

## Appendix 3

### Highways England Consultation Questions

#### Gravesham Borough Council responses

The structure of the questionnaire is a series of statements responded to by ticking the appropriate box:

**Strongly agree / agree/ neutral / disagree/ strongly disagree /don't' know**

There is then a space for comments. The answers give an overview of the Council's response. These should be read in conjunction with the report to Council and accompanying Appraisal with its Appendices.

Q1a Do you agree or disagree that the Lower Thames Crossing is needed?

✓ *Agree*

Q1b Reasons/comments

*Gravesham Borough Council agrees that there is a need for additional capacity over the Thames east of London, and has always argued that this should be located in the first instance at Dartford which is where most of traffic wants to be.*

Q2a Do you support or oppose out selection of the preferred route for the Lower Thames Crossing?

✓ *Strongly oppose*

Q2b Do you support or oppose the changes we have made to the route since our preferred route announcement in 2017?

✓ *Strongly oppose*

Q2c. Reasons/Comments

*The Borough Council opposes the selection of a route east of Gravesend and remains of the view that the issues with the Dartford Crossing need to be resolved at Dartford. That said on the current scheme the Council welcomes the extension of the Thames tunnel and the deletion of the A226 junction. It however strongly opposes the current proposed A2 junction with 70 mph slip roads because of the damage it does to landscape, historic features, and nature conservation, particularly in the Kent Downs AoNB. Noise and Air Quality (and construction in the short term) remain major concerns.*

*It is not for the Borough Council to comment in detail on the scheme north of the river but would observe that the failure to include west facing slips on the A13 shows that it is not designed to meet local economic development needs.*

Q3a Do you support or oppose the proposed route south of river?

✓ *Neutral*

Q3b Reasons/Comments

*The western option south of the river was selected in 2017 because it had less environmental impact than the eastern – the current proposals are however very damaging indeed on the environment and affect more local residents (Riverview Park and Thong). A re-think is needed of these proposals.*

Q3c. The crossing – comments

*The Borough Council welcomes the moving of the southern tunnel portal 600m to the south, but needs a better structured explanation as to why it cannot be extended (by cut and cover if not bored) further south to protect the residents of Riverview Park and Thong.*

Q3d-e (North of river) – *not applicable*

Q4a Do you support or oppose the proposed junction between the Lower Thames Crossing and the M2/A2?

*✓ Strongly oppose*

Q4b Reasons/Comments

*As explained in the answer to question 2c the proposed arrangements are opposed because of their environmental impact, destruction of HS1 (CTRL) landscaping and failure to provide commodious local links potentially setting up highway impact issues elsewhere.*

Q4c-f (North of the River) – *not applicable*

Q5a Do you support or oppose our proposals in relation the public rights of way network?

*✓ Strongly oppose*

Q5b Reasons/Comments

*The current proposals result in long complex diversions, particularly of NCR177. There is a need to develop a much more user friendly set of proposals that minimise the length of diversions and provide a good environment for walking/cycling/horse riding.*

Q6a Do you agree or disagree with the proposed measures to reduce the impacts of the project?

*✓ Strongly disagree*

Q6b Reasons/Comments

*Currently the PEIR neither fully explains the actual or potential impacts, how the design of the scheme has been influenced by these, or why the mitigation proposals are appropriate.*

Q7a Do you support or oppose the proposed area of land we require to build the Lower Thames Crossing?

✓ *Neutral*

Q7b Reasons/Comments

*The development boundary ('red line') has changed a number of times since first issued in 2017. It is not at all clear, apart from the current proposed engineering design, why some pieces of land are needed in the longer term, and why some are needed in the short term for construction etc.*

Q8a Do you support or oppose our proposals for a rest and service area in this location?

✓ *Neutral*

Q8b Do you support or oppose our proposals for the maintenance depot in this location?

✓ *Neutral*

Q8c Reasons/Comments

*The maintenance and service facility are to the north of the river and therefore not in Gravesham. It can be seen that there is a need for such facilities. It is noted that the scheme does result in the loss of a small but important service area at Cobham South, but that there is no opportunity south of the river to provide such facilities on the Lower Thames Crossing or connections to the east.*

Q9a Do you agree or disagree with the view that the Lower Thames Crossing would improve conditions on the surrounding road network?

✓ *Neutral*

Q9b Reasons/Comments

*The Borough Council has significant reservations about the current transport modelling. The model in its current form does not validate well on the local highway network and there are some obvious potential issues of concern. The A2 west would appear to benefit from a reduction in traffic but at the expense of introducing noise and pollution to new areas of the Borough. There is considerable concern over the implications for local roads and what happens in the event of disruption, given the current experience in Dartford as a result of the Crossing. Regular grid locking in North Kent is not acceptable. Further afield there are significant issues with the diversion of traffic between the M20/A20 and A2/M2 corridors*

Q10 Charges for using the crossing – reasons/comments

The Council consider that there should be no charges at the Lower Thames or Dartford Crossings. It does not wish to see variable rates at peak hours. If there are charges the same concessions to those existing for Dartford and Thurrock residents should apply to Gravesham residents for both crossings.

Q11a Do you support or oppose our initial plans for how to build the Lower Thames Crossing?

✓ *Neutral*

Q11b Reasons/Comments

*The Borough Council welcomes the decision to bore the tunnel from the north as the environmental implications from the south would be severe. That said the information in the consultation is highly limited and likely to change significantly as the project evolves, and in particular when actual contractors get involved (albeit constrained by the content of the DCO). Two large sites are shown in Gravesham with concerns about the implications for noise, disturbance, traffic, accommodation etc. and there is the issue of the substantial amount of spoil that would be produced by the cutting and how it leaves the site. There are very major concerns over the impact on the A2 of construction works on that road, in particular the shutting of the Brewers Road bridge for a significant period.*

Q12 Utilities and pylons – reasons/comments

*The scheme involves the moving of a significant number of utilities, particularly along the A2 corridor, and the 400Kv power line and high pressure gas pipelines through the gap between Riverview and Thong. All these have the potential to cause their own impacts, especially if they are taken close to people or potentially impact on assets of acknowledged importance (nature conservation, landscape, historic features etc.)*

Q13 Other comments

*The Council Report, Appraisal and covering letter provide a wealth of additional information and views.*

The Consultation

Q14a Information was the information clear?

✓ *Good*

Q14b Events – were the events of good quality?

✓ *Good*

Q14c Events – were the events suitable located?

✓ *Good*

Q14d Promotion – was the consultation promoted well and to the right people?

✓ *Good*

Q14e Comments

*The physical process in term of exhibitions, presentations, venues has conformed to the SoCC. From observation many people have attended the events.*

*There are however reservations about the content of some of the technical information.*