

# **The Lake Lothing Third Crossing (Lowestoft)**

## **Development Consent Order 201[\*]**

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Lake Lothing  
**THIRD  
CROSSING**

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### **Document 6.8: Equalities Impact Assessment - Screening**

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**Planning Act 2008**

**Infrastructure Planning**

**The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure)  
Regulations 2009**

Regulation Number: 5(2)(q)

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Author: Suffolk County Council

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Our Ref:  
Date: 11 January 2018  
Enquiries to: Allison Coleman  
Tel: 01473 265160  
Email: Allison.Coleman@suffolk.gov.uk



Dear Katherine

I confirm that the Lake Lothing Third Crossing Equality Impact Assessment was considered by the Suffolk County Council Policy Clearing House on 23 November 2017 and was approved, subject to some minor changes, at that meeting.

The information set out in the EIA was sufficient to demonstrate that impact on the protected characteristics had been considered and there was no evidence of need for a full EIA to be undertaken.

Yours sincerely

*Allison Coleman*

Allison Coleman  
Lead for Equalities and Inclusion  
Localities and Partnerships Team  
Directorate of Health, Wellbeing and Children's Services

## Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) – Initial Screening

*If you include anything on this form that requires protective marking, please annotate accordingly. Sensitive information will have to be removed prior to publication on the SCC website.*

The characteristics protected by the Equality Act are:

<b>Disability</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Sex (gender)</b>
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	<b>Marriage/civil partnership</b>	<b>Pregnancy/maternity</b>
<b>Race</b>	<b>Sexual orientation</b>	<b>Religion/belief</b>

*By law we must have due regard to the need to:*

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act*
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it*
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.*

In effect, this means that we need to ensure that our policies and services are fair, equitable and proportionate and where possible mitigate against any adverse impacts on people from the different protected characteristics.

In addition to the above protected characteristics you should consider the impact of living in a **rural area** as part of this assessment. Where people live is not a characteristic protected by law, but for an organisation such as Suffolk County Council it is good practice to consider carefully how location may affect people's experience of a policy or service.

The Rural-Urban definition (DEFRA) introduced in 2004, defines the rurality of very small census based geographies. Census Output Areas forming settlements with populations of over 10,000 (which are urban), while the remainder are defined as one of three rural types: *town and fringe, village or hamlet and dispersed*.

Details	
<b>Service or policy title</b>	Lake Lothing Third Crossing, Transport Strategy
<b>Lead officer</b> <i>(responsible for the policy or service/function)</i>	Jon Barnard – Project Manager, Lake Lothing Third Crossing
<b>Officers carrying out the screening</b> <i>(at least one must have done EIA training and recommended that an officer responsible for the policy or service/function is involved in the screening)</i>	Katherine Potts Michael Wilks
<b>Is this new or a revision?</b> <i>(If revision state when previous EIA undertaken)</i>	New
<b>Is this the first time this policy or function has been screened?</b> <i>(If not, indicate which iteration this is – 2, 3, etc.)</i>	Yes
<b>Date of completing this EIA screening</b>	December 2017

Description
<p><b>What exactly is proposed?</b> <i>(Describe the service/policy and the changes that are being planned)</i></p> <p>Suffolk County Council are proposing to construct a new crossing over Lake Lothing in Lowestoft.</p>

## Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) – Initial Screening

### **Why?** *(Give reasons why these changes are being introduced)*

The existing bridges over the lake at Mutford Lock and the A47 Bascule Bridge are inadequate to meet current and future traffic demand. Delays and congestion are a common occurrence for drivers, particularly during peak hours, and pedestrians and cyclists often have long and difficult journeys as they travel across the town. A bridge is the “missing link” in Lowestoft.

The key objectives for the projects are to:

- Reduce congestion and delay on the existing bridges over Lake Lothing
- Reduce congestion in the town centre and improve accessibility
- Reduce community severance between North and South Lowestoft
- Encourage people to walk and cycle, and reduce conflict between cyclists, pedestrians and other traffic
- Improve bus journey times and reliability
- Reduce accidents
- Open up opportunities for regeneration and development in Lowestoft
- Provide the capacity needed to accommodate planned growth.

### **What will the effect of the changes be?** *(Describe which people, communities, localities etc. will be affected by the changes)*

The Lake Lothing Third Crossing is a £100m infrastructure project linking Waveney Drive to the south of Lake Lothing to Peto Way on the north side. An Outline Business Case was submitted to the Department for Transport which identified a Benefit Cost Ratio of 8, meaning that for every £1 spent on the scheme, there would be £8 of transport benefits, derived from significant improvements in journey times across Lowestoft; as such the town as a whole benefits from the scheme.

Lowestoft is divided east to west by Lake Lothing which creates significant severance between communities to the north and south. The higher education provision, major retail park and town centre are to the north of the Lake, whereas the predominant residential areas are to the south.

The lack of connectivity across the Lake fundamentally affects the geographies of travel to work, due to the unreliability of journey times caused by the lack of highway capacity across the existing crossings. Improving journey time reliability could increase the accessibility to employment within the town; some of the wards in Lowestoft (for example Kirkley and Normanston) are among the most deprived in the country. These wards are in close proximity to the scheme and therefore would benefit from much swifter journeys across Lake Lothing. Additionally, part of the scheme proposals include providing a new access road through a large brownfield development site, which is allocated for a large mixed use development, but is yet to come forward. The scheme therefore directly enhances opportunities for economic and housing growth.

The crossing is designed to cater for all users and will provide high quality facilities for cyclists and pedestrians which tie in to existing networks. The gradient to the bridge is being designed to be accessible for those in wheelchairs or pushing strollers.

While there are no formal Air Quality Management Areas in Lowestoft, levels near the Bascule Bridge are close to, but just below National Objective levels. Improvements to traffic flow and reductions in congestion, which would be delivered by the scheme, would contribute positively to resolving this issue.

Air quality and noise modelling is being undertaken; the preliminary results do not suggest any significant effects would arise. These results will be interrogated through a public examination and any mitigation deemed necessary will be secured through that process. It should be noted

## Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) – Initial Screening

that as a road scheme, this is not generating 'new' traffic it is redistributing traffic within Lowestoft more efficiently on to roads that can best accommodate it.

### **How will it be implemented?** *(Describe the decision making process, timescales, process for implementation)*

The project is the subject of a Secretary of State for Transport direction that it should be treated as a project of national significance and hence requires a Development Consent Order (DCO). There is a prescribed process for these Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs). We conducted a formal pre-application consultation in Autumn 2017 and are now finalizing the scheme proposals. We intend to submit a DCO application for the scheme to the Planning Inspectorate in March 2018. Providing it is accepted, this will then lead to a Public Examination and finally a decision from the Secretary of State in early 2019. We hope to begin construction in late 2019 and the project will involve a 2 to 3 year build programme.

### **When is it due to start?** *(Planned start of new/revised policy/service)*

Construction should begin late 2019

We are considering impacts in the following categories:

- Impacts arising as a result of the construction of the project
- Impacts arising as a result of the operation of the project
- Impacts arising as a result of land requirements for the project including acquisition of land (compulsorily or by agreement) and temporary possession of land. Our aim in this scheme is to acquire land by agreement where possible. There is potential for people in one or more of the protected characteristics to be affected as part of the land take for the scheme if they are moved. However, the extent to which any one is personally affected is due to their geographical relationship to the scheme, rather than as a consequence of their protected characteristic. People affected by land take have the protection of various articles of the Human Rights Act (right to a fair trial and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, peaceful enjoyment of possessions, private and family life and home), the effect of which is discharged through the way the Planning Act operates, i.e. through statutory consultation and public examination.

## **Data about the user population**

**What is the demographic profile of the community you are serving?** *(A brief overview of quantitative data used and qualitative research undertaken, including customer surveys and focus groups, plus links to reports, local or national data that you have used)*

<http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Neighbourhood-Planning/Town-and-village-profiles/Lowestoft-Town-Profile.pdf> This gives the demographic information for the area.

The scheme has a long history in Lowestoft. In recent years there have been a number of non-statutory consultations from 2014, also newsletters issued widely.

A consultation strategy was developed for the project, and also a Statement of Community Consultation (a required part of the NSIP process)

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/assets/Roads-and-transport/public-transport-and-transport-planning/Lake-Lothing-Third-Crossing-Statement-of-Community-Consultation.pdf>

In Summer 2017 the team attended the Lowestoft Summer Festival to explain the scheme.

A formal consultation ran from 4<sup>th</sup> Sept to 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct 2017. This consisted of a leaflet, brochure, Q and A information, a questionnaire (and online survey), and the Preliminary Environmental Information Report. Posters were put in many public locations such as medical centres, local

## Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) – Initial Screening

supermarkets, the local college and community centres. The consultation was advertised to the hard to reach groups via the SCC lead on equalities and inclusion. We also attended the Waveney Youth Council to speak about the project.

The initial results from the consultation were that we had more than 1400 responses. For those that completed our questionnaire:

- 96% felt that the new crossing was needed
- 84% felt that our proposals address the objectives of the scheme
- 82% supported the proposed design of the bridge
- 78% of respondents felt the proposals for cyclists and pedestrians were appropriate
- 71% felt that the scheme would reduce congestion and improve journey time in Lowestoft overall.

The full results of all the consultation around the Lake Lothing Third Crossing scheme will be incorporated into a Consultation report forming part of our submission to the Planning Inspectorate. Once the document is finalized and in the public domain we will add this to the Lake Lothing Third Crossing page on the SCC website.

**What is the profile of your service users by protected characteristics?** *(Where this data is available. If it is not currently available state any plans to collect this in future)*

We had approximately 1500 responses to the formal consultation.

We asked four optional demographic questions in the questionnaire to assess which groups of people were responding to the consultation and which groups were underrepresented. These questions covered gender, age, disability and ethnicity. 90% of the questionnaires returned completed at least one of these questions.

Gender – our respondents were 60% male and 38% female. This compares to a 50-50 split in the town profile.

Age – we had a good range of ages complete the questionnaire.

16-24 = 2%

25-34 = 10%

35-44 = 12%

45-54 = 17%

55-64 = 22%

65-74 = 27%

75+ = 9%

Respondents with a disability

9% considered themselves to have a disability. 22% preferred not to say.

Ethnicity of respondents

74% white English

21% white British

1% other white background

2% do not want to say

This reflects closely the Lowestoft Town Profile of 97.5% white ethnicity (broad band)

### Implications for communities and workforce

#### Disability

## Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) – Initial Screening

What is the impact on people with a disability (including children with additional needs) and what evidence do you have? <i>(If you do not believe there is any impact describe why not)</i>	It should improve access for all as the bridge will be constructed to a recommended gradient in the Design Manual Roads and Bridges (DMRB) guidance which ensures accessibility for all. All associated footways, road crossings and markings will meet the standards required for those with a visual or hearing impairment.
How does it have a positive or negative impact?	Provides a further route through the town for all users. Non-motorised users will have a safer option away from motorised traffic than the current crossing, creating a positive impact .
Do you expect the extent of the impact to be low, medium or high?	Medium positive impact
What could be done to mitigate any adverse impact or further promote positive impact?	We can ensure that the ease of access to the bridge is well advertised and understood by potential users; through the placing of notices on site. The construction contractors will be required to be members of the Considerate Contractors scheme, as will be secured through the DCO. The contractors will be required to offer community benefits to local groups. We will liaise with the Lowestoft Rising group to seek appropriate communities to work with.
<b>Age</b>	
What is the impact on people of different ages and what evidence do you have? <i>(If you do not believe there is any impact describe why not)</i>	We do not foresee any impact on people of a particular age. Access should be improved for all ages. For construction the contractors will be required through the DCO or separate legal agreement with Waveney District Council to provide apprenticeships, work experience and skills interventions for local people – particularly young people and also the long term unemployed.
How does it have a positive or negative impact?	For people of working age the project should provide more reliable journey times to access work. With associated regeneration and development, the jobs market in Lowestoft should also improve.
Do you expect the extent of the impact to be low, medium or high?	Medium to high positive impact.
What could be done to mitigate any adverse impact or further promote positive impact?	The construction contractors will be required to be members of the Considerate Contractors scheme.  The contractors will be required to offer community benefits to local groups. We will liaise with the Lowestoft Rising group to seek appropriate communities to work with.
<b>Sex (gender)</b>	
What is the impact on people of different genders and what evidence do you have? <i>(If you do not believe there is any impact describe why not)</i>	At this stage of the project no impact is foreseen on people of different genders. The improvements should increase accessibility for all. The responses to our questionnaire indicate that the consultation reached a good balance of people.



## Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) – Initial Screening

How does it have a positive or negative impact?	The project should increase access in Lowestoft for all.
Do you expect the extent of the impact to be low, medium or high?	Low
What could be done to mitigate any adverse impact or further promote positive impact?	<p>The chosen contractors will be required to be members of a Considerate Contractors scheme.</p> <p>The contractors will be required to offer community benefits to local groups. We will liaise with the Lowestoft Rising group to seek appropriate communities to work with.</p>
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	
What is the impact on people who have undergone gender reassignment (i.e. transgender people) and what evidence do you have? <i>(If you do not believe there is any impact describe why not)</i>	At this stage of the project no impact is foreseen on people who have undergone or who are undergoing gender reassignment. The project is designed to increase accessibility for all.
How does it have a positive or negative impact?	The project should increase access in Lowestoft for all.
Do you expect the extent of the impact to be low, medium or high?	Low
What could be done to mitigate any adverse impact or further promote positive impact?	<p>The construction contractors will be required to be members of the Considerate Contractors scheme.</p> <p>The contractors will be required to offer community benefits to local groups. We will liaise with the Lowestoft Rising group to seek appropriate communities to work with.</p>
<b>Marriage/civil partnership</b>	
What is the impact on people who are married or in a civil partnership and what evidence do you have? <i>(If you do not believe there is any impact describe why not)</i>	At this stage of the project no impact is foreseen on people who are married or in a civil partnership.
How does it have a positive or negative impact?	The project should increase access in Lowestoft for all
Do you expect the extent of the impact to be low, medium or high?	Low
What could be done to mitigate any adverse impact or further promote positive impact?	<p>The construction contractors will be required to be members of the Considerate Contractors scheme.</p> <p>The contractors will be required to offer community benefits to local groups. We will liaise with the Lowestoft Rising group to seek appropriate communities to work with.</p>

## Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) – Initial Screening

<b>Pregnancy/maternity</b>	
What is the impact on people who are pregnant women or those with a young child and what evidence do you have? <i>(If you do not believe there is any impact describe why not)</i>	At this stage of the project no impact is foreseen on pregnant women or those with young children.  During construction and in operation, the safety of children will be ensured (around water, attraction to construction vehicles) Safety issues will be covered in the Code of Construction Practice document which will be submitted as part of our application for the scheme.
How does it have a positive or negative impact?	The project should increase access in Lowestoft for all.
Do you expect the extent of the impact to be low, medium or high?	Low
What could be done to mitigate any adverse impact or further promote positive impact?	The construction contractors will be required to be members of the Considerate Contractors scheme.  The contractors will be required to offer community benefits to local groups. We will liaise with the Lowestoft Rising group to seek appropriate communities to work with.
<b>Race</b>	
What is the impact on people from different races or ethnic groups and what evidence do you have? <i>(If you do not believe there is any impact describe why not)</i>	At this stage of the project no impact is foreseen on people from different races or ethnic groups.
How does it have a positive or negative impact?	The project should increase access in Lowestoft for all.
Do you expect the extent of the impact to be low, medium or high?	Low
What could be done to mitigate any adverse impact or further promote positive impact?	The construction contractors will be required to be members of the Considerate Contractors scheme.  The contractors will be required to offer community benefits to local groups. We will liaise with the Lowestoft Rising group to seek appropriate communities to work with.
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	
What is the impact on people according to their sexual orientation and what evidence do you have? <i>(If you do not believe there is any impact describe why not)</i>	At this stage of the project no impact is foreseen on people according to their sexual orientation.
How does it have a positive or negative impact?	The project should increase access in Lowestoft for all.
Do you expect the extent of the impact to be low, medium or high?	Low

## Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) – Initial Screening

What could be done to mitigate any adverse impact or further promote positive impact?	<p>The construction contractors will be required to be members of the Considerate Contractors scheme.</p> <p>The contractors will be required to offer community benefits to local groups. We will liaise with the Lowestoft Rising group to seek appropriate communities to work with.</p>
<b>Religion/belief</b>	
What is the impact on people according to their religion or belief and what evidence do you have? <i>(If you do not believe there is any impact describe why not)</i>	At this stage of the project no impact is foreseen on people according to their religion or belief.
How does it have a positive or negative impact?	The project should increase access in Lowestoft for all.
Do you expect the extent of the impact to be low, medium or high?	Low
What could be done to mitigate any adverse impact or further promote positive impact?	<p>The construction contractors will be required to be members of the Considerate Contractors scheme.</p> <p>The contractors will be required to offer community benefits to local groups. We will liaise with the Lowestoft Rising group to seek appropriate communities to work with.</p>

<b>Rurality</b>	
Where people live is not a characteristic protected by law: but for an organisation such as Suffolk County Council it is good practice to consider carefully how location may affect people's experience of a policy or service.	
What is the impact on people according to whether they live in an urban or rural environment and what evidence do you have? <i>(If you do not believe there is any impact describe why not)</i>	We envisage that the impact of the project on people living in the rural hinterland of Lowestoft will be positively impacted as they would generally drive into/through Lowestoft and it is hoped that their journey times should be shortened.
How does it have a positive or negative impact?	A positive impact as it is hoped journey times will be shortened for road users.
Do you expect the extent of the impact to be low, medium or high?	Medium
What could be done to mitigate any adverse impact or further promote positive impact?	We are investigating the signage for motorists as they approach the crossings to ensure it is clear when bridges will be opened for marine users and hence there may be a delay on certain routes.

<b>Recommendation to Policy Clearing House</b>	
In your opinion, should a full Equality Impact Assessment be carried out for this policy or function?	No

## Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) – Initial Screening

Why?	At this stage of the project it is not expected that any of the people from the groups identified above are negatively affected.
A full EIA involves consultation with all stakeholders: actual and potential service users, staff and management likely to be delivering the policy, partner agencies and Trade Unions. For guidance contact the Equalities Lead Adviser.	