



# Department for **Transport**

**From the Secretary of State**

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Our Ref: MC/40145

**26 JUN 2012**

*Dear Boris,*

Thank you for your letter of 1 June 2012 setting out the case for designating the proposed Silvertown tunnel a Nationally Significant Infrastructure project.

Please find attached a signed Direction recording my decision to designate the proposed Silvertown tunnel and associated matters as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project. The reasons for the Direction are set out in the attached Annex.

*Best wishes,*



**JUSTINE GREENING**

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**DIRECTION BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE UNDER SECTION 35 OF THE PLANNING ACT 2008 RELATING TO THE SILVERTOWN TUNNEL DEVELOPMENT**

By letter to the Secretary of State received on 1st June 2012, the Mayor of London formally requested that the Secretary of State exercise the power vested in the Secretary of State under section 35 of the Planning Act 2008 ("the Act") to direct that the proposed development set out in the Mayor of London's letter and known as the Silvertown Tunnel, as well as any associated matters, be treated as development for which development consent is required.

The Secretary of State is satisfied that:

- the development does not currently fall within the definition of a "nationally significant infrastructure project" and therefore it is appropriate to consider use of the power in section 35; and
- the Mayor of London's request constitutes a "qualifying request" in accordance with section 35(10) of the Act.

The Secretary of State has made a decision within the primary deadline set out in section 35A(2) and wishes to convey that decision.

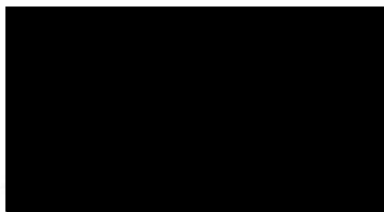
Having considered the details of the Silvertown Tunnel development set out in the request, the Secretary of State is of the view that this development by itself is nationally significant, for the reasons set out in the Annex below.

Accordingly, as the Secretary of State is satisfied that the proposed Silvertown Tunnel development is nationally significant, THE SECRETARY OF STATE DIRECTS that development, together with any matters associated with it, is to be treated as development for which development consent is required.

In addition, the Secretary of State further directs that any proposed application in relation to the Silvertown Tunnel development is to be treated as a proposed application for which development consent is required.

This direction is given without prejudice to the Secretary of State's consideration of any application for development consent which is made in relation to the Silvertown Tunnel development.

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State



*Caroline Wood*  
*Deputy Director: London & Olympics, Department for Transport*  
25 June 2012

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## ANNEX

### REASONS FOR THE DECISION TO ISSUE THE DIRECTION

The Secretary of State is of the opinion that the Silvertown Tunnel is of national significance for the following reasons:

1. London as an engine for economic growth nationally

The connection between the productivity and effectiveness of London and the corresponding economic wellbeing of the country is well established. The fact that the proposed development is intended to have a significant impact on reducing both current and forecast congestion in London means it may have a corresponding impact on the country as a whole.

2. The projected growth of London

London is forecast to grow, a large proportion of which will be in the East of London. As such The London Plan has designated both Greenwich Peninsula and Royal Docks as Opportunity Areas. Consequently the amount of traffic is also forecast to increase significantly. Current infrastructure is likely to be unable to absorb this additional capacity leading to even greater congestion. Given the position of London as an economic driver nationally any decrease in efficiency in London's transport network may have a consequential detrimental impact nationally. The proposed development is in part intended to address that increased congestion.

3. Current congestion at the Blackwall Tunnel is having a direct impact on the strategic road network

The Blackwall Tunnel is currently suffering from severe congestion leading to delays for traffic entering and exiting the tunnel. Due to congestion traffic is diverting to other crossings which can have detrimental affects on both the Dartford Crossing and the M25, which are part of the Strategic Road Network. The proposed development is intended in part to alleviate the strain on the Blackwall Tunnel and therefore may remove the current impact on the strategic road network.

4. The size and nature of the Silvertown Tunnel and comparison to other NSIPS

The proposed development is of a substantial size, both in terms of engineering scope and financial commitment. It is consistent with a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), in size and scale and indeed, in many cases may be considerably larger than many NSIPS. The reason it is not a NSIP is solely the identity of the local authority. The Infrastructure Planning Commission has already received applications relating to local highways which are nonetheless nationally significant. For example, the Heysham to M6 Link Scheme promoted by Lancashire County Council, which principally comprises the construction of a new dual carriageway road 4.8km in length which connects to the M6.