

DICKENS SQUARE PARK REGENERATION PROJECT

THIRD COMMUNITY CONSULTATION ANALYSIS

29 October 2018 to 9 December 2018

Analysis of community consultation:

The objectives of the third community consultation were:

- Presentation of an updated concept design, influenced by previous public consultation, to the public.
- Encouraging a broad range of park users and stakeholders to give feedback on the updated concept design.

The LDA Design documents considered were *Dickens Square Park: Illustrative Masterplan and latest design*. The final design may be different to the proposed masterplan shown. More detailed aspects of the design, such as furniture, trees, planting and path surfaces, will be consulted upon at a later stage of design development.

The public meeting held on 30 October 2018 was really well attended with 73 participants and wide community representation. A presentation by the Landscape architects from LDA Design was followed by a questions and answers session. The meeting also included a presentation to update local residents on the Harper Road improvements project.

Further feedback was subsequently provided by email.

A meeting with the Metropolitan Police Designing Out Crime team took place on 18 October 2018.

A site meeting with representatives of the mosque (Baitul Aziz Islamic Cultural Centre) took place on 4 December 2018 to discuss vehicle access requirements.

Online consultation through Southwark Council's website took place from 29 October 2018 to 9 December 2018. 17 responses were received.

All the responses were combined to provide the following analysis of opinions given to questions asked in the consultation (see below).

Q1.Location of under fives' play equipment

What do you think of the proposed location for the under fives' play area? It would be fenced, with railings and a gate, but not locked, to provide open access.

Summary of consultees' opinions

The strong majority supports the location and layout of the under fives' play area. A preference has been expressed for natural play equipment.

Q2.Location of play facilities for older children

What do you think of the proposed location for the older children's play area? It would be fenced, with railings and a gate, but not locked, to provide open access.

Summary of consultees' opinions

Similarly there is strong support for the proposed location. Some respondents insisted on the importance of the playground being visible from the street.

Some concern was expressed over expected increased noise from people using the new play and exercise facilities.

Q3.Location of exercise equipment trim trail/outdoor gym

What is your opinion about the location of the trim trail and outdoor gym?

Summary of consultees' opinions

Whilst the majority is in favour of the proposed locations for both the outdoor gym and the trim trail equipment, some respondents would prefer it to be further away from the road and others would want to see more equipment along Harper rd.

Q4.Improve entrances and footpaths. fencing to Harper road and Falmouth road options

What do you think about these proposals?

Summary of consultees' opinions

Most respondents like the proposed entrances, footpaths and fencing along Harper Road, with 12 respondents rating these Good or Very Good, and only 1 poor or very poor. Some comments were made with regards to the material used for the footpath surfacing which should contribute to the natural feel of the park.

Q5.Former Dickens Square

What do you think about the redesign of the area formerly occupied by Dickens Square?

Summary of consultees' opinions

Dickens Square Road will be closed and the site re-landscaped, but the new design will ensure vehicle access for mosque funeral vehicles into the rear entrance of the mosque.

There continues to be some concern regarding the adoption of the Dickens Square in the park and the loss of parking space. This was raised by representatives of the mosque users at the public meeting mainly, with only one response to the online survey stating this position.

However there was also a strong opinion that people attending the mosque should be encouraged to use public transport. The removal of as much hard-standing as possible is welcomed by many local residents.

Parking available to mosque visitors has recently been increased by the Highways team in two streets nearby. Resident-only bays along Falmouth Road and Rockingham Street have changed to shared pay and display/resident bays. One respondent expressed some concerns on the loss of resident only parking spaces in Trinity Village in particular. Highways Project Manager confirmed that there is no proposal to remove parking in Trinity Village.

Note from Highways presentation on Harper Road improvements: there will be a pedestrian crossing on Harper road to align with an entrance into the park.

Q6.Increasing biodiversity

The park is classified as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation, so ecology is a priority when improving the park. What do you think about the ideas for increasing biodiversity in the park?

Summary of consultees' opinions

Whilst there is strong support for proposed ideas to increase biodiversity there is a clear drive to go further in protecting existing fauna (woodpeckers were mentioned a couple of times) and enhance habitats (bat and bird boxes) and food supply (flowering and fruiting species). Interpretation boards and education and activities were requested.

Q7.Tree management

Trees in the park are a very important part of its green character and for their contribution to ecology. There are many unplanned, self-seeded trees, including in the existing adventure playground, which have created large areas that are shaded or blocked by uncontrolled growth, including bushes. Last year a tree survey was completed, to help to inform the design. There may be a need to remove some existing trees as part of the redesign.

What do you think about the ideas for tree management in the park redesign?

Summary of consultees' opinions

More details on tree removal and tree planting were requested but the general opinion is that the park does need opening up and that some tree removal is necessary. The only reservations relate to the trees along the nature trail and the fir trees. Some consultees would like to see native, flowering and fruiting trees.

Q8. Please provide comments on any other aspect of the latest design proposal

Summary of consultees' opinions

These are grouped by topic, in alphabetical order.

Bikes: To clarify, the proposal is to include bike stands in the Dickens Square area, not bike storage.

Bins: Several consultees requested that the recycling bins are either relocated or that an underground solution is explored.

Parks & Leisure's response:

The location of the recycling bins is being reviewed at the moment. Underground facilities are not an option.

Interpretation boards: It was suggested that the history of the site and of the area, and the biodiversity interests of the park should be displayed on information boards.

Lighting: A discussion around lighting took place at the meeting. The Metropolitan Police 'Designing Out Crime' team advised against any lighting in the park as it would only give a false sense of safety and encourage people to use the park at night.

Maintenance and monitoring: Parks will be responsible for the upkeep and operational management of the whole site, including the Butterfly Walk and Dickens Square area.

Name of the park: change of name requested to Dickens Fields, being the historic name.

Park & Leisure's response

It is possible to formally name the site Dickens Fields

Park Building: 2 responses expressed disappointment to see the building disappear (in relation to community room hire in particular) and not replaced.

Park & Leisure's response

The park building and existing playground will be removed and the area re-landscaped. The building is in poor condition and there are no

resources to fund repairs and alterations to the building to make it fit for modern use. A sustainable solution is needed. A much better quality play area for children of all ages will be provided, together with a range of quality equipment, including adventurous features such as a zip wire.

Picnic and barbeque facilities: a respondent would like to see a dedicated BBQ area.

Park & Leisure's response

Due to concerns over air quality, risk of fire, litter levels and maintenance costs, barbeque areas are not promoted in parks, in line with current byelaws.

Railings: request for the railings to be in keeping with historic ones in the environs.

Water feature: one consultee suggested to include a water feature, and suggested a design of an Islamic nature.

Widening of pavement along Falmouth rd: 2 respondents have commented on the loss of Park land to widen the pavement and have asked to minimise the change in boundary.

Works: Concern about works, disruption and coordination with Highways works. The Project Managers responded that we will be coordinating our timeframes to ensure minimal disruption.

General comments:

Strong support to transform the park into an attractive and well-designed leisure facility.

It is hoped that the finished park would be pleasant and welcoming, and attract visitors from both the local and wider vicinity.