



## Expression of Interest Form: 2020/21 proposals

*This form is for proposals over £5 million to be funded by DfT in 2020/21.*

*The closing date for Expressions of Interest is 31 October 2019.*

*For proposals submitted by components of a Combined Authority a separate EOI form should be completed for each one, then the CA should rank them in order of preference.*

### Applicant Information

**Local authority name:** Essex County Council

*Name and position of officer with day to day responsibility for delivering the proposal.*

**Manager Name and position:** Andrew Cook, Director Highways & Transportation

**Contact telephone number:**

**Email address:** andrew.cook@essex.gov.uk

**Postal address:** Essex County Council  
Attn. Mr Andrew Cook  
Director Highways & Transportation  
Room C232  
County Hall  
Market Road  
Chelmsford  
Essex

**Postcode** CM1 1QH

### **Combined Authorities**

*If the proposal is from a local highway authority within a Combined Authority, please specify the contact and ensure that the Combined Authority has submitted a Combined Authority Application Ranking Form.*

**Name and position of Combined Authority Co-ordinator for CA proposals:**

**Contact telephone number:**

**Email address:** N / A

**Postal address:**

**Postcode**

## **SECTION A – Description of works**

### **A1. Name of proposal:**

Uttlesford Bridge Strengthening and Footway / Cycleway Maintenance Scheme

### **A2. Geographic area:**

*Please provide information about the location of the proposal (in no more than 50 words).*

The scheme is primarily in Uttlesford district, situated in North West Essex within the London-Stansted-Cambridge Corridor. The seven structures are: Saffron Walden (the Slade), Newport (Wicken Fenn and Hercules), Thaxted (Armitage, Dairy Green and Borough), and Great Yeldham (White Hart). The footway / cycleway maintenance scheme is near Saffron Walden.

OS Grid Reference: TL539384 (easting 553972, northing 238470)

Postcode: CB10 1LU

*You might wish to append a map showing the location (and route) of the proposal, existing transport infrastructure and other points of particular interest.*

For more information please refer to Appendix A - 'Uttlesford Bridge Strengthening Location Map.pdf', Appendix A2 – 'Uttlesford Bridge Strengthening Programme Bridge Photos.pdf', & Appendix B – 'B1383 London Road to Great Chesterford Footway Cycleway Maintenance Scheme.pdf'

**A3. Description of existing problems and how the proposal would address them. Please set out which other options have been considered:**

Seven weak structures with abnormal load bans are creating significant network connectivity issues on key routes, making it problematic for hauliers to access primary destinations in Uttlesford and resulting in significant dead running time from diversion routes. This results in an impediment to the free flow of construction machinery and materials required by developers for housing and employment growth for the District. It also increases fuel costs, time and emissions.

The seven structures and associated works have been identified from inspections, option studies and impact assessment in terms of network connectivity issues. Proposed strengthening works to the seven structures will open this area and beyond for easier development and creation of employment. It will also enable better transport links to support local communities and essential services. The best value for money solutions for the works have been identified and road space has been reserved in readiness to undertake the works. Other weak structures within the District have not been included in the strengthening scheme as they are lower priority in terms of network impact and, therefore, have not been progressed to the same level of preparedness.

The accompanying footway / cycleway maintenance scheme will restore deteriorated assets, sustaining links from Saffron Walden and Audley End with the outlying villages of Littlebury and Great Chesterford towards proposed new housing developments in North Uttlesford and close by South Cambridgeshire. The footways / cycleways link to the railway stations at Audley End and Great Chesterford.

For information on the seven structures which comprise the bid, in terms of condition issues, proposed works, region of magnitude in terms of cost, length and time associated with diversion routes, and scheduling of treatments over the plan period, please refer to Appendix C - 'Uttlesford Bridge Strengthening Programme.xls'. For information on the footway / cycleway maintenance scheme, please refer to Appendix D - 'B1383 London Road to Great Chesterford Footway Cycleway Maintenance Scheme Info.pdf'.

## **SECTION B – The Business Case**

### **B1. The Financial Case – Project Costs and Profile**

Please indicate the anticipated cost of the proposal in the table below. **Figures should be entered in £000s** (i.e. £10,000 = 10).

#### **Funding profile (Nominal terms)**

<b>£000s</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>Total</b>
DfT Funding Sought	8,720	DfT funding is not available in 2021-22	DfT funding is not available in 2022-23	<b>8,720</b>
Essex County Council (ECC) Contribution	1,584	1,934	657	<b>4,175</b>
Other Third Party Funding	None	None	None	None
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,304</b>	<b>1,934</b>	<b>657</b>	<b>12,895</b>

#### **Notes:**

1) Department for Transport funding will be granted in the 2020-21 financial year, but local highway authorities may carry that funding over to following financial years if necessary.

2) There is no specific amount for a local contribution by the local authority and / or a third party, but if additional funding is proposed, please state what this is expected to be.

Please note that the above financial information is a combined total for Structures and Footway / Cycleway Maintenance elements.

### **B2. Timetable**

Proposed start date: 2020/21

Estimated completion date: 2022/23

### **B3. Strategic Case and Economic Case**

*The rationale for making the investment, evidence of the existing situation and why the asset needs to be repaired or renewed. It should also include how it fits into the overall asset management strategy for the authority **and why it cannot be funded through the annual Highways Maintenance Block Funding grant.***

**This expression of interest supports the emerging Uttlesford Local Plan which sets out a range of transport proposals including improvements to highways, cycling and pedestrian provision to support significant new growth in the district.**

Currently, seven weak bridges with abnormal load bans on key routes in and around Saffron Walden, Newport, Thaxted and Great Yeldham, are making it problematic to deliver goods and services to existing businesses, communities and health care facilities in Uttlesford and beyond. Current diversion routes can be lengthy, requiring up to 30 kilometres of additional motoring, requiring around 30 minutes extra travel time, contributing to delays and increased carbon emissions. For certain destinations, deliveries are actually not possible without concessions to current restrictions; these can take considerable time to plan and are a significant cost to the haulier.

These transport connectivity restrictions not only have a negative impact on the existing service requirements for the community but have a negative impact on forward development which requires the transportation of equipment and materials to support housing and business growth.

Three new garden communities are planned at North Uttlesford, Easton Park and West of Braintree to provide over 14,000 homes. Plans for employment growth will create around 14,600 new jobs.

London Stansted Airport is located in the south of Uttlesford and is the single largest employer in the east of England with approximately 12,000 site employees. Manchester Airport Group owns London Stansted Airport and is planning significant investment in the airport over the next five years.

Uttlesford is situated within the London-Stansted-Cambridge Corridor where the number of jobs has increased at more than twice the national rate in the last ten years. The Corridor provides a national innovation and knowledge hub, driving UK growth and economic dynamism. The Corridor is Europe's leading life sciences cluster and competes for international investment and jobs that would otherwise go to an overseas knowledge region.

**The proposed bridge strengthening will open key routes across the district**, and beyond, for easier development and creation of employment. It will also enable better transport links to support local communities and essential services – around 70% of the Uttlesford population lives in rural communities outside of the two key settlements Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow.

Additionally, there will be “softer” benefits in terms of a positive impact towards the social value of the area, by making it easier to access services and supporting access to the aforementioned employment opportunities and planned new housing. There will also be longer term reduction of disruption in the area.

We have been liaising with Uttlesford DC and the diagram below is taken from the Local Plan; it provides a strategic picture of the distribution and scale of proposed development within Uttlesford, including the broad location of the new garden communities. The location of the seven bridges is marked with a yellow circle. Please note that the location of the bridge to the east of Uttlesford is



and Great Chesterford towards the proposed new housing developments in North Uttlesford and nearby South Cambridge. Discussions are currently underway with Cambridge City Council which has shown a keen interest in the development of the cycle route, and the possibility of a funding contribution from Cambridge City Council is also being explored. These footways / cycleways will also provide access to the railway stations at Audley End and Great Chesterford.

There is currently a low cycle use and limited cycle infrastructure within the district, but the Local Plan, along with the recently published 'Uttlesford District Cycling Action Plan', proposes to promote alternative travel options such as cycling. **This maintenance scheme will make alternative travel more attractive, contribute to alleviating traffic volumes in and around Saffron Walden and nearby villages, and will reduce CO2 emissions.** It will also promote leisure activities associated with the Audley End English Heritage Country House and Gardens and will result in health benefits for pedestrians and cycle users through increased physical mobility from exercise.

This targeted approach for investment can only be considered via a significant financial contribution from the Department for Transport under the Challenge Fund, enabling works programmes to be accelerated into a relatively short period rather than being drawn out over many financial years by competing demands. This targeted, strategic investment is in keeping with ECC's asset management policy and strategy to support the Council's organisation objective to promote economic development in the County, thereby making Essex an attractive place to live and work.

An alternative approach would be to fund the works from the routine Highways Maintenance Block funding allocation, but because of the magnitude of costs and competing demands, this would result in works requiring to be phased over a prolonged period. At best, one or two of the bridges could be improved, but that would be of limited help to the overall situation, as the remaining bridges would still have restrictions.

Alternatively, refurbishment works could be deferred to much later, which would adversely affect the Local Plan proposals for development and expansion in the district, and in the meantime the bridges would continue to deteriorate in condition.

Some of the information referenced has been drawn from the Uttlesford economic development strategy and action plan 2018-21, and the emerging Local Plan for Uttlesford. For information on the Uttlesford Strategic Cycle Route Plan and the way this will be addressed by the proposed footway / cycleway maintenance scheme please refer to Appendix E – 'Uttlesford Strategic Cycle Route Plan.doc'

## **SECTION C: Declarations**

### **C. Senior Responsible Owner Declaration**

As Senior Responsible Owner for Uttlesford Bridge Strengthening and Footway / Cycleway Maintenance Scheme, I hereby submit this request for approval to DfT on behalf of Essex County Council and confirm that I have the necessary authority to do so.

I confirm that Essex County Council will have all the necessary powers in place to ensure the planned timescales in the application can be realised.

Name: Andrew Cook

Signed:

Position: Director, Highways & Transportation	
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**Submission of Expression of Interest:**

*The deadline for the Expression of Interest submission is 5pm on **31 October 2019***

*Successful proposals for EOIs in Tranche 2B are to be funded by DfT in 2020/21.*

*An electronic copy of the EOI should be submitted to:*

[roadmaintenance@dft.gov.uk](mailto:roadmaintenance@dft.gov.uk) copying in [Paul.O'Hara@dft.gov.uk](mailto:Paul.O'Hara@dft.gov.uk)