

RIXTON AND WarBURTON BRIDGE ORDER

THE TRANSPORT AND WORKS ACT 1992

**THE TRANSPORT AND WORKS
(APPLICATIONS AND OBJECTIONS PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND AND WALES) RULES 2006
RULE 10(2)(d)**



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CONSULTATION REPORT**

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Manchester Ship Canal Company Limited (**MSCC**) is applying to the Secretary of State for Transport under section 6 of the Transport and Works Act 1992 (the **1992 Act**) for an Order under sections 3 and 5 of the 1992 Act (the **proposed Order**) to modify the statutory regime applicable to the Rixton and Warburton Bridge (the **Bridge**), and introduce a package of measures to ensure continued safe and efficient operation of the Bridge and thereby safe navigation of the Manchester Ship Canal.
- 1.2 The proposed Order seeks to update and modernise provisions of the existing legislation in respect of the Bridge, and in particular to revise the tolls which MSCC may charge for use of the Bridge so as to supersede the toll levels set out in the Rixton and Warburton Bridge Act 1863.
- 1.3 The proposed Order also contains provisions for MSCC to make new byelaws in relation to the good management and use of the Bridge in order ultimately to safeguard the navigation of the Manchester Ship Canal.
- 1.4 In addition, the proposed Order contains provisions for MSCC to transfer the Rixton and Warburton Bridge undertaking to the newly incorporated Rixton and Warburton Bridge Company Limited (Company No. 13617881), should MSCC so resolve.

Purpose of this report

- 1.5 This report is a summary of the consultation and engagement undertaken in respect of the proposals which MSCC is seeking to authorise under the proposed Order. It is submitted as part of the Transport and Works Act Order application (the **TWAO application**) in accordance with rule 10(2)(d) of the Transport and Works (Applications and Objections Procedures) (England and Wales) Rules 2006 (the **TWAO Rules**) which requires submission of:

“a report summarising the consultations that have been undertaken, including confirmation that the applicant has consulted all those named in column (2) of the tables in Schedules 5 and 6 to these Rules where authority is sought for works or other matters described in column (1) of those tables, or if not, an explanation of why not.”
- 1.6 MSCC has carried out various consultation and engagement in respect of the Bridge since January 2018 and prior to this time there has been intermittent communication with the local highway authorities and constituency MPs. Consultation and engagement has aimed to provide an opportunity for stakeholders and other interested parties, including members of the public, to inform MSCC’s proposals, and to identify what they regard as key issues and priorities. In turn, consultation and engagement has allowed MSCC and its team to gain a clearer understanding of the main issues to be considered and refine its proposals as appropriate.
- 1.7 This report documents the consultation and engagement process and explains how the feedback received has helped to shape the proposals in respect of the proposed Order. In cases where it has not been considered possible or appropriate to make changes in light of comments, a rationale is provided.

Proposals

- 1.8 MSCC is applying for an order under the 1992 Act for powers to increase the toll, once improvements are complete, from the current rate of 12p, to a maximum of £1.00 (incl. VAT). The toll increase is needed to fund works to the Bridge and its approach roads that are required to ensure the continued safety and use of the Manchester Ship Canal. Without the necessary funds for maintenance there is risk of closure to certain classes of traffic, or complete closure of the Bridge, as has been the case at other bridge crossings in the country.
- 1.9 The proposed Order would allow MSCC to transfer powers to the newly incorporated company, Rixton and Warburton Bridge Limited, who would then be responsible going forward for the future management and operations of the Bridge, including the setting of tolls each year (subject to limitations in the Order), along with defining any exemptions or discounts. This would allow for greater transparency relating to income and expenditure associated with the Bridge, including any funds ringfenced for the future maintenance or a replacement bridge.
- 1.10 The proposed Order also seeks to update and modernise provisions of the existing legislation in respect of the Bridge.
- 1.11 In summary, the proposals in respect of the proposed Order are intended to:
- 1.11.1 improve the physical condition of the Bridge but retain a 3 tonne weight limit for general traffic;
 - 1.11.2 allow a weight limit of up to 7.5 tonnes for a small number of socially important vehicles such as fire engines and local bus services, who are currently unable to use the Bridge;
 - 1.11.3 upgrade the running surface of the approach roads;
 - 1.11.4 improve access for pedestrians and cyclists;
 - 1.11.5 control heavy and high vehicle access more directly to protect the Bridge;
 - 1.11.6 control vehicle speeds to improve safety;
 - 1.11.7 remove the toll barrier and upgrade the toll collection system to free-flow;
 - 1.11.8 once improvements are completed, increase the one-way trip toll up to a maximum of £1.00 (incl. VAT);
 - 1.11.9 allow tolls to then increase over time at a maximum of 1% below inflation;
 - 1.11.10 allow for discounts ; and
 - 1.11.11 build up a reserve fund for a possible replacement bridge in the future.

Structure of this report

- 1.12 This report is structured as follows:

- 1.12.1 **Section 2** – sets out the overall approach to consultation and engagement and provides an overview of the consultation undertaken to date.
- 1.12.2 **Section 3** – sets out the account of the consultation undertaken with key stakeholders.
- 1.12.3 **Section 4** – provides a summary of public consultation.
- 1.12.4 **Section 5** - outlines the proposals for future engagement and information sharing.
- 1.12.5 **Appendix 1** – sets out records of meetings and correspondence with key stakeholders and interested parties.
- 1.12.6 **Appendix 2** – includes MSCC’s Sustainable Investment Plan which MSCC consulted the public on in July/August 2021.
- 1.12.7 **Appendix 3** – MSCC’s Consultation Feedback Report to the public consultation in July/August 2021.

2 Approach to consultation

Introduction

- 2.1 MSCC recognises that the proposal requires effective stakeholder engagement and meaningful consultation. MSCC strived to deliver this and has engaged, and continues to engage, with a range of interested parties as a fundamental component of the development of the proposed Order. MSCC recognises the importance of maintaining effective channels of communication to enable a two-way flow of information and opinions and appreciates the value that stakeholder feedback can add.
- 2.2 Consultation with those organisations listed in Schedules 5 and 6 of the 1992 Act in defined circumstances is a requirement of the TWAO Rules. MSCC reviewed the organisations in these Schedules and the defined circumstances as to when consultation with them would be triggered, and concluded that there are no relevant Schedule 5 or Schedule 6 consultees for the purposes of the proposed Order. This is mainly due to no works being proposed under the proposed Order. The proposed Order also does not relate to any of the other triggering events such as interfering with hazardous substances or the compulsory purchase of ecclesiastical property. As such, no relevant Schedule 5 or Schedule 6 consultees for the purposes of the Order were identified.
- 2.3 Despite the fact that statutory consultation is not required, MSCC refers to the 2006 Transport and Works Act (TWA) Guide to Procedures (Department for Transport, 2006) (the **2006 Guidance**) which clearly identifies the benefits of pre-application consultation and recommends that promoters '*consult thoroughly on their proposals with relevant statutory authorities, with statutory utilities whose services may be affected, and with all other persons likely to be affected by the proposals*'.
- 2.4 MSCC agrees with this principle and has therefore ensured that pre-application consultation has formed an important part of the development of the proposals in respect of the proposed Order.
- 2.5 This section provides a high-level overview of the engagement and consultation undertaken.

Overarching principles of engagement and consultation

- 2.6 The overall approach to communication, consultation and engagement adopted has been based on the following key principles:
- 2.6.1 Engaging directly with key stakeholders and the wider local community.
- 2.6.2 Listening and, where appropriate, acting upon feedback to shape the detail of the proposals.

Overview of consultation and engagement

- 2.7 As detailed in Section 3 of this report, engagement with key stakeholders and interested parties in respect of the Bridge has been ongoing for many years and has taken various forms including

meetings and correspondence (please see Appendix 1 for further details) as well as through the logging of complaints.

- 2.8 MSCC has also developed a specific Bridge website (<https://www.warburtonollbridge.co.uk/>) and a dedicated email address for enquiries and purchasing of the annual pass (warburtonollbridge@peelports.com). Further details in relation to the website can be found in section 4.3.
- 2.9 In July and August 2021 MSCC also carried out an online non-statutory public consultation. For further details please see Section 4 of this report, Appendix 2 which includes Sustainable Investment Plan and Appendix 3 which include MSCC's Non-Statutory Consultation Feedback Report.
- 2.10 Following the non-statutory consultation, MSCC has also sought views of the local highway authorities, Warrington Borough Council (**WBC**) and Trafford Borough Council (**TBC**) on the accompanying draft proposed Order and the explanatory memorandum. For further detail please see Section 3 of this report.

3 Consultation undertaken with key stakeholders

- 3.1 MSCC has always been aware that the Bridge operates within a wider transport network and that its use, while delivering benefits to many, does inevitably lead to some negative impacts for some. Achieving the correct balance between these various interests has been an important consideration for MSCC in developing its proposals in respect of the Bridge.

Local Highways Authorities

- 3.2 As detailed in Section 2.2 of this Report, there are no relevant Schedule 5 or Schedule 6 consultees for the proposed Order.
- 3.3 Nonetheless, MSCC has consulted thoroughly on their proposals with relevant statutory authorities, and with all other persons likely to be affected by the proposals in accordance with the 2006 Guidance.
- 3.4 MSCC is an important part of the network of strategic transport providers in the region and maintains a close working relationship with all the highway authorities in the region, including those either side of the Bridge, WBC and TBC.
- 3.5 An example of this close relationship is the 2014 Memorandum of Understanding (**MOU**) signed between WBC and MSCC which is aimed at encouraging closer collaboration: *“in order to deliver the best solution for all end users”*. By way of example, the MOU states that the parties wish to:

“work together to identify ways of minimising disruption to the Borough’s local road network when bridges that cross the Manchester Ship Canal are swung; whilst at the same time, optimising the movement of freight by water”.

- 3.6 While the Bridge is not one of these swing bridges, the same MOU also had a section on “Highways Agency Diversions” that considered *“extreme cases, (such as the closure of the Thelwall Viaduct) where the majority of vehicles need to divert through Warrington”*. In that regard, the MOU states:

“Additionally, during these times of extreme congestion, consideration would be given to opening the Warburton Bridge toll [R&W Toll Bridge] so that vehicles could drive straight through without paying the charge, in order to reduce its impact on congestion”.

- 3.7 MSCC understand that, to date, every request from WBC to MSCC to lift the toll temporarily as per the MOU, once received by MSCC, has resulted in the toll being lifted.
- 3.8 MSCC has actively engaged with both local highway authorities in the vicinity of the Bridge, namely WBC and TBC, in relation to the proposed increase in toll, since January 2018. The form this engagement has taken is detailed below. MSCC has given proper consideration to the comments and issues raised by the local highways authorities.
- 3.9 The Councils are in broad agreement with the proposed improvements to the Bridge and surrounding roads. The issues of disagreement relate to the level of the toll increase and the extent of discounts available to local users. Free flow tolling will improve congestion in the area

and ultimately improve local air quality. Continued discussions will also be had with the Councils to continue the collaborative working to date on the proposals.

- 3.10 Both TBC and WBC have confirmed that they cannot afford to take on the responsibility of the Bridge, due to the costs of refurbishment and maintenance associated with the Bridge. If they were to take on this financial liability, they would likely require additional support from central Government and/or increases in Council Tax.
- 3.11 The remainder of Section 3 details further MSCC's engagement with TBC and WBC, including any outstanding areas of objection.

Trafford Borough Council

- 3.12 Engagement with TBC has included:
 - 3.12.1 Meetings and correspondence (Please see Appendix 1 for further details).
 - 3.12.2 Feedback provided as part of the public consultation in July 2021.
 - 3.12.3 Feedback on the draft proposed Order, shared in October 2021, as detailed in Section 3.44 of this report.
- 3.13 Over the years there has been positive engagement with TBC in respect of the Bridge. In their response to the public consultation in July 2021, TBC stated that they support the proposal for toll discounts for local residents, as well as annual passes. They also requested that both Warburton and Partington Parishes be included within the geographical discount area.
- 3.14 TBC also supports the exemption of specific vehicles, including emergency service vehicles, public transport, cyclists and motorcyclists.
- 3.15 TBC suggested additional consideration should be given to enhancing the Bridge's sustainability impact, through reductions in congestion, leading to improved air quality in the region and alignment with Trafford/Greater Manchester's Transport Strategy 2040.
- 3.16 TBC also noted in their response that a sustainable future for the Bridge is key due to its importance as a local highway and active travel route connecting Trafford/Greater Manchester and Warrington.

Warrington Borough Council

- 3.17 Engagement with WBC has included:
 - 3.17.1 Meetings and correspondence (Please see Appendix 1 for further details).
 - 3.17.2 Feedback provided as part of the public consultation in July 2021.
 - 3.17.3 Feedback on the draft proposed Order, shared in October 2021. MSCC notes that no comments were made by WBC on this as detailed in Section 3.44 of this report.
- 3.18 Over the years there has been positive engagement with WBC in respect of the Bridge.

- 3.19 Throughout the engagement over the past 4 years WBC have been supportive of the proposals for improvements in respect of the Bridge. In their response to the non-statutory public consultation in July and August 2021, WBC confirmed that they support proposals for Bridge and approach road improvements, as well as free flow tolling. WBC is also supportive of strengthening the Bridge to allow buses to travel over it and they welcome plans for toll discounts for local residents and high frequency users.
- 3.20 WBC have expressed their support for the free tolling , as it will greatly reduce delays and congestion and thus improve air quality as a consequence.
- 3.21 However, WBC continues to be strongly opposed to the toll being increased by the extent proposed and would be keen to find an alternative funding source for the refurbishments, insisting that improvements should not be financed from an increase in tolls.
- 3.22 MSCC has engaged with WBC on these alternative funding sources. MSCC has conveyed that it is happy to explore alternative funding sources with WBC and TBC, including lobbying for the removal of VAT.
- 3.23 Given the scale of the costs to undertake the improvements, and without alternative funding sources, a significant toll increase is considered the only option to ensure long term financial sustainability.
- 3.24 MSCC has stressed that the toll will not be automatically set at £1.00 (or indeed any other value), but will be set each year by the new bridge company at an appropriate level to meet the agreed objectives in accordance with the provisions of the Order.

Actions arising from Engagement with Local Highway Authorities

- 3.25 MSCC has given, and continues to give, serious consideration to representations made by TBC and WBC, and has changed aspects of MSCC's proposal in response to specific representations made. This included:
- 3.25.1 The delay of the non-statutory consultation from November 2020 to July 2021 at the request of both Local Authorities due to the May 2021 Local Elections and potential political sensitivities.
- 3.25.2 Value engineering of the project such that the original toll envisaged was £1.00 plus VAT (£1.20) to a revised toll increase of up to £1.00 (incl. VAT).
- 3.25.3 Consideration and development of a local user discount scheme (based upon postcodes - WA3 6 and WA13 9) such that relevant local residents would be entitled to a 50% discount in the toll payable. MSCC notes that this proposal did not generate much response during the non-statutory consultation, but it is still proposing this as part of its future discount proposals.

Other key stakeholders

Parish Councils

- 3.26 In addition to TBC and WBC there are a number of Parish Councils who have an interest in the Bridge. The majority of dialogue has taken place with Warburton Parish Council although more recently MSCC has engaged with Lymm Parish Council. Both Lymm and Glazebrook Parish Council responded to the non-statutory consultation undertaken in July/August 2021.
- 3.27 The Parish Councils have been kept informed about the development of the proposed Order and have been engaged via a combination of meetings, written engagement and public consultation. Please see Appendix 1 for further details.
- 3.28 The following broad issues have been raised by these parties:
- 3.28.1 Worsening damage to and congestion on the Bridge.
 - 3.28.2 Stationary traffic contributing to worsening air quality.
 - 3.28.3 Lack of local bus services which are deterred from operating to a timetable due to congestion and queuing.
 - 3.28.4 Concern over overweight (HGV) vehicles negotiating the approach roads to cross the high level Bridge.
 - 3.28.5 Support for an automated toll collection system.
- 3.29 The proposed Order seeks to address the above-mentioned concerns by including the following provisions in the proposed Order:
- 3.29.1 Enabling MSCC to use free flow tolling technology to remove the need for any toll collection booth, and hence any delay and congestion on the Bridge.
 - 3.29.2 Including controls in respect of heavy and high vehicle access to protect the Bridge.
 - 3.29.3 Enabling MSCC to build up a reserve fund for a possible replacement bridge in the future.
- 3.30 MSCC has also committed to researching and incorporating deterrent measures relating to HGV's attempting to use the Bridge.

Local MPs

- 3.31 MSCC has also been involved in written correspondence with numerous local MPs, since 2016.
- 3.32 The local MPs have been kept informed about the development of the proposed Order and have been engaged via written engagement and public consultation. For details of engagement, please see Appendix 1 of this Consultation Report.
- 3.33 The following broad issues have been raised by the local MPs and considered by MSCC in developing the proposals for the proposed Order:

- 3.33.1 Worsening damage and congestion at the Bridge.
 - 3.33.2 Support for an automatic toll collection system.
 - 3.33.3 Concerns relating to emergency service access.
 - 3.33.4 Concerns relating to air quality.
 - 3.33.5 Viability of short-term solutions.
 - 3.33.6 Concerns regarding bridge closure.
 - 3.33.7 Level of toll increase.
 - 3.33.8 Local user discounts.
- 3.34 There was one formal response submitted to the non-statutory consultation by a Local MP, which was given due consideration and which is captured in the Feedback Report, at Appendix 3.
- 3.35 Discussions with these parties and the comments raised have helped shape MSCC's proposals in respect of the Bridge. This is reflected in the inclusion of the following provisions in the proposed Order which seek to deal with the above-mentioned concerns:
- 3.35.1 Enabling MSCC to use free flow tolling technology to remove the need for any toll collection booth, and hence any delay and congestion on the Bridge.
 - 3.35.2 Enabling MSCC to raise the current level of the toll in order to fund works that are required for the safety of the Bridge, including the approach roads, and the safety of navigation and operation of the Manchester Ship Canal. Without the necessary maintenance there is risk of closure to certain classes of traffic, or complete closure of the Bridge.
 - 3.35.3 Enabling MSCC to build up a reserve fund for a possible replacement bridge in the future.
 - 3.35.4 Including controls in respect of heavy and high vehicle access to protect the Bridge whilst retaining access to emergency services.
 - 3.35.5 Including a power for MSCC to offer discounts.

Action Group

- 3.36 The Warburton Toll Bridge Action Group (the **Action Group**) was formed on Facebook in 2017. MSCC has been involved in active dialogue with the Action Group, since its inception.
- 3.37 The Action Group has been kept informed about the development of the proposals for the Bridge and in the past have been engaged via a combination of meetings, written engagement and public consultation. Please see Appendix 1 for further details.

- 3.38 The following broad issues have been raised by the Action Group:
- 3.38.1 Worsening damage and congestion at the Bridge.
 - 3.38.2 Opposition to the toll per se which should be abolished.
 - 3.38.3 Support for an automatic toll collection system.
 - 3.38.4 Level of toll increase.
 - 3.38.5 Local user discounts.
- 3.39 There was no formal response submitted to the non-statutory consultation by the Action Group. However, there were 72 individual responses from the public submitted which questioned existence of the toll and also magnitude of the toll increase.
- 3.40 Previous discussions with the Action Group and the comments raised have helped to shape MSCC's proposals in respect of the Bridge. This is reflected in the inclusion of the following provisions in the proposed Order which seek to deal with the above-mentioned concerns:
- 3.40.1 Enabling MSCC to use free flow tolling technology to remove the need for any toll collection booth, and hence any delay and congestion on the Bridge.
 - 3.40.2 Enabling MSCC to raise the current level of the toll in order to fund works that are required for the safety of the Bridge, including the approach roads, and the safety of navigation and operation of the Manchester Ship Canal. Without the necessary maintenance there is risk of closure to certain classes of traffic, or complete closure of the Bridge.
 - 3.40.3 Enabling MSCC to build up a reserve fund for a possible replacement bridge in the future.
 - 3.40.4 Including a power for MSCC to offer discounts.
- 3.41 MSCC has also acted on the request of the Action Group to promote motorists purchasing the annual pass, thereby obviating the need to stop to pay with coins, which would improve traffic flow.
- 3.42 MSCC also developed a specific Toll Bridge website, including a dedicated email address, at the request of the Action Group, to improve communication. For further details in relation to the website please see section 4.3.

Rule 5 Consultation

- 3.43 A copy of the proposed Order was sent to the Secretary of State on 16 September 2021, in line with Rule 5 of the TWA Rules. Detailed comments were received, relating mainly to the technical drafting of the proposed Order.
- 3.44 A copy of the proposed Order was also sent to the two local highway authorities TBC and WBC. WBC, on 22 October 2021, confirmed that they had no comments on the proposed Order. TBC raised certain technical queries/suggested some technical changes on 26 October 2021 including:
- 3.44.1 Clarification regarding the overlap with adopted highway.
 - 3.44.2 Queries regarding byelaw provisions in respect of transport regulations.
 - 3.44.3 Request that any closure of the Bridge should be related to an emergency or necessary maintenance works only, with a longer notice period.
 - 3.44.4 Request for provisions in relation to return on investment to be deleted or capped at an agreed percentage.
 - 3.44.5 Request that price review mechanisms should be periodic instead of in line with inflation e.g. every 10 years.
 - 3.44.6 Request for public transport vehicles, cycles and pedestrians to be included in the exemptions list.
- 3.45 MSCC has carefully considered above-mentioned comments and, where appropriate, have amended the proposed Order ahead of formal application, in line with these technical responses in the following way:
- 3.45.1 updated the plan accompanying the proposed Order following highways searches to confirm the extent of adopted highway land.
 - 3.45.2 included additional provisions to require consultation with the local highway authority in respect of any closure of the Bridge (except for emergency) and extended the notice period for the closure of the Bridge has to 14 days.
 - 3.45.3 added cycles, motorcycles and local buses to the exemptions register.
- 3.46 Where no changes were proposed, MSCC explained to TBC its reasoning.

4 Public Engagement

General Public engagement

- 4.1 MSCC recognises the importance of the Bridge to the local community. As such MSCC, has made engagement with the public a priority for many years. Since early 2013, MSCC has been keeping a log of contact made by the general public regarding the Bridge. These comments have been summarised in section 2.4.1 of the Business Case, which has been submitted as part of the TWAO application.
- 4.2 MSCC has had regard to the issues raised in the log in developing its proposals for the Bridge proposed to be authorised by the draft Order.

The Website

- 4.3 In Spring 2019, MSCC launched a website (<https://www.warburtontollbridge.co.uk/>) for the Bridge that:
- 4.3.1 Provides a portal for users to purchase the annual pass.
 - 4.3.2 Provides a portal to a user survey which assists MSCC in planning for the future of the Bridge.
 - 4.3.3 Allows users to register to receive regular information updates.
 - 4.3.4 Provides a portal to contact MSCC on Bridge related issues.
 - 4.3.5 Includes background information on the R&W Toll Bridge including the Terms and Conditions of use.

Non Statutory Public Consultation

- 4.4 MSCC is committed to ensuring that all those who may have an interest in the proposed Order have adequate opportunity to express their views.
- 4.5 MSCC, as explained, is proposing to upgrade the Bridge, approach roads and toll collection system, in line with customer and local concerns and to ensure a sustainable financial future for this important part of the local highway network.
- 4.6 These proposals are set out in the Sustainable Investment Plan (the **Plan**) which was published in July 2021 and consulted on with the stakeholders as part of non-statutory, online consultation in July and August 2021. This consultation on the Plan was undertaken to obtain feedback from the public and stakeholders. In total, there were 72 responses from the public and 3 from local businesses or societies.
- 4.7 In general, whilst most people were opposed to the increase of the toll charge to up to £1.00 including VAT, majority were strongly in favour of the proposed infrastructure upgrades to the R&W Toll Bridge, as well as the introduction of free-flow tolling.

- 4.8 MSCC has carefully considered responses received and has categorised responses into five overarching themes:
- 4.8.1 Legal powers
 - 4.8.2 Tolling
 - 4.8.3 Bridge and road improvements
 - 4.8.4 Use of revenues raised
 - 4.8.5 The past
- 4.9 Appended to this consultation report are documents related to this public consultation.
- 4.9.1 **Appendix 2** – includes MSCC’s Sustainable Investment Plan which MSCC consulted the public on in July/August 2021.
 - 4.9.2 **Appendix 3** – MSCC’s Consultation Feedback Report to the public consultation in July/August 2021.
- 4.10 The Consultation Feedback Report details the responses received and MSCC’s response to those comments.
- 4.11 Nearly all responses, including those of the highways authorities, were in favour of upgrading the Bridge and approach roads. Particular support was given to the proposed improvements allowing for greater active travel provision (such as walking and cycling) and the potential for public transport accessibility. Those who were averse to the improvements were primarily against the existence of the toll per se and the magnitude of the toll increase, rather than the improvements themselves.
- 4.12 MSCC has carefully considered all consultation responses received and incorporated suggestions where possible. This has resulted in some changes to the proposals, such as:
- 4.12.1 To reduce inconvenience to motorists during the refurbishment phase (anticipated up to 12 months) MSCC will not be levying any toll charges as essentially the Bridge will have to be controlled in both directions by temporary traffic lights.
 - 4.12.2 MSCC will undertake refurbishment works to improve sustainable access improvements as it was raised that existing crossing are not conducive to cyclists and pedestrians.
 - 4.12.3 MSCC hopes that reducing traffic congestion and queues should encourage the reinstatement of public transport services via Warburton Village.

5 Future consultation

- 5.1 Should the Secretary of State determine to grant the proposed Order and authorise MSCC's proposals in respect of the Bridge, engagement and information sharing will continue with key stakeholders, local community and general public:
- 5.1.1 By using the specific Bridge website (<https://www.warburtonollbridge.co.uk/>).
 - 5.1.2 Ongoing correspondence and meetings, where appropriate, with the local highway authorities.
 - 5.1.3 Correspondence and, where appropriate, meetings with any other key stakeholders, affected groups and users.
- 5.2 This report is one of the application documents that MSCC has submitted as part of its TWAO application. MSCC is committed to ensuring that the proposal to upgrade the Bridge and the toll collection system is carried out in line with customer and local concerns and to ensure a sustainable financial future for this important part of the local highway network.