

Media Release

TEME BRIDGE REFURBISHMENT – The extent of the work revealed

At the Public Briefing held on the 21 September the extent of the work required to Teme Bridge was revealed by the County Council.

Since the invasive investigations were undertaken in May this year to fully understand the nature of the fill and strength of the sandstone masonry and concrete, engineers have been working hard to complete the structural assessment of the structure.

The structural assessment has revealed that the bridge does not fully comply with the current design standards and a weight restriction of 7.5 tonnes mgw [maximum gross weight] will need to be imposed to prevent elements from being overstressed if the County Council does not go ahead with the refurbishment in the timescale proposed. If the bridge is left unchecked this could fall to 3 tonnes mgw.

There are three main areas requiring attention:

- The foundations to the approach wall adjacent to the slipway needs underpinning to prevent further settlement and cracking
- Masonry replacement is required to two of the arches, with pointing to all
- Strengthening of the concrete widening to both the upstream and downstream elevations over the Shropshire half of the river

In additions to the structural repairs it will be necessary to waterproof and protect the structural elements before the final re-kerbing and resurfacing of the structure. The parapets will also be cleaned back to bare metal before being re-coated in high performance paints.

County Councillor John Smith OBE – Cabinet member for Highways and Transport said;

"We currently have the finance allocated to address the refurbishment and it is essential that this work is progressed within the current programme this year. There are a number of community concerns which are planned alongside the delivery of the engineering works. These include how the businesses will continue to be served by both suppliers and customers during the bridge closure via the signed diversion routes, and whether suppliers can temporarily adjust their delivery itineraries to avoid the bridge closure. Additionally, how the emergency and health services will continue to operate.

We have also agreed to undertake additional winter maintenance activities on the diversion routes not routinely treated and likely to receive displaced traffic when freezing rain, snow, or haw frost are forecast.

The road closures are planned to commence on the 9th January 2012"

Richard Attwood – Worcestershire's Engineering Project Manager said;

"The community should not be concerned short-term about the bridge not meeting the required loading standards. We will be closely monitoring the bridge over the next two or three months in conjunction with planning for the essential refurbishment works.

We wish to avoid the need for a weight restriction to normal traffic since this will bring with it further restrictions for the community and the vitality of the businesses. We are working hard to ensure that the essential repairs to the bridge are undertaken in the most efficient way possible to reduce the time that the bridge remains closed. Early involvement with contractors is programmed to discuss the most efficient way forward."

End.