

National Infrastructure Planning

Sent by email only to:
LowerThamesCrossing@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Your Ref: TR010032
Kent Downs AONB Unit Interested Party Ref: 20035310

13 June 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

Application by National Highways for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Lower Thames Crossing

Response of the Kent Downs AONB Unit to Procedural Deadline C

2. Written submissions on Examination procedure, including responses to matters raised orally at the Preliminary Meeting part 1

If it is determined that landscape and visual impacts south of the River are to be the subject of a Issue Specific Hearing, it is requested that this be timetabled to be heard outside of the September Hearings as the AONB Unit's only Planning Officer is on pre-booked leave for the duration of the September dates.

In respect of the Principal Issues identified in Annex B, Under Principle Issue 12 – Physical effects of development and operation, we would welcome the inclusion of consideration of impacts to the landscape character and special qualities of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

5. Comments by Interested Parties on the Applicant's proposed accompanied site visit itinerary

The Kent Downs AONB Unit considers it essential that the Site Inspection includes an appropriate range of locations within the AONB for the landscape and visual impacts of the proposal on the AONB, including the severance of the landscape from the proposed works within the A2 corridor to be fully assessed.

The current itinerary is not considered to include sufficient locations within the AONB to provide such an understanding. As a minimum, we would request that the following additional locations are incorporated into the itinerary:

a. View from the Kent Downs AONB on public footpath NS161, located north of Park Pale, east of Shorne Woods Country Park – Viewpoint S03 in the



Kent Downs AONB Unit
West Barn
Penstock Hall Farm
Canterbury Road
East Brabourne
Ashford, Kent TN25 5LL
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mail@kentdowns.org.uk

Anglesey
Arnside and Silverdale
Blackdown Hills
Cannock Chase
Chichester Harbour
Chilterns
Clwydian Range
Cornwall
Cotswolds
Gower
Cranbourne Chase and
West Wiltshire Downs
Dedham Vale
Dorset
East Devon
Forest of Bowland
Howardian Hills
High Weald
Isle of Wight
Isles of Scilly
Kent Downs
Lincolnshire Wolds
Llyn
Malvern Hills
Mendip Hills
Nidderdale
Norfolk Coast
North Devon
North Pennines
North Wessex Downs
Northumberland Coast
Quantock Hills
Shropshire Hills
Solway Coast
South Devon
Suffolk Coast and Heaths
Surrey Hills
Tamar Valley
Wye Valley

Enhancing landscapes and life in the Kent Downs

The Kent Downs AONB Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) promotes and co-ordinates the conservation and enhancement of the Kent Downs AONB. Funding is provided by DEFRA, Kent County Council and the local authorities of Ashford, Bromley, Canterbury, Dover, Gravesham, Medway, Maidstone, Sevenoaks, Shepway, Swale and Tonbridge & Malling. Other organisations represented on the JAC include Natural England, the Environment Agency, Country Land and Business Association, National Farmers Union, Kent Association of Parish Councils and Action with Communities in Rural Kent.

LVIA. There is a strong disagreement between the AONB Unit and National Highways on the predicted impacts from this location, with the AONB Unit assessing significant adverse impacts, as well as raising concerns over the appropriateness of proposed woodland planting in this location due to the area's current 'parkland' character. Incorporation of this location would also enable the proposed revised access and land take arrangements at the Haulex Depot at Park Pale, which would impact on the AONB, to be viewed.

b. Additional locations to enable the impacts of the proposed loss of the central treed reservation between the east and west bound A2 carriageways to be assessed – suggested locations would be from the Brewers Road overbridge and from public footpath NS179 to the south of the A2.

I hope this is of assistance to you.

Yours faithfully

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Katie Miller.

Katie Miller
Planning Manager, Kent Downs AONB Unit

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