LETTER OF COMMUNITY CONSENSUS
FROM CAMBRIDGE PARISH COUNCILS, DISTRICT COUNCILLORS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

01 May 2019

The Rt. Hon. Chris Grayling MP
Secretary of State for Transport

cc: The Rt. Hon. **James Brokenshire** MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government

Heidi Allen MP for South Cambridgeshire
Daniel Zeichner MP for Cambridge
Lucy Fraser MP for East Cambridgeshire
James Palmer, Mayor, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority
Councillor Bridget Smith, Leader of South Cambridgeshire District Council
Councillor Lewis Herbert, Leader of Cambridge City Council
Rachel Stopard, CEO Greater Cambridge Partnership
Jim O'Sullivan, CEO Highways England

Dear Secretary of State,

Open Letter of Community Consensus on the need for all-ways connectivity at the Girton Interchange serving the M11, A428, A14 and A1307 at Cambridge.

The Girton Interchange is a key strategic junction on the Cambridge regional road network, connecting the M11, A14, A428 and A1307. The junction is severely hampered by a lack of all-ways connectivity. Enabling full connectivity will provide faster and more efficient connections on the road network, help to alleviate some of the long-standing congestion problems in the region and facilitate regional transport links to support economic growth. Moreover, it will improve connections between new housing developments west of Cambridge, the M11 motorway and the rapidly growing biotechnology cluster south of Cambridge city. Longer-term, the junction is vital to proposed improvements to east-west links.

Purpose of this letter

We are a group of Parish Councils and South Cambridgeshire District Councillors, representing over 30,000 people living in communities in and near Cambridge, and selected community interest groups. We note the letter from the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) to Highways England (19 Oct 2017) regarding the urgent need for all-ways connectivity at the Girton Interchange; we welcome the consensus among local governments, the Combined Authority for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, the GCP, MPs and business groups to progress this scheme; and we warmly welcome the positive indications from Highways England for delivery in due course.

We are concerned, however, that Highways England has not yet committed to include the Girton Interchange in the Road Investment Strategy (RIS-2) work period between 2020 and 2030, and that no clear plan has yet been articulated.

We write to express, in the strongest terms possible, our support for this development, which is long overdue, and to request that it be given urgent priority.

Requests for urgent action

1. **We request that work on improvements to the Girton Interchange to enable all-ways connectivity be accelerated and given urgent priority as part of the strategic transport improvements needed in this region.**
2. **We request that the strategic importance of the Girton Interchange be fully recognised by ensuring it is integrated with any mass transit scheme taken forward to the west of Cambridge.**
3. **We request that improvements help to reduce, and not exacerbate, the already detrimental impacts of traffic on the local road network and on the immediately surrounding communities.**
4. **We request that present proposals to constrict the capacity of the A428 eastbound where it joins the A14 at the Girton Interchange, from the present two lanes down to one lane, be reconsidered in anticipation of future needs.**
5. **We request that, where practicable, this work be integrated with on-going work on the A14 to make the most cost-effective use of resources and supporting works already mobilised.**
6. **We request that funding be made available and that all stakeholders work together to give their full commitment, with the aim of delivering these improvements by 2023 at the latest.**

The letter from the GCP and MPs and the response from Highways England are encouraging, and we are pleased that support is broad and analysis is underway. However, we note that these improvements have been called for by the community for more than twenty years, with little action to date. Much as we welcome the ongoing work of Highways England, there is currently no commitment to a timetable for completion of the improvements at the Girton Interchange. We believe the time for clear, unambiguous action has arrived, and a plan and timetable for delivery of this essential infrastructure is urgently needed.

In summary, all-ways interconnections at this critical junction are in the local, regional and wider national strategic interest and are in need of urgent action by all relevant parties.

If it would be helpful, we would be pleased to meet you or your officials to provide more information on the views of the community on the scheme.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Coalition of Parish Councils

Steve Jones
Chair

Cambridge Connect

Dr Colin Harris
Director

Parish Councils, District Councillors and Community groups expressing support for this letter

The Coalition of Parish Councils comprising Arrington, Barton, Bourn, Boxworth, Caldecote, Caxton, Comberton, Connington, Coton, Croxton, Dry Drayton, Elsworth, Eltisley, Eversden, Grantchester, Hardwick, Knapwell, Longstowe, Madingley, and Toft parish councils.

Girton Parish Council and South Trumpington Parish Council, which are not members of the Coalition, also have endorsed the letter. Cambourne Town Council has also long-expressed support for all-ways connectivity at the Girton Interchange.

South Cambridgeshire District Councillors:

- Cllr Ian Sollom (Harston & Comberton) (the Parishes of Barton, Comberton, Coton, Grantchester, Harlton, Harston, Haslingfield, Hauxton and South Trumpington)
- Cllr Philip Allen (Harston & Comberton)
- Cllr Tony Mason (Harston & Comberton)
- Cllr Grenville Chamberlain (Hardwick) (the Parishes of Hardwick and Toft)
- Cllr Tumi Hawkins (Caldecote) (the Parishes of Bourn, Caldecote, Childerley, Kingston, Little Gransden and Longstowe)
- Cllr Tom Bygott (Girton) (the Parishes of Dry Drayton, Girton and Madingley)
- Cllr Dr Shrobona Bhattacharya – Cambourne
- Cllr Ruth Betson – Cambourne

Selected Community interest groups:

- Cambridge Ahead
- Cambridge Connect
- Cambridge Past, Present & Future
- Federation of Cambridge Residents Associations (FeCRA)
- Smarter Cambridge Transport

Background

On 19 October 2017 an open letter was written from the Greater Cambridge Partnership to Jim O'Sullivan, Chief Executive of Highways England regarding the Roads Investment Strategy 2 (RIS2) – M11 in Cambridgeshire. This letter noted a clear consensus within our region for the improvements to the Girton Interchange, as indicated by the broad representation in the letter of local government, the academic and business communities, and Members of Parliament for Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire.

Martin Fellows, Regional Director of Operations (East) Highways England, responded on 17 Nov 2017 that the agency is assessing the strategic road network (SRN), including pressures on the M11 and the case for improvements at Girton Interchange, which will feed into RIS2. Following consultation, the Investment Plan for RIS2 will continue to be developed over 2018. In due course the Secretary of State for Transport will decide on priorities for RIS2, to be published in 2019.

The Girton Interchange is a key strategic junction on the regional road network, which is severely hampered by a lack of all-ways connectivity. Enabling connectivity will provide faster and more efficient connections on the road network, help to alleviate some of the long-standing congestion problems in the region, facilitate regional transport links and support economic growth. Moreover, it

will improve connections between areas west of Cambridge, such as Cambourne, and the M11 motorway, and support the increasing population. Longer-term, the junction is vital to proposed improvements in East-West links between Cambridge, Milton Keynes and Oxford, as recommended by the National Infrastructure Commission.

We recognise that some villages lying in close proximity to the Girton Interchange are already significantly affected by noise and air pollution from the current road system. It is important therefore that improvements should help to reduce, and do not exacerbate, any impacts on local communities.

Coalition of Parish Councils

The Coalition of Parish Councils to the West of Cambridge was formed to provide a coordinated voice on planning issues.

Cambridge Connect

Cambridge Connect was formed in 2016 to promote enduring and sustainable transport for Cambridge, in particular a light rail metro with an underground in the historic city core. The Girton Interchange is considered a key node on the network, where the metro would link with important strategic highways. Cambridge Connect works closely with Railfuture, UK Tram and Rail Haverhill, amongst others.

More information on Cambridge Connect is available at www.cambridge-connect.uk

Address for Correspondence

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Girton Interchange – Peak Hour traffic with A1303 gridlock

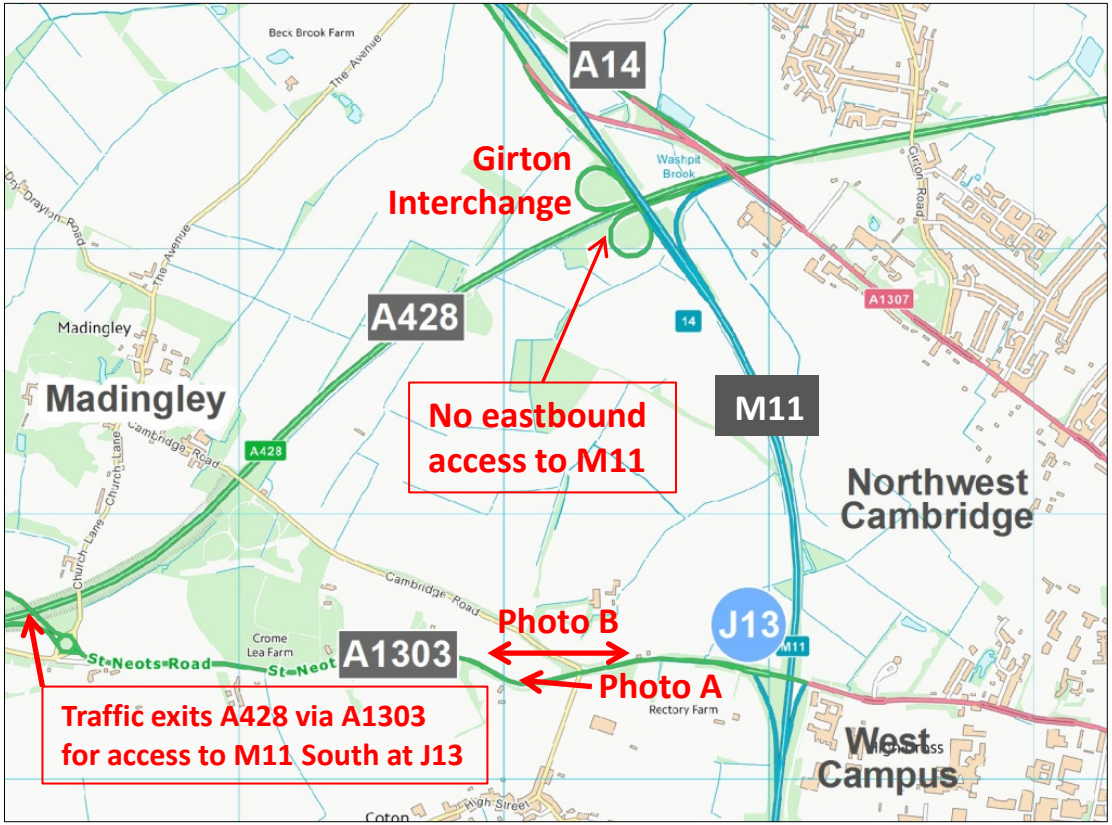

Photo: courtesy Natasha Hodge 2018

Photo A: 08:20 19 Sep 2018 – A1303 (Madingley Rise) gridlock. Only access onto M11 from Cambourne off A1303 at J13. No access at Girton Interchange.

- **Inefficient, wastes time, generates pollution, costly to economy**

Photo B: 08:36 26 Feb 2019 – A1303 (Madingley Rise) gridlock continues… No access at Girton Interchange

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Girton Interchange – Effect of reduction to one lane east on A428 at Girton Interchange (peak) – 2016 - 2019

Photo: Colin Harris 2016

Photo: courtesy Natasha Hodge 2018

Photo A: 01 Feb **2016**, 08:50 am (peak)
- A428 looking east from Madingley bridge over A428
- 4-lane highway, 1800 m to M11
- Lack of congestion
- **No eastbound connection or access to M11**

Photo B: 26 Feb **2019**, 08:26 am (peak).
- A428 east from same location as Photo A – with reduction to one lane at Girton Interchange
- **No eastbound connection or access to M11 at Girton Interchange**

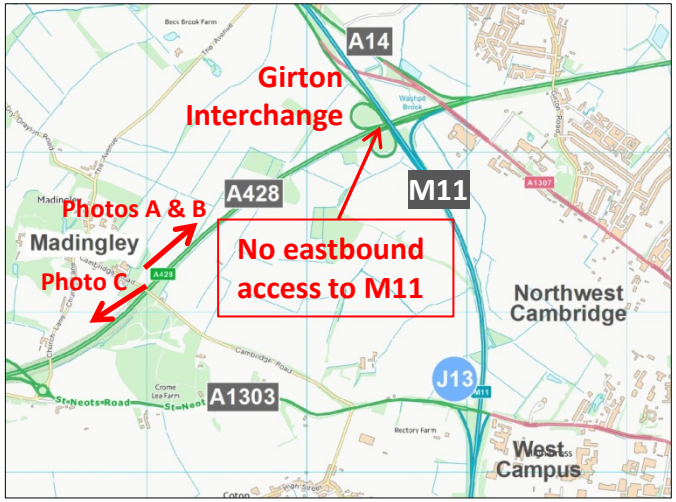

Photo C: 26 Feb **2019**, 08:28 am
A428 west from same location as Photos A &B with reduction to one lane at Girton Interchange

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