

Will we be saved by fixed link

The Chicken and Egg story

Which comes first the referendum or the feasibility study?

Should we find out if Islanders want a fixed link before we go to the expense of a feasibility study

Or

Or should there be a feasibility study before the expense of a Referendum

What would Government want?

Based on Brexit probably the referendum

Then there is the engineering report to ensure it is actually possible

Where with the entrance and exit go?

Whippingham is the latest idea

Whippingham is adjacent to an AONB and a Conservation area

Oh, and I live there!

Where will it emerge on the mainland?

There have been rumours of Titchfield

Before anyone goes running to Government for funds to pay for a feasibility study wouldn't it be a good idea to speak to the other side.

Further, where ever it emerges what will they think of 180,000 Isle of Wight residents coming along and destroying their world, with no benefit to them.

Until there are discussions with the relevant authority that will be affected on the mainland will Government be remotely interested in funding such a study?

Let's Look at some figures - THE COST

Assuming It will be another 30—40 years before a plan is approved by the secretary of state.

By then costs will have escalated, but for argument sake, let's look at costs at today's rate.

Example— look at HS2

*The HS2 project is being developed by High Speed Two (HS2) Ltd, a company limited by guarantee established by the UK government and has a projected cost of **£56 billion**, up from the initial cost of £32.7 billion in 2010. this is for 350 miles of rail.*

(This is a rail track not a massive engineering project to dig a 6 lane tunnel under the Solent)

At a conservative guess a fixed link will probably cost 8 BILLION POUNDS to build

Investors will require at least 0.25% interest with an APR of 3% that is 240 million pounds interest per year

To recover their capital investment and interest over a 25 year period here are some figures to consider. Being conservative....

8 billion divided by 25 years = repayment of 320 million/ annum+ 240 million interest = 560 million repayment /annum

@£25/journey it will require 22 million 4 hundred thousand vehicle users per year

@ £60/journey it will require 79 million 333 thousand + vehicle users per year

What investor, what Government is going to spend that sort of money for the benefit of 180 thousand Island residents. Not only that but what investor will accept being dictated to by the Council on how many vehicles they can allow to use it and how much to charge residents.

When was the last time the I of W Council dictated terms to the ferry companies

The Isle of Wight would have to become like Portsea Island. Totally Urban with several million homes built.

Welcome to Urban Wight

Questions—are they even worth asking

Will interest be fixed - possibly and actually none of our business

Will crossing fees be fixed - highly unlikely—that is our business

Will they sell the debt on to other investors who will insist upon higher journey fees to recover their investment?

The choice will be to increase journey prices or increase the number of users

Current position with the ferry companies

Wight Link - taken from their web site

About us

We are the main link between the Isle of Wight and the mainland. **Every year, we carry over 4.5 million passengers,** making us one of the UK's largest domestic ferry operators. We provide Island residents with an easy and frequent service to the mainland, as well as giving millions of holidaymakers a taste of Island life.

Crossings take approximately 22 minutes by catamaran and from 40 minutes by car ferry. And **we operate three convenient routes and over 45,000 crossings a year.** We are also dedicated to giving excellent customer service and the best facilities on board and at our Terminals.

As most people who travel to and from the Island do so with us, we are truly a part of Island life. We are proud to support IOW communities wherever we can, from sports sponsorship to local regeneration projects. And we offer Isle of Wight residents great value Multilink Pass tickets, making travel to the mainland easy and affordable.

There are three ferries 1 carries 184 cars the others carry 142 cars the new ferry will carry 178 cars

This equates to approx. 3—3.5 million vehicle journeys per annum

RED Funnel—taken from their web site

Red Funnel Ferries

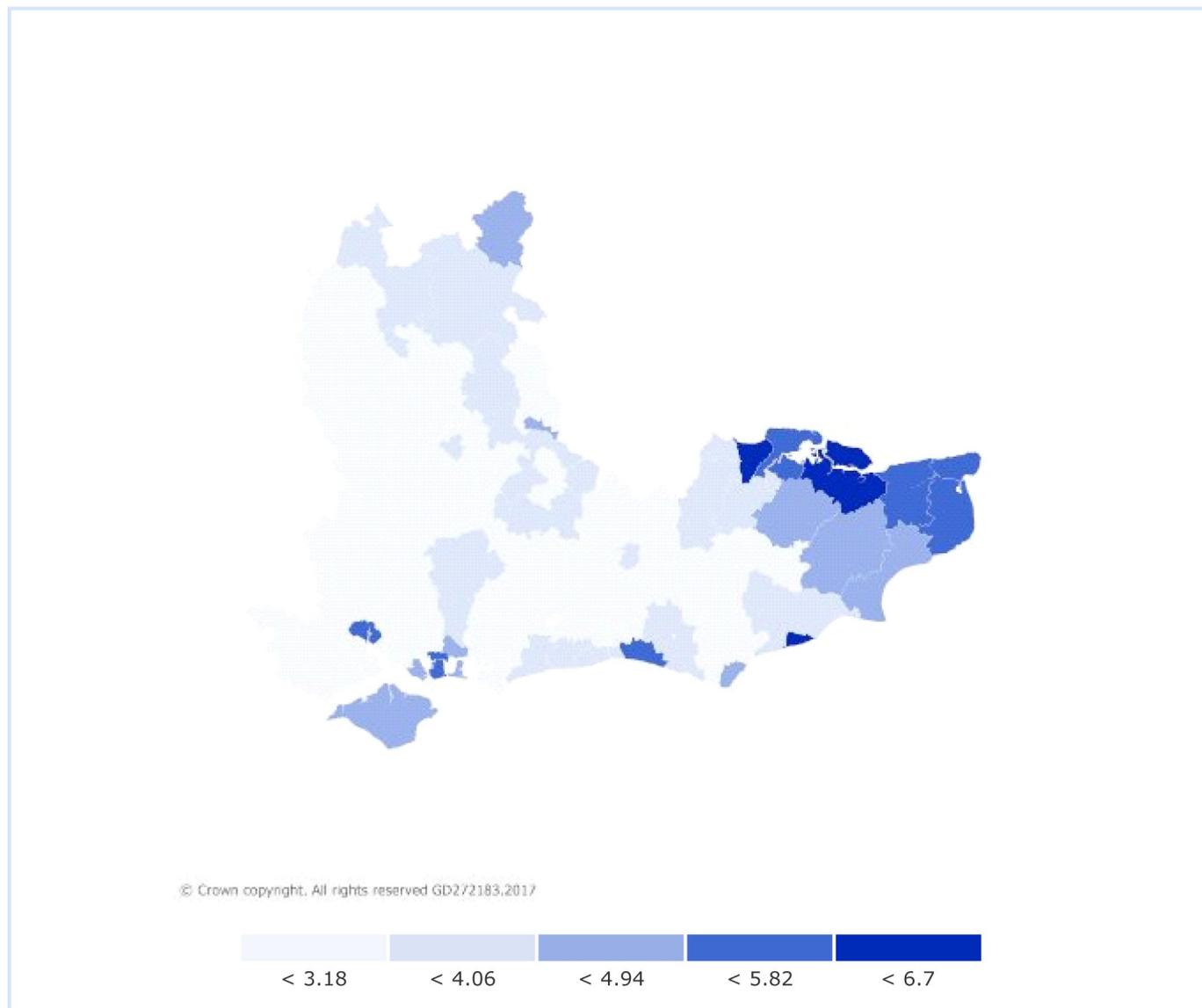
Red Funnel is the 'Original Isle of Wight ferry operator' and currently carries 3.4m passengers and 0.86m vehicles per annum. The Company operates services 365 days a year with 30,000 combined sailings between Southampton (UK mainland) and East and West Cowes (Isle of Wight). The fleet consists of modern purpose built Ro-Pax vehicle ferries and Red Jet Hi-Speed passenger catamarans. Catering and retail services are provided in-house.

**Total vehicle journeys per annum
carried on both ferries per annum
Is approx 4.5 million.**

A tunnel would clearly wipe out both ferry companies because they will be unable to compete. Leaving us with just one exit off the island. If the tunnel has to close for any reason people would be trapped both on and off the Island. This would be an untenable situation

***What company/business is going to relocate to
the island and risk that?***

All people - Economically active - Unemployed (model based)
South East



local authority	numbers	%
Adur	1,300	4.0
Arun	2,800	3.8
Ashford	2,900	4.5
Aylesbury Vale	3,500	3.3
Basingstoke and Deane	2,900	3.0
Bracknell Forest	2,000	3.0
Brighton and Hove	9,200	5.7
Canterbury	3,600	5.2
Cherwell	2,500	3.3
Chichester	1,700	2.9
Chiltern	1,500	3.1
Crawley	2,700	3.9
Dartford	2,400	4.0

Dover	2,900	5.0
East Hampshire	2,000	3.3
Eastbourne	2,400	4.8
Eastleigh	2,200	3.1
Elmbridge	1,900	3.2
Epsom and Ewell	1,300	3.0
Fareham	1,800	3.0
Gosport	1,700	4.2
Gravesham	3,300	6.7
Guildford	2,600	3.4
Hart	1,200	2.4
Hastings	2,700	6.3
Havant	2,600	4.3
Horsham	2,100	3.0
Isle of Wight	3,000	4.8
Lewes	2,000	3.8
Maidstone	3,500	4.4
Medway	7,700	5.3
Mid Sussex	1,900	2.6
Milton Keynes	5,600	4.1
Mole Valley	1,300	3.1
New Forest	2,500	2.8
Oxford	3,400	3.6
Portsmouth	6,200	5.7
Reading	3,600	4.0
Reigate and Banstead	2,400	3.1
Rother	1,600	3.8
Runnymede	1,500	3.1
Rushmoor	1,800	3.2
Sevenoaks	1,800	3.5
Shepway	2,500	4.7
Slough	3,300	4.3
South Bucks	1,000	2.7
South Oxfordshire	1,900	2.8
Southampton	6,800	5.2
Spelthorne	2,000	3.8
Surrey Heath	1,400	3.2
Swale	4,500	6.3
Tandridge	1,400	2.8
Test Valley	1,600	2.5
Thanet	3,700	5.5
Tonbridge and Malling	2,500	3.8
Tunbridge Wells	1,800	3.1
Vale of White Horse	1,800	2.6
Waverley	1,500	2.3
Wealden	2,400	3.1
West Berkshire	2,600	3.1
West Oxfordshire	1,300	2.3
Winchester	1,800	2.9
Windsor and Maidenhead	2,600	3.3

Woking	1,400	2.5
Wokingham	2,300	2.8
Worthing	2,100	3.8
Wycombe	3,400	3.4

Source: ONS annual population survey [Apr 2016-Mar 2017]

Note: numbers and % are for those aged 16 and over. % is a proportion of economically active

Note: figures and percentages are model based

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Reasons against a fixed link.

There are indeed many. I list a few

All the assumed problems that currently affect those Islanders disenchanted with Island life affect the mainland people too. Poor NHS, travel and traffic problems, housing, unemployment, cut backs to services

Will companies relocate to the Island when workers can travel to them

Will several million more homes will have to be built on the Island to fund the tunnel Will we become a dormitory Island? Will we become like Porstsea Island?

Will the new homes be inhabited by the elderly and retired rather than a young work force. Meaning an increased pressure on I of W Council services to care for the expanding elderly population.

What about the infrastructure required to accommodate the millions of visitors and residents

MENTAL HEALTH

This is an increasing problem as the pressures of our new way of life consume us. This is being taken seriously as the next debilitating problem of the work force. (The bad back is on the way out). Even the Royals are promoting this problem

We forget how lucky we are to live on an Island. It is safer, gentler, less pressurised, less urbanised than the mainland. We live a life of luxury compared to the stresses of living on the mainland.

Obviously there are down sides but compared to the mainland not so many.

Our natural environment is a precious commodity for our health and well being. The well being of the planet is crucial to the well being of the human race. Governments are finally waking up to the fact our natural environment is key to a vibrant economy, key to our survival on this planet. A fixed link with the massive amount of changes (if there won't be change it's not worth it) it will bring will cause irreparable damage to the Islands special natural environment and

Supporting the Pro links letter could lead to.....

- 1) The Council may appear to its voters/Islanders as being frivolous in supporting an individual's desire to ask for money to spend on a feasibility study when it is desperate for central funding to support its essential services.
- 2) Giving the impression that we are not concerned about the authority on the mainland that will be affected by the tunnel. It's not just about us it's about them too. What will they gain? Our council will be considered discourteous.
- 3) The Council giving Government the impression that the majority of Islanders support a feasibility study
- 4) Islanders not appreciating being treated as if they support something that they have not been consulted upon
- 5) Island businesses being deterred from further investment in their business by giving the impression a FL is going to be something you may support
- 6) Your support changing attitudes towards tourism on the Island based upon something that may never happen. You may set a tone that is detrimental to existing Island businesses

Quote.....

“ One of the greatest misconceptions of the modern age, and one which has concerned me for more years than I can remember, is that nature can be taken for granted and her needs ignored.”

“There are plenty more, I am afraid, who see the process of protecting natural systems as a sort of cost that should be avoided altogether, simply because it actively interferes with development, job creation and economic growth”

“This prevailing attitude couldn’t be further from the truth. Nature is, in fact, the source and very basis of our welfare and economic prosperity. For me this is so self evident that it seems ridiculous even to say it, but as the decisions taken in the real world continue to contradict this essential fact of life and as the worlds economic powerhouses desperately look for ways to rebuild so many faltering economies.....”

HRH Prince Charles (forward to What Has nature Ever Done for us by Tony Juniper)

A Fixed link will without doubt, based upon the number of users required to repay the cost of it, have a detrimental impact on the Islands’ natural environment, its culture, its human well being and our society.

We are lucky to have a unique and amazing asset but we seem to be constantly wanting to be like the mainland. We forget how lucky we are to live on an Island.

FINALLY—

Our AONB is working towards achieving UNESCO Biosphere Reserve status for our Island. Success would highlight the Isle of Wight globally as one of the best places to explore peoples interaction with nature. This is the opportunity we need to up our tourist game as one of the most unique places in the world to visit. But it has to include an effort from everyone and ensure we do nothing detrimental to damage our chances of success.

A fixed link will certainly destroy that chance of success.

Over the year there have been a variety of organisations, mostly universities that have conducted studies on a FL to the I of W. Even the I of W Council contributed towards a feasibility study. All have come out and said a FL would have a damaging effect upon our Island's amazing and unique natural environment. Being so close to the South coast we would be overwhelmed with visitors who will not necessarily have the same love for our island in their hearts that we have.

The world continues to progress and the well being of our planet which is crucial to the well being of the human race is constantly overlooked. We need a healthy planet to survive and we must begin in our own back yard. As world populations increase and the pattern of world economies change our personal well being becomes more and more important.

We are on this planet for around 80 years the first and last twenty are pretty benign. It is the 40 year in the middle where we can cause the most damage. We have been hard wired with a need to fill in our time until the day we die. We can choose to create, protect or destroy. This need to do things can be overwhelming and irrational and pierced with an inability to “play chess”. Beecham couldn't play chess why should we believe that those in favour of a fixed link can.

The powerful people of which there are few, thank goodness, have the charisma to pull nations along with them – that is what they do – regardless of the final outcome. Then there are the pseudo powerful with large egos who believe their ideas are so great they can't in any way accept alternative views to the point of being abusive. They become more obsessed with the winning than in the actual idea.

It has always been a Councils priority to look at the economy first. I believe a fixed link will change nothing. Big Companies will have no need to re-locate to the Island when islanders can use the tunnel to get to them. Hotels will close. Day trippers will increase causing a cost in rubbish collection, and more opening of toilets. Small island businesses will re-locate to the mainland. One ferry company will go out of business or reduce services and increase prices. Events may re-locate to the mainland due to easier access as the island roads become gridlocked. House prices will increase – good for some bad for others. More people will come to live here making us at risk of becoming a dormitory island I believe a vast amount of public money will be spent just to maintain the status quo. Why bother.

Do we always have to have change for change sake—isn't that the real problem?