

Lower Thames Crossing Fact sheet

Land and property

The Preferred Route for the Lower Thames Crossing:

- A bored tunnel crossing under the river east of Gravesend and Tilbury
- A new road joining the M25 between junctions 29 and 30
- A new road joining the A2 near Gravesend

You may be concerned about what the Lower Thames Crossing means for your land, property, home or business.

This factsheet explains what happens next, the options available to you and where to find further information.

What the preferred route means

It means that Government has selected a preferred route for the new crossing, allowing further design and assessment to be carried out. It does not mean that planning consent has been given.

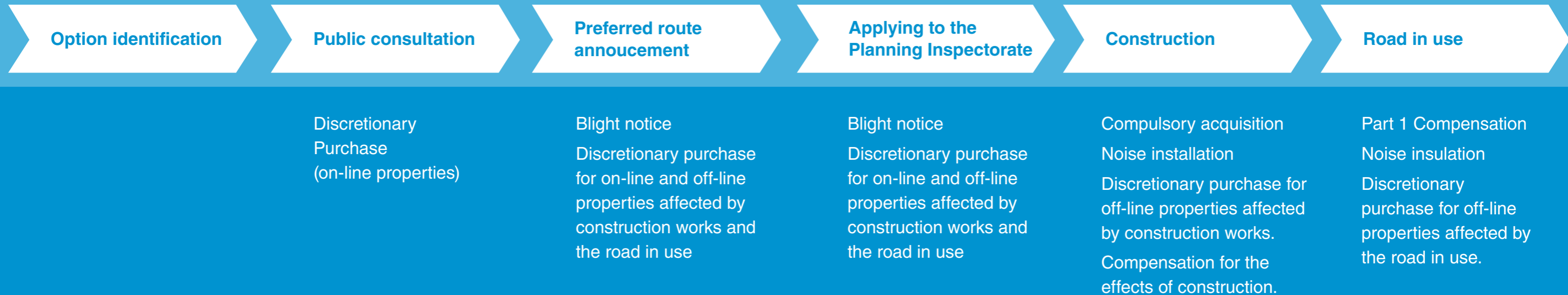
Over the coming months and years, we will further develop the design and assessment, including more detailed environmental surveys, air quality and noise impact assessments and further traffic modelling.

There will be opportunities to influence the scheme through further public consultation before we apply for development consent.



Major road schemes and property compensation

This diagram shows the progress of a scheme and the stages at which each type of compensation is available to land and property owners.



Protecting the route

In the meantime, to protect the preferred route from potentially conflicting new development we have asked the local planning authorities to register the red line boundary. This means that anyone planning to buy property inside of this, or within 200 metres of the preferred route, will be informed through land searches that there is route protection on the land. In addition, local planning authorities are required to consult with us before granting planning permission for development which is likely to prejudice the construction of our road.

The planning authorities we have contacted are Thurrock Council, Gravesham Borough Council, Transport for London, Essex County Council and Kent County Council.

The land is shown on the scheme's red line boundary map, which is available on our website (www.lower-thames-crossing.co.uk)

Property blight and your rights

Blight is when the value of a dwelling, business or agricultural land is reduced because of large scale, or major, public works. It may make it difficult for landowners to sell their properties at market value and they often have to sell at a much lower price.

Once a preferred route has been announced, and until we apply for development consent, this applies to all property wholly or partly inside the red line boundary.

Depending on how blight affects your property, you may be able to ask us to consider buying it from you.

To serve a blight notice on us you must be a freeholder or leaseholder with an eligible interest in the land. This usually means you must be an owner-occupier but other criteria also apply. You will also need to show that you have been unable to sell your property at a realistic unblighted (i.e. unaffected) price. We purchase blighted properties at their unaffected market value; this is the amount the property would be worth if the scheme did not exist, not the blighted (lower) value.

Please note that the property owner serves a blight notice on Highways England; not the other way round.

If your property is off-line

Blight can also affect off-line property. This is where none of your land is required but your enjoyment of it is likely to be seriously affected by the construction or use of the road. In these circumstances, owners might have an urgent need to move but cannot sell their land and property except at a significant loss.

Different rules apply to off-line properties and we are not obliged to buy them. We will consider each application on its merits. However, we only exercise our discretion in exceptional circumstances and convincing reasons must exist.

For more information about blight see our booklet *Your property and blight*. If you don't qualify for statutory blight, you may find our booklet *Your property and discretionary purchase* useful.

Compulsory purchase

If the Secretary of State approves the Development Consent Order we would then serve notices on landowners to purchase their land or property. Compulsory purchase only applies from this point.

Our booklets *Your property and our road proposals* and *Your property and compulsory purchase* are good sources of information.

Compensation for the effects of the new road

We will try to minimise the scheme's impacts on nearby properties as far as possible. However, if you believe your property or business has been impacted by construction works, you may be able to claim compensation. Please discuss your concerns with us as we may be able to help.

The planning process

The Lower Thames Crossing is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project. This requires a type of planning permission called a Development Consent Order (DCO).

A DCO grants planning permission and authorises the compulsory acquisition of land needed for a scheme. There is much more work to do over the coming months and years to develop the scheme in more detail before we apply for a DCO.

Consultation with landowners and other interested parties are key to the DCO process. There will be more opportunities to present your views and influence the scheme leading up to the DCO application and also during the public examination and hearings held by the Planning Inspectorate.

The DCO will be decided by the Secretary of State after all the issues have been examined.

What to do next

We are contacting landowners and occupiers within the red line boundary to discuss the implications and options for them and their property.

If you are within the red line boundary and you have an interest in the land as an owner-occupier you should receive a letter from us. You may qualify for consideration under statutory blight.

If your property is already on the market and you cannot sell at its unblighted value you may serve a blight notice on us.


Our series of land and property booklets give you more information about all the themes in this factsheet.

They are all available at www.lower-thames-crossing.co.uk

Contact us

Please contact us if you have any queries and we'll get back to you.

 lrc@highwaysengland.co.uk

 0300 123 5000

 www.lower-thames-crossing.co.uk

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