



Democratic Services

Location: Phase II
Ext: 0185
DDI: 01895 250185
CMD No: 656

**To: COUNCILLOR MARTIN GODDARD
CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE**

**COUNCILLOR EDDIE LAVERY
CABINET MEMBER FOR RESIDENTS' SERVICES**

c.c. All Members of the Residents' Services Select Committee
c.c. Dragana Knezevic – Place Directorate
c.c. Perry Scott – Corporate Director of Place
c.c. Ward Councillors for South Ruislip

Date: 06 December 2022

Non-Key Decision request

Form D

CAPITAL RELEASE REPORT (December 2022)

DEPARTMENT: Resident Services

SERVICE AREA / PROGRAMME: Environmental & Recreational Initiatives: Willow Tree Wander Project

Dear Cabinet Member,

Attached is a report requesting that a decision be made by you as an individual Cabinet Member. Democratic Services confirm that this is not a key decision, as such, the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 notice period does not apply.

You should take a decision **on or after Wednesday 14 December 2022** in order to meet Constitutional requirements about publication of decisions that are to be made. You may wish to discuss the report with the Corporate Director before it is made. Please indicate your decision on the duplicate memo supplied, and return it to me when you have made your decision. I will then arrange for the formal notice of decision to be published.

Liz Penny
Democratic Services Officer

Title of Report: Environmental & Recreational Initiatives: Willow Tree Wander Project

Decision made:

Reasons for your decision: (e.g. as stated in report)

Alternatives considered and rejected: (e.g. as stated in report)

Signed Date.....

Cabinet Member for Finance / Cabinet Member for Residents' Services

CAPITAL RELEASE REPORT (December 2022)

DEPARTMENT: Resident Services

SERVICE AREA / PROGRAMME: Environmental & Recreational Initiatives: Willow Tree Wander Project

Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Martin Goddard Councillor Eddie Lavery
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Cabinet Member for Finance Cabinet Member for Residents' Services
Officer Contact(s)	Dragana Knezevic, Residents Services
Papers with report	Appendix A, with capital release requests for approval
Summary	To seek release of £43.5k funds towards Reviving Willow Tree Wander project
Putting our Residents First	This report supports our ambition for residents / the Council of: <i>Live in a Sustainable Borough that is carbon neutral.</i>
Financial Cost	This report seeks the release of £44k for Reviving Willow Tree Wander project, fully funded by Smarter Water Catchment Grant.
Relevant Select Committee	Residents' Services
Relevant Ward(s)	South Ruislip

RECOMMENDATION

That the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Cabinet Member for Residents' Services approve the project and capital release request of £44k budget fully funded by Smarter Water Catchment Grant for the Willow Tree Wander Project. (Appendix A).

Reasons for recommendation

The 'Reviving Willow Tree Wander Project' aims to improve the river in Spider Park in South Ruislip, so the Council can take practical action to let more light into the river and further interventions to improve the biodiversity, flood storage capacity, amenity value and water quality of the Yeading Brook West. The project contains two linked elements:

1. Willow coppicing/pollarding and light touch habitat works along the river; and,
2. A feasibility study for reprofiling the river and daylighting of the surface water sewer to create wetland features in Spider Park.

Coppicing and pollarding mature crack willows will allow light into the river channel which will boost biodiversity and the growth of emergent plants. In addition, it will give greater views across the stretch of the river (1500m) allowing consultants and river morphologists to scan the river profile and create a feasibility study for the area between Field End Road and West End Road.

The Council plans to work in partnership with Metis, Zoological Society of London and a Cartographer in this regard.

A comprehensive feasibility study will enable experts to examine the full potential of the watercourse and the linked surface water drainage network for prospective projects. The aim is to reprofile/recontour riverbanks and create additional wetland features such as backwaters and two-stage channels as well as daylight in the water sewer. The new features in the park will provide more space for water, away from residential areas and thus reduce the likelihood of flooding. It will also improve the aesthetic environment and encourage access and enjoyment of the riverine environment.

Alternative options considered / risk management

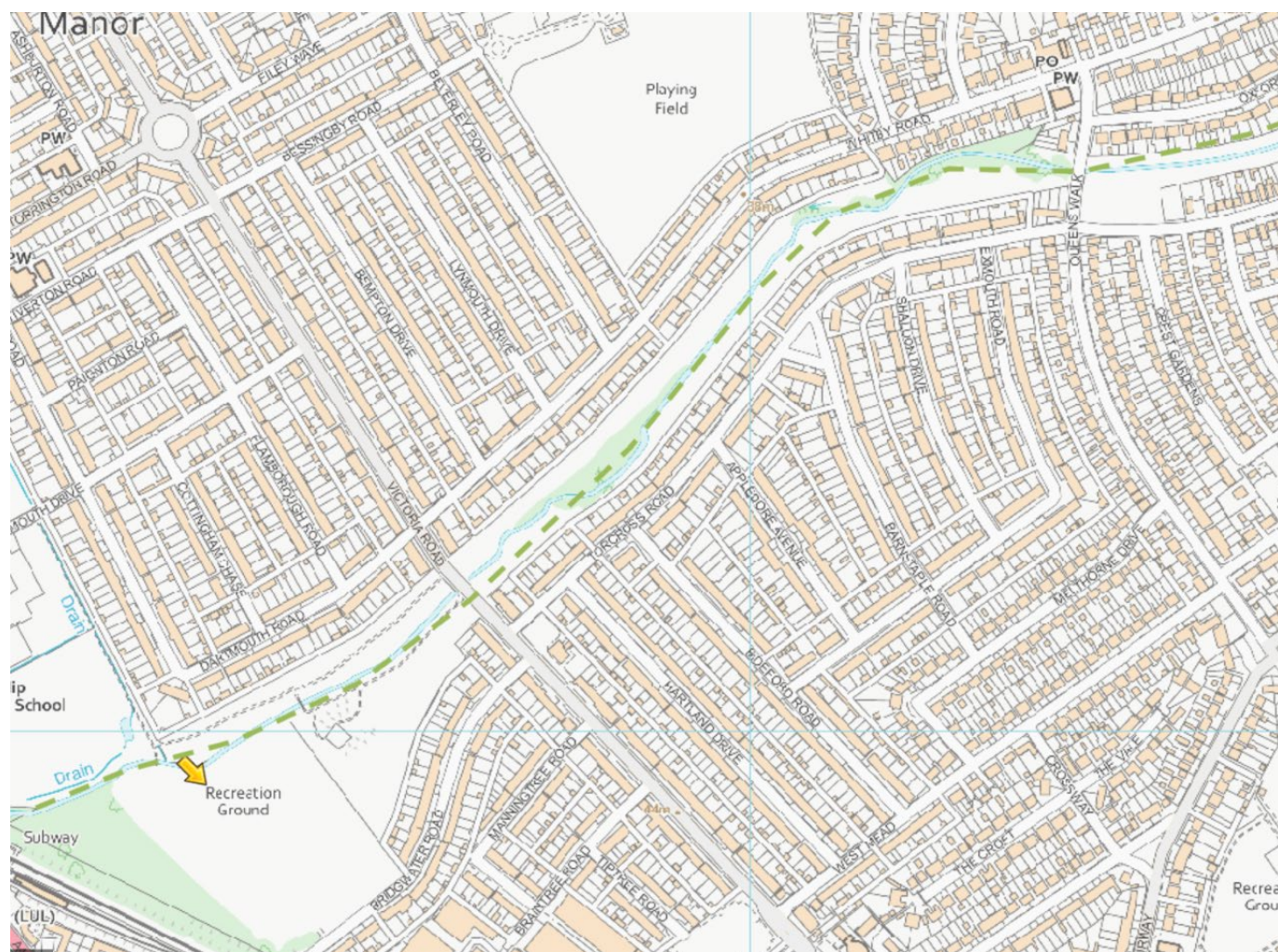
The Cabinet Members may agree to fund the scheme and / or suggest alternative projects to which funds could be allocated within the terms of the relevant legal agreements.

Select Committee comments

None at this stage.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Spider Park, as it is known locally, is a complex of several open spaces, including Bridgwater Open Space, Jim O'Neil Walk, New Pond Open Space and West End Road Open Space. Most of the project will happen in Spider Park, off Bridgwater Road (yellow arrow below), but willow pollarding will take place along Yeading Brook from Field End Rd to West End Rd (green dashed line).



This report is seeking project approval and the allocation of funding for the Reviving Willow Tree Wander project. The table below outlines the project plan and timescales:

[illegible]

The works will be undertaken by:

- Tree Contractor- Council contracted supplier
- The Forward Trust - Council contracted supplier
- Metis- Consultant (contracted for flood alleviation project in Hillingdon (Elephant Park, Court Park and Bessingby Park)

- Zoological Society of London (ZSL)- charity devoted to the worldwide conservation of animals and their habitats

The table below provides a breakdown of the costs:

Cost Plan

Description	Supplier	Amount
Habitat works		
Pollarding- contractors	LBH contracted supplier	14,000
Building hibernacula	LBH contracted supplier	2,000
Feasibility study		
consultant fees	Metis	18,000
drainage survey	Metis	5,000
design input and site survey	ZSL/Cartographer	1,000
Project management, design input and strategic planning	ZSL	3,500
Total		£43,500

Financial Implications

(Reviving Willow Tree Wander Budget £44k, Previously Released Nil, Capital Release Requested £44k) – Appendix A

In November 2022, Cabinet accepted £44k grant funding from the Smarter Water Catchment for Reviving the Willow Tree Wander scheme. No match funding is requested.

The report seeks the release of £44k for the Willow Tree Wander project which includes tree pollarding and feasibility study, which is fully financed from grant. The release request includes quotations from the green spaces term contractors and consultants with the remainder based on estimates, where quotations will be sought at a later date.

The project will be reported as part of the Environmental and Recreation Initiatives Programme once capital release is approved.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities

The Council and its partners are committed to making the Borough a cleaner, greener and safer environment. Improving existing habitats in this narrow Site of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC) section and creating a buffer zone with new habitats in the adjacent fields will increase the wildlife value of the site and benefit the whole corridor. The project will create a more varied and positive use of the land, increasing the site's overall biodiversity and ecological resilience, whilst retaining a peaceful place for people to relax and enjoy.

This project is also consistent with Hillingdon's Strategic Climate Change Action Plan and Carbon offsetting:

"Responding to the climate emergency is not just about reducing or removing carbon emissions. It is about recognising a much wider threat across all aspects of our environment. We are responsible for large sections of open areas and waterways that are an extremely important for wildlife and, amenity for residents. We can find better ways to use green and open space to support flora and fauna, manage flooding, integrate trees and planting schemes into urban environments and re-establish wildlife corridors."

C7 Carbon offsetting

C7.4 Understand and increase current carbon sequestration through increased planting and changes to green space management.

C7.5 Increase the number of trees, particularly in urban areas to complement objectives to improve air quality and promote urban wildlife.

C7.6 To exploit opportunities to increase carbon sequestration to maximise opportunities for biodiversity and flood risk management.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance concurs with the financial implications set out above, noting that this project is funded from external grant of £43.5k that has recently been awarded with no impact on Council resources.

Legal

The Borough Solicitor confirms that the Council is responsible for carrying out its function pursuant to Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. Thus, there are no legal impediments to the capital release being authorised, although any contract that is entered into must comply with the Council's Procurement and Contract Standing Orders.

Infrastructure / Asset Management

There are no Infrastructure / Asset Management implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

Capital Release Protocol

The release of all capital funds, and certain revenue funds, held by the Council is to be made by a formal democratic decision (by the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Business Services). No expenditure can be placed or committed by officers until this formal approval is given by Democratic Services. Release of funds must be for identified projects only and strictly not for the general release of funds for projects to be identified at a later date. No block releases of capital or funding will be allowed, except if authorised by the Leader of the Council in advance to Corporate Finance. The release of funds will only be made if previous Council, Cabinet or Cabinet Member agreement has been given to the project and only if there is an approved budget.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL.

CAPITAL RELEASE APPENDIX A

Reviving Willow Tree Wander

Location (Ward)	Project / Expenditure Title	Information	Funds Release Sought £000's	Approve	Hold	More Information Required
South Ruislip	Reviving Willow Tree Wander		44			
Total seeking release			44			
Previously released			0			
Budget			44			
Remaining budget			0			