

TRO10032 LOWER THAMES CROSSING

SUMMARY OF WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS For Deadline 1 (18th July 2023)

SHORNE PARISH COUNCIL (IP ref 20035603)

This document summarises our Written Representations due to their length being greater than 1500 words.

The proposed LTC east of Gravesend will have a huge adverse impact on the Parish with more than one third of land being destroyed or otherwise impacted, and severe severance created between the bulk of the Parish and Shorne West.

Through living in the area, Parish Councillors are very familiar with the natural environment east of Gravesend, plus as business, work and personal users of the nearby roads and major roads network are also very familiar with local traffic levels and problems and those on the A2 and M2 and wider road network.

Our Written Representations are based on previous submissions and Consultation responses, plus we have reviewed the DCO Application materials as much as we have been able to although they include a vast amount of documents which have been difficult to get through. At the same time, much of the baseline data was found to be poor but then highly massaged in favour of the proposals.

We have tried to cover topics within section titles that seem appropriate, however many of the issues interconnect and overlap in both location and timeframe of relevance. We have tried to raise the issues that particularly impact on local residents.

We have participated in the various Consultations and Reviews that have taken place since 2009. This has led us to conclude that the LTC proposals are not fit for the actual purpose on which they are predicated as they ignore, do not address and cannot sufficiently improve the actual problems at the Dartford Crossing and approach roads.

The concept of an LTC just east of Gravesend may have seemed a good idea when mooted decades ago but life, and particularly increased housing developments and car ownership, have moved on unrecognisably since then, so as a result the proposed location is no longer suitable.

Similarly, the Covid pandemic seems to have permanently altered working and leisure practices around car driving, so invalidating previous assumptions about traffic volume growth and further questioning the need for this project.

Review of the DCO documentation casts great doubt on the data used and manipulation methodologies employed in the project proposals, that then produce outputs and conclusions lacking any credibility, which in turn are not persuasive for a decision to spend such a vast sum of money.

If our area is to be sacrificed on the altar of NH's dogged pursuit of this project despite the great weight of evidence against it, then the scheme needs to work in regard to all parameters of evaluation: traffic improvement at Dartford, lack of constraint on A2, M2 and interconnecting routes from the M20 to the A2/M2, lack of creation of traffic problems locally and on unsuitable roads, VFM

etc. We wonder just how bad the negative aspects of the proposed LTC location have to be before they become game-changers or show-stoppers leading to need for abandonment of the proposals.

It seems very clear to us that the priority intervention that is needed should take place in Dartford itself, being probably both of routes A1 and A14 (long tunnel) to complete the M25 before thinking anew about the need and location for any new river crossing, which we believe should be much further east.

Our objections to the proposals are not a case of Nimbyism, but due to awareness from our knowledge and experience of the local area and road network that the proposed scheme simply will not work as the traffic levels in North-West Kent are already too high to accommodate such a large amount of additional traffic.

In the opening comments to the Inquiry the Inspectorate stated that the question in the Inquiry is whether consent should be given to “.....this particular project located in this particular location....” – in our view the answer that will emerge, after this robust examination process, will be a resounding “No”. The whole Application process should be paused for a very necessary, major re-think.

We are very grateful to the Inspectorate for considering our representations.

Shorne Parish Council

18th July 2023