

LONDON
REVIEW PANEL

[REDACTED]
Head of Area Regeneration for Wood Green
London Borough of Haringey

June 2022

Dear [REDACTED]

London Review Panel: Wood Green Common, LB Haringey

Please find enclosed the London Review Panel report following the design review of the Wood Green Common on the 22nd June 2022. I would like to thank you for your participation in the review and offer ongoing Mayor's Design Advocate support as the scheme's design develops.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Mayor's Design Advocate

cc.

All meeting attendees

Jules Pipe, Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Skills

Philip Graham, Executive Director of Good Growth, GLA

Louise Duggan, Head of Regeneration, GLA

LONDON REVIEW PANEL

Report of London Review Panel meeting for Wood Green Common, LB Haringey

Wednesday 22nd June 2022

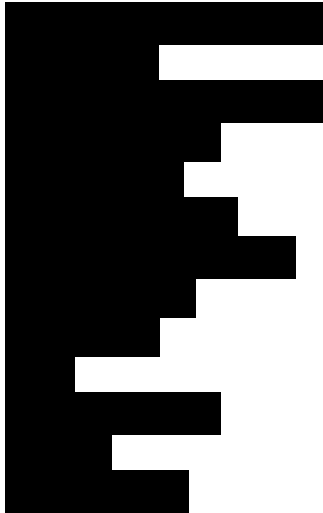
Review held in-person at Clockwise. A site visit took place ahead of the review.

London Review Panel



MDA
MDA (Chair)
MDA

Attendees



LB Haringey
LB Haringey
LB Haringey
LB Haringey
LB Haringey
LB Haringey
GLA Regeneration (remotely joined)
GLA Regeneration
GLA Regeneration (Panel Manager)
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Report copied to

Jules Pipe
Philip Graham
Louise Duggan

Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Skills
GLA Executive Director of Good Growth
GLA Head of Regeneration

Confidentiality and publication

Please note that while schemes not yet in the public domain, for example at a pre-application stage, will be treated as confidential, as a public organisation the GLA is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) and in the case of an FOI request may be obliged to release project information submitted for review. Review reports will target publication to the London Review Panel webpage six months following the review unless otherwise agreed.

London Review Panel's Views

Summary

The panel commend the team on the great engagement work undertaken to date. The principles established are positive and there has been a huge and deep amount of work done. Work with the local communities has demonstrably shaped these proposals. The panel agree now that there is a suite of proposals developed, the team should have the confidence and mandate to deliver these. The panel advise the team not to go out and justify these proposals, but rather honestly communicate the rationale for the prioritisation for their delivery.

There is a clear need to bring the ongoing cycle route work into the scheme, aligning the teams working on these adjacent and interrelated public realm works. The orientations and positioning of the paths and seating locations needs to accommodate the various activity zones to avoid creating hard edges of conflict. The proposals and their programming need to create an equitable amenity for all genders. There is a real need to ensure that these spaces are designed for women and girls' safety in the public realm.

The team should acknowledge the sheer number of people that will use these spaces in the future and provide the necessary infrastructure to support these including bins and toilets. This will avoid the good intentions of these proposals being thwarted by their overuse. The panel acknowledge that there has been significant change in society over the past couple of years and people's perceptions of the value of public spaces has shifted. These are green lungs and vital amenities for those without external space rather than only play space and dog walking spots.

The panel note this piece of land will be under intense pressure from the surrounding schools, the existing residents and those arriving with the new housing.

- The team are advised to be explicit in acknowledging this significant increase in people using this space.
- The panel advise the team to ensure adequate infrastructure is included in the other proposals being delivered to ensure there is enough 'boring' but vital infrastructure to support the quality-of-life improvements.
- Without sufficient bins and toilets any other projects are at risk of anti-social behaviour and of causing friction between user groups.

The panel acknowledge that a lot of great engagement work has been done to date.

- The panel note that this engagement of this community has been going on for a long time and there is much detail and strategy developed to support this space.
- The panel advise the team to ensure this engagement also captured more recent views that may have changed over the pandemic as well as voices in the community for older and younger groups.
- The team should carefully client the project, being honest with the community, no longer inviting further engagement, although perhaps some form of local steering group during delivery phase would be useful so as not to negate the work done to date. It should however be clear that from the huge number and variety of community views that have been gathered, clear priorities need to be made and the

team should feel a mandate to make informed decisions and to communicate the rationale for these decisions clearly, recognising the validity of some of the concerns raised.

- The community will appreciate the reality of constraints to the project if this is communicated clearly and honestly.

The panel encourage the team to include a wayfinding strategy into the proposals now that the scope of the amenities and study of the existing places is reaching conclusion.

- The panel understand there is no finalised design yet, but all the knowledge required to develop a wayfinding strategy is now there.
- The team should look at the existing design guidance developed for wayfinding in Wood Green.
- The team need to consider how wayfinding will inform both existing and new residents to show people how to get there and what they will find when they arrive.
- The panel would encourage more tactile and joyful wayfinding approaches as the existing wayfinding is quite uninspiring.

The panel advise the team to clarify their edge treatments, setting out which gates and fences to these open spaces are being added or subtracted.

- This edge protection strategy needs to inform and be informed by the emerging cycle lane work to ensure both projects are fully aligned and integrated.

The panel suggest the team develop a more purposeful approach towards the residual green spaces not currently programmed with activity or planting.

- The panel understand that these residual green spaces are subject to the final cycle lane designs and would encourage the team to liaise closely with the relevant teams to ensure a joined-up approach.
- The panel note that these areas are well used by school children as they move through the spaces, and this provides another opportunity to provide an improved amenity for this group whilst ensuring it is robust enough to deal with the associated heavy footfall.
- The panel note that some of the residents immediately adjacent to these residual green spaces have expressed a preference for no interventions to be undertaken here.
- The panel suggest an approach that focuses on planting and wildlife strategies rather than introducing new activities and amenities may be a solution to positively addressing these areas.
- Careful use of these residual spaces for calmer/quitter/contemplative activity will relieve some of the pressure on the primary green spaces during busy periods.
- This approach should expand to include consideration of the nearby 'school streets' to ensure a coherent approach.

The panel encourage the team now set out for delivery what needs to be spent and when for.

- The panel note that the spending deadlines are winter/spring 2023 with the adjacent cycle lane programme needing to be spent by April 2023.

- The team should avoid phasing the project which kicks the can down the road, but rather deliver what can be delivered with the current budget, whilst setting out clear plans for future work. It is important not to promise an amount of work to local communities if in reality, that work will be phased, with only phase 1 having a realistic chance to be delivered in the short-medium term. Clear and honest communication is key.

The panel agree the project bank and other proposals mapped out have real justification.

- The panel agree the project bank is a very helpful resource to deliver as and when funding is available.
- The panel agree there are more projects that can be delivered in this space and with this budget and that this provides a framework and rationale with community backing for future work.
- There are many projects devised in the context of a strategy developed over many years including guidance and manuals.
- The panel note that this is quite a small space and so the question the team must answer is not of whether these proposed projects are of value, but whether they are all in this place. This is key. It seems many of the legitimate concerns raised relate to overuse.
- The panel suggest mapping out the areas around this space to help justify the specific projects for this space. This could include mapping local activities for younger and older groups.

The panel advise the team to now commit to a clear process for prioritisation of what will be built first.

- The panel acknowledge that not all the proposals will be affordable and so some must be focused on for delivery whilst others must wait.
- The panel suggest there is a simple way to inform the prioritisation which is to look at the objectives around connectivity and growth. This should focus on what encourages people to the space and what infrastructure is needed to support this.
- There should be careful balance between new active infrastructure eg astroturf pitch, playground etc and supporting infrastructure eg bins, toilets, pathways etc.
- The panel encourage the team to consider frank conversations with stakeholders about what can be delivered and when.
- The panel note that there are already agreed objectives that have been developed with the community and recommend the design team be empowered to make these decisions on priorities for delivery.
- The panel would argue that the decisions have already been decided through the history of strategy development and engagement and would encourage the team to now deliver.

The panel agree that there is a high concentration of programmed spaces being proposed which needs to avoid creating tensions along the edges of these uses.

- If these spaces are to be subdivided people will feel quite close together.
- The panel would advise the team to consider how it feels to walk the line between the various uses and groups within these close adjacencies.

- The panel suggest developing the edge conditions and interfaces to avoid hard demarcations between uses, such as the seating and the astroturf.
- The team should seek to minimise these areas of conflict through gently introducing each zone of activity to each other.
- The current path down the middle of the proposal adjacent to the astroturf is quite a hard edge and could be reviewed to soften its exposure to adjacent uses.

The panel advise the team to consider how the proposals will promote safety for women and girls in the public realm.

- The panel note that many of the proposals for the programmed spaces cater for activities that could be male dominated.
- The team are encouraged to develop spaces that cater for all ages of women and girls, with an emphasis on teenage girls.
- The proposals should be developed to consider perceived and actual safety during the day and at night.
- The panel note a lot of good work has been done by the client and design team to provide this lens and would continue to support the team in delivering exemplar spaces for women and girls in the public realm.
- The panel encourage the team to design non-gendered spaces, acknowledging that currently astroturf pitches are male dominated, but challenging the programme and design of these spaces to provide activities females can get involved in and have better access to. These can include a broader range of activity areas as well as working hard to support female clubs and sports teams looking to book pitches.

The panel would recommend the paths and cycle infrastructure proposals are aligned to contribute to the sustainable drainage strategy and the school streets.

- The panel encourage the team to consider how the school streets can link into these park areas.
- The panel challenge the team to ensure these school streets are more than the standard, with crossings and planting spilling out and welcoming people in from the park.

The panel would advise the team to design the astroturf and its fencing to avoid safety concerns these can sometimes introduce.

- The panel suggest more planting opportunities and opening of the boundary edge to this play space would be beneficial and avoid creating a cage.
- The visual impact of the astroturf and cage is potentially significant. This needs some thought so that it is not dominating as well as consideration of whether the pitch will be floodlit and what that does to the character of the space as well as the nature of activity it will promote.

The panel suggest the team consider the feeling of exposure and shelter and increase the range of choice for where people can sit in the spaces.

- Many people may not want to go all the way and will look for places to dwell where there are clear sightlines and perceptions of safety.
- The panel would encourage dwell spaces to be designed to also consider pushchairs and wheelchair users.

Next Steps

The panel would welcome the opportunity to further comment on this exciting and aspirational scheme at a future appropriate stage in the project development.