



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: Southend-on-Sea City Council

b) Scheme / structure name and LHA bridges number: 2417: Belton Gardens Bridge

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

Easting: 583605

Northing: 185798

d) Name of Project Manager:

e) Email address:

f) Phone number:

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.

Southend City Council Structure 2417 (Belton Gardens Bridge), constructed circa 1959, is located in Leigh-on-Sea, Essex. The bridge carries a two-lane carriageway over the Fenchurch Street–Shoeburyness railway line, providing a key transport link between Belton Gardens and High Street and supporting access for residents, businesses and visitors.

A Principal Inspection undertaken in January 2026 provided an updated assessment of the bridge's condition ahead of the proposed Leigh Port Project. The inspection included a detailed visual examination of all accessible structural elements, including the deck, parapets, bearings, abutments and substructure. Defects such as material deterioration, water ingress, corrosion and structural movement were recorded and assessed in accordance with relevant standards.

Belton Gardens Bridge is not a listed structure and has no recognised architectural or historic designation.

Without significant repairs or strengthening, the bridge's condition is expected to deteriorate, potentially requiring traffic restrictions or full closure to maintain public safety. This would cause major disruption to the local highway network, restrict access for residents and businesses, hinder deliveries, and result in operational and financial impacts. Closure would also significantly affect the Leigh Port Project due to the lack of suitable alternative routes for Heavy Goods Vehicles. As a critical transport link, the bridge supports freight, emergency services, pedestrians and visitors, and any loss of access would reduce connectivity and increase the risk of community isolation.

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.

Based on the findings of the Principal Inspection, the bridge deck movement joints should be replaced in conjunction with renewal of the bridge deck waterproofing system and resurfacing of the carriageway and footways to reduce water ingress and accommodate thermal movement. Repairs should be undertaken to defective parapet post fixings and impact-damaged vehicle restraint system (VRS) rails to maintain the effectiveness of the bridge restraint systems. Concrete patch repairs are required to areas of spalled and delaminated concrete identified on Piers 1 and 2 and the east abutment, where reinforcement corrosion and associated deterioration are evident. In addition, movement at the bridge deck expansion joints and deck ends should be monitored to establish whether the bearings remain operational and capable of accommodating structural movements as intended. Further investigations are recommended to assess the extent of reinforcement corrosion within all bridge piers and to determine the current condition and functionality of the bridge bearings. A Special Inspection of the bearings should be undertaken to identify any seizure, excessive corrosion or loss of performance and to inform any necessary remedial measures. The fractured and uneven footway at the crest of the north-west approach embankment should be reinstated to provide a safe and serviceable pedestrian route. Finally, a Special Investigation of the transverse post-tensioning tendons should be carried out to assess their condition and verify their continued structural adequacy.

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 is owned by Southend-on-Sea City Council, but sits over the FSS2 Fenchurch Street to Shoeburyness railway line

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

Belton Gardens Bridge is not on the Strategic Road Network

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 poor condition of the deck surfacing is considered to be a significant contributor to many of the defects observed. Record drawings indicate that formal expansion joints were included in the original bridge design; however, these are no longer present and have been replaced by asphaltic plug joints, likely installed between 2017 and 2019. These joints exhibit multiple defects and are allowing water ingress, evidenced by saturation of the bearing shelves beneath the abutments and piers. This is likely accelerating bearing corrosion and contributing to concrete delamination and spalling associated with reinforcement corrosion. Renewal of the carriageway and footway surfacing, together with reinstatement of formal expansion joints, is recommended to improve waterproofing and accommodate thermal movement

BCI Average is 56.29, with BCI Crit 45.07 in the Principal Inspection undertaken in January 2026. The General Inspection undertaken in June 2026 was BCI Average 55 & BCI Crit 31.

Spalling concrete, exposed reinforcement and areas of hollow and cracked concrete are present on the piers and abutments, indicating ongoing deterioration. Several historic repairs have also cracked, suggesting continued corrosion of embedded reinforcement. The prestressed concrete beams remain generally satisfactory, although localised cracking and spalling are evident near bearing shelves, likely resulting from corrosion-induced stresses. More severe defects at the eastern end of Span 5 are likely linked to previously reported fire damage.

The condition of the bearings is a cause for concern. Significant corrosion may have resulted in seizure of rocker bearings, while roller bearings also exhibit corrosion and signs of excessive movement. If movement is restrained, increased lateral forces may be imposed on the piers. Specialist intrusive investigations are recommended to confirm bearing condition and identify remedial measures.

Given evidence of ongoing deterioration since previous investigations, further intrusive concrete and reinforcement investigations is recommended, particularly at all four piers, to assess structural condition and inform future maintenance requirements, this has been progressed for additional works by Term Service Contractors via Professional Services. There are currently no restrictions in place, be it Weight Limits or Traffic Restrictions

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.

No current traffic restrictions are in place

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.

If the structure continues to show signs of rapid deterioration found during the 2026 Principal Inspection, traffic restrictions are highly likely.

This would be to restrict HGV access to one vehicle at a time, reducing weight using the bridge at any one time. This would likely cause significant delays accessing Leigh High Street, especially in peak summer periods when visitor numbers increase drastically.

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.

No further measures are currently in place, although traffic restrictions may need to be introduced should the scheme not progress

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.

If the structure continues to show signs of rapid deterioration found during the 2026 Principal Inspection, the need for temporary measures is likely

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: From the 2026 Principal Inspection 45.07, From the 2026 General Inspection 31.00

BCI Ave: From the 2026 Principal Inspection 56.29, From the 2026 General Inspection 55.00

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.

Span 2, Pier 2, Span 5 and East Abutment – BCI condition change unknown

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.

Belton Gardens Bridge is an important transport asset that supports the economic vitality of Leigh-on-Sea by providing a key connection between residential areas, Leigh High Street and the wider highway network. The bridge facilitates the movement of residents, visitors, businesses and service vehicles, maintaining access to employment, retail and community facilities.

The bridge is located close to Leigh's historic port, which has a long association with the local fishing and cockling industries. These industries remain an important part of the town's heritage and continue to contribute to the local economy through commercial activity and tourism. By providing reliable access across the railway corridor, the bridge supports connectivity to the waterfront and businesses associated with these maritime activities.

Belton Gardens Bridge also serves as an important route to Leigh High Street, a popular destination known for its independent shops, cafés, restaurants and other local businesses. The High Street attracts both residents and visitors, contributing significantly to the economic and social wellbeing of the area. Maintaining the bridge in a safe and serviceable condition helps ensure continued access to these businesses and supports local trade and tourism.

As a key element of the local transport network, the Bridge contributes to economic growth by supporting connectivity between residential, commercial and historic areas of Leigh-on-Sea. The continued maintenance and management of the structure will help preserve access, support local businesses, encourage tourism and sustain the long-term economic resilience of the area.

- 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.

Repairs to Belton Gardens Bridge supports several UK Government policy objectives by maintaining safe, reliable, and efficient transport infrastructure that underpins economic growth and public services. At a national level, well-maintained bridges contribute directly to productivity by ensuring the continued operation of strategic and local road networks. This reduces disruption to commuters, supply chains, supporting economic output and regional connectivity in line with current infrastructure and growth priorities.

In terms of safety and resilience, bridge maintenance aligns with the Department for Transport's emphasis on proactive asset management. Repairing structural defects reduces the risk of deterioration progressing to more serious faults, emergency closures, or load restrictions. This helps ensure the network remains safe for all users while extending the service life of existing assets and reducing long-term whole-life costs.

Bridge repair also supports climate resilience objectives. Works such as renewing waterproofing, joints, and drainage systems help infrastructure better withstand increased rainfall, temperature

fluctuations, and more frequent extreme weather events. This improves long-term reliability and reduces vulnerability to climate-related damage.

From a sustainability perspective, maintaining existing structures avoids the higher carbon impacts associated with replacement or emergency interventions. It also helps reduce congestion and emissions caused by traffic diversions, delays, and unplanned closures, contributing indirectly to net zero objectives.

Finally, bridge repair supports place-based regeneration and levelling up by maintaining access to town centres, employment areas, and coastal or historic locations. Reliable transport links are essential for sustaining local businesses, encouraging investment, supporting tourism, and strengthening community connectivity. In this way, bridge maintenance plays a key enabling role across multiple UK 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.

Belton Gardens Bridge is a locally important transport asset in Leigh-on-Sea that directly supports the economic, social, and cultural vitality of the Old Town and the historic port area. By providing a key crossing over the Fenchurch Street to Shoeburyness railway line, the bridge maintains essential connectivity between residential neighbourhoods, Leigh High Street, and the seafront.

The structure plays a significant role in supporting the historic port, which is closely associated with Leigh's long-established fishing and cockling industries. These activities remain central to the identity of the town and continue to contribute to the local economy through seafood trade, small-scale commercial operations, and tourism interest in the working waterfront.

More broadly, the bridge supports the character and functionality of Leigh old town as a mixed-use historic area where heritage, tourism, and modern local business activity coexist. Maintaining the structure in a safe and serviceable condition is therefore essential not only for transport connectivity, but also for sustaining the long-term economic resilience and cultural identity of the area.

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.

Due to the ongoing deterioration of the asset and the current budget constraints facing the Council, there is strong support for this project from key stakeholders. This includes backing from our local Member of Parliament, elected members, the Leader of the Council, and the relevant Portfolio Holder. As a unitary authority, the Council is able to make decisions locally, enabling a more responsive and efficient approach to addressing community priorities. The project is also supported by engagement with utility providers and Independent Connection Providers (ICPs), including those accredited to work with UK Power Networks and, where applicable, Anglian Water, helping to ensure that infrastructure requirements can be delivered efficiently and effectively.

There is a shared recognition of the need to address the asset's condition and secure a sustainable solution that delivers long-term benefits for residents while making the best use of available resources

Support from Network Rail by way of letter is attached to the submission

- 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.

A new Senior Bridges and Structures Engineer post was established within the Project Delivery Team to strengthen the management of Southend's bridge and structure assets. The role supported the inspection and maintenance programme for all Southend-owned structures, ensuring that at least a General Inspection was undertaken for each asset during 2025/26. A programme of Principal Inspections was developed for delivery from 2026/27 onwards. Inspection frequencies and priorities were determined using a risk-based approach, informed by the outcomes of Principal Inspections and associated Bridge Condition Indicator (BCI) scores, enabling resources to be targeted towards structures presenting the greatest maintenance and safety risks.

The Council uses the Bridge Condition Indicator (BCI) to assess highway structures and prioritise maintenance and repair works. Inspections are undertaken by competent staff in line with recognised highway structures inspection standards, including DMRB guidance.

The BCI score reflects the condition and severity of defects across structural elements, helping identify assets requiring further investigation, repair, or monitoring. Priorities are determined using the BCI score alongside safety risks, network importance, available funding, and lifecycle requirements to ensure investment is targeted effectively.

- 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.

Belton Gardens Bridge is a priority candidate for DfT Structures Fund investment due to its poor condition, strategic importance and the significant funding required to secure its long-term future.

The structure is classified as 'Poor' under the Bridge Condition Indicator (BCI) assessment, reflecting significant deterioration and the need for substantial intervention. It is one of the authority's most complex bridge structures, spanning an operational railway line and presenting significant engineering, safety and delivery challenges. The complexity of the asset, combined with the extent of deterioration, makes the required remedial works highly challenging and costly.

The bridge is a key transport link, carrying approximately 15,000 vehicles per week and providing essential connectivity for the local community and historic fishing industry. Any future restrictions or closure would have significant economic, social and transport impacts.

Despite a programme of localised repairs and maintenance over many years, the underlying structural issues remain unresolved and the bridge continues to deteriorate. Engineering assessments indicate that a comprehensive repair scheme is required, with estimated costs exceeding £8 million.

The funding would enable the delivery of a sustainable long-term solution, preserving a critical and complex asset, improving network resilience and supporting value for money outcomes that cannot be achieved through local funding alone.

- 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.

The failure to repair Belton Gardens Bridge would have significant impacts on the local economy, heritage, and future regeneration of the area. The bridge provides essential access that supports the historic fishing industry, which is a key part of Old Leigh's identity and attracts visitors as a well-established tourist destination.

A closure or loss of the bridge would disrupt deliveries to businesses that rely on this route, creating operational challenges and potentially affecting the viability of local enterprises. The lack of a suitable alternative route for heavy goods vehicles, due to the constraints created by historic cockle sheds and the character of the area, would further increase the impact on businesses and essential services.

Repairing the bridge is also important to protect investment in the wider Leigh Port project, both for construction and for general access, which is supported through the Levelling Up Fund/MHCLG funding package of £16 million. Failure to maintain access could undermine the benefits of this regeneration programme, reducing economic growth opportunities, limiting visitor access, and affecting the long-term sustainability of the waterfront.

Overall, not repairing Belton Gardens Bridge risks damaging a vital link between heritage, tourism, local business activity, and planned regeneration, with consequences for the wider community and economy

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 closure or restriction of Belton Gardens Bridge would create significant community severance impacts by limiting access for residents, businesses, and visitors. Businesses relying on deliveries may no longer be accessible by HGVs, requiring multiple smaller vehicle journeys, which may be commercially unviable and could affect local trade and operations.

Emergency access could also be impacted, with potential challenges for services including ambulances, the coastguard, and RNLI responding quickly. There is no suitable diversion route available for HGVs, creating further disruption.

Pedestrian access would also be affected. The suggested walking diversions via Leigh Station Bridge, which is not fully accessible, or the pedestrian footbridge near The Ship Public House could create barriers for some users. Reduced accessibility may discourage visitors and negatively affect local businesses.

Overall, the bridge impacts all transport modes, including freight, emergency services, pedestrians, and visitors, increasing the risk of isolation and reduced connectivity within the community.

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.

For pedestrians, an alternative route is available via the footbridge, allowing continued movement across the railway without requiring access to the road network. This provides a relatively direct diversion option and avoids interaction with vehicular traffic.

For vehicles, the available diversion route would be via Leigh Station Bridge, which provides an alternative crossing point. However, this route has limitations, particularly for larger vehicles. HGV's would not be able to access Old Leigh due to restrictions on road suitability and available

space, meaning they would be unable to complete the same journey as smaller vehicles. There is no alternate HGV access

Private cars are expected to remain largely unaffected, as they would still be able to travel through the area using the existing road network and the available bridge diversion. However, any increase in traffic volumes on Leigh High Street as a result of diverted vehicles could introduce additional risks. The existing road is constrained, with limited space between the railway line and the cockle sheds, creating a narrow corridor where increased vehicle movements may affect safety, congestion, and pedestrian comfort.

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.

Journey time savings would improve connectivity and reduce transport costs, but the economic benefits extend beyond travel time reductions alone. Improved accessibility and more reliable transport links would enhance business productivity by providing better access to employment, services, and markets, supporting the efficient movement of people and goods across the local economy.

The scheme would deliver significant benefits to the fishing industry by improving freight reliability, reducing delays, and strengthening supply chains. More efficient access for heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) would support the movement of seafood and related goods, helping local businesses remain competitive, adapt to future challenges, and improve their long-term resilience.

Improved transport connections would also strengthen the tourism offer by reducing congestion and improving accessibility to key visitor destinations, particularly during peak summer periods when network constraints can limit visitor numbers and spending. More reliable journeys would help attract additional visitors, encourage repeat visits, and increase visitor expenditure, supporting growth across the hospitality, retail, and leisure sectors.

Collectively, these improvements would generate wider economic impacts by supporting business growth, safeguarding jobs, attracting investment, and enhancing the overall resilience and productivity of the local economy. The scheme therefore provides benefits that extend beyond journey time savings, contributing to a more connected, competitive, and sustainable economic future.

- 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)	£713,383
Present Value Benefits (PVB)	£3,601,138
Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR)	5.0

- 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.

The assessment assumes that a full closure of Belton Gardens Bridge is required to enable the safe and efficient delivery of the planned works, providing unrestricted access for construction activities, plant operation, inspections, and temporary works. A full closure will provide a controlled working environment, reducing health and safety risks associated with interaction between construction operations, vehicles, and pedestrians, while improving access, productivity, and quality control.

Maintaining partial access or a single running lane, including if no works are undertaken, may introduce ongoing risks associated with restricted inspection and maintenance access, increased monitoring requirements, traffic management constraints, and potential delays in addressing deterioration or unforeseen structural issues. During construction, partial access would further increase risks by limiting plant movements, complicating temporary works, extending the programme, and increasing the complexity of safely managing traffic and pedestrian movements.

The cost estimate is based on preliminary assumptions including traffic management, signage, contractor mobilisation, temporary works, stakeholder communication, and monitoring requirements during the closure period. The estimate excludes unforeseen ground conditions, major structural defects not identified during current assessments, utility conflicts, inflation changes, and significant programme delays.

A contingency allowance should be included to address risks associated with closure duration, additional traffic management requirements, temporary works changes, and design or construction-related variations. Final costs and diversion arrangements should be confirmed following site surveys, stakeholder consultation, and completion of detailed design.

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).

Google Maps data was used to assess diversion routes, providing accurate journey time analysis and supporting the evaluation of potential traffic impacts. Automatic traffic count data established baseline traffic conditions, identified peak demand periods, and informed appropriate traffic management measures.

Cost assessments were developed in collaboration with the Principal Contractor and specialist bridge repair engineers, ensuring estimates reflected current construction requirements, technical constraints, and practical delivery considerations. This approach supported robust risk identification, realistic cost forecasting, and effective planning of the proposed works.

A bridge lifespan assessment was undertaken to evaluate the structure's future viability, considering the continued implementation of HGV restrictions until 2040 and the need for ongoing monitoring of structural condition and performance. The assessment identified that, beyond 2040, the bridge is unlikely to remain viable without significant strengthening, refurbishment, or potential replacement works to maintain safety, capacity, and operational resilience.

The combined use of digital mapping, traffic analysis, specialist engineering expertise, and lifecycle assessment provided a comprehensive understanding of the proposed works, supporting disruption minimisation and ensuring that both immediate repair solutions and long-term asset management strategies are technically feasible and cost-effective.

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.

Closing or restricting access to Belton Gardens Bridge for heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) could have several negative social impacts on the High Street and Historic Fishing Port. Local businesses may experience difficulties receiving deliveries, as suppliers may be unable to transport goods efficiently. This could lead to delays, reduced availability of products, and increased costs for retailers, which may be passed on to customers through higher prices.

The reduction in HGV access could affect the success of shops that depend on regular deliveries, potentially causing lower profits and, in some cases, business closures. This could reduce the variety of shops and services available on the high street, making it less attractive for residents and visitors.

Customers may also be affected if businesses have fewer products available or if prices increase. A decline in the number of shops could reduce local employment opportunities and weaken the sense of community within the high street.

Overall, restricting HGV access across the bridge could negatively affect the High Street by creating challenges for businesses, increasing costs, reducing consumer choice, and contributing to a decline in the local economy.

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).

No Economic Assessment has previously been undertaken

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.

Southend Council's Environment and Place team has delivered a range of projects and continues to progress ongoing schemes, including Better Queensway and Leigh Port. The team has also

successfully delivered the initial demolition and temporary access works for the Chalkwell Ramp project, which involved close collaboration with Network Rail through a BAPA agreement, alongside managing formal submissions and reviews within a challenging timeframe. The appointment of a new Senior Bridges and Structures Engineer within the Project Delivery Team further strengthens technical capability and supports the successful delivery of complex infrastructure 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.

At Southend-on-Sea City Council, we use our delivery plans to turn our strategic priorities into clear actions, ensuring we focus our resources, budgets, and teams on delivering positive outcomes for our communities.

Our procurement strategy supports this by setting out how we will source the contractors, works, and services needed to achieve our objectives. We aim to achieve value for money, maintain transparency, manage risk, support local suppliers, and deliver social, economic, and environmental benefits.

By aligning our delivery plans with procurement activity, we ensure that our commissioning and contract decisions directly support our priorities. This includes effective contract management, robust contract performance monitoring, sustainable procurement practices, and creating opportunities for local businesses and communities.

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.

Key delivery risks include delays arising from securing agreements with Network Rail, completing required utility diversions, and managing works alongside ongoing historic port operations. These interfaces create potential impacts on programme, cost, access, safety, and stakeholder expectations.

Network Rail Agreements: Delays in approvals, possessions, access arrangements, or technical reviews could affect construction sequencing. Mitigation includes early engagement with Network Rail, establishing clear governance and points of contact, agreeing approval timelines, submitting information early, and incorporating review periods into the programme.

Utility Diversions: Diversion requirements, and third-party approvals present risks of unexpected works, delays, and cost increases. Mitigation includes early utility surveys, intrusive investigations where appropriate, early coordination with utility owners, agreeing diversion strategies, and maintaining contingency allowances. Utility diversions are expected to be temporary only, during construction works

Working around Historic Fishing Port Operations: Interface risks include restricted access, operational conflicts, safety constraints, environmental considerations, and disruption to port activities. Mitigation includes early engagement with port operators, developing a coordinated access and logistics plan, agreeing work windows, maintaining clear communication routes, and ensuring construction activities align with operational requirements.

- 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.

Working with Network Rail can be challenging for several reasons, mainly due to the scale, complexity, and regulatory environment in which it operates.

Network Rail manages critical national infrastructure, so safety and operational reliability are its highest priorities. This means decision-making processes can be cautious and involve multiple approvals, risk assessments, and compliance checks. While this reduces risk, it can slow down projects and make processes feel bureaucratic.

Network Rail has many stakeholders, including train operators, government bodies, regulators, contractors, local authorities, and passengers. Aligning different priorities and obtaining agreement can be time-consuming, particularly where projects affect train services or require possessions of the railway.

The railway environment is highly regulated. Works often require strict adherence to engineering standards, safety procedures, access rules, and assurance processes. Suppliers and partners may find that meeting these requirements requires significant preparation, documentation, and specialist knowledge.

Communication and decision-making can sometimes be difficult because responsibilities are spread across different teams and regions. Knowing who has authority to make a decision or approve a change can take time

Southend City Council and Network Rail Eastern Region have built a strong collaborative relationship, working together to deliver improved accessibility and transport infrastructure. Through projects such as the Access for All schemes at Chalkwell and Southend East Stations, and the initial works at Chalkwell Ramp, both organisations support delivery, overcome challenges, and achieve shared community benefits

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	/	£1,000,000	£6,000,000	1,000,000	£8,000,000
LA contribution	/	£500,000	/	/	£500,000

Other contribution	/	/	/	/	£0
Total costs	£0	£1,500,000	£6,000,000	£1,000,000	£8,500,000

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.

The recently allocated £12m over five years through Council borrowing for Highway Structure Improvements provides important investment in Southend's highway structures network. However, this funding is intended to address the condition of all 172 structures across the City, rather than being allocated solely to Belton Gardens Bridge.

Due to historic underinvestment, the overall condition of highway structures across Southend has deteriorated, creating a significant maintenance backlog and competing priorities for available funding. The existing Structures Maintenance Revenue funding pot is therefore not suitable as a dedicated solution, as it must be prioritised across the wider network and is primarily intended for routine maintenance and smaller interventions rather than major structural improvement works.

Given the scale and complexity of works required, the wider structures programme cannot fully address the specific needs of Belton Gardens Bridge without impacting other high-priority structures.

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.

The historic works undertaken on the bridge, alongside current funding allocations, have not delivered a significant extension to the structure's overall service life. Investment has largely been directed towards minor repairs, maintenance activities, and small-scale improvements that address isolated issues rather than the underlying condition and long-term resilience of the asset. While these interventions may provide short-term benefits, their limited scope means they have little influence on the bridge's fundamental deterioration or remaining lifespan. As a result, the level of expenditure does not appear proportionate to the outcomes achieved, providing limited value for money. A more strategic approach would require prioritising major structural interventions, renewal works, or comprehensive improvement measures that tackle the root causes of decline and provide a meaningful extension to the bridge's operational life.

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.

Costings have been discussed collaboratively with the contractor, drawing on their knowledge, experience, and benchmarking from multiple delivered structures improvement projects. The approach has focused on using contractor expertise to validate assumptions, identify efficiencies, review buildability, and ensure costs reflect practical delivery experience. Lessons learned from completed structures improvements have been incorporated to refine estimates, improve cost certainty, and support value-for-money decisions.

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.

As with any complex construction project, the Belton Gardens Bridge project faces potential financial risks arising from unforeseen circumstances and delays outside the project team's control, particularly relating to possession delays by Network Rail. Such delays could result in extended programme durations, increased labour and plant costs, and potential disruption-related claims.

Environmental constraints present a further risk, based on issues encountered on the Chalkwell Ramp project, where nesting birds were identified. Similar ecological constraints could lead to additional surveys, mitigation measures, restricted working periods, or delays to planned activities, increasing costs and affecting delivery timelines.

- 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.

The Council has approved funding of £12 million for improvements to Structures over the next five years, with the investment to be financed through borrowing. The funding approval represents a commitment to support the proposed programme of works and investment, subject to the successful approval of the Investment Board bid. As part of this allocation, £500,000 has been earmarked for Belton Gardens Bridge to support ongoing engagement, design development, and preparatory work, enabling construction to commence.

The final investment position for the construction element of the project remains subject to the Department for Transport (DfT) Structures Grant, based on current Council allocations.

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?

January 2028

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

June 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 project will be managed by an experienced internal delivery team, led by a Senior Bridge and Structures Engineer, with support from in-house engineers, existing contractors, and specialist professional services. The team will provide strong technical leadership, coordinate design

development, manage delivery risks, and maintain effective communication with key stakeholders, including Network Rail. Through proactive project control, stakeholder engagement, and collaborative working, the team will ensure the scheme progresses efficiently and meets programme, quality, and compliance requirement. The project has been discussed at length with the Term Principal Contractor, with programme discussed. With the project proposing to be completed by 2029, there is 9-months float until the end of the DfT Structures Fund completion deadline, which therefore allows some programme risk

- 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?).

Financial risks are mitigated through an allocated contingency, which will reduce as the detailed design progresses. No planning or land ownership issues are anticipated, as the works involve repair rather than replacement and remain within SCC land. Network Rail requirements and safe working practices may result in minor cost increases, which are already accounted for within the budget

- 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.

At Southend City Council, we use effective construction project controls to plan, monitor, and manage our projects to ensure successful delivery. We focus on controlling scope, programme, cost, quality, resources, and risks throughout the project lifecycle. Our approach includes developing clear project programmes, monitoring budgets, tracking progress, managing changes, assessing risks, and reporting performance. These controls help us identify potential issues early, make informed decisions, improve coordination between stakeholders, and ensure projects are delivered safely, on time, within budget, and to the required standard

- 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.

The proposed scheme will require early engagement with Network Rail to establish the necessary approvals, asset protection requirements, and operational constraints associated with working near railway infrastructure. Where applicable, a Basic Asset Protection Agreement (BAPA) will be required prior to commencement of works. The delivery of the scheme may require railway possessions and close coordination with Network Rail's operational and engineering teams to ensure safe access, appropriate planning, and compliance with railway standards. Sufficient lead time will be allowed for review, approval, and assurance processes. Formal submissions will be prepared and provided to Network Rail, including relevant design information, engineering drawings, construction proposals, risk assessments, method statements, temporary works details, and programme information. These documents will demonstrate how the works will be undertaken safely, minimise risks to railway operations, and protect existing assets. Early consultation with Network Rail will remain a key part of the project programme, ensuring that possession planning, approvals, and asset protection measures are incorporated into the design and construction phases. This proactive approach will support safe, efficient delivery of the works while maintaining the operational integrity of the railway

- 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 risks to the Belton Gardens Bridge repair project will include increased flooding, extreme rainfall, temperature changes, and severe weather events. These factors will have the potential to affect the stability of the structure, cause erosion or scour around foundations, accelerate material deterioration, and disrupt construction activities. The project and subsequent design will include climate adaptation measures, such as the use of resilient materials, improved drainage systems and flood management strategies to ensure the bridge remains safe and functional under future climate conditions

- 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).

As part of our carbon management approach, we will consider the full lifecycle impact of our assets. For very large structures, such as Belton Gardens Bridge, we will prioritise repairing and extending their service life where practical, rather than replacing them, to avoid the significant embodied carbon associated with demolition, new materials, and concrete production. By focusing on maintenance, refurbishment, and targeted interventions, we will reduce emissions, conserve resources, and support a lower-carbon future

- 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.

Belton Gardens Bridge has a limited number of utilities crossing the structure, which simplifies repair works. While several utilities are present in the surrounding area, these are generally located beneath the railway track and are unlikely to impact the bridge works significantly. The utilities directly affecting the bridge are the privately fed power supply and railway overhead lines. The power supply can be temporarily diverted by the UKPN ICP, reducing potential disruption. The overhead lines will be managed through discussions and an agreed working arrangement with Network Rail. Utilities are present but are not expected to pose a significant risk to the project at this time

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)

We will comply with our Public Sector Equality Duty by meaningfully consulting people and communities who are likely to be affected by our proposals, particularly where decisions may have an impact on individuals with protected characteristics. We will undertake consultation at a formative stage, before decisions are finalised, so that those affected have a genuine opportunity to influence the outcome.

We will ensure that our consultation is accessible, inclusive, and proportionate, allowing sufficient time for responses and taking reasonable steps to engage with those who may be disproportionately affected. We will actively seek evidence from affected individuals and representative groups to understand the likely equality impacts of our proposals.

We will carefully consider all responses received and use that information, alongside other relevant evidence, to assess the impact of our decisions on people with protected characteristics. Where appropriate, we will amend our proposals to address concerns raised through the consultation process.

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.southend.gov.uk/beltongardensbridgestructure

3.3 Declarations

Senior Responsible Owner declaration

As Senior Responsible Owner for [Belton Gardens Bridge], I hereby submit this request for approval to DfT on behalf of [Southend-on-Sea City Council] and confirm that I have the necessary authority to do so.

I confirm that [Southend-on-Sea City 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:

[REDACTED]

b) Signed:

[REDACTED]

c) Date: 03/08/2026

d) Email:

[REDACTED]

Section 151 Officer declaration

As Section 151 Officer for [Southend-on-Sea City Council], I declare that the scheme cost estimates quoted in this proposal are accurate to the best of my knowledge and that [Southend-on-Sea City 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:

[REDACTED]

f) Signed:

[REDACTED]

g) Date: 03/08/2026

h) Email:

[REDACTED]