



MAKING THE CENTRE OF CHISWICK FIT FOR THE FUTURE  
Re-designing Old Market Place


*September 2023*

# INTRODUCTION

Throughout July and August 2023 Chiswick Flower Market held a Co-Design Initiative laying out some proposals to improve the area where market are held in the centre of Chiswick, and inviting responses, suggestions, criticisms and improvements. The Initiative was widely promoted at the Flower Markets, on social media, articles in the local press, and with a display at the library.

Create Streets, a high-profile independent organisation dealing with the public realm, urban landscapes and place-making, provided the platform and has compiled the results.

Hundreds of you responded, and - we were delighted to see - several residents, including a couple of local architects came up with some important improvements. These have now been integrated into the proposals, and this version will now go to the council for official consideration and consultation.



I fully support the Flower Market's proposals for the improvement of the public space and car parking on Old Market Place. The generous width of Chiswick High Road and the set back of the buildings to its south create what is, in effect, a town square for Chiswick, yet until now little attempt has been made to design an amenable place for people. These well-considered proposals will create a greener space, provide sustainable urban drainage and accommodate the weekly markets while not inconveniencing those who wish to shop by car during the rest of the week

Peter Murray OBE

Local resident, Co-founder of New London Architecture, Former Mayor's Design Advocate

I fully support the Flower Market's imaginative proposals for improving the public space and car parking on Old Market Place. The markets have transformed life in Chiswick on Sundays but are hampered and let down by the run-down infrastructure on Chiswick High Road. These well-considered proposals will create a greener space, provide sustainable urban drainage and accommodate the weekly markets while not inconveniencing those who wish to shop by car during the rest of the week. At a time when Chiswick's attractions are increasingly recognised nationally and internationally, in The Times, the Wall Street Journal and elsewhere, these plans would result in major improvements to the area.

Torin Douglas MBE

Local resident and Director, Chiswick Book Festival

*Imagine if we actually managed to pull this off; the Old Market Place would genuinely become a community space for future generations in the way it always was for past generations*

Honor Barratt, Chief Executive, Birchgrove (Redeveloping the old police station site)

*The designs for renovating Old Market Place are excellent. These will bring greater biodiversity, provide nature-based ecosystem services and enhance the ways in which the space can be used for residents and visitors. Multifunctional urban design of this quality and inclusivity is rarely seen*

Dr Tilly Collins, FRES

Senior Fellow & Deputy Director, Centre for Environmental Policy, Imperial College London

*Looking forward to the improvements to this place in the heart of Chiswick - the greener the better.*

Marie Rabouhans, Chair, West Chiswick & Gunnersbury Society

# THE RESPONSES

356 responses were received. There were five broad questions to answer, but respondents were encouraged to submit comments and proposals. Some responded just by ticking the relevant boxes, but many offered comments, some lengthy. All replies were read and all were considered.

There was some concern that we are intending to remove all parking places. We are not. The current proposals do, however, suggest a reduction in the number of parking places. Our High Streets have changed. We don't need to read the research (which we have!) to know that many of us shop online, that many of us have heavy items delivered, that there is a climate and pollution emergency, that there is a biodiversity crisis, that our urban landscape is subject to sudden flooding as rainstorms become fiercer, that trees can help to ease the heat island effect. In order for High Streets to remain relevant and successful, they need to provide a welcoming environment with clean air, safe and pleasant places to sit and meet friends, interesting and useful shops, as well as offering efficient and non-polluting transport solutions. A parking survey will be carried out before any changes are made so that we are not relying on anecdotal evidence to make decisions.

A selection of responses is provided below. All the comments submitted are provided on our website [here](#)



# SELECTION OF COMMENTS

Is there enough seating? Thinking of ice cream eating.

The proposed new scheme seems well designed and provides an excellent mix of new or upgraded facilities in the right proportions. Let's see it done Hounslow!

Plans overall look carefully thought through to balance improving the environment hugely but keeping parking, enhancing the place for pedestrians and encouraging local use. Great planting, rain gardens, and development of community space.

It ticks all the boxes, more trees, nice sitting areas, parking lots, and on the whole very pleasant and beautiful.

This overall proposal is excellent; compromises have to be made, and car parking (in my opinion) should be prioritized/reserved as much as possible for the disabled and (somehow!) non-local families.

More green spaces, more trees, more places for old people to sit down, less car parking.

Ugly, waste of space caused by the dominance of private car parking. Don't design new space around cars - take the cars away bit by bit over say 5 years and roll out the public pedestrianised space incrementally. Keep it simple, don't over clutter.



## SELECTION OF COMMENTS (2)

I approve of the whole project EXCEPT the colour of the bricks.

I think this is a wonderful initiative for our community

Love the proposal. The seating/benches, the more greenery and planters, the more space.

Feels more inclusive and welcoming. We don't need more car parking so this proposal is great!

Brilliant - still a bit too much parking this should be totally pedestrianised

I really like the new proposal. The current space is grotty and dirty, attracting Deliveroo drivers and undesirable activity. Currently not easy to walk out of the car parking to the high road. More trees should be planted in the ground and not in planters

An excellent and well thought through proposal that will vastly improve the quality of Chiswick residents' lives and create an improved retail shopping experience for the area.

Excellent idea, draw as many people in as possible, with trees, vegetation, seating.

Overall I think it is a great idea. The southern side of the High Road is unattractive and in need of a refresh. In light of no plans by Hounslow Council or anyone else for that matter, the organisers of the Flower Market are to be congratulated.



## SELECTION OF COMMENTS (3)

Love it. Agree the more trees the better

Looks great more trees - why do we still believe we need so many parking spaces ? In Chiswick Gunnersbury ward 45% of households do not own a car.

There are too many parking spaces. Replace with seating, greenery and a few disabled parking bays. We need more vegetation, we don't need tarmac.

The overall number of parking spaces can be reduced because the car park doesn't seem to be busy, even at weekends.

I really like that the scheme provides car parking spaces, can there be dedicated spaces for blue badge holders.

An excellent and well thought through proposal that will vastly improve the quality of Chiswick residents lives and create an improved retail shopping experience for the area

Why do we keep having to cater for cars? No cars, car parking, or through traffic please! [many similar 'no parking' comments]

Please provide more seating, ideally under shade, so people can enjoy sitting with a good view while having a coffee or snack.





## SELECTION OF COMMENTS (4)

Looks fantastic and creates opportunities for more outdoor events to take place and a nice space for people to meet creating a more inclusive community.

This looks lovely, it will be such an improvement. [...] If it's really necessary to keep some parking in Old Market Place, I think it's really important to make drivers know that this is primarily a place for people walking and chilling out, and there may be kids (and also older people) around.[...] - the responsibility should be on drivers.

I really like the idea of a more integrated space that has flexible use.

Good layout and design, good that a space for events is being created.

More community integration and useable space in the heart of Chiswick can only be a good thing

A very useful proposal. Excellent.

I like it. A lot of thought gone into the overall plan. Permeable materials for parking areas would also help flooding. Love the rain garden and trees. Hopefully it will be maintained and watered.

Still looks like a car park, big expanse of tarmac, no greenery. More planting?

Removing so much parking will cripple the High St even more. You are hell bent on ruining vibrant Chiswick. Shops will shut. Chiswick will become a ghost town. By all means pretty up the area under review but do not remove the parking.



## SELECTION OF COMMENTS (5)

As for British Parking standards, that's a load of crap. It's a lame attempt to make it political. Plenty of smaller cars out there that can squeeze into any space.

It is highly likely that seating will be used by drug addicts and homeless people. Such large and unnecessary pavement areas will be used by yobs on bikes, skateboards, ebikes and for getting drunk after dark. Crime is already bad enough in Chiswick.

Chiswick is a destination and has been for centuries. It is not realistic to think it will ever be car-free - unless the aim is to destroy its local economy.

Removing parking is a bad option and will make Chiswick a far less attractive place to visit.

All of the tick options below are your suggestions in order to justify your proposals. The area could easily be tarted up, modernised and made more lovely without reducing parking spaces. This is a vanity project, Karen, driven by your desire to ruin the businesses of Chiswick.

Although this looks very "pretty", we do not need it. There are plenty of other greenery in Chiswick. We do need the number of parking spaces currently available, not a reduction in number.

I note comments that the parking area is only half full most of the time. That is due to fewer people travelling to Chiswick as it is such a nightmare to get there now [...] This type of idea is killing off businesses as it reduces footfall



## SELECTION OF COMMENTS (6)

Why is a Chiswick resident undertaking a so-called Consultation and working with a developer to change the nature and use of land which is under the control of the London Borough of Hounslow, which we the tax-payers, fund?  
*[Factcheck: this is not an official consultation from Hounslow; it is funded by the Flower Market, not the council]*

Please do not reduce parking bays, [...]. Local businesses have already suffered, please don't make them and others who are not fit young and healthy feel further excluded.

Will look messy and be a waste of parking spaces.

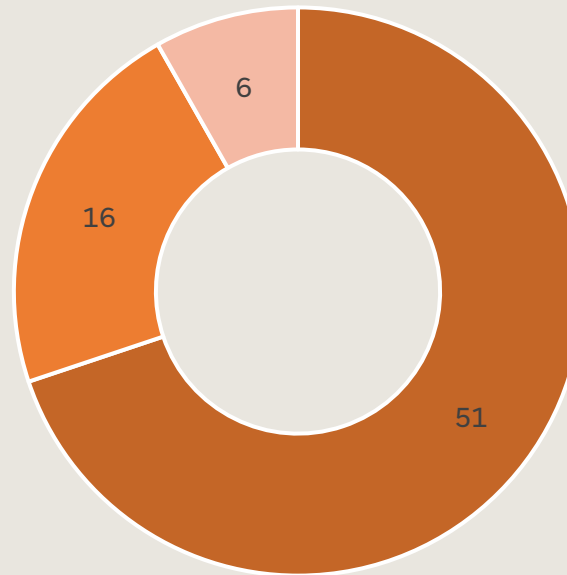
This appears to show a fantasy land from the Barbie film. It's a typical artist's impression that in effect bears no relation to reality. This side of the high road has relatively low footfall due to the few shops and the fact that a large expanse, formerly the police station, will be taken up by the older peoples planned flats. Removing valuable parking spaces to replace them with a few benches, planters and paving is absurd. We don't need a space for 'performances by local musicians....and other attractions'. This is simply your excuse for removing parking space. Please come out of Barbie-land and come down to Planet Chiswick High Road. We need to attract back shoppers from neighbouring areas who might need to drive here, people who want to do 'big shops', people with families who need to drive here to the restaurants and shops, people with mobility problems who need to drive here. For those who want to sit down and experience greenery, they can sit outside the numerous cafes and enjoy the trees which already exist. Or even go to the green.

It is an expensive nonsense.

The left side of the slide features a series of white, overlapping geometric lines that form a complex, abstract pattern. These lines intersect to create various shapes, including triangles and polygons, against the black background.

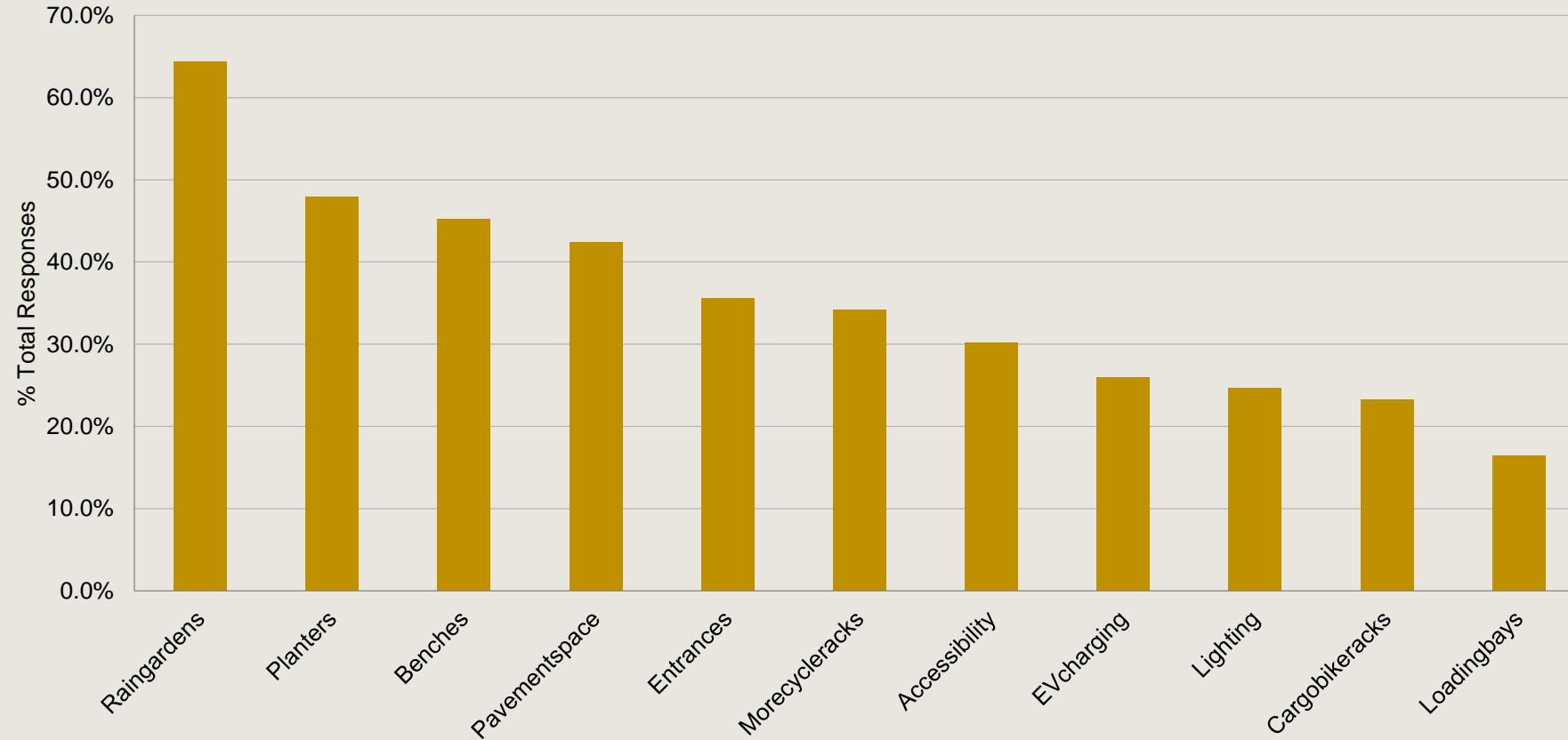
# ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES

# HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THIS PLACE?

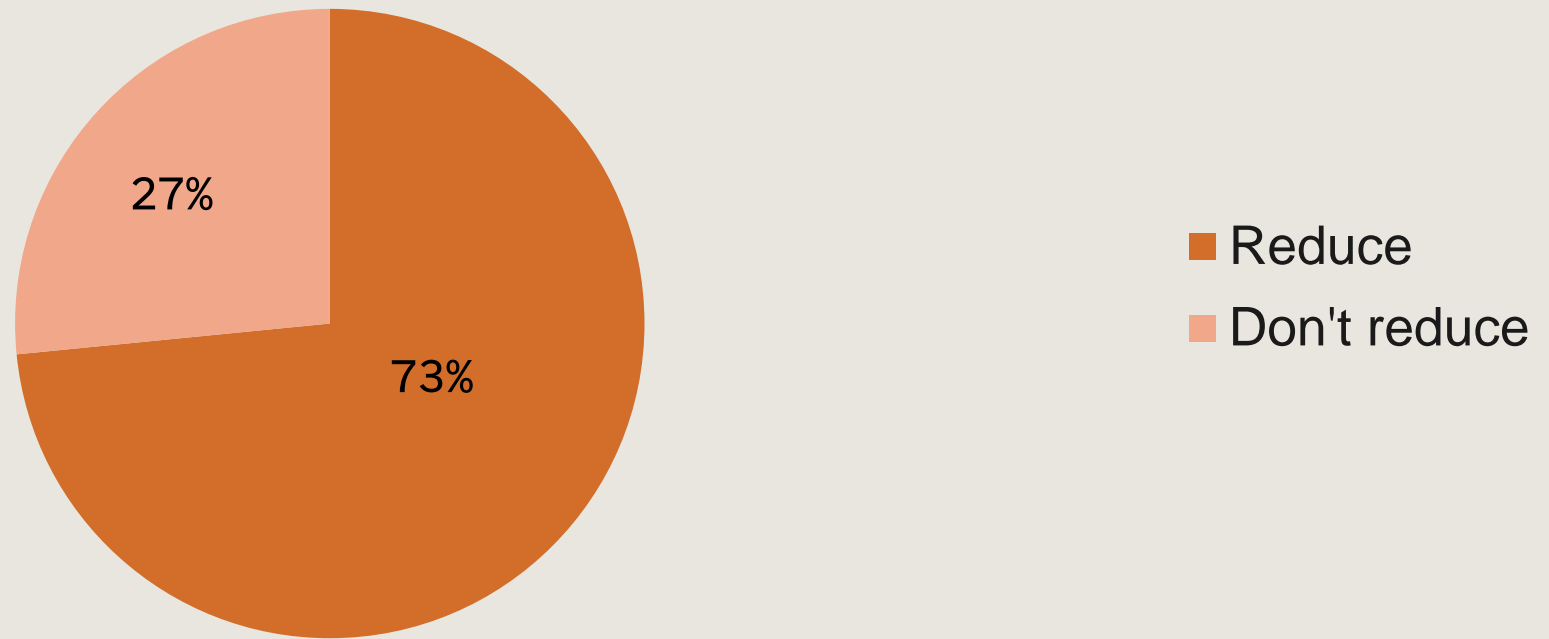


■ Like ■ Dislike ■ Neutral

# WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ARE MOST IMPORTANT



# OPINIONS OF CAR PARKING SPACES



## MOOD BOARD RESULTS

Visitors were invited to vote for images they liked (gold star) or disliked (black dot).

### Flexible space

	Gold star	Black dot
Exercise/ dance class	1	
Punch & Judy	2	4
Cafe, bunting, bar tables	11	
Outside dining, plants	11	
Cafe tables, flowers	9	
Bandstand with jazz	8	
Music duo	9	
Christmas tree	2	1
Children's choir singing	3	1
Rock choir singing	1	
Flower Market stalls	6	3

**Conclusion:** Participants wanted outside seating for coffee, drinks, dining, and also live music

### Plants and planters

	Gold star	Black dot
Curvy metal Corten planters	9	1
Birch trunks, ferns, grd cover	9	
Blocky planters spilling over seating	15	1
Wide rain gardens in the road	5	
Verbena beds, gabion seats	20	1
Narrow planted swales	1	3
Mature trees, underplanted	4	
Round corten beds, wooden seating, island flower beds	4	
Metal sculpture, under-planted grasses	6	10

**Conclusion:** Airy planting with integrated seating, like gabions (Luke's design!) was by far the favourite. Metal sculpture is a big no.



# MOOD BOARD RESULTS

Visitors were invited to vote for images they liked (gold star) or disliked (black dot).

## Seating

	Gold star	Black dot
Slatted seating around trees	20	
Round seating around planters	3	
Straight bench, no backs	4	3
Curved slatted bench, flowers behind	24	
TGT benches	17	3
TGT benches (diff view)	14	
Square slatted benches around trees	6	2
Coloured cubes, slatted seats	3	20
Corten steel, slatted benches, planters	14	1
Curved benches, grasses, trees	21	
Classic Chiswick benches, sphinx armrests	3	16
Concrete slatted + USB ports	2	5
Concrete curved	1	20

**Conclusion:** Curved, slatted, pale wood, with or without steel. A very clear no to coloured panels, classic Chiswick benches and concrete.

## Paving

	Gold star	Black dot
Pale granite setts	18	
Grey and white setts	2	8
Pale slabs, darker criss cross	2	9
Grey and pale slabs	5	2
Beige setts, steps, wide areas	1	4
Small setts, wide mortar	3	2
Orange resin (Leicester)	2	12
Curved cobbles	3	8
Pale patterns (Christchurch)	3	2
Grey, geometric patterns	4	21
Pale diamond patterns	22	

**Conclusion:** A definite no for resin (especially orange), and a definite no for bright patterns, but enthusiasm for pale granite setts and for pale diamond patterns

# THE UPDATED DESIGNS

Following several great suggestions for improvements from respondents to the Co-Design (both professional and amateur), we have modified our designs accordingly. There were many comments saying we had been too timid, that the area in front of the old police station was still predominantly tarmac, and that we should provide more greenery. We have taken this on board. We also consulted additionally with people with visual impairment and disabilities and have made modifications accordingly.

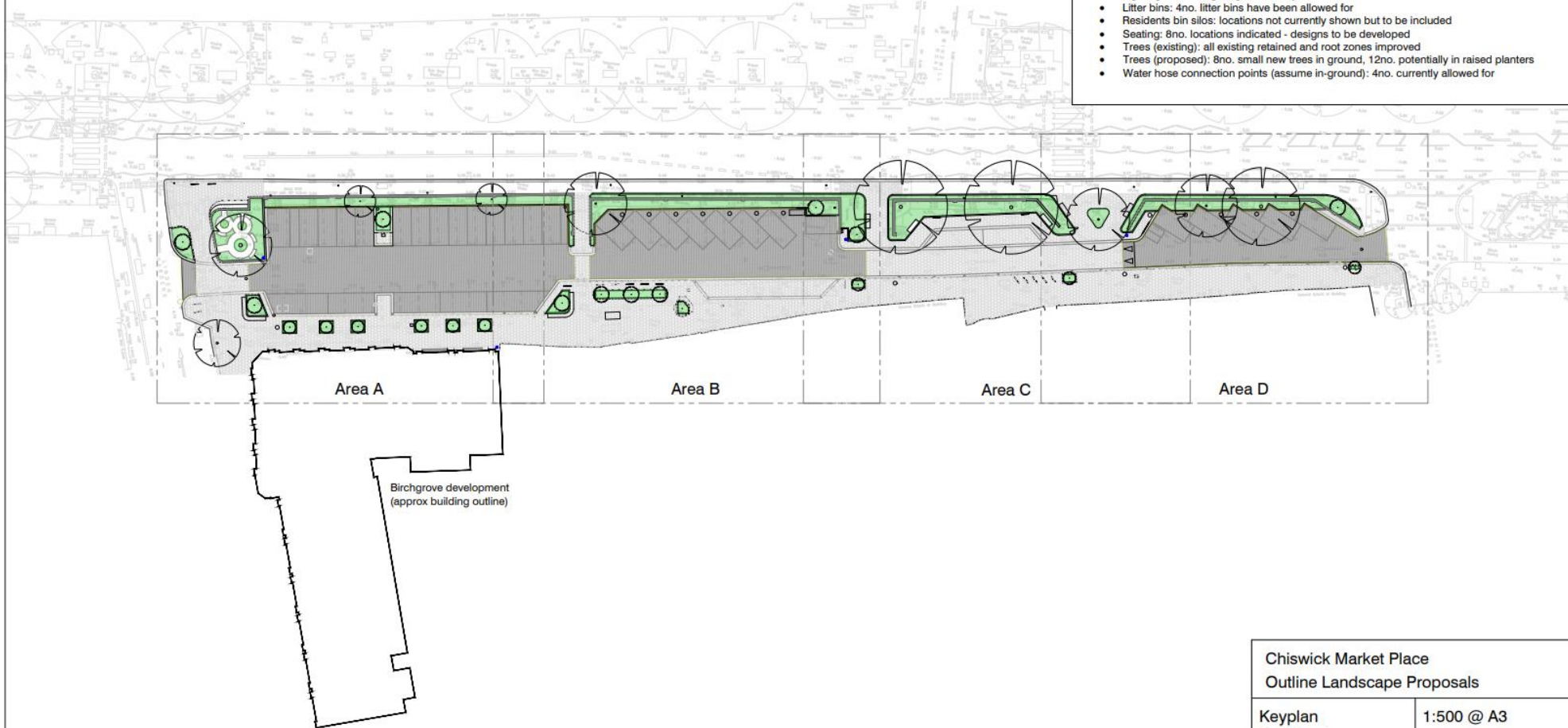
See below for an indicative plan of the area and a 3D sketch. The full revised design, which will now be submitted to the council, is available on our website at [www.chiswickflowermarket.com](http://www.chiswickflowermarket.com)



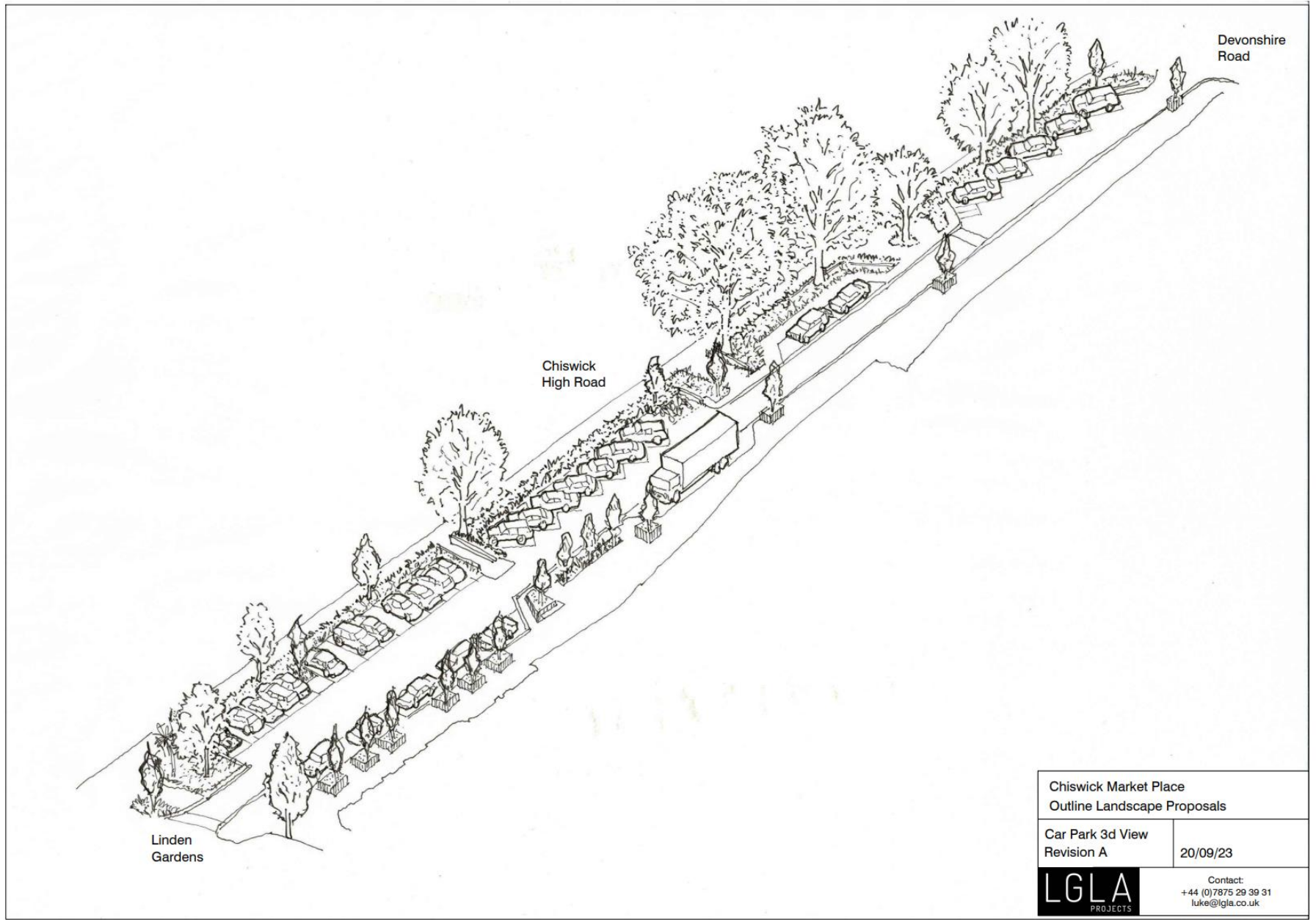
#### NOTES

This revised version of the outline proposals (June 2023) includes the following (all are subject to review and detailed development):

- Parking: 33no. parking bays (including 2no. blue badge spaces), plus 1 loading bay
- EV vehicle charger points: 12no. currently included
- Parking meters: assume retain, locations indicative
- Motorcycle bay: moved from Linden Gardens to central location, space for 5no.
- Cycle stands: 18no. currently included
- Cargo bikes: 2no. designated bays currently included
- Air Quality Monitoring Station: retained
- Electricity feeder pillars: 5no. located indicatively, assumption that some EV chargers can double-up as feeder pillars for some market stalls
- Rain garden - SuDS proposal to be developed in detail, requiring structural (existing wall) and civil engineering input
- Levels and falls: currently not shown as part of SuDS design development
- Kerbs: raised and/or flush kerbs indicated but subject to SuDS design development and approach taken to vehicle movements
- Surface water gullies: existing not shown as will be omitted as part of rain garden design
- Lighting: no new lighting is currently included
- Litter bins: 4no. litter bins have been allowed for
- Residents bin silos: locations not currently shown but to be included
- Seating: 8no. locations indicated - designs to be developed
- Trees (existing): all existing retained and root zones improved
- Trees (proposed): 8no. small new trees in ground, 12no. potentially in raised planters
- Water hose connection points (assume in-ground): 4no. currently allowed for



Chiswick Market Place Outline Landscape Proposals	
Keyplan Revision A	1:500 @ A3 20/09/23
<b>LGLA</b> PROJECTS	Contact: +44 (0)7875 29 39 31 luke@lgla.co.uk



Linden  
Gardens

Chiswick  
High Road

Devonshire  
Road

Chiswick Market Place Outline Landscape Proposals	
Car Park 3d View Revision A	20/09/23
<b>LGLA</b> PROJECTS	Contact: +44 (0)7875 29 39 31 luke@lgl.co.uk

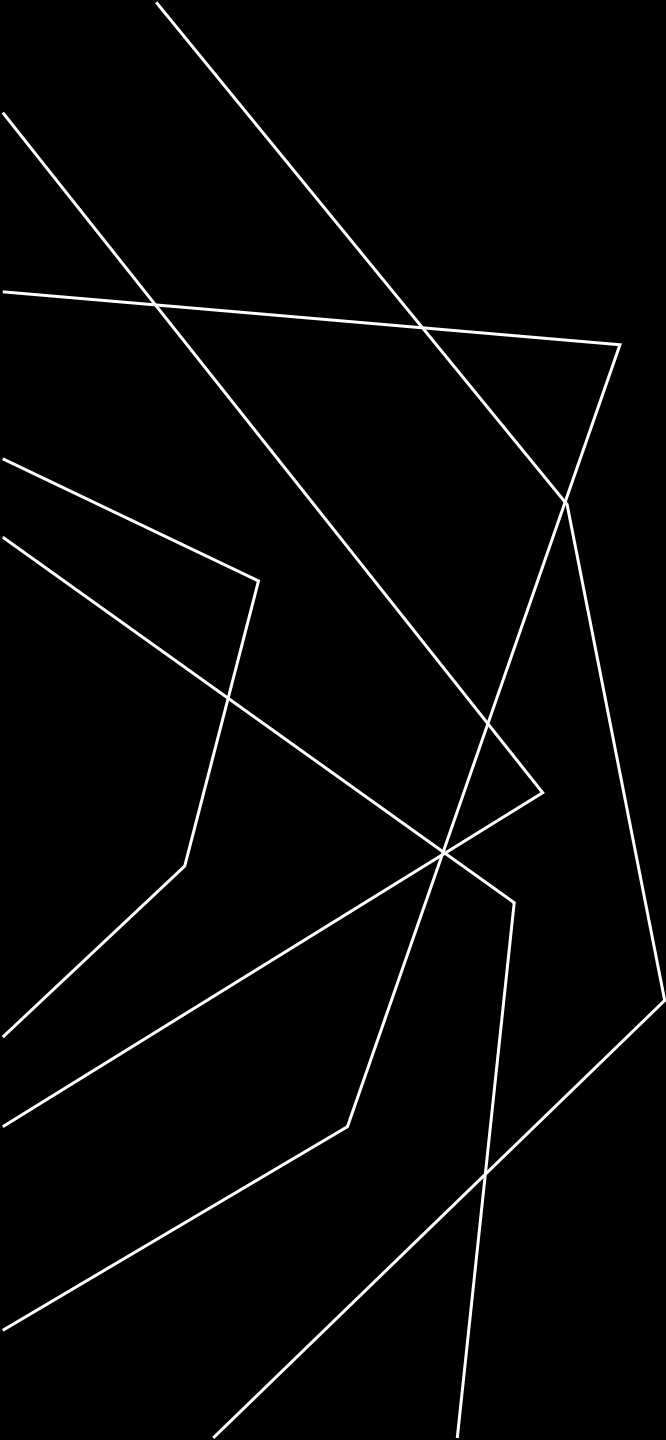
# WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Throughout this procedure we have worked in partnership with various departments of the council, with local businesses and residents, as well as the police and the arboriculture team, etc. and with those councillors willing to engage.

The demolition of the police station and the rebuilding of the Birchgrove facility for assisted living for the elderly will create huge disruption, but also a great opportunity and - importantly - potential funding. We need to coordinate the redesign of Old Market Place with the rebuilding of the old police station building to minimise the disruption.

We understand that the council will review these proposals and we very much hope that, following due consultation and further detailed design work, they will be implemented.

We must seize this opportunity to create a centre for Chiswick that is fit for the next decades and that is as beautiful, sustainable and functional for everyone as possible. This is an opportunity that we must not miss.



**THANK YOU**

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[www.chiswickflowermarket.com](http://www.chiswickflowermarket.com)