1. NEIGHBOURHOOD CIL APPLICATION FORM 2021

What's Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)?

Neighbourhood CIL is intended to help address the demands of a new development on the local area. This neighbourhood proportion is up to 25% of CIL receipts in areas with an adopted Neighbourhood Plan and up to 15% (capped at £100 per existing council tax dwelling) in areas without a Neighbourhood Plan. Therefore, if development occurs in an area, funds will be collected for the community to use to mitigate any impacts they have identified

At Solihull, a bidding system is open to communities to attempt to secure funding for projects that will benefit the local area. The fund total will be released annually, in April, and these funds will be open to bids until 30th September 2021. Solihull MBC aim to fund the most appropriate projects (for an area), to ensure this, a screening application form will enable officers to best allocate funding. The funding will be become available once the ward allocation pot reaches £10,000.

Completing this form:

A set of guidance notes on our website www.solihull.gov.uk/cil is available to assist with the completion of this application form, together with guidance around how we make decisions on how funding is distributed and what is expected following the completion of a successful bid. If you need any further advice, please contact the CIL team on 0121 704 8008 or cil@solihull.gov.uk

IMPORTANT: THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA IS MANDATORY IN ORDER TO BID FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD CIL

- **Project should be classed as Infrastructure/meets the demands development places on an area**
- **Projects should not require on-going maintenance**
- **The body applying should be:**
  - **Formally constituted**
  - **Has a bank account requiring two unrelated signatories**
  - **Has at least two unrelated management committee members if they are an unincorporated organisation or voluntary group**
  - **Demonstrates good financial management procedures including records of income and expenditure (or to be partnering with a delivery body who has these structures in place**

N.B you may be asked to provide evidence of the above when submitting an application.

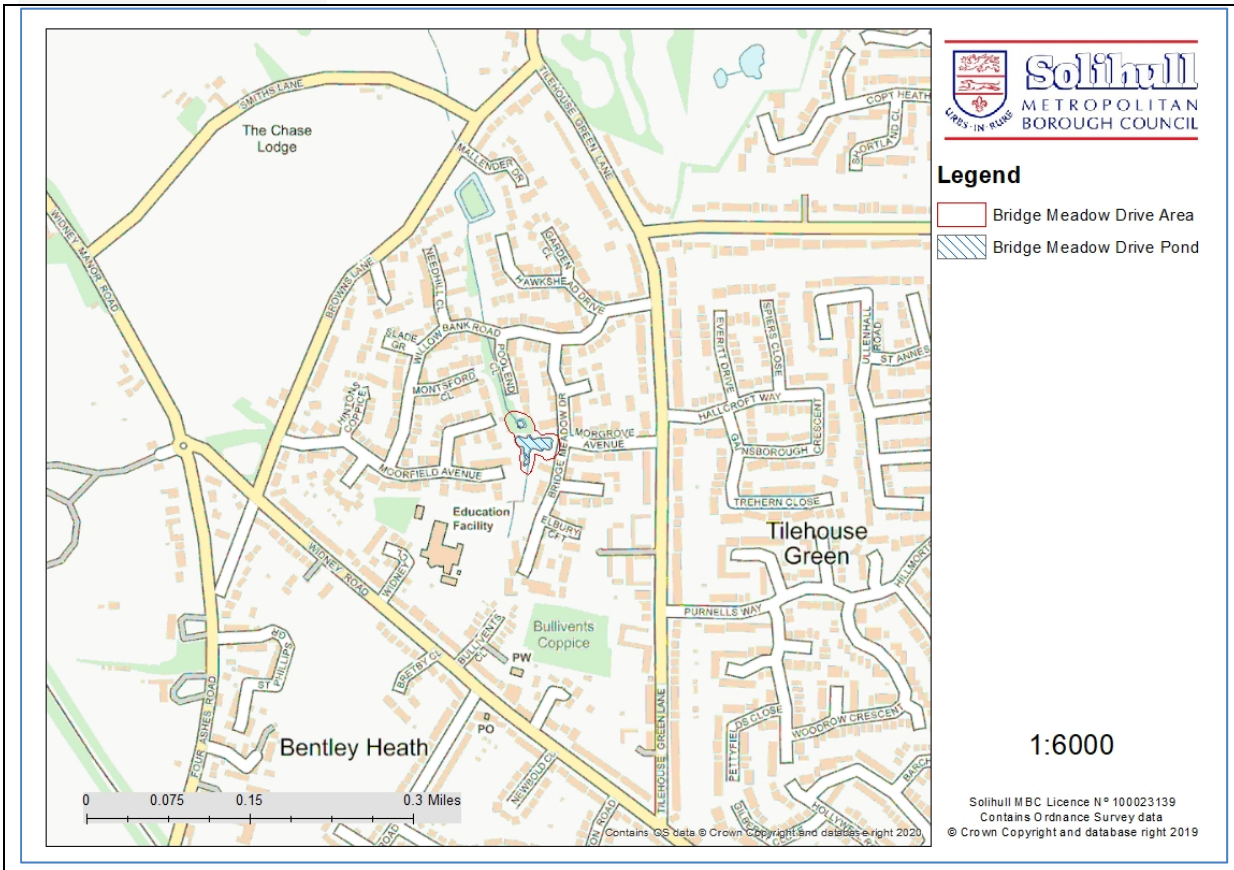
PART 1: ABOUT YOU/YOUR ORGANISATION

Name of organisation applying:	Solihull MBC
Address:	Council House Manor Square Solihull B91 3QB
Contact Phone Number:	[redacted]
Contact Email Address:	

Which Neighbourhood fund would you like to bid from?

Dorridge ☒	Shirley East ☐
Knowle ☐	Shirley South ☐
Silhill ☐	St Alphege ☐

Location of the Proposed Project:
Full Address and please attach site plan/map showing the location of the project. Bridge Meadow Drive Pond is situated on Bridge Meadow Drive, Knowle, Solihull B93 9QG



The pond is bordered by residential properties along all boundaries, so the greatest access to it is by walking.

If your project is located outside of the ward pot you wish to bid from, please explain why you believe that funding should be used for your project in a different ward: (optional)
N/A

Who will be responsible for delivering the project?

Community Group ☐ Please go to Part 2

Other Group/Organisation ☐ Please go to Part 2

Solihull MBC ☒ Please go to Part 3

PART 2: COMMUNITY GROUPS/OTHER GROUPS ORGANISATIONS

Please provide the details of the organisation responsible for the project delivery

Organisation Name	
Project Contact/Person Completing this form:	
Organisation Address (If different from above)	
Phone Number (If different from above)	
Email Address (If different from above)	

What is the legal status of the organisation?

Registered Charity ☐ Charity Registration Number:

Company limited by guarantee: ☐ Company Registration number:

An unregistered organisation ☐

Part of regional/national organisation ☐

PART 3 – SOLIHULL MBC APPLICATIONS

Name of Service Area	Economy & Infrastructure - Conservation of the Historic Environment , Landscape Architecture, Urban Design & Ecology.
Project Manager	[redacted]
Extension Number	
Email Address	

PART 4: ABOUT THE PROJECT

Project Name:
Bridge Meadow Drive Pond Enhancement (part of Newts & Shoots Pond Creation & Enhancement works contract)

Total amount CIL amount requested: (Please see www.solihull.gov.uk/cil for information regarding current funding availability)
£31,505.45

Project Summary:

Outline of proposed project you want to deliver.

Bridge Meadow Drive Pond Enhancement forms part of Newts & Shoots Pond Creation & Enhancement works contract.

This CIL funding application will help to guarantee the delivery of Bridge Meadow Drive Pond Enhancement in 2021/2. The project activities will deliver a range of benefits at a high level for the community.

Newts & Shoots Pond Creation & Enhancement comprises creation of one new pond at Elmdon Nature Park and improvements to three existing ponds at: Palmers Rough, Shirley; Bridge Meadow Road, Knowle; and Jobs Close Park, Knowle. This contract forms part of the council's wider 'Newts and Shoots' suite of biodiversity improvements (wetland/woodland/grassland) which is match funded by ERDF (European Regional Development Fund).

The programme is managed by SMBCs Conservation of the Historic Environment, Landscape Architecture, Urban Design and Ecology Team (CLAUDE) who have experience successfully delivering a number of projects including Solihull Habitat and Nature Improvements Project and Wildlife Ways delivered improved conservation status for approximately 190 hectares of habitat across publicly accessible green space within the urban areas of Solihull Borough. Newts & Shoots will build upon the achievements of these previously successful schemes by enhancing an additional 3.83 hectares of semi-natural habitat at seven sites within the Borough including:

- Habitat enhancement to three ponds currently in poor ecological condition
- Creation of a new pond specifically to benefit great crested newts (Triturus cristatus)
- Creation of species rich grassland at two sites
- Woodland management at one site

All sites included in the Newts and Shoots project: (PTO)

Site	Current Habitat	Size
Jobs Close LNR	Pond	0.07
Elmdon Nature Park	Poor semi-improved grassland	0.06*
Bridge Meadow Drive	Pond	0.37
Palmers Rough LNR	Pond	0.08*
Lavender Hall Park LNR	Poor semi-improved grassland & amenity grassland	0.90
Hillfield Park LNR	Poor semi-improved grassland	1.50
Bosworth's Wood (Lanchester Park)	Mature Woodland	0.99
	Total hectarage	**3.83**

Bridge Meadow Drive Pond is currently in a poor ecological condition supporting impoverished macro-invertebrate and macrophyte communities. It suffers from canopy shading and is heavily silted. Many years of inappropriate duck feeding has compounded the accumulation of silt through an increase in bird excreta and the introduction of excessive bird food, especially bread.

The focus of the pond enhancement project is to deliver improved water quality which will enhance their wildlife potential. This will be approached in three ways:

1. **Silt removal:** The silt will be removed from the pond using a combination of a long-reach excavator, amphibious machine with clamshell bucket and dredge pumps. Silt will be retained within the footprint of the ponds behind a revetment constructed of brushwood faggots with a double-weave revetment fabric liner.
   Native plants will then be used to stabilise the silt ledges. The benefits of the desilting works include:
   - Habitat enhancements and improved pond ecology
   - Biodiversity enhancements with increases in species and populations of aquatic vegetation, macroinvertebrates, fish, amphibians and birds
   - Water quality improvements
   - Removal/reduction of unpleasant odours (following completion of the works) that result from biological decomposition within the silt
   - Improved oxygen levels within the water body
   - Aesthetic improvements

2. **Management of Bankside Trees and Shrubs:** The ponds is heavily shaded limiting the range and diversity of ground flora. The annual leaf fall is contributing to the progressive siltation of the pond. Selective thinning of the pond edge trees will deliver the following benefits:
   - Habitat enhancements through the creation of more structurally diverse bankside vegetation and associated benefits to invertebrate and bird species
   - Removal of non-native species
   - Opening up of canopy allowing light transmission. This will encourage the greater establishment of marginal, emergent and submerged vegetation
   - Opening up views of the wetland will create opportunities for people to connect and engage with nature

3. **Planting of native aquatic plants:** A diverse range of native marginal, emergent and submerged floral species will be planted to stabile the silt ledges whilst generating an increase in floral diversity.

Project Outcomes and Benefits:

Please explain how your project out comes will benefit communities and how this will be shown after the project is completed.

Project output	**Project benefits**	**Evidence**
Outputs should be tangible deliverables from your project . E.G. New Playground Equipment	*How will you know the project has been a success? E.G. Increased use of the park*	*How can you provide evidence to show this has been a success? E.G. Survey of numbers of people using the park*
Enhance the quality of the natural blue-green infrastructure in Dorridge by investing in the long term future of the pond. • De-silt pond to improve water quality and remove unpleasant odours. • Improve natural environment around pond edge. • Plant marginal wetland plant species Natural aeration contributing to Solihull's Net Zero Action Plan. Reduced likelihood of negative impacts caused by climate change through increased ecosystem resilience. • Enhanced quality of priority habitat and improved habitat resources for priority species. The pond is currently unable to provide a home for freshwater species. Desilting the pond will provide the perfect habitat to support a variety of UK freshwater species which are in dramatic decline.	The project activities will deliver a range of benefits at a high level for the community: • The pond is visible from good path links and will be an enhancement to accessible nature to all in the community. Improved attractiveness of this semi-natural feature within the local nature reserve; benefiting local residents. • Improved opportunities for recreation. • Improved health and well-being outcomes for local communities. We will encourage residents to get outside and become more active by promoting the positive impact the natural world plays in their own physical and mental wellbeing. It is important to note that over the last 18 months the value of having access to good quality green space has never been clearer, providing a lifeline to many. Green spaces provide an opportunity for fresh air, exercise and quiet contemplation benefiting	All the outcomes will be measured for assessment at the beginning of the project and followed by a suitable period to allow goals to be achieved, i.e. 6 months. Ecological surveys have already taken place on the condition of the site, which showed the pond to be in poor condition. Further surveys will be carried out after completion of the works to evidence the success of the habitat creations and enhancements. These will also include assessments on:- • Improved wildlife • Enhanced public amenity • Aesthetic improvements • Decrease in unpleasant odour A survey of visitor numbers to the pond will be carried out for an assessment of:- • Physical & mental health of local residents. • Social & community engagement. The assessments will closely follow the data sets used by

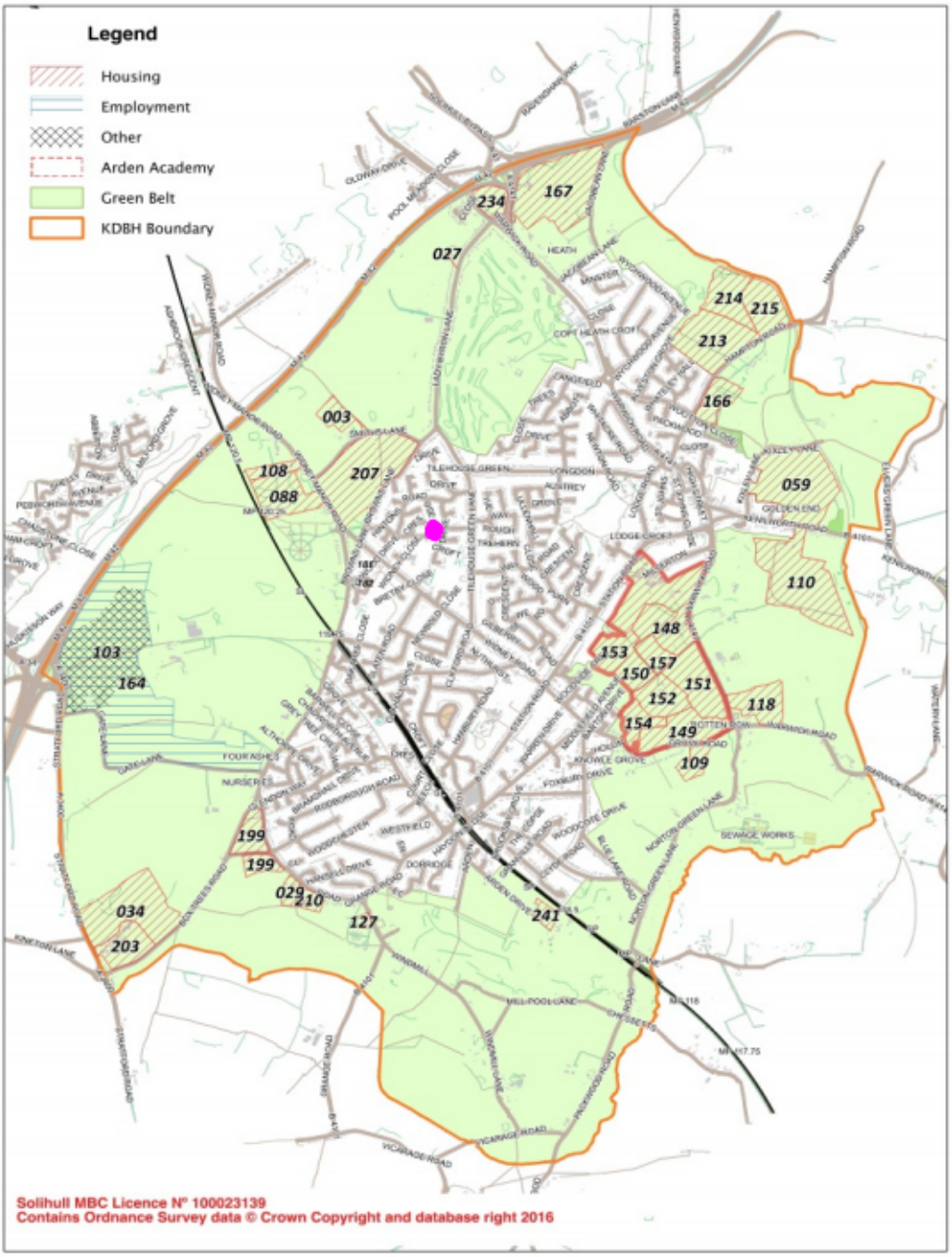
Blue-green infrastructure is a term to describe networks of good quality green space and water networks which can deliver quality of life and environmental benefits for the whole community including wildlife. The importance of safe, accessible and well-connected green spaces for improving quality of life has never been more relevant, and for those without gardens the value of green spaces is increased. Natural England in partnership with Defra, has undertaken the Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) survey. Their research recognises the vital importance of good quality local greenspaces for our physical and mental wellbeing. Their research also shows that our natural environment is in decline and we need to make a concerted effort to help nature recover. Survey results includes :- • Adult's engagement with the natural environment	both our physical and mental health. •An increase in communities' sense of ownership of local natural places, by establishing strong partnerships between communities and voluntary organisations. •Contributing to reduced anti-social behaviour, • This project will link together with Love Solihull and Active Communities to provide Environmental Education to local residents, community groups and nearby schools. • As part of a separate contract relating to these works an interpretation board will be installed to relay important and interesting information regarding the pond in an attractive and exciting visual display.	Natural England surveys to Monitor Engagement with the Natural Environment. For intangible measures, a focus group will be used to assess other unexpected outcomes that may have had a positive impact but cannot be measured by above tools. ERDF project monitoring also requires evidence of outputs of their joint funded projects through photographs and monthly reporting. As part of the Newts & Shoots ERDF application there is a requirement for a related site interpretation board to be installed at the site which will explain the benefits of these works to the public.

• Children's engagement with the natural environment		

Mitigating the impact of Development:
Please explain how your project will support development in the Neighbourhood, this could address a Social or a Physical need. Below local challenges related to development are identified, (information taken from Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath (KDBH) Neighbourhood Plan). These challenges have a direct impact on the project location: - Increasing the demand and importance of an accessible, high quality, local green space to take exercise either individually or with others, benefitting park users mental wellbeing. - Increasing the importance of providing a sustainable, biodiversity rich habitat for flora and fauna <u>Population increase:</u> The population of KDBH in 2011 was 18,958 (source: 2011 Census) living in 7,624 households. The latest estimate is almost 20,000 residents in 8,068 households. About half live in Knowle (Ward profiles 2016). <u>Aging population:</u> - 56% of the population has lived in KDBH for over 20 years and a further 20% for between 11 and 20 years - the age structure has a larger proportion of middle age and older people than Solihull Borough - the average age has risen from 42.3 years in 2001 to 46.7 years in 2011 - the number of people aged 75+ is estimated to grow by about 500 over the next 12 years. <u>Increase in housing developments:</u> The Area of KDBH has accommodated significant levels of housing growth over the years. In the last 5 years, planned development has delivered new houses at: Hampton Road, Knowle; Four Ashes, Bentley Heath; and Middlefield, Knowle (under construction). This, together with windfall developments such as those at Old Silhillians and Knowle High Street, has increased the number of houses and apartments by almost 500. The Area continues to be under enormous development pressure. The map below highlights the potential areas for development identified in the KDBH Neighbourhood Plan, with Bridge Meadow Drive indicated by a pink cross.

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

Land offered to SMBC for potential development in KDBH
Call for Sites - January 2016



Plan showing the KDBH Neighbourhood Boundary Area (Orange)

Arden Triangle (red continuous line)

The reference numbers for sites were used by Solihull Council to notate the various sites and the names of the sites can be found in the SMBC 'Schedule of Call for Sites Submissions, May 2016'.

Community Support

Please provide evidence of local support or backing for this project. Additional documentation should be submitted to support this. Please evidence any support from Local Ward Councillors.
Evidence can include letters, emails, petitions or fundraising efforts.

Email from member of public to SMBC ecologist 18.5.2021:
Apologies for such a delay in emailing you, I'm waiting for some more photos that the previous owner of our house is doing a search for but I didn't want to delay sending you these images any longer. The pictures attached are from our next door neighbour, they have lived here since the housing estate was built. They have also provided some comments below.
It was great to meet you and your colleagues recently (I live at * opposite the pond), it was fantastic to hear about the work that you have planned for the pond area. We love watching it change over the seasons but in the last few years it has become quite overgrown and on warm days is really quite smelly. I'm not sure if the lack of light into the pond is creating this problem. It's got the potential to be such a beautiful space.
For us it would be great to see the pond area opened up a little, the trees seem overcrowded and choking the pond which I think is forcing them to grow out towards the light and across the pond, they also seem a bit out of control. There are quite a few dead branches which fall into the pond or are just part hanging from the trees. I notice a few new trees have sprung up in the last 24 months. We actually have an Acer tree in our garden which was planted 2 years ago that we'd donate to the public space if you think that appropriate.
Only 3 of the 11 ducklings have survived this year compared to last year when 12 of 13 survived. We actually saw the fox take last years missing one but I've not seen them disappear this year. It's great to see the wildlife although I'm definitely not a big fan of the rats that appeared this year! It would also be good to discourage people from feeding the ducks bread, I know that sounds grumpy but I know it's not healthy for them and I think it encourages the rats. There used to be a warning sign in the water: Danger water! The sign is still there but you can't read it anymore. There's obviously lots of squirrels about, too many rats, a fox that hangs out here and a muntjac that comes occasionally and a good few frogs. I haven't seen the badgers for a couple of years but I'm listening out for them in the evenings now.
If ever you'd like me to send pics or monitor anything for you we'd be happy to help.
I've been speaking to the neighbours and I know there is a group of people that would support your work if it would make your budget go further… and I'd get over my fear of frogs ☺ If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me.

Email from member of public 1.5.2021 forwarded to SMBC ecologist 18.5.2021:
The attached photos were taken between December 1984 and 1988. The photo with snow was taken prior to our brick wall being constructed circa 1985 as you can see the water level then and in the later photo was much higher. Since these photos were taken the pond has filled up with silt and vegetation which has led to much lower water level.
Prior to our house being built the pond and the subsequent drainage system being installed the pond used to be on open land and had newts and frogs which migrated to a pond near Bentley Heath school.
It would be nice to see the silt and vegetation dredged to allow a greater depth of water

which would improve the habitat for wildlife.
If you need us to speak with the council then just pass our name to them.

Residents' Survey in KDBH Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2033:
The Residents' Survey shows a strong desire … to preserve existing publicly accessible parks, open spaces and green spaces within and surrounding the villages; to ensure that any new developments maintain public rights of way; and also to improve footpath networks to provide access to the surrounding countryside. The natural environment, particularly trees, landscape and ecology, needs to be protected.'

Council Plan

Does the Project align with any of the priorities set out within the Solihull Council Plan which can be found at https://www.solihull.gov.uk/About-the-Council/The-Council-plan

The project will help to support a number of the Council's 'Key things to do' by contributing towards the following component activities :-

Actioning our climate change declaration

- Enhance part of Solihull's natural environment
- Improve Solihull's air quality getting more people walking.
- Reduce Solihull's net carbon emissions

Thriving communities

- Enable communities to thrive

The project will also deliver national objectives of the Government's 2020 Biodiversity Strategy and the 25 Year Natural Environment Plan at a local level.

Is your project supported by polices or priorities of a neighbourhood plan?	Y (If Yes please provide details below)	N

This project seeks improvement in the quality of the natural environment, improving the conditions in which local people take their leisure.

'Protect Green Space and the Environment

The Residents' Survey shows a strong desire to maintain village atmosphere and character, particularly of the conservation areas; to preserve existing publicly accessible parks, open spaces and green spaces within and surrounding the villages; to ensure that any new developments maintain public rights of way; and also to improve footpath networks to provide access to the surrounding countryside. The natural environment, particularly trees, landscape and ecology, needs to be protected.'

KDBH Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2033

How will this project be delivered and who will deliver it?

Who will be involved in running the project? Who will carry out the work? Do they have any previous experience of this work? What kind of skills/resources will be needed? Are there any risks?

Who will deliver the project?

The project will be delivered by Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC). The project will also be supported, and have involvement from, local volunteer and community groups.

Project design work, ecological monitoring and project management will be carried out by the staff of SMBC's Conservation of the Historic Environment, Landscape Architecture, Urban Design and Ecology Team.

The project team will report through existing reporting channels and governance arrangements.

Physical implementation of the proposed project works will be by a range of external contractors to be procured and overseen by the Project Manager. They will be assisted by the SMBC Monitoring Team who oversee and keep track of the ERDF Greening the Grey programme ensuring all projects are implemented in compliance with ERDF funding requirements.

Procurement

Contract to be awarded for Newts and Shoots Pond Creation and Enhancement, comprising creation of one new pond at Elmdon Nature Park and improvements to three existing ponds at: Palmers Rough, Shirley; Bridge Meadow Road, Knowle; and Jobs Close Park, Knowle. This contract will be awarded in compliance with ERDF guidance to a single contractor.

An open tender was carried out in August 2021 but no contractors submitted a tender within the budget parameter of £95k. However one tender was received totalling £190,465.33, including £63,991.27 for works at Bridge Meadow Drive Pond, evidencing the

value of works for this application. The response to tenders would be partly due to the constraints of local contractors' availability in the autumn timescale and rising costs. We are therefore re-tendering with a wider works timescale of autumn/winter 2021/2 and an increased budget, to give greater confidence that the project can be achieved.

In order that these works can proceed as included in the Newts and Shoots ERDF funded application, additional funding is being sought to bring the overall budget for Newts and Shoots Pond Creation and Enhancement up to £230k. A Procurement Approval Document has been approved by SMBC procurement board to this effect on 14.9.2021. This additional CIL funding will then form part of a further application for ERDF match funding to meet the aggregate £230k.

Project Monitoring
The SMBC Ecology Team will use standardised methodologies to monitor the ecological improvements that result from the project work. Warwickshire Wildlife Trust has developed Woodland and Grassland Condition Monitoring Assessments, which are designed to assess the ecological condition of a site by examining its species and structural diversity. The methodologies have been specifically adapted for Warwickshire from Natural England's SSSI condition monitoring assessments. The condition monitoring assessments will be made pre and post interventions to establish measurable improvements in habitat condition. Condition monitoring of the ponds will include a baseline survey using the Freshwater Habitats Trust National Pond Survey methodology along with a GCN survey. These will be repeated post project.

Project Management
The project will be managed by an SMBC Project Manager supported by members of SMBC's Conservation of the Historic Environment, Landscape Architecture, Urban Design and Ecology Team.

Ongoing Maintenance– see guidance criteria

Will there be any on-going maintenance? How would this be funded?

The project is self-sufficient and will not create any additional maintenance cost. Once the projects have been delivered, the newly created, restored or enhanced habitats will all be incorporated into the on-going SMBC maintenance programme managed by SMBCs Public Realm Team.

TIMESCALES

Please outline a proposed timeline for the project

Proposed Date	Key Milestones
Oct 2021	Produce tender and award contract for pond management
Nov 2021	Commence pond creation and enhancement works
Feb 2022	Complete pond enhancement works

COSTS

Please outline the predicted costs for the project and outline if any other funding has been raised for the proposal:

Please attach evidence of quotes that have been sought as confirmation of the cost breakdown. Without the submission of quotes, your application will not be taken further.

Cost	£	Funded from?
Bridge Meadow Drive Pond Enhancement Works (part of Newts & Shoots Pond Creation & Enhancement works contract)	63,991.27	ERDF grant (£25,000)

RISKS

Are there any risks associated with the project?

What is the risk if work does not take place? Is there any reason why the work would not be fully completed if funding were to be granted?

All of the works are subject to seasonal constraints. Much of the works to be delivered are reliant on favourable weather and ground conditions to minimise damage and ensure successful implementation. There can be no control over these external factors and delays may be incurred to avoid working in sub-optimal conditions and jeopardising outcomes. However, considerable experience has been gained delivering the two previous ERDF Priority Axis 6d funded schemes and we are confident that the work can be programmed to accommodate periods of inclement weather.

Pond desilting works should be undertaken during autumn/winter ensuring to avoid the disturbance of nesting birds. Works generally, but particularly excavations and transportation etc. will be required to be undertaken outside school holiday periods.

Potential issues associated with the works:

- Health and safety (exposed wet silt, plant and machinery)
- Nuisance to users and residents etc. from potential odour machinery noise (short term)
- Timing of drying of silt prior to final treatment difficult to assess dependant on many factors

The Project Manager will be responsible for maintaining a risk register which will also identify mitigation strategies and actions.

Certification:

I confirm the information supplied is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand and accept that providing deliberate false information could result in Legal action being taken against me and withdrawal of funds awarded ☒

I confirm I have read and understood Solihull MBC Policy and Engagement Privacy Notice ☒

(https://www.solihull.gov.uk/About-the-Council/Solihull-Council-Statement/Economy-and-infrastructure/Policy-engagement)

SIGNED: [redacted]

ON BEHALF OF: Solihull MBC, Conservation of the Historic Environment , Landscape Architecture, Urban Design & Ecology.