

Cabinet

02 September 2025

Part 1 - Public

Recommendation to Council



Cabinet Member	Des Keers (Cabinet Member for Communities)
Responsible Officer	Robert Styles (Director of Street Scene, Leisure & Technical Services)
Report Author	Andy Edwards (Head of Technical Services)

Replacement of Shallows Bridge – Haysden Country Park

1 Summary and Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report brings forward a List C Capital Plan Evaluation for the replacement of the Shallows Bridge in Haysden Country Park.
- 1.2 It is recommended to Full Council that the scheme is included in List A of the Capital Plan and progressed within the current financial year.

2 Corporate Strategy Priority Area

- 2.1 Efficient services for all our residents, maintaining an effective council.
- 2.2 The replacement of the existing bridge is identified in the Council's new Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025/26 and will maintain access for users of the Country Park.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 Cabinet is requested to consider the List C Capital Plan Evaluation for the replacement of Shallows Bridge at Haysden Country Park (**Annex 1**), recommend to Council that the scheme be transferred to List A of the Capital Plan and subject to an assessment of the abutments be constructed in the current financial year.

4 Introduction and Background

- 4.1 The Council has a total of 28 Council bridges it owns.
- 4.2 These bridges are inspected on a routine basis by the Engineering Manager in the Technical Services Team with specialist independent structural assessments by a

consultant every 2 years. A number of bridges are now coming to end of life and are being closely monitored.

- 4.3 Shallows Bridge in Haysden Country Park has reached the end of its life and has been condemned by the structural engineer. The bridge has subsequently been closed to the public. The existing bridge cannot be repaired and now needs removal and replacement.

5 Proposal

- 5.1 The proposal is to remove the existing Shallows Bridge and replace it with a new bridge that meets the needs of park users.
- 5.2 The new bridge will include longer ramps that will be compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act and will be wider as the current bridge is very narrow.

The Shallows bridge is considered essential to Haysden Country Park, as it provides quick access to the park from the car park and enables circular walks for dog walkers and other regular users /visitors. It is also frequently used by Volunteers to carry out regular maintenance works. The distance to an alternative means of crossing the river is excessive and is prohibitive for some users. It is a popular start point for walks that end at the catering facilities and also popular with visitors who may not wish to visit the catering area or Barden Lake. The removal of the bridge also increases the time required for emergency responses and access to popular areas of the park.

- 5.3 The location of the bridge is shown on the plan at **Annex 2**.

6 Other Options

- 6.1 The only other option is not to replace the bridge as a repair is not possible. The existing structure would still need to be removed as a minimum and additional work would be required to remove the abutments and return the riverbanks to a natural finish. The budgetary estimate for this is iro £40k.

7 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 7.1 The replacement of the bridge has been estimated at £265k. Cabinet will see at **Annex 1** the potential to utilise developer contributions to meet just over half these costs. The Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) has advised that as the works are required for health and safety grounds the balance of £112k would need to be provided from the Revenue Reserve for Capital Schemes.
- 7.2 A key issue will be the inspection and assessment of the existing abutments by the structural engineer once the existing bridge is removed. It is hoped the existing abutments will be fit for purpose but if not a full reconstruction could cost iro £45,000. If this is the case there will be a need to bring a further report back to Members to determine if the project is cost prohibitive.

8 Risk Assessment

- 8.1 The current estimate for a replacement bridge is based on a standard replacement and more detailed design work may be required.
- 8.2 Any construction near or around water can be prone to unforeseen costs and challenges. The first stage for this project is for the existing structure to be removed to allow for the existing abutments to be inspected with the anticipation that they can be reused.

9 Consultation and Communications

- 9.1 As part of the project, stakeholders will be updated through site notices and through social media channels.

10 Cross Cutting Issues

10.1 Climate Change and Biodiversity

10.1.1 Adaptation and resilience have been considered.

10.1.2 Climate change advice has not been sought in the preparation of the options and recommendations in this report.

10.2 Equalities and Diversity

10.2.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There will be a positive impact on end users.

10.3 Other If Relevant

- Procurement
- Business Continuity / Resilience
- Health and Safety
- Healthy Lifestyles

Background Papers	None
Annexes	(1) Capital Plan Evaluation (2) Map