# 3-Span Concrete Box Beam Bridge of Varying Section 

| For LUSAS version: | 18.0 |
| :--- | :--- |
| For software product(s): | Bridge and Bridge Plus |
| With product option(s): | None |

## Description

A 3-span concrete box beam bridge of varying cross-section is to be modelled to illustrate the use of the box section property calculator and the use of the multiple varying sections facilities in LUSAS.


Two models are to be created; a preliminary model suitable for prototype / assessment work and a more detailed model suitable for developing further into a staged construction model. Simplified geometry is used for both to allow the example to concentrate on the use of the box section property calculator and the multiple varying section facilities that are used in modelling the structure.

Units used are $\mathrm{kN}, \mathrm{m}, \mathrm{kg}, \mathrm{s}, \mathrm{C}$ throughout

## Objectives

The required output from the analysis consists of:
$\square$ A comparison of results from the preliminary model and the more detailed model.

## Keywords

## 3D, Bridge, Beam, Span, Concrete, Multiple Varying Sections, Box

## Associated Files

[ concrete_box_bridge.mdl Basic beam model.

## Discussion

The 3-span structure is comprised of varying hollow cross-sections with solid diaphragm sections at the four supports. Cross-section properties for three void locations on the structure (as shown in the image below) will be defined and used in the creation of multiple varying section geometric line attributes which will then be assigned to selected lines on the model.


Schematic elevation showing the locations at which the varying section definitions are based.
Other section properties, for solid diaphragm sections at the supports and at the ends of the structure (shown on the image above), will also be defined and assigned as required.

When building a model like this the bridge can either be represented as a 'flat model' using lines at a common level with offsets being assigned to the elements to represent to eccentricity of the section properties about the line, or geometry lines could follow the centroid of the sections to create a 'curved' model. Both methods are valid, but for this example the 'flat model' method will be used.

'Flat' modelling method
(where lines following the centroid of one section with other sections offset to align to match)


Indicative diagram showing 'Curved' modelling method (where all lines follow the centroid of sections)

## Modelling details

The supplied basic beam model is a 'Flat' model with clear spans of $39 \mathrm{~m}, 78 \mathrm{~m}$ and 39 m formed of single straight lines. During the initial part of the example multiple varying section geometric line attributes are assigned to the single lines along with other section properties and a simple linear analysis is carried out.

After creating the simple model a more detailed model is formed by splitting the lines representing each span into shorter 3 m long lengths in readiness for a future staged construction analysis. In doing so 3 mesh divisions will be present on each 3 m long geometric line.

Caution. When modelling cross sections that vary with constant section beam elements, care should be taken to ensure that sufficient elements have been assigned to the line(s) representing the tapering beam to achieve accuracy of results. If varying section beam elements are used, only one element per line may be required.

## Modelling : Preliminary Model

## Running LUSAS Modeller

For details of how to run LUSAS Modeller see the heading Running LUSAS Modeller in the Examples Manual Introduction.

## Loading the model

- To create the model, open the read-only file Concrete_Box_Bridge.mdl located in the $\backslash<$ LUSAS Installation Folder>\Examples\Modeller directory.

Depending upon your access rights it may be necessary to copy this file to another folder before it can be opened, and remove the read-only protection before it can be saved to the new folder. Once opened:

The basic bridge geometry will be displayed.
The geometric lines of this model have been assigned a line mesh of thick beam elements with an element length of 1 m . Concrete (ungraded) material properties and a structural gravity load have also been assigned. Fixed supports restrain the piers and roller supports restrain the ends of the deck.


## Defining Cross-sectional properties

To start, cross-section properties for three voided box sections that are used in all three spans will be defined.

## To define the voided span section

Tools

$\xrightarrow[\text { Box Section }]{$|  Section Property  |
| :--- |
|  Calculator  |$}$

- Select the Complex section option and enter values as shown on the dialog opposite.

Box section dimensions are:

- $\mathrm{H}=2.2$
- $\mathrm{Wb}=\mathbf{3}$
- $\mathrm{Wt}=\mathbf{3}$
- $\mathrm{Hm}=\mathbf{0}$ (or leave blank)
- $\mathrm{Tb}=\mathbf{0 . 2}$
- $\mathrm{Tt}=\mathbf{0 . 2}$

Cantilever slab dimensions are:

- $\mathrm{Wc}=3.5$

- $\mathrm{Tc} 1=\mathbf{0 . 4}$
- $\mathrm{Tc} 2=\mathbf{0 . 2}$

To allow additional points to be entered in addition to P 1 and P 2 , that are used to define the internal shape of the cross-section, the following need to be set in the Number of extra points panel:

- Top slab = $\mathbf{1}$
- Bottom slab $=1$
- Cantilever slab =1

Web interior face and web exterior face points are not required so are left set to zero.

- Enter the name as Span

The complete set of values to be entered in the Extra points locations table are:

| Point | Offset (O) | Height (H) |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| P1 | $\mathbf{2 . 5}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 4}$ |
| P2 | $\mathbf{2 . 5}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 4}$ |
| t1 | $\mathbf{1 . 6 5}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 2}$ |
| b1 | $\mathbf{2 . 0}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 2}$ |
| c1 | $\mathbf{1 . 2 7}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 2}$ |

- To see the section and additional properties created and calculated by the values entered click the Section details button. Click Close to return to the main dialog.

- Ensure Add to local library is selected and click Apply to calculate the section properties, add the section to the local library, and allow you to continue to define another section.

Tip. Of the section properties calculated one, yt, ( $\mathbf{0 . 8 1 0 2 6}$ for this section) should be noted because it used in subsequent calculations of eccentricity / offset values for other sections.

Note. If an incorrect value is noticed after defining the section, the dialog should be re-visited and the Load Section button selected to load the values previously entered.

After making any corrections press the Apply (or OK) button as necessary to save the updated section data.

## To define the voided intermediate section

- In the 'Box section dimensions' panel change the value of H to be $\mathbf{3 . 2}$
- Change the name to be Intermediate and click Apply to calculate the section properties, add the section to the local library, and allow you to continue to define another section.


## To define the voided section adjacent to the pier

- In the 'Box section dimensions' panel change the value of H to be $\mathbf{5 . 2}$
- Change the name to be Pier and click Apply to calculate the section properties, add the section to the local library, and allow you to continue to define another section.


## To define the solid pier section

- In the 'Type' panel select Exclude void
- Change the name to be Pier Solid and click Apply to calculate the section properties, add the section to the local library, and allow you to continue to define another section.

Tip. The difference between the yt value of the Span section and the Pier Solid section should be noted because this will be required later in the example to specify an eccentricity value for other sections. In this case the difference in values of yt is 2.4626 $-0.81026=\mathbf{1 . 6 5 2 3 4}$

## To define the solid span section

Existing defined sections such as that of the voided span section can be loaded into the dialog for subsequent modification to create new or similar sections

- Click the Load section... button. Browse the sections in the local library to find the Span entry and click OK to load its section details into the dialog.
- In the Type panel select Exclude void
- Change the name to be Span Solid ensure Add to local library is selected and click OK to calculate the section properties, add the section to the local library, and finish defining the deck sections.

Tip. The difference between the yt value of the Span section and the Span Solid section should be noted because this will be required later in the example to specify an eccentricity value of one from the other. In this case the difference in values of yt is $0.98225-0.81026=\mathbf{0 . 1 7 1 9 9}$

## To define the column section



- On the Rectangular Solid Section Property dialog enter $\mathrm{D}=\mathbf{6}$ and $\mathrm{B}=\mathbf{2}$.

A name of RSS $\mathrm{D}=6 \mathrm{~B}=2$ will be automatically created.

- Ensure Add to local library is selected and click OK to calculate the section properties, add the section to the local library, and finish defining section properties.

All required section properties have now been defined and saved in the local user library. The solid sections must now be added to the Treeview in order to allow for them to be assigned to the model. The voided span sections will be used to create multiple varying section line attributes which will be automatically added to the Treeview when the attribute is created.

## Adding the geometric properties for the solid sections to the Treeview

| $\mid$ Attributes |
| :--- |
| Geometric $>$ |
| Section Library... |

The standard sections dialog will appear.

- Click on the drop-down list button
$\rightarrow$ to change the selection from UK Sections to User Sections
- Ensure a Local library is being accessed.
- Click on the drop-down list button - and select Span Solid from the list of local library items.
- Change the name to be Span Solid
- Click the Apply button to add the Span Solid line attribute to the Treeview and allow you to choose another section.
- Click on the drop-down list button
 $\checkmark$ and select Pier solid from the list of local library items.
- Change the name to be Pier Solid
- Click the Apply button to add the Pier Solid line attribute to the Treeview and allow you to choose another section.
- Click on the drop-down list button $\boldsymbol{\nabla}$ and select RSS $\mathbf{D}=\mathbf{6} \mathbf{B}=\mathbf{2}$ from the list of local library items
- Change the name to be Column
- Click the OK button to add the Column line attribute to the $\stackrel{\circ}{\circ}$ Treeview.


## Defining the multiple varying section line properties for the Left Span

A multiple varying geometric line attribute needs to be defined for the left-hand span. This will make use of the previously defined voided sections named Span, Intermediate and Pier.

## Define sections

| Attributes |
| :--- |
| Geometric |
| Multiple Varying |
| Section... |

- On the Multiple Varying Section dialog, click in the Section cell that currently reads $914 \times 305 \times 289 \mathrm{~kg}$ UB and the launch dialog button $\boldsymbol{7}$ will appear to allow a different pre-defined section to be chosen from a different section library.
- On the Enter Section dialog, click on the drop-down list button to change the selection from UK Sections to User Sections
- Ensure a Local library is being accessed.
- Click on the drop-down list button $\nabla^{2}$ and select Span from the list of local library items and then click $\mathbf{O K}$ to add the section to the first row of the table on the Multiple Varying Section dialog.
- On the Multiple Varying Section dialog press the TAB key to move between cells and create a new row beneath the existing row. (Shape interpolation and distance values will be entered after all sections have been added to the table)
- In the new Section cell (row 2) click on the launch dialog button $\boldsymbol{7}$ again. The dropdown list should still be showing User Sections for a Local library. Browse and select Intermediate from the drop-down list and click OK to add the section to the table.
- Press the TAB key to move between cells and create a new row beneath the existing row.
- In the new Section cell (row 3) click on the launch dialog button $\boldsymbol{7}$ again. The dropdown list should still be showing User Sections for a Local library. Browse and select Pier from the drop-down list and click OK to add the section to the table.

Note. As the multiple varying section is built-up in the table, a visualisation of the longitudinal and vertical alignment and of the cross-section shapes used is displayed on the dialog. Longitudinal section visualisation only takes place once all required data has been entered and only for sections that are compatible.

## Define shape interpolation method

To specify a shape interpolation method for each defined section:

- The Span section as the first in the table is set by default to Start
- For the Intermediate section entry click on the drop-down list button $\boldsymbol{\nabla}$ in the Shape Interpolation cell and select Smoothed
- Repeat for the Pier section in the cell below selecting Smoothed


## Define distance values

Lastly we need to specify a distance value at which each section will apply.

- For the Span section click in the Distance cell and enter $\mathbf{0 . 5}$

- For the Intermediate section enter 24.5
- For the Pier section enter 39.5 and click somewhere else on the dialog to cause the visualisation to be updated for the last entered distance.

Note. Values entered are treated as proportional distances along a line (for example entering 0,10 and 20 would specify a section at either end and at a mid-point of any line that was selected and assigned the geometric line attribute). Distances are also mapped to the actual line length so entering $0,0.5$, and 1 , in three separate cells would produce the same result. But note that a section does not necessarily have to be defined to start at a distance of 0 , (as in this example). In this case the use of a non-zero starting point of 0.5 (a chainage value representing the actual setting-out point of the section on the model) as well using a corresponding intermediate and an end point appropriate to the line beam length will help to ensure an easy conversion to a staged construction model in the second part of this example. This will use the same chainage values in conjunction with the reference path facility.

## Check alignment settings

The vertical and horizontal alignment of a series of sections is controlled by the Alignment options. All sections are aligned with respect to a chosen section.

- Ensure the alignment is Top to top, Centre to centre and with respect to section $\mathbf{1}$


## Name the attribute

- Enter a name of Left Span and click Apply to add the multiple varying section line attribute to the Treeview and allow you to continue to define another one.


## Defining the multiple varying section line properties for the Right Span

This can be done by reversing the order of the sections used for the left span and then changing the distance values. This time, to prevent inadvertent overwriting of previously defined line attributes, we will name the attribute first.

## Name the attribute

- With the Multiple Varying Section dialog for the Left Span currently displayed overtype the Left Span name with Right Span


## Define sections

- Click the Flip button to change the order of the sections listed.


## Check Shape Interpolation type

- The Pier section should be set to Start
- The Intermediate section should be set to Smoothed
- The Span section should be set to Smoothed



## Define Distance values

- For the Pier section click in the Distance cell and enter $\mathbf{1 2 3 . 5}$
- For the Intermediate section enter $\mathbf{1 3 8 . 5}$
- Repeat for the Pier section enter $\mathbf{1 6 2 . 5}$


## Check alignment

- Ensure that all sections are aligned Top to top, Centre to centre and with respect to section $\mathbf{3}$ (because this is now the number identifier for the Span section)


## Save the changes

- Click Apply to add the multiple varying section line attribute to the Treeview, and allow you to continue to define another one.


## Defining the multiple varying section line properties for the Centre Span

This can be done by using the symmetric option to mirror the sections used for the Right Span and then changing the distance values.

## Name the attribute

- With the Multiple Varying Section dialog displayed for the Right Span overtype the Right Span name with Centre Span


## Define sections

- Click the Symmetric section option to mirror the sections listed.


## Check Shape Interpolation type

- The Pier section should be set to Start
- The Intermediate section should be set to Smoothed
- The Span section should be set to Smoothed



## Define Distance values

Specify a distance value at which each section will apply:

- For the Pier section click in the Distance cell and enter $\mathbf{4 2 . 5}$
- For the Intermediate section enter $\mathbf{5 7 . 5}$
- Repeat for the Span section enter $\mathbf{8 1 . 5}$
- Click somewhere else on the dialog to cause the visualisation to be updated for the last entered distance.


## Check alignment

- Ensure that all sections are aligned with vertical alignment Top to top, horizontal alignment Centre to centre, and with respect to section 3 (the number identifier for the main setting-out section)


## Save the changes

- Click OK to add the multiple varying section line attribute to the Treeview and stop defining any more.

Note. Where all sections have been defined using either a LUSAS supplied standard library item, or one of the LUSAS standard section generators, an 'exact' calculation is made to arrive at intermediate section properties based upon the user-defined shape interpolation method.

## Assigning the varying geometric line properties

- First, select the 39 m long line representing the left-hand clear span of the bridge and drag and drop the Left Span (Varying - $\mathbf{3}$ Sections) geometric line attribute from the Treeview onto it.

Note. After a short pause whilst section property data is calculated for each element along the assigned line, the beam section will be visualised.

- Next, select the 39 m long line representing the right-hand clear span of the bridge and drag and drop the Right Span (Varying - 3 Sections) geometric line attribute onto it.
- Lastly, Select the 78 m long line representing the centre clear span of the bridge and drag and drop the Centre Span (Varying - 5 Sections) geometric line attribute onto it. After section property calculation has completed the beam section will be visualised.

After assignment (and with fleshing turned on) the model will look like this:


## Assigning the solid geometric deck properties

The solid sections at the ends of the deck and at column locations now need to be assigned to the model.
$Y: N / A$ Select the $\mathbf{Y}$ axis button to view the side elevation of the model.


- Box-select the lines at either end of the bridge defining the solid section and drag and drop the Span Solid (Span Solid) geometric line attribute onto the selection. This assignment will be adjusted shortly

- Box-select the 2 lines at both internal supports defining the solid section of the deck and drag and drop the Pier Solid (Pier Solid) geometric line attribute onto the selection. This assignment will be adjusted shortly.


## Adjusting the centroid offsets for solid sections

In assigning the geometric line attributes for the solid sections of the deck it can be seen that differences in centroid values in the $y$ direction cause the solid sections to sit too high with respect to the varying sections (which were all set-out with a vertical alignment with respect to the centroid of the section named Span that sits at the lefthand end of the structure). As a result the offset values for these solid sections need amending.


- In the Treeview, double-click the Span Solid (Span solid) entry. Enter a value of $\mathbf{0 . 1 7 1 9 9}$ for the Eccentricity in z direction (ez). This was calculated and noted with a Tip marker earlier in the example. Click Apply to make the change.
- On the Geometric Line dialog click the 'spinner' at the bottom of the dialog until the Pier Solid entry appears. For this entry, enter a value of $\mathbf{1 . 6 5 2 3 4}$ for the Eccentricity in z direction (ez). This value was calculated and noted with a Tip marker earlier in the example. Click OK to make the change and close the dialog.


## Assigning the main column properties



- Select the lines representing the columns (piers) and drag and drop the Column (RSS D=6 B=2 major $\mathbf{y}$ ) geometric line attribute onto the selection.
- Rotate the model to a suitable 3D view


Save the model file.
The preliminary model is now complete and ready to be solved.

## Running the Analysis : Preliminary Model

三 On the Solve Now dialog ensure Analysis 1 is checked and press OK to run the analysis.

Note. Normally a general warning relating to the use of sufficient constant beam elements will be displayed whenever a model containing multiple varying geometric line attributes is solved. However, for this example, it has been turned off.

## If the analysis is successful...

Analysis loadcase results are added to the Treeview.
In addition, 2 files will be created in the Associated Model Data directory where the model file resides:
$\square$ concrete_box_bridge_preliminary.out this output file contains details of model data, assigned attributes and selected analysis statistics.
$\square$ concrete_box_bridge_preliminary.mys this is the LUSAS results file which is loaded automatically into the Theeview to allow results to be viewed.

## If the analysis fails...

If the analysis fails, information relating to the nature of the error encountered is written to the output files in addition to the text output window. Any errors listed in the text
output window should be corrected in LUSAS Modeller before saving the model and re-running the analysis.

## Viewing the Results : Preliminary Model

Analysis loadcase results are present in the Treeview.

## Add a contour layer

- With no features selected click the right-hand mouse button in a blank part of the Graphics window and select the Contours option to add the contour layer to the Treeview.
- From the drop down menu in the dialog, pick Stress from the entity drop down list and pick $\mathbf{S x}(\mathbf{F x}, \mathbf{M y}, \mathbf{M z})$ from the component drop down list.
- Click OK to display stress contours on the fleshed shape.


## Add a diagrams layer

- With no features selected click the right-hand mouse button in a blank part of the Graphics window and select the Diagrams option to add the diagrams layer to the电 Treeview.
- From the drop down menu in the dialog, pick Force/Moment from the entity drop down list and My from the component drop down list.
- Select the Diagram Display tab and deselect Label values. Select the Scale tab and enter a magnitude of $\mathbf{1 8}$. Click OK to display a bending moment diagram on the fleshed shape.


Notes. When plotting results of beam stress for results components that contain a moment term such as $\mathrm{Sx}(\mathrm{Fx}, \mathrm{My}, \mathrm{Mz})$ or $\mathrm{Sx}(\mathrm{My})$ the results contours displayed on a
fleshed model are accurately represented by the colours shown in the contour key. However, because the contours are being drawn for all locations on the section (an infinite number of $y / z$ locations) at the same time, the maximum and minimum values cannot be stated on the contour key because they are based upon estimated values.

Beam stress contours plotted on an unfleshed model are precise and are drawn for a specified active fibre location.

This completes the preliminary part of the example.

## Modelling : Detailed Model

The preliminary model has clear spans of $39 \mathrm{~m}, 78 \mathrm{~m}$ and 39 m formed of single lines. A more detailed model is to be formed by splitting the lines representing each span into shorter 3 m long lengths in readiness for a future staged construction analysis. To allow this to happen a reference path is created and the multiple varying section geometric line attributes are updated to make use of the reference path that is defined prior to the lines representing the spans being split into the smaller number of line divisions. No reassignment of geometric properties need be made to the lines created by splitting the existing lines. The multiple varying section geometric line attributes will automatically be applied to the lines using the reference path facility.

- Confirm that all results files will be closed, and the enter the model file name as concrete_box_bridge_detailed and click the Save button.


## Changing the model description

- Change the model title to Concrete Box Beam Bridge Detailed Model and click OK


## Creating a reference path

A reference path defines a route through a model that provides a concept of distance to each point in the model. Those distances can be used in the definition of a varying section, such that when the section is assigned to lines, the path is used to interpret which part of the section is appropriate to each line. Bridge engineers refer to this reference path concept as chainage.

For this example and for clarity a reference path will be defined above the model using the path definition dialog.

- Enter coordinates of $(\mathbf{0}, \mathbf{0}, \mathbf{1 0})$ in the first row of the table. Press the TAB key and enter coordinates of $(\mathbf{1 6 3}, \mathbf{0}, \mathbf{1 0})$ in the second row, ensuring the Type remains Straight, as default.
- Click elsewhere in the grid to update the graphic and then click OK to define a reference path above and of the same overall length as lines defining the deck in the model. A corresponding path definition entry will be created in the Treeview.


Note. In its simplest form a reference path can be defined as a line between two points (quite separate from the model data, as in this case) if a straight path is to be considered, or be created from the model geometry itself and contain as many defining points as the lines from which it has been created (by using the Utilities > Reference Path menu item) in which case the coordinates of all lines selected would be listed in the Path Definition table. If the latter is done it is important to remember that whilst the model geometry has been used to arrive at the points required to generate a reference path, no connection between the model geometry and reference path data exists.

## Editing multiple varying section geometric properties

To make use of the reference path all multiple varying section geometric line attributes need to be edited to refer to it.

- In the Treeview, double-click the Left Span (Varying - 3 Sections) entry.
- On the Multiple Varying Section dialog change the Distance Interpretation setting to Along reference path and ensure that Path1 is selected. Click OK to update.
- Repeat the above procedure for the Right Span (Varying - 3 Sections) entry in the $\&$ Treeview.
- Repeat the above procedure for the Centre Span (Varying - 5 Sections) entry in the Treeview.



## Split the lines representing the clear spans

The single lines representing each clear span are to be split into 3 m lengths to represent each proposed construction stage.

- Select the two 39 m long lines representing the left and right clear spans of the bridge


| Geometry |  |
| :---: | :---: |
| Line | $>$ |
| By Splitting | $>$ |
| In Equal Divisions |  |

- Select Use same divisions for all lines and enter $\mathbf{1 3}$ for the number of divisions. Ensure that Delete original geometry after splitting is selected and press OK.
- Lastly, select the 78 m long line representing the centre span of the bridge

- Enter 26 for the number of divisions and ensure that Delete original lines after splitting is selected.

Splitting the lines in this way produces the following model which is now ready for further manipulation (not covered in this example) to allow a staged construction analysis to be carried out.


Save the model file.
The detailed model is now complete and ready to be solved.

## Running the Analysis : Detailed Model

E
Open the Solve Now dialog. Ensure Analysis 1 is checked and press OK to run the analysis.

## If the analysis is successful...

Analysis loadcase results are added to the $\stackrel{(2)}{\sim}$ Treeview.
In addition, 2 files will be created in the Associated Model Data directory where the model file resides:
[.] concrete_box_bridge_detailed.out this output file contains details of model data, assigned attributes and selected analysis statistics.
[ concrete_box_bridge_detailed.mys this is the LUSAS results file which is loaded automatically into the Treeview to allow results to be viewed.

## If the analysis fails...

If the analysis fails, information relating to the nature of the error encountered is written to a output files in addition to the text output window. Any errors listed in the text output window should be corrected in LUSAS Modeller before saving the model and re-running the analysis.

## Viewing the Results : Detailed Model

When the detailed model has been built immediately after creating and viewing results for the preliminary model, the Contour and Diagrams layers will already be present in the Treeview and the st
ress contours and diagram plot will be as shown below.


The results obtained can be seen to be identical to those obtained from the simple preliminary model.

This completes the detailed modelling part of the example.

