



CHAPTER TWENTY TWO
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS
OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

22. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

This Chapter contains the overall conclusions of the Environmental Statement that have been finalised following a consultation period on the Consultation Draft Environmental Statement issued in March 2004.

Chapter 5 details the multi criteria analysis results. An options appraisal was undertaken with reference to a number of environmental criteria that were determined during the workshop. The results show that the proposed second opening bridge option has the lowest risk to environmental criteria assessed during the construction phase. It is important to note that although this option has been ranked as the most preferable, in the construction phase it is difficult to discern any meaningful differences on environmental criteria between all of the bridge crossing options over the Backwater Channel at this same location. During the operation phase, the tunnel option under Holes Bay has the lowest risk based on the environmental criteria assessed, closely followed by all the bridge crossing options in the location of the proposed second opening bridge. It is worth noting that this tunnel option has one of the highest risks to the environmental criteria during the construction phase.

Table 21.2 in Chapter 21 details the impacts expected as a result of construction and operation of the second opening bridge in Poole which is the preferred option. The table indicates that there are positive and negative impacts anticipated from the scheme to construct and operate the proposed bridge, approach and link roads.

Receptors that are most significantly negatively impacted as a result of the proposed second opening bridge are the maritime users, ecology, local cultural heritage and the local community (specifically visual amenity and disturbance temporarily during construction).

Of the physical environmental impacts that are anticipated (related principally to contaminated sediments, hydrodynamics and surface water) the ultimate receptor in most cases is ecology (aquatic and terrestrial).

In most cases, when mitigation measures are implemented, the significance of the potential negative impact is reduced to a low or neutral impact. The exceptions to this even with mitigation in place, in the same order as they appear in Table 21.2 are:

- Direct removal of a relatively small area of subtidal habitat as a result of dredging in construction;
- The bridge, new road infrastructure and relocated moorings functioning as a visual intrusion in the local community;
- The demolition of a locally listed building during construction;
- Disruption to boat users using the Backwater Channel during operation of the two bridges, and
- Construction noise and vibration from equipment used during construction impacting on the local community.

These are residual impacts. Each of these impacts remains as a negative impact with medium significance, with the exception of demolition of the locally listed building which remains as high significance. There is not considered to be appropriate mitigation to reduce the significance of any of these impacts further. As explained in Chapter 21, the mitigation does not reduce the significance of the impact because the significance scale is only divided into three categories. For example, the mitigation measure implemented to address the impact of demolition of the locally listed building is to

make an archaeological record prior to its removal. Although this is appropriate mitigation, it does not result in a lower category of impact (i.e. medium) for the demolition. It is noted that the impacts relating to construction noise and vibration will be temporary.

The reduction in significance of other negative impacts will be determined by the correct implementation of mitigation measures. This will be controlled through implementation of the Construction Environmental Management Plan explained in Chapter 20, which will detail all mitigation measures, how and when they should be implemented and whose responsibility it is to implement them.

There are other predicted negative impacts that fall within the category of low significance after mitigation has been implemented. These impacts will occur, but are assessed as being of such low magnitude that they are of limited and localised concern. These include:

- Impact on surface water quality;
- Impact on aquatic ecology;
- Impact on navigation and maritime traffic issues (other than those noted above), and
- Impact on issues related to road traffic and transport during the construction phase resulting in local disruption (a temporary impact).

The positive impacts anticipated as a result of the proposed bridge are generally related to social issues in the operation phase. These include, in the same order as they appear in Table 21.2:

- The proposed bridge functioning as a landmark;
- Improvements to the local road network resulting in reliable journey times;
- Improved access to the Port of Poole;
- Improved access for emergency services across the Backwater Channel;
- Improved safety for road users including pedestrians and cyclists using the bridge;
- Improvements in local air quality as a result of improved traffic flows;
- Improvements to community movements between Hamworthy and Poole thus reducing social exclusion and improving employment opportunities, and
- Improved regeneration potential for the area such as development of the former power station site.

These positive impacts are in line with the overall objectives of the scheme as explained in Chapter 1.

A Cumulative Impacts assessment is discussed in Chapter 19. The second opening bridge is part of a wider regeneration scheme of the central area of Poole. When considering all the regeneration projects together, construction impacts will be influenced to the greatest degree by the timing of the individual developments. There are various positive and negative impacts that could be inferred from the regeneration as a whole, but a lack of detailed data meant that an accurate assessment was not achieved for the operation phase.

Summary and Overall Conclusions

- The Environmental Impact Assessment has been undertaken in line with the methodology required by legislation. Extensive consultation has been carried out throughout the process with statutory and non-statutory stakeholders. A wide range of detailed scientific studies have been undertaken to enable the potential impacts of the construction and operation of the scheme to be assessed.
- The proposed scheme scored very well in the Options Appraisal on environmental grounds compared with the other 12 alternatives considered in the assessment.
- Those detrimental impacts that have been identified in the EIA as a result of the proposed scheme can, in the main, be reduced or removed altogether by effective mitigation.
- The proposed link across the Backwater Channel will provide greater social connectivity and regeneration potential for land on the Hamworthy side of the Channel. Regeneration will open up land for new housing, employment and leisure opportunities.
- The construction and operation of the bridge will not have an overall detrimental impact on the SPA/RAMSAR/SSSI site integrity or species for which the sites are designated. In addition, there is no requirement to create any compensatory habitat as a result of the scheme.
- The only confirmed protected species are common lizards on the power station site. These will be relocated to a suitable receptor site.
- Significant improvements are achieved in reducing traffic congestion and delay from the proposed scheme.
- The scheme also results in improved pedestrian and cyclist facilities.
- Improved traffic flows will result in improvements in local air quality.
- The proposed bridge will be a local landmark structure.
- The loss of one locally listed building is required. This will be archaeologically recorded prior to demolition.
- Boat users will be affected by the increase in time required to transit the two bridges. A Bridge Operating Board will enable the operating schedule to be managed effectively. More bridge lifts will be offered during the summer weekends/Bank Holidays.
- Some moorings will need to be relocated from the area around the proposed bridge. All moorings moved can be relocated to Holes Bay if required. The relocated moorings will result in a visual impact from certain viewpoints in Holes Bay, but the layout will be drawn up to avoid the appearance of a regimented 'block' of boats.
- Although Wilkins Way will be lost as an access point to the water in the Backwater Channel, other 'Ways' will be improved as a mitigation.

- Effective measures will be put in place to manage boat safety including moorings for temporary use for boats transiting the basin. A new Control Room sited between the existing and proposed bridge will be used for control of the bridge operation.
- The amount of sediment released into the water column will be small as the volume of dredging required has been minimised and the dredging method utilised will be selected appropriately. The shellfish beds in Poole Harbour are not at risk from the proposals.
- Overall, the EIA process has not highlighted the presence of any permanent negative impacts that are of high significance, with the exception of demolition of the locally listed building.
- **On the contrary, there are a significant number of permanent positive impacts, of medium and high significance that are expected as a result of construction and operation of the proposed scheme.**

