

Lower Thames Crossing

5.1 Consultation Report

Appendix U

Traverse's summary reports of consultation responses

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Lower Thames Crossing

5.1 Consultation Report

Appendix U Traverse's summary reports of consultation responses

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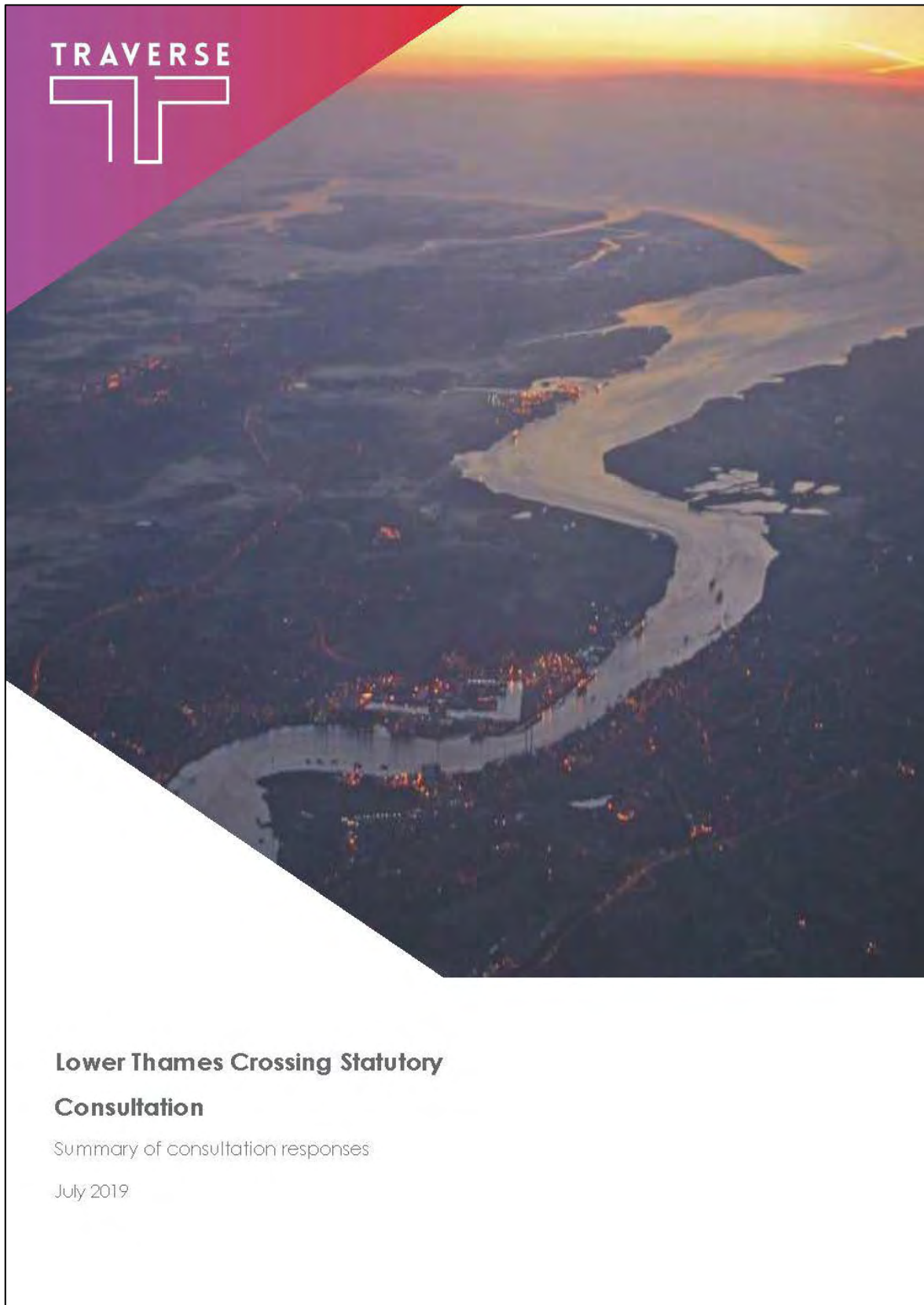
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Appendix U Summary reports of responses to 2018 Statutory Consultation and the Lower Thames Crossing Project Update

- U.1.1 In advance of the 2018 Statutory Consultation, the Applicant commissioned Traverse, an independent third-party agency that specialises in the analysis and reporting of consultation responses. Traverse was asked to provide a detailed report that set out and described the key themes and issues which had been raised in the consultation responses. The purpose of the report is to provide an accessible summary of the responses, in a format that describes in a series of theme-based chapters the range of issues raised by consultees, providing examples and quotes to provide further insights. It is intended to complement the tabular format used in Chapter 11 of the Consultation Report.
- U.1.2 Traverse was also asked to provide an executive summary report based on its detailed summary report. The executive summary report was published by the Applicant in July 2019 at the same time that the Applicant published its own Lower Thames Crossing Project Update.
- U.1.3 Copies of the following three documents are included within this appendix:
- a. The detailed summary report of responses to Statutory Consultation, produced by Traverse
 - b. Executive summary report of responses to Statutory Consultation, produced by Traverse
 - c. Lower Thames Crossing Project Update, produced by the Applicant

Plate U.1 Detailed summary report of responses to Statutory Consultation





Client	Cascade
Title	Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation
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Glossary

TERM	DESCRIPTION
<i>Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)</i>	An area of countryside designated by a government agency as having natural features of exceptional beauty and therefore given a protected status.
<i>Cut and cover</i>	A construction method using excavation equipment to dig a large trench or rectangular hole in the ground which is then covered by a concrete deck.
<i>Development Consent Order (DCO)</i>	The means of obtaining permission for developments categorised as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP).
<i>Embankment</i>	A wall of earth or stones to support a road, or to stop water from flooding an area.
<i>Green bridge</i>	A bridge that has landscaped features added to improve its appearance and to maintain or link habitats.
<i>Ramsar site</i>	A wetland site designated to be of international importance under the Ramsar Convention.
<i>Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)</i>	A formal conservation designation for an area that is of particular interest to science due to the rare species of fauna or flora it contains or important geological or physiological features that may lie in its boundaries.
<i>Special Protection Area (SPA)</i>	Strictly protected sites classified for rare and vulnerable birds and for regularly occurring migratory species.
<i>Viaduct</i>	An elevated road bridge supported by pillars.



1. Introduction and methodology

1.1. About the consultation

1.1.1. Background

In 2009, the Department for Transport looked at five potential locations for an additional crossing at the Thames with the aim to alleviate growing traffic congestion at the existing Dartford Crossing.

These five potential locations were subsequently narrowed down to three and following a comprehensive study and public consultation in 2012, the options were reduced to two – A and C.

Highways England assessed the economic, environmental, traffic and community impacts of the two options and recommended Option C as the one offering the greatest benefits. In 2017, after consulting with the public and reviewing the evidence, the Secretary of State for Transport announced that the preferred route would be a tunnel under the Thames east of Gravesend and Tilbury.

Following the announcement, Highways England launched a statutory consultation which ran between 10 October 2018 and 20 December 2018.

This report summarises the feedback received during this consultation by providing an overview of the range of issues raised by respondents. It should be read in conjunction with the tabular report included in the Consultation Report produced by Highways England as part of its application to the Planning Inspectorate for a Development Consent Order.

1.1.2. The consultation process

The purpose of the consultation was to give members of the public, people with interest in land and statutory bodies the opportunity to comment on the preferred route before Highways England makes a Development Consent Order application to the Planning Inspectorate to build a crossing at Option C.

This consultation was managed by Highways England. Traverse, an independent employee-owned research and consultation organisation, was commissioned to process, analyse and summarise all consultation responses.

As part of its statutory consultation, Highways England provided a number of ways for people to find out about the LTC proposals. These included:

- 25 Public Information Events, held at community venues and attended by specialist Highways England staff;
- 30 events using a Mobile Information Centre, where the LTC community team and specialist staff answered questions posed by visitors;
- 9 Awareness Events in locations across the wider Kent, Thurrock and Essex area; and
- a customer service team operating phone lines and an email account



Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation: Summary of consultation responses

1.2. Participation

1.2.1. Number of responses

In total, excluding null responses¹, this consultation received 28,493 responses. Table 1 shows a breakdown of the types of responses received.

We distinguished between two types of campaign responses: **campaign responses without variations** (where the respondent had not changed any of the provided text); and **campaign responses with variations** (where the campaign text had been modified by making additional comments).

Table 1: Breakdown by response type

Representation type	Count
Email/letter	221
Response form: online	25,210
Response form: hardcopy	918
Response form: email	27
Campaign	1,151
Campaign with variations	966
TOTAL	28,493

1.2.2. Responses by consultee type

For the purpose of reporting, all responses were assigned a stakeholder category in line with the requirements for a statutory consultation. The categories are:

- Statutory bodies under S42(1)(a) of the Planning Act
- Marine Management Organisation under S42(1)(a)(a) of the Planning Act
- Local Authorities under S42(1)(b) of the Planning Act
- People with an interest in land (PILs) under S42(1)(d) of the Planning Act
- Member of the public and other non-prescribed organisations under S47 and S48 of the Planning Act.

¹ Null responses comprised: general enquiries; duplicate submissions; blank submissions; or submissions which were not obviously intended as consultation responses, such as requests for consultation documentation



Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation: Summary of consultation responses

The table below indicates the number of responses received for each category.

Table 2: Breakdown by consultee type

Consultee Type	Count
S42(1)(b) - Prescribed	26
S42(1)(a)(a) - Prescribed	1
S42(1)(a) - Prescribed	28
S42(1)(d) - PILs	259
S47 and S48 - Public	28,179
TOTAL	28,493

1.2.3. Campaign responses

The Woodland Trust organised an email campaign with a pre-printed message and a space for respondents to add their own comments. The pre-printed message read:

"Protect ancient woods and veteran trees!
I consider that the current Lower Thames Crossing proposal which puts 13 ancient woods and 10 veteran trees at risk of damage or destruction is simply unacceptable.
These are highly valuable habitats which are host to an array of rare and threatened plants and wildlife. Once these irreplaceable habitats are gone, they cannot be recreated.
I believe that the project in its current form is unsound and that Highways England needs to be committed to protecting the ancient woods and veteran trees within the development boundary.
It is imperative that these woods and trees are not subject to damage, loss or deterioration from the proposals."

In total, the consultation received 2,117 responses via this channel.

1.2.4. Geographical distribution of responses

Figure 1 shows where responses were received from, based on UK postcodes provided by respondents. Responses without valid UK postcodes are not included in this map.



Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation: Summary of consultation responses

Figure 1: Geographical distribution of responses

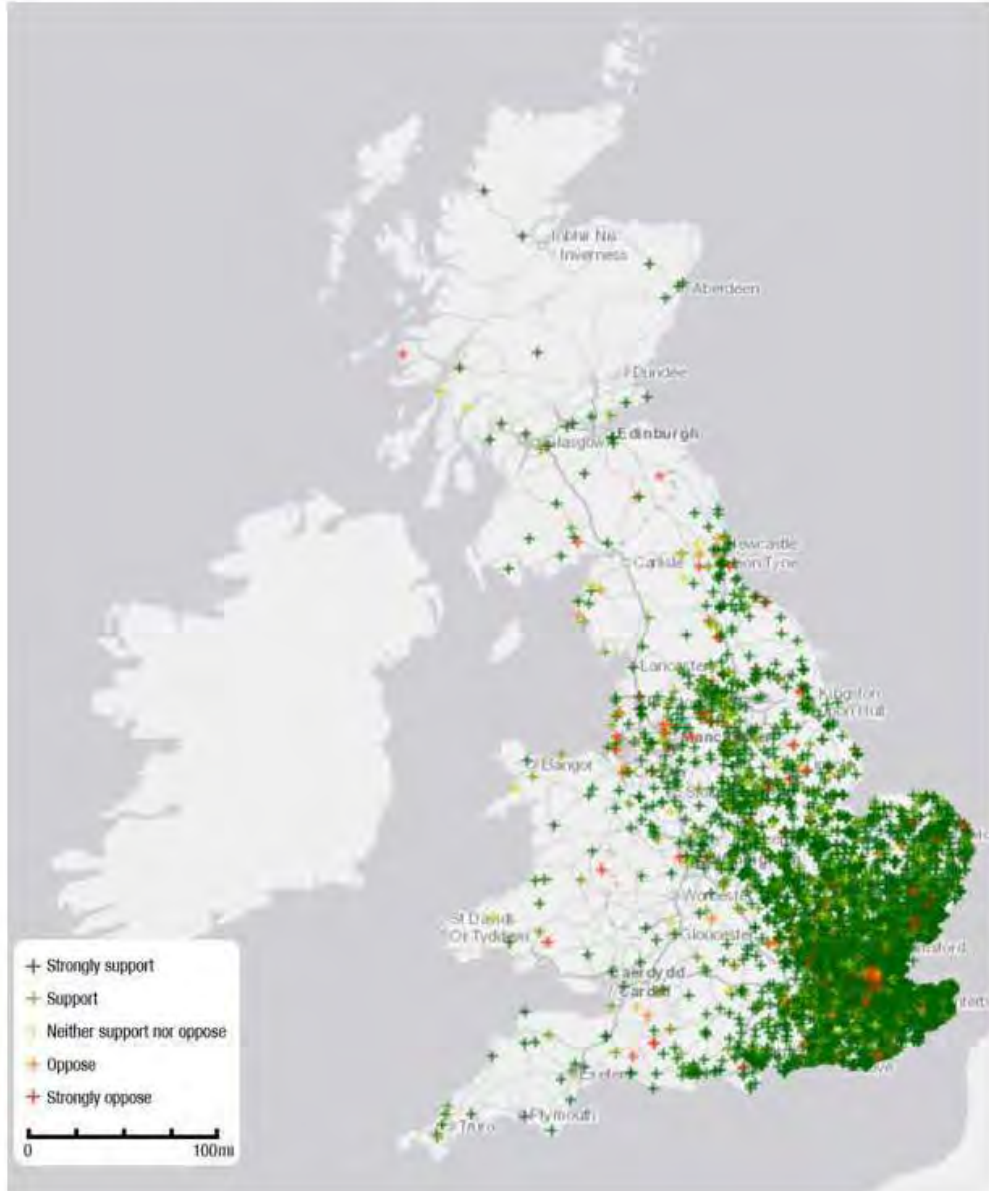


Figures 2 and 3 show how views on the need case (Q1 a of the questionnaire) and the preferred route for the Lower Thames Crossing (Q2a of the questionnaire) differed across the country. The maps only show responses where respondents have provided their postcode and have answered the relevant closed question.



Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation: Summary of consultation responses

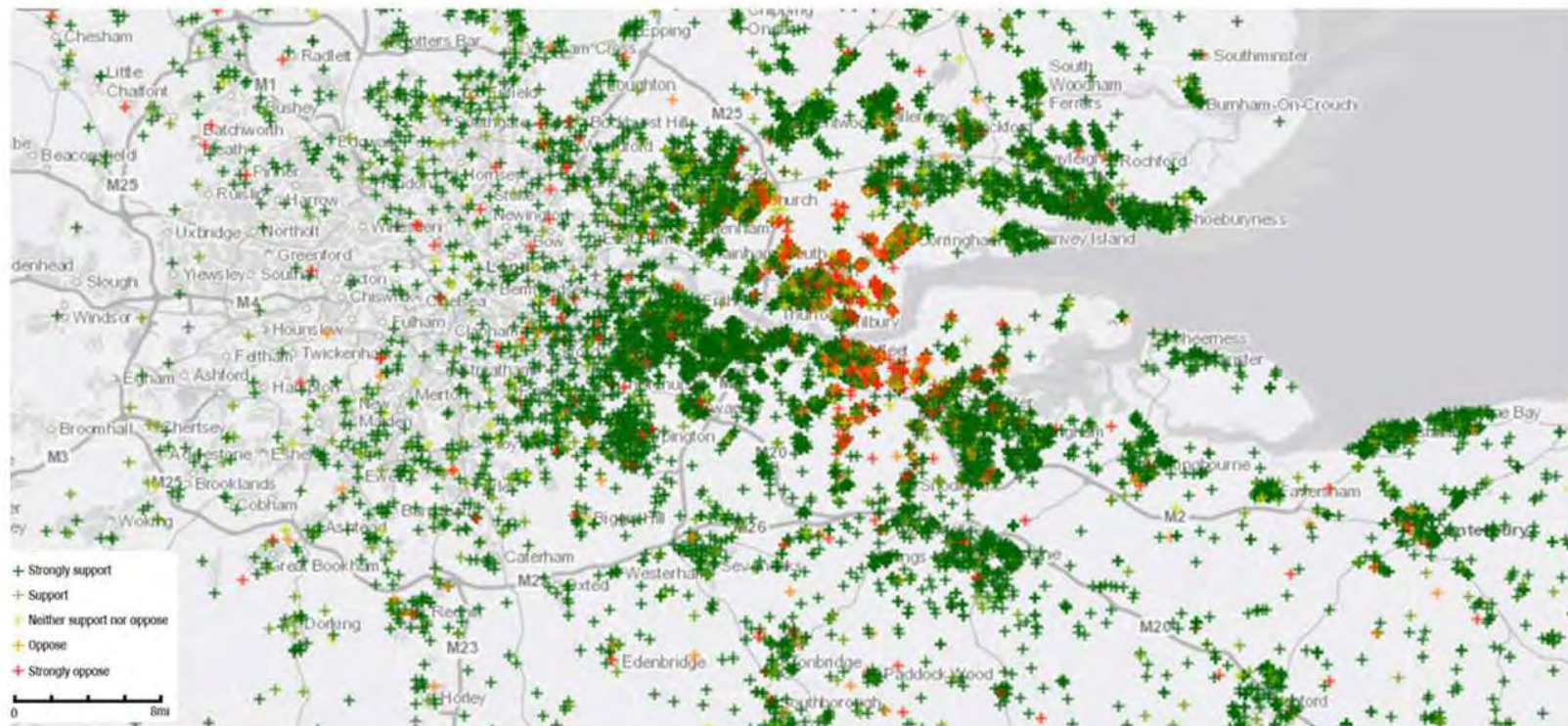
Figure 2: Views on the need case: nationwide view





Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation: Summary of consultation responses

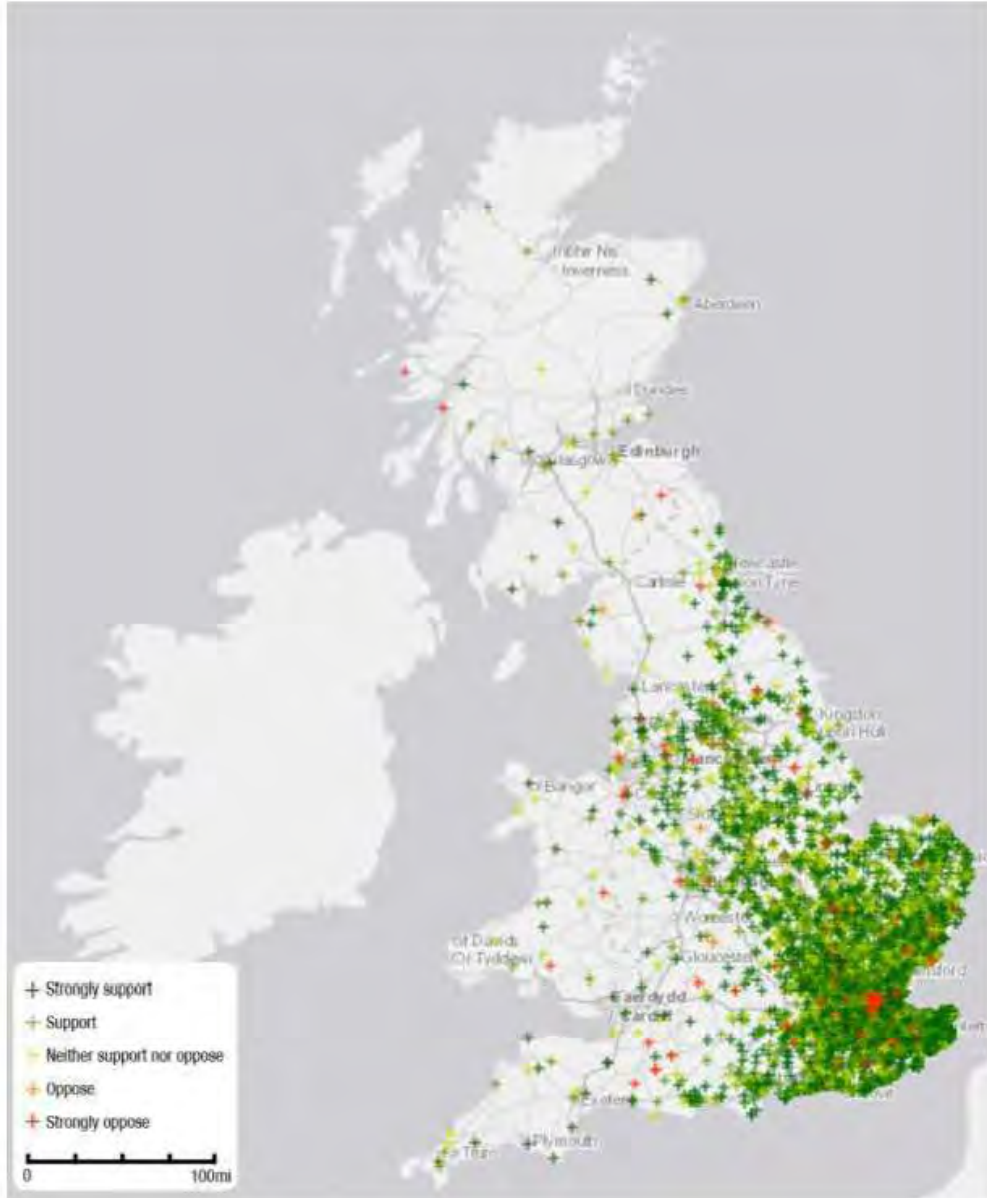
Figure 3: Views on the need case: regional view (near the proposed location for the LTC)





Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation: Summary of consultation responses

Figure 4: Views on the preferred route: nationwide view





Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation: Summary of consultation responses

Figure 5: Views on the preferred route: regional view (near the proposed location for the LTC)





1.3. Receipt of responses

Representations were received in several formats, including letters, emails, and hard copy feedback forms. Comments were also submitted through an online feedback form hosted on the Lower Thames Crossing's project website.

At the outset of data processing, each response was assigned a unique reference number and saved with that number as its file name. Responses, other than those submitted through the online form, were then scanned and transcribed verbatim into an analysis database, using editors' notes for non-textual data such as photos, videos and maps. Online responses were imported directly into the analysis database.

The consultation period ended at 11.59 pm on 20 December 2018 and the online form was switched off at this time.

To make allowance for postal or email delivery delays, it was agreed that we would accept:

- emails received up to 21st December; and
- responses received via the Freepost with a postmark date of up to 24 December.

The decision whether to accept responses received after the cut-off point was considered by Highways England on a case by case basis. All late responses were passed onto the project team for review.

1.4. Approach to analysis

Traverse, as a specialist data analysis agency, produced a detailed list of codes which describes the issues raised by respondents to the consultation. These codes were grouped into themes to aid the analysis process. This list, referred to as a coding framework, was updated iteratively to reflect new issues emerging from the responses received. The table below shows an extract that illustrates the approach to developing codes.

The application of a code to part of a response was done by highlighting the relevant text and recording the selection. A single submission could receive multiple codes and codes were applied to all text within responses.

Table 3: Extract from the coding framework

Question area	Sentiment	Topic	Specific point	Final code	Explanation
Need case (NE)	Support	Transport	Quicker journey	NE – Support – Tran – quicker journey	The need case is supported because the LTC would lead to quicker journeys



Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation: Summary of consultation responses

	Oppose	Transport	Congestion (worsen)	NE – Oppose – Tran – congestions (worsen)	The need case is opposed because the LTC would make congestion worse
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1.5. Approach to reporting

1.5.1. Reading the report

This report aims to provide a summary of the responses to the Lower Thames Crossing's statutory consultation, based on the analysis carried out by Traverse. The summary is accompanied by charts providing an overview of responses to the closed questions. The narrative section of this report does not reflect all points made by all respondents but provides an overview of the issues raised. For a full list of the issues raised during the consultation, please refer to the tabular report included in the Consultation Report produced by Highways England as part of its application to the Planning Inspectorate for a Development Consent Order.

The presentation of the analysis is organised thematically and is not guided by where the comment was made. For example, if a respondent discusses the need case for the Lower Thames Crossing but in a response to question 12 'Utilities', the comment would be summarised and included in the chapter covering the need case.

1.5.2. Numbers in the report

Charts included in this report should be interpreted with care as they only present the views of those respondents who answered a given closed question from the consultation questionnaire as opposed to all respondents to the consultation.

Numbers are used sparingly throughout the narrative, usually at the start of each analysis chapter so that the reader has a general sense of scale. It is important to note that a consultation differs from a representative survey and that numbers should be considered with great caution, as they only apply to those who chose to respond to the consultation. Therefore, the numbers are not necessarily a reflection of the views of the local or wider population and should not be treated as such.

Throughout the report we have used quantifiers (e.g. 'a few' and 'most') when describing issues raised by respondents. These notions are indicative only and do not express clearly defined ranges of number or percentage. They are used to give a general indication of the frequency with which an issue has been raised by respondents. The table below shows the quantifiers used throughout the report.



- 
- All
 - The majority /most
 - Many
 - Some
 - A few

1.5.3. *Structure of the report*

Chapter 2 includes summaries of the feedback of the 55 consultees prescribed under section 42(1) (a)-(c) who responded to the consultation.

Chapters 3 to 18 present a summary of our analysis structured according to the 16 topic areas included in the questionnaire. Each chapter is split according to consultee type, with comments made by members of the public and other non-prescribed consultees summarised first followed by the feedback received from people with interest in land (PILs).

Appendix A provides a summary of the demographic questions asked as part of the equality and diversity section of the questionnaire.

Appendix B provides a list of all participating organisations.

1.6. *Quality assurance*

Traverse has a series of quality assurance (QA) procedures in place at different steps of the data entry and analysis stages to ensure that responses are accurately captured and analysed.

At the data entry and analysis stage, a sample of the work is inspected by a member of staff and if a series of errors are found, an increased proportion of the work is reviewed.

At the analysis stage, QA procedures are also based on regular team meetings and updates to discuss the process and compare working notes to ensure a consistent and accurate approach is taken by each analyst.

All of our analysis was carried out by people, therefore, despite thorough processes to ensure correct understanding and consistency in analysis as much as possible, there will always be an element of individuals' editorial judgement when reporting on and interpreting the data.



Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation: Summary of consultation responses

2. Representations received from prescribed consultees

This consultation received responses from 55 consultees prescribed under section 42(1)(a)-(c) and the full list is provided in the table below.

In this chapter, we have included a short summary of each response.

Consultee	Category
Anglian Water	S42(1)(a)
Ashford Borough Council	S42(1)(b)
Basildon Borough Council	S42(1)(b)
Braintree District Council	S42(1)(b)
Brentwood Borough Council	S42(1)(b)
Cadent Gas Ltd	S42(1)(a)
Canterbury City Council	S42(1)(b)
Chelmsford City Council	S42(1)(b)
Cobham Parish Council	S42(1)(a)
Colchester Borough Council	S42(1)(b)
Dartford Borough Council	S42(1)(b)
Dover District Council	S42(1)(b)
Environment Agency	S42(1)(a)
ESP Utilities Group Ltd - ES Pipelines Ltd	S42(1)(a)
Essex County Council	S42(1)(b)
Essex County Fire & Rescue Service	S42(1)(a)
Essex Police	S42(1)(a)
Folkestone & Hythe District Council	S42(1)(b)
Forest Enterprise - part of Forestry Commission England	S42(1)(a)
Forestry Commission England South East & London Area Office	S42(1)(a)
Gravesham Borough Council	S42(1)(b)
Greater London Authority	S42(1)(b)
Harlow Council	S42(1)(b)
Health and Safety Executive (HSE)	S42(1)(a)
Higham Parish Council	S42(1)(a)
Historic England	S42(1)(a)
HS1 Limited	S42(1)(a)
Kent County Council	S42(1)(b)
Kent Downs AONB Unit	S42(1)(a)
Kent Police	S42(1)(a)
London Borough of Bexley	S42(1)(b)
London Borough of Havering	S42(1)(b)
London Borough of Redbridge	S42(1)(b)
Maidstone Borough Council	S42(1)(b)
Marine Management Organisation	S42(1)(aa)
Medway Council	S42(1)(b)
National Grid	S42(1)(a)
Natural England	S42(1)(a)



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Network Rail	S42(1)(a)
Northumbrian Water (Essex & Suffolk Water operating area)	S42(1)(a)
Office for Nuclear Regulation	S42(1)(a)
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex	S42(1)(a)
Port of London Authority	S42(1)(a)
Port of Tilbury London Limited	S42(1)(a)
Public Health England	S42(1)(a)
Royal Mail Group Limited	S42(1)(a)
RWE Generation UK plc	S42(1)(a)
Shorne Parish Council	S42(1)(a)
Southend-on-Sea Borough Council	S42(1)(b)
Suffolk County Council	S42(1)(b)
Swale Borough Council	S42(1)(b)
Thanet District Council	S42(1)(b)
Thurrock Council	S42(1)(b)
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	S42(1)(b)
Transport for London	S42(1)(a)



Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation: Summary of consultation responses

Anglian Water

Anglian Water states that there are existing sewers within the boundary of the site north of the river, which they say are critical to the company's ability to carry out their duty as a statutory sewerage undertaker. They note that the proposed route will be refined following future engagement with utility companies. They add that the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) refers to the need for diversions to overhead electricity lines, but makes no mention of sewers; the company claims however that Highways England has said that it does expect diversions of existing sewers.

The company believes that the Draft DCO should include provisions to protect sewerage infrastructure and comply with relevant regulations. They include recommended wording for these provisions in their response, stating that they are currently in discussion with Highways England on this wording. Anglian Water requests that agreement on the wording be reached prior to DCO submission.

The company asks that the Flood Risk Assessment, prepared as part of the Environmental Statement, considers the risk of flooding from all sources, including sewers. They ask that Highways England consults with them on an effective drainage strategy if foul and surface water management for the site during the construction phase will make use of their assets.

The company expects further discussions with Highways England before DCO submission if there is a need to obtain possession of any land in its ownership.

Ashford Borough Council

Ashford Borough Council "strongly reiterates its support for the Lower Thames Crossing project", which they say will improve connectivity to and from Kent, mitigating the effect of disruptions at the Dartford Crossing. The Council reaffirms its support for the preferred route, while requesting that the government includes "substantial provision of overnight lorry parking" within the scheme.

The Council additionally urges the Government to look strategically at improving the wider road network in Kent. They add this would maximise the benefits of the proposed crossing and improve freight flow in the area. The Council refers to specific roads that they believe should be considered for improvements, including the A229, the A249, and the M2/A2 corridor down to Dover.

Basildon Borough Council

Basildon Borough Council emphasises that their preference in response to the Route Options consultation 2016 was Route 4.

The Council states that they "strongly support the need case" for Lower Thames Crossing. They claim that the proposed crossing will increase connectivity in the area, which they say will lead to economic benefits, including opportunities for training and jobs during construction, as well as highlighting STEM careers to local young people and students.



Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation: Summary of consultation responses

The Council welcomes the most recent Lower Thames Area Model (LTAM) for traffic forecasting, noting however that only the high growth scenario includes “reasonably foreseeable” development schemes. They query the assumptions made in the LTAM about local housing growth and its impact on highway usage, adding that the low and high growth scenarios should reflect the potential increase in housing supply through local development plans. The Council argues that there may therefore be a need for improvements to the local road network, including the A127, A130 and particularly the A13. They request that Highways England commits to investment in the local road network to mitigate the negative impact resulting from the crossing.

The Council states that the environmental documentation provided for the consultation demonstrates that changes have been made to the scheme to reduce its potential environmental impact. They acknowledge that an assessment of air quality effects will be undertaken as part of a more detailed Environmental Statement in the future, and request that Highways England mitigates the negative effects of air and noise pollution, and vibrations caused by traffic.

The Council claims that Highways England has not included a specific economic assessment of how the proposed crossing could impact on its plans for economic growth, although they recognise that the consultation materials provide details of economic benefits of the scheme. The Council suggests that some of these economic benefits would align with the Council's own Economic Development Policy, using Lower Thames Crossing's volunteer STEM ambassadors as an example. They, however, express concern that by improving access to Kent, the crossing could change the borough's land economy which would contradict the Economic Development Policy for the area. The Council emphasises that they are keen to work with Highways England to ensure that the proposed scheme benefits local businesses and communities. They also note their own role in understanding the potential impact of the crossing in updating their own economic forecasting.

Braintree District Council

Braintree District Council “fully supports Lower Thames Crossing and the response sent on behalf of Essex County Council”. They believe that improved infrastructure in the South East would support economic growth in the Council's area.

Brentwood Borough Council

Brentwood Borough Council “strongly agrees with the need case” for Lower Thames Crossing, claiming that the Dartford Crossing is congested, causing delays that impact on the local economy. The Council claims however that a wider infrastructure strategy is necessary, which could include considerations of additional Thames crossings. They also suggest that the planning for the proposed crossing should involve collaboration with other



Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation: Summary of consultation responses

transport improvement projects in the area.

The Council “strongly opposes the proposed route north of the river”, specifically the proposals at M25 junction 29, which the Council believes would impact on plans for new employment land at an adjacent site. The Council argues that the delivery of this land at Brentwood Enterprise Park is “critical to the creation of new jobs in the Borough”. They also suggest an alternative route for temporary access to the site during construction than the route included in the proposals. The Council states that these issues have been raised with Highways England previously, and requests further engagement so their objection can be resolved.

The Council objects to the proposals for connections north of the crossing and requests further engagement between Highways England and the Association of South Essex Local Authorities. The Council describes the lack of new junctions in Thurrock as a “missed opportunity” for the proposals to align with government objectives for more housing and jobs, as they believe that improved transport links can promote economic growth.

The Council “supports the view that the proposed crossing would improve traffic conditions on the road network nearby”. While they express support for the modelling undertaken, they request further engagement to ensure that the modelling and the Brentwood Transport Assessment are consistent.

Cadent Gas Ltd

Cadent Gas Ltd requires protection of assets in close proximity to the proposed development, including compliance with relevant standards for such works. Their response refers to multiple pipelines and associated equipment and installations near the proposed scheme, noting that there may be other apparatus present that are not shown on plans.

Cadent’s response emphasises that they require notice of any aspects of the scheme that would impact on their apparatus, including any diversions required, with rights to access their apparatus to be included within the Terms of the Development Consent Order. They additionally refer to the potential need for “appropriate protection and further discussion” where the scheme interferes with their assets.

Cadent includes a set of issues for consideration in relation to any future works near their pipeline, including details of required practice to ensure safety of works near pipelines, as well as instructions for pipeline crossings and new service crossings.

Canterbury City Council

Canterbury City Council considers that Lower Thames Crossing will improve journey times between east Kent and areas north of the Thames, facilitating future economic growth in the east Kent area.

They claim however that additional road network improvements are required, specifically on the A2/M2 corridor. The Council believes that the positive effects of the proposed crossing will not be realised if these



Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation: Summary of consultation responses

improvements are not implemented, with increased traffic in the area potentially having a negative effect on the local economy. The Council expresses concern that drivers seeking to avoid the increased traffic might choose inappropriate alternative routes, for example using country roads or driving through Canterbury, with attendant safety risks and congestion. They request that Dover port traffic be split between the M20/A20 and M2/A2, and include a quotation from the Kent Local Transport Plan on the upgrades that they believe would be required in order to deliver this split. The Council states that they would welcome discussion on these proposals with Highways England.

Chelmsford City Council

Chelmsford City Council “agrees with the need case” for the Lower Thames Crossing, claiming that the crossing could improve the local economy by enabling improved connectivity between the north and south of the Thames. The Council claims that there are currently significant congestion problems at the Dartford Crossing, and says that Lower Thames Crossing will improve traffic flow on the local road network.

Cobham Parish Council

Cobham Parish Council “agrees with the need case” for the Lower Thames Crossing, while “strongly opposing the preferred route”, expressing their preference for an additional crossing that would use the infrastructure at Dartford. They comment on aspects of the scheme south of the river, supporting the removal of the A226 junction, and the extension of the tunnel south of that road, but “strongly opposing the proposals for the M2/A2 junction”. The Council argues instead for an alternative route from M2 Junction 1 that would pass between Shome and Higham. They also “strongly oppose” the view that the proposed crossing would improve traffic conditions locally, challenging the lack of additional traffic forecasted for Sole Street, and calling for an independent survey of Cobham, Sole Street and Meopham. The response lists features of specific local roads that the Council believes make them unsuitable for increased traffic, including sharp turns, and narrow road width.

The Council expresses views on other topics relating to the proposals. They support the proposals for public rights of way, asking that other opportunities for rights of way, including links into local lanes, should be reviewed. They also voice their support for all measures to ensure that the environment is protected, and comment that most of the land boundaries required by the scheme “seem sensible”. The Council agrees that the charges for using the proposed crossing should be in line with the current charge at Dartford Crossing, and requests a discount scheme for local residents. They support the plans for construction of the crossing, adding that quiet road surfaces should be used, and that removal of materials by river should be used where possible. If pylons are to be moved, the Council would prefer that they be kept away from properties, and that power cables should be kept underground so as to mitigate their visual impact.



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Colchester Borough Council

Colchester Borough Council “agrees with the need case” for the Lower Thames Crossing, stating that the improved connectivity will provide opportunities for economic growth regionally. The Council also requests investment in the Strategic Road Network in Essex and the South East. They support the preferred route, referring specifically to their support for the proposed A13 junction.

Dartford Council

Dartford Council highlights the high congestion levels at Dartford Crossing, which, they say, are caused by a combination of continuously increasing demand and dated infrastructure which poses limitations on Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV). The Council “strongly supports” the need case for Lower Thames Crossing as they believe it will improve traffic conditions in the area and on the wider transport network, which in turn would stimulate economic growth locally and nationally and improve residents’ wellbeing. They acknowledge that some environmental impact would be inevitable but ask for this to be considered within the context of the wider benefits of the scheme such as improved air quality and reduced noise pollution.

The Council “strongly agrees” with the preferred route location, saying that it will increase the connectivity between mainland Europe and the distribution centers in the Midlands and the North, which would be particularly attractive to long-distance freight traffic. The Council also argues that locating the new crossing at a sufficient distance from the existing one would provide a reliable alternative in case of incidents.

The Council is pleased overall with the proposed crossing and route south of the river but would welcome further improvements on the wider network, particularly around the link between M20 and M2 at A229. The Council emphasises that this area would see increased levels of traffic as a result of the new crossing and urges Highways England to undertake further work in this regard immediately to ensure planning and construction is well advanced by the time the Lower Thames Crossing opens. Related to this, the Council would like to see more funding allocated to road improvements in and around Dartford Crossing.

The Council supports the proposed junction between Lower Thames Crossing and M2/A2 but expresses disappointment that no link has been proposed from Lower Thames Crossing onto the A13 westbound and towards the Port of Tilbury. They add that this will affect the connectivity between Kent and Essex, leading to longer journey times and reduced economic benefits.

In terms of charges for using the new crossing, Dartford Council supports the proposals but suggests that more should be done to encourage drivers to use the new crossing, especially freight vehicle drivers from abroad who may be unaware of it. To help with this, they suggest Highways England should introduce an easy payment system at the ports, alongside clear signage and promotion.



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The Council stresses the importance of Highways England maintaining a cooperative relationship with the different local authorities as the scheme progresses, noting that the traffic forecasts have been conducted before the Local Plans have been finalised and that there are a number of planned Strategic Road Networks projects that Highways England should take into account. The Council adds that this will provide Highways England with a more accurate understanding of the extent of future traffic growth and of the full impacts of Lower Thames Crossing on the surrounding road network.

Dover District Council

Dover District Council is “fully supportive of the proposed Lower Thames Crossing”, agreeing that it will improve journey times, reduce reliance on Dartford Crossing and ease congestion. They believe the crossing will boost Kent’s economy by attracting developers and investors and improving accessibility.

Dover District Council’s main concerns relate to the impact on the local road network, which the Council says is of both local and national significance due to the high volumes of freight that utilise Dover Port. The Council commissioned WSP Consulting to undertake a high-level analysis of the impacts of the Lower Thames Crossing (LTC) on Dover, using network data provided to them from Highways England. The analysis indicated that the LTC traffic model has ‘significantly underestimated’ traffic volumes in the Dover area.

Locations of particular concern were Brenley Corner, where their analysis showed 5% additional traffic flow as a result of the LTC, and the A2, Whitfield roundabout and Duke of York’s roundabout where analysis showed 10% additional traffic flow. These findings have reduced the Council’s confidence in the LTC traffic flow estimates. The Council offers to share the results of this analysis with Highways England and includes a technical note from WSP Consultants which provides more detail on the findings.

The Council requests infrastructure upgrades to accommodate the additional traffic flow, namely:

- upgrading M2 J7 at Brenley Corner to improve flows between the A2 and M2;
- dualling the single carriageway on the A2 from Lydden through to the Port of Dover;
- expanding the M2 to three lanes along its length, or at a minimum between Junctions 4 and 5;
- traffic relieving measures at Whitfield and Duke of York’s roundabouts; and
- more lorry parking facilities along the M2 and M20 corridors to prevent lorry parking on the network causing congestion issues.

The Council considers dualling of the parts of the A2 single carriageway to be of most importance given the heavy use of the road in recent years, the



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rising use of the connecting road A256, and the projected additional flow on the A2 due to the LTC. They express concern about a bottleneck arising on the A2 corridor as the road narrows from three lanes to two and then one, causing major congestion and delays to journey times of tourists and freight traffic.

The Council also suggests that Brenley Corner and the A2/M2 are incorporated into the Government's Road Investment Strategy 2 (RIS2) programme.

While the consultation event held in Dover was welcomed, the Council was disappointed that the information provided did not include details of the impacts of the scheme on the Dover road network, or any solutions or possible funding for highway improvements at the areas above.

Environment Agency

The Environment Agency's response relates primarily to the environmental impacts outlined in the Lower Thames Crossing Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR). Overall, the Environment Agency says that the PEIR does not contain enough information, including environmental survey and baseline data to enable it to support the application in its current state.

The Environment Agency "would expect a scheme of this scale and importance to be providing more environmental improvement, benefit and legacy than is shown in the current designs". They add that the proposed measures for environmental protection and enhancement are not in keeping with the large scale of the scheme and the length of time needed for construction. The Environment Agency asks that the proposals take account of UK Climate Projections 2018 (UKCP18) targets and incorporate the potential to be retrofitted in line with future information and flood protection changes, in order to provide better safeguarding for the future.

The Environment Agency provides further comments relating to flood risk, groundwater and contaminated land, biodiversity and environmental protection and waste. General comments are summarised below, but the consultation response also provides a series of detailed comments and proposed edits relating to specific paragraphs of the PEIR document.

Regarding flood risk, the Environment Agency comments that the tidal defences data in the PEIR does not include Environment Agency-run tidal defences at Star Dam and Bowaters Wall/Sluice, the latter of which is no longer working and will need replacing in order to provide drainage to the scheme. The Environment Agency supports the location of the South Portal within Flood Zone 1 and says that any surface works should be detailed in the Flood Risk Assessment. They add that any works near to flood defences should not restrict the Environment Agency's ability to access the defences for maintenance.

The Environment Agency highlights that a Flood Risk Permit may be required if work is planned near rivers, flood defence structures or culverts, and



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provides details of guidance on applying for these permits. They expect that a Flood Risk Permit may require a temporary jetty, adding that they will need to assess the impact of any new or modified jetty on existing flood defence infrastructure and on the Thames Estuary.

In relation to groundwater and contaminated land, the Environment Agency requests further ecological and water sampling of the drains and ditches in and around an affected Ramsar site so they can assess the likely impacts of dewatering on the area. They remind the applicant that any lowering of groundwater levels must ensure springs and seepages continue to support flow and levels in surface water drains and groundwater-fed ponds. The Environment Agency highlights that dewatering is now a regulated activity and therefore should be included in future Water Features Survey. They expect further details to be included in the forthcoming Hydrogeological Risk Assessment report.

The Environment Agency states that further ground investigations are required to ensure land quality issues, particularly contamination and landfill, and any historic contamination, are addressed appropriately. They point out that permissions such as environmental permits and abstraction licenses may be needed and signposts to relevant pre-application guidance.

The Environment Agency is satisfied with the information provided on marine water quality, noting that scour protection may be needed to maintain the stability of the riverbed during construction. In terms of terrestrial ecology, they call for further ecological surveys and deeper ecohydrological understanding of the western end of the Ramsar/SSSI site to establish whether it is an acceptable site for a drainage route.

In relation to the proposed green bridges in Kent the Environment Agency says that the design should be informed by recent evidence to ensure they are the appropriate size and location to support wildlife in the area.

ESP Utilities Group

ESP Utilities Group Ltd confirms that they own gas mains in the vicinity of the project from the M25 near North Ockendon to the A2 near Shorne, and asks to be regularly updated about any planned construction activities.

The company attaches a list of precautions to be taken by a site personnel when carrying out works near electricity cables but adds that this may need to be updated once more is known about the extent and nature of the works.

Essex County Council

Essex County Council (ECC) "strongly agrees" with the need for the Lower Thames Crossing as they believe it will bring local economic benefits, improve the resilience of the road network and reduce the reliance on the Dartford Crossing. They seek early dialogue in order to maximise the benefits for the local economy and communities and encourages Highways England to accelerate the scheme if possible.



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The Council “strongly agrees” with the preferred route selection but opposes the changes made to the route since 2017, specifically the changes to the red line boundary which they believe has reduced local connectivity in the area around the M25 junction 29. Other issues with the changes include the removal of the proposed connection to the Port of Tilbury, and the reduction of eastbound connectivity onto the A13/A128.

The Council supports the proposed route north of the river and “strongly supports” both the proposed Tilbury junction and the proposed junction between the LTC and the A13/A1089, which they consider important for local and regional traffic flow.

They oppose the proposed junction 29 between the LTC and the M25 as they are concerned about the impact of the current LTC proposal on access to the planned Brentwood Enterprise Park. The Council requests further engagement with Brentwood Borough Council to mitigate impacts and identify improvements at junction 29.

The Council provides detailed comment on potential traffic impacts. They request a full Transport Assessment to understand the impacts, mitigations and benefits of the project on the transport network and suggest that a modelling working party is formed to ensure these are looked at holistically. Several routes and junctions are highlighted as requiring further analysis, namely: the A12 up to junction 29, the M11 up to junction 9, and the A13, A127, A128, A120, A130, A131 and the A1414. The Council asks that the area of detailed modelling is extended to cover Southend and other parts of Essex.

The Council asks Highways England to consider cumulative transport impacts arising from the LTC and other projects in the area, including any future Thames river crossings in east London, the Tilbury2 DCO application, Silvertown Tunnel, London City east, Transport for London (TfL) projects and other planned Highways England schemes in Essex. They add that the planned improvements at the A127/A130 Fairglen Interchange is missing from the list of schemes due to be built.

The Council supports the proposals in relation to public rights of way and asks that these are considered in the developing design and that any closures are addressed.

The Council “slightly disagrees” with the proposed measures to reduce the environmental impacts of the project and provides a detailed account of their concerns and suggestions for mitigation. They believe the preferred route to be the “worst possible route” environmentally as it goes through the green belt and several sites with environmental status. The Council lists several areas which they consider will be “badly affected” by the proposals, including West Tilbury Marshes, the Thames Estuary Path and the Mardyke Way, and provides specific comments relating to each. They also set out some of the potential opportunities to enhance the natural environment during the development of the scheme. The Council asks Highways England



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to take account of the Essex Landscape Character Assessment when conducting the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments and that the scope of these assessments is extended beyond M25 junction 29, as previously requested.

Regarding other environmental impacts, the Council provides specific comments relating to the local historic environment, and requests more detail relating to mineral and waste planning. They are also concerned about the use of the “Highways Agency Water Risk Assessment Tool (HAWRAT)” standards to develop the drainage strategy, which they do not consider to be sufficiently rigorous.

The Council recommends that EOC Public Health is consulted on the proposals, particularly on the proposals in the Environmental Impact Assessment, and comments that a Health Impact Assessment may be required.

The Council “opposes the proposed development boundary”, specifically the removal of the Tilbury Link Road. The Council also asks that the boundary is extended to include provision for above ground attenuation features to ensure appropriate surface water drainage systems can be put in place.

The Council “strongly supports” the proposals for the rest and service area, and maintenance depot.

EOC considers it necessary to charge crossing users, adding that amounts should be in line with charges for the Dartford Crossing and Silvertown Tunnel.

The Council awaits further engagement on both the plans for how to build the LTC and on the proposed changes to utilities infrastructure.

The Council is pleased with the level of consultation and provides positive feedback on the information, events and the website. They look forward to continued engagement on the following topics in particular: local employment legacy, environment, the role of public transport, cycling provision in and around the tunnel, and alignment with future RIS schemes.

The Council lists several additional organisations to engage, including neighbouring Transport and Highway Authorities, Brentwood Borough Council, Opportunity South Essex Partnership, London Southend Airport and Haven Gateway Partnership.

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service “agrees with the need for an additional Thames crossing”, saying that it would help alleviate increasing traffic congestion in and around the Thurrock area and “offer relief to a number of key junction to the west of the route”.

They, however, “oppose the proposed changes to the route” which involve the removal of a link road from Tilbury Docks towards the Lower Thames Crossing, saying that fire service access “will incur potential delays” from both Orsett and Grays Fire station. Essex County Fire and Rescue Service



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adds that access emergency roads need to be factored into the planning phase.

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service highlights the importance of facilitating emergency services access. Related to this, they support the proposed Tilbury junction, call for the maintenance of public rights of way and request that the provision of access routes is considered into those areas where construction workers will be engaging in higher risk activities such as “working at height, on unstable ground or in confined spaces”.

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service “supports the proposals” for a rest and service area as it could not only serve as a “rendezvous point for emergency incidents” but could also be used as an area where condensed traffic could be moved into if needed.

In terms of charges for using the Lower Thames Crossing, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service notes that there is no information on whether exemptions will be offered to emergency vehicles.

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service asks Highways England to maintain close communications with all emergency services, adding that “on-going consultation will be required to ensure that access, water supplies and fixed equipment are fit for purpose”. They also seek clarification about how the transportation of hazardous loads via the tunnels will be regulated.

They add that any disruption to utility supply for essential buildings during construction should be communicated in advance.

Essex Police

Essex Police’s response focuses on the potential for an increase in crime if the Lower Thames Crossing is built. They ask that crime risk is considered at all stages of the project and that management plans are developed and agreed with Essex and Kent police, with additional security measures introduced where necessary to mitigate and manage these risks.

Essex Police provides detailed comments relating to security risks on the crossing section of the route. They highlight the potential risk of objects being launched from the green bridges at ongoing traffic, as well as the potential for suicidal individuals. They also question whether timber posts would be robust enough. The Police requests emergency plans covering incidents that could occur within the tunnel, such as terrorist threat or crimes involving the unescorted HGVs carrying hazardous material, to be written, agreed and exercised. They also ask to be consulted on policies and procedures for monitoring the tunnels and surrounding roads, and that a 24/7 CCTV system of sufficient quality is used. Essex Police requests additional detailed information around the operation and purpose of gates in the crossing section, as they consider these gates are at risk of being abused.

Essex Police recommends that temporary accommodation for workers should be designed and built in line with ‘crime prevention through environmental design’ principles, and that if properties are likely to become



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more permanent that 'Secured by Design' accreditation is obtained.

Essex Police requests a detailed management plan for dealing with emergencies on the junctions north of the river, including what falls within the remit of the Control Centre and what would be directed to Essex Police. They ask for further information around the operation and purpose of barriers on the entry slip roads from A2, A13 and M25 junctions.

Regarding connections north of the crossing, Essex Police encourages direct engagement with Essex Police Roads Policing Team on the design of the road layout.

In relation to the proposals relating to public rights of way and environmental impact, Essex Police asks that regard is given to National Planning Policy and that sustainability, health and wellbeing are considered.

In terms of the proposed development boundary, Essex Police highlights a concern about relocating the traveler site at Gammon Fields and asks to be consulted about the relocation.

Essex Police provides a series of recommendations to minimise the risk of crime around the rest and service area, including consulting with 'Designing out crime' officers before submission, and obtaining the Secured by Design Commercial Award for the rest and service area to reduce the risk of burglary, theft, arson, vehicle crime, assault and terrorism. They also recommend the ParkMark scheme which ensures car parks have appropriate crime prevention measures in place to minimise vehicle-related crime.

Essex Police asks that information around road closures and traffic management when building the Lower Thames Crossing is made available to the Essex Roads Policing Unit.

Essex Police highlights the impact the placement of utility infrastructure and pylons could have on the threat of terrorism activity, and suggests early discussion with counter terrorism security advisors and the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure. They point out that incidences of metal theft are high in Essex and ask that measures are implemented to prevent this in relation with the Lower Thames Crossing, for example by using forensic marking gels.

Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Folkestone & Hythe District Council "strongly supports the proposal for the construction of the Lower Thames Crossing as part of a comprehensive package of infrastructure investment". The Council believes it would bring economic and traffic benefits to the area.

The Council, however, stresses the importance of a whole-system approach and calls for investment into other road schemes to ensure that congestion is not simply "pushed to the next weakest part of the highway network".

Related to this, they endorse the comments made by Kent and Medway Economic Partnership about linking M2 and M20 and improving the M2/A2



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corridor. In terms of improvements to the M2/A2 corridor, Folkestone & Hythe District Council asks that Junction 7 is upgraded, the single carriageway on A2 north of Dover and near Lydden is dualled and that the M2 is expanded. The District Council also asks for local businesses to be used in the project.

Forest Enterprise

Forest Enterprise, a part of the Forestry Commission, comments that three of their land holdings (Broadfields Farm, Falkes Lanes and Jeskyns) would be affected by the proposed scheme, which would represent "a considerable loss of public benefit" and asks for appropriate mitigation measures to be put in place:

- With regards to all three, Forest Enterprise asks that if the land is used for diversion of utilities, this is carried out underground and land subject to temporary use is appropriately restored to reduce potential impacts.
- With regards to Broadfields Farm, which is currently divided by the M25, they ask for severance of trails to be minimised and public access to be retained between the two parcels of land. They note that some land immediately south of the western part of Broadfields is to be acquired for environmental mitigation or landscape enhancement, and could form a valuable extension to the Thames Chase Community Forest.
- With regards to Jeskyns, part of which lies within an AONB, Forest Enterprise stresses the importance of landscaping and notes that the area that would be affected by the scheme is "of crucial importance" to existing and future car park provision.

The Forestry Commission

The Forestry Commission notes that a number of ancient woodlands could be affected by the planned route and asks for alternative, less damaging installation methods to be explored. They also stress that fuels, chemicals or waste materials should not be stored on ancient woodland soils or under the woodland canopy.

In addition to the potential impact on ancient woodlands, the Commission comments that the scheme would entail loss of woodland not designated as ancient and asks for this to be included in the compensation packages. They discuss the potential loss of woodland within the central reservation on the A2 and ask for options to link the woodland communities either side of the A2 to be explored, such as 'living bridges'. They also stress that this woodland lies within the Kent Downs AONB. The Commission notes that for any woodland that could be affected, Highways England must take into consideration the Root Protection Zone. The Commission points out that some adjacent woodland would be brought closer to live traffic and asks for this to be considered in the proposals.

The Commission welcomes the proposed new woodland by the A2 Junction and makes recommendations of how the benefits could be maximised further. They also refer to other opportunities for woodland creation, which



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they would like to discuss further with Highways England.

Gravesham Borough Council

Gravesham Borough Council provides a detailed response to the consultation, discussing all aspects of the scheme at significant length.

The Council's response is also supplemented with technical reports they have commissioned on the different consultation documents.

Gravesham Borough's Council agrees that there is a need for a new crossing at the Thames but objects to the preferred route selection east of Gravesend, citing environmental, community and traffic concerns. They argue that the LTC would not relieve congestion at Dartford in the long term and comment that "issues with the Dartford tunnel should be resolved at Dartford."

The Councils comments that there is insufficient information about how alternative options have been assessed and against what data. They also suggest that some of the options that were ruled out in 2009 should be revisited in light of new transport developments, such as an additional ferry crossing of the Thames.

The Council provides detailed comments on the design of the scheme, which they believe fails to meet its stated objectives. The Council argues that the scheme would not support local economic growth, would cause significant environmental impact and would not relieve the congestion at Dartford in the long term.

The Council is strongly opposed to the proposed junction on the A2 corridor. Concerns include the impact on the environment, such as Kent Downs AONB, and the design of access points which could impact on the local road network. Recommendations focus on the design of slip roads to ensure free flow and the width of the green bridges. To make an informed judgement on proposals relating to the Gravesend East Junction, they request further detailed information.

Whilst objecting to the preferred route and southern section, if the scheme does go ahead, the Council supports the extension of the southern tunnel. Although they would like to see it extended even further (by cut and cover if not bored) to mitigate the impact on residents of River Park and Thong. They also support the removal of the A226 Junction. The Council considers that further design work and assessment need to be carried out on the Thong Lane Bridge and the tunnel portal to mitigate the impact on local residents.

The Council is concerned about the wider impacts of the LTC on the highway network in Kent, in particular the A227, A228, A229 and M2. They argue that it is imperative that a full assessment is conducted, and improvements are made to the wider strategic network, highlighting the Blue Bell Hill Junction on the A229 as a particular concern.

The Council offers a detailed review of the traffic modelling, expressing a concern that it does not assess the impact on the wider road network. They



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are also concerned that the growth agenda for the Thames Gateway has not been taken into account and provide a list of housing developments which are not referenced in the consultation documents.

Discussing the PEIR, the Council concludes it lacks sufficient detail and is inadequate in a number of areas. It, They review each of the chapters in detail raising a number of concerns, for example:

- a lack of analysis on the actual impact on local communities;
- concern that levels of air quality may worsen in some areas;
- the impact on the landscape, in particular Kent AONB;
- the impact on ancient woodland and insufficient information in the PIER on the level of impact on habitats and species; and
- concern about the assessment of cultural heritage and a call for it to be revisited in discussion with stakeholders.

With regards to air quality, the report commissioned by the Council questions some aspects of the methodology and observes that there has been no assessment of the construction impact.

The Council has included detailed comments from Kent Downs AONB Unit and Kent County Council's Heritage Conservation, both of which make recommendations about how the potential impact could be assessed and mitigated.

In terms of charges for using the crossing, while not providing a definitive view due to what they felt was a lack of information, the Council recommends: the same charging regimes are applied to the LTC and the Dartford Crossing; Gravesham residents receive the same discount for both Dartford and Lower Thames Crossings as those in Dartford and Thurrock; there are no peak charges and a proportion of revenues from tolls are paid to a Community Fund.

The Council argues that local residents will experience significant disruption during the construction phase and once the crossing is operational, and stresses the need for adequate financial compensation. They also comment that contractors should be required to use local labour whenever possible, including apprenticeships to provide a long-term legacy.

Greater London Authority

The Greater London Authority supports the proposed Lower Thames Crossing "in principle" as it would improve the resilience of the river crossing options.

The Authority comments that the "enhanced road capacity should be managed to avoid" adverse impacts on the existing road network. They recommend that a working group is established tasked with the development of a Charging Strategy for all current and planned river crossings in/to East London.

The Authority stresses the Mayor's commitment to protecting London's Green Belt and asks for any potential impacts arising from the proposed works to be



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minimised and mitigated.

The Greater London Authority endorses Transport for London's response.

Harlow Council

Harlow Council "strongly agrees with the need for a Lower Thames Crossing" as it would improve journey times in the area which are currently subject to significant delays at Dartford Crossing.

The Council, however, is concerned that the proposed crossing might increase traffic levels on the M25 and M11 and by extension affect Harlow's road network which is already struggling with demand. The Council urges Highway England to assess this scenario and undertake a wider regional modelling.

The Council does not comment on the details of the proposals as they believe "that is best left to the local authorities in south Essex and north Kent".

Health and Safety Executive

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) notes that there are several major hazard pipelines present within the development area. HSE says that their Land Use Planning advice "would be dependent on the location of areas where public may be present and so it is possible that HSE may advise against this proposal."

HSE advises Highways England that depending on the type of substances they want to store on site, Highways England may need to apply for Hazardous Substances Consent.

HSE notes that the proposals involve going through the safeguarding zone of the Tilbury berths and outside the purple line for another berth and says that they would need to review the licences for both berths.

Higham Parish Council

Higham Parish Council "strongly disagree with the need case" of the Lower Thames Crossing and does not believe that a Lower Thames Crossing east of Gravesend will alleviate the traffic problems at Dartford. They add that the preferred route would have an adverse impact on those living in and around Gravesend. The Council argues that "the proposal is not part of a joined up strategic plan to manage traffic and journeys in South East England" and lacks long-term thinking in terms of improving public transport in the area. Instead, the Council believes that Highways England should have selected one of the earlier reviewed crossing options, Option A14.

Notwithstanding its objection to the proposed route, the Council welcomes the proposed tunnel extension but adds that it should be extended even further south and raises concerns about potential impact on Thong if this does not happen. Related to this, they add that if Highways England opts for a footbridge rather than tunnel extension south of the river, this would create a safety risk in terms of bridge-jumping.

Higham Parish Council expresses concerns about the potential spilling of



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traffic onto local roads. They are worried about the proposal for the A2/M2, saying that among other things, the large number of roundabouts would deter drivers and increase traffic on nearby rat runs. The Council also seeks clarification about the service road onto the A226, asking if it would only be used for emergency services and maintenance vehicles. Commenting on the traffic forecast, the Council is “disappointed” that they feel none has been done for most of the rural roads and that those conducted show an increase of traffic. The Council stresses the importance of improvements and upgrades on the wider network with a specific reference to the A227, A228, A229 and A249.

In terms of potential environmental issues, the Council welcomes the proposed measures but believes that more should be done about mitigating pollution (air and noise) and wider biodiversity impacts. They also ask how the excavated spoil will be removed from the site.

Higham Council is “not convinced that the amount of land put aside is reasonable” and asks for legal guarantees that it will not be used for development, business or housing.

Referring to the disruption that local areas would experience during the construction phase, the Council argues that some form of compensation should be offered such as improving access to public transport, development of sport and community facilities, and/or enhancing recreation areas. They also enquire if Gravesham residents will be entitled to discounts for using the crossing and stress that if pylons are relocated, they should not be moved near residential areas.

Historic England

Historic England comments in detail on elements of Chapter 7 of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) on Cultural Heritage, often making reference to previous advice that they say they have provided to Highways England.

Historic England comments on the importance of the Thames Estuary in shaping the history of England, calling for the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to incorporate a narrative of ‘what is important and why’ into the assessment methodology. They state that the PEIR does not include descriptions of the significance of heritage assets, and that a “considerable amount of future baseline information and survey is outstanding”. They add that the PEIR does not state in detail what the potential impacts of the scheme on heritage assets might be, or how such impacts might be mitigated. Historic England asks that the Environmental Statement (ES) covers these matters.

Regarding built heritage, Historic England advises that the PEIR chapters on Cultural Heritage and Landscape should show an integrated understanding of landscape history and usage, with appropriate cross-referencing, for example in relation to the Historic Landscape Characterisation. As regards the route south of the Thames, the response identifies specific heritage assets



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(including the Thong Conservation area, and St Mary's Church at Chalk) that Historic England says require attention in order to identify impacts and mitigation approaches. While Historic England welcomes that their scoping advice has been observed in relation to parts of the scheme in Greater London, they argue that the demolition of a listed building north of the Thames has been downplayed in the report, and suggest alternative wording on this point. Historic England comments on the importance of the setting of listed buildings, saying that they "would expect due weight be given to the importance of setting" when assessing a building's significance and the potential impact of the scheme. They suggest that assessment of the impacts on several designated historic military installations should be included in the ES.

The largest section of the response covers buried archaeological remains, which may be designated, undesignated or unidentified. Historic England recommends that the ES must consider the significance of such remains "on a landscape scale in the context of national and regional research frameworks" to ensure compliance with national planning policy. In addition to calling for stakeholder engagement on the approach to take to archaeological remains, Historic England lists draft methodologies that they say were due to be provided by Highways England for review by November 2018. They also make recommendations for considering the potential archaeological remains to be discovered, commenting for example on the use of relevant specialists and the division of the route into "zones of differing character and potential".

Historic England would like Highways England to consider how the public could benefit from the cultural heritage mitigation measures so that these could contribute to the project legacy agenda. They question whether the suggested pre-DCO application timeline allows enough time to undertake the different heritage surveys.

Historic England includes a short set of additional points and corrections on the PIER, as well as comments on the Cultural Heritage Assessment Methodology, which includes requests for additional detail on assessment, and recommendations for specific archaeological techniques and use of specialists.

HS1 Limited

HS1 Limited is generally supportive of the need case for the Lower Thames Crossing, citing the congestion on the A2 in the Ebbsfleet area currently, and referring to the potential economic growth that could result locally if additional capacity is created on the A2. They claim that the preferred route would have a "substantial impact" on its infrastructure and land in proximity to the scheme south of the river. HS1 notes that they have been working collaboratively with Highways England, and believe that this collaboration will continue so that any risk to HS1 assets can be mitigated.

HS1 asks that the Singlewell Infrastructure Maintenance Depot be removed



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from the development boundary to be included in the DCO submission, adding that access to the site will be required at all times during construction and afterwards. They emphasise that they will also require access to the railway and to electrical compounds nearby, and request improved signage to Ebbsfleet International so that road users can navigate the new road alignments. Their response also includes a request for further detail about the potential relocation of electricity lines in the area. HS1 says that it may require ownership of any under track crossings. If such crossings are necessary for redirecting utilities infrastructure.

The response raises the importance of security considerations where roads, footpaths or new planting are located adjacent to HS1 infrastructure, and states HS1's expectation that surface water runoff and drainage discharge will not impact on their assets. They add that debris from construction could affect HS1 services, and state that certain works will require their technical approval. They give notice that the scheme will require a Protective Provisions Agreement to cover risks to HS1 assets and facilitate their sign-off on the scheme.

Kent County Council

Kent County Council "strongly agrees with the need case" for the proposed crossing, which they say will improve connectivity and network resilience, offering opportunities for economic growth. The Council calls for further improvements to the strategic road network from the Channel Ports through the Midlands to the North, providing a list of upgrades to the wider road network that they believe are required to successfully make use of the scheme's benefits, including improvements to the A229 and A249 and associated motorway junctions.

The Council also "strongly supports the preferred route" and the changes that have been made since 2017, stating that there will be greater strategic benefits and less impact on heritage assets. They state that mitigation must be put in place for air quality, noise and visual impacts, requesting that Highways England work with local councils and other stakeholders. They "strongly support the proposed route south of the river", saying that the route "takes steps to address" concerns they previously raised about the scheme and commenting favourably on alignment, portal location, the use of three lanes, and the junction with the A2. They would prefer that the tunnel portal be moved further south, with use of a 'cut and cover' tunnel for parts of the route in cutting, which they believe would mitigate the impacts on local communities of severance, noise and visual appearance. They call for noise and environmental impacts on Shorne Woods Country Park to be mitigated, saying that significant impacts "would be unacceptable". They additionally recommend early engagement on any proposed transfers of ownership of land, roads or structures. The Council asks that the tunnel design includes adequate venting, and access for emergency services.

The Council "supports the proposed junction" with the M2/A2, emphasising that long-distance traffic should remain on the Strategic Road Network and



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not make use of local roads such as the A228 and A227. They request that Highways England review the design of the Gravesend East junction, expressing concerns about the potential impact of the proposals on accessibility, traffic levels and road safety in the area. The Council supports the proposed Tilbury junction, and calls for Highways England to work with Thurrock Council on a potential link road, but they oppose the proposed junction with the A13/A1089, which they believe will not provide efficient local connections. They also oppose the proposed junction with the M25, on the grounds that it fails to provide resilience in cases where the Dartford Crossing has been closed, as traffic on the crossing cannot access the M25 in the opposite direction.

The Council “disagrees with the view that the crossing would improve traffic conditions” in the locality. The response includes concerns about the modelling used, for example arguing that planned development in the area should be included in the model and querying the peak periods used.

Discussing public rights of way, the Council states that it is “neutral as regards to the proposals”, and calls for any impacts of the scheme to be reduced, with discussions on diversion of routes where required. They include specific comments on public rights of way within the application boundary, with suggestions for maintaining the character of routes, and some design recommendations, including widening green bridges. The Council suggests that Highways England review the demand for a cross-river service for cyclists, and includes a list of enhancements that could be delivered through the scheme in line with national planning policy.

The Council is “neutral on the proposed measures to reduce environmental impacts”. They supply detailed comments on the chapters of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) relating to terrestrial and marine biodiversity. As well as commenting on methodology, the potential effects of the scheme and proposed mitigation measures, the Council says that they would like to see the achievement of ‘net gain’ in biodiversity as a stated aim of the scheme, suggesting that Highways England liaise with the Kent Nature Partnership. They request that mitigation and compensation for terrestrial biodiversity impacts be provided as close as possible to impacted areas. Regarding marine biodiversity, they say that the chapter relies only on desk research, and is particularly focused on the north side of the Thames. The Council also comments on the potential environmental impacts on Shorne Woods Country Park, making recommendations for noise buffering, woodland planting and the need for additional surveying of emissions impacts. They also comment on aspects of the PEIR relating to heritage, with recommendations for issues that require further consideration, such as the impact of lighting, and the effects of the scheme on large heritage assets and historic landscapes. They suggest that Highways England collaborate with Kent Downs AONB to ensure that the scheme minimises impact on the area. In relation to drainage, the Council outlines some expectations for the scope of the Flood Risk Assessment, with further detailed comments about



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resilience, covering topics such as surface and ground water management, and appropriate planting.

Discussing the proposed area of land required for the crossing, the Council says that they are “neutral”, and outline various requirements, including that the widening of the A2 remain within the existing highway boundary, that the number of buildings affected be minimised, with appropriate compensation provided, and that land use for temporary compounds be reduced. The Council also states that they are “neutral on initial plans for how to build” the crossing, noting that a construction management plan will be required, and additionally requesting that modelling of HGV movements be provided. The response outlines expectations about the mitigation of construction impacts on the local area, including noise, materials handling and local access. The Council is keen for the scheme to use the local workforce, with apprenticeships and training provided, and they state their willingness to assist utility companies to prepare for the scheme.

The Council additionally “supports proposals for a rest and service area” and “strongly supports proposals for the maintenance depot”. They express disappointment however at the proposed provision of 80 overnight lorry parking spaces included in the scheme as they believe that 300 spaces are needed. On the charge for the crossing, the Council calls for integrated tolling at both crossings to enable bifurcation of port traffic, recognising that the charging regime will be linked to the financing option chosen. They state that peak charges may not be immediately required, and calls for a discount scheme for local residents.

Kent Downs AONB Unit

Kent Downs AONB Unit lists specific policies from its current Management Plan that it believes are particularly relevant to the proposed crossing, covering conservation of the AONB and the need to mitigate any negative impacts upon it. The Unit “strongly opposes the preferred route” because of potential impacts on the AONB resulting from a link road proposed to connect the crossing with the A2/M2, as well as the widening of the A2/M2 corridor and the higher volume of traffic expected on the A229 and the A2/M2 as a result of the scheme.

They believe that the A229 Blue Bell Hill is likely to be widened in future to address this increase in traffic. Such works would impact on the AONB as the road mostly lies within the AONB boundary. The AONB Unit also says that the absence of improvements to this part of the A229 would lead to increased traffic on the road links between Dover and Folkestone, which are located in the AONB area. They express concern that increased traffic on the M2/A2 would impact on the AONB’s tranquility, and that further works may take place along the route. They state that they maintain their opinion that Location A would have impacted less on the AONB, claiming that economic factors have carried too much weight in decision-making, with environmental and community impacts not receiving due consideration.



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The AONB Unit also “strongly opposes the changes made to the route”, arguing that the proposed widening of the A2 corridor and associated works would damage the landscape and visual quality of the AONB, hinder accessibility between parts of the AONB, and reduce tranquility. Regarding the choice of the Western Southern Link, the Unit expresses concern that the decision was not based on what they describe as the “current, more impactful proposal”, and state that they regard the proposals to be “wholly in conflict” with relevant planning policy.

The AONB Unit “strongly opposes the proposed route south of the river”, citing the impacts described above, as well as the potential impacts of the scheme on the setting of the AONB, arguing that the scheme would “fundamentally change the landscape resulting in a loss of existing rural character”. They also state their opposition to the proposed junction between the crossing and the M2/A2, saying that it will have a greater negative impact on the landscape than the previously proposed design. The AONB Unit states that they are “neutral on proposals in relation to public rights of way”, supporting proposals to reinstate public rights of way affected by the scheme and identifying specific opportunities to improve the existing public rights of way network in the area.

The Unit comments on aspects of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR), for example saying that the report should refer to revised planning requirements, and should consider the potential effects of ash dieback. They request that the PEIR include a greater variety of viewpoints and photomontages, and that noise impacts on the AONB be considered. The response calls for “exceptional mitigation to minimise impacts as far as possible”, using a “strategic landscape scale approach”. They request that green bridges and environmental barriers are appropriately designed, and outline further mitigation measures to be considered. The Unit states that compensation should be provided “commensurate with the significant level of harm”, making reference to other cases where they say compensation was paid. In relation to construction, the AONB Unit asks that a construction compound adjacent to the AONB boundary be moved, and that the potential visual and noise impacts of other compounds be reduced.

Kent Police

Kent Police states that they recognise the benefits of an additional Thames crossing, adding however that they remain neutral as to details of the scheme, such as the preferred route. The response includes a list of areas where they believe there may be potential impacts for policing, and for local communities. Kent Police says for example that it will provide a “proportionate response to protest” should any protests arise. They add that road safety is a priority area, and that they will therefore work with other agencies to understand the potential disruption to the Strategic Road Network during construction of the scheme. Kent Police emphasises the importance of incident response, including plans for emergency access during construction and operation, and says that protocols for emergency



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response will be required, as the crossing will be part of critical national infrastructure. They also call for crime prevention measures to be taken, referring to the need to “design out” opportunities for criminality”. Kent Police adds that they welcome engagement on these topics, and note the need for police assessment and review of the delivery of abnormal loads and Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders.

The London Borough of Bexley

The London Borough of Bexley states that they “support new Thames crossings”, including an additional crossing between Belvedere and Rainham. They claim that traffic forecasts suggest that there will be a case for such a crossing even after the Lower Thames Crossing opens. The Council states that they may provide a further response when they have reviewed additional traffic data that they requested from Highways England. The Council also expresses concern about increased traffic on the A2 within or close to the borough when the scheme has been completed.

London Borough of Havering

The London Borough of Havering restates its preference for locating a new crossing next to the Dartford Crossing. They nevertheless welcome improvement to infrastructure in the borough, referring to the potential for increased social value as a result of the proposed crossing. They ask that Highways England liaise with the Thames Gateway Strategic Group for consideration of the opportunities and issues related to the scheme. The Council also states that the proposed location helps to improve the resilience of the strategic road network in the area, noting the negative impact of congestion in the borough caused by delays at the Dartford Crossing, and the potential positive economic impacts of the proposed scheme.

The Council says that Highways England must consider planned developments in local boroughs, outlining the substantial new housing capacity set out in the Havering Local Plan. They argue that Highways England must provide for long-term connections within the borough for current and forecast residents and businesses, with improvements made to mitigate the effect of any traffic increases as a result of the crossing. The Council expects Highways England to fund and “deliver essential improvement projects to both the highway and public transport network within the borough”. The response outlines some of the strategic transport improvements they believe will be required, including better north/south public transport connectivity, the transformation of Gallows Corner and the use of the river for freight. The Council also requests further information on the construction of the scheme, including clarification about the timing of works, location of construction sites, and expected HGV movements through the borough. They favour the use of river transport during construction, suggesting two wharves where they say Highways England could make upgrades to allow for their use.

The Council claims that there are “deficiencies in the traffic model”



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provided, offering specific comments on the baseline data, and the potential impact of increased traffic on local roads such as the A13, A1306 and A127. They add that much of the local road network is operating close to capacity already. The Council includes details of what they describe as “anomalies in the shapefile data” for Highways England to review, as well as specific junctions to be assessed in the traffic modelling. The London Borough of Havering requests further discussions with Highways England and TfL to mitigate the potential impacts of the scheme. The Council also includes some commentary on potential local highway impacts, including public rights of way and proposed bridges, outlining their expectations for maintenance liability.

The Council comments on several issues raised in the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR), emphasising that they look forward to further discussion. They support the proposed methodology for noise and vibrations, although the Council expresses concern about the threshold for long-term impact, which they say conflicts with the criteria for the Noise Insulation Regulations. In relation to lighting, they note that light pollution from the construction compound near the North Ockendon Conservation Area must be minimised. The Council expects further details on air quality impacts and mitigation to be included in the Environmental Statement and suggests particular sites for sensitive receptors. The Council also includes some specific comments on the appropriate assessments and guidance for works that impact on soil and groundwater.

The Council recommends that the PEIR use a 2km study area for heritage impacts, expressing concern about the potential negative effects of the scheme on heritage assets. Their response includes several technical comments on heritage and archaeology, including recommendations for considering the potential impacts on interior spaces, as well as the effects of noise and vibrations. Noting the objective included in the Local Plan to “protect and enhance Havering’s Green Belt”, the Council requests further detail about the visual impact of the construction and operation of the scheme, with several technical comments on this point as well. They particularly ask that Highways England engage with Thames Chase Community Forest to agree appropriate mitigation, in line with their policy to replace provision of any open space used for development.

The response also outlines the Council’s expectations for the protection of biodiversity in the borough, including adequate assessment and mitigation. They comment in detail on the use of Priority Habitats and documentation to be included in the desktop assessment. The Council also requests that Highways England engage with landowners of properties that may be subject to compulsory purchase, as well as owners and employees of businesses that may be impacted directly or indirectly by the scheme.

The Council’s response includes comments on other potential local impacts, including the re-provision of bus stops affected by proposed works at Ockendon Road, as well as the need for consistency with the charge for the



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Dartford Crossing, including a toll discount for residents, employees and businesses of host boroughs. They also express concern about the cumulative impacts of the scheme along with other proposed projects locally, such as the potential improvements to the M25 Junction with the A12, as well as TfL works. The Council also hopes that a Planning Performance Agreement will be concluded to allow them to sufficiently resource their engagement with the DCO process.

London Borough of Redbridge

The London Borough of Redbridge “strongly agrees with the need case” for the proposed crossing, referring to their interest in ensuring that traffic with no business in the borough uses the M25 corridor as much as possible rather than the A406. The Borough believes that the proposed route will encourage longer distance orbital traffic to use the M25 rather than seek out alternatives. They also state that the increased connectivity as a result of the scheme will bring benefits to businesses in the borough.

The Borough does not comment on the specifics of the proposals and “believes the particular views of those local authorities directly affected by the proposed scheme should warrant priority consideration by Highways England”. They support the principle of providing a rest and service area and a maintenance depot to allow for safe and efficient use of the crossing. While the borough says that the crossing would have “both positive and negative impacts on traffic conditions locally”, they are hopeful that there will be a positive impact in the short-term, and that further measures will be put in place to manage higher traffic levels in the longer term. The Borough requests further information on traffic modelling for the A12, and claims that investment in the local road network is necessary to mitigate the potential traffic impacts in the area as a result of the crossing.

In relation to the charge for use of the crossing, the Borough comments that there should be no financial incentive for drivers to use one crossing over another.

Maidstone Borough Council

Maidstone Borough Council “strongly agrees with the need case” for the proposed crossing, saying that the scheme would provide increased capacity and resilience on the local road network.

The Council “supports the preferred route” for the crossing, including the changes made to the route since 2017, such as the widening of the M2/A2 and the redesign of the M2/A2 Junction 1. The Council also supports the proposal for the crossing to have three lanes in each direction. Its response discusses the potential benefits and environmental impacts of the Eastern Southern link, which the Council previously preferred, but expresses satisfaction that additional appraisals have demonstrated that the Western Southern Link is more appropriate. They add however that their “in principle support” for this link is subject to concerns about the potential impact of the proposed crossing on the local road network, including the A229, A249 and



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M20 east of the A229. The Council notes that this impact is expected to be greater when the crossing has been constructed, and asks that the improvements in connectivity from the crossing not be hindered “by insufficient road infrastructure further along the road network”.

The Council “disagrees with the view that the Lower Thames Crossing would improve traffic conditions”. While they agree that traffic in some areas, such as the immediate vicinity of the Dartford Crossing, would be improved, they note that traffic in the Borough’s key routes, such as the A229, A249 and M2, is expected to increase, and say that improvements should be considered for the road network down to Dover. The Council refers to the A229 as being of particular concern, including its interchange with the M2 at Junction 3. The Council suggests some alternatives for this interchange, and expresses their willingness to collaborate with Highways England on road improvements. They call for improvement works ahead of or concurrent with the construction of the proposed crossing, fearing that the potential benefits of the crossing will otherwise not be realised. The Council additionally notes that further local development, including housing, is likely to take place when the updated Local Plan has been adopted, saying that the resulting increase in traffic exceeds the road usage currently modelled.

In relation to environmental impacts, the Council says that air quality is their primary concern, commenting that the A229 is expected to have additional traffic when the proposed crossing is operational. They request that mitigation measures be put in place if significant negative effects are predicted when the Environmental Statement has been prepared.

Marine Management Organisation

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) examines the potential impact of the scheme on marine biodiversity as outlined in the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR), agreeing that Highways England has “correctly identified designated sites with marine components” that may be affected.

The MMO calls for further reviews before the Environmental Statement (ES) is finalised, covering the status of nearby Marine Conservation Zones, the potential effects on fisheries, and the effects of the proposed use of scour protection. They additionally ask that the ES includes a consideration of the impact of underwater noise from sources other than those included in the PEIR. The response includes commentary on other specific aspects of proposed noise surveying and mitigation.

The MMO states that further information is required about the studies relating to benthic ecology that were included in the desk-based review undertaken, and notes that detail of benthic ecology sampling and the indirect impacts on bird feeding will be required in the ES.

With regards to coastal processes, the MMO expresses satisfaction that the potential impacts of the works have been identified, and will be assessed in the ES. They ask that the ES also includes specific details about any dredging



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proposed, saying that the documentation provided is inconsistent about whether any dredging will take place. The response outlines the MMO's expectations for information relating to dredging, including sediment analysis, assessment of impact, and mitigation, and includes a request for precise details of the proposed jetty and scour protection works.

The MMO states that they provided comments on the proposed monitoring and modelling programme in November 2018, and acknowledge that revisions are being made. They request further engagement prior to the submission of the draft DCO.

Medway Council

Medway Council "strongly supports the need case" for the proposed crossing, saying that they believe that the improved connectivity will provide opportunities for economic growth in the region. The Council adds that they "support the selection of the preferred route", including changes that have been made since 2017, in particular stating that they "strongly support" the proposal for three lanes in each direction along the crossing.

The Council "supports the proposed junction between the Lower Thames Crossing and the M2/A2", stating that Highways England should however examine whether the removal of east-bound access along the M2/A2 from Gravesend East to Medway would have a negative impact on routes within Gravesend. While the Council says that they do not intend to comment extensively on the route north of the river, they do express their "support for the proposed junction between the Lower Thames Crossing and the M25", citing the removal of the need for additional railway crossings, and the lower setting of the proposed crossing in the landscape.

Though the Council explains that they have a "neutral position in relation to public rights of way", they state that the crossing should in principle improve accessibility in the area for non-motorised transport, welcoming the green bridges proposed as part of the scheme. The Council also states that they have a "neutral position on the proposed measures to reduce the environmental impacts of the project", calling for mitigation of the scheme's visual impact. They express concern that the noise and air quality impacts of the scheme could be higher than currently estimated, as they believe that the level of traffic has been underestimated.

Medway Council "supports the proposals for a rest and service area" in the location proposed, given the distances between existing service stations in the road network locally. They express concern that the traffic modelling carried out does not reflect the impact on local traffic from an increase in housing provision. The Council says that the Hoo Peninsula has been identified as a location for housing and commercial development, commenting that the rebuilding of M2 Junction 1 "provides the only opportunity in the short to medium term to align growth in Medway with improvements to the Strategic Road Network". They therefore ask that the modelling takes account of such development needs, and offer to work with



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Highways England on this modelling. The Council also refers to other potential improvements to the local road network, including the A229 and motorway junctions on both the M2 and M20, that they believe should take place in order to make best use of the proposed crossing.

Regarding charges for the crossing, the Council calls for “a coherent and consistent approach” to be taken that includes the Dartford Crossing and potentially other crossings. They “support initial plans for how to build” the crossing, recommending that Highways England engage in further consultation as the proposals are finalised, and suggesting that transport of materials to and from the site be undertaken by river. They also encourage the use of Medway-based companies during construction.

National Grid

National Grid submitted a joint response on behalf of National Grid Electricity Transmission plc (NET) and National Grid Gas plc (NGG). They state that NET and NGG “do not object to the Proposed Development in principle”, and have been collaborating with Highways England on the diversion or removal of assets that would be impacted by the scheme. The response includes a list of specific assets within the boundary of the scheme, as well as a list of matters to be agreed on in future discussion in order to ensure the safety of the assets. NET and NGG emphasise the requirement that the proposed scheme do not impact negatively on the operation of their networks, adding that they will require Protective Provisions to be included in the Development Consent Order.

National Grid also provides statutory advice and guidance that should be considered during works in close proximity to its electricity and gas assets, covering a range of topics including continued access to its assets, clearance distances, and safe working practices.

Natural England

Natural England states that the scheme provides an opportunity for delivery of net environmental gain in accordance with the Government’s 25 Year Environmental Plan. They do not however consider that the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) has sufficient information for Natural England to provide detailed advice on the potential impacts on environment and biodiversity, or on proposed mitigation and compensation approaches. They describe their advice therefore as “necessarily limited in scope and detail”, while offering to work further with Highways England ahead of the DCO submission.

While Natural England welcomes the clarity on the positioning of construction compound areas, and the use of the proposed Code of Construction Practice, they call for clarity on whether additional works, for example on diverting utilities, or improving local roads, are to be assessed separately. The response contains several recommendations on replacement of habitat, with recommendations for how to provide such habitats given the long timeframe for construction. Natural England



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additionally outlines their expectations for the preparation of a Habitats Regulations Assessment, particularly with regard to the areas to be included. They comment on the consideration of protected species in the PEIR, suggesting further details to be included about invertebrates and local plant species. Natural England advises that the Environmental Statement (ES) should include an assessment of the potential impacts of the scheme on 'best and most versatile' agricultural land, including proposed mitigation measures.

Natural England expresses concern that the scheme will have significant negative impacts on the setting of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, with the additional removal of areas of land where landscape mitigation measures were implemented from HST. They expect a "visionary mitigation and compensation package" to be delivered and look forward to the completion of surveys on visual and noise impacts. They also recommend that the ES considers the impacts of the scheme along the M20 and M2/A2 corridors, including highway and utility diversion works as well as increased traffic.

Natural England recommends that the scheme be designed to avoid impacting negatively on designated sites, with robust mitigation in cases where impacts are expected. The response includes commentary on specific aspects of the scheme relating to designated sites, suggesting for example that the use of timing restrictions be included in the list of potential mitigation measures, and that the ES examine impacts within the overall area of influence of the scheme. They recommend that the air quality assessment should consider the potential impacts on designated sites from increased traffic, taking account of the in-combination impacts from other projects or developments locally. Natural England also comments on the approach to habitats of conservation importance, asking for clarity for example on the meaning of "new mosaic habitat", and saying that the zones of influence will need to be agreed.

Natural England hopes that the landscape will not be severed by the proposed crossing, suggesting that green bridges be provided and requests that the soft estate² be managed so as to maximise biodiversity. The response concludes with details of suggested opportunities for the scheme to deliver environmental legacy projects.

Network Rail

Network Rail raises the importance of ensuring that its assets, including land and railway lines, are not impacted negatively by the proposed crossing, citing its role as the statutory undertaker responsible for railway infrastructure. They state that an Asset Protection Agreement is required before any works begin in proximity to their infrastructure, detailing some areas where they say agreement needs to be reached, including ground movement monitoring.

² The natural habitats that have evolved along the edges of motorways and trunk roads



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and use by the scheme of Network Rail culverts and railway network. Network Rail lists some legal and commercial agreements that they say will need to be put in place to ensure protection of their assets. They additionally state that further requirements and approvals will be required before works begin, covering site safety and technical details.

Northumbrian Water

Northumbrian Water (Essex and Suffolk Water) states that they have a groundwater abstraction in proximity to the proposed scheme north of the river at Linford. They clarify that they do not object to the scheme, provided that the construction and operation of the proposed crossing will not have a negative effect on water quality or the ability to abstract the required amount of water from the source.

The Office for Nuclear Regulation

The Office for Nuclear Regulation has “no adverse comments” and does not provide further feedback.

The Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex

The Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex “agrees with the need” for an additional Thames crossing, saying that it would help alleviate increasing traffic congestion in and around the Thurrock area, which in turn would reduce the number of traffic accidents. The Commissioner, however, adds that while the additional crossing would enhance the road capacity, it would also result in additional security challenges and demands on the emergency services.

The Commissioner objects to the changes of the route because of the removal of a link road from Tilbury Docks to the LTC, saying that “this would increase LGV movements in the local area”.

With regards to the construction phase, the Commissioner expects some disruption as a result of that the increased traffic volumes. They add that Essex Police would not be able to support additional requests for local traffic management schemes and suggest that any temporary speed limits are enforced through the use of average speed detection systems. They seek clarifications about how the transportation of hazardous loads via the tunnels would be regulated.

The Commissioner also comments that the improved connectivity in the region could be exploited by criminals and seeks assurances that infrastructure such as Automatic Number Plate Recognition has been factored into the design of the scheme.

The Commissioner highlights the importance of collaborative approach and cohesive communications as the project progresses. The rest of their response mirrors that of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, a summary of which can be found on page 23.



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The Port of London Authority

The Port of London Authority (PLA) supports the need case for the LTC, believing it would increase trade at the Port of London and other nearby ports, increase jobs and reduce road freight.

The PLA supports a crossing downstream of Tilbury as they agree it will reduce pressure on the Dartford Crossing and the M25 and improve network resilience.

The PLA raises some concerns about the route north of the river, particularly the removal of the Tilbury junction and linking road, and expresses support for the submissions from the Port of Tilbury and London Gateway on this topic.

The PLA notices that the proposed minimum tunnel cover under the river has been reduced, adding that the reason for this reduction is not clear and requesting further justification. They highlight the significance of tunnel depth for river users both now and in the future. The PLA also asks that the impact of scour protection on the navigable depth of the river should also be assessed.

The PLA asks what restrictions might be imposed on river users within the exclusion area, for example on anchoring or public right of navigation, adding that any such restrictions are kept to a minimum. They also invite further discussion regarding proposed permanent and temporary use of PLA land.

Regarding the development boundary, the PLA seeks justification for the boundary's increased width as the tunnel passes under the river, adding that more detail is needed to establish whether the nearby Diver Shoal Groyne will be impacted.

The PLA encourages use of the river to transport construction materials and waste and asks that the final application makes clear its commitments relating to river use. They direct the applicant to the Codes of Construction Practice and River Transport Strategies submitted as part of the DCOs for Silvertown Tunnel and the Thames Tideway Tunnel. The PLA supports the plans to include an assessment of air quality impacts of construction in the environmental statement as part of the DCO application.

Regarding legacy, the PLA suggests engagement with the Thames Skills Academy about employment and training opportunities on the river. They also ask for the use of renewable energy to power the tunnel boring machines to be explored, along with legacy opportunities related to the jetty and the ferry from Tilbury to Gravesend.

The PLA provides several comments on the information in the PEIR. They feel there is not enough information about the potential jetty and ask that more detail on it and any associated dredging is included in the Water Framework Directive assessment. The PLA refers to conflicting information within the PEIR around plans for surface water drainage and asks for clarity on this matter. The PLA notes that the information provided on Marine Conservation Zones in the PEIR is not up to date and suggests engagement with Natural England to



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address this. Similarly, they note some missing species from the list of invasive species.

In terms of the information in the PEIR on how the project will affect people and communities, the PLA considers the list of potentially affected activities, infrastructure and assets to be incorrect and makes some specific suggestions for what to remove and include in the assessment. They recommend that a Navigational Risk Assessment is conducted and submitted with the DCO application which considers the full range of activities on the river and how impacts can be minimized and mitigated, and invites prompt engagement on this matter.

The PLA believes the regular engagement throughout the development of proposals has been useful and constructive.

Port of Tilbury London Ltd

Port of Tilbury London Ltd (PoTLL)'s response focuses on the removal of the Tilbury Link Road (TLR) from the current proposals. They agree with the need for the LTC, believing it has the potential to enhance access to and from the port and improve economic growth and sustainability in the area. However, the removal of a link road to Tilbury as previously planned has led PoTLL to object to the preferred route and the proposals as a whole, on the grounds that they do not meet the requirements set out in the National Policy Statement for National Networks regarding providing capacity and connectivity to support national and local economic activity, facilitate growth and create jobs.

The Authority emphasises the significance of the port in driving economic growth and job creation in south Essex, adding that without adequate connectivity between the LTC and the port, this potential will not be maximized. PoTLL feels that removing the TLR makes it less likely that the benefits of the LTC will outweigh the financial and environmental costs.

PoTLL highlights that they have engaged thoroughly throughout the development of the proposals, supporting the proposals while making clear that the TLR was an important factor in this support.

They criticize the consultation process which they feel has not made enough information available for PoTLL to understand and question the evidence supporting the removal of the TLR. They believe that Highways England was not forthcoming with traffic modelling and cost-benefit analysis information when asked during the consultation period. They suggest the information on which Highways England based its decision to remove the TLR should be made available to stakeholders as part of the consultation.

PoTLL considers that there has not been sufficient explanation as to why the TLR has been removed from the current proposals and calls into question the reasons that are provided. They consider the traffic-related arguments for removing the TLR are "not substantiated" as they believe the TLR would improve journey times and connectivity in the region:



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Regarding the justification that the TLR is not compatible with the road traffic plan for the Tilbury2 DCO application, PoTLL considers this concern to be unfounded and encourages further engagement to establish how the TLR could be accommodated alongside the Tilbury2 plans.

PoTLL questions the claim that the TLR would cause significant environmental impacts. They believe that ecological impact has been assessed without taking into account mitigation and compensation measures associated with the Tilbury2 project which will already be in place by the time the LTC begins construction. As such they consider the ecological impacts of the TLR have been given "inappropriate weight" and will be less than stated in the PEIR. This leads PoTLL to believe that the decision to exclude the TLR on environmental grounds may not be well-founded.

Similarly, the Authority believes that the heritage impacts listed as justification for removing the TLR are not significant, especially when considered cumulatively in combination with the plans for Tilbury2 and with landscaping to mitigate the impact. They add that concerns about flooding and the need for more flood storage compensation volume could be overcome and do not consider it sufficient reason to remove the TLR.

PoTLL believes that inclusion of the TLR in the proposals would allow the scheme to perform better against the project's overarching objectives, without affecting the cost-effectiveness of the scheme.

PoTLL provides other comments in its capacity as port operator and landowner. They ask that vessel movements are not disrupted during construction, and that construction materials are transported by river using the port wherever possible. The PoTLL agrees in principle to Highways England accessing its land during construction, but adds that access will need to be restricted to the specified routes to avoid disrupting port operations.

Public Health England

Public Health England is "generally satisfied with the proposed methodology" included in the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR). They, however, make a range of detailed recommendations about planned or additional assessments.

These focus on air and water quality, waste materials, electric and magnetic fields, wider well-being, possible health impacts on vulnerable or disadvantaged populations and noise pollution. With regards to the health impact of noise pollution, Public Health England comments that they have been unable to find any discussion of this in the PEIR and expect this to be rectified at the next stage of assessment.

Royal Mail Group

Royal Mail Group "broadly welcomes the Lower Thames Crossing proposals" but expresses concern about the potential impact the construction phase might have on their nine operations sites located in the area. They stress the



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importance of having “uninterrupted access to the wider region via the M25, including the Dartford Crossing, and the A12”.

Royal Mail makes a range of requests to be considered during the construction phase including areas and days/times to be avoided. They add that during the London Olympics, they were given access to roads closed to general traffic and ask for such opportunities to be explored by Highways England.

Royal Mail is also concerned whether the proposed tunnel would be sufficiently high to accommodate their double-deck trailers, adding that the standard for a motorway bridge is 16'6”.

Given the scale of the construction activities, Royal Mail emphasises the need for close coordination between Lower Thames Crossing works and other Highways England and statutory schemes. Related to this, they request further engagement with Highways England.

RWE Generation UK Plc

RWE Generation UK Plc, the owner of Tilbury B Power Station which is in the process of being demolished, confirms that their plans to promote a Tilbury Energy Centre through a Development Consent Order have been frozen. However, the site remains suitable for future gas fired power station development and they would like to continue engaging with the LTC team to agree and maintain two routes for the construction of a potential gas pipeline. RWE believe that “there is no foreseeable impediment that would prevent construction of either option in combination with the LTC”.

Shorne Parish Council

Shorne Parish Council opposes the preferred route east of Gravesend due to concerns about the impact on local traffic, environment and residents. The Council notes that the proposals require a “very large” area of green belt land in Shorne Parish, adding that the amount required has increased from previous consultations. They give examples such as the A2 junction being bigger than in the 2016 consultation, and the proposals for service roads which previously had not been mentioned.

Regarding the southern tunnel entrance, the Council acknowledges this has been moved to the south since a previous consultation, but asks it is moved further south still in order to reduce the environmental impact on Chalk Church and Crematorium, local residents and the North Kent Marshes. They ask that the green bridges are made as wide as possible to make them more attractive to users and reduce the impact of the road on nearby residents.

The Council does not think that impacts of the LTC on public rights of way such as footpaths, cycling paths and bridleways have been sufficiently mitigated. They suggest some solutions, including a continuous footpath and cycle track along the west side of the LTC and commitments to ensuring that the bridleway network is enhanced.

Regarding construction, the Council raises concerns that construction in the



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Chalk area will cause pollution to the North Kent Marshes and the Ramsar site, and that dewatering will have a negative impact on the Church building and on the water supply to the marshes. The Council is worried about the impact of construction traffic on the A226 and opposes the use of Thong Lane by construction vehicles. They also ask that measures are put in place to reduce the visual impact of the construction compound on neighbouring houses.

In terms of traffic, the Council raises concerns about the design of Gravesend East junction. It believes the proposed plans will make traffic flow worse and asks for the junction to be redesigned with slip roads, a pedestrian crossing, and a simplified two-way side road system.

The Council challenges that assumption that the local road network could absorb the predicted increased traffic flow, particularly on busy roads such as the M2, A227, A228 and A229. They are also concerned about increased traffic on local roads affecting the safety of local people and visitors to the area.

The Council questions the accuracy of the traffic modelling, as they consider the data to be outdated and the predictions are only valid at a regional rather than local level. They believe that new and planned housing developments have not been taken into account when predicting future traffic levels, and also ask that local traffic data is published.

In relation to environmental impact, the Council seeks reassurance that rainfall estimates are correct so as to minimize the risk of drainage ponds overflowing and contaminating the marshes. They also highlight an important fresh water supply to the marshes and the Ramsar site and ask that this is not disturbed by the development.

The Council feels that the air quality information provided in the consultation documentation is difficult to understand, and as with the traffic modeling, is worried that regional data is being applied at a local scale. They consider noise impacts to be significant and request more detailed information about this, including noise contour diagrams, and request landscaping and mitigation of visual impacts, particularly to protect the villages of Thong and Chalk.

The Council notes that Thong Village is particularly affected in terms of land take and asks that the needs of these residents are carefully considered and addressed through mitigation measures.

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council "remains broadly supportive of the project" but at the same time shares some of the concerns raised by Thurrock Council. The Council comments that as part of the Association of South Essex Local Authorities they are preparing a Joint Strategic Plan for South Essex which the Lower Thames Crossing could contribute to by improving connectivity or affect adversely by prohibiting housing



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developments.

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council agrees that the Lower Thames Crossing would reduce journey times, offer resilience and provide economic opportunities at both national and local level. The Council stresses that the project would be a major employer in the region during the construction phase and would like the benefits for the local communities to be maximized for example by closely working with local suppliers or by offering construction training.

The Council raises concerns that the Tilbury Link Road has been removed from the scheme, which they describe as a lost growth opportunity. They ask for it to be accommodated, alongside the ability to access LTC southbound from the A13 Eastbound.

The Council is concerned about the potential impact on the wider road network with a particular reference to A127, A13 and A130, which they describe as essential for the housing and economic growth of the area. They seek assurances that improvement schemes for those roads will be funded and provided for.

The Council would like potential environmental impacts to be kept to a minimum and suggests that any spoil should be moved via rail or river transport rather than by road. They also comment that other projects in the past used the spoil to create wildlife habitats.

In the context of their concerns about air quality, the Council asks for more emphasis to be placed on providing measures that reduce standing traffic and congestion, including intelligent information signage.

With regards to the proposed charging system, the Council welcomes that the system proposed for LTC is similar to that used at Dartford Crossing but adds that currently it is unclear how it would affect the traffic flow in local towns and calls for this to be assessed further.

Suffolk County Council

Suffolk County Council “supports the need case and preferred route for the Lower Thames Crossing”, citing traffic, resilience of the network and economic benefits.

The Council, however, calls for further traffic modelling on the potential impact of the project on roads within Suffolk and Essex, particularly the A12 from the A14 to its junction with the M25. The Council raises detailed concerns about the construction period and the associated increase in traffic, especially of HGVs and asks for this to be managed appropriately.

Suffolk County Council welcomes the intention of Highways England to optimise road networks but adds that for this to happen, timely information through intelligent signage will have to be provided to drivers to enable a route choice. Related to this, they add that the charges for using the Lower Thames Crossing should be similar to those applied at Dartford Crossing and crossings to the east such as the Silvertown Tunnel.



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The Council stresses that the scheme should be future-proofed and have the ability to respond to changing technologies and travel patterns. They also expect robust digital connectivity.

Swale Borough Council

Swale Borough Council agrees that there is a need for a Lower Thames Crossing but says that they cannot support the current proposals until there is an investment commitment to address the impacts of the project across the wider Kent network.

The Council states that “LTC will simply move the traffic queues further east” and is concerned that traffic in the borough would increase, particularly with reference to the already congested Junctions 5 and 7 on the M2. They add that highways capacity is already a barrier to achieving their housing targets and additional traffic would make “an already unacceptable position worse”.

The Council, however, adds that if the Government and Highways England “provide sufficient comfort in respect of the wider infrastructure issues”, they may consider withdrawing their objection to the scheme.

Transport for London

Transport for London (TfL) says that in principle they are supportive of the proposed Lower Thames Crossing citing the potential for improved resilience but adds that “this is subject to being satisfied that it will not result in a significant increase in the number of additional car or goods vehicle trips being generated within London”.

TfL agrees that upon opening, the LTC would improve traffic conditions but they seek assurances that these benefits would not be “eroded over time” if the traffic growth is higher than the core predictions. TfL stresses that if the scheme has not accounted for this, sections of their road network, including Gallows Comer junction and A13, could experience an increase in traffic and the associated with it deteriorating air quality.

In the context of their concerns, TfL would like further information on:

- what the impact of the LTC would be on the Transport for London Road Network and wider network in London in different growth scenarios (low and high growth);
- what mitigating measures may be required; and
- the degree of certainty behind the assumptions around the proportion of traffic that would use the Blackwall Tunnel once the LTC is operational.

Transport for London comments that they expect Highways England to fund any required mitigations to the road network.

With regards to the proposed charges for using the crossing, TfL argues that they can be an important tool in managing demand and congestion. To this end, they suggest that a consultation forum is set up to discuss the



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development of a charging strategy that explores the interaction between all relevant crossings.

TfL stresses that any potential disruption during the building phase should be kept to a minimum and suggests that a close cooperation between the two organisations is essential to ensure that any cumulative impacts arising from the concurrent Silvertown Tunnel construction are managed appropriately.

As regard to non-motorised users, TfL asks that any potential negative impacts are either removed or minimised as far as possible. They add that “maintaining the limited opportunities for these users to cross the M25 is important to preserve access between communities and services”.

Thanet District Council

Thanet District Council states its “strong support” for the Lower Thames Crossing, adding that the scheme would provide economic and social benefits across the eastern half of the South-East region, improve connectivity and reduce journey times between Kent and East Kent, and the rest of the country.

Thurrock Council

Thurrock Council objects to the Lower Thames Crossing on multiple grounds including a belief that its impacts would undermine the Council’s housing growth plan, which represents a quarter of housing growth across the wider South Essex area.

The Council acknowledges that “in principle, the LTC presents a huge opportunity to support and enable this growth in sustainable locations, particularly in East Tilbury, Chadwell St Mary and South Ockendon” but concludes that the current design of the scheme “does not accommodate this and instead severely limits the scale of sustainable housing growth”. In support of this view, the Council points to the removal of the Tilbury Link Road which, they say, would have been beneficial to the local economy.

The Council also comments that the proposals “appear contrary to important national and strategic policy tests.” They provide analysis on policy tests from the National Policy Statement on National Networks that if considers are not being adequately met, for example ‘adequacy of options appraisal’ and ‘driving prosperity’.

The Council highlights where they feel there are deficiencies in the information presented or where further detail is needed. For example, the Council makes detailed observations about traffic modelling, concluding that there is insufficient assessment about how the LTC would affect local roads.

The Council also questions how resilient to changing circumstances the scheme is, adding that the consultation documents present no evidence about how the scheme would respond to changes to travel behaviour, modal shift and emerging technologies.



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The Council highlights specific design elements of the proposed scheme which in their opinion require moderation or further review, for example:

- the Council argues against the decision to exclude the Tilbury Link Road from the LTC and calls for it to be re-instated, with appropriate traffic management;
- discussing the proposed Rest and Service Area, the Council would like it to be constructed further north, adding that the current location is part of land being considered for housing development;
- the Council explains that there will be a number of restricted movements at the A13 connections and asks that these are reconfigured;
- the Council is concerned about the visual impact of the current plans at Mardyke Valley and asks that alternative design options are considered;
- they call for alternative design options for the treatment of the viaduct over the Tilbury Loop line to reduce the environmental impact;
- the Council notes that an existing public Gypsy and Traveller site located at Gammon Field would be relocated and is concerned that the proposed new location has not been adequately assessed to determine its suitability;
- the Council calls for physical design mitigation measures to address the potential impacts of the LTC on the Borough's residents, for example bunds and cut and cover tunnels.

The Council raises a number of environmental concerns, both in terms of landscape impact, access to green and open spaces and air quality assessment. They also comment that the proposed alignment crosses through five of its Green Grid Improvement Zones and, if not mitigated appropriately, it would contravene the Council's development plan. The Council adds that a lot has changed since the EIA Scoping Opinion for the LTC was issued, including an update to the development boundary, which could have led to new, unassessed, environmental impacts. They also provide detailed comments on sections of the PEIR. Overall, the Council concludes that the PEIR lacks detail, offers insufficient assessment and some of its sections (such as the Flood Risk Assessment and Waste Management Plan) have not been consulted on.

In terms of impact on heritage sites, the Council comments that they are considering developing Coalhouse Fort into an events facility and a visitor attraction and that these plans would be affected by the proposed scheme.

The Council considers that the LTC would have significant negative impacts on its land titles. Specific issues include: the impact on agricultural land, loss of amenity, loss of residential property (e.g. Gammon Field), loss of commercial and residential development potential, and 'injurious affection'. However, they acknowledge the requirement to work with Highways England to mitigate the negative impacts and maximise the benefits to the



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wider community.

As a next step of the process, the Council suggests a comprehensive engagement programme with Highways England to discuss specific aspects of the scheme.

Thurrock Council has also commissioned a detailed review of the consultation documents which supplements its response.

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council strongly supports the need case for the Lower Thames Crossing on the basis that it would improve the network's resilience, contribute to economic growth and provide a new direct link between Kent and Essex. They "support the preferred route and design changes",

The Council, however, express strong concerns about the potential impact on local roads (A228, A229, A20, junction 3 at M2 and junction 4 at M20) and by extension their ability to sustain the planned housing growth in the borough. The Council also expresses concerns about the traffic forecast increase in HGV traffic. They ask for sufficient mitigation measures to be put in place.

In terms of the design of the scheme, the Council welcomes what is currently proposed at the crossing and south of the river, and asks for the structures to be designed with minimal visual impact in mind.

With regards to the proposals north of the river, the Council "questions whether the junction of the M25 and the A13 should be improved, in addition to the provision of west facing slips at the junction of the LTC and A13."

The Council believes that where possible, provisions should be made for non-motorised users and gives the A21 non-motorised users route between Tonbridge and Pembury as an example of good practice.

The Council is concerned that the Preliminary Environmental Information Summary is limited in scope and does not include designated sites within the borough, which even though are not immediately adjacent to the project area, could still be affected. They request further environmental assessments to be included within the Environmental Statement.

In terms of the proposed charges for using the Lower Thames Crossing, the Council believes that they should be the same as those applied at Dartford and that the Dart Charge system should be extended to cover both crossings. The Council stresses that the charges should be affordable to residents and businesses in Tonbridge and Malling.

Discussing the proposed rest and service facilities, the Council finds the proposed location 'suitable'.

The Council has no specific comments about the proposed changes to the utilities infrastructure but encourages Highways England to explore opportunities to place any existing overhead utilities underground.



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They also note that engagement with residents and businesses in the borough is perceived to be limited and would welcome early engagement with Highways England in preparation of the DCO application, ES and construction plan for the LTC.



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3. The need for the Lower Thames Crossing

3.1. Overview

Q1a asks:

“Do you agree or disagree that the Lower Thames Crossing is needed?”

In total 26,127 respondents answered this question and the results are summarised in the charts³ below.

Chart 1: Answers from members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations (n=25,901)

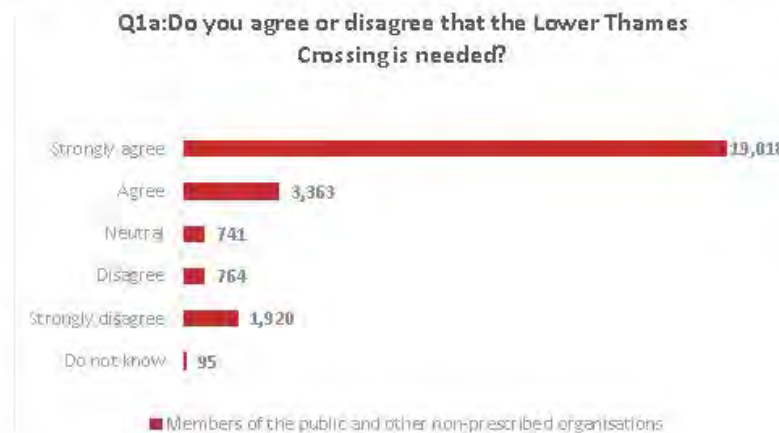
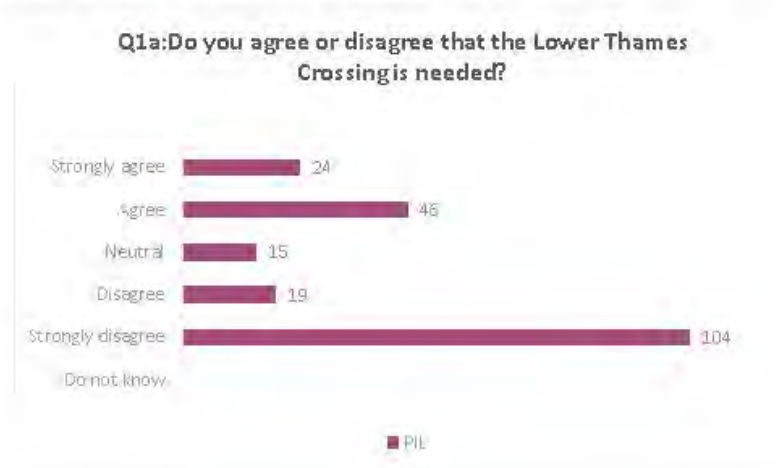


Chart 2: Answers from people with interest in land (PIL) (n=208)

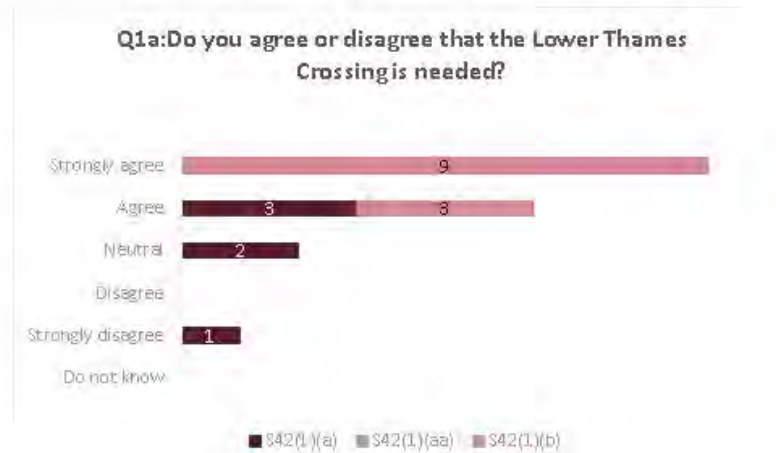


³ Respondents who did not respond using the questionnaire were not able to complete this question



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Chart 3: Answers from prescribed consultees (n=18)



Additionally, 24,306 respondents discussed the need case for the Lower Thames Crossing as part of their qualitative feedback. This chapter presents a summary of their comments.

Even though this question asks for views on the specific Highways England’s proposals, some respondents engaged with it from a broader perspective and discussed the general need for a new crossing on the Lower Thames. Because of this, this chapter should be read in conjunction with Chapter 4 (Preferred Route).

3.2. Comments expressed by members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations

3.2.1. Reasons for supporting the need for the Lower Thames Crossing

21,236 respondents comment positively on the need for the Lower Thames Crossing or identify benefits associated with it as part of their qualitative feedback.

Many of these respondents do not provide further comment and describe the new crossing as ‘needed’, ‘overdue’, ‘required’ or ‘necessary’.

“Fully support it and would like to see it happen sooner rather than later” (UserID 11031)

Some respondents argue that the benefits of the crossing would outweigh any potential impacts or that wider interests need to be prioritised over local objections. Where these respondents raise specific potential impacts, these are summarised in the relevant section below, or the relevant chapter of this report where applicable.

“In all cases of development there is always someone at a disadvantage. Being local I have sympathy for their position. However this Road/tunnel system is badly needed to contribute to increased traffic flow” (UserID 1318)



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A few respondents caveat their support for the need case. Some of these respondents suggest that they support the need case provided the project is carried out to a high standard or that the result is an effective solution to existing concerns, whilst others caveat their support with specific concerns or suggestions. These specific concerns or suggestions are captured in the relevant section below, or the relevant chapters of this report where applicable.

Community

Some respondents support the need case as they feel the LTC would be beneficial for local communities such as Dartford and improve the lives of local residents. Respondents often tie these comments to concerns about the existing traffic levels or the need to improve congestion. See the 'Transport' section below for more information.

Some respondents feel that the project is required in order to accommodate future population growth and housing developments in the region. They argue that the population is expanding and that there is a large amount of housing proposed for the area, which would lead to increased traffic.

"The proposed crossing is a direct need to match the amount of house building going on in the South East" (User ID 2691)

Meanwhile, some respondents feel that the new crossing would improve the health and wellbeing of local residents. These respondents typically suggest that current traffic conditions cause stress or illnesses related to high levels of air pollution, or comment more generally on the need to improve residents' quality of life.

"I travel to see my disabled parents in Cambridge and they travel to see us in Dover. We used to live in Canterbury also. Myself and my parents being disabled just thinking of the journey is enough to give you palpitations and anxiety" (User ID 17838)

A few respondents comment on the distribution of crossings along the Thames, suggesting that there are not enough crossings on the lower section of the Thames outside East London, in contrast to West London.

Some respondents comment specifically on how the LTC would be beneficial for them personally. They typically comment on how this might help with their routine or day-to-day life with reference to wide-ranging specific activities.

Economy

Some respondents, including the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), Essex Chambers of Commerce, Suffolk Chamber of Commerce's Transport and Infrastructure Board, the Essex Business Board, a joint response from Kent and Medway Economic Partnership (KMEP) and Kent and Medway Business Advisory Board (BAB), South East Local Enterprise Partnership, the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership, Canterbury Christ Church University, Segro PLC and Kent and Medway Business Advisory Board, support the need case for



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the LTC because they believe that it would help local business and the local economy. Most of these respondents focus on the current delays and suggest that less traffic would improve conditions for existing businesses, although some also believe that the LTC could help to attract new businesses and industry to the area. Similarly, some respondents, including BCC, Essex Chambers of Commerce, a joint response from Kent and Medway Economic Partnership (KMEP) and Kent and Medway Business Advisory Board (BAB), the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership, Canterbury Christ Church University and the Port of Dover, argue that the LTC is necessary to support the wider national economy. These respondents say that a crossing could support economic growth and productivity beyond regional level.

A few respondents suggest that Brexit increases the need for the LTC. Some suggest that there will be increased numbers of freight movements on the roads, particularly through Kent, after Brexit, or that trade through the ports in Kent would take on increased importance, whereas others suggest that the road network would need to be resilient.

Some respondents suggest that another potential economic benefit could be an increase in jobs and employment in the local area, whilst a few say that the crossing would help with their commute to work.

Environment

Some respondents support the need case for the LTC because they argue that stationary or slow-moving traffic contributes to poor air quality and higher carbon emissions.

Others refer to the potential of the LTC to lower noise levels by distributing traffic. These respondents often refer to the current situation at Dartford Crossing where, they say, because of the high concentration of (slow-moving) traffic, noise pollution is excessive.

"We have lived in Dartford for 35+ years and have suffered the increased noise, pollution and traffic congestion over this time. The Lower Thames Crossing will be the answer to some of these problems" (User ID 568)

Some respondents feel the LTC would benefit the environment more generally, without commenting on specific improvements.

Transport

Most respondents to this consultation support the need case for the LTC because of the level of congestion at present and need to alleviate this. Many of these respondents refer to existing congestion at the Dartford Crossing or on the M25, although some refer to other locations including the Blackwall Tunnel.

"As a resident of the area of the current single crossing, my life is adversely impacted on a regular basis by congestion caused by problems at the crossing" (User ID 5907)



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A few respondents who do not necessarily support the need case do feel that it may be beneficial in terms of reducing congestion. For information on how respondents feel that traffic levels would be affected by the proposed LTC see Chapter 14 (Traffic).

Many respondents feel that the LTC would help to improve journey times, particularly for those travelling between Kent and Essex. More information on how respondents think the LTC would improve the connectivity in the region and beyond, please see Chapter 4 (Preferred Route).

Many, including Transport East, the Freight Transport Association (FTA), the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) and the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry, also feel that the new crossing would help to improve the resilience of the road network by providing another crossing over the Thames. They feel that this would be beneficial in the event of an accident or closure of one of the current crossings. Some of these respondents refer to weather- or wind-related closure of the existing Dartford Crossing whilst others comment on the frequency of accidents and closures at present.

“Better connectivity across Thames is needed and currently options are limited if there are problems in tunnels or QE2 bridge. How we solve this is the key question!” (User ID 25143)

Some respondents feel that there is a need for a crossing to improve safety. They comment on the high number of accidents at present or suggest that existing high traffic volumes increase the likelihood of accidents. Others argue that the new crossing is necessary because of a lack of realistic or viable alternatives to travelling by car. They believe that public transport is inadequate or expensive, particularly rail travel.

A few respondents say that the LTC would help to improve fuel efficiency by reducing the distance which cars need to travel, and the amount of time spent with engines idling in stationary traffic.

Other

Some respondents support the need case for the LTC but believe that more crossings would be required in addition to the preferred route and tunnels.

Other respondents comment exclusively on issues related to the existing Dartford Crossing without necessarily referring to the need case for the LTC. These comments typically relate to the design or condition of the Dartford Crossing.

3.2.2. Reasons for opposing the need for the Lower Thames Crossing

3,534 respondents express concerns or raise objections to the need for the Lower Thames Crossing.

Many of these respondents state their opposition to the need case for the LTC without providing further detailed comment. They say that a crossing is ‘not needed’, ‘not required’ or ‘unnecessary’.



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Some suggest that those responsible for assessing the need case are driven by a profit motive or that the decision-making process relating to the assessment of a need for a crossing has been in some way inadequate.

Some respondents say that the existing crossings are sufficient and that no further crossings are necessary. They sometimes say that existing conditions at the Dartford Crossing are acceptable, with a few arguing that there has been an improvement since toll booths were removed.

“Since the Dartford bridge was built for traffic running from Essex into Kent and the tolls taken away, the traffic flow has improved considerable” (User ID 2268)

A few respondents, including the Campaign for Better Transport, believe that changing road use, modal shift or a possible reduction in car ownership could eliminate the need for the LTC in future.

Community

Some respondents raise concerns about the impact a crossing would have on local communities and the disruption it would cause to the lives of local people. Some also express concerns about a crossing possibly impacting on the health or wellbeing of local residents, particularly in relation to higher levels of pollution.

A few respondents express concerns related to security and policing, with some saying that the preferred route would be a potential terrorist target.

Other community related concerns, though raised within respondents' comments on the need case, relate to the location of the route and are summarised in Chapter 4 (Preferred Route).

Economy

Some respondents raise concerns about the cost or value for money of the LTC, with some suggesting it would be a waste of public funds. Meanwhile, some respondents argue that too much money is being spent on infrastructure in the South or Southeast of England and that not enough is spent in other parts of the country.

“There has to be an end to continually investing in better transport links in London and the South East. More investment is urgently required in the North.” (User ID 7510)

Some respondents make reference to Brexit, suggesting that a significant infrastructure project should not be undertaken at this time given uncertainty around the UK's future position, or that a potential decrease in demand for movement of goods to the Channel Ports would eliminate the need for a crossing.

A few respondents, including Thurrock Business Board and the Campaign for Better Transport, challenge the suggestion that the new crossing would create economic growth or say that it could have a negative impact on local businesses and the local economy.



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“More congestion will have a negative impact on the local economy e.g. customers cannot reach local businesses, local trades cannot move about, people cannot get to and from their place of employment easily. Existing local businesses will suffer because of this new road. Essex and Kent have always been strong economically because of the success of small businesses here. This road will destroy all this.” (User ID 19085)

Many respondents express concerns about the ownership and financing of the LTC. Among those, many respondents fear that the crossing would be sold to a foreign company, while others object to private financing of the project, sometimes mentioning the use of Private Finance Initiative (PFI). A few respondents, including ICE South East England, feel that there is a lack of clarity as to how the project is going to be financed.

Environment

Some respondents oppose the need case for the LTC on the basis that it could worsen pollution or negatively impact upon air quality, while others believe that the new crossing could damage or destroy areas of countryside, green belt or farmland.

‘I think the countryside needs to be preserved, it is already in short supply in this area’ (User ID 16831)

Some respondents also oppose the need case because of a potential increase in carbon emissions with some respondents, including the Kent Wildlife Trust, questioning how this would fit in with the UK's climate change strategy.

Meanwhile, some raise general concerns about possible impacts from a crossing on wildlife, landscape, and noise levels. Please refer to Chapter 11 (Environment) for further information on these issues.

Transport

Many respondents, including Cycling UK and Campaign for Better Transport, are opposed to the need case for the LTC because of the impact they feel that this would have on congestion. Some feel that the new crossing would not improve the current traffic situation, whilst others worry it would make the situation worse.

‘Traffic when the M25 is gridlocked will move to the new tunnel causing chaos in the surrounding villages and particularly the A227 which is not designed for heavy traffic’ (Cycling UK)

Those who feel that the new crossing would not improve the current situation suggest that it does not address existing problems or that it would not help certain areas. For example, some suggest that the LTC taking traffic into Kent would not address the main issue of the Dartford Crossing and traffic using the M25 orbital around London. Meanwhile, those who feel the new crossing would make the situation worse say that constructing a new road could attract more traffic onto the roads.



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A few respondents oppose the need case as they feel that having more traffic on the roads would lead to higher number of traffic incidents.

3.2.3. *Alternatives to the Lower Thames Crossing*

The most popular alternative to a crossing amongst respondents, including CPRE Kent, South East Essex Friends of the Earth, Essex Wildlife Trust, Kent Wildlife Trust and the Campaign for Better Transport, would be increased use of or investment in public transport, particularly rail links. Essex and Kent Wildlife Trusts both say that road building should be a "last resort" and that consideration should be given to minimising dependency on private vehicles, whilst the Campaign for Better Transport says that investment in rail could offer better value and environmental benefits. Similarly, some respondents say that there should be a focus on reducing the volume of traffic on the roads, whilst a few suggest there should be greater investment in cycling facilities rather than road building.

"The government should be investing its money into finding more sustainable solutions for traffic and could perhaps use the huge amount of money it would invest in this new road into improving public transport systems or alternative means of travel" (User ID 140)

Some respondents, including the Thames Crossing Action Group and the Campaign for Better Transport, argue that freight should be transported by rail, river or sea to a location closer to its final destination, rather than being transported by road, as a means of reducing the number of HGVs on the roads.

The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) supports the need case for a crossing but also feels that consideration should be given to improving rail links for the transport of freight.

Some respondents argue that Dartford Crossing should be improved rather than building a new crossing. Some, including the Thames Crossing Action Group, believe that better management of traffic at the existing crossing would alleviate congestion without the need for additional capacity. Similarly, some respondents, including Kent and Essex Wildlife Trusts and the Campaign for Better Transport, feel there should be a focus on improving existing roads and maintaining the road network rather than building new roads.

"The project will cost up to £6.8 billion to deliver just 14.5 miles of motorway standard road. That same investment in maintaining the existing road network could make a significant contribution to addressing the estimated £9 billion road maintenance backlog, providing benefits over a much wider area, at much lower environmental cost" (Campaign for Better Transport)

A few respondents believe that road use should be reduced through localisation of people's lifestyle, with more people working from home or



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living nearer to work, whilst some respondents argue that all options should be considered before settling on the need to build a new road.

Some respondents suggest various other road improvement schemes which they feel should be undertaken. These suggestions include:

- a connection from the M27 to the M20;
- improvements to the A12; and
- an upgraded or widened M25.

Metrotidal Ltd believes that consideration should be given to their 'independent but complementary proposals' for a Metrotidal Tilbury Tunnel (MIT), a Belvedere Crossing (BC) and a Metrotidal Lower Thames Orbital (MLTO) in place of the LTC.

Some respondents also suggest various other projects or activities which they feel could be undertaken, such as introducing ferries or spending the money from the project on public or social services.

3.2.4. Suggestions

Some respondents suggest various ways in which they feel the existing Dartford Crossing could be improved alongside the construction of the LTC, often relating to the design of the crossing or traffic management.

Some argue that a train line should be included in the plans for the LTC, providing a link between train services in Essex and Kent and providing access to East Anglia and the south of London.

Some respondents, including the University of Kent, feel that there is a need to focus on a wider integrated transport strategy, which they feel is necessary to ensure an effective roads strategy. Some of these respondents suggest that public and sustainable transport should be given consideration both within the LTC proposals and as part of a wider integrated transport strategy.

'No rail option to allow for a truly integrated transport system that would contribute to removing freight and passenger journeys and therefore extend the time before a third crossing will be needed'
(User ID 2915)

A few respondents make suggestions relating to national roads policy or the way in which roads are managed, such as road usage restraints – introduction of toll roads, for example – or measures to address driver behaviour and standards.

A few respondents feel that they require more information in relation to the need case for the LTC, or raise queries about the information provided.



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3.3. Comments expressed by people with interest in land

3.3.1. Reasons for supporting the need for the Lower Thames Crossing

78 PILs comment positively on the need for the Lower Thames Crossing or identify benefits associated with it as part of their qualitative feedback.

These comments mirror those raised by members of the public and focus on the need to address congestion, particularly at Dartford Crossing and improve the resilience of the road network. Related to this, PILs mention the economic and environmental benefits that would come from this in terms of businesses not wasting time in traffic jams and communities not being subjected to poor air quality.

A few PILs say that a crossing would be needed to future-proof the road network in anticipation of increased housing construction and population growth.

3.3.2. Reasons for opposing the need for the Lower Thames Crossing

126 PILs raise concerns or object to the need for the Lower Thames Crossing as part of their qualitative feedback.

Many of those do not provide further detail and those who do, tend to raise similar arguments to those expressed by members of the public.

Some PILs are concerned that the new crossing would exacerbate air pollution problems in the area, disrupt local communities, reduce property prices and destroy green belt land.

Others argue that the project would be too expensive and unnecessary as Brexit would affect traffic demand. In contrast, other PILs object to the need case for the LTC as they believe that it would make congestion problems worse by attracting more cars on to the road.

A few PILs argue that the existing crossing is sufficient, with some of these referring to improvements following the removal of toll barriers.

3.3.3. Alternatives to the Lower Thames Crossing

The alternatives put forward by PILs mirror the arguments expressed by members of the public and include:

- improving Dartford Crossing instead;
- improving public transport; and
- moving freight by rail, river or sea.

3.3.4. Suggestions

A few PILs feel the plans should include improvements to Dartford Crossing, or that there is a need for rail provisions to be included.



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4. Preferred route for the Lower Thames Crossing

4.1. Overview

Q2a asks:

“Do you support or oppose our selection of the preferred route for the Lower Thames Crossing?”

In total 24,653 respondents answered this question and the results are summarised in the charts⁴ below.

Chart 4: Answers from members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations (n=24,429)

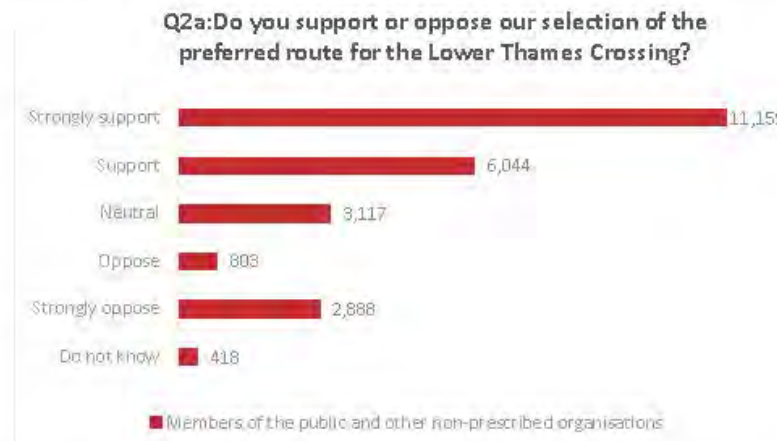
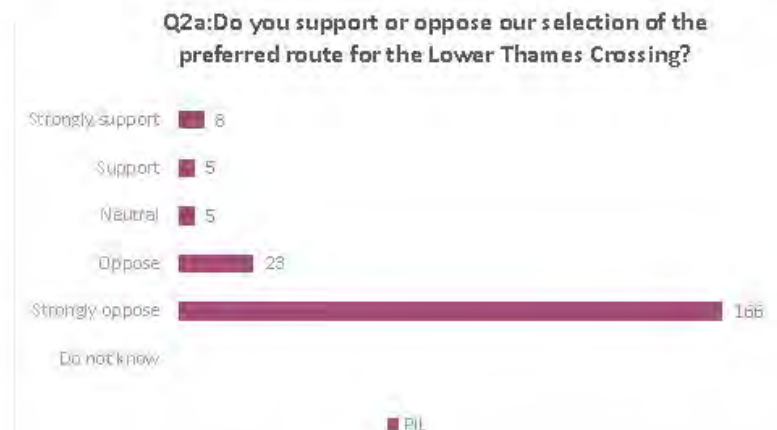


Chart 5: Answers from people with interest in land (PIL) (n=207)

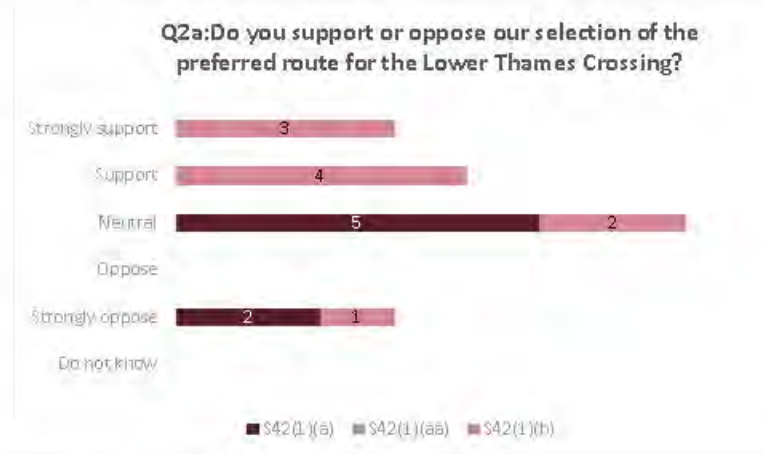


⁴ Respondents who did not respond using the questionnaire were not able to complete this question



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Chart 6: Answers from prescribed consultees (n=17)

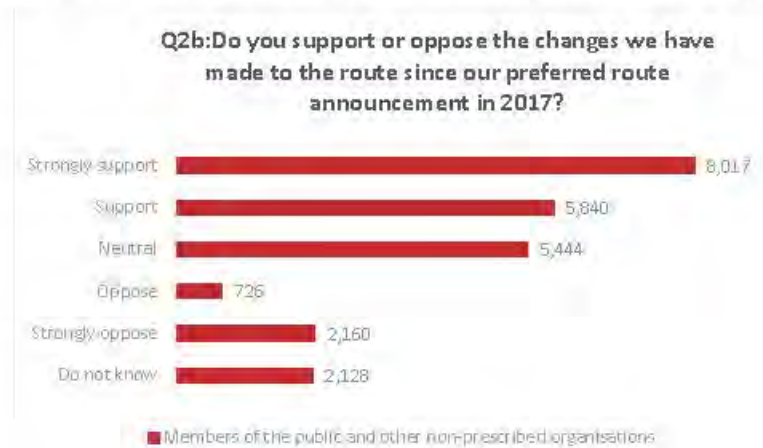


Q2b asks:

"Do you support or oppose the changes we have made to the route since our preferred route announcement in 2017?"

In total 24,538 respondents answered this question and the results are summarised in the charts⁶ below.

Chart 7: Answers from members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations (n=24,315)



⁶ Respondents who did not respond using the questionnaire were not able to complete this question.



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Chart 8: Answers from people with interest in land (PIL) (n=206)

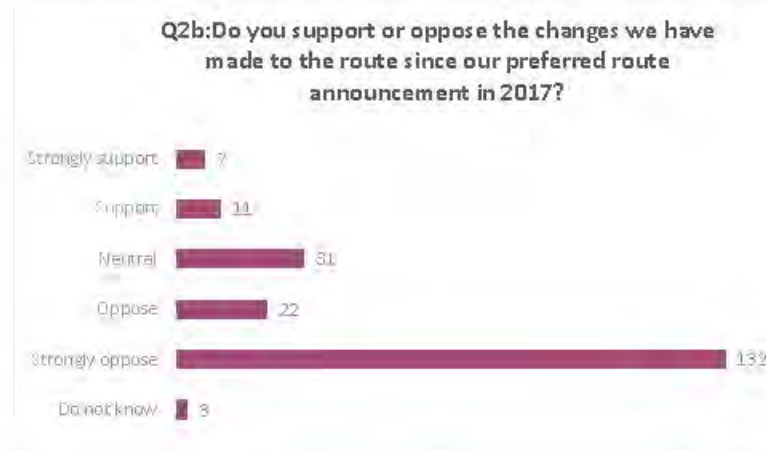
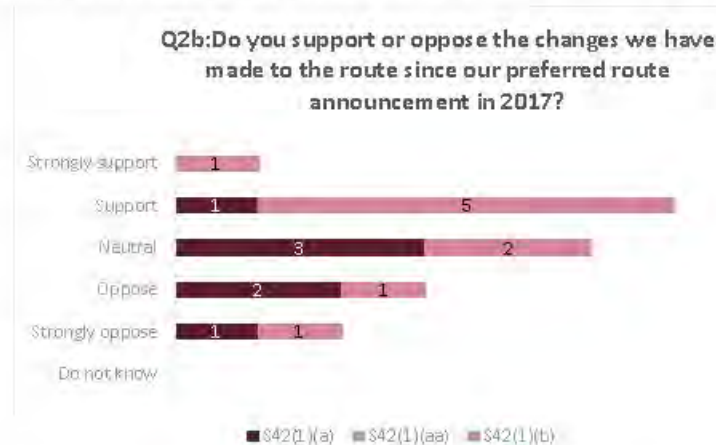


Chart 9: Answers from prescribed consultees (n=17)



Additionally, 15,786 respondents discussed the selection of the preferred route and subsequent changes as part of their qualitative feedback. This chapter presents a summary of their comments.

This section summarises comments made in reference to the entire route. These are often very similar to comments raised by respondents with regards to specific sections of the route, which are summarised in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

4.2. Comments expressed by members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations

Most of the comments focus on the selection of the route. Where respondents specifically discuss the changes to the route, this has been highlighted.



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4.2.1. **Reasons for supporting the preferred route for the Lower Thames Crossing**

11,217 respondents comment positively on the selection of the preferred route or identify benefits with it and/or its subsequent changes as part of their qualitative feedback.

General

Many respondents express supportive views about the preferred route for the Lower Thames Crossing in general terms or by adding that it is the best of the original options and urge Highways England to get on with it as soon as possible.

Many respondents, including the Essex Chambers of Commerce, acknowledge the route would have some adverse impacts on the local community and environment but argue that its benefits ultimately outweigh its impact.

“Whilst the proposed route will cause hardship and distress for people on the new route, I do believe that the route is carefully considered and for the greater benefit of a vast majority” (User ID 3965)

Some respondents qualify their support, often expressing a concern that the expected results would not be achieved or that some of the promises in terms of mitigation measures would not be kept.

Community

Many respondents who support the preferred route for the LTC believe that it would cause the least disruption compared to the other options, both in terms of number of properties affected and wider community impact. In support of this view, respondents refer to the proposed use of brownfield land and the relatively unspoiled character of the area.

“The final proposed route is the least intrusive and disruptive option, with the smallest number of people being displaced, and the route nearly all crossing open agricultural land” (User ID 2788)

Some respondents support the preferred route on accounts of its perceived benefit to local communities in terms of reduced congestion and pollution and by extension, improved quality of life. Often, these comments refer to Dartford’s residents or drivers using the Dartford Crossing.

Many of the respondents who support the preferred route argue that the route selection cannot satisfy everyone and that there will always be pros and cons but that the LTC has to go somewhere.

A few respondents refer to the population growth in the South East or in the area as a reason to support the selected location.



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Design

General

Some respondents express supportive comments about the design of the preferred route in general terms, describing it as 'practical', 'sensible' and 'well engineered' with a few referring specifically to the design changes made by Highways England since 2017.

"the changes strike me as a sensible amendment after feedback in earlier consultations". User (ID 453)

Many respondents believe that the preferred route for the LTC provides good connections to the existing network, particularly the major roads. Please see Chapters 8 and 9 (Northern and Southern Connections) for further discussion on these points.

"The route needs to be as non-disruptive as possible and link to the M2/A2 A13 and M25 as best as possible and I think the proposed route does that." (User ID 11241)

Some respondents believe that the design of the preferred route would improve traffic flow, often referring to LTC's motorway status, the removal of roundabouts which were included in the previous design, and the attempt to minimise the use of traffic lights or tight bends along the route.

Others welcome the use of bridges, viaducts and embankments proposed along the route. For further detail on this, please refer to Chapter 5 (Southern Route) and Chapter 7 (Northern Route).

Number of lanes

Many respondents support the proposed increase in number of lanes, saying that it would make the preferred route future-proofed. A majority of these respondents also welcome the fact the change was introduced following earlier consultation feedback, which they argue, indicates that Highways England has taken on board respondents' views.

Road height

Some respondents support the proposed road height, mainly because they believe it would reduce the potential noise and visual impact.

Economy

National and local economy

Many respondents, including South East Local Enterprise Partnership and Opportunity South Essex, argue that the Lower Thames Crossing would benefit the local areas, whether through jobs opportunities, a boost to the local economy or regeneration projects. A few of those comments relate to specific developments which could benefit from the LTC such as the Thames Gateway.

Some respondents believe that the preferred route would have a positive impact on local businesses by reducing congestion and enabling quicker



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and more direct journeys in the area than are currently possible. Related to this, some specifically mention that the preferred route would make journeys to and from the Channel Tunnel quicker and stress how this would enhance businesses.

“The current capacity constraints and consequent congestion problems are adversely affecting the efficiency of businesses located in the area as well as the employment and career opportunities of those that live nearby”. (Aviva Southern Counties)

Identifying similar benefits but on a wider scale, some respondents, including the British Chambers of Commerce and Opportunity South Essex, believe that the preferred route would benefit the national economy. For further discussion on these points, please refer to Chapter 3 (Need Case).

Cost/value for money

Many respondents consider that the preferred route for the Lower Thames Crossing is cost effective and delivers the best value for money. A few respondents specifically refer to the location of the preferred route along the Thames Estuary, arguing that it would cost more to build a crossing further east.

Environment

Many respondents comment in general terms on the perceived environmental benefits in terms of improved air quality and reduced carbon emissions.

“This crossing was proposed years ago as The East London River Crossing but the environmental lobby got hold of it and it was cancelled. The resulting lack of road infrastructure and increases in traffic volume have resulted in thousands of vehicles at a standstill queuing for the Tunnel, sometime for up to an hour, and the sheer amount of pollution generated by that is truly staggering” (User ID 14329)

In addition, many respondents feel that the preferred route would minimise specific environmental impacts:

- **visual impact:** some respondents say that they appreciate the aesthetics of this route, arguing that it blends well within the landscape.
- **wildlife and ecology:** a few respondents mention specific areas avoided by the route such as marshlands or conservation areas.
- **countryside and green belt land:** some respondents say that the preferred route would result in less loss of green belt than other options.
- **noise impact:** a few respondents comment that the proposed road height or the use of cuttings and embankments would reduce noise pollution.
- **designated areas:** some respondents are pleased that the preferred route would avoid or have less impact on Sites of Specific Scientific



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interest (SSSI) compared to other options.

Transport

The vast majority of the respondents who support the preferred route for the LTC, including the British Chambers of Commerce, Suffolk Chamber of Commerce's Transport and Infrastructure Board, the Institution of Civil Engineers, the Road Haulage Association, London Gateway, Dover Town Council, and Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council do so because they believe it would alleviate traffic congestion (around Dartford, M25 or other Thames crossings) and enhance the resilience of the road network. For further discussion of these points, please refer to Chapter 3 (Need Case).

Some respondents discuss the alternative location options, concluding that none of them would provide the same transport benefits.

"As shown by Highways England's evidence, Location A would have a lesser effect on traffic levels around the Dartford Crossing due to constraints on the current junctions". (Institution of Civil Engineers (South East England region))

A few respondents believe that the preferred route would minimise the impact on local roads in particular, and prevent them from being used as 'rat runs'.

Many respondents believe that the preferred route would provide drivers with a more direct route to various location points than are currently possible. Among those, some support the ability to bypass Dartford and London in particular, while others argue that commercial traffic coming from the Channel would be able to reach their northern destinations more easily and efficiently.

"Your route provides a "by-pass" for Dartford that allows continental traffic from Dover to access the M1/M10/M11 etc far quicker than at present. Returning vehicles will find it far easier and quicker to reach Dover" (User ID 17869)

Similarly, many respondents believe that the preferred route would improve connectivity in the region with the majority of these comments referring to enhanced links between Kent and Essex.

Many respondents also feel that the preferred route for the LTC would reduce journey times for drivers, whether through having a more direct route or by reducing congestion.

Process

Many respondents support the preferred route for the LTC on the basis that it has been designed by experts. Respondents argue that they do not have enough knowledge or experience and prefer to trust those more knowledgeable than them.

"In all honesty.. I haven't looked on the basis sometimes you simply have to trust the experts they have reached the right and



correct choice.” (User ID: 16045)

Many respondents also support the decision-making process, saying that it has been thorough and considerate towards previous comments. Other respondents feel that all the options have been properly assessed and decisions made accordingly.

4.2.2. Reasons for opposing the preferred route for the Lower Thames Crossing

4,248 respondents express concerns or raise objections to the preferred route for the Lower Thames Crossing and/or its subsequent changes as part of their qualitative feedback.

Many of these respondents oppose the preferred route for the LTC in general terms, arguing that the location is not suitable but without giving further details. Those who do, tend to focus on the following themes.

Community

Commenting in general terms, many respondents believe that the preferred route for the LTC would cause disruption, notably during construction. Among these, some respondents argue that other route options would have less impact.

Many respondents, including Thames Crossing Action Group, Thurrock Business Board, Homdon on the Hill Community Forum and Tilbury Town Community, also discuss local impacts, saying that the preferred route would be detrimental to the local communities, including some who believe that links between neighbouring villages could be severed. Respondents highlight a range of health risks (respiratory, stress, mental illness), which they say residents would be exposed to with some adding that local communities have already suffered enough from the Dartford Crossing.

“The resulting health issues for local people is a public emergency already; a new road will only worsen the living condition” (User ID: 101985)

Many respondents raise specific concerns about properties that would be affected by the preferred route. Among those, some respondents are concerned that houses would be demolished while others fear that property values would be reduced.

In addition, some respondents comment specifically on the impact on children and believe that the preferred route is too close to a number of schools. Other respondents also raise particular concerns about local amenities, such as public services or leisure facilities.

Some respondents express concerns that the preferred route would lead to urbanisation or industrialisation of the affected areas. While some limit these concerns to the potential loss of green belt, others add that more urbanisation could increase congestion and negate the effects of the LTC.



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Connectivity

Some respondents believe that the preferred route for the LTC does not provide sufficient access opportunities. Most of these respondents are specifically concerned about local access to the new road. Similarly, some respondents say that certain locations won't be served by the preferred route, arguing that it does not provide equal access to some communities.

“The new road needs to offer an access alternative to people living in the area and not just to traffic moving between Dover and the M25. The highest traffic impacts are felt on people living in this area and yet it does not appear to offer them an alternative in any way to the existing crossing due to apparent lack of junction access” (User ID 5699)

Please refer to Chapters 8 and 9 (Northern and Southern Connections) for further discussion on these points.

Design

Many respondents raise concerns about the design changes made since 2017. Some respondents believe that the changes have made the preferred route less favourable, while others say that they do not understand why the changes were needed and that it has altered the plan too much. In contrast, some respondents believe that the design changes are not doing enough to mitigate the potential impacts and are only ‘cosmetic’.

“the cosmetic changes to the route will do nothing to mitigate the damage to the environment and to the impact on the wider road network” (User ID 24838)

Traffic flow

Some respondents feel that the design of the preferred route would not enhance traffic flow, referring to the complexity of the layout, the design of the junctions and the use of roundabouts.

Some respondents express specific concerns about the absence of a hard shoulder referring to the potential safety or congestion implications of this decision. Others say that having no hard shoulder prevents the preferred route from being future-proofed.

“The removal of the hard shoulder will also cause more delays as the whole road will be closed every time there is a major incident rather than the incident being moved to the hard shoulder and traffic being allowed to flow past albeit at a lower speed, as what happened in the past” (User ID 465)

A few respondents raise concerns about the status of ‘motorway’ proposed for the LTC. Among those, some say that learner drivers will not be able to use it, while others argue that the LTC was not promoted as a motorway in the first place.

A few other respondents express specific concerns about bridges, viaducts



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and embankments along the route. Some respondents question whether such structures are necessary at all and others focus on the build quality of any bridges and viaducts, sometimes referring to the collapse of the Morandi bridge in Genoa in August 2018. Comments specific to individual structures are summarised in Chapter 5 (Southern Route) and Chapter 7 (Northern Route).

Others are critical of the height of the structures such as viaducts and bridges intended to carry the road, as they believe that this would be visually obtrusive.

Number of lanes

Some respondents express concerns about the number of lanes proposed, which mainly gravitate towards two issues:

- **too many lanes:** these respondents, including Campaign for Better Transport, argue that the increase from two to three lanes as part of the design changes would lead to more community disruption because of increased traffic; and
- **not enough lanes:** these respondents believe that more lanes would be needed to avoid congestion and ensure future-proofing.

Economy

The majority of the respondents who oppose the preferred route for the Lower Thames Crossing on economic grounds raise concerns about its cost. While some of those respondents argue that this option is too expensive compared to the others, others believe that it is cheaper and worry that this has prevailed over other considerations such as minimising disruption.

In addition, some respondents are concerned about the impact of the proposed LTC on local businesses, either in terms of disruption or lack of specific benefits. A few respondents, including NFU, express specific concerns about the impact of the LTC on farmers and the wider farming industry.

Environment

Many respondents express concerns about the environmental impact of the proposed route with some, including Kent Countryside Access Forum, Gravesham Rights of Way Committee, Havering Friends of the Earth, the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership and the Thames Crossing Action Group arguing that this option has the worst impact on the environment out of all assessed options. Respondents worry about the perceived loss of green belt land and farmland, the impact on designated and historic sites as well as the potential for noise pollution and visual blight.



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“A new crossing at location C would have large adverse environmental effects, these again publicised in a technical paper on the Government website entitled ‘reducing the environmental impacts of option C’ dated May 2014. By the Government’s own admissions, in the ‘Consultation Response Summary’ dated December 2013 by the Department for Transport, point 2.8 says ‘A new crossing at Option C would involve the longest route of the options assessed, passing largely through undeveloped land which is designated as Green Belt’ (User ID 102218)

Most of the respondents opposing the preferred route on environmental grounds, however, raise concerns about air pollution. Some of these respondents argue that the area is already one of the most polluted in the UK while others believe that the preferred route will bring air quality below legal requirements.

Other respondents, including the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), are concerned about the impact of the preferred route on wildlife and natural habitats, including marshlands. Some of the respondents mention ancient woodlands and veteran trees without giving specific examples. A few respondents also cite the beluga whale residing in the Thames Estuary.

Please refer to Chapter 11 (Environment) for further discussion on these points.

Transport

Congestion/resilience

The majority of respondents objecting to the preferred route for the LTC on transport grounds, including Abridge2far, Thames Crossing Action Group and Thurrock Council, raise concerns about congestion and/or resilience of the road network, either because they believe the selected location is too close to Dartford Crossing to be a reliable long-term solution to the traffic problem or because they worry that it would make congestion worse by attracting traffic to an area that is not equipped to cope with it.

“My concern is that the greater area away from the crossing will also be effected. This has not been considered. Traffic from Hastings come up the A21. When the road works regarding the upgrade of the A21 between Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells started, the traffic along the A229 increased significantly. This only dropped a small amount when the A21 reopened. If the new crossing opens then again the A229 will suck in traffic.” (User ID 8986)

Many respondents express more specific concerns about the impact of the preferred route on local roads, arguing that no provision has been made to upgrade the network or expressing a concern that local roads will be used as



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'rat runs' along the preferred route, including by HGVs.

In the context of those concerns, some respondents raise the issue of road safety and ask for it to be prioritised.

Process

Many respondents raise various concerns about the process of decision-making, such as:

- general comments saying that the route has been 'poorly thought out';
- concerns that too much emphasis has been placed on cost, ignoring other factors such as community and environmental impact; and
- concerns that local communities have been treated unequally and some groups had more influence than others.

4.2.3. Alternatives to the preferred route for the Lower Thames Crossing

Alternative options east or west of the preferred route for the LTC

Many respondents who disagree with the preferred route, believe that the Lower Thames Crossing should be built **east or west** of the preferred route,

Among those who advocate for an **eastern relocation**, many respondents say that the current proposal is too close to the Dartford Crossing to be a real alternative and that a crossing further east would alleviate traffic more effectively or minimise disruption, especially in terms of impact on housing. Specific locations mentioned by respondents include:

- an M2 link to Canvey Island - this was an option previously considered in the 2009 DfT study and was known as option D; and
- an Isle of Grain link to east of Southend - this was an option previously considered in the 2009 DfT study and was known as option E.

Among those who advocate for a **western relocation**, many respondents argue that it needs to be closer to London.

'a crossing nearer to London would have had a more beneficial impact on jobs and businesses in South East and East London'
(User ID 167)

Specific locations mentioned by respondents include:

- crossing the Swanscombe Peninsula - this was an option previously considered in the 2009 DfT study and as was known as option B;
- placing the route between Woolwich and Beckton; and
- moving the route closer to Gravesend or Northfleet.

Other alternative options

Some respondents argue that the LTC should be part of an orbital road to create an outer ring around London beyond the M25.

A few others say that they support the preferred route but prefersome of its



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alternative sub-options which were consulted on in 2016.

4.2.4. Suggestions

Community

Some respondents ask for any potential impact on local communities to be minimised, for example by designing the route in such a way that rat runs would be prevented.

Design

Many respondents make suggestions about how the preferred route's design can be improved. Even though these are raised in the context of respondents' discussion about the location of the preferred route, in this report, we have summarised them alongside other similar comments in Chapter 14 (Traffic) and Chapter 6 (Crossing the river).

Environment

Many respondents make suggestions related to the environment such as planting trees along the route, building noise barriers, using noise minimising road surface or introducing wind mills along the route in order to generate green energy. For further discussion on these points, please refer to Chapter 11 (Environment)

Process

Some respondents make diverse suggestions about how the decision-making process can be improved including asking Highways England to take account of the 'bigger picture' or consult with specific stakeholders.

Other suggestions

A few respondents suggest names for the Lower Thames Crossing, some asking for it to reflect the history of the local area.

4.3. Comments expressed by people with interest in land

4.3.1. Reasons for supporting the preferred route for the Lower Thames Crossing

26 PILs comment positively on the selection of the preferred route or identify benefits with it and/or its subsequent changes as part of their qualitative feedback.

These comments mirror those expressed by members of the public and focus on:

- improved traffic conditions in terms of quicker and more reliable journeys;
- advantages to the national and local economy by providing better connectivity in the region;
- minimised environmental impact compared to the other options; and
- beneficial design changes that make the preferred route less



damaging.

4.3.2. Reasons for opposing the preferred route for the Lower Thames Crossing

185 PILs express concerns or raise objections to the preferred route for the LTC and/or its subsequent changes.

These comments largely mirror those raised by members of the public and include:

- general objections to the proposed location, simply describing it as 'wrong';
- environmental concerns mainly about loss of green belt land and farmland, air and noise pollution as well as visual impact and disruption of designated and historic sites;
- community disruption, including severance of villages along the preferred route, further urbanisation, impact on local amenities and businesses;
- increased health risks with specific reference to respiratory diseases and anxiety;
- increased congestion on local roads and not sufficient access opportunities for local traffic; and
- concerns about the increased number of lanes, complexity of the route and the use of viaducts.

A few PILs discuss in more detail the perceived impact on wildlife and ecology, including ancient woodlands. The Woodland Trust says it objects to the preferred route for the Lower Thames Crossing as it would affect 13 areas of ancient woodland and potentially damage at least 11 veteran trees. Areas mentioned by the Woodland Trust include Kenl Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Ashen Shaw and the ancient woodland network of Shome and Ashenbank Wood Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). In addition, the Woodland Trust is concerned that Pot Kiln Wood would also be at risk.

Many PILs raise specific concerns about properties that would be affected by the preferred route, including loss of value and demolition. There are also concerns that the preferred route would take too much land, therefore impacting on local councils' ability to meet their housing needs.

In addition, a few respondents are concerned that the preferred route is too close to schools and worry how this would affect young children.

Some of the PILs raise various concerns about the process of decision-making, mainly arguing that other options have not been given enough consideration.



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4.3.3. Alternatives to the preferred route for the Lower Thames Crossing

Many of the PILs who suggest alternatives to the preferred route, including the Scalars Hill Livery Stables, believe that a new crossing would be better sited at Dartford as this would not introduce impact in new areas and also would be more attractive to drivers.

Other respondents mention options previously investigated for the Lower Thames Crossing sited at Dartford such as Option A1 with most of those favouring sub-option A14.

Other alternative suggestions mirror those expressed by members of the public and include:

- siting the LTC to the east the preferred route by either putting it through Carvey Island or using some of the previously investigated options (namely, Option D and E);
- siting the LTC to the west of the preferred route, for example at the previously investigated Option B;
- having an outer ring road; and
- siting it at some of its alternative sub-options of the preferred route which were consulted on in 2016.

4.3.4. Suggestions

Most of the suggestions mirror those raised by members of the public and include:

- ways the project could be funded either by public or private body;
- planting trees to mitigate pollution, noise and visual impacts;
- ensuring access for emergency vehicles;
- naming suggestions; and
- placing the entire route in a tunnel.

Other suggestions related to the design of the route and are summarised in Chapter 14 (Traffic).

A few respondents, including the Thames Chase Trust, ask for further information about the proposals or ask for further assessment of the potential impacts.



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5. Sections of the route – south of the river

5.1. Overview

Q3a asks:

“Do you support or oppose the proposed route south of the river?”

In total 23,174 respondents answered this question and the results are summarised in the charts⁶ below.

Chart 10: Answers from members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations (n=22,962)

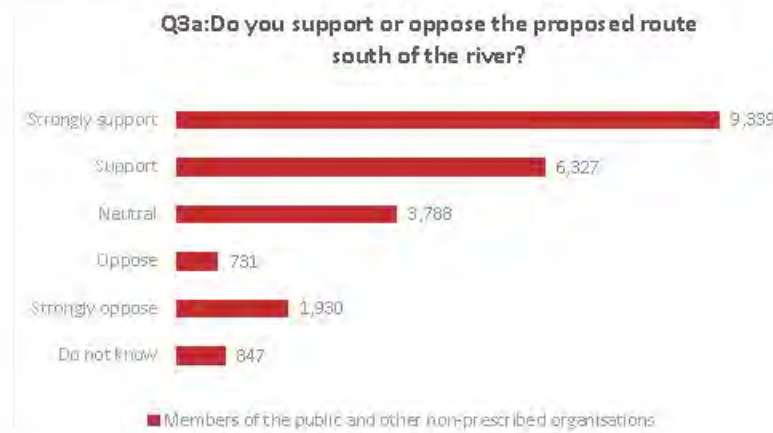
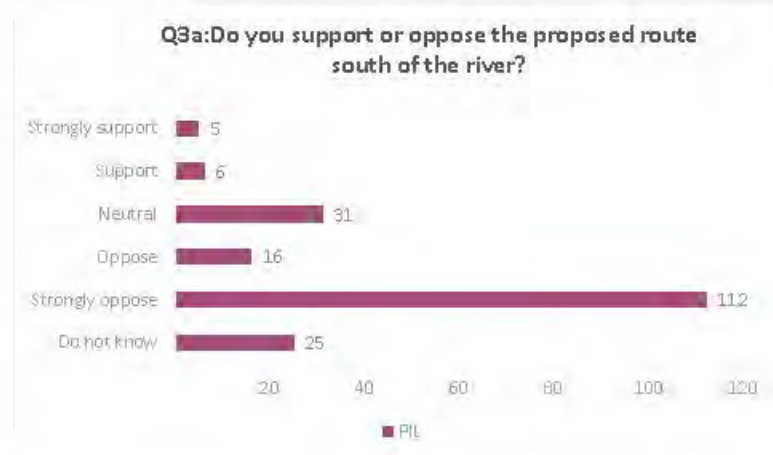


Chart 11: Answers from people with interest in land (PIL) (n=195)

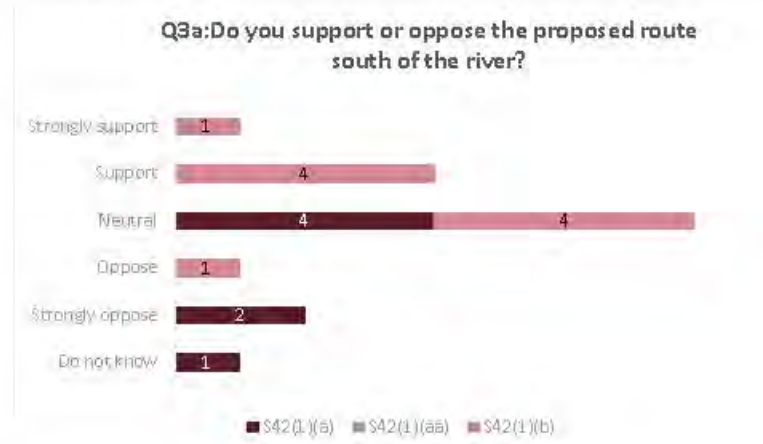


⁶ Respondents who did not respond using the questionnaire were not able to complete this question



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Chart 12: Answers from prescribed consultees (n=17)



Additionally, 8,909 respondents discussed the section south of the river as part their qualitative feedback. This chapter presents a summary of their comments.

5.2. Comments expressed by members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations

6,095 respondents comment positively on the proposed route south of the river or identify benefits associated with it as part of their qualitative feedback.

5.2.1. Reasons for supporting the proposed route south of the river

The vast majority of these respondents express support for the proposed route south of the river because they feel the chosen route is the best option, but do not go into any great detail beyond that. Many respondents argue that any negative impacts are outweighed by the need for the crossing, and that temporary disruption is a necessary price for progress. Some others are generally happy with the proposed route south of the river, but make it clear that they have reservations that prevent them from supporting it unconditionally.

“Where the new road joins the A2 this will obviously become very busy, however I think that this will have to be accepted as a result of relief to the Dartford area” (UserID: 100259)

Many respondents are supportive of the decision-making process that led to the selection of the proposed southern route, saying that it looks “well thought out” and “practical”, or simply that they support the decisions made by experts as they do not have the requisite expertise to propose an alternative. Some respondents explicitly support the location chosen for the new southern route, on the grounds that it is sufficiently far away from the M25.



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Community

Some respondents support the proposed route south of the river due to a perceived positive impact on local residents and communities in Kent such as Dartford, Gravesend, Chalk and Shorne. Of these, most make unspecified references to the traffic relief that the new crossing would bring to Kent as a whole and to Dartford specifically, although some explicitly regard the Lower Thames Crossing as a catalyst for wider social change:

"I think that the tunnel opening on the South near Rochester is good for Medway tourism, bringing visitors from North directly into the center of Medway area" (User ID 16744)

A few respondents base their support on the assumption that impacts on specific communities in Kent would be minimised. The most commonly-referenced of these communities is Chalk, with some respondents praising the amendments made to the southern route so as to avoid severing this community from its church, while others support the decision to avoid the villages of Higham and Shorne. Such responses often suggest that areas in Kent would be less negatively affected than equivalent areas in Thurrock and Essex, where the scheme is thought to have more of an impact.

Some respondents praise the choice of southern route specifically due to its use of non-residential land, which in turn would limit the number of people and businesses displaced by compulsory purchase orders and demolitions. A few go further and suggest that the chosen route would increase the value of their property, due to improved access.

"There seems to be plenty of room to build or construct along this area, not impacting too much on housing" (User ID 21548)

A few respondents focus on Kent's ability to cope with predicted population growth, and so praise the southern route for improving the infrastructure along the A2 corridor, making it more suitable both for the planned development projects in Ebbsfleet and Bluewater, and for any further projects that may be proposed in the future. Some of these argue that the LTC would stimulate population growth and demographic change south of the river, and that this would in turn have a positive effect on the affected communities.

Others focus on what is predicted to be the improved wellbeing of residents of the area, as a result of the reduced congestion. These comments are identical to those raised with regards to all sections of the route and as such are summarised in Section 4 Preferred Route.

Design

Of those respondents who make positive comments regarding the design of the southern route and associated structures, many simply say that it looks good, or that they have no objections.

"The changes go some way to alleviating concerns voiced by Gravesend resident" (User ID 996)



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Some respondents make positive comments regarding the changes made to the design of the southern route since the previous consultation. Most of these merely state that the design has improved, or that local concerns have been sufficiently addressed, but a few refer to specific aspects of the design such as the removal of the A226 junction, the relocation of the southern tunnel entrance or issues related to bridges, embankments or viaducts as outlined below.

Bridges/embankments/viaducts

Many respondents support the inclusion of bridges in the southern part of the route as a necessary and inevitable aspect of the design for a project of this scale, with some specifically regarding the use of green bridges as beneficial both to local wildlife and to the overall aesthetics of the project. A few of these respondents support the proposed connecting bridges due to potential social benefits for the area.

“as settlements can be created around such structures, which would ultimately aid in solving social issues such as housing and the provision of other basic amenities” (User ID 19686).

Many respondents indicate support for the use of embankments due to the new road's proximity to housing and the potential for increased noise and air pollution, as well as the need to limit the visual impact on the landscape.

Some respondents support using viaducts as they allow the new road to run above areas of environmental significance and therefore minimise the project's impact on local wildlife. Furthermore, a few believe viaducts to be the most suitable option for this project as they are aesthetically pleasing in their own right and therefore minimise any adverse effect on the landscape.

Some respondents specifically support the planned widening of the A2/M2 to four lanes as a sensible option to improve traffic flow.

The rest of the identified design benefits refer to measures applied across the entire route and are summarised in Section 4 (Preferred Route).

Economy

The majority of economic arguments in favour of the proposed southern route focus on the potential benefits for the local economy in Kent, particularly for small and medium business in areas such as Gravesend or Medway.

“as a representative of 5,000 members of the Federation of Small Businesses in Kent, I can confirm that following a survey conducted in June 2018, 53.2% of respondents felt that the Lower Thames Crossing would help their business grow.” (Federation of Small Businesses, Kent).

In a similar vein, a few respondents feel that the economic benefits of the southern route to the LTC are not limited to Kent, and will have a positive impact on the UK economy as a whole by providing a free-flowing



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connection to the Channel Ports, which some argue, would be particularly important in light of Brexit.

Others feel that the proposed location of the route south of the river and its design are the most cost-efficient as it would require less land to be purchased.

Environment

Many respondents indicate that they support the proposed southern route for environmental reasons due to its sensitive design, with some specifically referring to its visually unobtrusive design.

Other respondents praise the proposed mitigation measures aimed at reducing noise pollution, wildlife impact and impact on green belt land and local heritage sites. Most of those comments are general in nature while others highlight specific mitigation measures such as green bridges, living walls and planting corridors.

"You have mentioned this in the consultation that I have read through where living walls etc and high earth banking and planting corridors are to be included - this is excellent" (User ID 23573)

A few respondents express support for the avoidance of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), especially Shorne Woods Country Park and Claylane Wood.

Safety

A few respondents believe that the suggested route south of the river would have a positive effect on road safety in the area, particularly at Junction 1 of the M2, where it is hoped it would solve the current problem of drivers cutting across multiple lanes of traffic as they attempt to leave the motorway.

Transport

Of the respondents who base their support for the LTC's southern route on transport issues, the majority focus on its role in reducing congestion and improving the resilience, both in the immediate vicinity and across the wider road network. Most responses in this group express support for the southern route due to the expected reduction of congestion at the Dartford Crossing, within Dartford itself, and along the M25. Many others support the anticipated reduction in traffic on the A2 and M2, as traffic would no longer be forced to carry on as far as Dartford. Some answers echo the sentiments outlined above, but with reference to other roads that currently suffer with high levels of congestion, such as the M20.

"The chosen route would provide for traffic to and from the port, thereby relieving the overloading on the A2/ M25 junction, reducing the overloading between junction J2 and the Dartford Crossing" (User ID 6559)

Many respondents, including Haven Gateway Partnership, support the



southern route as it would improve access to Kent, particularly isolated areas such as the Medway towns, as well as to the Channel Ports and associated roads (e.g. M2/A2). Related to this, many respondents express support for the provision of a direct route between Kent and Thurrock and Essex, the creation of a direct link to the North for freight traffic from the Channel Ports and reducing journey times to London, Canterbury and Maidstone, amongst others.

5.2.2. Reasons for opposing the proposed route south of the river

2,493 respondents express concerns or raise objections to the proposed route south of the river as part of their qualitative feedback.

Many of these do not go into any great detail beyond saying that it would have an unacceptable impact on the local area. Many others simply oppose the chosen location for the southern route, either due to its proximity to residential areas or because it is too close to the Dartford Crossing and therefore, they argue, there will not be enough incentive for traffic to divert from Dartford to the new crossing unless they are coming from Dover and East Kent.

Some respondents oppose the decision-making process that has led to the proposed design for the southern route, either because they feel local concerns have been ignored or because they feel more affluent areas have been treated preferably.

“when all this started a couple of years ago the route marked was nearer Shorne village. It is a very pretty place with many important residents in MP's, councillors, barristers, doctors, CEO's etc. These people were not going to allow any road near them and complained strongly.” (User ID 100113).

Community

Some respondents oppose the proposed southern route due to its perceived impact on local communities and residents in terms of increased traffic, deteriorated air quality and restricted access. Such respondents are often general in their comments, although some do make reference to specific communities affected by the choice of route south of the river, most commonly Gravesend, Shorne or Chalk.

Many respondents express similar concerns regarding disruption to communities and residents, but focus solely on the construction phase of the project rather than any lasting effects.

Many respondents argue that the proposed southern route is too close to existing residential areas such as Riverview Park in Gravesend, and that this would have a negative impact both on residents' lifestyles and on house prices, making it more difficult to move out of the area in the future should they so wish.



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“Housing in the Riverview Park, Thong Lane and Shome areas will be blighted by this monstrosity and the years of building work associated with it. Already people living in Riverview Park are seeing a decline in house sales and difficulty finding buyers.” (User ID 18804)

Some respondents feel that the proposed southern route would not adequately cater for planned housing developments in Bluewater and Ebbsfleet, while others believe it would only encourage further development, which they regard as not just unnecessary but actively harmful to the area.

Some responses, including the response from Sport England, express opposition to the loss of local amenities, particularly the Southern Valley golf course, as this would negatively affect the lifestyles of local residents.

A few respondents are also concerned about how the proposals would affect local children, especially those whose schools and nurseries are in the immediate vicinity of the LTC's southern route.

Design

A few opposing comments focus on the design of the southern route.

Traffic flow/widening

Most respondents who oppose the design of the southern route focus on traffic flow, arguing that the proposed design would create multiple bottlenecks, as the number of lanes changes from one stretch of road to the next, thereby restricting the effectiveness of the new crossing. Many others are concerned about what they describe as the excessive widening of the A2/M2, which at its widest point would comprise twelve lanes of traffic.

Bridges/embankments/viaducts

Some respondents feel that there are a number of unnecessary bridges included in the design of the southern route, and that they would not be adequately maintained once built. Many of these respondents object specifically to the Thong Lane bridge, either because of its location, or because they do not believe it meets the criteria to be classified as a green bridge. Others argue that the green bridges at Thong Lane and Brewers Road are too narrow.

“The ‘green’ bridges you mention are not what I consider to be a true green bridge. A bit of grass planted on the bridge doesn't equate to a true green bridge and HE need to do better on this.” (User ID 102203)

A few respondents object to the use of embankments, either because they believe they would not sufficiently limit the impact of noise from the new road, or because they are seen as having a negative effect on the aesthetics of the project.

Other respondents oppose the use of viaducts, either because they believe they are too narrow to effectively maintain traffic flow, too visually intrusive,



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or would increase the impact of road noise on nearby residential areas.

Other criticisms apply to all sections of the route (road height and motorway status) and are summarised in Chapter 4 (Preferred Route).

Economy

Most economic arguments against the proposed southern route tend to focus on its perceived excessive cost to the taxpayer, or on a lack of value for money.

"The cost and impact is too much for the short term profit." (User ID 6586)

Some respondents are critical of the potential impact of the proposed southern route on the local economy, arguing that businesses would suffer during the construction phase, or, alternatively, that the anticipated economic benefits would not be forthcoming, even once the project is complete.

Environment

Many of the respondents who oppose the proposed southern route cite its perceived negative impact on the local environment. A great deal of these comments refer to deteriorating air quality, increased light pollution, and loss of green belt land without mentioning specific locations. Others refer to Chalk and Riverview Park in Gravesend.

"Pollution was a problem in the past hence the A2 being physically moved a few years ago. Creating the new road will effectively box in Gravesend by pollution" (User ID 7890)

Many other respondents are opposed to southern section of the LTC for aesthetic reasons, arguing that it is unsightly and would blight the landscape.

Many respondents focus on the potential impact of the southern route on local wildlife populations and habitats, in an area that is home to a number of protected species such as Water Voles, Great Crested Newts and Marsh Harriers.

"It cuts across habitat close to the last home of the Nightingale in Kent" (User ID 418)

Some respondents, including CPRE Kent, raise concerns regarding the potential impact of the southern route on designated areas such as Kent Downs AONB, Claylane Ancient Woodland, Thames Estuary and Marshes.

A few respondents oppose the proposed southern route as it would lead to the loss of some historical buildings and the destruction of a heritage area which has a strong link to the life and novels of Charles Dickens.

Others oppose the decision to build the southern route across marshland, which is a known flood plain and would require measures to be put in place to ensure drainage of excess water.



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Safety

Some respondents are particularly concerned about the safety of the proposed southern route, either because they believe too much traffic would be forced on to what they describe as unsuitable roads, or because the location of the southern tunnel entrance is frequently affected by heavy fog. Others feel that there is inadequate provision on the southern route for emergency services to gain access in the event of a serious incident.

“What consideration has been given to the fact that the low lying areas close to the Thames are prone to fog in the autumn and winter this, combined with the proposed cuttings, potentially rendering the new road a death trap” (User ID 941)

Transport

Most of the complaints relating to issues of transport refer specifically to congestion (either during or after construction), with an almost even split between those who believe that it would get worse following the construction of the southern route, whether that be in and around Dartford or on specific local roads, and those who simply think it would not improve due to the inadequacy of the design.

Many respondents, including Medway Labour Group and Meopham Parish Council, are concerned that the choice of route south of the river would encourage traffic to use local roads such as the A2 and other smaller local roads, some of which are already over capacity and would therefore be unable to cope with the expected increase in traffic and ask for improvements to the wider network.

“The country roads around the A2 and Gravesend can't cope with the huge amount of traffic which is already there” (User ID 23469)

Some other respondents, including the Port of Dover, worry that the surrounding network would not be able to cope in the event of a major incident on the new crossing or the surrounding roads.

A few respondents oppose the proposed route south of the river as it does not directly link the new road to the M2, or because of concerns that it would increase journey times for local residents.

“for example, someone in Cobham who uses the medical facilities in Shoreham could have an hour round trip instead of the current 15-minute trip” (User ID 15943).

5.2.3. Alternatives to the proposed route south of the river

Respondents also suggest alternatives to the proposed route south of the river, the most popular of which is the Eastern Southern Link as outlined in the previous consultation, connecting directly to the M2 further east than currently proposed.

Some respondents feel that it would be more sensible to improve existing



roads before building new ones.

5.2.4. Suggestions

Design

Most design-related suggestions concern the height of the road, with the majority of these arguing that the road should remain in a tunnel until it reaches the A2/M2. Some even go so far as to suggest that the tunnel should continue as far as the M20, to avoid increasing traffic on what they believe to be unsuitable link roads. Many others do not specifically ask to extend the tunnel, but suggest that the new road should be lowered to minimise noise and pollution.

"I feel that the southern portal of the LTC between the A226 and the A2 should be constructed in a longer cut and cover tunnel, reducing land-take in the area" (User ID 100294)

The rest of the suggestions about how traffic can be improved are raised by respondents with reference to multiple sections of the route and are summarised in Chapter 14 (Traffic).

Bridges/embankments

Some respondents make suggestions regarding the use of bridges along the southern route, although within this group there is a split between those who wish to see aesthetically pleasing designs used for these structures, and those who would prefer there to be as few bridges as possible.

A few respondents suggest that the use of embankments should be encouraged wherever possible, with trees and wild flowers planted along them to minimise their visual impact.

Environment

Many respondents suggest that the southern route should be as sympathetic as possible to the local environment, but do not offer any detailed proposals as to how this might be achieved.

"I have no specific views on the structures, but the impact on the environment and on the aesthetics of the area should be of primary consideration" (User ID 7486)

A few respondents suggest that the design of the southern route should include measures to improve access to designated areas such as Shome Woods Country Park.

The rest of the suggestions about how the environmental impact can be reduced are raised by respondents with reference to multiple sections of the route and are summarised in Chapter 11 (Environment).

Transport

Most transport-based suggestions emphasise the importance of future-proofing the new road by building it with sufficient capacity to cope with any future increase in traffic.



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More information required

Many respondents suggest that the available documents concerning the proposed southern route are inadequate, and that more information is required before they can appropriately comment on the route or its associated structures.

5.3. Comments expressed by people with interest in land

5.3.1. Reasons for supporting the proposed route south of the river

20 PILs comment positively on the proposed route south of the river or identify benefits associated with as part of their qualitative feedback.

These largely mirror those expressed by members of the public and highlight the anticipated community benefits (in terms of reduced congestion, quicker journeys and more direct routes) or visually appealing design of the preferred route.

A few PILs are supportive of the proposed southern route for environmental reasons, such as the inclusion of green bridges or the potential reduction of carbon emissions in the area as a result of improved traffic flow.

5.3.2. Reasons for opposing the proposed route south of the river

105 PILs express concerns or raise objections towards the proposed route south of the river as part of their qualitative feedback.

Of these, some simply express general opposition, while others explicitly oppose the choice of location, either because it is too close to Dartford or because they do not feel sufficient space has been allocated for roads, structures and junctions that would be required for this route to work properly.

Most of the PIL's concerns mirror those raised by members of the public and include:

- community disruption with specific reference to Chalk, Higham, Shorne, Riverview Park and local schools;
- environmental disruption and the impact on Shorne Woods Country Park and ancient woodlands;
- further urbanisation;
- loss of local amenities such as Southern Valley golf course;
- the widening of the A2/M2 and the lack of hard shoulder;
- the visual impact of the road structures like bridges, embankments and viaducts;
- increased congestion and rat running through residential areas such as Shorne and Thong; and
- safety concerns about both drivers and residents.

Furthermore, a few PILs are sceptical of the decision-making process that led to the choice of route, and feel that their input on previous consultations has



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been ignored.

A few PILs are concerned that the projected cost of the southern route has increased since the previous consultation and others voice concerns about the potential impact on local businesses who would lose land to the new road and whose access may be restricted during the construction phase.

Some PILs argue that the proposed southern route would not improve congestion at the Dartford Crossing due to the decision to join the A2 east of Gravesend, meaning it would only make a significant difference to journeys to and from Dover and East Kent.

Other concerns relate to the location of the southern route which PILs feel is inefficient as most traffic would come from the east and would therefore need to double back on itself once it leaves the A2/M2.

A few PILs oppose the proposed southern route as they believe it would take up an excessive amount of land which could impede local growth plans.

Others oppose the location of the proposed green bridge at Thong Lane.

5.3.3. Alternatives to the proposed route south of the river

Some PILs offer alternatives to the proposed route south of the river which largely mirror those expressed by members. These include:

- the Eastern Southern Link through Shorne to junction 1 of the M2, as proposed during the previous consultation; and
- starting the southern route nearer the Isle of Sheppey.

A few PILs believe that improving the existing road network is a more suitable option than constructing new roads, and that sufficient improvements at Dartford might remove the need for a new crossing altogether.

5.3.4. Suggestions

Design

Most suggestions from PILs regarding the proposed southern route relate to its design, and specifically to the height of the road, arguing that it should be kept in a tunnel, or at least in a cutting, until it reaches the A2/M2.

A few PILs suggest that the southern route should be built with sufficient capacity for any future increase in traffic to avoid the need to add more lanes after the new road has opened, as was the case with the M25. Others highlight the importance of clear signage to allow drivers ample time to choose the correct lane for their journey.

Bridges

Some PILs disagree that the proposals for the Thong Lane's bridge are sufficiently comprehensive to earn it a green bridge status. Others call for it to be widened and made safe for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians.



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Environment

A few PILs make suggestions about how to limit the environmental impact of the proposed southern route, such as the need to plant more trees, widen the Thong Lane green bridge, use noise baffling materials and move pylons away from residential areas.

Others focus on ways to address air quality pollution, recommending that Southern Valley golf course is kept as green land once construction has finished.



6. Sections of the route – crossing the river

6.1. Overview

Q3c asks:

“Please give us your comments on the tunnel, the north and the south tunnel entrances and any other feedback you have on this part of the preferred route.

10, 688 respondents discussed the proposed crossing and tunnel entrances as part their qualitative feedback. This chapter presents a summary of their comments.

6.2. Comments expressed by members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations

6.2.1. Reasons for supporting the proposed crossing the river

6,718 respondents comment positively on this part of the proposed route or identify benefits associated with it as part of their qualitative feedback.

Many of these wish for work on the LTC to be undertaken as soon as possible so that the crossing is completed quickly. Respondents highlight the transport benefits associated with the crossing, in terms of quicker and more direct journeys than currently available.

Some respondents qualify their support, saying that they would like guarantees that there would be no congestion in the tunnel and environmental impacts would be sufficiently mitigated.

Other respondents engage with the proposals in more detail:

Overview

Many respondents, including a joint response from Kent and Medway Economic Partnership (KMEP) and Kent and Medway Business Advisory Board (BAB), the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, the Dover Society, the Port of Dover and the Thames Gateway Partnership support the number of lanes proposed at the crossing. Some of them feel that this would help reduce congestion and others believe that it would make the crossing future-proof.

‘I am pleased that the proposed tunnels are three lanes wide as experience with the Dartford Crossing has shown how quickly a two lane tunnel becomes overloaded’ (UserID 13032)

Some respondents are supportive of the 70 miles per hour speed limit proposed for the tunnel and roads leading to it. The most common reason given for this is that the high speed limit would reduce the need for cars to slow down when approaching the crossing and keep the crossing running more smoothly compared to the Dartford Crossing where the speed limit is 50 miles per hour.



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Many respondents comment positively in general terms about the design of the crossing with some mentioning that the design appears good for traffic flow, particularly because of its simplicity and the straightforward nature of the roads connecting to the tunnel.

A few respondents praise the safety of the proposed crossing, predominantly in general terms, although a few highlight particular aspects such as the proposed level of lighting within the tunnel or the consideration given to the risk of fire.

A few respondents believe that the proposals would have minimum impact on wildlife, green areas and designated sites such as the South Thames Estuary and Marshes Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Tunnel

Many respondents are supportive of the proposed tunnel design in general terms. Of those who provide a reason for their support, some respondents cite the reduced environmental or community impact of a tunnel compared to a bridge. More specifically, other respondents support the proposed tunnel, because:

- it would not block the river and therefore be less disruptive to shipping;
- it is a more resilient option than a bridge; and
- it would be cheaper and less visually obtrusive than a bridge.

"It has to be a tunnel. As the land around is flat a bridge would have to have very long approach roads which could be an eyesore and would also be interrupted more often by high winds"
(User ID 20601)

A few respondents indicate support for the twin-bore design of the tunnel with some of them arguing that it would provide greater resilience and reduce the amount of congestion.

Some respondents say that they support the proposed architectural design of the tunnel. Among these respondents, the attractiveness of the design is highlighted alongside the modern look of the tunnel.

With regards to the tunnel size, some respondents make positive comments. They offer a variety of reasons for this with a few approving of the length of the tunnel and some supporting the width of the bores, particularly because they feel this would enable greater traffic flow than can presently occur at the smaller tunnels at the Dartford Crossing.

Tunnel entrances

Some respondents approve of the location of the tunnel entrances with many welcoming the altered location of the southern tunnel entrance, which would avoid impacts on the village of Chalk. In addition, some respondents comment positively on the design of the tunnel entrances, either generally or in terms of their perceived minimal environmental impact.



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'I think the changes, particularly the south tunnel entrance being moved, will lessen the immediate impact on local communities'

(User ID 6115)

6.2.2. Reasons for opposing the proposed crossing

2,677 respondents express concerns or raise objections to this part of the preferred route as part of their qualitative feedback.

Overview

Many of these focus on environmental and traffic concerns. These mirror concerns expressed by respondents with regards to the wider route and a summary can be found in Chapter 4 (Preferred Route).

A few respondents are opposed to the crossing because of the impact that the tunnel could have on properties, with several of these respondents believing it impacts or destroys too many homes.

A few respondents also comment critically on the visual impact of the crossing. The most frequent responses are either requests that the visual impact be minimised or responses that believe that the crossing would blight the landscape beyond repair.

'The tunnel entrance areas are significant blots on the local landscape. No attempt has been made by Highways England to soften the impact of these areas on local communities' (User ID

20797)

A few respondents highlight the effect of the crossing on designated areas such as the South Thames Estuary and Marshes SSSI as an aspect of concern. Please see Chapter 11 (Environment) for more information on this issue.

Some respondents are concerned or object to the proposed number of lanes because they feel they would provide insufficient capacity and resilience and the crossing would need to be upgraded in the near future. Some of these respondents mention that the Dartford Crossing has a total of eight lanes and remains frequently gridlocked and therefore they cannot see how a crossing with two fewer lanes would avoid becoming just as congested. Conversely, a few respondents object to the number of lanes because it has increased from the original design of two lanes which they prefer.

Some respondents are concerned about the proposed speed limit of 70 miles per hour through the tunnel, primarily because they feel that this would lead to more accidents or to more dangerous driving.

Furthermore, a few respondents are concerned that the southern emergency/maintenance access points would be used by drivers to get on the local roads and call for this to be prevented.

Some respondents are concerned that building a tunnel would be expensive and ask if this is the most cost-efficient option.



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Tunnel

Respondents' primary concern is that they feel tunnels lead to congestion, as demonstrated by the frequent delays at the Dartford Crossing's tunnels, and would not solve the congestion issues that they currently experience. Other concerns focus on:

- the two-tunnel design: a few respondents are sceptical that this would provide sufficient capacity while others remark with concern on the engineering challenge building two tunnels would represent;
- safety issues: a few respondents criticise the proposed tunnel because they feel there is a lack of access for emergency services, while others are particularly critical to the lack of hard shoulder because they believe it would create dangerous situations in cases of breakdowns. There are also concerns that there is no mention of ventilation being installed in the tunnel;
- maintenance: there are some concerns about how the tunnels would be maintained with most of those respondents referring to their experience at Dartford Crossing where tunnels are often closed for long periods of time during maintenance; and
- appearance: a few respondents disapprove of the design of the tunnel, perceiving it to be ugly or boring.

Some respondents comment with concern on Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) using the proposed tunnel. This concern takes a variety of forms with a few respondents questioning whether the design of the tunnel would be able to accommodate HGVs of all sizes or whether the proposed crossing can safely cope with multiple HGVs at once. A few respondents are opposed to the tunnel because it would attract greater numbers of HGVs to the local area.

"Will the tunnel be high enough to take freight uninterrupted unlike the northern tunnels at Dartford, which cause a lot of the congestion. This needs to be a free flowing crossing and it needs to be future proofed as lorries get higher and bigger in size" (User ID 1401)

Some respondents are concerned about the issue of hazardous vehicles within the tunnel as they fear that the practice of escorting these vehicles through the tunnel while halting all other traffic, as occurs at Dartford Crossing, will be repeated at the LTC, causing regular congestion. Related to this, Greenenergy, stresses that vehicles such as fuel tankers should be allowed to use the tunnel unescorted.

A few respondents oppose the crossing for safety reasons, with some referring to increased risk of terrorism or fire within the tunnel.

Tunnel entrances

Some of the respondents are critical of the location of the tunnel entrances. Many of these responses mention the proximity of the tunnel entrances to sites they wish to remain undisturbed such as Condozers Scout Campsite or



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Coalhouse Fort. A few of respondents are concerned about the noise and pollution which would be created around the tunnel entrances.

“The proposed placement of this tunnel on the north side is too close to Coalhouse fort. This area is the ONLY place in Thurrock where residents can enjoy a walk along the river where there is no noise from traffic, no heavy industry or factories or warehouses, no ports or docks, no oil storage facilities or waste disposal sites.” (User ID 22727)

Respondents who raise concerns about the southern tunnel entrance specifically, including the Parochial Church Council Chalk, argue that it could be extended even further south or ask for alternatives to be found to minimise its impact on the local community.

Many respondents are concerned that the tunnel entrances could form bottlenecks, with some referring to the current situation at Dartford where respondents feel the use of traffic lights and roads merging close to the entrance slow down traffic. In relation to this, a few respondents express concern about slip roads and whether local access close to the tunnel entrances would lead to increased congestion.

Other respondents are concerned about the prospect of flooding and request that flood defences are put in place, particularly around the north tunnel entrance which rests on a flood plain. Concern is also expressed by respondents around rising sea levels in the future and whether the tunnel would be safe in these circumstances.

6.2.3. Alternatives to the proposed crossing

Some respondents prefer a bridge to a tunnel. Various reasons are given for this with the most common being that the Queen Elizabeth II Bridge is frequently less congested than the tunnels at Dartford I and that a bridge would be quicker or cheaper to construct than a tunnel.

“A bridge would be better, the problems caused by dangerous goods escorts & over height vehicles in the current tunnel have a huge effect on journey time. There are no such issues with the bridge” (User ID 21964)

6.2.4. Suggestions

Tunnel

Many respondents offer general suggestions that the proposed tunnel should be future-proofed in order to be able to handle increased traffic volumes. For some respondents, this means building a tunnel as wide and high as possible while for others this involves including a higher number of lanes.

Many respondents ask for the tunnel length to be extended and link to various roads such as the A2/M2 south of the river Thames. Other respondents ask for the entire LTC route to be placed in a tunnel. On the other hand, a few respondents suggest that the tunnel is too long and should



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be shortened, often for safety reasons

Some respondents feel that the two tunnels proposed would not be adequate and suggest that there should be additional tunnels. The most common reason is that they believe that further capacity is needed, especially in the event of an accident, and that this would best be provided by constructing more tunnels, most frequently three or four.

“An option for a third bore should have been considered to relieve any emergency closure or restriction with one or both of the originally proposed tunnels. The ‘third’ tunnel could also be operated in either direction to relive [sic] extra congestion on one of the routes” (User ID 1266)

Discussing the proposed speed measures, a few respondents advocate for a lower speed limit such as 50 miles per hour and others suggest that the speed limit for the tunnel should be identical to that on the rest of the LTC to avoid creating congestion. While most respondents who comment on the proposed speed monitoring measures such as speed cameras welcome their inclusion, saying that they are an important road safety feature, a few oppose them without elaborating further.

A few respondents present suggestions about resilience with some of them suggesting that a contra-flow system should be put in place so that the direction of traffic can be changed in the event of an incident. A few respondents propose that there should be a designated service road that can be used in the event of accidents.

Safety is another theme where suggestions are made such as:

- having escape routes within the tunnel; and
- having emergency laybys to ensure safety in the event of a breakdown or incident.

A few respondents offer ideas about signage connected to the tunnel. These are mainly concerned with ensuring that the signage would be clear and up to date although more specific suggestions such as that the signs are multilingual have also been put forward by a few respondents.

Other suggestions include:

- including a hard shoulder;
- making sure the tunnel is well-lit;
- making sure that mobile, data or radio signal is retained;
- making the tunnel straight; and
- incorporating a rail tunnel.

The rest of the suggestions about how traffic within the tunnel can be improved are raised by respondents with reference to multiple sections of the route and are summarised in Chapter 14 (Traffic).



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Tunnel entrances

A few respondents comment on the architecture of the tunnel entrances with most of these asking for it be of a great stature and celebrate the local area.

Conversely, some respondents request that the architecture of the tunnel entrances blends as much as possible with the surrounding area. Related to this, some ask for the area surrounding the tunnel entrances be landscaped or that the entrances be lowered so that they are less visible. A few also ask that the approach roads to the tunnel be screened or put further into cuttings.

The vast majority of suggestions connected to the southern tunnel entrance are that the entrance should be moved further south, preferably closer to the A2.

"The southern portal should be moved further south, this would reduce the amount of excavation required for the portal and it would take the excavation further away from the RAMSAR site to the north" (User ID 8065)

A few respondents comment on the need for drivers to be able to make a U-turn if they do not wish to proceed onto the crossing and suggest that the turnaround loop proposed at the southern tunnel entrance should be replicated at the northern tunnel entrance.

Other

There are suggestions about how the environmental impact of the crossing can be mitigated with most focussing on tree planting near the tunnel entrances. As these suggestions are general in nature and mirror others made in relation to the entire route, they are summarised in Chapter 11 (Environment)

A few respondents wish to have more information. A few of them want to know more about the infrastructure of the proposed tunnel while others pose security related questions.

6.3. Comments expressed by people with interest in land

6.3.1. Reasons for supporting the proposed crossing

21 PILs comment positively on this part of the preferred route or identify benefits associated with it as part of their qualitative feedback.

Their comments largely mirror those expressed by members of the public in terms of improved transport impact. Some explicitly welcome the extension of the southern tunnel entrances and others praise the visually pleasing design of the tunnel.

6.3.2. Reasons for opposing the proposed crossing

50 PILs express concerns or raise objections to this part of the preferred route as part of their qualitative feedback.



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These largely mirror those expressed by members of the public and focus on:

- environmental concerns in terms of loss of green belt, deteriorating air quality;
- traffic concerns in terms of increased or not improved congestion levels;
- the ventilation within the tunnel; and
- the absence of a hard shoulder and the safety risks this could pose;

In addition, several PILs, including the Thames Chase Trust express concerns about specific wildlife habitats and are particularly worried about the landscape impact of the tunnel.

The Thurrock District Scout Council is concerned how increased noise levels would affect outdoor activities that currently take place at the Condoovers Scout Activity Centre.

A few PILs are critical of the number of lanes proposed for the LTC as they feel that there are too many and so the LTC is affecting an even larger area than was originally proposed. Similarly, there is criticism by a few PILs that the general size of the tunnel is too large and that the gradient within the tunnel entrances is too steep.

Another safety issue raised by PILs is a concern around disability access for escape routes in the tunnel.

PILs express opposition towards the locations of the tunnel entrances with a few respondents criticising the entrances for being too close to residential areas, in particular the village of Chalk and Riverview Park in Kent.

A few PILs are concerned about the proposals for how hazardous vehicles are to be managed, with some requesting that these vehicles are not escorted through the tunnels as this leads to congestion, whilst others are troubled by the prospect that the vehicles would travel unescorted, citing safety concerns.

Resilience is a topic of concern for a few PILs. Several of them make reference to the Dartford Tunnel and their belief that incidents that happen there are slow to clear. They wish for the management of accidents to improve in the LTC, in particular they would like to see a reduction in the number of times the tunnels are closed entirely because of accidents.

A few PILs are apprehensive about safety within the crossing with a few mentioning the Mont Blanc tunnel fire of 1999 as a source of anxiety.

Thames and Medway Canal Association raises concerns about locating the proposed tunnel drain in close proximity to the extraction pool they use to fill in the canal. The Association worries that this may lead to pollution which would affect the local wildlife and vegetation.



6.3.3. Suggestions

Tunnel

In terms of tunnel design, the gradient of the tunnel entrances is a source of debate amongst PILs with a few suggesting a gradient of 3% should be used in place of the proposed 4%. Others request that a hard shoulder is incorporated into the tunnel design in case of accidents or breakdowns. A few PILs suggest that the tunnel should be future-proofed with some adding that more lanes should be considered so that each carriageway has four lanes.

A few PILs highlight the potential visual impact of the tunnel and ask for its design to blend in with the surrounding environment as much as possible, whether by lowering its height or planting vegetation around the tunnel entrances.

Other suggestions include:

- clear and easy to understand signage;
- incorporating a rail tunnel;
- not allowing hazardous vehicles within the tunnel;
- ensuring that the tunnel is accessible to all types of HGVs; and
- using cut and cover on the approach roads.

Tunnel entrances

A popular suggestion amongst some PILs is that the tunnel should be extended or that the route should be entirely underground. The primary reasons given for this are to reduce the impact on local communities and the environment, as well as to limit noise and air pollution. This suggestion is especially common with regard to the southern tunnel entrance where PILs want the entrance moved much closer to the M2/A2.

There are a few references to the northern tunnel entrances as well with PILs asking that the tunnel be extended to bypass East and West Tilbury.



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7. Sections of the route – north of the river

7.1. Overview

Q3d asks:

“Do you support or oppose the proposed route north of river”

In total 20,589 respondents answered this question and the results are summarised in the charts⁷ below.

Chart 13: Answers from members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations (n=20,375)

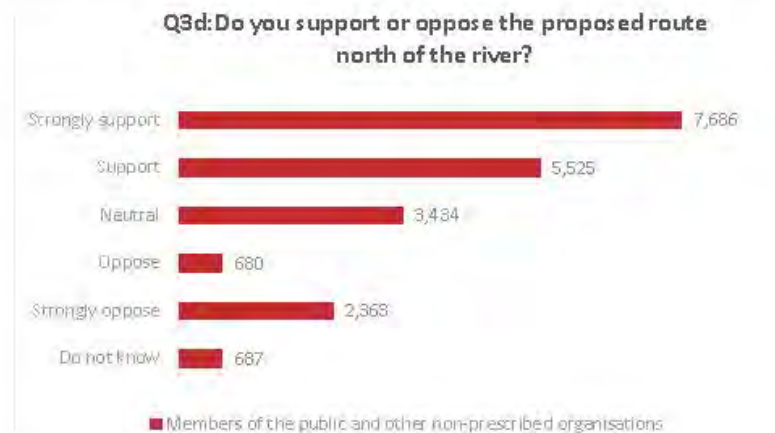
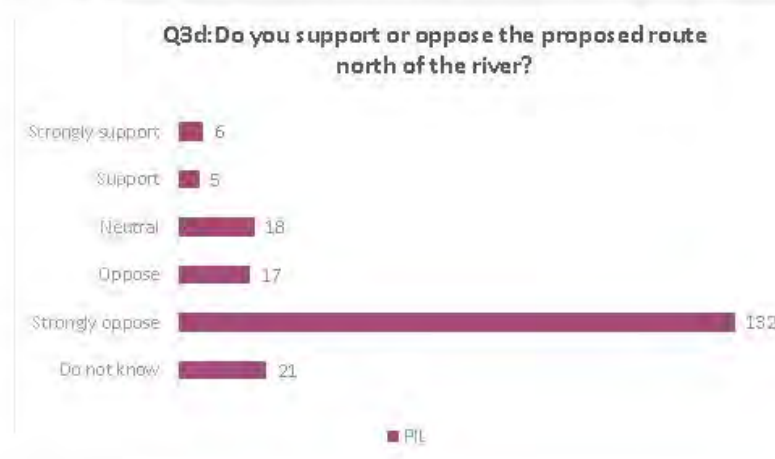


Chart 14: Answers from people with interest in land (PIL) (n=199)

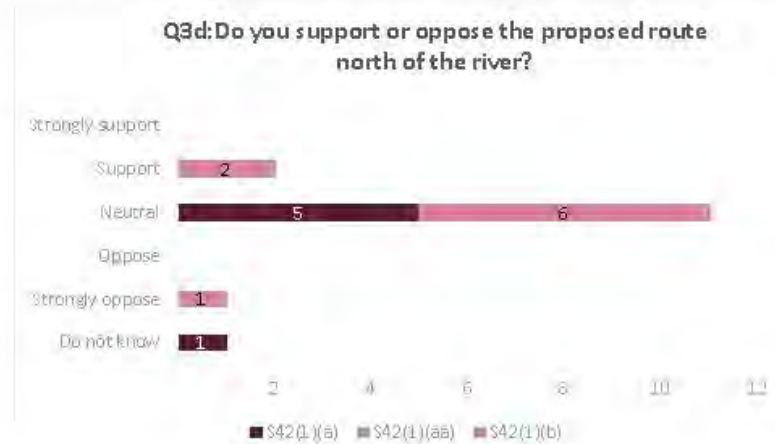


⁷ Respondents who did not respond using the questionnaire were not able to complete this question



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Chart 15: Answers from prescribed consultees (n=15)



Additionally, 8,680 respondents discussed the proposed route north of the river as part their qualitative feedback. This chapter presents a summary of their comments.

7.2. Comments expressed by members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations

7.2.1. Reasons to support the proposed route north of the river

5,143 respondents comment positively on the proposed route north of the river or identify benefits associated with as part of their qualitative feedback.

Community

While some respondents acknowledge that some communities in Thurrock would be adversely affected by the proposed route north of the river, many of those who support the proposals, including Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council, believe that sufficient consideration has been shown to mitigate the potential impacts. Some respondents also argue that the proposed route north of the river would avoid the most densely populated areas, as unlike the area around Dartford, Essex is more sparsely populated.

“Southern Essex is a very densely populated area and the planned route is probably passing through the least residentially developed and more industrialised zone” (User ID 17062)

Some respondents feel that one of the primary community benefits would be an end to frustrations and delays over the present situation at the Dartford Crossing.

Additionally, a few respondents believe that reducing congestion at Dartford would result in health benefits for those communities who currently experience high levels of air pollution associated with traffic congestion.

A few respondents suggest that the proposed route north of the river has the potential to regenerate South Essex.



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Design

Some respondents comment positively on the design of structures such as bridges, viaducts and embankments, describing them as “attractive” and designed in line with the wider surroundings so their visual impact would be minimised.

Respondents add that the proposed embankments would minimise the noise pollution and welcome the use of a viaduct for the Mardyke Crossing as they believe this is the best structure given the flood risk present in the area.

“The embankment and viaduct for the Mardyke Crossing is an excellent idea for the flood area and farming” (User ID 100024)

Some respondents applaud the use of existing infrastructure in the proposals, believing that existing roads would only require minor expansion and improvement to deliver the preferred route.

As most of the proposed road structures relate to the proposed junctions, more specific comments on these are included in Section 8 (Northern Connections).

Economic

Some respondents highlight the business opportunities that could be unlocked by the proposed northern route, suggesting it would stimulate regional growth and employment. A few believe this would be particularly advantageous following Brexit, as the route would provide support for the ports and associated businesses which, respondents believe, would have an important role in the UK's future outside the EU.

“This is the best route that will help facilitate the growth prospects in South Essex sub-region” (User ID 9022)

Some respondents say that the proposed route north of the river is economical as it would avoid built-up areas, thereby reducing building costs.

Other economic benefits related to the overall need case and are summarised in Chapter 3 (Need Case).

Environment

Of the respondents who support the proposed northern route on environmental grounds, many believe that it would help address issues around Dartford such as air and noise pollution. Respondents stress that the build-up of slow-moving and static traffic is detrimental to the environment and solving this would go some way to reducing the pollution levels.

Some respondents add that the proposed mitigation measures are sufficient with some adding that the area chosen within Essex is not of high ecological significance. A few respondents believe that if done well, the preferred route structures could create new habitats for the local wildlife.



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‘these kinds of works are soon assimilated into the natural landscape with wildlife making use of the new habitat.’ (User ID 13842)

Transport

Many of the respondents who support the proposed route north of the river do so because they believe it would reduce congestion, minimise delays, improve road safety, create better connections and increase resilience. These are similar to the benefits outlined by respondents in relation to the entire route, summarised in Chapter 4 (Preferred Route).

Respondents highlight the current high congestion levels in Tilbury and stress that the northern route would not only improve those but also improve connections within Essex.

‘I support any route which will take away some of the congestion currently a common occurrence on both sides of the crossing but particularly on the Essex side where local traffic seems to suffer the worse’ (User ID 5226)

7.2.2. Reasons for opposing the proposed route north of the river

2,925 respondents express concerns or object to the proposed crossing north of the river as part of their qualitative feedback.

Communities

Many respondents, including Homdon on the Hill Community Forum and Orsett Community Forum, comment on the negative impact the proposed northern route would have on communities in Essex, specifically Thurrock, with particular concerns that the pollution generated by the additional traffic would cause significant health issues for local residents.

Some respondents, including Orsett Village Conservation Group, criticise the potential impact upon local infrastructure and amenities, with most of those referring to the potential loss of Orsett Showground, which respondents emphasise is frequently visited.

‘In actual fact it would be going through the Orsett Showground, a well used and popular village amenity of major importance for the whole of the County of Essex’ (User ID 103259)

Respondents also highlight the proximity of the preferred route to properties and schools and some are concerned that villages in Thurrock, such as South Ockendon, would be isolated.

Furthermore, a few respondents worry that the proposals would encourage further unwanted development:

‘The route appears to have been chosen for the highest level of land being made available for developments whether industrial or residential’. User ID 5766



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Design

Most of the design criticisms towards the proposed road structures (viaducts, bridges and embankments) stem from concern about their visual impact on the local landscape. For example, the height of the proposed Mardyke viaduct is often mentioned, though opinions are split as to whether it should be higher or lower.

As most of the proposed road structures are part of the proposed junctions, more detailed comments are included in Chapter 9 (Northern Connections).

Other respondents suggest that the proposed number of lanes is insufficient to address the congestion problem, that the route is unduly complex or that it is not direct enough.

"Don't know why the route winds around and then turns sharply in towards Ockendon. Surely the route should be more direct." (User ID 10343)

Economy

Some respondents express concern about the cost of implementing the route through Thurrock or the disruption it would cause to local businesses, adding that no potential benefits would offset the negative impact.

Some respondents, including Basildon Business Group, argue that the proposals do not realise the full economic potential of the area as there is limited eastwards access to/from the route. Related to this, some respondents comment that motorists would face higher petrol costs as they would have to take a longer route.

"Basildon Business Group members have raised concerns that the combination of route selection, connectivity and existing infrastructure does not realise the full potential economic and social benefits to the Basildon Borough and the wider South Essex area that this crossing could bring" (Basildon Business Group)

Respondents are concerned that Essex in general and Thurrock in particular would have to pay a high price in terms of continuous disruption and would not see any tangible benefits in terms of economic opportunities.

Environment

The majority of respondents who raise concerns about the environmental impact of the proposed northern route, including Thames Crossing Action Group, focus on the potential increase in air and noise pollution. Related to this, some respondents, including Tilbury Town Community, cite statistics which highlight the already high levels of pollution in Essex and Thurrock and express concerns that these would deteriorate even further if the proposed northern route goes ahead.

Many respondents feel that the route would have a severe impact upon Essex, referring to the potential visual impact as well as loss of green belt land, farmland and wildlife habitats.



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“The visual effects will be very marked, instead of a largely rural setting overlooking a sequence of small valleys the causewayed enclosure will be flanked by roads and the view across a valley will be replaced by a major road running on an embankment” (Essex Society for Archaeology and History)

A few respondents identify designated areas which could be affected by the proposals such the marshes in Rainham. Similarly, other respondents, including the Essex Society for Archaeology, highlight the monuments and cropmarks west of Orsett that could be threatened by the proposed northern route.

Furthermore, some respondents worry that the proposed northern route would cross flood plains.

Transport

Many respondents who indicate opposition to the proposed northern route do so because of fears that congestion levels would not only not improve but could even get worse with specific references to the A13, Orsett and Ockendon amongst others. Respondents are concerned that congestion levels would be transferred to other roads north of the river due to a continued reliance on the M25 and ‘rat runs’ would develop between the two crossings.

“We are also concerned that when there is any hold up on the M25 and/or the LTC traffic will spill onto the local roads in Cranham and Upminster as motorists attempt to find a way round the hold up. This is already a problem when the M25 is blocked in the area, with traffic using local roads, eg St Mary's Lane, Avon Road and Wingletye Lane and will only get worse with the additional traffic” (Upminster and Cranham Residents' Association)

Some respondents also believe that the northern route of the LTC fails to provide adequate access to the local road network [See Chapter 9 (Northern Connections) for further detail]. As a consequence, some of these respondents argue that the preferred route of the LTC does not result in a more resilient road network and would not be a suitable alternative to Dartford.

Other respondents raise concerns that accidents would increase along this section of the route, often pointing out that Orsett Fen is prone to foggy conditions or that the route involves multiple sharp bends without elaborating further.

Other

Some respondents question the integrity of the decision-making process, and feel that the interests of business groups, such as the ports in the area, have been granted undue weight at the expense of the local residents who will have to live with the project on their doorstep.



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7.2.3. Alternatives to the proposed route north of the river

The majority of the respondents who ask for an alternative location, request that the route north of the river should bypass the M25 and link to the A12 and/or the M11. Likewise, other respondents advocate the bypassing of the M25 in a route that extends further north (e.g. towards Cambridge), but do not specify which roads should be linked to achieve this.

“To ease the congestion at Dartford crossings would have like it to be linked to or near the the M11 where it meets the M25 which would give better links to East Anglia and Cambridge and remove a lot of congestion north of the crossing.” (User ID 6094)

In contrast, some respondents feel that the northern route of the LTC should be further east, with routes towards Brentwood or Chelmsford often mentioned.

Some respondents express a preference for options put forward in the 2016 consultation, namely Route 4 (a route that would join the M25 at junction 29) and Route 2 (a route that would pass through West Tilbury).

Some respondents believe that the location of the northern route is unsuitable and insist that the road should not cross Thurrock.

A few respondents suggest other route amendments that would avoid the Mardyke valley.

7.2.4. Suggestions

Network upgrades

Respondents ask for an upgrade to the existing road network north of the river, adding that otherwise LTC's ability to alleviate congestion would be limited and stress the importance of making sure that the route is future-proof. Specific roads mentioned include A12, A130 and M11.

“Need to ensure that local traffic leaving or joining the new crossing has ‘somewhere to go’. It is likely that local traffic will increase significantly so the local area must not be allowed simply to clog up.” (User ID 19720)

Other requests relate to the access points with the wider network and as such are summarised in Chapter 9 (Northern Connections).

Mitigation measures

In the context of their concerns about the visual and noise impact of the preferred route, respondents make a range of mitigation suggestions such as:

- placing the route in a cutting (or at least the section crossing Thurrock);
- creating structures that are designed in sympathy with the existing environment;
- installing sound barriers; and



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- planting more trees to absorb noise from the road.

Traffic flow

Respondents stress the importance of avoiding delays and suggest a variety of traffic calming measures, signage mechanisms and safety measures to achieve this. These are raised by respondents with reference to multiple sections of the route and are summarised in Chapter 14 (Traffic).

Some respondents request integration with public transport infrastructure, such as providing a rail link to East Tilbury. Respondents add that in addition to the traffic benefits, this would also be a way for Highways England to offer something to communities which, respondents argue, would be significantly disrupted by the proposed northern route.

Viaduct

Some respondents request amendments to the proposed viaduct over the Mardyke valley such as:

- having a full viaduct rather than a combination of viaduct and embankment;
- changing its height with some asking for it to be higher, while others insisting it should be lower; and
- building it using noise-cancelling materials.

7.3. Comments expressed by people with interest in land

7.3.1. Reasons for supporting the proposed route north of the river

Seven PILs comment positively on the proposed north of the river or identify benefits associated with it as part of their qualitative feedback, mainly focussing on the development opportunities the project would provide. Most PILs, however, are tentative in offering their support for the northern route of the LTC.

7.3.2. Reasons for opposing the proposed route north of the river

149 PILs express concerns or raise objections to the proposed northern route as part of their qualitative feedback. Their comments largely mirror those made by members of the public and focus on:

- impact on local communities in terms of congestion, air pollution and severance, with a strong focus on Thurrock;
- increased congestion and a perceived inability of the northern route to provide a long-term solution to traffic problems;
- loss of valuable farmland;
- impact on local wildlife and landscape;
- the complexity of the route

Some PILs raise concerns that the preferred route would intensify the flood risk in the locality, suggesting that the construction of a viaduct over the Mardyke would cause flooding in neighbouring areas such as Bulphan.



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Some PILs also advise that the route would threaten areas of archaeological interest in the county, emphasising the impact on the conservation area of North Ockendon and historical buildings such as St Mary Magdalen Church.

7.3.3. Alternatives to the proposed route north of the river

The alternatives suggested by PILs largely mirror those made by members of the public and include:

- two previously discussed options as part of the 2016 consultation (Route 4 and Route 2);
- a route which would bypass M25 and connects directly to M11;
- moving the preferred route further east; and
- extending the route further north into Essex.

Some PILs identify particular concerns with the proposed route north of the river and ask that it is amended so it would have less impact on their properties.

7.3.4. Suggestions

Many PILs argue that the tunnel should be extended further north as this would reduce noise pollution and limit the visual impact of the LTC.

Some PILs advocate measures for providing visual screening, and believe that trees should be planted alongside the route. This is of particular concern to respondents commenting on sections of the preferred route running in close proximity to North Ockendon.

PILs offer various opinions on the proposed viaduct across the Mardyke valley. Some advocate for its height to be extended in order to minimise its footprint whereas others believe that it should be lower in order to minimise its visual impact on the surrounding areas. Some PILs also express concern that environmental issues relating to the viaduct have not been properly assessed, with no adequate proposals to address the excess surface water.

There are also requests for a new public transport route between Ebbsfleet and East Tilbury to be incorporated within the northern route.



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8. Connections – south of the crossing

8.1. Overview

Q4a asks:

“Do you support or oppose the proposed junction between the Lower Thames Crossing and the M2/A2?”

In total 20,660 respondents answered this question and the results are summarised in the charts⁸ below.

Chart 16: Answers from members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations (n=20,454)

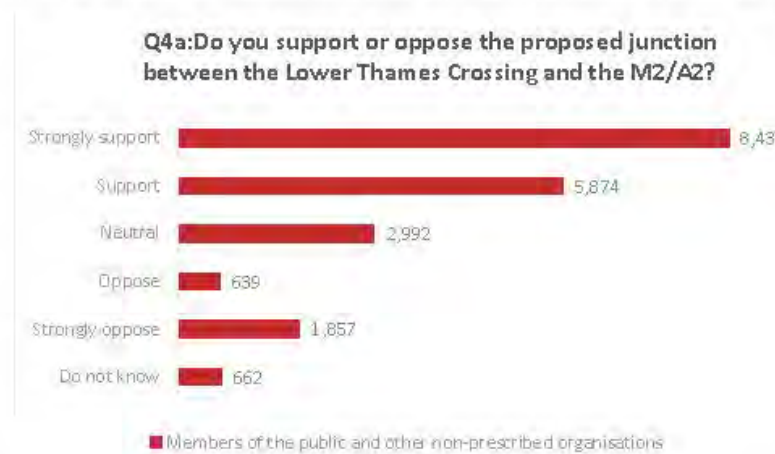
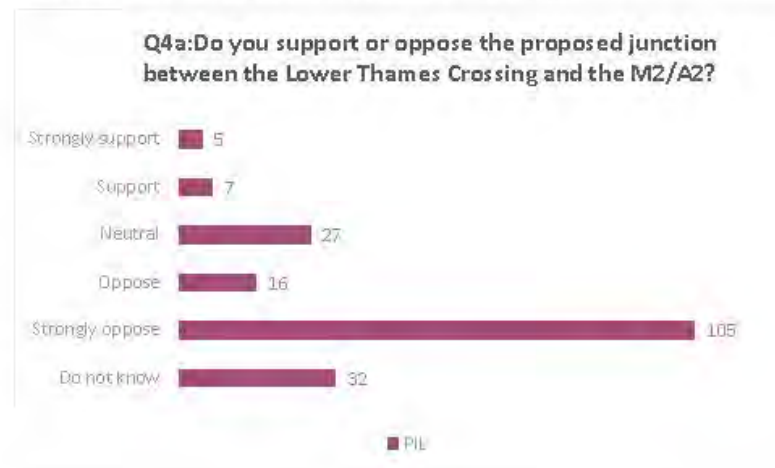


Chart 17: Answers from people with interest in land (PIL) (n=192)

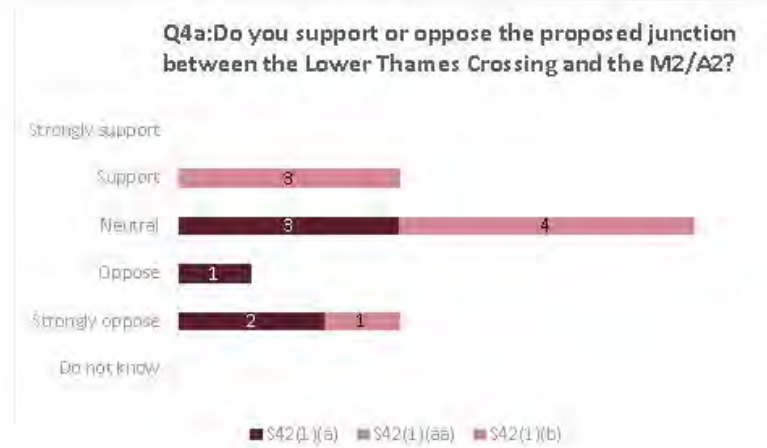


⁸ Respondents who did not respond using the questionnaire were not able to complete this question



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Chart 18: Answers from prescribed consultees (n=14)



Additionally, 9,883 respondents discussed the proposed junction between the Lower Thames Crossing and the M2/A2. This chapter presents a summary of their comments.

8.2. Comments expressed by members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations

8.2.1. Reasons for supporting the proposed southern connections

6,605 respondents comment positively on the proposed junction between the Lower Thames Crossing and the M2/A2 or identify benefits associated with it as part of their qualitative feedback.

Of those respondents, the majority simply say that the planned M2/A2 junction looks good or is well-designed, without going into any further detail.

Many others are specifically supportive of the location chosen for the new junction, believing it to be appropriate as it would avoid the busier sections of the A2.

“The most appropriate and convenient place to commence the new road to the new tunnel[s], it avoids the much busier sections of the A2, westwards towards Blean [sic], Bluewater, Swanscombe Cutting, Ebbsfleet and Dartford; - all areas where the road congestion is growing daily.” (User ID 7004)

Additionally, some support the decision-making process behind the proposal on the grounds that it has resulted in an effective compromise between various needs, including economic, community, environmental and transport needs.

Some respondents support the proposed southern connection despite its potential impact on the local area, as they feel some disruption is a small price to pay for the expected benefits to the wider road network.



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Community

Of those respondents who provide community-based reasons for supporting the proposed southern connection, most welcome the efforts to minimise the amount of disruption for local residents, both during and after construction.

Related to this, some respondents support the proposed southern connection either because they expect the improved infrastructure to positively impact local communities in Kent, or because they support the decision to avoid specific areas such as Higham and Shorne.

"I think that this option has the least impact on the local community, as it means the proposed route from the A2 would now use greenbelt land south/south east of Riverview Park and therefore, not affect the local communities including the Shorne/Higham area." (User ID 21927)

A few responses focus on the lack of disruption to existing housing caused by the latest design for the southern connection, which minimises the need for compulsory purchases and demolitions. Others believe that the project overall (and by extension the proposed southern connection) is needed to accommodate planned housing developments in the area and argue that in the long run, the project would have a positive impact on property values.

Design

Many respondents make general supportive comments regarding the proposed layout of the new junction with the M2/A2, believing it to be appropriate and simple to navigate with adequate connections to the wider road network.

Some respondents support the proposed southern connection on the basis of one or more elements of its design. Of these, most believe that the proposals effectively minimise the number of pinch points and bottlenecks that might restrict the flow of traffic to, from and through the new junction, and support the removal of roundabouts and traffic lights from earlier designs. Similarly, some respondents support the decision to widen the M2/A2 to four lanes, as well as the choice to retain the hard shoulder on this stretch of road.

"Seems logical: all routes are grade separated, so maximising traffic flow." (User ID 2176)

Some respondents are also explicitly supportive of the decision to remove the planned access to the A226 at Chalk, due to concerns that this junction would have increased traffic on unsuitable local roads.

Some respondents support the use of connecting structures such as bridges and underpasses, believing the proposed designs to be both practical and suitable for the area, with some also supporting the use of diversions where necessary to maintain traffic flow. Please see Chapter 5 (Southern Route) for further discussion on these road structures.



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Economy

Some respondents support the projected cost of the proposed southern connection as they feel it represents the best possible value for money, especially given the decision to connect to existing infrastructure.

Other respondents are supportive of the proposed southern connection as they anticipate a positive impact on the local economy, with the emergence of new employment opportunities and increased revenue from tourism.

"I believe this may help with tourism and economy within Rochester and surrounding areas." (User ID 1331)

Environment

In addition to general comments about the perceived reduced environmental impact of the proposed southern connection, some respondents indicate that the proposals require a minimum amount of green belt land, use noise-minimising techniques, have been designed with the surrounding landscape in mind and would avoid ecologically sensitive areas.

Others stress that as a result of the improved traffic flow, air quality in the area would improve while a few respondents support the proposed southern connection on the basis that it would not encroach on protected areas such as Shorne Woods Country Park and the ancient woodland at Cobham.

Transport

Of those respondents to give transport-based reasons for supporting the proposed southern connections, the majority expect a reduction in congestion at Dartford Crossing and on the surrounding road network in Kent as the proposed southern connection would encourage traffic from East Kent and the Channel Ports to leave the M2/A2 earlier.

"The A2 from the M2 to the M25 is at capacity Monday to Friday anything that takes some of this traffic off the A2 at the earliest opportunity will be beneficial" (User ID 1088)

Some respondents are pleased that the proposed junction could be easily reached from both the M25 and, to a lesser extent, the M20 and highlight a number of areas where access would be improved, including the Channel Tunnel, the ferry ports and various locations in Kent.

A few respondents specifically support the decision to use the new northern service road to retain eastbound access onto the M2/A2 from Brewers Road, as they feel this represents a marked improvement both in terms of traffic flow and drivers' safety.

Furthermore, some respondents explicitly support the decision to limit access options to local roads, stressing that this would improve traffic flow, reduce the risks of rat runs and improve drivers' safety.



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"It should have the minimum number of intersection as possible through highly populated areas as this causes congestion and pollution as traffic slows." (User ID 13774)

8.2.2. Reasons for opposing the proposed southern connections

2,740 respondents express concerns or raise objections to the proposed southern connection as part of their qualitative feedback.

Many of these regard the proposals as impractical, inadequate or unnecessary, without providing any detail as to their specific concerns. Others argue that the proposed location of the junction is too close to the Dartford Crossing to provide the required level of resilience or too far from the M25 to be of use for anyone other than traffic to and from Dover.

Many other respondents express their opposition to the decision-making process that has resulted in the proposed design for the southern connection, as they do not feel enough attention has been paid to local communities or to connecting roads, such as the A229 and its junctions with the M2 and M20, which are not part of the LTC but, which, they argue, would be central to its successful operation.

Others are concerned that Highways England's calculations regarding future traffic flows are based on a flawed model which does not take into account the full impact on local roads. Please refer to Chapter 14 (Traffic) for further discussion on this point.

Community

Of those respondents to provide community-focused reasons for opposing the proposed connection with the M2/A2, most base their opposition on the anticipated impact on specific communities in the immediate vicinity of the new junction, such as Gravesend, Thong and Shome, which some expect to experience increased congestion and pollution once the LTC is operational.

'Encouraging a high volume of traffic through this community will have an increased negative impact on the quality of health and life of those unfortunate enough to live adjacent to the proposed route' (User ID 22839)

Other mention the risk of urbanisation which would further erode the rural character of the area, falling property values and the loss of local amenities such as the Southern Valley golf course.

Additionally, some respondents are concerned that a number of housing developments are planned for this area, including plans to build 30,000 new houses in the Medway area by 2035, and feel that this has not been properly taken into account when designing the LTC's southern connection.

Design

Some respondents oppose the proposed southern connection due to one or more problematic elements of the design, with the majority of these, including Bean Parish Council, arguing that the complexity of the planned



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junction, with its multitude of slip roads and roundabouts, would cause problems for both local and LTC-bound traffic as well as create bottlenecks:

“it is a very complex and confusing junction. The proposed amount of signage to get through the junction is at best bewildering to us let alone foreign drivers. There is no way that driving at 60-70 miles an hour one would be able to read the signs and follow the correct route” (User ID 24326).

Other describe their concerns over the capacity of the proposals to accommodate the expected increase in traffic, and the unsuitability of the existing infrastructure used to connect the LTC to the road network in Kent.

Some respondents are opposed to the proposed design of the various structures required for the new junction to work, including bridges, underpasses and viaducts, varying from generic concerns regarding their layout to more specific issues with the design. These are summarised in Chapter 5 (Southern Route). Other bridge related concerns are raised with regards to the entire project and are summarised in Chapter 4 (Preferred Route).

Some respondents oppose the changes made to the design of the southern connections since the previous consultation, with most of these focusing specifically on the decision to remove the connection to the A226 junction 3 at Chalk, which would have provided an additional access route to the M2 for local traffic, as well as improving the resilience of the local road network.

Economy

Some respondents are opposed to the proposed southern connection for economic reasons, with most raising concerns regarding the cost of the proposed junction and its accompanying structures, due to the unnecessary complexity of the design. Furthermore, there are widespread concerns that the projected cost of the proposed southern connection has not taken account of the various upgrades to the existing road network that would be required for the new junction to function properly. They add that the responsibility for said upgrades would fall on Kent County Council, meaning that local taxpayers will be made to cover the cost of the project even as the benefits are felt throughout the country.

“At the LTC/A2 interchange, the A2 eastbound to LTC northbound left turn slip crosses the LTC mainline twice on a high speed alignment (presumably 85kph design). These two bridges will add significantly to cost.” (User ID 1709)

Environment

Some respondents make negative comments regarding the environmental impact of the proposed southern connection, with many of these objecting to the perceived destruction of the local environment or the lack of sufficient mitigation measures, without offering any specific reasoning for their comments.



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Other respondents are concerned about destruction of green belt land, deteriorating air quality, increase in carbon emissions and noise pollution.

On a similar note, some respondents oppose the proposals for the LTC's southern connection as they feel an excessive amount of land is being requisitioned.

"It is a cynical land grab to open up the Thames area to more development, more housing, more roads, putting profit before the health and well being of local people and the environment." (User ID 23177)

Some respondents raise concerns regarding the visual impact of the proposed junction and its accompanying structures on what is currently a picturesque area, either because they do not feel that enough thought has been put into making them aesthetically pleasing, or because they object to the loss of vegetation in the central reservation.

Some respondents are concerned that the proposed southern connection would have a negative impact on local wildlife populations whose habitats have already been eroded by infrastructure projects such as the HS1 railway, and that insufficient effort has been made to mitigate this. In the context of those concerns, respondents often refer to the Shorne Woods Country Park.

Existing road network

Local roads

Some respondents oppose the proposed southern connection as they do not feel the new junction has been sensibly integrated into the existing road network in Kent. Of these, the majority highlight the perceived unsuitability of the local roads to accommodate increased traffic, especially as many of these are either narrow, single lane roads that are mostly used by local and agricultural traffic, or are already frequently congested.

Many respondents are also concerned that the proposed junction might encourage traffic to use unsuitable local roads as rat runs to access the LTC, leading to increased congestion in residential areas such as Thong, Shorne, Sole Street and Cobham.

"In particular, it will be important to look at the A228 and other routes heading south towards the M20, which will not currently be able to support increases in vehicle number." (West Malling Parish Council)

M2/A2

Many respondents, including Minster-on-Sea Parish Council, Inade Parish Council, the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership, Abridge2Far and Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport, express concerns over the decision to connect the LTC's southern route to the M2/A2, as they argue that this stretch of road is already frequently congested and, even with the planned widening, lacks the requisite capacity to cope with the increased volume of



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traffic. Others, including Dover Town Council, share these concerns, but specifically relate them to the junctions on this stretch of road, such as junction 7 of the M2 at Brenley Corner, which they think will require extensive upgrades if they are to avoid becoming bottlenecks.

M20 link roads

Many respondents, including Meopham Parish Council, Minster-on-Sea Parish Council and the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport raise concerns regarding the suitability of the link roads between the M2/A2 and M20, with most of these focusing on the A229 at Blue Bell Hill, which many people expect would be the primary link between the two motorways. Some respondents point out that previous designs had included plans to upgrade this stretch of road to motorway standard, but these have since been removed from the proposals. Other respondents have similar concerns regarding the other potential link roads, namely the A249, A228 and A227, saying that all of these suffer with congestion and would require significant upgrades if they are to be made suitable for the increased volume of traffic.

“Without upgrades to the A229 there is a risk that strategic traffic coming from the south and west will use, or be diverted, onto the A226, A227 and A228, which are not suitable.” (User ID 103284)

A20 /M20

A few respondents raise concerns regarding the capacity of the A20/M20 corridor and the suitability of the existing connections with the link roads to the M2/A2, given the predicted traffic levels in light of planned housing developments.

Finally, some respondents raise concerns about other specific parts of the existing road network, such as the M26 and A251, which they feel may require upgrading, even though they are not directly integral to the operation of the LTC.

Transport

Access

Of those respondents who oppose or raise concerns about the proposed southern connection for transport-related reasons, many focus on the access, or lack of, provided by the new junction with the M2/A2.

Most of these respondents decry the lack of access provided by the new junction to specific areas, or the loss of existing access routes, with the majority focusing on the removal of the previously planned junction with the A226 at Chalk, and the lack of a motorway standard connection to the M20, both of which are thought to be detrimental to the successful operation of the LTC. Some of these respondents, including Bean Residents' Association, also oppose the loss of direct access to the M2/A2 for local traffic, adding that this would lead to convoluted and long journeys. In contrast, some believe that the proposed design has too many access points and will therefore be confusing and potentially dangerous for drivers.



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'the only way of joining the 'old' A2 (to Strood and Rochester) from Valley Drive would be via six roundabouts and crossing the M2/A2 twice, then taking the slip road off Brewers Road' (The Thames Gateway Kent Partnership)

Some respondents raise concerns regarding the lack of or poor access provided by the proposed southern connection to specific communities and/or roads in Kent that are not mentioned above, such as the Channel Ports, the link roads between the M2/A2 and M20, and the M20 itself.

Congestion

Of those respondents who provide transport-based reasons for opposing the proposed southern connections, the majority believe that the new junction and its associated structures would not improve congestion and would have a negative impact on congestion because of its perceived insufficient capacity. Related to this, some add that not only the resilience of the local road network would not be enhanced but that the proposed junction would cause further disruption both on roads as well as in residential areas such as Sole Street and Cobham.

"The south east is already over populated with increased traffic on the M2 and A2 already over the last few years. The new link will condemn the M2 to the same carnage as the M25 rather than elevate it." (User ID 9398)

Some respondents oppose the decision to connect the LTC to the M2/A2, as this stretch of road is already an accident blackspot and this might be expected to get worse with more traffic.

8.2.3. Suggestions

Connections

Respondents make a range of suggestions for additional connections such as:

- reinstating the previously proposed motorway connection to the M20, known as the C variant;
- a direct motorway-standard link to M25;
- a link to the M26; and
- extending the link further into East Kent to provide a link to the Isle of Sheppey and the Medway towns.

Design

Traffic flow

Many respondents make suggestions regarding the proposed design of the southern connection, with most of these concerned with maintaining traffic flow through the new junction with the M2/A2. Suggestions in this category range from more generic assertions that the junction should be "free flowing", or that the use of roundabouts and traffic lights should be



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minimised, to suggestions about the need to remove certain potential bottlenecks or specific connections to local roads, so as not to overload the new intersection.

Other ways respondents suggest traffic flow or safety could be improved include:

- **Slip roads:** slip roads should maintain a consistent number of lanes, on-slips should have their own lanes or extra slip roads should be added;
- **Signage:** should be clear, easy to understand and begin as far in advance as possible to give drivers time to make a decision;
- **Safety measures:** such as removal of any sharp bends, the provision of run-off areas and the introduction of speed cameras;
- **Future-proofing:** the proposed junction should be designed with future traffic needs in mind and be wider and with more lanes.

Motorway

Some respondents' suggestions relate to the motorway status of the new intersection and the surrounding roads, with most comments of this type highlighting the importance of a motorway-to-motorway connection and therefore the need to maintain a motorway standard road from junction 1 of the M2 through to the LTC itself, and to upgrade the A2 as far as the M25. However, it should be noted that a few respondents make the opposite suggestion, i.e. that the LTC and its accompanying roads and junctions should all be of 'A' road status, without providing further detail.

"The A2 changed from A road status to a full motorway stopping agricultural and other inappropriate road users from using the road as they also cause significant congestion during rush hours."
(User ID 7890)

Bridges/flyovers/underpasses/viaducts

Some respondents suggest minimising the use of bridges at the proposed junction, or, if there must be bridges, that they should be as aesthetically pleasing as possible. Others, in contrast, believe that more footbridges should be incorporated into the design, so that local communities might retain their access to existing public rights of way, such as the footpaths around Muggins Lane. Some also suggest that the green bridges at Thong Lane should be as wide as feasibly possible or use cut-and-cover design instead.

Other respondents suggest using flyovers and underpasses due to the need to fit several connections into a relatively small space, as these would allow the various slip lanes to run above and below one another, thereby maintaining consistent traffic flow through the intersection.

A few respondents make suggestions regarding the use of viaducts, namely that they should be aesthetically pleasing and built to the highest possible standard, or that the construction of a viaduct exclusively for local traffic underneath the existing M2 bridge might help to reduce congestion.



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Environment

Some respondents make suggestions about how the visual, noise and air quality impact could be minimised. These include the use of cuttings, embankments and cut and cover construction techniques, the use of noise cancelling materials, planting trees and lowering the height of the roads.

"I'd like to see significant noise dispersion technology deployed along the length of the LTC and the A2 between the M25 and A229 such as the barriers found." (User ID 25024)

Existing roads

Some respondents suggest improving the existing roads around the proposed intersection with the M2/A2, with many suggesting that the whole road network requires extensive upgrades if it is to cope with the increase in traffic that will accompany the new crossing. Other specific suggestions include:

- **M2/A2:** respondents suggest widening the M2/A2 corridor to at least three lanes, or, ideally, upgrading the road to motorway status for its full length. Some also suggest upgrading specific junctions along the M2/A2.
- **M20 links roads:** respondents including Medway Labour Group, Bobbing Parish Council, Offham Parish Council and Detling Parish Council suggest improving the connecting roads between the M2/A2 and the M20, particularly the A229 at Blue Bell Hill or the A249.
- **M20/A20:** respondents suggest including lorry parking facilities alongside the road as well as improving specific junctions (7 and 11a).

Some others make more specific suggestions regarding improvements to existing roads that are not included in the LTC project but are believed to be integral to its successful operation, such as the M26 and the A299 to Ramsgate.

Transport

Access

Some respondents make a range of suggestions regarding specific access routes. The most popular of these are that Gravesend East and Singlewell residents should retain their access to the M2/A2 from Valley Drive, or that the westbound slip road from the LTC should connect to the existing roundabout at this junction.

"There is a need to ensure that those travelling northbound on M25 that wish to use the new tunnel have quick and easy access to Eastbound A2 without having to use the roundabout on the A2/M25 junction." (User ID 5581)

In contrast, a few respondents believe that access to the A2 should be restricted and that the Brewers Road junction should either be permanently closed or reconfigured to give priority to local traffic heading to Shorne.



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Traffic flow

A few respondents suggest ways to improve the resilience of the proposed southern connection, such as the need for rapid vehicle recovery in the event of a breakdown or collision in the tunnel, or the provision of more connecting roads between the M2 and the surrounding major road network in case of border issues or HGV congestion at Dover.

The rest of the suggestions about how traffic within the southern connection can be improved are raised by respondents with reference to multiple sections of the route and are summarised in Chapter 14 (Traffic).

More information required

A few respondents suggest that the available documents and materials concerning the proposed southern connection are inadequate, and that more information is required before they can appropriately comment on the intersection with the M2/A2 or its associated structures.

8.3. Comments expressed by people with interest in land

8.3.1. Reasons for supporting the proposed southern connection

12 PILs comment positively on the proposed southern connection or identify benefits associated with it as part of their qualitative feedback.

These largely mirror the comments expressed by members of the public and refer to the high design standards of the scheme, the removal of the previously planned junction with the A226 at Chalk and the minimised environmental impact in terms of air and noise pollution.

Most PILs who support the proposed southern connection base their support on the access provided by the new intersection, with the majority of these supporting the decision to connect directly to the M2/A2 as this provides easy access to local roads, the wider motorway network and the Channel Ports at Dover and Folkestone, as well as improving access for Gravesend residents. A few PILs also support the decision to remove local access to the tunnel from the A226, and restrict access to the M2/A2 from the existing junctions at Valley Drive and Brewers Road.

Some PILs provide transport-based reasons for supporting the proposed southern connection, with a few arguing that the planned intersection with the M2/A2 would help to ease congestion in Kent, or that it would improve the ability of the local road network to cope with incidents in the new tunnel or at Dartford Crossing.

A few PILs support the proposals for the new intersection with the M2/A2 on the basis that it would help to discourage drivers from using unsuitable local roads as rat runs.

8.3.2. Reasons for opposing the proposed southern connection

92 PILs express concerns or raise objections to the proposed southern connection as part of their qualitative feedback.



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A few PILs express their opposition to the proposed southern connection in somewhat vague terms, arguing that the planned construction works in Kent are either excessive or unnecessary, while others oppose the decision-making process that has led to the latest proposals, saying that not enough consideration has been given to the needs of local traffic.

Furthermore, some PILs explicitly oppose the chosen location for the new intersection due to its proximity to residential areas and the existing Dartford Crossing, or because they believe it should be built at junction 1 of the M2, as in the previous design. Others believe that the new intersection will soon be rendered inadequate, or even obsolete, due to its proximity to planned housing developments in Gravesend and Rochester.

A few PILs oppose the compulsory purchase and demolition of properties that would be necessary to create the space for the proposed intersection with the M2/A2.

A few PILs are particularly concerned that the new footbridges would be too high for pedestrians with a fear of heights, and too narrow for equestrians or dog walkers. Others are concerned that the proposed southern connection lack the resilience to cope with breakdowns or serious collisions in the tunnel and on the surrounding roads, with Thong Lane at particular risk of congestion under those circumstances.

A few PILs oppose the proposed southern connection as they believe the design to be unsafe due to the extensive use of tight bends and Highways England's insistence on 70 miles per hour speed limit, especially as the M2/A2 is already considered to be an accident hotspot.

The rest of the arguments mirror those expressed by members of the public and include concerns about:

- the perceived complex design of the proposed junction;
- community disruption;
- noise and air quality pollution;
- disruption to local businesses;
- insufficient access points or removal of existing access points such as via Valley Drive, via Brewers Road or via Halfpence Lane;
- congestion not being improved as A2 is not attractive road for HGV traffic;
- increased traffic flow on already congested local roads (with specific reference to Gravesend East, Halfpence Lane and Brewers Road) or local roads being used as rat runs (with specific reference to Shore and Thong Lane);
- the congested and steep A229 at Blue Bell Hill; and
- the suitability of the wider road network to accommodate additional traffic.



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8.3.3. Suggestions

Connections

A few PILs suggest that the LTC's southern connections must include a direct link to the M25, while others recommend reinstating the previously planned motorway standard link to the M20, known as the C variant. Additionally, a few other PILs advocate for the inclusion of specific other connections, such as with the A21 and M26, or request the reinstatement of the A226 link at Chalk.

Design

A few PILs make suggestions as to how traffic flow through the new junction might be improved, such as reinstating the Eastern Southern Route so that all LTC traffic from East Kent and the Channel Ports can leave the M2 at Junction 1.

Some PILs regard the design of Thong Lane's green bridges as inadequate, and suggest that they should be widened, while a few others believe that all bridges around the new intersection should be green bridges.

Environment

A few PILs suggest ways to minimise the environmental impact of the proposed southern connection, such as planting mature or fast-growing trees wherever possible to reduce the visual impact, or using noise-baffling techniques such as polymer-based surface coating to mitigate any increase in noise and vibration from the new intersection.

Existing roads

A few PILs suggest that general improvements to the existing road network would be required if the new intersection is to function as intended, while a few make similar suggestions, but relate them to specific roads such as Thong Lane, M2/A2 and A229 at Blue Bell Hill. Other suggestions in this latter group include installing traffic calming measures and double yellow lines along Park Pale, and improving signage where this road meets Brewers Road.

Transport

A few PILs suggest widening the road around the proposed southern connection to four lanes wherever possible, and installing barriers between roads and slip lanes that are too close together or that run parallel to one another.

A few PILs make suggestions as to how to improve the available access from the proposed M2/A2 intersection, such as maintaining the existing access to the A2 from Gravesend East via Valley Drive, while others are more concerned with maintaining access to their property.

The rest of the suggestions about how traffic within the southern connection can be improved are raised by PILs with reference to multiple sections of the route, and are summarised in Chapter 14 (Traffic).



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9. Connections – north of the crossing

Q4c asks:

“Do you support or oppose the proposed Tilbury junction?”

In total 19,416 respondents answered this question and the results are summarised in the charts⁹ below.

Chart 19: Answers from members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations (n=19,212)

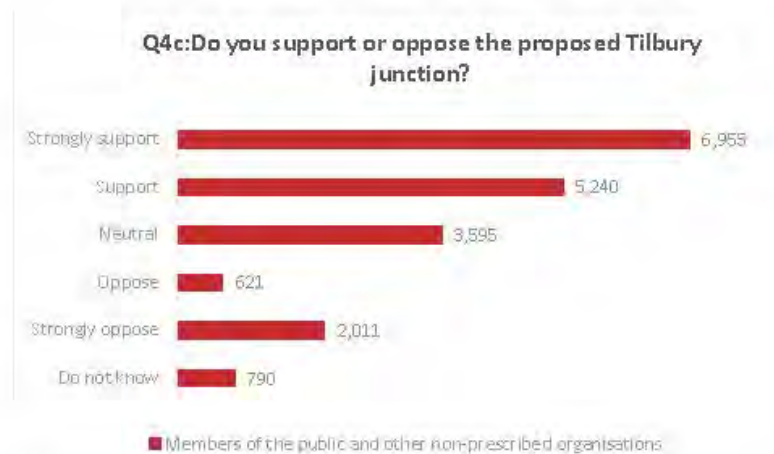
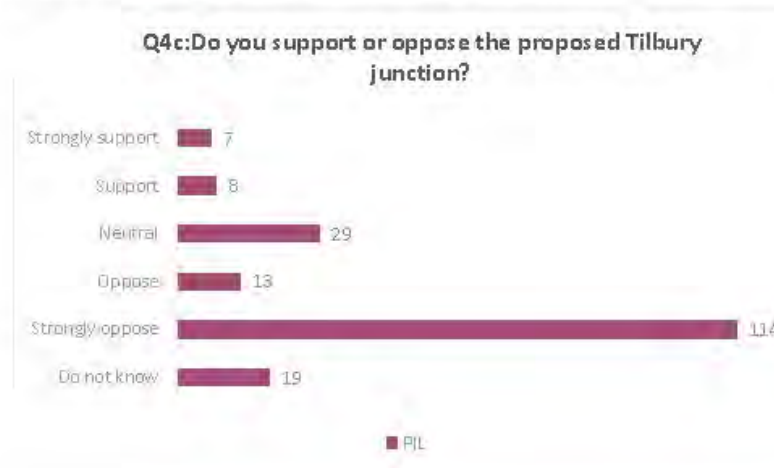


Chart 20: Answers from people with interest in land (PIL) (n=190)

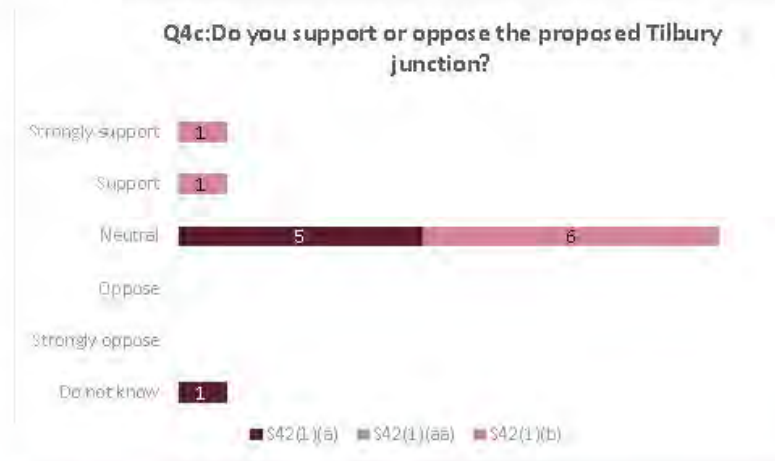


⁹ Respondents who did not respond using the questionnaire were not able to complete this question



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Chart 21: Answers from prescribed consultees (n=14)

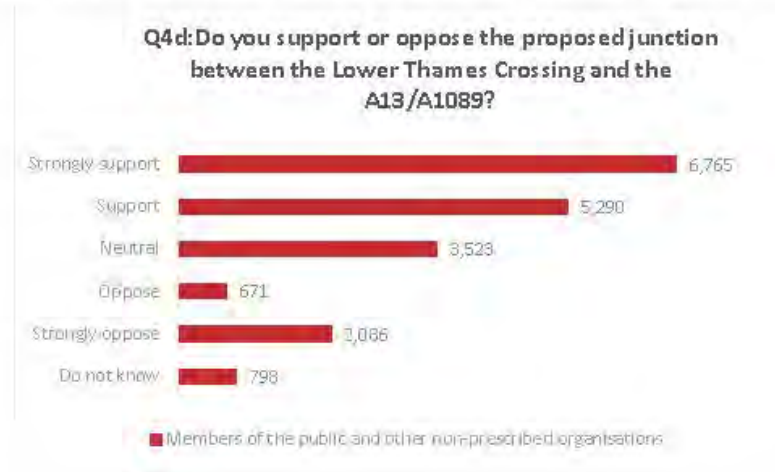


Q4d asks:

“Do you support or oppose the proposed junction between the Lower Thames Crossing and the A13 /A1089?”

In total 19,335 respondents answered this question and the results are summarised in the charts¹⁰ below.

Chart 22: Answers from members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations (n=19,133)



¹⁰ Respondents who did not respond using the questionnaire were not able to complete this question



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Chart 23: Answers from people with interest in land (PIL) (n=188)

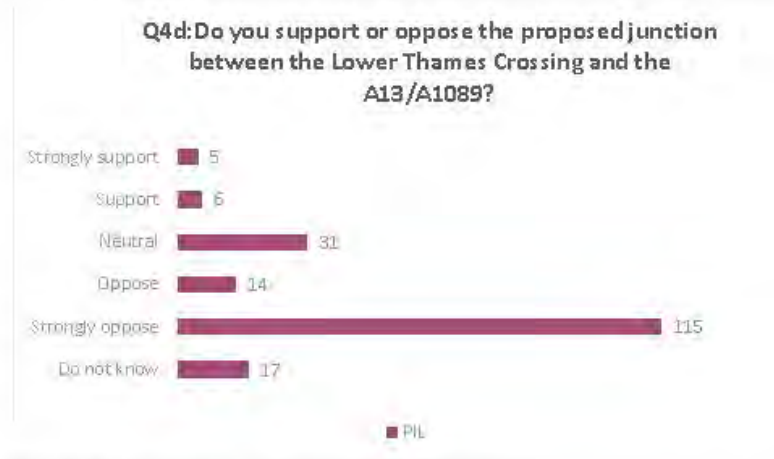
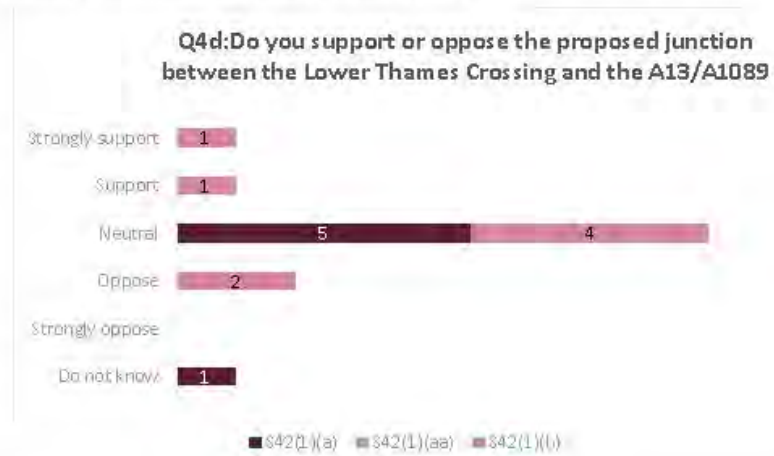


Chart 24: Answers from prescribed consultees (n=14)



Q4e asks:

“Do you support or oppose the proposed junction between the Lower Thames Crossing and the M25?”

In total 19,388 respondents answered this question and the results are summarised in the charts¹¹ below.

¹¹ Respondents who did not respond using the questionnaire were not able to complete this question



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Chart 25: Answers from members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations (n=19,185)

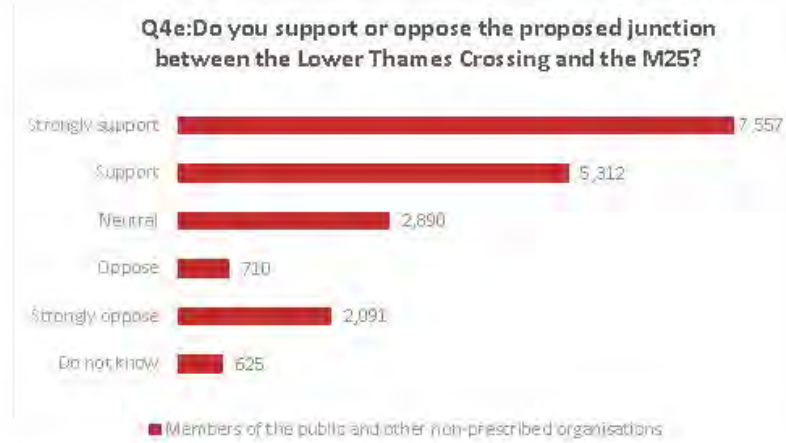


Chart 26: Answers from people with interest in land (PIL) (n=190)

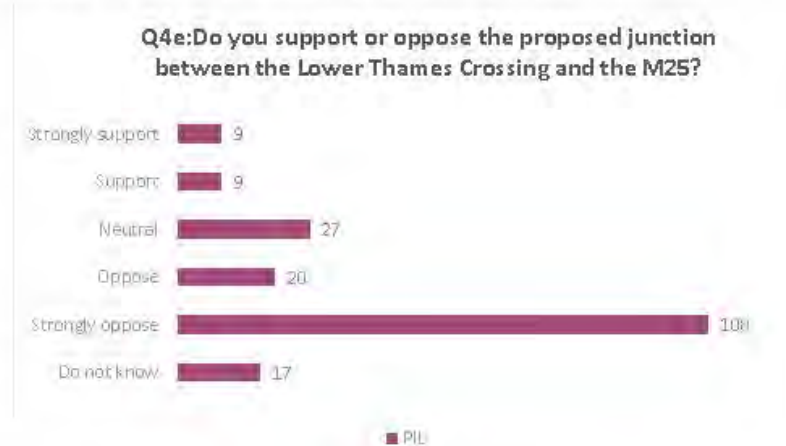
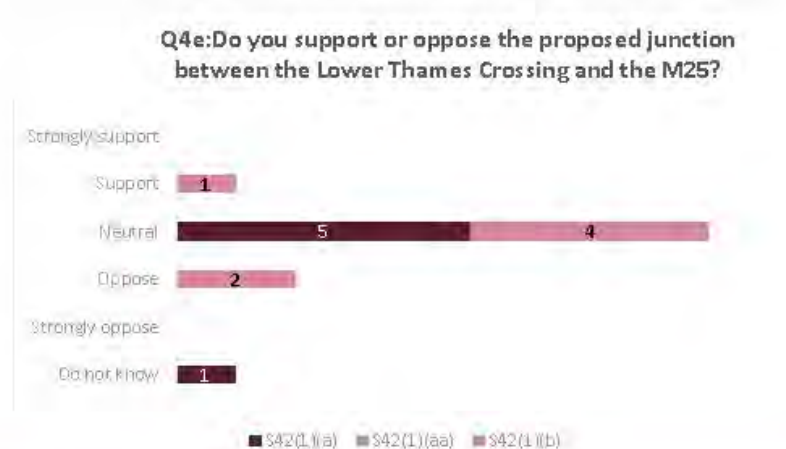


Chart 27: Answers from prescribed consultees (n=13)





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Additionally, 9,014 respondents discussed the proposed northern connections as part their qualitative feedback. Where respondents comment specifically on one of the proposed junctions those comments are captured separately. However, the majority of respondents comment on the proposed northern connections together and are not specific about which of the junctions their comments relate to.

9.1. Comments expressed by members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations

9.1.1. Reasons for supporting the proposed connections north of the crossing

5,697 respondents comment positively on some or all of the proposed connections north of the crossing or identify benefits associated with them as part of their qualitative feedback.

Community

Many respondents support the proposed northern connections as they believe appropriate steps have been taken to minimise disruption to local communities or because they believe that the proposals would regenerate the region and complement house building projects in areas such as Homdon.

“With possible future plans to extend housing and industry to both upstream and downstream areas this will provide capacity.” (User ID 9363)

A few respondents make the same observations but with regards to specific junctions.

Design

The majority of respondents who comment positively on design features of the connections support efforts to promote smooth traffic flows, with some adding that the proposed junctions are sufficiently future-proofed:

‘All of these feed naturally into the current infrastructure giving scope for future expansion’. (User ID 5165)

In terms of comments on the specific junctions:

- **A13/1089 junction:** respondents endorse the use of existing network infrastructure at the A13/1089 junction.
- **LTC/M25 junction:** respondents approve of the decision to have a seamless connection with slip roads.

Economy

Many respondents who believe the proposed northern junctions would have a positive effect on the economy suggest that local businesses would be the primary beneficiaries because of better access to areas north of the Thames.

Some respondents emphasise the role of the connections in a strategic



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national freight network between the Kent ports and the north of England, with some arguing that this route would become even more integral following the UK's departure from the EU.

“After Brexit we will need access to other ports so our east coast should revitalise and will need better links.” (User ID 9718)

Transport East and Suffolk Chamber of Commerce Transport and Infrastructure Board highlight those benefits for A13/1089 junction with other respondents making the same observation for Tilbury junction and LTC/M25 junction.

Environment

Most of the environmental benefits associated with the proposed connections focus on the reduced pollution levels associated with the improved traffic flow.

“Clear wide lanes and junctions will reduce speed which in turn reduces pollution of stationary traffic.” (User ID 4724)

Many respondents who support the proposed northern connections, also welcome the proposed mitigation measures particularly with regards to local wildlife and noise pollution.

Others comment on the minimised visual impact of the junctions, saying that they their design demonstrates a sensitivity towards the local environment.

Some respondents make the same observations but with regards to specific junctions.

Transport

Many of the respondents who support the proposed northern connections do so because they believe they would promote a smoother traffic flow, improve access to major routes and reduce journey times and road accidents.

“Multiple access points will facilitate use of the crossing and alleviate pressure on existing crossings.” (User ID 13637)

Some respondents support the junctions as they believe they would enhance the resilience of the preferred route by offering multiple routing options in the event of incident or extreme weather. Related to this, some respondents comment specifically on the proposed locations for the junctions arguing that these are at a suitable distance from the existing Dartford Crossing.

In addition to the observations above, some respondents make specific comments with regards to individual junctions:

- **Tilbury junction:** a few respondents support the decision to limit access at this junction, believing that this would limit the congestion experienced by local roads. Additionally, respondents highlight how the junction would play an important role in ensuring the safety of LTC's users, since it would permit the reversal of traffic at a critical location in



the event of an incident at the tunnel.

- **A13/1089 junction:** the majority of respondents who discuss the transport benefits of this specific junction, welcome the improved access it would offer. Respondents also approve the location of the junction, as it would connect to one of the key arterial roads in South Essex. Others believe that it would ease congestion on the A13 and relieve an existing chokepoint at the A13/M25 junction.
- **LTC/M25 junction:** In addition to believing that it would ease congestion on the M25, respondents assert the importance of connecting the LTC to the M25, which is a critical access route for traffic in the UK.
- **M25 junction 29:** respondents believe that it would improve access to the A127.

9.1.2. **Reasons for opposing the proposed junctions north of the crossing**

2,867 respondents express concerns or raise objections to some or all of the proposed junctions north of the crossing as part of their qualitative feedback.

Community

Many respondents who raise objections to the proposed northern connections, emphasise the perceived negative impact they would have on communities in Essex, citing disruption to everyday lives, increased health risks and deteriorated air quality.

As a local resident I cannot see any benefits to having the crossing, the junctions will only add to chaos on local roads when accidents/breakdowns occur' (User ID 14945)

Some respondents argue that too many houses would be demolished to make room for these connections, whilst a few respondents highlight the local schools that would be negatively impacted.

Furthermore, respondents feel that the connections would encourage further unwanted development in the region, with several anticipating that a mass house building programme would soon follow.

In terms of concerns about individual junctions, respondents raise the following:

- **Tilbury junction:** respondents are concerned by its proximity to homes and local schools with some worrying that it would effectively split East and West Tilbury.
- **A13/1089 junction:** respondents refer to previous improvement works to the A13 and argue that further disruption to local residents, particularly those in Orsett, is unwelcome. Chadwell St Mary Community Forum objects to the junction as it would require the demolition of relatively new housing. Other respondents raise concerns over the impact to properties on Baker Street and Stifford Clays Road. Some respondents emphasise the proximity of the junction to Treetops School and the



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proposed Orsett Heath Academy. A few respondents are concerned that the proposals require the relocation of a traveller site at Garmion Fields and express reservations about moving it closer to nearby villages.

- **LTC/M25 junction:** as with the A13 junction, some respondents say that the M25 connection would have a devastating impact upon the local community, exacerbating health issues and threatening nearby properties. Some respondents express concern that there would be considerable disruption on the M25 as a result of this junction, which cannot be tolerated given the importance of the road to the strategic network in the south east. Many respondents, including the Barking, Dagenham & Havering Green Party and Upminster and Cranham Residents' Association express concerns about the potential disruption to local amenities such as the Thames Chase Community Forest, which is frequently visited by children.

Design

The majority of respondents who object to the design of the junctions believe they are flawed because the access arrangements are too convoluted and would lead to delays or accidents.

"The links and slip ways look complicated at times appear to take a wide birth of existing or new main carriageways." (User ID 1099)

In addition to the point, above, respondents also raise specific concerns with regards to individual junctions:

- **Tilbury junction:** respondents worry that because of the perceived convoluted design of the proposed junction, drivers would be confused and inadvertently enter the service area.
- **A13/1089 junction:** respondents emphasise the need to simplify the design given the anticipated number of foreign drivers coming from the ports, who may be unfamiliar with standard UK signage. In the context of their concerns, respondents highlight the large number of slip roads and describe the proposed junction as a "bowl of spaghetti". Some object to the decision to upgrade the A13 to motorway status at its junction with the LTC, as this would limit access for non-motorway eligible traffic.
- **LTC/M25 junction:** respondents worry that the design of the junction would confuse drivers who want to access the A127.
- **M25 junction 29:** as with other junctions, a few respondents consider the design of the proposed junction excessively complex. Some respondents comment on proposals to widen junction 29, arguing that problems would arise where the seven lanes of northbound traffic on the M25 go down to three at the flyovers at junction 29 and Junction 28. Furthermore, some respondents believe that it would be better if LTC joins M25 at a different, less busy junction.



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Economy

The majority of respondents who object to the northern junctions on economic grounds believe that their cost is too high or that they do not provide value for money as they would not solve the congestion issue.

A few respondents including Basildon Business Group, Opportunity South Essex and Transport East suggest that the junctions do not deliver adequate access and therefore local businesses would be impaired by the connections. Raising a similar point, some respondents argue that the junctions fail to support local growth strategies.

“This LTC runs through Thurrock but access on to the new road is limited and fails to exploit potential for industrial development north side of the river.” (User ID 24307)

In additions to the points above, some respondents also raise junction-specific concerns:

- **Tilbury junction:** the majority of respondents who comment negatively on the economic impact of the Tilbury junction suggest that the failure to provide a Tilbury Link Road would significantly limit the utility of the junction. Similarly, respondents, including Thames Industrial Estate, believe the lack of access to the Tilbury Port would contribute to a failure to deliver local development and regional economic growth.
- **A13/1089 junction:** some respondents say that the complicated design of the junction, which includes expensive features such as multiple box-jacked tunnels, makes the cost of its implementation prohibitive. Likewise, respondents, including the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership, express concern that users would be burdened with increased costs due to limited access arrangements forcing circuitous journeys.
- **LTC/M25 junction:** a few respondents express similar concerns over the cost of the M25 junction, deeming it unnecessarily complicated and expensive.

Environment

The majority of respondents who raise concerns about the environmental impact of the proposed northern connections focus on the perceived increase in air pollution. Many suggest that air quality in Thurrock would further deteriorate, with increasing traffic levels leading to congestion and greater pollution. Similarly, some respondents worry about noise and light pollution.

“The amount of road connections a project like this would lead to is deeply concerning, given the number of areas this will mean have to suffer from toxic air.” (User ID 420)

Some respondents emphasise the perceived destructive effect that the junctions would have on the countryside, wildlife habitats and heritage sites in Essex, with some feeling that the elevation of structures would lead to permanent visual impact.



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Some respondents make comments in relation to specific junctions:

- **Tilbury junction:** in addition to air and noise quality concerns, respondents raise concerns over the extent of the land acquisition. They argue that it would impact the countryside and destroy valuable Thames-bank and marshland habitats. Likewise, Opportunity South Essex draws attention to what it expects to be “significant visual intrusion” given the flat surrounding landscape. Some respondents also comment on the impact to the historic Tilbury Fort and suggest that constructing the junction on a flood plain poses a substantial risk.
- **A13/1089 junction:** respondents highlight features in the junction’s design, such as its bends and gradients which they believe would cause rapid deceleration and acceleration, thereby generating a lot of noise and pollution. Some respondents argue that the size of the proposed junction would result in an unnecessarily large use of land, which would ruin local countryside and blight the landscape around Orsett. A few respondents highlight the impact upon local wildlife, fearing that the wildlife site behind Grey Goose Farm would be spoiled. Additionally, the Essex Society for Archaeology and History raises concerns about the effect on heritage sites such as the cropmarks east of Orsett.
- **LTC/M25 junction:** respondents believe that elevated sections of the junction would subject the residents of North Ockendon to excessive noise from traffic, whilst also having a major visual impact upon the landscape. The Upminster and Cranham Resident’s Association objects to the proposal as it would involve building on green belt land around the Thames Chase Forest Centre. A few other respondents comment on the loss of community land at the Thames Chase Forest, arguing that the potential land loss would be especially damaging, as trees were planted there in the 1980s-90s to mitigate the effects of the M25.
- **M25 junction 29:** the few respondents who comment on the environmental impact at junction 29 suggest excessive noise would impact local residents and express concerns that the junction would be visually intrusive having taken part of Thames Chase Forest.

Transport

Many respondents who indicate opposition to the northern connections feel they would worsen congestion issues by adding additional traffic to already busy local roads and creating rat runs through Grays, South Ockendon, and Tilbury. Related to this, some respondents question the decision-making process by which those connections have been identified, adding that they would not provide the resilience that is required.

“Traffic levels this side of the river are already at saturation level, junctions here would not make matters better, but would trap residents in their homes and make it impossible to travel in the area” (User ID: 1808)



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Respondents including Thames Crossing Action Group, Opportunity South Essex and the Thames Industrial Estate, express concerns over the lack of local access offered by the proposed connections. Some, including CPRE Essex, elaborate on this concern, saying that limited local access would force drivers into diversions which would add extra miles to their journeys.

In addition to the points raised above, some respondents also raise concerns specific to individual junctions:

- **Tilbury junction:** many respondents argue the Tilbury junction is flawed due to its failure to provide access to the local area, with the proposed junction exclusively serving the rest and service area and maintenance depot. Respondents are also concerned that significant congestion will be generated at the connection point with the service area, which would spill over local roads. A few add that the roundabout between the junction and the rest and service area is too complicated and might result in accidents or delays.
- **A13/1089 junction:** many respondents express concern that the A13/1089 junction would generate additional traffic on the A13 and local roads whose capacity is already stretched. Furthermore, some respondents raise concerns that the junction would become an accident blackspot, because it replicates the faults of the existing A13/1089 junction, where, respondents argue, tight bend designs have resulted in an accident rate significantly higher than the UK average.

A few respondents are wary of the proposed junction's proximity to the Orsett Cock roundabout and question if there would be enough space to accommodate it. Additionally, many respondents indicate their opposition to proposals to realign Rectory Road.

Some respondents are also critical of the access arrangements at the junction. They raise concerns over eastwards connectivity and object to traffic being directed towards Stanford Le Hope before returning westbound to re-join the LTC. Some respondents, including DP World, London Gateway, the Essex Chambers of Commerce and Thames Enterprise Park emphasise the six-mile detour that traffic wanting to access the Port of Tilbury would have to take. Infu Lakeside is concerned about the lack of west-facing slips as their customers would not be able to use the LTC.

LTC/M25 junction: respondents feel that a junction with the M25 would contribute to the overuse of the already busy M25, thereby not providing the required resilience that the LTC project is looking to achieve. In contrast, some are critical of the proposals because they would like to see greater integration with the local road network.

- **M25 junction 29:** respondents emphasise the volume of traffic already using the A127 and consider the proximity of the connection to busy interchanges like junction 29 and Junction 30 to be unsuitable. A few



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respondents express concerns that the junction is already an accident blackspot and that traffic merging from the LTC would make it even worse.

9.1.3. Alternatives to the proposed connections north of the crossing

Respondents offer alternative locations for the northern connections because of concerns that the proposed junctions do not offer sufficient access points for local traffic or would not facilitate free flowing traffic. The suggested alternatives to the proposed junctions north of the crossing include:

- **Tilbury junction:** In addition to calls for the junction to avoid disrupting the railway line, there are suggestions for it to be relocated northwards to where it would cross Muckingford Road. This relocation, respondents argue, would provide better access for local traffic and emergency services.
- **A13/1089 junction:** respondents call for the junction to avoid Rectory Road because of concerns that it would disrupt residential properties and Orsett Showground. Suggestions for alternative locations include moving the connection east or west of the proposed location.
- **LTC/M25 junction:** suggestions for alternative locations include moving the connection further north with some specifying that junction 27 (M11), junction 28 (A12), or junction 29 (A127) should be the connection point. These respondents primarily want to see the connection with the M25 as far away as possible from existing crossing points because of concerns that the already heavy traffic in the area would deteriorate even further. Others ask for southern relocation for similar reasons.
- **M25 junction 29:** a few respondents ask for this junction to be replaced by an alternative connection further north to avoid creating a chokepoint with junctions in close proximity.

9.1.4. Suggestions

Some respondents advocate for the inclusion of as many junctions as possible in this section of the route in order to ensure that traffic flows smoothly and without delays. Some of these respondents suggest the LTC route should be extended to incorporate junctions with the A12 and M11. Some respondents also ask for a link with the A130.

"Good access to the A12 and the M11 from the Lower Thames Crossing is a must, there is a lot of congestion on the M25 onto the A12, the Lower Thames Crossing must be designed to remove this congestion." (User ID 1509)

Some respondents feel that access arrangements at all junctions should be improved to permit access in every direction. Other suggested measures to maintain traffic flow are raised by respondents with reference to multiple sections of the route and are summarised in Chapter 14 (Traffic).



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In addition to the suggestions summarised above, respondents also make junction-specific recommendations:

Tilbury junction

The majority of respondents commenting on the Tilbury junction, including London First, DP World, Thurrock Business Board, Essex Business Board, Opportunity South Essex, South East Local Enterprise Partnership the Haven Gateway Partnership, London Distribution Park LLP, and the joint response from Thames Industrial Estate Ltd and One Big Data Management Ltd, make suggestions relating to access to Tilbury and its ports with most of those requesting the reinstatement of the Tilbury Link Road which had been a feature of past proposals¹². Respondents, including The Essex Business Board, Essex Chambers of Commerce and London Distribution Park all argue that direct access to Tilbury docks is essential for stimulating local growth. However, a few respondents support the removal of the link road, citing environmental and community concerns.

"It would seem that commercial traffic from Tilbury docks would have to take a convoluted route (mention of go east on A13, U-tum etc) to access the LTC, surely getting this traffic directly on to the LTC both north & south bound is essential to minimise local traffic disruption and emission." (User ID 11581)

Opportunity South Essex believes the road should be lowered to mitigate its impact on projected future housing growth.

A13/1089 junction

Many respondents, including the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership and a joint response from Kent and Medway Economic Partnership (KMEP) and Kent and Medway Business Advisory Board (BAB), suggest there needs to be improved access at the A13/1089 junction. Respondents ask for access to the LTC from eastbound A13 traffic whilst northbound LTC traffic must be able to access the A13 westbound.

Many respondents request upgrades to the A13 so it can cope with the anticipated increase in traffic.

LTC/M25 junction

As with the A13/1089 junction, some respondents request full access at this junction, and believe that M25 users south of the junction should be able to access the LTC. Other want greater local access for residents.

Many respondents express concern over the ability of the junction to maintain a smooth flow of traffic and in addition to the suggestions outlined at the beginning of this section, ask for the introduction of a smart information boards that show congestion levels at the Dartford Crossing as well as the LTC.

¹² Many respondents erroneously believe that a link road to Tilbury is included within the LTC proposals and state their support for it.



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Other respondents request that the capacity of the junction is increased with additional lanes provided.

M25 junction 29

As with the M25 junction, respondents believe the A127 should be upgraded to accommodate increased traffic from the LTC.

Many of the respondents who suggest changes to the design of junction 29 request a direct connection from the LTC to the A127 to alleviate pressure on the M25. Other respondents express concern about the merging of traffic flows at junction 29 and propose measures to disperse traffic flows.

9.2 Comments expressed by people with interest in land

9.2.1. Reasons for supporting the proposed connections north of the crossing

Nine PILs comment positively on some or all of the proposed junctions north of the crossing or identify benefits associated with them as part of their qualitative feedback.

These mirror the arguments raised by members of the public. PILs suggest that the junctions are sited in appropriate locations to minimise the impact upon local communities and anticipate that they would lead to a reduction in congestion.

9.2.2. Reasons for opposing the proposed connections north of the crossing

90 PILs express concerns or raise objections to some or all of the proposed junctions north of the crossing as part of their qualitative feedback.

These largely mirror those expressed by members of the public and include concerns over adverse community impact, convoluted junction design, visual impact, deteriorating air quality in Thurrock, lack of economic benefits, insufficient access points.

In terms of concerns about individual junctions, respondents raise the following:

Community

- **Tilbury junction:** PILs highlight the potentially deteriorating quality of life of local residents and increased rate of respiratory diseases. There are also concerns about the proximity of the proposed junction to residential properties.
- **A13/1089 junction:** some PILs express concern that the lives of local residents in Orsett would be disrupted, not least because of the potential loss of Orsett Showground. Additionally, a few respondents emphasise the impact of the junction on local homes and schools, arguing that the reorientation of Heath Road and the A1013 route from Homsby Lane would disturb several properties.



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- **LTC/M25 junction:** PILs criticise the closure of Ockendon Road and the impact upon local bus routes. A few PILs, including the Thames Chase Trust, raises concerns about the proximity of the junction to its visitors centre, which receives in excess of 120,000 visitors per year.

Environment

- **Tilbury junction:** Many PILs oppose the Tilbury junction because they believe it will subject residents of East Tilbury, West Tilbury, and Linford to pollution and excessive noise. They specifically criticise decisions to reroute Muckingford Road and to have the structure cross the Tilbury loop railway over a viaduct as respondents believe this would expose local communities to further pollution. A few respondents including the Thames Chase Trust express concern over the size of the junction, feeling it would ruin the countryside and have a substantial impact upon the landscape.
- **A13/1089 junction:** the majority of PILs commenting on the environmental impact of the A13/1089 believe its construction would lead to additional pollution because of its design. Respondents explain that due to limited access, traffic wanting to travel to Tilbury Port would exit at the A13 junction and U-turn at the Manorway roundabout, thereby leading to stationary HGV traffic. Similarly, some PILs raise concern about noise pollution around the Baker Street and Stifford Clays Road area and visual impact on the conservation area of Orsett.
- **LTC/M25 junction:** Thames Chase Trust objects to the environmental impact of the proposed junction. They are 'extremely concerned at the amount of land take' and the detrimental effect on the landscape. A few other PILs raise concerns over the destruction of countryside and the loss of Grade 1 farmland.

Transport

- **Tilbury junction:** many PILs feel the Tilbury junction is flawed in the absence of a link road to the local area. They argue that this link is integral as it provides a direct route to Tilbury Port and serves as an escape route for traffic in the event of an incident on the LTC. PILs believe the junction would not reduce congestion as traffic would continue to use the A13 and M25 and in addition to this the area would see a rise in traffic volumes because of the proposed rest and service area. Some demand a guarantee that LTC traffic from the service area would not have access to the realigned Station Road and local networks. A few PILs also voice safety concerns either in general terms or referring to what they perceive to be narrow lanes.
- **A13/1089 junction:** PILs raise concerns about the diversion of traffic to Stanford-le-Hope and criticise the detour which traffic wanting to access Tilbury port would have to take. Some also highlight how this would also limit access for the fire station located on the Orsett Cock Roundabout. Many PILs also highlight the congested A13 and feel that



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the proposed junction would make the situation worse. A few PILs object to the realignments of Heath Road and Rectory Road.

- **LTC/M25 junction:** PILs argue the LTC should not provide access to the M25 as they feel that additional traffic should not be encouraged to use an already congested route, countering any ambitions to introduce greater resilience to the network. However, a few PILs who do not oppose a connection between the LTC and M25 suggest the junction is located too near the Dartford Crossing to alleviate any congestion. Some also express concern about the elevation of structures at North Road, fearing accidents as a result of reduced visibility.
- **M25 junction 29:** St Modwen Developments comments on access to Brentwood Enterprise Park, believing proposals to upgrade junction 29 would threaten the creation of a new access to this site.

"A127/M25 Lane Works") in the manner shown on the 'Proposals for Consultation' plans on the basis that it does not safeguard the creation of a new access to the Site and thereby fails to ensure that the new BEP can be developed in line with the Council's allocation in its emerging Local Plan." (User ID 102054)

9.2.3. Alternatives to the proposed connections north of the crossing

PILs' suggested alternatives to the proposed junctions north of the crossing include:

- **Tilbury junction:** PILs, including Thurrock District Scout Council, ask for amendments to the junction to mitigate its impact upon residents. They request the addition of a link road for emergency vehicles to enable access to the LTC and service area.
- **A13/1089 junction:** PILs request amendments to the junction to minimise disruption to individual properties. Additionally, others argue the junction should be reconfigured to avoid the closure of Rectory Road.
- **LTC/M25 junction:** PILs suggest the junction should be sited further north to prevent bottlenecks or propose shorter, entrenched slip roads to lessen the impact on Cranham Place near North Ockendon.

9.2.4. Suggestions

PILs' suggestions largely mirror those made by members of the public and include:

- free flowing connections to maintain traffic movement. They request improvements to slip roads to achieve this; and
- siting the junctions below ground level wherever possible and accompanying them with an extensive planting scheme.

In addition to the suggestions summarised above, respondents also make junction-specific recommendations:



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Tilbury junction

Several PILs propose the reinstatement of the Tilbury Link Road, believing that direct access to the port would aid the regional economy. However, Thurrock District Scout Council supports the removal of the link road as they believe it would have led to a rise in traffic passing by their campsite resulting in increased noise and light pollution.

A13/1089 junction

A few PILs request improved access at the proposed junction. Additionally, they raise concerns over disruption during construction and ask that access from Baker Street be maintained during the build.

Others ask that local access to HGVs be limited apart from occasions when they are delivering to specific areas.

LTC/M25 junction

A few PILs call for mitigations to reduce the junction's impact upon their land, asking for additional access points and splays¹³ to be provided to compensate for lost access.

Other requests include shortening the slip roads and making the junction accessible in both directions, so it does not curb the growth potential of South Ockendon.

¹³ A tapered widening of a road at an intersection to increase visibility.



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10. Walkers, cyclists and horse riders

10.1. Overview

Q5 asks:

“Do you support or oppose our proposals in relation to public rights of way?”

In total 20,080 respondents answered this question and the results are summarised in the charts¹⁴ below.

Chart 28: Answers from members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations (n=19,872)

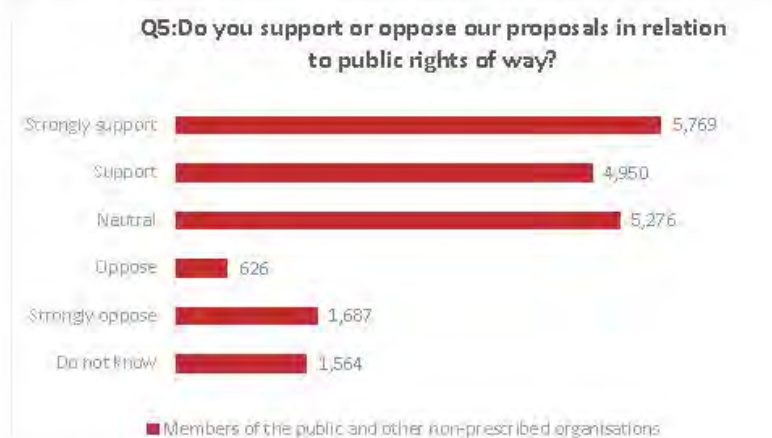
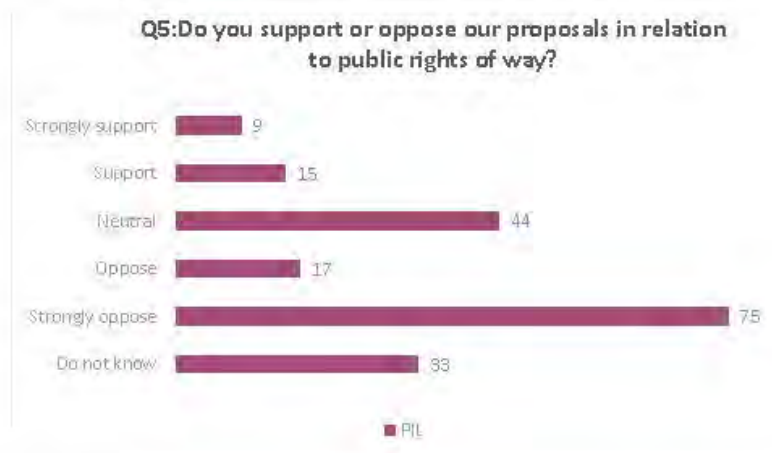


Chart 29: Answers from people with interest in land (PIL) (n=193)

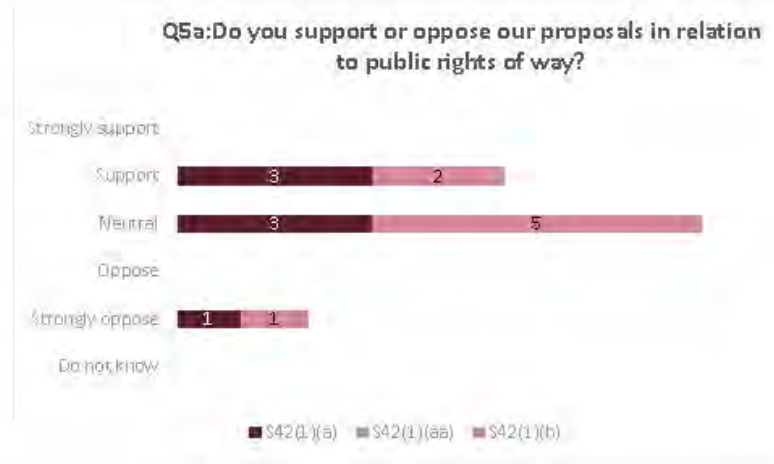


¹⁴ Respondents who did not respond using the questionnaire were not able to complete this question



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Chart 30: Answers from prescribed consultees (n=15)



Additionally, 10,533 respondents discussed the proposals in relation to public rights of way as part their qualitative feedback. This chapter presents a summary of their comments.

Even though the question only asks about feedback on the proposals in relation to public rights of way, many respondents also choose to comment on what should be the relationship of non-motorised users (walkers, cyclists and equestrian) with the LTC infrastructure.

10.2. Comments expressed by members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations

Many respondents choose to remain neutral on this question, either because they feel they do not have sufficient understanding of the proposals, or because they would not use the proposed facilities. Some also feel that disruption to the public rights of way network is inevitable, and so comments are unnecessary.

10.2.1. Reasons to support the proposals in relation to public rights of way

6,038 respondents comment positively on the proposals in relation to public rights of way or identify benefits associated with them as part of their qualitative feedback.

General

Many of these respondents express a general support without elaborating further. A few respondents support the proposals because they feel provision of public rights of way and consideration for non-drivers would encourage people to lead healthier lifestyles.



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Public rights of way

Many respondents, including Gravesend Historical Society's Footpath Committee, the Kent Countryside Access Forum and the Gravesham Rights of Way Committee, support the need to protect public rights of way as part of the LTC project, and maintain the number that currently exists in the local area. Most of these respondents accept that some would be lost in the construction process, but ask that an equivalent number be instated after the LTC has been built. In contrast, a few only ask for restoration where practicable, stressing that it should not impact on the overall project.

"Thurrock is surveying for a PROW improvement Plan, and Network Rail is applying for an order to close some level crossings. The Coastal Path and Estuary Path routes are proposed to cross the Tilbury area. These routes should be integrated for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders." (User ID 103288)

Other respondents believe that the project could offer opportunities for the number of public rights of way to be increased.

Walkers, cyclists and horse riders

Many respondents feel that considering all users in the LTC proposals is important, and that provision for these groups should be included in the designs for the route. They particularly mention the need for sustainability, and the need to ensure all those groups can use footpaths and underpasses that cross the LTC.

Some respondents say that a particular user group should be given priority, often without elaborating further. Of these respondents, most mention cyclists as their priority with walkers less frequently mentioned. Views on equestrians are split with some suggesting that horse riders' rights should be prioritised, while others insisting that they should be given lower priority than other non-driver groups.

Some respondents feel that the project should take priority over the interests of non-drivers. In particular they cite the need to ease congestion and the need for the project to be completed with minimal delay. Related to this, some respondents support non-drivers not using the tunnel, citing the safety issues that would otherwise arise.

'Access and prevention of pollution due to congestion must take priority over public rights of ways' (User ID 1509)

10.2.2. Reasons to oppose the proposals in relation to public rights of way

2,564 respondents express concerns or raise objections to the proposals in relation to public rights of ways as part of their qualitative feedback.

General

Of these, some feel that the proposals are inadequate because of lack of concrete plans and solid commitment, with a few specifically saying that the



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proposals do not go far enough.

"I think "where practicable" can be interpreted many different ways". (User ID 8657)

Some respondents, including Gravesham Rights of Way Committee, raise concerns that Highways England would not follow through on the promises they make in this proposal, often saying that although the theory is good they fear the reality would be different.

Public rights of way

Many respondents oppose any loss of public rights of way, saying that this would isolate communities, decrease local people's quality of life, infringe on green belt land and displace wildlife. Some specifically raise pollution, fumes or a deterioration in air quality and the impact this could have on walkers and other non-drivers. A few also add that the proposals would impact designated areas and public rights through them, such as Thames Chase.

Some people have concerns about the loss of specific public rights of way. These include:

- footpaths in the Thames Chase Community Forest Area, including the path from the visitor's centre to North Ockendon or Ockendon Road;
- footpaths around and between Coalhouse Fort and Tilbury Fort;
- footpaths around Shome Woods Country Park; and
- footpaths around Jeskyns Park.

A few respondents are particularly concerned about the temporary disruption to some public rights of way during construction, asking that these closures be closely monitored, and disruptions kept to a minimum.

"I am a great believer in people's rights to bridleways, pathways and open space. Disruption to these rights of ways should be avoided" (User ID 1114)

Some respondents also voice criticisms towards the proposed new public rights of way saying that these are too close to the LTC to be an enjoyable space or that they do not offer suitable short-cuts.

In contrast, a few respondents oppose the proposals because they believe they place too strong focus on preserving public rights of way, which these respondents argue are used by a small (to the point of insignificance) set of people.

Walkers, cyclists and horse riders

Some respondents reject the proposals as they believe they do not show adequate consideration for non-drivers and believe that more should have been offered. Cyclists are the group most frequently mentioned as being disadvantaged by the proposals, particularly by organisations such as Cycling UK and Dartford and Gravesham Cycling Forum, though some also make references to equestrians and pedestrians. In contrast, other



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respondents disagree with the proposals because they feel that cyclists and equestrians have been prioritised over pedestrians,

“The proposed realignment of NCN 177 adds approximately 750 metres to journeys between Marling Cross and Thong Lane. It also involves more climbing due to changes in elevation when compared to the existing route.” (Dartford and Gravesham Cycling Forum)

It appears that some respondents misunderstood the proposals and believe that non-drivers would be allowed to use the LTC, something they strongly object to on multiple grounds, mainly safety.

Other

A few respondents express concerns that the proposed mitigation measures would be too expensive, add additional cost to the project, and introduce delays.

Some respondents, including Cycling UK, Dartford and Gravesham Cycling Forum, London Cycling Campaign (Havering) and Horse Access Campaign UK, raise safety concerns, querying if sufficient consideration has been put into the plans to ensure the safety of non-drivers.

10.2.3. Suggestions

Public rights of way

A few respondents raise issues with specific public rights of way or make suggestions for new ones which could be built as part of the project.

Some respondents believe that non-motorised interest groups such as Sustrans, the Ramblers, CPRE as well as local parish councils should be consulted as the plans progress. Essex Bridleway Association says they would welcome the opportunity to discuss the scheme. Some respondents also believe that Highways England should work with local councils' improvement plans to ensure the restored public rights of way meet local requirements.

“I want to see involvement of national as well as local groups, including those who may have opposing views (e.g. Ramblers vs GLASS). Just involving one side of these groups will lead to skewed results.” (User ID 1845)

A few respondents suggest that before public rights of way are restored, the frequency with which they are used should be assessed to ensure that the most popular routes are protected or restored.

Other requests include:

- **Signage:** respondents ask Highways England to ensure that any public rights of way restored after the construction process are adequately signposted, and that any diversions during construction are also clearly demarcated.
- **Maintenance:** others suggest that public rights of way would need



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regular maintenance to remain useable, and urge Highways England to take on this responsibility.

- **Accessibility:** respondents also ask that any designs for new or restored public rights of way are accessible to those with reduced mobility.
- **Wildlife:** a few respondents also suggest that restored public rights of way and crossing points could be used as wildlife corridors.

Non-drivers

The most frequently made suggestion is that there should be provisions for non-drivers to use the LTC tunnel. In support of this view, respondents cite the lack of adequate crossing options for non-drivers and refer to the Severn Crossing and the Clyde Tunnel as examples of good practice.

Respondents make a range of suggestions about how the access should be provided such as:

- allowing non-drivers to use the service tunnel;
- providing a dedicated lane within the tunnel;
- building an additional tunnel;
- incorporating public transport within the LTC (e.g. rail or bus link);
- offering shuttle bus within the tunnel;
- building additional pathway alongside the motorway (an option supported by Thurrock Local Access Forum and the Essex Bridleways Association); and
- providing a ferry service close to the LTC crossing or enhancing the existing Tilbury service.

The issue of cycling paths is also frequently mentioned with respondents such as Dartford and Gravesham Cycling Forum calling for such provision not only with regards to the LTC project but also suggesting that Highways England should invest in cycling infrastructure along the Thames and in local residential areas to mitigate the loss of some public rights of way.

“Cycling and walking routes should be expanded in the area to compensate for the damage caused by increasing motor traffic. This expansion should be at least twice the length of the new road.” (User ID 150)

A few respondents make suggestions about the style of crossing points provided for the LTC, stressing practical considerations such as the rate of incline for bridges and underpasses, as well as the need to ensure crossing points are adequately connected to the rest of the public rights of way network.

A few respondents ask that any bridge or underpass be suitable for all users, including horse riders, cyclists and motorcyclists and that the infrastructure should be future-proof.



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More information

Some respondents request additional information about the proposals and would like to know how public rights of way would be restored or what the new ones would look like.

10.3. Comments expressed by people with interest in land

10.3.1. Reasons to support the proposals in relation to public rights of way

25 PILs comment positively on the proposals in relation to public rights of way or identify benefits associated with them as part of their qualitative feedback.

These largely mirror those made by members of the public and express general satisfaction with the proposals or specifically commend the provisions made for preserving public rights of way.

A few PILs support the idea of considering all users, including non-motorised users in the LTC project in terms of provisions of footbridges and underpasses. Others believe equestrians should be de-prioritised.

10.3.2. Reasons to oppose the proposals in relation to public rights of way

88 PILs express concerns or raise objections to the proposals in relation to public rights of way as part of their qualitative feedback.

These largely mirror those made by members of the public in terms of scepticism that the plans would be implemented, objection to the loss of public rights of way and concern that the restored or new public rights of way would be considerably longer, exposed to air pollution and overall not enjoyable place to use due to their proximity to the LTC.

Some PILs are concerned about the loss of specific public rights of way, including:

- the bridleway off Baker Street;
- footpaths near to Thong and Thong Lane;
- footpaths in or around Claylane Woods;
- footpaths in or around Shome Country Park; and
- the Two Forts path between Tilbury Fort and Coalhouse Fort.

Specific concerns are also raised about the proposals for the diversion of Station Road which would leave pedestrians unprotected from road traffic.

In contrast, a few PILs believe that public rights of way are not used frequently enough to warrant concern and disagree with the attention they have received in the proposals.

A few PILs oppose the proposals because they believe non-drivers have not been sufficiently considered in the proposals, and that the lack of tunnel access for them means the proposals are not sustainable. They cite the need to encourage cycling, and the loss of land used for activities such as horse



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riding.

10.3.3. Suggestions

Non-drivers

A few PILs ask that non-drivers are provided with access to the tunnel, for example by a shuttle bus or other public transport link. Others suggest that cycle routes should be enhanced as part of the LTC project.

Public rights of way

A few PILs ask that the use of public rights of way be assessed and that their restoration be done in consultation with locals and experts.

Others ask for changes to specific public rights of way proposals, namely footpaths 135 and 136 not being linked, increase in the number of crossing points for walkers and that appropriate structures are installed along the public rights of way to ensure that there is no unauthorised access to private land nearby and an increase in the number of crossing points for walkers.

More information

A few PILs request additional information mainly around the proposed new public rights of way.



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11. Environmental impacts and plans to reduce them

11.1. Overview

Q6a asks:

“Do you agree or disagree with the proposed measures to reduce the impacts of the project?”

In total 19,713 respondents answered this question and the results are summarised in the charts¹⁵ below.

Chart 31: Answers from members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations (n=19,499)

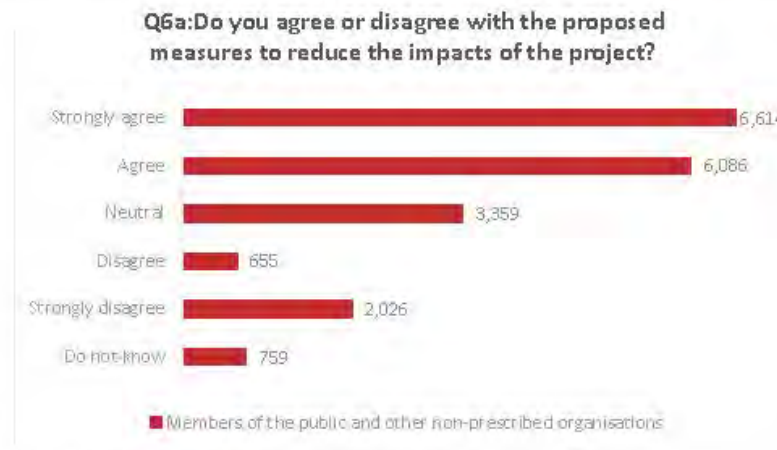
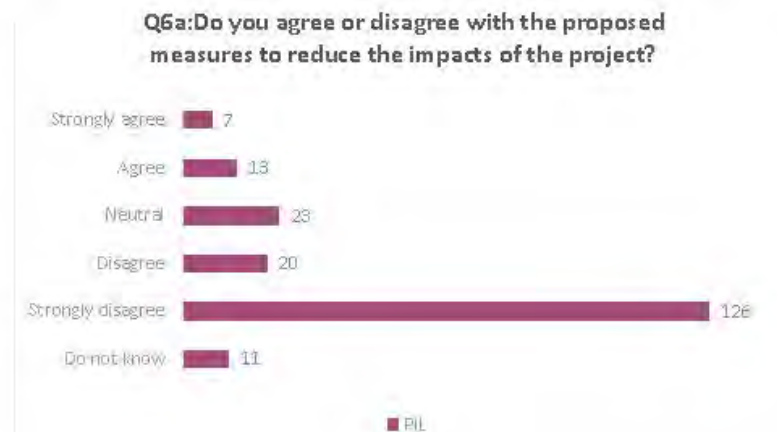


Chart 32: Answers from people with interest in land (PIL) (n=200)

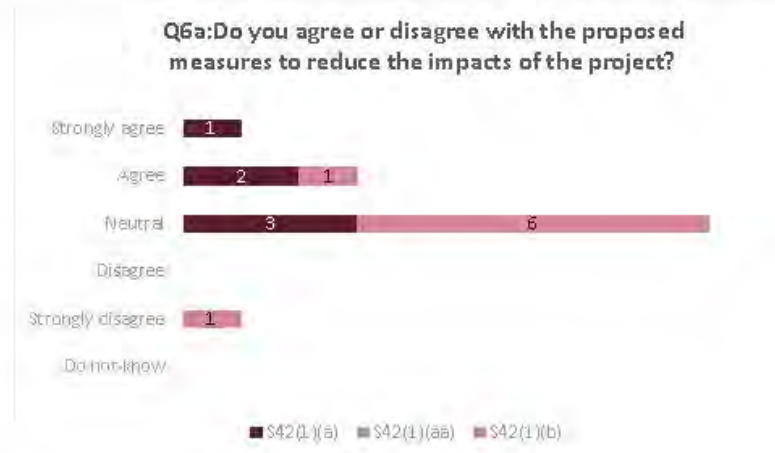


¹⁵ Respondents who did not respond using the questionnaire were not able to complete this question



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Chart 33: Answers from prescribed consultees (n=14)



Additionally, 12,531 respondents discussed the environmental impacts and plans to reduce them as part their qualitative feedback. This chapter presents a summary of their comments.

Many respondents discuss the potential environmental benefits or impacts of the LTC in relation to specific parts of the route. Such feedback is summarised in the relevant chapters of this report.

This chapter includes comments which discuss specifically the proposed mitigation measures and the environmental assessment process as well as more general, not section specific, environment-related feedback.

11.2. Comments expressed by members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations

11.2.1. Comments in support of the proposed mitigation measures

6,830 respondents comment positively on the proposed environmental mitigation measures or identify benefits associated with them as part of their qualitative feedback.

Respondents mention that the proposals seem reasonable and a considerate compromise with the need to build the LTC. Some add that the LTC would offset the environmental impacts created by the current congestion at Dartford Crossing and make specific references to reduction in carbon emissions and the associated climate change benefits.

"I feel that it will lower the carbon emission in one place and only slightly rise it in another. In fact it may not even rise in the new area due to the tunnel effect on the dispersion of emissions. Lowering it over Dartford and capture dispersal in the tunnel."
 (User ID 17838)

Many respondents do not engage with the proposals directly, but instead express their belief that the environment should be minimally impacted by



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the project, during and after construction.

Respondents discuss positively a range of mitigation areas (community, geology, heritage, marine environment, waste management and water). The areas, however, which receive most comments are air quality, biodiversity, landscape and noise and vibration.

Air Quality

Of the respondents who mention air quality, most believe the LTC would improve air quality due to improved traffic flow.

'I believe that allowing traffic to continue to move unimpeded is by far the most environmentally friendly approach' (User ID 2478)

Others reference specifically the air quality mitigation measures proposed by Highways England (such as planting trees), describing them as sufficient. A few respondents support factoring in extensive air quality assessment into future impact reports.

Biodiversity

Some respondents feel strongly that the wildlife local to Essex and Kent should be protected throughout the process of building the LTC, and that adequate measures are implemented to ensure wildlife is not adversely affected by the new infrastructure.

These include:

- support for wildlife corridors under the LTC;
- relocating rare species;
- habitat restoration; and
- taking measures to preserve unique local habitats like the SSSI and AONBs.

"It is essential that wildlife is protected. The extensive environmental documentation demonstrates a commitment to mitigate effects in this area." (User ID 1709)

Landscape

Some respondents support the proposals for landscaping the LTC, particularly the plans to plant the sides of the LTC with trees and shrubs, and generally feel that areas of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) should be avoided as much as possible. Preserving the enjoyment of the countryside for future generations is a recurring sentiment, with many respondents supporting the proposed landscaping measures to lessen the visual impact of the route.

A few respondents are particularly pleased with the proposals for green bridges, also saying that more green bridges would reduce the visual impact of the motorway and help mitigate the pollution from the road.



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"Green bridges fully supported. Grass catches dust and fine particle emission from the vehicles." (User ID 2266)

For further discussion on green bridges, please refer to Chapter 5 (Southern Route) and Chapter 8 (Southern Connections).

Noise and Vibration

Some respondents feel that noise reduction is an important element of environmental mitigation. Many believe that the building a new road provides an opportunity to add in additional noise screening and noise cancelling measures. The use of embankments and trees to reduce noise impact is also supported.

"Essential to reduce the impact of traffic noise on the local community, given that the surrounding landscape is flat and does not therefore provide a natural barrier to noise." (User ID 24712)

Other

Some respondents who agree that the proposed environmental mitigation measures are adequate, argue that the environment should not be an important consideration in this project. They reference the overall need for the project, saying that impact is inevitable, but the overall benefits of the project outweigh these concerns, with additional comments saying that not building this project would cause an equal level of harm to the environment. A few respondents say that the environment would recover in time, and that the current area has already been damaged, and as such should not be considered too much of a concern.

11.2.2. Concerns about the proposed mitigation measures

5,480 respondents express concerns or raise objections to the proposed mitigation measures as part of their qualitative feedback.

Of those, many respondents feel that the proposed mitigation measures are not sufficient to offset the environmental impact of the LTC and are limited in their approach.

Both the Kent and Essex Wildlife Trusts express the view that environmental measures are not given appropriate weight by Highways England in the decision-making process. Some other respondents express concerns over the efficacy of the proposals, suggesting that the true impact of the LTC would not be apparent until it is built, and so any mitigation measures suggested at this stage would be inherently ineffective.

"The whole problem is that it is a preliminary report. By the time you undertake the proper studies (that is if you can define them appropriately) the whole scheme will be so far down the track that it will become unstoppable." (User ID 941)

Others raise concerns that the proposed mitigation measures would not actually be put in place. They cite Highways England's environmental track record and express their suspicion over Highways England's commitment to



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follow through on these proposals. Others feel that the cost of environmental mitigation would lead to measures being abandoned in favour of cost efficiency.

'In the past arguments have been made under the guise of environmental preserve, health and wellbeing, only to be ignored or altered to benefit further developments' (User ID 15154)

In the context of those concerns, some respondents oppose the entire project on the basis of its perceived environmental impact.

Air Quality

Many respondents are concerned about deteriorating air quality in the area adjacent to LTC, with many respondents saying they believe no mitigation measures would significantly offset the impact of exposing rural areas of Kent and Essex to increased traffic flow. Many argue that levels of air pollution in Thurrock are already high and that the LTC would serve to exacerbate this situation. Some respondents relate any deterioration in air quality to health impacts – see section 'Community' within this chapter.

Biodiversity

Many respondents, most of whom used a campaign response provided by the Woodland Trust, express concern over the loss of ancient woodland, particularly saying that Highways England cannot mitigate the damage to these areas. They urge Highways England to avoid these woodlands, which a few respondents say are designated SSSIs, and to protect them both during and after the building of the LTC.

Many respondents feel that the destruction of habitat caused by the LTC would pose a significant risk to local wildlife, with some respondents drawing out specific concerns such as the threat to bird habitats and native species in rural areas. The Essex Wildlife Trust argues that acoustic fencing and landscape bunding used to shield the Thames Estuary and Marshes Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar Site, the Holehaven Creek SPA, the South Thames Estuary and Marshes SSSI and the Mucking Flats and Marshes SSSI from disturbance could disrupt the foraging or roosting of wildfowl.

Climate

Some respondents, including South East Essex Friends of the Earth, oppose the LTC due to its assumed contribution to climate change. Most comment on the effect large projects such as the LTC have on global warming, including increased traffic, a rise in oil consumption and the removal of trees and shrubs. Some are also critical of the perceived lack of climate assessment included in the PEIR.

"The section on 'Climate' in the Preliminary Environmental Information Summary is totally inadequate. It makes no reference to the conflict of the proposals with national and international policy on climate change. It trivialises a concern that should be of fundamental importance." (User ID 4320).



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Community

Many respondents are concerned with the impact the LTC would have on residential areas, particularly the disturbance it could cause on village life in areas such as Ockendon and Orsett.

Many respondents, including Havering Friends of the Earth, Orsett Community Forum, the Chadwell St Mary Centre and Abridge2far oppose the proposals on the grounds that the LTC would negatively impact the health of local residents with some referring to the high rate of asthma and lung cancer in Thurrock and the surrounding area. Additionally, respondents raise concerns about the mental strain and stress the LTC would impose on some communities.

"Health & Wellbeing is again something which has not been properly considered. We live in a very stressful world these [sic] days and this project adds to it. It is acknowledged by many medical organisations that Stress is a killer." (User ID 23442)

A few respondents express concern about the impact the LTC would have on the countryside, by reducing the amount of available farmland. This is raised both in terms of visual impact and in terms of the loss of agricultural land.

Construction

Many people comment on the construction phase causing significant environmental impact, though only temporary. Of particular concern are:

- the movement of equipment and removal of soils;
- construction waste removal;
- storage of materials;
- construction noise; and
- vehicle and worker movements during construction periods.

Respondents feel that Highways England has not assured the public that they would take responsibility for addressing unexpected environmental issues that could arise during construction.

Geology

A few respondents are worried about the impact of the LTC on local geology, particularly the effect of contaminated soil.

Heritage

Some respondents express concerns over both the mitigation measures for heritage protection, and the impact of the LTC on certain sites. A few respondents feel Highways England has not adequately outlined what would happen to archaeological finds uncovered during construction, and some also object to the suggestion that 'preservation by record' is an adequate mitigation measure.



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"I was disappointed not to be able to see or assess any plans for pre-construction archaeological excavations. I gather that preliminary historical analysis and geophysics work is still going on. You should be aware that the A2 area in particular is rich in archaeology." (User ID 7263)

A few respondents suggest that further geophysical studies should be conducted.

Landscape

Many respondents are concerned about the impact the LTC would have on the environment, particularly the loss or division of green spaces and woodland, as well as the visual impact on the natural countryside in Kent and Essex. Many are troubled by the loss of green belt land, including some expressing concern that by using green belt land the LTC would expose further green spaces to the threat of development, and that there are not sufficient assurances that landscaping initially put up by Highways England would remain there permanently and not be removed at a later date.

Some respondents express specific worries about the increase in light pollution caused by the LTC, and feel that Highways England is not adequately addressing this issue.

References to specific designated areas that could be impacted by the projects are also made. Please refer to the route specific chapters for further detail.

Marine

The RSPB and Kent Wildlife Trust raise specific concerns about the lack of sufficient information on the impact the LTC would have on certain marine conservation zones and ecological areas. These organisations request that the LTC perform up to date surveys.

"There is insufficient information to determine the possibility and significance of this potential impact. It is, therefore, recommended that Highways England evaluate the potential for changes in surface and ground water hydrology as part of the environmental assessment." (RSPB)

A few respondents raise concerns over specific water-based animals such as water voles, and the beluga whale that has recently been sighted in the Thames Estuary.

The RSPB also raises concerns about the potential impact of the LTC development on water levels and quality at their reserve and across the wider Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA, SSSI and Ramsar site.

Noise and Vibration

Many respondents are concerned about the impact the LTC would have on noise pollution and feel that the current mitigation measures proposed are insufficient. In particular, respondents are concerned about the perceived



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risk of:

- lack of road screening and additional noise barriers;
- insufficient tree planting;
- lack of bunds; and
- an insufficiently sized noise reduction boundary.

A few respondents express concerns that road surfacing and road raising could exacerbate issues with noise unless noise reducing materials are used.

Waste

Of the respondents concerned about waste, many worry about littering and query how Highways England would keep the LTC litter-free once it is built.

"The verges in this area are already in a despicable state – rubbish strewn everywhere and seemingly never cleared up by HE, I would like to know how HE plan to maintain and keep these new roads litter free." (User ID 24930)

Some respondents express concerns about the impact, amount and location of spoil and general construction waste. They suggest removing or recycling this as much as possible.

Water

A few respondents raise concerns about dirty run off from roads, the loss of flood plains such as Orsett Fen and the disruption this may cause to the local environment, and more general concerns about a flood risk due to the LTC.

"the land around the crossing is marshland on both sides and prone to flooding which will only become a more frequent occurrence as a result of this mega-infrastructure project"

(User ID 22912)

Other

A few respondents are concerned about the cost of environmental mitigation measures, and the impact this may have on the viability of the LTC.

A few oppose the proposed mitigation measures generally because they feel that they are excessive, and that Highways England shouldn't disproportionately mitigate environmental impacts compared to, for example, community impacts.

11.2.3. Suggestions

Many respondents suggest that there should be enhancement of local areas through the creation of additional woodland areas and community facilities; and increased use of renewable energies. There is some general support for not simply mitigating the environmental impact but going some way to making sure that the LTC has a long-term positive environmental impact.



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Air Quality

Some respondents suggest measures to address air pollution. These include:

- charging more for exhaust-heavy vehicles;
- increasing CO₂ and tunnel exhaust capture devices;
- increased measures to minimise tyre debris and road dust;
- managing road use during peak air pollution times;
- planting more trees along the route;
- visual displays of pollution levels to keep communities informed; and
- air filtration systems in the tunnel.

Others suggest that there should be increased consideration of electric cars, and that there needs to be additional provision for them along the LTC.

Biodiversity

Many respondents have specific biodiversity suggestions, particularly on reducing the hedgerow loss, restoring Thames Terrace Grassland, protecting invertebrate species, minimizing roadkill risk areas, and protecting the nesting areas of local wildlife.

Others, including Havering Wildlife Project, make suggestions in relation to the nature or number of the proposed green bridges or propose ways to reduce the fragmentation of ancient woodland.

“Motorways and roadways make linear barriers impacting on wildlife in the area. Ideally consideration should be given to provide smaller tunnels for smaller wildlife (plastic conduits) under motorways at regular intervals. Relevant wildlife organisations may be contacted.” (User ID 2266)

Climate

Some respondents suggest that additional ways the LTC could mitigate its environmental impact is by setting an aim to be carbon neutral, for example by:

- adding renewable energy infrastructure like pressure plates in the tunnel to power lights or wind turbines in the motorway's central reservation areas;
- using low energy lighting along the route; and
- recycling waste produced from construction.

Community

Some respondents make suggestions about the way in which Highways England could mitigate the impact on communities such as:

- providing adequate compensation (both monetary and home improvement/services);
- introducing an engagement programme; and



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- encouraging developers to show a serious and sustained commitment to community improvements.

Construction

Some respondents suggest that the process of construction could be made better through using environmentally friendly construction materials and vehicles, transporting materials via the river or employing responsible contractors committed to sustainability.

Geology

A few respondents, including GeoEssex and Essex Rock and Mineral Society, discuss the need to investigate, sample or study the geology of the local area, including areas such as the Orsett Causewayed enclosure. A few respondents also refer to the need to use soils and sands local to the area in the mitigation process to ensure soil stability.

“Maximising the educational benefit from this challenging geotechnical build on my doorstep for future generations of geologists and engineers.” (User ID 1439)

Heritage

Some respondents suggest that it is important for Highways England to provide assurances that there will be a multi-sectoral approach to conservation and that further archaeological surveys would be conducted.

Landscape

Some respondents suggest that structures created by the LTC should blend in with the environment as much as possible, and that planting should be appropriate to the local native landscape.

Other respondents call for an increased number of green bridges along the route in general.

“Could the bridges/structures be green bridges, landscape bridges or wildlife overpasses, planted with a variety of local trees or shrubs and other vegetation. They would allow birds, mammals and insects to keep moving.” (User ID 8712)

Light Pollution

A few respondents suggest that lighting should be chosen specifically to minimise light pollution, and that there should be further screening around the LTC to counter light pollution.

Marine environment

A few respondents suggest that wetlands and the Thames Estuary be enhanced as part of the construction process for the LTC. Kent Wildlife Trust, Essex Wildlife Trust and RSPB also make suggestions about how the marine environment can be protected. For example, by:

- minimising pilling to reduce potential impacts on the marine



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environment:

- ensuring road run off does not negatively impact marine biodiversity; and
- creating mitigation habitats.

Noise and Vibration

Some respondents suggest that there more should be done to reduce noise from the LTC. There is also a general suggestion that the current number of trees planted to reduce noise impact is insufficient and should be increased.

“Trees planted to reduce noise to residents of Riverview Park must be mature trees otherwise will not fulfil the purpose for years.”

(User ID 100362)

Waste

A few respondents suggest that waste from the project such as materials from the borings could be recycled and used in other conservation projects, as seabed land reclamation, or that waste should only be transported by the Thames.

Water

A few respondents suggest:

- that water pumped from the tunnel could be redirected to a local reservoir;
- the use of lowered embankments alongside the road to maintain flood water storage, and
- that further analysis of flood risk and water contamination risks are carried out.

Future monitoring and upkeep

Respondents who have concerns about the continued impacts of the LTC either suggest ongoing impact assessment during the construction process with a flexible mitigation system so that measures can be updated or more concrete assurances that environmental mitigation measures will continue once the construction of the LTC has finished.

Some respondents suggest that land set aside for environmental mitigation is entrusted to the Woodland Trust, Thames Chase or another local environment organisation to ensure that it is used to create the most positive environmental impact possible. Others ask that land put aside for mitigation be given a legally protected status to ensure it cannot be used for other developments in the future.

“Could the Kent Wildlife Trust help manage the new banks, and use them as wildlife havens? Could local bee keepers tend hives along the banks to help increase bee populations?” (User ID 9959)

A few respondents argue that Highways England need to be more forthcoming about its legal obligations to protect the environment, and are



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concerned about whether the LTC would adhere to EU or UK environmental standards in light of Brexit. A few respondents also make general suggestions that the LTC needs to include plans that are future-proofed and take into account long term environmental trends.

11.2.4. Comments on the PEIR and further assessment

Some respondents raise concerns about the lack of concrete assurances in the PEIR, particularly the use of words such as 'could' and 'should'. There is additional concern about the 68% land increase since the Environmental Scoping Report was carried out, and thus the validity of the current report's data. Further to this, respondents raise concerns that the mitigation land suggested by Highways England is not fully justified, and that the report shows a lack of consideration for local government environmental policies.

There are also concerns about the robustness of the assessment with regards to air quality, biodiversity, heritage, flood risk and noise and vibration.

"HE have been woefully inadequate in assessing the COPD-orientated impacts, with no suitable or sufficient EIA being completed. Thurrock suffers with respiratory illness prevalence in its demographic – and this hasn't been considered adequately"

(User ID: 22735)

In the context of those concerns, respondents call for further, more detailed assessment, including a full Health Impact Assessment.

Some respondents additionally ask that Highways England should show a greater commitment to consulting local experts or specialists.

11.3. Comments expressed by people with interest in land.

11.3.1. Comments in support of the proposed mitigation measures

23 PILs comment positively on the proposed environmental mitigation measures or identify benefits associated with them as part of their qualitative feedback.

These mirror the comments expressed by members of the public and focus on measures addressing air quality, community, landscape and noise and vibration, which PILs feel are adequate.

11.3.2. Concerns about the proposed mitigation measures

168 PILs express concerns or raise objections to the proposed environmental mitigation measures as part of their qualitative feedback.

These largely mirror those raised by members of the public and include concerns about air and noise pollution, impact on wildlife, loss of ancient woodland and green belt land, community disruption and loss of cultural heritage.

Others specific topics raised by respondents include:

- **Air Quality:** there are particular concerns about the impact on the



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areas of Thurrock, Ockendon and the broader A2 Trunk Road Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). A few respondents also distrust predictions in the PEIR that suggest air pollution in some areas close to LTC would improve, such as the Thong area of Gravesend.

- **Biodiversity:** a few are particularly concerned about root protection for veteran trees. There is also a concern over Southern Valley golf course being used as both a construction compound and a receptor site. A few respondents also comment that land set aside for environmental mitigation is disproportionate to the actual need for this land, and not justified in the PEIR.
- **Geology:** a few respondents express concern about the apparent presence of toxic materials in unrecorded tips near the proposed entrances of the LTC. Others are worried about the sterilisation of mineral reserves and highlight the unique geological make-up of Thames Chase, Gravesend and Lower Higham areas.
- **Landscape:** some PILs feel that landscaping measures would take a long time to prove effective, particularly Highways England's plans to plant trees along some parts of the LTC.
- **Noise and vibration:** Some PILs particularly worried about the lack of concrete data about vibration and noise levels along the preferred route, as well as the impact of increased vibration on older buildings.
- **Waste:** a few PILs express concern over what is felt to be Highways England's lack of a litter management strategy, and its overall waste management plan. There are particular worries about the lack of waste management measures around the service area, the current lack of capacity for inert waste, and the method of transporting waste out of the area, and its safe disposal.
- **Water:** a few respondents go into detail on their concerns; specifically, that the flood mitigation area to the north of the Thames appears to be excessive, and the impact on the floodplain at Tilbury Marshes would be significant. Highways England's flood compensation strategy is also called into question, particularly the amount of excavation material it would potentially generate. Drainage is another recurring concern, including road surface run off and its impact on agricultural land. There is also a concern raised over the impact on navigation should marine infrastructure be required.

11.3.3. Suggestions

Some of the suggestion put forward by PILs are general in nature and call for further mitigation measures to be considered to enhance the area around the proposed LTC and suggest that experts and local stakeholders should be consulted. Others focus on the following specific areas.

Air Quality

A few PILs suggest several additional measures to mitigate air quality, including:



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- using the Thames as a method of transportation for construction materials;
- reducing the approach gradient to the LTC tunnels to reduce vehicle emissions;
- installing a ventilation system inside the tunnels to filter car fumes; and
- setting up washing points for lorry wheels.

Biodiversity

Some PILs suggest more should be done to relocate wildlife. A few suggest using land further away from residential areas for ecological mitigation, others that trees should be planted as quickly as possible so that they are established by the time the proposed project finishes.

Buffer planting zones, wildlife crossings, and screening barriers for flora and fauna are also suggested, as well as linking other areas of woodland together to redress the loss of ancient woodland.

Community

A few PILs suggest encouraging local economic growth through the LTC's environmental mitigation strategy such as engaging communities through volunteering, learning and employment opportunities. They also suggest increased tunnelling to protect residents of the area from potential adverse health impacts.

Heritage

A few PILs suggest increasing heritage awareness in the LTC's mitigation strategy, particularly in terms of knock-on heritage impacts, and respect for existing conservation areas.

Landscape

Some PILs suggest several additional measures to reduce landscape impacts, the majority of which include increasing the number of trees the LTC plans to plant, extending the tunnel and increasing the number of green bridges.

Expanding the green bridge currently at Thong and adding in further green bridges along the route are also recurring suggestions.

A few respondents ask for clarification on Highways England's light pollution mitigation measures and ask that overhead lighting be used sparingly.

Noise and Vibration

Some PILs suggest additional measures to reduce noise and vibration impacts, including the planting of additional trees to increase noise screening, additional acoustic barriers (some cite those used along the M40 at The Chilterns), using noise absorbent road surfacing and extending the boundary of the proposed noise mitigation measures.



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Waste

A few PILs suggest that Highways England needs to improve its litter management strategy, and suggest that spoil from excavation could be used as part of the LIC's environmental mitigation strategy.

Water

A few PILs suggest that Highways England need to add in detailed designs for local drainage provision and flood compensation.

11.3.4. Comments on the PEIR and further assessment

Some PILs raise concerns about the validity of the PEIR, given that the development boundary has increased since the Environmental Scoping Report was carried out. Further to this, PILs raise concerns that the mitigation land suggested by Highways England is not fully justified, and that the report shows a lack of consideration for local government environmental policies.

As with responses from members of the public, PILs express concerns about the robustness of the assessment with regards to air quality, biodiversity, heritage, flood risk and noise and vibration.

Some PILs suggest that air quality monitoring should be continued indefinitely, further detailed geological surveys should be carried out, and that in general Highways England needs to establish a robust ecological baseline position so that accurate impact assessment can be carried out.



12. Development boundary

12.1. Overview

Q7a asks:

“Do you support or oppose the proposed area of land we require to build the Lower Thames Crossing?”

In total 18,789 respondents answered this question and the results are summarised in the charts¹⁶ below.

Chart 34: Answers from members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations (n=18,571)

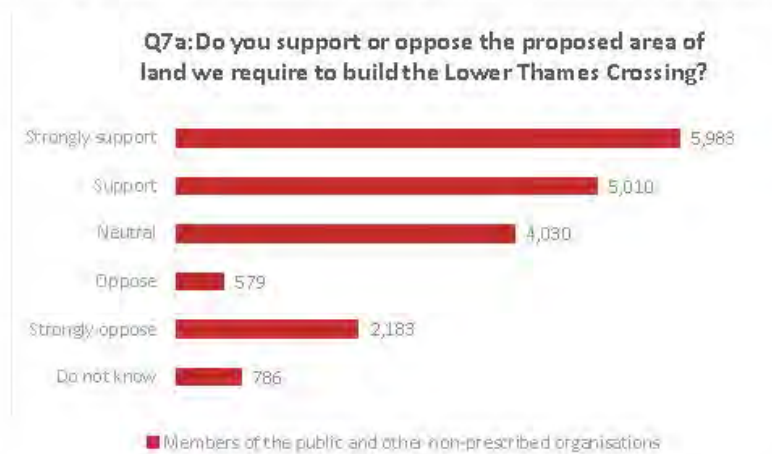
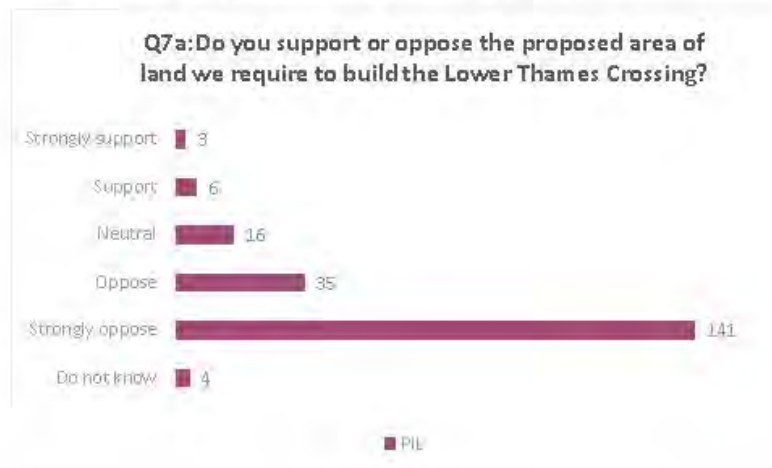


Chart 35: Answers from people with interest in land (PIL) (n=205)

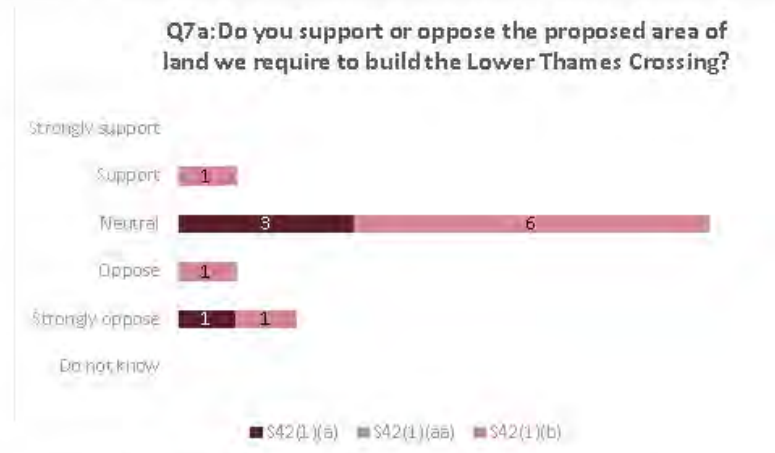


¹⁶ Respondents who did not respond using the questionnaire were not able to complete this question



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Chart 36: Answers from prescribed consultees (n=13)



Additionally, 7,765 respondents discussed the proposed development boundary as part of their qualitative feedback. This chapter presents a summary of their comments.

12.2. Comments expressed by members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations

12.2.1. Reasons to support the proposed development boundary

4,592 respondents comment positively about the proposed development boundary or identify benefits associated with it as part of their qualitative feedback.

Overview

The majority of these respondents are supportive in general terms, often stressing that having a development boundary is a necessary feature of the project and highlighting the transport benefits they believe LTC would bring.

'As with all such schemes sacrifices have to be made for the greater good and this scheme, if done properly, shall be an amazing improvement to traffic flow through the area'

(User ID 7512)

Some respondents support the development boundary, however their support is conditional upon certain conditions being met such as adequate compensation for affected landowners and minimum environmental impact.

Some respondents stress that the impact of the development boundary is unavoidable as the project would have to be located somewhere and as such it would always disrupt some people, but they do not explicitly support the outlined proposals.

Community

On a similar theme, some respondents are supportive of the development



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boundary as they hope that the project would encourage development in the local area. A few of the respondents make reference to other infrastructure projects such as the Channel Tunnel Rail Link and what they consider to be the positive impacts that these developments had on their surroundings.

“The development of this area after this project will bring enormous benefits to the local business and residential communities.” (User ID 13483)

Some respondents praise the proposed development boundary as they feel that the area chosen has a reduced impact on local communities compared to other areas that might have been selected. Some respondents indicate that the proposed development boundary does not affect many properties or sites of historic significance.

Compensation

Other respondents are pleased that Highways England would offer compensation to those affected. Those respondents do not necessarily support the proposed development area but welcome the efforts to offset the potential adverse impact.

Environment

Some respondents support the proposed development boundary as they believe that the impact on the environment would be minimal or sufficiently mitigated with some adding that the selected area is less ecologically valuable than others.

“Glad to see the ‘Development Boundary’ taking into consideration ‘ancient woodland’ and farming land which in the end will be planted to make ‘green areas’” (User ID 102083)

Some respondents favour the proposed development boundary, saying that the land take has been as minimal as possible and that all has been used efficiently. Other respondents welcome Highways England's commitment to return as much land as possible to its former use.

The current status of the area chosen for the development boundary is mentioned by some respondents who refer to its brownfield or marshy character, adding that the area is underdeveloped, so this would make it suitable for the proposals.

12.2.2. Reasons to oppose the proposed development boundary

2,250 respondents express concerns or raise objections to the proposed development boundary as part of their qualitative feedback.

Community

Many of these respondents are concerned about how local communities within or near the development boundary would be affected, either during the construction process or once the LTC is operational, with Thurrock and



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Orsett being frequently mentioned. Respondents predict worsening congestion in the local areas or noise and pollution generated by the LTC.

Some respondents are critical of the development boundary because they believe that it would lead to the urbanisation of the area. In particular, respondents fear that some of the land taken as part of the development boundary would be used to build houses or commercial buildings and disapprove of this, especially if it involves green belt land being converted to brownfield and then built upon.

'Once building is completed this land will be used for development not returned to its original state and this is a great concern for us all' (User ID 100350)

Some respondents, including The National Trust, express concern about the impact of the development boundary on buildings or areas of historical importance and call for any potential impact to be minimised. Certain historical sites are specifically mentioned such as Orsett Windmill, Tilbury Fort and the Grade II listed houses in Orsett that are earmarked for compulsory purchase. Please refer to Chapter 9 (Northern Connections) for further discussion on these points.

The impact of the development boundary on farmland generates criticism from some respondents, including NFU, who are concerned that high quality farmland would be lost, adding that they feel this is unacceptable when there is a growing demand for food from an increasing population.

Some respondents criticise the potential disruption to or loss of local amenities such as Condoovers Scout Campsite, the Thames Chase Forest Centre and Southern Valley Golf Club.

'The loss of Southern Valley Golf Club by itself will be a cost to the community of Gravesend, removing a place of exercise and relaxation for many residents' (User ID 5454)

A few respondents are opposed to the proposed development boundary, citing concerns that the potential disruption could affect local schools or businesses and others argue that local views have not been taken into consideration.

Economy

A few respondents are opposed to the development boundary because they challenge the cost of acquiring the properties within it, considering it too great an expense.

The issue of farming land is also raised with the NFU objecting to any loss of agricultural land. They add that there is too little detail on this in the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR).

In their joint response, Thames Industrial Estate and One Big Data Management, oppose the proposed development boundary because of concern that it would affect the future development of East Tilbury, which in



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turn would obstruct Thurrock Council's growth strategy.

Environment

The environment is a source of concern for some respondents who comment negatively in general terms about the proposed development boundary.

Many of these respondents express disapproval about the amount of land required, often referring to the increase since previously published plans for the LTC. Others, including CPFE Essex, put forward concerns centred around the impact of the proposed development boundary on the countryside, green belt land or local woodlands such as Shome Woods and the Thames Chase Community Forest. Some respondents, including the Essex Wildlife Trust, raise concerns about the impact on wildlife and ecology, asking that any disruption be kept to a minimum.

“The extent of the development boundary around the location of the north portal will result in the destruction of large areas of coastal habitat of high importance for water voles, reptiles and rare invertebrates.” (Essex Wildlife Trust)

A few respondents comment negatively on the effect of the development boundary on nearby Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) such as the Kent Downs.

A few respondents are sceptical of Highways England's promise to restore as much land as possible to its former use, either because they question the level of commitment or because they believe that it would be practically impossible. Some respondents cite the land taken for the construction of the M25, much of which, they say, was never properly restored. In support of their views.

Landowners

Some respondents express concern about the practice of compulsory purchase or the idea of displacing people from their properties, arguing that compensation is not enough to replace the loss of someone's home. Others are critical of the practical aspect of the process, saying that it often takes too long to complete and that the amount of compensation is usually too low and does not take into account the full scale of disruption.

Another area of concern is the process by which Highways England will be negotiating with landowners with respondents requesting that the landowners are treated fairly, consulted regularly and given plenty of notice if they are to be affected by the LTC.

“Careful nurture, empathy and pastoral care is needed before, during and following the completion of the project and for a long time after, if objections are to be avoided and protests are not generated.” (User ID 11682)

Some respondents refer to the scarcity of housing within Thurrock and the need for these houses to be preserved rather than demolished for the LTC.



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Other respondents display general concern about the impact that the LTC would have on properties close to the development boundary, even if they are not to be demolished, and wish for any negative impact to be minimised as much as possible so that they are not blighted. Related to this, some respondents raise concerns about the value or saleability of properties in the area, arguing that the disruption associated with the project would drive potential buyers away.

Decision-making process

Some respondents argue that there are flaws in the process by which the development boundary was defined. A common criticism is the frequent changes to the boundary and the practice of sending letters to residents informing them that their property might need to be compulsorily purchased and then subsequently letting them know this is no longer the case, causing unnecessary stress. In addition, a few respondents feel that inadequate research was done in order to draw out the boundaries while others believe local residents are given too much influence over the process.

Some respondents comment with concern on the implementation of the development boundary as they fear that the agreed boundary would be exceeded or that Highways England would fail to adequately maintain /restore the land within it.

"The most worrying aspect of it all is that we are constantly being told by Highways England that the planned route could change at any time, and who knows how much more land will be required?" (User ID 24947)

12.2.3. Suggestions

In addition to calling for any adverse impact to be kept to a minimum, respondents also make some specific suggestions.

Community

The future use of the land required for the development generates a lot of suggestions, for example:

- the creation of new wildlife habitats;
- building legacy projects such as parks for local residents; and
- encouraging commercial developments.

Compensation

Many respondents offer suggestions related to the compensation process, often with a focus on the compulsory purchase. These include:

- the compensation to be offered should be fair and generous;
- full market value or above market value should be paid for the properties; and
- those who are losing their homes should be helped both financially and practically with the re-location process.



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Alternatively, a few respondents draw attention to the need for different forms of compensation such as compensation for noise disruption or health issues related to pollution while others provide guidelines for who they feel should be compensated.

“As well as ‘land compensation’ there needs to be some consideration to compensating the Local Authorities impacted by this development as their budgets will have to meet some of the costs that this road development results in; e.g. air quality and other environmental impact.” (User ID 713)

Environment

Some respondents ask that land within the development boundary which has been taken temporarily be restored to its owners and its former purpose once it is no longer needed for construction.

Many respondents call for the land take to be as little as possible. In contrast, other respondents request that more land should be taken, either because they do not think the current land take would allow the project to be built safely or with minimal disruption to local residents or because they feel additional land would be necessary in order to future-proof the roads linked to the LTC.

A few respondents ask that landscaping be carried out at the end of the construction in areas used temporarily as part of the development boundary to mitigate the impact on the environment as much as possible.

Landowners

The suggestion that the views of local people should be considered is a popular one among respondents with some stressing that those of landowners should be prioritised. Other respondents ask that Highways England should work closely with affected landowners at every stage of the LTC project.

Decision-making process

A variety of suggestions are made with regards to the process of defining and applying the development boundary, many of them focused on ensuring that co-operation and good communication are maintained throughout the process.

More information

Some respondents want more information about how areas within the development boundary would be affected, whereas others wish to have more details about the compulsory purchase of land and properties or about other aspects related to compensation.

12.3. Comments expressed by people with interest in land

12.3.1. Reasons to support the proposed development boundary

Eight PILs comment positively on the proposed development boundary or



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identify benefits with it as part of their qualitative feedback.

Some of them agree with the identified area while others welcome the commitment to restore any unused land to its previous form.

12.3.2. Reason to oppose the proposed development boundary

199 PILs express concerns or raise objections to the proposed development boundary as part of their qualitative feedback.

Most of those mirror the comments expressed by members the public such as the perceived risk of the following:

- **community disruption:** concerns about the potential urbanisation of the area, demolition of properties, loss of farmland, increased health risks, destruction of sites of historical importance, and impact on local amenities such as Condoovers Scout Campsite or Orsett Showground;
- **cost:** high cost due to the value of properties to be compulsory purchases; and
- **environmental impact:** concerns about the potential loss of green land and other ecological impacts

In addition to those concerns, PILs also raise further points.

Many PILs highlight the detrimental impact the proximity of the LTC would have on their wellbeing due to increased traffic and pollution with some also expressing concern that the quality of their land would be forever affected.

Some PILs feel that the compensation offered to them is inadequate and does not reflect the true scale of disruption, with a few commenting that the process by which to claim compensation is too lengthy as properties can only be declared blighted once the LTC is built.

A few PILs complain that the use of compulsory purchase orders is not consistent, criticising that some properties, which they believe to be sufficiently affected, will not be compulsorily purchased. Related to this, some raise concerns about the value and saleability of their properties.

A few PILs display concerns about the process of negotiating with Highways England, suggesting that more care and sensitivity could be shown by Highways England's representatives.

PILs also complain that the design of the boundary does not prioritise residents but is more influenced by other factors such as the placement of pylons.

The Thames Chase Trust is particularly concerned about how the Thames Chase Community Forest would be affected.

12.3.3. Suggestions

Community

A few PILs request that the land which is taken as part of the development boundary, but which would not be required for the project, should be used



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for legacy projects (such as community gardens) or mitigated in such a way that future residential developments are not obstructed.

Suggestions are also put forward about how the boundaries can be amended to avoid specific properties.

Compensation

In addition to calling for fair and comprehensive compensation, some PILs list properties they feel should be compulsory purchased because of the extent of anticipated disruption. Castle Lane in Gravesend is one area frequently mentioned in this regard.

Others suggest specific forms of compensation should be awarded such as compensation for disruption because of construction or for noise pollution.

Environment

A few PILs suggest that the land take for the proposed development boundary should be minimised, either generally or in relation to specific areas of land take such as the flood mitigation areas north of the river Thames.

Conversely, a few PILs feel that the development boundary should be extended to enable more homes to be compulsorily purchased and to reduce the disruption to those living very close to the currently proposed boundary.

On the topic of land required temporarily for the development boundary, some PILs request that this land be returned to its owners and to its former state.

Landowners

A few PILs ask either that local opinion in general is given more weight in relation to the development boundary than has been the case thus far or for Highways England to engage further with their specific concerns.

Decision-making process

A few PILs make general suggestions about the process of defining and implementing the proposed development boundary. For example, suggestions are made about access during construction.

More information

For the most part, these requests for information are related to compensation or the effect on their properties with PILs asking for more details about the conditions necessary for compensation or to know more about how their properties would be impacted.



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13. Proposed rest and service area, and maintenance depot

13.1. Overview

Q8a asks:

“Do you support or oppose our proposals for a rest and service area in this location?”

In total 19,113 respondents answered this question and the results are summarised in the charts¹⁷ below.

Chart 37: Answers from members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations (n= 18,901)

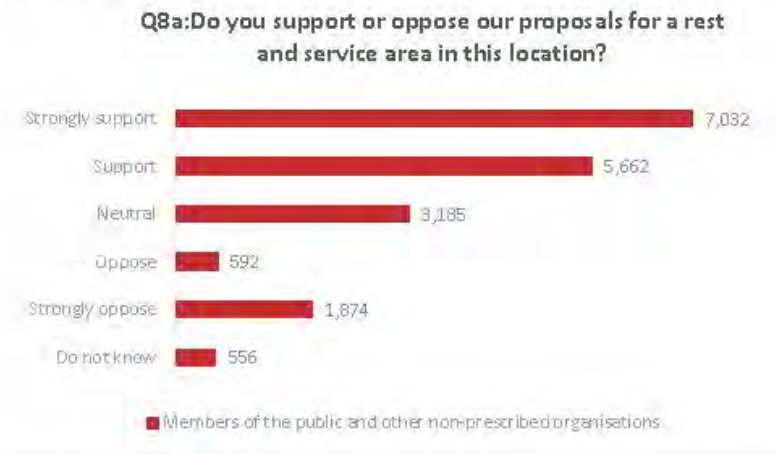
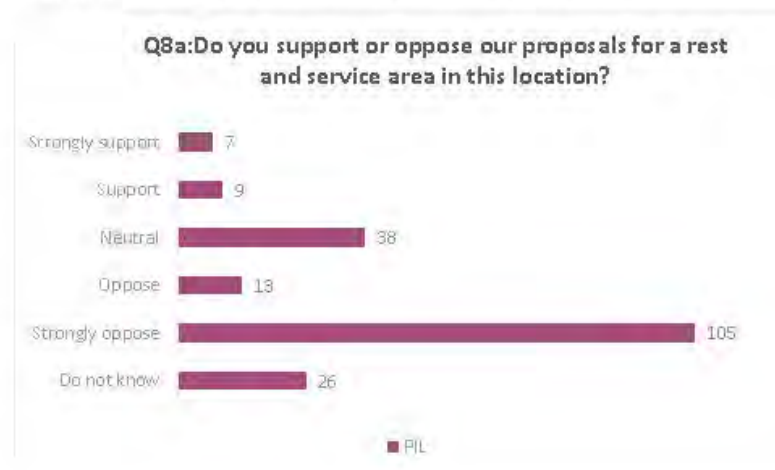


Chart 38: Answers from people with interest in land (PIL) (n=198)



¹⁷ Respondents who did not respond using the questionnaire were not able to complete this question



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Chart 39: Answers from prescribed consultees (n=14)

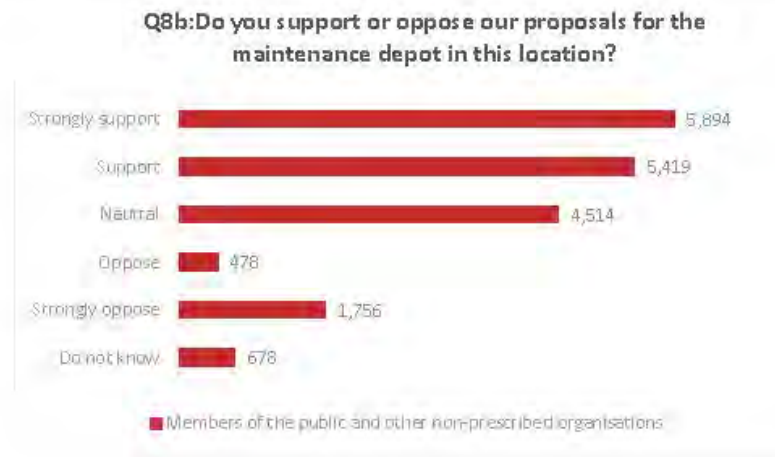


Q8b asks:

“Do you support or oppose our proposals for the maintenance depot in this location?”

In total 18,949 respondents answered this question and the results are summarised in Chart 40-42 below.

Chart 40: Answers from members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations (n=18,739)





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Chart 41: Answers from people with interest in land (PIL) (n=196)

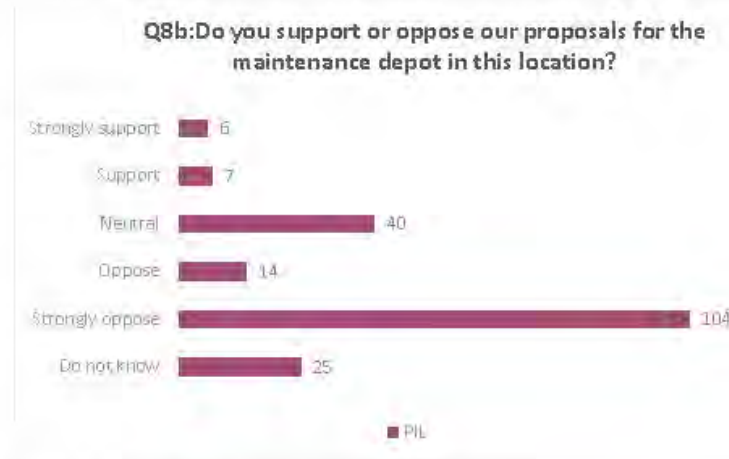
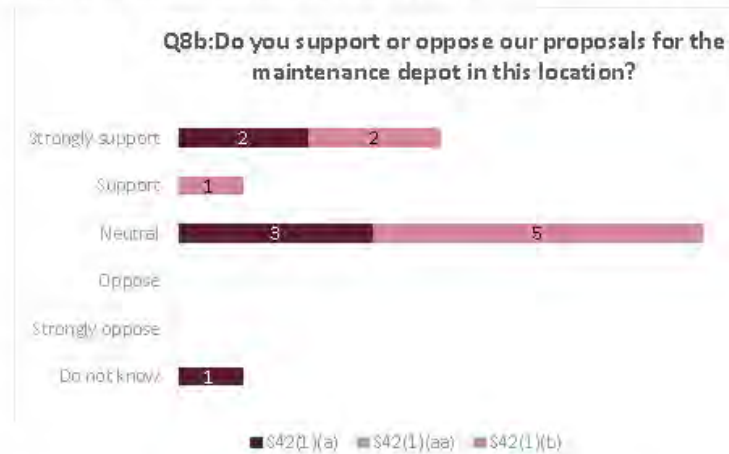


Chart 42: Answers from prescribed consultees (n=14)



Additionally, 9,659 respondents discussed the proposals for a rest and service area and maintenance depot as part their qualitative feedback. Where respondents comment specifically on one of these proposed areas those comments are captured separately. However, the majority of respondents comment on the rest and service area and maintenance depot together as one site or are not specific about which of these proposals their comments relate to.

13.2. Comments expressed by members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations

13.2.1. Reasons to support the proposed rest and service area and maintenance depot.

7,313 respondents comment positively on the proposed rest and service area and maintenance depot or identify benefits associated with them as part of



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their qualitative feedback.

Many of these respondents offer support for the proposals in general without commenting on specific aspects or providing detailed reasoning. They say that the proposals 'look good', 'make sense' or are 'sensible'.

Furthermore, many respondents who support the rest and service area and maintenance depot proposals as a whole or individually say that they are necessary or vital, with some arguing that the rest requirements placed on HGV drivers by law mean that these facilities are needed.

"We are legally obliged to have these facilities for HGV's with tachometers or they will exceed the safety regulations. In other words these rest areas are a must have requirement." (User ID 19246)

Some respondents say that they support the proposals as a whole because they trust the judgement of those who have devised the proposals, or that the experts, engineers or planners know best.

Some respondents caveat their support, sometimes suggesting that they do not support the LTC but that if the project goes ahead then proposals for a rest and service area and maintenance depot would be necessary, or that they support the proposals provided their possible impacts are minimised or potential benefits are maximised. Some of these respondents support the proposals only if there is a demonstrable need for them.

Community

Some respondents support the proposals because they feel that any potential disruption or negative impact for the local area appear to be minimal, with a few suggesting that these proposals do not appear to impact on residential developments.

Design and facilities

Some respondents support the proposed rest and service area because they feel that the existing Thurrock service station is or would be in some way inadequate or insufficient.

"...it makes sense to provide a modern easily accessed facility in this area" (User ID 1242)

Some respondents, including the Freight Transport Association (FTA) and the Road Haulage Association (RHA), support the proposals for HGV parking. They feel that this would ensure drivers have somewhere to rest and would reduce the incidence of HGVs parking in laybys or on the side of roads.

Some respondents, including the FTA and Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, also support the inclusion of electric charging points in the proposals.

A few respondents, including the RHA, support the inclusion of shower facilities, whilst a small number of respondents support the restriction of access from the LTC to local roads via the rest and service area.



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A few respondents support the design of the proposals as a whole, generally without referring to specific design aspects or features.

Economy

Some respondents believe that the proposals would create new jobs, help to regenerate the local area, lead to more development and investment or help to improve the local economy.

'It will be nice to create jobs in this area, as long as you are willing to help train and provide much needed paid employment for the locals' (User ID 1026)

Environment

Some respondents argue that the proposals for these two sites in general would minimise or avoid any potential impact on the environment. Typically, these respondents refer to the 'environment' in general terms without further specifying the impacts which they feel would be avoided.

Transport

Some respondents suggest that the proposals as a whole would be important either in the event of congestion or for the avoidance of congestion as they would help distribute the traffic. Others say that they are important for safety reasons.

A few respondents make similar comments in relation to the maintenance depot specifically, arguing that this could reduce maintenance-related delays and improve the resilience of the network by ensuring that roads are in good condition and breakdowns or accidents can be responded to quickly.

"Also roads and building structures require maintenance and emergency response, so the closer to the tunnels, gives a quicker response time in emergencies." (User ID 12781)

Some also argue that having a rest and service area would make the LTC a more attractive route for drivers and a few feel it could reduce congestion in other locations. A few suggest that the rest and service area could be beneficial for the emergency services in the event of an incident.

Other

Many respondents, including West Hamdon Parish Council, Offham Parish Council, Adisham Parish Council and Dover Town Council, make specific references to the location of the proposed sites, arguing that they are in a 'logical' or 'sensible' place, whilst some respondents support the co-location of the rest and service area and maintenance depot. A few of these respondents suggest that co-location could create cost-saving efficiencies.

In relation to the rest and service area specifically, some respondents argue that there is a shortage of services in the area or on existing routes such as the M25, A13, M2, A2 or M20, whilst some other respondents believe it is necessary for the maintenance depot to be as close to the tunnel entrance



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as possible.

A few respondents support the location of a Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) site or inspection facility within the maintenance depot.

13.2.2. Reasons to oppose the proposed rest and service area and maintenance depot

2,141 respondents express concerns or raise objections to the proposed rest and service area and maintenance depot as part of their qualitative feedback.

Some respondents oppose the proposals as a whole or individually without expanding on their reasoning. The rest of the respondents raise more specific comments which are summarised below.

Community

Of those respondents who raise community-related concerns, many, including Thames Crossing Action Group and Homdon on the Hill Community Forum, express concerns about possible impacts on or disruption to the local community. They argue that these proposals could adversely affect Thurrock and East Tilbury in particular but also Essex more widely. Respondents sometimes suggest that these areas have been treated unfairly or that the proposals would be detrimental to the lives of local people.

“The site will be a massive lorry park and filling station that will be open 24 hours a day. Not a pleasant environment for people living locally. It will ruin the area.” (User ID 15218)

Some respondents raise concerns about the proximity of the rest and service area and maintenance depot to residential areas. They argue that this could lead to increased impacts for local people and devalue properties or complicate their sale. Some of these respondents state that the proposed rest and service area and maintenance depot would be near their own property, whilst others refer to a new housing development which they say would be nearby.

A few respondents argue that the proposals would negatively impact on residents' health, whilst others say that they would be close to a local school. A few also argue that the siting of the rest and service area and maintenance depot in East Tilbury amounts to unnecessary development of the area and could lead to further urbanisation or industrialisation.

Meanwhile, some respondents raise security concerns and the possibility that these facilities could lead to an increase in criminal activity or anti-social behaviour. Several of these respondents, including Thames Crossing Action Group, make reference to the possibility that the facilities could attract illegal immigrants.

“The possible issues that could arise, with illegal immigrants coming in, on, and under coaches and HGVs, and fleeing within the area.” (Thames Crossing Action Group)



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Design and facilities

Most of the comments on the design of the rest and service area and maintenance depot focus on the size of the proposed facilities, with some respondents suggesting that they are not big enough whilst others feel that they take up too much space.

Where respondents comment on the proposed facilities they focus on their cleanliness, with some expressed concerns that these areas would be untidy or that there would be a lot of rubbish.

"The rest and service area is also a great concern with regards to litter. If the Lower Thames Crossing goes ahead we need assurances that Highways England will properly and adequately ensure that it and all associated roads are kept clean" (Thames Crossing Action Group)

Economy

Some respondents feel that the proposed rest and service area and maintenance depot would cost too much or that this money could be better spent on something else.

A few respondents also feel that they could impact local business or would fail to provide local employment. In their joint response, Thames Industrial Estate Limited and One Big Data Management Limited say that the potential environmental impacts from the proposed rest and service area would negatively impact the operation of the industrial estate and Madstone Limited says their business in East Tilbury would be affected.

*"I don't believe these amenities will benefit the area and it creates very little employment for local people. Very often local people are not considered favourably to work in these places."
(User ID 23442)*

Environment

Some respondents, including Essex Wildlife Trust and the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership, express concerns about the impact of the proposals on the environment in terms of increased pollution (air, noise and light), disruption to wildlife, loss of green belt land and visual blight.

A few respondents argue that the surrounding area is of historical or heritage interest. CPRE Essex says that the proposed rest and service area and maintenance depot would be immediately adjacent to Coal House Fort which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and that the land around it is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) supporting insects and other forms of wildlife. They add that the location of the proposed rest and service area is close to sea level and that measures would be required to protect it from rising sea levels and flooding.



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"This takes up a huge area and is really close to East Tilbury and East Tilbury Village, the home of our ancient monument, Coalhouse Fort, an area much loved by residents and visitors. It is hugely popular with walkers, birdwatchers etc. and much work has been done in the area for the conservation of wildlife." (User ID 24242)

Transport

Some respondents argue that the proposals would increase congestion, decrease road safety (with specific reference to HGVs) or lead to more traffic using local roads. Thames Crossing Action Group raises concerns that traffic would potentially be able to access local roads from the LTC via the proposed rest and service area and maintenance depot.

Other

Some respondents oppose the location of the proposed rest and service area and maintenance depot. They often argue that these facilities should not be sited in Thurrock or East Tilbury. Some respondents make this argument specifically in relation to the proposed maintenance depot. Meanwhile, some respondents are opposed to co-locating the two facilities and feel they should be separated.

"Keep the areas separate with own access." (User ID 7364)

Furthermore, many respondents who oppose the proposals say that there is no need for a rest and service area as these provisions already exist, with most of these respondents making reference to Thurrock services. A few respondents make the same argument in relation to the proposed maintenance depot, suggesting that there are already adequate maintenance provisions and that a new depot is not needed.

A few respondents express concern about the removal of a service area on the southern side of the river off of the A2 near Cobham, arguing that it is the only service area on this section of the A2 so its removal could lead to lengthy detours to refuel or to traffic being drawn onto local roads seeking services or rest stops.

13.2.3. Suggestions

Some respondents suggest that the environmental impact of the proposals should be minimised and ask for environmental measures to be put in place to mitigate any potential impacts. These include sympathetic design to reduce visual impact, installation of solar panels and renewable energy sources, planting of trees or hedgerows and collection of rainwater for use in toilets.

A few respondents feel that the proposals should include plans for a transport hub, with a park and ride scheme and bus or coach stops. A few respondents also feel the proposals could incorporate safety features such as an area for breakdown assistance or a base for emergency response or rescue services.



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"The area is close to a railway line, so there must be potential for a park & ride/public transport interchange, which would be assisted if the service area was adjacent to the railway." (User ID 24466)

Other respondents say that the proposals should include larger facilities than are currently proposed. Related to this, Dover Town Council highlights that 2.6 million lorries used the port of Dover in 2017 so having a rest and service area that can only accommodate 80 is inadequate and would lead to lorries being parked in villages. In contrast, in relation to the proposed maintenance depot, a few respondents feel that this facility should be smaller in size.

Some respondents suggest that there should be further rest and service areas included in the proposals. Suggested locations include:

- Kent;
- the M2/A2 corridor;
- the M25, near the new junction or at the junction with the M11; and
- both sides of the crossing.

Meanwhile, many respondents, including the Road Haulage Association and the Freight Transport Association, feel that the proposals for the rest and service area need to include a greater amount of parking or secure rest spaces for HGVs, including provisions for overnight parking.

"Space for overnight truck parking should be included as much as possible to help alleviate the problem of rogue parking in Kent's roads." (User ID 868)

Some respondents suggest that facilities should have sufficient capacity to cope in the event of the implementation of Operation Stack¹⁶. A few respondents would like additional HGV parking facilities to be included in addition to those at the rest and service area.

Other parking suggestions include:

- increasing the number of ordinary parking spaces;
- providing parking areas for users with caravans or motorhomes;
- offering free parking with non-time; and
- including a greater number of electric vehicles charging points.

Some respondents describe other facilities which they would like to see included in the rest and service area. Suggestions include:

- green space, an outdoor area, or a picnic area (with several of these respondents referencing French-style service areas as a model);
- adequate toilet facilities;

¹⁶ A procedure used by Kent Police and the Port of Dover in England to park lorries on the M20 motorway in Kent when services across the English Channel are disrupted



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- food and drink outlets (with a few suggesting a need for healthy alternatives to fast food outlets);
- a hotel;
- security and policing facilities including CCTV, security fencing, an area for checking HGVs and a customs clearance area;
- religious facilities;
- clear signage; and
- shopping facilities or a shopping centre.

A few respondents suggest that the rest and service area should provide local jobs, use local produce or support local companies and businesses.

A few respondents say that access to the rest and service area needs to be simple whilst others feel the service area should be accessible from local roads.

Some respondents suggest alternative locations for the proposed facilities which include:

- a location south of the River Thames in Kent such as the new A2/M2 junction with the LTC;
- a location on the M25 such as junction 29; or
- a location closer to the entrance to the tunnel.

DHL argues that its land to the southeast of the proposed Tilbury junction would be a more appropriate location for a rest and service area than the current proposed site to the northeast of the proposed Tilbury junction.

"The reasons that are given are because it is outside the flood zone, avoids historic landfill areas and other poor ground conditions and ground water protection zones. This site is also the furthest away from the scheduled monuments of Tilbury and Coalhouse Forts." (DHL)

Some respondents suggest that it would be preferable to upgrade existing service areas at locations such as Thurrock or Medway.

Some respondents feel that they need more information, adding that they either could not locate information (including maps or designs) or that it was insufficiently detailed.

13.3. Comments expressed by people with interest in land

13.3.1. Reasons to support the proposed rest and service area and maintenance depot

15 PILs comment positively on the proposed rest and service area and maintenance depot or identify benefits with it as part of their qualitative feedback.

Of those, some are supportive of the proposed location without elaborating further, while other hope the proposed facilities would bring jobs to the area.



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13.3.2. Reason to oppose the proposed rest and service area and maintenance depot

98 PILs express concerns or raise objections to the proposed rest and service area and maintenance depot as part of their qualitative feedback.

Some of those PILs do not elaborate further. The rest cite community, environmental, transport, design and economic concerns which largely mirror those expressed by members of the public.

PILs are concerned about the potential proximity to residential properties, rise in anti-social behaviour, deteriorating air quality, increased noise pollution, loss of green belt land, impact on wildlife and heritage sites and traffic disruption on local roads.

A few PILs raise concerns about the cleanliness of the facilities and about the inclusion of HGV parking facilities in the proposals for the rest and service area.

Some PILs object to the location of the facilities in East Tilbury, whilst some feel that there is no need for a new rest and service area as there is already one in Thurrock.

13.3.3. Suggestions

Suggestions from individual PILs include:

- reducing the height of lamp columns to reduce the impact of light pollution on the local area;
- the inclusion of a lorry park in the designs; and
- ensuring there is a sufficient number of electric charging points to handle the increasing popularity of electric cars.

A few PILs propose alternative locations for a rest and service area and maintenance depot, such as junction 29 of the M25, a location south of the River Thames or on the western side of the Tilbury junction.

A few PILs feel that more information is required to inform their views on the proposals



14. Traffic

14.1. Overview

Q9a asks:

“Do you agree or disagree with the view that the Lower Thames Crossing would improve traffic conditions on the surrounding road network?”

In total 22,487 respondents answered this question and the results are summarised in the charts¹⁹ below.

Chart 43: Answers from members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations (n=22,243)

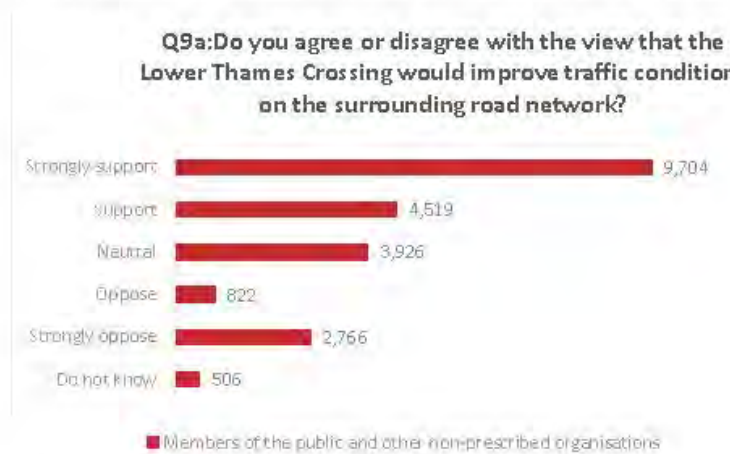
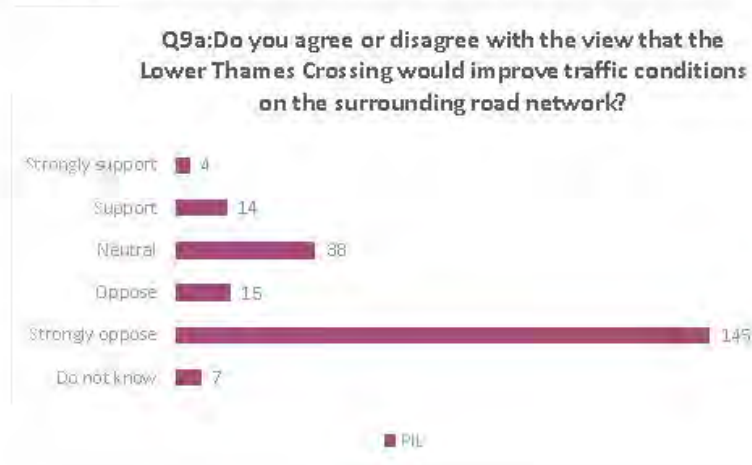


Chart 44: Answers from people with interest in land (PIL) (n=223)

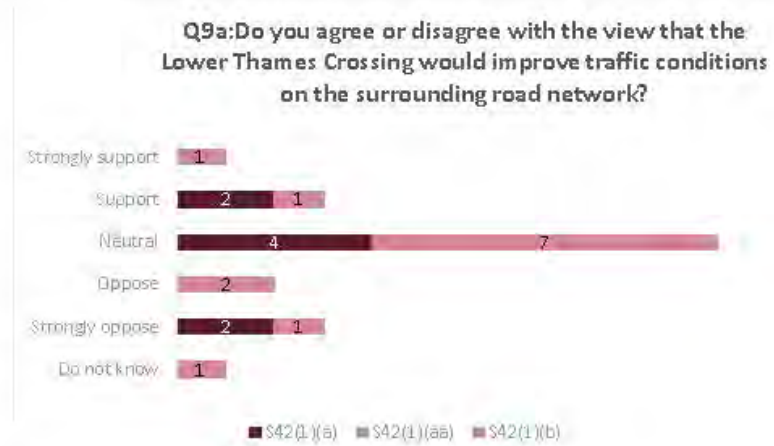


¹⁹ Respondents who did not respond using the questionnaire were not able to complete this question



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Chart 45: Answers from prescribed consultees (n=21)



Additionally, 11,994 respondents discussed the forecast traffic improvements as part their qualitative feedback. This chapter presents a summary of their comments.

Many respondents discuss the potential traffic benefits or impacts of the LTC in relation to specific parts of this route. Such feedback is summarised in the relevant chapters of this reports. This chapter includes comments which raise traffic suggestions applicable to the entire route and/or discuss specifically the traffic forecasts.

14.2. Comments expressed by members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations

14.2.1. Reasons to agree that the Lower Thames Crossing would improve traffic conditions

7,553 respondents comment positively on the forecast traffic improvements or identify benefits associated with them as part of their qualitative feedback.

Forecasts

Many of these respondents agree with the predictions that the Lower Thames Crossing would ease congestion, particularly around Dartford Crossing.

Support is generally given on the basis of trusting the accuracy of the forecast figures and modelling, and believing that research and traffic surveys carried out have been adequate.

*‘I have full confidence in the research and forecasting models, it has to be better outcome than not having an alternative crossing’
 (User ID 24688)*



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Some, such as Kent and Medway Economic Partnership (KMEP) and Kent and Medway Business Advisory Board (BAB), qualify their support saying that although they expect traffic around Dartford to reduce, other areas would experience an increase in traffic as a result of the LTC.

Transport

Many respondents make general comments that the LTC would reduce traffic and alleviate congestion at the Dartford Crossing without discussing the actual forecast data. Others point to specific areas where they think traffic conditions would be improved by the LTC: these mostly refer to the M25 and its connections immediately north and south of the river.

"I live in Bexley, which is several miles from the Dartford Crossing, however, when the Dartford Crossing is impacted with delays the traffic backup reaches back to cause congestion in and around Bexley Village. By having a new Thames crossing all traffic conditions in the surrounding area will be favourably affected."

(User ID 11979)

Some respondents support the LTC without believing that it would have any particular effect on the surrounding roads but because they believe that there is a need for a new crossing in order to meet future traffic needs.

For other transport-related comments, please refer to the relevant sections within the route-specific chapters.

14.2.2. Reasons to disagree that the Lower Thames Crossing would improve traffic conditions

4,487 respondents express concerns or disagree with the forecast traffic improvements as part of their qualitative feedback.

Forecasts

Many of these respondents challenge the findings in the traffic forecast. Some do not give specific reasons for their distrust but object to the LTC as a way to relieve traffic in the area. Others feel that the forecasts and prediction are inherently unreliable.

"History tends to show that the assumptions made in traffic modelling do not allow sufficiently for changes in journey patterns which a new road like this will attract and the knock-on consequences" (User ID2460)

Some respondents are concerned about the forecast data being collected too long ago, not forecasting far enough into the future, or underestimating the increase in vehicles using the roads. Brexit is also raised as an unknown factor that could affect the accuracy of the predictions.

Other respondents, including Bean Parish Council, raise specific concerns about the way the scheme has been modelled which they believe does not reflect reality, including:



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- traffic data being collected during school holidays;
- rush hour being classified as occurring between 7-8am and 5-6pm; and
- failure to assess what the effects would be of closing one of the crossings.

These factors, some respondents suggest, mean that the number of vehicles using the LTC and surrounding roads has been significantly underestimated.

Several potential future development projects (such as Ebbsfleet Garden City, Swanscombe Peninsula and Intu Lakeside's schemes) are raised by respondents concerned that the forecasts do not accurately predict the likely increase in traffic in the area. Some of these respondents include DP World, the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership and Swanscombe Development LLP.

Some respondents point out specific areas where they doubt the accuracy of the predictions or do not feel that certain impacts have been modelled. These include:

- junction 28 of A12 and M25;
- A227, A228, and A229;
- A13 and A2; and
- A282, A128 and the local roads around Gravesend

Some respondents feel that further information is required before they comment on the proposals.

Transport

Many respondents do not reference the traffic forecasts directly but suggest that the LTC would do nothing to improve traffic. Many more go further and suggest that the LTC would actually exacerbate the problem by increasing capacity in a small area and thereby encouraging more vehicles onto the roads.

Some respondents agree that the LTC would improve traffic but argue that it would be only a temporary measure as any extra capacity would quickly be filled. Others worry that unless the wider network is improved, the problem would simply be moved to new areas.

"But overall not much improvement locally; as I said in a previous answer, drivers cutting across Kent, eg: on the A228, will cause congestion in new and strange unforeseen areas" (User ID 6354)

A few respondents suggest that any eventual benefits to the LTC would not outweigh the increased congestion caused by its construction, especially as some believe this could last ten years or more.

For other transport-related comments, please refer to the relevant sections within the route-specific chapters.



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14.2.3. Suggestions

Forecasts

These mostly involve expanding the parameters of the traffic surveys to include smaller roads as well as key features outside the current scope, such as the Blackwall Tunnel.

"I still believe more traffic modelling incorporating the whole local road network including strategic roads i.e. A2/M2 and other A roads and M25 is required using realistic future traffic forecasting numbers." (User ID: 9491)

Transport

Free flow of traffic

The most common suggestion is to future-proof the preferred route by increasing the number of lanes and upgrading existing surrounding roads to support the increase in traffic flow. The A229, specifically Blue Bell Hill, is often raised as a key site for improvement:

"In order to alleviate this it would be necessary to upgrade the A229 Bluebell hill to motorway status with 3 lanes in each direction to connect the M20 and M2" (User ID 3429)

Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) are considered to be a major factor in congestion and various suggestions are made about them. These include:

- spreading HGVs evenly between the crossings;
- restricting HGV traffic to either the Dartford crossing or the LTC;
- separating HGV from other vehicles by limiting them to a designated lane;
- restricting HGVs' use of the LTC to certain times of the day, mainly avoiding peak times; and
- ensuring that all vehicle types, including hazardous vehicles, can use the LTC.

Many respondents suggest other ways free-flowing traffic can be achieved such as:

- minimising the use of traffic lights, roundabouts, or any other structures that might prevent vehicles from maintaining a consistent speed;
- adding hard shoulders to increase the road's resilience in case of an accident;
- ensuring that the route is of motorway standard for its full length;
- ensuring that the route is wide enough to accommodate future increase in traffic or the need for additional lanes;
- introducing measures to reduce instances of drivers changing lanes;
- segregating LTC and Dartford-bound traffic from the Channel Ports as early as possible, to avoid confusion;



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- using slip roads, flyovers and underpasses; and
- avoiding any reduction in number of lanes.

Related to this, many respondents make suggestions about the connections of the preferred route, with most suggesting that there should be no or fewer junctions, in order to limit local traffic's access, which in turn, respondents argue would improve traffic flow.

"The sole purpose of the LTC should be [...] to relieve the traffic flow and density at the existing crossing. It should have no intermediate junctions along its route therefore local traffic should not change or be affected one way or another" (User ID 9615)

In contrast, some respondents suggest that more junctions should be built, especially connecting to major roads. A few respondents say that junctions should provide access in all directions.

Other junction related suggestions include:

- promoting better lane discipline, including the use of smart technology
- making the connections as simple as possible;
- ensuring all connections are future-proofed so there will be no need to revisit them; and
- incorporating features to enhance the safety of road users, including the use of smart motorway technology to police environments where accidents are likely to happen.

Other respondents feel that more should be done to separate traffic according to destination to ensure that drivers choose the most suitable crossing or recommend having designated lanes for hazardous vehicles and emergency services vehicle. A few respondents, including SG19 Road Safety Group, ask for a provision of efficient diversions in case of incidents on one of the crossings.

Respondents request good provision for emergency services and road design enhancing safety.

Other suggestions

Some respondents talk about traffic control measures. Arguments are given both for and against variable and average speed limits as either a way to keep traffic moving or a further cause of congestion. Other suggestions include adding traffic calming measures to local roads to discourage heavy use and visible policing of the LTC to discourage dangerous driving.

Some respondents make suggestions about the signage on the route, mainly saying it should be clear, well in advance and provide valuable information, including time estimates for both crossings.



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“Accurate signage is essential. Before both crossings well in advance of joining any approach roads are essential. For example: a lorry coming from the East may see congestion at the LTC and decide to go on to the Dartford Crossing only to find congestion worse. (Similarly, travelling West to East). Traffic emanating from a mid-point between the crossings needs to know where the congestion is worse before choosing their crossing point.” (User ID 100060)

A few respondents suggest speed control measures, mostly mentioning speed limits and the use of cameras or make recommendations for sufficient lighting.

A few respondents, including members of the Motorcycle Action Group, suggest that the LTC, like the Dartford Tunnel, should be designated an ‘A’ road as opposed to a motorway to allow learners on ‘powered two wheelers’ (PTWs) to use it legally.

“The Dartford Crossing linking the M25 across the Thames is of ‘A’ road status (A282) specifically to enable non motorway users to cross the river. The new LTC must follow this format. How ironic if a hardworking, low waged young person on L plates was forced to go all the way around the Dartford Crossing when a financially secure person in a potentially congesting and polluting car can access the LTC. (Motorcycle Action Group)

14.3. Comments expressed by people with interest in land

14.3.1. Reasons to agree that the Lower Thames Crossing would improve traffic conditions

15 PILs comment positively on the forecast traffic improvements or identify benefits associated with them as part of their qualitative feedback.

These comments largely mirror those expressed by members of the public.

Some of these PILs mention the relief they feel LTC would provide to the Dartford Crossing, while others talk about local roads which they believe would be less congested and no longer used as rat runs.

*“Any incident on the current Dartford Crossing results in vehicles using local roads/rat runs to gain advantage. A crossing in Thurrock or another part of Essex would improve this situation”
(User ID 22702)*

For other transport-related comments, please refer to the relevant sections within the route-specific chapters.

14.3.2. Reason to disagree that the Lower Thames Crossing would improve traffic conditions

155 PILs express concerns or disagree with the forecast traffic improvements as part of their qualitative feedback. Most of these mirror those expressed by



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members of the public

Forecast

In addition to raising general concerns about the accuracy of the data, some PILs express specific concerns about the way the scheme has been modelled, including:

- failure to assess overnight and weekend use of the crossings;
- failure to assess how closing one of the crossings would impact the surrounding roads; and
- only using data from a single mobile network provider because of concerns that this would provide limited data.

A few PILs feel they require extra information in order to understand the traffic forecasts.

Transport

Some PILs believe that the level of improvement predicted is insufficient and does not justify the need for the LTC, often adding that any improvement would be short-lived as capacity would be filled in quickly. Others are concerned that traffic would increase on specific local roads which are already struggling to cope with demand.

Some PILs focus on the impact on traffic caused by the construction of the LTC, arguing that it will increase congestion both on the major roads and through residential areas.

For other transport-related comments, please refer to the relevant sections within the route-specific chapters.

14.3.3. Suggestions

A few PILs suggest that further surveying and modelling may be required to build up a better picture.

Other suggestions involve ways the increase in traffic could be mitigated for and include:

- increasing the capacity of the LTC by introducing more lanes;
- separating commercial traffic and HGVs from other road users or segregating traffic by destination; and
- introducing 20mph speed limits in some areas and traffic calming measures such as speed bumps to prevent local roads being used as rat runs.



15. Charges

15.1. Overview

Question 10 asks:

"Please give us your views on our proposed approach to charging users of the crossing."

In total, 19,144 respondents discuss the proposed approach to charging users of the Lower Thames Crossing. This chapter presents a summary of their comments.

15.2. Comments expressed by members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations

15.2.1. Reasons to support the proposed approach to charging users of the crossing

5,378 respondents comment positively on the proposed approach to charging users of the crossing or identify benefits associated with it as part of their qualitative feedback.

Many of these respondents support the proposed approach in principle, describing it as necessary to meet the cost of the project and as a tool to minimise excessive traffic.

Some respondents qualify their support, saying that they expect the LTC crossing to be faster and more efficient than the current Dartford Crossing, with no delays. Respondents argue that otherwise they would not want to pay.

"People should be charged an appropriate amount if the amount of congestion can be reduced, because at present they pay £2.50 a crossing to sit in traffic. Who would willingly do that?" (User ID 3289)

Some respondents do not endorse the proposed approach to charging but feel that charging for the crossing is inevitable and request further information on points such as what the actual fees would be, how they would be collected, and by whom.

Free-flow e-charging

The majority of comments on free-flow e-charging are supportive, with many respondents saying it would keep traffic moving and reduce delays.

"Unless the tolls are collected automatically, as at the existing Dartford Crossing, then the whole object of this project would be defeated" (Chadwell St Mary Community Forum)

Variable charging

Many of the respondents who comment on the proposals express explicit support for variable charging. Most of these respondents prefer a model



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differentiating between peak and off-peak time, whereas some are in favour of variable charges based on emissions or vehicle classification. A common sentiment expressed by the latter group is that by incentivising low emission vehicles, the crossing would be less polluting.

“Emissions based charging, for example exempting battery vehicles for the charge, would go some way towards mitigating the increased pollution caused by the extra traffic.” (User ID 6098)

15.2.2. Reasons to oppose the proposed approach to charging users of the crossing

9,578 respondents express concerns or raise objections to the proposed approach to charging users of the crossing as part of their qualitative feedback.

Most of these respondents, including the National Alliance Against Tolls, feel that the LTC should be free to use, often objecting to introducing charges based on the precedent set at the Dartford Crossing where, they argue, charges have continued beyond the promised term. Some respondents also believe that the current charge at Dartford is too high and asks for it to be scrapped.

“It was promised when the Dartford Tunnel/Bridge was constructed that once the cost had been covered that all charges would be removed. That has never happened so any further promise of a similar nature will be treated with the greatest of scepticism.” (User ID 950)

Many respondents also point out that other crossings, such as those further west along the Thames, are free to use.

Other reasons mentioned by respondents include:

- drivers are already being charged via vehicle excise duty and fuel tax;
- It would discourage some drivers from using the LTC; and
- It would be difficult to enforce charges on overseas vehicles so having charges would be unfair on British drivers.

Some respondents feel that it is not necessary to charge for using the LTC at all as the costs could be recouped from Dartford Crossing, either from ongoing fees, or from profit already made.

Free-flow e-charging

Some respondents express concern over the free-flow e-charging with some suggesting that it is less effective than toll booths at preventing non-payments. Other respondents believe that congestion and delays at Dartford have been exacerbated by the removal of toll booths and the introduction of free-flow e-charging without elaborating further.

“There is a jam there every day, and almost every week there is a serious build up of traffic that brings all the surrounding roads to a



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standstill for hours. This has worsened since the toll booths were removed.” (User ID 24300)

Variable charging

Many respondents, including the Alliance of British Drivers and Thames Crossing Action Group, object to emissions based charging, arguing that it is not relevant, and it penalises those who cannot afford to buy a new car.

“A low emissions car does not cause less wear and tear to the road than any other car.” (User ID 157)

Similar concerns are raised by those who disagree with variable charging based on the time of the day or vehicle classification.

15.2.3. Suggestions

Charging model

Respondents make a range of suggestions about how the charging model for using the Lower Thames Crossing should be structured.

The majority feel that the charges should be the same as at the Dartford Crossing, though this is often expressed in the context of respondents' calls for charges at Dartford to be abolished.

Another frequently made suggestion is for LTCs charges to be lower than those at Dartford Crossing, so the new crossing is more attractive to drivers. In contrast, some feel that LTC should be priced higher to reflect the saving in fuel costs linked to the shorter journeys for vehicles traveling approaching the LTC from Dover.

*“Make charges lower than the existing Dartford crossing to incentivise local traffic to prefer the lower Thames crossing otherwise there will be no improvement to Dartford congestion”
(User ID 6357)*

Some respondents highlight the importance of having a coordinated charging strategy across all river crossings to ensure that traffic is managed properly.

Price

Affordability is the most commonly raised issue, with many calling for the charge to be as low as possible.

Other respondents focus on a variable model, which they suggest could be based on:

- the type of user - discounts for local residents, older people, Blue Badge Holders or commuters;
- the type of vehicle - lower rate for electric and/or smaller vehicles and higher rate for commercial, large vehicles, and/or overseas vehicles; and
- the time of the day - lower rate/free at night/ weekends or a bank



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holiday.

In contrast, a few respondents believe that having a flat rate would make the system simpler and easier to use.

Other suggestions include not charging for the first year to encourage use of the LTC, reducing the rate after ten years, or having a price freeze for a period of 5 – 20 years.

Process

There are several suggestions for how the charging mechanism should be organised. The majority of these would like the process to match that at the Dartford Crossing and even for the process to be linked, with a single user account that is valid for both crossings.

In contrast, some respondents feel that the process used at the Dartford Crossing requires some improvements, including a few that suggest there should be a longer timeframe to pay charges, or that the auto top-up minimum of £10 should be removed. Some respondents also feel that greater effort should be put into pursuing non-payments and these respondents are generally concerned that those who do pay are paying extra to compensate for those who avoid the charge.

The importance of simplicity is often stressed by respondents, who call for clear signage and a mobile app. Others call for only charging in one direction.

Many respondents also would like to see reimbursement for significant delays, similar to that offered by train companies.

*“Include ‘Delay Repay’ or free crossing if traffic delays exceed 20 minutes to encourage better management by the operators”
(User ID 1671)*

Many respondents raise concerns about overseas vehicles avoiding payment and make recommendations about how this can be addressed at the new crossing such as charging vehicles at the port or having separate lanes at the crossing with toll booths.

Revenue

Some respondents discuss how the revenue from the charges should be used. Most of those respondents insist that the LTC should not be for profit and that the charge should be abolished in the future, once the construction costs have been recouped. Others are willing to accept some charge as long as it is only used to cover maintenance costs.

“All receipts from charges for the use of the crossing should be ring fenced for the cost of repaying the capital build costs and ongoing maintenance and upkeep.” (User ID 16373)

A few respondents feel the best use for any profits from the LTC would be reinvestment in further Thames crossings, but a more common suggestion is that profits should be used to offset any impacts of the LTC, such as



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environmental enhancement schemes, improving local infrastructure, improving public transport links, and compensating local communities.

Other respondents argue that since the proposed charging model would cover the cost of the LTC, no expense should be spared in ensuring that the scheme is of the highest quality and impacts are minimised wherever possible.

Some respondents stress that the LTC should be kept under British ownership.

15.3. Comments expressed by people with interest in land

15.3.1. Reasons to support the proposed approach to charging users of the crossing

28 PILs comment positively on the proposed approach to charging users of the crossing or identify benefits associated with as part of their qualitative feedback. Their comments largely mirror those made by members of the public.

Those who are supportive of the proposed charging model feel it is necessary to cover the construction and operation costs and express varying degrees of support for the variable charging and free-flow e-charging.

A few PILs do not endorse the proposed approach to charging but feel that charging for the crossing is inevitable. Other respondents reserve judgement in the absence of what they consider to be a solid charging model.

15.3.2. Reasons to oppose the proposed approach to charging users of the crossing

90 PILs express concerns or raise objections to the proposed approach to charging users of the crossing as part of their qualitative feedback. Their comments largely mirror those made by members of the public.

The majority of PILs who oppose the proposed approach to charging feel that the LTC should be free to use and are concerned that otherwise it would not be attractive to drivers.

PILs argue that road tax should cover the cost of the LTC and often mention crossings where charges have recently been abolished.

Some respondents are concerned that too many overseas vehicles avoid charges at the Dartford Crossing and a few respondents link this to concerns over the free-flow e-charging, suggesting that it could be open to exploitation through non-payments.

15.3.3. Suggestions

Charging model

The most common suggestion is for the charges to match those at the Dartford crossing, with a few thinking that this should be lower to attract drivers.

Most PILs feel that there should be a discount for local residents, often



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referring the Dartford residents' scheme as a good example or template. Some respondents go even further and request free travel for those living close to the crossing.

Process

PILs stress the importance of having a simple and easy to follow process with most feeling that the Dartford Crossing provides a good model.

Some respondents also urge Highways England to do more to pursue non-payments. They worry that otherwise the penalty fee would be artificially increased to compensate for lost revenue, thereby punishing those who do pay their fines.

Revenue

A few PILs feel that any profits arising from charges at the LTC should be spent on offsetting any adverse impacts it causes. These suggestions include repairing roads such as the A226 Rochester Road, compensating local communities, and environmental enhancement schemes:

"The Thames Chase Trust would wish to see a percentage of the charge returned to local environmental initiatives in the area, particularly those directly affected by the scheme i.e. the Thames Chase Community Forest" (The Thames Chase Trust)



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16. Building the Lower Thames Crossing

16.1. Overview

Q11a asks:

“Do you support or oppose our initial plans for how to build the Lower Thames Crossing?”

In total 18,523 respondents answered this question and the results are summarised in the charts²⁰ below.

Chart 46: Answers from members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations (n=18,314)

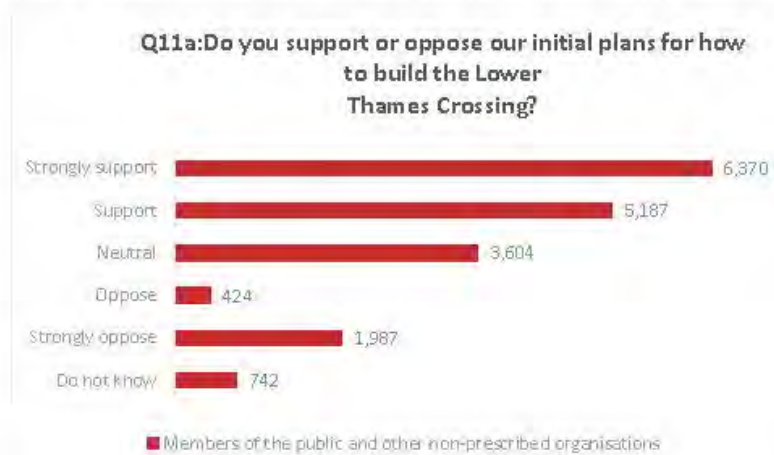
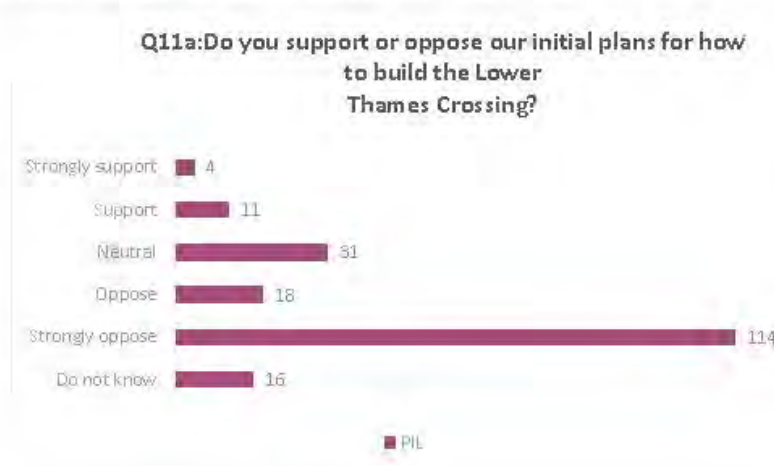


Chart 47: Answers from people with interest in land (PIL) (n=194)

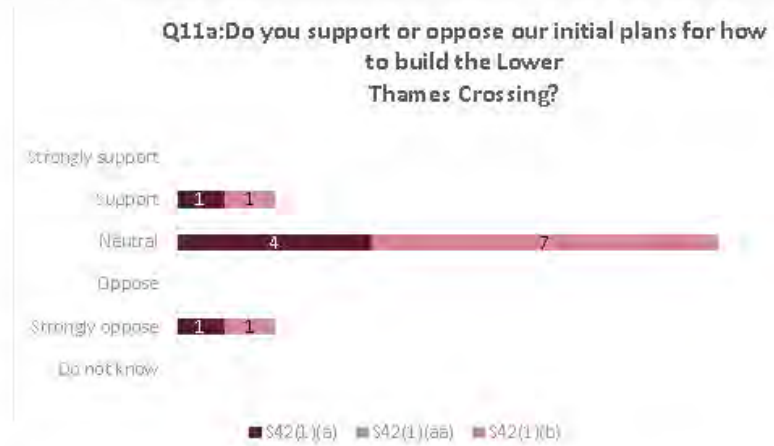


²⁰ Respondents who did not respond using the questionnaire were not able to complete this question



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Chart 48: Answers from prescribed consultees (n=15)



Additionally, 6,706 respondents discussed the proposed approach to building the LTC as part their qualitative feedback. This chapter presents a summary of their comments.

16.2. Comments expressed by members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations

16.2.1. Reasons to support the proposed approach to building the Lower Thames Crossing

3,294 respondents comment positively on the proposed approach to building the Lower Thames Crossing or identify benefits as part of their qualitative feedback.

Many of these respondents acknowledge the construction process would cause some disruption but add that this is inevitable and are pleased overall with the amount of work that has gone into the plans so far. Some respondents also say that they welcome the proposed mitigation measures as they appear to have been well-considered and thought through.

“I accept there will be some disruption but if you do nothing it will be worse” (User ID 815)

Some of the respondents comment that this is a matter best left to the experts and are confident in the expertise of the project team.

Others qualify their support, saying that they expect Highways England to stick to the proposed timeframe or even finish the project sooner, cause minimal disruption to communities and mitigate environmental impacts.

A few respondents comment specifically on the proposed 24-hour working pattern proposed for the construction of the tunnels and the concurrent building of the tunnel and road construction, saying that the sooner the project is complete, the better.



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“24-hour working in areas not affecting people will optimize the completion of the project.” (User ID 21118)

A few respondents, including the Essex Chamber of Commerce, support the construction method on the basis that it would create more jobs and employment opportunities, especially for local residents.

16.2.2. Reasons to oppose the proposed approach to building the Lower Thames Crossing

2,559 respondents express concerns or object to the proposed approach to building the Lower Thames Crossing as part of their qualitative feedback.

Many of these respondents express concerns about the duration of the construction, saying that seven years is far too long. Related to this, some doubt the project will be completed on time and expect it to go beyond what is currently predicted.

Discussing the potential disruption local communities will experience during the construction phase, most respondents focus on environmental issues including air, noise and light pollution, and traffic congestion. There is a particularly strong concern about the use of HGVs, both in terms of road safety and the capacity of the local network to accommodate such vehicles.

“As a Gravesend resident all I can foresee are at least 7 years of utter traffic chaos whilst the crossing is constructed and the knock-on effect this will have. I view the potential improvements that will result with a lot of suspicion”, (User ID 233).

A few respondents are concerned that there might be a shortage of suitably qualified workforce, adding that sub-standard performance might put the project at risk.

Some respondents express disappointment that there is no commitment to employing local people for the construction of the LTC.

Other prominent concerns focus on:

- the proximity of the construction compounds to residential areas;
- the proposed long working hours, particularly the 24/7 tunnel construction, and the disruption this could cause to local residents;
- the proposed methods for storing and disposing of construction spoil; and
- the cost of the construction process.

16.2.3. Suggestions

Method of construction

Respondents make a range of suggestions concerning how to approach the construction with many highlighting the need for effective oversight and management in order to complete the project on time and to budget.



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There are also specific suggestions aimed at minimising disruption:

- the order of construction: such as building the service area last and building the north and the south side of the tunnels simultaneously;
- road traffic measures: such as keeping the roads open as long as possible to avoid congestion;
- the transport of materials: using rail in addition to river transport.

Moreover, a few also suggest recycling spoil or that construction compounds be used for disposal.

Many also suggest using high-quality materials and the latest available technology to achieve quicker completion and high standard. Related to this, some suggest learning from foreign countries, such as China and Dubai who have a reputation for the fast completion of large infrastructure projects.

“Just build it taking a leaf out of the Dubai book on finishes for overbridges and plantings from many cities.” (User ID 1459)

A few respondents emphasise the importance of safety, both in terms of safe work environment for construction workers and drivers passing through it.

Timeframe and working hours

Most of the suggestions focus on ways to reduce the potential disruptions, with many respondents simply stating that they would like Highways England to do everything possible to minimise the level of inconvenience. Businesses, such as USP, stress that much of the commercial freight is moved overnight and would like this to be factored in the building planning.

Many are also keen to see the construction completed quicker and advocate for 24-hour works or longer hours than those currently proposed. In contrast, a few respondents suggest shorter working hours, only working overnight or avoiding the rush hour in order to give local residents some respite.

Workers, contractors and working hours

Many respondents, including South East Local Enterprise Partnership, Essex Chamber of Commerce and the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership, suggest that to maximise the benefits of the project, local companies and workforce should be contracted for the construction of the Lower Thames Crossing. Some also emphasise that should contractors fail to meet deadlines, they should face penalties.

“I would caution that you stipulate financial penalties for contractors who do not complete each section in a timely fashion. Large projects like this are notorious for being delayed and going over-budget. The burden of delays caused by contractors should be borne by them, not the public.” (User ID 18171)



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16.3. Comments expressed by people with interest in land

16.3.1. Reasons to support the proposed approach to building the Lower Thames Crossing

11 PILs comment positively on the proposed approach to building the Lower Thames Crossing.

Many of these make comments similar to those expressed by members of the public.

PILs express confidence in the skills and knowledge of the experts involved and whilst acknowledging that residents would face a period of disruption, feel that the resultant benefits are worth it.

Few PILs say that they would support the construction process as long as the contractors conform to the Code of Construction Practice.

16.3.2. Reasons to oppose the proposed approach to building the Lower Thames Crossing

122 PILs express concerns or raise objections to the proposed approach to building the Lower Thames Crossing as part of their qualitative feedback.

Many of those express concerns which mirror those raised by members of the public.

Most PILs are concerned about the amount of disruption involved in the process, particularly in relation to noise, air quality and traffic.

Some PILs also highlight that local roads are narrow and already congested, and would not be able to accommodate the HGVs which would be required during the construction phase.

Placing construction compounds next to homes is also a source of concern for some. Related to this, the Woodland Trust emphasises that the construction compound would affect ancient woodlands and others worry about its impact on local wildlife sites.

A few PILs object to the proposed long working hours, saying that they would disrupt local life, while others are concerned that the project would overrun.

Cobham Hall School is concerned about how the construction phase would affect the school, stressing that it is important that access is maintained for pupils and staff.

16.3.3. Suggestions

Most of the suggestions focus on ways to minimise the potential disruption such as:

- being mindful of the timing of the work if its near schools or residential areas;
- limiting lorry movements onto Thong Lane;
- moving construction compounds away from residential areas;



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- careful management of spoil disposal;
- shortening working hours or restricting them to day time only; and
- complying with various regulations and guidelines, particularly with regards to construction vehicles and health and safety.

There are also suggestions concerning safety, including one that there may be unexploded bombs from the Second World War in the river and surrounding area.

A few PILs stress the importance of providing employment/training opportunities to local people.



17. Utilities and pylons

17.1. Overview

Question 12 asks:

“Please let us know any views you have on the proposed changes to utilities infrastructure.”

In total, 6,463 respondents discuss the proposed changes to utilities infrastructure. This chapter presents a summary of their comments.

17.2. Comments expressed by members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations

17.2.1. Reasons to support the proposed changes to utilities infrastructure

3,421 respondents comment positively on the proposed changes to utilities infrastructure or identify benefits associated with them as part of their qualitative feedback.

The most frequently cited reasons in support of the changes are that they are necessary for the progress of the project and that they would offer opportunities for infrastructure upgrades.

“The utilities must be moved to enable the construction to take place and allow ongoing maintenance access to the relevant companies” (User ID 21891)

Many respondents, however qualify their support asking for guarantees that the disruption to local utilities would be kept to a minimum or that the new arrangements would improve the local landscape.

Some respondents specifically comment on the proposed pylon diversion, saying that as the area is already exposed to pylons, moving some would not make a difference.

17.2.2. Reasons to oppose the proposed changes to utilities infrastructure

1,243 respondents express concerns or raise objections to the proposed changes to utilities infrastructure as part of their qualitative feedback.

Of those, many, including Tilbury Town Community, oppose the proposed diversion because of concerns it would disrupt their utility supply or affect local amenities such as Condoverts Scout Campsite. Environmental concerns are also frequently highlighted in terms of impact on wildlife, air quality pollution and wider countryside.

“The fact that you are going to have to relocate utilities means that local residents will have to suffer possible breaks in their services” (User ID 100936)



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Some respondents raise cost concerns, commenting that the utility diversion would be too expensive and that utility companies may impose extra charges on residents to recoup the expense. Other respondents object to the relocation of specific utilities infrastructure.

Some of those are particularly concerned about relocating pylons in close proximity to residential homes, citing health, visual and noise concerns. Some respondents add that the area already has pylons and worry about the cumulative impact.

“My only major issue is with pylons and the effect on this living nearby – not just how they look but health wise [sic].” (User ID 4759)

A few are against relocating the gas pipeline, because of the risk of fire and accidents.

17.2.3. Suggestions

Many of the respondents who make suggestions, including Bean Residents' Association, Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council and Thames Crossing Action Group, believe that the electricity lines should be placed underground (or put in service tunnels) in order to minimise the visual impact of the pylons. Others suggest specific locations where they feel the impact would be minimised such as Cobham or Dartford.

Other suggestions focus on the installation process with calls for this to take place as soon as possible to avoid delays to the project and minimise disruption to residents. Many also highlight the need for this to be done to a high standard so future changes are avoided.

*“Disruption to residents should be minimised, as close as possible to zero – including the hiring of temporary generators (and their equivalent for other utilities) where disturbance of existing supplies is required so they can be moved, or even if it is anticipated.”
(User ID 18443)*

Many ask for the relocation of pylons and utilities to be sensitive and mindful towards local communities and environment.

Some of these respondents strongly believe that pylons should not be close to residential areas, due to potential health risks and general disruption. Riverview Park in Gravesend and Shorne are often mentioned in the context of those concerns. With regards to Shorne, a few respondents comment that the village often experiences power cuts and ask if moving the pylons closer would make the situation worse.

Some respondents ask for compensation to be given to those adversely impacted by the proposed changes.



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17.3. Comments expressed by people with interest in land

17.3.1. Reasons to support the proposed changes to utilities infrastructure

13 PILs comment positively on the proposed changes to utilities infrastructure or identify benefits associated with it as part of their qualitative feedback.

Their comments mirror those made by members of the public and stress that it is a necessary part of the project.

17.3.2. Reasons to oppose the proposed changes to utilities infrastructure

109 PILs express concerns or raise objections to the proposed changes to utilities infrastructure as part of their qualitative feedback. These mostly mirror the comments made by members of the public.

Many of those PILs worry about the proximity of utilities infrastructure to residential areas, citing health, noise and access concerns. One PIL highlights that part of their land for which they have acquired planning permission may be affected by the utilities diversions.

Others are concerned about the impact on the environment, stressing the potential disruption to local wildlife.

17.3.3. Suggestions

Some PILs suggest that the electricity cables should be placed underground or located away from residential areas with a few also emphasising the need for environmental mitigation measures.

A few want assurances that their rights of future development would not be affected and ask for compensation for any restrictions imposed on the use of their land.



18. The consultation process

Q14 asks:

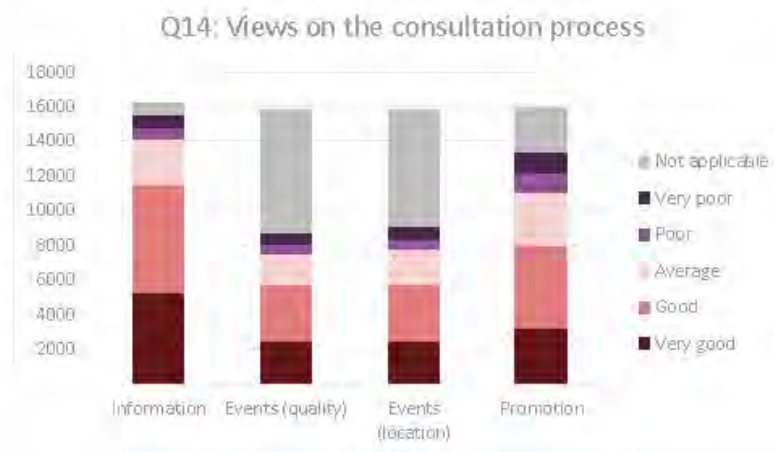
“Please let us know what you think about the quality of our consultation materials, our events, the way in which we have notified people about our plans, and anything else related to this consultation.”

In total:

- 16,354 respondents answered the question asking for views on the consultation information. Of those 16,147 were members of the public, 193 were PILs and 14 were prescribed consultees.
- 16,052 answered the question asking for view on the quality of the events. Of those 15,845 were members of the public, 193 were PILs and 14 were prescribed consultees.
- 16,043 answered the question asking for views on the location of the events. Of those 15,836 were members of the public, 194 were PILs and 13 were prescribed consultees.
- 16,130 answered the question asking for views on the promotion of the events. Of those 15,924 were members of the public, 192 were PILs and 14 were prescribed consultees.

The results are summarised in the charts²¹ below.

Chart 49: Answers from members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations



²¹ Respondents who did not respond using the questionnaire were not able to complete this question



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Chart 50: Answers from people with interest in land (PIL)

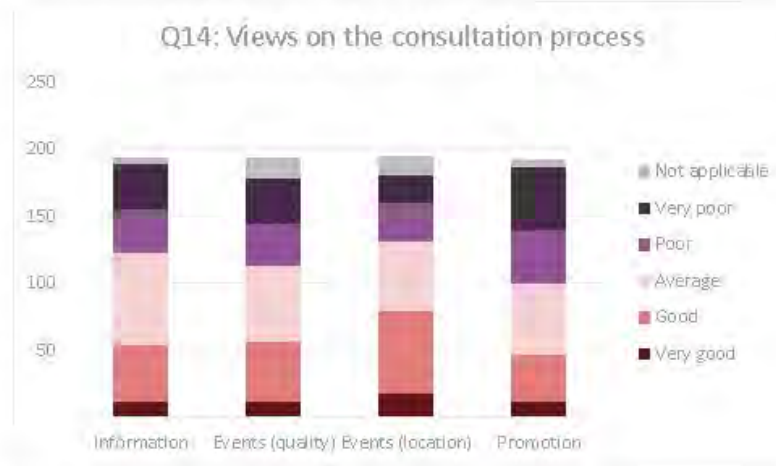
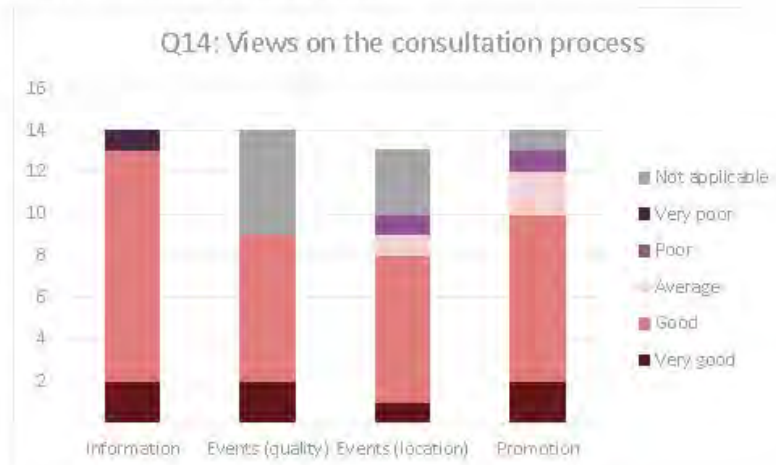


Chart 51: Answers from prescribed consultees



Additionally, 9,481 respondents discussed the consultation process as part of their qualitative feedback. This chapter presents a summary of their comments. This chapter follows the structure of the closed questions and is organised by a sub-topic: consultation process overall, information, quality of the events, location of the events and publicity activities.

18.1. Comments expressed by members of the public and other non-prescribed organisations

18.1.1. Consultation process overall

Respondents who are supportive of the consultation process say that they appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposals, the time they have been given to respond, the simplicity of the process and the quality of the communication they have had with Highways England:



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"I have received emails of regular frequency keeping me informed of what Highways England are doing." (User ID 1191)

Conversely, key criticisms of the process focus on the duration of the consultation, accessibility of the venues and materials or the ability of those without internet access to participate.

Others are sceptical if their feedback would influence the decision-making processes, arguing that the outcome has been predetermined. In support of these views, these respondents often refer to the way the previous consultation was conducted and what they feel to be a failure to act on feedback, the perceived.

"I am being 'consulted' after the basic decision which I disagreed with has already been taken, against huge opposition from everyone in the affected areas. That first 'consultation' ploughed ahead regardless so what's the point of this one? Why on earth would I think any real notice will be taken?" (User ID 3488)

Some respondents oppose the consultation process entirely as unnecessary. They say this is not a matter for the public and that consultation only causes delays to infrastructure development. Some also describe the consultation as a waste of money.

18.1.2. Information and materials

Respondents who find the materials helpful and informative make specific mention of the fly-through video and the 'before and after' comparison pictures. Some highlight the accessibility of the information, praising it for being well presented, clear and easy to understand.

"Good to see plans and photographs showing before and after views. Made it easier to follow the changes." (User ID 435)

In contrast, other respondents believe the information to be overly complex, insufficient, misleading or inaccessible. A few respondents talk about the materials being a "glassy", "sales pitch" or "PR stunt". The video fly-through is brought up specifically by some, including the Thames Crossing Action Group which says landmarks such as the Orsett Windmill are not shown, and neither are several small residential areas close to the site of the preferred route. Other respondents say the areas of mature trees shown are misleading as the trees in question would not reach such sizes for several years after their planting.

Some respondents point out where they feel there are inaccuracies in the information provided such as:

- the number of lanes on the M2/A2;
- out of date crossing fees quoted for the Dartford Crossing;
- inaccurate data on pollution and predictions about the future use of electric vehicles;
- the Isle of Sheppey referred to as the Isle of Grain;



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- an omitted residential area off Princess Margaret Road, East Tilbury; and
- omitted tunnel infrastructure such as control rooms.

Many respondents complain that the maps are unclear and difficult to use.

Some respondents note that the proposals for the LTC have changed several times since its inception, and there is an expectation that further changes may still be needed. This, they argue, makes it hard to take a definite view on the current proposals, in advance of a final design.

“The constant changing narrative, outcomes and frankly misleading consultation documents make a mockery of the term ‘meaningful consultation’.” (User ID 23594)

Views on the questionnaire are also mainly critical with respondents saying it is too long, biased, unclear and with reference to the online version - clunky.

Some respondents also question the need for the equality and diversity section of the response form, either because they do not understand how this information is relevant to the consultation or because they find the options incomplete. With regards to the latter, some respondents are critical of the fact that under ethnicity they could not select White British.

18.1.3. Events

Some respondents praise the consultation events for being well-organised and presented. Some also praise the events staff for their friendly manner and knowledge of the project. The event at Bluewater shopping centre received particularly high remarks from respondents.

In contrast, others are critical of the events, stating that they were held at inconvenient times, in unsuitable locations, were not informative and were poorly advertised. Many respondents also suggest that there should have been more events, particularly around the Medway towns.

“The people holding the meetings did not live anywhere near here and had no idea about local problems or why people feel so angry about having this forced on them. They also failed to answer concerns on the day due to ignorance of the area” (User ID 5319)

18.1.4. Promotion

Those who express positive views towards the level of promotion refer to specific promotional materials such as advertisements in newspapers and local forums. Those respondents also praise the use of DartCharge database²² arguing that as potential users of the LTC they appreciate being consulted.

²² The DartCharge database is made up of individuals and organisations who have provided contact information when registering to pay the DartCharge for using the Dartford Crossing. Highways England sent an email to these contacts at the beginning of the consultation so that they were aware of the issues it dealt with and how to get involved.



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In contrast, some respondents believe that the level of advertisement was insufficient and object to businesses and DartCharge account holders being specifically targeted as they fear this would skew the results:

"You need to capture opinions of local residents first and foremost, not random people who are in no way affected by this proposal (and some who don't even live in the UK) just to influence the numbers" (User ID 21192)

18.1.5. Suggestions

Most of the suggestions relating to the consultation process are simply that public and local opinion should be listened to and taken into account during decision-making.

A few respondents ask for further consultation; either with extra information which the respondents feel is missing, or following developments to the project to give the public a chance to comment on design changes.

Some respondents suggest specific organisations which they believe should be included in any future planning. These mostly consist of various environmental and wildlife groups, countryside access groups, and local resident groups.

Some respondents suggest there should be a concise summary of the information provided for those who do not want to read everything as well as better use of visuals, including 3-D models.

Other suggestions include:

- door-to-door knocking to canvass opinions;
- keeping the public informed throughout the process;
- using social media to promote the consultation or billboards on the M25;
- holding several events at each location so that people could come back with questions after digesting information as well as recording the events for those unable to attend; and
- organising tours of the construction sites.

18.2. Comments expressed by people with interest in land

18.2.1. Consultation process overall

PIIs who support the consultation process express similar sentiments to members of the public in terms of appreciating the opportunity to comment and the level of communication they have received from Highways England.

In contrast, the identified perceived shortcomings are also similar to those mentioned by members of the public and focus on the short duration of the consultation, fears that the outcome is pre-determined and suggestions that the previous consultation had been inadequate.

Some respondents criticise the level of communication they have had with



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Highways England during the consultation, feeling that they were contacted too late in the process or that email responses have been delayed or unhelpful.

Other specific concerns include:

- concerns that previous route choices are no longer being offered as alternatives; and
- concerns that the consultation has taken place without all assessments and reports being completed.

18.2.2. Information and materials

Positive comments made by PILs largely mirror those expressed by members of the public in terms of the perceived, clear, accessible and easy to digest presentation and layout.

Concerns are also largely similar to those raised by members of the public and describe the information and materials, including the questionnaire, as overly complex, biased, difficult to use and missing details.

Some respondents point out where they feel there are inaccuracies in the information provided:

- the routes of public rights of way;
- the number of lanes on the M2/A2; and
- discrepancies around the anticipated construction duration, which varies from five to seven years across different reports.

The various design changes made to the LTC proposals during the various consultation stages are of concern to some respondents, who feel unable to form a definite view of these proposals until the final plans are confirmed.

18.2.3. Events

Those PILs who support the consultation events identify similar benefits to those outlined by members of the public and describe the events as well-organised, informative and fronted by friendly and knowledgeable staff.

In contrast, the expressed challenges also echo those voiced by members of the public who criticise the events for their perceived inconvenient timings, unsuitable locations, unhelpful staff and poor publicity. Some also argue that there should have been a lot more events.

18.2.4. Promotion

Comments on the promotion of the consultation mirror those expressed by members of the public.

PILs who support the promotion welcome the level of advertising and the campaign to DartCharge account holders, whereas those who are critical say that they found out about the process through a word of mouth and question how appropriate it is to seek the views of drivers who are not local residents.



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18.2.5. Suggestions

The suggestions raised by PILs are similar to those offered by members of the public and include calls for local opinions to be respected, recommendations for further consultations and requests to be kept updated throughout the project.

Other specific suggestions include:

- providing more images around the Baker Street area which show the impact of the junction with the A13;
- easier access to physical copies of the information, including DVDs or similar for digital materials; and
- consulting those living near any roads that would be subject to increases in traffic flow.



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Appendix A: Demographic data

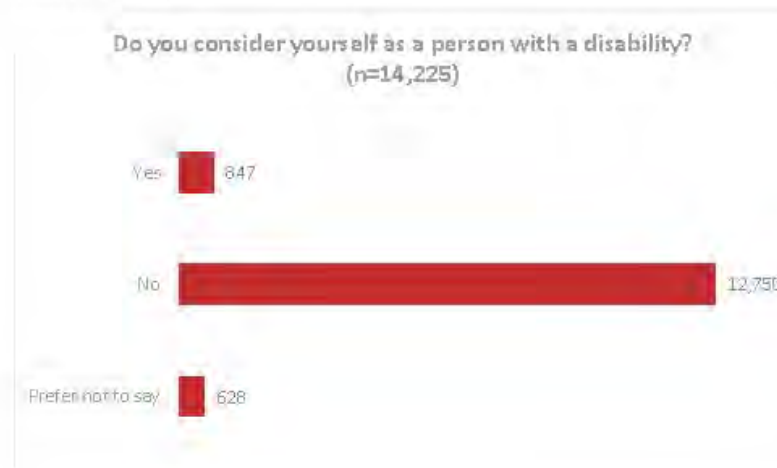
The consultation questionnaire included a series of optional equality and diversity questions. As the answers provided to these questions are defined as 'special category data', respondents had to give explicit consent for this data to be processed as part of the consultation process.

The charts below only display the answers of those respondents who gave consent for their data to be used.

Chart 52: Gender



Chart 53: Disability





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Chart 54: Ethnicity

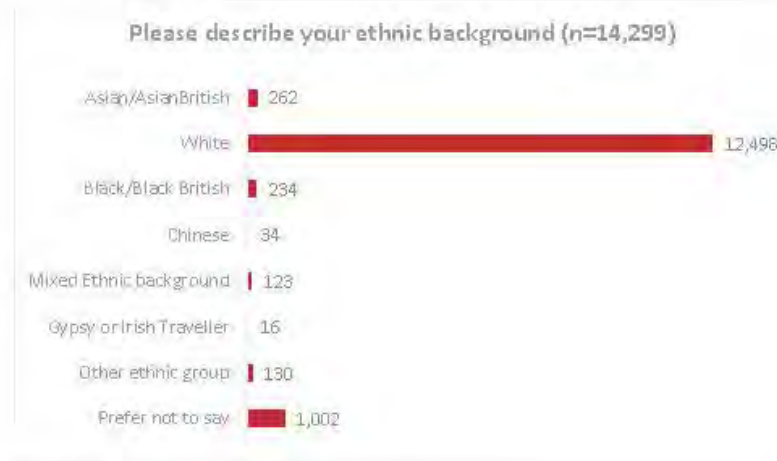
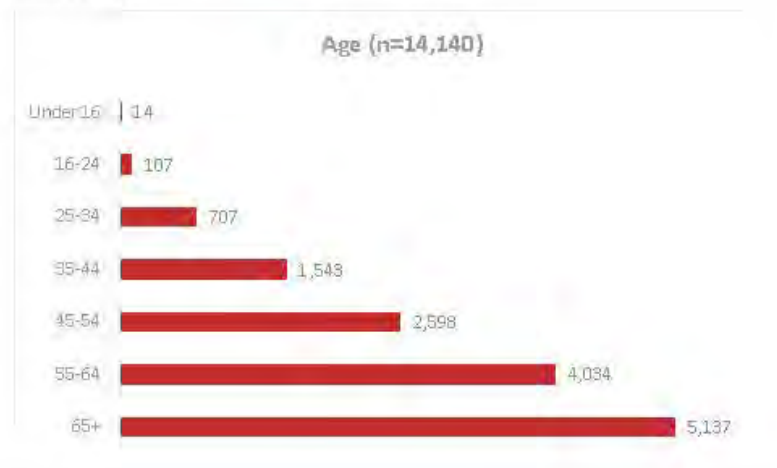


Chart 55: Age





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Appendix B: List of participating organisations

In addition to the 55 responses from consultees prescribed under section 42(1)(a)-(c) (see Chapter 2), this consultation also received responses submitted in the names of the following 50²⁹ non-statutory organisations. It was not within our remit to check the attributions of organisations to responses.

Organisation name
3 way cleaning Ltd
A B Jones and Partners
A C Preou Ltd
A P Safe Transport Ltd
A&B taxis
A2B Express Logistics
Abacus Accountancy
Abbott and Frost Ltd
Abel Partnership
Abridge2far
Accountancy & More Ltd
Accountancy (Computer) Services Ltd
Acorn Taxis
Adidome Ceramics Company Ltd
Adisham Parish Council
Admiral Ventilations & Maintenance Ltd
Adnams and Co PLC
Adpak Machinery Systems Ltd
Aerial & Satellite Technology Ltd T/A AstecAV
Aggregate Processing Solutions Ltd
Alan Fellows Associates Ltd
Alan Osuoha Ltd
Albion Stone
Aldworth Ltd
Alliance of British Drivers
Allum Building Services Ltd
AM Mortgage & Financial Services
Amazon LCY2 Tilbury
Ambient computer services
AMOS Services
Amtal UK Ltd
Amtec
Amusement Catering Equipment Society
Anchor Sound & Security
Andromeda Boru Ltd
Antique Vault Ltd

²⁹ Includes PILs



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Anything Military
Apex Lifts
Aqua Air Hygiene Solutions (CPS) Ltd
Aqualma Empowerment Services
Arcangel Technology Ltd
Arrigonfrutta Ltd
Arriva Southern Counties
Asap Domestic
Ashfold Consulting Ltd
Ate UK Ltd
Automead Ltd
AWA Consultants
Baca Workwear & Safety Ltd
Bannerman Consulting Engineers Ltd
Barking Dagenham & Havering Green Party
Basildon Business Group
Baylis Landscape Contractors Ltd
Bean Parish Council
Bean Residents Association
Beroworth UK
Bespoke Business Finance LLP
Bexley BMSport Ltd
Bikes2Go
Birley Engineering Supplies Ltd
Black River Logistics
Blinkin Ltd
Blue Mayne Ltd
BlueSky Cycle Services
Bobbing Parish Council
Border Engineering Ltd
Boss Plant Hire Ltd
Bostik Football league
Bound Around Ltd
Bra dgate
BrainPatch Ltd
Brentwood Gypsy Support Group
Brett Aggregates Ltd
Bright Technologies Ltd
Brighton Marina Co
British Chambers of Commerce (BCC)
Brokersure Ltd
BrookhouseUK
Brothers Fish Bar
Brownes boatyard
Buglife- The Invertebrate Conservation Trust
Build Consultants Ltd



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Building Associates Ltd
Burnet Heritage Trust
Business Credit Solutions Ltd
C&M Hayes Ltd
C, M & G J Phipps
Campaign for Better Transport
CanMarket Ltd
Canterbury Christ Church University
Caracol Printing Co.
Carl's Airport Flyer
Carville Ltd
Cassidys Ltd
CED Ltd
CF Transport
CH Cole & Sons (Cherry Orchard) and CH Cole & Sons (Mill House) and CH Cole & Sons (Heath Place) Partnerships
Chadwell St Mary Centre (Community Hub)
Chadwell St Mary Community Forum Ltd
Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport
Chelmsford Diocese Board of Finance
Chemidose Ltd
Chess Structural Consultants
Christopher Scott Padfield, S&J Padfield Partners LLP and S&J Padfield Estates LLP
CJC Development Company Ltd
Clarkes of London
Cliff Electronic Components Ltd
C-Mech Services Ltd
Coach Lamp Chauffeur Services
Cobham Hall
COBRA Insurance Brokers
Codarin Associates
Cogent Land LPP
Cohesis Ltd
Colne Office Supplies Ltd
Colton Commercials Haulage Ltd
Compass Travel (UK) Ltd
Concept Multi-Car Ltd
Coniston Ltd
Connaught Competition Engines
Coryton Advanced Fuels
CPRE Essex
CPRE Kent
Cranham Golf Course
Crossroads Motors
Crystal Display Systems
Crystal windows
Cycling UK



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Danmac Coaches
Dartford and Gravesham Cycling Forum
Data Relish Ltd
David Jenkins Architects and Planners
de Merke Estates
Delphini Ltd
Detling Parish Council
Deveci Properties
Development Design Consultants
Dgsplashback.com
DGT Wheels and Tyres Ltd
DHL
Dickens' Country Protection Society
Digital Printing Company in Laindon
Dive Machine
DK Travel
Dover Town Council
DP & BA Carter
DP World, London Gateway
DPD Group UK Ltd
Durable Contract Roofing Ltd
E & K Benton Ltd
E H Nicholls Jnr Ltd
East Malling and Larkfield Parish Council
Ebbfleet Development Corporation
Eco Control Systems
Educate4Business Ltd
EJ FINANCIAL Ltd
Eldorado Leisure
Elis UK Ltd
Elite Technical Services
Endeavour School
Ensto UK Ltd
Equihunter Horseboxes Ltd
Essex Bridleways Association
Essex Business Board
Essex Chambers of Commerce
Essex Field Club
Essex Society for Archaeology and History
Essex Systems
Essex Wildlife Trust
Exact Digital
Extreme clean commercial Ltd
F H Brundle
Fast Mover Tools Ltd
Federation of Small Businesses (Kent)



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Finn Geotherm UK Ltd
Flint Consulting Ltd
Four Jays Group
Four Square
Francis and Co Ltd
Freight Transport association
Frenbury Properties Ltd
Friendly Vets Ltd
Fritz Motorsport
Frontrunner Distribution
G Beake Consultants Ltd
Gabocom Ltd
Garon Park CIC
General Aero Services Ltd
Generated Power Services Ltd
GeoEssex & Essex Rock & Mineral Society
Gibbs Boat Sales Ltd
GKT Health Resources Ltd
Gnk Interiors
Gravesend Historical Society's Footpaths Committee
Gravesham Rights of Way Committee
Grays Café
Greenergy
GRT Holdings Limited and Southern Valley Golf Club (joint response)
GT Industrial Doors Ltd
Gunite Solutions
H&V Insulation Supplies Ltd
Harlex Haulage Services Ltd
Harlow Autos Ltd
Harrison Road Haulage
Harrogate Chauffeurs
Havering College of Further and Higher Education
Havering Friends of the Earth
Havering Wildlife Project
Heritage Holdings
High Garrett Properties Ltd
Highbank Communications Ltd
Horndon on the Hill Community Forum
Horse Access Campaign UK
Howard Foundation Holdings Ltd
Huntley Electronic Systems Ltd
Hutton Executive Cars
Hydreau Ltd
Hyper Property Company
I S Transport Ltd
I&A Communications Ltd



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ICPR 1200 Ltd
Ideal Group Ltd
iLakeside
Import Export Logistics
Impossible Creations Ltd
Ince PR
Indalo Transport
Ingenso Ltd
Ingrebourne Valley Ltd
Institution of Civil Engineers (South East England Region)
INT Logistics UK Ltd
International Property Media
Invicta Flight Training Ltd
Iwade Parish Council
IWTM UK Ltd
J R M Fairclough
J&E Hall International (Dartford)
J&J carpentry
J.Clubb Ltd
Jalex Collective IT Ltd
JDW Cleaning Ltd
Jenpro GWER Ltd
JSA Leisure Ltd
JTL
KALF Ltd
Kathryn Homes Ltd
KB - HSE Ltd
Kemo Ltd
Kent and Medway Economic Partnership (KMEP) and Kent and Medway Business Advisory Board (joint response)
Kent Countryside Access Forum
Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce
Kent Laptops Ltd
Kent Wildlife Trust
Kent Window Films
KnightOwl Transport Ltd
Kumpania Consulting
LA21
Land Securities
LandSec as Manager and co-owner of Bluewater Shopping Centre
Laslett International Ltd
Lawtax Ltd
Legend Roofing
Len Worrel Marketing
Licensed Private Hire Car Association
Liftec Lifts
Liquid Computing Ltd



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Livett Group
Lloyd-Deer & Noble
Lloyds Mastics Ltd
London Chamber of Commerce and Industry
London Cycling Campaign (Havering)
London Distribution Park
London First
London Heating Solutions Ltd
London Stansted Cambridge Consortium
Lone Wolf Sales Ltd
Loyalty Engineering Ltd
Luna Textiles
LynchBuchanan
M R Services Essex Ltd
M Scott Properties Ltd
M&E Solutions (Fire & Maintenance) Ltd
Madstone Ltd
MagneCorp Marketing & Events Ltd
Mark Scott Arenas Ltd
McNealy Brown Ltd
Medway Labour Group
Meopham Parish Council
Mercury R V
Metals Direct & Fine City Fasteners
Metrotidal Ltd
MGN Builders Merchants
Michael James Price Ltd
Micro Electronic Services Ltd
Micronizing Company UK Ltd
Midland Fixings Ltd
Millwood Designer Homes Ltd
Minster-on-Sea Parish Council
M J Anderson Maintenance Contractors Ltd
MJF Rrcords Management
MMK Solutions Ltd
Moat
Morston Ltd
Moss Electrical Co Ltd
Motorcycle Action Group
Mundo Freelance Ltd
My Cave Ltd
N M Holland
National Alliance Against Tolls
National Gearboxes Ltd
National Transport Forum
Navigator Terminals Ltd



Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation: Summary of consultation responses

Neale & Sons
New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)
NFU
Nightingale Motorcycles
NJA Audio
North Cambs Development Ltd
North Management Services
Northbourne CEP School
Offham Parish Council
Old Ferry Wharf Ltd
Old Oak Training Ltd
Openfield Agriculture Ltd
Opportunity South Essex
Orsett community forum
Orsett Fen Right Holders
Orsett Show and Orsett Showground Ltd
Orsett Village Conservation Group
P&J Light Haulage
P&O Ferries
P.M.Wilkins
Page & Sons
Paicint LLP
Parochial Church Council Chalk
Paul Vonberg Architects
PBL
PBM Computer Services Ltd
PDRS Ltd
Penshurst Place & Gardens
Persimmon Homes Essex
Pestproof Ltd
Peter Baxter Associates Ltd
Peter Wormald Safety Services
Pieter Smit Group
Pineview Plants
Pinto Enterprises Ltd
PJ Associates
Plastic Project Solutions Ltd
Plextek Ltd
PM Power Engineering Ltd
Port of Dover
PPPC Ltd
Prill Porsche Classics
Principal Colour Ltd
Project Plant
Proudfoot Properties
Pure Storage



Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation: Summary of consultation responses

QPATH Ltd
R&P ARC Ltd
R.G. Scott Furniture Mart
R.J. Cutting Agricultural Contractor
Rainbow International
Rawley Plant Ltd
RDJ Ltd
Readie Construction Ltd
Ready Metal Ltd
Red N White Vans Ltd
RED Services Ltd
Refiner's House Ministries
Render & Insulation Supplies Eastern Ltd
Reside Developments Ltd
Revera
Rhino Waste Services Ltd
RN Electronics Ltd
Road Haulage Association Ltd
Rooff Ltd
Rochester Bridge Trust
Rory J Holbrook Ltd
Rotary Club of Barking
Route One Distribution
Rowsell Partnership
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
RPH Hire services
Rundle & Dorey Ltd
Ruskins Trees & Landscapes Ltd
Ryan property Group
S Hicks Ltd
S P Heating
S Walsh & Son Ltd
Salvage Wire Ltd
SATL Ltd
Save Manston Airport association
SB Projects
Scalers Hill Livery Stables
Scot Bennett Engineering Ltd
Scotland & Bates Ltd
Scotline
Sculpture Grain Ltd
SD Applications Solutions Ltd
SG19 Road Safety Group
Seahawk Marine Foods Ltd
Sedona Civils Ltd
SEGRO PLC



Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation: Summary of consultation responses

Sekisui Diagnostics (UK) Ltd
Sense with Roads
SERVIMED - NAUTIC
Seventyholds Ltd
Simply Courteous Ltd
Siri Guru Nanak Darbar Gurdwara
Smart-tech Kent Ltd
Solus Accident Repair Centre
South East Essex Friends of the Earth
South East Local Enterprise Partnership
Southern Water
Speed Tapers UK Ltd
Sport England
Sports Direct
SSI Ltd
St Catherine's Church, East Tilbury
St Mary's Church, Thorpe
St Modwen Developments Ltd
St. Margaret's Church
Stanbridge Ltd
Stephenson Automation Ltd
Stockvale Ltd
Stuart Well Services Ltd
Stylographics Ltd
Suckling Services Ltd
Suffolk Chamber of Commerce Transport and Infrastructure Board
Suffolk Growth Programme Board
Sun Plastics Ltd
Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council
Swanscombe Development LLP
T J Hire Ltd
T V Technologies Ltd
T W PLANT
Tangney Tours
Tarmac
TCS
Tek Interiors Ltd
Tending Pool and Spa Ltd
Terry Taylor Plumbing Heating
TFC Group LLP
Thames and Medway Canal Association
Thames Chase Trust
Thames Crossing Action Group
Thames Enterprise Park
Thames Gateway Kent Partnership
Thames Industrial Estate and One Big Data Management (joint response)



Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation: Summary of consultation responses

Thames Medway Canal Association TMCA
Thames Rugby Club
The Chauffeur Service
The Dover Society
The Escalator Company
The Essential Housewares Co Ltd
The Haven Gateway Partnership
The National Trust
The Nook Pet Hotel
The Parish Church of St Mary Magdalene
The Redeemed Christian Church of God VICTORIOUS (Family Parish)
The SUS Group
Thurrock Business Board
Thurrock Council Conservative Group
Thurrock District Scout Council
Thurrock Local Access Forum
Tilbury Town Community
Tim Coombs Ltd
TJK Repairs
Toilets plus
Tony's Removals
Top-Man Access & Handling
Toucan Energy
Track 7 Couriers Ltd
Training Depot Day Nursery
Transcity Exhibitions Ltd
Transport East
Trax UK Ltd
TRAXROM SRL
Triple T Services
Turner Burke Ltd
University of Kent
Upminster and Cranham Residents' Association
UPS
Urquhart Associates (Health and Safety Consultants)
Versant Construction Ltd
Versacare Ltd
Viking Recruitment
Vintage Financial Solutions Ltd
VoyageAir Green Ltd
W. Alexander (Shoreham) Ltd
Walkers Taxis
Watercress Farm CL
Welcocks Skips Ltd
West & East Tilbury & Linford Community Forum
West Horndon Parish Council

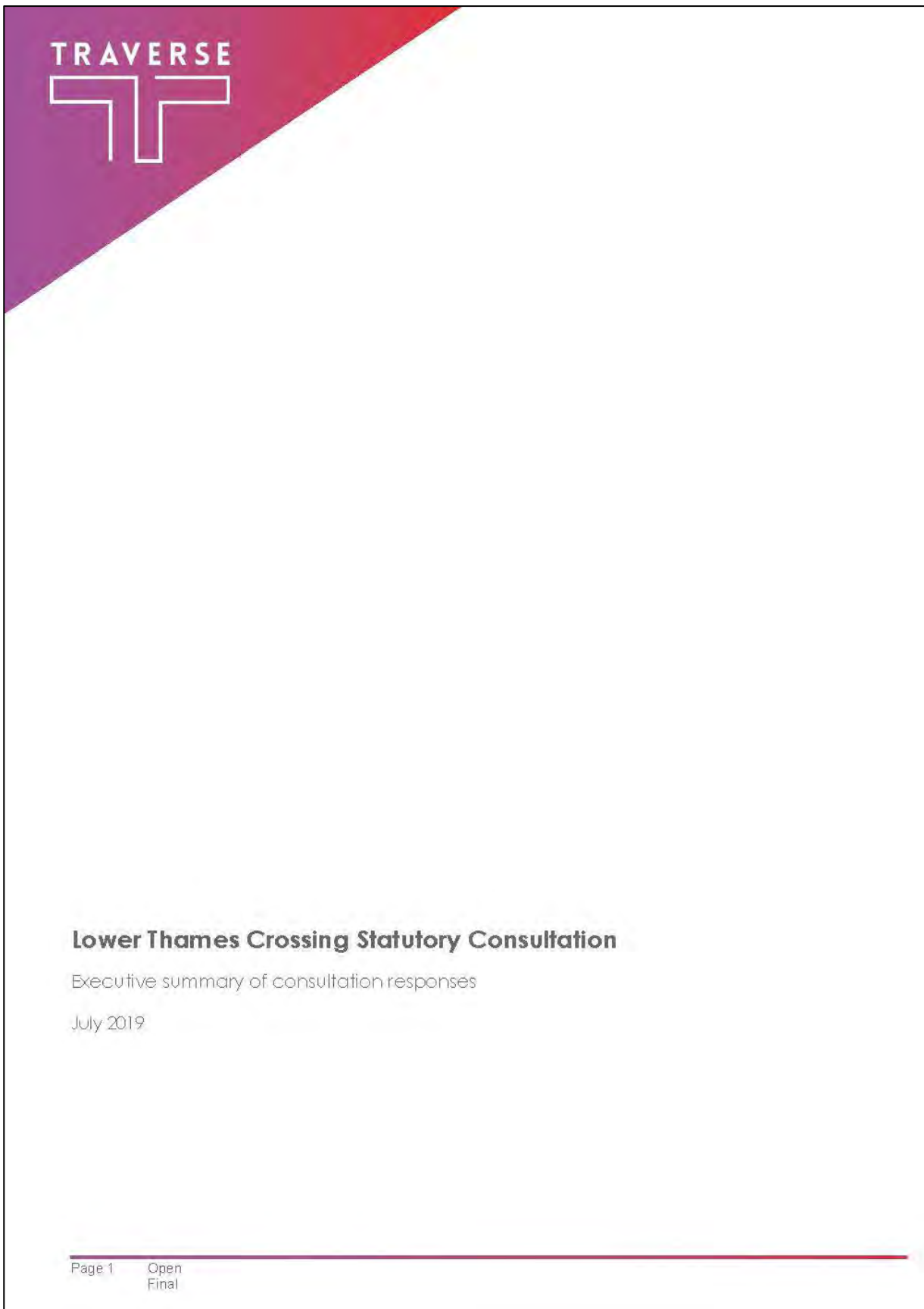


Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation: Summary of consultation responses

West Riding Automobile Company Ltd
Westport Project Consultants Ltd
WGK Services
Wightman and Parrish Ltd
Willow Garden Day Nursery
Woodland Trust
Wright Outcomes Ltd
Wynns Ltd
XPCamper Europe Ltd
Yalding Parish Council
YHPM Ltd
ZOOM Ltd
Zummo Southern Ltd



Plate U.2 Executive summary report of responses to Statutory Consultation





Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation: Executive summary

Introduction

Following the Secretary of State for Transport's announcement in April 2017 of the preferred route for the Lower Thames Crossing (LTC), Highways England carried out a statutory consultation from 10 October 2018 to 20 December 2018. This consultation gave members of the public, prescribed bodies, including local authorities, businesses, organisations, and people with an interest in land (PILs) the opportunity to comment on an updated set of proposals for the preferred route.

The consultation received 28,493 responses, including 2,117 campaign responses and responses from 55 prescribed consultees. Responses were submitted in several formats, including 25,210 online responses, 945 feedback forms (both by email and via the post) and 221 free-text letters and emails.

The consultation questionnaire contained questions spanning 13 key topics as well as an option for respondents to provide general feedback. Traverse, an independent company specialising in public consultations, was commissioned to receive, analyse and report on the responses. Where comments were made in response to the general question or via emails and letters, these comments were coded based on the issues they raised and are included in the relevant sections of this report.

The purpose of this report is to provide a factual summary of responses received during the statutory consultation, including a statistical breakdown of responses to closed questions.

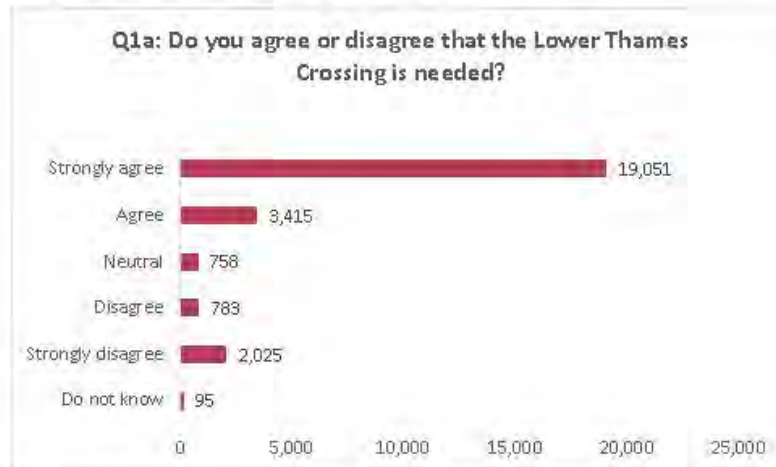
A full consultation report – providing detailed information about the consultation process, the issues raised, and setting out Highways England's responses to the issues raised – will be published as part of Highways England's application to the Planning Inspectorate for a Development Consent Order.



Need case

Q1a asks: "Do you agree or disagree that the Lower Thames Crossing is needed?"

Chart 1: Views on the need case (number of respondents: 26,127)



Open-text comments

In addition, 24,306 respondents discussed the need case for the Lower Thames Crossing as part of their feedback.

Those who **support** the need case for the LTC typically refer to present levels of congestion at the Dartford Crossing or on the M25 and the need to alleviate this. These respondents frequently highlight the amount of time spent in traffic and the financial cost and health impacts associated with heavy congestion. Other prominent themes include the potential for reduced journey times between Kent and Thurrock and Essex or enhancements to the resilience of the local road network. Of the respondents who support the need case, some suggest that the potential transport improvements would deliver wide-ranging benefits such as an economic boost, improved air quality (as fewer vehicles would be stationary) and increased wellbeing for both drivers and local residents.

In contrast, those who are **opposed** to the need case often say that it would not improve the current traffic situation and could even make it worse by attracting more cars onto the roads. Many respondents are concerned that the increase in traffic would disrupt local communities and worsen air quality. Other concerns relate to the ownership of the new crossing or the way in which it would be financed, with some doubting that it would represent good value for money.

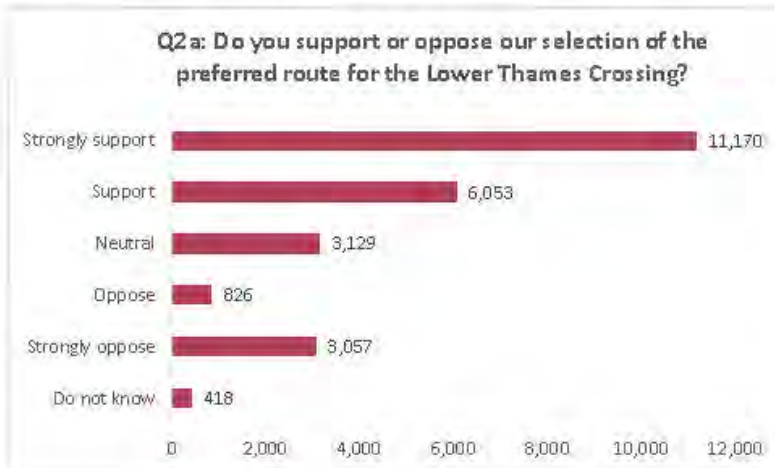
Many respondents offer suggestions about how congestion levels could be improved without the need for the LTC. Some of the most popular **alternatives** to a new crossing would be increased investment in public transport, particularly rail links, and efforts to reduce the volume of traffic on the roads. To this end, some respondents suggest measures to limit the number of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) using the roads, such as moving freight by rail, river or sea to a port nearer to its destination. Other frequently raised suggestions include improving the existing Dartford Crossing or road network.



Route selection

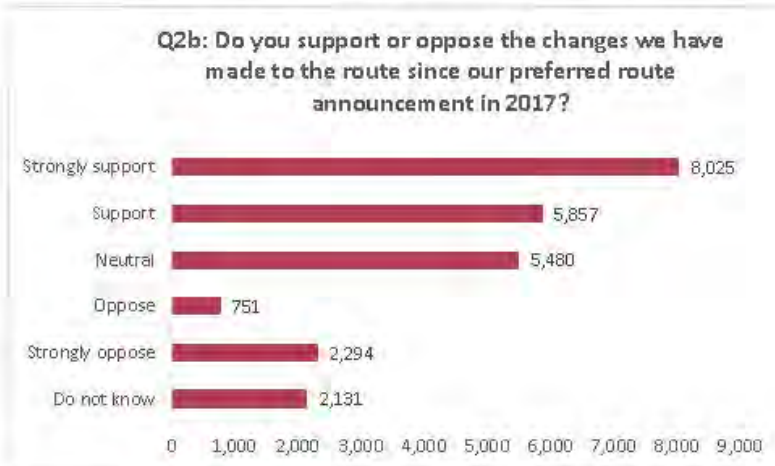
Q2a asks: “Do you support or oppose our selection of the preferred route for the Lower Thames Crossing?”

Chart 2: Views on the route selection (number of respondents: 24,653)



Q2b asks: “Do you support or oppose the changes we have made to the route since our preferred route announcement in 2017?”

Chart 3: Views on the changes to the route (number of respondents: 24,538)



Open-text comments

In addition, 15,786 respondents discussed the selection of the preferred route and subsequent changes as part of their feedback. This section summarises comments made about the entire route.

Those who **support** the preferred route believe that it would alleviate traffic congestion and improve the resilience of the road network whilst reducing journey times and providing a more direct route between areas. Other reasons given for supporting the route selection broadly



Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation: Executive summary

reflect those given for supporting the need case, although some also comment positively on design features such as the number of lanes or on the process by which the preferred route was selected and the expertise of decision makers.

In contrast, those who are **opposed** to the preferred route say that it would not address the existing congestion problems either because they believe it is too close to the Dartford Crossing to offer a real alternative or because of concerns that it would attract more traffic onto the local network which, according to these respondents, is not equipped to deal with additional vehicles. Other reasons for opposing the preferred route broadly include a perceived lack of connectivity with the wider region, with some expressing concerns over access issues for local traffic. Changes to the design of the route, the overall decision-making process and the cost of the project also receive some negative comments.

Alternative locations, both east and west of the preferred route, are suggested by respondents. These often refer to options previously considered by the Department for Transport (DfT).

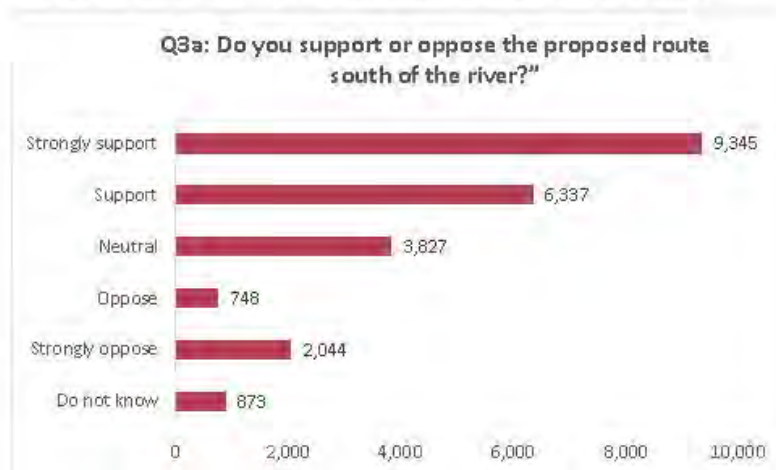


Sections of the route

South of the river in Kent

Q3a asks: “Do you support or oppose the proposed route south of the river?”

Chart 4: Views on the proposed route south of the river (number of respondents: 23,174)



Open-text comments

In addition, 8,909 respondents discussed the section south of the river as part of their feedback.

Those respondents who support the proposed route south of the river in Kent make similar arguments to those already summarised in the section on the preferred route. However, these are raised in relation to specific locations or areas in Kent, such as Gravesend, Chalk, Shorne or Higham, and roads like the A2, M2 and M20.

Some respondents who **support** the proposed route south of the river in Kent also believe that bridges and embankments are a necessary part of the design, sometimes commenting positively on the inclusion of green bridges in this section, whilst others believe the new route would reduce traffic on the A2 between the new junction and the Dartford Crossing and improve access to areas of Kent such as the Medway towns and the Channel Ports.

In contrast, those who are **opposed** to the proposed route south of the river in Kent often raise traffic concerns. These either focus on worries that additional traffic would be diverted to the already congested A2 or that the design would lead to bottlenecks as the existing road network has fewer lanes than the southern leg of the LTC. The potential impact on residential areas such as Riverview Park is also frequently highlighted, as is the perceived visual impact of bridges incorporated into the design of the proposed route south of the river in Kent. Other environmental concerns focus on how the project would affect designated sites such as Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Suggestions offered by respondents include adopting the previously considered Eastern Southern Link, upgrading the existing local road network south of the river, or making changes to the design of the road, including that the tunnel should be extended further.



The crossing

Q3c asks: "Please give us your comments on the tunnel, the north and the south tunnel entrances and any other feedback you have on this part of the preferred route."

10,688 respondents discussed the proposed crossing and tunnel entrances as part of their feedback.

Many of the respondents who **support** the crossing wish for the tunnel to be completed as soon as possible, citing the transport benefits which they feel a crossing would bring. Others support the design of the crossing, including the use of a tunnel rather than a bridge, the location of the tunnel entrances and the number of lanes.

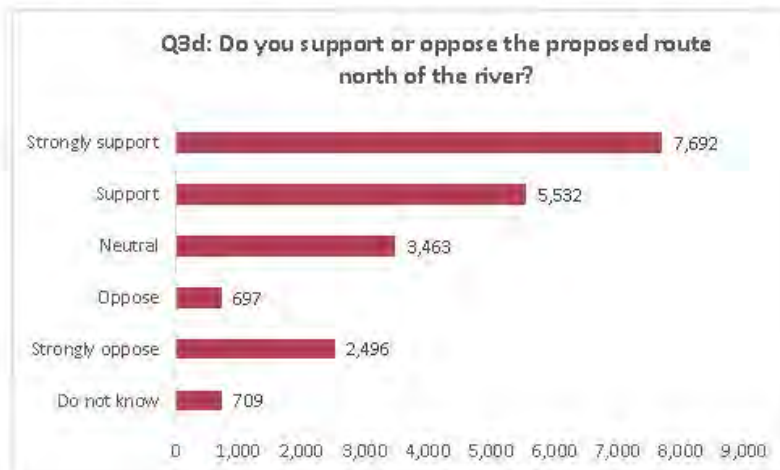
Those who are **opposed** to the crossing believe it would have an adverse impact on the environment, including on air quality, noise, wildlife and the green belt. They also express concern that a tunnel would lead to increased congestion with bottlenecks at the entrances, sometimes referencing delays at the tunnels at Dartford Crossing, and say that the number of lanes may not prove adequate to address future traffic volumes. Some criticise the location of the tunnel entrances, particularly the southern entrance, suggesting that it should be located further south. There are also concerns that HGVs would require an escort through the tunnel and this would hold up traffic.

The most common **suggestion** is that the tunnel must be future-proofed to handle future traffic volume. Related to this, respondents mainly refer to the need for more lanes, though others suggest that the tunnel should be longer, that more tunnels are needed or that the crossing should be a bridge instead.

North of the river in Thurrock, Essex and Havering

Q3d asks: "Do you support or oppose the proposed route north of river?"

Chart 5: Views on the proposed route north of the river (number of respondents: 20,589)





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Open-text comments

In addition, 8,680 respondents discussed the proposed route north of the river as part of their feedback.

Those respondents who **support** the proposed route north of the river in Thurrock, Essex and Havering make similar arguments to those already summarised in relation to route selection, at pages 4 and 5 of this report. However, these are raised in relation to specific locations or areas in Thurrock and Essex.

Some respondents who **support** the proposed route north of the river in Thurrock, Essex and Havering also believe that the design of structures such as bridges, viaducts and embankments north of the river appears sympathetic to the wider surroundings.

In contrast, those who are **opposed** say that the route would impact negatively on local communities in Thurrock, could cause a deterioration of already high levels of pollution, and could increase congestion on the A13 and in Orsett and Ockendon. Some also raise concerns about the height of the proposed Mardyke viaduct or suggest ways in which the design of the viaduct could be amended to reduce its impact.

Other **suggestions** include linking the LTC directly to the A12 or the M11, upgrading the existing local road network north of the river, or adopting one of the other routes put forward in the Lower Thames Crossing Route Consultation 2016.

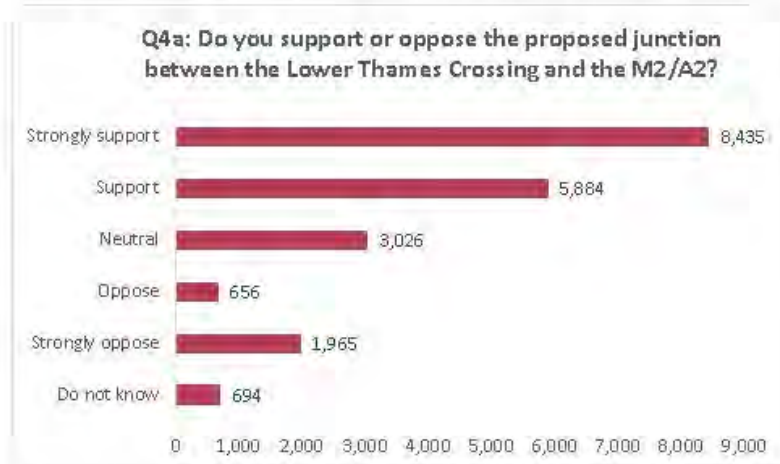


Connections

Southern connections

Q4 a asks: "Do you support or oppose the proposed junction between the Lower Thames Crossing and the M2/A2?"

Chart 6: Views on the proposed junction between LTC and the M2/A2 (number of respondents: 20,660)



Open-text comments

In addition, 9,883 respondents discussed the proposed junction between the Lower Thames Crossing and the M2/A2.

Many respondents **support** the location and layout of the proposed M2/A2 junction or say that it will help to reduce traffic at the Dartford Crossing by diverting traffic away from some sections of the A2.

In contrast, those who are **opposed** to the proposed junction say that insufficient consideration has been given to the potential impacts of the new road on the rest of the road network in Kent, including local roads, major roads such as the M2 and the M20, and trunk roads such as the A229. Some also raise access concerns either related to the removal of the A226 junction at Chalk, or to what they consider to be overly complicated design arrangements which could impede local traffic. The perceived negative impact on air quality, local communities and wildlife are also mentioned.

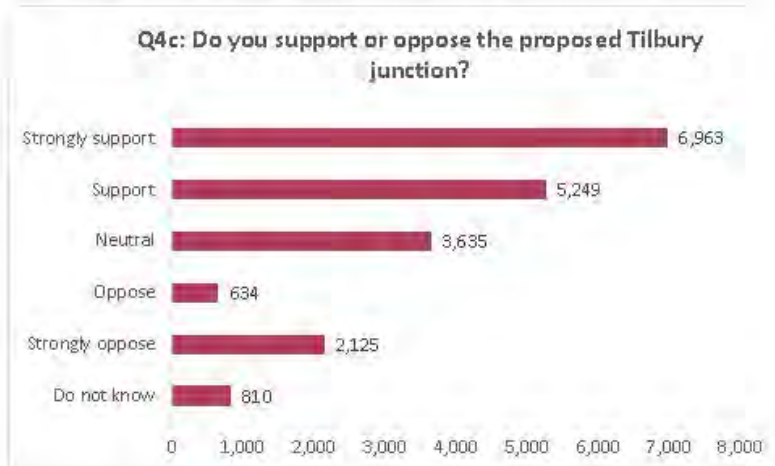
Suggestions put forward by respondents mainly focus on the need for additional connections with some specifically calling for the reinstatement of the 'C variant' link to the M20, which was explored in previous studies by Highways England. Others would like to see improvements to the existing road network, including the M2, A2, M20, A20 and the connecting roads between these routes. Changes to the design of the proposed M2/A2 junction are also recommended.



Northern connections

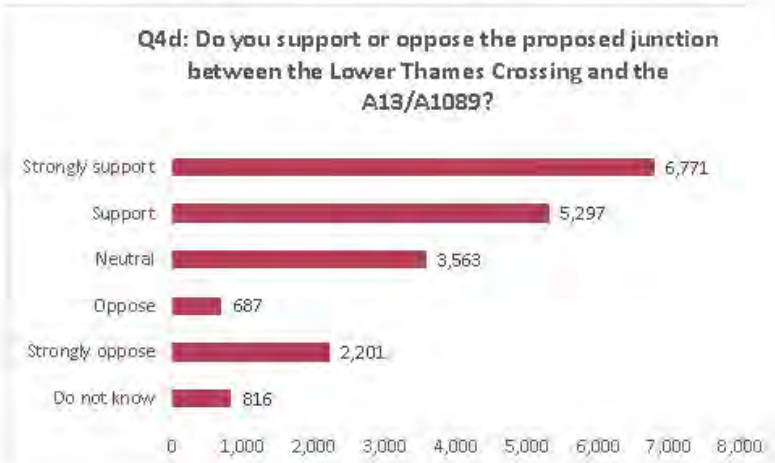
Q4c asks: "Do you support or oppose the proposed Tilbury junction?"

Chart 7: Views on the proposed Tilbury junction (number of respondents: 19,416)



Q4d asks: "Do you support or oppose the proposed junction between the Lower Thames Crossing and the A13/A1089?"

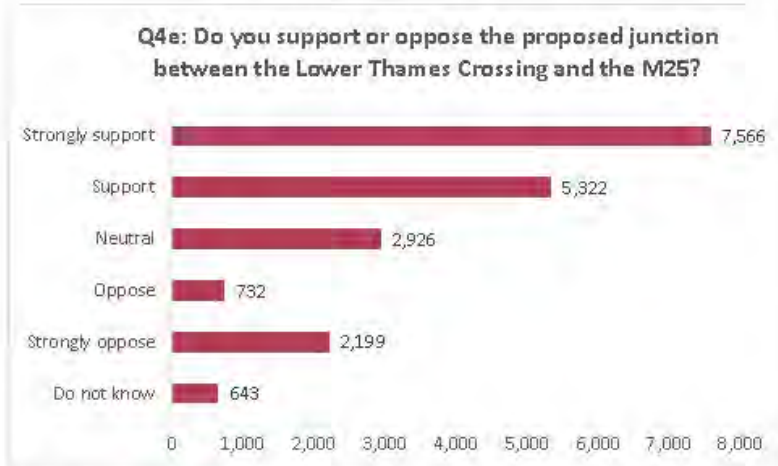
Chart 8: Views on the proposed junction between LTC and the A13/A1089 (number of respondents: 19,335)





Q4e asks: "Do you support or oppose the proposed junction between the Lower Thames Crossing and the M25?"

Chart 9: Views on the proposed junction between LTC and the M25 (number of respondents: 19,368)



Open-text comments

In addition, 9,014 respondents discussed the proposed northern connections as part of their feedback. Where respondents comment specifically on one of the proposed junctions, those comments are captured later in this chapter. However, most respondents comment on the proposed northern connections together and are not specific about which of the junctions their comments relate to.

Northern connections as a whole

Those who **support** the proposed northern connections in general terms say that any potential community impacts have been minimised and that the connections would promote smoother traffic flow, reduce air pollution and have a positive influence on the economy.

Those who are **opposed** say that the proposed northern connections would impact negatively on communities in Thurrock and cause a deterioration in air quality whilst worsening congestion by adding traffic to already busy local roads.

Tilbury junction

The focus of comments on the **Tilbury junction** is the lack of a link road or any kind of access to the local area. It is suggested that a link road is necessary to provide access to Tilbury port, which, respondents say, would stimulate local economic growth.

A13/A1089 junction

Supportive comments on the **A13/A1089 junction** suggest that it would provide access to one of the key arterial roads through South Essex, but a major concern is that the junction would generate extra traffic on the A13 and other busy local roads. Concerns are also raised in relation to potential environmental impacts and the access arrangements at the junction, with some respondents saying that a six-mile detour would be required to make certain journeys. Others suggest that the design of this junction should facilitate a smooth traffic flow.



LTC/M25 junction

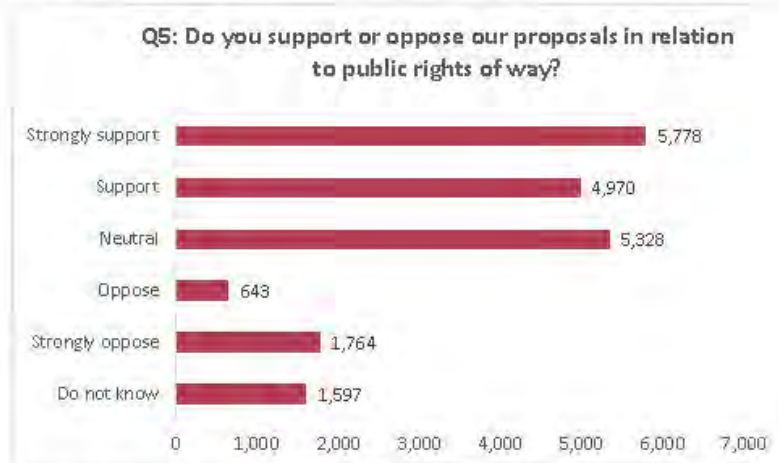
Many of the respondents who comment on the **junction between the LTC and the M25** say that it is important to provide access to the M25 but raise concerns about the impact the elevated sections of the junction would have on local communities in terms of increased noise and visual impacts. The potential impact on amenities such as Thames Chase Community Forest are also referenced. Similar concerns are raised in relation to **junction 29** of the M25. There are also suggestions that access to the A127 would be complicated or that traffic would be drawn onto this already busy road, although some argue that there should be direct access between the A127 and the LTC.



Walkers, cyclists and horse-riders

Q5 asks: "Do you support or oppose our proposals in relation to public rights of way?"

Chart 10: Views on the proposals in relation to public rights of way (number of respondents: 20,080)



Open-text comments

In addition, 10,533 respondents discussed the proposals in relation to public rights of way as part of their feedback. Even though the question only asks for feedback on the proposals in relation to public rights of way, many respondents also chose to comment on what should be the relationship of non-motorised users (walkers, cyclists and equestrians) with the LTC infrastructure.

Many respondents **support** the need to maintain or reinstate where possible lost public rights of way, highlighting their importance to local communities, and welcome Highways England's commitment to consider all users in the LTC proposals. In contrast, others **object** to any loss of public rights of way in general or raise concerns about specific public rights of way being affected. Some also say that the proposals for public rights of way and non-motorised users are not concrete enough and worry that they may not be implemented.

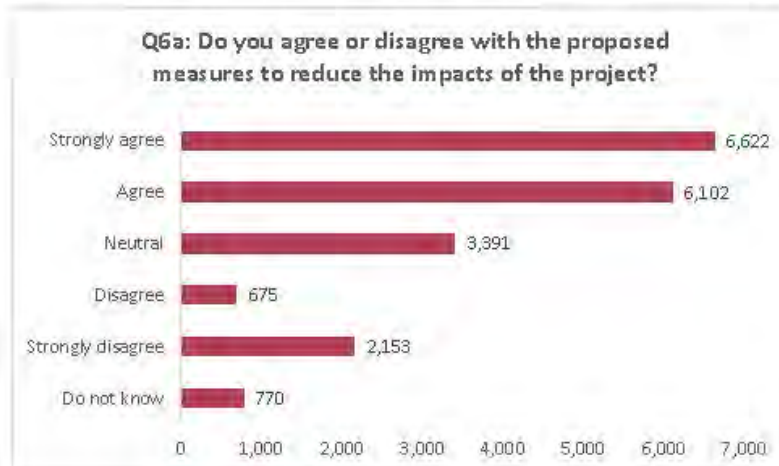
The most common **suggestion** is that there should be provisions made for non-motorised users to use the LTC tunnel in some way, including parallel routes or tunnels, or use of a shuttle service. However, other respondents expressly **oppose** the idea of non-motorised users being able to use the tunnel or the LTC in general, stressing that the need to relieve congestion must be prioritised.



Environment

Q6a asks: "Do you agree or disagree with the proposed measures to reduce the impacts of the project?"

Chart 11: Views on the proposed environmental measures (number of respondents: 19,713)



Open-text comments

In addition, 12,531 respondents discussed the environmental impacts and plans to reduce them as part of their feedback.

Many respondents do not engage with the proposed mitigation measures directly but express their belief that the environment should be a high priority or should be minimally impacted by the project.

Those who **support** the proposals related to the reduction of impacts on environment say that air quality in the area would be improved by better traffic flow. They also back proposals to protect biodiversity and the visual landscape, as well as to minimise noise pollution.

Those who are **opposed** to the proposals say that environmental considerations have not been given sufficient weight or they express concerns about specific impacts. These include potential detrimental impacts on air and noise quality, biodiversity, climate, community and the landscape. Some express concern about a perceived lack of concrete assurances in the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) and suggest that words like 'could' and 'should' are non-committal. A campaign organised by the Woodland Trust also raises concern over potential loss of ancient woodland.

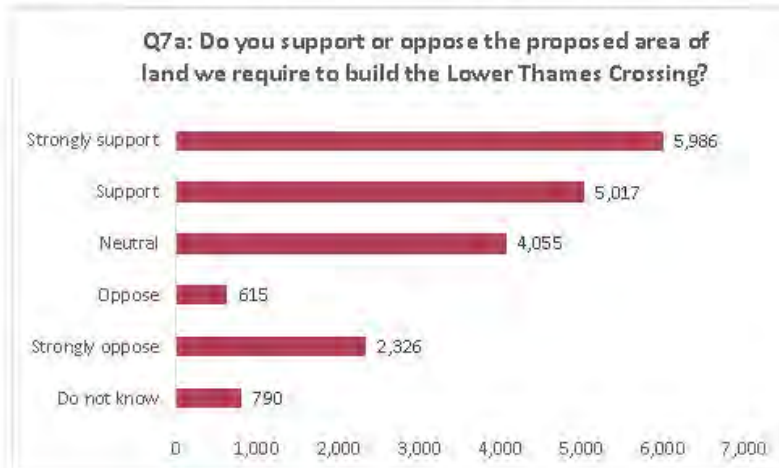
Frequent **suggestions** put forward by respondents include the creation of community facilities, tree planting and increasing the use of renewable energy as part of the LTC proposals. Other wide-ranging suggestions for reducing impacts on wildlife species are also presented.



Development boundary

Q7a asks: "Do you support or oppose the proposed area of land we require to build the Lower Thames Crossing?"

Chart 12: Views on the proposed development boundary (number of respondents: 18,789)



Open-text comments

In addition, 7,765 respondents discussed the proposed development boundary as part of their feedback.

Those who **support** the development boundary feel that it is necessary for the project to proceed and say that impacts on local communities and the environment have been minimised and the project may encourage regeneration of the area.

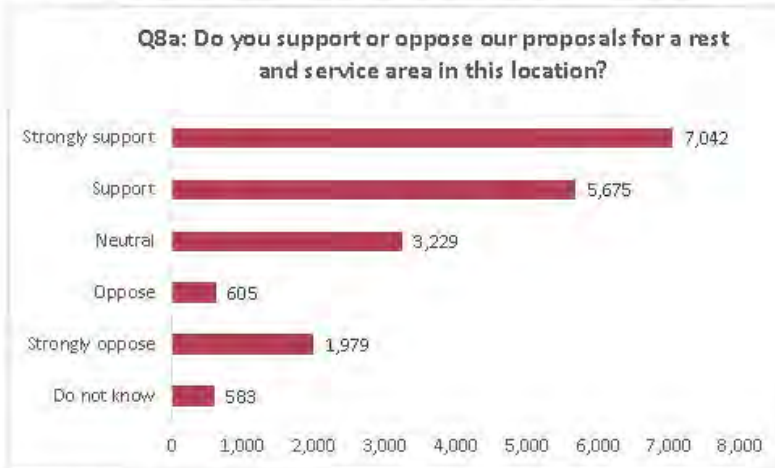
In contrast, those who **oppose** the development boundary express concern about the amount of land required or the number of homes that could be demolished and the impact this would have on local communities. There are also fears that the LTC would open up the area to further urbanisation. The decision-making process behind the proposed development boundary is also criticised, with respondents describing frequent changes to the boundary and other practices causing stress to residents. **Concerns** are also raised and **suggestions** made in relation to compulsory purchases and negotiations between Highways England and landowners.



Rest and service area and maintenance depot

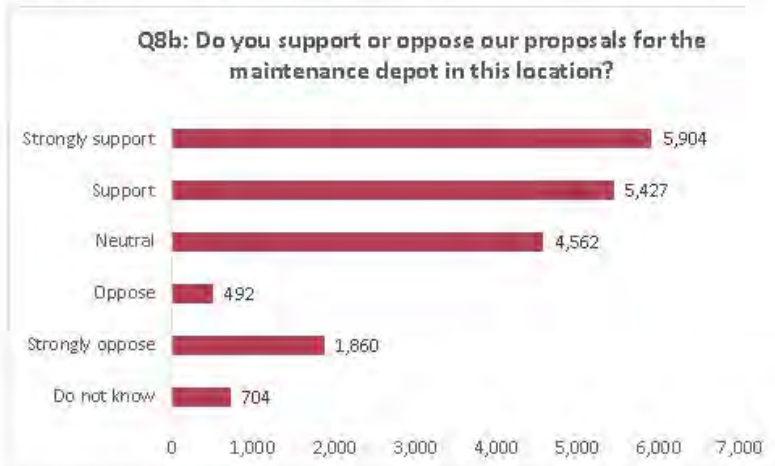
Q8a asks: "Do you support or oppose our proposals for a rest and service area in this location?"

Chart 13: Views on the proposed rest and service area (number of respondents: 19,113)



Q8b asks: "Do you support or oppose our proposals for the maintenance depot in this location?"

Chart 14: Views on the proposed maintenance depot (number of respondents: 18,949)



Open-text comments

In addition, 9,659 respondents discussed the proposals for a rest and service area and maintenance depot as part of their feedback. The majority of respondents comment on the rest and service area and maintenance depot together as one site or are not specific about which of these proposals their comments relate to.

Those respondents who **support** the proposed location of the rest and service area and maintenance depot often say that the existing Thurrock services are inadequate, that there is a general shortage of services in the area, and that there is a need for HGV parking facilities on



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the LTC. They also say that the maintenance depot needs to be located near the tunnel entrance. Additionally, some respondents feel that co-locating the sites would minimise the community impacts and that the service area would help to create jobs and regenerate the local area.

In contrast, others **oppose** the service area, saying there is **no need** for it and objecting to its location in East Tilbury or Thurrock more widely. They say that it would impact on the local community as it is too close to residential areas and argue that these areas have been treated unfairly.

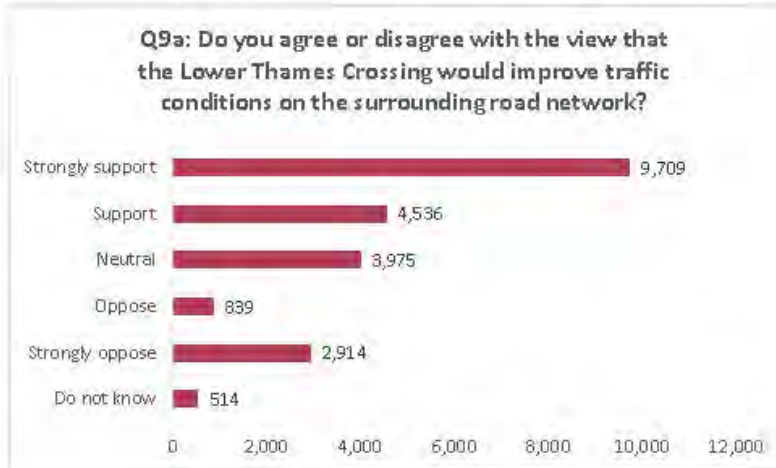
Suggestions put forward by respondents mainly focus on more HGV parking and facilities with green space and an outdoor area.



Traffic

Q9a asks: “Do you agree or disagree with the view that the Lower Thames Crossing would improve traffic conditions on the surrounding road network?”

Chart 15: Views on the impact LTC would have on traffic conditions (number of respondents: 22,487)



Open-text comments

In addition, 11,994 respondents discussed the forecast traffic improvements as part of their feedback.

Many of those respondents who feel that the LTC would improve traffic conditions **agree** with the forecasts that show congestion would ease and suggest that congestion around the Dartford Crossing in particular would be reduced.

In contrast, those who **disagree** with this notion challenge the accuracy of the forecasts, suggesting that they are unreliable or have failed to consider certain factors such as planned housing schemes and current traffic patterns. Others state that the LTC would not improve traffic, that any improvement would be temporary as extra capacity would be quickly filled, or that the LTC would worsen traffic conditions by attracting more cars onto the roads.

The most common **suggestion** put forward by respondents is that there is a need to future-proof designs by increasing the number of lanes and upgrading existing roads to support increased traffic flow, particularly the A229 at Blue Bell Hill. HGVs are also considered to be a major contributing factor in congestion and respondents offer suggestions for how they can be better managed.



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Charges

Question 10 asks: “Please give us your views on our proposed approach to charging users of the crossing.”

In total, 19,144 respondents discussed the proposed approach to charging users of the LTC.

A number of respondents who **support** the approach to charging back a variable charging model, particularly in relation to peak and off-peak charges, but also for emissions-based or vehicle-based variance because they feel that this would better regulate the traffic flow and deliver some environmental benefits. Some also support free-flow e-charging to keep traffic moving and reduce delays. Other respondents see charging as necessary to meet the costs of the project.

In contrast, the majority of respondents **object** to the proposed approach to charging because they feel that the LTC should be free to use, with many referring to their experience at the Dartford Crossing in support of their views. Other objections focus on an emissions-based charging model because of concerns that it would discourage use of the new crossing or punish those drivers who cannot afford to upgrade their vehicles. There are also some concerns that a free-flow e-charging system would be less effective than toll booths for preventing non-payment.

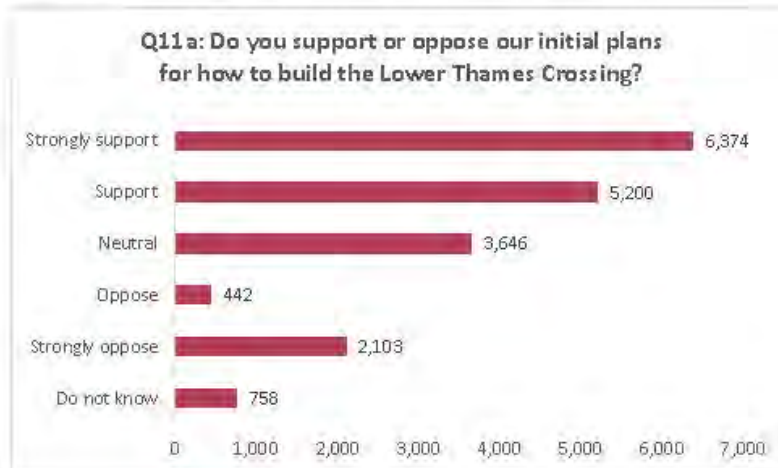
Many **suggestions** are put forward by respondents both in terms of the actual rate and the wider mechanisms and practices for charging. To ensure that the new crossing would be used, respondents call for the charge to be affordable, with some stressing that it should be the same or lower than that at the Dartford Crossing. Others ask for reimbursement of drivers in the event of significant delays as well as measures to ensure that overseas vehicles do not avoid payment.



Building the LTC

Q11 a asks: “Do you support or oppose our initial plans for how to build the Lower Thames Crossing?”

Chart 16: Views on building the LTC (number of respondents: 18,523)



Open-text comments

In addition, 6,706 respondents discussed the proposed approach to building the LTC as part of their feedback.

Those who **support** the proposed approach to building the LTC acknowledge that some disruption during construction is inevitable, but that they are pleased with the proposed mitigation measures, with some adding that this is a matter best left to experts. These respondents stress the importance of completing the build on time or even faster to minimise any disruption.

Those who are **opposed** to the approach raise concerns about the length of the construction process or the possibility of the project over-running and suggest that the build would impact negatively on local communities and the environment.

Many respondents **suggest** that local companies and workforce should be contracted to build the LTC to maximise the local benefits of the project.



Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation: Executive summary

Utilities and pylons

Question 12 asks: “Please let us know any views you have on the proposed changes to utilities infrastructure.”

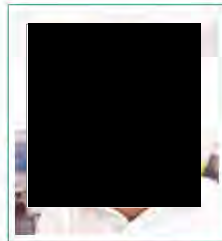
In total, 6,463 respondents discussed the proposed changes to utilities infrastructure.

Those who **support** the proposed utilities changes feel they are necessary for the project to proceed but seek assurances that disruption to utilities is kept to a minimum and that consideration is given to the local landscape.

Those who are **opposed** raise concerns over supply disruptions, environmental impacts, pylons near residential areas, as well as the cost of the proposals. The most popular **suggestion** is that the electricity lines should be placed underground to minimise their visual impact.

Plate U.3 Lower Thames Crossing Project Update





Director CIP, Chris Taylor.

Foreword

Welcome to the Lower Thames Crossing consultation update

At the end of 2018 we held the most comprehensive consultation Highways England has ever undertaken and we received a record breaking response with around 15,000 people attending our 60 events and almost 29,000 people sharing their views on our proposals. I would like to thank everyone who took part.

Since the consultation we have been reviewing all of the feedback and our commitment to you is to consider each and every response we received and to use that feedback as we continue to develop our proposals ahead of submitting our Development Consent Order (DCO) application.

We received a record breaking response with around 15,000 people attending our 60 events and almost 29,000 people sharing their views

We will publish a full consultation report as part of our DCO application, however to keep you updated on progress we are now issuing an interim update on the key themes we heard during the consultation. This update sets out levels of support for and opposition to our proposals and some of the suggestions made as to how we can improve the design of the Lower Thames Crossing.

There is significant support for our proposals with more than 80% of respondents supporting the need for a new crossing and 70% supporting the location, however we recognise that there are a number of areas of concern. Our work now is focused on continuing to improve our proposals. It is vital we get all aspects of the design, construction and operation right to minimise the impacts and maximise the benefits.

The level of detail in the feedback we received through our consultation and our comprehensive programme of ground investigations means we want to take additional time to improve our proposals and to develop our DCO application.

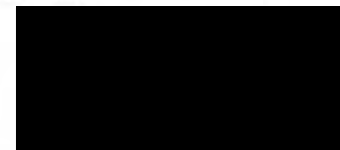
We now intend to submit our DCO application in summer 2020. This does not impact on our overall programme and we are on target to open the Lower Thames Crossing in 2027 as we have further developed our approach to construction to schedule work concurrently and reduce the overall time required for construction.

Ahead of submitting our DCO application in summer 2020 we will continue to review the feedback we received during last year's consultation and consider it as we develop the design of the route. We will share design updates with stakeholders and communities and we may need to consult further on proposed changes. We will of course keep communities, customers and stakeholders updated as our plans progress. We may also choose to consult further on proposed changes to the project as it develops.

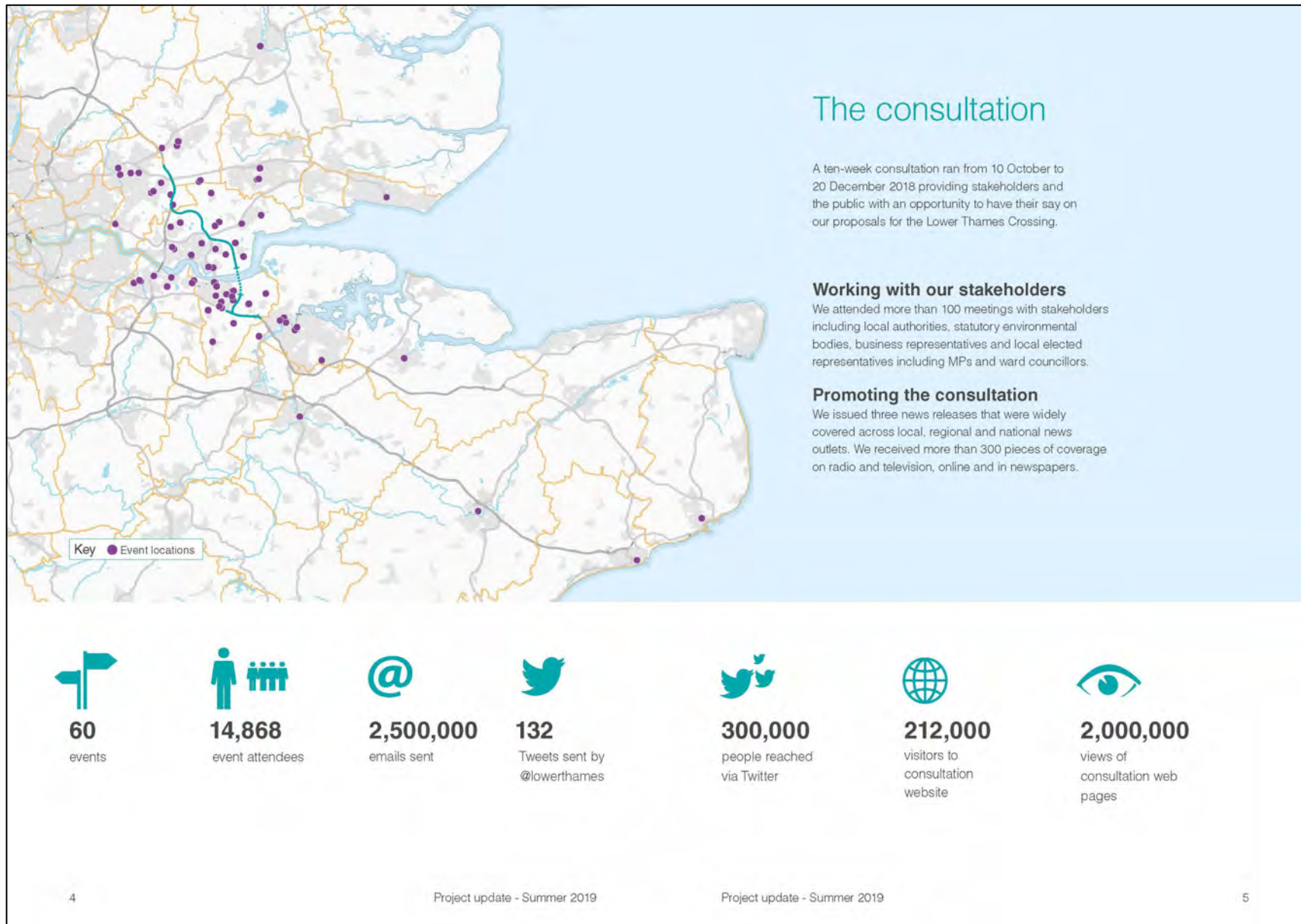
Please visit our website www.lowerthamescrossing.co.uk to sign up to our email updates or follow us on Twitter @lowerthames to keep up to date.

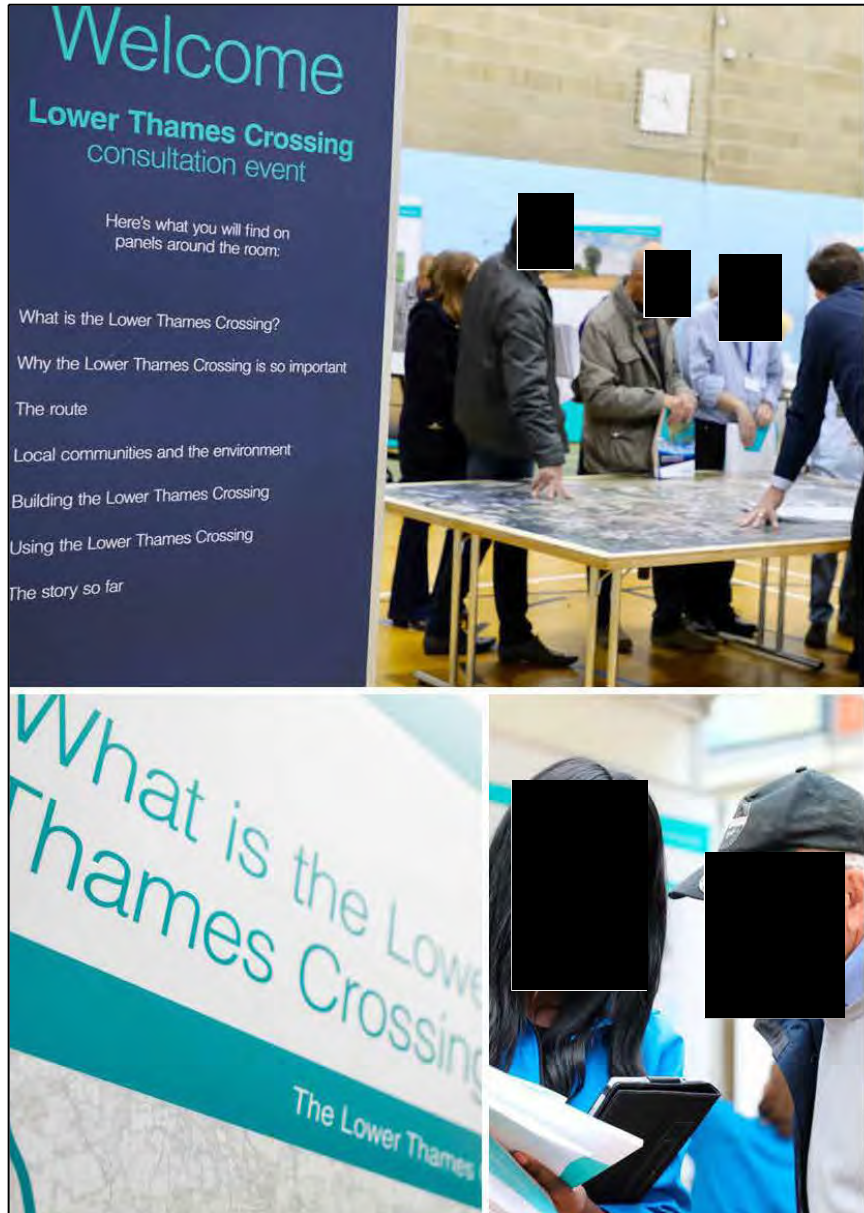
Thank you again for your continued interest in the Lower Thames Crossing.

It is vital we get all aspects of the design, construction and operation right to minimise the impacts and maximise the benefits



Chris Taylor
Director, Complex Infrastructure Programme
Highways England





Your responses

28,493

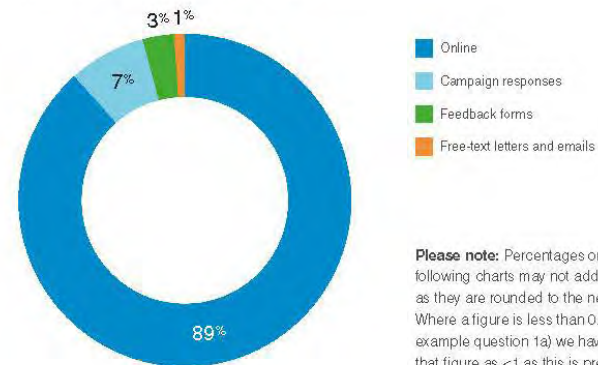
responses received.

This is a record for a consultation of its type. The consultation responses were received and analysed by Traverse, an independent company specialising in public consultations.

To view Traverse's Executive Summary of the issues raised during the consultation please visit www.lowerthamescrossing.co.uk. The full statutory consultation report providing detailed information about the consultation process, the issues raised and our responses to them will be published as part of our Development Consent Order application.

The following pages provide a summary of the responses received during the consultation.

How we received the responses



Please note: Percentages on this and following charts may not add up to 100%, as they are rounded to the nearest percent. Where a figure is less than 0.5% (For example question 1a) we have displayed that figure as <1 as this is preferable to 0%.

Project update - Summer 2019

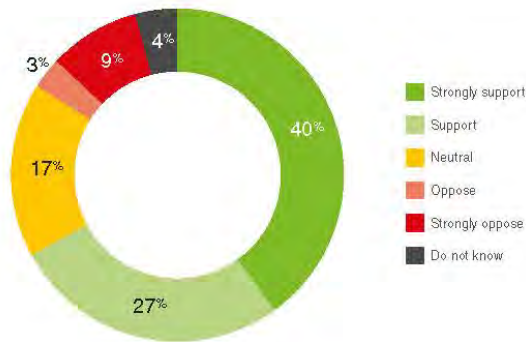
7



Sections of the route

South of the river in Kent

3a. Do you support or oppose the proposed route south of the river?



Highlighted comments

Support

Supporters of this section make similar arguments to those who support the location of the preferred route. Bridges and embankments are a necessary part of the design and the inclusion of green bridges is a good thing.

Opposed

Concerned about traffic and the impact on the existing road network and the already congested A2. Impact on residential areas and the visual impact of bridges. Impact on designated sites such as Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Suggestions

Go back to the previously considered Eastern Southern Link, upgrade the existing local road network or make changes to the design such as making the tunnel longer.

The crossing

3c. Please give us your comments on the tunnel, the north and the south tunnel entrances and any other feedback you have on this part of the preferred route.



Highlighted comments

Support

Want the tunnel built as soon as possible. Support the use of a tunnel rather than a bridge, the number of lanes and the location of the tunnel entrances.

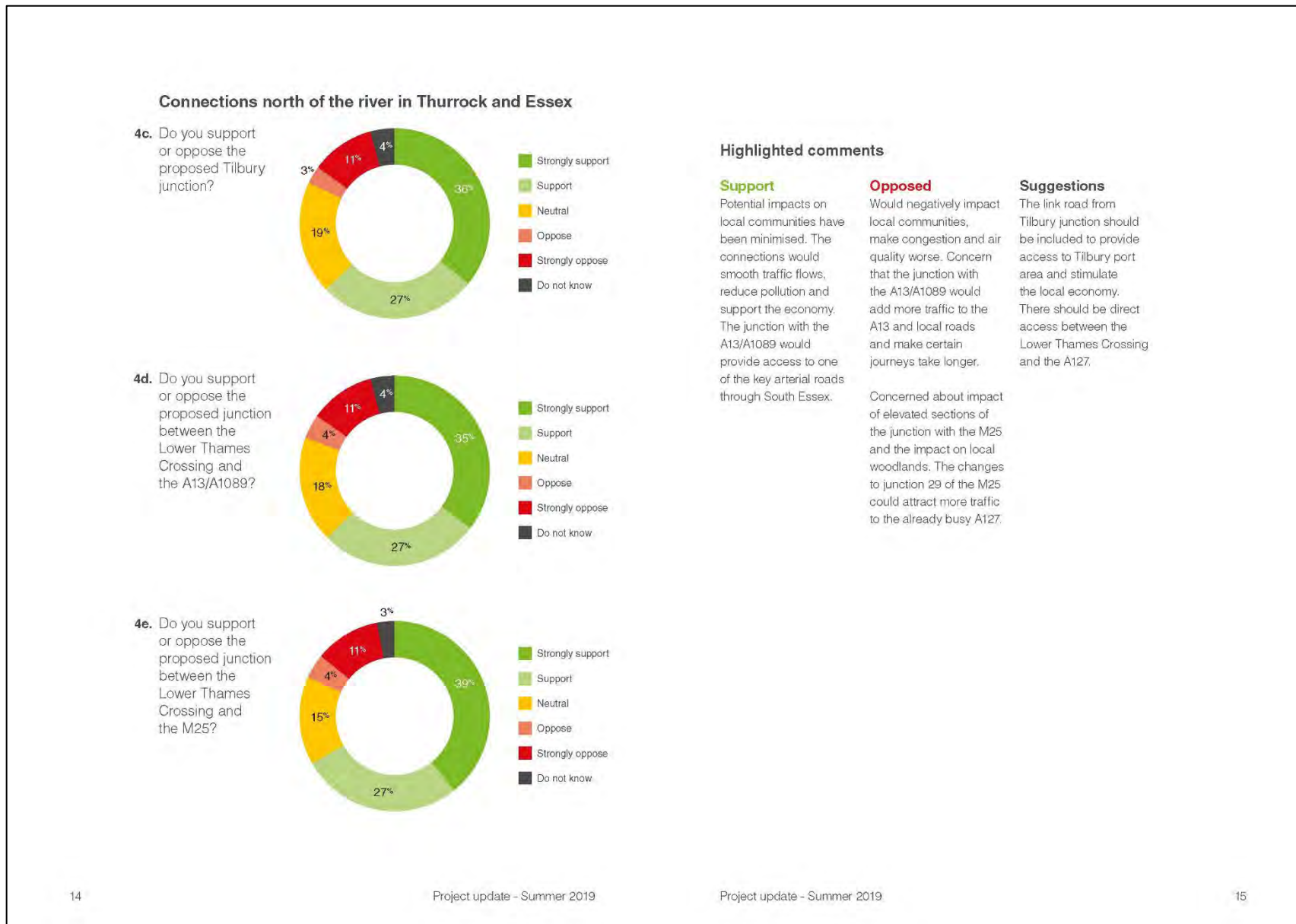
Opposed

It would have a negative impact on air quality, noise, wildlife and the green belt. There may not be enough lanes to meet future traffic demand and concerned that HGVs using the tunnel could hold up traffic like at the existing crossing.

Suggestions

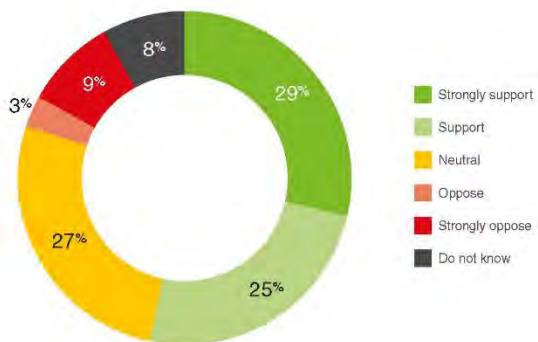
The tunnel must be future-proofed to cope with increasing traffic volumes. It should have more lanes, be longer, there should be more tunnels or it should be a bridge instead.





Walkers, cyclists and horse-riders

5. Do you support or oppose our proposals in relation to public rights of way?



Highlighted comments

Support

Public rights of way should be maintained or reinstated.

Opposed

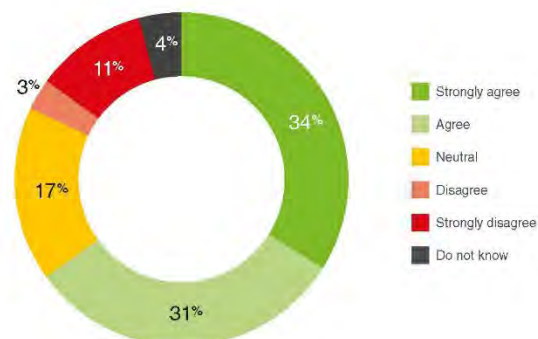
Object to any loss of public rights of way and commitments to these and non-motorised users are not strong enough. Easing congestion must be prioritised over allowing non-motorised users to use the crossing.

Suggestions

Non-motorised users should be able to use the tunnel in some way such as on a parallel route or tunnel or via a shuttle service.

Environmental impacts

6a. Do you agree or disagree with the proposed measures to reduce the impacts of the project?



Highlighted comments

Support

Air quality would improve with better traffic flow. Biodiversity and the visual landscape should be protected and noise pollution minimised.

Opposed

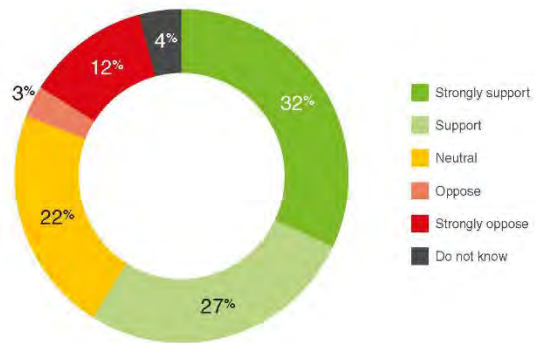
Environmental considerations have not been given sufficient weight including air and noise quality, biodiversity, climate, community and the landscape. A campaign organised by stakeholders raised concern over potential loss of ancient woodland.

Suggestions

Tree planting, using renewable energy and creating community facilities. Various ways to reduce the impact on wildlife species.

Development boundary

7a. Do you support or oppose the proposed area of land we require to build the Lower Thames Crossing?



Highlighted comments

Support

The land is needed and impact on the local community and environment has been minimised.

Opposed

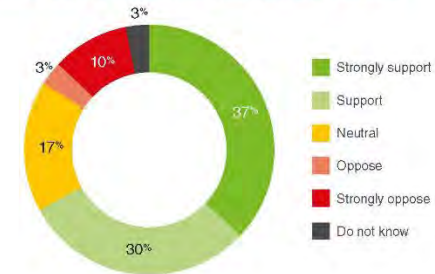
Concerned about how much land is needed, how many homes could be demolished and how this would affect local communities. Risk that the project would lead to further urbanisation of the local area.

Suggestions

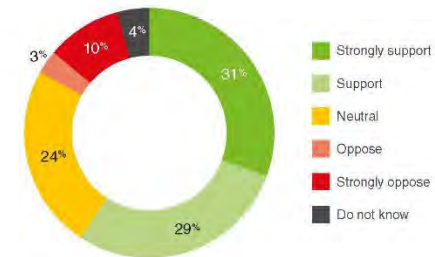
Suggestions related to specific properties and negotiations between Highways England and landowners.

Rest and service area and maintenance depot

8a. Do you support or oppose our proposals for a rest and service area in this location?



8b. Do you support or oppose our proposals for the maintenance depot in this location?



Highlighted comments

Support

Existing services are in short supply and inadequate. Parking for HGVs on the route is needed. The service area would create local jobs and regenerate the local area.

Opposed

It is not needed and should not be at the proposed location. It is too close to residential areas.

Suggestions

More HGV parking should be provided along with green space and an outdoor area.

Traffic

9a. Do you agree or disagree with the view that the Lower Thames Crossing would improve traffic conditions on the surrounding road network?

Response	Percentage
Strongly agree	43%
Agree	20%
Neutral	18%
Disagree	4%
Strongly disagree	13%
Do not know	2%

Highlighted comments

<p>Support Traffic forecasts show congestion would reduce, particularly at the Dartford Crossing.</p>	<p>Opposed Forecasts are unreliable or fail to consider things like planned housing schemes and current traffic patterns. The new crossing would not improve traffic. Improvement would be temporary as extra capacity would be quickly filled or it would make traffic worse by attracting more cars onto the roads.</p>	<p>Suggestions The route should be future-proofed by increasing the number of lanes and improving existing roads like the A229 at Blue Bell Hill. Various suggestions were put forward for how HGVs could be better managed.</p>
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Project update - Summer 2019

Charges for using the crossing

10. Please give us your views on our proposed approach to charging users of the crossing.

Highlighted comments

<p>Support The traffic flow would be better regulated if a variable charging model was used. Free-flow e-charging could keep traffic moving and reduce delays. Charging is necessary to pay for the project and manage traffic demand.</p>	<p>Opposed The crossing should be free to use. An emissions-based charging model would stop people from using the crossing or might punish those who can't afford a new car. Toll booths could be better than a free-flow e-charging system for preventing non-payment.</p>	<p>Suggestions The charge should be affordable and could be the same or lower than the charge at the Dartford Crossing. Measures should be put in place to make sure overseas drivers pay the charge. Local discounts should be considered.</p>
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Project update - Summer 2019


Building the crossing

11a. Do you support or oppose our initial plans for how to build the Lower Thames Crossing?

Response	Percentage
Strongly agree	34%
Agree	28%
Neutral	20%
Disagree	11%
Strongly disagree	4%
Do not know	2%

Highlighted comments

<p>Support Some disruption is inevitable but the proposed mitigation measures are welcomed. The building works should be done on time or faster to minimise disruption.</p>	<p>Opposed Building the crossing will negatively impact local communities and the environment. Concerned about how long the crossing will take to build and if the project will be built.</p>	<p>Suggestions Local companies and workers should be employed to build the crossing, benefitting the local community.</p>
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Utilities and pylons

12. Please let us know any views you have on the proposed changes to utilities infrastructure.

Highlighted comments

<p>Support The changes are needed for the project but should be done in the least disruptive way.</p>	<p>Opposed Concerned about disruption to supply, pylons being located close to homes and the cost of the proposals.</p>	<p>Suggestions Electricity lines should be placed underground to minimise the visual impact.</p>
--	--	---

Other comments

13. We would like to know what is important to you. Please let us know if you have any other comments about the Lower Thames Crossing.

The responses to this question have been summarised in the relevant sections of this update. For example, comments about the general need for the Lower Thames Crossing have been included with the responses to question 1a The need for a new crossing.

22

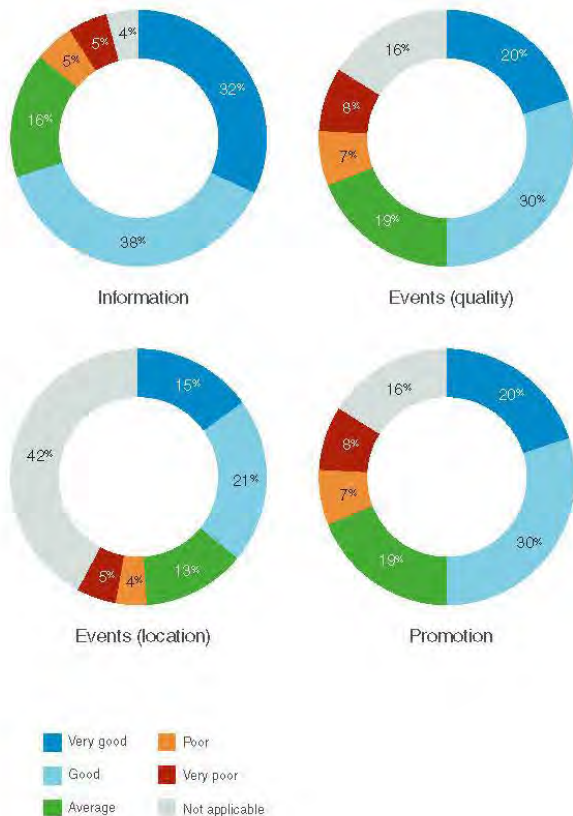
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The consultation

14. Please let us know what you think about the quality of our consultation materials, our events, the way in which we have notified people about our plans, and anything else related to this consultation.



Highlighted comments

Support

The materials and events were helpful and informative. The use of "before and after" pictures and the "fly-through" video was good. Grateful for the opportunity to comment on the proposals.

Opposed

Don't believe feedback given will influence decision making and the decision has already been made. Information was biased or there was not enough and the consultation was poorly advertised. Some found the events to be inaccessible due to their time and location.

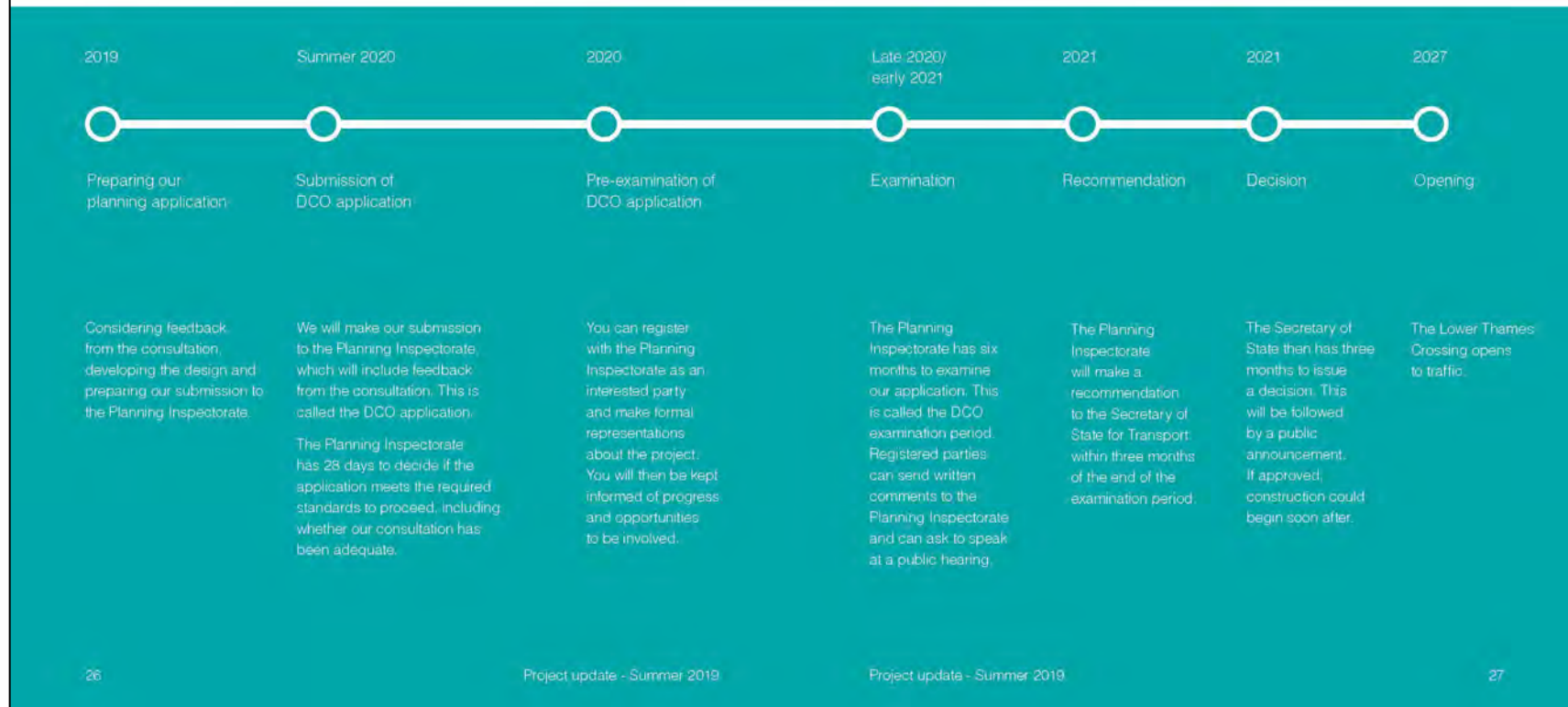


Next steps

We're continuing to work through people's comments in detail and as we consider the responses we received we may make changes to the design to improve the scheme. If we make significant changes to the design, we may carry out further consultation on those changes. We will keep you informed should we decide to do so.

It is vital we get all aspects of the design right to ensure we maximise the benefits of the Lower Thames Crossing while also minimising the impacts on communities and the environment. We continue to work with stakeholders to shape the design and understand the impact on local communities.

Given the quality and volume of responses we received to our consultation and the important information we continue to receive through our engagement with stakeholders we intend to take additional time to consider the feedback and we now expect to submit our application for a Development Consent Order in summer 2020. This does not change our target of opening the road in 2027.



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