



**UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE**

Sub-Department of  
Animal Behaviour

The Highways Agency

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme Public Consultation, April 2014**

The details of the Cambridge to Huntingdon A14 Improvement Scheme have only just been brought to our notice and give rise to serious concern with regard to the effect of traffic noise on research at the Cambridge University Sub-Department of Animal Behaviour in Madingley. The sources of noise that are of most concern are the slip roads to the west of Girton Junction, in particular their elevated components.

The Madingley site provides animal accommodation for the University School of Biological Sciences and research facilities for five University departments: Genetics; Pharmacology; Physiology, Development and Behaviour; Psychology; Zoology. The site contains two aviaries housing a colony of corvids which has been studied continuously for approximately 15 years. The colony is a unique resource for behavioural research, and is one of many that have contributed to the University's international reputation in this discipline. The Sub-Department of Animal Behaviour was established in 1950 by Professor W H Thorpe FRS, who chose the site partly because of its quiet environment: a feature essential for the pioneering research on birdsong conducted by Thorpe and his colleagues at the time. This research was largely responsible for the replacement of the concepts of instinct and learning by an interactive approach, with profound implications for the psychology of learning. The work has led to significantly revised views of human development.

Although no work on birdsong is currently being conducted at Madingley, that research area is very active and might easily be re-introduced. There is, however, other noise-sensitive research on the site at the moment. Of particular concern is the effect of traffic noise on current behavioural research on corvids at Madingley. The birds on the Madingley site are not infrequently disturbed, and research correspondingly disrupted, by traffic noise. If this noise were much greater, large research projects, supported by correspondingly large research grants, would be jeopardised.

When the expansion of the A428 past Madingley was planned, it was recognised that traffic noise would be a problem and in consequence a fence was erected and trees planted to shield the site from such noise. These measures were effective at the time, but would not protect research from increased traffic noise from the Girton Junction. We therefore request that measures be taken to ensure that the Cambridge to Huntingdon A14 Improvement Scheme does not result in traffic noise exceeding the

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current level. Measures that are likely to be effective include road surfacing techniques to minimise noise, acoustic shielding of appropriate parts of the Girton Junction, and increasing the height of the fence at the Madingley site combined with adjacent tree planting.

Yours sincerely,

DocuSigned by:  
  
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Sir Patrick Bateson FRS  
Professor Emeritus, University of Cambridge



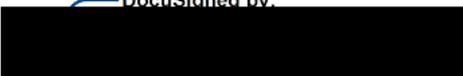
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