

Westminster City Council

Pimlico Gardens

Re-development and

Investment:

Public Consultation

Findings & Recommendations

Report date: 03/11/2023

ACTIVE
WESTMINSTER



City of Westminster

PIMLICO GARDENS CONSULTATION PHASE 2: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Purpose of the report

The report aims to provide a summary of the findings gained from Phase 2 of the consultation, followed by a list of recommendations for the next steps ahead.

Phase 1 of the consultation comprised an online survey (completed). We directly contacted 15 community residents, groups, forums, and clubs and launched a public campaign.

The survey received a total of **325 public responses** were received over a **6-week period**. The findings have been shared with Cllr Dimoldenberg, Ward Cllrs, and a summary has been provided to the chair of 'Friends of St Georges Square Residents' Association'.

In addition, an interim meeting was held with the chair of St Georges Square Residents' Association, where they voiced perceived next steps to include:

- collating feedback from the survey.
- undertaking an initial design process to include several different designs.
- outlining proposed features.
- identifying space allocation, and
- providing further rationale for comment in Phase 2 of the consultation.

The findings from the phase 1 consultation survey were made publicly available through:

- An Executive summary report on the ActiveWestminster 'Have your Say' webpage.
- An ActiveWestminster web news article and accompanying social media posts.
- Engaging with resident groups by sharing an article through individual group newsletters, as requested.

2. Phase 2 Drop-in sessions and online survey form

The findings from the phase 1 were made publicly available before the drop-in sessions commenced to allow the public time to review and raise any queries (attached).

Again, we directly contacted community residents, groups, forums, and clubs, in addition to launching a public campaign (including the WCC Consultation hub, Library and parks notice boards, social media platforms, email marketing and a text message campaign). This time we also contacted local schools and asked them to share the Facebook post within their closed parents' community pages, inviting people to the drop-in sessions or access the findings presentation and survey form online.

Two in-person drop-in sessions (daytime and early evening) were conducted at Pimlico Library in July 2023, as a central location near Pimlico Gardens.

The presentation slide deck about the project and the findings from the phase one consultation was presented to attendees by Marketing and Parks team members, followed by round table discussions about the scheme and the findings. This gave attendees an open forum and facilitators ensured that the quieter voices in the room got their opportunity to ask questions and speak about their experiences of Pimlico Gardens.

- Daytime session: 14 people attended.
- Evening session: 7 people attended.

A majority of attendees were long term residents. It was noted that the results tallied with previous survey work completed by the Resident's Association.

Additionally, 4 of the attendees from the day had not been previously aware of the scheme and welcomed the opportunity to find out more. Paper copies of the online form and a QR code to the online form were provided for completion.

The online form was made available for a total of six weeks to give people time to access the survey. In total 19 responses through the drop in and the online form were received.

3. Findings from Phase 2

The response from phase 2 was much smaller – however the quality of the conversations with attendees to the drop-in session was very good and overall, the majority were very positive about the scheme, echoing the findings from the phase 1 consultation.

The consultation form was qualitative in nature and asked people the following question:

‘What do you want to have your say on or provide feedback about?’

These are a selection of the responses received:

‘I fully support efforts to rejuvenate the gardens.

I feel a better connection is required to at George’s Sq to attract people to the space and preferably an opening to the river, a decking area was mentioned at the public meeting which sounded ideal. The area around towards Claverton St is very unattractive and has rough sleepers by the tennis courts. It’s not a pleasant walk.’

‘I would like to see pimlico gardens kept as peaceful as it is now. A toilet would be amazing as this would allow us to enjoy the gardens for longer periods of time. I have no children and therefore have no desire for children’s play areas to be introduced.’

‘Given everything we’ve learnt about wellbeing and the need for green space, I think it’s vital to maintain and develop public spaces such as Pimlico Gardens. A cafe and toilets can only make the garden more attractive.

If the children’s play area isn’t a potential development, I would welcome St George’s Square having a more development for children’s play area.’

‘Would it be possible to ban dogs from the gardens? Some owners do not pick up the dog mess, plus there is a dedicated dog section across the road in St George’s Square.’

‘I would like the gardens to be updated with regards to flowers/trees/nature. I would not like to see this peaceful refuge turned into a children specific area. There is very little in the way of public quiet places in this area, it needs to remain so.’

4. Overall summary of the comments received

| Comment | Number of responses |
|--|---------------------|
| Currently enjoy the area as a place of calm | 5 |
| No child specific area/playground | 4 |
| Include toilets | 3 |
| Do not change area | 3 |
| Ban dogs | 3 |
| Lock the park at night - worried about ASB | 3 |
| Include viewing platform | 3 |
| More seating | 2 |
| Include café | 2 |
| Fully support proposals | 1 |
| St Georges for playground if not Pimlico | 1 |
| Do not include viewing platform | 1 |
| New water fountain | 1 |
| Update planting for nature | 1 |
| One more table tennis table | 1 |
| Link Pimlico up to St Georges and include traffic calming measures | 1 |

5. Summary of findings across Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the consultation

The findings across both stages identified:

- a) Re-development and investment of Pimlico Gardens is favourable based on the proposed features – overall majority of 72% were in favour of the development.
- b) Current provision at Pimlico Gardens is not rated highly by the public.
- c) Prominent concerns relating to the current provision include anti-social behaviour and safety, lack of facilities, and cleanliness and maintenance.
- d) Repair of the existing hut for café, building a viewing platform overlooking the Thames and the development of a toilet cabin were most favourable features.
- e) Inclusion of an accessible playground received a varied response though was deemed favourable particularly by respondents with dependents who did not regularly use Pimlico Garden – in particular the inclusion of sensory play features was more popular.

6. Recommendations

- a) Consideration should be made wherever possible to support designs in keeping with a natural environment where planting improvements are for habitat creation and increasing biodiversity including natural materials for playable features. And that emerging designs are non-intrusive, in character with the local area and responding to the findings from the consultation.
- b) That the design will include:
 - ⇒ refurbishment of the existing hut back for a café offer.
 - ⇒ new toilet provision.
 - ⇒ a viewing platform.
 - ⇒ a new planting design incorporating existing planting for habitat creation.
 - ⇒ that the existing grass area will remain as is.
 - ⇒ a series of non-intrusive sensory play elements and sensory planting to maintain tranquil environment and appeal to families, groups and individuals with SEN.
 - ⇒ more seating within the design, and
 - ⇒ if possible and if space allows, another table tennis table to be introduced.
- c) Address concerns relating existing provision within any proposal design including riverside access, riverside view, improvements for accessibility, safety, maintenance, and security.
- d) Further local discussion/engagement about access to dogs in Pimlico Gardens through the Environment team – separate this issue out from the rest of the project.
- e) Provide information on future management and safety concerns if new facilities are introduced to the park e.g., management of toilet facilities to prevent anti-social behaviour.

7. Next steps

- a) WCC Parks team to start the process of taking on a project manager and commissioning a designer to develop an initial draft design for the development of the park. The aim is to set up a series of design workshops with the local community to involve people in the design process early next year.
- b) Project timetable to be drawn up with the key milestones once a project manager and designer is commissioned, including Planning where required – a discussion with planning colleagues to be had once designs are created, as the work may be within the limits of allowable permitted development rights on Council owned land. This will be published on the WCC and ActiveWestminster websites.


- c) Proposed timeline:
 - a) Project Manager and Designer Commissioning phase – November 2023 to January 2024
 - b) Design workshop and finalising design phase – January to April 2024
 - a) Planning phase for viewing platform – May to July 2024
 - b) Mobilisation and Construction phase – either May to September (without planning) or August to December (with planning)


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