



BISHOPSFORD ROAD BRIDGE

CONSULTATION DOCUMENT MAY 2020

merton.gov.uk/bishopsfordbridge



INTRODUCTION

This document is to seek people's views on the design of the new bridge at Bishopsford Road, Mitcham.

The A217 crosses the river Wandle at Bishopsford Road. Historically this was known as Mitcham Bridge, now more commonly known as Bishopsford Road Bridge.

The bridge partly collapsed in a flood event in June 2019.

Over the following months the bridge was stabilised to stop any further deterioration of the structure. The council carried out surveys and other investigations to explore whether the bridge would be repaired or replaced.

Merton Council has decided to demolish the broken bridge and build a new one. Demolition has started on the broken bridge.

As the bridge lies within the Wandle Valley Conservation Area we are seeking planning permission to build a new bridge.

We are seeking early views so that local residents, businesses and other organisations have an early input to the design of the new bridge.

The views we receive to this consultation will be taken into account in the design we submit for planning permission. Another public consultation will also be undertaken after the planning application has been submitted to the council.



1. Map of the Wandle Valley Conservation Area.

Conservation Area Guidance:

www.merton.gov.uk/assets/Documents/0177_wandle_valley_sub_area_6_lower_mitcham.pdf

BACKGROUND

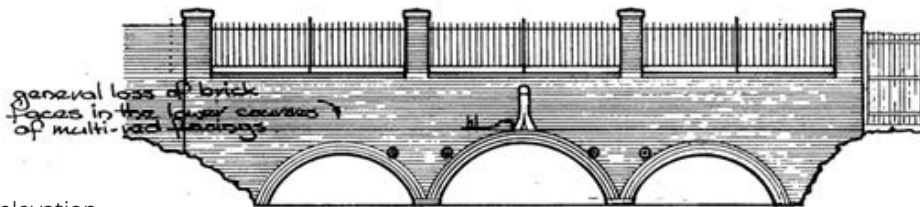


2.. Bishopsford Bridge and Ford.

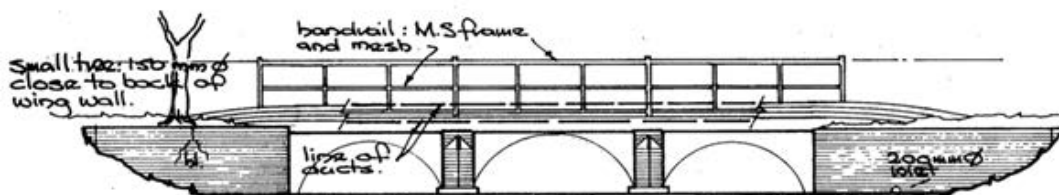
Historical records relating to Bishopsford Bridge show that this location has been a fording point since the middle ages. The three arch Bishopsford Bridge was built in the 18th century and survey records exist from 1882.

In 2010 a wooden footbridge was built downstream (West elevation) about 6 metres from Bishopsford Bridge in Ravensbury Park adjacent to Watermeads estate.

The upstream footbridge was built over the ford circa 1947. This was an unsympathetic addition that covered up the original arches, wholly changing the view of the bridge from upstream (East elevation)



3. West elevation



4. East elevation

PLANNING FOR THE NEW BRIDGE

The new bridge will be a single span structure, approximately 10 metres long.

The void below the parapet will be rectangular. The final span will be agreed with the Environment Agency based on fluvial modelling to minimise local flood risk.

The bridge and parapets will be designed to modern highway standards to accommodate heavier structural loads.

Other issues that will form part of the planning application include:

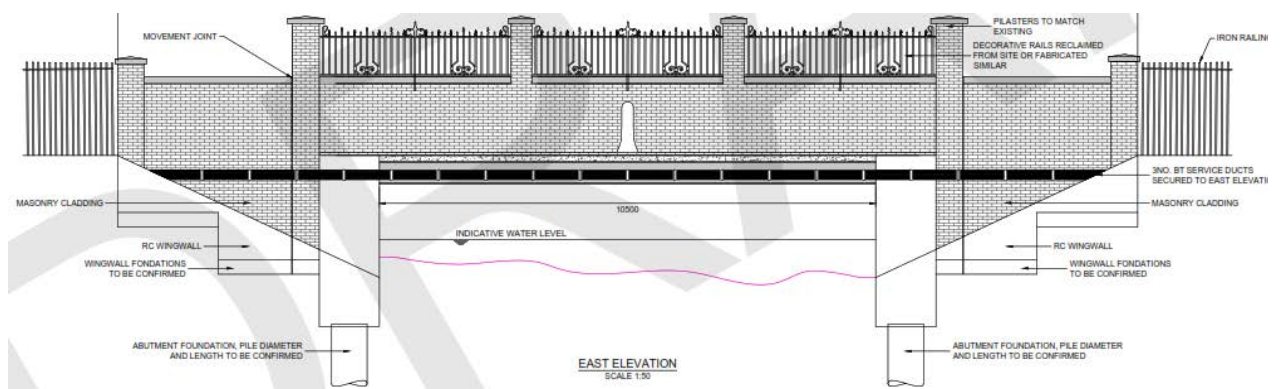
Flood risk – the bridge crosses the river Wandle. The new bridge should maintain, and if possible improve, flood risk mitigation upstream and downstream. The new bridge will be single span and be designed to ensure there is no increase in flood risk elsewhere. We are working very closely with the Environment Agency and separate from the planning application, the new bridge will also require permission from the Environment Agency.

Disturbance to neighbours – the construction of the new bridge should be managed so that it does not disturb neighbours unduly (noise, vibration, dust, traffic).

Design and historic context – the bridge lies within Wandle Valley conservation area and an archaeological priority area. Views should also be considered from the Wandle Trail and nearby Metropolitan Open Land, all set within the Wandle Valley Regional Park.

Highways and access – the new bridge and parapets will be built to modern highways safety standards, improving safety for all its users and be accessible for people of all capabilities.

Ecology – Bishopsford Bridge lies within an area that is important for nature conservation and is near a local nature reserve at Watermeads. The new bridge should include opportunities to enhance biodiversity, particularly in the river and its banks.



5. East elevation of the new, single span structure

HERITAGE FEATURES

We will salvage the Mitcham Parish boundary marker (left), dated 1882 inset to the downstream side of the bridge (visible from the wooden footbridge) and other metal artefacts.

We also intend to salvage the metal railings in the downstream parapet, either for reuse or replication.

Please tell us in the survey if you have any ideas for where these artefacts might be best displayed locally.



6. Decorative railings



7. Mitcham Parish boundary marker 1882.



8. Mitcham Parish boundary marker on the west facing bridge parapet.

EXISTING BRIDGE - VIEW FROM THE ROAD

The bridge is not symmetrical when viewed from the road.

9. The parapets to the downstream side (Watermeads Park) consist in part of three sets of metal railings and continues to the left side into a long boundary wall with Watermeads.



10. These metal railings compliment the large metal gates (locked) visible beside the entrance to the wooden footbridge from the southern side of Bishopsford Road



11. The upstream side parapet (bordering the National Trust land) is a solid wall separating the road bridge from the brick footbridge added to the bridge in the 1940s



EXISTING BRIDGE - VIEW FROM THE BANKS

The rectangular red brick piers and footbridge were added to the upstream side of the bridge in the late 1940s, over the former ford. The former arches are just visible beneath the footbridge.

Gas, electricity, water, telephone and broadband services run across the bridge, either through the pipes visible here or within the bridge concrete itself.



12. Upstream side: Bishopsford Road bridge, 2016, view looking north

In 2010 a wooden footbridge was built across the Wandle from Bishopsford Road to Watermeads Park, close to the downstream side of the road bridge. The wooden footbridge is separate from the highway bridge and will not be affected by this project.

The metal railings and the pilasters of the highways bridge are visible above the footbridge railings.



13. Downstream side, c2010, view looking north

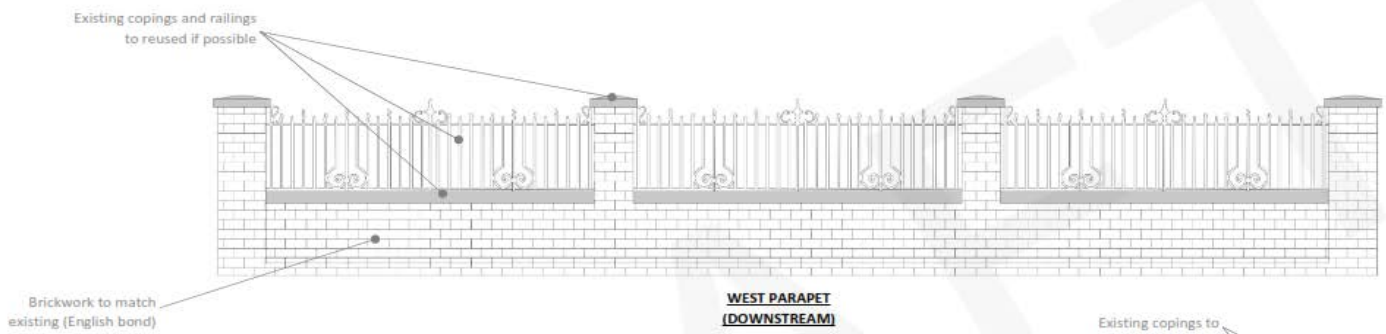
NEW BRIDGE PROPOSAL

The replacement bridge will be a single span structure. This is to minimise flood risk in future, ensuring the River Wandle can flow unobstructed under the bridge.

Whilst the form of the new bridge won't replicate arches of the old bridge, we do have two options for the new parapet.

Option 1:

Brick parapets similar to the existing downstream parapet but on both sides of the bridge



14. West parapet. option 1 detail



15. Impression of Option 1:
View north (towards Mitcham town centre)

VISUALISATION: OPTION 1



16. Looking Northbound: Summer

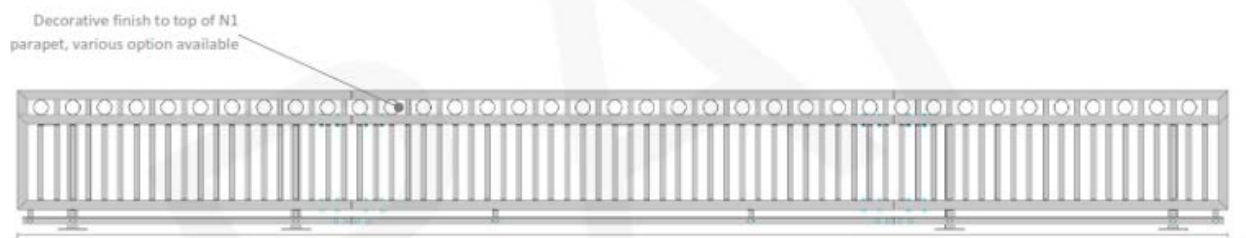


17. Looking Northbound: Winter

NEW BRIDGE PROPOSAL

Option 2:

Metal railings, similar to those in place around the National Trust land (upstream side of the bridge) but with the options for decorative features



18. Parapets: option 2 detail.



19. Impression of Option 2:
View north (towards Mitcham town centre)

VISUALISATION: OPTION 2



20. Looking Northbound: Summer



21. Looking Northbound: Winter

HAVE YOUR SAY

We'd like to hear your views on:

- » **Option 1 for the new bridge**
- » **Option 2 for the new bridge**
- » **Your ideas on how we can interpret the historic artefacts from the original Bishopsford Bridge.**

**Please respond online at:
merton.gov.uk/bishopsfordbridge**

