

14 October 2019

Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk  
Kings Court  
Chapel Street  
King's Lynn  
Norfolk  
PE30 1EX

**Historical Railways Estate on behalf of the DfT, Disused Railway Bridge, PMY2/76 Congham Railway Bridge– Strengthening works.**

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing to you on behalf of our client, Historical Railways Estate (HRE), formerly BRB (Residuary) Ltd, to inform you of planned strengthening works to the structure PMY2/76 via a structural infill. HRE is responsible for the historical railways estate following the abolishment of BRB (Residuary). This responsibility is undertaken on behalf of the Department for Transport, who own the structures. Therefore, the structures are classed as crown property.

**PMY2/76 – ‘Congham Railway Bridge’** is located approximately 10km north east of King's Lynn, Norfolk and is a single span bridge which carries an unclassified public road (St. Andrew's Lane) over the former South Lynn to Yarmouth railway line at OS grid reference TF 703 238. A location map is enclosed for you information.

The single span square overbridge, believed to have been constructed in 1923, comprises of 7 longitudinal girders which consist of BSB 23 14" x 6" encased in concrete. The space between the longitudinal girders is infilled with concrete jack arches. There are a total of 6 jack arches. Wingwalls are located in each corner which extend approximately 5.5m from the bridge parapets. There is a soft verge on each side of the carriageway over the structure. The square span is 7490mm and the average clearance through the structure is 3.84m. The wingwalls, abutments and parapets are constructed from concrete blockwork.



**Image 1 - View of south elevation access below structure**

The bridge has been subject to a series of structural assessments. The most recent was in 2019 which was undertaken by Jacobs on behalf of HRE. The assessment concluded that the edge girders are restricted to a 7.5 Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW). Furthermore, the eastern abutment is exhibiting indications of movement, resulting in numerous cracks appearing beneath the edge girders and along the abutment faces. The faces of the longitudinal girders are also showing defects with some beam exposure in some instances. The wingwall coping courses and the

*Jacobs U.K. Limited*

Registered Office: 1180 Eskdale Road, Winnersh, Wokingham, RG41 5TU, UK  
Registered in England and Wales No. 2594504

south west newel are demonstrating minor failure and collapse, which could be caused by the dense vegetation present on all embankments.

To prevent the further decline of the structure and to maintain future vehicular movements along the carriageway, the proposal is that the bridge is subject to structural infill.

Historical conveyance documents show that HRE retain development rights either side of the structure. The land directly under the bridge span was not included within the historical sale of the land and is therefore assumed to be owned by HRE. The proposed infill works are expected to be within the extents of the land to which HRE has development rights.

The Norfolk County Council Walking and Cycling Strategy states an ambition to recycle disused railways and incorporate them in to the cycling and walking routes in the region. The figure provided in section 6.10 of the strategy and shown below would suggest that one of the possible routes is along the former Yarmouth to South Lynn railway line, and thus interfaces with the proposals for the structural infill of this structure.

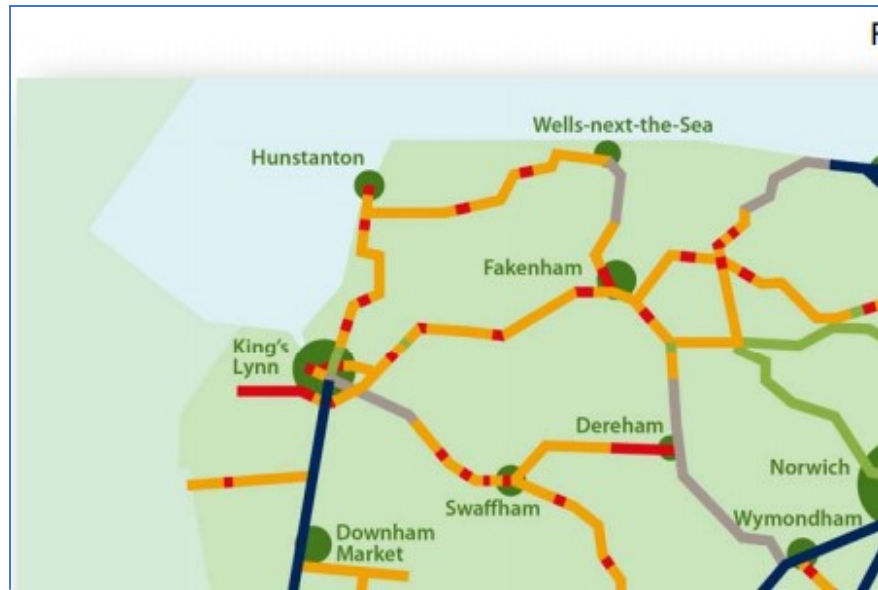


Figure 1 - Extract from Norfolk County Council Publication - Norfolk Cycling and Walking Strategy

The land either side of the bridge has been raised to the surrounding ground levels, including to the south which now comprises a large agricultural field, with little or no evidence that it was formerly a railway line. A photograph of this land is shown below, which was taken during a site visit in August 2019. The current usage of the disused railway land to the south of the bridge means that it is considered unlikely to be appropriate for a section of cycle of walking route. Access to the existing restricted byway to the north of the structure will not be compromised by the proposed works.



**Image 2 - Land to the south of the bridge, view from the structure looking south**

As the structure represents an ongoing and increasing risk to public safety and is owned by the Secretary of State for Transport, so is deemed 'Crown property', we propose to (undertake repairs/demolish/infill) as 'permitted development' in line with the 'Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, Schedule 2, Part 19, Class Q.

We trust that the above proposal is acceptable. We would like to obtain any general comments the council may have, or details of any constraints that may be imposed on the works by the local authority. I have also sent a copy of this letter to Norfolk County Council for any comments they may have.

Can you please confirm receipt of this letter either by return letter or email: [joel.wilson@jacobs.com](mailto:joel.wilson@jacobs.com).

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information.

Yours faithfully,

Joel Wilson

Civil Engineer - Jacobs UK Ltd

Tel: - 01904 559963

Email: - [joel.wilson@jacobs.com](mailto:joel.wilson@jacobs.com)