



ASSOCIATED BRITISH PORTS

**Assessing the impact of the
proposed M4 'black route' on existing
operations and future development
plans for the Port of Newport.**



ASSOCIATED BRITISH PORTS


Port of Newport

Newport has operated as a port since Roman times and took up its current position in 1865 to accommodate increasing volumes of trade. Associated British Ports (ABP) was created in 1982 following the denationalisation of the British Transport Docks Board and took on immediate ownership of the Port of Newport. ABP has a commercial interest but also a statutory responsibility to ensure the future viability of the port operation at Newport.

In its current state, the Port of Newport consists of two docks: the North and South, enclosing a water area of 125 acres and a land area of 685 acres. It is considered to be a major UK port, handling in excess of 1.85 million tonnes of cargo per year and contributing £186 million to the Welsh economy. Its ability to handle deep sea vessels of up to 40,000 tonnes makes Newport a crucial hub for Welsh and UK industries wishing to service lucrative and growing deep sea markets worldwide, including in China and the Far East, Russia, Southern Europe, Africa and the Americas.

Two recent economic impact reports, by consultants Arup and the Welsh Economic Research Unit, independently estimated that the Port of Newport supports around 3,000 local jobs, both directly employed by ABP and its tenants and indirectly through supply chains that span the steel, construction, agriculture, manufacturing and power generation sectors. The port continues to play a vital role in the Welsh economy, and ABP is concerned its future viability is threatened by proposals for a new M4 relief road known as the 'black route'.

While ABP recognises the need for measures to improve the traffic flow around Newport, ABP strongly feels that the most recent consultation was unsatisfactory because it failed to include all the options or give serious consideration to a modified 'black route'.

**PORT OF NEWPORT
HANDLES
1.85M 
TONNES PER YEAR
OF GENERAL CARGO**

**SUPPORTS
3,000
LOCAL JOBS
CONTRIBUTES
£186M 
TO WELSH ECONOMY**



**WORKS WITH STEEL, CONSTRUCTION,
AGRICULTURE, MANUFACTURING AND
POWER GENERATION INDUSTRIES**

**RECEIVED
£10M 
OF INVESTMENT
FROM ABP IN THE
18 MONTHS TO DECEMBER 2014**

Source: Economic Impact Study, Arup 2014



ABP's position on the M4 relief road:

- As owner and operator of the Port of Newport and four other ports across South Wales, ABP recognises the need for action to tackle congestion during peak times on the M4 in the Newport area.
- ABP is very concerned about the direct effects of the proposed 'black route' on existing operations and future development of the port.
- ABP does not favour any specific alternative M4 route proposal, but believes all options should be fully explored before an irrevocable decision is taken to build a new motorway on a route that would substantially reduce the Port of Newport's current and future capabilities.

Map showing alternative routes to relieve congestion on the M4 around Newport



A bridge too far?

Newport is Wales' leading general cargo port and the UK's second largest steel handling port. Its ability to accommodate large cargo ships is integral to its success and future development.

The proposed 'black route' involves constructing a bridge which would bisect the South and North Docks, creating a **height restriction of circa 25 metres** for vessels entering the North Dock. A report by global shipping consultancy, Safety at Sea, found that **58% of vessels** entering the North Dock during 2004 – 2008 would not have been able to gain access if the proposed bridge had been in place. By reducing access to almost 1,000 metres of high-quality quayside in North Dock, the bridge would effectively limit the vessel and berthing options that can be offered to port users and harm the ability of the port and its customers to compete effectively on the UK and world stage. Importantly, the height restriction would also inhibit future development and expansion plans (see overleaf).

This is against a backdrop of a **global trend for increasing cargo and vessel size**, not least to meet the crew accommodation requirements of the new Marine Labour Convention (2014), and increases in height clearance requirements. This means that if a new M4 bridge is constructed at its suggested height, the Port of Newport will lose its competitive edge and almost certainly lose out on business, jobs and future investment to other parts of the UK, simply because its ability to handle large cargo ships would be significantly impeded.

The motorway bridge would also create **challenges to the day-to-day operations** of the port as its presence will prevent the movement of mobile cranes and other large plant machines are deployed across different areas of the port, both when used for loading and unloading ships as well as for routine maintenance. Likewise several specialist cargo licences required by the port to carry out certain types of work could be lost.

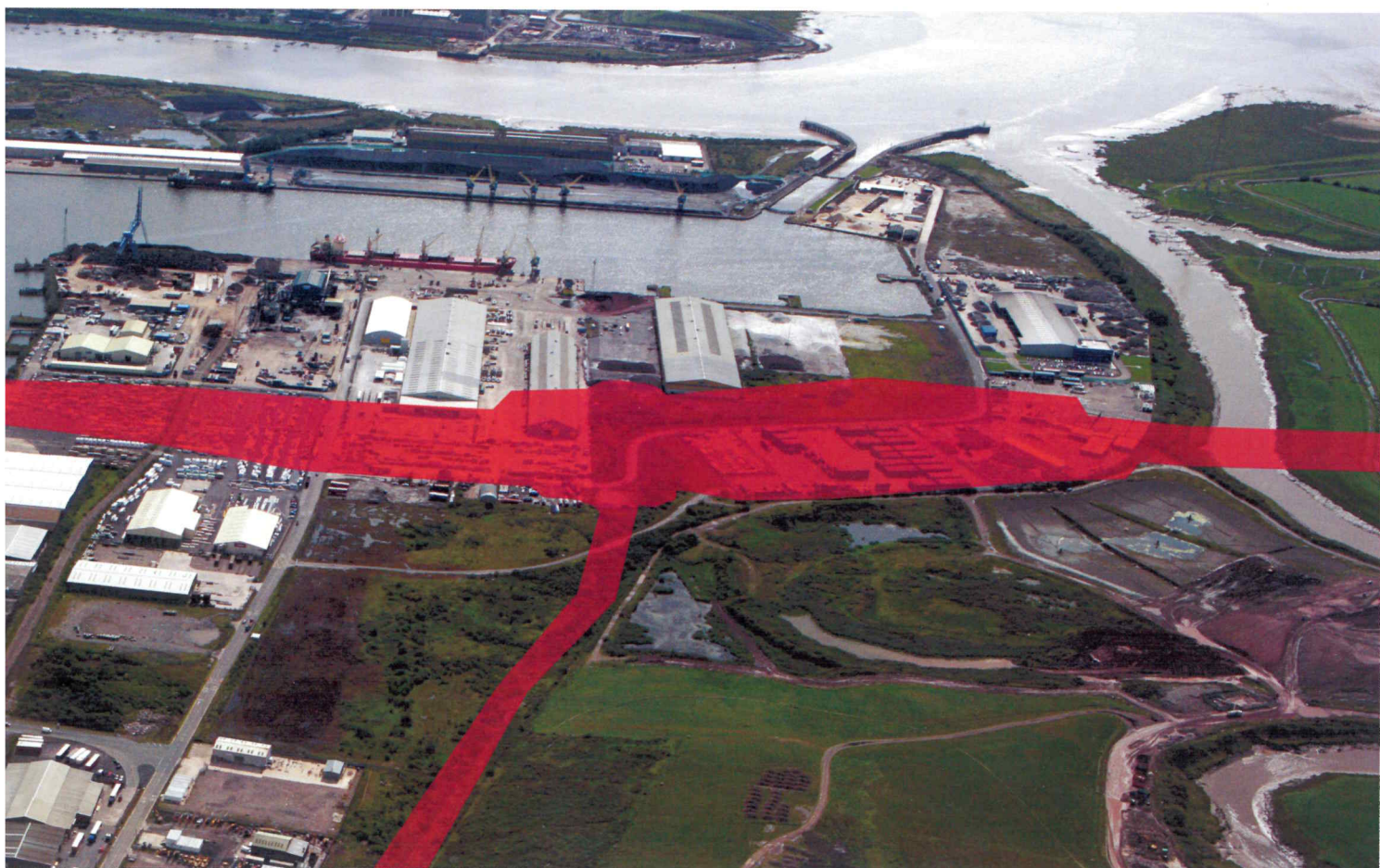
If the construction of the motorway goes ahead in its proposed 'black route' position with the recently proposed motorway junction, an estimated **40 acres of land at the port would be lost** to accommodate the new motorway and proposed junction. This would not only reduce existing customers' capacity (meaning they would have to be relocated or leave the port) but it would also significantly reduce the potential for future development of the port.

The proposed 'black route' will:

- Create a vessel height restriction to enter the North Dock of circa 25m
- Prevent 58% of vessels currently utilising the North Dock from entering
- Limit access to 1,000 metres of high-quality quayside
- Disrupt the day-to-day operations of plant machinery and cranes at the port, including the movement of mobile harbour cranes with a minimum height of 45m
- Threaten several specialist cargo licences held by the port
- Result in around 40 acres of land being lost, affecting existing customers and the future development of the port



The MV 'Fri Karmsund' ship with an air draught (maximum height) of 28m and a length of 89.75m discharging timber in the North Dock of the Port of Newport in January 2015.



Aerial image of North and South Dock with indicative drawing of the proposed M4 'black route' and accompanying motorway junction alongside.

ABP – a major inward investor

ABP has invested more than £10 million in the 18 months to December 2014 to improve operations and facilities at the Port of Newport and is considering plans for further investment.

ABP's commitment to long-term ownership and operation of the Port of Newport is further demonstrated by the development of a draft 20-year Port Development Master Plan, something it has done for several of its other larger, strategically important UK operations. However, the current proposals for the M4 relief road represent a real threat to these plans.

ABP's key investment in recent years:

- **£2.5m** for warehouses to accommodate the port's growing steel and bulk business
- **£3.3m** investment in renewable energy projects
- **£1.7m** on a new rail bridge
- **£1.6m** on a new mobile crane for use in berths across the port
- **£1.1m** on quay strengthening works

Transforming North Dock

A major component of the draft 20-year Port Development Master Plan for the Port of Newport involves creating additional capacity and capability for deep sea vessels and carrying out strategic development of land around North Dock.

Plans to widen the 'Junction Cut' into the North Dock to allow access for vessels wider than 17 metres are already included in the draft Master Plan and have been raised with Newport City Council. ABP has built a strong business case for the North Dock proposals that would increase the Port's ability to service larger vessels, offer customers greater flexibility, faster turnaround times and significant cost savings. These proposals would not only increase the utilisation of 1,000m of high-quality gravity wall quayside but allow the Port of Newport to compete effectively with other ports across the UK, attract further investment and create new jobs.



LHM 180 mobile harbour crane with a height of 48.8m

The draft Master Plan also includes proposals to:

- Expand steel import / export and storage facilities around North Dock;
- Develop the 'in-fill' of the northern section of North Dock to create a further 10-12 acres of operational land;
- Create a new berth alongside this development site to accommodate a new business.

Investment in North Dock has been identified by ABP as a key part of its strategy and by far the most cost-effective way of boosting the overall capacity and capability of the port. The draft Master Plan also includes proposals for the development of the South Dock, such as building new quayside, but this would require significant additional investment. If the demand for berthing facilities continues to increase, the development of both North and South Dock would be needed.

Uncertainty surrounding the M4 relief road proposals and the impact they could have on North Dock is already making ABP's decisions on investment in the Port of Newport extremely difficult. If the proposed 'black route' goes ahead, the potential offered by the ability to utilise both the North and South Docks for deep sea vessels would be lost forever and this will ultimately mean that ABP will be unable to make the investments it would like to make in the Port of Newport.

Westway Road development proposals

Land around Westway Road has also been earmarked for development within the 20-year Port Development Master Plan. The area currently houses a number of small industrial lettings, a timber and panel storage and distribution facility with a recently refurbished shed complex and a timber treatment facility, but there is considerable space for further development.

A rail siding developed in 2007 offers further potential, as does the opportunity to construct rail connected warehouses and energy schemes, all of which would be closely linked to the quayside in this area of the port.

However, this development area would be constrained if the 'black route' goes ahead, with further restrictions introduced by the addition of a proposed motorway junction which falls within the boundaries of the port, providing access to the city centre in Newport. Adding a new motorway junction within the boundary of the port would also have serious security implications that would need to be addressed.

See overleaf for map of key port development sites



Port of Newport development sites



Finding a solution

As owner and operator of the Port of Newport and four other ports across south Wales, ABP recognises the need to tackle M4 congestion at peak times, in the Newport area. Just a few miles away in Cardiff, ABP is actively co-operating with the Welsh Government to facilitate improvements to the Eastern Bay Link Road, which many property and regeneration experts have cited as a key driver for future regeneration and investment.

To secure the future viability of Newport, ABP is urging the Welsh Government to fully investigate the viability of all the proposed routes for the M4 relief road before it commits to building the 'black route' in its current form.

ABP has proposed a motorway standard alternative crossing point several hundred metres further north of the proposed 'black route'. While this would still cause disruption to the port estate, it would have a far less severe impact on both current operations and future development plans.

ABP has owned and operated the Port of Newport since 1982 and is set to celebrate 150 years of North Dock next year. These are exciting times for the port, with demand for industrial space and cargo berths increasing, jobs being created, a programme of investment underway and proposals in place to increase both capacity and capabilities over the next 20 years.

The Port of Newport is enjoying a resurgence, with annual tonnage increasing by 20.17% in 2014 compared with 2013, and several occupiers expanding their operations. The proposals for a new M4 relief road in their current form create uncertainty and make it extremely difficult for ABP to plan its future investment in Newport.

This is a decision with major implications for future generations. If the ultimate outcome is to go ahead with construction of a motorway bridge that bisects Newport's North and South Docks, the full potential of the Port will be lost forever with lasting consequences for the prosperity of the region and the growth of the Welsh economy.



ASSOCIATED BRITISH PORTS

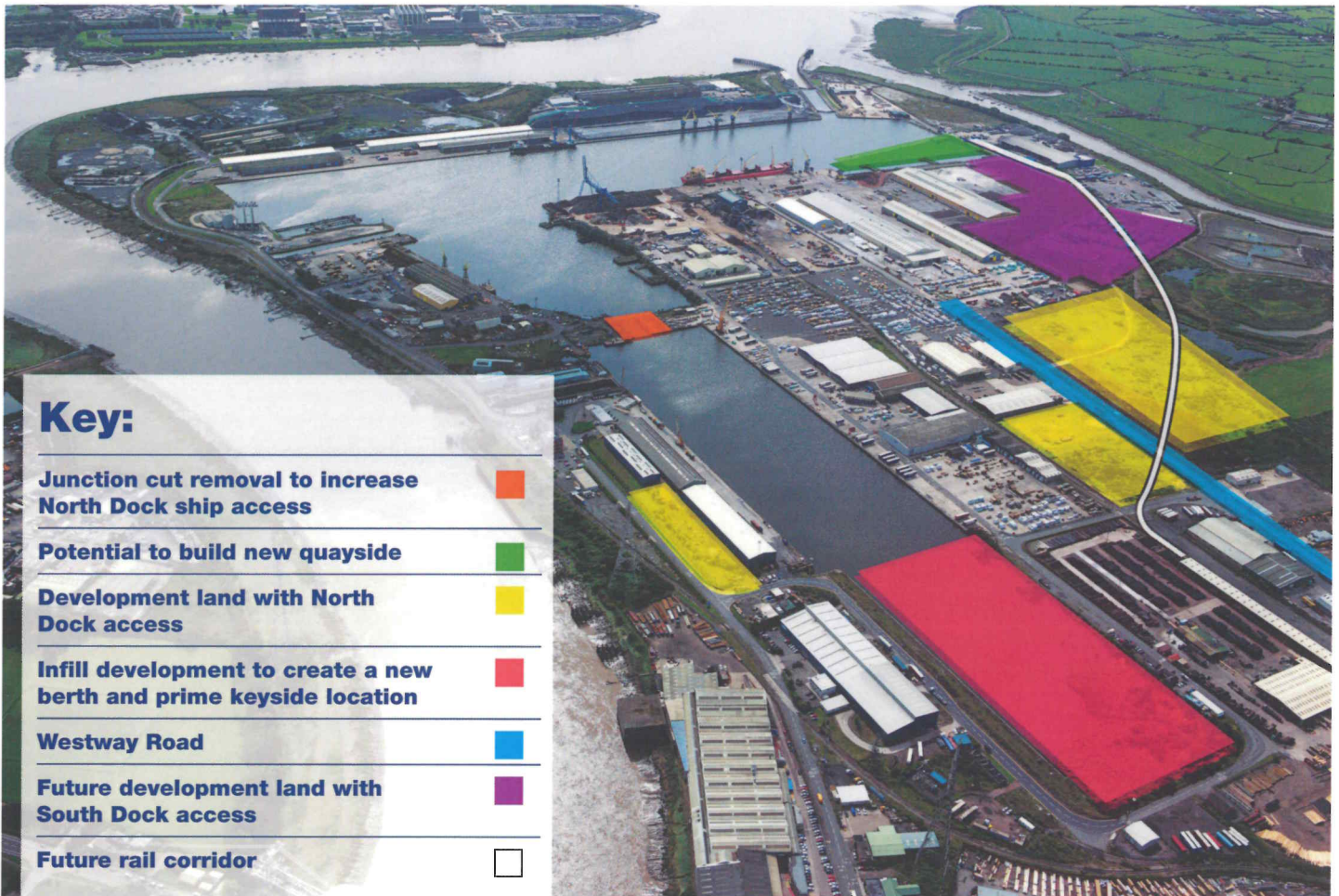
If you would like further information about the Port of Newport, please contact:

Associated British Ports, Port of Newport, Port Office, Alexandra Dock, Newport NP20 2UW

T: 0870 609 6699 E: newport@abports.co.uk

www.abports.co.uk

Port of Newport development sites



Finding a solution

As owner and operator of the Port of Newport and four other ports across south Wales, ABP recognises the need to tackle M4 congestion at peak times, in the Newport area. Just a few miles away in Cardiff, ABP is actively co-operating with the Welsh Government to facilitate improvements to the Eastern Bay Link Road, which many property and regeneration experts have cited as a key driver for future regeneration and investment.

To secure the future viability of Newport, ABP is urging the Welsh Government to fully investigate the viability of all the proposed routes for the M4 relief road before it commits to building the 'black route' in its current form.

ABP has proposed a motorway standard alternative crossing point several hundred metres further north of the proposed 'black route'. While this would still cause disruption to the port estate, it would have a far less severe impact on both current operations and future development plans.

ABP has owned and operated the Port of Newport since 1982 and is set to celebrate 150 years of North Dock next year. These are exciting times for the port, with demand for industrial space and cargo berths increasing, jobs being created, a programme of investment underway and proposals in place to increase both capacity and capabilities over the next 20 years.

The Port of Newport is enjoying a resurgence, with annual tonnage increasing by 20.17% in 2014 compared with 2013, and several occupiers expanding their operations. The proposals for a new M4 relief road in their current form create uncertainty and make it extremely difficult for ABP to plan its future investment in Newport.

This is a decision with major implications for future generations. If the ultimate outcome is to go ahead with construction of a motorway bridge that bisects Newport's North and South Docks, the full potential of the Port will be lost forever with lasting consequences for the prosperity of the region and the growth of the Welsh economy.



ASSOCIATED BRITISH PORTS

If you would like further information about the Port of Newport, please contact:

Associated British Ports, Port of Newport, Port Office, Alexandra Dock, Newport NP20 2UW

T: 0870 609 6699 E: newport@abports.co.uk

www.abports.co.uk