

19 September 2024

Dear Ms Haigh

I write with regard to your ministerial brief as Secretary of State for Transport.

Your decision on the Lower Thames Crossing is due in just a couple of weeks, and I cannot doubt that it weighs heavily on your mind: it is no little thing, and would be the country's biggest transport project after HS2.

I say "would" as I write to ask you to make the right decision and not go ahead with the scheme.

When the very first public engagement on this potential scheme was undertaken I found many others in highlighting the needless ecological destruction. This concern has only grown as the extent and severity of the biodiversity crisis has become ever more apparent.

This of course goes hand in hand with the climate crisis, which the L.T.C. would both exacerbate through induced traffic and be vulnerable to as sea level rises and extreme weather becomes more common.

At the same time, not building the LTC would make significant inroads into the Treasury's budget shortfall, especially noting the "hidden" cost of necessary road connections not included in the reported £9bn project cost, and inevitability of that cost also rising.

By not building the LTC, which is not objectively needed and will leave us all no worse off, you will do the nation good service. Were you to allow the project to proceed you would create another HS2 - a costly, divisive and damaging scheme that is neither needed nor wanted, and will do your party great electoral harm as well. If you will not stop the LTC for any better reason, consider that it would increase the growing likelihood, unthinkable a few months ago, that this will be a one-term government. That is not something we ordinary people can be criticised for: it is your risk, but one I should like to see you avoid.

Yours sincerely

