Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Baroness Taylor of Stevenage
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Housing and Local Government
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Jess Asato MP
Blake Stephenson MP
Adam Thorp

27th April 2026

Dear all,

TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE EAST OF ENGLAND

As discussed at the meeting with Adam on 16 April, I agreed to write to you with further detail on the transport infrastructure in the East of England set out in the pre-briefing material you shared with me. I hope the information below is helpful.

The Government recognises that some prospective new town and growth locations in the East of England have particularly complex interfaces with the Strategic Road network (SRN). In these locations, the SRN plays a critical role in enabling growth, but also presents constraints that require careful, strategic consideration. National Highways is working closely with all relevant partners on considering SRN requirements, particularly on the A1.

In respect of the A12, National Highways is exploring a more proportionate and targeted plan of any potential small-scale interventions for the A12 corridor in Essex to support housing growth, following the cancellation of the A12 Chelmsford major enhancement scheme.

On the A47, National Highways is already investing c£500m dualling large sections of the A47 to support this key economic corridor in the east of England. Further investment on the route will be considered as part of future investment planning in partnership with local authorities.

Turning to the Trowse swing railway bridge, this has a slight negative affect on performance and delivering a new double track bridge and improved track approaches could improve performance and potentially enable an increase in services from Norwich to Ely or Ipswich. However, initial assessments suggest that replacing the bridge could be costly, potentially requiring a Transport and Works Act Order to deliver given rights of river navigation under the structure. Given these factors, replacement of the swing bridge is not currently considered a priority. I would urge you to engage with local stakeholders to develop a case for this investment and explore any potential sources of local funding (such as section 106 contributions).

Ministers in the previous Government paused Ely Area Capacity Enhancement (EACE) and the related Haughley Junction upgrade following the 2021 Spending Review. The Secretary of State updated Parliament on 8 July last year regarding those rail and road infrastructure projects which will progress following completion of SR25 – the EACE and Haughley schemes were not amongst

the projects listed. The EACE scheme will be kept under review. It is a worthy scheme that will be considered for potential progression in the future as funding becomes available.

Given that transport policy, funding and investment decisions sit primarily within the Department for Transport, I would also encourage engagement with DfT who are the appropriate lead Department on these matters.

Finally, Between 16 December 2025 and 10 March 2026, we consulted on changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). That consultation, which can be found on gov.uk here, included proposals to ensure that all development proposals should be capable of proceeding without having a severe impact on the transport network in terms of capacity and congestion, including cumulative impacts. We are currently analysing the feedback received and will publish our response in due course.

I hope this provides clarity on the issues raised.

Yours ever,

BARONESS TAYLOR OF STEVENAGE
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Housing and Local Government