

HIGHWAYS ENGLAND LOWER THAMES CROSSING NOTICE PUBLICISING A PROPOSED APPLICATION FOR A DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER NON-STATUTORY COMMUNITY IMPACTS CONSULTATION

HIGHWAYS ENGLAND COMPANY LIMITED of Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, GU1 4LZ (“Highways England”) proposes to make an application (“the Application”) under section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 to the Secretary of State for a Development Consent Order for the Lower Thames Crossing (“the Project”).

Highways England carried out a statutory consultation in relation to the proposed Application from 10 October to 20 December 2018, a non-statutory supplementary consultation from 29 January to 2 April 2020 and a design refinement consultation from 14 July to 12 August 2020. Information about the Project presented during the 2018 statutory consultation, and the non-statutory supplementary and design refinement consultations in 2020 can be found at:

- <https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/ltc/consultation>
- <https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/ltc/consultation-2020>
- <https://lowerthamescrossing.consultationonline.co.uk/>

Highways England is now carrying out a further non-statutory consultation in relation to the Project, from 14 July to 8 September 2021. This consultation will seek to gather feedback on:

- the latest construction, operation and ward impact summary information, and our plans to mitigate the impacts of the Project
- changes to the Project since the design refinement consultation
- detailed feedback on how responses received at each of our previous consultations have informed the development of the Project

The Lower Thames Crossing is a proposed new road connecting Kent, Thurrock and Essex through a tunnel beneath the River Thames. It would provide much-needed new road capacity across the river east of London and deliver the other project aims set out in the Guide to community impacts consultation.

On the south side of the River Thames, the new road would link to the A2 and M2 in Kent. On the north side, it would link to the A13 in Thurrock and the M25 in Havering. The tunnel crossing is located to the east of Gravesend on the south of the River Thames and to the west of East Tilbury on the north side. The Lower Thames Crossing proposals include:

- approximately 14.3 miles (23km) of new roads connecting the tunnel to the existing road network
- three lanes in both directions, apart from the southbound connection between the M25 and A13, where it would be two lanes, and around junctions
- technology providing lane control and variable speed limits up to 70mph
- upgrades to the M25, A2 and A13 where it connects to those roads
- new structures and changes to existing ones including bridges, viaducts and utilities such as electricity pylons
- two 2.6-mile (4.3km) tunnels crossing beneath the river, one for southbound traffic, one for northbound traffic
- a free-flow charging system, where drivers do not need to stop but pay remotely, similar to that at the Dartford Crossing
- traffic regulation measures that include prohibiting use by pedestrians, low-powered motorcycles, cyclists, horse riders and agricultural vehicles
- provision of environmental mitigation and replacement of open space and common land
- diversions to overhead powerlines and underground gas pipelines, some of which constitute Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects in their own right

In addition, any necessary rights and powers will be sought to ensure delivery of the Project, including compulsory acquisition of land and interests/rights in land, as well as any restrictions to be imposed over the River Thames following the construction of the Project.

The Project is an Environmental Impact Assessment development (“EIA development”), as defined by the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. This means that the proposed works constitute development for which an Environmental Impact Assessment will be required. An Environmental Statement containing information about the likely significant environmental effects of the Project will therefore be submitted as part of the Application.

During the 2018 statutory consultation, environmental information was included in a Preliminary Environmental Information Report, which is available online at <https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/ltc/consultation>, along with the rest of the statutory consultation materials.

An Environmental Impacts Update (EIU) was also published in January 2020 as part of the suite of supplementary consultation documents and is available at <https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/ltc/consultation-2020>

A further EIU was produced to support the design refinement consultation in summer 2020, explaining any new or changed environmental effects associated with the design refinements. This is available at <https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/ltc/design-consultation>

All consultation materials will be available on our consultation website, details of which are set out at the end of this notice. We will also try to provide the following documents at deposit locations, close to the proposed Project route:

- Guide to community impacts consultation
- Community impacts consultation leaflet

- Response form and Freepost envelope
- Construction update
- Operations update
- Ward impact summaries
- You said, we did
- Map Book 1: General Arrangements
- Map Book 2: Land Use Plans
- Map Book 3: Engineering Plans
- Large scale map operation
- Large scale map construction
- Easy Read versions of the Guide and other materials

A selection of draft Development Consent Order documents will also be available during the consultation online and at deposit locations.

To keep stakeholders and members of the local community fully informed on the proposals, we will also be looking to host a series of information events and drop-ins at key locations along the route. These plans may be subject to change due to potential COVID-19 restrictions. Information on these events is available on our website. Alternatively, you can call 0300 123 5000 for further details.

All the materials for this consultation will be available on the consultation website from 14 July 2021. For those unable to access the internet, one printed copy of the consultation materials per household will be available to order from 14 July 2021. They will be delivered to you free of charge. Instructions on how to order printed copies are set out at the end of this notice.

The website will also feature webinars with a Q&A session for the public to attend. There will also be a telephone surgery available, so that members of the public can book a call back from a member of the project team who will answer questions on the proposals. Details on how to access these services are listed at the end of this notice.

Anyone may comment on the proposals or otherwise respond to this consultation publicity.

From 14 July 2021, responses can be submitted via one of the following methods:

- **Online:** Fill in the response form at highwaysengland.co.uk/ltcconsultation
- **Freepost:** Send your response form or comments to: FREEPOST LTC CONSULTATION (the Freepost address is the only text needed on the envelope, and no stamp is required)
- **Email:** Send your comments to LTC.CONSULTATION@TRAVERSE.LTD
- **Telephone:** We are offering support to help you provide feedback over the phone. Please call us on 0300 123 5000 to book an appointment.

We cannot guarantee that responses sent to us in any other way will be considered.

Responses will be accepted until 11.59pm on 8 September 2021.

Highways England will consider all responses received when developing the Application for a Development Consent Order, once the consultation has closed. Responses will form the basis of a Consultation Report, which will be one of the factors taken into consideration by the Planning Inspectorate when deciding whether the Application can be accepted for examination. Therefore, anyone providing comments should consider this.

If you would like further information about this notice, the consultation or the Project, please contact Highways England by emailing info@lowerthamescrossing.co.uk, phoning 0300 123 5000, or writing to Lower Thames Crossing, Woodlands, Manton Industrial Estate, Manton Lane, Bedford, MK41 7LW.

Highways England’s policy on managing personal data can be found at

<https://highwaysengland.co.uk/privacy>.

Yours sincerely

Gareth Protheroe, Development Director, Highways England

Consultation website

The consultation website will be available to access anytime from 14 July 2021 on highwaysengland.co.uk/ltcconsultation. Details regarding the consultation services and ways of accessing consultation materials and information can also be found here.

Telephone surgery

A call back from a member of the project team can be booked to discuss any questions or provide comments on the proposal. An appointment can be booked from 14 July by visiting highwaysengland.co.uk/ltcconsultation or by calling 0300 123 5000.

Consultation material on demand

For those unable to access the internet or concerned about visiting a consultation event, deposit location or information point, one printed copy per household of the community impacts consultation materials will be available to order from 14 July 2021 onwards and will be delivered free of charge. The consultation materials are available to order via the following channels:

- By contacting Highways England on 0300 123 5000 or emailing info@lowerthamescrossing.co.uk
- By ordering on the consultation website at highwaysengland.co.uk/ltcconsultation