



PTA vice chair Cllr Muriel Green and PTA deputy vice chair Cllr Tom Hanson



How to have your say...

Local people are invited to give their views on the New Tyne Crossing at special exhibitions at Wallsend Library on Friday 13 and Saturday 14 July. Residents from South Tyneside have a similar opportunity to give their views on the crossing at the Jarrow Community Association on Sunday 15 and Monday 16 July.

PTA vice chair North Tyneside Cllr Muriel Green and PTA deputy vice chair South Tyneside Cllr Tom Hanson are keen for local people to get involved:

"The exhibitions and consultation will give local residents a real opportunity to have their say on the proposed plans. We would urge as many people as possible to get involved.

"We will also be holding workshops for those who may be affected during the scheme and for special interest groups."

If you have any other comments on the proposed New Tyne Crossing please write to: Paul Fenwick, Planning & Transportation Division, Civic Centre, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8PD

Questions can also be sent by e-mail to: ntc@newcastle.gov.uk

Log on to the website at www.tynewear-pta.gov.uk/ntc

Your questions answered

Q. What will the toll be for the tunnel?

A. The level of toll will be based upon the proposals of the successful consortium appointed to design and build the new crossing and operate all the tunnels. One of the factors the PTA will consider when deciding on which consortium to appoint is the level of toll that is desirable. The PTA wants to see tolls set as low as possible so they do not become a barrier to people looking for work. Once set, the toll will not rise faster than the rate of inflation.

Q. Why have a toll at all? All the other Tyne crossings are free.

A. There are historical and legal reasons why the existing tunnel has a toll. The PTA which owns the tunnel cannot raise finance

itself to build the new tunnel. Obviously, the private financing of the new crossing means the tunnels have to provide a return on the investment for the consortium.

Q. I've heard that the European Union wants privately-owned tunnels to charge VAT on tolls. Will that apply to the Tyne Tunnel?

A. The PTA and its advisers have sought legal advice and believe that it is possible to arrange matters so that the PTA can comply with a ruling by the European Court of Justice without charging VAT.

Q. Why isn't the new tunnel four lanes? Will two lanes create a bottleneck in the near future?

A. A four lane option was carefully considered but the PTA and its

advisers believed that the level of tolls required to fund a four-lane crossing would be too high. The PTA and its advisers consider that sufficient capacity will be provided for the duration of the concession.

Q. Why not build a bridge?

A. A bridge would have to be very high to allow ships to pass underneath and would be very expensive. Also, and equally importantly, the environmental problems created would be far greater than a tunnel. A bridge solution was therefore rejected.

Q. I think my house will be affected by the tunnel. What should I do?

A. Come and see the exhibition to find out or contact the PTA at the address on this page. They will be able to discuss with you whether you qualify for compensation.



Update

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Let us know what you think



People likely to be affected by the construction and operation of the New Tyne Crossing are to be given the opportunity to express their opinions on the scheme over the next few months.

A major consultation exercise is swinging into action following the decision of the Tyne & Wear Passenger Transport Authority (PTA) on 31 May to promote a new two-lane immersed tube tunnel under the Tyne, next to the existing vehicle tunnel. The new tunnel will carry the A19 southbound traffic. The existing tunnel will carry northbound traffic.

A programme of meetings with community and special interest groups is being arranged and questionnaires sent out to give people every opportunity to express their views and ensure their concerns are taken into consideration. The PTA's advisers will also be available at special exhibitions on North Tyneside and South Tyneside to answer your questions. See back page for more information. Details will be advertised locally and in the press.

Before construction can start on the new crossing a legal order must be

advertised and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions. It is probable that the Secretary of State will require a Public Inquiry to take place before the order is confirmed. This means that the PTA and its advisers have to undertake as wide a consultation as possible.

Subject to this Inquiry, construction work is expected to begin in early 2004, with completion due in late 2006.

The immersed tube tunnel is the preferred method of construction and the tolls will be kept as low as possible. The new crossing will be financed by a consortium of companies who will be appointed in 2003. As well as building the new tunnel, it will be responsible for maintaining and operating the existing road and pedestrian/cycle tunnels for a period of about 30 years. It will also be responsible for setting the toll levels in agreement with the PTA.