

[My letter to Highways England re the delay to the implementation of works on the A329\(M\) and their reply](#)



John Redwood won a free place at Kent College, Canterbury, He graduated from Magdalen College Oxford, has a DPhil and is a fellow of All Souls College. A businessman by background, he has been a director of NM Rothschild merchant bank and chairman of a quoted industrial PLC.

- [Read more about John Redwood](#)
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[The response from the Aviation Minister to my submission to the UK Airspace Policy Consultation](#)



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[Theresa May concedes it will take](#)

years to conclude a trade agreement with the EU – Paul Blomfield

In an interview this morning with Sky News, Theresa May said she hoped Britain will have been able to “look at” the future trade deal with the EU by the time Britain formally leaves the EU in March 2019.

“[L]et’s look at the whole question of the where we end up at the end of this negotiation. Have we looked, will we have looked at both withdrawal and the future relationship, that’s what’s important ... That’s what I’m asking for and that’s what I believe increasingly we will see.”

Theresa May, Sky News, 4 April 2017

She also conceded, for the first time, that the UK will have to sign the future trade deal with the EU as a third country. Given that the deal will be a ‘mixed agreement’, it will need to be ratified unanimously by all member states.

FI: Can you clarify that you accept what the European Council suggested which is that the final deal will be done as a third country status under a unanimous vote with everyone having a veto?

TM: There’s obviously a legal situation in terms of how the European Union can conduct trade negotiations.
Theresa May, Sky News, 4 April 2017

This is a significant retreat from what she and the Brexit secretary have previously said – in effect that Britain will be able to negotiate and finalise a new free trade agreement alongside the exit agreement by the end of the two year period. They have until now been adamant that any transitional period would be purely for “implementation” and “adjustment” of systems, rather than for negotiation of the terms of the future trade deal.

**Responding,
Labour’s shadow Brexit minister Paul Blomfield said:**

“It is less than a week since the Prime Minister triggered Article 50, and it seems every day brings another broken promise from the Government. First they said immigration may go up after Brexit. Now they are backpedalling on trade deals.

“We will hold the Government to account on the pledges made to the British people during the referendum campaign and since. They promised a comprehensive free trade agreement with the EU giving the “exact same benefits” we have now. They said it would be ready for the day we leave, along with new trade deals with other countries.

“Now, as they face reality, they are trying to downplay expectations. They need to spell out the transitional deal that will be in place, to stop the economy falling off a cliff edge without new agreements in two years time.”

[News story: Torcross sea defence repaired after Devon storms](#)

The Environment Agency has finished repairing Torcross sea defence after damage caused by the storms of February 2016.

Those storms saw large waves hit the sea defence when beach levels were low, causing cracks to appear along the promenade.

The repaired wall cost £2.4 million and reduces the risk of flooding to 51 properties. It is designed to withstand a severe storm, even when beach levels are low. Steel sheet piles have been installed directly in front of the existing line of piles with a new reinforced concrete capping beam. These double-length piles give the wall extra stability.



Steel sheet piles have been driven in front of existing piles and topped with concrete beams

The Environment Agency's Becky Richards said:

A huge thank you to all the residents of Torcross who have supported our repair work.

The project team worked hard to complete this repair quickly as possible, and our contractor, BMM JV, has done well to complete the works in time for the Easter holidays.

Local MP Dr Sarah Wollaston said:

Thank you so much to all those who have worked hard to restore the sea defences at Torcross, and to the community and agencies which came together during the anxious weeks following last year's storms to get things done.

The Environment Agency will inspect the defence every 24 months and monitor the repair during periods of bad weather.

A complementary project is underway to identify the best beach management options for Torcross. South Hams District Council is creating a Torcross and Slapton Beach Management Plan on behalf of The Slapton Line Partnership, to

which the Environment Agency will contribute.

Alan Denbigh, Chair of the Slapton Line Partnership, said:

Together we hope to identify the best long-term beach management options to reduce the impact of storms at Torcross.

We are planning events in summer 2017 for residents and businesses in and around Torcross to talk about the plan. Visit www.slaptonline.org to find out more.

Even with this sea defence, parts of Torcross remain at a high risk of flooding from the sea. High risk means that each year this area is at significant risk of flooding during storms due to waves.

Everyone has a part to play to protect themselves from the risk of flooding. There are some simple steps you can take now:

- Use our flood map to see which areas are more likely to flood first, deepest, or most often [by entering your postcode](#)
- Register for Floodline – if you're at risk of flooding, you may be able to receive flood alerts and warnings, completely free
- Be prepared – know what to do if flooding happens with a flood plan – [download a personal, business or even a community flood plan template](#)

To report an emergency flood incident in Torcross call our 24-hour incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

[Government must publish their post-Brexit strategy to protect jobs in the finance sector – McDonnell](#)

John McDonnell MP, Labour's Shadow Chancellor, commenting on reports that 100,000 jobs in the City of London are at risk due to the failure of the Tories' Brexit negotiations, said:

"This threat to 100,000 jobs was all too predictable given the Tories' extreme approach to the Brexit negotiations. This is yet another major concern facing our country since Theresa May triggered Article 50, and yet Tory ministers appear stunned and unprepared when obvious issues arise.

"We need to know

immediately from the Government what its strategy is to protect jobs in the finance sector, because all we have witnessed so far is silent bewilderment.

“Labour will fight for a Brexit that works for everyone, unlike the hard right Tory elite who want a low-wage, tax-haven bargain basement economy. Our six tests, including preserving existing benefits of membership, must be met before Labour will support any Brexit deal.”

Ends