

### LATEST NEWS

#### Extension to Planning Consultation

The consultation period for the planning application to replace Finchingfield bridge was opened on the 17 January and was due to close earlier this month. Following a request from the Finchingfield Parish Council this has been extended to 28 February 2023.

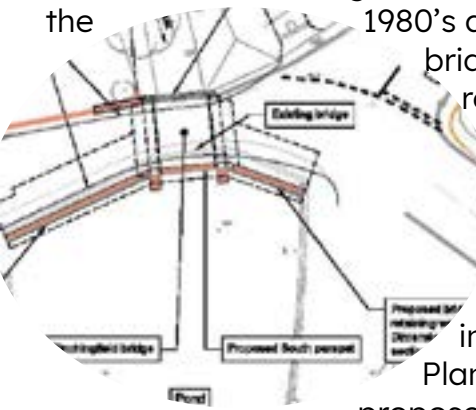
Access to the planning application can be found on the Essex County council website:

[ECC Planning Application.](#)

### BRIDGE FACTS

#### Proposals to widen the structure

The existing bridge is regularly struck by passing traffic and this has led to brick defects within the bridge parapets and from time to time major damage to the bridge and adjacent building. The walls to the pond have seen significant reconstruction in previous decades. The walls over and west of the bridge were entirely reconstructed in the 1980's and the wall east of the



bridge was substantially reconstructed in the 2000's. The proposal discussed at the public open event in 2020, which has been included in the current Planning Application, proposes to widen the bridge cross section to allow the introduction of narrow verges. The intention is to offer some protection to the parapets and adjacent building. The proposal remains unchanged with minimum verge widths being 600mm to the north and 400 to the south. The road itself between kerbs will be narrowed slightly to 3.7m from around 3.86m. The overall increase in bridge width will be around 1.42m, from 4.42m to 5.84m.

#### Otters

We have already had various ecological reports prepared during our design process which have identified otters to be present as commuters or foragers. Recent media footage provides evidence of their activity at this location so we have requested updated reports to reflect this.

We will gain licences if determined necessary for future works, and plan mitigations to ensure the safety of otters and other wildlife.

#### Strength of existing Finchingfield Bridge

In the bridge's recent history it has had two assessments conducted, and on both occasions has been found to be weak.

- In 1994 the bridge was assessed by Essex County Council. It was found to be capable of sustaining 7.5 tonnes within the brick arch and 40 tonnes within the concrete arch. Link to: [1994 Assessment Report.](#)
- In 2010 the bridge was assessed by Limitstate. This was a more detailed assessment of the brick arch section alone, prepared to try to improve the 1994, 7.5 tonnes assessment rating. The assessment concluded that the arch was capable of sustaining 10 tonnes, however relied on composite action with the backfill. Otherwise, the assessment concluded that a 3 tonne weight limit should be considered. Link to: [2010 Assessment Report.](#)

In the years since the 2010 assessment, site investigations reveal that the backfill concrete comprises of randomly sized stones, gravels and clay. With these factors in mind, the capacity should be considered 3 tonnes.

More information and contacts:

- [www.essexhighways.org/finchingfield-bridge-b1053-finchingfield](http://www.essexhighways.org/finchingfield-bridge-b1053-finchingfield)
- [www.essexhighways.org/future-plans-finchingfield-bridge](http://www.essexhighways.org/future-plans-finchingfield-bridge)
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