

Appendix 1 – Summary of Community Feedback Showcase

On 10th September we presented this report and our design opportunities and constraints report to local stakeholders at a Community Feedback Showcase held at the Exchange. 21 people attended the event and gave us some great feedback, overall the reaction to the ideas presented and how the engagement process so far has gone were positive.

At the event attendees were asked to give general feedback and ideas on the design opportunities and constraints and were also asked to submit questions for the soon to be appoint landscape design practice. Using the suggestions a question was created and put to the each of the landscape design practises bidding to re-design the gardens the rest will go forward to be asked at a later “Meet the Architect” event. You can see the question below.

The general feedback received range from design inspirations from other local parks to highlighting concerns around ASB, flooding and lighting. Also a prominent theme were comments on a potential food business in the gardens with some feedback questioning the local need for such a business and others offering more novel solutions that offered something different to a typical café. All the reports and comments collected will be shared with the Landscape Architect once they are appointed and will feed in to their design work.

We have included all the questions and comments received at the event below;

Questions for the Landscape Design Team

Can you create a design for the park that can connect across the town to create an Erith as a garden town? So Riverside Gardens aren't thought about on it's own.

What can you do so we can see the Thames?

Will there be a café?

How can we strike a balance between the hard landscape of surrounding buildings and soft landscape of the Gardens?

What design solutions are there to make me feel safe in the Riverside Gardens?

What are your thoughts about heights of new structures? I live in the new L&Q block and wouldn't want anything to block my view of the river.

Will there be a cycle path and/or cycle rack, and how can a newly designed gardens be used to promote cycling more widely?

Question posed to architects:
How will you connect and link the project with other nearby green and open spaces and the surrounding area?

Feedback from Stakeholders

Consider traffic calming down Walnut Tree Road/Erith High Street. With more children & activity in the gardens, this will be a safety concern.

Yoga in the gardens was great! More of these quiet activities would be fantastic! Like the idea of markets as well.

Drunks and ASB, no toilets? no skateboards, leave our trees, discourage caravans, dog free area.

Directions to parking

Space across the road for a restaurant that would be open in the evenings, nod to the success of the Lighthouse and not taking up space in the Gardens.

Inspiration – Shorne Country Park – good children's play area has part-submerged crocodiles that children play on.

What about sand pits in the planters on the river walk?

Why a café? Another one? Compete with The Exchange and 68 Pier Road?

Drainage must be considered as part of project as there is already problems with surface flooding on Erith High Street.

Play area for children, also maybe adult exercise equipment.

What about having a mobile kiosk/food truck on the weekends instead of a permanent café

Erith High Street – in very bad condition since there was a flood. Heavy goods vehicles for the works will make it worse.

Ensure lighting is adequate to allow events after daylight hours and so people feel safe.

Develop a children's soft ball games court/area. Communicate directly with schools by attending 'think-ins' or attendance at parent's evenings.

Inspiration – Lesnes Abbey Wood, tree carvings.

40 years ago there used to be a small kiosk/café opposite the Gardens. Sea cadets used to have a barge on the river.