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**TR10032-006584**

Please accept this as our submission to Deadline ending the 13<sup>th</sup> March 2025 set by the Secretary of State, in response to comments to the proposed Lower Thames Crossing.

We would like to highlight again as in previous submissions that our property will be severely affected if the DCO was granted to NH. All past submissions can be found under our interested party number written above.

Therefore, we are writing once again to express our strong opposition to the proposed Lower Thames Crossing project. This scheme represents a poor value for money, evidenced by its benefit-cost ratio (BCR) of just 1.2. So, for every pound the government spends, only 20 pence in return are anticipated, which is financially unsustainable and fails to meet the scheme's objectives.

Moreover, the environmental impact of this project is deeply horrendous. The construction and operation of the crossing are projected to result in the emission of 6.6 million tons of carbon. Despite efforts by National Highways to present this project in a positive light, it amounts to greenwashing, as the environmental damage far outweighs any perceived benefits.

There are more viable alternatives that warrant consideration, such as the Essex-Kent Superlinks. This proposal includes the creation of a new heavy rail crossing in the Dartford area, which would enable between 50-100 million passenger journeys annually. Additionally, it would facilitate the movement of freight, potentially removing 550,000 – 1,100,000 lorries off the roads between Essex and Kent. The Essex-Kent Superlinks would also support the development of new ferry services and the KenEx tram system, further enhancing connectivity and reducing road congestion. Importantly, this alternative can be delivered at a fraction of the cost of the Lower Thames Crossing, making it a more economical and sustainable option.

Please find report links are below;

<https://transportactionnetwork.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/LTC-Roberts-Report-web.pdf>

<https://transportactionnetwork.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/TAN-Essex-Kent-Superlinks-web.pdf>

If private funding were to be sought for the Lower Thames Crossing, it is unlikely that investors would agree to finance a project that stands to cost over £10 billion and has proven to be a waste of public money. To attract private investors, the government would need to offer significant incentives. These could include guarantees on returns, tax breaks, and subsidies to offset the financial risks. Additionally, the government might need to promise regulatory support and streamlined planning processes to sweeten the deal. This would be paid by future generations of tax payers across the UK.

Investing in these alternatives would not only alleviate congestion but also release investment and stimulate economic growth in a more sustainable manner.

Public opinion is also crucial to consider. Surveys, petitions, and public consultations have shown significant opposition to the project, indicating widespread concern among local communities, businesses and the Ports.

Investing in sustainable infrastructure projects that align with the UK's carbon reduction commitments is vital for long-term economic growth and environmental health. Technological advancements and innovations should be incorporated into alternative projects to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness.

The concept of smart motorways by stealth is a folly and should not be pursued. We hope that common sense will prevail in evaluating these alternatives and that you scrap the LTC. At present its tax payers money that is paying for this, and could be better spent, when stringent cuts are happening in nearly every government department.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Kind Regards

The Hughes Family