




Scheme Name:	Blackpool Bridges Scheme
Scheme Description:	<p>The Blackpool Bridges scheme proposes the repair/reconstruction of Blackpool's 10 strategic bridges at a total estimated cost of £11.365m.</p> <p>The bridges are located throughout the town, either under/over live rail lines, on strategic north/south routes, on roads linking the M55 motorway with the town's major car and coach parks and on local distributor roads feeding traffic from the M55 to the Promenade and resort visitor attractions.</p> <p>Eight of Blackpool's ten strategic bridges were originally constructed to enable railways into Blackpool. Some were constructed at the same time as the railways and others were built in the 1920s and 1930s to enable development. In both cases the bridges have suffered from the effects of airborne chloride attack associated with aggressive coastal environments and from minimal maintenance/investment. Several key bridges require urgent attention otherwise they will close or have weight restrictions imposed within the next two years.</p>




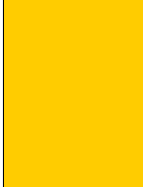


The purpose of this review is to examine the evidence base for the above scheme in order to identify any gaps. Additional work can then be undertaken on the scheme to ensure the business case for the scheme is comprehensive, which will limit the risk of future challenges.

The criteria used for the assessment is based upon the DfT document, 'The Transport Business Cases' (January 2013).

The review which has been undertaken is based upon:
Blackpool Bridges Strategic Outline Business Case (February 2015)

A RAG analysis has been undertaken to highlight areas where there appears to be insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the scheme has followed DfT best practice for the development of a major scheme. Recommendations have been included on work which could be undertaken to strengthen the business case for the scheme.

KEY	
	= Sound evidence base
	= Some additional work required
	= Information Missing

Business Case	Criteria	Evidence	RAG Analysis	Recommendations
Strategic Case	1.1 Strategic Context	<p><u>Wider strategic context of the scheme, including aims and objectives.</u></p> <p>There is sufficient evidence within the SOBC to suggest the scheme is of important strategically; more specifically centred around the schemes importance for tourism alongside the importance of the bridges in terms of commercial traffic. The Lancashire LEP Strategic Economic Plan appears to be in support of the aims of this scheme through the 'Renewal of Blackpool'. The evidence highlights that the scheme will reinforce Blackpool as a tourist destination, a market which is expected to grow considerably in future years, and build on the significant existing base on which tourism underpins the economy. However, ultimately, improved connectivity will provide benefits for all sectors and markets and address social equality and access to services.</p>		No issues with strategic context.
	1.2 Challenge or Opportunity to be addressed	<p><u>Impacts of not progressing the proposed scheme understood? Key challenges and the opportunities presented through meeting these challenges?</u></p> <p>Challenge being addressed is to propose a maintenance schedule for the 10 bridges to ensure weight restrictions/closures are not enforced. The opportunities presented then align themselves with the aims within the SEP. The impacts of not progressing with the scheme are explored throughout the SOBC and more specifically in the Strategic Assessment of Alternative Options and identify the severe economic impacts that would arise from bridge closure and the subsequent impact on congestion and the wider transport network.</p>		Cycling and Walking benefits noted but not quantified later in SOBC. BCR's fine without.
	1.3 Strategic Objectives	<p><u>Present the SMART objectives that will resolve the previously identified challenges/strategic context.</u></p> <p>Timetable for maintenance delivery and completion is provided, which of course presents a quantifiable measure of scheme progression success. There is no specific mention of SMART objectives beyond this repair programme. Potential examples could include the HGV impacts should the programme be met/delayed. However, given that the repair programme is itself the deliverable scheme derived from the inputs to this SOBC, this criteria is sufficient.</p>		Objective should perhaps state traffic impacts e.g. HGV restriction impacting flow. See 1.7 for further context.
	1.4 Achieving Success	<p><u>Quantifiable measures of success proposed?</u></p> <p>Similar to section 1.3, the completion of the maintenance programme has been shown to the measure of success. Whilst this is true and sufficient for the SOBC, it would be beneficial to show how the success of the maintenance is judged e.g. no weight restrictions being applied and traffic flow over the bridges broadly similar to current levels.</p> <p>This information would typically be included in the monitoring and evaluation plan and it is recommended that it should be upon approval of the scheme.</p>		Apart from realisation of timetable for repairs, there is no quantifiable measure of success. It would be beneficial if some additional metrics were presented to quantify the success of the repairs, not just the completion of the repairs. This should be defined in the monitoring and evaluation plan. If not then needs to be updated on scheme approval
	1.5 Delivery Constraints	<p><u>Describe high level internal/external constraints.</u></p> <p>There is an admission that the complexity of and scale of some works are beyond experience of council, but adequate mitigation appears to be in place through Project Management team and initial Highways Asset Management Plan works. The level of optimism bias in the SOBC also reflects this.</p>		
	1.6 Stakeholders	<p><u>Describe the main stakeholders and their relevance to the scheme. Identify key requirements / constraints / conflicts</u></p> <p>Letters of support and engagement with local/national stakeholders deemed sufficient and evidenced. DfT support is clear and evidenced through the funding proposals. Key stakeholders include Network Rail, the Blackpool Business Leadership Group and local communities / residents, who will be able to participate and information disseminated through a Consultation and Information Strategy relating to the scheme.</p>		

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	1.7 Strategic Assessment of Alternative Options	<p>Provide evidence of consideration of alternative options</p> <p>Evidence of alternative options provided and sufficient. These include three options, a do-nothing in which bridges are allowed to continue to deteriorate. A do-minimum, in which bridges are maintained but continue to deteriorate and a do-something reflecting the proposed scheme. Evidence of the impact of each option, including the capital cost associated with each and key risks have been highlighted.</p>		
			Yellow	<p>The BCR's put forward in the Maintenance Challenge Fund appear to differ from those in the SOBC. These differences need to be detailed and understood.</p>
			Green	<p>Re-routing appears to be very fixed/static, and doesn't account for more strategic decisions as to entry points into Blackpool. I.e. assuming all demand will drive to the same point in the network knowing the closure/restrictions are in place. It is assumed there is no readily available, alternative approach to this method.</p>
			Yellow	<p>RPIX inflation is used not GDP. Should be updated for approval, however it is unlikely to significantly alter the derived VfM of each scheme.</p>

Business Case	Criteria	Evidence	RAG Analysis	Recommendations
				Terminology of Do nothing, Do minimum & Do something does not translate to BCR sheets consistently.
				Where input demand/flow has been transferred from another site, need to see explanation of applicability and subsequent processing of count data.
				<p>Within the supporting text there is a statement that the 'Do Minimum' (Do something within the BCR sheets) will start seeing HGV restrictions in 2 years. As such, this has been factored into the benefits profile. The supporting text states that the proposed £400k works will secure the bridge and its operation for the next 20 years. It appears that benefits are accruing over a 60 year period with no additional costs. I believe this should either be cut to a 20 year appraisal period where benefits stop accruing after 20 years and restrictions apply or a refresh in cost is applied in 20 years time.</p> <p>Reduced appraisal periods to be applied throughout, and in the context of the seaside location (unless specific mitigation warranting an extended appraisal period is justified). This is the key updated that needs to be applied from the VFM perspective prior to funding approval.</p>
		Describe the extent to which the scheme has been assessed in terms of value for money (in line with DfT's Transport Appraisal Framework)		Additionally, linked to the above, it appears the costs of the scheme are offset against the cost of the Do Nothing (Do min in the sheet) rolling maintenance costs. This is providing a 'Net Cost' of the Do Something but the same isn't being done for Do Something as per my last point.
		Evidence provided for the ten bridge schemes individually. Value for Money is shown in each case, and for the combined package of works. Individual items with regards to the economic analysis carried out to generate the VFM case have been covered within the 'Recommendations' Column of this RAG analysis. Given that the analysis of		

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Economic Case	2.1 Value for Money	<p>to the economic analysis carried out to generate the VFM case have been covered within the 'Recommendations' column of this RAG analysis. Given that the analysis of ten separate Economic Cases could highlight items relating to one or two, or all of the schemes, it is suggested the scheme promoter cross checks the applicability of the recommendations on a scheme by scheme basis.</p> <p>The VFM calculations proves value for money with regard to the individual schemes and all ten schemes collectively. A revision to the value for money calculations has been made since the implementation of the recommendations made in this document, however the fundamental conclusion is that the scheme continues to reflect very high value for money. It is acknowledged that some additional modelling could be undertaken to help solidify the economic case, however, the approach that has been used is considered to be proportionate. Therefore, any changes would not significantly alter the value for money calculations on which the economic case has been underpinned.</p>	Red	<p>The rerouting of ALL traffic (HGV and Car) seems to be a little extreme. It would be beneficial to see logic of rerouting assumptions. Benefits being derived from this greatly inflate the BCR and as such should be updated/justified for each scheme.</p>
			Yellow	<p>Discount factor applied to MECs in sheet "Car – MECs" looking up wrong cell from 2013 onwards – causing incorrect discount rates applied over appraisal period.</p> <p>To be updated.</p>
			Yellow	<p>Discounted MEC values should be applied per year, not as an average over the appraisal period: see example sheet in WebTAG unit A5-4 "Marginal External Costs", Section B5, Page 14.</p> <p>To be updated.</p>
			Yellow	<p>Application of IP PCU factor to MEC benefits (weighted for HGVs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If input traffic flows are in PCUs, then these should be split out by class from the original count data, not requiring the application of a blended PCU factor from the national vehicle class/journey purpose splits. • If these are to be applied, PCU factors incorrect – use those outlined in WebTAG Unit A5-4 'Marginal External Costs', Table A7: PCU Factors by vehicle type, as below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggest the removal of MECs for HGV traffic using this method and quantify time saving for HGV traffic only. • Include MEC benefits for light vehicles only, where full closure is required as part of the DN scenario. <p>To be updated.</p>
			Green	<p>Clarification required for the application of an "October average week day / annual average weekday" factor in cell G31. WebTAG Unit M1-2 "Data sources and Surveys", Section 3, paragraph 3.3.6 states that October is a neutral survey month, and should therefore be considered representative of average flows over the year.</p> <p>Assumed to be due to seasonality and tourist traffic in Blackpool, however more information would be useful.</p>

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				No explanation of how AM, IP and PM peak hour to peak period factors have been calculated (2.4/6/2.6).
				No explanation of why the standard annualisation period has been factored in cells B98:S98. Suggest a standard annualisation of 253 is used:
				Vehicle proportion splits in cells I74:Q83 are incorrect. These should reflect proportions outlined in the webTAG databook sheet A1.8.4
				Update reference "WebTAG unit 3.5.6" in cell B74.
				Capital cost discount factor in cell K205 calculated from old method of using RPIX. Need updating with GDP deflator (CPI) as outlined in latest WebTAG, and included in "TAG annual" sheet column D.
				Cell M203 should read "Total Costs, Undiscounted 2010 prices"
	2.2 Economic Assumptions	<p>Describe any economic assumptions made as part of appraisal work</p> <p>Linked to VfM section 2.1 comments. The economic assumptions made to underpin the economic case have been evaluated and considered to be sound. Changes have been made based on recommendations made within this document to ensure compliance with relevant guidance and therefore the resulting very high value for money output is considered to be based on a sound and proportional approach.</p>		
	2.3 Sensitivity and Risk Profile	<p>Describe how changes in economic, environmental and social factors could affect the impact of the proposed scheme BCR.</p> <p>Benefits of schemes realised through transport usership on existing traffic levels. Providing VfM case is sound, then relative risk and sensitivity to benefits is not seen to be of great impact. Level of traffic growth in the forecasts to be understood. However, majority of benefits occur to existing traffic; therefore there is limited risk to the value for money case based on future sensitivities and risks. Additionally, although no specific development is expected to be unlocked by the scheme, an Uncertainty Log has highlight that the probability of three key development schemes being delivered improves as a result of the scheme, supporting wider regeneration and economic growth.</p>		

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	2.4 VfM Statement	<p>Provide a summary of the conclusions from value for money assessment</p> <p>Linked to VfM section 2.1 comments.</p>		Jacobs to update for LEP- based on comments from Blackpool on the above
	2.5 Prelim AST	<p>Provide a Preliminary Appraisal Summary Table (AST) showing an overview of the impacts of the scheme</p> <p>AST table completed on the basis of do something scheme implementation at 9 sites, with the exception of Harrowside Bridge, which involves a do-minimum intervention. AST outputs seems reasonable, based on the changes implemented as a result of the recommendations in this document on value for money.</p>		
Financial Case	3.1 Affordability Assessment	<p>Explain how the affordability of the scheme has been assessed</p> <p>A significant volume of background work has been undertaken to support the SOBC. A detailed feasibility study, identifying scheme options at each site has been undertaken, highlighting that costs have increased due to the rate of deterioration observed in the bridge-stock, resulting in two sources of funding now being required.</p> <p>The financial assistance for the scheme has been further supported by the securing of funding from the DfT Maintenance Challenge Fund, although the SOBC document has not been updated to reflect this funding has been secured.</p> <p>Previous endorsement from the section 151 officer has been provided for the DfT Maintenance Growth Fund application, however a separate endorsement is also provided as part of the SOBC verifying the scheme benefits and evidence base. Any cost spend over and above the TfL contribution will be the responsibility of Blackpool Council.</p>		Update to reflect MCF funding announcement.
	3.2 Financial Costs	<p>Provide details of Whole Life Costs of scheme</p> <p>Details provided in SOBC document up to 2018/2019 period.</p>		Ensure maintenance costs of Do Something reported in line with section 2.1