

New homes and community improvements on Edenham site

Analysis of round three resident and stakeholder consultation

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**THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA**

Introduction

Background

The Council is delivering 600 new homes including a minimum of 300 social rent homes, alongside open market homes to rent and other community and employment facilities as part of its New Homes Programme (NHDP). All of these new homes will be developed on sites owned by the Council. We have 2,100 people on our housing waiting list who are in temporary accommodation. So it's important that we, as a Council, maximise the use of the land that we have to address this acute housing shortage. We are looking at land across the whole borough to be able to do this.

Edenham, adjacent to Trellick Tower, is just one of the sites identified as part of the NHDP to help deliver new homes for the borough. In addition to providing new homes, the proposed development would include the following additional benefits: a dedicated community facility, an improved major central landscaped area, retention of a significant portion of the graffiti wall, a new ball court facility and improvements to the surrounding area with investment planned for Trellick Tower public realms.

Consultation approach

Following two rounds of consultation in late 2020 and February 2021, the Council launched a third round of consultation on 8 July, running to 20 August 2021, to gather stakeholders' views on the emerging proposals (taking into account feedback from previous rounds). A dedicated page was set up on the [Council's website](#) with details of the proposals and consultation, this included a video presentation. Stakeholders were encouraged to provide feedback via an online survey and two public meetings (one in person and one online) where stakeholders could ask questions about the proposals and provide feedback. To ensure those that without access to the internet were able to participate, paper copies of material was available on request and paper copies of the survey were delivered to residents living closest to the site.

The consultation was promoted via a variety of channels, including; leaflet drops, social media, the Council's website, newsletters, posters and via faith groups, schools, businesses and local voluntary and community groups.

Report

A total of 93 surveys were returned by the deadline and one virtual meeting and two in person drop in sessions were held. This report contains an analysis of survey responses, a summary of feedback from the virtual meeting and a detailed response from Golborne Ward Councillors and CoMMET. Where graphs are shown, percentage figures are used. A separate appendix report is also available on request, containing data tables and all comments made in the survey.

Acknowledgements

The Council would like to thank all residents and stakeholders that took the time to feedback their views.



Results at a glance: Feedback from the survey

The below summary is high level findings from the survey, which received 93 responses. More detail on the results can be found in the main body of the report.

Building heights

- Two-thirds (66 per cent) **'objected'** to the revised building heights.
- A total of 14 per cent responded neutrally (**neither supporting nor objecting**) to the proposals.
- A total of 12 per cent **'supported'** the revised proposals.

Number of homes

- Respondents were asked to comment on the revised proposals for 110 homes. A total of 34 comments related to there being **too many homes or not supporting the proposals**. Twelve comments related to **concerns about infrastructure or facilities**. Whilst 11 commented they would like to see a **higher number/percentage of affordable/social rent homes**.

New community space

- From a list of choices, respondents ranked a **health and wellness centre** as their first choice for a new community space at the base of Trellick Tower, followed by a **creative workspace**.

Landscape provision

- Respondents were asked to comment on the proposed landscape provision. A total of 15 commented **against the building proposals overall**, whilst 14 commented **against the landscape proposals**. However, 13 were **in favour of the landscape proposals**.

Ball court facilities

- The most selected features that respondents would like to see in the ball court were: - **accessible to all users** (43 per cent), **improved lighting** (41 per cent) and **flexible for use by different sports** (38 per cent).



Results at a glance: Feedback from the survey

Play spaces

- Respondents were asked what type of play spaces they would like to see for different age groups.
- A **naturalistic, incorporating natural features, planting and nature** play space was the most popular choice for play spaces for toddlers (0-5 years old), 6-11 year olds and 12-18 years old.
- For those aged over 18, **calm play activities e.g. board games or seating areas** was the most popular choice.

Graffiti provision

- Half (50 per cent) of respondents **supported the proposal to retain existing graffiti walls** as part of the landscape.
- However, a quarter **objected** to this approach.

The Beach

- The most popular future uses of the Beach were: - **flexible event space** (32 per cent), **picnic area** (29 per cent) and for **ball sports** (25 per cent).

Trellick Garden

- From a list of choices, respondents ranked **new landscaping and trees** and **improved safety and security** as their top choices for improvements for Trellick Garden.

Servicing

- Nearly a third (31 per cent) **'objected'** to the proposed access route.
- A quarter (25 per cent) responded neutrally (**neither supporting nor objecting**).
- Nearly a quarter (23 per cent) **'supported'** the proposed access route.



Section 1:

Resident and stakeholder survey

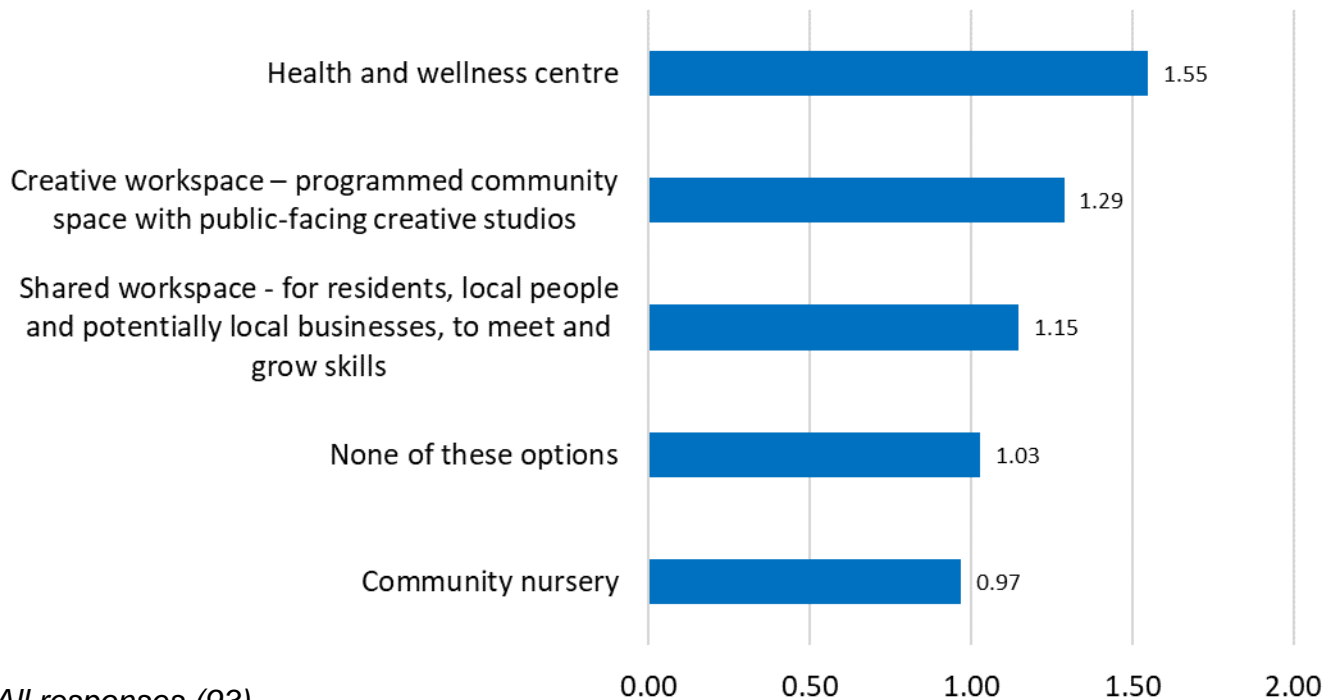


Survey findings: New community space

Based on feedback from previous rounds of consultation, a new community space is proposed at the base of Trellick Tower as part of the proposals. Respondents were asked to rank in order of preference some identified opportunities for the space. A score of five was awarded to their first choice, four to their second choice, through to one for their fifth choice (respondents could rank fewer choices if they wished). A mean score was then calculated for each option to produce the below graph.

- Respondents ranked a **'health and wellness centre'** as their first choice
- From the list, respondents ranked a **'community nursery'** as their last choice
- A number of respondents did not want to see any of these options and went on to make other suggestions which are explored in subsequent pages.

New Community Space: Ranked in order of preference



Base: All responses (93)

Survey findings: Community space suggestions

Respondents were asked if they had other suggestions for the community space. Comments made have been themed and examples of comments made can be seen below. The full list of themes and comments made can be found in appendix two.

“Without listening to concerns about the density and high rise buildings these questions are both an insult and irrelevant. They do not constitute a valid consultation process.”

Comments on the proposals/consultation

“Youth club, community space, green space, keep graffiti walls. Keep open space and views.”

Community activities/socialising

“I would like that the residents would have priority to these workspaces and I wish to believe they serve the need for the ones who live in small flats and need to work from home nowadays.”

Education/workspaces



“None of these - put money into existing estates rather than ruining this one.”

None of the suggestions/leave as is

“Health and wellness workshops for health related issues, also where the venue may be used for health and fitness sessions.”

Sports/fitness/wellbeing

“Green areas.”

Green/open spaces

“Keep the graffiti wall as it is. “

Grffiti wall



Survey findings: Landscape provision

The scheme now proposes a total of circa. 7,000sqm of open space all of which will be for use by the local community. This is more than three times the size of the existing space available to residents and has been increased by five per cent since the previous round of consultation. In response to stakeholders' comments on the importance of shared open space within the estate, and supporting an 'estate wide' approach to development, the site area has also been extended to include improvement to the area to the north of Trellick Tower (an additional 2,150sqm).

Respondents were asked for their thoughts on the proposed landscape provision. Comments made have been themed and examples of comments made can be seen below. The full list of themes and comments made can be found in appendix two.

“We are happy to see the landscape being improved. Suggest to have a bike lane along the canal. It's too dangerous to walk along the canal with children and elderly.”

In favour of the proposals



“Approve. Very pleased that the current filthy space behind Trellick will finally be sorted out.”

In favour of the proposals

“Why ask, you don't take our comments and thoughts into consideration.”

Consultation process

“Don't agree, just leave as it is.”

Against the landscape proposals/leave as is

“There should be more open green space between the tower blocks and Edenham Way as the towers are far too overpowering.”

Garden/green spaces

“I do not agree with taking any space to build new flats.”

Against the building proposals

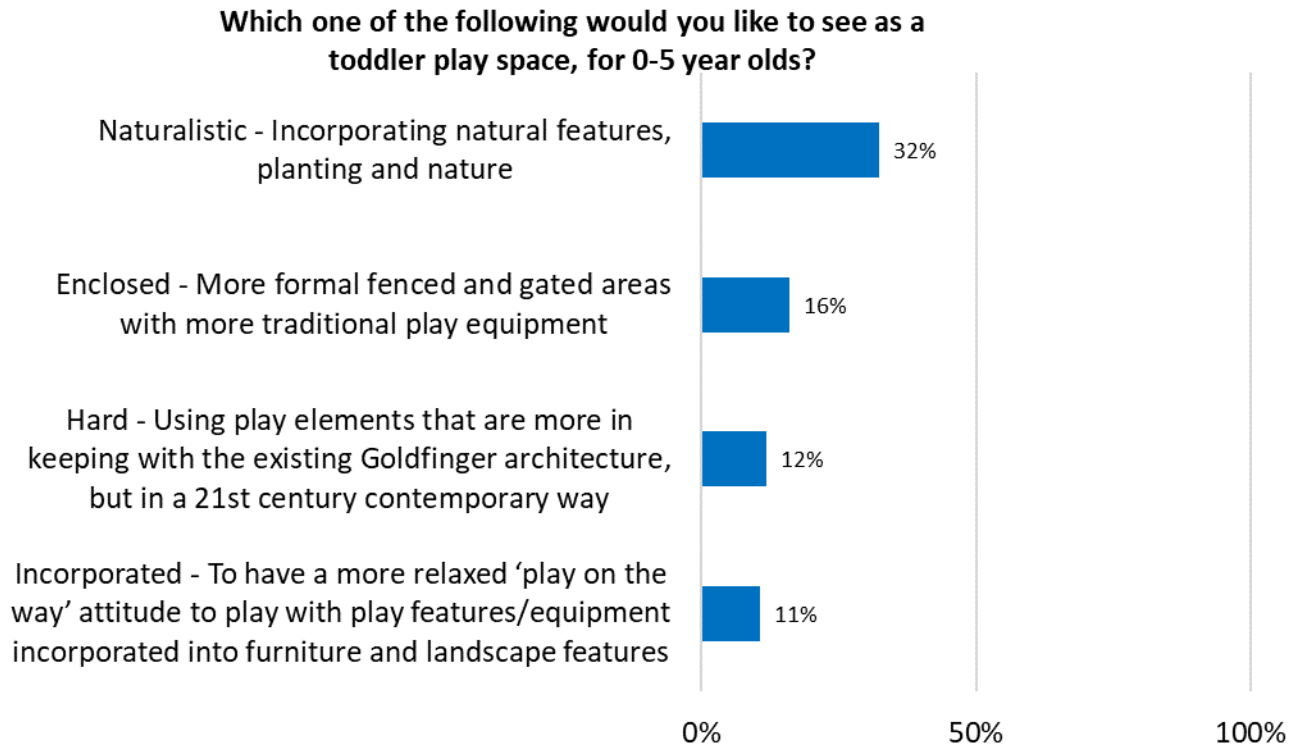


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Survey findings: Play space for 0-5 year olds

In the second round of consultation stakeholders told us that providing new play space for children was the type of landscaping they would most like to see. Respondents were asked about the characteristics they would like to see for each group. For the toddler play space (0-5 years old):

- Almost a third (32 per cent) would like to see a play space that was ***'naturalistic, incorporating natural features, planting and nature'***.
- A total of 16 per cent would like to see a play space that was ***'enclosed, more formal fenced and gated areas with more traditional play equipment'***.

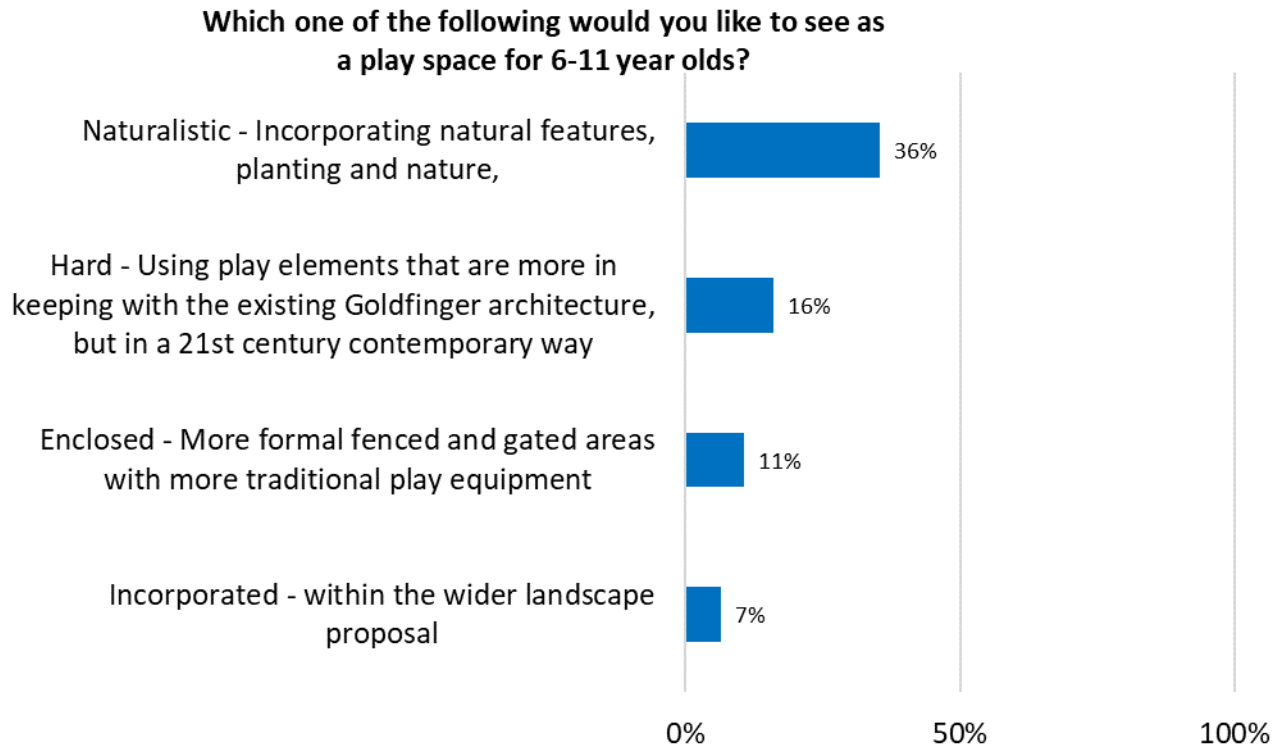


Base: All responses (93)

Survey findings: Play space for 6-11 year olds

In the second round of consultation stakeholders told us that providing new play space for children was the type of landscaping they would most like to see. Respondents were asked about the characteristics they would like to see for each group. For the play space for 6-11 year olds:

- Over a third (36 per cent) would like to see a play space that was ***‘naturalistic, incorporating natural features, planting and nature’***.
- A total of 16 per cent would like to see a play space that was ***‘hard, using play elements that are more in keeping with the existing Goldfinger architecture, but in a 21st century contemporary way’***.

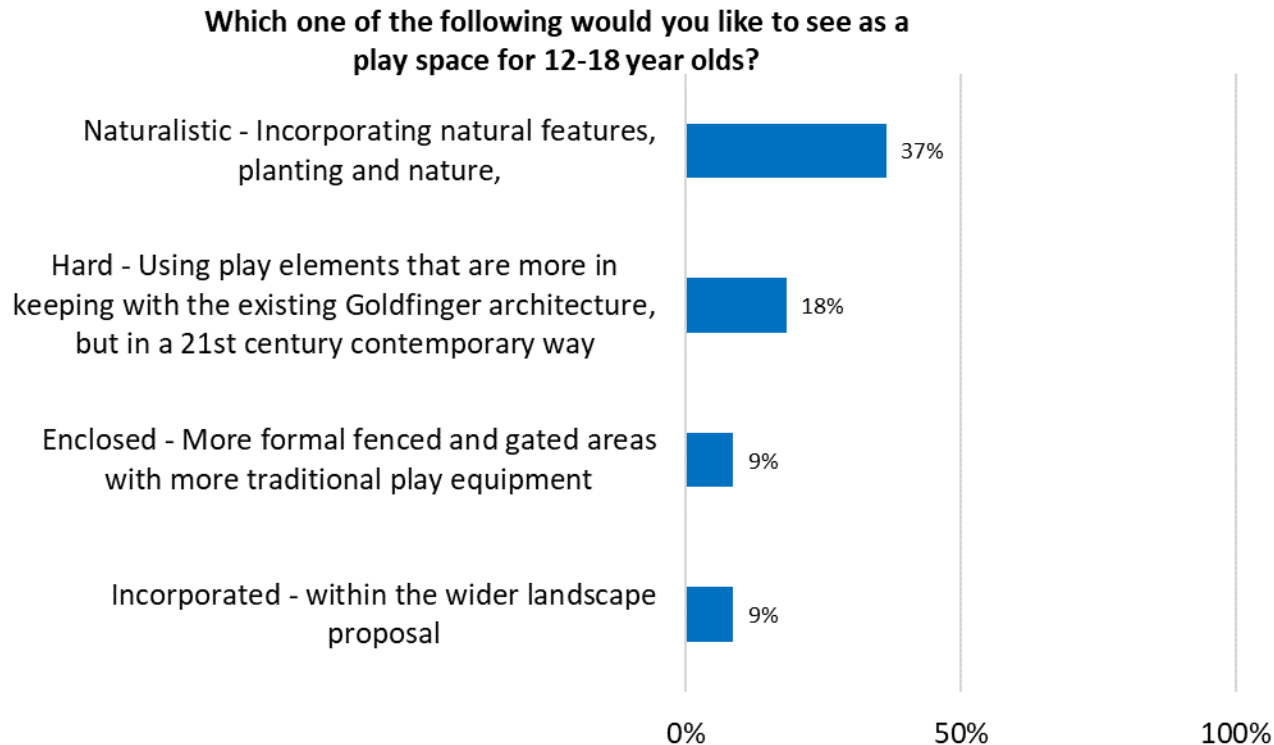


Base: All responses (93)

Survey findings: Play space for 12-18 year olds

In the second round of consultation stakeholders told us that providing new play space for children was the type of landscaping they would most like to see. Respondents were asked about the characteristics they would like to see for each group. For the play space for 12-18 year olds:

- Over a third (37 per cent) would like to see a play space that was ***‘naturalistic, incorporating natural features, planting and nature’***.
- A total of 18 per cent would like to see a play space that was ***‘hard, using play elements that are more in keeping with the existing Goldfinger architecture, but in a 21st century contemporary way’***.

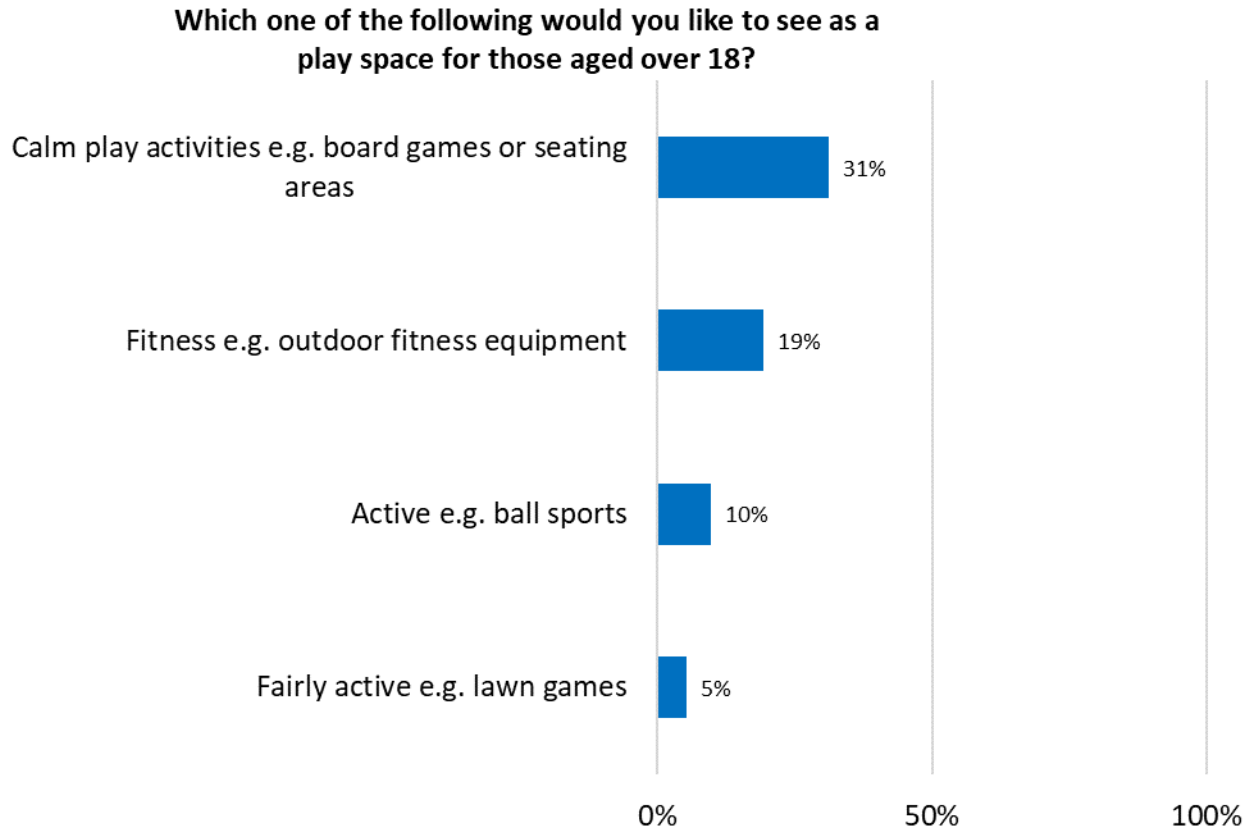


Base: All responses (93)

Survey findings: Play space for those aged over 18

In the second round of consultation stakeholders told us that providing new play space for children was the type of landscaping they would most like to see. Respondents were asked about the characteristics they would like to see for each group. For the play space for those aged over 18:

- Nearly a third (31 per cent) would like to see a play space with ***'calm play activities e.g. board games or seating areas'***.
- Nearly a fifth (19 per cent) would like to see play space for ***'fitness e.g. outdoor fitness equipment'***



Base: All responses (93)

Survey findings: Play space suggestions

Respondents were asked if there were any other play spaces they would like to see incorporated into the landscape provision. Comments made have been themed and examples of comments made can be seen below. The full list of themes and comments made can be found in appendix two.

“Netball. Table tennis. Football.”

Sports/fitness activities

“Tennis court, ping pong table, chess table, bars (gymnastic).”

Sports/fitness activities

“Gardens for elderly and all. People rest, relax.”

Gardens/green spaces

“My comments wouldn't be taken into consideration.”

Consultation process

“Improvement to the ball court as it has been left to rot for years. “

Ball court

“Just keep it calm and green.”

Calm/quiet place

“Keep the original graffiti wall.”

Graffiti wall

“This is not a real consultation if you have already decided the outcome, half the people have not been properly informed, Edenham barely knows about these plans. We do not want these buildings!”

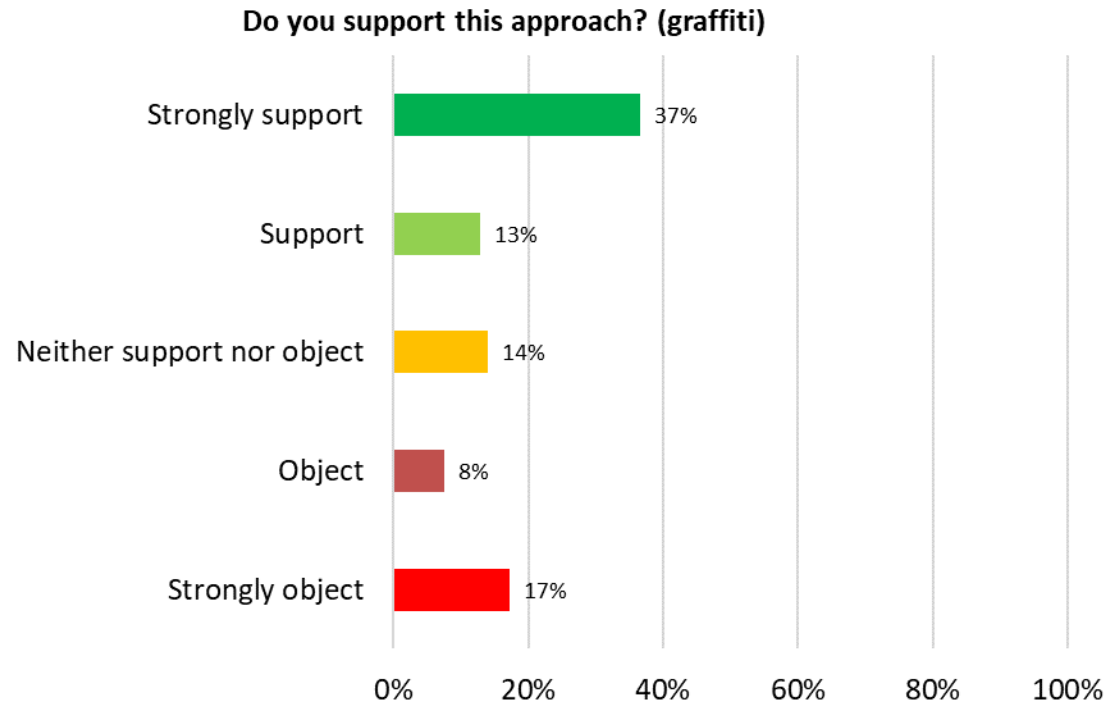
Against the building proposals



Survey findings: Graffiti provision

We understand the value of the site to the graffiti writers and its legacy on the estate. We are therefore proposing to now retain a significant portion of existing graffiti walls as part of the landscape and making it more inclusive, safer and accessible space for the neighbourhood. Respondents were asked if they supported this approach.

- Half (50 per cent) of respondents either '**strongly supported**' or '**supported**' the approach.
- A quarter (25 per cent) of respondents either '**strongly objected**' or '**objected**' to this approach.



Base: All responses (93)

Survey findings: Objection to graffiti provision

Respondents that objected to the approach to graffiti provision were asked to explain why. Comments made have been themed and examples of comments made can be seen below. The full list of themes and comments made can be found in appendix two.

“They have a space now, why take it away. I think Goldfinger must be so upset if he was alive.”

***In favour of keeping the graffiti wall/
leave as is***

“All outdoor art should be supported.”

***In favour of keeping the graffiti wall/
leave as is***

“The “graffiti artists” have taken the space away from the residents. It is an intimidating space to walk through. It is filthy much of the time, discarded bottles and cans, aerosols, takeaway food etc. This should be a space primarily for residents. Currently it is not.”

Anti-social behaviour of artists



“Don’t build in front of Trellick.”

Against building proposals

“Not a valid question - does not accurately reflect the choices we face.”

Consultation process

“I find it utterly baffling that RBKC are prioritising a niche activity enjoyed by such a small number of mainly non-residents. It's a magnet for ASB, open drug use, drinking, etc. It is usually strewn with cans, aerosols, discarded take away food and generally filthy.”

Used by people not from the estate

“It is not inclusive for all. Most people don’t use this space right now as it’s unsafe and uninviting. It’s a dump.”

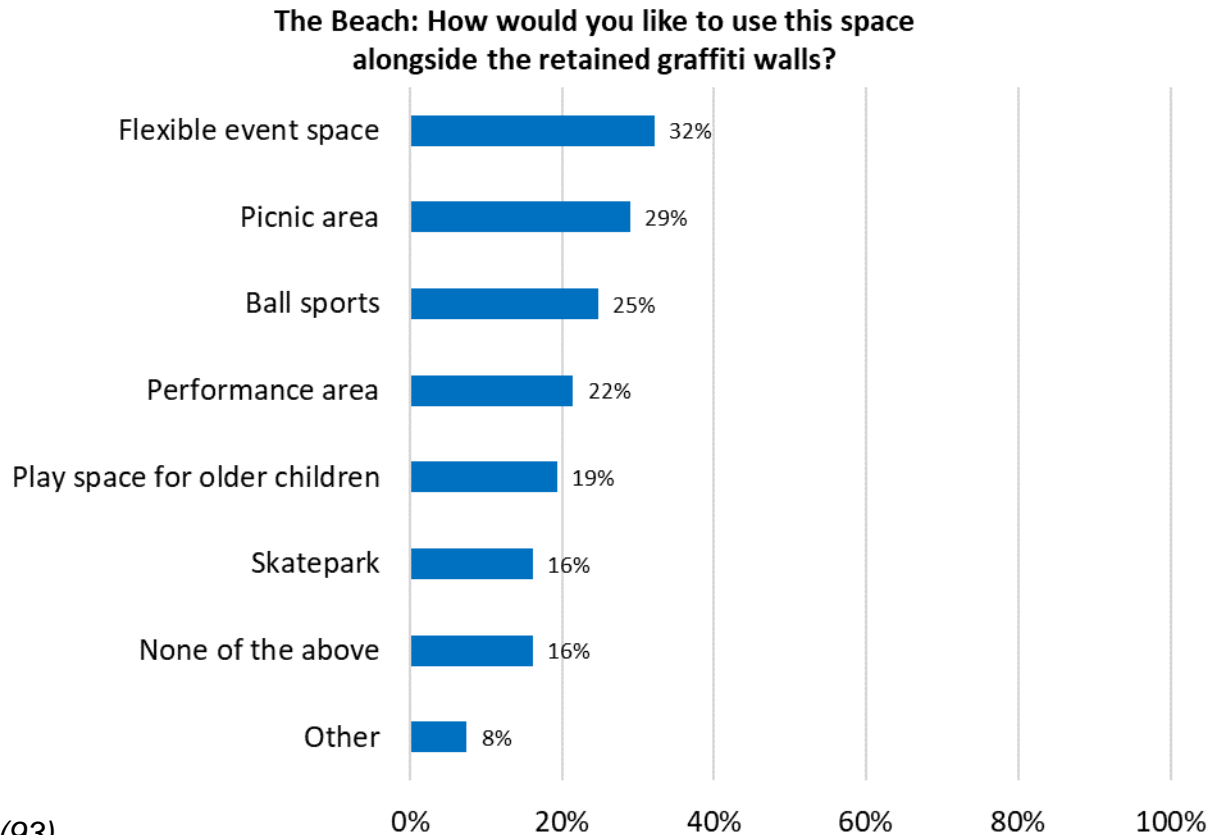
Safety concerns



Survey findings: The Beach

The design team are exploring different ideas for how “The Beach” space might be used. Respondents were asked how they would like to see this space used alongside the retained graffiti walls. Respondents were able to select as many options as they wished.

- Almost a third (32 per cent) would like to see this space used as a **‘flexible event space’**.
- Over a quarter (29 per cent) would like to see it used as a **‘picnic area’** and a quarter (25 per cent) would like to see it used for **‘ball sports’**.
- Eight per cent would like to see the space used for **‘other’** uses, these are explored on subsequent pages.



Base: All responses (93)

Survey findings: The Beach, other uses

Respondents that had other suggestions for use of The Beach, were asked to comment further. Comments made have been themed and examples of comments made can be seen below. The full list of themes and comments made can be found in appendix two.

“Leave the space as it is. The beach? You’ll never developed it. It’s a con to get this passed.”

Against/leave as is

“Keep it a graffiti wall. Improve the area around it.”

Graffiti

“A quiet park area. As we have enough noisy spaces next to Trellick Tower.”

Calm/quiet area/meditation

“Badminton, table tennis, yoga.”

Sports/ball court

“Small houses with gardens. On original design by Mr Goldfinger.”

Housing



“We do not want any buildings at all, this is totally inappropriate for the area and community.”

Against the building proposal

“It’s important that there is enough space to hold community events alongside the graffiti wall.”

Community events/activities

“Dog park.”

Dog park/walking

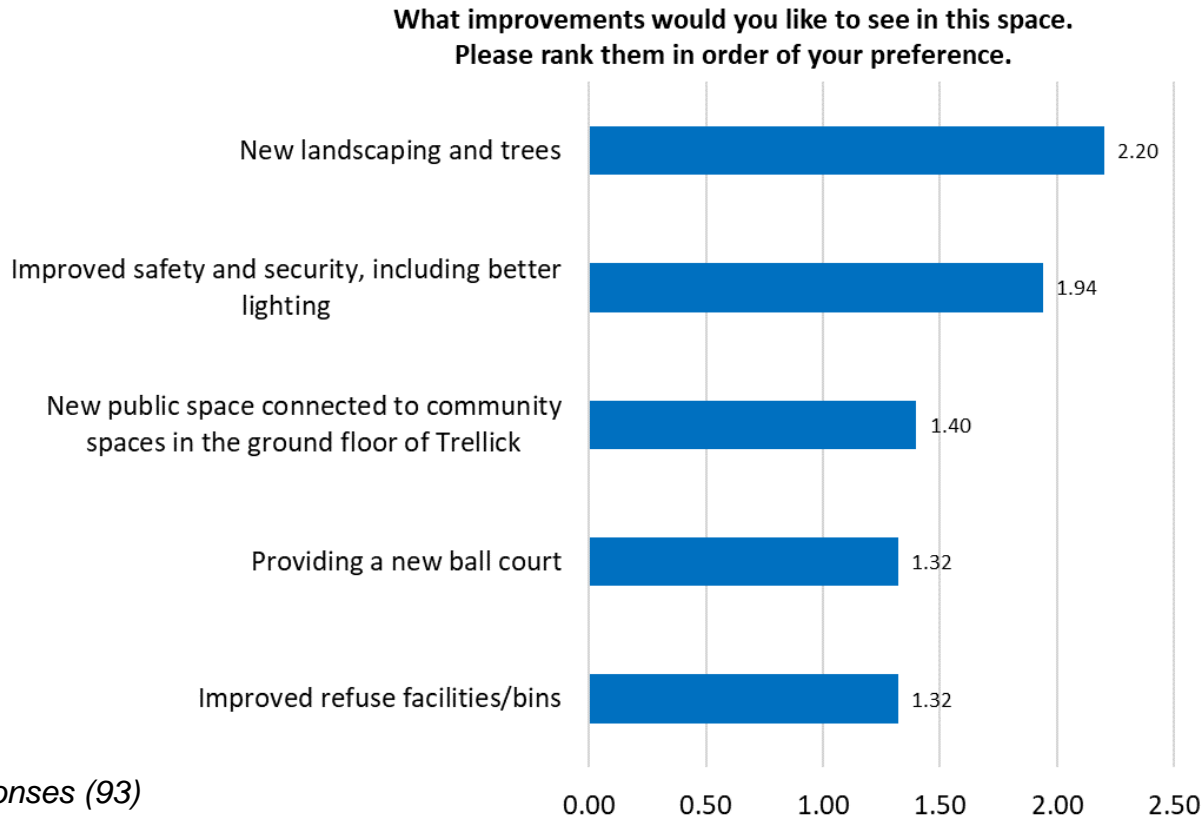


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Survey findings: Trellick Garden

The design team are exploring different approaches to improving the space to the north of Trellick Tower including the potential to locate a new ball court here. Respondents were asked to rank in order of preference some identified opportunities for the space. A score of five was awarded to their first choice, four to their second choice, through to one for their fifth choice (respondents could rank fewer choices if they wished). A mean score was then calculated for each option to produce the below graph.

- Respondents ranked a **'new landscaping and trees'** as their first choice
- From the list, respondents ranked **'improved refuse facilities/bins'** and **'providing a ball court'** as their joint last choices.
- Other suggestions for Trellick Garden are explored on subsequent pages.



Base: All responses (93)

Survey findings: Trellick Garden, other uses

Respondents that had other suggestions for use of Trellick Garden were asked to comment further. Comments made have been themed and examples of comments made can be seen below. The full list of themes and comments made can be found in appendix two.

“Happy as it is now.”

Leave as is/improve the existing space

“Leave it alone.”

Leave as is/improve the existing space

“Ball court on this side of the building is such a bad idea. Noise travels up the building on that side and there is a very strong wind tunnel which will make playing with a ball there very difficult.”

Against ball court



“Plans not fit for purpose.”

Against proposals

“I really find this form/pictures confusing.”

Have not seen images/images confusing

“Peaceful garden making more use of the extension to water/ponds effects a better water garden!”

Green spaces/open spaces/gardens

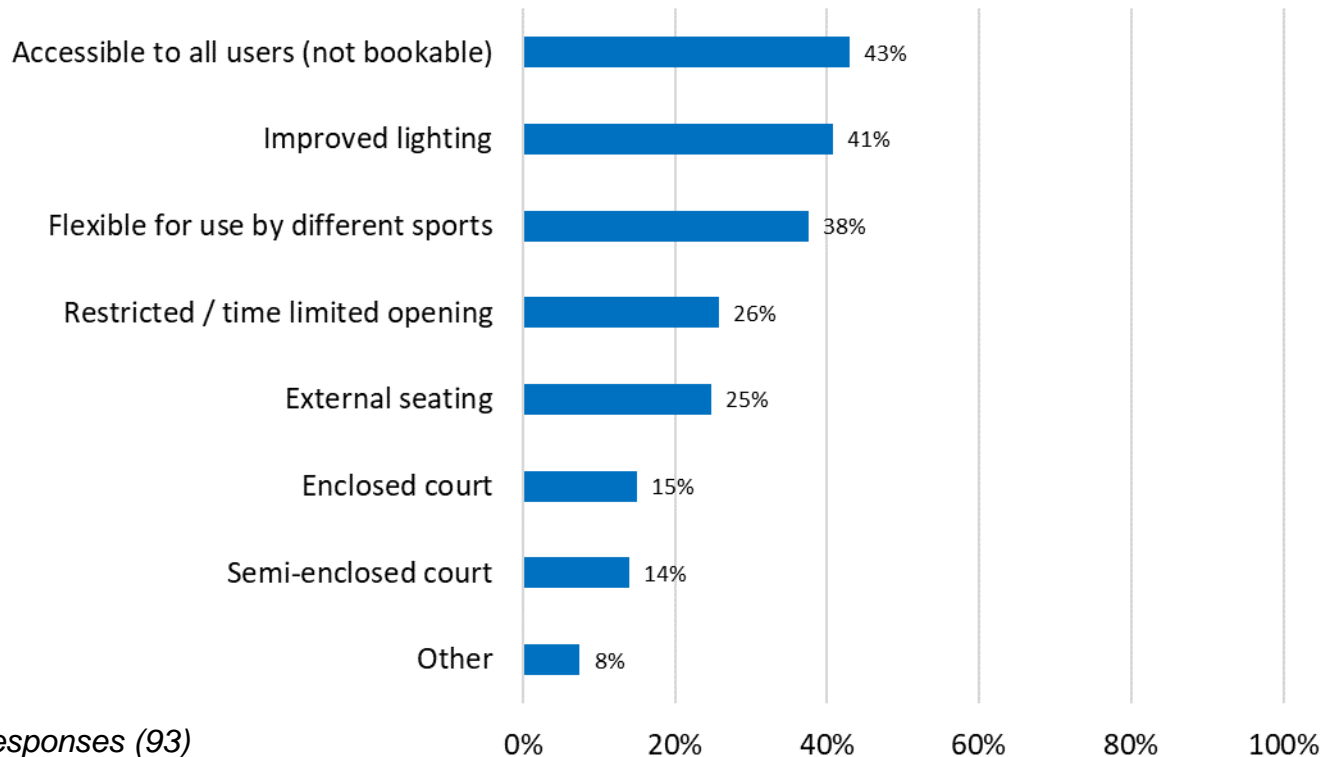


Survey findings: Ball court facilities

Stakeholders had previously indicated that they would like to retain a ball court for the estate. Respondents were asked what sort of features they would like to see as part of any ball court. Respondents were able to select more than one option.

- A total of 43 per cent of respondents would like to see the ball court **'accessible to all users (not bookable)'**.
- Slightly less (41 per cent) would like to see **'improved lighting'**
- A total of 38 per cent would like to see it **'flexible for use by different sports'**.
- Other suggestions are explored on subsequent pages.

What sort of features would you want to see as part of any ball court?



Base: All responses (93)

Survey findings: Ball court suggestions

Respondents that had other suggestions for the ball court were asked to comment further. Comments made have been themed and examples of comments made can be seen below. The full list of themes and comments made can be found in appendix two.

“You have presumed I (and everyone) want to retain the ball court.”

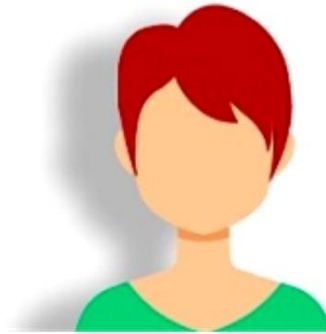
Against a ball court/ball court not needed

“Not in favour of retaining.”

Against a ball court/ball court not needed

“In my experience over the past 10 years living in Trellick Tower, I have barely seen people use the ball court. When it is in use however, the noise from the metal fencing and echo throughout the tower is a nuisance. I would suggest the ball court is moved far away from bedrooms.”

Alternative location suggested/keep in current location



“Absolutely no booking system, which in the case of a mixed development has proven contentious in gentrified communities.”

No booking system

“Cut off at 7pm. Cover it so we don’t hear the thumping ball after 7pm at night. Give us some peace and quiet! You put a ball court right next to a domestic residence, wake up!”

Noise concerns

“Restricted - good lighting, security utmost.”

Lighting



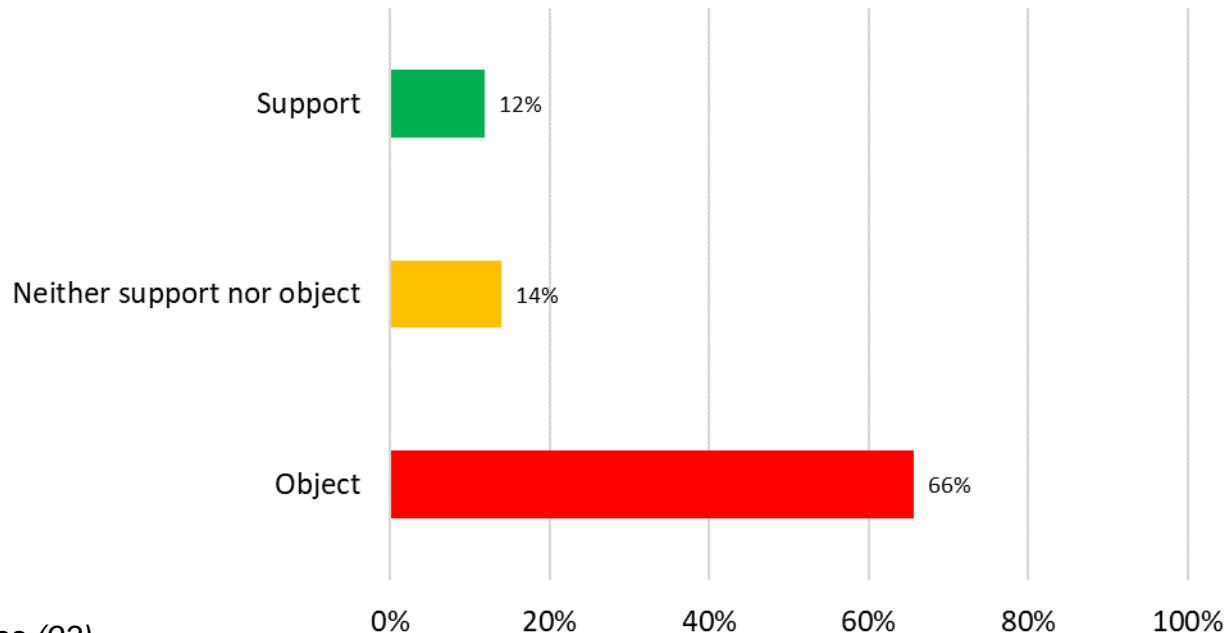
Survey findings: Building heights

We understand that building height is a divisive issue, and we have tried to minimise the impact of development for all. Having a taller building enables us to provide larger communal open spaces and community benefits alongside providing new homes. In response to comments from the previous round of consultation we have reduced the height of block one to 14 storeys (from 16 storeys) and the height of block three to six storeys (from eight storeys).

Respondents were asked if they supported these revised proposed building heights.

- Two-thirds (66 per cent) '**objected**' to the revised building heights.
- A total of 12 per cent '**supported**' the revised proposals
- Those that objected were asked to explain why, which is explored on subsequent pages.

Do you support these revised proposed buildings heights?



Base: All responses (93)

Survey findings: Objections to building heights

Respondents that objected to the proposed building heights were asked to explain why. Comments made have been themed and examples of comments made can be seen below. The full list of themes and comments made can be found in appendix two.

“Do not build anything here, these heights are COMPLETELY inappropriate and destroy the integrity of the estate and the quality of life of the residents. 14 storeys is insane, all of these blocks are inappropriate and should not be built.”

Building(s) too high/lower heights suggested

“I strongly object! My health and wellbeing will be adversely affected if you go ahead and erect this monstrosity, blocking the light and the trees. If, as you say, you care about your residents’ quality of life, you will reconsider. Please do not destroy the architectural heritage of the Cheltenham Estate.”

Light impact



“We object to all of this. We are not sardines. Go build somewhere else.”

Density

“I don’t support the building of any blocks around Trellick Tower and Edenham Estate.”

Do not support scheme

“14 storeys and six storeys is still too high. The design of the buildings is sooo boring. Why not do something imaginative with the shape? There isn’t a law that says tower blocks have to be blocks! Why not stagger the level of each block, including roof gardens?”

Design of the buildings

“The new buildings should not be high rises, the view of Trellick Tower shouldn’t be obstructed at all.”

View of Trellick Tower/views



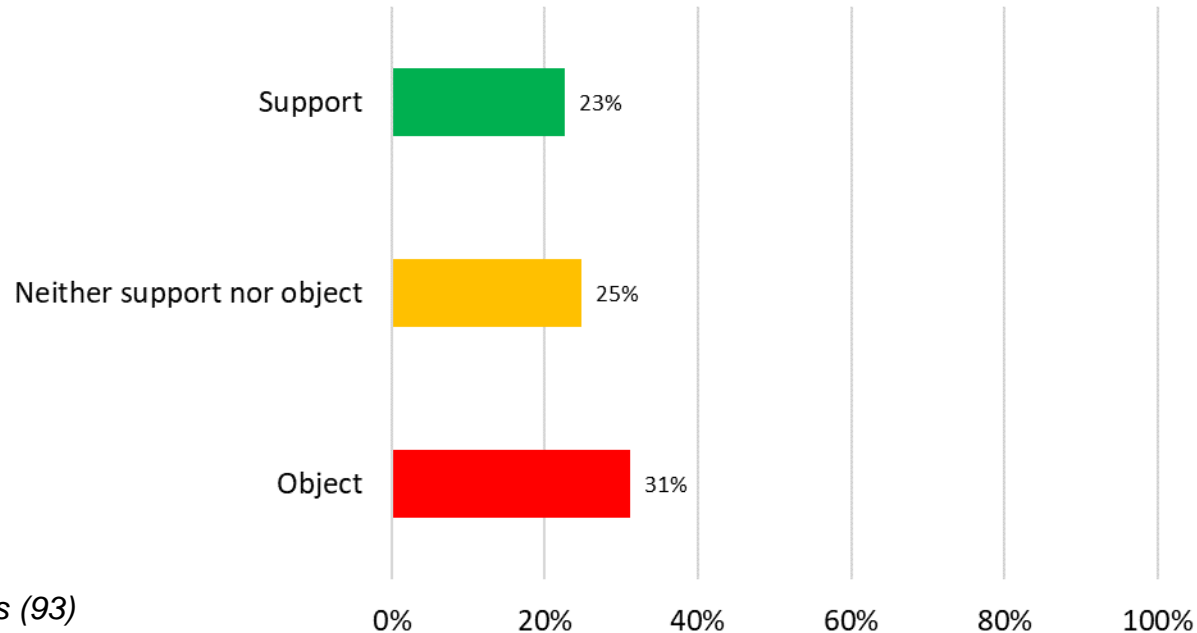
Survey findings: Servicing

In response to concerns on the Round two proposals which provided access to Block 3 via Edenham Way, the approach to servicing has been amended. Block 3 has also been reduced in size and number of homes, reducing the servicing requirement.

Respondents were asked if they supported the proposed servicing access route via Meanwhile Way.

- Nearly a third (31 per cent) **'objected'** to the proposed access route.
- Nearly a quarter (23 per cent) **'supported'** the proposed access route.
- A quarter (25 per cent) responded neutrally.
- Those that objected were asked to explain why, which is explored on subsequent pages.

Do you support the proposed servicing access route via Meanwhile Way?



Base: All responses (93)

Survey findings: Objections to servicing access

Respondents that objected to the proposed servicing access were asked to explain why. Comments made have been themed and examples of comments made can be seen below. The full list of themes and comments made can be found in appendix two.

“Unworkable solution and additional manpower costs which you will charge us.”

Do not support proposals

“You haven’t made any of it clear as to what’s happening.”

Understanding of the proposals/more information needed

“The on-line presentation was too difficult to view and did not provide sufficient visual display of proposals therefore no comments can be made.”

Understanding of the proposals/more information needed



“The congestion would be unbearable. Disrespectful to the estate.”

Traffic concerns

“Resources in the area are already stretched. So it’s a bad idea to add to the demand when the system is already failing.”

Traffic concerns



Survey findings: Number of homes

In response to concerns about the density of development, the number of new homes proposed has been reduced since the outset of the project from circa 160 to 110 homes. This number is the minimum necessary in order to (1) provide at least 50 per cent of the homes as social rent/key worker (2) deliver the new community space (3) include new landscaping, play space and open space; and (4) replace the existing ball court with a new one.

Respondents were asked to comment on the number of proposed homes*. Comments made have been themed and examples of comments made can be seen below. The full list of themes and comments made can be found in appendix two.

“Already the area is over populated and parking is already an issue. The blocks are too high too/way out of proportion to the Goldfinger Buildings. You are destroying a heritage site. You need to make proposals for an alternative site for these new homes.”

Too many homes/do not support the proposals

“It still feels like too many homes with no provision for the more elderly residents.”

Too many homes/do not support the proposals

“Should be 85% of social housing.”

Higher percentage of affordable/social rent homes



“Services in the area such as schools, doctors, hospitals, parking and so on are already not coping with demand, so where do you expect 160+ new families to fit in?”

Impact on infrastructure/facilities

“No new homes on site! Not enough resources to cope with new homes.”

Impact on infrastructure/facilities

“110 homes OK. More if possible.”

Support number of homes/need homes

“We need homes!”

Support number of homes/need homes

**The first paper copy of the survey contained an error in relation to this question, in that an earlier question was repeated. This was corrected in a second version of the paper survey which was re-sent to residents.*



Survey findings: Other thoughts or comments

Respondents were asked if they had any other thoughts or comments on the evolving preferred scheme. Comments made have been themed and examples of comments made can be seen below. The full list of themes and comments made can be found in appendix two.

“Having lived in Edenham I think it is utterly ridiculous that you want to build blocks of housing here. It is already a densely populated area. We need more open green space and recreational space in the area, not blocks of housing. It is a well used community space. DO NOT TAKE IT AWAY. Listen to the residents who oppose it.”

Against the development/heights of buildings



“Please listen to the local people and reduce the heights of the towers.”

Against the development/heights of buildings

“The whole consultation process is a scam. The development must not happen.”

Consultation process

“Without a serious prior investment into the local services this development should not go ahead.”

Infrastructure concerns

“Why can you not build homes with a larger floor plan and less height? Everyone I have spoken to regarding these consultations believes you only had the consultations to tick off a box on your way to doing what you want with the space anyway. Despite so many meetings, lots of us feel you have not listened or considered what we have had to say. Myself and others I have spoken to are not happy at all with the proposed plans.”

Design of scheme/architects

“Reduce the height of the buildings - MAXIMUM of eight storeys. You absolutely cannot destroy the local cultural heritage by throwing up cheap housing blocks.”

Negative impact on light/views/heritage or other elements of the scheme

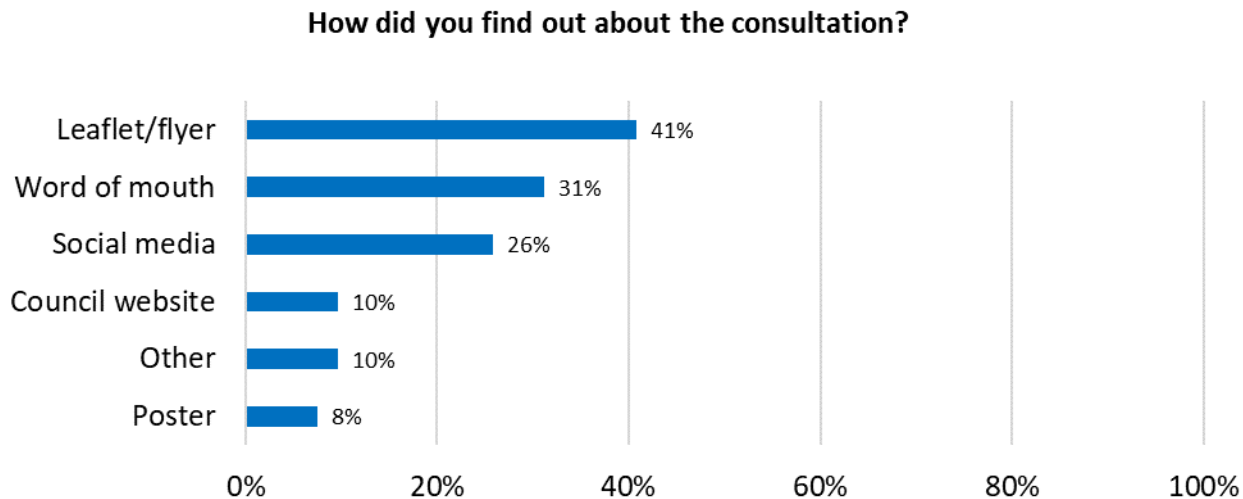


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Survey findings: Finding out about the consultation

Respondents were asked how they found out about the consultation. Respondents were able to select more than one answer.

- A total of 41 per cent found out about the consultation from a **'letter/flyer'**.
- A total of 31 per cent found out via **'word of mouth'**
- Over a quarter (26 per cent) found out via **'social media'**.
- Ten per cent indicated that they found out via an **'other'** means. This included via local organisations (three comments). All comments can be found in appendix two.



Base: All responses (93)

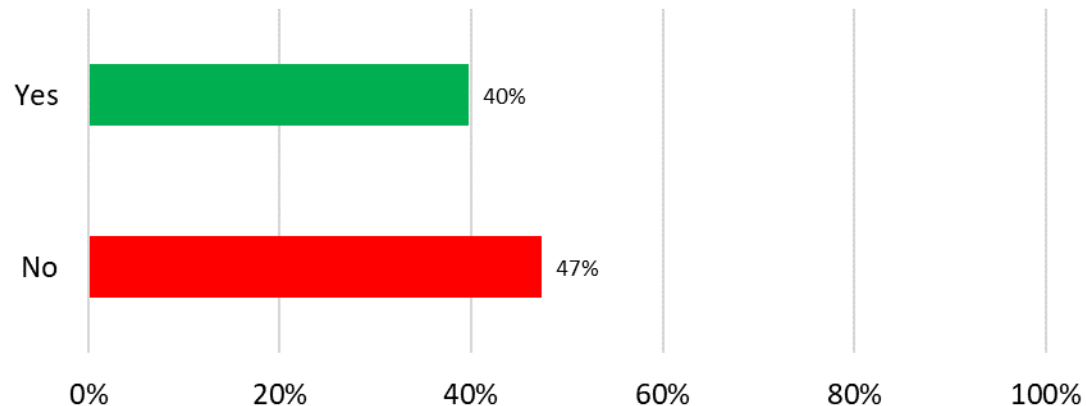


Survey findings: Presentation

Respondents were asked if they felt the presentation (available on the Council's website) informed them how they could provide their thoughts as part of the process.

- Four in ten (40 per cent) felt the presentation did inform them how they could provide their thoughts and input as part of the process.
- However, nearly a half (47 per cent) did not agree.

Do you feel that the presentation informed you how you can provide your thoughts and input as part of the process?



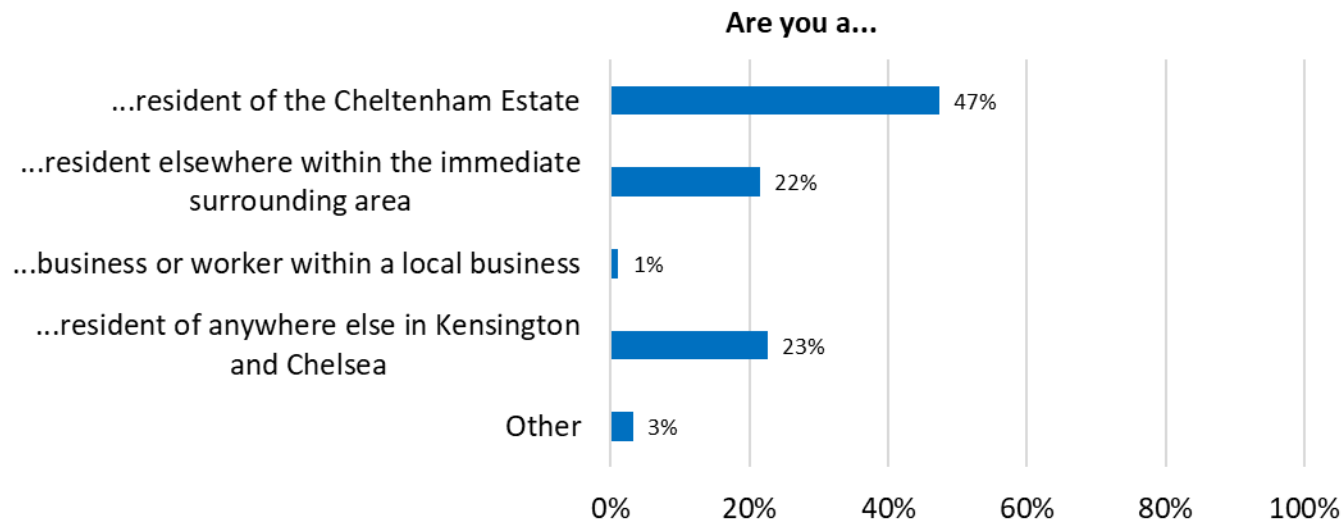
Base: All responses (93)



Survey findings: Profile of respondents

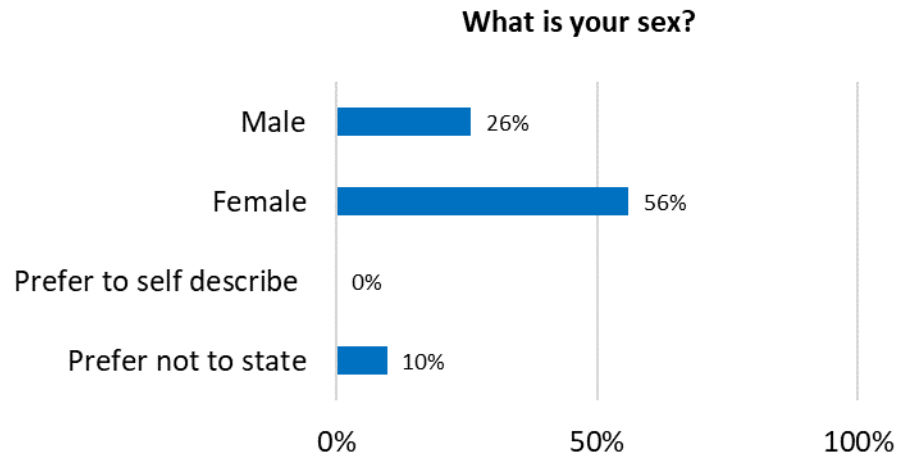
Respondents were asked a series of questions about themselves, to understand who had responded to the consultation.

- Almost half (47 per cent) of respondents indicated that they were a resident of the Cheltenham estate.
- Over a fifth (22 per cent) of respondents indicated that they were a resident of the immediate surrounding area.
- A similar percentage (23 per cent) indicated that they were a resident from elsewhere in Kensington and Chelsea.

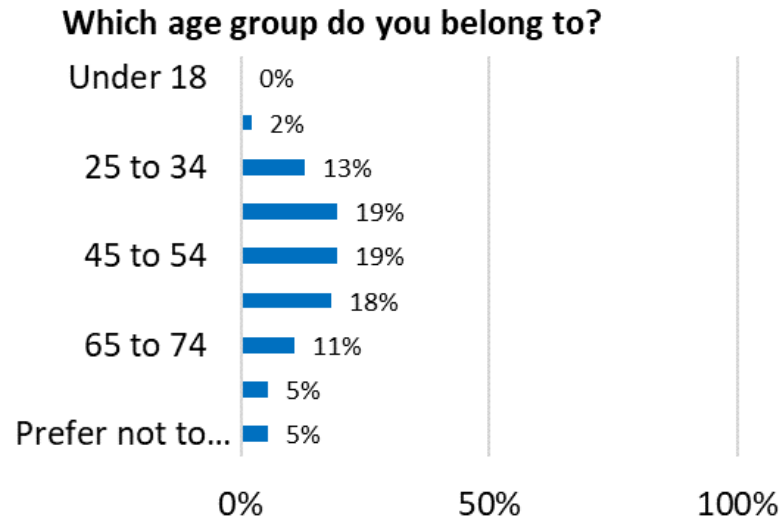


Base: All responses (93)

Survey findings: Profile of respondents



Base: All responses (93)

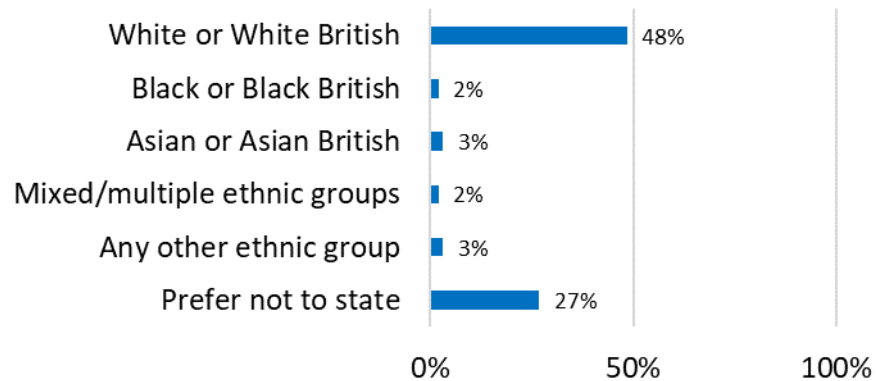


Base: All responses (93)



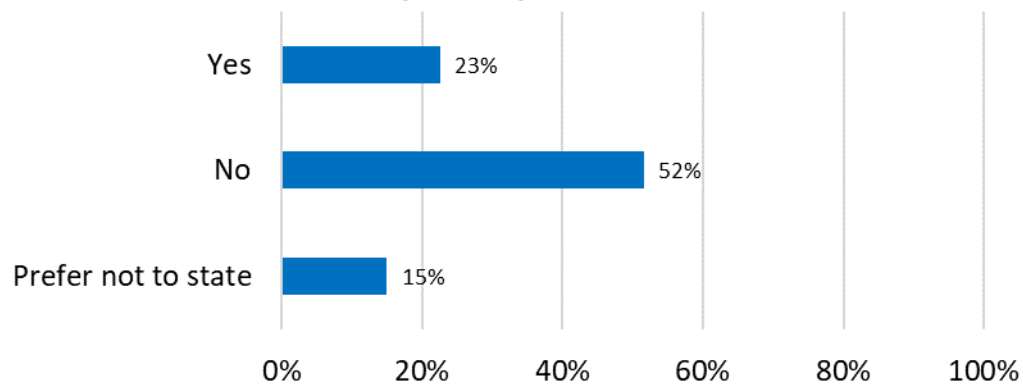
Survey findings: Profile of respondents

How do you describe your ethnic origin?



Base: All responses (93)

Do you have a long-term illness, health problem or disability which limits your daily activities?



Base: All responses (93)



Section 2: Virtual meeting and in person drop in sessions



Virtual meeting and drop in sessions

In addition to the feedback survey, the Council organised a virtual meeting and two in person drop in sessions. The virtual meeting took place on 14 July via Zoom and the drop in sessions on 17 July and 24 July, both outside Trellick Tower main entrance.

Summary of feedback/points made at the virtual meeting

- Stakeholders raised concerns around the height and density of the development.
- Stakeholders felt that engagement could have started earlier than it did.
- Discussions around the aspects that had been taken on board around height and density was held and whilst some of the feedback was welcomed it was raised that the reduction in height and density as reported in the slides was misleading since the initial height and density proposal had not been shared with the stakeholders.
- Discussion around landscaping was held and it was explained that this work has not started yet and that the community involvement and input in this is very important in order for it to work for residents on the estate. The slides shown were illustrations and there has been nothing agreed on landscaping yet.



Section 3: Response by Golborne Ward Councillors



Response by Golborne Ward Councillors

The below is a response to the Edenham site proposals from the three Golborne Councillors, Cllr Emma Dent Coad, Cllr Pat Mason and Cllr Sina Lari.

In February 2020 the GLA, using Office of National Statistics data, stated that Kensal Town in Golborne Ward was suffering the worst multi-deprivation in the whole of Greater London.

This means that in terms of adult, child and elder poverty, health, income, education and employment, this neighbourhood of 500 households encompassing the whole Cheltenham Estate that includes Trellick Tower is still suffering the deprivation that inspired Erno Goldfinger to design his most comprehensive 'person centred' cradle to grave project which is still admired around the world.

In 2008 the Council, despite huge protests from local people and architectural conservation groups, demolished the Edenham Residential Care Home that formed part of his project. This outrage inspired local people to pursue the listing of Edenham Way at Grade II, achieved in 2012.

Soon after a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was written with community representatives for the site in front of Trellick Tower that encompasses the vestiges of the garage, the ball-court and the care home site; it was agreed in 2015.

We have been told that the 2010 Wornington Green SPD must be adhered to, no changes are permitted. We are told to put our faith in the 2020 SPD on 'Community Housing' to deliver social rented homes. But for reasons that have not been made clear, the 2015 SPD, that was agreed at a Full Council meeting and is now planning policy, is to be ignored.

It beggars belief that more than ten years after the demolition, with local deprivation worsening and highlighted in the updated Marmot Report, the Council seems prepared to turn its back on its own SPD. Instead of the 4-6 storeys proposed in the SPD, current proposals include a 14 storey block, the total demolition of the concrete garage block - with associated huge carbon cost - and its replacement with ill-defined and windowless 'community' or work spaces, a 'mews' with a row of two-storey single aspect houses (private rented) with gardens, and another ill-defined residential block of six storeys which seems to be an after-thought, in front of Elkstone Road. All are designed in what can only be called 'cod Goldfinger' style, and will obscure essential views of the iconic Trellick Tower – unless viewed by drone as represented in the visual presentations.



Comments by Golborne Ward Councillors

The mix of tenure for the 110 now proposed at this stage is 50% 'private rented' and the rest a mix of intermediate and social rented. This equates to 56 private homes, 10 intermediate, and just 44 for social rent.

Sacrificing this precious site in front of the world famous Trellick Tower, for a 'gain' of just 44 social rented units, is indefensible. There would be little benefit to local people desperate for homes, improved health facilities, opportunities to improve their work skills and income, employment, and somewhere close by to house their elders if the need arises.

Good planning includes addressing local need; in an area of extreme deprivation this should be predominant. Instead, using Mayoral funding, which is 'our' money, plus Council funding, which is also 'our' money, the Council seems intent on turning its back on the 2,500 households in Temporary Accommodation, and a further 2,000 on the Council waiting list, and countless other very overcrowded families that have no hope of even getting on a list.

The proposals state they are addressing local need. They are not.

Since these proposals were published, Golborne ward councillors have listened regularly to the views of local residents and have attended numerous meetings with groups including CoMMET, as well as the Council-run consultation sessions. If the Council genuinely intends to "put local people at the heart of everything it does" as demanded by its own Charter for Public Participation, it will come to the same conclusion as Golborne ward councillors. The overwhelming view of residents in Trellick Tower, Edenham Way and beyond is that these proposals for a 14-storey tower and over-densification will offer no improvement to an area struggling with deprivation, but will be a blight on residents and will damage the original intent of Goldfinger's world famous Cheltenham Estate which was commissioned as integrated council housing by the LCC (later GLC).

In a neighbourhood of extreme deprivation the Council has a duty to tackle this and improve the living conditions and lives of its residents. Instead current proposals provide just 44 homes for social rent, and 56 for private and intermediate rent. Meanwhile the Council is considering spending £40m to buy properties outside the borough for 'permanent Temporary' accommodation. This is little better than the Council's outrageous plan of 2012 to spend £50m buying land and developing part of Peterborough to move homeless families into - social cleansing plain and simple.



Comments by Golborne Ward Councillors

While some of these issues are for another forum, we would like you to note that we object very strongly to the Council's attempts at exclusion from information that was available to others. Councillors had to ask 25 times for confidential access to the financial viability assessment, that may or may not justify the number of private homes proposed to be built, against strong local protest. [Named Councillor] was told over and over again that this information did not exist. When it was finally shared, in July, after requests dating back to March, the spreadsheets were dated 21.3.21. We also discovered that some of this detail had been shared with members of CoMMET, possibly because it was felt they would be more amenable to persuasion.

In the event, the figures that we are not permitted to share due to confidentiality show very clearly that the Council is hoping to make a profit, and that an alternative scheme providing 60 social rented homes only – that would obviate the need for the controversial 14 storey tower - would possibly risk a small deficit.

Part of the justification against this alternative is that the HRA cannot support a deficit. However, more than half the land to be built on here – the entire site formerly covered by the care home – is General Fund land. We see a clear aim to socially engineer this neighbourhood of Golborne using the excuse of financial viability.

We have also been subjected to constant claims that this planning application must be determined by the end of the year to attain the Mayoral funding. However we have discovered that this deadline has been imposed by the Council, and not by the Mayor's office. The true deadline for commencement by 'spades in the ground' is in fact March 2023, and not 2022.

These deliberate obfuscations do not build trust. They are decidedly not in the spirit of post-Grenfell engagement, as an honest and open process, to which the Council committed.

We therefore ask the Council to withdraw the current plans and undertake a complete rethink of this site. They should work with the community to find empathic architects who understand the meaning of co-design and do not continually push their pre-determined ideas while treating residents with disdain. The starting point for this project should be to address the local need they appear to be ignorant of and appear to care about even less.

The need is for: improved primary care facilities; a residential care home; a day centre for elders; outdoor gym; 60 homes for social rent; employment space; and improved community and social space, nothing above four storeys, and with passive surveillance over Elkstone Road. The 2015 SPD should be their starting point and not a target.

The Council has been the subject of comprehensive criticism in the past four years for a series of very expensive mistakes. We will not let them add the Edenham site to that list.



Section 4: Response by CoMMET



Response by COMMET

At the start of this year a group of residents came together with others who use the Cheltenham Estate to voice our alarm at the scale of a new housing development proposed by RBKC. The plan – if realised – would see two high-rise blocks erected through the middle of the Estate, effectively cutting it in two, irrevocably damaging the cultural heritage, community infrastructure and social fabric of the Grade II-listed Estate.

At a meeting with yourself, RBKC officials and the architects, Haworth Tompkins, we said that we recognise the urgent need for more social housing. Many residents are not opposed to developing the site of the former old-people's home for that purpose. But we emphasised that together we (the residents, other stakeholders and the Council) are custodians of a unique and treasured space, and it is our duty to protect it. We highlighted the meticulously-consulted SPD adopted by the Council in 2015, which states “new housing should be broadly consistent in scale with that of the Edenham Estate. It should be clearly subservient in scale to [Trellick Tower] Block B [7 storeys], not overly dominating the low-rise buildings of Edenham Way.” We underlined the reason for the Estate's listing: “Group value: the houses and flats [on the eastern half of the Estate] form an integral part of the original design and have a strong visual as well as social unity with Trellick Tower, listed Grade II*; the scheme as a whole ranks among Goldfinger's finest works.” It is that visual and social unity that gives the Estate an incalculable value in one of the most deprived wards in the country. The proposed scheme would break that unity forever.

At the meeting we were encouraged when you proposed the formation of a working group to discuss ways to address our concerns and improve the scheme. It looked like the Council was taking its duty to consult seriously. A group of representatives of the Estate's Residents' Associations, together with representatives of Meanwhile Gardens, Graffiti Writers, and the Metronomes (CoMMET) began weekly discussions with Council officials and the Architects. We were met initially with a highly dismissive attitude by Haworth Tompkins. There were other incidents (of which you are aware) which indicated that some officials from RBKC were not taking the process seriously. Sometimes it seemed that an alternative to the scheme was not really being considered, as the Council and the Architects continually reiterated their position no matter what we said.

Nevertheless, we continued to engage, to try to make our concerns understood. When in April the project manager for RBKC said he had instructed the Architects to go back to the drawing board to examine other options with a view to setting up a process of co-design, we thought we had made a break-through. Unfortunately, it seems we were wrong. The Architects produced a dozen alternative options, all of which they themselves simultaneously dismissed as inadequate according to a metric they could not (or would not) share, either with us or RBKC. They then produced two additional proposals, in essence slight modifications on the originally-proposed scheme, to which they gave the green light.



Response by CoMMET

The RBKC project manager now tells us co-design is no longer possible. “There is no more time to discuss the concept,” he tells us. We understand that RBKC has already instructed the Architects to proceed with this slightly modified version of the original scheme for planning. This is the proposal that will now be put forward to consultation.

Needless to say, a consultation is not a consultation if the subsequent course of action has already been decided on. Indeed, the Council has a statutory duty to consult before high level decisions are taken, not afterwards. Given that the previous round of consultation (in February) was – by the Council’s own admission – inadequate, and the upcoming round of consultation is on a project whose fundamental characteristics appear to have already been fixed and set in motion, we must conclude that if this project goes ahead, it will be effectively forced through without real consultation. Indeed, we find it hard to avoid the conclusion that throughout this process, the Architects and RBKC officials have not engaged with us in good faith, and never had any intention of fundamentally changing the proposed scheme as outlined in February, hoping instead to persuade us to back their scheme.

CoMMET cannot in good conscience continue to engage in a process that gives the appearance of consultation while in fact doing the opposite: disregarding the interests of residents and others who use the Cheltenham Estate. You will not need us to tell you how sensitive this issue is here, given RBKC’s previous record in failing to listen to the concerns of its residents, a reputation we know the Council has been trying hard to change.

We still hope that the political leadership of RBKC, mindful of the lessons learned over the past four years, and having a genuine desire to reset its relationship with the residents of its Estates, will rectify this situation, through actions rather than words. In the meantime, having failed to make our voices heard in private, we intend to voice our concerns in public, in the hope that we may avert an act of social and cultural vandalism.

Yours Sincerely

The Members of CoMMET and
The Cheltenham Estate Community Co-Design Board



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA