

Title of Report:	Boardwalk Repair and Replacement, Benone Duneland
Committee Report Submitted To:	Leisure & Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 December 2025
For Decision or For Information	For Decision
To be discussed In Committee	NO

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Protecting and Enhancing our Environments and Assets Promote our tourism offer locally and internationally. Prosperity, Health and Wellbeing and Cohesive Community.
Outcome	Improved access to our natural environment. Development of Visitor economy and health and wellbeing opportunities.
Lead Officer	Head of Tourism & Recreation Coast and Countryside Manager

Estimated Timescale for Completion	
Date to be Completed	Pre-April 26

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	Estimated - £153,500 -£285,800 plus consultancy and procurement costs.
Included in Current Year Estimates	NO
Capital/Revenue	Capital
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Legal Considerations	
Input of Legal Services Required	NO
Legal Opinion Obtained	NO

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek Elected Members approval to advance to Stage 1 of the Council's Capital Works Process (scoping project and outline design) for the repair and replacement of boardwalks in the Benone duneland.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The duneland at Benone is served by a network of paths connecting the beach with the holiday and leisure park. The path network totals a distance of 1336 metres, of which 1010 metres is wooden boardwalk. The boardwalks allow visitors to enjoy the dunes which forms part of Magilligan Special Area of Conservation a designation which reflects the value of the duneland habitat.
- 2.2 The existing timber boardwalks were part of the original development of the site in 1987 with an additional section of boardwalk introduced in 2004 funded through the Natural Rural Resource Tourism Initiative. There are three separate sections of boardwalk which are illustrated in **Annex A** (Map of existing path location). The boardwalks are as follows:
- Marram Way
 - Longboard Way
 - Kestrel Way
- 2.3 Over time, the boardwalks have deteriorated significantly due to the exposed nature of the coastline and natural processes. The condition of the boardwalks now poses safety and maintenance concerns, necessitating the removal and replacement of one boardwalk entirely and repairs to sections of the other two boardwalks.

3.0 Proposals

- 3.1 A combination of proposals is being suggested that will best meet the needs of facilitating public access within a sensitive duneland habitat and ensure reduced maintenance costs and associated issues.
- 3.2 It is proposed to initiate Stage 1 of the Capital Works Process to assess best options for the network of boardwalks. This includes that consideration is given to the removal of the existing timber boardwalk at Marram Way that is in an advanced state of deterioration and has associated safety risks. A replacement slightly shorter boardwalk could be provided as a durable, accessible route that aligns with current best practices for sustainable path construction within natural and recreational environments. A wooden boardwalk is more in keeping with the existing provision at the site which experiences high visitor footfall throughout the year.
- 3.3 Due to the ASSI/SAC designation on the duneland the provision of a compacted dust path is not considered an appropriate provision at this location.
- 3.4 With respect to Longboard Way and Kestrel Way, whilst several sections of boardwalk require replacement much of the existing boardwalk appears to be sound. Initial assessment suggests that approximately 150 metres of boardwalk requires replacement.

4.0 Possible Options

Option 1

This option will consider the complete removal of all three existing timber boardwalks and replacement with new composite/hardwood paths, approximately 1010 metres in length and 2.5 metres in width. The new paths would follow the current alignment of the boardwalk and provide a durable, low-maintenance, and accessible surface suitable for pedestrians and recreational use.

Estimated Cost –

£30,300 (removal) + £252,500 (path) + £3,000 (tree works) = **£285,800**

Option 2

This option will consider the complete removal and replacement of Marram Way in its entirety and replacement of sections of Longboard Way and Kestrel Way, with new composite/hardwood path. The new paths would follow the current alignment of the boardwalks and provide a durable, low-maintenance, and accessible surface suitable for pedestrians and recreational use.

Estimated Cost - £16,500 (removal) + £137,000 (path) = **£153,500**

Maintenance

Post 5-year annual maintenance wooden boardwalk.

Routine maintenance (inspections, edging vegetation, small top-ups with sand) is estimated at £2,150 per year.

5.0 Recommendation

The Leisure and Development Committee is asked to recommend to Council the approval for Council Officers to initiate Stage 1 of the Capital Works Process (scoping, feasibility, and SOC) for the repair and replacement of damaged or deteriorated boardwalks at Benone Coastal and Holiday Park.

ANNEX A

