

West London green space to be revamped

By Magda Ibrahim

Momentum is growing on a project to give Shepherd's Bush Common a new lease of life after the start of a public consultation last week.

The focus of the £3.3m scheme is to maximise the use of the west London open green space and to create a new boulevard around the common.

A design team led by Whitelaw Turkington landscape architects, in collaboration with FoRM Associates design practice, has created the makeover plan.

FoRM Associates director Peter Fink said concentrating on the western side had allowed design-



Shepherd's Bush Common: plans include 20 trees

ers to enlarge the green space.

"It's a very precious resource for London because it's not a park but a big green space," he said.

"There have been a whole series of changes in the past 50 years, such as dog runs and playgrounds being put in, which has created a very fragmented green and destroyed the sense of openness.

"Our strategy is based on restoring the open quality of the green and giving access [to the area] from all edges."

The design includes the addition of about 20 trees, lighting, a café, a playground and a skate park.

The central area of the common will be used for holding large-scale events and fairs, while the edges of the green space are set to be raised about 1m in a gentle slope,

allowing visitors to sit and sunbathe in summer.

Fink added: "There was a very ad hoc series of planting going on and some of the trees are in very bad shape so they'll be pruned – and around five will be removed."

An exhibition displaying the plans was shown at the West12 Shopping Centre on 23-29 January. There will also be another exhibition as part of the public consultation before the formal planning application will be submitted in June.

Work is expected to start in February 2009 and continue until early 2010.