

Simon Wolff Charitable Foundation

Science - Transport - Health

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Inquiry Manager
Thames Gateway Bridge Public Inquiry
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Dear Mr Groom

You indicated to me in our recent conversation that bullet points were needed as a summary of the full proof we must hand in in August. I see this as also indicating the scope of cross-examination by me. If you need further hard copies of this, please could you give me a few days.

1. Re: Rosewell: "Regeneration Implications of Thames Gateway"

Tables 1 and 3, Access and Job Seekers' Allowance Claimants for ten London Boroughs show a significant positive correlation: the better the access, the greater the unemployment.

The data as to access and Index of Multiple Deprivation (Tables 2 and 3) show a negative correlation: better access goes with greater deprivation.

Rosewell claims East London has poorer access than West London based on five boroughs chosen from each half (Table 3). Writing W for a West borough, E for East borough, and listing the boroughs in order of access, best on the left, the order is: W W E E W E W E W E. How is West better?

The five west boroughs average some 14% above the east boroughs. The t test shows no significant difference between East and West, as also does Wilcoxon in Mann Whitney form. And this although Rosewell has chosen her boroughs presumably to present a favourable picture.

Rosewell singles out Newham (3.3.6) as exemplifying misery and poverty - and it has almost the worst IMD in the whole country – but its access is close to the best of ten. Richmond has almost the worst access of 10 but far and away the best figures for employment and IMD.

Many reasons and examples given e.g. in the Whitelegg Report suggest why better access can destroy employment – most obviously local people use the better access to shop at out-of-town hypermarkets.

There is no sign that Rosewell has validated her model by applying her analysis London-wide, country-wide and Europe-wide to test the relationship of access to unemployment and general deprivation.

In Tables 4 and 5 Rosewell points to some lack of general amenities in East London but no reason to link this with access or TGB. Rather her tables suggest: save the money from TGB and build hospitals etc

Chapter 5 muddles together transport improvements. But Rosewell's figures show the Inquiry needs disaggregation. Table 6 reveals that building TGB adds 6 access points to East London, nothing to West. But building CrossRail adds 5 points in East London, 3 in West. XR gives virtually the same access as TGB to East London – and better access to West London too. Rosewell argues (5.4) that helping London helps the whole country: Likewise helping West London helps East London.

Chapter 5 also muddles together different areas of London: much of the employment and access data in Fig 2 and Fig E3 come from the City where a huge well-paid labour force is largely brought in by long rail commuting trips. What application has this to a motorway bridge on Thamesmead?

Again, no attempt to evaluate more cost-efficient transport or transport less damaging to local people: we will show that DLR extensions do better, just as Rosewell's figures show that XR is more cost-effective.

Chapters 6 and 7 blur everything into a glorious muddle by adding to the TGB case (if any) any sort of initiative and funding for any purpose. The right way – which we will demonstrate – is to find which steps give which improvement for how much.

In conclusion, Rosewell has thrown hugely over-aggregated figures in, been unable to use those to prove her case, and then adds in other spendings and improvements which could be done without TGB.

2. Re: Traffic, Tolling, Public Transport and Appraisal

Table 36: the “do minimum” comparisons with the Scheme are not realistic in assuming broadly similar traffic levels with or without the scheme. Alternative figures (to be sketched) should be given to assist the Inquiry.

The comparisons ought also, in a way to be sketched out, compare not just with “do minimum” but with “do rail/DLR”.

Table 34/35: the benefits are as to 90%, time savings. The calculation ought to be perturbed using other values of time, which is mainly subjective. There is no reality giving the value of saving a few minutes of drivers’ time as £2.5bn as though this figure were in any way comparable to actually spending £2.5bn.

3. Re: Bridge Engineering and Cost Estimates

This report should include comparisons with other road and road bridge schemes to assess the credibility of the estimate. We will sketch this and show that the costs quoted are far too low.