



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT  
2 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 3EB

1 <sup>ms</sup> Mr. Schwab  
2 Prime Minister 2

William Rickett Esq  
Private Secretary to the  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON SW1

22 July 1982

W/R  
22/7

MS

Dear Willie,

EAST LONDON RIVER CROSSING

The Prime Minister will wish to know of the announcement which the Secretary of State proposes to make of the preferred scheme for the East London River Crossing. This will be done through an arranged written question on 27 July, to be answered after 3.30 pm.

The scheme, which was put to public consultation last October, is the last, and most important, of the three trunk road schemes which make up the Docklands "package": the others are the South Woodford to Barking Relief Road and the Hackney-M11 link road. By extending the present North Circular Road as a trunk road to the A2 south of the Thames (thus linking with Dover and the Channel ports), it will make a significant contribution to the development of Docklands by attracting industry to the area. It will also be important as a demonstration of the Government's commitment to regeneration of this area of East London.

The public reaction to the scheme was on the whole not unfavourable although, not surprisingly, a number questioned the need for the scheme and others commented on the detail. Apart from the London Borough of Greenwich, who oppose the scheme, the Local Authorities (including GLC) gave it support in principle, with some reservations on specific aspects of the proposals. These will be discussed as the scheme is developed.

The next stage will be to prepare draft Orders under the Highways Act and we shall extend the appointment of Sir William Halcrow and Partners, the consulting engineers who have carried out the studies so far, to do this work.

/ I enclose copies of the draft Question and Answer, and the press notice.

I am copying this letter to Nick Huxtable (Lord President's Office) and to Murdo Maclean (Chief Whip's Office).

Yours ever,

Toby Johns

T. JOHNS  
Private Secretary

## APPENDIX A

DRAFT PQ, for written answer on 27 July 1982

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will announce the result of the public consultation on the proposed East London River Crossing.

DRAFT ANSWER

The scheme which I have selected to be developed for the new East London River Crossing is the one put forward at the public consultation in October 1981, incorporating alternative alignment Y in the Wickham Lane area and a new alignment slightly to the east of alternative alignment B in the area of Oxleas Wood.

In reaching my decision I have given careful consideration to the views of the elected local authorities and just over 1000 members of the public who completed a questionnaire on the scheme. The line chosen at Wickham Lane requires more properties to be demolished, but is better in environmental terms: it was the alternative favoured by the majority of those who responded on this part of the scheme at public consultation. At Oxleas Wood strong views were expressed in favour of keeping as large an area as possible of the wood undisturbed: by moving the line further to the east I have sought to achieve this.

A detailed statement of the results of the consultation has been placed in the Library. My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State will also make presentations of the selected scheme to interested members and to Local Councillors in the Autumn.

Together with the South Woodford to Barking Relief Road, at present the subject of a local public inquiry, the East London River Crossing scheme will extend the existing dual carriageway A406 trunk road across the Thames to connect with the A2 and Dover. It will thus significantly improve access to the Docklands area and play an important part in its economic development. The provision of a purpose-built route will help remove the environmental damage at present being suffered on residential roads on the present inadequate road network in the area.

This government gives very high priority to the regeneration of this area of East London and I am anxious that we should push ahead quickly with the next stages in the development of the scheme. I have therefore instructed Sir William Halcrow and Partners, the consulting engineers who carried out the initial studies, to prepare draft orders for the scheme under the Highways Act. In the meantime we shall safeguard the land required for the preferred scheme.

## APPENDIX C

## DRAFT PRESS NOTICE

The Rt hon David Howell Secretary of State for Transport today announced his decision on the scheme for a new East London River Crossing from the A13 in Barking to the A2 at Falconwood. This follows the public consultation held in October/November 1981 on the proposed route which had alternative alignments over two sections.

The preferred scheme is that put forward at public consultation incorporating alternative alignment Y in the Wickham Lane area and a new alignment slightly to the east of alternative alignment B in the Oxleas Wood area.

Commenting on his decision Mr Howell said:

"The initial public response to the consultation was encouraging with more than three thousand people visiting the public exhibitions. Over ten thousand documents and questionnaires were distributed. However, only about a thousand were completed and returned. In reaching my decision I have given very careful consideration to the opinions of those who did return the questionnaires, and to the views of the elected local authorities. This scheme which, with the South Woodford to Barking Relief Road will extend the existing dual carriageway North Circular Road over the Thames to connect with the A2 and Dover, will significantly improve access to Docklands. This Government gives very high priority to the regeneration of this area of East London and better road access will play an important part in attracting industrial development.

I am anxious that no time should be lost in taking the scheme forward and Sir William Halcrow and Partners, consulting engineers, have been instructed to prepare details which can be published as soon as possible in the form of draft Orders under the Highways Act. In the meantime we shall safeguard the land required for the preferred scheme."

A detailed statement on the consultation will be sent to local authorities and interested organisations. Copies of that statement will be placed on deposit for inspection by members of the public from 28 July 1982 at Council Offices and public libraries. The full list of addresses is at Annex 1 to this Notice.

Copies of the statement can also be obtained from the Greater London Roads and Traffic Division, Department of Transport, Room 2/18, St Christopher House, Southwark Street, London SE1 0TE.

#### NOTE TO EDITORS

The public exhibitions were held at St Nicholas Church Hall, Plumstead, the Beckton Community Centre and at Woolwich Town Hall in October 1981. Sir William Halcrow and Partners were originally appointed in April 1980 to undertake a detailed study of an East London River Crossing up to the Public Consultation stage.

The 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> mile (9.2 kilometres) proposed scheme will start at a junction with the A13 near Barking Creek and cross the Thames on a high-level bridge at Gallions Reach. From a junction with Thamesmead Spine Road

the new highway will pass over Nathan Way and the North Kent Railway line before passing under Plumstead High Street. From there it will continue between Wickham Lane and Plumstead Common (following alignment Y) to pass over Kings Highway into a cut and cover tunnel under Rockcliffe Gardens, which will be restored after construction. The road will continue in cutting under Highmead before rising to ground level beside Dryden Road and passing under Shooters Hill Road where there will be a junction. From there it will run on the new alignment to the east of alternative B to pass under Welling Way and cross the railway to join the Greater London Council's new Rochester Way Relief Road (A2) Falconwood.



12 2 JUL 1982



East London River Crossing 27.7.82

CJ 508

Mr. Neubert asked the Secretary of State for Transport when he will announce the result of the public consultation on the proposed East London river crossing.

**Mr. David Howell:** The scheme which I have selected to be developed for the new East London river crossing is the one put forward at the public consultation in October 1981, incorporating alternative alignment Y in the Wickham Lane area and a new alignment slightly to the east of alternative alignment B in the area of Oxleas Wood.

In reaching my decision I have given careful consideration to the views of the elected local authorities and just over 1,000 members of the public who completed a questionnaire on the scheme. The line chosen at Wickham lane requires more properties to be demolished, but is better in environmental terms: it was the alternative favoured by the majority of those who responded on this part of the scheme at public consultation. At Oxleas Wood

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Written Answers

27 JUL

strong views were expressed in favour of keeping as large an area as possible of the wood undisturbed: by moving the line further to the east I have sought to achieve this.

A detailed statement of the results of the consultation has been placed in the Library. My hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State will also make presentations of the selected scheme to interested members and to local councillors in the Autumn.

Together with the South Woodford to Barking relief road, at present the subject of a local public inquiry, the East London river crossing scheme will extend the existing dual carriageway A406 trunk road across the Thames to connect with the A2 and Dover. It will thus significantly improve access to the docklands area and play an important part in its economic development. The provision of a purpose-built route will help remove the environmental damage at present being suffered on residential roads on the present inadequate road network in the area.

This Government give very high priority to the regeneration of this area of East London, and I am anxious that we should push ahead quickly with the next stages in the development of the scheme. I have therefore instructed Sir William Halcrow and Partners, the consulting engineers who carried out the initial studies, to prepare draft orders for the scheme under the Highway's Act. In the meantime we shall safeguard the land required for the preferred scheme.