



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Rt Hon. Grant Shapps MP, Secretary of State for Transport
Baroness Vere, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport

Department of Transport
Great Minster House, 33 Horseferry Road
London, SW1P 4DR

Dear Grant,

29 October 2020

RE: Upgrading the A1 Between the M25 and the M62

We write regarding this Government's commitment to levelling up and investing in vital infrastructure for our communities. Across the country, this Government is building back better to generate prosperity and protect jobs and growth.

A project of particular concern to us, and to residents and local government across the East Midlands, is the A1. As MPs, District Councillors and County Councillors, we have already had productive conversations with Highways England regarding the necessity of safety improvements along the motorway, but there is a strong desire in our communities for a comprehensive upgrade to the A1 between Peterborough and Blyth.

Residents and businesses in our constituencies have raised the significant congestion issues posed by the inadequate capacity of the A1 currently, and indeed the A1 is closed at least once a week in the Rutland stretch alone due to an accident. However, beyond there being significant issues with the road, it is also a major artery for our country, connecting London with Edinburgh, and weaving through communities from Letchworth to Berwick-upon-Tweed. It is a vital economic thread for communities up and down the corridor, the longest numbered road in the UK.

Currently the 72-mile stretch between Peterborough and Blyth carries between 20,000 and 25,000 vehicles per day on average (single direction), of which a very high percentage of HGVs – 22 per cent compared to the average 12.1 per cent). About 50 percent of trips travel the full length of the corridor.

Compared to the M1, HGVs on the A1 make longer and more strategic trips. While travel times can be generally good, there is a high degree of variability, due to sub-standard junctions and safety measures, a higher than average rate of fatal collisions and overall an average of 136 collisions a year. Because of this, there have been 201 closures of the A1 (in at least one direction) over the last five years.

If there is an upgrade to a dual carriageway, the Transport Economic Efficiency benefits equate to £213 million in positive impacts across the UK, falling £138 million on a standard 60-year appraisal. An assessment of the transport user benefits estimates a benefit to cost ratio of 0.47, but this does not include any level 3 wider benefits.



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Transport for the East Midlands unanimously agreed to support an upgrade to a 3-lane motorway standard on the 9th of September. Transport for the East Midlands submitted a robust case for this upgrade this month as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review. This proposal is supported by every level of local government in our constituencies.

The need for this investment is pressing given the desire to expand jobs and growth in the East Midlands, and the commitments the Government has made to invest in every region of the country. This is particularly pressing in the East Midlands, where transport investment has been around 50 per cent of the UK average.

In this context, we hope that the affected local Members of Parliament might meet with you to discuss the case for an A1 upgrade, and how central and local government can work together to deliver on the East Midlands' pressing transport priorities.

Kindest regards,

Alicia Kearns MP
Rutland and Melton

Nick Fletcher MP
Don Valley

Brendan Clarke-Smith MP
Bassetlaw

Dr Caroline Johnson MP
Sleaford and North Hykeham

Gareth Davies MP
Grantham and Stamford





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Council Leaders and LLEP

Handwritten signature of Kay Cutts in blue ink.

Kay Cutts CC
Nottinghamshire County Council

Handwritten signature of Oliver Hemsley in blue ink.

Oliver Hemsley CC
Rutland County Council

Handwritten signature of Martin Hill in blue ink.

Martin Hill
Lincolnshire County Council

Handwritten signature of Joe Orson in blue ink.

Joe Orson CC
Melton Borough Council

Handwritten signature of Kelham Cooke in blue ink.

Kelham Cooke
South Kesteven District Council

Handwritten signature of Pat Doody in blue ink.

Pat Doody
Greater Lincolnshire LEP Chair