

I have only become aware of this study today and, given that the closing date for comments is also today, I would like to comment without having read any of the reports so far. If what I write is already included in the analysis, then you are entirely free to ignore my submission.

My *perceptions* are that 1) very few civil engineering projects finish within budget and 2) contractors are *obliged* to bid below what they know is the real cost because, otherwise, they have no chance of winning contracts. This applies to all projects from the tiny (filling potholes) to the huge (Channel Tunnel, HS2).

I would like the CMA to report on this, comparing initial bid levels with final costs and/or, for things like filling pothole, adding remedial repair costs when the original work was done to a low standard (low cost). I would then like the study to go on to evaluate whether the differences in cost would have been lower if contractors had been allowed/required to bid at more 'realist' cost levels.

Should this analysis prove 'positive', there would be a follow-up need looking, in particular, at how public purchasers could spot and thereby eliminate unreasonably low tender bids.

Best wishes,

Dr. Adam Pinney
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