



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

YNYSANGHARAD WAR MEMORIAL PARK CABINET COMMITTEE

12th JUNE 2018

TAFF VALE REDEVELOPMENT / YNYSANGHARAD WAR MEMORIAL PARK – PROPOSED FOOTBRIDGE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION, PLANNING AND HOUSING IN CONSULTATION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER, COUNCILLOR R BEVAN.

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an update to the Cabinet Committee on progress with the proposed new footbridge and to seek approval for the next stages of the development.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

2.1 Note the recent progress made and endorse the approach detailed in paragraphs 6.1 to 6.4.

3. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

3.1 Ynyshangharad War Memorial Park is currently linked to the town centre by only one pedestrian bridge to the south of the park and the creation of a new pedestrian bridge link to the north western corner of the park will provide significantly improved pedestrian connectivity between the town centre and the park and provide a circular pedestrian route between both key areas.

3.2 The Taff Vale Redevelopment project is making significant progress with the main construction contract well underway. The proposals contained within this report enable the detailed design of the footbridge to be finalised and the planning application submitted. Subject to planning consent, the construction of the bridge will be aligned with the main construction programme.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In July 2016 Cabinet approved the next stages of development of the Taff Vale site and the adjacent area which included further development work being undertaken to progress design options for a new footbridge.
- 4.2 The Taff Vale multi-disciplinary design team were commissioned to explore options for the footbridge by designing a new and exciting connection to the park from the town.
- 4.3 Following a detailed options analysis, two design options were presented to Members of this Committee in November 2017 and it was agreed that the tower cable stayed bridge with central mast option should be taken forward as the preferred design. The next stages of detailed design work together with further detailed site investigation work were endorsed.
- 4.4 Members also agreed that subject to detailed design and funding availability, a planning application for the bridge is submitted in 2018.

5. PROGRESS TO DATE

- 5.1 Since the last meeting of this Committee, detailed design and intrusive site investigation works have progressed well. RIBA Stage 3 design and all necessary site investigation works are due to complete in July 2018.
- 5.2 A contractor specialising in bridge design and construction has been appointed to provide Early Contractor Involvement, working with the Council and the multi-disciplinary design team to advise on design and build issues.
- 5.3 A report outlining the business case for the whole Taff Vale Redevelopment including the estimated funding required for the footbridge was approved by Cabinet in November 2017.

6. PROPOSED APPROACH AND NEXT STEPS

- 6.1 Demolition of the former day centre to the north west of the park in March 2016 and the presence of this now derelict site provides an opportunity to integrate the landing point for the footbridge in this area, which is currently the least utilised corner of the park.

The derelict single storey brick building, formerly a changing room block/store and overgrown conifers, as shown in Appendix 1, lie adjacent to the area of the former day centre. Subject to obtaining necessary consents, it is proposed that this building is demolished and trees felled as a separate operation prior to installation of the bridge. This will assist with the construction of the bridge by providing access for piling rigs, cranes and deliveries but more importantly will enhance the aesthetic appearance of the area and further revitalise the northern end of the park.

6.2 At present a steep vehicular ramp runs along the perimeter of the former day centre site and provides direct access to the now cleared area. The ramp does not comply with current design standards and is not suitable for vehicles or pedestrian use. If the ramp is retained it is likely to cause conflict between pedestrians and vehicles in this area when the footbridge is in situ. As there are no plans to upgrade/utilise the ramp for future access, it is therefore proposed that subject to planning permission, the ramp is removed and a safer environment is created.

6.3 The introduction of a new footbridge between the Taff Vale Redevelopment and the Park provides the opportunity to open up views across the river. Localised tree loss will be necessary not only to enable construction of the bridge but to enhance the visibility between the Taff Vale Redevelopment and the regeneration of north of Taff Street and the Park.

Subject to further surveys and the necessary consents, the following trees as identified in Appendix 2 are likely to require removal:

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Tree Species</i>	<i>Class/Grade</i>
G22	Sycamore, Lawson Cypress, Sewara Cypress	B2
G24	Layland Cypress	C2
T7	Oak	B2
T13	London Plane	B2
T14	London Plane	B2
T15	London Plane	B2
T23	Lawsons Cypress	B2
T82	Turkey Oak	B2

The result of this tree loss will be minimal with both access avenue trees and the remaining line of London Planes, defining the north western extent of the park, being retained as key features of the park. Views of this currently enclosed corner of the park will be improved from within the park and views of the river corridor, the new Taff Vale Redevelopment and riverside promenade will also be improved, strengthening the visual links between the town centre and the park. It should be noted that there are no Tree Preservation Orders in place for the trees identified above.

Although the overall important tree structure will remain, there is the potential for new tree planting within the wider park to mitigate tree loss. New tree planting will be sympathetic to the historic character of the park in terms of location and species. Safeguards will also be adopted to ensure that nearby trees that are not to be removed, are not damaged during or after construction works.

6.4 The current programme details the following key milestones*:

- Planning Application Submission July 2018
- Commence Procurement Process October 2018
- Contractor Appointment December 2018
- Commence Construction July 2019
- Completion December 2019

*Actual dates are to be reviewed and aligned to the Taff Vale Redevelopment programme to ensure the bridge is available for use at the same time as the public realm works are available for use by the public.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment screening form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. It has been found that a full report is not required at this time.

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 A public exhibition in respect of the Taff Vale redevelopment was held in March 2017 and the Council's aspiration for a footbridge was discussed with visitors to the exhibition. Stakeholder engagement is ongoing and conversations are currently being held with key stakeholders including CADW and Natural Resources Wales. Consultation will be undertaken as part of the Statutory Planning process when a planning application is submitted.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 An initial cost estimate of circa £2 million has been provided for the footbridge. A report was presented to Cabinet in November 2017 outlining the business case for the whole Taff Vale redevelopment including the footbridge and the prudential borrowing approved.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

10.1 The Taff Vale site is wholly controlled by the Council in terms of freehold and leasehold.

10.2 The Park is held in trust by the Council for the charity of the 'Ynysangharad War Memorial Park'. The conveyance contains a restrictive covenant restricting the use of land for the purposes of a public park and recreation ground for the benefit of the inhabitants of the town of Pontypridd and the adjoining district.

10.3 The detailed legal issues which arise in the delivery of capital projects will be considered and progressed in accordance with relevant legislation, within the usual project management arrangements.

11. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN/OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/SIP

11.1 The development opportunity outlined in this report will make a positive contribution towards the Corporate Priorities “Economy – Building a Stronger Economy” and “A Prosperous Wales”.

12. CONCLUSION

12.1 The Taff Vale Redevelopment will result in transformational change for Pontypridd and its pivotal position in the Cardiff City Region. Together with a new footbridge it will create a vibrant new quarter at the northern gateway to the town and Ynysangharad War Memorial Park.

12.2 The proposed footbridge will significantly improve the connectivity between the town centre and the growing attraction of the park while also improving the use of the River Taff as an asset to the town and its growth potential. Linking new developments in the town to the Park’s existing attractions and the further planned redevelopment of the Park will maximise opportunities to increase footfall and visitor numbers along with income levels of town centre businesses.