

WHITCHURCH BRIDGE COMPANY TOLL APPLICATION DATED 31st OCTOBER 2008

Further Information: Bridge Reconstruction Project Management

1. Introduction

1.1 Paragraph 2.7 of the Toll Application states that:

“Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), who have been retained by the Company as its consulting engineers since 1997, have advised that major reconstruction will be required by 2015 (see Appendix 1). The Company has therefore decided to plan for reconstruction in 2013 -2014, which is after the London Olympic Games when there is likely to be a greater availability of civil engineering construction resources.

1.2 This document provides further information about OCC's recommendations and the Company's response to them.

2 OCC's Recommendations

2.1 OCC's recommendations are summarised in the OCC letters in Appendices 1 and 2 of the Toll Application.

3 The Company's Response to OCC's recommendations

3.1 Before deciding to plan for the reconstruction of the Bridge in 2013/14, the Company sought clarification from OCC on 2 major issues associated with their recommendations. These are

- **The timing of the reconstruction works** (see para 3.2)
- **Load capacity of the Reconstructed Bridge** (see para 3.3)

3.2. Timing of Reconstruction Works

3.2.1 The Company has discussed with OCC whether or not it would be possible to postpone reconstruction in order to allow the Company to build up funds. OCC response is given in their letter of 24th October 2008 (Appendix 1 of the Toll Application), and the key issues (with the Company's views on some) are summarised in para 3.7 of the Toll Application as follows:

“Load assessment requirements are likely to require a reduction from 7.5 tonnes to 3 tonnes on the existing Bridge because of the assessment requirements of the latest Department for Transport standards, particularly in relation to the design and condition of the longitudinal girders and transverse beams. The Company believes that this lower weigh limit would be unacceptably restrictive to those who wish to use the Bridge, and would not be acceptable under its Acts, and would have a significant adverse effect on the local community.

Cracking of the pier caps due to thermal movement of the Bridge. These cracks are being monitored under a special inspection regime, and are still propagating. Replacement of these pier caps is necessary to alleviate this problem, which is a major task requiring lifting of the deck and temporary closure of the Bridge.

Metalwork Corrosion affecting the lower flanges of the longitudinal girders and the transverse beams due to water ingress. This would require a new sprayed waterproof membrane to be put in place, which would also require road closure and replacement of the roadway deck.

Full repainting was last carried out in 1998, and will be required again in 2010 – 2015. OCC recommend that blast cleaning of the lattice girders be carried out to bare metal at this repaint in order to protect them from further corrosion and extend their life: this would be difficult to do in situ because of environmental considerations.

Risk assessment – river traffic. The structure is vulnerable to boat impacts on the slender piers, notwithstanding the timber fenders. This risk cannot be resolved without replacement of the piers, which would be a major task. This is a risk that the Company is not prepared to accept.

Risk assessment – road traffic. The structure is vulnerable to heavy vehicles crossing the Bridge in contravention of the statutory weight limit of 7.5 tonnes mgw. Although such vehicles travelling southbound are stopped by the Toll collectors during Toll collecting hours (currently about 1 vehicle per week), there remains a significant risk that serious damage could be caused to the Bridge by vehicles of up to 44 tonnes unlawfully crossing the Bridge northbound at any time or southbound outside collecting hours. This is a risk that the Company is not prepared to accept.”

3.2.2 For these reasons, the Company accepts OCC’s recommendation that reconstruction must take place by 2015 at the latest.

3.3 Load capacity of the Reconstructed Bridge

3.3.1 The Company has agreed with OCC the Design Philosophy for the reconstruction of the Bridge. This is set out on page 1 of OCC’s letter of 29th October 2008 in Appendix 2 of the Toll Application.

3.3.2 However, the Company has sought clarification of the requirement to reconstruct the Bridge to carry 40/44 tonnes vehicles in accordance with current Highways Agency standards. The Company felt that that this load capacity was excessive in view of the local road infrastructure, and was concerned about the extra costs associated with constructing the Bridge to this capacity.

3.3.3 OCC have confirmed that the Highways Agency requirements on load capacity (Standard 37/01, DMRB Vol 1) are mandatory and apply to Whitchurch Bridge. OCC have also pointed out that risk management issues associated with heavy vehicles crossing the Bridge are more effectively addressed if the Bridge is constructed to 40/44 tonnes.

3.3.4 For these reasons, the Company accepts that the Bridge must be reconstructed to a load capacity of 40/44 tonnes.

4 Project Plan and Progress to Date

4.1 A Project Plan has been prepared by OCC. A summary version is attached as an Appendix to this document.

4.2 Tasks completed already include:

- a) Architectural design (part)
- b) Detailed Engineering design (part)
- c) Topographical survey
- d) Geotechnic survey
- e) Abutment investigation
- f) Consultation with local Parish Councils and the local community
- g) Initial consultation with South Oxfordshire District Council on Planning issues

4.3 Tasks a) – e) were procured through and managed by OCC, who Invoiced the Company in May 2008 as follows:

* OCC staff costs (excl Reconstruction tasks)	£ 1,277.15
OCC staff costs (Reconstruction tasks)	£ 6,633.45
Jacobs – architectural and engineering design	£26,400.00
Brunel Surveys Ltd - topographical survey	£ 3,800.00
Structural Solis Ltd – geotechnic survey	£42,238.46
* Greenplant – pontoon for Pier Inspection	£ 1,540.00
Total excl VAT	£81,889.06
Total incl VAT	£96,219.64

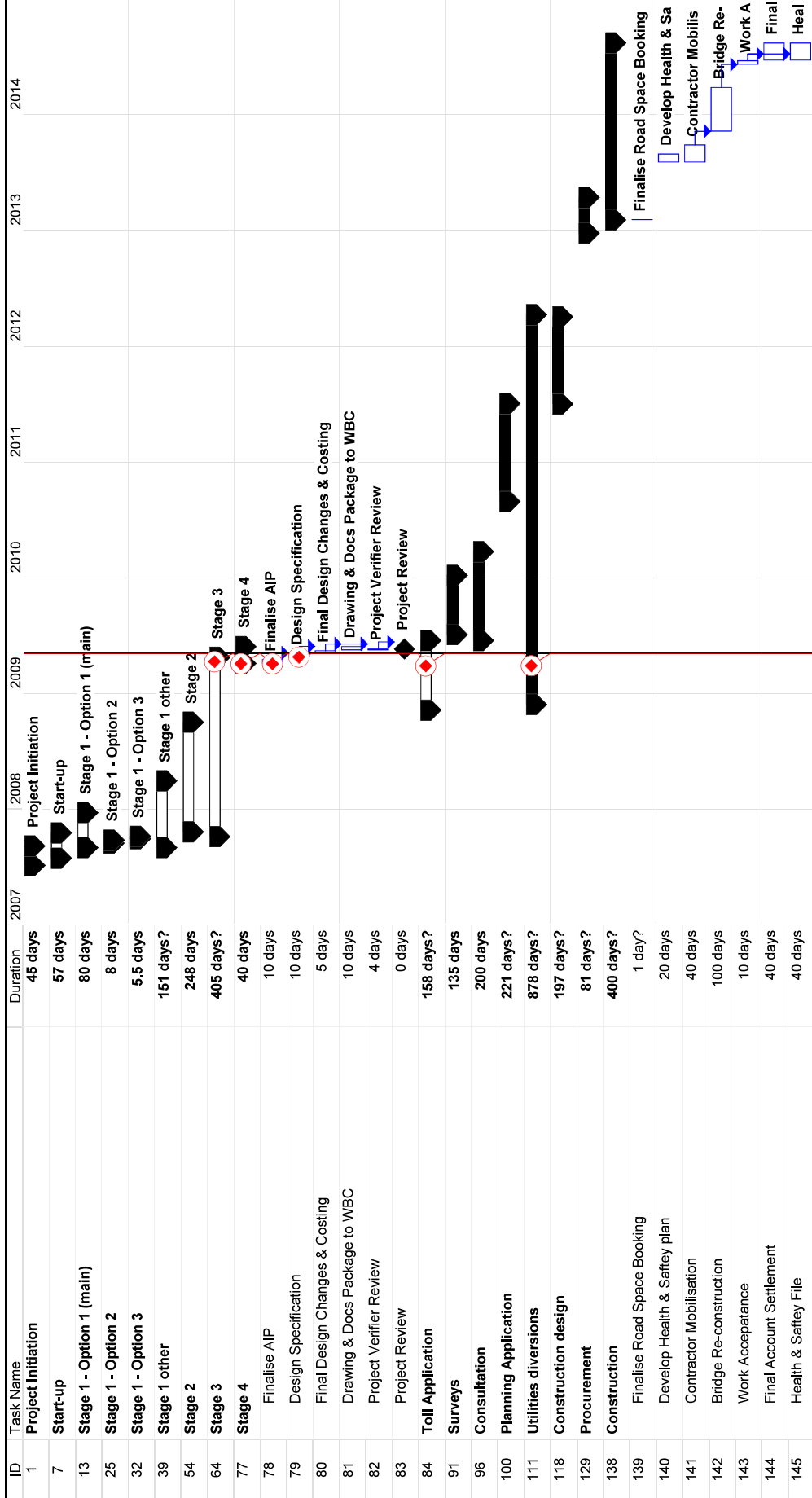
- 4.4 The Total Invoice amount splits down as follows:
- | | |
|---|------------|
| Items linked to the Bridge Reconstruction Project | £92,979.72 |
| * Items not linked to the Bridge Reconstruction Project | £ 3,239.72 |

4 Summary

- 5.1 The Company has concluded that it must accept all the recommendations from OCC on the timing and scope of the reconstruction works.
- 5.2 Specifically, the Company accepts the engineering advice from OCC that it must plan for the reconstruction of the Bridge in 2013/14 to ensure the works are completed by 2015 allowing for any slippage, and that the Bridge must be reconstructed to a load capacity of 40/44 t.
- 5.3 In accordance with the overall Project Plan, some work associated with the Reconstruction Project has already been completed and paid for

GW

The Whitchurch Bridge Company



Task Milestone External Tasks

Split Summary External Milestone

Progress Project Summary Deadline

Project: Whitchurch Bridge
 Date: Thu 07/05/09