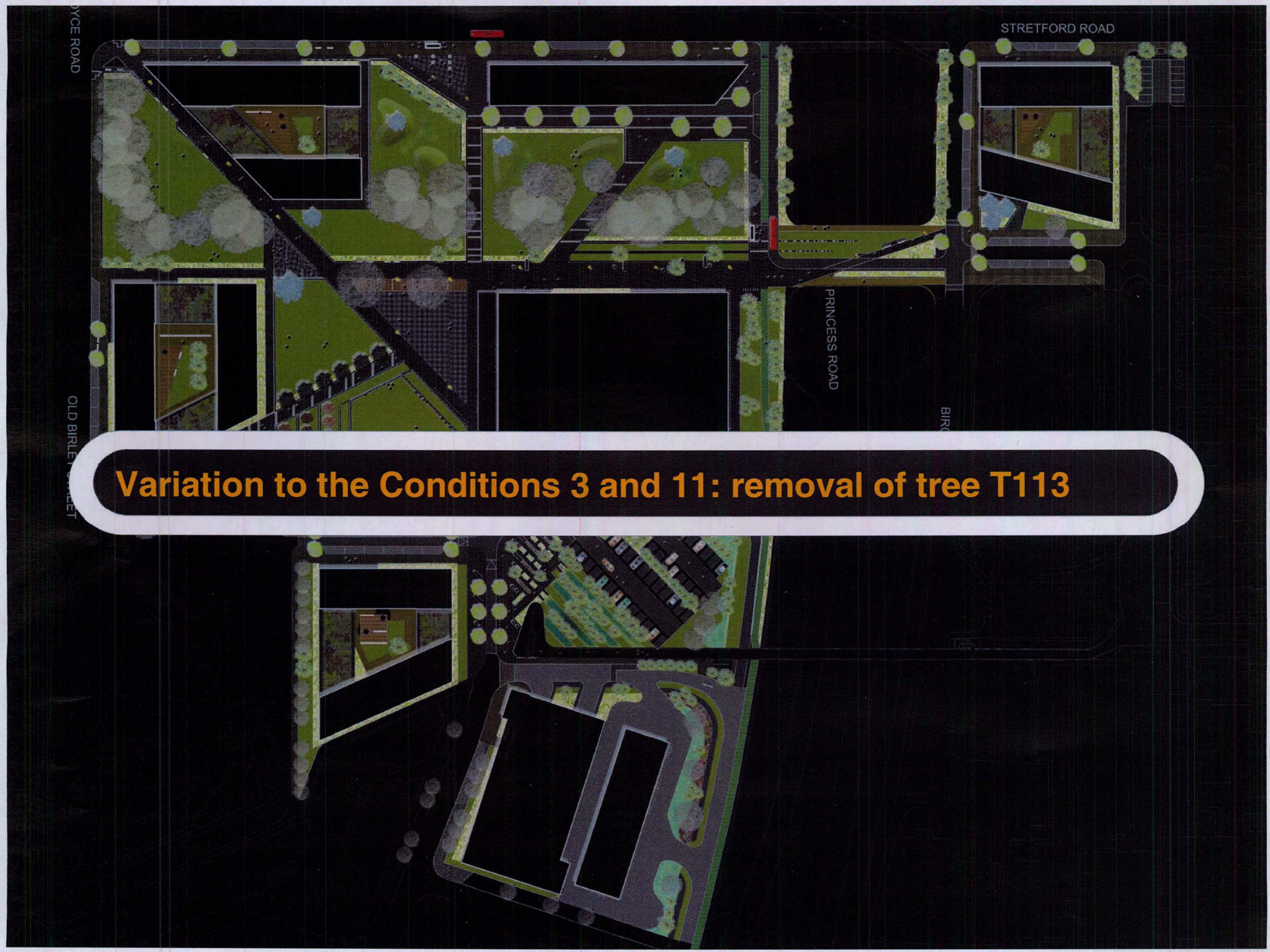
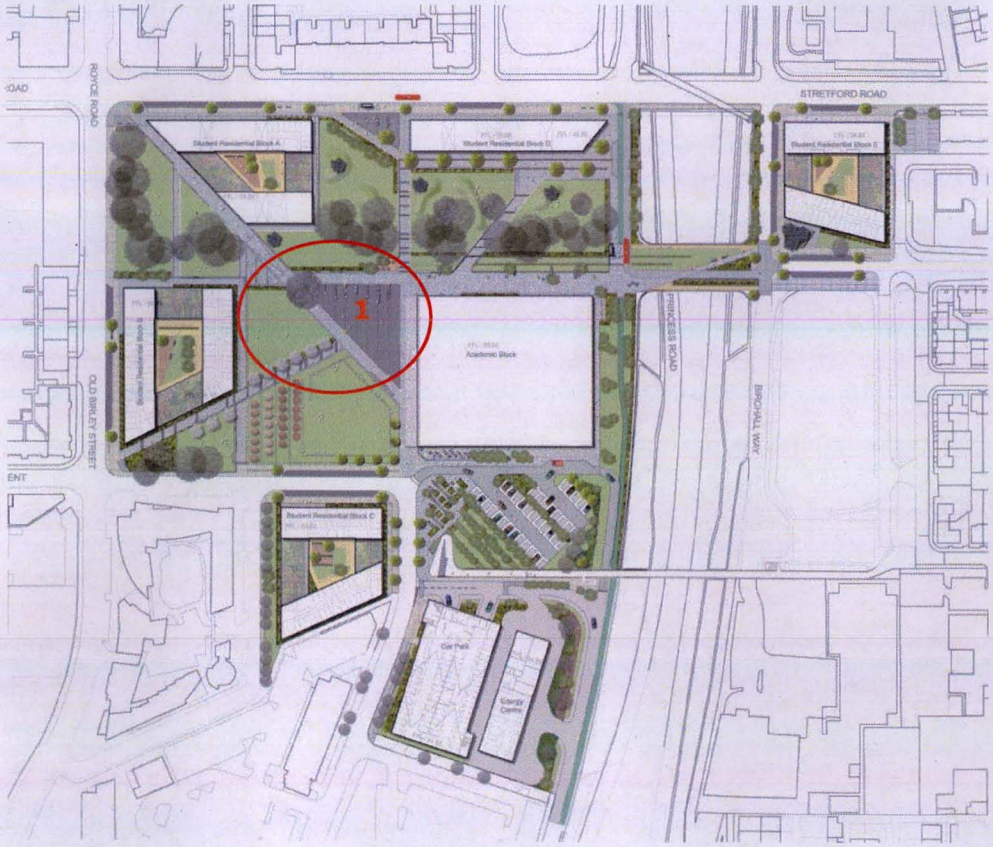


Variation to the Conditions 3 and 11: removal of tree T113

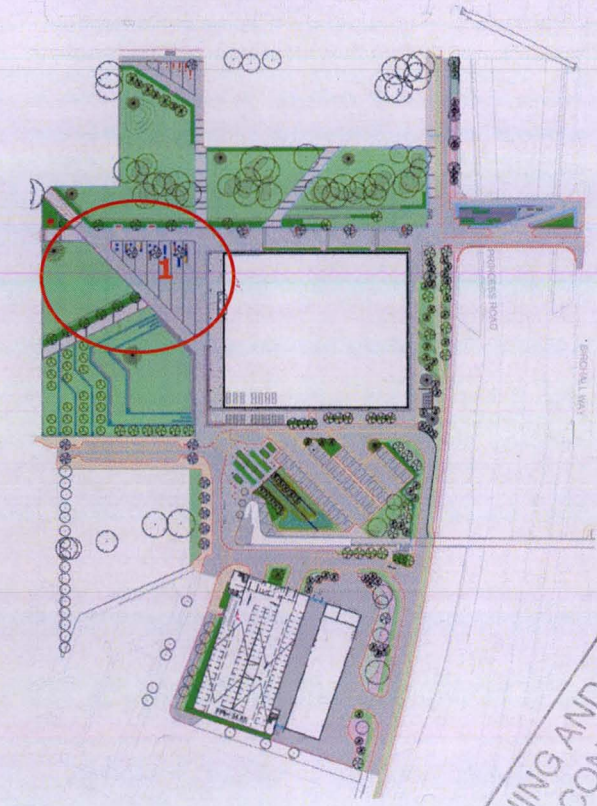
Trees on Plaza

Masterplan development

Masterplan submitted for planning January 2011



Current Masterplan April 2012

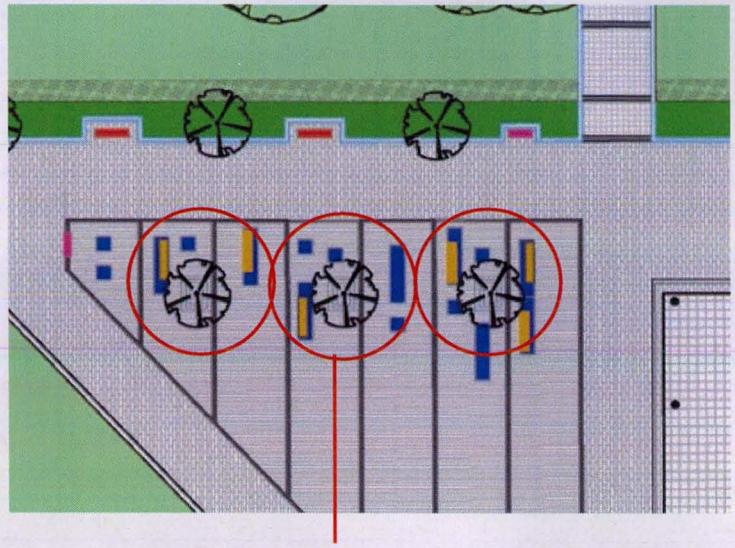


PLANNING AND BUILDING CONTROL
09 MAY 2012

1. Plaza

- Removal of retained tree T113
- Addition of new tree planting in replacement

Plaza Development Details

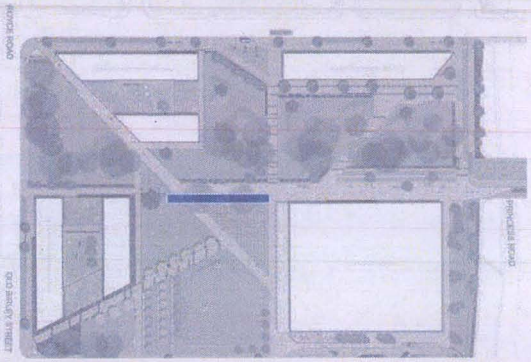


Additional proposed trees

Key Developments

- Removal of T113 due to concerns over long term viability and construction constraints
- Addition of 3 new semi mature tree to improve spatial qualities of the plaza and contribute to BREEAM rating

Trees on Plaza – detailing around level changes

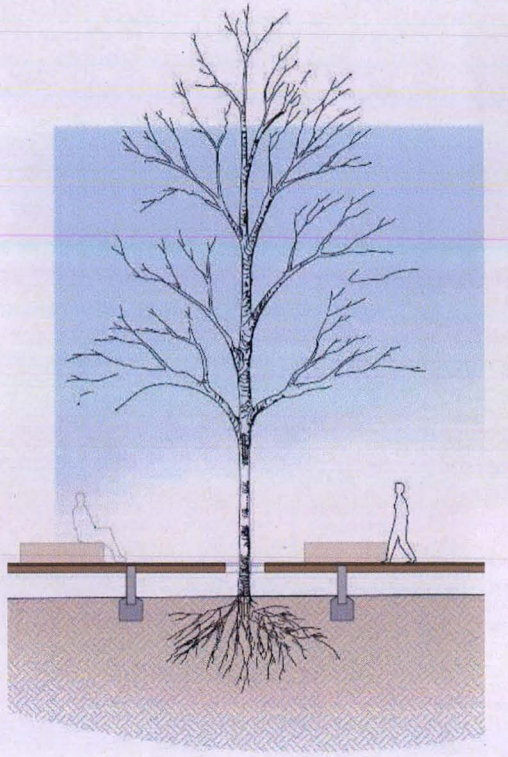


What are the issues with the tree T113 on the plaza ?

- Existing tree levels are between 300 – 500mm below the proposed FFL of the plaza
- Level at the base of the trees is uneven as they are planted within an earth mound along Bonsall Street

What are our concerns?

- That construction works around the tree will be difficult and the tree may be damaged during construction
- To retain the pathway widths at 3.5m approximately 40% of the tree root protection area will be lost. British Standards recommend maximum 20% removal – possible premature loss of trees
- Shown as retained due to requests during consultation and comments from public during the planning process
- Design compromised to retain a tree that is not a Class A specimen.



What are our options?

1. Terrace the landscape down to the tree level and retain the existing soft landscape undulating levels around the base of the trees. The retention of the greenspace will allow greater surface area for water and gaseous exchange (see following slides for design option)

2. Remove tree with agreement from MCC Planning due to concerns over the design restrictions that have become apparent during the detail design stage, and impacts on the tree's long term viability. Confirm with the planners that mature trees will be replanted in this area that better integrate with the design narrative of the plaza

What decision needs to be made?

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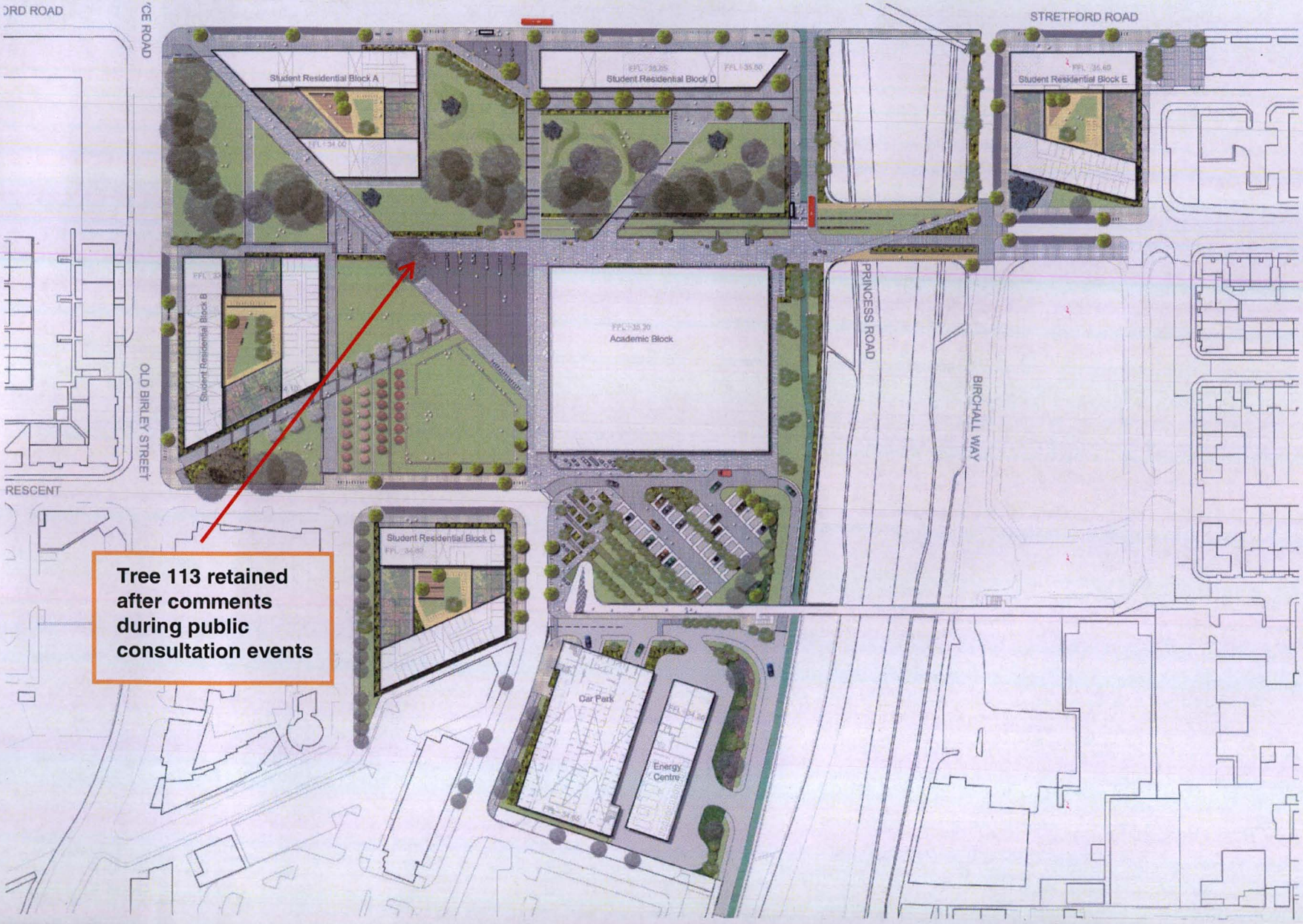
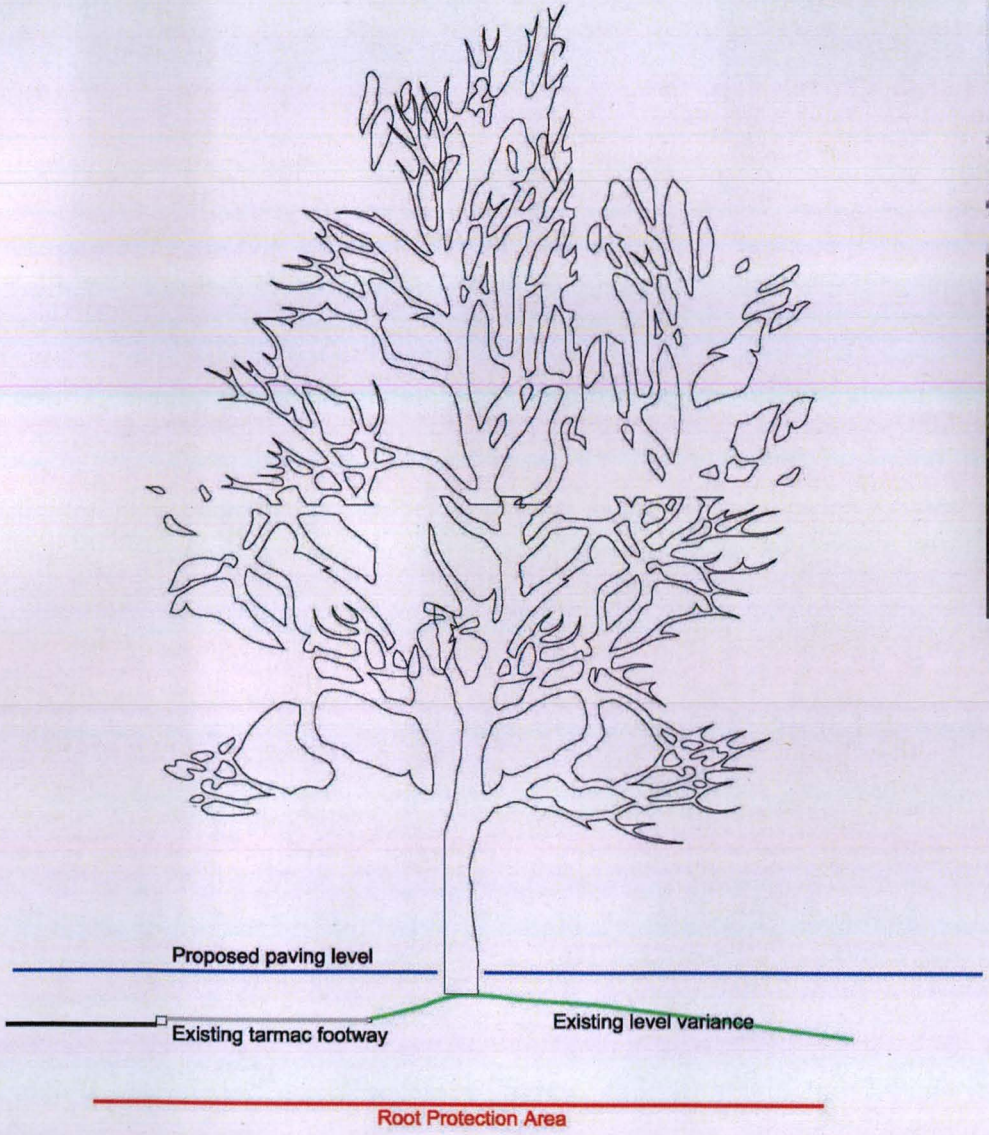
1. Confirmation from Manchester City Council for the removal of the trees with high quality tree replacement

What was the landscape design at Planning?



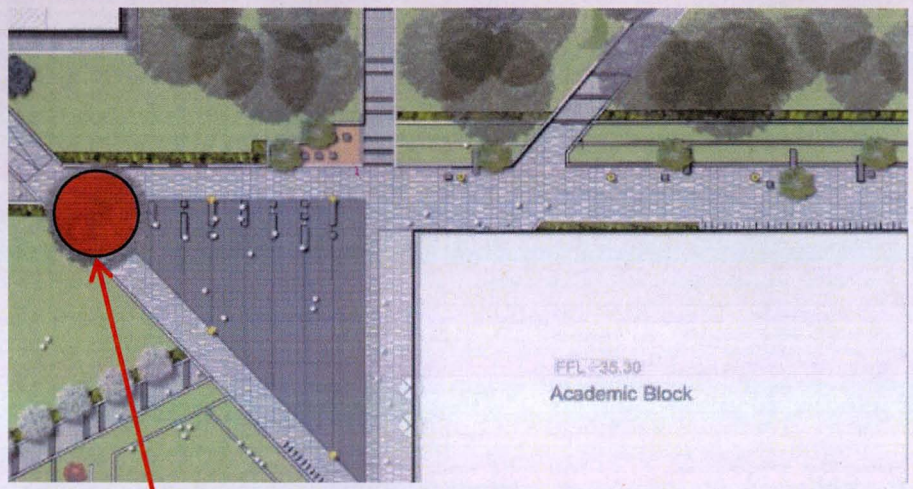
Design Constraints



Tree 113



T113 Sycamore



Root protection zone impacts on footway widths T113

[redacted]

tree no	species	height	DBH (mm)	RPA (av. radius)	crown spread N-E-S-W	crown clearance height	age class	condition	structural condition	preliminary management recommendations	estimated remaining years	Category grade
T0113	sycamore	13	400	4.8	6-6-5-4	2.2	M	fair	Open crown; over road; minor dead wood	monitor	10+	B1-

Extract from Tree Assessment Table prior to Planning Application

Design Choices – Treatment to trees on plaza

What decision needs to be made?

1.Confirmation from Manchester City Council for the removal of the tree T113 with high quality tree replacements

Proposed options for review

Rejected Option1. Retain Tree (T113), Terrace Landscape and Build Walls **OPTION DISMISSED**

Pros

- *Retains tree – comments from local residents during planning process*

Cons

- *Arboricultural advise is that the construction works will negatively effect the quality / life span of the trees*
- *Quality of trees is questionable for the new hard landscape setting as the focal point of the plaza*
- *Impact on design to retain trees*

Option2. Remove existing tree (T113). Replace with 3 new semi mature trees with recessed grills **PREFERRED OPTION**

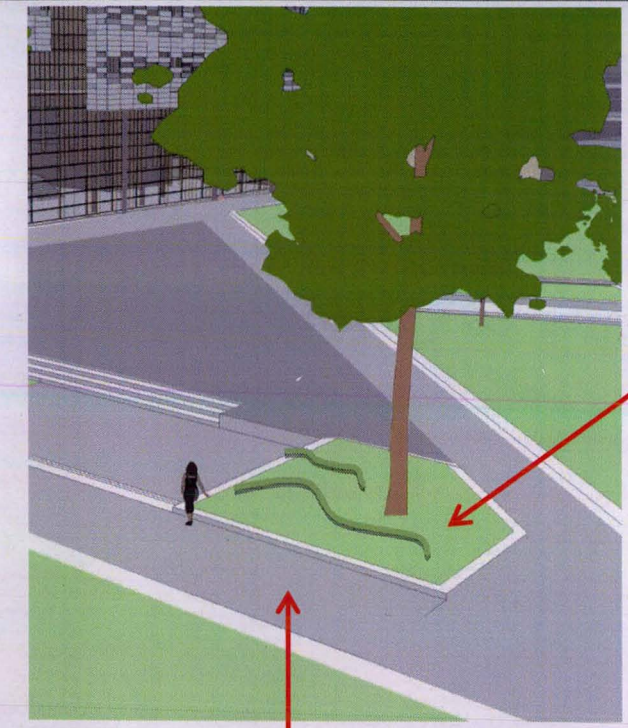
Pros

- *Trees can be located with a coordinated scheme – and planted at the same level as the paving*
- *Higher quality finish and integration*
- *Plant trees towards the end of construction phase to limit impact from construction traffic*

Cons

- *Liaison with planning authority for change*

Opt 1 - Retained trees with terraced landscape



Trees retained at existing lower levels with undulating landform at base

Narrowed footway to allow larger root protection area creates creates pinch point (footways 3.5m wide)

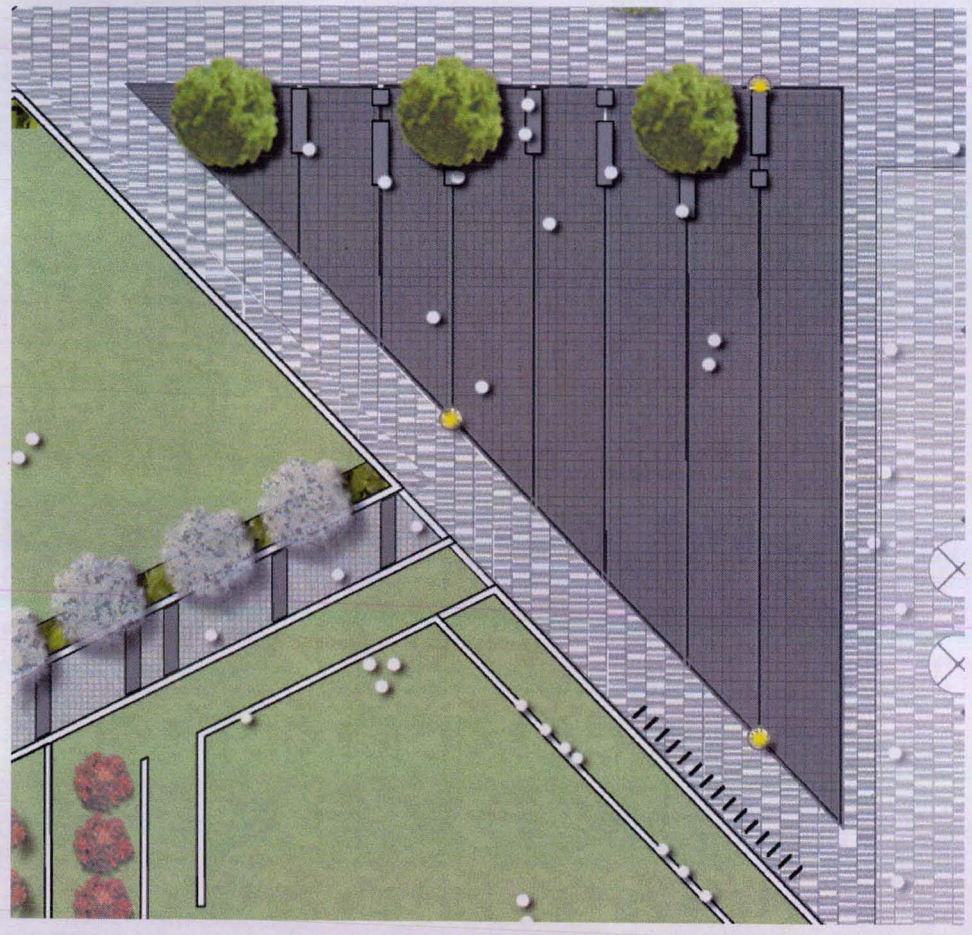
Opt 2 – Recommendations by Arboriculturalist

"Any increase in soil level over an RPA will be problematic unless it can be kept highly porous. The issue in implementation is that it's not easy to keep things porous because traditional base layer material will be 'to dust', i.e. containing fines such as to lock together and be stable. Geogrids can be helpful in locating porous layers (preventing shear or other migration), but they generally require a reasonably flat surface below- they would be quite tricky to build up to a tree stem as you show in your first drawing with the varying levels. At a glance I would say that your chances of success with 113 would be quite low given the extent of the gradient, and I'd suggest that it would not be worth trying on 114 - the tree simply isn't good enough. I've attached APN12 as promised, but I'd say that the document makes a lot of assumptions about the skill of the contractors and their familiarity with the materials and techniques. I've often seen this sort of work fail, and I think what you're proposing is quite ambitious.

In general terms you're asking a lot of trees in sub-optimal health; the standard is pretty tough in terms of RPAs and to encroach even more on trees with limited prospects is likely to be counterproductive. You'll very likely be coming back to fell them in a few years' time. If there is scope to make the case to replace, and to really engage the locals by showing them what a good-quality mature tree looks like, for instance, may help your case. Keeping weak or declining trees, when there's a potential fund for new ones would not be in line with best practice, and would be missing an opportunity, in my opinion.

I'm personally moving away from proposing work within RPAs and suggesting large replacement trees in root container systems with adequate rooting volumes and suitable soils. Much greater chance of success, generally better species and long-term survivability"

Scott Fairley (Fairley Arboriculture & Landscape Planning)



Option 2 - PREFERRED OPTION

Three large trees planted to the north of the plaza reflecting the historic alignment of Bonsall Street. Integrated with in the hard landscape for a seamless narrative. Trees to be planted in large trench to give greater growing capacity.

Tree Specification

Platanus orientalis "Minaret "girth size **40-45cm**



Platanus orientalis "Minaret"

- Upright crown
- Very resistant to being planted in hard surfaces
- Tolerant of air pollution
- Foliage gives light dappled shade (seating located around the tree for varied environment seating locations (sun / shade)
- Attractive bark

