

2. MILLENNIUM BRIDGE – ALTERNATIVE SITE

Officer responsible Parks and Waterways Manager	Author Anne Greenup, DDI 371-1701
Corporate Plan Output: Turning Point 2000	

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to site the Millennium Bridge in an alternative site near the daffodil woodlands.

The Millennium Bridge Subcommittee, at its meeting of 18 June, supported the siting of the Bridge at the entrance to the Botanic Gardens where the existing foot-bridge gives access to the kiosk and information centre off the Armagh Street car park. There were reservations at the time about the lack of visibility of the Bridge in this site, owing to the large trees and the other conflicting elements of the car park and the Botanic Gardens buildings. There are also issues of littering and congestion. It was agreed, however, that the site could be modified to suit, at an added cost, and acceptance of the site would allow the Bridge project to proceed.

ALTERNATIVE SITE

The Botanic Gardens Management Plan of 1996 identified the need for a foot-bridge in the stretch of the Avon upstream from the hospital, but not as far upstream as the bridge that takes pedestrians into the Gardens from the band rotunda area. The idea of a new bridge was to encourage walkers to explore the daffodil woodlands and the heritage rose gardens and then go, via a loop track, back across into the Gardens again, over the existing footbridge. This second foot-bridge has never been built and examination of the site by the artist Andrew Drummond and Deborah McCormick of Art and Industry led to an enthusiastic response to the idea that the Millennium Bridge design would be very suited to this location.

This stretch of the river is serene and unimpeded by other distracting elements. The Bridge would make a striking focal point and would attract many walkers to cross at this place. There would be opportunities to view the Bridge from both sides of the river, and the punts that use this stretch of the river would give their passengers a unique viewpoint of the Bridge reflected in the water.

The Subcommittee and other invitees met to discuss the potential of this alternative site on 11 July. Ian Clark of the Civic Trust attended the meeting and though Professor David Given of the Friends of the Botanic Gardens was invited to attend, illness in his family prevented him from coming. Anna Crighton and Deborah McCormick of the Art and Industry Biennial Trust were in attendance. The Civic Trust had been opposed to the siting of the Bridge at Dorset Street, but Mr Clark gave his support to this woodlands location.

At this site, the Bridge crosses from the Botanic Gardens to Hagley Park. Advice from our planners is that we would apply for a non-notified resource consent, but it would be the decision of the Commissioner whether it be notified or not.

The banks of the river at this site would require minimal work to position the Bridge appropriately and we could avoid the extra costs of extensively modifying part of the Armagh Street car park and the banks of the river, which would be necessary for this design at the entrance site.

The Parks and Waterways Manager sought the advice of the Legal Services Manager, which has been incorporated into recommendations 1, 2 and 3.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the Council give approval in principle for this woodlands site.
 2. That the project continue to its next stage, subject to the Legal Services Manager's approval of the process and the legal documentation being signed by the Council.
 3. That proceeding be subject to funding.

(Note: Councillors Corbett, Harrow and Sheriff requested that their votes against the above recommendation be recorded.)