



Department  
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*Dear Peter, Daniel,*

Thank you for your letter of 29 May to Grant Shapps, about the funding of the Ely and Haughley Junction planned improvements. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this issue.

As you are aware, Network Rail and my Department have recently concluded development work on the Ely programme, culminating in the production of an Outline Business Case. The programme continues to demonstrate sound decarbonisation and connectivity benefits, but it also continues to require a significant amount of public funding, with a total cost of over £450 million.

As we continue to build back from the pandemic, it is becoming clear that travel patterns are likely to have changed into the longer term and government is therefore having to make difficult decisions to restore the railway's financial sustainability. Following the 2021 Spending Review, I am considering the necessary changes to the national enhancement portfolio and some projects will have to be cancelled or indefinitely paused.

I fully recognise the benefits of the Ely programme and its strong alignment to Government's strategic priorities. Should the outcomes of the Spending Review impact on the Ely programme, my Department would continue to work with industry to explore opportunities to realise at least some of the desired outcomes, either through wider operational changes to the network or through smaller, targeted investment enabled by future funding settlements.

I remain committed to publishing an update to the Rail Network Enhancement Portfolio, thereby confirming the status of individual schemes across England and Wales, including Haughley and Ely.

*Yours ever*

*Wendy*

**WENDY MORTON MP**

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT**