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REF:APP/G5750/V/05/1174146
APP/E5330/V/05/1174147

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8th March 2005

THAMES GATEWAY BRIDGE - OBJECTION

Dear Mr. Rob Barker,

I am Chairman of the LA21 Traffic and Transport Group (Bexley). My deputy is Mr. Alan Thompson. I am also Chairman of the A2 (Bexley) Environmental Campaign Committee. On behalf of both Groups I wish to voice our objection to the inclusion of the traffic lanes for the bridge. We are not objecting to the building of the bridge per se as long as it is only allowed to be used for *public transport* - Heavy Rail, Docklands Light Rail, Trolley Bus, Tram. We as a traffic group have always tried to maintain a balanced view over traffic issues. We are not anti car but at the same time we try to encourage alternative means of transport - this in accordance with the Mayor's and local Council policy.

In Bexley we already suffer from the effects of heavy traffic, including pollution and noise from both the A2 and A20. These two roads already carry over 200,000 vehicles per day (and night). They both are exceeding their original estimated carrying capacity, and suffer daily accidents and holdups. I know how damaging noise and pollution is on the local population. Although some noise remedial measures have been implemented we still suffer from the continual noise generated by the traffic despite campaigning for some 10 years to have acoustic sound barriers installed where appropriate. Because of its problems the A2 is featured regularly on B.B.C. news.

We, in Bexley, do not wish to suffer the effects of another similar type road running through the borough. Local roads, which are not designed to carry heavy traffic volumes will become gridlocked. Expected traffic volumes using the bridge have already been increased.

The new bridge is being promoted as 'bringing new jobs to the local area.' There is absolutely no guarantee of this. 60% of Bexley's population already work outside the borough. Local trained labour standards is acknowledged as low - Bexley Council's own figures. How can this possibly guarantee more jobs for local people?

Although not against the actual bridge - for public transport - might the vast amount of money being spent not be better used to shore up jobs on either side of the Thames thus guaranteeing local jobs for local people. Modern technology is already beginning to reduce the need for travel with video linking etc.

Roads leading to the new bridge are also likely to be submerged if the the Thames floods which it is expected to do in the not too distant future.

Tolling has been put forward as a means of controlling traffic. Nonsense. Buisness will nearly 'write off' the tolls as a tax exemption and in any case would carry any extra cost if it meant any saving on time and distance. Poorer members of society would be unable to afford the extra cost and would therefore be excluded from the local jobs. The Dartford crossings are a good example of tolling not alleviating traffic. Consistently high volumes of traffic meant that the original building costs have been paid off early - 1993 - but tolling is still continuing.

For these reasons we **object** to the traffic lanes of the new bridge.

Yours sincerely,



MR IAN LINDON