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Contact: Bartholomew Wren
Email: [REDACTED]@tmbc.gov.uk
Your ref: TR010032

Date: 19 September 2023

Dear Rynd

RE: Application by National Highways for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Lower Thames Crossing – Responses to the Examining Authority’s written questions and requests for information (ExQ1)

Having reviewed the Examining Authority’s (ExA’s) first written questions and requests for information. TMBC provides the following responses.

Q4.3.8 - Benefits to Tonbridge & Malling’s Network

Question - Paragraph 3.4 of the Council’s LIR acknowledges that positive, neutral, and negative [effects] should be identified. Save for flows west of junction 4 M20, no other traffic benefits are identified in the LIR. Can Tonbridge and Malling Council confirm that there are no other locations in the borough that would experience positive effects?

TMBC Response - In accordance with the detail set out in our Local Impact Report and accompanying evidence, TMBC does not currently consider that there are any other positive effects of LTC upon the strategic and local highway networks within our borough. As we have previously informed the ExA, we are currently undertaking a transport modelling scenario test of objectively assessed growth over our forthcoming plan period to 2040/41, with an accompany LTC sensitivity test. The methodology for this work and baseline assumptions have been agreed with National Highways. We hope to be able to provide the outputs of this modelling work by deadline 5. This further evidence should clarify any potential positive, neutral and negative in combination effects.

Q12.2.5 - Mitigation Planting and Photomontages

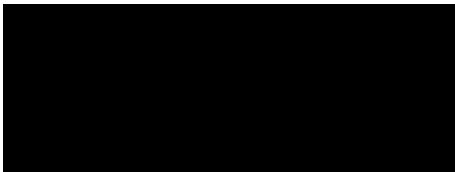
Question - It is noted that Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments No. LV003 (contained in ES Appendix 2.2 – Code of Construction Practice, First Iteration of Environmental Management Plan) [REP1-157] states that “the first five years of vegetation establishment would be overseen by an Environmental Clerk of Works” and that “failed vegetation in this period would be replaced.

Can the Local Authorities, Kent Downs AONB Unit and Natural England advise whether this period of time is sufficient when landscape mitigation is so heavily relied upon to minimise adverse landscape and visual effects and air quality effects of the project?

TMBC Response - TMBC consider that 5 years is a sufficient period of time for newly planted vegetation to become established, and during which any failed vegetation should be replaced.

We would be grateful if the ExA could take TMBC's further comments into consideration.

Yours sincerely



Eleanor Hoyle
Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health