



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: [Suffolk County Council](#)
- b) Scheme / structure name and LHA bridges number: [A1120, Cedars Link Viaduct, Bridge Ref 200](#)
- c) Location (OS Grid Reference) of the scheme/structure (to identify location on map):
- Easting: [606223](#)
- Northing: [257683](#)
- d) Name of Project Manager: [Colin Godfrey](#)
- e) Email address: [REDACTED]
- f) Phone number: [REDACTED]
- 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 structure is an 8-span viaduct bridge carrying the A1120 dual carriageway over the river Gipping, the electrified Ipswich-Norwich railway, and two industrial areas. The bridge was constructed in 1975 and each of the spans comprises 12 prestressed U8 beams with an insitu reinforced concrete deck slab, with insitu reinforced concrete diaphragms at the abutments and

intermediate supports. The bridge deck is continuous, with end spans of 21.92m and intermediate spans of 24m. The abutments and intermediate supports are insitu reinforced concrete, with each intermediate support comprising a pair of large circular piers. Abutments and piers are supported on piled foundations.

At the abutments each of the 12 beams is supported on an elastomeric bearing with a sliding surface between the bearing and the underside of the beam, the central pair of bearings are also guided. A large pot bearing is present on top of each pier support, with a sliding surface between the bearing and the underside of the deck at all locations, other than at the central supports, where fixed bearings are present.

The abutment bearings have reached the end of their service life and are in urgent need for replacement – Temporary fail-safe support jacks have been installed alongside the bearings that are at significant risk of complete/sudden failure. The sliding pot bearings on the intermediate pier supports are also suffering from significant distress and are in need of replacement. Other maintenance works are also required including replacement of the movement joints at each abutment, cleansing/repairs to the drainage system and other minor repairs.

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.

All bearings (other than the central fixed bearings, which are able to be refurbished), have reached or are very close to the end of their service life and need to be replaced. The existing elastomeric bearings at the abutments are to be replaced with sliding pot bearings – 24 No. in total. Separate new guide bearings are to be installed at each abutment to provide lateral restraint – 4 No. in total.

The existing sliding pot bearings at the intermediate supports are to be replaced – 12 No. in total.

The design working life of the replacement bearings will be 50 years in accordance with CD350.

Other works required include replacement of both expansion joints, cleansing of the drainage system, alterations/improvements to the drainage system at each abutment to improve drainage from the bearing shelf, and other minor repairs.

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

The bridge is owned/maintained by the highway authority, Suffolk County Council. The land below the bridge is owned by two private companies, with the railway corridor owned by Network Rail.

k) If the structure is on a diversion route for the SRN provide a clear description/commentary.

The section of the A1120 that the bridge carries forms part of Routes 11-13 of National Highways contingency plan for off-network diversion routes in the event of incidents on the A14 between junctions 49 and 52 – A total length of circa 15km. If the bridge were not available for use as a diversion route, traffic would need to be diverted through Stowmarket and Needham Market town centres via the B1113 and the A1308.

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.

The last Principal Inspection, undertaken in March 2025, indicated several significant defects in the bearings, with the abutment bearings being of greatest concern. Some of the abutment bearings were found to have failed or had limited functionality to carry loads and/or accommodate movements, and the intermediate pier support sliding bearings were also found to be showing significant signs of distress with limited/uncertain ability to accommodate movements.

An additional Special Inspection was undertaken of the bearings and movement joints in June 2025 to investigate defects and functionality in greater detail and to obtain recommendations on interim and permanent interventions required. This inspection recommended the following:

- Replacement of the movement joints at the abutments and cleansing of the drainage system to prevent leakage onto the abutment bearing shelf.
- Installation of emergency “failsafe” temporary supports alongside four of the abutment bearings due to concerns regarding their ability to carry loading as an immediate interim measure.
- Replacement of the life-expired abutment bearings as soon as possible.
- Replacement of the sliding pier bearings within the next few years, which were found to be reaching the end of their service life with limited/uncertain ability to accommodate movements.

- 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.

Prior to 2025, Abnormal Indivisible Load (AIL) restrictions on the nearby A14 Hillhouse viaduct structure to the north of Stowmarket meant that the bridge was frequently used for AIL movements moving east/west on the A14, with AIL vehicles coming off the A14 between Junctions 49 & 50 and traversing the bridge as an alternative route to the A14, using the A1120 and A1308. The bridge was also frequently used and for more local AIL movements connecting to the A14, and it is also the Special Order route from Ipswich to Burwell substation in Cambridgeshire.

As an interim measure due to the condition/functionality of the bearings, the AIL capacity on the bridge has been reduced from its design capacity of 45 Units of HB loading down to STGO 1, which effectively prevents a large proportion of AIL movements from crossing the bridge.

- 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.

As recommended in the most recent inspection reports, interim temporary “failsafe supports” have been installed alongside 4 of the abutment bearings as an emergency measure, on the

assumption that the abutment bearings will be replaced as soon as possible. Each of these failsafe supports comprise a pair of hydraulic jacks and sliding plates, positioned between the abutment bearing shelf and the underside of the precast beams, that will take-up any load should there be a catastrophic failure of the abutment bearings that are in the worst condition. Without these failsafe supports being in place, failure of an individual abutment bearing would result in load shedding to adjacent bearings and beams which they have not been designed to accommodate and there is a strong possibility of progressive failure/collapse, which would likely require that the bridge would need to be closed to all traffic. The abutments bearings and failsafe supports are currently being monitored at 2 weekly intervals to check that the structure is still able to continue to carry normal highway loading. These interim measures are only considered to be a temporary arrangement, and a weight restriction and additional temporary supports will need to be implemented if the bearings are not replaced within the next year or if significant deterioration or sudden bearing failure are detected during the ongoing 2 weekly monitoring inspections. The timing and level of any further weight restriction required will be dependent on the findings of the ongoing monitoring and the rate of deterioration/development of further bearing failures – Full bridge closure is likely to be required if no action is taken.

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 following interim measures have been implemented:

- Temporary failsafe supports have been installed alongside 4 of the abutment bearings and all abutment bearings are being monitored at 2 weekly intervals.
- AIL load movements have been limited to STGO 1 vehicles.

A remote monitoring system is in the process of being implemented to monitor movements at the end piers and abutments, to better understand the functionality of the existing sliding bearings and articulation 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.

Further temporary propping/fail-safe supports will be required if the abutment bearings are not replaced in 2027.

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: 60.68 (Poor)

BCI Ave: 79.19

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.

The following elements are the key ones that are impacting on the overall BCI score (Previous 2021 scores in brackets):

Primary deck element (U Beams) – Worst BCI Severity/Extent score 3/B (2B)

Parapet beam/cantilever – Worst BCI Severity/Extent score 3/B (2B)

Diaphragms – Worst BCI Severity/Extent score 2/B (Unknown)

Abutments – Worst BCI Severity/Extent score 3/B (4E)

Piers – Worst BCI Severity/Extent score 2/C (2B)

Bearings – Worst BCI Severity/Extent score 5C (3C)

Superstructure drainage - Worst BCI Severity/Extent score 3D (5D)

Substructure drainage - Worst BCI Severity/Extent score 5D (4D)

Movement joints - Worst BCI Severity/Extent score 4E (4D)

Parapet finishes - Worst BCI Severity/Extent score 3B (3C)

Parapets/safety barriers - Worst BCI Severity/Extent score 3C (4B)

Carriageway surfacing - Worst BCI Severity/Extent score 3B (3C)

Footway/verge surfacing - Worst BCI Severity/Extent score 4B (2B)

Wingwalls - Worst BCI Severity/Extent score 3C (3C)

The condition and functionality of the bearings, movement joints, and drainage are the primary concerns:

- Abutment bearings - Significant corrosion and distortion of the majority of the 24 bearings. 4 of the bearings have partially failed and have limited ability to carry loads/accommodate movements. Some of the guide bearings have failed with no capacity to sustain transverse loading.
- Pier bearings – upper sliding plates are subject to significant corrosion/distortion which limits their ability to accommodate movements.
- Movement joints – Both movement joints are corroded/distorted and are leaking badly.
- Drainage – Drainage gullies/pipework on the bridge deck are blocked/non-functional.

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.

If the bearings are not replaced as a matter of urgency further interim measures, in the form of a structural weight restriction, additional temporary failsafe supports/bearings, and eventually closure of the bridge, will be required to ensure the safety of the public. The bridge forms the primary link to the A14 and the Strategic Road Network for businesses in Stowmarket and the surrounding communities. The bridge also forms a vital part of the road network that enables AIL movements that are servicing NSIP projects in Suffolk and other developments/businesses in the County and further afield.

The bridge is positioned in the heart of an industrial and commercial centre of the region. Gateway 14 Logistics and Business Centre along with a number of significant national and international business premises where interconnectivity and access would be affected.

The bridge provides the main access route to the A14 from the Stowmarket, Needham Market and a significant number of surrounding parishes who rely on the route for both business and personal travel purposes.

Without progression of this scheme the area may become less attractive for developers and businesses to base their operations with potential impacts on economic sustainability and growth of the area. It's also possible that some existing businesses might close/relocate if there is no direct link to the A14.

- 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.

Clean Energy

Maintaining the bridge and access to this route reduces the need for speed and weight restrictions and eventual closure and prolonged diversion routes which would increase journey times and fuel use, increasing carbon use, impacting on the governments net zero targets.

NHS Fit for the Future

The route is also a key route for emergency services with potential impacts on intervention and treatment timing if prolonged diversions were required through non progression of the scheme.

Safer Streets

Diversion routes may become less safe with increased numbers of vehicles and larger / heavier vehicle types using routes that are less suitable / adequate to cope with the diverted traffic particularly HGVs.

Breaking down barriers

Maintaining this key route maintains improved access to work for residents and business.

Progression of the scheme would maintain this key route supporting these key government policy objectives.

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.

In addition to the economic growth and government policy objective benefits which also have local benefit for local residents and businesses and therefore demonstrate local priority; Suffolk's Local Transport Policy has 4 key themes which are relevant to the progression of this scheme: -

- Decarbonisation of transport.
- Health, wellbeing, and social inclusion.
- A strong, sustainable, and fair economy.
- Creating better places.

In addition, Suffolk County Councils current key policy objectives are:

- Health & wellbeing of residents.
- Economic growth and prosperity.
- Environmental sustainability.
- Efficient, value-for-money public services.

There are clear benefits previously stated that overlap government, commercial and local priorities.

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.

There has been ongoing liaison with the adjacent businesses who own land below the bridge. Good relationships have been developed, and the landowners have been supportive/co-operative to facilitate access to enable inspections and works to progress to date. This support/co-operation is anticipated to continue as the details of the works/access requirements etc are progressed.

A works agreement will need to be entered into to enable works to be undertaken to the piers alongside the railway corridor. It is anticipated that Network Rail will be supportive of SCC undertaking its duty to complete essential maintenance of a highway structure that crosses the railway. SCC and MGroup have considerable previous experience in working in the rail environment, involving maintenance, reconstruction, and inspection works on bridges crossing the railway – Both organisations are very familiar with NR's processes/requirements/timescales.

Hauliers and their clients, including the promoters of NSIP's and other local business/developers, are supportive of the works being undertaken at the earliest opportunity such that the AIL restrictions can be lifted.

The County Council and Town Council both recognise the importance of the crossing and the need to maintain it to ensure that unrestricted access can be maintained.

- 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 local approach to the prioritisation of maintenance works on structures is to focus on urgent safety-critical works first, and then to prioritise other maintenance works using a combination of the SAVI toolkit, route importance, whole-life cost implications, and consideration of deliverability. The bearing replacement works required at this bridge fall into the urgent safety-critical category.

Due to the significant cost of the works required relative to normal annual capital budget allocations, a staged approach has had to be taken to progressing the works to date. The following progress has been made to since completing the Principal and Special inspections in 2025:

- Installation of failsafe supports alongside the partially failed abutment bearings – Implemented in 2025, cost circa £40K.
- Ongoing monitoring of bearings, started in 2025, in progress, costs to date circa £5K.
- Design/assessment work to develop a bearing schedule for all replacement bearings required – Started in 2025, in progress, costs to date circa £60K.
- Bearing replacement design, started in 2025, in progress, costs to date circa £50K.
- Movement joint replacement, started in 2026, almost complete, costs to date circa £350K.
- Drainage cleansing/investigation, started in 2026, costs to date circa £40K.

The anticipated cost of replacing the abutment bearings is not affordable within the current 26/27 capital funding allocation and therefore only works and design that are affordable are currently being progressed in 26/27.

- 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.

Replacement of the abutment bearings was originally planned to be started in the 26/27 financial year, however there is inadequate funding available to do this and the works have had to be deferred to 27/28 – There is a significant risk that a weight restriction may need to be implemented as a result of this deferment, and it is also not certain if sufficient funding will be available to undertake the works in 27/28.

Although not as urgent as the need to replace the abutment bearings, replacement of the sliding bearings on the pier supports is also required within the timeframe of the Structures Challenge Fund. Replacement of the pier bearings is a significant and complex undertaking, involving significant temporary propping/jacking, partial demolition of the pier tops, and working alongside the railway corridor. This work is not affordable within the constraints of the normal capital allocations when considered alongside all other maintenance needs on bridges throughout the County. If the pier sliding bearings are not replaced within the timeframe of the Structures Challenge Fund, it's likely that a weight restriction and other interim measures will need to be implemented. Based on current condition/risks it's considered that the maximum residual life

expectancy of the sliding pier bearings is no more than 10 years, however it could be much shorter than this.

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.

If the bearings are not replaced further interim measures will need to be implemented (weight and/or lane restrictions) until such point that the bridge will become unsafe for use and will need to be closed to all vehicular traffic.

Weight restrictions and closure will have a significant negative impact on businesses and communities, with the alternative route being via Stowmarket Town Centre using the A1308 to gain access to the A14.

Delaying delivery of the scheme would result in significantly higher Whole Life Costs

The impacts have been explained in greater detail within parts a, b and c.

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 A1120 Viaduct provides an active travel link across the Great Eastern Main Line railway and river Gipping, connecting communities to various employment, leisure facilities and key services. In accordance with TAG Unit A4.1 (Section 5), community severance is defined by the physical or psychological barriers that isolate residents from local facilities. Should this structural asset fail, the resulting impact on non-motorised users, particularly pedestrians and cyclists, would be classified as 'Severe', due to the lack of alternative facilities serving residents in the south of Stowmarket.

The railway line and River Gipping present permanent physical barriers. Asset failure would completely sever this direct active travel corridor, forcing vulnerable road users to seek alternative, and more convoluted routing. For active travel, even minor increases in journey distance can render a trip non-viable. A closure here would suppress walking and cycling options, limiting active travel crossing to Navigation Approach, adding 1.5 miles to a single journey. It would decouple residential neighbourhoods from essential everyday destinations, such as schools, shopping and employment sites located on the opposite side of the rail corridor.

Furthermore, forcing displaced active travel users onto alternative and longer routes would escalate perceived safety risks, exacerbating psychological severance. Consequently, funding for asset repairs on the A1120 Viaduct is essential to prevent a shift from a highly integrated urban environment to one of community severance that disproportionately penalises those without access to private motor vehicles.

- 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.

The 2025 AADT flow = 14,863

Breakdown by mode as follows:

- 2 wheeled motorcycles – 70
- Cars – 11,809
- Buses/Coaches – 24
- LGV's – 2,183
- HGV's - 777

AADT traffic flow information is taken from DfT traffic count data for the A1120 over the bridge - counted in 2023 and estimated for 2025 (<https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/downloads>)

The bridge also carries a combined footway/cycleway on the west-side, providing a route for NMU use to supermarket and other businesses/facilities in the local area.

The nearest alternative crossing of the River and Railway for vehicle and NMU use is via Navigation Approach, approximately 1.5km to the northwest of the bridge.

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.

The main benefit of completing the scheme at the earliest opportunity is to avoid the need to implement further interim measures i.e. weight restrictions and additional temporary works and associated monitoring, and to ensure the resilience/safety of the structure and enable the road to remain open in the longer term. Undertaking planned works as soon as possible will also remove the need for reactive interventions, which will be more costly and disruptive to businesses and Network Rail.

Weight restriction and eventual closure will result in a lengthy diversion via the A14 and unsuitable roads through the centre of Stowmarket, which will be disruptive, lead to significant delays, increase pollution, and increase the risk of accidents occurring on the diversion route.

- 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)	-11,650,062
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Present Value Benefits (PVB)	202,218,780
Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR)	-17.4

(NB – The Net Present Value of the proposed scheme is £11.65M greater than the Present Value Benefits)

- 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.

As advised in the economic toolkit guide, the optimism bias % is based on the guidance contained in Table 7 of TAG Unit A1-2. Due to the difficulty in determining what Risk % to use at this stage, the same value as used for the Optimism bias has been used. (A higher value of Optimism bias has been attributed to the OMR costs for the “without scheme” scenario to reflect the higher level of uncertainty regarding likely costs/implications of not undertaking the works as soon as possible.)

- 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).

AADT traffic flow information is taken from DfT traffic count data for the A1120 over the bridge - counted in 2023 and estimated for 2025 (<https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/downloads>)

Journey time estimates are based on local knowledge of the alternative routes and likely average speeds/disruption that will be experienced if the diversion needs to be instigated.

- 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.

The scheme will:

- Enable an appropriate National Highways diversion route to be available for when there are incidents on the A14.
- Avoid the situation where the bridge must be restricted/closed to traffic with no means of addressing the issues and the resulting discourse/challenge from the public/businesses.
- Enable an appropriate route to be maintained avoiding the need for large numbers of vehicles to use inappropriate alternative routes through local towns with all the resulting delays, noise, pollution, and safety issues.

- 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).

Not Applicable

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.

Suffolk County Council (SCC) has a Highway Service Contract in place with MGroup. The contract commenced in October 2023, with a term of 10 years (extendable to 20 years) and includes for all highway services, including major maintenance and bridge reconstruction projects. The design and construction work required for this project are within the scope of the contract and there are no problems envisaged with delivery of either the design or construction works required. SCC undertakes the role of the Technical Approval Authority and Client and has a structures team, including experienced Chartered engineers, who are able to undertake this role. Key roles include:

- Client Representative – SCC, Structures Asset Manager, [REDACTED]
- Principal Designer Representative – MGroup, Principal Engineer, [REDACTED]
- Principal Contractor Representative – MGroup, Project Manager, [REDACTED]

All three parties have considerable experience in delivering major structures construction, maintenance, and strengthening schemes, including bearing replacement projects.

- 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.

The Highway Services contract has provisions within it for the procurement, delivery, and valuation of the works.

Design for the required works is already underway, involving local MGroup design teams and their partners for independent checking.

Negotiations with the landowners is already underway and will continue to develop as detailed proposals for the works are finalised.

MGroups construction team have already completed some elements of the works (installation of failsafe supports at both abutments, movement joint replacement, and drainage cleansing works) and are actively engaged in Early Contractor Involvement support to develop bearing replacement works.

An outline project programme is appended to the submission.

- 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.

Gaining approval for some elements of the works from Network Rail (NR) – This risk will be mitigated by engaging with NR as early as possible and by developing robust solutions that minimise the risk of impacting on the safe operation of the railway.

Gaining network occupancy permit for sufficient construction duration may be a risk given the proximity to the A14 strategic road network and the regular use of Cedars Link as part of local diversion routes for National Highways and other works promoters. This risk will be mitigated by engaging with Network Management Team and National Highways as early as possible to minimise the risk. Both parties are already aware of the issues, the need to address them at the earliest opportunity to prevent further disruption and have been supportive in connection with the works completed to date. The most disruptive elements of the works in relation to traffic (replacing movement joints and resurfacing) have already been completed – The bearing replacement works will be less disruptive on traffic flows, mostly requiring only intermittent lane closures during critical activities.

Nesting birds on the abutments has been an issue in the past; however, netting was installed during recent works to prevent access by birds and thereby mitigate this risk. There are no other significant seasonal, environmental, or ecological risks that might prevent the works from being completed.

Lead-in times to procure/fabricate replacement bearings is a potential risk – This is being mitigated via early contractor involvement during the design stage, including input from specialist bearing sub-contractors.

- 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.

There are two industrial site landowners below the bridge with whom agreement will need to be reached for access for the works. Both landowners have already been contacted and have been actively engaged with the works undertaken to date. No particular risks are anticipated with

gaining access etc for the remaining works, however as a “fall-back” Notice could be served on both landowners using the Highways Act to facilitate access to undertake maintenance activities.

One span of the bridge crosses the railway corridor, and a formal asset protection works agreement will need to be entered into with Network Rail (NR) for works undertaken in this area. SCC and MGroup have significant previous experience in working with Network Rail in similar circumstances. The initial notification of our works has been submitted to NR and this will be followed by entering into a Basic Asset Protection Agreement with NR, such that NR's requirements can be addressed, possessions arranged etc as the design and works proposals are developed/finalised.

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	£128,000	£864,000	£3,300,000	£198,000	£4,490,000
LA contribution	£25,600	£172,800	£660,000	£39,600	£898,000
Other contribution	0	0	0	0	0
Total costs	£153,600	£1,036,800	£3,960,000	£237,600	£5,388,000

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.

Based on the output from the SAVI toolkit, SCC's DRC as a % of GRC is circa 59%, with an accumulated depreciation of circa £400M and an annual depreciation rate of circa £14M/year.

(This only includes the group of structures within the scope of Whole of Government Accounting.) Overall structures stock condition has been declining for decades and there is now a considerable backlog of maintenance needs to structures across the County. It's not possible to address this ever-increasing backlog of maintenance needs alongside more significant projects, such as the ones being put forward for the Structures fund, which require significant funding in relation to normal maintenance funding allocations.

Due to the urgency of the works required at the bridge some of the total budget assigned to structures for 25/26 and 26/27 has been allocated to the scheme to progress elements of the works that are affordable and to progress the design/planning of the main works. The typical annual allocation of funding assigned to maintenance of structures is circa £2.5M and is not sufficient to enable the main works to be undertaken in a cost-effective manner and would be to the detriment of circa 1,700 other highway structures throughout the County that also have significant maintenance requirements.

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.

In order that the bridge can remain open and safe for use the bearings will need to be replaced.

Whole life costs will be significantly reduced by implementing the bearing replacement works at the earliest opportunity. This will avoid the need to implement extensive additional temporary support works/interim measures, and the ongoing need to inspect, maintain, and renew any temporary works/interim measures.

Additional Whole Life Costs of circa £7.6M (over a 60-year period) are anticipated if the replacement of the abutment bearings were to be delayed for 5 years, and the replacement of the pier sliding bearings were to be delayed for 10 years.

Whole life cost comparison for “with” and “without” scheme scenarios is appended to the submission.

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 cost estimates for the replacement of the abutment bearings and design work (i.e. the sums indicated in 2026/27 & 2027/28) are based on a contractor outline estimate provided in May 2026 and estimates from previous design work and include input from a specialist bearing fabricator/installer.

The cost estimate for replacement of the pier bearings (i.e. the sums indicated in 2028/29 & 2029/30) are a budget estimate based on input from a specialist bearing fabricator/installer, who is currently preparing costing information for National Highways on the “sister structure” (Hillhouse viaduct) on the A14 in Stowmarket, which has very similar issues with the bearings. This estimate will be updated/refined as the design/temporary works proposals are developed over the coming year.

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.

An allowance for optimism bias has been applied to the cost estimates for the capital costs to reflect the uncertainty regarding costs of the different stages of the project – This is based on the guidance contained in TAG Unit A1.2 – Scheme costs, as follows:

- Phase 1 works (replacement of abutment bearings), optimism bias = 28%
- Phase 2 works (replacement of pier bearings), optimism bias = 32%

It's acknowledged and understood that the risk of any costs incurred in excess of the estimates produced to support the Structures Fund submission will be owned by SCC.

- 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.

20% local contribution has been indicated which will be funded from SCC's normal Block funding allocation from DfT. Any additional funding required above the expected costs will be funded from the DfT Block funding allocation by adjusting the local apportionment undertaken by SCC of the funding that is received from the DfT.

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?

Some elements of the works required are already underway/ongoing – If funding is secured in time construction works to replace the abutment bearings could be started in early 2027.

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

All works completed before end of 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.

A staged approach to the delivery of the works is being taken, focusing on the more urgent aspects first and those that are affordable using current budget allocations. Alongside this, design/planning is being progressed for all other elements of the works with realistic timeframes set to deliver these.

An outline project programme is appended to this submission.

- 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?).

Cost estimates are being developed/updated as the details of the works are being developed. Planning permission is not required for these works. Liaison has already started with landowners and will continue to be developed to facilitate the works – In the unlikely event that agreement cannot be reached with landowners, Notice will be served on them for access using the provision contained within the Highways Act.

A risk register has been prepared for the scheme and is appended to this submission. This will be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure risks are identified and mitigation measures implemented.

- 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.

The project will be delivered via SCC's Highway Service contract with MGroup. This is a term-services type of contract, based on the NEC contract, with provisions contained within it to manage the successful delivery of schemes on time and within budget. This includes provisions for flexibility in procurement options to suit the requirements of the scheme, early warning notifications, managing change control, compensation events and programme management. A scheme of this value and complexity will be managed appropriately, with regular progress meetings and updates to the project risk register and programme as has been the case over the last year to enable the advance works to be completed to programme i.e. Undertaking inspections and investigation works to inform the design, installation of emergency failsafe supports at both abutments, replacement of the movement joints, cleansing of the drainage system, resurfacing works, topographical survey works etc.

- 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.

Specific permissions required from other bodies are limited to:

- Gaining acceptance from Network Rail (NR) for works to replace the pier bearings alongside the railway corridor.

The proposed works are relatively low-risk/low-impact with regards to the safe operation of the railway. NR will be engaged by following the normal processes for an Outside Party working in/alongside the railway. Approvals will be sought and obtained for all works that could potentially impact the safe operation of the railway.

- Gaining access to undertake the works from the two adjacent landowners.

Discussions and arrangements have already taken place to facilitate the installation of failsafe

temporary supports at the abutments, undertake topographical survey works, and to facilitate the ongoing inspection/monitoring inspections. Discussions are underway to secure working space/access for the bearing replacement works. In the unlikely event that further access arrangements cannot be reached by agreement, access can be secured by serving Notice under the Highways Act.

- Gaining network occupancy from SCC and Highways England Network Assurance Teams. Discussions and arrangements have already taken place to facilitate the most disruptive elements of the works to replace the bridge movement joints. Discussions are ongoing to arrange for the less disruptive network access required to replace the bearings.
- Gaining consent from the Environment Agency for any works alongside the River Gipping (Main River). Consent application to be made for pier works adjacent to river.

- 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.

The replacement bearings and movement joints will be designed to current standards that take account of anticipated temperature & climate related effects. The bridge carries part of SCC's defined Resilient Road Network, which is additional justification for securing the additional funding required to ensure that the essential maintenance works required can be implemented at the earliest opportunity.

- 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 though reducing vehicle miles).

Suffolk County Council are striving to become a Net Zero organisation by 2030. The Highway Services contract with MGroup is aligned with this ambition and there is a rolling programme of actions and initiatives being instigated across the contract services with a view to achieving carbon neutrality by 2030. A carbon reduction plan is in place and MGroup have achieved PAS2080:2023 Management of Carbon in Infrastructure standard certification as designer and constructor.

- 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.

No statutory undertakers are impacted by the scheme

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)

Not Applicable

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.

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roads-pavements-and-verges/bridges-and-highway-structures>

3.3 Declarations

Senior Responsible Owner declaration

As Senior Responsible Owner for [A1120, Cedars Link Viaduct], I hereby submit this request for approval to DfT on behalf of [Suffolk County Council] and confirm that I have the necessary authority to do so.

I confirm that [Suffolk County 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: Colin Godfrey

b) Signed: 

c) Date: 01/08/26

d) Email: 

Section 151 Officer declaration

As Section 151 Officer for [Suffolk County Council], I declare that the scheme cost estimates quoted in this proposal are accurate to the best of my knowledge and that [Suffolk County 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 Filby, Head of Corporate Finance and Deputy S151 Officer

f) Signed: 

g) Date: 31 July 2026

h) Email: 