

Gareth Johnson MP for Dartford

Reporting back from
Dartford
and Westminster -
reaching over
5,000 people in the local
area.



Special Bulletin - 12th
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It's Option C!



Lower Thames Crossing

In one of the most significant announcements affecting Dartford for many years, the Department for Transport has today announced the Lower Thames Crossing will be located east of Gravesend at 'Option C'.

This has been a long, hard campaign carried out by myself and others, often behind the scenes, to secure this result. It means the threat of another crossing at Dartford is lifted. It would have been nothing short of disastrous for our town if we were to have another crossing next to the existing one with the years of roadworks that would have been necessary.

Placing the Lower Thames Crossing east of Gravesend gives the motorist another route to use and will relieve much of the congestion we currently experience.

It will take approximately ten years to complete and so we will not experience the full benefit until then but the prospect of having hugely disruptive roadworks in Dartford over the next decade has been lifted.

In the meantime the Secretary of State has announced plans for £10 million to be spent in the area on measures to ease some of the existing problems. Nobody is claiming this money will completely remove the current problems but they should provide some benefit. In addition, Highways England will continue looking at ways to improve the flows of traffic across Dartford whilst the building of the Lower Thames Crossing takes place.

The Department for Transport has accepted the argument that placing another crossing in Dartford would have been the wrong approach. It would have added more traffic and pollution to the existing pinch point and funnelled traffic through roads that cannot cope as it is.

Opening up the Thames Corridor

The announcement today follows the largest ever response to a Department for Transport consultation involving a road project. Over 47,000 responses were received which mainly supported Option C.

The new Lower Thames Crossing will be a tunnel with a 70 mph limit to it, compared to 50 mph at the existing crossing. It will cost £4.4 billion.

The new crossing will require an additional junction on the A2 east of Gravesend and will enable traffic from Kent to travel over the Thames without coming near to Dartford. In Essex, the crossing will emerge east of Tilbury and meet the A13 at Orsett and will join the M25 close to North Ockenden.

The new crossing is estimated to boost the economy in the local area by more than £8 billion and create thousands of new jobs.

For too long Kent and Essex have suffered from a lack of connectivity. This new crossing will seek to change that and relieve the congestion and pollution we have all suffered for too long.

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