



Department
for Transport

Iain Stewart MP
Chair of the Transport Select Committee
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From the Parliamentary
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2nd May 2023

Dear *Iain*,

Planning for the third Road Investment Strategy 2025-2030

Thank you once again for inviting me to give oral evidence, in March, to the Transport Select Committee's inquiry into strategic road investment in England. In the Department's written evidence to the Committee in February, we outlined the plan and principal milestones in setting the next road investment strategy (RIS3) covering the period 2025-2030.

In accordance with our plan, on 18 May the Government published its public consultation on National Highways' Strategic Road Network Initial Report. The Initial Report is National Highways' assessment of the current performance and condition of its network, and the company's proposals for investment and future outcomes. It completes the first stage of the RIS setting process. You can access the initial report here:

<https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/future-roads/strategic-road-network-initial-report/>. The public consultation, which you can access here:

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/shaping-the-future-of-englands-strategic-roads is the formal point in the RIS development process when we seek views from stakeholders. It will inform the development for the draft road investment strategy, which we expect to publish later in 2023. The draft RIS includes details of the requirements to be delivered by National Highways in RIS3, along with the financial resources to be provided. The final RIS is due in late 2024.

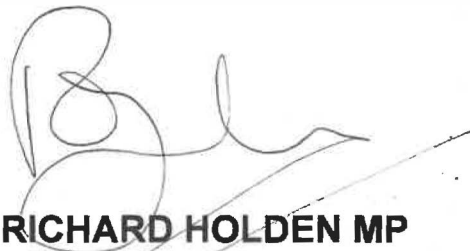
The launch of the consultation and SRN Initial Report is accompanied by the publication of National Highways' 20 Route Strategy Initial Overview Reports; the company's long-term strategic plan (Connecting the Country), looking ahead to 2050; and our analytical approach to developing and drawing together the evidence base that will underpin RIS3.

The Route Strategy process has been informed by extensive local and regional engagement, and the Initial Overview Reports have been an important resource in informing the Initial Report.

At the same time, National Highways will publish its first Environmental Sustainability Strategy (ESS). The ESS sets out National Highways' commitments towards the protection and enhancement of nature; carbon reduction; and support for community wellbeing up to 2050. The key message is that National Highways will not only mitigate the impact of its 4,500-mile network but actively ensure it can be used as a force for good. The consultation does not specifically seek views on the ESS, but does consider National Highways' approach to decarbonisation and environmental sustainability in RIS3.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of National Highways' Initial Report, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to the Transport Select Committee publishing its inquiry findings.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Holden', written over a diagonal line that extends from the bottom left towards the top right.

RICHARD HOLDEN MP

MINISTER FOR ROADS AND LOCAL TRANSPORT