



Department  
for Transport

Laura Blake  
Chair  
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From the Parliamentary  
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Our Ref: [REDACTED] 9

22 November 2022

Dear *Laura,*

Thank you for your email of 29 October to the Secretary of State, enclosing a joint letter co-signed by yourself and various other organisations about the proposed Lower Thames Crossing project. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this issue.

I am grateful to you for taking the time to write in with your concerns.

In response to the view that the Lower Thames Crossing (LTC) project should be re-examined, there is a robust framework to ensure that projects, including the LTC, continue to be assessed at all stages of the project, both ahead of DCO submission (which will be independently assessed by the Planning Inspectorate), and after.

The LTC adheres to the Departmental governance framework as a Tier 1 project – this represents the Department's projects that are either one or a combination of the largest, highest risk, novel and/or contentious. Further information can be found at: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport/about/our-governance](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport/about/our-governance). It is assessed against a number of factors. This includes the scheme's objectives and value for money.

It also continues to follow the HM Treasury approval process for programmes and projects, and the Green Book. Further information on both can be found at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/treasury-approvals-process-for-programmes-and-projects](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/treasury-approvals-process-for-programmes-and-projects), [www.gov.uk/government/publications/managing-public-money](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/managing-public-money) and [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1063330/Green\\_Book\\_2022.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1063330/Green_Book_2022.pdf).

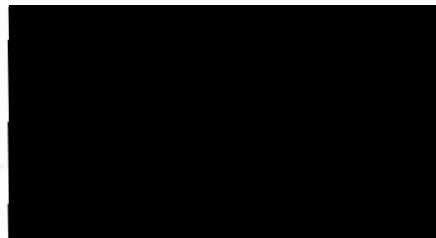
The project is part of the Government's Major Project Portfolio, and as such must regularly report to the Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA), who continue to provide expert project delivery advice, guidance and assurance on the LTC. Information on the role of the IPA can be found at: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/infrastructure-and-projects-authority](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/infrastructure-and-projects-authority)

It is important to add that National Highways, as the scheme promoter for the LTC, has its own robust governance framework, and adheres to the project control framework<sup>1</sup>, which sets out a joint approach with the Department for managing major projects.

As you say, an application for development consent has been submitted by National Highways and all aspects of the application, including environmental factors will be carefully considered by the Planning Inspectorate. Their independent examination of the application for Development Consent Order, in addition to the Transport Business Case process, with appraisals based on the Green Book, Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG) and Transport Business Case guidance, will provide the necessary and robust examination that is required, and there are no plans to supplement this with any other review or examination process.

As this is a live planning application, I hope you will appreciate that it would be inappropriate to comment further.

Best wishes,



**RICHARD HOLDEN MP**

**MINISTER FOR ROADS AND LOCAL TRANSPORT**

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<sup>1</sup> [https://assets.highwaysengland.co.uk/roads/road-projects/A46+Coventry+Junctions+Upgrade/Proofs+of+evidence/J.01+PROJECT+CONTROL+FRAMEWORK+HANDBOOK++V4-NOVEMBER+2018\\_.pdf](https://assets.highwaysengland.co.uk/roads/road-projects/A46+Coventry+Junctions+Upgrade/Proofs+of+evidence/J.01+PROJECT+CONTROL+FRAMEWORK+HANDBOOK++V4-NOVEMBER+2018_.pdf)