



Structures Fund template

This template is for local authorities proposing schemes for investment from the Structures Fund. Before completing the template, local authorities should read the [Structures Fund guidance and associated documents](#). Alongside the template, local authorities must also complete the economic toolkit for the proposed scheme.

Part 1 – Details of the Structure Being Promoted

1.1 Scheme Information

This section captures the key information on the scheme that is being proposed to the Structures Fund.

a) Local highway authority (LHA) name: Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

b) Scheme / structure name and LHA bridges number: Barston Bridge (Over River Blythe)

c) Location (OS Grid Reference) of the scheme/structure (to identify location on map):

Easting: 421634

Northing: 278390

d) Name of Project Manager: Matthew Derrington

e) Email address: matthew.derrington@solihull.gov.uk

f) Phone number: 07768615198

g) What type of eligible structure would your scheme address? (select all that apply)

☒	Bridges	☐	Cutting/embankment
☐	Fly-overs	☐	Tunnels
☐	Retaining walls	☐	Local highway repairs due to landslip
☐	Culverts	☐	Local highway repairs due to collapse
☐	Other structure type (please specify): Click or tap here to enter text.		

h) Provide an overview of the structure proposed for intervention and the nature of the problem. (Maximum 250 words)

This could include, for example, the age, construction type, feature carried and feature crossed of the relevant structure and if the structure has listed heritage status.

The scheme concerns the replacement of Barston Bridge, a historic highway structure carrying Barston Lane over the River Blythe in the Metropolitan Borough of Solihull. The existing bridge was constructed in 1859 and comprises a three-span brick masonry arch structure, aligned broadly west–east. The central arch spans the River Blythe and is wider than the two flanking side

arches. The structure includes brick masonry abutments and piers, with a brick parapet on one side and a steel parapet on the other.

Barston Bridge carries around 1,000 vehicles daily on a rural single-track road, with no dedicated pedestrian, cyclist, or equestrian facilities. It operates under informal priority due to its constrained width. The bridge crosses the River Blythe, which is designated as both a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a statutory main river, reflecting its ecological sensitivity and importance as a naturally functioning lowland river system. The bridge therefore sits within a highly constrained environmental and hydrological context.

The key issue is primarily structural deterioration and load capacity limitation. Detailed inspections and a renewed structural assessment have confirmed that the bridge is in poor condition and currently subject to a 3-tonne live load restriction. This severely restricts its ability to accommodate modern traffic, including agricultural machinery, maintenance vehicles and emergency services. Progressive material degradation, together with the inherent limitations of an unreinforced masonry arch bridge of this age, mean that continued operation without substantial intervention poses risks to safety, resilience and long-term serviceability of this important local crossing.

i) Provide an overview of the proposed intervention and how the works will address the problem.

This should set out the method of resolving the issue that is to be addressed.

The proposed and preferred scheme option is for the complete replacement of the bridge with a modern clear-span bridge solution designed to address both the structural deficiencies of the existing asset and the environmental constraints of the site. The preferred scheme is a single-span integral prestressed concrete bridge, providing an overall clear span of approximately 14 metres to fully cross the River Blythe without introducing in-channel supports or new obstructions to flow.

The new bridge deck will be supported on piled foundations located behind the existing masonry abutments, allowing the abutments to be largely retained while avoiding disturbance to the riverbed and banks. This approach significantly reduces ecological and hydromorphological impacts in a location designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a statutory main river. By spanning the river in a single clear span, the scheme avoids the need for culverts or other in-channel works that were discounted at an earlier stage due to environmental risk.

The proposed structure is designed to meet modern highway loading standards, supporting a full 40-tonne assessment live load and thereby removing the existing 3-tonne restriction. This will restore safe and reliable access for agricultural traffic, maintenance vehicles and emergency services, improving network resilience and safety. The integral bridge form eliminates bearings and joints within the structure, reducing future maintenance requirements and long-term whole-life costs.

j) Is any part of the relevant structure owned by a third-party (e.g. the Canal and River Trust or Network Rail)?

The structure forms part of the local highway network and is a highway asset under the control of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, which is responsible for its ownership, maintenance, and operation. The bridge carries Barston Lane, a public highway, and there is no indication that any element of the bridge superstructure or substructure is owned by a third party.

The River Blythe, which the bridge crosses, is designated as a statutory main river. As a result, responsibility for the river's management, regulation, and flood risk oversight rests with the Environment Agency. While the bridge itself remains a highway asset, works in proximity to or

affecting the watercourse are subject to Environment Agency regulation, reflecting the river's statutory status and environmental sensitivity.

k) If the structure is on a diversion route for the SRN provide a clear description/commentary.
The structure does not form part of an SRN diversion route.

1.2 Understanding the Condition of the Structure

Please set out the current condition of the structure in this section.

a) Provide evidence that the relevant structure is in need of repair either now or by the end of the 2029/30 financial year. (Maximum 250 words)

Provide details of the process used for determining whether this structure is in need of repair and the timescale in which the repair is needed..

Recent inspections and structural assessments have demonstrated that Barston Bridge is in poor condition and in clear need of repair or replacement within the current funding period, and before the end of the 2029/30 financial year.

The bridge has been subject to repeated inspection and assessment as part of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council's bridge management process. A renewed structural assessment (2024) concluded that the bridge has an assessment live load capacity of only 3 tonnes. This restriction is principally driven by displacement of the bridge's arch barrels, cracking, hollow areas within the arch masonry, movement of spandrel walls, and deterioration of pier buttresses. The weight restriction demonstrates that the structure no longer meets modern highway requirements and is not fit for purpose in its current form. The low load capacity significantly constrains access for agricultural vehicles, maintenance plant and emergency services, and presents an increasing risk to network resilience and public safety. The bridge's condition has therefore moved beyond routine maintenance and minor repair, and now requires major intervention.

The determination of need and timescale for repair has followed established asset management procedures, including visual inspections, detailed condition surveys, and formal structural assessment in accordance with current standards. The outcomes of these assessments were reviewed through an options appraisal process, which concluded that continued operation of the bridge without substantial intervention is not viable. On this basis, the scheme has been identified as requiring intervention within the current programme period, rather than deferred beyond 2029/30.

b) Please indicate if the relevant structure is **currently** subject to traffic restriction as a result of its condition.

Reference should be made to closures, weight limits, width restriction, limits on use.

The bridge is currently subject to a 3-tonne maximum weight limit, imposed following recent structural assessment. This low live-load capacity reflects the poor condition and limited structural capacity of the unreinforced nineteenth-century masonry arch bridge and severely constrains its use by modern vehicles.

In addition, the bridge carries a single-track carriageway with a restricted width which varies from 3.85 to 4.2 m, and the verge varies between 0.5 and 1.2 m, requiring informal priority working for

opposing traffic movements. There are no dedicated facilities for pedestrians, cyclists or equestrians, and all users are required to share the carriageway within a constrained envelope defined by the bridge parapets. While no permanent width limit signage is currently in place, the narrow deck width inherently limits the size of vehicles able to cross the structure safely.

Furthermore, the River Blythe under the bridge is known to flood. When this happens, the roads leading to the bridge (and sometimes the bridge itself) can submerge underwater, making it unsafe to use. Floodwater also reduces how much weight the bridge can safely carry. For these reasons, the route is temporarily closed during floods and only reopened once the water has reduced to a safe level. Periodic inspections and monitoring are ongoing as part of the interim measures and after flood events, additional inspections are carried out before the route is re-opened.

At present, the bridge remains open to traffic, but its continued operation is dependent on adherence to the existing weight restriction and informal traffic management.

c) Please indicate if the relevant structure is **not currently** but **by the end of the 2029/2030 Financial Year is expected** to be subject to traffic restriction as a result of its condition.

Reference should be made to closures, weight limits, width restriction, limits on use that are anticipated.

N/A - Barston Bridge is subject to an existing 3-tonne weight restriction.

d) If the answer to c) above is yes, then please estimate the likelihood of this occurring: (select box that applies):

- ☐ Low confidence in restriction occurring
- ☐ Medium confidence in restriction occurring
- ☐ High confidence in restriction occurring

e) Please indicate if the relevant structure is **currently** subject to other temporary measures to manage risk.

Reference should be made to measures such as propping, etc.

The bridge is currently subject to a 3-tonne weight restriction. A regular regime of crack monitoring and periodic inspections are also in place to monitor the condition of the bridge.

f) Please indicate if the relevant structure is **not currently** but **expected by the end of the 2029/2030 Financial Year** to be subject to temporary measures to manage risk.

Reference should be made to measures such as propping, etc. that is anticipated.

The bridge is currently subject to a 3-tonne weight restriction and is subject to temporary closures during flood events. This is likely to continue through the period to the end of the 2029/2030 Financial Year.

No additional temporary measures are proposed, however, there is known deterioration of the masonry arches and associated elements. Without intervention, this deterioration will continue, increasing the likelihood of progressive structural failure or loss of stability in key components. As the structure weakens, the margin of safety reduces, raising the risk of an unplanned partial or full collapse, particularly under abnormal loading or extreme weather conditions.

In operational terms, the current 3-tonne weight restriction is unlikely to remain sufficient as a long-term risk control. If no improvements are made, further deterioration would likely necessitate additional measures, such as lower weight limits, tighter traffic controls, or ultimately a full closure of the bridge.

g) If the answer to f) above is yes, then estimate the likelihood of this occurring:

- ☐ Low confidence in temporary measures being required
- ☐ Medium confidence in temporary measures being required
- ☒ High confidence in temporary measures being required

h) If available and applicable, what is the current Bridge Condition Indicator score (average and critical) of the relevant structure?

BCI Crit: 58.00

BCI Ave: 72.46

i) Which elements of the structure are negatively contributing to the BCI scores and how has this changed in the last 5 years.

Reference should be made to recent inspections and highlight the type and extent of the defects.

Over the last 5 years, the BCI average for Barston Bridge has dropped from 82.82 (2020 inspection) to 72.46 (2025 inspection). This drop is being driven primarily by failed waterproofing, degraded safety features, and worsening structural elements, indicating the bridge has moved firmly into a 'poor and deteriorating' condition state.

Most notably, waterproofing across all spans has deteriorated from a very good, defect-free condition to a poor condition with widespread defects, indicating that the deck is no longer adequately protected from water ingress and that underlying structural elements are increasingly vulnerable to damage.

Safety-critical features have also declined sharply. Finishes to parapets and safety fences have deteriorated from moderate condition to severe defect states, while handrails and parapets on the west span have worsened from minor defects to a critical and widespread condition. These represent some of the most severe defects recorded and are major contributors to the reduced BCI.

Furthermore, parapet beams have declined from a minor to moderate condition, while piers and columns have either remained in a moderate defective state or deteriorated further, reflecting an increasing level of structural concern. The carriageway surfacing has also degraded, particularly on the centre span, where it has transitioned from a moderate condition to a poor condition with extensive defects, affecting both ride quality and the effectiveness of the waterproofing system.

j) Submit, alongside this submission template, the most recent, dated copy of the structural inspection proforma or a report summarising this.

Part 2 – Understanding the Case for Investment

2.1 Strategic Case

This section of the template captures the wider need for the scheme and how it aligns to the objectives of the Structures Fund.

- a) Provide a summary of how this scheme contributes to the Government's economic growth mission (Maximum 250 words)

Describe how the proposal will support economic growth (e.g. by creating jobs, attracting investment, improving productivity, or enabling new business activity) and set out the mechanisms through which these benefits will be delivered.

The scheme contributes to the Government's economic growth mission by strengthening a piece of local transport infrastructure underpinning rural connectivity, productivity and resilience. Barston Bridge carries Barston Lane, which serves agricultural land, small rural businesses and residential properties. The existing 3-tonne weight restriction significantly constrains the movement of goods, agricultural machinery, service vehicles and some emergency services, increasing journey times, operating costs and uncertainty for locals.

Improving structural capacity enables more efficient movement of people, goods and services, supporting agricultural productivity and the viability of rural enterprises that depend on reliable access. Improved highway resilience reduces disruption caused by restrictions or potential closure, helping businesses plan with confidence and maintain supply chains. This supports daily economic activity and helps safeguard jobs that rely on dependable local transport links.

Replacing the bridge negates the need for a long-term diversion route, producing more than £27 million of net economic benefits (2023 prices) through avoided accidents, congestion, greenhouse gases, noise and vehicle operating costs.

During the design and construction phases, the scheme will generate direct economic benefits through employment in engineering, construction, surveying, environmental services and supply chains, with opportunities for local and regional contractors. Expenditure on materials and specialist services will help stimulate the local economy and support skilled jobs in the infrastructure sector.

By reducing the risk of future restrictions or closures, the scheme helps protect rural communities from severance, supporting inclusive growth while aligning with the Government's objective of maintaining and upgrading existing infrastructure as a foundation for economic prosperity.

- b) Explain how the scheme supports other Government policy objectives. (Maximum 250 words)

Provide a summary of the scheme's alignment to UK Government policy objectives as represented by the remaining missions.

The scheme supports a range of wider Government policy objectives aligned with the UK's current missions by maintaining and enhancing a critical piece of local infrastructure in a way that delivers economic, social and environmental benefits.

In relation to the "Strong Foundations" mission, the scheme ensures the continued operation of an important local crossing, avoiding the economic and operational disruption that would arise from further restrictions or loss of the bridge. By maintaining network reliability and supporting the movement of goods, services and emergency vehicles, the proposal contributes to economic stability and infrastructure resilience.

The scheme supports building “an NHS Fit for the Future” and “Safer Streets” missions by safeguarding reliable access for emergency services and healthcare provision in rural areas. Removal of the existing load restriction ensures that emergency vehicles can cross without delay, improving response times. “Safer Streets” are further supported by the scheme through addressing structural risk, improving reliability, and maintaining a safe crossing point on a constrained rural route. In addition, a wider bridge will improve active travel safety by reducing risk of collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists. In turn, this enhanced route may encourage mode shift to active travel, improving public health outcomes and reducing burden on the NHS.

The scheme aligns with the ‘Break Down Barriers to Opportunity’ mission by maintaining connectivity between rural communities, services and employment. Avoiding bridge loss prevents community severance and ensures continued access to education, services and economic opportunities.

c) Explain why this scheme is a local priority. (Maximum 250 words)

Provide a summary of the scheme’s alignment to local priorities and policies.

Barston Bridge is a local priority due to its critical role connecting the local rural communities of Barston, Eastcote and Balsall Common. The need to maintain a safe, reliable and accessible highway network is consistent with Solihull’s strategic transport and asset management objectives. SMBC’s Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan identifies highway assets, including bridges, as fundamental to the Borough’s economic vitality and stresses the need to maintain them in a condition that is safe and fit for purpose through a long-term, whole-life cost approach. The current deterioration and operational constraints at Barston Bridge indicate that it is no longer meeting these service expectations, therefore requiring priority intervention to avoid further decline, increased risk, and higher future costs.

The scheme also aligns strongly with the Solihull Connected Transport Strategy, which emphasises providing a transport network that enables access to jobs, services and local centres, supports economic growth, and improves quality of life for residents. Maintaining Barston Bridge ensures continued connectivity for rural communities and businesses, supporting inclusive access (including that of farm vehicles and equipment) and local economic resilience. Furthermore, the strategy highlights the need to manage congestion, maintain infrastructure, and support sustainable movement across the Borough, all of which would be compromised if the bridge were to fail.

The scheme also mitigates environmental impacts by avoiding lengthy diversion routes in the event of bridge failure. Such diversions would increase vehicle mileage, congestion and associated emissions, contrary to Solihull’s Air Quality Strategy. By maintaining a direct route, the scheme helps minimise emissions and supports the Council’s objective of delivering cleaner air.

d) Summarise engagement with local stakeholders, any joint-owners, levels of support for the scheme and explain any controversial elements. (Maximum 250 words).

Summarise support from relevant stakeholders such as the Local MP, Elected Members relevant combined authorities, National Highways, Network Rail, neighbouring LHAs, or important utility providers.

A public consultation was undertaken between 7 January to 4 February 2026, providing residents, local businesses and users of Barston Bridge with the opportunity to comment on the proposals. The council consulted on two options: Option 1; replacing the bridge with a new structure with a maximum weight limit of 40 tonnes, and, Option 2; closing the bridge to motorised transport, requiring drivers to use alternative existing routes. Feedback from the consultation indicated overwhelming and consistent support for retaining the route and maintaining access for all modes, particularly given the role of the bridge in supporting rural connectivity and access to services.

The scheme has also been discussed with elected members at a local level and with West Midlands Combined Authority. A letter of support from Saqib Bhatti MBE MP, Member of Parliament for Meridan and Solihull East and Letter of Endorsement from the West Midlands Combined Authority demonstrates wider political backing. Both letters are attached to this application.

Engagement has taken place, and will continue, with relevant statutory bodies, including the Environment Agency, given the location of the bridge over the River Blythe, a designated main river and SSSI. This has informed the scheme's design approach, particularly the preference for a clear span solution that avoids in channel works.

It is noted that the bridge was constructed in 1859 and retains period features including unreinforced masonry arches. However, stakeholder feedback indicates that the priority is to ensure a safe, reliable and unrestricted crossing. The overall level of support for intervention is high, particularly given the risk of future closure if no action is taken.

- e) Provide a summary of the local approach to prioritisation of structural maintenance work.
(Maximum 250 words)

Set out any weighting, scoring or other methodology which explains why this scheme has not been subject to work prior to this point.

The Authority applies a risk-based approach to prioritising maintenance works across the structures stock which is aligned with current national guidance. Structures are inspected at defined intervals, and condition data is recorded for all elements. This information feeds into a 10-year plan which is updated periodically to forecast required capital expenditure across several structures identified for intervention.

Structures have a calculated condition score, based on identified defects categorised by severity, extent, and estimated remedial costs. To inform the 10-year plan, the condition score is combined with several other factors including route hierarchy, structure type, impact of failure and specific risks present. Scores are applied to each factor to generate an overall prioritised ranking of structures, enabling a capital funding forecast to be generated against each prioritised scheme to identify the total funding shortfalls between estimated total costs of each scheme and the Authorities' annual Bridges Capital allocation.

Barston Bridge has been subject to routine inspections and maintenance, and whilst known defects have been identified, these have historically been assessed as manageable within reactive or planned works. Its previous prioritisation score within the 10-year plan (2019) remained low when compared to other structures across the borough partially due to the imposition of a 7.5t weight restriction, moderate traffic volumes and the absence of any critical potential structural failure mechanisms.

However, the most recent assessment identified that capacity had deteriorated further and therefore additional measures were implemented to mitigate the risk imposed to the public whilst options were explored, including the implementation of the current 3-tonne limit.

- f) Provide a summary of why this scheme has been selected for this application to the Structures Fund. (Maximum 250 words)

Provide a brief summary of the specific need for this structure is advanced to the Structures Fund.

Barston Bridge has been selected for submission to the Structures Fund due to the increased risk identified through recent structural assessments, its importance within the local highway network, and the scale of investment required, which significantly exceeds the Council's annual Bridges Capital allocation.

Following the latest assessment, external consultants undertook an options appraisal which concluded that repair would be prohibitively expensive and offer poor value for money compared with full replacement. A repair solution would retain key structural elements that have already exceeded their intended design life, limiting long-term benefits and increasing future maintenance liabilities.

The bridge carries Barston Lane over the River Blythe and serves as an important local distributor route for commuters, agricultural traffic, residents and businesses. While alternative routes are available, they are predominantly rural roads that would result in longer journey times, increased traffic volumes and greater congestion in nearby communities such as Hampton-in-Arden.

Accommodating diverted traffic, particularly agricultural vehicles, would also require additional investment to improve and maintain these routes.

The case for funding is driven by the combination of the bridge's deteriorating condition, rising maintenance and monitoring costs, and the growing risk of unplanned closures or structural failure if replacement is delayed. A replacement scheme would enable a shift from reactive maintenance to a proactive, whole-life asset management approach, delivering a modern, resilient structure that meets current design standards while reducing future maintenance demands.

External funding through the Structures Fund represents the most viable route to delivering the scheme, ensuring public safety, maintaining network resilience and securing long-term value for money, while allowing the Council to continue progressing other priority bridge projects within existing budget constraints.

- g) Summarise the impacts of not delivering this scheme (Maximum 250 words).

The response should consider the impact of not delivering the scheme, such as community severance, lengthy diversion routes or impacts on other infrastructure.

Without intervention, ongoing deterioration could lead to the eventual closure of Barston Bridge resulting in significant community severance, disconnecting rural properties, farms and businesses on either side of the River Blythe. Users would be required to divert via lengthy alternative routes, resulting in substantially longer journey distances and times, increased vehicle operating costs, and reduced accessibility to services and employment.

The two diversionary routes identified are through Hampton-In-Arden via Wootton Lane, A452 Kenilworth Road, B4102 Meriden Road and Eastcote Lane (approx. 7.7 miles), and through Knowle via Balsall Street,

B4101 Kenilworth Road, High Street, Hampton Road and Knowle Road (approx. 7.1 miles). These diversionary impacts would disproportionately affect agricultural activity and local businesses, as well as emergency service response times. Using these diversionary routes, average estimated journey times at 5pm between Solihull and Berkswell would be 3 minutes longer than the current direct route via Barston Bridge, while average journey times between Catherine de Barnes and Balsall Common would increase by 4 minutes.

The redistribution of traffic onto the surrounding network would place additional pressure on adjacent rural routes, increasing congestion, road wear and safety risks in neighbouring communities. Longer diversions would contribute to higher vehicle emissions and localised air quality impacts, conflicting with wider environmental objectives.

In addition, the loss of the crossing would reduce the resilience of pedestrian and informal active travel routes, requiring users to undertake indirect and less convenient journeys, further exacerbating severance.

- h) If applicable, explain how the scheme helps prevent the likelihood of community severance for all transport modes and the impact that this severance would have or already has. (Maximum 250 words)

Answers should explain the impact on connecting local people to facilities, services, employment, education and local communities. The response should also summarise the extent of diversions for communities, which modes are impacted and how. Applicants may wish to use the guidance in TAG A4-4 Social Impact Appraisal.

The scheme helps prevent community severance by maintaining a continuous crossing of the River Blythe on Barston Lane, a route that forms an important local link between Barston, Balsall Common and the surrounding rural area. The existing bridge is already constrained by a 3 tonne weight restriction, limiting access for certain vehicles and reducing the effectiveness of the route for all users. Without intervention, further deterioration could result in additional restrictions or full closure, severing this connection entirely.

Loss of the bridge would result in 'severe' diversions for all users including vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians, to alternative crossings located significantly further away. 'Severe' severance is defined by TAG A4-1 as scenarios where travel is impeded to the extent that people reorganise their activities, potentially losing access to facilities or shifting activity centres. Bridge loss would result in longer journeys, reducing accessibility to key local facilities such as schools, healthcare services, shops and leisure facilities located in nearby settlements including Balsall Common and Hampton in Arden. For rural residents, particularly those with limited transport options, this would create a substantial barrier to accessing employment, education and essential services.

The scheme therefore supports all transport modes by maintaining a direct, convenient and reliable route. It preserves informal active travel movements, which currently share the carriageway, avoiding the need for indirect and less attractive alternatives. By retaining the crossing, the scheme prevents the physical and social separation of communities on either side of the river, maintaining cohesion within a dispersed rural population.

- i) Summarise the volumes of traffic by mode that are impacted as a result of any community severance (Maximum 250 words).

Explain the impacts on non-motorised and motorised traffic flow. Describe how diversions may differ by mode.

Automatic traffic counts were undertaken at Barston Bridge in September 2024. The count data showed that around 84% of vehicles using Barston Bridge are private cars or LGVs (830 vehicles daily average). This trend is likely driven by the 3-tonne weight restriction currently in place. Meanwhile, the remaining 16% of vehicles are HGVs (160 vehicles daily average). Bridge failure would result in a diversion of over 7 miles for each of these vehicles, resulting in higher levels of congestion on the surrounding road network and associated increased vehicle emissions. It is expected that cyclists would be forced to make this same diversion, which could discourage many cycle journeys in favour of car use given the significant diversion length.

The traffic data shows that up to around 65 vehicles use Barston Bridge between 8-9am on a weekday travelling eastbound, while up to around 60 vehicles use the bridge during that period travelling westbound, indicating a notable impact on the existing local road network during the AM peak in the event of a bridge closure.

For non-motorised users, there are alternative crossings over the River Blythe which pedestrians may use, both 400 metres upstream and downstream of Barston Bridge, situated along rural public rights of way. However, these alternative routes are unpaved and include obstacles such as stiles/gates, making them broadly unsuitable for most pedestrians, especially those with reduced mobility or during wet weather conditions. This demonstrates how the closure of Barston Bridge could result in adverse impacts for protected characteristic groups.

2.2 Economic Case

This section sets out the assessment for Value for Money of the project. Applications must use the provided economic toolkit, but if alternative methods have also been used to support the economic case, this section provides the opportunity for the results to be reported.

- a) Set out the key sources for the economic benefits (e.g. journey-time savings, carbon, etc.) of the scheme. (Maximum 250 words)

Describe the main benefits the scheme is expected to deliver.

Over the 60-year appraisal period, the proposed scheme is forecast to generate present value benefits (PVB) of £27,496,082.

The largest component of the PVB is generated by journey time savings (£17,849,876), by maintaining a connection along Barston Lane and thereby avoiding a diversion of more than 7 miles. The second largest source of PVB are the vehicle operating cost savings, at £5,920,401. Further large sums of benefits are forecast to originate from external impacts, including decongestion benefits (£562,919), reductions in greenhouse gases (£2,090,939), and accidents (£1,113,862).

With present value costs totalling £2,649,724, the Value for Money of the project sits firmly within the 'very high' category, with a BCR of 10.4.

- b) Summarise the estimate of the present value of costs and benefits (in 2023 present values, market prices) and the benefit cost ratio of the scheme from the economic toolkit.

Present Value Costs (PVC)	£2,649,724
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Present Value Benefits (PVB)	£27,496,082
Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR)	10.4

- c) Explain assumptions used in the economic toolkit to estimate the present value scheme costs. (Maximum 250 words)

Describe the basis of the costs input to the economic toolkit and provide justification for the risk and optimism bias values that have been used.

A high-level scheme cost estimate of approximately £5m has been prepared for the replacement of Barston Bridge. The estimate has been developed with QS input, based on quantities measured from the concept design, and benchmarked against previous schemes, and adjusted for the schedule of work and the construction methodology, reflective of site-specific risks and constraints (i.e. working within a SSSI).

Direct construction costs, based on quantities of materials, together with typical indirect costs allowances, such as preliminaries (56%) and traffic management (9%), reflecting the need for full road closure. An additional 5% allowance for unscheduled items has been included within the direct costs to capture minor scope uncertainties.

Costs have been calculated to Q4 2025 base, with inflation based on BCIS Tender Price Index. A construction midpoint of August 2028 has been assumed to represent forecast price increases in construction labour and materials.

Whilst a number of risks have been identified, these have not yet been quantified through a Quantified Risk Assessment.

For 'fixed link' projects (i.e. bridges), an OB value of 55% (TAG A1-2) would typically be applied at this current stage of design (equivalent to 'SOC'). However, given the nature of the risks identified to date, an OB value of 123% has been selected, equivalent to the P80 value, as per the DfT's OB workbook. This is justified given the early stage of design, the uncertainty in the flood design level, existing ground conditions, historic nature of the structure, and the environmental sensitivity of working adjacent to a main river and SSSI. This level of contingency is consistent with industry norms for concept design estimates, where key risks have not yet been fully quantified or mitigated.

- d) Explain the sources of data and assumptions used to complete the Scheme Details section of the economic toolkit. (Maximum 250 words)

Provide details of the source of all data and associated assumptions (e.g. provenance, data checks, etc).

Traffic volumes are derived from traffic surveys commissioned by SMBC, specifically for the Proposed Scheme to understand current vehicle demand using the bridge, by time, day, direction and vehicle classification. The surveys were undertaken as an Automatic Traffic Count (ATC) in September 2024. It is noted that the data reflects the existing situation, with a 3-tonne weight limit in place. Consequently, the traffic survey data may not reflect the true demand along the corridor by larger vehicles that are already limited by the weight restriction.

The current route (without diversion) has been defined as the most direct drive between Barston and Balsall Common, the two nearest population centres to the structure. This route is 4.6 kilometres, via Barston Lane and Balsall Street, using Barston Bridge. Average journey times for

the current route and with diversion have been derived from route planning websites, based on typical journeys by private car.

Potential diversion routes have been reviewed with respect to distance, route quality, constraints. The selected route represents the most likely diversion route for the majority of traffic between the communities of Barston and Balsall Common, as recommended by SMBC during the 2026 scheme consultation. The 9.4-kilometre diversion uses Elvers Green Lane and Kenilworth Road.

The existing 3-tonne weight restriction on the bridge was represented in the economic toolkit by selecting that the diversion applies to HGVs for 365 days per year. Based on the 2024 inspection report, it has been assumed that, without intervention, a further restriction to all vehicles could apply for all vehicle categories, preventing them from using the bridge all-year-round.

e) Describe significant non-monetised impacts of the scheme. (Maximum 250 words)

Consider any economic, environmental and social impacts that have not been monetised to fully describe the impacts of delivering the scheme.

From a social perspective, replacement of Barston Bridge will prevent the loss of an established crossing and reduce the risk of community severance between surrounding rural communities. This will help maintain access to employment, education, healthcare, local services and social networks for all current bridge users, including pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians. The scheme will also improve network resilience by reducing the likelihood of unplanned closures and associated disruption.

The proposal is expected to improve the perception of safety for bridge users by providing a wider structure, reducing the number of conflicts between motorised and non-motorised traffic. A modern bridge designed to current standards will provide greater confidence in the safety and reliability of the route for both motorised and non-motorised users.

Economically, the scheme will support rural businesses, farms and local suppliers by maintaining reliable access and avoiding the increased costs associated with lengthy diversion routes. In the event of bridge closure, businesses would face increased access difficulties for suppliers, deliveries and service vehicles, potentially affecting productivity and business continuity. The scheme therefore helps sustain economic activity by preserving efficient local connectivity.

Environmentally, the preferred clear-span design avoids in-channel works within the River Blythe, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), thereby reducing potential impacts on river morphology, water quality and aquatic habitats. The scheme also reduces the risk of an uncontrolled structural failure affecting the river environment and avoids the additional vehicle kilometres and emissions that would result from diversionary routing.

f) Where an alternative economic assessment has been undertaken to support a case for investment, please summarise the data used, the assumptions made and the results obtained (in 2023 present values, market prices). (Maximum 250 words)

Some schemes may have been subject to economic assessment to support previous cases for investment. Summarise the key details of these here, including details of the data, assumptions and results (e.g. present value of costs and benefits and benefit cost ratio).

Click or tap here to enter text.

Present Value Costs (PVC)

Click or tap here to enter text.

Present Value Benefits (PVB)

Click or tap here to enter text.

Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR)

Click or tap here to enter text.

To enable the assessment of the economic case, please submit the supporting information listed below to StructuresFundTAB@dft.gov.uk

- Economic Toolkit
- Any supplementary reports which support the economic case

2.3 Commercial Case

This section captures information on the commercial viability and procurement strategy for the planning and delivery of the scheme being promoted.

- a) Explain the LHA capacity and experience delivering comparable schemes. (Maximum 250 words)

Where capacity is challenging for local authorities, explain how any capacity gaps may be addressed to ensure delivery of the scheme.

SMBC demonstrates strong capacity and experience in delivering comparable bridge and highway infrastructure schemes. The authority has already commissioned AtkinsRéalis through its Professional Services Framework Contract (PSFC) to undertake the structural assessment, options appraisal and preliminary design for Barston Bridge. This provides continuity of technical knowledge and ensures that experienced designers familiar with the asset will support detailed design in 2026/27, reducing delivery risk.

SMBC also has proven experience delivering similar schemes, most notably the Fillongley Road Bridge Replacement (completed in 2022), which provides a relevant precedent in terms of scale, complexity and procurement approach. In addition, the authority is currently delivering the A45 Damson Parkway Junction Improvements, demonstrating its ongoing capability to manage large infrastructure projects through design, procurement and construction phases.

For construction, SMBC has access to established and well tested procurement routes, including SCAPE, where Balfour Beatty is the regional civil engineering contractor. This framework has been successfully utilised on previous schemes, providing confidence in programme certainty, cost control and contractor competence. Additional flexibility is available via regional frameworks such as Midlands Highway Alliance MSF4 and Warwickshire County Council frameworks.

The authority is likely to adopt an NEC Engineering and Construction Contract (Option A), reflecting best practice and prior experience.

Any capacity gaps are effectively mitigated through the use of experienced framework consultants and contractors, ensuring sufficient technical, commercial and delivery capability to progress the scheme to completion. SMBC has access to multiple support frameworks specifically for external resource and primarily utilise Midlands Highway Alliance Plus' Professional Services Partnership (PSP4) and have done this for previous major schemes as well as ongoing support staff within the Development and Delivery team.

b) Explain the delivery plans and procurement strategy for the scheme. (Maximum 250 words).

This section should include explanation of the various stages of the scheme that are required for completion. This may include design, consents and construction processes.

AtkinsRéalis have been employed by the authority through the Professional Services Framework Contract (PSFC) to undertake all works to date on Barston Bridge including the latest assessment, options appraisal and preliminary design. It is therefore anticipated that AtkinsRéalis will continue to support the authority through the PSFC in undertaking detailed design development for the replacement scheme in the 2026/27 financial year.

The authority has several established routes to market for the pre-construction and construction phases of the proposed replacement scheme. It is anticipated that delivery through SCAPE will be explored with Balfour Beatty regional civils in place as the principal contractor. SCAPE has and is being utilised by the authority on previous large scale infrastructure schemes such as Fillongley Road Bridge Replacement completed in 2022 and A45 Damson Parkway Junction Improvements which is ongoing and due for delivery between the 2026-2028 financial years.

Additionally, the authority has access to regional framework contracts such as Midlands Highway Alliances Medium Schemes Framework (4) and Warwickshire County Councils Provision of Engineering and Construction Framework (2023). Any mechanism for delivery will need to be reported and approved through internal governance procedures prior to any award of contract.

Based on the Fillongley Road Bridge Replacement Scheme, it is likely that the authority would seek to deliver the proposed works utilising an NEC Engineering Construction Contract arrangement, likely to be an Option A contract. This will be subject to detailed design and procurement of the delivery phases.

c) Describe the delivery risks associated to the project delivery. This should include risks which may challenge the end date for the Structures Fund.

Explain what risks have been identified and how might these be mitigated.

The primary risks are summarised below, together with associated mitigation measures:

1. **Flood risk / design level** – The current concept design has been developed based on the existing bridge deck level. However, through the design development process the 1-in-100 year flood level will need to be determined to determine the final design level. If the design level of the bridge needs to be raised, this is likely to result in an increase in scheme costs associated with the requirement for adjacent third-party land (to accommodate highway tie-ins) and programme prolongation due to a requirement for planning permission). Mitigation: A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) should be undertaken at next stage of design. Early engagement with the Environment Agency (EA) and Local Planning Authority should be undertaken throughout the scheme development.
2. **SSSI** – Impact of SSSI on design and construction methodology, may result in additional costs / design requirements. Mitigation: Engagement with Natural England. Selection of a

single-span clear bridge to avoid in-channel works and retain riverbed; locate piles behind existing abutments. Mandate CEMP and Pollution Prevention Plan. Prohibit in-channel plant in contract. Implement temporary measure to prevent debris drop.

3. **Consenting route** – A preliminary assessment has determined that if the works can be delivered within the highway boundary the works can be delivered under Permitted Development rights. There is a risk that through the design development process land outside the highway boundary or temporary works / construction compounds etc. outside the highway boundary may trigger a requirement for planning permission. This may have an impact on programme and scheme costs.
4. **Construction access** – constrained rural location (i.e. road width) and limited working space (i.e. abutting private land) may result in additional costs. Mitigation: ECI to inform construction methodology and early engagement with adjacent landowners.
5. **Land** – additional land take requirement to achieve visibility and improve geometry. If required, this could increase project costs and extend the delivery programme through the need for landowner negotiations, legal agreements and associated design changes. Mitigation: agree with all concerned parties on land take requirement before finalising the design.
6. **Ecological constraints** - working adjacent to water body and vegetation clearance affecting flora and fauna. Mitigation: Allow sufficient time for ecological studies and vegetation clearance outside of bird nesting season.

- d) Explain whether liaison with any applicable third-party organisations present a particular risk to delivery and whether those organisations have agreed to support the scheme's delivery.
(Maximum 250 words)

In this section set out if the scheme requires support from other organisations, and the nature of any engagement undertaken to date.

Early engagement with the Environment Agency has been undertaken and has informed the selection of a single-span clear bridge to avoid in-channel works and retain riverbed. Further engagement is required in relation to hydraulic modelling and Flood Risk to inform further design development.

Engagement with the Local Planning Authority (LPA), also SMBC, will be required to determine whether the proposal is considered to constitute Permitted Development under Schedule 2, Part 9, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015. This can only be determined once the design has been further developed and it is known whether the proposals are wholly within the public highway.

Engagement with Natural England will also be required in relation to the SSSI, including assent from NE for the works, which will include mitigation measures within the construction phase.

2.4 Financial Case

- a) Provide estimated outturn costs (£million) for the scheme in the table below. The table should be completed with total costs, requested DfT investment, LHA contribution and third-party contributions. Only capital funding costs should be included in the table.

To note, the prospectus sets out that:

- schemes should be delivered by end-2029/30.
- schemes with early delivery (i.e. in 2026/27) may be prioritised.
- schemes should not be affordable from existing LA budgets.
- local contributions are required for proposed schemes.
- preference will be given to schemes with higher local contributions and/or those where there is a high percentage of local contribution.
- preference will also be given where the local contribution is:
 - not from other central government funding sources.
 - partially funded from other third-party sources.

	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	Total
Requested DfT investment	£	£706,117	£2,554,339	£1,437,460	£4,697,915
LA contribution	£	£300,000	£	£	£300,000
Other contribution	£	£	£	£	£
Total costs	£	£1,006,117	£2,554,339	£1,437,460	£4,997,915

b) Outline how the LHA has sought to manage this scheme from existing budgets and why that has been unsuccessful.

Explain the local approach to managing the existing DfT contribution across its highway assets and what specific challenges have meant that this structure was not repaired earlier.

SMBC has sought to manage Barston Bridge within its existing bridges capital allocation through routine inspection, reactive maintenance and targeted minor repairs, consistent with its wider asset management approach. Defects have historically been monitored and addressed where feasible within available budgets.

This approach is no longer viable. Recent structural assessment identified significant deterioration and a reduction in load capacity to 3 tonnes, demonstrating that the structure now requires major intervention rather than incremental maintenance. The estimated replacement cost (c.£5m) exceeds the annual bridges capital allocation, which must be distributed across a wider portfolio. As such, delivery through existing budgets would require displacement of higher-priority schemes and is not considered affordable.

SMBC allocates DfT funding using a risk-based prioritisation framework. Structures are scored based on condition, defect severity, route hierarchy, and consequence of failure, with outputs informing a rolling 10-year investment plan. Funding is directed toward those presenting the greatest network risk and need.

Within this framework, Barston Bridge was previously lower priority due to its rural location, moderate usage and the ability to manage risk through a 7.5-tonne weight restriction. Earlier inspections did not identify critical failure mechanisms requiring immediate intervention.

However, the latest assessment represents a step change in condition and risk. Key challenges delaying earlier intervention include constrained funding across competing assets, evolving deterioration beyond maintainable levels, and a significant affordability gap between required works and available resources. External funding is therefore necessary to deliver a sustainable solution.

c) Describe the whole life costs anticipated without the proposed scheme. Explain how the proposed scheme mitigates costs from a whole life perspective. (Maximum 250 words)

Explain maintenance considerations for maintaining the structure and compare these to the scheme cost to demonstrate the financial benefit of delivering this scheme.

Without the proposed scheme, whole life costs are expected to increase significantly due to the continued deterioration of key elements. The inspection history shows widespread decline, particularly in waterproofing (now in poor condition with widespread defects), safety-critical features such as parapets and handrails (now in very poor to critical condition), and structural elements including parapet beams, piers and carriageway surfacing. This suggests the bridge is entering a phase of accelerating degradation, where defects begin to interact (e.g. failed waterproofing leading to structural damage), increasing both the frequency and scale of maintenance interventions.

Ongoing maintenance would likely shift from routine works to reactive and emergency repairs, including repeated surfacing, parapet repairs, and localised structural strengthening. These interventions are typically less efficient and more costly over time, while also introducing operational impacts such as traffic restrictions, temporary closures, and continued weight limits, which carry indirect economic costs.

SMBC produced a 2026 report using the BridgeStation bridge asset management system to assess the lifecycle performance of Barston Bridge. The report provided the cost profiles of several scenarios for the existing bridge without intervention. The 'Planned Preventative' cost profile was used in this scheme assessment, as it indicates the lowest whole-life cost of the bridge without intervention, making it the most robust prediction. Under this scenario, OMR costs would total £2,359,417 over a 60-year appraisal period, as opposed to £1,199,933 with intervention, representing a saving of £1,159,484.

d) Summarise how the cost estimate for the scheme has been developed.

Set out the basis for the estimate. For example, is it based on an estimate from similar work, developed by a quantity surveyor or a contractor quotation. Describe the inflation assumptions used and the rationale for these.

The scheme cost estimate has been developed from a combination of consultant-led cost planning and SMBC's experience of delivering comparable highway and structural works. The cost build-up utilises professional quantity surveying judgement, and benchmarked rates derived from the consultant's internal cost libraries. Early Contractor Involvement has taken place with a framework contractor to clarify and confirm prices used for estimating the works.

Total Construction Costs: Construction cost estimate has been prepared for the replacement of Barston Bridge, comprising a comprehensive build up of direct construction costs, based on quantities of materials (e.g. demolition, piling, structural concrete, drainage and highways works). The total direct construction cost equates to c. £500,000, increasing to c.£857,000 with typical indirect costs allowances, such as preliminaries (56%) (e.g. site establishment, temporary works, and contractor overheads), traffic management (9%) and contractor overheads and profit.

A further allowance for scheme development (i.e. design costs, surveys and investigations, legal fee), client supervision and project/programme management has been allowed for.

Optimism Bias: A number of project risks have been identified, which have been factored into the estimate through an OB allowance of 123%, equivalent to the P80 value, as set out in DfT's OB workbook. Whilst it is recognised that this is a significant allowance it is also reflective of the design maturity and the unknowns associated with the flood design level. The OB provides allowance for scope refinement, unidentified defects, construction constraints, utility impacts, stakeholder requirements and other known unknowns that cannot yet be priced with precision.

Inflation: Costs have been based dated to Q4 2025 and an inflation forecast based on the BCIS Tender Price Index (TPI) has been applied. An assumed construction midpoint of August 2028 has been adopted to represent forecast price increases in construction labour and materials of 9.1%.

Summary: A total scheme cost, including inflation and OB is estimated at £5m, of which c.£2.6m is identified as OB. Overall, the adopted allowances are proportionate and reflect the level of design maturity, ensuring that the total scheme cost represents a robust yet realistic estimate for funding purposes.

The estimate remains proportionate to the current stage of scheme development and reflects the best information available at this point. It will continue to be refined through further design development, surveys, utility investigations, stakeholder engagement and early contractor involvement.

- e) Explain the financial risks that have been considered and factored into the estimate and what contingency is allowed for.

Explain the key risks and their impact on the cost and programme, including how these link to the overall contingency allowed for in the estimate.

The key project risks, that may have a significant impact on the forecast scheme costs include flood risk, construction access, land requirement, proximity to an SSSI, and ecological constraints.

A primary risk is the confirmation of the 1-in-100-year flood level and consequently the final level of the bridge. This has the potential to require the level of the bridge to be raised, resulting in a need for land acquisition and additional highway and earthworks on the bridge approaches, resulting in direct additional works costs and consenting and programme prolongation, leading to indirect additional costs.

Furthermore, the impact of working close to / within a SSSI has the potential to increase costs through constrained construction methodologies, additional protects and/or design requirements.

At this stage, the above financial risks have not yet been quantified. Therefore, Optimism Bias has been used to reflect the potential underestimation of costs. Given the nature of the risks identified to date, an OB value of 123% has been selected, equivalent to the P80 value, as set out in DfT's OB workbook.

This is justified given the early stage of design, the uncertainty in the flood design level, existing ground conditions, the interface with an existing historic structure, and the environmental sensitivity of working adjacent to a main river and SSSI. This level of contingency is consistent with industry norms for concept design estimates, where key risks have not yet been fully quantified or mitigated. A total Optimism Bias allowance of £2.6m has been allocated.

- f) Provide details of the local and other contributions, including the relevant funding sources and the certainty of whether these contributions are available. (Maximum 250 words)

Describe the various sources of funding and their availability.

It is anticipated that approximately £300k will be allocated from the authority's annual bridges capital allocation, funded from the appropriate financial years.. This funding will support the progression of the detailed design stage, associated internal officer fees linked to general project

management, design coordination, and oversight activities, as well as any further consultation or engagement activities and internal governance approvals required to advance the scheme to the pre-construction phase.

The authority therefore is seeking to secure the full capital funding required for the physical delivery of the scheme through the Structures Fund. This request totals £4.7m and is intended to cover all remaining phases of the project after detailed design, including pre-construction activities such as site investigations, procurement processes, and contractor mobilisation, in addition to the main construction works themselves. It is noted that this figure remains subject to detailed design and procurement of works. At present, it is assumed that no supplementary funding sources will be pursued, and the scheme will be reliant on the Structures Fund allocation for delivery.

2.5 Management Case

Outlines how the project will be delivered and managed effectively.

a) Select the option which best describes the current stage of the project:

- ☐ No design, benchmarked against other schemes only
- ☐ Design concept only, no supplier yet engaged
- ☒ QS estimate / early supplier engagement, stable design

b) What is the anticipated start date for construction for the scheme?

April 2028

c) What is the anticipated end date for construction for the scheme?

September 2029

d) Summarise the approach to the management of the delivery of the scheme. This should be from the current point of development to completion.

This should include the management of resources, including the supply chain, to ensure delivery and an explanation of any evidence that provides certainty of delivery within the timescale.

The delivery of the scheme is governed through a structured, multi-level management framework led by SMBC as the accountable body. From the current development stage through to completion, the scheme will be managed in accordance with the UK Central Project Management Framework, ensuring robust oversight, control, and compliance. The scheme will be delivered under SMBC's established governance framework, with the Council retaining statutory responsibility, commercial authority and strategic oversight.

Overall Delivery Approach: SMBC retains statutory responsibility, strategic oversight, and commercial authority, while private sector partners deliver technical design, construction, and key infrastructure elements under its direction. Governance is structured across:

Strategic level – SMBC Cabinet (funding, approvals, oversight)

Programme level – UKC Portfolio and Programme Boards (coordination and assurance)

Project level – Project Board, Technical Steering Group and Project Team (delivery)

The scheme will progress through defined Gateway stages (Detailed design → design freeze → construction → handover), ensuring formal review and approval before advancing.

Technical design, construction and elements of the proposed scheme will be delivered by private

sector partners under SMBC direction. SMBC will adopt the NEC4 ECC, which offers a comprehensive framework for identifying, managing, and mitigating the risks of delay or disruption to anticipated services. Key contingency mechanisms include early warning procedures, programme re-sequencing, Compensation Event processes, risk allocation under the chosen ECC Option, and structured governance of cost and time contingencies. These arrangements ensure that any disruption is managed proactively, transparently, and collaboratively, minimising impact on service delivery and maintaining value for money.

- e) Explain the key delivery risks and challenges and how the local authority intends to address them. Answers should also explain any financial risks and how any cost overruns will be addressed by the local authority. (Maximum 250 words)

Explain how key financial risks are being managed and mitigated. Explain how other risks are being managed (e.g. are there any points of complexity or requirements regarding planning or land ownership?).

A structured approach to risk management will be embedded throughout the scheme lifecycle. Risk Workshops will be undertaken on a regular basis to inform the development of a comprehensive Risk Register. This will capture risks identified for further design and delivery stages, with each risk assigned a clear owner and supported by defined mitigation measures to eliminate or reduce potential impacts. Risk and issue management will be fully integrated within the scheme's governance and assurance framework, ensuring transparency, accountability, and timely escalation and decision-making. The key delivery risks relate to the flood risk design level and site complexity and constraints associated with the SSSI. These risks are being actively managed through the design development process. The key financial risk at this stage is uncertainty around the design level and the potential requirement for land acquisition and additional highway works. The risk is being managed through the Detailed Design process. Early Contractor Involvement will further reduce delivery risks by incorporating construction expertise into design development, improving buildability and programme certainty. The use of established framework contracts reduces procurement risk and provides greater cost certainty. Contingency allowances will be maintained and reviewed as the design develops, and any cost pressures will be managed through value engineering and scope optimisation where necessary. This proactive and structured approach ensures that risks are identified early, managed effectively, and maintained within acceptable tolerances, supporting confident and timely delivery of the scheme.

- f) Describe the key project controls that will be employed by the local authority to ensure that schemes are delivered on time and in budget. (Maximum 250 words)

Provide details of the methods that the authority uses to ensure timely delivery within budget.

To ensure that the project and its implementation remain fully compliant with all funding requirements and conditions, the appointed Project Manager will be supported by SMBC's Assurance Team. This team provides specialist guidance on adherence to funding regulations, policies, and reporting obligations. The assurance function, located within the SMBC Funding and Commercialisation Team, is further supported by SMBC's Procurement and Finance teams, which work closely with Assurance on all matters relating to externally funded projects. SMBC will continuously monitor project progress against agreed timescales, budget parameters, and key milestones. This will ensure that progress, risks, and issues are identified, reported, and escalated in a timely manner. Regular updates will be provided to project partners, subcontractors, and stakeholders, and SMBC will work collaboratively with all parties to address emerging issues. These governance and assurance processes will also apply to any technical or professional consultants appointed as part of the project. Financial systems and records: All project expenditure will be approved under defined cost headings, with every item of spend, regardless of value, fully evidenced and traceable to individual transactions. Outputs and outcomes will be monitored

throughout the project lifecycle in accordance with the agreed benefits realisation framework. This includes ensuring that all deliverables align with expected benefits such as business growth support, new business creation, job generation, and contributions to public sector reform

- g) Set out if the scheme requires permission from other bodies, and how this permission can be obtained to ensure delivery.

Provide details of the permission required, the likely timescale for obtaining permission and any potential barriers to obtaining that permission.

An 'Environmental and Planning Appraisal' and a 'Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report' have been prepared to assess the required consenting route and an indication of the likely permissions from other bodies. The Environmental and Planning Appraisal concluded that, based on the concept design, the proposed scheme could benefit from Permitted Development rights under Schedule 2, Part 9, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015. It was also concluded that the proposed works do not exceed the threshold to trigger EIA screening under Schedule 2, Category 10(f) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. However, it is noted that if the Local Planning Authority (also SMBC) decide that permitted development rights cannot be utilised, or if the proposed works fall outside the limits of permitted development (i.e. due to design changes), a full planning application under the TCPA would be required. Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) assent may be needed from Natural England. Details of the works, timings and duration will need to be known and communicated to Natural England who have a statutory duty to ensure the protection of SSSI special features. Water Framework Directive Assessment, Flood Risk Assessment and hydraulic modelling may also be required. A Flood Risk Activity Permit will be required as works are located within 8m of a Statutory Main River (The River Blythe). A number of invasive plant species and Invasive Alien Species have also been identified which may be subject to additional legal controls and permissions from Natural England.

- j) If applicable, explain how the scheme development has included consideration of climate adaptation and ensures the future resilience of the highway network (Maximum 250 words).

Describe how climate related risks (e.g., flooding, heat, extreme weather) have been assessed and incorporated into design measures to improve the long term resilience of the highway network. This may include evidence of risk assessments, adaptive design features, and how the scheme will maintain network performance under future climate conditions.

Climate-related flood risks have been considered throughout the development of the replacement bridge design. The replacement bridge removes in-channel piers, increasing the effective waterway opening and reducing the potential for flow constriction, debris accumulation and local scour during flood events. This is expected to improve the structure's resilience to climate change-driven increases in river flows compared with the existing arrangement. As the design develops, climate-related risks will be reviewed and incorporated into the design and delivery stages. This could include consideration of more durable waterproofing and drainage solutions, managing surface water effectively, and materials and construction approaches better suited to future weather extremes and long-term durability. The scheme could also consider the resilience of bearings, joints, concrete repairs and other critical elements so that the structure can better withstand the effects of moisture, thermal movement and aging over its extended service life.

- h) Explain the considerations have been made or will be developed to account for the management of carbon for the development of the scheme.

This may include development of a carbon management plan dealing with whole life carbon (e.g. using low carbon construction measures to deliver the scheme or reducing emissions through reducing vehicle miles).

A Carbon Management Plan (CMP), aligned with PAS 2080 principles, will be developed in the next design stage. This will set out a proportionate approach to identifying, managing and reducing whole-life carbon

associated with the Barston Bridge scheme. An initial high-level baseline estimate of embodied and operational carbon has been undertaken to identify key carbon hotspots, through the Whole Life Carbon (WLC) Phases. Total emissions for the proposed scheme equate to approximately 83 tCO₂e, of which 66.4 tCO₂e (76%) are generated through embodied materials (A1-A3) and a further 9.6 tCO₂e (11%) through construction processes (A5). The top five carbon hotspots are identified as Structural Concrete, Piling, Road Restraint Systems, Construction Processes (A5) and Transportation (A4). The CMP will provide a summary of potential mitigation measures such as material optimisation, efficient construction methods and reduced energy use. The CMP will also establish clear roles, responsibilities and governance for carbon management, together with outline targets or ambitions and a commitment to monitor and review carbon performance as the design develops. In line with PAS 2080, it would emphasise early-stage decision-making, collaboration with the supply chain, and the integration of carbon considerations into design, procurement and delivery. A carbon reduction opportunities log will be maintained to record options assessed, decisions made, and measures implemented as the scheme progresses.

- i) What statutory undertakers affect the proposed scheme? Has any engagement been undertaken and how has this been accounted for within the delivery approach?

Set out the relevant statutory undertakers, the impacts they may have on the programme – including planning – and how this part of the programme will be managed. If applicable, describe how deterioration of the structure has or may impact utilities services and the extent of this disruption.

A desktop utility search (C2) has been completed, identifying very few statutory undertaken apparatus within the vicinity of the proposed scheme. The only directly affected apparatus comprises overhead telecommunications cables, that may impact lifting or demolition operations. The impact of these utilities / on these utilities will be reviewed through the detailed design process; however it is considered that the overall impact on statutory undertaker equipment is low.

Part 3 – Governance and Declarations

3.1 Equality Analysis

a) Has analysis of the equality impacts of the scheme been undertaken by the LHA in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty? Select below:

☐ Yes

☒ No

b) Explain how the equality impacts of the scheme have been considered or will be considered. Identify the relevant affected groups with protected characteristics, and any planned measures to mitigate these impacts. (Maximum 250 words)

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) will be undertaken for the proposed Barston Bridge replacement scheme. The EqIA will support compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), ensuring that the scheme is developed with due regard to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations between different groups.

The assessment will consider possible impacts on the protected characteristic groups (PCGs), including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. Where relevant, additional groups such as carers and those experiencing rural isolation may also be considered.

The scope of the EqIA will include a structured review of potential impacts arising from the scheme during both construction and operation. This will cover key themes such as accessibility, safety, connectivity, temporary diversions, and the overall user experience of the transport network, recognising that rural contexts can present specific challenges for inclusive access.

The assessment will involve:

- A review of baseline demographic and relevant local evidence
- Identification and appraisal of potential impacts on PCGs
- Consideration of intersectionality where impacts may overlap
- Development of proportionate mitigation measures and enhancement opportunities

The approach will align with Solihull Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy, supporting its focus on understanding communities, reducing inequalities, and designing services that meet diverse needs.

Findings will be clearly documented, with recommendations to inform the design, delivery and operation of the scheme, alongside proportionate monitoring considerations where appropriate.

3.2 Public Sector Transparency

When LHAs submit proposals for funding to DfT, as part of the Government's commitment to greater openness in the public sector under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the

Environmental Information Regulations 2004, they must also publish a version excluding any commercially sensitive information on their own website within two working days of submitting the final proposal to DfT.

a) Please specify the weblink where this proposal will be published.

www.solihull.gov.uk

3.3 Declarations

Senior Responsible Owner declaration

As Senior Responsible Owner for [Barston Bridge Replacement], I hereby submit this request for approval to DfT on behalf of [Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council] and confirm that I have the necessary authority to do so.

I confirm that [Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council] will have all the necessary statutory powers and other relevant consents in place to ensure the planned timescales in this proposal can be realised.

a) Name: Dean Ward



b) Signed:

c) Date: 31/07/2026

d) Email: dean.ward@solihull.gov.uk

Section 151 Officer declaration

As Section 151 Officer for [Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council], I declare that the scheme cost estimates quoted in this proposal are accurate to the best of my knowledge and that [Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council]:

- has allocated sufficient budget to deliver this scheme on the basis of its proposed funding contribution.
- accepts responsibility for meeting any costs over and above the DfT contribution requested, including potential cost overruns and the underwriting of any funding contributions expected from third parties.
- accepts responsibility for meeting any ongoing revenue requirements in relation to the scheme.
- accepts that no further increase in DfT funding will be considered beyond the maximum contribution requested and that no DfT funding will be provided after 2029/30.
- confirms that the authority has the necessary governance and assurance arrangements in place and that all legal and other statutory obligations and consents will be adhered to.

e) Name: Andrew Felton

f) Signed:



g) Date: 31 July 2026

h) Email: andrew.felton@solihull.gov.uk