



Department for Transport

Sir Edward Leigh MP
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From the Minister of State
The Rt Hon John Hayes MP

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Our Ref:
Your Ref:

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Dear Edward

Lincoln Eastern Bypass

I am very grateful to you for inviting me to meet you and a delegation of local stakeholders and residents on 15 December to discuss the concerns that you and they have about the proposed closure of Hawthorn Road as part of the planned Lincoln Eastern Bypass.

Let me assure you that I fully understand the concerns that everyone at the meeting explained to me and the clearly expressed arguments that were made for retaining a road bridge.

These concerns included:

- access to facilities including schools, the hospital etc;
- the capacity, suitability and safety of alternative routes;
- increased journey times caused by the closure; and
- additional traffic generated in Cherry Willingham.

As I said at our meeting the design of the bypass is a matter for Lincolnshire County Council, who are promoting the scheme, and it is not for the Department to promote changes to it.

The Council has published revised statutory orders (compulsory purchase and side roads orders) to include a new design for the "Non Motorised Users" bridge and the consultation period for this ended on 5 December.

Officials in the National Transport Casework Team have now confirmed that, because of the nature of the objections that have been made, a further Public Inquiry will be needed.

I know that you understand how important it is that the Department adopts a neutral stance to the design of the current scheme while this statutory process is underway.

You asked for further clarification on the funding available from the Department towards the scheme. The Secretary of State for Transport wrote to Karl McCartney on 1st December on this point and that letter was copied to you and to the Leader of the County Council. I attach a further copy for ease of reference.

You asked me to clarify the reference to "*the remainder of the current local authority major schemes programme*". As I explained at our meeting, the Government's spending plans include a residual "tail" of expenditure to deliver the remaining schemes in the local authority major schemes programme approved in 2011/12. This expenditure "tail" extends over a four to five year period.

The Government has safeguarded and "ring-fenced" within our spending plans the £49.95m provisionally approved for the scheme in 2011. This means that we will ensure that this money is available for the scheme subject to the satisfactory completion of statutory processes and Ministers approving the Council's Full Approval (i.e. final approval) funding application.

At our meeting there was some discussion about what impact the forthcoming General Election might have on the scheme. Whilst no-one can predict with complete certainty what a future Government's detailed spending plans might be, I am optimistic about the good progress that is being made on building a cross-party consensus on infrastructure investment. I believe that this will considerably lessen the usual "stop/start" risk that we have seen when there has been a change of Government in the past.

We briefly touched on the option of a dual carriageway solution which the Secretary of State also covered in his 1st December letter to Karl McCartney. As the Secretary of State says in that letter, we would support a dual carriageway in principle. However, we have no provision in our current spending plans for the additional costs that this option would incur.

As you know, the Autumn Statement published on 3rd December included an announcement of a second round of the Local Growth Fund bidding process. My Ministerial colleague, Greg Clark MP, who oversees the Fund, has invited MPs to work with their Local Enterprise Partnerships and local authority partners in preparing bids. I know you will want to give this some thought in relation to the Bypass.

Finally, I should point out that my colleague, Baroness Kramer, is the Minister responsible for funding decisions on local major schemes so any further correspondence on the Bypass should be addressed to her. Following our

meeting I have asked her to maintain a close interest in this matter, and she will also respond to the letter the County Council recently wrote to the Secretary of State.

I am copying this letter to Baroness Kramer, plus Karl McCartney MP, Councillors Martin Hill and Richard Davies and Councillor Ian Fleetwood who was also present at our meeting.



THE RT HON JOHN HAYES MP



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- 1 DEC 2014

In Karl.

I am writing to you further to your recent discussion with the Chancellor of the Exchequer about the Lincoln Eastern Bypass.

I know that you and others have been concerned that the need for the scheme promoter (Lincolnshire County Council) to seek revised statutory orders will put at risk the £49.95m funding which the Department has provisionally approved for the scheme.

I am happy to confirm that provision has been made to secure and "ring fence" this funding within the Department's spending plans for the remainder of the current local authority major schemes programme.

You raised with the Chancellor the possibility of securing support to a dual carriageway solution. I understand that the Council is currently consulting on revised statutory orders for the existing single carriageway scheme so I am unable to comment on the pros and cons of making a further change to the scheme design.

If, however, there were to be a future bid from the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership for a dual carriageway (with the full support of Lincolnshire County Council), as a priority in their Strategic Economic Plan, we would, in principle, support such a scheme. This would, of course, be subject to the Department complying with all statutory processes and procedures.

I am copying this letter to Sir Edward Leigh MP and to the Leader of Lincolnshire County Council.

y- Patrick

THE RT. HON. PATRICK McLOUGHLIN

