

Present

- Lita and Sarah Smith, Charrington St
- Slaney Devlin NPF
- Henry Leak + Phoenix Court resident
- Amy Lame – Coopers Lane
- Cllr Frondigoun – ward councillor
- Andrew Hinchley – LB Camden Green Spaces
- Nerissa Sweeney – LB Camden CIP Plots 5&6
- Louise T – LB Camden CIP engagement
- Beverley Stevens – LB Camden Housing Management

Apologies: LBSP, Morgan Sindall, Henry Construction, Cllr Khatoun, Cllr Miah

Key issues

- Impact of landscaping on surrounding residents, possibility of attracting or increasing ASB in the open space.
- Possible arrangements to maintain and secure the community garden for Coopers Lane residents
- Phoenix Court residents' perspective on the landscaping designs in the area of Purchase St open space at the front of their building
- Trees and planting generally
- Cumulative impact and timing of works across Somers Town

Reason for the new meeting format

With the Brill Place tower nearing completion, a number of other projects are about to start in Purchase St open space; notably the building of new social housing (Plots 5&6) adjacent to Coopers Lane; and the landscaping of Purchase St open space.

Timelines:

- Plots 5 & 6; hoarding likely to go up mid-Jan 2023 before demolition of the community hall.
- Landscaping works – finalising procurement of the contractor will take until Feb/March and work is likely to start in May.

1. Community garden access and ASB

Possible access arrangements that might be in place for the new community garden area at Coopers Lane are being discussed. Greater use and access by residents was viewed as highly desirable. While the community garden should be open during daylight hours for example, it's desirable for residents to be able to access the garden beyond these hours.

There has been discussion about whether the inclusion of seating areas in the community garden would encourage ASB. Camden policy is to include seating to encourage people to enjoy green spaces, and proactively tackle ASB should it arise.

A set of Victorian iron gates, salvaged from the original Goods Yard at King's Cross have been procured to help preserve Somers Town heritage. Coopers Lane TRA expressed willingness for these to be used at the Purchase St entrance to the new community garden.

Discussion points:

- Not everyone on Coopers Lane estate has the same view of ASB. For example some people living on the estate might also be involved in the ASB (not purely 'outsiders').

- To be more inclusive, officers should continue to take a wide range of views into consideration; for example, take onboard more than the views of TRAs.

2. Brill Place end of Coopers Lane

The end of Coopers Lane on Brill Place has a memorial to a young man who passed away. There was discussion about the changes proposed for this area

The Green Spaces team is seeing through the implementation of the landscape designs. The proposal for that area was always that it be opened up, becoming easier to walk through.

- Several new areas of planting will be created within the overall space for landscaping.
- As many of the trees as possible will be retained.
- Ground levels are quite complex in that space, so it's been a bit of a balancing act between how to make the area flatter while at the same time it's not damaging any of the trees.
- There's also provision in the designs for the replacement or relocation of the memorial.

Louise T thanked those present who have made a positive contribution to the discussion around the designs and the continuing engagement of residents.

3. Phoenix Court considerations

Phoenix Court residents have given feedback and want to know if changes have been made.

Green spaces team confirm that the plans are continuing to evolve. They are trying to do some work with young people to input into it. Joe Lewis is the contact.

- The picnic area on the corner of Brill Place was controversial – possibly attracting ASB. The benches may be moved to a different (grassed) area.
- Phoenix Court residents are concerned that the corner felt like concrete rather than a green space.
 - The gaps being opened in the existing wall should enable better views
 - The balance between hard and soft is fundamental to the designs.
- Can there be more planting and trees in that corner? This is being actively considered, though there are some restrictions due to the basement of the tower.
 - The existing trees act as a windbreak and residents are keen to ensure that area is protected by tree cover if possible.
 - Housing managers asked that any planting should avoid providing cover for gangs to conceal weapons/drugs. This has been a problem in the area.
- Green spaces team say that new drawings will be coming, and creating a safe and enjoyable space for residents is a key consideration.

However, designing it out in the park doesn't necessarily solve the problem. It often merely shifts it somewhere else

Cllr Edmund Frondigoun

There is the work that we're doing to improve estate safety with the rollout of CCTV cameras and more. That's separate to this bit of work. But we are very mindful of the situation in Somers Town. Just to put people's minds at rest, there's other work going on as well to tackle these issues.

4. ASB in the open space: 'designing out crime' and re-establishing a forum to monitor and tackle ASB locally

The open space is regarded as hostile by many residents. An audit of the issues caused by this situation for the residents living on Coopers Lane estate was previously undertaken by the designing out crime team (police)

Helpful cross-directorate and multi-agency discussions took place to identify what steps might help to prevent or mitigate the ongoing ASB.

- One of the big concerns from the beginning of the project was safety and was people's perceptions and fear in Purchase St open space. Many big design changes are all based on principles of making the space safer (and feel more secure) by design.

The suggestion is to re-establish this forum

Suggestion: In parallel to this type of meeting, which is more about the construction, we need to re-establish our previous forum. so that residents, officers, the police and partner organisations can focus on this issue as we make the changes, and into the future. The new landscaping cannot solve the issue alone.

The ASB forum will provide the opportunity to focus and talk about those things that people are concerned about, with a view to tackling ASB, and creating a safe and pleasant environment for residents. LT will take this forward.

5. Cumulative impact issues

- Loss of parking locally could be a problem, we want to ensure we're not losing any disabled places or making it very difficult for people if they can't walk very far.
- Has the 'healthy school Street' that's going to be on Purchase St been taken into the times that the site can operate?
- About the Godwin & Crowndale works - the construction management plan for that shows vehicles coming in from the West. So in theory the vehicles shouldn't be going through this half of Somers Town
- Residents concerned about the cumulative impact of a lots of different works happening at the same time. Around Charrington, St Goldington Crescent we're going to have a lot of lorries going backwards and forwards. It's just a shame that it's all being done at a similar time.

We are making all these points to the contractors now to forewarn them about all the things that are likely to cause an issue when they happen.

6. Other matters/queries

- *Who's going to maintain any of the Landscaping?*
All of the park will be maintained by Camden by our Green Space team as it as it was before. (Currently idVerde contractors)
- Residents point out that any large vehicles will have difficulties using Chenies Place, particularly fat weekends because cars park on both sides of the street. Contractors should bear this in mind.
- It's unfortunate that the cobbles have been laid on Purchase Street if this is to be used for heavy vehicles. Is there any way to protect the new cobbles?
- Residents are often missing the newsletters from the contractors to update them on progress. Can we continue to check that there is effective distribution eg in Charrington St.
- Request to visit the Brill Place tower and have a look:
Jas from LBPS Ltd has indicated that we may be able to go later in the year (possibly May) At present they still have quite a lot of things to finish off.

- Will people still be able to access the open space easily? Will the new hoarding areas make the open space feel closed in and off-putting (like a trap)? What measures can we take to mitigate this?

7. Next meeting

The next meeting's going to be later in January (not 1st week) Same time – 5.30pm
Please continue to communicate all your points to us.