

WORLD CONSERVATION & EXHIBITIONS CENTRE

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2010 / 2013

The British Museum has started construction on the World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre project. This important new building will house state-of-the-art laboratories and studios for the conservation, preservation and research of the collection, a new special exhibitions suite, world-class stores for the study of the collection as well as facilities to support the Museum's extensive national and international loans programme.

In this issue

- 1 Construction update and looking ahead
- 2 Accommodation
- 3 Artist in residence
- 4 Local community
- 5 Who to contact

Demolition in the project site, February 2011.



1 Construction update and looking ahead

There have been a number of changes within the site since phase 2 demolition started at the end of November 2010. Work undertaken includes:

- underpinning and temporary support to existing structures within the site
- deconstruction of 1 & 2 Montague Place
- initial excavation of the site to reduce the levels by 3m in preparation for piling works
- initial work has started within areas of existing Museum buildings to prepare connection points into the new building

The next major stage of activity is the piling, forming the secant wall and the foundations for the new building. Two piling rigs will come onto the site in late March and this activity will continue until the end of summer 2011.

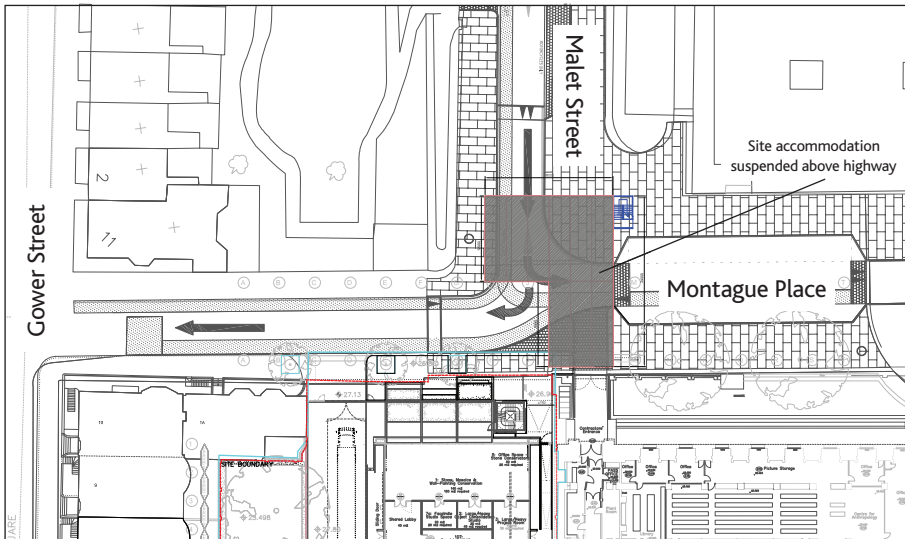
Key milestones for 2011 are:

Milestone	Target date (subject to change)
Piling commences	March 2011
Demolition complete	April 2011
Piling complete	September 2011
Substructure commences	July 2011
First tower crane erected	August 2011
Bottoming out	November 2011

In March, access to the project site will change when the formation of an access ramp leading from Montague Place into the construction site will be complete. The temporary hoarding currently installed on Montague Place will be replaced by permanent hoarding, which will include two pairs of access gates for vehicle traffic. There will be an increase in the number of lorries arriving and leaving the site over the coming months and measures such as wheel washing and covering lorry loads with sheeting will remain in place. To manage construction traffic a vehicle booking system will be used and there will be a holding location away from the site for vehicles to wait if they arrive earlier than their allotted time. Marshals will move on vehicles that do not have a delivery slot.



2 Site accommodation



The location for the temporary accommodation for the people working on the construction site has been agreed with the London Borough of Camden (see plan). The structure is designed to sit above the roadway to a height that will allow double-decker buses to pass beneath it. The number of people working in the site will vary during the lifetime of the project but will average at around 120 and rise to around 300 at the peak; there will be direct access from the accommodation into the construction site. The building will be ready for occupation at the end of May 2011 and will remain in place until 2013 when the project is completed.

3 Artist in residence

Liam O'Connor has been documenting the changing WCEC site since demolition began last year and will record the development of the site for the duration of the project. About his work, Liam writes:

My drawings are an investigation of the transformative nature of the building site capturing the site's constantly evolving form.

I have two complementary approaches for studying the site. The first is a single drawing, viewing the site from the Model Room, to mirror the nature of the building site this drawing will be worked on for the entire length of the building project. New studies will be placed on previous ones to allow the site's many identities to accumulate on the paper's surface, capturing the spirit of the transformation, and the negotiation of the past in a move towards the future.

The second part of the work, through access to the site, involves a process of extracting smaller fragile architectural forms that, piece by piece, contribute over time to the overall transformation of the site. This has already begun to build into a complex architectural narrative of moments and encounters with this evolving landscape.

It is hoped that Liam's work can be displayed during the course of the project. In the meantime previous and ongoing work can be viewed at www.liamoconnor.co.uk

4 Local community



The Museum is committed to keeping the local community involved and informed about the World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre project. This is being done in a number of ways such as quarterly newsletters, the website, briefing meetings and site visits.

A series of site visits have taken place for local residents and businesses, schools, universities, societies and other organisations.

During the summer of 2010, the project team welcomed students to the site from St Dominic's RC Primary School. The focus of the visit was to look at the archaeology, which linked in well with a project the students were carrying out at school as part of the Camden Living Heritage Project. As well as learning about the archaeological excavations and finds,

Site Visit by St Dominic's RC Primary Primary School, July 2010.

the group was given a talk on the history of the Museum and the surrounding area, and on how the buildings on the Museum's site had changed and grown over the years. On a second visit to the Museum, students brought in finds from their own excavations to be analysed by the archaeologists. It is hoped that similar initiatives will continue during the course of the project.

5 Who to contact

If you have any questions or would like more information about the project, please contact Heidi Weeks on 020 7323 8713 or wcec@britishmuseum.org

If you have any questions regarding the activities on site, you can also contact Martin Field at MACE on 020 7323 8933 or martin.field@macegroup.com