



<b>Report for:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>19 October 2021</b>
<b>Part:</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>If Part II, reason:</b>	

<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>River Gade Restoration &amp; Improvement Project in Gadebridge Park</b>
<b>Contact:</b>	Cllr Graham Barrett, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services  Author/Responsible Officer: Bill Buckley, Interim Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Delivery)
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cabinet to consider the restoration and diversion scheme of the river Gade channel to prevent flooding within Gadebridge Park and the improvements to environmental amenities of the park.</li> <li>2. The Environment Agency is seeking a financial contribution of £100-120k from the Council to fund inclusion-within the scheme of an additional footbridge, footpaths, beaches etc to enhance the scheme and improve the park.</li> </ol>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>That Cabinet</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Agrees to support the Environment Agency and Affinity Water Ltd in the restoration of the river Gade and improvements to Gadebridge Park project.</li> <li>2. Approves access to Gadebridge Park for the Environment Agency and its contractors to carry out restoration and improvement works during 2022.</li> <li>3. Approves, subject to Council, a contribution of up to a maximum of £130,000 for Environmental Amenity works as part of the project.</li> <li>4. Delegates authority to the Assistant Director Neighbourhood Delivery in consultation with the Portfolio Holder of Environmental Services to agree expenditure up to a maximum of £130,000.</li> </ol>

	<p>5. Delegate authority to the Assistant Director Neighbourhood Delivery in consultation with the Assistant Director (Corporate and Contracted Services), Legal Governance Management to approve legal agreements and documentation between the Council and the Environment Agency and Affinity Water Ltd.</p>
<b>Period for post policy/project review</b>	<p>The project will be an ongoing review until completion of the scheme and for a minimum of 12 months after completion and prior to physical assets transferring to the Authority</p>
<b>Corporate objectives:</b>	<p>The Project supports two of the Corporate Objectives-</p> <p>Safe and Clean Environment with and improved recreational and environmental amenity of Gadebridge Park, and</p> <p>Climate &amp; Ecological Emergency as the realignment of the river into its natural flood plain will reduce the incidence of flooding, improve the water quality and the natural habitat of the wildlife within the river and in the park</p>
<b>Implications:</b>	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>The financial implications are set out within the report below and Cabinet are invited to consider and approve a financial contribution up to a maximum of £130,000 towards the project for environmental amenities within Gadebridge Park. This funding cannot be contained within existing budgets and would have to be found from Council Funds.</p>
<b>'Value for money' implications</b>	<p><u>Value for money</u></p> <p>The procurement process by the Environment Agency will ensure value for money and scrutiny will be by the Assistant Director Neighbourhood Delivery in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services for any financial contribution and expenditure from the Authority</p>
<b>Risk implications</b>	<p>The main risk is the ability of partners to deliver on the project within the timeframe. So far, we have sought to minimise this risk by gaining buy in to the process from key partners and providing influence over the project. This approach being taken should significantly minimise this risk further to Gadebridge park.</p> <p>Appendix III identifies potential operational risks with mitigations to the Authority.</p> <p>If Members decide not to contribute, the EA could still go ahead with the diversion of the river without the environmental amenities restricting access to the park for users.</p>
<b>Community Impact Assessment</b>	<p>This has not been completed, as the Environment Agency is the lead key partner and will complete such an assessment as the project progresses.</p> <p>The park is available to all communities across the Borough and the project will improve access to park areas via DDA compliant bridges and footpaths.</p>

<p><b>Health and safety Implications</b></p>	<p>The project will have to be managed in accordance with Health &amp; Safety legislation including the CDM Regulations by the EA their consulting Associates and the contractor. The Authority will monitor compliance through Environmental Services with support from the Corporate Health and Safety Team when works commence and through discussions with the EA.</p> <p>Preliminary discussion will be held as the project progresses as the landowner and ensuring legal agreements are in place between partners to safe guard the Authorities interests and offset liabilities</p>
<p><b>Monitoring Officer/ S.151 Officer Comments</b></p>	<p><u>Deputy Monitoring Officer</u></p> <p>Under section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to incur expenditure, which in its opinion is in the interest of and will bring direct benefit to its area or any part of it or all or some of its residents. The improvements to Gadebrige Park as proposed by the recommendations will directly benefit local residents and improve the park.</p> <p><u>Deputy S151 Officer</u></p> <p>The funding requirement of up to £130k for this project would be drawn down from the Dacorum Development Reserve (DDR)</p>
<p><b>Consultees:</b></p>	<p>The SPAE Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report and presentation from the Environment Agency at its meeting on 15 June 2021 and resolved: the Committee recommends that Cabinet do not to move forward with the plans in their current state without further information.</p> <p>Further information has been provided which is contained within the report.</p> <p>In 2020, Portfolio Holders for Environmental Services, Planning &amp; Regeneration and Communities have met with the Environment Agency to be briefed upon the proposed project</p> <p>The Environment Agency as the lead partner has consulted widely with stakeholders and the public</p> <p>James Deane, Corporate Director Finance &amp; Operations  James Doe, Assistant Director Planning, Development and Regeneration  Richard LeBrun, Assistant Director Neighbourhood Delivery  Nigel Howcutt, Assistant Director Finance &amp; Resources  Craig Thorpe Group Manager Environmental Services  Simon Coultas, Operations Manager Clean, Safe and Green</p>
<p><b>Background papers:</b></p>	<p>The SPAE Overview and Scrutiny Committee report dated 15 June 2021</p>
<p><b>Glossary of acronyms and any</b></p>	<p>EA – Environment Agency  AF - Affinity Water Ltd  DBC – Dacorum Borough Council</p>

<b>other abbreviations used in this report:</b>	<p>WFD- European Water Framework Directive</p> <p>AEP- Annual Exceedance Probability (usually expressed as a percentage)</p> <p>FCRM- Flood and Coastal Risk Management (EA funding stream)</p> <p>NPPF – National Planning Policy Framework</p> <p>MoU – Memorandum of Understanding</p>
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List of Appendices:

Appendix I - River Gade Restoration & Improvement Plan

Appendix II - Illustrated designs of Environmental Amenities

Appendix III – Benefits & Potential Risks from Clean, Safe and Green

Appendix IV – Environment Agency Engagement Plan

## **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The Environment Agency (EA) wishes to work in partnership with the Council and Affinity Water Ltd (AW) to restore the river Gade at Gadebridge Park and improve the environmental amenities within the park. This is a project to change the river channel back to the lowest level in the park and estimated original course on the natural flood plain. Furthermore, it will reduce the incidence of flooding within the park and downstream. This will improve the biodiversity and quality of the river in compliance with European Water Framework Directive (WFD).
- 1.2 The EA is seeking a financial contribution from the Authority to fund the environmental amenities of a footbridge, footpaths, river beaches, dipping platforms, signage and park furniture. Affinity Water Ltd as a key partner has granted funding towards the project.

## **2. Introduction**

- 2.1 The Environment Agency (EA) is working with Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) and Affinity Water Ltd (AW) to help restore the River Gade at Gadebridge Park, a globally rare and valuable chalk stream. The project will provide multiple benefits, including improved habitats for wildlife, the protection of water resources for both people and the environment, and it will enable local residents and visitors to get closer to the river and enjoy nature.
- 2.2 The River Gade is a chalk river, one of approximately 200 chalk rivers in the entire world. Unlike most rivers, chalk rivers are fed from chalk aquifers – underground porous rock formations that store water. They are directly connected to these aquifers, making their water clear running, mineral rich, and home to an extremely diverse population of flora and fauna. Chalk rivers have clean gravel beds, providing the ideal habitat for a unique range of plants and animals.
- 2.3 However, chalk rivers and the unique habitats they provide have degraded over time and are at significant risk of further deterioration if action is not taken. A range of factors threatens the ecological health of our chalk rivers including historic modifications, abstraction, pollution, and invasive species. The River Gade has not escaped these threats. The Gade has been changed and modified over time, is significantly impacted by channel alterations, is disconnected from groundwater, and suffers from low flows, which has resulted in poor habitat quality and diversity.

- 2.4 Currently, only 17% of chalk streams are in their natural state. Like many chalk streams, the River Gade faces pressure from low flows and historic modifications to its channel that limit the river's habitats and the wildlife it can support. The watercourse is at present classified as having a 'poor' ecological status under the European Water Framework Directive (WFD)
- 2.5 The main reason for the scheme is to reduce the incidence of flooding within the park and downstream in Hemel Hempstead, as the current river course is located above the flood plain.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 The proposed restoration of the Gade through Gadebridge Park has been considered for a number of years and this restoration has since become part of the wider Revitalising Chalk Rivers Initiative. This is a partnership between the Environment Agency and Affinity Water, working alongside landowners and catchment hosts and partners. This partnership working is to protect and restore chalk rivers throughout Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire, and parts of Bedfordshire.
- 3.2 Working with Dacorum Borough Council, the EA explored a collective vision for the park and funded the production of the Indicative Landscape Plan, which was the practical expression of our joint ambitions including river improvements, landscaping, improvements to facilities, and access and information/interpretation.
- 3.3 An important part of the work undertaken to help shape the vision was a public consultation which, in 2018, included a series of drop-in events attended by over 80 people and a public consultation which received 147 responses.
- 3.4 A total of 85% were in full support of the project and supported the idea of being closer to nature. 10% were undecided. The EA would like to maintain this level of enthusiasm, reassure those who are unsure, and complete the project as soon as possible while funds are available to them.
- 3.5 Several projects have taken place or are currently in progress on the River Gade, both upstream and downstream of Gadebridge Park. The details of which have been provided and examples are: access improvements at Great Gaddesden; upper Gadebridge Park Restoration project, fish passage at Noake Mill; channel restoration at Box Moor, weir restoration at Bulbourne Moor and flood relief structure at Bury Mill etc.
- 3.6 As part of its draft local plan, the Council has listed the importance of protecting chalk streams and mitigating and adapting to climate change. In addition, the scheme addresses the EA and DBC obligations for compliance with the Water Framework Directive, as the Upper Gade water body is classified as Poor. This project addresses several 'Reasons for not achieving Good', such as Physical Modification and Flow.
- 3.7 In 2020, Portfolio Holders for Environment, Planning and Communities supported by senior managers met with representatives of Herts & East London Area EA to discuss, clarify the proposals, flood risk, value for money, costings and consider the financial request.

#### 4. Local Authority Water Framework Obligations

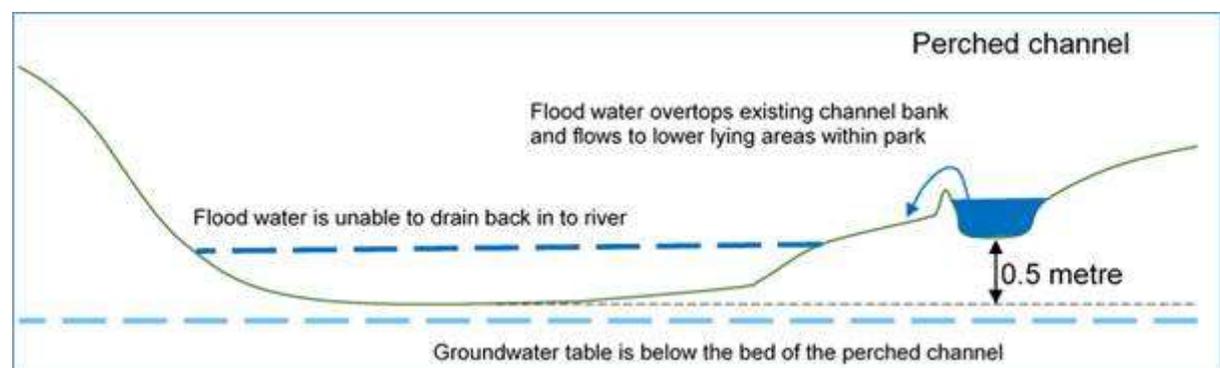
- 4.1 All partners have a duty to improve the ecology of the River Gade so it supports 'Good Ecological Status' under the Water Environment Regulations 2017. Associated with this is the need to mitigate the impacts of climate change and to adapt to future climate scenarios. This includes improving resilience to low flow events and drought conditions, when the water available is reduced and improving floodplain connectivity when rainfall is high. Regulation 17 of the Water Environment Regulations <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2017/407/contents/made> states that, like other public bodies, local authorities must "have regard to the River Basin Management Plan for that district" and "any supplementary plans" in exercising their functions.

#### 5. Reasons for the Project

- 5.1 A perched channel:

The River Gade was previously used as a mill leat. This means that the channel is at a higher level than the bottom of the valley (half a metre in this instance). In times of high flows, water can overtop the banks and flood the lower levels of the park. Once the water levels drop, this water cannot flow back into the channel. It therefore sits for long periods in the park. The channel is also disconnected from the groundwater table. For a chalk stream, where over 70% of flow is from groundwater, this can have a big impact on both its resilience to low flows and to wildlife in the channel.

Below is the flood diagram of how flooding occurs when the channel is perched:



- 5.2 Gauging Station:

The Environment Agency has a gauging station at the bottom of the park to monitor flows on the River Gade. It is a concrete flume and weir structure. The data is required to monitor periods of low and high flows. The weir is too high for fish to pass, so it presents a barrier to fish passage upstream. The channel consists of a concrete bed and banks for about 40 metres. The weir also impounds the river upstream to the White Bridge. This impoundment results in the loss of gradient over this reach and reduces the diversity of flow types and habitats. The low energy flows result in the deposition of fine sediments over the gravel bed. All of these points affect the ecology that the channel is able to support.

- 5.3 Low Flows:

The River Gade often suffers from low flows due to:

- spring flows (groundwater emerging at the surface) being diverted into an underground tunnel (culvert) rather than feeding the river Gade. The culvert was built to stop the town from flooding and discharges into the fishing lake at Kings Langley, about 5km downstream of Gadebridge Park.
- being disconnected from the groundwater table. For a chalk stream, where over 70% of its flow is from groundwater, this can have a significant impact on both its resilience during periods of low flows and on wildlife in the channel.
- water being taken (abstracted) for public water supply.

Most water consumed in the South East comes from rainwater stored deep in natural chalk 'aquifers'. These also feed our chalk streams. In 2018, Affinity Water reduced net abstraction in the Gade catchment by 2,342,400 m<sup>3</sup>/year (that is an average of 6.4 million litres a day). However, demand for water in the South East remains high.

#### 5.4 Poor Habitat Quality and diversity

As a result of being a historic mill leat and previous management such as dredging, the channel is very straight and is over-wide for the amount of flow. This combined with the impoundment means that there is excessive vegetation growth that will readily grow across the entire channel if maintenance is not carried out. There are also remnant weir structures which have been notched (the middle removed), but still cause slight impoundments. These characteristics provide the channel with little resilience to drought conditions as the water is spread thinly across a wide expanse of channel.

## 6. Project Objectives

### 6.1 To improve the ecology, recreational value and environmental resilience of the River Gade through Gadebridge Park by 2022

- Improve the River Gade and the adjacent parkland for wildlife;
- Provide more opportunities, accessible to everyone, for people to get close to the river and enjoy nature;
- Provide more opportunities to learn about the River Gade, both its historical importance to the landscape and its value as a rare chalk stream;
- Improve the river's resilience – it's ability to cope with and adapt to the pressures of low flows and climate change;
- Improve floodplain connectivity, but reduce the impact of flooding – i.e. flood water can be stored on the floodplain when needed, but doesn't sit on the parkland for long periods of time;
- Improve biodiversity in the River Gade, so that it supports Good Ecological Status under the European Water Framework Directive;

## 7. The Project Delivery

7.1 The river improvements will contribute to:

- Improving the Gade towards reaching Good Ecological Status and meeting the UK's desire to improve the health of our water environment.
- Meeting the EA obligations under the Water Framework Directive, the commitments expressed in the Thames River Basin Management Plan and the Government's Five-Year Environment Plan.
- Mitigating the impacts of climate change and adapting to future climate scenarios.
- Improving resilience to low flow events and drought conditions when water availability is reduced, and improving floodplain connectivity and drainage when rainfall is high. To allow free movement of fish and river wildlife.

7.2 These benefits are consistent with the Dacorum draft Local Plan that contains references to the importance of protecting chalk streams and mitigating and adapting to climate change. The policies most relevant to this project have been outlined below:

Policy	Description
Local Plan 104	c- Supporting initiatives to improve the quality of water in rivers and canals. f- Restoring culverted watercourses to a more natural state.
Local Plan CS26	The strengthening of biodiversity corridors; the creation of better public access and links through green space; and a greater range of uses in urban green spaces.
Local Plan CS27	The conservation of heritage assets and requires the integrity, setting and distinctiveness of designated heritage assets to be protected, conserved and if appropriate enhanced.
NPPF Paragraph 190	Identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise.

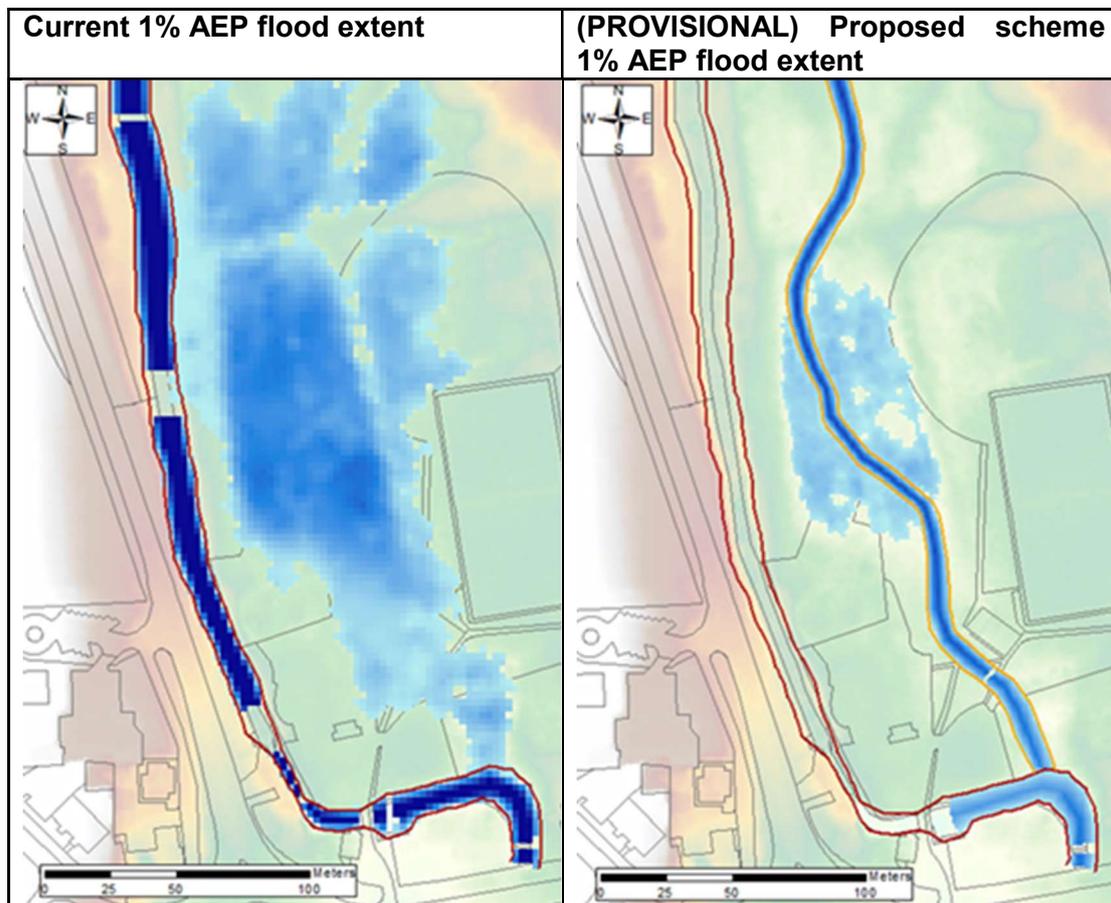
7.3 The Council's pre-planning response in October 2018 to the EA stated: "In principle, the Council supports the aims of the project. Environmental improvements and the development of low key, outdoor, riverside recreational facilities will be favourably considered provided there would be no adverse effect on residential amenity or the value of the river for nature conservation".

## 8. The Project- Environmental Improvement Scheme

8.1 The works will comprise of new channel 250 meters of the river Gade being restored, 1.1 kilometres will be opened up to fish and eel passage and 6.1 kilometres improved with the provision of spring flow downstream. The

associated bridges, footpaths, dipping platforms, beaches, signage, landscaping and recreational amenity etc.

- 8.2 A River Gade Restoration Plan with details of works and environmental amenities is attached to visualise the changes and improvements to the Park and its use at Appendix I. Examples of the environmental amenities such as the footbridge, signage, and park furniture are illustrated in Appendix II.
- 8.3 The benefits in reducing potential flooding are illustrated in the before and after diagrams below. The current river channel 'before' results in a greater area of flooding within the park encroaching on the splash park, towards the bowls club and grassed leisure areas is a 1 in a 100 years occurrence (1%).
- 8.4 The 'after' works of the new channel projections of the 1 in 100 years flooding occurrence results in a markedly reduction in potential flooded areas.
- 8.5 As climate change continues and with climatic fluctuations in rainfall, the flooding incidences cannot be eliminated but the river restoration and new channel will capture more run off and enable flooded areas to soak away much more quickly.



**Diagrams illustrating current and proposed scheme as 1/100 year flood events on the river.**

## 9. Time Line

- 9.1 The proposed milestone and time line provided by the EA is outlined in the table below:

<b>Milestone / Engagement Phase</b>	<b>Date</b>
Share draft detailed designs publicly and invite comment	September 2021
Park event to share draft detailed designs with public	21 September 2021
Comments reviewed and addressed	October-December 2021
Submit planning application	September to October 2021
Full Council to approve detailed designs	October-November 2021
Construction phase tender	January 2022
Project commencement communications	February to March 2022
Start works – opening ceremony	April to May 2022
Install interpretation boards	May 2022
Project completion communications	July 2022
Post project review	August 2022
Post project review (1 year on)	August 2023

9.2 At each key milestone, the EA will update the local community of the project progress via the ColneCAN catchment partnership website, the Revitalising Chalk Rivers website, emails to their mailing list and other social media. The Council will include similar articles within their Clean, Safe & Green website, Dacorum Life and on our social media pages.

9.3 The programme of works will ensure disruption to the park is minimised. With access at all times from various points to the park facilities, splash park, temporary bridge to bowls club, temporary site compound created, new footpath and DBC foot bridge, channel creation, followed by diversion of flow, infilling old channel, and decommissioning of EA gauging station and installation of new gauging station with footbridge near the Bury and Bowls Club. Landscaping, making good, park furniture and signage.

9.4 The project will be subject to planning consent and the EA will be submitting a planning application for the scheme to the Planning Authority (DBC) during October/November 2021.

## **10. Project Costs**

10.1 The Environment Agency has spent £198,000 to date on this project, covering the feasibility study, investigations, outline designs, public consultation and detailed designs. The EA is committed to spending a total of £235,000 up to the construction phase, with staff costs this amounts to approximately £364,000.

10.2 It is estimated that delivery of the river restoration elements of the project during the construction phase will cost £753,000. The Council has been requested to contribute funding to pay for the environmental amenity aspects of the project e.g. a footbridge, footpaths, beaches, dipping platforms, signage etc., which have been estimated up to £120,000. Therefore, the whole project cost is estimated to be in the region of £873,000.

10.3 Affinity Water Ltd have granted £250,000 towards the project which can be used from 2020-23.

10.4 The EA Water resources and FCRM funding bids have been made for 2022/23. Additional funding will likely to be required for any shortfall and the EA are investigating options.

10.5 If Cabinet were to agree to a contribution, subject to Council approval, the estimated cost of these environmental amenity works are outlined in the table below:

Feature	Specification	Cost*
DBC Bridge	1x bridge in the centre of the park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 m x 3 m</li> <li>• £1500 per square metre</li> </ul>	Approx. £35,000
Path	1 x footpath 1.5 m wide. Finish options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• semi-bound = £40 per metre</li> </ul> With the preferred option being a semi-bound, finish which is a DDA compliant surface x 325m including installation.	Approx. £19,500
Bins	4 X bins @ £200	£1,600
Signage	3 X information boards @ £1000 per sign	£3,700
Furniture	4 X benches @ £455 5 X picnic table @£802 (or refurbish) 2 X dipping platforms @ £100-£150 per m2	£3,000 £4,010 £4,000
Beaches	2 X assuming 300mm depth of gravel - £10-£15 per m2	£3,000

\*including installation costs which are contained within the totals

10.6 Current estimates equate to approximately £74,000, which will be subject to the EA procurement process and scrutiny by DBC senior managers regarding value for money. The costs are estimates at this stage and may vary from the procurement process, there may be unforeseen works so a contingency element is included. In addition, the contribution enables the authority being a key partner to influence the project and impact on the park. It is suggested that a maximum contribution of up to £130, 000 be considered for approval.

10.7 This funding cannot be contained within existing budget provision and would need to come from Council funds.

10.8 If a funding contribution up to a maximum of £130,000 is not available from the Council, the work could start without the environmental amenity element.

10.9 Despite this, the EA believes that it is important that the Council contributes towards the scheme, as well as the site being located on Council land, it will help the authority fulfil its obligations under the Water Framework Directive. The EA are unlikely to be able to fund the environmental amenity aspects of the project. These are the parts of the scheme that will provide real benefits to people, will increase the amenity use and value of the park.

10.10 Whilst the EA believes the project could go ahead without these components it would not deliver the full benefits to the wider community and the use of the park as it would split the park in two with reduced access.

10.11 If Cabinet is mindful to support the funding contribution, it is proposed that delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Director Neighbourhood Delivery in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services to approve expenditure up to a maximum of £130,000.

## **11. Memorandum of Understanding**

11.1 A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is being drafted between The Environment Agency, Dacorum Borough Council and Affinity Water, the 'key partners' involved in the River Gade River Restoration project. Its purpose is to record the roles, responsibilities and commitments of the key partners to achieve the project's objectives collaboratively.

11.2 The MoU does not have any binding legal effect and does not create any legal relationship between the partners. Once the project's construction timetable has been agreed, (following the EA procurement process), a legally binding collaborative agreement between the key partners will cover all legal matters.

11.3 It is proposed that approval of legal agreements and documentation between the Council, EA and AW is delegated to the Assistant Director Neighbourhood Delivery in conjunction with the Assistant Director (Corporate and Contracted Services), Legal Governance Management.

## **12. Risks and Mitigation**

12.1 The main risks of the project are borne by the EA and their contractors from the project management, construction works, financial and legal. This includes the health and safety management and public liabilities etc.

12.2 The Council's risks are in relation to being the landowner, health and safety and taking over the physical assets on completion of the works. These will be mitigated within the future binding legal agreement between partners, the Authority's own insurance cover and the provision of certificates of completion, licence for access and alterations on our land together with guarantees and warranties for assets transferred to the Authority. Adoption of any footbridges would be subject to an independent assessment on behalf of the authority.

12.3 Appendix III identifies the benefits and potential risks of the project from a Clean, Safe and Green Service with mitigation.

## **13. Communications**

13.1 The EA has developed a comprehensive engagement plan that is attached at Appendix IV. There have been a range of stakeholder and consultation events over previous years including a recent engagement event in the park on 21 September to which Members, stakeholders, and the public were invited to attend.

13.2 Social media has been used as a source of information, expressing opinions and updates that will continue throughout the project timeframe and after the works have been completed

13.3 The DBC website, its social media messages and Dacorum Life present project information which links directly to the EA website for this specific project

## **14. EA are requesting**

14.1 The EA is seeking assurance that, subject to relevant assessment and approvals, the river restoration project at Gadebridge Park has the support of Dacorum Borough Council as the landowner and facility manager and to proceed between April to July 2022. EA would like specific agreement on:

- access to the park to undertake river works
- support for the project and a funding contribution
- the project timeline as proposed
- assigned roles and responsibilities for each partner through an MoU and a future binding legal agreement

## **15. Conclusions**

15.1 The river Gade restoration project in Gadebridge Park is essential to protect the river, its natural habitats and reduce the incidence of flooding within the park and downstream. The scheme is part of a wider improvement initiative for chalk streams across Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire and parts of Bedfordshire. The project will provide multiple benefits, including improved habitats for wildlife, the protection of water resources for both people and the environment, and enabling local residents and visitors to get closer to the river and enjoy nature.

15.2 A proposed financial contribution from the Authority for the environmental amenities required for accessing increased areas of the park will ensure maximum benefits for residents and users and prevent the park being split into two halves.

15.3 Overall, the project and partnership with the key players and stakeholders will enhance, sustain and benefit the main park within the Borough for future generations.

## **16. Recommendations**

16.1 Cabinet to:

- i. Agree to support the Environment Agency and Affinity Water Ltd in the restoration of the river Gade and improvements to Gadebridge Park project.
- ii. Approve access to Gadebridge Park for the Environment Agency and its contractors to carry out restoration and improvement works during 2022.
- iii. Approve, subject to Council, a contribution of up to £130,000 for Environmental Amenity works as part of the project.
- iv. Delegate authority to the Assistant Director Neighbourhood Delivery in consultation with the Portfolio Holder of Environmental Services to agree expenditure up to £130,000.
- v. Delegate authority to the Assistant Director Neighbourhood Delivery in consultation with the Assistant Director (Corporate and Contracted

Services), Legal Governance Management to approve legal agreements and documentation between the Council and the Environment Agency and Affinity Water Ltd.

