



Rt Hon Louise Haigh MP

By email to: louise.haigh.mp@parliament.uk

14 July 2026

Dear Rt. Hon. Louise Haigh MP

Lower Thames Crossing

We write as we would like you to share this letter with Andy Burnham and suggest that a rethink is required on the Lower Thames Crossing (LTC) which could save £1 billion of public funds. There is still time to reconsider, as no finance is in place, and the contracts to privatise the scheme have not been agreed.

You will be familiar with the Lower Thames Crossing (LTC) from your time as Secretary of State for Transport in 2024, when you initiated the capital spend review, which we supported. Cancelling the LTC now will save at least £1 billion of scarce public funds, and steer Andy Burnham's government away from privatisation of valuable national assets. There is still time to take this decisive action before more public funds are wasted as the National Audit Office has confirmed it will be investigating the LTC.

You will no doubt be aware that the LTC has a very weak business case, with a very low Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of just 1.22, and will only relieve congestion at the Dartford Crossings for five years. Not only that, but the privatisation of LTC and the Dartford Crossings (in perpetuity) will lose the exchequer hundreds of millions of pounds every year through the loss of toll revenues, which the country can ill-afford. Valuable funds will instead be funnelled to private investors, rather than back into the country to reinvest in sustainable transport projects which deliver better value for money and support economic growth.

At the Autumn Budget (26 November 2025) the Chancellor announced¹ £891 million of additional public funding for the LTC in what was described as the "final tranche of government support to enable the private sector to take forward construction and long-term operation". This was to cover the period 2027-29.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/budget-2025-document/budget-2025-html>

However, since then we have discovered that the Department for Transport has allocated a further £174 million to LTC in the RIS3 period (2026-31). We also discovered that LTC is progressing, funded with billions of public funds, without a completed business case. This was covered by *The Guardian* on 8 June 2026².

We wrote to the National Audit Office (NAO) with our concerns about the LTC in March³ and June⁴ this year, and on 8 July the NAO confirmed it will investigate. This was also covered in *The Guardian*⁵.

The cost of LTC has also risen hugely, now expected to cost £11 billion, with over £3 billion coming from public funds. Since you were Secretary of State for Transport the cost of LTC rose 17 per cent in the 9 months from February 2025 to December 2025⁶.

We do not see how progressing a privatised smart motorway, with a weak business case, whilst privatising the Dartford Crossings can be a priority for a new Burnham government, fixed on achieving growth and stability through nationalisation.

We would be happy to meet with you, Andy Burnham, and the new Secretary of State for Transport after the reshuffle to brief you and Labour colleagues on the case against the Lower Thames Crossing. There are many cheerleaders from vested interests for this project, and the dissenting voice is rarely heard. It is time to look at the LTC with fresh eyes, and decide if it is compatible with Labour values and sustainable economic growth.

Yours sincerely,



Abby Coften
Chief Executive
Transport Action Network

² [Extra £174m earmarked for 'spiralling' bill for Lower Thames Crossing](#), The Guardian, 8 June 2026

³ [Transport Action Network letter to National Audit Office](#), 11 March 2026

⁴ [Transport Action Network letter to National Audit Office](#), 26 June 2026

⁵ [UK's public spending watchdog to investigate Lower Thames Crossing project](#), The Guardian, 12 July 2026

⁶ [Lower Thames Crossing spiralling costs: 17% increase in just 9 months](#), TAN, 3 December 2025