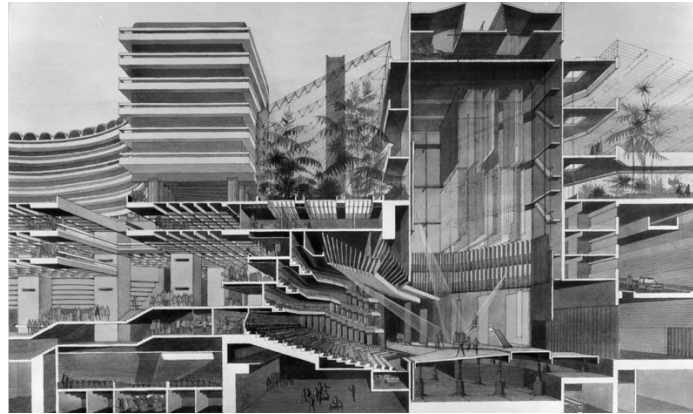


## Stage 2 Consultation Summary Barbican Podium Phase 2



### 1: Executive Summary:

Stage 2 of the consultation was launched when e-newsletters about Phase 2 of the Podium project were issued to our email updates list, community stakeholders and ward councillors. Adverts were also placed in City Matters and EC1 Echo and posters were placed in the Barbican Library, Golden Lane Community Centre and Sports Centre. The consultation was also advertised through the Barbican residents' bulletin and Culture Mile twitter.

The second round of consultation shared the plans for the podium, which includes the key project outcomes:

- 80% increase in green area and biodiversity
- Provides more seating
- Design addresses anti-social behaviour concerns
- Improves accessibility for all
- Reduce maintenance cost and improve water management
- Potential to improve lighting design to enable better safety.

The information was first shared through a webinar on Wednesday 20 October. A number of meetings with local groups were also held.

Comm Comm UK, on behalf of the City of London Corporation (the City Corporation), has summarised feedback received from these activities so far.

### 2: Key Figures:

- 33 people attended the webinar
- 32 people asked questions asked or shared feedback during the webinar
- 934 people visited the website in October
- 3 meetings have taken place with stakeholder groups.

### 3: Approach to consultation

The webinar took place on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021 from 7pm to 8pm.

The panellists from our project team included:

- Michael Gwyther-Jones, Head of New Developments and Special Projects, City of London Corporation
- Dean Elsworth, Project Manager, City of London Corporation
- Neil Manthorpe, Atkins'
- Helen Davinson, Resident Services Manager for Barbican Estate Office
- Sandra Brown, Senior Communications Officer, New Developments and Special Projects, City of London Corporation
- Vivien Moseley, Comm Comm UK

Neil took attendees through a short presentation, which was followed by a Q&A session. Attendees could view questions and feedback made and sometimes responded to others' views.

### 4: Webinar Q&A

The following outlines the questions asked and the answers given during the webinar. It also notes any feedback given.

#### Planting

#### **Q: Do we have any indication of the heights of the new trees?**

Answers: There are structural engineers carrying out reviews of the existing drawings and information, including concentrate sampling testing to ensure the future trees which are planted can take that weight. It has to be considered that a major factor to the cause of leaks is due to the weight of trees. No definitive answer yet on the height but the team are looking into it.

#### **Q: There are strong wind-tunnels within that area – how will the plants survive and thrive?**

Answer: This has already been considered through the micro-climate analysis, the way to overcome this is larger blocks of planting which is designed to impact wind flow. This will be tested in the developed design.

#### **Q: Will existing plants be safe for re-planting?**

Answer: No – we are exploring where these plants can be re-purposed in other parts of the City.

**Q: I like the increase in planting but is there too much? Given the original design was vertically no planting perhaps some tiling would be still welcomed.**

Answer: There are still large areas of tiling across phase 2. The agenda is for a balance between the climate action strategy and trying to eradicate anti-social behaviour through planting.

**Q: Will the fountain in the picture be repositioned?**

Answer: The fountain will be repositioned – located directly outside the Exhibition Hall 1 and 2 and the dolphin sculpture would be retained within the planting.

### **Anti-social behaviour and noise pollution**

**Q: Skateboarders are the biggest menace – can we ensure the bench design will discourage this activity**

Answer: The design element has removed steps and handrails including the removal of straight runs to address this issue.

**Q: Can the smooth runs be interrupted with thicker vertical tiles to deter skate boarders?**

Answers: The intention is to deter skate boarders - the design suggestion will be considered if it helps prevent this activity

**Q: Some parts of the podium have hidden, or quiet corners generated by the current planters used by drug takers and drinkers – who make residents feel unsafe and create noise at night, has the current design considered how can we avoid or reduce these issues?**

Answer: There is a balance between privacy (with new planting) and active surveillance. The new lighting system, open views across the podium will help the space to be a safer more welcoming environment in the day and night.

**Q: The tree trunks we saw in the visual suggests a new children's play area – is this a serious proposal, this could cause noise and nuisance?**

Answer: The team are proposing passive and subtle recreation, which can be integrated in the planting.

**Feedback: Play areas will encourage a lot of noise – residents now have to put up with noise for kids playing by the dolphin fountain.**

### **Construction**

**Q: In Phase 1 the old planting was cut down and removed many months before the work commenced, would it be possible to remove the existing planting in phases?**

Answer: This suggestion will be taken on board and the team will put this forward to the contractor. The bird nesting seasons need to be considered so would need to be carried out in two instalments.

**Q: It was suggested work would commence in 2022 - Why is there a delay?**

Answer: Extensive site investigations and surveys have taken longer than expected which has impacted on the planning consent. The current projection now won't commence until 2023.

**Q: How long will this project take?**

Answer: The construction period is 2 years and finishes in 2024.

**Q: The contractor's storage could block access to the art centre**

Answer: These are all speculative suggestions, until the contractor comes on board the project these considerations will all be dealt with.

**Q: How can we conceive a two-year build for phase 2, when phase 1 that is smaller took twice as long?**

Answer: This is the current estimation with the construction company – however, this is not set in stone and timings can vary.

**Q: There is two hatched points for the hoists at the side of Cromwell tower – how can this be reached at ground level. If its via Cromwell place it might be dangerous for access – how will we manage people's safety and noise?**

Answer: They will be examined and those areas that aren't safe will be disregarded. Once a contractor is identified, a key document will be a definitive Management plan and all those issues will be considered and dealt with throughout the project.

Main concerns were regarding the timescale of the project, the team confirmed that the project was due to end after 2 years, commencing in 2022/2023. Extensive site investigations and surveys have been carried out which has delayed the planning consent stage.

## **Phase 1**

**Q: Is it possible for us to address the issues from Phase 1? Please can we give this some serious consideration.**

Answer: The team are aware of the issues and defects rising from Phase 1. They are liaising closely with the contractors and investigating the unresolved defects.

**Q: Is Nigel still involved (from phase 1)?**

Answer: Yes, he is an integral part of the scheme and will be developing the planting proposals.

Concerns were raised regarding the defects from Phase 1. The team have confirmed that this is being currently investigated with the contractors.

**Q: Phase 1 beach gardens look lovely, but it's often disappointing on the sides when it's out of public view. They might need volunteers for upkeep. Can you tell us how Phase 1 gardens are kept?**

Answers: They are maintained by City of London Open Spaces Department, there are volunteers that assist, and they will possibly extend that into Phase 2

#### **Lighting:**

**Q: When the programme meets the Podium High Walk will faulty lighting be refreshed?**

Answer: You can report faulty lighting to your designated house officer who can report this on your behalf or email [dbbarbicanlighting@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:dbbarbicanlighting@cityoflondon.gov.uk).

**Q: Are Mountain halide lighting part of any public realm design?**

Answer: The team has been in discussion with Historic England about retaining the look and feel of the Barbican. Similar style lights will most likely be used for the new design.

**Feedback: Agree that we should be improving this at ground level, but we should be cautious about more light or glare into flats.**

#### **Seating**

**Q: Can we confirm there will be no tiled benches at Breton west?**

Answer: The tiled bench will be removed. There are some seating proposals for areas around Breton House.

**Q: (Breton Seating) Can you be more specific about where the existing plans show where it will be?**

Answer: The team can meet with groups of people to go through proposals with groups of people.

#### **Active and Passive Use**

**Q: The projects outcome doesn't address low footfall on the podium or poor signage on the street level up to the podium – is this something we can include in Phase 2?**

Answer: The team anticipates an increase of footfall from increase of greening of the podium, making it a more attractive place for people to visit or walk through.

A comprehensive access audit has been introduced to combat the issue of poor signage. However, the signs on the lower floor are not considered part of this project so will not be addressed.

**Q: Running track – can this be considered?**

Answer: No plans for a running track or a fixed outdoor gym. There is a provision for all of those activities to be undertaken through the space.

**Q: Is there wider scope for active use of the public realm?**

Answer: This is in consideration for the whole of the Barbican and there are more areas that are more active than others. In this particular location active public realm is not considered it to be the best solution.

**Q: What elements of the planting scheme can be interpreted as more active than passive?**

Answer: The podium can be used for exercise for running and yoga, however there will not be a designated running track based off feedback. Exercise facilities for children will be introduced in terms of play.

**Other**

**Q: Have we considered the slipperiness of the tiles in wet weather?**

Answer: The old tiles don't conform to slip resistance standards. The new proposed tiles provide a greater level of slip resistance in wet weather which is the main reason for selection.

**Q: Why is this not under the Open Spaces Organisation?**

Answer: The team have been working alongside and meeting frequently with Open Spaces for the entirety of the project for hard and soft landscaping.

**Q: I hope there are plans for working your way around the Barbican so that the podium to the east is not forgotten. Do we have any idea of timescales for the remainder of the Barbican podium works?**

Answer: The works are planned to start in 2023 and the construction will take 2 years. The works will be zoned, and construction team aims to avoid 100% disruption. They will make their way around the podium.

## **5: Conclusion**

Overall, consultation participants are positive about the proposed plans for Phase 2. Concerns were raised about what will happen with the old planting, which will be re-purposed in another city location. Others raised the question of how the plants will thrive in a

windy location, it was suggested that this has been considered in the micro-climate analysis and will be tested before-hand.

It was communicated to the consultees that the designs intention is to prevent anti-social behaviour through removal of steps and handrails to address the issue of skateboarders. A subtle and passive recreation space for kids has been suggested, which can be integrated in the planting design to create a balance in use. New lighting systems and open spaces will help combat general anti-social behaviour to help provide a safe environment for residents and visitors. During a stakeholder meeting, it was noted that although the planting should be extensive, the podium is a throughfare and should remain so. Some local residents and stakeholders felt concern the informal play elements could create nuisance for residents living directly above the podium by encouraging loitering.

Feedback about lighting design suggested the glare into flats should be considered. Another webinar attendee requested if halide lighting would be included in the new design. The team confirmed that the design elements will be kept in line with the original look and feel. Two webinar attendees expressed their interest for an active use for the public realm. However, it was confirmed this is a passive space for which users can actively use the space. Another consultant highlighted the importance for slip-resistant tiles for the replacement. The team confirmed they have been selected specifically for this purpose.

Questions were raised about the new seating design and location. It was expressed by the team that a tour would be considered for those interested in seeing the design proposals.

In summary, the webinar and meetings were a good opportunity for our Atkins' to present their plans for the Barbican and answer questions from the public. The webinar presentation and recording are available on the project website for anyone to re-watch or share with neighbours or colleagues. A number of emails sharing feedback and suggestions have been received by the team and these will all be reviewed ahead of submitting a planning application to the City of London. The team will continue to liaise with the community through and following submission of a planning application to the City of London.

**ENDS**