

A Short Note on Project by Project Authority

The proposed project is essentially a bridge project and involves construction of bridge on Vasai Creek connecting Vasai and Bhayandar cities. The mangroves at the places where bridge is to be constructed fall under protected forest categories which are to be cut in order to construct a bridge.

General

The proposed bridge project is mooted by Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA), a Government of Maharashtra Undertaking responsible for planning development works in Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR). The MMRDA has shown keen interests in developing urban projects in MMR including Vasai-Virar. It has sanctioned the work of construction of road bridge with an approximate length of 5 km and width is 30.6 meters (2 bridges of 3+3 lane with width of 14.3 m X 2 No. with 2 m gap) on Vasai Creek connecting Vasai and Bhayandar urban settlements. The bridge is proposed as a state of the art bridge in the structural arrangement comprising pre-cast segmental construction.

The objective of the project is to improve the connectivity and to provide and improve transport & communication facilities between Vasai and Bhayander and to the surrounding area of village Panju, which is currently, not connected through road transport. The Village Panju in Taluka Vasai situated on natural island formed on Vasai Creek having population of around 1400 persons as per 2001 census. The proposed project will cater major loads from Mumbai to Vasai and vice versa. This project activity will save present day detour of 30 Km; and will be useful for road traffic by avoiding longer length and resultant pollution and thus will be in good demand. Welfare of people will be improved due to short route. Infrastructural facilities within state will be strengthened by this activity.

The proposed bridge length is approximately 5 km and width is 30.6 meters due to the construction of the bridge, the travel distance between Vasai to Mumbai will be reduced nearly by 30 km benefiting nearly 7.94 lakh populations in Vasai Taluka. The travel time will also be reduced and improve the environmental air quality on account of reduction in traffic congestion. People at Panju island doesn't have any road connection either with Vasai and Mumbai region and they have to use ferry services between Vasai Panju island and from Vasai they can access nearby areas which is very inconvenient and time consuming. Hence two ramps of approximately 600 m in length with approximate width of 8.5 m (straight portion) and 12 m at curved portion are proposed at Panju island (**Figure: 2**), which connects it with the proposed bridge directly and people from Panju island will get direct access to Mumbai as well as Vasai through road, hence it will promote the tourism activity in nearby area of island.

The proposed bridge involves diversion of 3.44 ha. Forest land for bridge construction. This bridge passes through Mira-Bhayander Municipal Corporation Area, Vasai Creek, Panju Island and Vasai-Virar Municipal Corporation Area.

Location and its importance

The proposed project is planned, just western side of the existing railway bridge. There are 2 railway bridges across the creek on alignments more or less parallel to one another. Out of these two railway bridges, the Lowermost (i.e. most sea ward or downstream) bridge is the oldest and is now defunct. The project activity is very important as it will be the direct connecting point between Mumbai and Vasai as well as Gujarat, as the existing NH-8 is not sufficient enough to cater the current traffic load and often experience severe traffic jams. Hence the proposed project will cater major loads from Mumbai to Vasai and vice versa.

Need of Project

Construction of Bridge on Creek Connecting Vasai and Bhayandar. The proposed bridge length is approximately 5 km and width is 30.6 m (14.3 m X 2 No. + 2 m gap). The distance between Vasai to Mumbai by road will be reduced nearly by 30 km and nearly 7.94 Lacs of population in Vasai Taluka will be benefited by this proposal.

1. There is no road service which directly connects Vasai and Bhayandar and both the town can be connected through rail route only. People from Vasai has to travel through NH-8 to Kashimira and Mira –Bhayandar via Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Road which is a journey of 39 Km and it takes around 1 hour 17 min (by vehicle)
2. NH-8 caters major part of JNPT bound traffic from Gujarat and also in reverse direction and also traffic from Ghodbunder Road. Hence most of the time NH-8 experiences the severe traffic jam. NH-8 and Ghodbunder road are commercially very important road link for trade and commerce and increase in traffic in future will cause tremendous loss in time and

fuel, **hence a dedicated road/ bridge is must to connect Vasai with Mumbai**

3. The shortest distance between Vasai to Bhayender by road (via NH-8) is 39 Km, 1 hour 17 min
4. This project would connect Bhayandar with Naigaon and Panju Island. Currently, motorists travelling to Naigaon from Bhayandar take the Mumbai-Ahmedabad highway NH-8 and travel about 39- km.
5. Once completed, the bridge will help motorists reach their destination in just 10 minutes, against the present travel time of over an hour.

Figure 1: Project Alignment



Existing Road

Railway Line

Project Activity

Thus considering the above importance of the project geography, the proposed bridge will open better opportunities of connectivity with the main cities for Bhayandar, Panju Island and Vasai.

Figure 2: Panju Island



As the proposed bridge is passing through mangrove patches which are a protected forest area, the need of diversion of 3.44 ha Mangroves under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. Therefore, this application is made under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and rules made there under. Apparently implementation of this project will reduce travel time, fuel consumption, vehicle operational and maintenance cost of vehicles in addition to many advantages like pollution control, increase in productivity, prevention of losses due to delayed transit and safety to human life by avoiding likely accidents and quick transfer of serious patients. While meeting these essential services the project activity will generate temporary as well as permanent employment to the skilled and un-skilled workers at a large scale. This will improve the economy of the local population of this region.

Justification for locating the project in forest area: Project activity is planned along western side of existing railway track where salt pan land is available and mangrove vegetation is very sparse and it belongs to government, whereas land at eastern side of railway track has dense human settlement of bhayandar city (**Figure: 3**) and this land can not be acquired for project activity. Hence there is no possibility of locating this project on any other alternative site. The proposed project alignment commence from uttan road near netaji subhash chandra ground at murdha gaon passes salt pan land, patches of water logged area and mangrove at bhayendar side (approx. 2.16 Km) and panju island (approx. 0.77 Km), vasai creek (approx. 1.45 Km) and Naigaon (approx. 0.59 Km). Project alignment terminates at coutino road near naigaon before that it passess through mangrove area and water logged area. It is easier to acquire the land for project alignment on western side of railway bridge. Hence the project alignment can not be located on eastern side of railway bridge as it will require demolition of structures/households, displacement and resettlement of people.