

Title: Replacement of footbridge off Radford Road, Leamington Spa
Lead Officer: Steve Partner
Portfolio Holder: Councillor W Roberts
Wards of the District directly affected: Willes and Clarendon Wards

Approvals required	Date	Name
Portfolio Holder	20/11/23	Cllr W Roberts
Finance	20/11/23	Andrew Rollins
Legal Services		
Chief Executive	20/11/23	Chris Elliott
Director of Climate Change	20/11/23	Dave Barber
Head of Service(s)	20/11/23	Steve Partner Marianne Rolfe
Section 151 Officer		
Monitoring Officer	20/11/23	Graham Leach
Leadership Co-ordination Group	20/11/23	
Final decision by this Committee or rec to another Cttee / Council?	Yes	
Contrary to Policy / Budget framework?	No	
Does this report contain exempt info/Confidential? If so, which paragraph(s)?	No	
Does this report relate to a key decision (referred to in the Cabinet Forward Plan)?	Yes, Forward Plan item 1,407 – scheduled for 6 December 2023	
Accessibility Checked?	Yes	

Summary

To set out background to the closure of the footbridge off Radford Road, and to recommend that it be replaced.

Recommendations

- (1) That Cabinet agrees to the replacement of the footbridge off Radford Road with a new structure and not seek an interim arrangement
 - (2) The Cabinet delegates authority to the Head of Neighbourhood & Assets to progress this inline with budget set at out in Confidential Appendix 2 including seeking any necessary consents or licences.
 - (3) That the budget as set out in Confidential Appendix 2 to the report, be met from the Assets Reserve in 2024/25
 - (4) That contributory funding be sought from Sustrans and other appropriate organisations.
-

1 Reasons for the Recommendation

- 1.1 There is a timber construction footbridge crosses the River Leam, from the car park adjacent to the allotments off Radford Road over to Newbold Comyn, set out in the location plan at Appendix 1 to the report. This bridge is owned by the Council and predates the introduction of the National Cycle Route
- 1.2 This crossing forms part of Route 41 of the National Cycle Network and is designed only for pedestrian and cycle use.
- 1.3 Budget provision was made for 2023/24 to carry out repairs to the bridge, based on a technical survey previously undertaken. However, when our structural advisers Pick Everard looked at the bridge, they recommended immediate closure as the glulam timber beams forming the main structural element of the bridge were showing significant signs of delamination and decay of the timber beams.
- 1.4 It was initially planned that the bridge could be repaired to at least allow a reopening pending a plan for its replacement, but more intrusive inspections showed that the bridge could not be repaired at economic cost.
- 1.5 Pick Everard, together with WDC surveyors and the Green Spaces team have looked at several options, all of which require consents from the Environment Agency, even for a temporary solution and these consents can take many weeks to obtain.
- 1.6 The bridge is a key crossing point for leisure and sports users and regular media releases have been made to inform on options and progress.
- 1.7 Any temporary bridge could not be in place until March / April 2024, at the earliest, as it will require Environment Agency (EA) consent and it is anticipated the Environment Agency will impose restrictions to protect fish giving timing constraints for certain works until 15 June 2024.
- 1.8 The intention would be to start works on a new bridge as early as possible and the installation of a temporary bridge could delay this. Therefore, it is proposed not to provide a temporary solution and progress with arranging a permanent replacement.

- 1.9 The estimated timeline for a replacement bridge is 31 weeks from the submission of a permit application to remove the existing bridge to the installation of a new bridge, which can be subject to delays, changes and salmonid timing constraints for certain works.
- 1.10 The existing bridge width is 1.4m between parapets and the proposed bridge would be 3.5m between parapets and therefore a significant enhancement and in line with Sustrans standards. Therefore it is recommended that funding is sought from Sustrans and other potential organisations to support the cost.
- 1.11 Initial contact has been made with Sustrans about contributory funding and once the replacement is approved, officers will explore potential funding streams with them to see if / how they can assist. Sustrans could not give a time scale or a guarantee at this stage.

2 Alternative Options

- 2.1 The alternative is to not to replace the bridge, but this would require a rerouting of the national cycle path and the bridge is a key route into Newbold Comyn.
- 2.2 The Council could replace the bridge with one the same width as existing, but this would not allow cyclists to cross at the same time from opposite directions and is unlikely to be eligible for Sustrans funding.
- 2.3 If the new bridge is not installed to meet the EA's deadline of 1 October 2024. A temporary bridge option may need to be explored to be installed for us to June 2025.

3 Legal Implications

- 3.1 Failure to replace would have implications for National Cycle Route 41.

4 Financial Services

- 4.1 A budget estimate has been provided by our advisers, Pick Everard as set out in confidential Appendix 2 to the report. The exact cost will not be known until final design and procurement.
- 4.2 The intention is to apply for Sustrans grant funding, to reduce budget requirement from although this cannot be guaranteed.
- 4.3 It is proposed that the cost is met from the Asset Reserve for 2024/25, which allowing for this and other proposed schemes has a balance of £xxx. This has been significantly drawn on during the year but this is inline with expectation.

5 Corporate Strategy

- 5.1 Warwick District Council has adopted a Corporate Strategy which sets three strategic aims for the organisation.
- 5.2 **Delivering valued, sustainable services** - There is no direct contribution to this aim by this project.
- 5.3 **Low cost, low carbon energy across the district** - There is no direct contribution to this aim by this project.
- 5.4 **Creating vibrant, safe and healthy communities of the future** - The proposal will bring forward an enhanced bridge of use by the community which will improve access to Newbold Comyn and the National Cycle Network. The provision of a larger bridge will also provide a safer crossing point for the use of cyclists and pedestrians at the same time.

6 Environmental/Climate Change Implications

- 6.1 The replacement bridge will take into account the needs of ecology, wildlife, and fisheries and that all appropriate consents will be sought and complied with as part of the scheme.

7 Analysis of the effects on Equality

- 7.1 An equality impact assessment will form part of the project plan to ensure that the likely or actual effect of installing a replacement bridge is that it will eliminate discrimination and advance equality of access and opportunity.

8 Data Protection

- 8.1 There are no data protection implications of the proposal.

9 Health and Wellbeing

- 9.1 The replacement of the existing bridge with one that better meets Sustrans standards will enhance the sense of health and wellbeing of residents particularly those who use the bridge to access green open spaces.

10 Risk Assessment

- 10.1 The Council needs ensuring that it has suitable and safe access to its green open spaces for the public to use. Failure to do so would result in the closure / diversion of a National Cycle Route.

11 Consultation

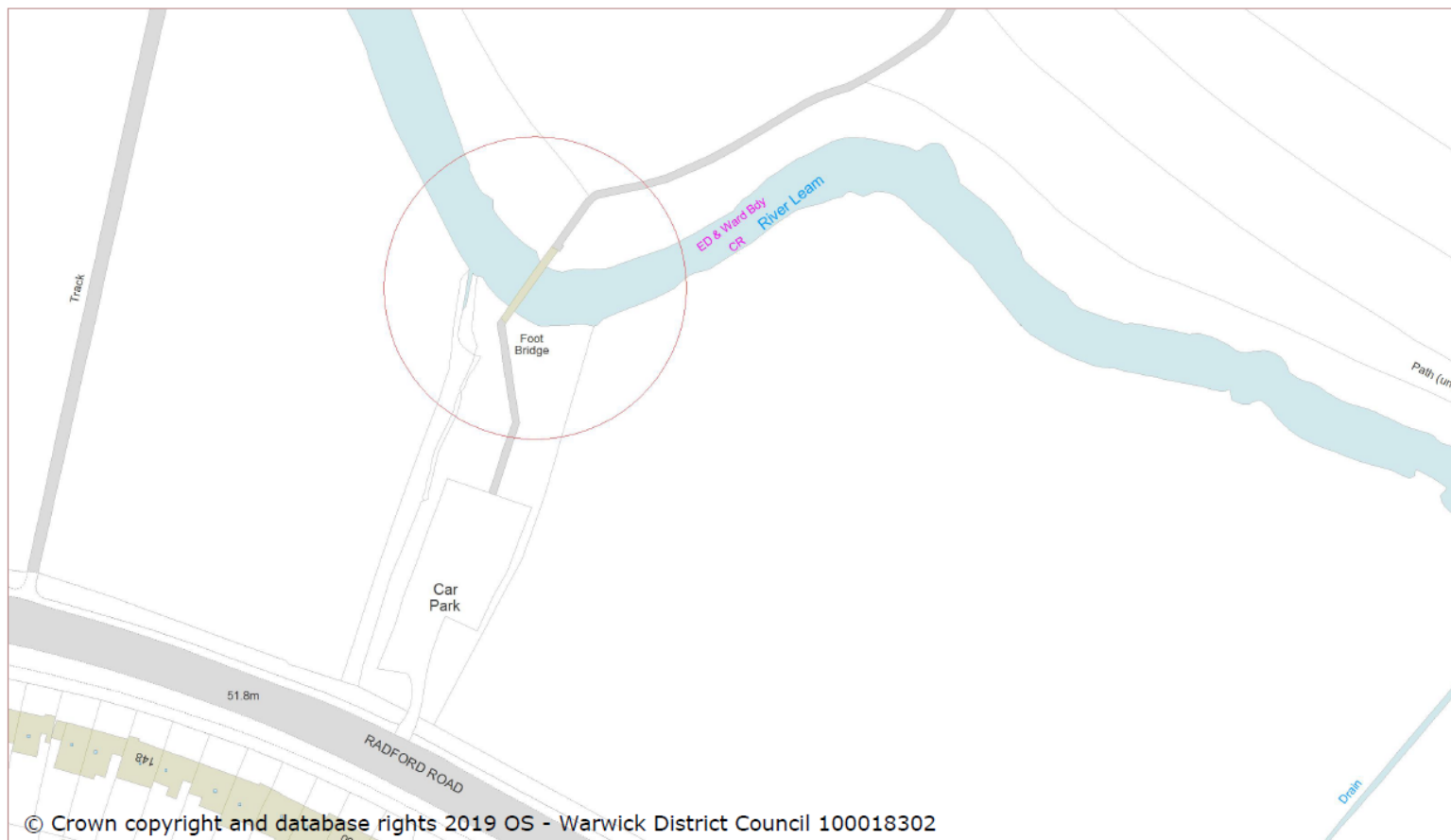
- 11.1 There will be ongoing engagement with the Environment Agency and relevant statutory bodies as the proposal is developed.



Background papers:

None

Supporting documents:

None



	Title: Plan 1	
	Description: Radford Road Foot Bridge	
	Scale: 1:1250	