

COMMUNITY UPDATE

JULY 2020

Key Consultation Issues and Responses

These are the main issues and concerns raised from our third consultation event in April, together with our responses:

Height and Scale of the Proposals

Some residents have expressed concern about the height and scale of the proposals. This has been raised throughout the consultation. As a result of our approach and the feedback, the proposals have been carefully designed to ensure that the overall scale and density of the proposed development are in keeping with the character of the surrounding area. Density levels reflect that of the existing communities and developments around the New Town North proposals.

Green and Public Space

Residents were keen to understand the impact of the proposals on King George V Park, and considerable effort has gone into ensuring that additional green space is created within the development and that it blends well with the park. In total the available green space and soft landscaping on the site will increase that provided within the park by more than 25%, in addition to extensive public realm in newly created courtyards and pathways. The design team has been determined to make a significant improvement to the available public space and is confident this has been achieved in the latest proposals. We'd like to thank everyone, particularly the Friends of the Park, for their help in improving the proposals through the consultation.

Tree Maintenance

Trees in the area have now been subject to detailed reports by two independent arboriculturists to make sure we are taking a fully informed approach. The tree survey work has included King George V Park and the tree belt along Royal Crescent and Fettes Row will be managed in order to maintain its long standing and important presence. The team is finalising proposals on how this can be best achieved with the Council. In addition to the long-term management of the trees on Royal Crescent and Fettes Row there will be considerable new tree planting incorporated into the soft and hard landscape throughout the proposals.

Overshadowing

Some residents asked about overshadowing of the park. The team has been aware of this issue from early in the consultation process and this has been fully taken into account in the latest proposals. The plans remain fully compliant with the guidance applied by the Council for development beside parks and public places and will not result in any material additional overshadowing and in a couple of locations will offer a moderate benefit. The team has always worked to ensure that the proposals are coordinated with King George V Park and the planning application will reflect that approach.

Parking

Some of the local residents have raised concerns about the number of car parking spaces and seem to have been advised that there were only going to be 20 car parking spaces created. We have no idea how this rumour originated, but we are delighted to clarify the position. Parking numbers are strictly controlled by the Council on new developments.

The proposals comply with Council Parking Standards, with off street parking being created for a total of 164 cars, across all uses. We also have incorporated 700 spaces for cycle parking, also based on guidance from the Council.

Eyre Place Courtyard

Eyre Place residents have raised questions about the relationship of Eyre Place residents have raised questions about the relationship of the new development with their existing courtyard, which currently abuts a blank wall adjacent to the existing office building. An expanded courtyard is being created adjacent to their properties. We can confirm that this expanded courtyard space is 50% larger than the existing space. Sunlight penetration into the courtyard will also be increased.

There were also questions about overlooking, which is inevitable on any city centre development. Any new directly facing windows will be the same distance away, or further, than at present. There are two facing sets of windows that will be created. The windows that are being created facing East/West will be no nearer than the existing windows at a distance of 22.3 metres. We are also creating windows where there is currently a blank wall, and these will face North/South. These will be around 19 metres away from existing properties which is a metre further away than the standard privacy/overlooking distances permitted by policy.

Materials

Many residents asked about materials being used in the development. We have been working hard with the Council and Historic Environment Scotland to get the right mix of stone and other materials for use in the development, which is obviously a major challenge on such a complex proposal. These discussions are nearing a conclusion and will be reflected in the Planning Application.

Pathways/Cycling

Some residents were concerned about increased cycling through the park. The proposals for pathway access have been significantly reduced to reflect these concerns and to manage the interface between pedestrians and cyclists, with one of the proposed access points being removed. This will create an environment where walking is given an appropriate priority.