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**HASTINGS ALLIANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT SOLUTIONS SAYS:  
'TIME FOR INTELLIGENT DEBATE AS LINK ROAD COSTS MORE THAN DOUBLE'.**

Speaking for the Alliance, Chairman Nick Bingham said:

' Costs have more than doubled from £47m to close on £100m (1). At a time of belt tightening, as well as huge increases in the costs of road transport and concerns over climate change, it is alarming to see East Sussex County Council and co-promoters of the Bexhill to Hastings Link Road (BHLR) pretending that the hugely environmentally damaging road project is still 'value for money'.

He went on: 'It is absolute madness to commit huge sums of money to build transport infrastructure that will see an increase in dependence on the car. This is especially true in Bexhill and Hastings where journeys are overwhelmingly short distance, and school run traffic is well above average for the UK. With BHLR, the future would look bleak, with those living in any new planned communities more likely to place the car first in a list of travel options. The communities themselves would be far less likely to include high quality alternatives to the car; public transport would be undermined

The Hastings Alliance for Sustainable Transport Solutions has done some calculations (2) that answer the legitimate question: 'What else could you get for the money?'

For around one tenth of the current cost of BHLR (and these are likely to go up further), Bexhill and Hastings could enjoy:

- A 'Real Time' bus information system.
- A new cycleway by the sea between Bexhill and Hastings
- A cycle link between the two new college sites at Hastings station, and Ore
- A new railway station at Glyne Gap
- A substantial start on creating 20mph zones in residential areas

Several huge bonuses would flow from a cancellation of BHLR, including:

- Strong growth in walking and cycling and a healthier population
- A predicted reduction of 6000 tonnes per year of CO2
- A better market for public transport
- More sustainable urban design and land use
- More high quality and attractive public spaces in town and neighbourhood centre
- A stronger local economy with more successful district centres such as Sidley, Silverhill, Bohemia and Ore

Importantly, the beautiful Combe Haven valley would remain the tranquil place it still is, to be enjoyed by this and future generations, residents and tourists alike.

Notes for Editors:

1. ESCC quarterly progress report to Gov Office for SE, fourth quarter, 2007 -8. (£96,095,000)
2. Figures for 'Real Time' bus information system from ESCC based on an unsuccessful bid for funding as part of the Local Transport Plan 2. Figures for CO2 from the Appraisal Summary Table (AST) of the bid document for BHLR. Cycleway construction costs from Sustrans/ESCC. Station costs based on Network Rail's new 'modular' station design (Local Transport Today, 11<sup>th</sup> July 2008 – c £5. 8m. Costs of 20mph zone implementation based on Hull City scheme (£23,500 per kilometre (2002) plus inflation – c£53,000 in 2008)