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Member of Parliament for South Cambridgeshire
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Tel: 0207 219 8089

Hamish Macloed
Director, MobileUK

Lucie Smith
Corporate Affairs and Marketing, Digital Mobile Spectrum Ltd

28th September 2020

Dear Hamish and Lucie,

Mobile phone signal in South Cambridgeshire

It was good to meet with you both earlier this month. Thank you for sharing your insights into the roll out of the Shared Rural Network. South Cambridgeshire is a largely rural constituency, but also the home of the UK's world-leading life sciences sector including four major research and development campuses. Partial not spots - where mobile phone users can only access some networks and not others - are a significant problem in many areas, meaning many people can't make a phone call when they need to. Our local scientists are creating the life-saving treatments of the future, but poor mobile signal means their communications are stuck the past.

The Cambridge life sciences cluster is at the forefront of the fight against COVID-19. The Wellcome Genome Campus, which has the world's largest collective genomics capacity on one site, is currently sequencing tens of thousands of SARS-CoV2 genomes, tracing different strains of the virus to allow rapid public health decision making and developing our understanding of the genetics of this disease.

Cambridge Biomedical Campus combines biomedical research, patient care and education on a single site. With more than 20,000 highly skilled workers (and growing rapidly), it is also home to the global headquarters of Astra Zeneca, which is at the forefront of the race to find a COVID 19 vaccine. The Cambridge Stem Cell Institute is collaborating internationally on COVID 19 research and the campus houses one of the UK's biggest COVID testing laboratories.

Babraham Research Campus plays a key role as a facility for start-up companies and is studying how cells communicate, how health is affected by genetic and environmental factors

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and how the immune system changes with age. Nearby Granta Park also brings together more than 30 life sciences companies.

Many of our life sciences workers are currently based at home. They need reliable mobile phone signal to stay in touch with colleagues and share information. Now, more than ever, it is vital that the mobile digital communication supports their essential work to fight COVID-19 and other devastating health conditions. It is our hope that the Shared Rural Network scheme will therefore prioritise South Cambridgeshire as a 'mission critical' centre for the UK's life sciences sector and a key driver of our economic recovery.

Yours sincerely,

Anthony Browne MP

cc **Matt Warman, Minister for Digital Infrastructure, DCMS**

Lord Bethell, Minister of Innovation, DHSC

Co-signatories:

Professor Sir Mike Stratton, Director Wellcome Sanger Institute, CEO Wellcome Genome Campus

Derek Jones, Chief Executive Babraham Bioscience Technologies, Babraham Research Campus

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