

# Lower Thames Crossing

Consultation October 2018



We would like your views on the Lower Thames Crossing, a proposed new motorway connecting Kent, Thurrock and Essex through a tunnel beneath the River Thames.

This will provide much needed road capacity across the river east of London, and transform journeys throughout South East England and beyond.

Our conversations with residents, community groups, businesses and other organisations have played a vital role in developing our plans. This is your opportunity to shape the Lower Thames Crossing before we apply for planning consent.



**Have your say**

It's your road, your tunnel, your journey

# What is the Lower Thames Crossing?

The most ambitious project of its kind in the country, the crossing is the largest single road investment proposal in the UK since the M25 was completed more than 30 years ago. The crossing under the Thames will be the longest road tunnel in the country and, at 16 metres in diameter, one of the largest bored tunnels in the world.

On the south side of the Thames, the new road will link the tunnel to the A2 and M2. On the north side, it will link to the A13 and the M25.

The crossing and the new connecting road network will provide quicker and more reliable journeys locally, regionally and nationally.

If planning consent is given, we expect to begin construction around 2021 with the crossing opening in 2027.

The Lower Thames Crossing will have:

- approximately 14.5 miles (23km) of new roads connecting the tunnel to the existing road network
- three lanes in both directions with a maximum speed limit of 70mph
- improvements to the M25, A2 and A13, where the Lower Thames Crossing connects to these roads
- new structures and changes to existing ones (including bridges, buildings, tunnel entrances, viaducts, and utilities such as electricity pylons) along the length of the new road
- two 2.5 mile (4km) tunnels, one for southbound traffic, one for northbound traffic crossing beneath the river
- a free-flow charging system, where drivers do not need to stop but pay remotely, similar to that at the Dartford Crossing

# Why it is so important

## A boost to the economy

Good transport connections are vital for economic growth. The crossing will provide new connections, better journeys, fewer delays and more certainty on how long journeys will take. It will give businesses large and small the confidence to invest and grow, and bring them closer to existing and potential customers and markets.

## Easing our heavily congested roads

Motorists trying to cross the Thames face a daily challenge. As those who regularly use the Dartford Crossing know, it is already far too congested, far too often. The new crossing will provide 90% more capacity across the River Thames. It will make the region's roads more resilient by easing congestion at the Dartford Crossing, the UK's busiest river road crossing.

## Quicker journeys

In its first year, more than 27 million drivers are forecast to use the Lower Thames Crossing (around 75,000 vehicles a day). This will relieve congestion at Dartford by reducing the number of vehicles using the crossing by 22%, improving journey times and reliability.

HGVs carrying hazardous materials, such as fuel or chemicals, will be able to use the new crossing safely and unescorted.

This is in stark contrast to today where escorted lorry convoys at Dartford cause significant delays for all traffic.

# Design changes

We have used feedback from previous consultations, conversations with interest groups and the results of our own assessments to refine our proposals. We have made several design changes since the government announced the preferred route in April 2017 and since we published an updated design last November. These include:

## Southern tunnel entrance

The southern entrance to the tunnel has been moved approximately 600 metres further south. This will reduce the visual impacts on local communities, such as Chalk, and will not split the village from the church. We will also need to acquire less land, and the impact on the adjacent Ramsar site (a wetland of international importance) will be reduced.

## Tilbury link road

We are not proposing a link road to Tilbury from the junction. Modelling highlighted drawbacks to our potential design including delays to HGV journeys and significant impacts on the local roads. The inclusion of the Tilbury junction means that the opportunity remains to deliver a direct link to Tilbury in the future, subject to necessary funding and consents.

## Route between Tilbury and A13 junction

The road has moved around 80 metres east, away from properties in Chadwell St Mary. This will limit the need to move some power lines. The road will be lowered by between 5 and 6 metres to reduce its visual impact.

## Three lanes of traffic

We will provide three lanes in each direction for the entire route from the M25 to the A2 to provide enough capacity for peak hours and future demand. It will not have hard shoulders in common with smart motorways. This will reduce journey times and increase capacity for road users across the river by more than 90% east of London.

# Have your say

Our consultation materials contain lots more information about the Lower Thames Crossing, including:

- how it will be built
- what it will be like to use the crossing
- how local traffic will be affected
- how we will protect the environment

Visit our website for more information about the consultation at [www.lowerthamescrossing.co.uk/haveyoursay](http://www.lowerthamescrossing.co.uk/haveyoursay). Here you can also find the venues where you can view the consultation materials, pick up copies of the guide to consultation and the response form, as well as details of our consultation events.

Please use our online or paper response form to tell us what you think by 23:59 on 20 December 2018.



# Stay in touch

Please contact us if you have any questions:

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 0300 123 5000

 www.lowerthamescrossing.co.uk

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## Have your say

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