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May 2023

Dear Sirs

**TfSE Response to the North Thanet Link Highway Improvement Scheme Consultation  
May – June 2023**

Transport for the South East welcomes the opportunity to respond to the North Thanet Link Highway Improvement Scheme Consultation.

Transport for the South East (TfSE) is a sub-national transport body (STB), which provides a single voice on the transport interventions needed to support sustainable economic growth across its geography. The South East is crucial to the UK economy and is the nation's major international gateway for people and business with some of the largest ports and airports in the country. High-quality transport infrastructure is critical to making the South East more competitive, contributing to national prosperity and improving the lives of our residents.

TfSE's transport strategy (2020) set out an ambitious 2050 vision for the area. Through a programme of area studies, we identified multimodal packages of transport interventions needed to deliver the strategy. Underpinned by this credible, evidence based technical programme, we consulted on our draft Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) in the autumn of 2022. Published in spring 2023, the SIP presents a compelling case for future decision making to help create a more productive, healthier, happier, and more sustainable south east.

The SIP is aligned with government priorities to rapidly decarbonise the transport system, improve public health outcomes, reduce congestion, improve road safety, level-up left-behind communities and facilitate sustainable economic growth. There is a need for more joined up planning, particularly between transport and housing, to help build more sustainable communities and enable more efficient business operations, putting the strategic transport infrastructure in place that enables communities to thrive and live happier, healthier, more active lives. Securing the right investment in the MRN is a crucial part in delivering our transport strategy.

TfSE supports delivery of the North Thanet Link Highway Improvement Scheme. Identified as a priority scheme in the SIP. Part of a package of improvements in the A28/A299 (Faversham – Ramsgate) South East Radial Major Road Network Corridor. It will provide an alternative route to the already congested A28 corridor. The existing A28 through Birchington and Westgate-on-Sea is heavily constrained. It also suffers from congestion and air-quality issues.

The scheme also supports delivery of four local plan sites providing 5600 new houses. Supports the economic growth of Thanet. Will also provide additional walking and cycling routes.

The scheme continues to meet the overarching MRN objectives which are:

- Reducing congestion
- Supporting economic growth and rebalancing
- Supporting housing delivery
- Supporting all road users

Scheme analysis has taken into account the wider objectives of Government transport investment including:

- Active travel
- Improvements to facilitate larger buses.
- Decarbonisation

We consider that in accordance with Government policy every effort must be made to avoid and mitigate environmental impacts and ensure that biodiversity net gain is achieved through this project. We would therefore expect that a high-quality package of environmental mitigation measures is developed and delivered as part of the scheme.

This is an officer response. The TfSE Partnership Board meets on 3 July 2023 to consider the draft response and a further iteration of the response may follow.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss any element of this response.

Yours sincerely,