

Letter of Support for the Four Villages Bypass on the A12 in Suffolk

Lord Marlesford DL,


April 19th 2021

Dear Lord Marlesford,

I have been in discussion with Richard Cooper, a member of your parish council on various issues concerning the A12 between Marlesford and Farnham, I am now writing to you as Chair of Marlesford Parish Council in my capacity as Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk and as one of our county's Inward Investment Ambassadors.

In summary I am fully supportive of resurrecting the proposals of the four villages bypass for several reasons as set out below:

1. Improved Road Safety

This particular stretch of this ancient highway has received no significant improvements in living memory and is very clearly not fit for purpose. It presents a significant danger to all road users, including pedestrians and cyclists. Keeping the traffic flowing on this major route is essential for the general well-being and prosperity of the county.

2. International Significance

The successful bid for Freeport East (based at Felixstowe and Harwich) has the potential to make a major contribution to the United Kingdom's future economic growth and prosperity. The A12 north of Ipswich is one of the most important routes servicing the Port of Felixstowe and it is arguable that without the four villages bypass the potential for maximising the economic benefit will be compromised.

3. East Coast Connectivity including Lowestoft

Many of the settlements on the East Anglian Coast have suffered from years of economic decline and deprivation, including Lowestoft which is Suffolk's second largest settlement. We all welcome the aspiration for rejuvenating our fishing industry post Brexit, but the port of Lowestoft is now an increasingly important offshore energy service and construction hub. As the UK moves towards delivering its laudable aim of net zero carbon emissions this port needs excellent road connections which the Four Village Bypass will help to deliver

4. Sizewell C

An early decision on Sizewell C is crucial and if this development does take place, I would find it inconceivable the bypass for four villages would not be a requisite component for the successful completion of this enormous national project. Provision of a Four Village Bypass is

necessary to alleviate the impact on local residents from increased HGV traffic associated with the proposed Sizewell C construction and other possible energy projects in East Suffolk.

5. Levelling Up Agenda

Like many areas in northern England, Suffolk is not a particularly wealthy county. The recent Hidden Needs report from the Suffolk Community Foundation contains a wealth of data as evidence regarding average income, low social mobility and below average educational attainment. As Police and Crime Commissioner I know at first hand there is a very strong correlation between high rates of deprivation and raised levels of crime, abuse, addiction and anti-social behaviour. As the Four Village Bypass will help improve prosperity, it is highly probable this will assist in reducing the demand for police resources as levels of economic activity increase in currently deprived areas. Improvements to the A12 will also help develop better access for our important coastal tourist industry that will result in more and better employment prospects especially for the younger generation. This must not be overlooked as the nation emerges from the devastating and tragic consequences of the pandemic. A Four Village Bypass will provide an important legacy post-Sizewell C construction as tourism helps to boost economic activity once Sizewell C construction ends.

6. Quality of Life Benefits

The traffic congestion and air pollution within these four villages is particularly challenging for local residents. This situation should be untenable in twenty first century Britain and without this investment further deterioration is highly likely. In all four villages residents live within feet of this hugely important commercial corridor.

I have discussed these points with senior officers at Suffolk Constabulary and they are all supportive of delivering the Four Village Bypass. Its provision will also enable better emergency services communication and speedier response in the fight against criminality and in the blue light services ability to keep residents in East Suffolk safe.

Therefore, I would urge an early and positive decision on implementing the Four Village Bypass construction.

With kind regards,



Tim Passmore

Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner