

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE  
7<sup>th</sup> November 2013

<u>UPRN</u>	<u>APPLICATION NO.</u>	<u>Item No:</u> <u>DATE VALID</u>
	13/P2573	29/07/2013
<b>Address/Site</b>	Footbridge connecting, Wandle Meadow Nature Park to Bewley Street, Colliers Wood	
<b>Ward</b>	Trinity	
<b>Proposal:</b>	Completion of footbridge via installation of disability discrimination act (DDA) compliant ramp and steps	
<b>Drawing Nos</b>	0001, 0002 and 0015.	
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Stuart Adams (0208 545 3147)	

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## RECOMMENDATION

**GRANT Planning Permission subject to conditions.**

## CHECKLIST INFORMATION.

Heads of agreement: - N/A  
Is a screening opinion required: No  
Is an Environmental Statement required: No  
Has an Environmental Impact Assessment been submitted – No  
Press notice – No  
Site notice – Yes  
Design Review Panel consulted – No  
Number of neighbours consulted – 18  
External consultations – Environment Agency.  
Number of jobs created – N/A  
PTAL score – 3  
CPZ – N/A

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## 1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The application has been brought before the Planning Applications Committee for consideration, as the application relates to a Council application. Four letters of objections have been received and the case officer's recommendation is to grant permission subject to conditions.

## 2. **SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

- 2.1 The site forms part of the Wandle Meadow Nature Park Local Nature reserve which is situated on the site of the former Wandle Valley Sewage Works, which became redundant in the 1970's. The site lies to the south of the Wimbledon to Tooting Railway line, and on both the north and south sides of North Road on the east Bank of the River Wandle.
- 2.3 As identified on the Councils proposals map, the application site is located within a flood plain, Metropolitan Open Space (MOL), Green Corridor and Archaeological Priority Zone space. The site is not located within a Conservation Area.

## 3. **CURRENT PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 Completion of footbridge via installation of Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant ramp and steps. The footbridge would have a total depth of 28.9m, total width of 6m and the structure would have a suspended steel frame with timber deck and parapets supported by concrete foundations. The footbridge would have a 1:15 gradient with landings at a maximum interval of 5m. Each section of the footbridge passageway would be 3m wide with a 1.4m high rail. A resin bound aggregate footpath would link the new footbridge to the existing nature trail in the park (materials to match the colour of the existing footpath).

## 4. **PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 99/P1936 - Erection of a new pedestrian/cycle bridge over the River Wandle – Grant - 17/03/2000

## 5. **CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The application has been standard site notice procedure and letters of notification to the occupiers of neighbouring properties.
- 5.1.1 In response to the consultation, 2 letters of support and 4 letters of objection were received. The two letters of support raise the following points:

- Although the proposal is not ideal for cyclists or indeed anyone on wheels as it requires two switchbacks to continue in the desired direction of travel, it would be a useful transport connection and a welcome conclusion to this sorry saga.
- It was always frustrating to be served from the meadow and to have the wonderful Wandle Trail have to detour on account of the developer's intractable arrogance.
- Antisocial behavior was never an issue with the bridge, this always occurred further south near Byegrove Road and I imagine it would be lessened with regular passing of foot and cycle traffic.
- It will finish an important link along the Wandle river for pedestrians, removing the need to make a large detour currently necessary to continue along the river.
- The proposed ramp treatment is vital to ensure the link is accessible to all, so I am also glad to see this proposed.

#### 5.1.2 The four letter of objection raise the following points

- Nature Park opposite Bewley Street is a local gathering area for anti-social behaviour. The current incomplete footbridge is the only element preventing much of this anti-social behavior from spilling over onto Bewley Street.
- Direct footbridge would invite crime and anti-social behaviour onto Bewley Street
- Access to Wandle Meadow Nature Park does not require the footbridge. Access can still readily be gained by walking around Bewley Street and onto North Road which provides ready access to the nature park.
- A small number of non-residence petitioning for the completion of the footbridge are not affected by the proposal (just makes a small difference to walking distances).
- If approved, can LBM guarantee that the residents of Bewley Street will be protected from additional anti-social behavior and crime?
- Increases footfall in Bewley Street and associated problems
- The completion of the bridge would not benefit anybody. Funds should be used on other projects which actually make a difference or improve something.
- Loss of privacy
- Security due to poor lighting in Bewley Street
- Bewley Street is a private road and increased footfall will impact on maintenance of the street.

#### 5.1.3 Environment Agency – No objection

#### 5.1.4 Tree Officer – No objection subject to conditions

- 5.1.5 Leisure and Culture Greenspaces – Greenspaces welcomes this proposal on the grounds that it improves recreational public access into the Wandle Valley and will encourage visitors into and community enjoyment of the Wandle Valley Regional Park as a whole. Any environmental impacts arising from the proposal appear to be minimal

## 6. **POLICY CONTEXT**

- 6.1 The relevant policies within the Adopted Unitary Development Plan (October 2003) are:

BE.13 - Archaeological Protection and Preservation  
BE.14 - Archaeological Evaluation  
BE.16 - Urban Design  
BE.22 - Design of New Development  
NE.1 – Metropolitan Open Land  
NE.8 - Green Corridors  
NE.11 - Trees: Projection  
PE.2 - Pollution and Amenity  
L.1 - Informal Recreation

- 6.3 The relevant policies within the Adopted Core Strategy (July 2011) are:

CS13 – Open Space, Nature Conservation, Leisure and Culture  
CS14 - Design  
CS18 – Active Transport

## 7. **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- 7.1 The principal planning considerations related to this application are the planning history of the site, principle of development, design, impact upon neighbours, trees, flooding and ecology.

### 7.2 History

- 7.2.1 A strong material planning consideration in this instance is the planning history of the site. The footbridge was constructed in June 2007 under a Section 106 Agreement by the developer undertaking the Connolly Place Development. The footbridge was proposed to link the new housing development on the west bank of the river to The Wandle Meadow Nature Park on the east bank as well provide a missing link in the Wandle Trail.
- 7.2.2 Construction work on the footbridge by the developer ended following the construction of the bridge supports and installation of the bridge deck. As a result, whilst the footbridge is accessible at the western approach the eastern end is currently suspended at approximately 1.9m above ground

level making the link between the east and west banks of the river incomplete.

- 7.2.3 As the bridge was intended to provide access for the new development to this important community amenity and provide the missing link in the trail, the current status of the bridge makes it unfit for purpose.

### 7.3 Principle

- 7.3.1 The principle of the development has already been established by planning permission 99/P1936. However the bridge has never been completed and has remained in situ since 2007. The ramp is proposed to complete the unfinished Bewley Street Footbridge which upon completion will provide access to the Wandle Meadow Nature Park from the housing development as well as link the park to the Wandle Trail. The structure will allow for disabled access into the park and will also be suitable for use by cyclists, further improving cycling facilities along the Wandle Trail. The principle of development is therefore considered to be acceptable subject to other planning considerations.

### 7.4 Design

- 7.4.1 The proposed new section of the bridge would have a suspended steel frame with timber deck and parapets supported by concrete foundations. The proposed section of the bridge would therefore have a lightweight appearance within the park setting and would not appear out of place. Existing planting and replacement planting would also ensure that the completed bridge has a limited impact upon the visual amenities of the area by blending into and respecting the parkland setting.

### 7.5 Impact Upon Neighbours

- 7.5.1 Neighbours directly opposite the existing footbridge in Bewley Street have raised concerns over anti-social behaviour and increased footfall within Bewley Street. Whilst these concerns have been noted, the existing bridge is set partly between vegetation within the park, is a dead-end structure and has limited natural surveillance. The proposal would increase both pedestrians and cyclist movement through the area and thus would increase natural surveillance. It was the original intention that the bridge would link the Wandle Meadow Nature Park to Bewley Street and the proposal would increase the natural surveillance of the area. It is therefore considered that there would be no undue impact upon neighbouring amenity to warrant refusal of planning permission.

### 7.6 Trees

7.6.1 The proposal would involve the removal of some vegetation and a small tree measuring approximately 6m in height. The removal of vegetation is considered minimal and the tree to be removed is small in size and does not have high public amenity value. The proposed footbridge would predominantly be located within the existing natural gap between trees. Therefore there would be limited impact upon vegetation and trees within the park and thus the proposal would respect visual amenities of the parkland setting.

## 7.7 Flooding

7.7.1 There was a requirement to maintain the site as a flood water storage area for the River Wandle. This is a continuing requirement by the Environment Agency to hold up to 50,000 cubic metres of water with the estimated frequency of flooding as once in every 50 years. The site is reported to have been last flooded in 1968.

7.7.2 The design of the footbridge has incorporated comments made by the Environment Agency as the ramp structure is located within a flood storage area. Given the design of the footbridge the Environment Agency raises no objection to the proposal. It is therefore considered that the proposal would have no undue impact upon the flood plain.

## 7.8 Ecology & Environment

7.8.1 A desk-top study has been undertaken to identify protected and notable sites, habitats and species on and within 2 km of the site. An extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey of the site and its immediate environs was also undertaken to identify the type and extent of existing habitats and assess their potential for supporting protected species.

7.8.2 The field survey identified that the area affected by the proposed ramp was predominantly amenity grassland with little value for nature conservation. However, an area of scrub and semi improved (species-poor) grassland fringes the amenity grassland and, although of low intrinsic value, could support breeding birds and reptiles.

7.8.3 The survey concluded that the proposed ramp would not result in any significant impacts on any habitats or species of nature conservation value. However in order to limit any potential harm, the recommendations set out in section 5 of the Design and Access Statement will be imposed as planning conditions and a planning informative.

## 8. **SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS**

8.1 The application does not constitute Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 development. Accordingly, there are no requirements in terms on EIA submission.

9. **CONCLUSION**

A strong material planning consideration in this instance is the planning history of the site. The bridge was intended to provide access for the housing development to this important community amenity and provide the missing link in the trail. The current status of the bridge makes it unfit for purpose. The design of the new bridge would respect the visual amenities of the parkland setting by having a lightweight appearance. The siting and design of the bridge also restricts the amount of vegetation and trees to be removed and would have a limited impact upon the flood plain. Whilst the completion of the bridge would increase footfall through the area, this was the original intention of the bridge and in comparison to the existing situation would create a better natural surveillance of the area. Therefore, it is considered that there would be no undue impact upon neighbouring amenity.

**RECOMMENDATION**

GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following conditions:

1. A1 Commencement of Development (full application)
2. B3 External materials as Specified
3. F5P Tree Protection
4. F8 Site Supervision (Trees)
5. Scrub and tree removal should be undertaken outside the bird breeding season (not between end-February and mid-August). Where works in this season are unavoidable, the site should be cleared during the preceding winter or following details of a survey confirming the absence of nesting birds have submitted to and approved by the local planning authority.  
  
In the interest of good planting a nature preservation
6. No development shall commence on site until a further ecological survey has been carried out and the details have been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority.  
  
In the interest of good planting a nature preservation

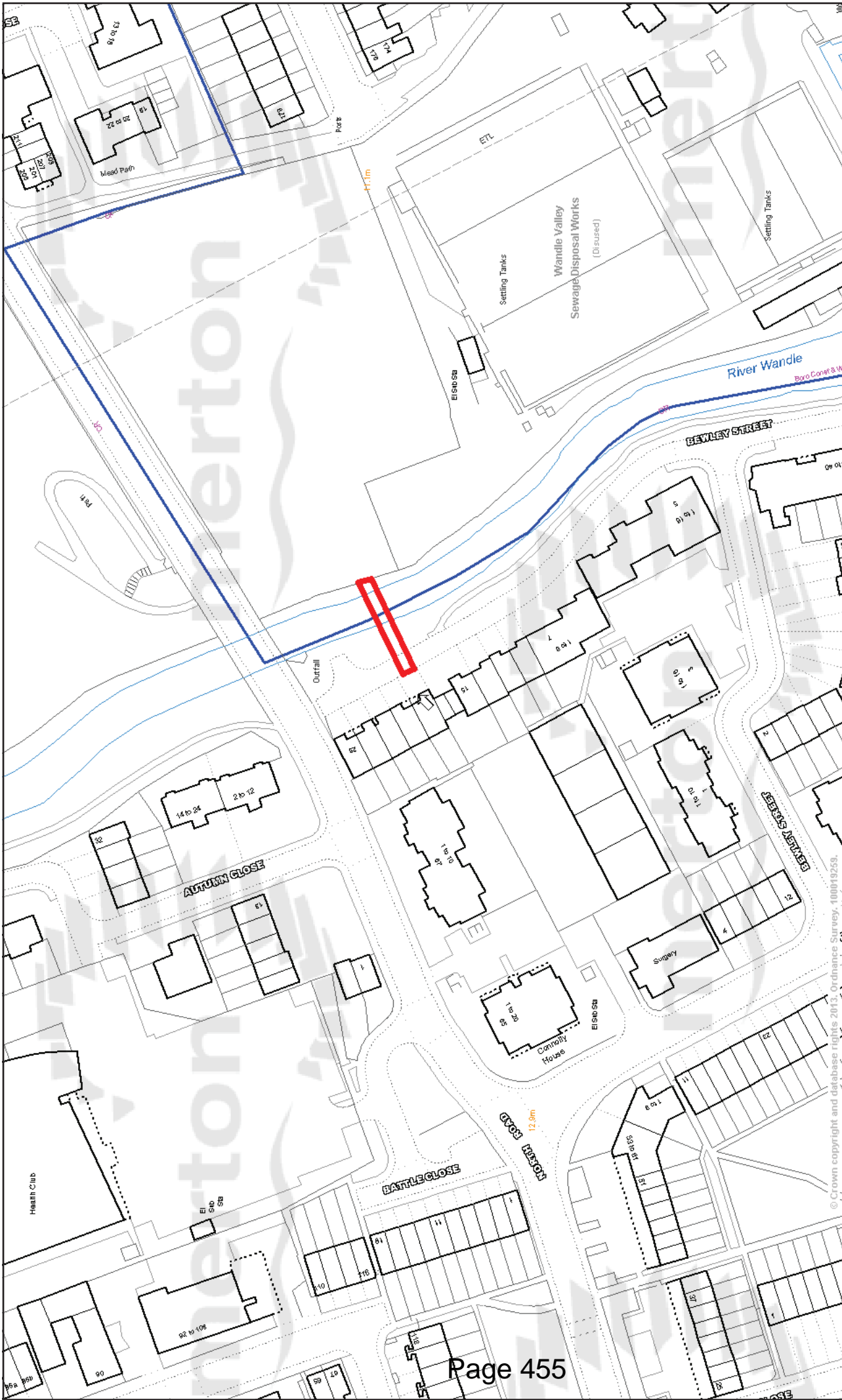
7. F1      Landscaping/Planting Scheme

8. F2      Landscaping (Implementation)

Planning Informative

Vegetation clearance works should be undertaken in a precautionary manner, overseen by an appropriately experienced ecologist. It may be determined that a destructive search is required in these areas to capture and move reptiles and amphibians to undisturbed habitat elsewhere. In the unlikely event that great crested newts are found to be present, further advice should be sought from Natural England.





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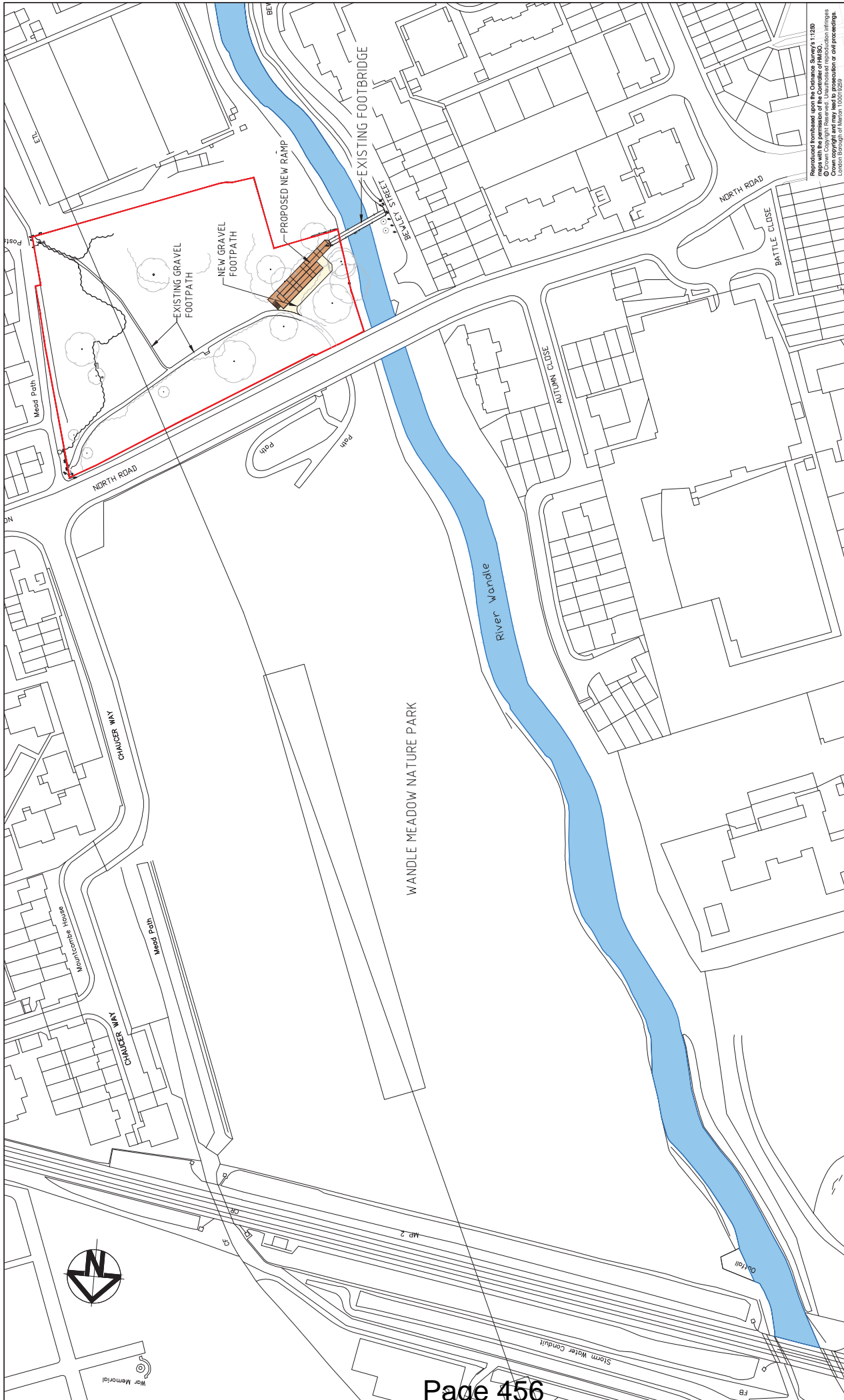
Scale 1/1250

Date 28/10/2013

Footbridge over River Wandle

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Drawing No. 0015 — Project No. UA006201 — Issue 02

Project: BEWLEY STREET FOOTBRIDGE RAMP  
 Title: LOCATION PLAN

Status: PRELIMINARY NOT TO BE USED FOR CONSTRUCTION	
Scales: 1:1250	Current Issue Signatures:
Original Size: A3	Author: P. GROFT
Datum: NEWLYN	Checker: T. RENT
Grid: 0.5	Approver: CLAMBERT
Filename: UA006201-0015-02.dwg	© Copyright reserved

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Notes:

Issue	Description	Date
02	REVISED ISSUE FOR PLANNING	17-07-2013
01	INITIAL ISSUE	22-04-2013

Notes

- 1. RAMP STRUCTURE DESIGNED BY OTHERS.
- 2. ALL DIMENSIONS IN MILLIMETRES UNLESS NOTED
- 3. ALL LEVELS IN METRES RELATIVE TO ORDNANCE DATUM
- 4. RAMP DESIGN TO HAVE NON-SLIP FINISH.

03	REVISED ISSUE FOR PLANNING	24/07/13
02	REVISED ISSUE FOR PLANNING	17/07/13
01	INITIAL ISSUE FOR PLANNING	28/06/13

PRELIMINARY  
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Scales	1:1000 1:100	Author P. GIBNET	Current Issue Signatures
Original Size	A1	Checker T. GENT	
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Project	BEWLEY STREET FOOTBRIDGE RAMP
Title	GENERAL ARRANGEMENT PLAN
Drawing No.	0001
Project No.	UA006201
Issue	03



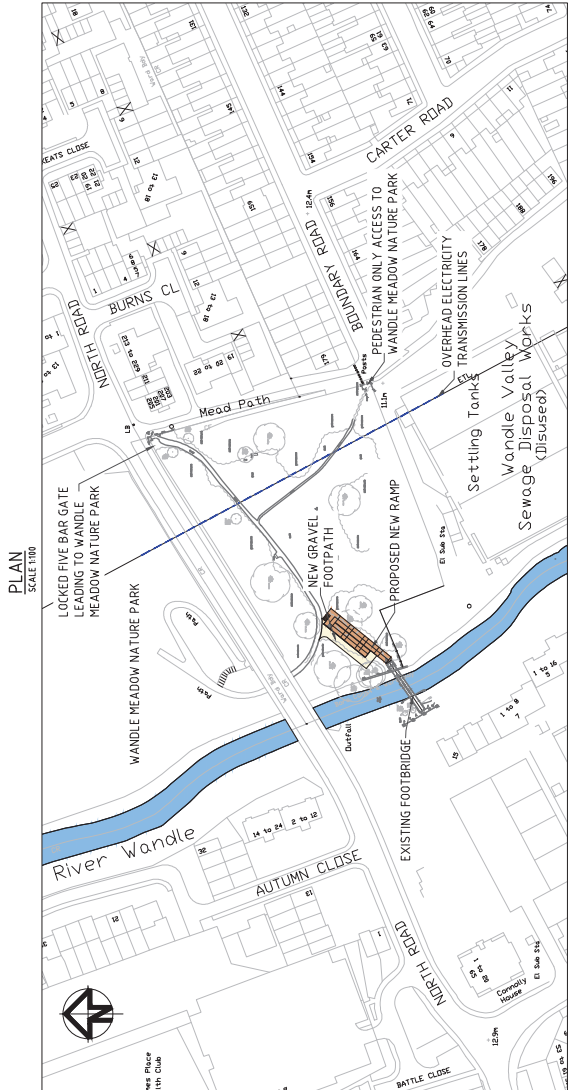
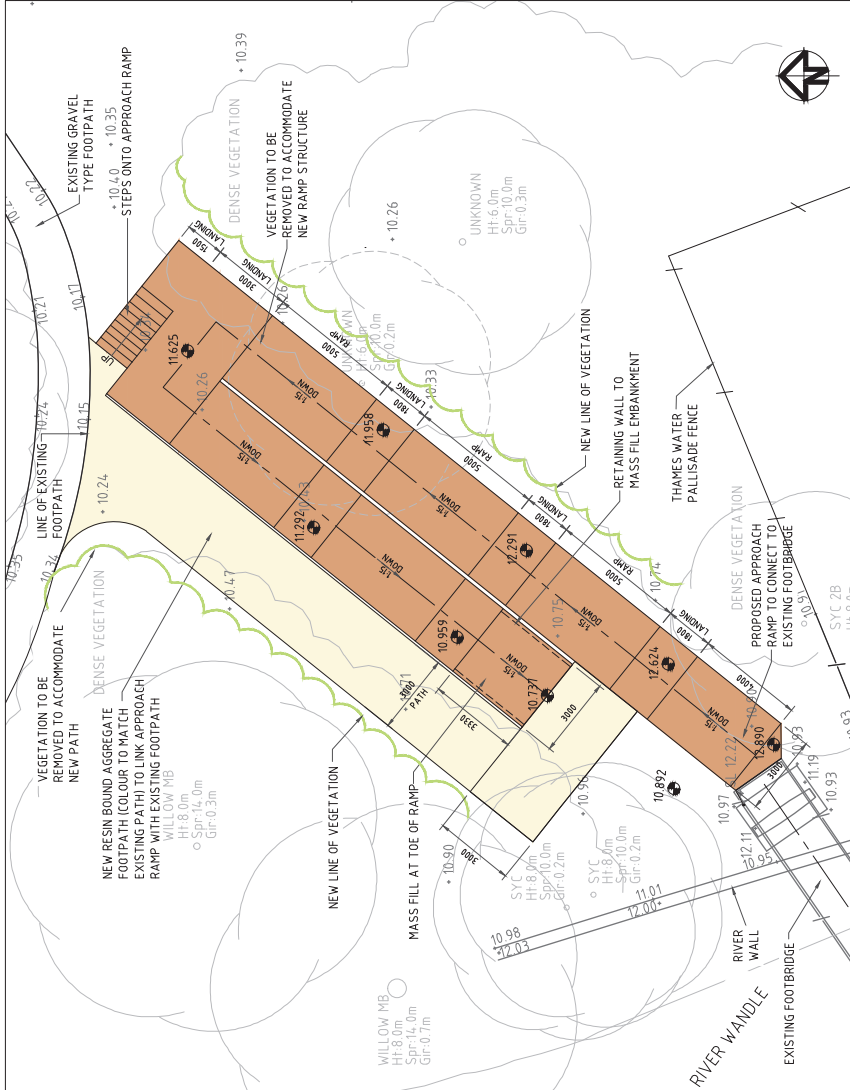
PHOTO 1.0  
SIDE ELEVATION OF END OF FOOTBRIDGE

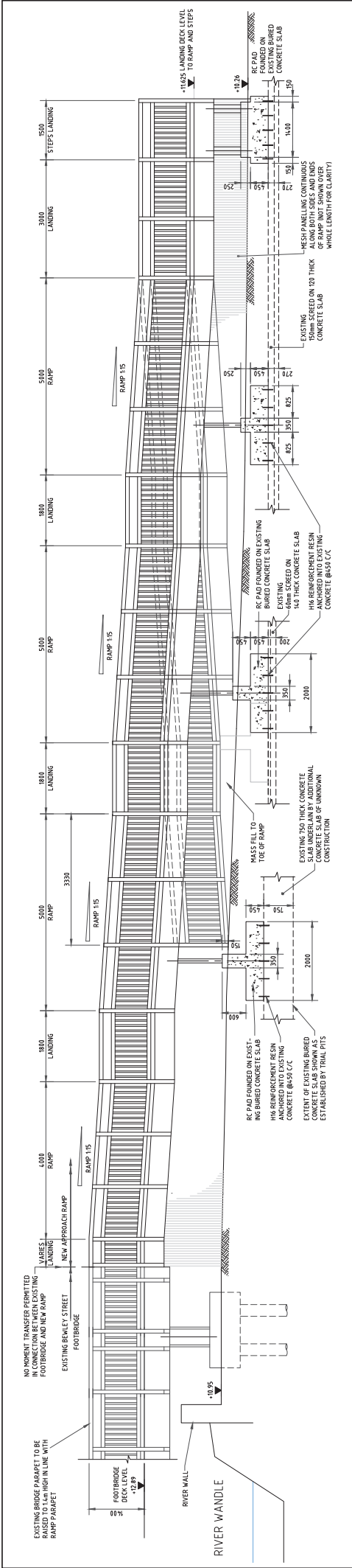


PHOTO 2.0  
VIEW OF FOOTBRIDGE WITH PROPOSED LOCATION OF APPROACH RAMP  
IN FOREGROUND



PHOTO 3.0  
VIEW ON END OF FOOTBRIDGE





TYPICAL ELEVATION ON RAMP  
SCALE 1:50

- Notes
1. RAMP STRUCTURE DESIGNED BY OTHERS.
  2. ALL DIMENSIONS IN MILLIMETRES UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE.
  3. ALL LEVELS IN METRES RELATIVE TO ORDNANCE DATUM (NEWLY).
  4. RAMP DECKING TO HAVE NON-SLIP FINISH.
  5. ALL LEVELS ARE APPROXIMATE.

Issue	Description	Date
02	REVISED ISSUE FOR PLANNING	17/07/13
01	INITIAL ISSUE FOR PLANNING	28/06/13

Scale: 1:50  
 Author: P. GIBBY  
 Checker: T. GENT  
 Designer: G. LAMBERT  
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 Client:

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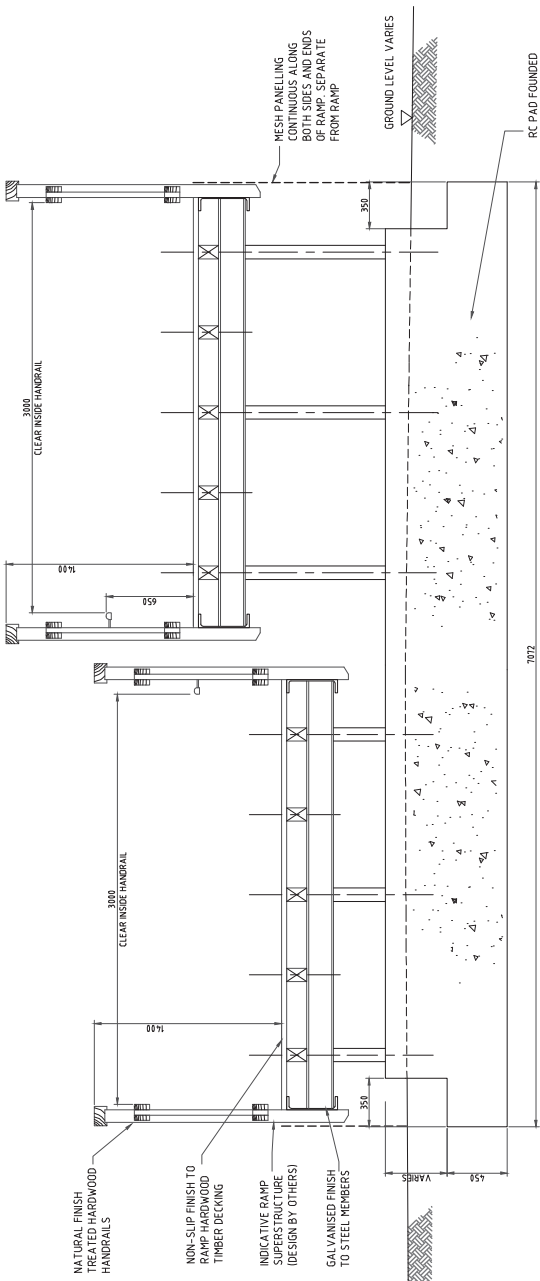
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Project: BEWLEY STREET FOOTBRIDGE RAMP

Title: ELEVATION AND CROSS SECTION FOR RAMP

Drawing No. 0002  
 Project No. UA006201  
 Issue 02



TYPICAL SECTION THROUGH APPROACH RAMP  
SCALE 1:20



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