

## Lower Thames Crossing

### Agenda item 8: Revised Recommendations

1. That Highways England (HE) be thanked for carrying out the statutory consultation process whilst noting that insufficient time has been allowed to properly digest and respond to it given the volume of material involved.
2. That the resolutions of 8 December 2015, opposing in principle a new Lower Thames Crossing (LTC) to the east of Gravesend, be re-affirmed.
3. That the Council is of the view that LTC will only provide temporary alleviation of congestion at Dartford and will only defer a requirement to take action at that location.
4. That the Council considers the Preliminary Environment Information Report (PEIR) to be deficient in a number of areas and it fails the requirements of the relevant Regulations.
5. That the Council considers that further design work, environmental assessment and consultation needs to be carried out on the Thong Lane Bridge north and the tunnel portal to mitigate the impacts of the scheme on local residents through consideration of, amongst other things:
  - (i) Extension of the tunnel southwards whether bored or cut and cover
  - (ii) Widening of the Thong Lane green bridge to a minimum of 80m
  - (iii) Mitigation for Riverview Park and Thong residents from the impacts of noise, disturbance and air quality
6. That the environmental impact of the new LTC/A2/M2 junction on the A2 corridor is unacceptable and further detailed work is required if an acceptable solution is to be produced, which needs to address, amongst other things:
  - (i) Design speed of the junction slip roads ensuring free flow
  - (ii) Width of Thong Lane South and Brewers Road green bridges
  - (iii) Loss of HS1 landscaping and the overall impact on landscape, nature conservation and historic environment, particularly in the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
7. That the Council considers that the Gravesend East junction should connect direct to the A2/M2 east-bound and, if possible, Lower Thames Crossing but that it is not in a position to make a definitive judgement in the absence of a proper assessment of alternative junction designs and detailed highway modelling.
8. That the Council cannot provide a definitive view on the issue of variable charging, given the lack of information, transport modelling and consequential impacts, but basic principles should be:
  - (i) Same charging regime at both Dartford Crossing and Lower Thames Crossing
  - (ii) GBC residents receive the same discount as those in Dartford and Thurrock which should apply to both crossings and start from commencement of construction
  - (iii) No additional charging in the peaks

- (iv) A proportion of the revenues collected from tolls should be paid to a Community Fund administered by this Council to undertake leisure and other projects that will benefit the local community.
  - (v) The above and other matters should be examined in detail through a working group
9. That, in any event, the Council considers that the transport modelling needs to reflect the requirements of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, National Policy Statement for National Networks (2014), and the National Planning Policy Framework (2018), and associated guidance, upon Local Authorities for the delivery of housing.
  10. That there is considerable concern over the wider impacts on the wider highway network in Kent, in particular on A227, A228, A229 and M2 and well as the potential implications for local roads from the junction arrangements. These are not assessed as part of this consultation and this is a serious omission on the part of Highways England. It is imperative that a full assessment is conducted and that any improvements to the local strategic highway network found necessary are programmed and implemented prior to the opening of the new Crossing. The Council is particularly concerned at the absence of any evaluation of the Bluebell Hill junction on the A229 and considers that the suggestion of vehicles using the A249 as an alternative is completely unrealistic.
  11. That the information about the construction compounds is unclear and there is considerable concern over the implications for local residents and the environment given the long timescale involved and the activities that may take place.
  12. There will be considerable disruption to the lives of residents both during the construction period and when the Crossing is in use and there should be arrangements for adequate financial compensation to those affected.
  13. During the construction phase Highways England should require its contractors to use local labour wherever possible, including the creation of apprenticeships to provide a long term legacy of a higher skills base in the area
  14. That the contents of this report, the minutes, the appraisal (with appendices) and the responses to the consultation questions (as amended) set out in Appendix 2 be submitted to Highways England (Lower Thames Crossing and Chief Executive Officer), Adam Holloway MP, Minister of State for Transport, with the Director (Housing and Regeneration) being granted delegated authority to make minor amendments.