



Department
for Transport

Rt Hon Sir George Howarth MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

From the Parliamentary
Under Secretary of State
Richard Holden MP

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Our Ref: MC/433416

5th August 2023

Dear

Sir George

Thank you for your email of 14 July enclosing correspondence from your constituent about the Lower Thames Crossing (LTC). Your letter has been passed to this Department and I am replying as the Minister for Roads and Local Transport.

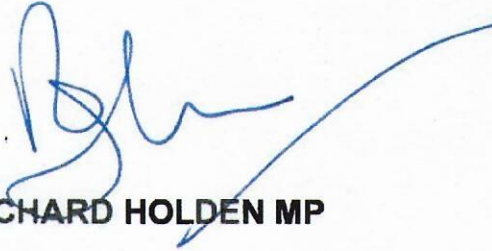
National Highways is procuring the Lower Thames Crossing, including the contract for the Tunnel and approaches, in accordance with UK procurement rules. This includes wider international obligations on government procurements.

I understand from National Highways that Bouygues Murphy is a qualified tenderer for the Lower Thames Crossing tunnels and approaches contract, which forms part of the Lower Thames Crossing project. J Murphy & Son form part of that consortium. National Highways understands that one of their subsidiaries, Murphy International, who are not themselves part of the bidding consortium, is subject to legal action in Ireland in respect of workforce issues. That action is currently ongoing and does not yet have an outcome.

National Highways recognise the need to ensure that contractors fully comply with their legal obligations in respect of trade union recognition and membership. At this stage, it would not be appropriate for National Highways to pre-determine the outcome of any legal case or propose the exclusion of any bidder on these grounds from the procurement process. Any decision to do so might prejudice future action that National Highways could otherwise take under the contract.

However, if it becomes apparent during the procurement process that these requirements have been breached by a bidder, National Highways will, of course, follow the appropriate legal process to determine whether any such bidder should be excluded from the process or whether other action should be taken.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R Holden', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

RICHARD HOLDEN MP

MINISTER FOR ROADS AND LOCAL TRANSPORT