



Dean Gardens Summer Engagement Event 20/07/19

Final Report 22/08/19

To share and explore draft design analysis and options, New Practice and KLA hosted a summer engagement event in Dean Gardens on Saturday 20th July.

This event included the display of a range of design materials, including three draft options, as well as a range of additional free activities to attract attendance from a diverse local audience – including smoothie bikes, yoga sessions and manicures.

Participants were able to express their reactions to the design materials displayed by talking to facilitators and completing a survey. This summary report provides an overview of common thoughts and ideas expressed.



Event Description

The summer engagement event took place between 11am and 3pm on Saturday 20th July. The date and time was selected to coincide with Wilson's Funfair, an annual event in Dean Gardens that attracts families and young people.

The event was promoted ahead of time through both physical and digital media. A leaflet drop of 3000 local residences was undertaken, and the event was promoted through a Facebook event, with paid promotion ensuring it was visible to local people. This social media activity was promoted primarily through Ealing Council's online presence, with KLA and New Practice promoting the event through their own networks.

Five boards were prepared by KLA to display information on their design development process. Two of these boards explored assessment of the park; opportunities and constraints on the site and a range of broad thematic concepts driving potential design approaches. Three others displayed design options for the park, exploring a range of alternative ideas.

New Practice are committed to engaging a wide range of diverse stakeholders in change processes. There are many ways to support community engagement processes that attract unusual suspects; individuals and groups who might not typically be involved in engagement around the built environment.

To attract engagement from a wide cross-section of the West Ealing community, and to link to some of the thematic aspirations of the Dean Gardens re-development process, a number of additional activities were included as a part of the engagement event:

Smoothie Bikes – Linking to themes of active travel, these bikes offered the participants a chance to blend their own free smoothie by pedal power.

Yoga Sessions – A qualified yoga instructor led participants on short introductory sessions in a covered area.

Manicures – Two trained manicurists offered free services to participants who were able to respond to surveys and conversations about the design materials while they waited.



To help identify the engagement within the park, New Practice established a highly visible layout, with flag banners and flexible seating arranged to demarcate an attractive and interesting engagement space.

Engagement Survey

To help facilitate the collection of responses to design materials, New Practice and KLA developed a survey which could be completed either by facilitators in conversation with participants or members of the public themselves. This survey offered a range of questions relating to each of the five display boards. The survey included a range of questions types, including multiple choice and ranked option questions relating to alternative design options for the aspects of the park, as well as open response spaces. Summaries of responses related to each display board are noted over the following pages.

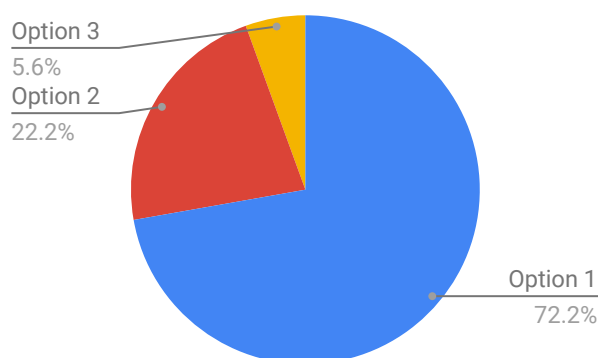
Display Board 1 – Opportunities and Constraints

This board provided an overview of initial analysis of the site and its context within West Ealing.

Participants were broadly in favour of each of the three design ideas explored in this board; the introduction of larger trees to increase tree canopy, improving the legibility of the park, and the removal of clutter and renewal of the boundary with The Broadway.

Of the four options provided for the park boundary,

participants expressed most interest in option 1; 72% of respondents preferring the retention of existing fencing or a similar barrier around the park edge. In conversation with participants, facilitators noted a mixture of opinion on the existing fencing itself, but a strong preference for ensuring safety of young people engaged in play through the retention of clear boundary.

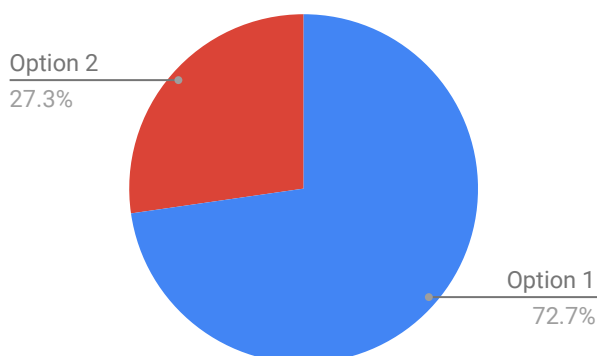


Preference for boundary options

A number of additional opportunities and constraints were mentioned within survey responses. The most common of these was anti-social behaviour within the park. Consistent with earlier stages of engagement, this was a common topic of conversation with participants, who expressed concern about feelings of a lack of safety within the park, particularly after-dark, with alcohol and drug misuse contributing to this.

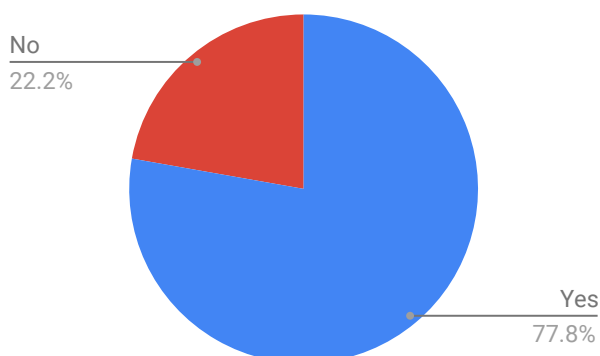
Display Board 2 – Opportunities and Constraints

The second board explored the existing layout of the park, and analysis of the current issues with this, as well as thematic opportunities around topics like play, lighting and active travel.

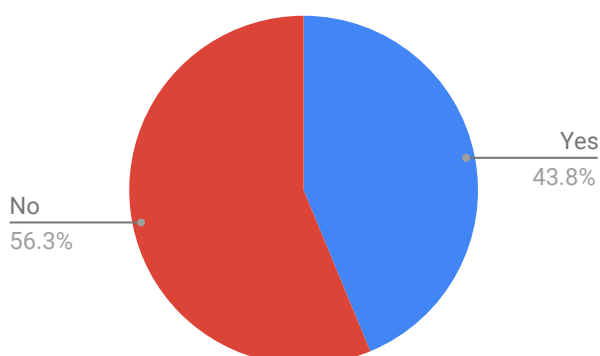


Preference for lighting options

Of the two options presented for lighting across the park, participants largely supported option 1, with 72% of participants preferring improved lighting around the park perimeter, rather than a broad coverage within the centre of the park.



Participants in favour of introducing community growing to Dean Gardens



Participants who would themselves volunteer to take part in community growing in Dean Gardens



Participants were broadly in agreement with each of the ideas to activate the park and improve security, with a strong note of support for both the introduction of community growing as well as maintaining open space in the park for larger events such as fairs and festivals.

More than three quarters of respondents were in favour of introducing community growing to Dean Gardens. However, only 44% expressed an interest in themselves volunteering to be involved in this activity. A number of participants did express concern about safety and security and the risk of vandalism and theft that might befall a community growing facility.

Generally, participants were in favour of introducing play elements proposed by KLA, including natural play, landform elements and sensory play. There was however some preference expressed by some participants for the retention of more traditional play facilities, i.e. swings.

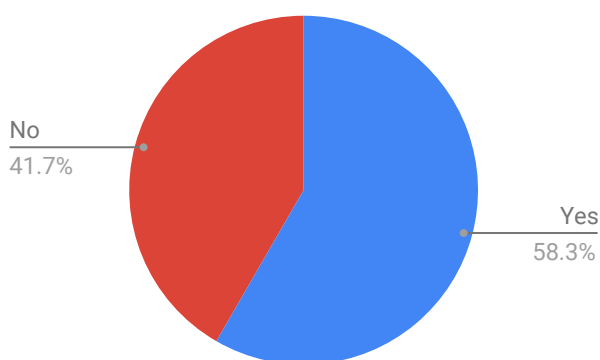
Participants were asked to express interest in a range of potential ideas for developing a cycling and pedestrian culture in the park. The results of these questions were mixed. Participants generally expressed some disinterest in obstacles for BMX riders and skateboarders. There was however stronger interest in cycle repairs



taking place in the park, and outdoor facilities for self-repair and inflating tyres.

Display Board 3 – Design Option 1

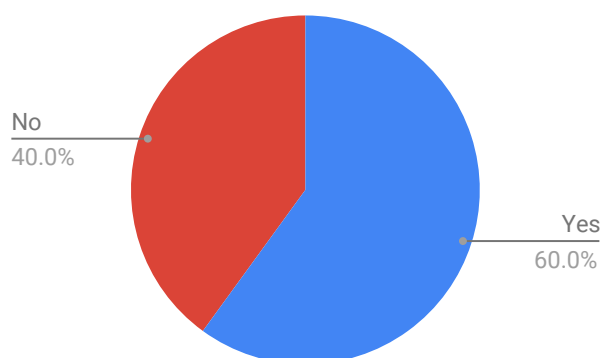
This design option introduces the concept of a pick-and-play orchard into Dean Gardens; a growing space linked to learning and playing. Participants were marginally in favour of introducing this element in to Dean Gardens, with some concern expressed about how this would be managed.



Participants in favour or against the introduction of a pick-and-play orchard in Dean Gardens

Participants were largely in favour of the landform concept in this design option, with decking forming seating and play elements. There was very strong support for introduction of new youth play facilities in the form of table tennis tables and performance decks.

A number of participants responding to an open question on what other forms of play equipment they would like to see within this design mentioned climbing walls and other fitness facilities.



Participants in favour or against the creating a landform with edges forming decking Yes No and seating facing in to the park

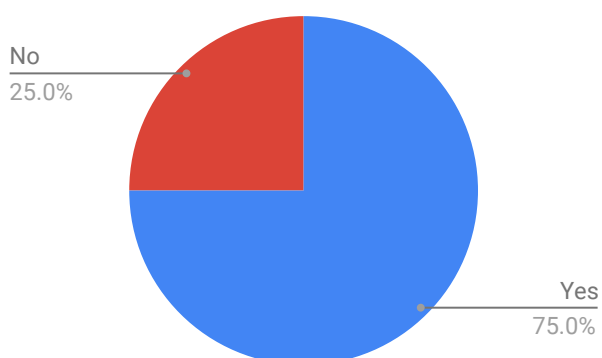
Display Board 4 – Design Option 2

This design option introduces a waving landform into the park along its northern edge, as well as a community growing space in the south-western corner.

Participants were generally in favour of this location, although a number of people mentioned concern generally about a community growing facility, and the risks of theft and vandalism.



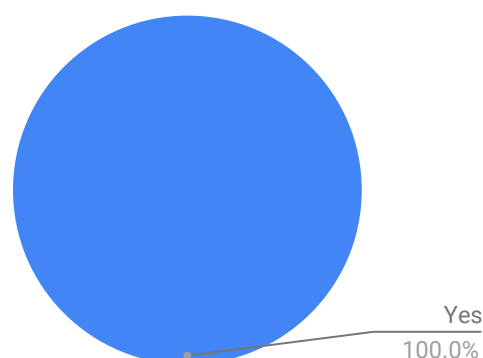
Participants were strongly supportive of the waved landform design, and the introduction of climbing facilities, while there was mixed support for the concept of musical play.



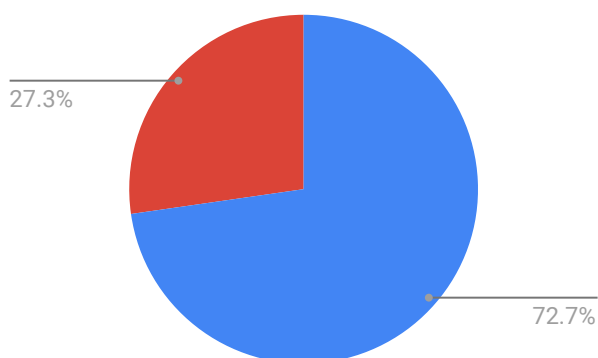
Participants in favour or against the introduction of a waved landform design in the park

Display Board 5 - Design Option 3

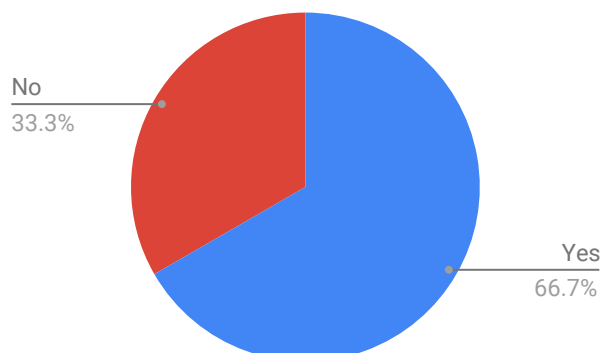
This design option introduces an alternative form of landform, constructed as islands and bowls. As with Design Option 2, this option includes the community growing space, with an alternative layout of raised beds.



Participants in favour or against creating a landform with oval 'islands' and bowls, linked with play facilities



Participants in favour or against the introduction of a climbing wall within this design option

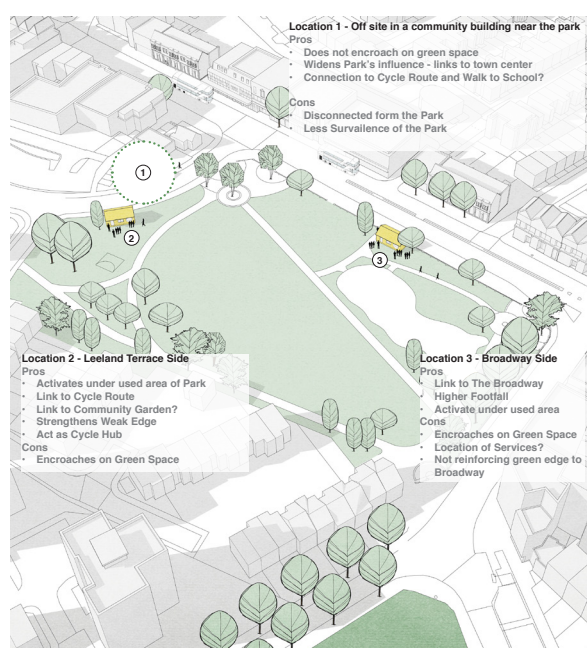


Participants in favour or against idea of a play gravel in this option

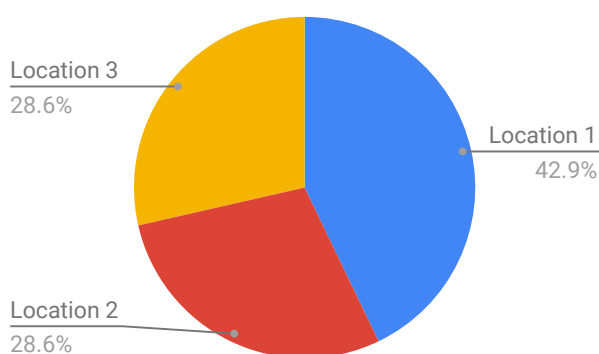
There was very strong support for the landform design in this option and the introduction of natural play elements including gravel play and the wheeled sports track.

Community Kiosk

Participants were asked to respond to suggestions for a community kiosk located in or close to the park. There was no strong opinion on the potential location of this kiosk, with a marginal preference for locating this outside of the park, with concerns raised both about reducing the green space within the park, and of the kiosk disrupting local independent businesses.



Proposed kiosk locations within the display board



Support for location options for a community kiosk

Participants were also asked to respond to suggest functions of this kiosk. There was general support for all of the suggested functions, with particularly strong preferences for an external area covered by a canopy, and public toilets and baby-changing facilities.