

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**YNYSANGHARAD WAR MEMORIAL PARK CABINET COMMITTEE**

**21st NOVEMBER 2017**

**TAFF VALE REDEVELOPMENT / YNYSANGHARAD WAR MEMORIAL PARK –  
PROPOSED FOOTBRIDGE**

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

**Author:** Andrea Virgo, Project Team Leader (Funding and Implementation)

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an update to the Cabinet Committee on the proposal for a new footbridge from the Taff Vale redevelopment over the River Taff to Ynysangharad War Memorial Park.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

- 2.1 The design options for a new footbridge are considered and the next stage of detailed development work is endorsed.

**3. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 The Taff Vale redevelopment project has made significant progress and the opportunity to include a new footbridge between the Taff Vale site and Ynysangharad War Memorial Park has been explored.

**4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 In March 2016 a feasibility study for a new footbridge to connect the town centre with the park was undertaken. Three potential design options were produced, varying in configuration and structural form with each option spanning from the Council's Gas Road car park which is adjacent to the Taff Vale site.
- 4.2 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 the design options for the bridge.

- 4.3 The Taff Vale redevelopment represents the single biggest development opportunity in Pontypridd and will significantly increase footfall in the town, helping to sustain and improve the town's retail and commercial offer. It is essential that the location of the bridge does not result in a decrease in the level of available parking in the adjacent Gas Road car park.
- 4.4 The Taff Vale multi-disciplinary design team were commissioned to further explore the options for a footbridge by designing a new and exciting connection to the park from the town, whilst ensuring that there was no negative impact on the adjacent Gas Road car park.
- 4.5 Key considerations for the design team were:
- The bridge should be considered as an extension to the new pedestrian street within the Taff Vale development and complementary to the riverside walkway.
  - The design quality should increase the profile of both the park and the new development.
  - The design should complement the architecture of the new development and respect the Registered Historic Park and the Scheduled Ancient Monument.
  - The bridge must accommodate all pedestrians including those with impaired mobility and sight;
  - The bridge must accommodate mounted cyclists, although it is noted that cycling is not currently prohibited throughout the park. This requirement should be seen as future proofing and within the guidelines of the Active Travel (Wales) Act;
  - The bridge is to be closed at the same time as the park and a security gate installed.
  - The bridge should be as maintenance free as possible and provide simple methods of inspection.
  - Light spillage from the bridge should be minimised particularly in terms of the effect on the river corridor close to the level of the river.

## **5. PROGRESS TO DATE**

- 5.1 A stage 2 concept design study has been produced and a series of surveys and investigation works undertaken including ecological, flood risk, geotechnical, utilities and buried services and a tree survey schedule.
- 5.2 Following a detailed options analysis, the following two options have been further developed:

Option 1 – Tower cable stayed bridge with central mast; and  
Option 2 – Torsion box beam bridge.

Both options include three landing points – one on the Taff Vale redevelopment site on the east bank of the river, a central one in Ynysangharad Park on the west bank of the river, and a third landing point further west into the park.

- 5.3 Initial contact has been made with Cadw and the positive feedback received is that in principle there is no objection to the construction of the bridge to link the Taff Vale development with Ynysangharad Park. However as the bridge will have an impact on both the Registered Historic Park and Scheduled Ancient Monument, both physically and visually, the design and associated landscaping should seek to minimise any negative impacts and look to integrate the modern feature into the park setting.

## **6. NEXT STEPS**

- 6.1 It is proposed that detailed design work for the preferred bridge option is progressed and any further site investigation works undertaken.
- 6.2 Further reports are presented to both this Committee and Cabinet as appropriate.
- 6.3 Subject to detailed design and funding availability, a planning application for the bridge is submitted in 2018.

## **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. Further consultation on the footbridge proposal will take place with key stakeholders over the coming months and 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 will be presented to Cabinet shortly outlining the business case for the whole Taff Vale redevelopment including the footbridge.

## **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 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 Taf as an asset to the town and its growth potential. Linking new developments in the town to the Park's attractions including the LIDO 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. This new landmark will also be a statement for the confidence in the future role of Pontypridd in the regional economy.

### **Other Information:-**

#### ***Relevant Scrutiny Committee***

Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

#### ***Contact Officer***

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