

## **Transport 2000**

### **Outline of Proof of Evidence for the Public Inquiry into the proposal to build the Thames Gateway Bridge**

1. Transport 2000 is the independent national body promoting sustainable transport. It finds solutions to transport problems and aims to reduce the environmental and social impact of transport by encouraging less use of cars and more walking and cycling and use of public transport.
2. Much of Transport 2000's evidence to the inquiry, will relate to the second of the matters about which the Secretary of State has said that he particularly wished to be informed for the purposes of considering these applications:

“The extent to which the proposal accords with national planning policy on transport set out in *PPG13 – Transport*, particularly with regard to :

  - i) the impact of the proposal on traffic generation and overall travel patterns having regard to the desirability of achieving development that minimises the need to travel, particularly by private car:
  - ii) maximising use by non car modes of travel, particularly public transport, cycling and walking:
  - iii) the impact of the development on traffic congestion in the local area.
3. Some of our evidence will focus on the traffic model commissioned by Transport for London from the consultants Halcrow. We will demonstrate that it falls short of the standards necessary to support the proposal in two ways: (a) it does not give adequate evidence, support and information to demonstrate that the criteria in paragraph 2 above have been fulfilled; (b) on those aspects that information is provided, it fails to take into account the guidance and policy issued by the government, and does not make use of the available evidence on impacts provided in research commissioned by the Department for Transport and its predecessors.
4. In particular, we shall argue that there are serious shortcomings in the forecasts of traffic growth derived from that model and presented in Halcrow's Traffic and Transport Report. Our evidence will refer to reports commissioned by the London Boroughs of Greenwich, Newham and Bexley to test the conclusions of the Halcrow report.
5. Our evidence will consider the adequacy of Transport for London's definition of local traffic and the likely effectiveness of the proposed tolling regime in restricting the use of the Bridge by non-local traffic. It will take into account the wider land use context and the land use planning implications of the Bridge itself.
6. Transport 2000 will contend that the predicted levels of traffic growth, if the bridge is built, are too low and that the bridge would have a much wider and more severe traffic impact than the Traffic and Transport report suggests. If the predicted traffic levels are too low it follows that the predicted impacts of the bridge on for example air quality, noise and health are also too low.

7. Transport 2000 will demonstrate that Transport for London has not given adequate consideration to alternative proposals including an all public transport option or a bridge carrying rail based public transport instead of, or in addition to, buses (and has therefore not complied with national policy). We will argue that Transport for London has not considered properly the case for providing a tram route across the river or considered at all the case for ultra-light rail. Nor has it considered associated policies designed to 'minimise the need to travel, particularly by private car', including aspects of undoubted importance such as road user charging, the wider use of 'Smarter Choices' (soft measures), the impact of reallocation of road capacity, and the procedures necessary and available to 'lock-in' benefits of capacity changes, all of which would have an impact on the case for the scheme, its design, and the time scale of any benefits delivered.
8. We will present evidence that it is perfectly possible to design a new river crossing which, at similar or less cost, would provide improved public transport access to employment opportunities but would have no adverse environmental impacts and would not increase traffic or congestion. We will also test the claims that the Bridge will provide an effective pedestrian and cyclist route and argue that pedestrian and cyclist use of the Bridge would be negligible.
9. Because the effect of the Bridge will be to increase substantially car use in the Thames Gateway area and to fail to realise the potential to travel by means other than the car (on foot, by bicycle and by public transport) we will show that the proposal is not consistent with numerous statements of national and regional policy ( in addition to PPG13 mentioned above and to others mentioned in the Statement of Matters).
10. Transport 2000 will present concerns about the quality of the consultation exercise conducted by TfL.
11. Finally Transport 2000 will show that Transport for London's claims that the Bridge will improve access to employment and amenities are unjustified, particularly for low income household who do not have access to a car. We will present evidence that the claimed links between a new road scheme such as the Thames Gateway Bridge and new jobs and economic regeneration have not been substantiated.

**Transport 2000 would like to stress that we have not yet been able to start work on preparing our submissions to the Public Inquiry. This outline of evidence is therefore unlikely to cover all the issues that we will address when submitting our final proof of evidence and presenting oral evidence to the Inquiry.**