



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOAT OWNERS

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NABO Response to NR Consultation for the upgrade to the railway between Huddersfield and Westtown (Dewsbury)

October 2019

This response contains the comments and evidence provided by The National Association of Boat Owners (NABO) in October 2019 for the Network Rail **Consultation on Huddersfield and Westtown (Dewsbury)**

The National Association of Boat Owners is dedicated to promoting the interests of private boaters on Britain's canals, rivers and lakes. NABO was formed in 1991 and represents over 3,000 boaters predominantly on the waterways operated by The Canal and Rivers Trust and the Environment Agency. Views of members are obtained through correspondence, Association publications, surveys, open meetings, and face to face contact with boaters at boat shows and on the waterways.

NABO wish to express their appreciation for the opportunity to contribute to the consultation.

General

NABO supports the principles of increasing the capacity of the railway lines, the provision of improved cross-country passenger services between canal towns and centres. We have reviewed the proposals and note that the works do come close to and cross the canal in several places that we have identified. We comment on these alone. If we have missed something in the detail and there is another canal crossing, we would be happy to comment. We have also reviewed the plans at

<https://www.networkrail.co.uk/running-the-railway/railway-upgrade-plan/key-projects/transpennine-route-upgrade/huddersfield-to-westtown-dewsbury/>

There are four issues for NABO

Firstly, that existing navigation and towpath use is not inhibited by change in alignment, head room or width in the proposed construction of crossings.

Secondly that construction nuisance is minimised, and this includes noise and light pollution, and maintaining through navigation during construction.

Thirdly that use is made of the canals for construction work and that NR leave a legacy of facilities such as moorings and jetties that may be further utilised by others.

Fourth, that long term noise pollution is considered for canal users.

1. Specific crossing issues.

Broad Canal Crossing at Colne Bridge

We note that the plan is to reconstruct the bridge over the Huddersfield Broad Canal to provide the wider track capacity. We comment that that existing navigation and towpath use should be not inhibited by change in alignment, head room or width in the proposed construction of crossing. The upstream canal lock is very close to the bridge and it is not possible to confirm that the intended orientation of the abutments will facilitate navigation. Boats are not articulated and are no longer drawn by horses. It follows that they need space to turn and cannot be assumed to run on railway lines, and also need line of sight through the bridge. There are many badly aligned road and rail bridges on the canal system, and we ask for careful design and consultation with local boating organisations to confirm the suitability of the final layout. It is apparent that many design organisations do not understand the navigation of craft. The bridge is portrayed differently on the plans. We note that the plan for Deighton and Bradley shows unrealistic alignment for navigation of the bridge.

Calder and Hebble Navigation and River Calder viaduct

We note that the plan is to reconstruct the viaduct over the Navigation and River to provide the wider track capacity. We comment that that existing navigation and towpath use should be not inhibited by change in alignment, head room or width in the proposed construction of crossing. In view of the scale of this structure, it appears that this will be the lesser of the problems from the point of view of navigation but again this should be designed not impede canal navigation. We note the temporary bridge on the river and this should not impede navigation.

2. Construction nuisance

We draw your attention to the fact that the adjacent canal is in itself a residential and amenity area, and exposure to excessive noise and light will

blight the area particularly at night. NR are requested to ensure that significant noise abatement is applied to the construction work. It is important that navigation is maintained during the works, except for agreed stoppages. The canal system supports an industry for leisure and commercial activities, and long and unplanned closures will destroy this. It will need careful management.

3. Use of the canals in construction

NABO in principle welcomes the use of the canal for bulk transport. This will cause inconvenience and some risk to canal users, and it is important that this is recognised and managed, and also that legacy benefits are realised after the project. Towpath improvements are not enough. There must be something for navigation too.

4. Long term noise abatement.

We draw your attention to the fact that the adjacent canal is in itself a valuable residential and amenity area, and long-term exposure to excessive noise will blight the area particularly at night. There will be residents and holiday makers sleeping on boats on the waterways. We ask that NR consider all aspects of noise such as but not limited to traction noise, rail squeal, rail joint click clack etc., both to minimise and abate.

This completes the submission.

D Fletcher

On behalf of the National Association of Boat Owners

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