



2 May 2018

Fiona Powell  
Bathampton Conker Crossing  
By email only

**Our Ref** CRTR-PLAN-2018-24653  
**Your Ref**

Dear Fiona,

**Proposal:** New pedestrian and cycle bridge over the Kennet & Avon Canal  
**Location:** Bathampton Conker Crossing, , Bathampton  
**Waterway:** Kennet & Avon Canal

Thank you for your consultation.

The Canal & River Trust (the Trust) is the guardian of 2,000 miles of historic waterways across England and Wales. We are among the largest charities in the UK. Our vision is that “living waterways transform places and enrich lives”. We are a statutory consultee in the development management process.

The Trust has reviewed the application. This is our substantive response under the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. Based upon the information available we have the following general advice to offer:

#### Design of the Proposed Bridge

The concept drawings and design document show a bridge of an appropriately high level of design quality for this sensitive location, which makes creative use of the limited space to deliver a safer crossing and route to the canal towpath from the south. We hope to see the design aspirations, particularly with regard to depth of deck, quality of materials and invisibility of handrail, matched in the eventual planning application and its delivery by B&NES Highways, if agreed.

There is an apparent inconsistency between the elevational drawings and the CGI, with the elevational drawings showing an open approach ramp for its entirety on the towpath side, whereas the CGI images show it as partially solid. Our preference is for an open ramp. We would welcome confirmation of which is proposed.

**Canal & River Trust Fradley Junction, Alrewas, Burton-Upon-Trent,  
Staffordshire, DE13 7DN**

**T** 0303 040 4040 **E** [planning@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:planning@canalrivertrust.org.uk) **W** [www.canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk)

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We generally welcome the appearance of the proposed balustrade, but we have some concern about how susceptible it would be to vandalism. This has been a problem in other places on the canal network. Will it be possible to design this in such a way that in the, hopefully unlikely, event of if someone cutting through one of the wires the remainder are not affected?

The access ramp on the towpath side appears to only provide 2.55 m head height. The Trust would usually require 2.7m clearance above the towpath. We are keen to understand what changes to the scheme would be needed to deliver this and would be happy to meet with you to discuss this further. The possibility of somebody striking the support structure adjacent to the towpath needs to be considered. However, the dropping of the towpath level may help prevent this.

We note that the clearance above the canal level in the centre of the channel is 3.15m, which is, as you note, greater than our 3m expectation. We would welcome confirmation that the clearance above the canal level adjacent to both canal banks also exceeds 3m.

We have no objection to the proposed lowering of the canal towpath, subject to this being delivered in a manner that retains a 'fall' towards the canal to prevent the pooling of water on the towpath surface. We would also like to understand what material will be used to construct the retaining structure along the back of the lowered section of towpath.

We note the proposal for a fence of 'up to 2m' on the off-side around the school playing fields. We would like to see more details of the design of this fence and the landscaping (existing or proposed) that will sit between it and the canal in order that we can consider the impact of this on the character and appearance of the canal corridor.

## Heritage Impact

We are content that any adverse impact on the conservation area and listed bridge can be mitigated through the design and the use of high quality materials. We would, of course, wish to reconsider this position if significant changes are made to the scheme.

## Impact on Biodiversity

We are generally content with the Ecological and Arboricultural assessments. However, we would like to see some consideration from the ecologists given to any impacts from shading on adjacent marginal habitats as a consequence of the new bridge. We note that proposals for lighting on the bridge (or not) are still being considered. Ideally there should be 0 lux

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increase on the canal. However, we accept that lighting may increase the safety and perception of safety of users. We suggest that low level lighting at foot height is an option that is considered. We would like to see any proposals that are developed as a result of your consultations and are happy to discuss the issue further.

#### The Trust as Landowner

The development of the proposed bridge will require the Trust's agreement for the use of its land, including the airspace above the Kennet & Avon Canal and the land on the off-side that the Trust leases to the King Edwards School. The agreement of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is also likely to be required. Amongst other things, as part of this agreement, the Trust will want to ensure that maintenance arrangements are in place and that there will be no ongoing maintenance liability for the Trust. My colleague, David Faull ([David.Faull@canalrivertrust.org.uk](mailto:David.Faull@canalrivertrust.org.uk)), will be able to discuss this agreement with you or the Council's Highways Department at the appropriate time.

#### Impact on Moorings

The Trust leases space to the operator of the "Café on the Barge" to allow the mooring of the boat and the outside seating area in close proximity to the proposed bridge. Based on the information available, it appears that this has been taken into account in the design and the bridge access will start to rise north of the existing towpath, minimising any impact.

This stretch of towpath contains busy 48 hour moorings, which are used by private boaters and hire boats. The Trust does not ordinarily allow mooring under bridges and would need to consider how to manage the impact on all forms of moorings if the bridge is granted planning permission and agreed by the Trust as landowner.

#### Code of Practice

The developer of the proposed bridge would be required to sign up to, and follow, our Code of Practice for Works Affecting the Canal & River Trust. I understand that you have already discussed this with my colleague, Phil J. White.

If you have any queries please contact me, my details are below. If you would like to arrange a meeting to discuss any of the points raised in more detail then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

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Canal &  
River Trust

Steve Craddock MRTPI  
Planning Manager – London, South & South Wales  
Steve.Craddock@canalrivertrust.org.uk  
07768 560282

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