

Leader of the Council

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Professor Sir Roderick Floud FBA
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27 March 2018

Dear Sir Roderick

Thank you for your letter of 22 March regarding the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway and proposals for its routing. As I understand it you are concerned that the views of the Haddenham Village Society have not been canvassed with regard to the current Highways England consultation. I hope I have understood correctly.

The current consultation on routing is being carried out by Highways England, not by the County Council. The County Council is simply one of very many local authorities and other public sector bodies that Highways England have chosen to consult. They are, for example, consulting all County and District Councils between Cambridge and Oxford with regard to the route through northern Buckinghamshire. They have also involved, I believe, the Wildlife Trusts and the National Trust. It is a policy of Highways England not to consult more widely with the public at this stage. However, they do propose to consult with the public once the broad corridor has been selected. In my personal opinion this is a mistake and only last Friday, at a meeting with Highways England, I expressed the view that a wider public consultation should be undertaken by them.

I also asked what would be the criteria against which any routing would be evaluated and what weighting would be attached to each criterion? Clearly different criteria might lead to the choice of different routes. For example, if the focus is on economic development, then one route might be chosen. However if the priority is unlocking land for housing development, another route might be selected. Other criteria could include journey speed between Oxford and Cambridge or more importantly, environmental impact. Currently Highways England seem unable to confirm all the relevant criteria or what weighting will be used.

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Highways England have confirmed that the consultation with local councils will close on 12 April. In the time available it is not possible for the County Council to arrange public meetings across the county nor is that in line with Highways England policy. We are however arranging for the local County Councillors to be consulted and we would hope that they would reflect local views from within their own divisions. After the preferred corridor has been chosen, then public engagement will begin on potential routes within that corridor and I hope that the Haddenham Village Society will play a full part in that consultation.

Yours sincerely



Martin Tett

c.c. Cllr Clive Harriss
Cllr Paul Irwin
Rt Hon John Bercow MP
Rt Hon David Lidington MP