

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Lower Thames Crossing](#)  
**Subject:** TR10032-006584 - Funding Statement Response - 2  
**Date:** 13 March 2025 23:44:00

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**Interested Party Ref: 20034332**

Having re-read my previous email, i would like to emphasize a couple of areas and add to it.

I believe that the Lower Thames Crossing (LTC) is non future-proof if it goes ahead in the current planned location, it will be a disastrous and irreversible mistake whether publicly or privately funded.

The world has many eyes and ears and together with the latest update from National Highways, it seems that contrary to their reassurance that no works can be carried out before DCO is granted, there are areas where certain elements have been put in place in readiness. It would be interesting to compare landscape changes from past and present aerial views and new commercial projects around the proposed LTC route.

RIS should prioritise UK's Local Road Networks, not New Major roads, until the LRN's are reconstructed to a high standard. The potholes and deteriorating road surfaces and cambers are hazardous and potential cause of accidents, placing lives at risk. Road traffic accidents inevitably cause congestion.

Extracts from the National Audits Office Report 23rd July 2024:

The local road network in England is essential to everyday travel and the movement of goods. Almost all journeys start and end on the local road network, which consists of 183,000 miles of road and represents 98% of the total road network. As well as the road surface, the local road network includes pavements, embankments, bridges and drainage systems that need to be kept in good condition.

The Department for Transport (DfT) says that poorly maintained local roads can be dangerous to the people using them, lead to congestion and longer journeys, and cause people to avoid types of travel, such as cycling or walking. It considers that well-maintained local roads are vital for the economy and the social wellbeing of communities. Well maintained roads and infrastructure are also necessary for DfT's objective to improve transport for the user, as well as specific policy areas such as increasing active travel and supporting autonomous vehicles.

**Key findings**

**DfT's understanding of the condition of local roads**

There are currently significant gaps in DfT's information on the condition of local roads, limiting its understanding of condition of the network. DfT requires local authorities to report the proportion of their road networks that should be considered for maintenance each year, based on a survey of a portion of the network. Local authorities do not provide all the data that DfT mandates – for example, one fifth of authorities did not share data on the proportion of their A roads that should be considered for maintenance in 2023. DfT plans to increase the response rate of local authorities by working with them more closely and recruiting a dedicated DfT specialist for road condition data collection. There is no reporting requirement for unclassified roads, which make up 62% of the local network, although around 70% of local authorities provided these data in 2023. This means DfT does not hold information for much of the network. DfT told us that it decided to limit the data it collects from local authorities to minimise administrative burdens, consistent with

**DLUHC policy. Local authorities are adopting new data collection approaches for their own use, and DfT is planning changes to support local authorities making use of different technologies and modernise its data collection approach. DfT does not collect data for footways or cycleways and has not collected data on bridge condition from local authorities since 2014, when it revised its data collection. A 2023 survey by industry found that on average 4% of bridges maintained by local authorities – totalling around 2,300 – were in substandard condition.**

The limited data that DfT collects show the surface condition of local roads as stable over time, but information from industry bodies and people using roads suggests that road condition is getting worse. DfT's latest data on road surface condition show that around two-thirds (67% in 2022-23) of total local road network length was in good condition. However, a long-running survey of local authorities by the Asphalt Industry Alliance shows only half of roads (48% in 2023-24) to be in good structural condition, and that this has been largely consistent since 2015-16. Research undertaken in 2021 by the UK Roads Leadership Group – a body chaired by DfT, but whose members come from national and local government – found the condition of the network was deteriorating. **Potholes are a symptom of poorly maintained roads, with industry estimates of 1.9 million potholes being filled in England (including London) during 2023-24, the highest number since 2015-16. Companies dealing with vehicle breakdowns also show an increase in callouts related to damage caused by potholes.** An annual survey of road users, covering around 75% of local authorities, reported in 2023 that public satisfaction with the road condition was declining.

The increasing backlog in road maintenance work hinders local authorities in undertaking preventative work that could deliver better value. The maintenance backlog is the investment needed to improve the local road network so it is in a condition of good repair. Improving the network to good repair would better allow local authorities to take a preventative approach to asset management. DfT estimated the backlog to be between £7.6 billion and £11.7 billion in 2019. In 2023-24, estimates by the Asphalt Industry Alliance put the backlog at £15.6 billion (including in London) and its annual surveys of local authorities show that the backlog has grown over time. Local authorities have attributed the increase in part to DfT's short-term funding strategies as well as to cost pressures from inflation and investment levels in road maintenance by central government not being sufficient to prevent a growing backlog. DfT's data show that the percentage of road length maintained in England each year is falling (for example, between 2017 and 2023 the proportion of roads receiving maintenance treatment declined from 7.6% to 5.2% for A roads and 4.3% to 2.4% for B and C roads). DfT has previously concluded that preventative work is much more cost effective than reactive work. Industry experts say that it must be informed by regular condition surveys and predictive modelling to identify where interventions would have most effect. Reducing the backlog of maintenance would allow local authorities to follow best practice principles focused on work that prevents poor road condition, leading to financial efficiencies and better value for money.

I believe all the above has a bearing on the RIS and indicates that the LTC should be "put on the back burner" at least until current UK Roads are brought up to standard.

Having travelled abroad quite extensively, I feel embarrassed with the condition of our roads in comparison. We are regressing not progressing.

Very sincerely,

Mrs. Jackie Thacker 3th maarch 2025 - 23.42

on behalf of the Thacker Family,

