



Department  
for Transport

Tom Tugendhat MBE MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton**  
Minister for Roads, Buses and Places

Great Minster House  
33 Horseferry Road  
London  
SW1P 4DR

Tel: 0300 330 3000  
E-Mail: [baroness.vere@dft.gov.uk](mailto:baroness.vere@dft.gov.uk)

Web site: [www.gov.uk/dft](http://www.gov.uk/dft)

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Dear Tom,

Thank you for joining the meeting on 16 June with colleagues to discuss the future of the A21 corridor. I undertook to clarify the position with respect to your proposal to add east-facing slip roads to the M25 at Junction 5.

I was grateful for your support for this potential scheme in the RIS2 consultation; it is positive that Members are engaged and are taking the time to advocate enhancements to support the network. This was one of the many credible candidate schemes for RIS2 which ultimately could not be included owing to the considerable competition for the finite amount of funding available. In that context, I know you will recognise the very significant investment we are making in strategic roads in and around Kent, including the Lower Thames Crossing and major improvements to the M20.

As RIS3 is developed, Highways England will revisit the performance of the entire A21 corridor and the needs of the communities therein through its Route Strategy process. I am sure you will actively engage with this process in respect of the Junction 5 slips, and with Transport for the South East as it establishes its view of the region's priorities. These processes will inform our decisions on where further enhancement work should be funded. Of course, and as discussed when we met, any such work will need to take full account of the environmental impacts given that both the A21 and the M25 run through Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

*Yours,  
Charlotte*

**BARONESS VERE OF NORBITON**