

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change

Bramcote Hills Park Development Proposal1. Purpose of Report

To present the feasibility study findings for enhanced visitor facilities at Bramcote Hills Park, including a café, toilets and meeting space.

2. Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to consider the feasibility study findings and RESOLVE whether to proceed with the development of enhanced visitor facilities at Bramcote Hills Park.

3. Detail

In February 2026, Cabinet approved the commissioning of a feasibility study to explore the provision of enhanced visitor facilities at Bramcote Hills Park. The study was commissioned in response to longstanding feedback from residents and park users, which consistently identified the lack of toilet facilities and visitor amenities as a key issue at the park.

Bramcote Hills Park is one of the Borough's most popular open space destinations, attracting visitors from across the Borough and beyond through its woodland, parkland, play facilities and heritage features. However, the absence of supporting facilities currently limits the length of time visitors can comfortably spend on site.

A feasibility study considered the development of a new visitor facility at the site comprising of the following:

- A café with seating for around 20 customers and light catering facilities.
- Flexible community and exhibition space.
- Public toilet provision, including accessible facilities.
- Sustainable and robust construction suitable for a park environment.
- Associated external seating areas and landscaping.

Feasibility Findings

The feasibility study assessed five potential locations within Bramcote Park and evaluated each option against design, operational, planning, cost and risk criteria. Following this assessment, Option B achieved the highest overall score at 14 out of 20 and was identified as the preferred location for further development.

Option B was recommended because:

- It provides the best visibility from, and relationship with, the main car park and play area.
- It is conveniently located for the majority of visitors.
- It offers good accessibility and operational benefits.
- It presents fewer planning challenges than some alternative locations.
- It balances cost, risk and visitor convenience more effectively than the other options considered. [https://broxtowebc-my.sharepoint.com/personal/egeorgiou_broxtowe_gov_uk/Documents/Microsoft Copilot Chat Files/Broxtowe BC Feasibility Report - final.pdf](https://broxtowebc-my.sharepoint.com/personal/egeorgiou_broxtowe_gov_uk/Documents/Microsoft%20Copilot%20Chat%20Files/Broxtowe%20BC%20Feasibility%20Report%20-%20final.pdf)

The feasibility study estimates that delivery of the proposed café, public toilets and meeting space at Option B would require a capital investment of around £1.2 million, including construction, associated infrastructure works and project contingencies.

Whilst Options C and D also performed relatively well, Option C presents greater planning risks due to its visibility from surrounding roads and the impact on significant trees, whilst Option D offers poorer visibility and connectivity for visitors. Option E scored significantly lower due to its secluded location, accessibility challenges and higher construction costs.

The feasibility study recommends progressing the project based on Option B and undertaking further design development to RIBA Stage 3, together with the appointment of specialist consultants and the commissioning of detailed site surveys and investigations. The estimated cost of this next phase of work is £100k.

Progression to RIBA Stage 3 will provide the detailed design, cost planning and technical information required to develop a robust business case for the scheme. This information will be used to pursue external funding opportunities, including investment through the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA), with the aim of reducing the Council's overall capital contribution to the project should Members wish to progress the project, the current indicative programme suggests that design development, surveys, planning and procurement activities could be undertaken during 2026 and 2027. Subject to the necessary approvals being secured, construction could commence thereafter, with the facility potentially opening during 2028. The programme remains indicative and will be refined as the project develops. A detailed assessment of all options is attached in the **Appendix**.

Risk Management

The current feasibility work identifies a preferred scheme with an estimated total project cost of around £1 million and advises that up to £1.2 million should be assumed for budgeting purposes at this stage.

In addition to governance considerations, there are also resource implications associated with progressing the project. Delivery of a scheme of this scale would require dedicated project management, procurement, contract administration and client-side oversight. At present, there is limited capacity within the Environmental Services department to undertake the delivery of a project of this size alongside current operational and other strategic priorities. Consequently, if the project progresses beyond the feasibility stage, additional internal resources and/or external professional support would need to be secured to ensure effective project delivery, programme management and risk control.

Conversely, delaying progression of the project until the new authority is established could result in the loss of momentum, increased construction costs, and missed opportunities to improve visitor facilities. As such, Members are asked to consider the balance between progressing development of the preferred scheme at this stage and the uncertainty associated with future governance arrangements, funding approvals and project delivery resources.

4. Key Decision

This report is a key decision as defined under Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

5. Updates from Scrutiny

Not applicable.

6. Financial Implications

The comments from the Interim Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer were as follows:

There is no budgetary provision within the capital programme for the further development of this scheme to provide new facilities at Bramcote Hills Park.

The feasibility study has produced high-level cost estimates for each location option. Estimated total project costs range from £900k to £1.2m. The preferred Option B has an estimated total project cost of around £1.0m, comprising construction costs together with allowances for professional fees, development costs, risk and inflation.

Given the early stage of project development and the assumptions underpinning the feasibility assessment, it is advised that a total project cost of around £1.3m should be assumed for planning purposes. This includes an additional allowance of £100k above the feasibility estimate to reflect project development and delivery requirements.

The estimated costs remain subject to further design development, site investigations, utility searches, planning requirements, procurement activity and prevailing market conditions. The project budget would not include any additional internal support costs that may be required to deliver the scheme.

The cost of undertaking further design development work to RIBA Stage 3, as outlined above, is estimated at £100k and would have to be funded from the Council's own resources at this stage.

If Members are minded to proceed with the project, significant funding would need to be secured for the capital programme. The preference will always be to secure grant funding towards the project in the first instance, which could include grant funding bids to the East Midlands Combined Counties Authority (EMCCA) and similar, and allocations from existing capital development funds if this could be agreed with the respective Boards. Any shortfall would have to be met from prudential borrowing, to which there would be ongoing revenue implications for the Council. These would be in addition to any ongoing operational costs to manage and maintain the site, that would have to be considered as part of the business case.

7. Legal Implications

The comments from the Head of Legal Services were as follows:

The Title should be considered and ensure that there are no restrictions in place that would prevent the proposal, alongside consideration of any relevant byelaws and enforcement alongside the normal planning requirements and permissions being granted should the proposal go ahead.

This to include but not limited to the consideration of protection of public open space, design and visual impact, highway and access matters, ecology, tree impacts, and any relevant heritage constraints etc.

Public law duties must also be considered to ensure that under the Equality Act 2010, any new facilities are accessible to everyone. Consideration also needs to be had towards a public consultation should the proposal drastically alter the public use.

Prior to agreeing any proposed lettings, the Council must first comply with the requirements of Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972, which directs that a Council may not dispose of any land consisting or forming part of an open space unless before disposing of the land they cause notice of their intention to do so, specifying the land in question, to be advertised in two consecutive weeks in a newspaper circulating in the area in which the land is situated, and consider any objections to the proposed disposal which may be made to them. The Council must comply with this procedure before granting the lease.

The public benefit of the proposal may well outweigh any limited loss of open space arising from the development footprint.

8. Human Resources Implications

Not applicable.

9. Union Comments

Not applicable.

10. Climate Change Implications

The development must balance the enhancement of visitor facilities with the protection of the park's environmental value. Any scheme should be designed to achieve high standards of sustainability, minimise environmental impacts and deliver significant biodiversity net gain.

11. Data Protection Compliance Implications

Not applicable.

12. Equality Impact Assessment

Not applicable.

13. Background Papers

Nil.