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for Transport

Rt Hon Andrew Murrison MP  
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From the Secretary of State  
**The Rt Hon Grant Shapps**

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27 January 2022

Dear Andrew,

Thank you for your letter of 14 January, following the correspondence you received from National Highways, regarding the scope of the A303 Phase 2 upgrade RIS3 Pipeline scheme.

I want to reassure you that Government remains committed to providing a high-quality connection to the South West, and we recognise improving the A303/A358 corridor is key to achieving this. Successive Road Investment Strategies have reflected the Government's commitment to upgrading the A303 corridor as a priority for improving connections between the South West and London and the South East. The delivery of the corridor is a part of a long-term aim to improve inter- and intra-regional connectivity, by providing a second, reliable and high-performing connection in addition to the M4 and the M5.

In that context, the existing A303 remains a key strategic route and we have no plans to change that status. Safety is, of course, a key priority across the network, so thank you for bringing to my attention your concerns around the Willoughby Hedge junction on the A303. I would encourage you to engage further with National Highways as to whether there are any issues specific to this location that may require attention, though of course any solution would have to be considered within the context of wider ambitions for long term improvements to the A303 as a strategic corridor. My Ministers and I of course remain at your disposal throughout this process.

Yours ever,

**Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP**  
**SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT**