

Further update on Exceat Bridge Replacement Project

From [Contracts Management Group](#) on 24-04-2025 14:21

[Details](#) [Headers](#) [Plain text](#)

Dear all

Further to my email of 11 April, I am writing to let you know that Cabinet has approved the reallocation of funding to the Exceat Bridge project. This means that the offline, two lane bridge is now fully funded and the project can go ahead as originally planned.

Work will now continue to:

- secure the land necessary to construct the two-lane bridge,
- finalise designs,
- carry out pre-construction preparations and surveys, and
- discharge the necessary conditions attached to the planning approval.

We will aim to start constructing the new bridge in spring 2026. You can keep up to date with progress on the Exceat Bridge project and Bus Service Improvement Plan projects on our website:

[Exceat Bridge Replacement Project](#)

[Bus Service Improvement Plan for East Sussex County Council.](#)

Best wishes,

The Project Team

Contracts Management | Communities, Economy & Transport Department
East Sussex County Council
eastsussexhighways.com

From: Contracts Management Group Contracts.ManagementGroup@eastsussex.gov.uk

Sent: 11 April 2025 10:02

Subject: Update on Exceat Bridge Replacement Project

Dear all

I am writing to give you an update on the Exceat Bridge Project. You will recall that in February, the County Council's Cabinet was asked to consider replacing the Exceat bridge with a more affordable, single-lane structure instead of the planned, two-lane bridge due to a significant funding gap.

However, the decision was deferred following a proposal from the Brighton and Hove Bus and Coach Company to reallocate some of the funding from the Bus Service Improvement Plan to the Exceat Bridge Project. This would allow the Council to build the two-lane bridge as originally planned, with minimal road closures during construction.

The Department for Transport has approved our application to reallocate the bus funding. Cabinet will consider whether to go ahead with the construction of the two-lane bridge at their meeting on 22 April.

If Cabinet agrees, work will continue to finalise designs, carry out pre-construction preparations, discharge the necessary conditions attached to the planning approval and progress with the public inquiry to secure the land necessary to construct the two-lane bridge. We would aim to start constructing the new bridge in spring 2026.

The proposed two-lane bridge would be built next to the existing bridge, meaning road closures would be for around 19 days in total. These closures would not need to be continuous, and some closures could be carried out on weekends or less busy times to reduce disruption.

We are grateful to the Brighton & Hove Bus and Coach Company for supporting the delivery of a two-lane bridge and for prioritising its delivery over other bus priority schemes.

The Cabinet meeting will be on 22 April and the report will be published on our website today: [Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 22nd April, 2025, 10.00 am | East Sussex County Council](#)

Further information about the reallocation of funding from the Bus Service Improvement Plan projects (BSIP):

The scheme to provide a two-lane bridge at Exceat has always been a very high priority for both the County Council and Brighton & Hove Bus and Coach Company.

The Brighton & Hove Coaster service, which crosses the bridge, carries over 5 million passengers each year. The current bridge is a major bottleneck. It adds to journey times and causes delays at busy times that affect the whole route between Eastbourne and Brighton. This often results in significant delays, short running of services or whole route cancellations. Cuckmere Buses also use the bridge for local services. The proposed two-lane bridge would effectively remove the bottleneck.

The [East Sussex Bus Service Improvement Plan](#) identified the A259 from Brighton to Peacehaven as a key corridor, where changes could enable significant improvements to journey times and reliability for buses. A number of schemes were developed with funding from the Department for Transport's BSIP1 Grant. At the time of the BSIP1 funding application, the Exceat Bridge project was fully funded. Therefore the Council applied for funding for other schemes along the corridor. These included improvements to The Drove and Denton roundabout in Newhaven, and a bus priority scheme at Telscombe Cliffs in Peacehaven.

The Newhaven, Peacehaven and Exceat projects are very much a package of schemes. The two-lane bridge is a vital part of this package and the most time critical. Therefore, the bus company proposed that the Exceat bridge scheme is prioritised and funding that had been secured for the Newhaven and Peacehaven schemes be reallocated to the Exceat Bridge Project.

However, these schemes would not be forgotten. We are proposing to use our 2025/26 BSIP funding to deliver The Drove and Denton Roundabout bus priority scheme in Newhaven. We would also aim to deliver the Telscombe Cliffs to Peacehaven' bus priority scheme at the earliest opportunity with future BSIP funding.

We will update you with the outcome of the Cabinet meeting and next steps. This information will also be available on our website: [Exceat Bridge Replacement Project](#).

Best wishes,

The Project Team

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East Sussex County Council
eastsussexhighways.com