

LCCI Response to the Lower Thames Crossing Statutory Consultation

19 December 2018

INTRODUCTION

1. London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) is the largest capital-focused business advocacy organisation representing the interests of small and medium-sized enterprises through to large, multi-national corporates. Our member companies operate within a wide range of sectors, including transport and logistics across all 33 London local authority areas – genuinely reflecting the broad spectrum of London business opinion.
2. As the voice of London business, we seek to promote and enhance the interests of the capital's business community through representations to central government, the Mayor and London Assembly, Parliament and media, as well as international audiences. Through member surveys and commissioned research, LCCI seeks to inform and shape debate on key business issues.
3. LCCI continues to be a vocal campaigner across a broad range of issues that impact our members and the wider businesses community throughout the capital. For example, we have and continue to champion the case for Crossrail 2, East London River Crossings and the expansion of Heathrow, then Gatwick.

SUMMARY OF LCCI'S VIEW

4. LCCI recognising that the capital's transport infrastructure is susceptible to overcrowding and congestion supports the development of a new crossing and would like to see it constructed and open to traffic as soon as possible.
5. Currently, if there is a closure of the Dartford Crossing, traffic has little choice in terms of alternative routes. The closest crossing, the Blackwall Tunnel, is itself heavily congested at peak times and is not designed to carry strategic traffic. Additionally, it also has a low height limit, so taller HGVs are forced to utilise the M25 via Heathrow.
6. As a result, this new crossing will help alleviate the congestion challenges at the Dartford Crossing and will provide much needed resilience on the Strategic Road Network.
7. **LCCI welcomes the design of the new tunnel, which will be capable of accommodating taller HGVs and those carrying hazardous loads, both of which are attributable to some of the delays experienced at the Dartford Crossing.**
8. Furthermore, we welcome that since the last consultation in 2016, the route has been upgraded to three running traffic lanes rather than two, as originally proposed.
9. **However, during the construction phase, and to minimise disruption, early and accurate information about road works and road closures will be essential to enabling businesses to plan.**

10. LCCI would be happy to clarify or provide further comment on any matter raised within this response.

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