

Tottenham Green regeneration project

Summary of consultation responses, December 2012

Headline figures

41 responses submitted

21 explicitly supportive (51%)

12 raise specific concerns issues, but did not renounce the scheme (29%)

8 openly against the broad proposals (20%)

Key design features consulted upon

1. Tottenham Green levelled and minor works to mature trees to improve views including consideration of a reduction in numbers.
2. Gentle bank, with new planting, to the High Road where a widened pavement is defined by a low retaining wall, benches and extra space around bus stops.
3. Subject to negotiations with TFL, Town Hall Approach Road closed to through traffic with access only from the south. Road surface narrowed and raised and the park extended towards buildings along the Green. Uplighting to historic buildings.
4. Revised network of paths, centred on a new grove at the heart of the Green, with space for events such as markets and performances. This includes new direct access from the well in the north east corner to better link Church Green and Tottenham Green with new benches and lighting included throughout the park.
5. Distinctive new hard surface for the Bernie Grant Arts Centre courtyard, reusing stone paving from the Green, to create space for outdoor events.
6. Special low level planted area including lawns, paving and a series of long benches in front of existing buildings.
7. Clad the electricity sub-station with mirrored panels to make it more attractive.
8. War Memorial, with setting significantly improved as part of the gyratory road works, has enclosure altered to offer a more fitting space for remembrance and improved access to the Green.
9. East Green 'refreshed' with improved furniture and surfaces including a new path to the north, a cherry tree grove and an informal natural play area, with low fencing.

Themes

17 responses commented on the impact of traffic calming/closure of Town Hall Approach Road with **10** against the closure (24%) and **7** for the closure (17%)

14 responses were explicitly against any reduction in numbers to trees and in some responses against any works to trees. Some responses did concede that diseased trees could be justifiably removed (33%)

7 responses stated that this scheme should not be considered a priority and that the money would be better spent on other issues – supporting young people, tackling economic conditions, restoring Wards Corner (17%)

5 responses specifically called for either protection of the war memorial as it stands or relocation to be more central and better set (14%)

5 responses called for or hoped that anti-social behaviour to be addressed through the scheme (14%)

4 responses asked us to consider the ongoing maintenance of the site after the work is completed to maintain standards and also to raise existing standards (11%)

Other themes featuring in 2 or less responses:

- supporting cafe culture,
- calling for more greenery than hard surfaces,
- more plants,
- moving the play area away from traffic,
- improving the setting of the well,
- expressing opinion on lighting (1 positive 1 negative)
- asking for further consultation

Detailed feedback

The proposals were variously described as ‘fantastic’ ‘good’, ‘excellent’ or ‘great’ as an opening line. The majority of responses make general comment on the highlighted design features – thematically summarised above. The biggest issue is the proposal to **close or restrict traffic on Town Hall Approach Road**.

“Any traffic reduction would be a good thing”

“build up of traffic on Philip Lane could be the result of closing Town Hall Approach Road”

“You have carried out this type of road structure at West Green Road/Philip Lane/Down Hills Park... causing heavy congestion and tailbacks”

Respondents were 10 to 7 against the proposal to close or restrict traffic on Town Hall Approach Road and for a range of reasons; safety at night from passing cars, restrictions on dropping off or collecting coach parties from the road and the knock on effect of congestion on Philip Lane. On the latter point, the proposals we made are in addition to the plans to be implemented as part of the TfL Gyrotory works and consequences will happen regardless of our work.

The second biggest single issue was the proposals around **trees**.

“Consideration of a reduction in numbers' of mature trees is a terrible idea. Why do this in an area with very few of these trees?”

“What view is more beautiful than that of a mature tree. " Consideration of a reduction in numbers" - for pity's sake why?”

“I do not support the idea of removing trees. They take a long time to grow and mature trees form a valuable asset in terms of their beauty, improving air quality and temperature regulation and providing wildlife habitat.”

“I would be 100% opposed to any reduction in tree numbers and I would have thought such a action would be illegal anyway (it certainly should be)”

“If you destroy any trees, you will lose lots of neighbourly goodwill which, in my, opinion, you need.”

None of the 14 responses to tree management proposals agreed that tree removal was a desirable outcome – certainly for healthy trees. Comments ranged from the short and absolute rejection of the proposal to a reasoned argument against.

A draft tree management plan has been produced identifying all the trees on the green by species and condition, this has been prepared in conjunction with LBHs Arboricultural Officer. None of the trees on the Green are subject to a Tree Preservation Order.

7 respondents **didn't consider this a good investment**, citing other priorities or questioning the need for change.

"Have known Tottenham Green as it is for 45 years. Some of your changes are too modern"

"Why [level the green]? The natural contours are very agreeable"

"the proposals are bit OTT and not meeting the direct need [in the local area]"

"I can't help thinking that £1.2m would be better spent on youth centres and improving facilities for young people in Tottenham to distract them from causing trouble"

"I don't feel that this is a good use of money at all. Why would you want to change this area in the first place?" "A solution in search of a problem"

"Would have thought that there are plenty of other areas in Tottenham in greater need of cash for physical improvements"

For those that consider the money better used elsewhere, we have to accept their point but move on in recognition of the fact that this money wasn't made available for 'other' activities such as youth centres or worklessness programmes. The respondents that questioned the need for change and that designs are too modern indicate that local memories of the Green are short-term as the current layout is less than 10 years old.

Respondents recognised that Cafes and activity could encourage visitors including childrens play. Although one response felt the green was too polluted an area – through vehicle emissions – to be suitable for childrens play in any form.

"A cafe or public use [along Town Hall Approach Rd] could help connect building and park better and bring more use everyday"

"[with appropriate facilities] attract 'healthy' activities"

"with more events going on, it will draw people across to come into the area"

"There is no facility for children's play and this is missing in the area"

"No childrens play area in any format due to the traffic pollution"

"It would be nice to have either a Starbucks or Costa coffee shop to attract people to the green and then notice the other amenities"

"Doing up the area is a good thing and will make it the heart of Tottenham"

5 responses focussed on the **War Memorial**. Specifically that not enough was made of it as it is, that it should not be reduced only enhanced and that could we consider moving it – piece by piece – to the centre of the green.

"the War Memorial should be centre of this plan"

“The War Memorial is at the pinnacle of a triangle – when you close Town Hall Approach Road it will become isolated and made insignificant”

“The War Memorial should not be left on the corner of the street...it should be re-erected and placed in the middle”

Since the plans that were consulted on were released, the Architect in conversation with the Conservation Officer has decided that the costs and timescales for undertaking any work to the War Memorial were prohibitive within the available programme and budget. The War Memorial is owned and managed by the Council as a heritage asset (it is a grade II listed structure). Additionally, the TfL Gyrotory works will increase the amount of pavement around the memorial, setting it in a larger paved area and distancing it from traffic, this will have some of the desired effects intended by the Architect.

Ongoing maintenance, respect and community safety were regular comments made, including the following:

“vital that the area not become a meeting ground for gangs or drinkers”

“please increase community policing patrols if you fix up this park”

“during the build up to the Olympics, Crouch End and Muswell Hill got red, white and blue flower borders, Tottenham got pink Geraniums” “we pay the same level of council tax – give us some respect”

“[after improvement] What guarantee is there that the area will be fit for purpose?” “By-laws need to be enforced [against current anti-social uses] to be suitable for children”

“cull’ the pigeons[!]” “put up notices prohibiting the feeding of these birds”

There were also specific comments made about the design approach:

“We would like to see better signage” “help create a sense of place”

“[create] ‘real’ paths to discourage people making their ‘own’ paths across the grass...this spoils the grass”

“Community notice board space also needed – perhaps around the electricity substation”

I welcome the proposals to improve the Green and look forward to them starting, however...uplighting [of historic buildings] makes the features, brick or stone, look artificial and flimsy”

“More green less paths”

Using this feedback

All consultation material and thematic analysis was made available to the Architects, Adams & Sutherland, within a week of the closing date. The designs that consultation was based on were the initial proposition, a general arrangement of design elements and desires laid out on a plan of the Green, with the consultation response, with further consideration of practical constraints and with a full cost report from the Quantities Surveyor, the architect will turn the initial proposal into a formal detailed design proposal. Changes will range from refined changes to path networks and surface materials, to firm proposals on specific issues.

On trees, the proposal was to raise the canopy to 6-7m to give better views across the Green and to better display the architectural heritage on Town Hall Approach Road. The initial proposal suggested some tree removal to create better spaces, but the consultation responses indicated strong opinions on tree protection. The detailed designs will still recommend some tree removal, but with a strong case built around the health of the trees, public safety and the overall welfare of the community of trees across the Green.

On the War Memorial, the proposal was to reduce the base of the memorial within an expanded paved setting (provided through the TfL Gyrotory works) to make it stand out more. However, there was both opposition in the consultation response to any amendments and also a risk to the programme as it became clear the regulatory and cost constraints of this action. The detailed designs will leave the War Memorial as it is, with any action limited to cleaning and restoration of the monument.

On the closure/traffic calming on Town Hall Approach Road, the ambition remains to make this a fundamentally pedestrian area and the TfL Gyrotory works will contribute to this by removing Northbound traffic from the High Road (service and resident only Northbound exit from CHENEL and Newlon Housing) and making it Bus and Cycle only exit Southbound. The stakeholder group has discussed going further and working with TfL and Arriva to relocate the #76 bus to Tottenham Hale and to find alternatives to bus standing and route curtailment away from Tottenham Green. The detailed designs therefore, still reflect a space that fundamentally a pedestrian realm and that can manage/control traffic whilst it is still necessary on site.

The detailed designs will be subject to a key public consultation exercise on Saturday 19th January. This will be an opportunity for the public to comment specifically on types of furniture, surface materials, plant types etc. This relies on the assumption that the general arrangement of the scheme has been satisfactorily arrived at through existing public and stakeholder consultation.

This report and anonymous comments will be made available publically.