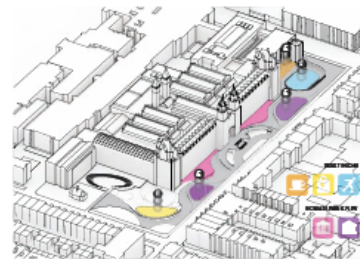
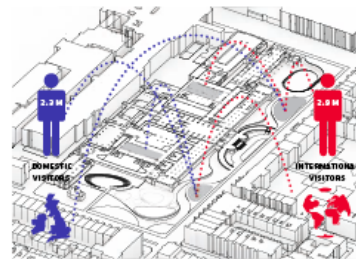
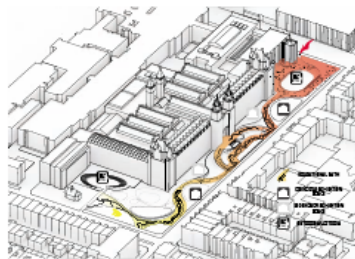
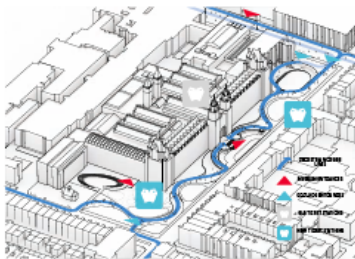
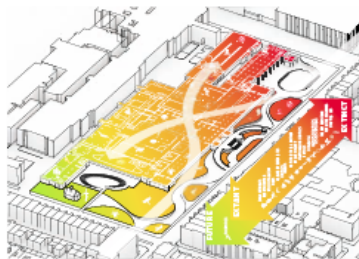


CONCEPT AND VISION

Natural History Museum, London



View From the Wildlife Garden



INTRODUCTION

We consider the grounds in front of the Natural History Museum to be a new public realm linking the museum with the City of London and beyond. Creating a diverse landscape of learning and leisure around the museum invites and introduces the Natural History Museum's core tenets, connecting it with both its national and international context. Within this landscape glazed pavilions house new programme that seamlessly knits the grounds functions with those of the museum. We emphasise the historical importance of Alfred Waterhouse's Romanesque design by proposing a simple linear gesture that picks up its characteristic half-arches in a contemporary expression that generates a playful atmosphere attracting visitors of all ages to discover the treasures of the museum.

1. IDENTITY

Develop a more authoritative public offer that deepens our visitors' engagement with the natural world and grows the number of visitors to our temporary programmes.

The intervention brings the museum into the exterior public realm, creating a narrative that mirrors the interior timeline of the museum as it was originally conceived by Richard Owen. This placed extinct species to the east and those extant to the west. In this way our additional cross-circulation experience allows visitors to reinterpret Richard Owen's intentions through the new possibilities presented by our outdoor landscape. Expanding on the focus of the Wildlife Garden the landscape looks to future natural history to encourage engagement with those challenges most critical to the world today.

2. FUNCTIONALITY

Improve our visitor, user and customer experience to ensure it is of the highest quality and reflects our international status.

The designed visitor routes incorporate pedestrian desire lines which connect the arrival of visitors with the museum's entrance via the proposed pavilions. To solve the undesired queuing experience we propose a decentralised ticketing system within the grounds. Visitors retrieve tickets from dispensers at the east and west entrances which state the time at which they can be admitted to the museum. While waiting visitors can explore and enjoy the old and newly proposed functions of the grounds.

3. EDUCATION

Become an international centre of excellence for informal learning.

The grounds in front of the museum provide a multi dimensional education experience for visitors of all ages. Domestic and international visitors can access the temporary exhibition pavilions or the "vitrines" to get a glimpse of the latest research, follow the various animal footprints on the educational trail, enjoy a journey through the geo-timeline landscape, or simply observe the old and newly assembled artifacts within the grounds. The museum grounds become an educative civic space that blends the museum's intellectual focus with the city.

4. ATTRACTION

Grow and deepen our engagement with national and international audiences.

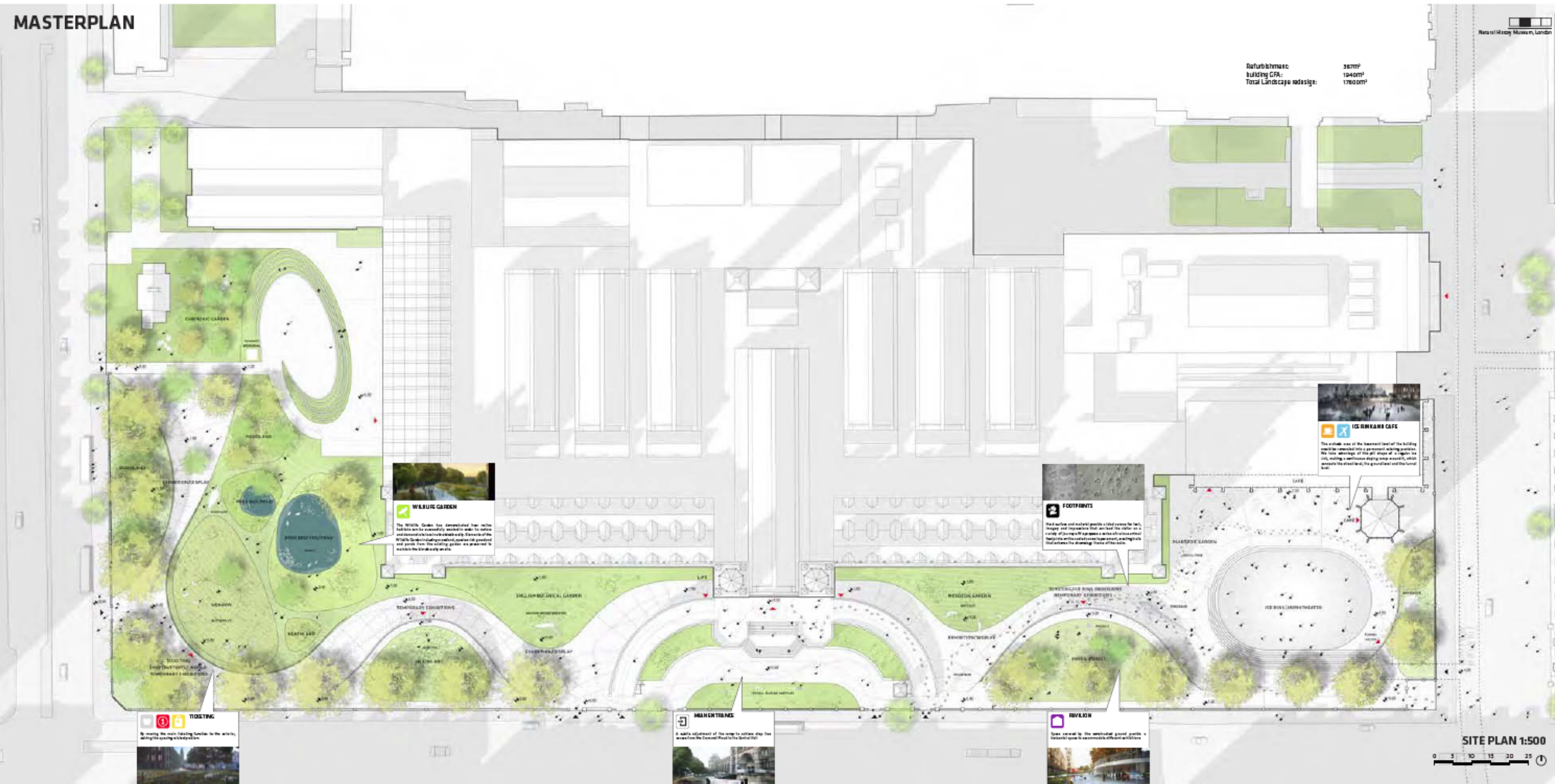
The museum today accommodates an almost equal number of domestic and international visitors. Before entering the museum the visitor is offered an introduction and invitation to explore within the exhibition pavilions, vitrines and artifacts. Simultaneously these elements represent both the museum's domestic and international focus. For international visitors, the species and objects situated within the landscape demonstrate the unique role Great Britain played in moulding our understanding of the natural history today.

5. VALUE

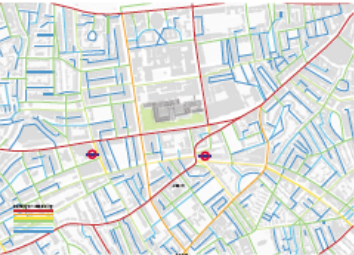
Increase and diversify our self-generated income through our public engagement activities.

An open landscape links the grounds with its broader context and utilises its unique location to provide several lucrative opportunities for the museum. These are anchored by the museum's existing temporary programme such as an ice skating rink and butterfly world. Permanent catering and retail concessions and temporary exhibition galleries complement the direct revenue with the educational elements within the grounds supporting them.

MASTERPLAN



LOCATION
Sitting on the southern edge of Albertopolis The Natural History Museum occupies a prominent location within the area. The civic realm in front of the museum serves as an introduction to the cultural quarter of South Kensington. It bookends the south section of the campus, and is within a 5 minute walk of South Kensington and Gloucester Road underground stations. Our proposal welcomes visitors with a modest landscape that emphasizes the prominence of the Natural History and other Museums behind it.



ACCESSIBILITY
The Natural History Museum occupies a strategic location within the City of London and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. Sitting on the busy Cromwell Road close to several key transportation, retail and leisure hubs guided our proposal of a meandering corridor landscape. This fluid landscape is designed to absorb and guide the large numbers of visitors to the area created by the density of the accessibility. This capitalises on the heavy foot fall of the site to create an accessible and attractive introduction to the museum.



GREEN CARPET
The green carpet we propose opens the opportunity of linking to a broader field of green. The flora and fauna of the area become a stepping stone between the many existing green areas in the district. The grounds in front of the Natural History Museum become an essential park for the South Kensington area, playing a great role for improving the quality of life in the surrounding area.



PEOPLE FLOW
We propose to create a new entrance on Queen's Gate. By relocating and adding more functions to the west we make the grounds in front of the museum a more pleasant and playful place for the public. By creating a more important entrance on Queen's Gate Gloucester Road Underground Station becomes a more desirable approach to the museum. This greatly improves the flow of visitors through the grounds and into the museum. We also propose to relocate coach drop-offs to Queen's Gate, thereby freeing up space in front of the main entrance. This creates a more efficient public flow and interface in the museum public realm.



PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE
Expanding on the recently pedestrianised Exhibition Road, with its many museum entrances we create a meandering landscape. Our proposal provides an alternative joyful pedestrian experience along Cromwell Road. The grounds also have the potential of serving as a catalyst to revitalise the wider public realm. They make Cromwell Road a more welcoming place for pedestrians allowing Cromwell Place to become a more visible route between South Kensington underground station and the Museum.



VISUAL CONNECTIVITY
The lifted stepping stones create a visual connection between the street level and the ground. They announce the activities happening on the ground to the public. At the same time, instead of drawing attention to the park, the shape and the modest gesture of the landscape direct the visual attention to the historical building behind. The accessible roof garden on top of the pavilions also provides a visual connection between the east and west sides of the grounds previously separated by the existing ramps.

CONTENT AND PROGRAMMING



View In West Wing



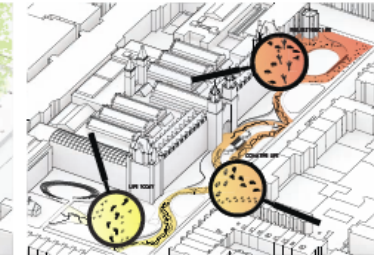
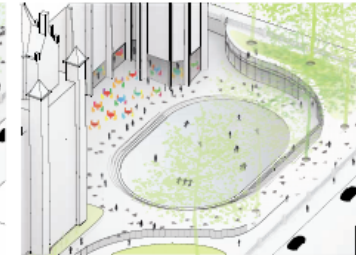
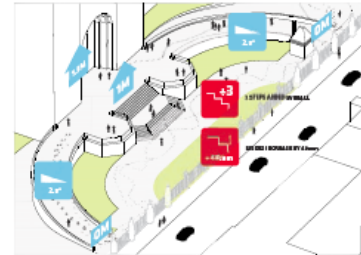
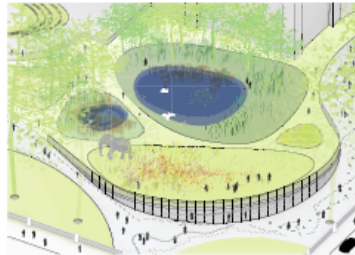
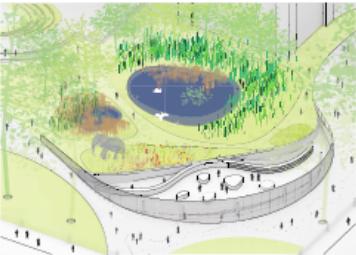
View Toward Ice Rink



View Toward Main Entrance



View Toward Wildlife Garden



TICKETING AND INFORMATION

This section of the proposal provides ticketing, an information point, museum shop and space for the 'Butterfly World' previously accommodated in a temporary pavilion. The round curve of the pavilion naturally lead visitors toward the main entrance and the Darwin Center entrance beyond. The ticketing and information center emphasises the hierarchy of the entrance on Queen's gate, as well as providing an appropriate first stop for groups of visitors.

WILDLIFE GARDEN

The Wildlife Garden has demonstrated how native habitats can be successfully reintroduced and sustained within an urban environment. Elements of the Wildlife Garden including woodland, species-rich grassland and ponds from the existing garden are preserved to maintain the site's existing biodiversity. The ponds are retained in their original position and with a similar form to minimize disruption to this habitat and remind visitors of the old wildlife garden. Carefully selected species would be introduced into the garden to ensure that the proposed changes result in a net increase in biodiversity and ecological value.

MAIN ENTRANCE

Step free access through the museum's main entrance is currently blocked by a final 10 steps. We propose to infill the existing structure with a new concrete surface. Slightly raising the slope of the ramp from 2.3° to 2.5° and adding three steps and increase each riser by 40mm bring the stair to the newly adjusting landing in front of the museum. A glass railing is added above the current stone balustrade. Our proposal provides step free access from Cromwell Road to the Central Hall, with the most subtle adjustment on the entrance itself, while retaining the great integrity of the entrance and monumental portal. As the rise is more than 2m, a supplementary lift is added concealed to the west of the main entrance portal independent of the existing structure.

EXHIBITION

Exhibition pavilions and vitrines are sheltered under the constructed ground. The highest point of the accessible roof of the pavilion is 3.5m from ground and 1m above street level, thus provides a strong visual link with the street level and keep a modest gesture toward the heritage building. The vitrines are 1.5m high with the roof package. The height difference between the pavilions and vitrines composite a diverse and rhythmic landscape. The vitrines integrated with the softscape have a minimum edge height of 50cm together with high grass and bushes planted on it create a natural separation between the visitors and building facade, replacing the original steel fence.

ICE RINK AND CAFE

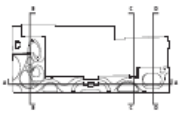
The grade area at the basement level of the building would be renovated into a permanent catering provision. The cafe could extend to the outdoor plaza during warm seasons. We take advantage of the pill shape of a regular ice rink, making a continuous sloping ramp around it, which connects the street level, the ground level and the tunnel level. The stepped ice rink can become an amphitheater in warmer months housing lectures, concerts and film screenings to enhance the museums public offer and educational capacity.

EDUCATION TRAIL

Hard surface and material provide a ideal canvas for text, imagery and impressions that can lead the visitor on a variety of journeys. We propose a series of various animal footprints on the cast concrete pavement, creating trails that enhance the chronological themes and layout of Richard Owen. With careful curation, the footprints of a particular animal could also lead visitors to the gallery where the animal is actually display allowing the experience of walking on the trail to become a playful exploration.

TECHNICAL AND CONSTRUCTION

Museum Library Museum, London



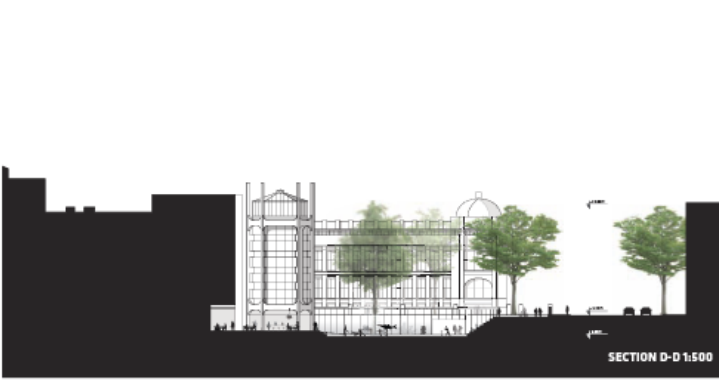
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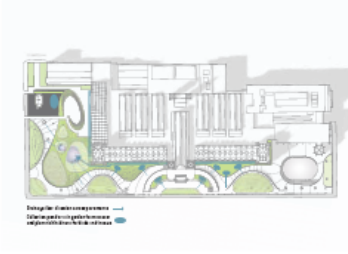
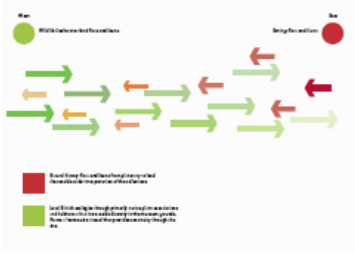
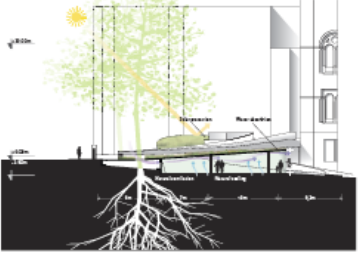
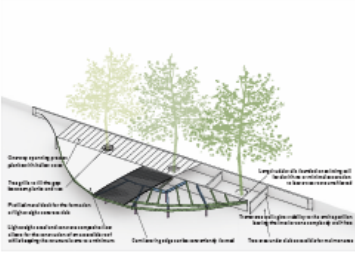
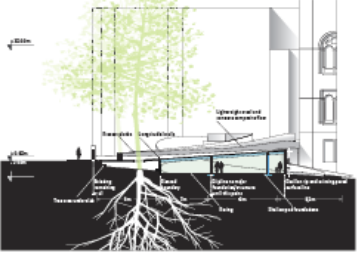
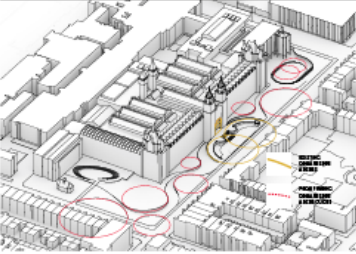
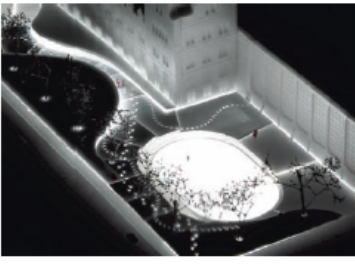
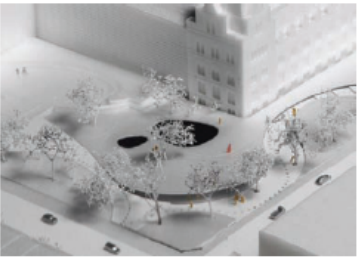
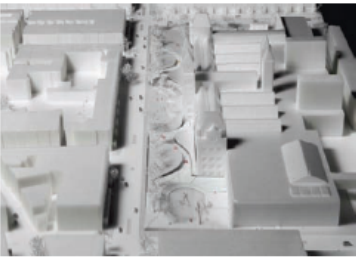
SECTION B-B 1:500



SECTION C-C 1:500



SECTION D-D 1:500



GEOMETRY
The round/oval shapes in the landscape make reference with the entrance and monumental portal. Form the whole ground into a continuous open park and generates elegant and efficient public flow in the park. At the same time the round/oval shapes generate contrast to the building volume of the historical heritage, while keeping the landscape itself in a modest gesture, creating a sustainable co-existence with the heritage. The landscape generates attractions in respect of its historical back ground. The repetition of the circular curve also reduce the cost of the construction.

BUILD NEAR TREES
Building near the existing trees is important to identify a Root Protection Area (RPA), i.e. an area deemed to contain sufficient root volume to maintain the tree's viability, and where the protection of the roots and soil structure is treated as a priority. In the proposed solution the load of the slabs distributed along long walls founded on the current ground surface, which bridge over main structural roots, once these are identified with exploratory surveys. Any additional strengthening could be achieved with minipiles, if required, which minimize the impact on roots. Shallow pad foundations would be an efficient and economical solution for columns outside the RPA. The new construction should be also able to adapt to soil changes due to tree growth by allowing suitable movement and tolerances within the structure design.

STRUCTURE
The variation in landscape levels across the site is achieved in part with sloping accessible pavilion roofs and in part with gentle ramps of soil build-up. In this case soil may need to be supported with retaining walls where there is a sharp level change, however significant level gaps could be accommodated with reinforced earth which allows to create green slopes without the need for concrete altogether. A part from their particular geometry, pavilions can be constructed with simple standard methods in order to achieve an economical structure, for example by using a lightweight composite floor of steel beams and concrete slab on profiled metal deck.

SUSTAINABILITY
The geometry and direction of the pavilion shades itself and gives proper arbor protect in summer. Steel structure with long span and simple glass facade is a low maintenance structure solution. Grass roof reduce the water flow speed and benefit to the drainage system on the site. Natural ventilation could be intellectually integrated into the pavilion through the gillies around the London planes tree and with operable windows on the facade or on the roof.

BIO-DIVERSITY
Our response addresses the requirements to protect the existing London plane trees, to conserve the Wildlife Garden and to address the issue of stormwater attenuation - a key element of the Museum's future adaptation to climate change. Although there will be changes to the Wildlife Garden in order to improve access and circulation to the grounds, there will be a net increase in biodiversity because of the planting in areas which are currently of low ecological value. There is an integrated ecosystem services, multi-functional approach to the landscape with the incorporation of rain gardens into the grounds, creating further opportunities for species-rich wildlife friendly planting and interpretation. Other more intensively used areas like lawns can also be good for biodiversity and drainage.

ECO DRAINAGE
To engage storm water management practices that direct impervious surface runoff into rain gardens or bio-swales spread throughout the site. These more water rich areas can host an array of plants that provide cover and food sources for birds and insects that will also increase the biodiversity of the site. Another opportunity exists to collect additional roof runoff, by collecting the downspouts along the Cromwell facade of the building and directing this flow to the redesigned wildlife area or additional small ponds creating numerous new, small, habitats. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) slow down the flow of rainwater - attenuating it so that there is a diminished surge on the wider system in London.