



## **Port of London Authority Response**

### **National Infrastructure Commission – call for evidence**

#### **3.1 London's transport infrastructure**

*The Commission is seeking evidence related to London's transport infrastructure, with particular emphasis on large-scale transport infrastructure improvements. Our response relates to the future potential of the Thames, the role it plays as both: transport infrastructure itself; and as a key transport route for construction of major new infrastructure, removing pressure on London's existing transport network.*

#### **Thames potential**

Over the last nine months we have been developing, with stakeholders, a Vision for the development of the Thames over the next 20 years. The project has identified potential for increasing all types of river use, linking it to the growth of the city, particularly to the east. We are currently consulting on the emerging conclusions of this work around six goals, of which the following three relate to transport infrastructure:

- The busiest ever Port of London, handling 60 – 80 million tonnes of cargo each year (in 2014 the port handled 44.5 million tonnes)
- Double the number of people travelling by river – reaching 20 million commuter and tourist trips every year
- More goods and materials moved between wharves on the river, taking 550,000 lorry trips off the region's roads

A summary of the Thames Vision Goals and Priority Actions can be found on line, using this link: <http://pla.co.uk/assets/thamesvisionsummary.pdf>

The full Thames Vision Goals and Priority Actions consultation document can be found using this link: <http://pla.co.uk/assets/thamesvisionmain.pdf>

More information on the Thames Vision project is at: [www.pla.co.uk/ThamesVision](http://www.pla.co.uk/ThamesVision)

We have included overleaf further information on: the Thames' existing contribution as a transport route; how the Thames is used to deliver major infrastructure schemes in the capital; the economic contribution that flows from employment of people working on and around the river; and river crossings.

### Thames as a passenger travel route

- In 2014, there were ten million passenger trips on the Thames. The Thames Vision project has identified scope to double this.
- In the last couple of years, the river passenger transport network has grown west to Putney; in the coming years it is expected to grow to the east – with a series of new pier opportunities already identified.

#### *Actions required for greater passenger travel:*

- *Continued engagement between the PLA, the Mayor's team, the GLA, Transport for London and the Assembly around the ambitious targets to increase passenger travel.*
- *Making more efficient use of piers and riverspace, including new timetabling to manage peaks in traffic.*
- *Encouraging more use of piers at current low peak times.*
- *Long-term pier strategy, going beyond the existing River Action Plan: new piers at Thamesmead, Erith, Greenhithe, Swanscombe, Grays and Tilbury by 2025.*

### The Thames and major infrastructure schemes

- The record 5.5 million of freight moved between wharves on the Thames in 2014, kept more than 250,000 loaded lorries off London's congested roads.
- Major schemes using the river as part of their logistics chains include:
  - Crossrail moved three million tonnes of excavated material away from London on the Thames, with 1,528 shipments taking 150,000 lorries off the roads.
  - Crossrail also used the Thames to move 110,000 tunnel segments for the eastern twin tunnels, from the factory where they were made in the Medway to the main tunnel drive site in Bow Creek, close to Trinity Buoy Wharf, saving an estimated 10,000 lorry movements.
  - Blackfriars Bridge station project over three years, starting in 2011, 80,000 tonnes of construction materials and site waste was moved on the Thames, including cranes, scaffolding, pre-cast concrete sections and 25-tonne steel rib sections that made up the skeleton of the bridge.
  - The Thames Tideway Tunnel project team has a legal commitment to move over 5.5 million tonnes of tunneling materials by river during their seven-year project, and is adopting a 'river first' policy, where materials can only be transported by road if it can be demonstrated it impossible to do it by river. This project will link to the Lea Tunnel scheme, which itself used the River Thames to move 1.7 million tonnes of excavated material from Beckton and Abbey Mills.
  - Northern Line extension: 600,000 tonnes of excavated waste material is being transport from Battersea by barge to Tilbury in Essex, removing over 40,000 lorry journeys by road and prevent 2,000 tonnes of carbon emissions.

*Actions required for greater freight movement by river:*

- *Work with Transport for London and the Greater London Authority to extend the River Concordat to promote freight movements by water*
- *Mandating the use of the Thames for major projects' transport needs, where projects are close to the river.*
- *Continued safeguarding and reactivation of wharves for port operations in London in accordance with national (NPPF) and regional (London Plan) planning policies; at least Peruvian, Orchard and Hurlingham wharves brought into operation over the next decade*
- *Establish a Thames Skills Academy by Autumn 2016, to provide a sustainable model for skills development on the Thames*

Thames' economic contribution

- Latest research into the economic impact of port and river operations shows that, in Greater London the Thames generates:
  - 10,000 full time equivalent jobs
  - £1 billion of economic value added annually
- The first ever study of the amenity value of the Thames found that:
  - At least 23 million people visit attractions by the Thames every year
  - Almost 100,000 people are employed in the tourism industry in wards adjacent to the Thames
  - These activities generate £2.4 billion gross value added a year

Links to the study findings are here: <https://www.pla.co.uk/About-Us/The-Thames-Vision/Evidence-Base>

River crossings

- We are supportive of the river crossings agenda, alongside retaining river access for ships into the Pool of London - as has been possible since Roman times. We will continue to work with Transport for London on this.

*Action required around river crossings:*

- *At least three further Thames crossings to the east of Tower Bridge, that allow continuation of river trade; the first by 2022*

**About the PLA**

The Port of London Authority (PLA) is a self-financing organisation, set-up by an Act of Parliament in 1909 to run the tidal River Thames in trust for future generations. The tidal Thames runs for 95 miles from Teddington Lock, through the capital, and out to the sea. Our 350-strong workforce oversees safe navigation, protects the marine environment and promotes the use of the river. We have no shareholders; any financial surpluses are reinvested in stewardship of the river and improving the efficiency of our operations. More information on the PLA: [www.pla.co.uk](http://www.pla.co.uk)

*[contact redacted]*