

Tombland scheme tree removal – Frequently asked questions

What changes are proposed in Tombland?

The scheme plans approved by councillors on the Joint Committee for Transforming Cities Fund projects [can be found here](#).

What will the scheme look like?

The below image shows an artist's impression of how the finished scheme will look:



Are any trees being removed and why?

We are removing two Common Lime Trees and introducing other species to enhance the usability of the space, complement the scheme layout, and improve the diversity and age structure of the street trees in the interest of long-term management of the tree cover in Tombland.

The Tombland scheme that is being built has been developed through a careful design process. Arboricultural officers from both the County and City Councils have been involved in scheme development. Norfolk County also engaged the services of an arboricultural consultant to undertake an independent tree survey and produce method statements for working practices on site.

One of the main aims for the scheme is to provide safe and clear routes through Tombland for pedestrians. A path is being created along the front of the buildings on the east side of the space but the tree immediately outside Zizzi's restaurant would obstruct it. This tree is also located uncomfortably close to the grade II listed building and reduces light and sight lines along the front of the buildings for pedestrians and CCTV surveillance. The removal of this tree enables a well-lit and suitably surfaced route to be achieved in front of the eastern buildings improving access to businesses and to the Ethelbert Gate and St Faith's Lane.

Removing of the second tree, which is outside Giggling Squid, will enable a greater level of tree planting to take place in that part of the space. It will also complement the new overall layout by aligning trees with the new path in front of the buildings and allow diversification of street tree planting in Tombland.

The Tombland scheme presents an opportunity to diversify street tree planting in this area. All but one of the trees on the east side of Tombland are Common Limes and they are also all the same age. This makes tree cover in Tombland vulnerable to pests and diseases, which are becoming an increasing threat through climate change and the global plant trade. The trees do have a good life expectancy of 40+ years but because they are of the same age they are likely to all decline at a similar time. We are looking to secure tree cover in Tombland for the long term, using an 'urban forestry' approach to managing the cities' tree stock which seeks a variety of ages and species of trees to ensure overall longevity and resilience of tree cover. Appropriate tree pits and rooting areas will be provided for the replacement tree planting that will improve health and longevity of the trees.

Will there be any replacement tree planting?

Five trees will be planted to replace the two Common Limes.

The species to be used are Honey Locust (*Gleditsia triacantos 'Skyline'*) and Turkish Hazel (*Corylus Colurna*), both of which are proven to be good urban street trees not only for their robustness in difficult growing conditions, but also for their pollution tolerance and mitigation. They are also good for insects.

The new planting locations have been selected to complement the scheme design including views towards buildings and through the space to enhance the setting of the conservation area and listed buildings and to visually frame paths.

Why aren't you planting any trees where the toilet is being demolished?

Tree planting in this area was considered during the feasibility stage but ruled out due to excessive shading and the interruption of visibility across the space that would cause concerns for personal safety and limit the views of Ethelbert Gate that are being opening up by the removal of the toilet. The area around the toilets is also constrained by underground utilities and the void area left by the toilet is limited and restricted by the method of demolition. The method was selected to manage the different environmental and project risks, including protection of the roots of retained trees and potential archaeology.

What is the County Council's policy on felling and replanting of trees?

Appendix 4 of the Norfolk County Council Tree Safety Management Policy outlines tree management guidelines. These guidelines state that:

"No live tree is to be cut down without seeking agreement with the Arboricultural and Woodland Officers, and that each case will be carefully judged on its merits...Tree felling will not be permitted for individual healthy trees of amenity value unless there is very clear justification for the work." p.19

The relevant Arboricultural officers have been involved in the development of the Tombland scheme from its inception. The scheme has been designed with the retention of trees in mind but through lengthy assessment and discussion, it was found that removing the two identified trees would create the most benefits for the space and provide most opportunity for new planting.

Appendix 4 of the Norfolk County Council Tree Safety Management Policy outlines tree management guidelines state that:

"...resilience to climate change and pests and diseases will be an increasing consideration when selecting planting stock. It will be important to diversify the number of genera within tree populations to ensure that new diseases that attack a particular species or genus (such as Chalara fraxinea - Ash Dieback) do not decimate a whole area." p.20

"The Arboricultural and Woodland Officers will continue to actively source new species, genera and varieties of street trees in urban areas both to increase biodiversity and provide a more dynamic adaptable population. The forms chosen should have low future pruning requirements and consideration will be given to genera and varieties that are likely to be able to adapt to changing climatic conditions, that are tolerant of restricted space both above and below ground, wounding, pruning, road salt and herbicides..." p.21

Removing two trees enables other species to be introduced to improve diversity and age structure of the street trees in the interest of long-term management and preservation of the tree cover in Tombland.

The Norfolk County Council Tree Safety and Management Policy can be read in full here:

[Tree Safety and Management Policy](#)

How big will the replacement trees be?

Honey Locust (*Gleditsia triacantos* 'Skyline') and Turkish Hazel (*Corylus Columna*) will be a minimum 18-20cm girth trees, circa. 4 – 5 metres tall on planting. This size of tree is classified as a Heavy Standard.

Turkish Hazel is a large scale tree reaching up to 20+ metres. The leaves of this tree resemble those of Lime.

Honey Locust is a Medium to large tree reaching up to 12 – 17 metres.

How will replacement trees be maintained?

Planting and establishment maintenance will be undertaken by a suitable landscape contractor appointed specifically for the Tombland scheme.

Establishment maintenance will cover a 3-year period and include necessary watering and other checks and works required for the new trees.

How was this scheme consulted on and what was the decision-making process?

20 December 2018 – Norwich Highways Agency Committee approved a public consultation on the scheme based on the preferred option identified in a feasibility study.

31 January - 28 February 2019 - Public consultation. The consultation sought the views of the public and included the proposal to remove the two Common Limes. Consultation material can be viewed in the [report that was submitted to members of the Transforming Cities Joint Committee in August 2019](#) (Appendix 3, page 21). The consultation information was presented online, at a one-day consultation event at St George's Church Tombland, and via a display within City Hall throughout the consultation period. The consultation was promoted through the City and County Council Twitter feeds, email invitations to key groups and stakeholders, and a letter drop to properties in the local area to around 2000 addresses. The total number of respondents to the consultation within the time period was 275.

4 August 2019 – results of the public consultation, including further works and scheme changes identified through the public consultation were presented to the Joint Committee for Transforming Cities Fund projects, which resolved to approve the scheme in principle, including removal and replacement of trees, and agree to consult on the required traffic regulation orders.

17 January to 11 February 2020 –Traffic Regulation Orders were advertised.

29 January to 12 February 2020 - public consultation through Norwich City Council as local planning authority on the proposed demolition of the disused public conveniences, (application reference number 19/01799/NF3). An independent tree survey was submitted as part of this application, and subsequent method statements have been submitted to discharge conditions under reference number 20/00863/D.

06 October 2020 – Conservation area Section 211 notice submitted to Norwich City Council of intent to undertake tree works (reference number 20/01178/TCA).