

Lower Thames Crossing: Community Impacts Consultation

Non-Statutory Statement of Community Impacts Consultation (SoCC) Addendum

Introduction:

Highways England submitted a DCO application for the Lower Thames Crossing in October 2020. Following feedback from the Planning Inspectorate, this application was withdrawn in November 2020. The Project intends to resubmit the application for development consent later this year. Following the withdrawal of the Project's application for a Development Consent Order in 2020, we reviewed all the Adequacy of Consultation Representations (AoCR) and the matters raised by stakeholders.

The Project has committed to developing and delivering a further round of public consultation. This next round of consultation is focussed on the assisting the public in understanding how we will construct the Project, the impacts of construction and operation and the mitigations we are proposing, at a local level.

Given the current COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and uncertainty on whether those restrictions will ease or be lifted this summer, a digital-first approach to consultation is proposed. Should the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions allow, the Project would look to support this approach with a series of public information events and outdoor information centres along the route.

Information on the details of our proposals can be found below.

Community Impacts Consultation and consultation to date

1. Ahead of the Project's reapplication for development consent, Highways England is planning on carrying out a further non-statutory consultation. This latest round of consultation will include information on the proposed approach to construction and operation, the anticipated impacts of each and the associated mitigation. It will also summarise the feedback received during previous consultations and explain how this has been incorporated into the plans to date.
2. Based on feedback from stakeholders as well as the scope of the consultation proposals, supporting information, and the anticipated level of public interest, the Project considers the proposed duration of eight weeks for this round of consultation to be proportionate.
3. The proposed launch date for this latest consultation is 14 July 2021, closing at 11.59 pm on 8 September 2021.
4. In line with the statutory consultation SoCC, this latest round of consultation will build on our previous consultations:
 - Statutory Consultation (October 2018),
 - Supplementary Consultation (January 2020) and
 - Design Refinement Consultation (July 2020)
5. Although this consultation is non-statutory, it does include some statutory elements to ensure all statutory requirements of the Development Consent Order process are fulfilled. This includes notifying new land interest holders about the consultation under section 42 of the Planning Act 2008.

6. This non-statutory SoCC addendum provides an overview of which elements of the Project will be consulted on, as well as the ways stakeholders and local communities will be consulted and engaged.
7. This addendum is part of Highways England's ongoing engagement with local authorities and communities on the Project.

Project overview

8. The Project includes a proposal to construct, operate and maintain the Lower Thames Crossing (LTC), a proposed new road connecting, Kent, Thurrock, Havering and Essex via a tunnel beneath the River Thames.
9. The Project is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), as defined by the Planning Act 2008. This means that Highways England is required to submit an application to the Planning Inspectorate for permission to construct the Project, known as a Development Consent Order (DCO).
10. The proposals also include information on the utility diversions associated with and located across, the LTC route. A small number of these utility diversions qualify as NSIPs in their own right but will form part of the same DCO application for the Project.
11. We have all been faced with immense challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At times like these, NSIPs, such as the Lower Thames Crossing, have an important role to play in supporting the UK's economic recovery and future growth. As such, the development of the Project has continued during the current COVID-19 pandemic with the aim being to resubmit the DCO application later this year.
12. Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, we will be adopting a "digital-first" engagement approach. This is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff and consultees and will be regularly reviewed to ensure that it is fully aligned with Government guidelines. A series of public information events and outdoor information centres at locations along the route are being planned. These are, however, dependent on the COVID-19 restrictions in place on the day and are therefore subject to change. Further details on the proposed approach can be found within this document.
13. The channels available are similar to those used during previous consultations and are outlined below. In addition, this document includes information about how you can obtain paper copies of documents, including a response form.
14. In line with the earlier Design Refinements consultation, the Project will continue to ensure that those who have no or limited access to the internet can access, view, understand, and comment on the proposals. This will include the ability to order hard copies of the consultation materials free of charge, and a telephone call back service for members of the public to ask questions. Further details about our initiatives to ensure everyone has the opportunity to take part in the consultation can be found within this document.
15. The approach set out below puts the health and safety of the public and project staff first while enabling all stakeholders and the public the opportunity to view, understand and provide feedback on the proposals. As Government guidance changes and evolves, we would look to adjust our approach accordingly.

Consultation Materials

16. All consultation materials, some of which are described in detail below, will be available on the consultation website. We will also endeavour to provide key documents and materials at as many deposit locations and information points as possible close to the proposed Project should they become available due to easing of COVID-19 restrictions.

- Guide to Community Impacts Consultation
- Construction Update
- Operations Update
- Ward impact summaries
- You said, we did (Described below)
- Map Book 1: General Arrangements
- Map Book 2: Land Use Plans
- Map Book 3: Engineering Plans
- Large scale map operation
- Large scale map construction
- Community Impacts Consultation leaflet
- Response form and Freepost envelope
- Easy Read versions of key documents

A selection of draft DCO documents will also be included in the consultation including the Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) and Register of Environmental Actions and Controls (REAC).

Guide to Consultation

17. The Guide to Consultation will provide an overview of the information included in the consultation materials and how the public can have their say on the impacts of the Project and how we would mitigate them.
18. It will outline and define the documents provided in the consultation materials.
19. The Guide will detail the consultation period and deadline.

Construction Update

20. The Construction Update will provide more information about how the construction of the Project is likely to be carried out, should development consent be granted. The document builds on the information provided during previous consultations and aims to provide further detail on the proposed construction schedule, construction methods, mitigations and controls that will be put in place.
21. The document will provide an overview of the Project's construction schedule and main construction activities.
22. It will describe the construction methods and mitigation measures that would apply to the whole Project. This will include the steps that would be followed to ensure

construction is carried out in a safe, efficient and sustainable way, following industry best practice.

Operations update

23. The document will provide a summary of how the new road and its associated features will look when it opens. It also details the impacts, associated mitigation measures and the changes made to the Project's design since the design refinement consultation in 2020.
24. The document will provide an overview of the main features that would make up the Lower Thames Crossing when it is open, including information on the new road, junctions, the tunnel, utilities proposals, environmental design and green infrastructure.
25. The document will also present information on the updated traffic modelling work carried out by Highways England to assess the impact the completed road will have on the wider network.
26. It will also look at our approach to the environmental impacts associated with the operation of the Lower Thames Crossing and the environmental assessments undertaken to understand those impacts and how they can be mitigated.

Ward impact summaries

27. This document provides an overview of the activities, impacts and mitigation measures expected in those wards most likely to be affected by the Project during its construction and operation. As well as describing the Project, it summarises the predicted impacts in key topic areas, including traffic, noise and air quality.
28. Where applicable, it will present construction activities affecting the ward and the operational impacts, alongside proposed mitigation, both specific to an activity and generally in relation to a ward.
29. In producing our ward impact summaries, we have aimed to be proportionate, with those wards most affected by the Project being described in the greatest detail. Where appropriate, wards on the fringes of the Project have been combined, so a single chapter describes the impacts on two or more wards.

You Said, We Did (YSWD) - Shaping the design of the Lower Thames Crossing

30. Following feedback received during the three earlier rounds of consultation, the Project has created a You Said We Did document. This aims to provide a summary of responses received during previous consultations and how these have been used to further refine the Project's design.
31. In addition to providing an overview of feedback, the document will provide an overview of how respondents had provided feedback during each of the previous consultations, and how their responses were analysed.

Map books and large-scale maps

32. As with our previous consultations, we will be providing a series of map books and large-scale maps for the public and stakeholders, these will include general arrangements, land use and engineering maps. We will also be presenting large scale maps of the Project during construction and in operation.

DCO Control documents in the consultation

33. A selection of DCO control documents will be included as reference material within the consultation, this will include

- DCO Schedule 2 and Explanatory Note
- Outline Site Waste Management Plan
- Outline Traffic Management Plan for Construction (oCTMP)
- Outline Materials Handling Plan
- Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC)
- Code of Construction Practice
- Design Principles
- Wider Network Impacts – Management and Monitoring Plan
- Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan
- Framework Travel Plan

Response form and Freepost envelope

34. The response form will provide the public and stakeholders with the opportunity to provide their feedback on the proposals presented at the consultation.

Easy Read

35. We are partnering with a member of the UK Association for Accessible Formats (UKAAF) to produce Easy Read versions of the consultation material.

Consultation publicity

36. Overview of consultation publicity channels:

Channel	Details
Website	<p>All of the consultation material will be available on a dedicated consultation website at www.lowerthamescrossingconsultation.co.uk from 00.01 on 14 July 2021. It will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Digital maps• Explainer videos• Document section with access to all consultation materials• Links to find out more information including booking a telephone or video call-back, or registering for a webinar, and the events listings (more information below) <p>The website will meet accessibility guidelines.</p> <p>The website will direct people to Highways England's dedicated online response form where consultees will be able to provide feedback on the proposed plans. This will be available at https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/ltc/consultation-2021</p>

	<p>The consultation will also be promoted on the Lower Thames Crossing project website at www.lowerthamescrossing.co.uk</p> <p>Information about the Project presented at previous consultations can be found at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018 statutory consultation: https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/ltc/consultation/ • 2020 supplementary consultation: https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/ltc/consultation-2020 • 2020 design refinements consultation: www.lowerthamescrossing.co.uk/design-consultation
Events	<p>An event programme is planned so members of the public can speak to the project team and access a range of exhibition materials including boards, videos and reference documents and pick up consultation materials about the proposed scheme.</p> <p>The programme is subject to Covid-19 restrictions being eased and is subject to change. It will consist of several Public Information Events (PIEs) supplemented by some Outdoor Information Centre (OIC) events.</p> <p>The locations and venues will be chosen following engagement with host Local Authorities, and are based on the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located on or near the proposed route. • Accessible to communities who will be affected by the construction and/or opening of the new road. • Have the capacity to hold the expected numbers of visitors; and • Have the ability to accommodate the event and allow additional planning and layout measures to meet evolving Covid-19 guidance including space to enable social distancing and queuing, ventilation and more. <p>The OIC events will be in locations serving hard to reach communities.</p>
Consultation leaflet	<p>A leaflet will be distributed directly to all properties within 5km of the route of the proposed Lower Thames Crossing. It will include a brief introduction to the Project and consultation, with information about how to learn more about the proposals, and how people can have their say. See Appendix 1 for a map showing the distribution area.</p>
Email	<p>Information about the consultation and notifications encouraging people to respond to the consultation will also be sent to an extensive database of individuals, businesses, interest groups and organisations. This will also include all respondents to previous consultations.</p> <p>It will also be possible to provide comments and feedback to the consultation by sending an email to LTC.CONULTATION@TRAVERSE.LTD</p>

	All email data is held and used in accordance with the relevant data protection legislation.
Social media	<p>The consultation will be promoted through a combination of posts via the Lower Thames Crossing Twitter account (@lowerthames), Facebook page (@lowerthames), and LinkedIn page (www.linkedin.com/company/lowerthamescrossing/)</p> <p>Consultation responses submitted through social media will not be considered.</p>
Third-party channels	The Project will also reach out to key stakeholders, community groups and representatives to encourage them to share information about the consultation on their websites and social media channels, such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn as well as being advertised in any relevant newsletters.
Non-statutory notices	<p>The consultation is being carried out on a non-statutory basis, as such, there is no legal obligation to publish notices advertising the consultation.</p> <p>However, as part of the Project's ongoing commitment to promoting the consultation widely, and following best practice, notices will be published in local and national newspapers and online. If available, we will be publishing the notice in the New Shopper Bromley, Essex Chronicle, Kent Messenger, Thurrock Gazette, Romford Recorder, London Gazette, Fishing News, Lloyds List and The Times.</p>
Media	Press activities will be carried out to encourage the media to provide editorial coverage of the consultation.
Advertising	<p>Advertisements promoting the consultation and how to find out more will be placed in several local newspapers on or near the route of the Lower Thames Crossing.</p> <p>The consultation will also be advertised on Facebook, targeting people who live or travel near the proposed route.</p>
Public webinars	<p>The Project will host a series of public webinars with explanations of the proposals and a live Q&A session with project representatives.</p> <p>The webinars will give an overview of the Project and the proposals outlined in the 'Operations Update, Construction Update, Ward Impacts Summaries and the 'You Said, We Did' consultation materials, presented in relation to their geographic region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • two webinars will focus on Kent. • two will focus on the area between the Thames and the A13 in Thurrock. • two will focus on the area north of the A13 in Thurrock, Brentwood and Havering. <p>We will monitor demand and can add more webinars if required.</p>

	<p>The webinars will be scheduled for 60 minutes each and held at different times throughout the consultation period to give people different options to attend.</p> <p>They will also be recorded and retained on the consultation website and Highway's England's YouTube channel for future reference.</p> <p>The webinars will have live transcriptions that can be supplied afterwards by request.</p> <p>The Project is also arranging for British Sign Language interpreters to support our webinars, alongside the live transcription.</p> <p>Clear instructions and guidance on how to access the webinars will be provided.</p>
<p>Telephone Call Back service with optional screen-sharing service</p>	<p>There will be a telephone consultation service in place throughout the consultation period.</p> <p>This will allow people who are not able or comfortable attending a physical event to speak directly to a member of the project team</p> <p>The telephone services will be available on days when there are no physical events or webinars and will be scheduled for afternoons, evenings and weekends to give people flexibility on when to request a call-back.</p> <p>The public will be able to request a call back within a 3-hour window via the consultation website or by calling the Highways England Contact Centre.</p> <p>Pending confirmation from suppliers, a video call back service will be offered to enable members of the project team to share their screen to help in understanding the consultation materials.</p>
<p>Responses over the phone</p>	<p>Additional support will be offered to help the public provide their response to the consultation over the phone.</p> <p>When the consultation launches, people will be able to book an appointment to provide their response over the phone by calling 0300 123 5000 or through the consultation website.</p>
<p>Ongoing programme of stakeholder engagement</p>	<p>In addition to the various consultation activities, the Project will endeavour to offer online meetings and conference calls to discuss the proposals with local authorities and parish councils in the affected areas.</p>
<p>Community and stakeholder briefings</p>	<p>The Project will also reach out to and encourage community representatives and stakeholder groups in the affected areas to take part in the consultation and get in touch through one of our consultation channels to ask the team any questions.</p>
<p>Ad hoc meetings</p>	<p>Where resources permit, representatives of the Project will attend online meetings and conference calls if invited by community groups, businesses and interest groups to discuss the Project.</p>

	<p>These meetings can be requested by contacting the Project via email or telephone.</p>
<p>Deposit locations and information points</p>	<p>The Project will work closely with local authorities, community groups and representatives to try to ensure deposit locations and information points are available.</p> <p>The deposit locations will include hard copies of the full suite of consultation documentation.</p> <p>Information points would hold the following: 'Guide to Consultation', paper copies of the consultation response form and Freepost return envelopes.</p> <p>Following a similar approach to the Design Refinements consultation, the Project is reaching out to widen the list of available venues to have at least one deposit location and five information points distributed appropriately around the project. See Appendix 2 for indicative deposit locations and information points.</p> <p>At moment, all the deposit locations and information points that have been used in previous consultations are either closed or operating at a very limited capacity due to COVID-19 restrictions. The Project will however continue to monitor the situation and plan accordingly.</p> <p>Subject to agreement/approval from Local Authorities, the Project is willing to explore the possibility of using council or community facilities that are currently open or planned to be open to members of the public as potential deposit locations and information points.</p> <p>The Project welcomes any further feedback and suggestions on potential deposit locations and information points.</p> <p>Availability of deposit locations and information points are dependent on the COVID-19 restrictions and are therefore subject to change.</p>
<p>Copies of consultation documents on request</p>	<p>For those who have limited or no access to the internet, copies of printed versions of the consultation materials will be available to the public to order free of charge (one pack per household).</p> <p>Requests will be taken from the day of launch, and delivery times may vary. If ordered within the first week of the consultation, delivery will take place from 21 July 2021. Orders from 21 July will be delivered within 48 to 72 hours.</p> <p>Documents from all consultations to date will be available and free to download online through the following links:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Route consultation in 2016: https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/ltc/lower-thames-crossing-consultation/ • Statutory consultation in 2018: https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/ltc/consultation/ • Supplementary consultation earlier in 2020: https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/ltc/consultation-2020/

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design Refinements consultation in 2020: www.lowerthamescrossing.co.uk/design-consultation <p>Information on how to order the consultation materials will be included in the promotional leaflet and on the consultation website.</p>
Alternative formats	<p>Based on the previous consultations, easy read and Braille versions of the Guide will be produced to enable all members of the public to view and comment on the consultation.</p> <p>Arrangements are also being made to hold British Sign Language (BSL) online sessions, explaining the project and supporting those in the affected communities with hearing difficulties to respond to the consultation.</p>
Customer contact centre	<p>The Highways England customer contact centre will be able to provide information about the consultation to members of the public. The phone number is 0300 123 5000.</p> <p>The Project will also brief local authority customer contact centres, so they are in a position to provide the public with information about the consultation as well.</p>
Hard to reach populations	<p>It is of vital importance that everyone who wishes to participate in this consultation is being allowed the opportunity to consider and respond to the proposals. The Project will continue to work closely with local authorities, community groups and representatives on identifying relevant stakeholders who cannot access digital resources, to ensure they are being notified of the consultation and that the opportunity to take part is genuinely provided for these groups.</p> <p>Alongside this and the advertisement campaign, the Project is undertaking several activities to ensure those with limited or no access to the internet are notified of the consultation. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issuing of information leaflets to properties within 5km of the route, • Publishing of notices in local and national newspapers, before consultation launch. <p>The initiatives introduced by the Project last year as part of the Design Refinement Consultation such as the ordering of consultation materials free of charge and a telephone services, available on days when there are no physical events or webinars, to ensure the consultation is accessible to everyone will be continued.</p> <p>Easy Read and Braille versions of the consultation material are being proactively produced, as well as providing British Sign Language translation at the public webinars.</p> <p>Following Highways England policy, the intention is to consider any requests for material in other formats as they arise and to look at</p>

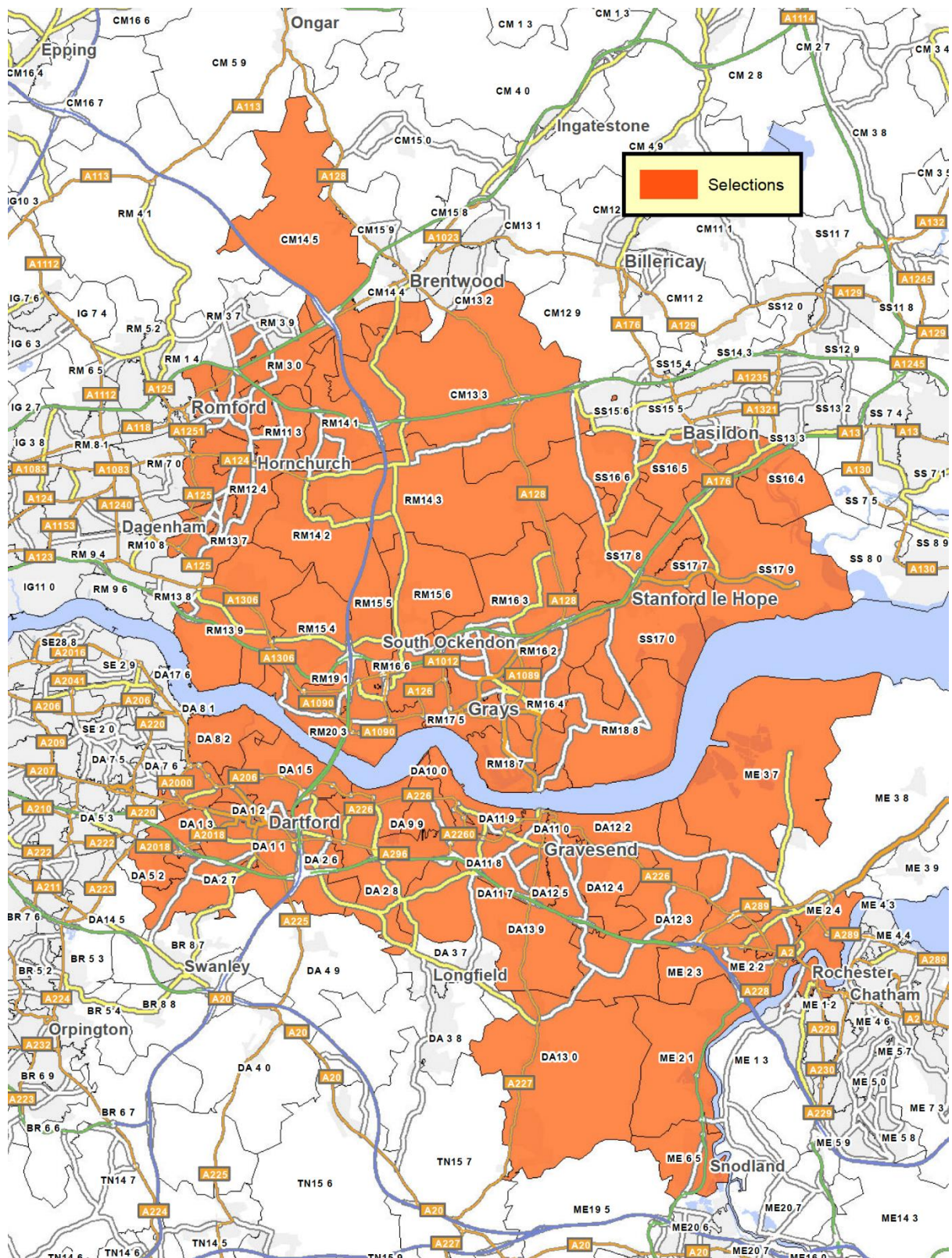
	<p>providing the best solution to ensure consultees can engage with our materials.</p> <p>The Project is open to any suggestions on how we might improve our approach especially on how to engage with 'hard to reach groups.</p>
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How to respond

37. The public and stakeholders will be able to respond to the consultation using the following methods:

- Online: Fill in the online survey at:
highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/ltc/consultation-2021
- Post: Post your response form or comments to **FREEPOST LTC CONSULTATION**. The Freepost address is the only text needed on the envelope, and no stamp is required.
- Email: Send your comments to: LTC.CONULTATION@TRAVERSE.LTD
- Telephone: We are offering additional support to help you provide feedback over the phone. Please call us on 0300 123 5000 weekdays between 9 am and 5 pm to book an appointment.

Appendix 1: Leaflet distribution area



Appendix 2 - Deposit locations and information points

The following is dependent on the COVID-19 restrictions and are therefore subject to change.

Deposit location:

- Rochester Library, Rochester, ME1 1EW - Open and ready subject to govt guidelines
- Dartford Central Library & Museum, Market St, Dartford DA1 1EU - Open and ready subject to govt guidelines
- Gravesend Library, Windmill St, Gravesend DA12 1BE - Open and ready subject to govt guidelines
- Maidstone Library, James Whatman Way, Maidstone ME14 1LQ – Open and ready subject to govt guidelines
- Grays Library, Orsett Rd, Grays RM17 5DX – in discussion
- Tilbury Hub, 16 Civic Square, Tilbury RM18 8AD – not yet open. Monitoring developments
- Brentwood Library, New Road, Brentwood CM14 4BP - in discussion
- Romford central library – in discussion

Information points:

- Belhus Library, South Ockendon Centre, Derry Avenue, South Ockendon, RM15 5DX – open but with restrictions. Monitoring developments
- Blackshots Library, Grays, RM17 5DX – open but with restrictions
- Chadwell St Mary Library, Brentwood Rd, Chadwell St Mary, Grays RM16 4JP – currently open with restrictions – monitoring developments
- East Tilbury Post Office, Unit 2-3 Stanford House, Princess Margaret Road, East Tilbury, Tilbury, Essex, RM18 8YP – open with restrictions. Monitoring developments
- East Tilbury library, Princess Ave, East Tilbury, Tilbury RM18 8ST - open with restrictions. Monitoring developments
- Thurrock Council Offices – Currently closed. Monitoring developments
- Marling Cross library, 266 MacKenzie Way, Gravesend DA12 5TY - currently closed. Monitoring developments
- Meopham Library, Wrotham Rd, Meopham, Gravesend DA13 0AH - currently closed. Monitoring developments
- Riverview Park library, The Alma, Leander Dr, Gravesend DA12 4NG – currently closed. Monitoring developments
- Shorne Woods visitor centre – Brewers Rd, Shorne, Gravesend DA12 3HX - currently closed. Monitoring developments