



REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

PORTFOLIO AREA: INFRASTRUCTURE & ENVIRONMENT

Date of Meeting: 19 November 2007

Public

Key Decision: Yes

Recorded in Forward Plan: Yes

Inside Policy Framework

Title: CALDEW/CITY CENTRE FLOOD ALLEVIATION PROJECT

Report of: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

Report reference: CS 83/07

Summary:

This report provides an update on progress with this project and identifies a range of emerging issues which have a direct impact on the Council's operations/services.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:-

1. This progress report be noted.
2. Consideration be given for non re-curring funding contributions of
 - (i) £20,000 to mitigate the impact of works to public/staff parking
 - (ii) Up to £21,000 towards upgrading wall alongside Bitts Park
 - (iii) £50,000 for public artwork linked to Carlisle Renaissance

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Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: CS 10/07

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND OPTIONS

- 1.1 As part of the ongoing project liaison there are continuing discussions between Council staff and the Environment Agency and consultants acting on their behalf. This report provides an update and identifies a range of emerging issues.
- 1.2 The Environment Agency have confirmed that the funding is secured for this project. Design work is underway and the project has been phased as follows:-

Phase 1 - works to the left bank in Denton Holme and the City centre.
Detailed design scheduled for completion Nov/Dec and works will start on site in March/April 2008

Phase 2 - works to the right bank, Stainton and Willowholme.
Detailed design will commence in Dec/Jan 2008 and physical works will follow-on.

The preferred contractor will be appointed early in 2008 and detailed programmes will follow shortly after. It is still planned to have a 2 year construction period.

- 1.3 At its meeting on 19 February 2007 the Executive resolved to make an 'in-kind' contribution of £0.5m to this project because of its importance to the City and Carlisle Renaissance. This decision was extremely helpful in securing national funding for the scheme in light of competing bids from other areas of England, particularly following other major flooding events in the summer of 2007. However as a result of this there are potentially some cost implications which fall directly on the Council.

The main one to arise is the need to use Council land for car parking. During construction the capacity of some will be reduced, whilst others will be closed. These include:-

Bousteads Grassing
Enterprise Centre
Swifts
Sands
Bitts Park
Lower Viaduct

Alternatively provision will have to be provided for staff and in the public car parks re-direction will be required to alternative sites with spare capacity. It is suggested that a one-off allocation of £20,000 be made for temporary provision/signage.

- 1.4 The phasing of the works in Willowholme will enable United Utilities to undertake their sewer replacement programme in 2008. The business tenants group are being kept informed of the construction related issues for both projects. At the present time a temporary alternative location for the showman's Guild has to be identified close to their existing site. It is planned that they will move back to their current site once construction works are completed. [The Leader has agreed to include a presentation from UU at the informal Council Briefing on 27 November]
- 1.5 The proposals for the Flood defences in the city centre include the construction of a new sandstone faced wall at the rear of the footway along Castle Way/Hardwick Circus (shown green on the plan Appendix A). However these works do not include the whole section at the wall and there are two areas where it is proposed to retain the existing construction (shown red on Appendix A). It would be preferable to provide a consistent and high quality standard of finish to this which will be visible from the highway and Bitts Park area. The EA have advised that it would cost £42,000 to construct these sections of wall to the same standard of finish. The County Council Local Committee have been asked to consider contributing, and initial informal feedback is that this would be considered.
- 1.6 The project development also includes two areas of environmental enhancement; one in the Cummersdale Holmes/Fairy Beck area and one in the Stainton area opposite the former Power Station.

The Council owns the land in the Fairy Beck area and the proposed works would enhance the area. At Stainton the EA are acquiring some land to enable additional storage to be provided by removing the existing flood defence embankment and part of the Former railway embankment. The EA have indicated that they would be prepared to transfer ownership of this land on completion. This would have a range of advantages to the Council providing an opportunity to link this area into the Kingmoor Nature Reserve.

Indicative Plans for both areas are included in Appendix B. Discussions are ongoing about the future maintenance liability/funding for both these areas.

- 1.7 As the design develops there is ongoing liaison to resolve the Planning Conditions and current discussions focus on the defence wall finishes.

- 1.8 Similarly discussions between the respective Property Officers are ongoing on a range of issues.
- 1.9 The flood defence project includes a budget provision of £50,000 towards public art to be incorporated into the project. An artist has been commissioned and is working with the community to develop ideas and opportunities. In view of the importance of the public realm (including public art) which has been identified through Carlisle Renaissance the Council may wish to consider making a capital contribution. This could be linked to the transformational site at Caldew Riverside or the works in the Historic Quarter due to the proximity of these two areas.

Summary

- 1.10 This report provides a brief overview as the detailed design of this key infrastructure project develops. At this stage many of the issues should be noted however there are three financial issues that the Council may wish to consider:-
- (i) The allocation of £20,000 from 2008/9 to mitigate the impact of construction works on public/staff car parks
 - (ii) A contribution towards the cost of completing sections of the wall alongside Bitts Park, subject to co-funding contributions from the County Council (Total estimated cost of £42,000)
 - (iii) Providing a capital contribution up to £50,000 towards the incorporation of public art within the project, linked to the public realm strategy currently being developed through Carlisle Renaissance.

2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1 Consultation to Date - Environment Agency, County Council
- 2.2 Consultation proposed – As above.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:-

3.1 This progress report be noted.

3.2 Consideration be given for non re-curring funding contributions of

- (i) £20,000 to mitigate the impact of works to public/staff parking
- (ii) Up to £21,000 towards upgrading will alongside Bitts Park
- (iii) £50,000 for public artwork linked to Carlisle Renaissance

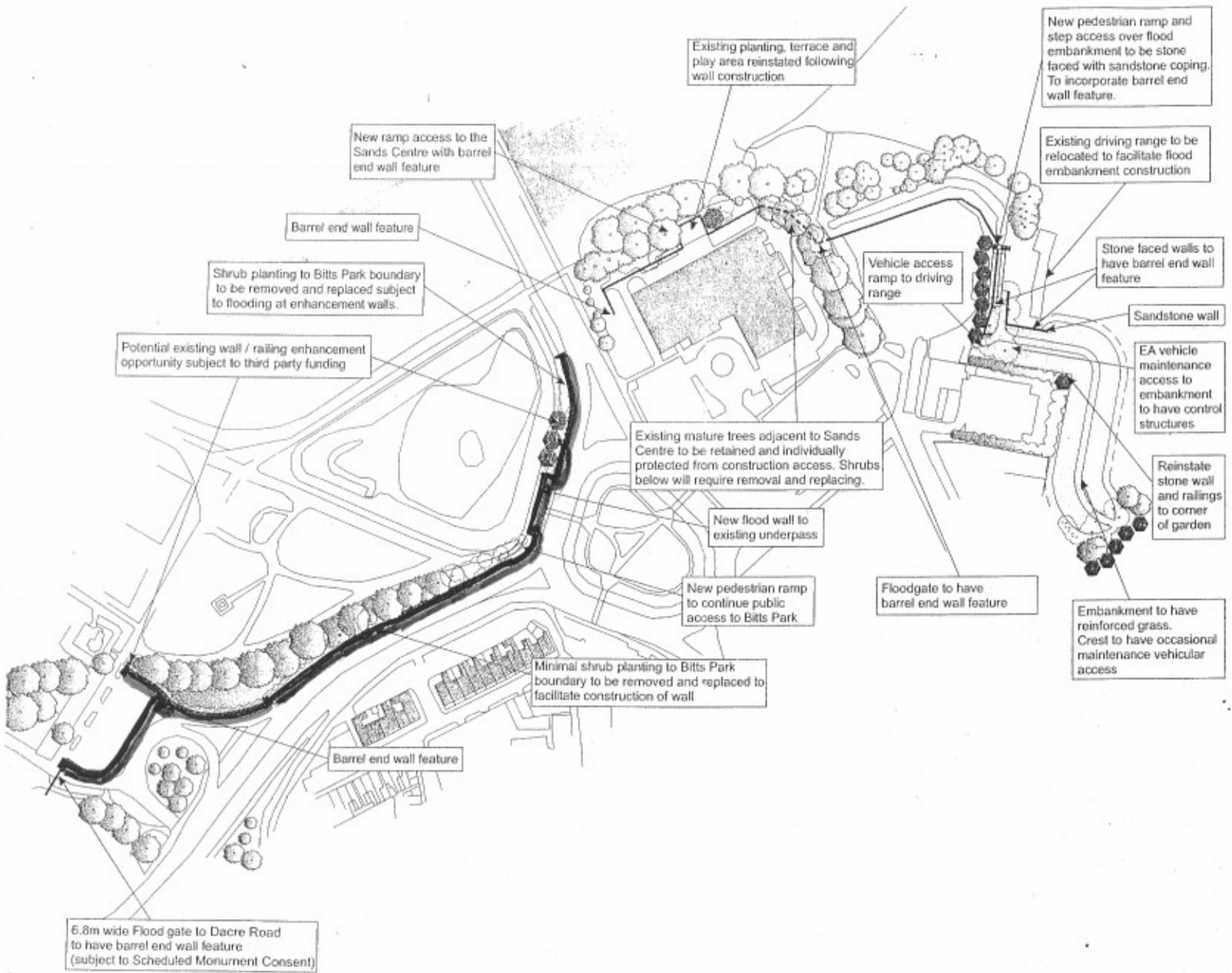
4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The detailed design development has, to date, identified several areas where the Council may wish to add value to this project or mitigate the impacts of construction

5. IMPLICATIONS

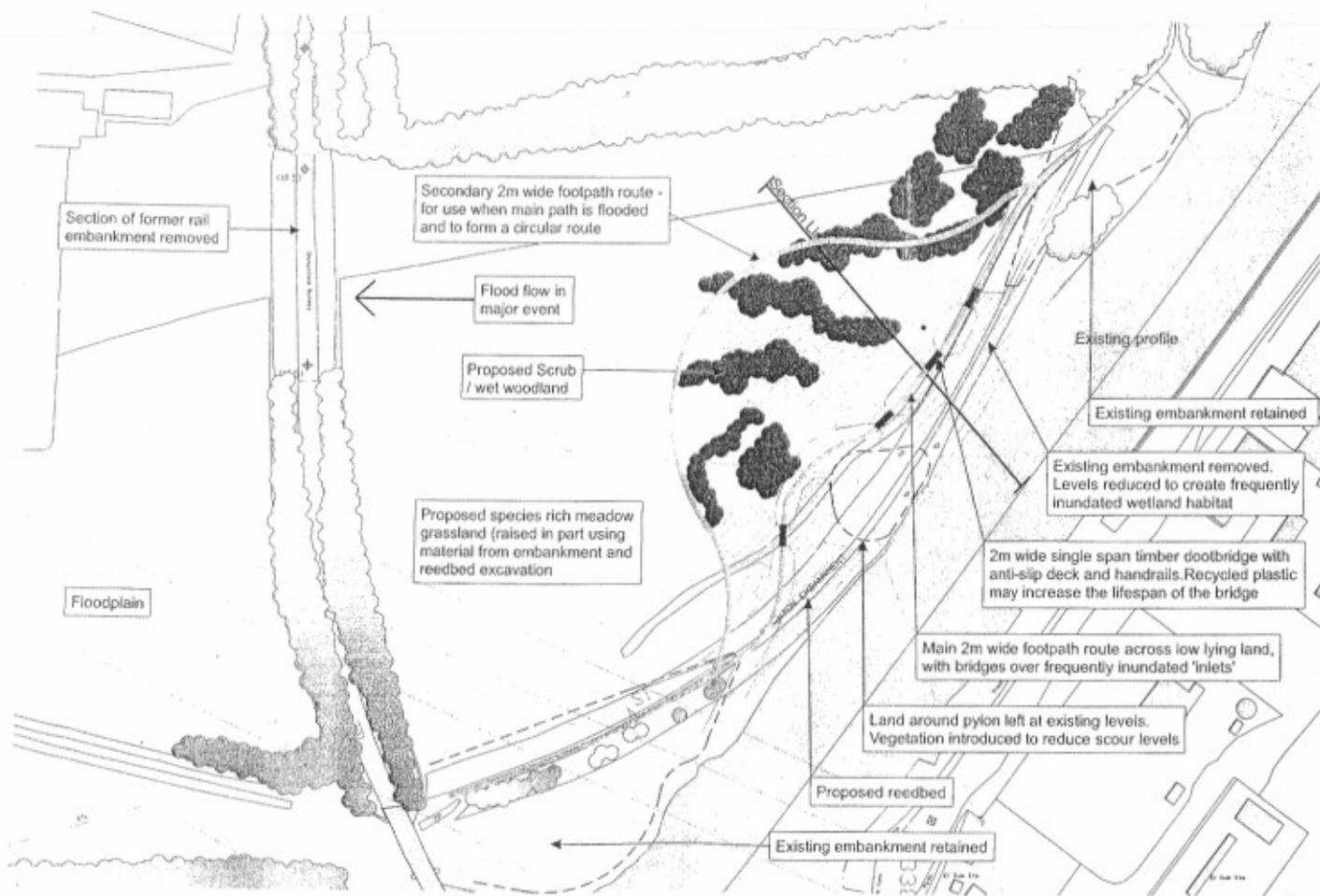
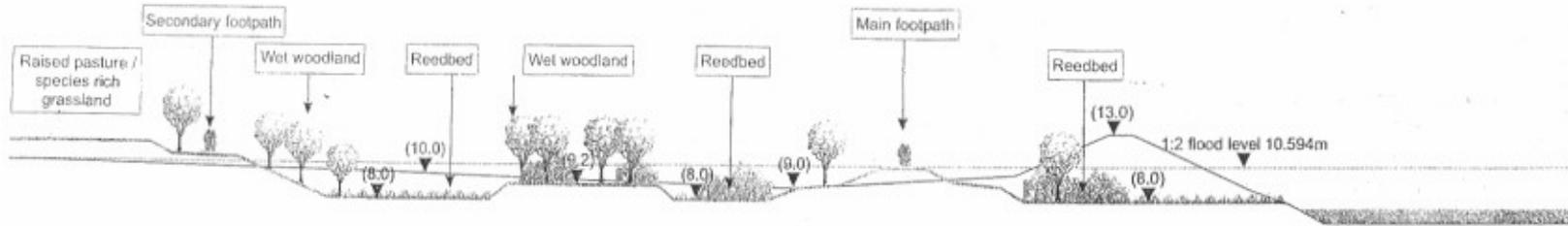
- Staffing/Resources – No significant staffing implications
- Financial – The estimated costs of this scheme will all fall in 2008/09 and 2009/10 which have been included in the budget pressures report and will be considered as part of the 2008/09 Budget process. The scheme will result in an estimated £20k in one off costs for temporary signage etc to minimise the revenue impact in car parking income over the construction period. It involves a possible capital contribution of £21k for work on the wall which is subject to the County contributing an equal amount. The remaining proposal for art works of £50k may be capital or revenue (non-recurring) depending on the nature of the asset created and more information will be required before this can be assessed.
- Legal – The Local Government Act 2000 (Section 2) provides that the Council has the power to do anything which it considers likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of its area. The power may be used in relation or for the benefit of the whole or any part of the community or all or any persons present or resident in the Council's area. The Council is able to incur expenditure or enter into agreements or arrangements with any person. In exercising the power, the Council must have regard to its Community Strategy.

- Corporate – The flood defence project is an essential piece of infrastructure for the protection of the City and to facilitate progress on Carlisle Renaissance
- Risk Management – This infrastructure project is essential to protect key areas of the City from river flooding and to generate community and investment confidence particularly alongside the two identified transformational sites. The use of existing car parks is likely to be disrupted and could impact on income forecasts. This, once in a lifetime, construction project could have value added if progressed and is more economic to incorporate in the main construction contract.
- Equality and Disability – N/A
- Environmental – N/A
- Crime and Disorder – N/A
- Impact on Customers – N/A



Key

- Wall Finishes**
- Sawn stone with sandstone copings
 - Dashed line indicates where the wall is below trees.
- Potential enhancement walls (3rd party funding)
- Embankment
- Soft Landscape**
- Indicative Tree Removal
 - Indicative Tree Retention
 - Indicative Tree Planting
- ↑



Key

- Proposed Tree Planting
- Existing Retained Vegetation
- Indicative Scrub / Woodland Planting
- Indicative Reedbed / Wetland Planting
- Embankment
- Footpath
- Arrow

Downstream Enhancement Area

The environmental enhancement works will include wet woodland, reedbeds, and wildflower meadows, with local land raising for grazing.

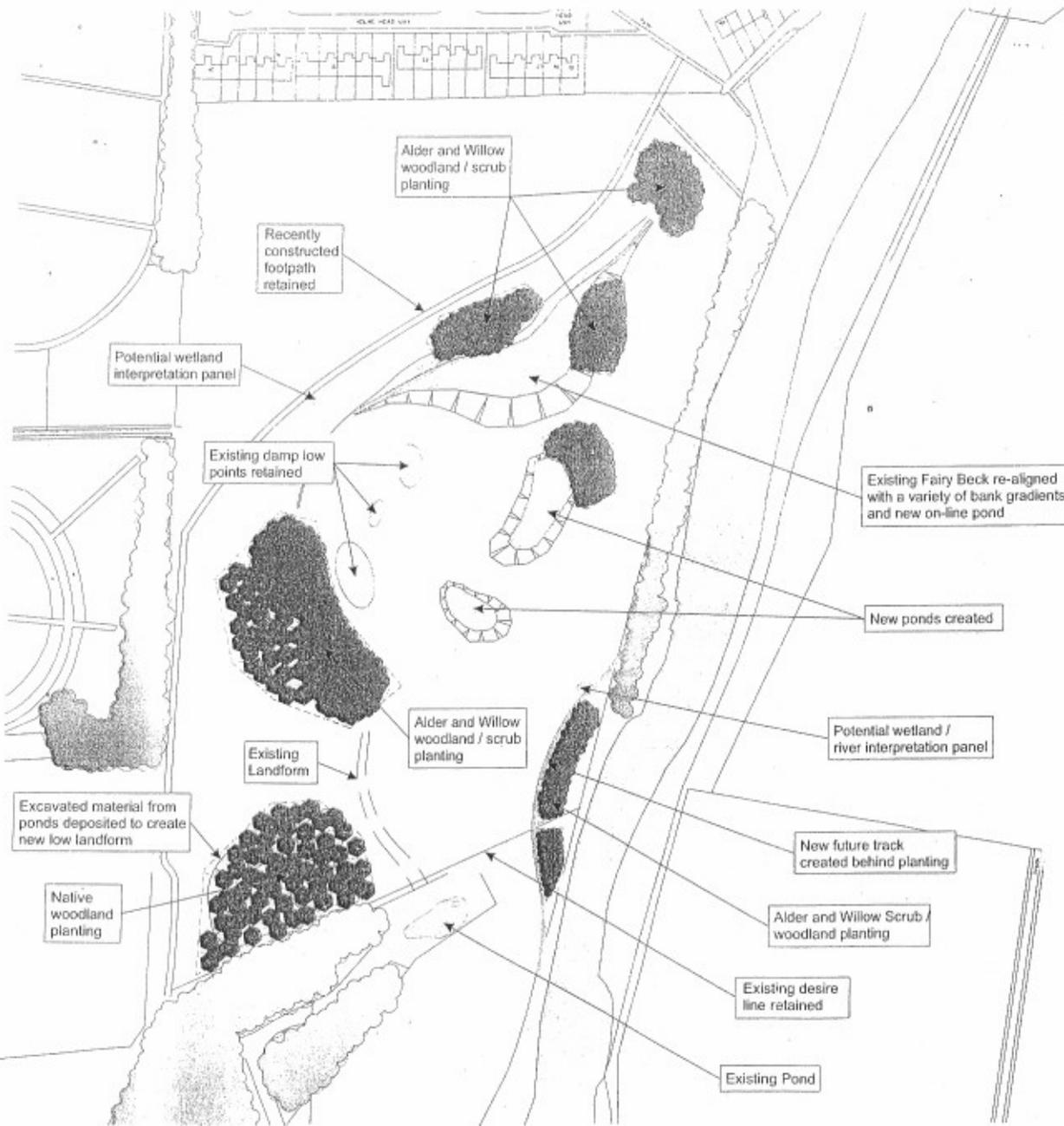
Opportunities will be taken to incorporate a variety of bank gradients to enhance the natural appearance of the proposals.

Path surfaces will be robust but should be sympathetic to the urban fringe location. Timber should be the main bridge and path edging material. Ground retention should be faced with natural sandstone.

All species will be agreed with Natural England.

Future ownership / maintenance to be the responsibility of Carlisle City Council.

Proposals are subject to Ground Investigations and Topographical survey.



Key

-  Existing Vegetation Retained
-  Indicative Scrub Planting
-  Indicative Woodland Planting
-  Embankment
-  Proposed Footpath
- 

Upstream Enhancement Area.

Existing wet depressions will be retained and protected.

Opportunities to de-canalise the beck will be taken to incorporate a variety of bank gradients and to include a new online pond.

The large open grass area provides opportunities to develop new wetland scrapes of varying depths and a new pond.

New woodland and scrub areas will be planted both above the old river bank and within the floodplain.

Scrub planting is proposed adjacent to the main section of open river bank. This may protect the bank in the future from erosion.

Future Ownership / maintenance is to be the responsibility of Carlisle City Council

No EA flood defence access is required to this area

Proposals are subject to Ground Investigations and Topographical survey