

**British Museum
North-West development**

**Tree Replacement Strategy
03-06-2009**

Two existing mature plane trees on Montague Place (T1 and T2) and one within the British Museum boundary (T3) are affected by the proposed North-West development. These trees are all the subject of tree protection orders and have been independently assessed by a certified arboriculturalist. The original project intent was to retain all three trees and an assessment was made of the impact of the works on each of them as set out in the report

The routing of vehicles between the two trees on Montague Place (T1 and T2) was seen as the only viable option to service the development. Site investigations were carried out to establish the position and dimension of roots in order to carry out a detailed design for the proposed vehicle crossover. Structural roots were found running along the back of the kerb, which informed the design of a thin concrete deck supported on mini-piles to take the vehicle loading. Given the shallow depth of the roots, this proposed solution would necessitate the raising of levels in the carriageway and the construction of a raised pedestrian table to Montague Place.

Having reviewed this proposal the highway department felt this was not a desirable solution due to the scale of impact on drainage, levels and existing camber in the highway. The possibility to cut the roots to allow construction of a conventional crossover was discounted due to their position and stature as it was felt that the structural integrity of the trees would be severely undermined.

Camden Council asked for an alternative solution to be submitted that would remove the two trees on Montague Place and retain existing levels in the highway. To mitigate the removal of these two trees it is proposed that three replacement semi-mature trees of 10 to 12m height are planted in close proximity to the removed trees and in front of the development. The use of semi mature trees is seen as appropriate for this location given the high profile context of the museum and surrounding property and as a means of quickly establishing a scale of planting commensurate

with that of the other trees in the vicinity. A large and clearly defined tree pit detail with watering and aeration points is proposed that would provide the semi mature trees with an environment that would suit their long term requirements. The trees would be underground guyed. The proposed species are London Plane (*Platanus acerifolia*) to match the existing trees. These are seen as appropriate as they match the other trees in the vicinity and respond well to cyclical pruning which would be required due to their proximity to existing built form. A porous paving around the base of the tree is to be confirmed with Camden Council as conventional tree grilles are seen as inappropriate given the width of the pavement.