

OBJECTOR NO. 1544

THAMES GATEWAY BRIDGE

PROOF OF EVIDENCE

MR ROY ALFRED CARRIER

VOLUME 1 – SUMMARY

29 MAY 2005

1. SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

- 1.1 My name is Roy Alfred Carrier and I appear at this Public Inquiry as an objector.
- 1.2 It is not known what the environmental impact will be on the quality of life of the residents of the London Borough of Bexley as a result of the traffic levels likely to be generated by the use of the Bridge.
- 1.3 It is not known whether the London Borough of Bexley road network can function effectively if the Bridge were to be introduced.
- 1.4 The traffic and environmental impacts on Bexley are as great if not greater than any other authority.
- 1.5 The Bexley Council resolved - Minute 92 (11/04) that planning permission should not be granted until: -
 - (a) A full traffic impact assessment in relation to the Bexley road network with reliable assumptions and traffic figures have been published.
 - (b) Measures have been agreed and funded to control and mitigate increased traffic flows on residential roads.

2. TRAFFIC IMPACT

- 2.1 For the Greenwich Council to have granted planning permission without a full traffic impact assessment in relation to the Bexley road network was an act with complete disregard to the well-being of Bexley's residents. I am of that view for the reasons stated in the Main Text of my proof.

- 2.2 The Bexley Council's concerns seem to have increased even after, presumably, intensive negotiations with TfL.
- 2.3 It would be precipitous to grant planning permission if concerns cannot be vanquished at this point in time.
- 2.4 Drivers who choose to use the TGB will have to weave their way as best they can via an inadequate network to and from the A2.
- 2.5 I agree with the Main Findings of the report of the John Elliott Consultancy (March 2003) (page 4) under the heading "Transport role, traffic flows and environmental impacts".
- 2.6 There was little substance in the assumption that the Thames Gateway Bridge was a predominantly local crossing for local people since it links directly to the major trunk road network on the north side, and to the expressway system around Thamesmead, which links readily to the strategic road network, on the South side.
- 2.7 I cannot pretend to understand all of the technical jargon expressed by Terry Wong in his Proof of Evidence on Traffic (1774/2/A1) but with that caveat I agree with his key conclusions as set out in paragraph 7 because they cover the very misgivings dealt with in the Main Text of my proof.
- 2.8 The Bexley Council's other proof of evidence on highways was not available on the date this proof was prepared, namely, 29 May 2005.

3. TRAFFIC MITIGATION MEASURES

- 3.1 How can traffic mitigation measures be prepared if there has not been a full traffic impact assessment in relation to the Bexley road network? It is not even a chicken-and-egg problem
- 3.2 Why on earth could not the mitigation measures be settled before permission was granted in view of the fact that some roads in the London Borough of Bexley are believed to already operate at or above theoretical capacity?
- 3.3 What purpose will be served by ongoing monitoring if at the outset traffic levels are over the top?
- 3.4 There is no evidence as to how the sum of £11.45 million was calculated or whether it will be sufficient nor of its division between the affected boroughs.
- 3.5 Who knows whether the mitigation measures will mitigate?
- 3.6 To have decided that the three measures set out in Table 14.13 of the Environmental Statement and any others should not be worked up before the application for planning permission was made is indicative of TfL's naïve approach to the project so far as the residents of the London Borough of Bexley are concerned
- 3.7 To say that the issues I have specified can be secured through the use of conditions and legal agreements is a spurious tactic.

4. TRANSPORT

- 4.1 There appears to be little information available concerning the impact of

buses.

4.2 The omission of buses from the SATURN highway model raises concerns that buses and their effects on highway capacity have not been given sufficient consideration.

4.3 There is an intention to set up a comprehensive bus service without any regard whatsoever to the impact it will have on the Bexley road network.

4.4 Planning permission should not be granted where the effects of buses on highway capacity have not been fully researched and details of bus routes are non-existent.

5. TOLL CHARGES

5.1 The maximum tolls are ludicrously low and will encourage non-local use.

5.2 There is potential conflict between two competing aims of TGB.

5.3 Despite the results of TfL's modeling the maximum toll level to be charged is not thought to be of a sufficient amount to discourage the transfer of long-distance journeys from other routes, thereby undermining the objectives that the TGB aims to achieve

5.4 The formula for calculating the possible changes to the future toll charges relates to changes in the retail price index and does not take into account the future impact on the adjoining boroughs or the possible increased attraction of non-local traffic.

5.5 Information relating to the local area boundary is unclear at present because three possible areas are currently being considered.

5.6 The mechanism that is proposed for the review of toll charges is purely time related and to each calendar year. No procedure has been suggested that would assess other impacts the TGB may generate, such as a higher than expected attraction of non-local trips or the effects of local traffic management schemes.

5.7 An agreement should be sought that the Bexley Council will have increased involvement in the decision making processes that are likely to impact on its borough.

5.8 I am appalled that it is thought that decisions of the Consultative Body need only be taken shortly before bridge opening.

6. Early Approval

6.1 The notion of Greenwich Council and TfL that the application in respect of a scheme costing an estimated £641 million (nominal terms) should be dealt with expeditiously, is not one that could be looked on favourably by residents adversely affected by the project to say the least of it.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 The TGB is TfL's Trojan Horse.