



A47 Alliance
CES
County Hall
Martineau Lane
Norwich
Norfolk NR1 2SG

Mr Bob Collins
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

27th October 2020

Dear Mr Collins,

Thank you for your attendance at the recent A47 Alliance meeting on 23 October 2020. As you may remember, this letter was agreed by the Alliance at the meeting. I would be grateful if you could consider the proposals made in the letter, and I hope we can move forwards from the Road Investment Strategy 2 announcement together in order to provide the vital improvements to the A47.

I write on behalf of the A47 Alliance, representing the interests of stakeholders along the A47 trunk road route from Lowestoft to the A1 at Peterborough. The local authorities, businesses and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) along the A47 have a common goal of a fully dualled A47, backed up by a wealth of evidence showing the wide range of benefits that this would provide.

I am following up the announcement in the 2020 Budget, outlining the schemes included in Roads Investment Strategy 2 (RIS2) and the Roads Investment Strategy 3 (RIS3) Pipeline. Neither of these strategies included any improvements to the A47, which the A47 Alliance has campaigned in earnest for, believing improvement to be fundamental to the economic vibrance of East Anglia as well as making this essential road safer for its users. The route also serves an important role as an access route to the Energy Coast sites which are highly important to meet the country's ambitious emissions targets. Improvements to the A47 are, therefore, key in enabling the growth and development of the Energy Coast as it improves the accessibility of the sites and subsequently increases the attractiveness of the area as a place to invest in renewable energy.

The Alliance recognise that government has to prioritise its funding and cannot take forward all schemes needed across the country. On behalf of the Alliance I would

like to make an offer to government. That is that members of the Alliance, with their huge experience and bringing multi-disciplinary skills drawn from business and local authorities, work with government and Highways England to understand the future role of roads like the A47 to develop the longer-term future investment strategy and how this might best be realised.

This would allow the Alliance to understand why the much-needed A47 improvements were not included in RIS2. It would enable government to work on the A47 as a case study for similar roads across the country to start to develop their likely future investment needs, taking account of, amongst other things, a post-Covid world, the challenge of zero carbon, the role of public transport, walking and cycling, and future autonomy and technological innovation in roads and road transport.

The work would lead to greater knowledge about how government can make roads such as the A47 fit for the future and continue to serve their strategic purpose in 30-40 years. This would help inform future infrastructure investments with a particular focus on longer-term investment needs in East Anglia.

A47 Alliance members have a strong history of working collaboratively including with DfT and Highways England. Norfolk County Council has agreed with Highways England that it will take forward design and development work on RIS1 junction improvements in Great Yarmouth, having already delivered – on Highways England's behalf – an improvement at Gt Yarmouth rail station. The Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is working closely on dualling schemes between Peterborough and Wisbech with Highways England and government.

The A47 Alliance remain confident that there is a strong case for dualling the A47 and will be moving forward, growing stronger and continuing to work with and offer our help to government to ensure this essential piece of infrastructure is upgraded to promote economic growth now and into the future.

I hope you accept our offer of collaboration and support and hope we can move forward together to provide great benefits for the East.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Martin Wilby
Chair of the A47 Alliance



Department for Transport

Cllr Martin Wilby
Chair of the A47 Alliance
County Hall
Martineau Lane
Norwich
Norfolk NR1 2SG

Web Site: www.dft.gov.uk

18 November 2020

Dear Cllr Wilby,

Thank you for your letter of 27th October to Bob Collins about the work of the A47 Alliance. Your letter has been passed to me as its primary focus in on future enhancement options for the route.

Firstly, I can confirm the importance placed on the A47 as a key strategic route by the Government. As you know, this was underlined in the second Road Investment Strategy (RIS2) which maintained our commitment to upgrade several key sections of the A47. This £300 million investment will enable six upgrades along the A47 between Peterborough and Great Yarmouth, which includes linking up existing sections to produce continuous dual carriageway for some 30 miles across the centre of Norfolk. Plus, the Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing scheme at the eastern end of the A47 has had provisionally approved up to £98.088 million of additional Government investment.

Of course, as you acknowledged in your letter, difficult decisions have to be made about what enhancements can be funded based on what is affordable and deliverable within a RIS period. But that does not mean that we consider the rest of the strategic road network (SRN) is perfect and will never need to change. The demands on the network are ever-evolving, and its role can expand to facilitate future developments as you suggest, such as housing and commercial opportunities. We also need to acknowledge that changes in technology, the vehicle fleet and road users' requirements must be accommodated.

As you know, we will shortly begin the process of developing RIS3, which is expected to cover SRN investment beyond 2025. A key source of evidence regarding the potential for further enhancements to the A47 will be the Highways England route strategy. In that context we very much welcome the offer of help and support from the Alliance to develop an understanding of the future role of the A47 which could neatly align with the development of the route strategy. As you say, successful partnership working here could benefit the route strategies being developed for other similar roads elsewhere in England.

I am sure that you will want to build on the strong relationships already established with Highways England and key regional stakeholders such as Transport East to establish the fullest possible account of the issues along the A47 and potential solutions, including

those that address the environmental challenges of operating a strategic route through a national park.

In the first instance, can I suggest that we seek to arrange a meeting between the A47 Alliance, Highways England, Transport East and my team early in the New Year? This would give us some time to think about how we can best work together and prepare for a constructive discussion.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Read-Leah