

The Rt Hon Heidi Alexander MP
Secretary of State for Transport
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

Castle House
Great North Road
Newark, Nottinghamshire
NG24 1BY

www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk

via email: heidi.alexander.mp@parliament.uk

8 July 2026

Dear Secretary of State

A46 Newark Bypass – Proposed Cancellation and the Need for Immediate Reconsideration

I am writing on behalf of Newark and Sherwood District Council to express my profound disappointment and frustration at both the substance of the Government's recent announcement regarding the A46 Newark Bypass and the manner in which it was communicated.

Firstly, I must place on record how unacceptable it was that local and regional leaders learned of the proposed cancellation of the A46 Newark Bypass with virtually no notice and no meaningful consultation. The Mayor of the East Midlands, Claire Ward, was informed only moments before the news became public, leaving no opportunity for engagement, discussion or consideration of the wider implications for our communities, businesses and regional economy. This approach falls far short of the partnership that Government should be demonstrating towards local and regional leaders, particularly when decisions affect the future prosperity of an entire region.

The A46 Newark Bypass is not simply another road scheme. It is a nationally significant infrastructure project that has been many years in the making. It has secured an approved Development Consent Order late last year and was announced as funded and committed as part of the Road Investment Strategy 3 (RIS3) as recently as March this year.

The project has unparalleled support from local authorities, highway authorities, businesses and political leaders across party lines. From the Humber Ports to Tewkesbury, organisations have stood shoulder-to-shoulder in recognising the critical importance of addressing one of the most significant bottlenecks on the country's strategic road network. The scheme is widely regarded as the number one transport priority for the East Midlands.

I acknowledge and welcome the statement from Government that no final decision has yet been taken and that a consultation process will follow. I must stress that the case for this scheme has never been stronger. The East Midlands has suffered chronic underinvestment in transport infrastructure for decades. Regional evidence demonstrates that transport spending in the East Midlands remains substantially below the national average, despite the region's significant contribution to the UK economy.

Anyone who regularly uses the A46 experiences the reality every day: severe congestion, lengthy delays, unreliable journey times, pressure on local roads and growing constraints on economic activity. Without the bypass, these issues will continue to worsen. Residents will face ongoing disruption, businesses will continue to experience lost productivity, and opportunities for investment and growth across Newark, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and the wider East Midlands will be unnecessarily constrained. The argument that the East Midlands should lose one of its most important infrastructure investments at precisely the moment when Government is pursuing growth, productivity and housing delivery is deeply concerning.

Let me therefore be clear, Newark and Sherwood District Council will not quietly accept the loss of this scheme. We will continue to work closely with the Mayor of the East Midlands, East Midlands Councils, the Greater Lincolnshire Mayor, Nottinghamshire County Council, Lincolnshire County Council, our Members of Parliament and partners across industry to make the strongest possible case for its retention and delivery. We are committed to speaking with one voice and ensuring Government fully understands the local, regional and national consequences of abandoning this project. Our objective is not merely to preserve the scheme in principle. We are seeking a clear commitment that the A46 Newark Bypass will remain within the RIS3 plans and be delivered at the earliest possible opportunity during the RIS3 period. Anything less risks condemning another generation of residents and businesses to suffer avoidable congestion, reduced productivity and constrained growth.

Finally, the Mayor of the East Midlands is seeking a meeting with Ministers which we fully support and would be willing to host in conjunction with the Mayor. We look forward to engaging constructively through the consultation process.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Paul Peacock
Leader of the Council

cc Claire Ward, Mayor of the East Midlands
Simon Lightwood MP, Minister for Roads and Buses