

Trellick Tower Open Space and Public Realm Improvements: First Stage Community Engagement Report



November 2019

1. Introduction

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) commissioned Groundwork London (GWL) to develop a shared vision for open space improvements around Trellick Tower. The project is delivered in partnership with the Residents' Association (RA). The aim is to develop a master plan and designs for specific spaces based on residents' priorities. Designs aim to be in keeping with the original design vision to create homes and a neighbourhood that enrich residents' lives and play a key role in building neighbourliness, local pride and supporting a healthy lifestyle. Open space improvements will be delivered cohesively with improvements to the club room and foyer. Groundwork will seek match funding for internal and external improvements.

First stage community and stakeholder engagement took place in October 2019. During this stage of the engagement process we asked the local community and stakeholders how the open and green spaces and the public realm around the Tower could be improved to provide a more attractive and user friendly environment for all. We also asked how people would like to use the community room and how they would like to see it improved.

1.1 Aims

First stage engagement consisted of walk and talk sessions, conversation stalls and meetings with key stakeholders.

Walk and Talk Sessions

- Support participants to meaningfully contribute their ideas.
- Identify priority improvements and specific areas for open space and public realm improvements.
- Gain an understanding of issues and concerns based on participants local knowledge and experience of using spaces.

- Explore connectivity and synergies with future/ wider public realm improvements, encompassing Goldbourne Road and space in front of the shops on the opposite side.

Conversation Stall Engagement

- Raise awareness of the project, engage residents and the wider community.
- Gain an understanding of how the community currently use and perceive the open spaces.
- Identify community needs, priorities and aspirations for specific areas and public realm improvements.
- Gather qualitative and quantitative data to help inform the draft masterplan and identify potential quick win projects.

Stakeholder engagement

Groundwork attended stakeholder meetings with RBKC, Meanwhile Gardens and shop proprietors in order to raise awareness of the project and gain their input from the outset.

Stakeholder Gap Analysis

RBKC/ Groundwork contacted the below stakeholders, but it was not possible to set up meetings to date. Input from these stakeholder will be sought whilst Groundwork's Landscape Design Team develop the draft masterplan:

Estate Services Team

Grounds Maintenance Team

RBKC department responsible for car parking allocation

Waste Management Contractor

Metropolitan Police

2. Methodology

2.1 Walk and Talk Session

We set up specific Walk and Talk sessions with the following stakeholder groups:

18 September: RBKC

7 October: TRA, 7 attendees

22 October: Meanwhile Gardens

2.3 Conversation Stalls

Groundwork set up pop up conversation stalls in areas of high footfall to engage residents and the wider community. 120 people engaged and contributed their ideas. We also talked with proprietors of local shops located under the Tower. Engagement material included 2D plans of the area and a mood boards to aid discussions. GWL also asked residents to complete a mini-questionnaire. The stalls took place on weekdays as well as on a Sunday to maximise engagement:

Sunday 13 October 2019 12pm – 3pm

Wednesday 16 October 2019 4pm – 7.30pm

Thursday 17 October 2019 4pm – 7.30pm

Conversation stalls were advertised via posters and newsletters. A poster was displayed in all the lifts and a screen shot for the TV screen in the foyer of Trellick Tower. The newsletter was left with the concierge for residents to pick up in the foyer. The posters and newsletter were also put up in the surrounding area such as the Surgery, café and library. These invited local people to attend the conversation stalls and included contact details for further information. Key stakeholders were sent the poster via email to share with their wider networks.

Format of Conversation Stalls

To enable the conversations to focus on key parts of the open space, we split the areas around the Tower into 4 areas:

The North 'Triangle' Oremi Centre Entrance

The Entrance to Trellick Tower

The Shopping Parade

The South Podium garden & service area

The below table summarises the format of the pop up conversation stalls and data collected:

Format	Data collected
Consultation boards x 4 Board 1 Strengths & Weaknesses map Board 2 Opportunities map Board 3 Precedent images and mood board Board 4 Comments board	Quantitative & Qualitative data: Explore strengths, weaknesses, issues and opportunities the site presents and what's most important to residents Start to identify priorities for improvement Start to identify materials and approaches to inform the masterplan and designs Initiate 1:1 conversations to draw out ideas and issues and note these down
Record of conversations with residents	Qualitative data
Stickers on favourite examples on Board 3 to help focus attention and initiate discussions	Quantitative data
Mini questionnaire to identify priority areas	Qualitative data and Quantitative data

Table 1: Format of pop up stalls

3. Results: Walk and Talks

3.1 Residents Association: 7th Oct 2019 , attended by 7 TRA members.

We agreed how to refer to the spaces around the Tower to help with the engagement stall conversations:

1. North side 'triangle' by Oremi Centre / Meanwhile Gardens
2. South Podium/ Garden behind Oremi Centre
3. Entrance to TT and Shopping Parade

- **North side 'Triangle' Oremi entrance**

The group do not use this area much but have noticed that the removal of the box structure and the adding of the magnolia trees and herbs has improved the area.

Planting: The RA all agreed that the Triangle area could be improved by planting, repaving and removing the lower railings to make the space more open and welcoming. The boundaries between the car park area and the public space could be defined in a sensitive way using planting or paving designs (rather than kerbs or railings).

Lighting: The lighting is poor in this area which makes it feel unsafe after dark, so could be improved.

Bins: There was a discussion about the siting of the recycling bin, which is regularly overflowing. Attendees suggested removing the bin and adding a few more to the recycle area in the car park by the back entrance to the lift. There are two there already but more are needed. Good signage and clear information about where to put recycling is needed- at the moment it is unclear to residents if the cleaners are supposed to move the recycling bags from hallways or not.

General layout: this area is not used as a social space but the group could imagine that through planting improvements it could become more attractive and social. The route is used regularly to cut through to the tube so is a popular access route during daylight hours.

Accessibility: the area should be made more accessible for wheelchair users as the surfacing is uneven at present. Routes to the Oremi Entrance and through to Meanwhile gardens could be clearer.

- **South Podium/ Garden behind Oremi Centre**

Not all of the group had visited this area before and were surprised by its size and potential. There was a discussion if this area should be accessible only for residents and users of Hestia and Al-Hasaniya Charities based at the Oremi Centre and how/ where this could be established. One of the RA remembered the area as a nursery with play elements in the garden and a tennis court at one end.

There was a discussion about food growing with a mix of opinions, but a general consensus that it would be good provided that any raised beds were set far enough back from the façade to ensure no rubbish is dropped on the plants. They acknowledged that it would need to be managed well, with a process for allocation of beds. In terms of gating the back garden, there were several suggestions of where to gate: just the tarmacked part, half of the tarmac area or from the entrance round the corner by Meanwhile Gardens.

- **Other**

The RA's top priority is improving the foyer and clubroom. They are supportive of open space improvements to complement internal improvements. In terms of the heritage of the site, they believed that most of the residents were aware that the building was listed, but largely unaware of its iconic status and wider history/ heritage value.

- **Entrance to Trellick Tower and parade of shops**

Planting/ Greening: the RA were open to increased planting around the entrance as presently there is no planting at all.

Lighting: the lighting along the parade, although adequate, could be improved and does not reflect the quality of the building. The RA were keen for improvements and discussed the idea of up-lighting the façade as well and lighting the area in front of the shops.

Social Space: This area is well used to meet and socialise by users of the Trellick Lounge especially after dark. Groups can seem intimidating. The Panella outdoor tables are well used during the day. The closure of the betting shop and the surgery have made the area quieter. The Goldfinger café is well liked and well used with the café owner knowing everyone. The group were fine with the connectivity in the general shopping area and keen for the surgery to be opened for community use in some way.

Accessibility: there was concern about how motor scooters were using the area in front of the shops, riding very fast along the pavements, which poses a danger for residents using the entrance and local people using the shops. There was a desire to address this through design, including planting. The passage by Costcutters was well used as a cut through to the tube but was perceived to be unwelcoming, unlit and considered unsafe, especially after dark.

- **General Issues**

Access & boundaries: The routes around the tower are unclear and confusing with gates closed and dark areas, especially in the car park area. A barrier would help at the entrance of the lower service yard/car park as lorries sometime come and dump rubbish there.

Waste and recycling: The rubbish shoots work well as residents are now aware not to overfill bags. Recycling is confusing with little signage or information for residents and not enough recycle bins in the car park/ service area. The one on the North side is unsightly and it was suggested that this is moved to the lower car park.

Car parking was not mentioned as an issue; none of the RA members present own cars.

Drainage was not deemed an issue at present.

3.2 Stakeholder Engagement

RBKC, Walk about 18 September 2019

The South Podium Garden is occasionally used by the tenants of the Oremi Centre for informal meetings or lunch in the summer. It is South facing and could be a great place to sit. There is also a herb raised bed which the Centre looks after. However, this area is by not used by residents. It attracts anti social behaviour (ASB), especially rough sleepers and drug taking as it is hidden and partly sheltered by an overhang. The back of the Oremi Centre looks neglected and run down which makes it unattractive to visit. Further, there is the fear of falling objects. Although netting has been put up recently small objects can still be thrown or fall off the balconies.

The route to the garden has a lawn area that is very rarely used. The shrubs cut off a clear view to the garden which adds to it feeling unsafe.

The 'triangle' by Oremi Centre entrance was discussed as a confused space with the bin always overflowing and the avenue of trees also confusing the space.

The Shopping Parade lighting was discussed as needing improvement; greening to improve the look and feel of the walkway could also be explored. There was mention that any improvements to the shopping parade could also be linked to wider improvements of the area across the road.

Meanwhile Gardens: The Triangle/ North side Oremi entrance and link with Meanwhile Gardens was discussed. Meanwhile are open to the idea of improving the connection between the spaces by either opening up the high railings or opening the second gate, but only if residents are supportive of this idea. Poor lighting contributes towards ASB in the area and Meanwhile are seeking funds to repair the lights across Meanwhile Gardens.

3.3 Conversation Stalls



3.3.1 North 'triangle' by Oremi Centre entrance

Night time activity

There was a lot of discussion about the activity that takes place there and in Meanwhile Gardens after dark. It was generally agreed that it was unsafe and the noise from the gardens carried up to the top floors of Block A. There was also a general agreement that benches would attract ASB.

Lighting: The route is well used during the day as a cut through to the tube and to enjoy Meanwhile Gardens, but most people would not use it after dark because of the lack of lighting which makes them feel unsafe. They are hoping that the lights in Meanwhile Gardens can be repaired and new lighting offered in this area.

Waste and Recycling: The recycling bin seems to be placed awkwardly in the middle of the space and it is not a user-friendly design as each item needs to be added one by one. This results in full bags being left around the bin. Although some people use the bins in the lower service yard/ car park, some were unaware of their existence. There were requests for additional well designed bins somewhere on ground floor level, especially as some people did not like going to the service yard after dark, and would find a ground floor bin more convenient to drop their recycling on their way out to work etc.

Concern over falling objects: There was a general feeling of unease when walking near to the sides of Trellick Tower as historically large and small objects had been thrown or fallen from windows or balconies. Although they know that this behaviour has in part been addressed, some still felt unsafe and suggested to explore design solutions to make them feel safe from falling objects.

Railings: The low railings and walkways create confusion and the unpaved area is unattractive. The higher fencing around Meanwhile Gardens is useful so cars don't drive in to the space by accident

and also useful to keep the ASB taking place in the Gardens contained. Many suggested removing the lower railings but retaining the higher ones. There were questions about the locked gate to the Gardens about 15 meters before the open gate and why that was locked.

Greening: The enclosed planting area was seen as an improvement to the Wates site office, which stood there for a while, but the railings make it inaccessible so it can't be enjoyed as a garden space. Meanwhile Gardens was mentioned positively many times as a providing great access to nature. There was agreement that new and more planting in the space would be good. Greening and de-paving to create a more organic/soft feeling place is desired; low maintenance planting should be used to ensure that it remains attractive and useable, with some opportunity for SUDs.

Walkways: The paths were seen as confusing with paving uneven and routes unclear. Many supported the idea of the space becoming more defined and useable like the piazza pictures on the conversation boards.

Bicycles: A few residents would like secure bike parking available here.

Exercise / Play: Some saw this area as having potential as an area for exercise and play, with suggestions for informal play features or outdoor gym equipment.

Parking: It was unclear to residents about who uses the car park and how many car parking spaces were needed and are open to reconfiguring/ rationalising the space if needed.

3.3.2 Tower Entrance

There were requests to see more colour in front of the entrance (i.e. planting or flowers), to make the approach to the tower appear more attractive, especially for people visiting residents. Any planters should be designed so that they cannot be sat on, to discourage loitering and ASB. They liked the cycle parking directly outside.

Shopping Parade

Lighting: Improving the quality of the lighting was seen as a priority, and there was a lot of interest in the example images showing. Residents suggested uplighting the pillars or new ways to light undercrofts.

Social Space: The area in front of the Trellick Lounge is used by a large number of men smoking. They can block up the undercroft making it intimidating for people to pass through. ASB was mentioned concerning cannabis smoking/ possible dealing and scooter noise, speed and riding on the pavement. Some residents mentioned feeling intimidated and uncomfortable going to the local shop but a couple of female residents said they had never had any problems from the group. Many residents also acknowledged the group as a community and didn't want to take away their right to socialise. There are no outside tables for the customers to sit at and smoke, so they are all standing with some of the older men sitting on crates.

Paving: There was agreement from most that the paving could be improved or cleaned. The Carnival food stalls leave long term oil stains on the paving. Distinctive paving patterns were suggested to create a sense of connection with the Tower. There was also a desire for planting.

Parking: The configuration of the parking could be changed with a much larger area for motorbike parking which might help to address the issue of the scooters being parked on the pavements.

Greening: There were some suggestions to improve the greening around the shops. The trees are appreciated. However, those engaged were concerned that any raised planters would attract litter and be misused as seating. One resident liked the olive trees and moveable planters outside the pub on the opposite parade of shops and how well that had created a welcoming, sociable friendly space. Some supported the idea of sculptural features to discourage scooters.

Noise: Anything that helps to reduce the noise from the shops would be welcomed by residents living above the parade, especially any measures that might stop scooters from mounting the pavement as the noise and fumes of the revving motors disturb residents living in Block B.

Existing shops/ units: People were pleased that the betting shop had closed and were keen to see some community access and usage of the old surgery. Panella café was very well liked by the residents and the owners are considered well embedded in the community. Their monthly community suppers are appreciated. The customers of the Trellick Lounge see it is an intergenerational meeting place for their Moroccan community with excellent mint tea and an important destination for their community. They would like to see outdoor seating for smokers and older people. The Youth/ boxing club are keen to do more outreach by opening up their gardening space for growing. The Costcutter is well used. Generally there was a desire for more bins, cigarette bins, improved lighting and paving.

3.3.3 South Podium/ Garden behind Oremi Centre

Security: The area behind Block A is open access, with a small overhang. The area is well hidden and attracts ASB and rough sleeping. Many residents did not know the space existed and the rest very rarely went there due to feeling unsafe. Some would like it fenced off so only resident can access it, but others were keen on keeping it open.

Fear of falling objects: The garden is overlooked by all the balconies in Block A and many people reported seeing objects falling onto the garden. Historically large and small objects had been thrown or fallen from windows or balconies. Although they know that this behaviour has in part been addressed by the netting on the balconies, they would like to see designs to address their fear of falling objects.

Social area / Play/ Exercise: Some would like a small play area there or a café for residents and people attending the Oremi Centre. Many mentioned how they miss the basketball court and there were some suggestions about adding an outdoor gym or hoops to this area, once it feels safer.

Food Growing: Many residents would like to see raised beds, allotments and growing opportunities that would bring community benefits and improve people's well-being. They felt health and

connecting with nature is really important, is needed most and would be the best value. It was mentioned that it would also align with Goldfinger's ideas on sustainability. However the raised beds would need to be out of reach of any falling objects and within a secure space.

3.3.4 .Other issues raised by residents

One resident noted there are problems with water leaking through to the unused garages below and believes structural engineers have previously been called out to assess the integrity of the podium.

Recycling: Some residents felt that recycling facilities should be made available near the bin shoots, as the current facilities are too far away to be useful for residents. A lot of people didn't know about the recycling bins in the service yard area at the bottom of the tower. Adding recycling bins in the yard was largely supported, although some people mentioned how unfriendly it currently feels and highlighted a lack of lighting, which makes people feel unsafe and they consequently don't use the area after dark.

Storage: Residents would like to see the large storage areas under the blocks behind the shops utilised. Suggestions included co-working space or space for markets.

The Clubroom: Residents are keen to see this as a community facility with priority for them to use for activities such as running a book club, homework club, Zumba classes, jigsaw swaps. It was suggested it could be transformed into a co-working space where food and drink is available; also to offer local youth and entrepreneurs somewhere to grow businesses and socialise. There was a suggestion that it could host meetings by the smaller cultural groups who are residents in the tower, for example the Filipino Muslim residents.

Green Spaces: A few residents mentioned the green space to the south of Block B that is behind the curved wall, fenced off but visible from the shops. This is an unused space that is messy and referred to as a "no-man's land" that they would like to see improved, particularly as it can be seen from the shops. Those engaged stressed the importance of general maintenance and that any changes implemented need to be monitored and maintained to ensure that they remain useable. The large side wall of flats facing north, on the opposite side of the Goldborne Road shops, would benefit from a distinctive local feature such as a mural, graffiti or feature lighting.

Parking: Drivers engaged would like to see better parking for residents, especially as most available parking spaces tend to get taken up by none residents, e.g. customers of the restaurant in the shop arcade.

A lot of the **walking routes** around the tower (e.g. in the North area by the Oremi entre, south of the Shops) are very complicated with multiple corners etc. which create places for people to hide and make the area more intimidating

Heritage: Most of the residents and local people were aware of the heritage aspect of the Tower and happy to share memories and stories. Some were also aware of Goldfinger's approach to

design and sustainability. A few residents spoke about the sense of pride people feel now – which hasn't always been the case. Many of the residents wanted to talk about the graffiti garden area and were keen that the graffiti community continue to be welcome there; some miss the old basket ball court.

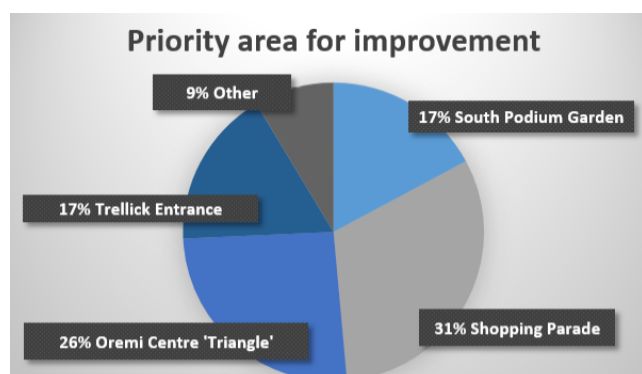
Internal Improvements: Residents engaged would like to see internal improvements carried out, prioritising the Foyer and Clubroom. Many residents voiced their appreciation of the excellent concierge who has a direct impact on their sense of community, safety and quality of life. Some felt that the noise and dust in the flats can be really bad, especially from the nearby train lines.

One long term resident mentioned circles of concrete from the side of the Tower were removed during the recent scaffolding works, the decision was taken not to put them back in for health and safety reasons. If the circles are still available she suggested that they could be re-purposed with names of residents as street paving.

3.3.5 Mini questionnaire results

Those engaged at the conversation stalls had the option of completing a mini questionnaire survey to share their opinions. 45 people completed a questionnaire survey.

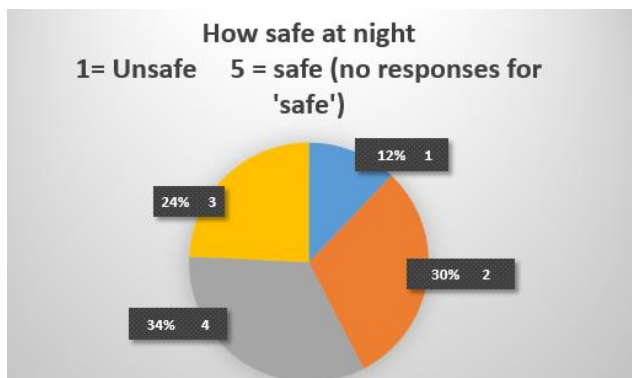
The shopping parade was people's improvement priority (11), followed by the Oremi Centre triangle (6), South Podium Garden and Trellick Tower entrance (6 mentions each). Other suggestions were – adding play, gym and the walkways below the tower.



Graph 1: Improvement priorities

Level of safety: Most felt safe during the day but after dark over half of people (66%) felt fairly to very unsafe.

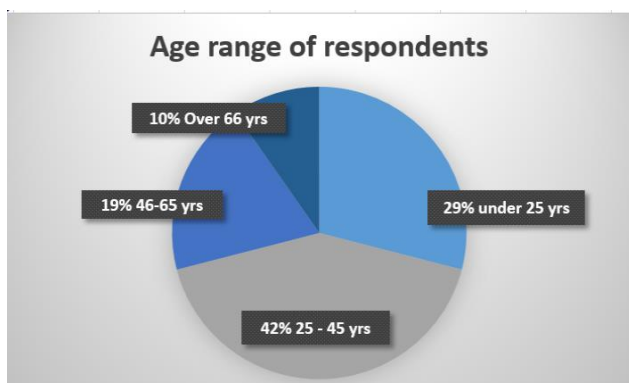
Awareness of heritage: The 90% are aware of the Trellick Tower's heritage and that the building is listed.



Graph 2: Perception of safety

Interest in food growing: Over 60% of the respondents are keen on food growing.

Questionnaire respondents: 30 respondents were residents of Trellick Tower, 2 worked in the area and the remaining 13 were local residents. There was a good range of age groups: 9 were under 25, 13 were aged between 25 – 45 , 6 between 46-65 and 3 over 66 years old.



Graph 3: Age range of respondents

4 Headline Findings

Trellick Tower and local residents were keen to talk about the area and engage in conversations about improving the open spaces and public realm around the Tower.

The following emerged as key themes and priority areas for improvement:

- **Shopping parade** and the area outside the **Oremi Centre entrance** are the 2 priority areas for improvement. Those engaged would like to see the functionality and visual appeal of these areas improved. They would like to see simple, yet attractive and effective design solutions to improve access and walking routes, improve areas aesthetically through greening, improve or create social spaces and improve safety. Those engaged cautioned that anything that could be misused or attract ASB should be avoided, including seating.
- **Accessibility and surfaces:** those engaged would like to see accessibility for all improved, including surface upgrades and simplifying the public realm/ walkways.
- **High quality greening**, requiring little maintenance, was high up on people's priority list.
- There was interest in community gardening and food growing (provided a suitable and secure space can be identified and support for residents to get this underway is available).

- **Lighting upgrades**, complementing other improvements, would help to create sense of place and make residents feel safer.
- **Recycling facilities**: residents would like to see more and more conveniently located recycling facilities.