‘You Said, We Did’ Report: Highways Buildouts for Trees – Needham Road – Informal Consultation, Duty to Consult and Traffic Management Order (TMO) Consultation

Background

Needham Road has been identified as a suitable street for the introduction of tree buildouts based on existing parking occupancy and provision of trees. The proposals for the highway public realm improvements and parking changes will include the following:

- The addition of four highway buildouts, including the planting of 4 trees;
- The removal of one pay-by-phone bay to facilitate for tree buildouts;
- The removal of the existing tree outside the Cock & Bottle pub, to facilitate the addition of one of the new trees and improve accessibility on the pavement.
- There will be no impact to the resident parking bays.

The proposals for Needham Road are part of a wider programme of works called *Highways Buildouts for Trees*. This programme seeks to implement tree buildouts across the City of Westminster, to increase the number of trees across the borough and improve the public realm, whilst having a minimal impact on parking and loading restrictions. This programme aligns closely with the Council’s City for All – Vision and Strategy, in particular the Greener and Cleaner objective.

The proposals for Needham Road involve three key elements, each requiring a different consultation:

Subject of Consultation	Name of Consultation	How to Respond
Streetscape Changes	Informal Consultation	Questionnaire on Commonplace
Removal of the Existing Tree	Duty to Consult (under section 96a of the Highways Act 1980)	Comments on Commonplace
Changes to Parking & Loading Restrictions	Traffic Management Order (TMO) Consultation	TMO Consultation Process

The consultations on the above elements were undertaken at the same time, for 4 weeks from 4th September 2024 to 2nd October 2024.
Via the consultations, we asked for your views on the proposals for Needham Road

You Said

In total, we received 21 unique responses to the consultation; the majority of the responses were submitted via Commonplace. There were some key themes within the consultation responses

Themes	You Said	WCC Response
Parking	Objections to the reduction of parking spaces. Loss of parking was unclear.	The City Council considers an average car length to be at least 5 metres. The proposals suggest removing 3 metres from two resident parking spots outside Nos. 1-9 and Nos. 13-17, and 1 metre from outside Nos. 2-6.

	Confusion around the loss of parking.	Reducing the length of a resident parking bay does not necessarily reduce the number of parking spaces. For example, a bay reduced from 18 metres to 15 metres would still be considered to accommodate 3 cars, as each parking space is 5 meters long. The proposals would result in no net loss of residents' parking spaces but would result in the loss of one Pay-by-Phone parking space. The loss of one Pay-by-Phone parking space is due to the need to accommodate buildouts and the placement of trees on the street. Yellow lines are necessary to prevent obstruction around the buildouts.
Trees – removal and planting	Mixed feelings about the removal of the existing tree. More trees are welcome.	Council officers considered the benefits and disbenefits of retaining the existing alder tree, but ultimately decided that the tree has rather outgrown its location, and the trunk and roots of the tree obstruct the pavement. This is particularly important for mobility or sight impaired individuals, or those using mobility aids or child buggies. Currently, in order to navigate around the tree an individual has to use the Cock and Bottle Public House's private land, which is not part of the public highway. The forecourt is also slightly raised from the pavement and creates a trip hazard, and a potential difficulty for some pedestrians as outlined above. The alder tree has not reached its full size and therefore retaining the tree would result in a worsening obstruction in future years, if it were it to remain.
Cycle Parking	Request for more secure cycle parking.	The City Council are always appreciative of suggested locations to improve the City Councils' cycle parking infrastructure. Interested applicants for cycle parking can register their interest for a cycle hangar on the City Councils' website here: https://www.westminster.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/walking-and-cycling/cycle-parking
Traffic and Safety	Suggestions to make the road no entry for vehicular traffic Concerns about pedestrian safety and junction widths	There are no proposals within the scope of this scheme to prohibit vehicular movement or to widen the junctions. This scheme has a sole focus on planting additional trees within the highway. A Road Safety Audit (RSA) has been undertaken for this scheme, and there are no safety concerns with the proposed design. As part of the RSA, intervisibility at the junctions was considered, and moving the trees closer to the junction would affect visibility of drivers conflicting between Needham Road / Artisan Road.

Next Steps

Please revisit the Commonplace site for future updates on this scheme.