

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

Robert Neill AM MP  
Assembly Member for Bexley and Bromley

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Rt Hon Ruth Kelly MP  
Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London  
SW1E 5DU

Our ref: RN05942702  
Your ref:  
Date: 27 February 2007

Minister	MM
Subject	THAMES GATEWAY BRIDGE
Official	MARK PLUMMER

Dear Secretary of State

**Thames Gateway Bridge Inquiry – Blackwall Tunnel tolls**

I write as the local Assembly Member in full support of the letter dated 13 February sent to you by Councillor Ian Clement, Leader of Bexley Council (see copy attached for ease of reference).

At the Thames Gateway Bridge Public Inquiry considerable doubt was cast on the reliability of Transport for London's traffic modelling, and the prospect of tolls being introduced for use of the Blackwall Tunnel strengthens those concerns.

Yours sincerely

Robert Neill AM

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Encl

c.c. Rt Hon Douglas Alexander MP, Secretary of State for Transport, DfT, Great Minster House,  
76 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DR  
Cllr Ian Clement, Leader of Bexley Council

\* PLEASE NOTE: IN REFERENCE TO CASE N.O. 23507/06 WE HAVE NO RECORD OF LETTER DATED 13/02/07 FROM IAN CLEMENT

13 February 2007

Ruth Kelly MP  
Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London  
SW1E 5DU

Dear Secretary of State

**Thames Gateway Bridge Inquiry – Blackwall Tolls**

I wrote to you on 13 December 2006 stating that the Public Inquiry into the Thames Gateway Bridge (TGB) scheme should be reconvened to reassess the evidence as a result of proposals to increase the tolls at Dartford crossing. I received a response from your Customer Liaison Unit on 20 December 2006 stating that the Department for Transport (DfT) had agreed to accept responsibility for the correspondence. As the Inquiry was held under Town Planning legislation to consider Applications for planning permission for the bridge, jointly with Secretary of State for Transport for the Scheme and Orders, it is surely your responsibility to decide if it is reconvened. I also wish to express my serious concern that I am still awaiting any sort of response from the Department for Transport. I trust that no decisions will be taken on the outcome of the Inquiry before you have considered my request.

The main reason for writing to you again, however, is that in recent days it has been reported that Greenwich Council, in conjunction with Transport for London (TfL), is actively pursuing the introduction of congestion charging in Greenwich Town Centre as part of a Transport Infrastructure Fund bid. This has been linked to the introduction of a £2 toll for the use of Blackwall Tunnel. The proposals have been widely publicised and the proposal to toll Blackwall Tunnel is also set out and supported in a number of Thames Gateway London Partnership documents, including its response to Transport 2025. Bexley is opposed to the tolling of the Blackwall crossing because of its potential impact on traffic levels on the Thames Gateway Bridge

TfL made it clear at the Public Inquiry that it had not taken any account of a toll at Blackwall Tunnel. All of the modelling and traffic calculations assumed that the Blackwall crossing would be free. The critical factor in how much traffic will use the Thames Gateway Bridge and if it caters only for local traffic as intended will