



# NORWICH City Council

**Committee Name: Cabinet**

**Committee Date: 13/11/2024**

**Report Title: Adjustment to the 2024-29 general fund capital programme**

**Portfolio:** Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for an open and modern council

**Report from:** Head of finance

**Wards:** **Bowthorpe**

## **OPEN PUBLIC ITEM**

### **Purpose**

To adjust the 2024-29 general fund capital programme to provide funds from Section 106 funding for path upgrade work at Bowthorpe Southern Park.

### **Recommendation:**

It is proposed that Cabinet recommend to Council, the approval of an adjustment to the 2024-29 general fund capital programme, to include an additional £0.030m of the Section 106 funding to enable the upgrade of the riverside path, located at Bowthorpe Southern Park. The upgraded path will provide access to the pedestrian foot bridge over the River Yare to Colney, Norfolk and Norwich Hospital, John Innes Centre UEA and public transport on the UEA.

### **Policy Framework**

The Council has five corporate priorities, which are:

- An open and modern council
- A prosperous Norwich
- A fairer Norwich
- A climate responsive Norwich
- A future-proof Norwich

The proposed project and use of Section 106 funding meets the Council's corporate priorities in the following ways:

- The pedestrian path is important for people's health and wellbeing, providing a way people can get to work or to the hospital for appointments or to visit loved ones without having to use a vehicle and pay for parking, as well as easier access to Watton Road to catch a bus. The path is an important link for people who are also on a low income living in the nearby North and West Earlham, Bowthorpe, Larkman and Marlpit housing estates where the deprivation index is one of the lowest in the country.

- It encourages people to walk rather than drive
- Where new homes are being built at Three Score, the path provides pedestrian access to the countryside, as well as to a place of work and to the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital

## **Report Details**

### **Background**

1. There is a need to upgrade the pedestrian footpath linking Bowthorpe (Bowthorpe Southern Park) to Colney, following flood damage which occurred during the heavy rains and flood waters in Autumn 2023 and Winter 2024.
2. The path, located at Bowthorpe Southern Park, provides a strategic pedestrian link from Swallow Tail Close, Three Score, Bowthorpe, to the pedestrian bridge over the River Yare to Colney as well as providing access to The Research Park, The Norfolk and Norwich Hospital and UEA. The path has become uneven and is difficult for pedestrians to use and at risk of further damage from future flooding.
3. The Colney Bridge over the River Yare was installed in 2018/2019 funded by GNGB CIL funding, linking the public footpath on Bowthorpe Southern Park to the bridleway on the South Norfolk side of the River Yare. It has become an important strategic link for local people and those working for the various companies and organisations on the other side of the Watton Road.

### **Proposed work**

4. The aim is to provide a sustainable repair to the path making it future proof and resistant to damage from future flooding.
5. The work will involve using crack willow tree timber as path edging on both sides, sustainably sourced from Bowthorpe Southern Park. The willow logs will be sat in a shallow trench fixed in place. The flood water will be pushed over the logs preventing erosion of the path. The willow trees located adjacent to the path are at risk of collapsing. Coppicing them will allow the trees to regenerate helping to create an age structure to the woodland, therefore increasing biodiversity.
6. Stone gabions will also be used to prevent damage to the piped culvert and path surface where erosion has occurred from the flood water. The permeable gabions will use locally sourced large flint rejects, which will protect the path from erosion and allow water to run through. The path will be graded and resurfaced with a suitable material.

### **Scope of the works**

7. This involves the repair of an 80metre section of path, installing large diameter logs and a stone gabion structure with locally sourced reject flints, to control flood water movement and speed as well as a regrading and resurfacing of the 80metre section of the path by 1.5metre wide. This also includes the

installation of an additional 600mm diameter twin wall culvert to manage water movement

### **Consultation**

8. Norwich City Council's Landscape Team have been consulted on this project and provided a landscape drawing for the repair of the path.
9. The Environment Agency were consulted on the proposed works, who identified that no permit for undertaking the work is required.
10. This is an existing access path, so no public consultation is deemed necessary.

### **Implications**

#### **Financial and Resources**

11. Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively increase income must be made within the context of the council's stated priorities, as set out in its Corporate Plan and Budget.
12. The proposed use of Section 106 funding is in line with the intended purpose of that funding and consequently the proposed expenditure would be fully funded from external sources and have no direct implications for the financing of the Capital Programme.
13. Three contractors have been approached to undertake the work. Two contractors have submitted quotes, with the third contractor having not quoted.  
Quote 1: £23,875 plus VAT  
Quote 2: £23,966 plus VAT
14. The proposed work will be funded from existing Section 106 contributions.
15. The proposed budget of £0.030m will provide sufficient funding for the project and incorporates flexibility for a contingency sum, should essential additional work be identified as the project progresses.

### **Supporting information**

16. The Council's Policy Projects and Transport Manager is supportive of the project, stating that Section 106 money can be used to fund the "Bowthorpe Southern Park Path Repair Project" and that this project is important to ensure people using the section of the Southern Park accessed by the damaged path, including those living in homes that have been built around Three Score over the last twenty-five years, can continue to enjoy the space and reach the bridge to Colney that the council built a few years ago using funds from the Greater Norwich Growth Board.
17. The proposed funding is derived from a £44,065 property transaction with Cofton Homes in 1999, rather than a Section 106 agreement and has indicated that it was intended to be spent on the maintenance of open space in the southern part of Three Score, including Bowthorpe Southern Park. This

was confirmed by Cabinet on 20 March 2013, when they approved the Bowthorpe Open Space Investment Plan. These funds have therefore been earmarked for this project prior to formal allocation by Council.

## Legal

18. The path being repaired is a public right of way. There is the possibility that the council may get notification from the Norfolk County Councils Highways Team if the path is not accessible

## Statutory Considerations

Consideration	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Equality and Diversity	There is not a direct impact on the equality and diversity, but these works will maintain access to between Bowthorpe and Colney
Health, Social and Economic Impact	Encourages people to exercise through walking to work, reduces peoples outgoing as not using a vehicle
Crime and Disorder	More people using Bowthorpe Southern reduces the risk of ASB issues occurring
Children and Adults Safeguarding	No implications
Environmental Impact	Reduction in emissions as not using a vehicle

## Risk Management

Risk	Consequence	Controls Required
Financial	The significant investment already made with the installation of the pedestrian bridge in 2019, will be brought into question as the bridge will not be able to be used.	Undertake the work to a sustainable and high standard to prevent further damage to the path and an increase in costs to undertake the work.
Operational	The path becomes unsafe and will require closing.	Undertake the work to a sustainable and high standard to prevent the path eroding in the future. Seek advice from the Environment Agency and other experts.
Legal	Legal notification by Norfolk County Council Highways if the path is not maintained to the required standard.	Undertake improvement work to keep the path in good working order

## **Reasons for the decision/recommendation**

19. The reason for the recommendation is to ensure that the path remains accessible for everyone and the pedestrian connection between Bowthorpe and Colney is retained.

**Background papers: None**

**Appendices: None**

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