

Edinburgh Tram – Replacement Tree Planting

Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee
18 June 2012

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of the background and arrangements for replacement tree planting relating to the Tram Project.

2 Summary

- 2.1 This report sets out the statutory powers in relation to the removal and replacement of trees along the tram corridor, the consultation process which took place during the design process, details of the trees removed and the proposals for replacement, particularly the situation at Atholl/Coates Crescent Gardens.

3 Main report

- 3.1 Following the motion by Councillor Johnstone from the Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee, 21 February 2012, (This motion was remitted from the Council of 2 February 2012) it was agreed that a report for the next TI&E Committee be provided covering:

- a) Where and how many trees have been removed;
- b) The consultation process which has been undertaken, including details of areas and organisations which were included in the consultation process;
- c) Noting the delay between the conclusion of the consultation process and implementation of the tree removal, any improvements in this process which can be recommended for future consultations; and
- d) Full details of replacements including number and variety to be provided.

Background - Tram Acts and Statutory Powers

- 3.2 The Edinburgh Tram Acts 2006, and the Environmental Statements which support these, require that all trees removed in relation to the Tram Project are to be replaced on a 2 for 1 basis.

- 3.3 Under the scope of the Acts, the removal of, or works to trees and soft landscaping does not require specific Prior Approval. However, where relevant, all Prior Approvals submission drawings have indicated general landscape design principles for context and to demonstrate compliance with the Tram Design Manual, which contains guidance of the design of environmental mitigation. In turn, these drawings have been supported by detailed landscape drawings, prepared for purposes of construction. The majority of Prior Approvals were determined during 2008-09.
- 3.4 In the case of the Roseburn Corridor, the detailed landscape design proposals were subject to the Landscape & Habitat Management Plan, this being agreed by the Planning Committee on 15 May 2008. The decision to postpone the Haymarket - Granton section of the tram route, which includes the Roseburn Corridor, was taken by the Council in 2009. As such, no trees have been felled in this area other than those at the Roseburn Delta, which falls within the current contractual scope of works.
- 3.5 The Project Tree Bank has provided a record of the number of trees removed to establish replacement requirements, thereby ensuring adherence with the Environmental Statements. Under the previous governance arrangements, these records were prepared by the project design team. During the design process there was also an expectation that the tree bank proposals would eventually be agreed with the Council in its capacity as project promoter, planning authority and landowner.

Trees Removed in Relation to the Project

- 3.6 All trees scheduled for removal as part of the current works have now been taken down. Please refer to Appendix - Table 1. The trees removed comprised a wide range of sizes and species; from low quality, self-seeded stock to more mature examples.
- 3.7 A number of street trees were also removed on Leith Walk, Constitution Street and Picardy Place during the utility diversion works. Due to the concentration of utilities and space constraints, various locations for replacement in the wider Leith Walk area (as opposed to direct location replacement) were identified with Services for Communities, Parks and Greenspace Officers. Local Members were briefed to this effect in December 2008.
- 3.8 Through the new governance arrangements those replacements which now lie outside the current scope of works and would need to be funded through the Council.
- 3.9 During the course of the utility diversion works, it was also necessary to remove a small number of trees immediately outside the Tram Limits of Deviation, e.g. structural landscaping around the Gyle Centre. Where possible, it is intended that these would also be replaced by the Council.

Consultation - General

- 3.10 As part of the stakeholder engagement process with both frontagers and wider communities along the route, in excess of 54,000 residential mailings and

nearly 1,000 business mailings took place at the various design stages (initial, preliminary and detailed) to advise on progress.

- 3.11 Detailed design proposals were presented at a series of public exhibitions, where attendees were able to discuss proposals with the design team, including representatives from the Council.
- 3.12 Details of Prior Approvals and all other applications relevant to the project were published on the weekly lists of planning applications, providing opportunities to make representations within the 21 day consultation period.
- 3.13 In terms of the scope of consultation, it is difficult to see what more could be done. The stakeholder engagement process carried out under the previous governance arrangements was extensive. The issues which could be taken into consideration as part of the planning process are also determined through the parliamentary acts.
- 3.14 As regards the delay between consultation and removal this was largely resultant on the contractual dispute under the previous governance arrangements, although it should be noted that the majority of trees along the route were removed as part of utility diversions and site clearance early in the construction programme. Had the construction programme proceeded as per the original timescales, a much shorter period would have elapsed between consultation and remaining tree removals, particularly at Atholl/Coates Crescent Gardens.

Atholl/Coates Crescent Gardens

- 3.15 Atholl/Coates Crescent Gardens, through which the tram line will pass, represents a historically significant and high profile public space in the New Town Conservation Area and the World Heritage Site.
- 3.16 During the development of the detailed design, it was established that 28 trees fronting the road would need to be removed to deliver tram infrastructure requirements.
- 3.17 Each of the trees were subject to a detailed survey (using the Helliwell System) to establish their condition, amenity value and provide a reasoned justification for removal of each tree. Due to the complex nature of the site, listed structures and utility services it was not considered viable for the trees to be relocated. In all cases, it was established that;- root systems would be significantly disturbed from excavations and/or proposed change in levels; conflict would result from installation of Overhead Line Equipment (OLE)/lighting pole and foundations; or the level of pruning required to accommodate the revised road layout would affect the health or integrity of the trees. This was presented as supplementary information in relation to Prior Approval submission 08/01521/PA. No representations were received in relation to this application and it was subsequently approved through delegated powers on 5 January 2009.
- 3.18 Details of replacement trees were deferred at that stage pending further detailed design work by the Council. The issue of replacement tree provision

was discussed at that time and an agreement in principal was reached that the quality and maturity of replacement trees needed to reflect the location.

- 3.19 A Conservation Study of the Atholl/Coates Crescent Gardens was then commissioned by CEC Planning, though a joint working group comprising CEC Services for Communities, Edinburgh World Heritage Trust and Historic Scotland. This initial work was followed by a Public Realm Strategy prepared by Ironside Farrar Landscape Architects. These studies have established the historic landscape significance of the gardens and how they should evolve in landscape terms following the delivery of the tram.
- 3.20 This study has informed the development of a detailed proposal comprising 35 replacement trees, which has been developed in conjunction with the tram designers.
- 3.21 Provision for the tree pits fronting to the road will be made as part of the tram construction works. However, the trees will be funded and delivered separately by the Council.

Proposed Tree Replacements

- 3.22 Some replacement planting has already commenced, particularly in the Gogarburn area and around the Tram Depot. Replacements will mainly comprise a mix of whip planting in protection tubes and semi mature nursery stock. The proposed number of tree replacements will outweigh the total number of trees removed in order to deliver an appropriate level of landscape mitigation in those areas affected by the tram construction.
- 3.23 A range of species will be used to meet biodiversity requirements. See Appendix – Table 2. The mix of planting currently being taken forward by the contractor will be broadly similar across the Haymarket – Airport section. However, a slightly different mix (C) will be used on those parts of the route closest to the Airport in order to meet BAA requirements to prevent bird strike.
- 3.24 The site originally proposed for a Sub Station on Russell Road will not now be taken forward under the current scope works. This land falls within Council control and it is suggested that this is subject to a planting scheme in order to protect nearby residential amenity and minimise future maintenance requirements. These works would need to be funded and delivered by the Council.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The majority of the Tree Bank relating to the project is being delivered by the contractor through the allocated budget.
- 4.2 The costs of replacement or additional planting (see Appendix - Table 3) amounts to £97,550. This will be met from a combination of existing SFC capital and revenue budgets.

5 Environmental Impact

- 5.1 Local Authorities have a duty through the Planning Acts to provide environmental improvements as part of development. The Tree Bank proposals are considered to provide a suitable level of environmental mitigation along the Airport-Newhaven tram corridor, in place of those trees which have had to be removed as part of the tram construction works. The proposals will also address issues of severance, and once the landscaping begins to mature will further integrate the tram route into the fabric of the city.

6 Equalities Impact

- 6.1 There is no relationship between the matters described in this report and the public sector general equality duty.
- 6.2 There is no direct equalities impact arising from this report.

7 Conclusions

- 7.1 Every tree which has been removed during the course of the project will be replaced by a factor of 1 to 8, thus far exceeding the requirement set out in the original Environmental Statements. This figure excludes additional planting which lies outside the current contractual scope of works and financial provision would need to be made by the Council in future years to allow this work to be undertaken.

8 Recommendations

- 8.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- a) notes the overall contents of this report;
 - b) notes the Council's obligations and funding requirements (See Appendix - Table 3) to deliver replacement planting outside the contractual scope of works; and
 - c) notes that the tree type and specification for those areas lying outside the contractual scope of works would be agreed in conjunction with the relevant council officers as appropriate.

Mark Turley
Director of Services for Communities

Wards affected	Almond - Ward 1, Drum Brae - Ward 3, Corstorphine/Murrayfield – Ward 6, Sighthill/Gorgie – Ward 7, City Centre – Ward 11, Leith Walk – Ward 12, Leith – Ward 13
Single Outcome Agreement	<p>Supports National Outcome 1 – ‘We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe.’</p> <p>Supports Local Outcome – Edinburgh is a thriving, growing city with a high quality of life and environment and prosperous economy.</p> <p>Supports National Outcome 10 – ‘We live in a well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need’</p> <p>Supports Local Outcome – The number of people who are satisfied with their neighbourhood increases</p> <p>Supports National Outcome 12 – ‘We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect and enhance it for future generations.’</p> <p>Supports Local Outcome – The development of quality built and natural environment is well supported.</p>
Background Papers	See project files

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Appendix 1

TREE REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENTS

Table 1 Details of trees removed and proposed replacements in the Tram Limits of Deviation

Section	Trees removed	Proposed Number of tree replacements	Proposed type of tree replacements (Refer to Table 2)
Constitution Street	6	12*	*
Leith Walk	50	100*	*
Picardy Place	4	8*	*
Atholl Coates Crescent	28	35	**
Haymarket - Murrayfield	41	99	Woodland Mix A Woodland Mix B Selected Specimen trees
Russell Road Sub Station Site	Non	6	Rowan/Mountain Ash
Murrayfield – Balgreen - Saughton	565	1253	Woodland Mix A Woodland Mix B Selected Specimen trees
Saughton - Edinburgh Park	624	3938	Woodland Mix A Woodland Mix B Selected Specimen trees
Edinburgh Park – Gyle - Gogarburn	1229	13833	Woodland Mix C Selected Specimen trees
Gogarburn – Ingliston – Airport	367	Approx 5600	Woodland Mix C Selected Specimen trees
TOTAL	2914	Approx 24758	

* Figure assumes replacement on a 2 for 1 basis. Detail and planting locations to be subject to further CEC agreement. Size and species to be appropriate to the location.

** Detailed proposal as referred to in 3.19, indicates 31 x Avenue trees (160-180mm girth) and 4 x Crescent trees (350-400mm girth). Species to be determined.

Table 2 Details of proposed species

Proposed specimen trees
Field Maple 6-8cm girth, Light Standard
Amur Maple 10-12cm girth, Select Standard
Sycamore
Silver Birch 18-21cm girth
Silver Birch 8-10 cm girth, Select Standard
European Common Hornbeam 18-20 girth
Common Hazel 10-12cm girth
Common Single Seeded Hawthorn 10-12cm girth
European Common Beech
Claret Ash "Raywood"14-16cm girth
European Common Ash 10-12cm girth Select Standard
European Common Ash 10-12cm girth Standard
European Common Ash 18-20cm girth
Holly/European Holly 3 litre pot
Austrian Pine rootballed 1750-2000mm
Black Pine rootballed 900-1200 mm
Scots Pine
London Plane 14-16cm girth Standard
Wild Cherry 2.75-3m height
Blackthorn/Sloe 10-12 cm girth
Sessile Oak 18-20cm girth
English Oak 10-12cm girth
Turners Oak 10-12cm girth
Rowan/Mountain Ash 18-20cm girth
Greenspire 10-12cm girth
Small leafed Lime 18-20cm girth
Proposed woodland trees
Mix A
Silver Birch 40%
Silver Birch 10%
Rowan/Mountain Ash 20%
European Ash 20%
Sessile Oak 10%
Mix B
Common Hazel 30%
Hawthorn 10%
Blackthorn 20%
Pussy Willow 20%
Holly 20%
Mix C (BAA Compliant)
Hazel 60%
Common Lime 40%

Table 3 Estimated costs for planting outside the current contractual scope of works

Section	Proposed tree replacements	Proposal and estimated unit costs	Estimated costs
Leith Walk	100*	100 x Parkland trees (160-180 girth) @ £450 per tree (supply and plant)	£45,000
Picardy Place	8*	8 x Parkland trees (160-180mm girth) @ £450 per tree (supply and plant)	£3,600
Atholl Coates Crescent	35	31 x Avenue trees (160-180mm girth) @ £450 per tree (supply and plant) 4 x Crescent trees (350-400mm girth) @ £1000 per tree (supply and plant)	£17,950
Russell Road Sub Station	6	3m landscaped strip at site edge comprising trees and shrubs. Site preparation required.	£20,000
Gyle Centre – Northern boundary adjacent to A8	1600	Whip planting @ 1 per sq metre x 1600 sq metres @ £3.50 per tree (supply and plant)	£5,600
Total			£97,550

* Figure assumes replacement on a 2 for 1 basis. Detail and planting locations to be subject to further CEC agreement. Exact size and species to be appropriate to the location.