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for Transport

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From the Secretary of State  
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Thank you for your email of 11 March 2016 to the Chancellor of the Exchequer about Ely North rail junction.

The Government fully recognises the significant contributions that the East of England makes to job creation and economic growth. We also recognise the key role that the rail network plays in supporting that growth – both in terms of passengers and freight.

I understand the frustration that the delays to Ely North Junction improvements will cause to customers, which we very much regret. However, allow me to make clear that these major works are only being delayed, not cancelled. In addition, the retiming of the works will allow for better coordination and integration of safety critical level crossing works in the Ely area. As such, I am confident that the scheme to be delivered in Control Period 6 (2019-2024) will be of greater overall benefit to users.

I am aware of the discussions which took place at your recent rail summit, as well as your subsequent private meeting with Claire Perry. I warmly welcome the commitment of local authorities, LEPs and other local stakeholders to seek to secure funding for further development work during Control Period 5 (2014-2019). My Department and Network Rail will do everything possible to support this and work in partnership with local stakeholders. I know Claire Perry has asked to be kept apprised of progress and we look forward to hearing what progress has been made in identifying local funding for development work during Control Period 5.

However, I must make clear that we see no prospect of the Government (or Network Rail) providing funding for Ely North Junction improvements during Control Period 5. Indeed, I regret that the Chancellor was unable to meet the specific request of your email to provide funding for Ely North Junction at the recent Budget.

I am copying this letter to Henry Bellingham MP, Lucy Frazer MP, Richard Bacon MP, Ben Gummer MP, Peter Aldous MP, James Cartlidge MP, Jonathan Djanogly MP, Stewart Jackson MP, Heidi Allen MP, Chloe Smith MP, Steve Barclay MP, Matthew Hancock MP, Jo Churchill MP, Keith Simpson MP, Dan Poulter MP, Therese Coffey MP, Brandon Lewis MP and George Freeman MP.

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Patrick

**THE RT. HON. PATRICK McLOUGHLIN**