

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Gt Yarmouth Third River Crossing - Local Impact Report of GYBC
Date: 22 October 2019 08:30:58
Attachments: [REDACTED]

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find attached the Local Impact Report of Great Yarmouth Borough Council in relation to the Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing examination. If there are any questions, please contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Adam Nicholls

Adam Nicholls MRTPI
Head of Planning & Growth
[Great Yarmouth Borough Council](#)

Email: [REDACTED]
Website: www.great-yarmouth.gov.uk
Telephone: 01493 846688



<https://www.great-yarmouth.gov.uk/email/signature-image>



To read our email disclaimer visit here: www.great-yarmouth.gov.uk/email-disclaimer



GREAT YARMOUTH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Planning and Growth

Town Hall, Hall Plain
Great Yarmouth
Norfolk, NR30 2QF

Customer Contact Centre

Tel: (01493) 856100

Fax: (01493) 846110

Email: enquiries@great-yarmouth.gov.uk

Website: www.great-yarmouth.gov.uk

National Infrastructure Planning

The Planning Inspectorate

Temple Quay House

Temple Quay

Bristol BS1 6PN

GYTRC@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Our ref: 3RC LIR

Your ref: GY Third River Crossing Examination

22nd October 2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing Development Consent Order application: Local Impact Report of Great Yarmouth Borough Council

Summary

The Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing (3RC) has been a long-held ambition of both Great Yarmouth Borough Council (the Council) and Norfolk County Council (NCC) to help improve access to the port, create jobs, boost economic growth and (by reducing traffic flows through Great Yarmouth town centre) improving traffic congestion, air quality, noise and quality of life. **It is strongly supported by the Council.**

This Local Impact Report does not address every aspect of the 3RC scheme, only considering those issues of more significance to the Council. For clarity, references in this Local Impact Report to Norfolk County Council relate to them as applicant, not as Planning Authority or any other role they play, unless indicated otherwise.

Introduction

Access to the main port area of Great Yarmouth (as distinct from Gorleston, on the other side of the River Yare) is, and remains, not ideal. The South Denes peninsula has had a long history of commercial and industrial uses making use of its river/port access, including fishing, brewing, oil and gas, minerals, import/export and, more recently, offshore wind. In addition, there is a miscellany of other industrial/commercial uses (such as manufacturing and storage) in the area. Whilst significant strengths remain – for example, oil and gas – several sectors (such as fishing) have declined in recent decades.

Very positively, more recent years have seen the rising importance of offshore wind in the North Sea and Great Yarmouth is uniquely-well placed to contribute to this, given its geographical proximity to the opportunity sites. A new Outer Harbour was completed in 2009 to provide all-tide, deep-water access for commercial shipping and Peel Ports has invested very significantly in facilities and infrastructure since arriving in December 2015.

In order to be at the forefront of an estimated £39bn investment in the North Sea offshore energy sector over the next 20 years, much of the South Denes area was included as one of six areas within the Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft Enterprise Zone (EZ). The EZ was approved in 2012,

expanded in size in 2018 and has a number of business benefits, including simplified planning through Local Development Orders (LDOs) and the provision of superfast broadband.

There are a significant number of offshore wind projects progressing through the DCO process in the North Sea and Great Yarmouth (Peel Ports) has already seen the assembly of some turbines and a number of servicing contracts agreed. There is much more potential, with East Anglia 1 and 2, and Vattenfall's Boreas and Vanguard projects all progressing. Agreements in principle have been reached between Vattenfall and Peel Ports for an operations base for the Boreas and Vanguard projects.

However, surface transport access to the port is in need of improvement. The main route for HGVs and cars to South Denes involves passing through Hall Quay, a busy junction which includes the original (Haven) bridge crossing of the River Yare and then traversing South Quay/South Denes Road. To get to Hall Quay from the A47 trunk road, the signed route either from the south (Lowestoft and beyond) or north (Norwich and beyond) is via the busy Gapton Hall A47 roundabout junction, passing along (busy) Pasteur Road and then over the Haven Bridge. An alternative route for traffic from the north is to traverse the town centre (along North Quay) to Hall Quay, which involves passing through some more residential (mixed-use) areas.

A significant volume of HGVs, LGVs, vans and cars access the South Denes area and the impact on the town centre area of Great Yarmouth is considerable: traffic congestion at peak times; noise and poor air quality for pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, residents and office workers; and consequent impact on the quality of life for residents. The North Quay area has long been identified as a regeneration priority for the Council, which is actively progressing this, and the heavily-trafficked (at peak times) North Quay road has not helped with regeneration efforts.

The need for improved traffic links to the port area (South Quay), with the various benefits that would flow from it, forms the main rationale for the 3RC proposal. The Council has worked very closely with NCC to seek to progress the scheme over many years, including successful lobbying of the Government for a significant funding contribution (£98m) towards the project.

The Proposal

The proposed 3RC will link South Quay (close to the junction with Sutton Road) across the river to a new five-arm roundabout, one arm of which will connect to the Harfrey's A47 roundabout junction. The aim is therefore to provide a quicker, more convenient, access to the port and Enterprise Zone area from the A47, which will not require passing through Great Yarmouth town centre, the Haven Bridge and Hall Quay.

The Planning Policy Position in Principle

The Council adopted the Local Plan Part 1 (Core Strategy) in December 2015 and there are a number of positive references to the Third River Crossing in the document. Firstly, in the Vision (paragraph 3.1.9) it is stated:

A Third River Crossing over the River Yare is envisioned, along with improvements to public transport and the creation of attractive walking and cycling routes from the train station to the waterfront, town centre and seafront, which will relieve congestion and provide essential links to key facilities and services, including the outer harbour.

Secondly, Strategic Objective 4 (SO4) says that the local economy will have its competitiveness strengthened by (bullet point 3): *"Promoting the River Port and Outer Harbour on a local, national, European and international scale as an attractive base for businesses"* and SO7 (Securing the delivery of key infrastructure by): *Encouraging efficient patterns of movement by recognising the strategic role that the A47, a Third River Crossing, the river port, outer harbour and rail corridor (including a rail freight interchange) will play in meeting the borough's needs".*

Thirdly, Policy CS16 (*Improving accessibility and transport*) says that high priority infrastructure schemes to (*inter alia*) help improve congestion and accessibility include (bullet point 4):

“Supporting proposals for a third river crossing over the River Yare which appropriately balances the needs of road and river traffic and continuing to protect the route alignment”.

Supporting text to Policy CS16 (partial) states:

4.16.3 Easing congestion and improving the transportation network will make the borough more desirable to investors and improve air quality through a reduction in traffic emissions. To help ease congestion, the Council with its partner organisations and the local transport operators are pursuing a range of different options, including:

** Supporting the development of a Third River Crossing to reduce congestion within the heritage area of North Quay and South Quay, reducing pressure on Haven Bridge and generally improving access across the River Yare and to help the Outer Harbour realise its long-term potential. This scheme is supported in principle by the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership in their emerging New Anglia Plan for Growth and features in the Norfolk & Suffolk Local Transport Body’s list of top priority schemes. Norfolk County Council have adopted a preferred route alignment for a third river crossing south of the existing bridges; this route will continue to be safeguarded by Great Yarmouth Borough Council and Norfolk County Council [and this is shown on the adopted Policies Map]...*

and, with reference to the Norfolk Local Transport Plan 2011-2026 (paragraph 4.16.9), states that one measure (bullet point 2) is:

“Developing a Third River Crossing over the River Yare to create a new link between the trunk road network and the port, as well as reducing congestion in the town”.

In principle, therefore, the Core Strategy is very supportive of the 3RC and has an adopted route alignment, with this also factored into the South Denes Local Development Order area.

The Details of the Proposal

The DCO submission (including the Environmental Statement) contains all the details of the proposed bridge and associated structures and works. The proposed extent, line and orientation is slightly different from that shown on the Council’s Policies Map, but this is not unexpected as the scheme has evolved over the last few years.

The eastern side of the works (on the Yarmouth side of the river) is in a commercial/industrial area, with the nearest residential areas some distance away. Almost all the DCO area falls within the Port Operational Land classification (saved Local Plan policies EMP 23-26) and is safeguarded employment land (Core Strategy policy CS6). It also falls within Flood Zone 3 (tidal flooding).

The western side (Gorleston) is more residential in character; some properties on Southtown Road would need to be lost (it is understood that all necessary properties are being, or have already been, acquired by NCC), with a small number of businesses affected too. Part of the land needed falls within the Main Urban Area and Village Development Limits (saved Local Plan policies HOU7, 8 and 21) and the part immediately adjacent to the river lies within Port Operational Area too. Like land on the eastern side, the whole of the 3RC area on the western side falls within Flood Zone 3.

Open Space

The open space situation is detailed in paragraphs 8.3.68-80 of NCC Document 7.1: The Case for the Scheme (including Planning Statement) and therefore does not need to be repeated at length by the Council. However, briefly, part of the land needed for the 3RC is an area classed as Open Amenity Space (saved Local Plan policy REC11). Although this policy remains part of the Development Plan for the time being, it is almost 20 years old and not entirely consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and can thus probably be given only a limited amount of weight in any planning decision. This policy is due to be replaced on adoption of the Part 2 Local Plan, which is scheduled to be in December 2020. In any case, as stated above, Core Strategy

Policy CS16 contains an adopted 3RC route alignment, and as the more recently adopted Local Plan document, this carries more weight than Policy REC11.

The Council's position is that this land is surplus to requirements, is of no value for existing or planned future recreational facilities (and that there are also extensive sport/recreational facilities just across the road from this piece of land). The Council acknowledges that the site does have some value in terms of local visual amenity but considers that this is very limited. **The loss involved would be significantly outweighed by the value to the wider through the provision of the Third River Crossing.**

The new landscaping proposals as part of the 3RC are warmly welcomed by the Council and as set out in the Statement of Common Ground, the Council will continue to work with Norfolk County Council on the ongoing development and refinement of these proposals.

Flood risk

As stated above, the whole of the 3RC area lies within Flood Zone 3. The area is vulnerable to tidal flooding but also has some vulnerability to river flooding and surface water flooding. The Flood Risk Assessment (FRA, document 6.2 in the examination library) concludes that there is negligible risk to the scheme from fluvial, groundwater, sewer and artificial sources of flooding. The FRA also concludes that the scheme has the potential to increase tidal flooding elsewhere, albeit (paragraph 7.2.2) it is a very small area and affects only two properties. Given the small number of the affected properties, the FRA does not propose any specific physical mitigation measures but proposes the preparation of an emergency preparedness and response plan, which would (it says in para 7.2.3) reduce the overall impact to "slight adverse".

The Council is aware of the Environment Agency's "holding" objection on (tidal) flood risk grounds, as set out in its Relevant Representation. Whilst the Council obviously does not wish to see any significant increase in flood risk to its residents and businesses as a result of the 3RC scheme, it notes NCC's response to Relevant Representations (document NCC/GY3RC/EX/008, published on 10th October 2019). In particular reference to the EA's objection, NCC says it will continue to engage with the EA, but that it believes that further sensitivity modelling it (NCC) is undertaking is not thought likely to change the outcomes and conclusions of the FRA. The Council is therefore content with the tidal flood risk position as it stands.

In terms of flooding elsewhere, the area around the western part of the 3RC scheme has seen regular flooding over the years. This tends to be surface water flooding and/or flooding from ordinary watercourses – most recently, there was flooding during the very heavy rain of 6th October 2019. The drainage infrastructure is mainly ordinary watercourses managed by the relevant Internal Drainage Board and/or riparian owners. Whilst the IDB has worked with the Council and NCC to deliver some improvements to the situation (cleaning culverts and installing a retention pond), the overall lack of capacity of the system to deal with intense rainfall will remain a problem. It is therefore important to the Council that any surface water runoff from the 3RC does not worsen the situation – again, this matter is detailed in the Council's/NCC's Statement of Common Ground.

The Drainage Strategy (document 6.2) notes (paragraph 2.3.1 and 2.3.2) that that two options are to drain via a pumped system to the River Yare or (NCC's preferred option) to discharge via gravity to the IDB ordinary watercourse area. Whilst the Council would prefer discharge to the River Yare, it notes that the Drainage Strategy says (para 2.3.5) that receiving culverts etc will be improved if necessary and that (para 2.3.16) there will be two attenuation storage ponds developed. The Council is content that this will, at least, not lead to an increase in flood risk downstream of the 3RC site.

On the eastern side of the river, the Drainage Strategy says (para 2.3.13-14) that discharge to combined sewers is the preferred option as alternatives are not viable. Attenuation features will be required (para 2.4.15); the Council is content with this.

Air quality

The air quality monitoring and modelling work undertaken by NCC concludes (paragraph 4.1.5 of the ES Non-Technical Summary) that no sensitive receptors within 200m of road links to the scheme will see any exceedance of any Air Quality Objectives. It also concludes that more properties will see a moderate improvement of air quality through re-routing of traffic away from Hall Quay and the town centre. This is, of course, one of the major benefits of the scheme and is warmly welcomed by the Council as it aligns well with the Council's Town Centre Masterplan and regeneration aspirations in the Core Strategy.

Transport Assessment

The Council has relatively few comments on the bulk of the Transport Case for the scheme, being very supportive of it. The key conclusions – and the rationale for the whole scheme – are that (pages 2 and 3 of the Transport Assessment, document 7.2):

- Traffic using the Haven Bridge is projected to be reduced by 41-45%; and
- There will be significantly faster journey times, particularly between A47 (south) and the Outer Harbour, but also for other trips for locals, visitors and businesses.

As stated earlier in the LIR, the Council feels strongly that these changes will be of significant economic benefit to the town, borough, county, region and country, given Great Yarmouth's international reputation for excellence in the offshore and related sectors. The considerable predicted improvements in north-south travel times in the Borough (caused by lower reliance on the existing two bridges, especially in the event of a breakdown in one of the bridges) is a major benefit. The reduction in traffic through the town centre will also lead to significant environmental and social benefits.

The introduction/strengthening of links for walking and cycling – to better connect the two sides of the river – is also welcomed by the Council.

Natural environment

The River Yare falls within the Outer Thames Estuary SPA and there are some protected species and trees in the vicinity of the 3RC site. However, the conclusions of the Habitat Regulations Assessment and the Environmental Statement are that with appropriate mitigation measures in place, any remaining impacts would be minor and not significant, with no adverse impact on the Outer Thames Estuary SPA or any other nearby Natura 2000 sites. The Council is content with this.

Historic and built environment/cultural heritage

The immediate 3RC area is not within any Conservation Areas, although the Camperdown Conservation area lies a short distance to the north-east of the eastern end of the 3RC area. Several other heritage assets, such as the Nelson monument, are also close by. Whilst a large and imposing new structure will inevitably have effects on the townscape, the Council is content with the conclusions of the ES of impacts being limited.

In relation to the landscaping and use of materials and surfacing treatments at either end of the bridge it is important – especially on the eastern side – that they are harmonious with existing signage, materials, planting treatments and landscaping so that they do not appear as “discordant” elements in the streetscape. The Council will continue to work with NCC to agree the precise details as the scheme progresses (as set out in the Statement of Common Ground) and the significant improvements to the western end are welcomed.

Socio-economic elements

The Council acknowledges that there will be some negative effects – including the loss of some houses and some inevitable disruption to some residents and visitors (noise, dust, traffic impacts etc) during construction. There will also be disruption to some local businesses, in some cases permanently through their land being required for the 3RC, and in some cases temporarily during the construction period (traffic disruption, noise, dust etc).

However, appropriate mitigation measures – such as re-housing affected people and dust control measures – should ensure that these impacts are reduced to acceptable levels.

The wider benefits of making the port area more accessible for businesses, and reducing traffic (especially HGV traffic) through the town centre are considerable, and are likely to lead to the whole area (town, borough and wider environs) becoming more attractive place to live, work, recreate and do business in.

Conclusion

The Council believes that the Third River Crossing project is in conformity with the Council's Local Plan and would lead to significant improvements to the immediate and wider area. Whilst there are – inevitably – some minor negative impacts, these are concluded to be **overwhelmingly outweighed by the social, economic and environmental benefits of the scheme.**

Yours faithfully,



Adam Nicholls
Head of Planning and Growth