

Appendix C – Detailed Methodology

In order to assess the ability to plant additional trees across the City, our consultants, WSP, have been commissioned to;

- Create assessment criteria based on the presence of existing trees and parking density, the latter of which involved seeking advice from the Parking Team;
- Identify and prioritise locations, based on the defined assessment criteria;
- Develop three standard details of highway buildouts and provide estimated costs associated with each option for consideration

The methodology looked at two key considerations when identifying possible locations for highways buildouts for tree: parking occupancy, to understand if a loss of parking would impact negatively on the surrounding area; and tree provision, to appreciate where there are currently low levels of trees.

Steps to identify potential locations for trees:

- The streets were prioritised by comparing the existing tree density with the existing parking demand.
- The parking occupancy on each street was obtained from WCC's 2018 base parking beat surveys which enabled a weighted score that was produced for each street, with the help of WCC's parking services. This scoring system acknowledged the different types of parking bay as well as the occupancy. Any street with a parking occupancy of >80% was excluded to ensure that the impact to existing availability is likely to be minor.
- The existing street tree density was also reviewed, assuming a maximum of 1 tree per 10m length of footway; streets were then scored based on their deviation from this maximum density. Trees outside of the highway boundary such as in parks, were not captured in the initial data set.
- The two scores were then combined to provide an initial list of potential sites and have been sense checked through an internal review, providing a robust list of high priority sites

It is important to note that any street with a parking occupancy of >80% was excluded in order to ensure that the impact to existing parking availability will be minimal. The Tree Team then undertook a desktop study of these locations, followed by site inspections in order to examine any initial site-specific constraints on the locations identified. within the emerging programme.

Further site investigations will need to be undertaken to ascertain:

- a) Whether these sites can progress to detailed design and implementation based on physical surveys of the location. Locations with the following constraints are unlikely to be progressed; underground services; vaults and cellars; impacts to road safety; conflict with existing assets and infrastructure; and unsuitable townscapes/historic environments.
- b) Which highway buildout design option is most appropriate for each location. The design selection will depend upon: available space; environmental constraints; opportunity for additional public realm assets; and townscape features.

WSP have produced three standard highways buildout designs. The three designs vary in scale and complexity, all of the designs will utilise carriageway space and will therefore not reduce the available space on the footway:

- Option A – standalone highways buildout accommodating one tree. The buildout will be separate from the footway. It is similar in design to the tree buildouts found in Pimlico, please see the appendix for a photograph.
- Option B – highways buildout, accommodating one tree, incorporated into the surrounding footway.
- Option C – highways buildout, accommodating two trees, incorporated into the surrounding footway and including additional public realm assets, for example cycle stands or seating.

Each design will be evaluated against each location, in order to ensure that the most appropriate design is selected.

Alongside site and design selection, the success of Westminster's street tree planting and tree maintenance relies on selecting the right trees for the right locations. As a rule of thumb, the largest tree that a site can accommodate is selected, in order that canopy cover and environmental benefits are maximised.

Other considerations include:

- species diversity and biodiversity
- other ecosystem services - for example air quality, pollution absorption
- size, form and canopy shape
- townscape and urban design considerations
- resilience to the harsh street environment
- climate change resilience
- aesthetic qualities
- specific negative characteristics for example brittle branches or surface rooting
- resistance to pest and diseases.

This scheme will proactively coordinate with existing and proposed public realm projects, in order to ensure the greatest efficiencies.