

Feedback from Resident Steering Group Workshop

11th February 2021

Project: 3663 Aberfeldy Masterplan

Date: 11 February 2021

Main session

- 309 route – questions about the proposed right turn on the A12 – the bus priority route was explained
- Questions about future access from the A12 – the team confirmed that access from both the A12 and the A13 will be kept. The only difference is that the underpass will not include vehicular movement.

Room 1

Safe and friendly streets

Abbott Road

- Very busy and mainly used by non-residents as a shortcut. Would be good to find a way to reduce the vehicular use by non-residents, not only to reduce traffic but pollution is also a concern.
- Will large vehicles be restricted from travelling down Abbott Road?
- In the surrounding area there are examples of signage restricting the weight of vehicles – but these are typically ignored.
- The scheme should aim to reduce the flow of traffic and manage the restrictions of the types of vehicles.
- Residents could have input on the developments with TFL.
- The problems of Abbott Road happen at rush hour rather than during the day.
- Abbott Road should not change too much – should ensure all the services can still be provided (deliveries, emergency services etc)

Dee Street

- What is happening with the school? And when will the school be discussed?
- If the school be relocated next to Millennium Green – there is a concern that MG will be taken over by the school. Agrees that it makes sense for the school to use the green space but fears that it will be eventually fully incorporated into the school.
- Has there been a response from the school on whether they want to move or not?
- Will the capacity of the school remain the same? 4 form entry is most definitely needed by the community. Not much play space compared to other schools. If relocating, the design should look to expand the school.
- Safety around the existing school – accidents frequently nearly happen with cars.

The High Street

- Would like a cheap local shop with convenient opening times Eg. a Tesco Extra (Londis has been closed for some time).
- Other wanted shops – a cheap café, a shop full of bits and bobs (pans etc)

- Strongly believes the name Aberfeldy Street should be retained and does not agree with the use of 'The High Street' in these presentations. Fears losing the identity of the place through the change of names. Originally the streets were names alphabetically- slowly loosing this.
- Used to be that you would say you 'Live on the Aberfeldy' – It was this little area valued by residents but now it feels like it's not good enough because it's being upgraded.

Enterprise Yard

- Activating the streets is a good idea
- All nice ideas. More people will mean that the streets are safer.

What makes an enjoyable and safe street?

Spaces for bins and bikes

- Regarding the sulu system – there is already a problem with excess rubbish in Aberfeldy Village in general.
- Welcomes better access for cyclists.
- Concerns over the communal bike stores due to bad experiences in the past – they are not safe as people can get up to anything when hidden away out of sight.
- The bike stores you can see into are a lot better.

Wide pavements and front gardens

- Currently pavements are uneven and a trip hazard in many places

Well lit, safer streets

- Open and bright streets is great. However, feels security cameras are a must.
- Approves of light as an art installation
- Light art installation would be exciting for the children. Would also encourage people to go there. Particularly like the look of the lights in the trees.
- Positive comments about the colourful lights.

Places to sit

- Top right image on the places to sit page (seat surrounded by plants) – Older people would possibly not feel safe sitting there since you can't see who is behind you or coming up to you.

Community art

- At the bottom of Dee Street, where it meets Abbott Road, there used to be tea factory remember distinctly the smell of tea. The factory was called Hennessy's.
- The piece of art that looks like rope is beautiful

Parking

- What about a car park for those don't have a permit?
- Would underground parking be more expensive?

Cycle routes

- Cycle routes are not currently safe and rarely take the children for a bike ride as there is no destination they can get to safely. For example, a park/ green space where they can sit, and rest and kids can run around.
- Canal gets too busy in the summertime and the path isn't wide enough.

Other thoughts

- A Badminton court somewhere in the scheme would be great, as they used to play it as a family.
- Like the idea of solar panels on the roof

Room 2

Safe and friendly streets

Abbott Road:

- Spaces for cyclists and pedestrians – it would be good to have space for kids cycling.
- Discussion about the width of the roads and how the section of Abbott Road would change.
- Cyclist sometimes could be annoying, both as a pedestrian and driver.

Dee Street:

- People were asked what they think of Dee Street in its current status.
A resident thought that reducing the amount of parking along Dee Street could have a negative impact on parking in neighbouring areas. The team explained that is working closely to the transport consultant and checking the capacity of the streets and if they can support the proposal.
- A lot of people use Dee Street because of the school.
- The underpass along Dee Street will need to be improved.
- School: drop off and pick up are pretty bad. The group was asked if pedestrian and cycle connections should be improved. Some residents said that it depends if you work and need a car. It also depends on the number of kids that you have, as they might go to different schools.
- One of the residents living in Nairn Street was used to go to the Culloden primary school. He explained that from Nairn Street there were two potential routes, along Abbott Road (busier but safer) or behind the A12 and the underpass. The second one was a bit more dangerous.
- Potential school relocation: that could be good.

High Street

- Priority: make sure it is a safe space for people to walk.
- There is currently no zebra crossing, so it is not safe for kids. Need for more zebra crossings.
- Lack of shops variety. You would not buy your groceries there and go to the supermarket instead. It would be nice to have a good bakery of fresh grocery.
- A few years ago we had great shops.
- High Street at night and evening – it is important to be safe at all time.
- A resident asked if all the current shops will stay. The team confirmed that the buildings will be new, and the shops will be varied. It is making sure that there is a mix of shop sizes to allow a variety of shops. The client is also trying to keep the rent affordable, and this would allow businesses to stay.
- The residents were asked if they would like to see more food and drink places along the High Street. Tommy currently organises some family events and we always had a local pub. Barry's was always there. Some shops are always empty, and you feel sorry for them.
- Residents were asked what they would like to see again.
Proper shops, we had fresh butcher, baker and a grocery shop. Competitive prices are important as well, otherwise people will drive to Canning Town.
- Shared spaces are ok, as long as they are safe.
- If the proposal includes plants in beds, then they need to be well maintained.
- Colour – The High Street after the meanwhile intervention looks better, and the kids comment positively on them every time they walk past. A resident raised a concern if it is going to be maintained as it could otherwise age very quickly.

Enterprise Yard

- The current parking and management of Poplar Works is not very good, in particular for the units forwards the end.
- The café is a good thing.
- When asked, residents were not sure if Poplar Works improved the noise condition (as they mentioned that you get used to the noise) but agreed that they made the area prettier.
- The Poplar Works parking is a concern for residents living next to it.
- A resident asked if local people would be able to get jobs out of the proposed extension of Poplar Works. The team highlighted that currently a lot of tenants are from Aberfeldy. The aim is to bring the creative industries together and have a platform to learn new skills.
- The residents were asked if they see the overlooking benefits of having Poplar Works, feeling safe walking down the street. A resident said that he personally doesn't walk down that street but can see the overlooking benefits.
- The team explained that there will be a range of uses within the new Poplar Works, as the line between retail and workspaces is getting more blurred.
- The residents asked if that would increase the potential of noise for local residents. Parking and security could be an issue as well.

What makes an enjoyable and safe street?

Bikes and bins

- It is not safe to leave the kids alone with their bikes outside of a shop (if I get into the shop) as they get stolen.
- More cameras would be beneficial, as we would try to find who has done it
- The bike and bins precedents had a positive feedback. Questions about who would be able to use the bike cages.

Wide pavement and front gardens

- The front gardens look good, people can get straight into their properties.
- Wide pavements and front garden precedents were positively received.

Well lit spaces

- The underpass is a no-go area at night.
- I like the colourful lights in the square
- Lighting is important.

Places to sit

- The residents were asked if there are currently enough benches. Definitely not, we had more of them. They are needed for the elderly and people with kids as well.
- Benches increase the independence for many people, being able to stop and rest along the route.
- It is more about the management than the design.
- There is going to be a tension between antisocial behaviour and social activity.

Community art

- Youth engagement: young people were keen to have a space where to be creative.
- I think it would be a good idea to make a Youth Club, that way the teenagers will have somewhere to go and that prevents them from hanging about the streets.

Parking

- Question about the price for the podium car parking.
- Questions about accessibility and security, in particular late at night
- On street parking precedents were positively received.
- There is need to be a mix of podium and on street parking.

Other

- Will the place still be called Aberfeldy, as there were some rumours that the name will change? It was confirmed that there is no intention to change the name, and that Oxbow is only used for marketing purposes.

Room 3

Safe and friendly streets

Abbott Road

- Will cars still be able to access AV – what's the balance between walking and cycling and vehicle uses?
- Like the improvements for cycling
- Abbott Road is a rat run between the A12 and A13 – how are we going to manage this?
- Concerned about 'narrowing' Abbott Road and if parking would be lost – explained that the central area of the road would be reconfigured to a usual carriageway and parking would still be incorporated along the street.
- Electric charging points good idea as it will help improve air quality

Dee Street

- Drug use on Dee Street at present
- Street doesn't feel particularly safe, and the feeling of being trapped because of the underpass tunnel
- Anything we can do to improve the street will be welcomed
- The problems are at day and at night.

High Street

- How are we going to maintain the street furniture?
- Residents really like the artwork/murals on the High Street – it looks brighter and the colour is good.
- We should have evergreen trees on the High Street
- Questions about the footfall for shops and how we are going to bring people to Aberfeldy Street
- Small shops and local/community businesses are important especially during Covid.

Enterprise Yard

- Ideas look very nice and really attractive
- Some concerns that it would be too gentrified or too exclusive to certain people/groups in the community.
- Really like the look of this street.

What makes an enjoyable and safe street?

Bins and bikes

- People leave rubbish at the sides of the bins and rubbish gathers
- Poplar Harca are always sorting the bins out
- Concerned that existing problems with bins would continue.
- People are sceptical about leaving their bikes outside
- They perceive communal bike stores, or bike garages, as unsafe and would still take their bike into their home.
- Bike parking along the High Street for a 'quick stop' is a good idea

Pavements and front gardens

- Wide pavements are a good idea
- For front gardens most residents preferred brick walls and fences, with greenery in back gardens.
- They thought that more open front gardens could be good for blocks of flats as they are more sociable, but brick walled front gardens would be better for houses.
- They didn't like the front gardens from their visit to Island Point. They didn't like that you couldn't tell what was a flat, house or maisonette.

Well lit safe streets

- Like the lighting that creates atmosphere.
- They don't think that the cycle lane should be lined with trees and bushes, as it feels too enclosed and not as safe because of the planting.
- But low-level planting would be better.
- Like the catenary lighting.
- Like the coloured lighting for All Hallows Square.

Places to sit

- Open seating is good
- But a mixture of types of seating in both open spaces and the shade for different purposes would be good.
- Group seating near the square would be good.

Community Art

- Love it
- Very colourful and brightens up the place
- Residents would like to see diverse art that reflects the diverse population/community
- Residents through good locations for community art would be:
- The High Street
- In the square to attract people
- Near the school – children could get involved.
- Enterprise Yard and the underpass
- Areas where children might be such as the green spaces.

Parking

- Residents are concerned about pigeon mess on cars which are parked underneath and do not want trees near parking spaces. All trees were taken out of Balmore Close for this reason.
- They think the podium parking looks good and were reassured that it would be secure.
- Residents asked if there would be any option of houses having front drives.

Cycle routes

- Pavements need to be wide enough for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Some residents have no problems with sharing space with bikes, providing there is enough space.
- Other residents thought it would be good to separate pedestrians and cyclists.

- Separate routes for cyclists could be a good idea in places where they may want to go faster.
- Residents checked that we were keeping the Santander bikes.
- Dockless bikes are not frequently seen in Aberfeldy at the moment.

Bridges and wider connections

- Concerns with the bridges encouraging anti-social behaviour in youths between Tower Hamlets and Newham and providing easier access between the boroughs.