Rt. Hon Chris Grayling M.P.

Department for Transport,

Great Minster House,

33 Horseferry Road,

London,

SW1P 4DR

Date

Dear Minister,

Re: A358 Taunton to Southfields Dualling Scheme - Highways England Ltd

**“Taunton - A Garden Town Not a By-Pass Town”**

I write to you as a resident who will be directly affected by the proposed Highways England Ltd road improvement scheme. I have attended the Highways England exhibitions, spoken to members of the development team and read extensively about the current proposal. I write to express my grave concerns for the following reasons.

On at least two previous occasions this road scheme has been proposed and subsequently dropped. Firstly by the old DoT and secondly by The Highways Agency but on both occasions the announced route had been, what most local people considered a fair route, which would form a meaningful by-pass for the village of Henlade. On this round of consultations that route is not being considered.

The present proposal to route a new six kilometre dual carriageway to a new closed motorway Junction 25A, to the south of Taunton would be an unnecessary travesty. By reading the limited details supplied by Highways England the proposed scheme is possibly the least expensive but offers the lowest benefit to cost ratio and does not, as far as I can ascertain, fulfil any of the criteria set down by Government:

* The proposed route will not bring any economic benefit locally.
* The scheme will not markedly reduce local congestion, particularly through Henlade.
* It actually increases noise levels and accidents.
* The proposal will have a massive impact on the local environment, ancient woodlands, prime arable land and landscape.

Currently Highways England Ltd are consulting on only one route, the one they selected. It is not the route required by the District Council, requested by the County Council or desired by the population of the areas which will be forever changed by this scheme.

Would you please intervene at this early stage and ask Highways England Ltd re-evaluate their proposals, to engage meaningfully with the Local Authorities, local Parish Councils and residents. There is a solution to this problem and it can be solved, not by bullish confrontation but by considered, factual and well-presented consultation of the options, upon which we can all make a valued contribution.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely

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Your name and address here