

MR AND MRS BURNS



**ECOLOGY**SOLUTIONS

Part of the ES Group

61 REDINGTON ROAD,  
HAMPSTEAD,  
LONDON

## **Ecological Assessment**

May 2023  
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## **PLANS**

PLAN ECO1	Application Site Location and Ecological Designations
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APPENDIX 1	Information Obtained from GiGL (Summary Page)
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APPENDIX 3	Detailed Description and Photographs of Existing Building

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Background & Proposals**

- 1.1.1. Ecology Solutions was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Burns in February 2022 to undertake an Ecological Assessment of 61 Redington Road, Hampstead, London, hereafter referred to as the application site (see Plan ECO1).
- 1.1.2. The development proposals are for the conversion of three existing residential units into one family dwelling and a one-bedroom flat at lower ground level (net loss of one unit), which will involve extension and refurbishment works to the existing building at the application site as well as landscaping. The proposals are illustrated on the drawings produced by Ashby Design Ltd submitted as part of the planning application.

### **1.2. Application Site Characteristics**

- 1.2.1. The application site is located on Redington Road in the London Borough of Camden and is surrounded by existing residential development and gardens.
- 1.2.2. The application site comprises an existing residential building (supporting three separate flats), with associated hardstanding and a vegetated garden to the rear.

### **1.3. Ecological Assessment**

- 1.3.1. This document assesses the ecological interest of the application site as a whole. The importance of the habitats present is evaluated with regard to current guidance published by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM)<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.3.2. The report also sets out the existing baseline conditions for the application site, setting these in the correct planning policy and legal framework and assessing any potential impacts which may occur from the proposed development. Appropriate mitigation where necessary is identified such that it will offset negative impacts of the proposals, and where possible provide for the ecological enhancement of the application site, in accordance with relevant planning policy.

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<sup>1</sup> CIEEM (2018) *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine. Version 1.1.* Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

## 2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY

2.1. The methodology utilised for the survey work can be split into three areas, namely desk study, habitat survey and faunal survey. These are discussed in more detail below.

### 2.2. Desk Study

2.2.1. To compile background information on the application site and its immediate surroundings, Ecology Solutions contacted Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL).

2.2.2. Information has been provided by GiGL with a summary sheet included at Appendix 1 of this assessment. Due to publication conditions, the full report cannot be appended, although the findings are referenced within this report where appropriate. Information regarding designated sites of nature conservation interest is also shown on Plan ECO1.

2.2.3. Further information on designated sites from a wider search area was also obtained from the online Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC)<sup>2</sup> database. This information is reproduced at Appendix 2 and where appropriate on Plan ECO1.

### 2.3. Habitat Survey

2.3.1. A habitat survey was undertaken at the application site on 28 February 2022. The purpose of this survey was to ascertain the general ecological value of the application site, to identify the main habitats and associated plant species situated within and in close proximity to the application site boundary, and to identify potential opportunities that the application site affords to protected and notable faunal species.

2.3.2. The application site was surveyed based around the extended Phase 1 survey methodology<sup>3</sup>, as recommended by Natural England, whereby the habitat types present are identified and mapped, together with an assessment of the species composition of each habitat. This technique provides an inventory of the basic habitat types present and allows identification of areas of greater potential which require further survey. Any such areas identified can then be examined in more detail.

2.3.3. Using the above method, the application site was classified into areas of similar botanical community types, with a representative species list compiled for each habitat identified.

2.3.4. All the species that occur in each habitat would not necessarily be detectable during survey work carried out at any given time of the year, since different species are apparent at different seasons. However, considering the developed nature of the application site, and the paucity of semi-natural habitats present, it is considered that an accurate and robust assessment has been made.

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<sup>2</sup> MAGIC website. Available at: <http://magic.defra.gov.uk>

<sup>3</sup> Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2010). *Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey – a Technique for Environmental Audit*. England Field Unit, Nature Conservancy Council, reprinted JNCC, Peterborough.

## 2.4. Faunal Survey

- 2.4.1. General faunal activity observed during the course of the survey was recorded, whether visually or by call. Specific attention was paid to the presence or potential presence of any protected, rare, notable or Priority Species, and the extent to which the application site provides any potential opportunities for these species / groups.
- 2.4.2. In addition, specific survey work was undertaken in respect of bats. A comprehensive internal and external inspection survey was undertaken to assess the potential of existing buildings and trees within the application site to support roosting bats. This work was undertaken by experienced bat workers and aimed to establish the likelihood of presence / absence of bats.
- 2.4.3. Field surveys were undertaken with regard to best practice guidelines issued by Natural England (2004<sup>4</sup>), the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2004<sup>5</sup>) and the Bat Conservation Trust (2016<sup>6</sup>).
- 2.4.4. Accessible voids and areas within the existing building were surveyed, with evidence to indicate use by bats such as droppings, feeding remains or individual bats searched for. Furthermore, a detailed external survey was undertaken to identify any potential access points or features which could be utilised by bats. Equipment such as ladders, torches, binoculars and endoscopes were used, where necessary, to assist with the internal and external inspection.
- 2.4.5. The probability of a building being used by bats as a summer roost site increases if it:
- is largely undisturbed;
  - dates from pre 20<sup>th</sup> Century;
  - has a large roof void with unobstructed flying spaces;
  - has access points for bats (though not too draughty);
  - has wooden cladding or hanging tiles; and
  - is in a rural setting and close to woodland or water.
- 2.4.6. Conversely, the probability decreases if a building is of a modern or pre-fabricated design / construction, is in an urban setting, has small or cluttered roof voids, has few gaps at the eaves or is a heavily disturbed premises.
- 2.4.7. The main requirement for a winter / hibernation roost site is that it maintains a stable (cool) temperature and humidity. Sites commonly utilised by bats as winter roosts include cavities / holes in trees, underground sites and parts of buildings. Whilst different species may show a preference for one of these types of roost site, none are solely dependent on a single type.
- 2.4.8. In addition, trees present within and immediately adjacent to the application site were assessed for their potential to support roosting bats. For a tree to

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<sup>4</sup> Mitchell-Jones, A. J. (2004). *Bat Mitigation Guidelines*. English Nature, Peterborough.

<sup>5</sup> Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. (Eds.) (2004). *Bat Workers' Manual*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough.

<sup>6</sup> Collins, J. (Eds.) (2016). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3<sup>rd</sup> edition)*. Bat Conservation Trust, London.

be classed as having some potential for roosting bats it must usually have one or more of the following characteristics:

- obvious holes, e.g. rot holes and old woodpecker holes;
- dark staining on the tree below a hole;
- tiny scratch marks around a hole from bats' claws;
- cavities, splits and/or loose bark from broken or fallen branches, lightning strikes etc.; and/or
- very dense covering of mature Ivy *Hedera helix* over trunk.

2.4.9. Consideration was also afforded to the habitats present within and adjacent to the application site in terms of the potential opportunities that they provide for foraging and commuting bats in the local area.

2.4.10. The application site was also assessed in terms of the opportunities that it may provide for other faunal species in the local area.

### 3. ECOLOGICAL FEATURES

3.1. The application site was subject to an ecological survey on 28 February 2022. The vegetation present enabled the habitat types to be satisfactorily identified and an accurate assessment of the ecological interest to be undertaken.

3.2. The following main habitat types were identified within the application site:

- Existing Building;
- Hardstanding;
- Modified Grassland; and
- Trees and Ornamental Planting.

3.3. The location of these habitats is shown on Plan ECO2. Each habitat present is described below with an account of its representative plant species (where relevant).

#### 3.4. Existing Building

3.4.1. The application site primarily comprises a large existing residential building, which is divided internally into three separate dwellings. The building is four stories in height (with a lower ground floor to the rear) and includes a garage on the southern aspect and supports brick walls and a pitched clay tile roof with chimneys.

3.4.2. A detailed description of the internal and external features of the building are provided at Appendix 3 of this assessment, in addition to a selection of photographs taken during the survey.

#### 3.5. Hardstanding

3.5.1. Small areas of hardstanding are present to the front and rear of the building, in the form of gravel parking area to the front (with access to the garage) and a paved patio to the rear. These areas were recorded to be devoid of any vegetation at the time of survey.

#### 3.6. Modified Grassland

3.6.1. An area of regularly managed amenity grassland was recorded to be present to the rear of the building in the western part of the application site. This area was recorded to support a short, closely cropped sward at the time of survey, supporting a limited range of common and widespread species common with this habitat type.

#### 3.7. Trees and Ornamental Planting

3.7.1. Trees and areas of ornamental planting were recorded to be present, primarily associated with the periphery of the garden in the western part of the application site.

3.7.2. A large Beech *Fagus sylvatica* was recorded to be present in the western part of the application site, in addition to smaller Silver Birch *Betula pendula*. A range of non-native ornamental scrub and herb species are also present, including Cotoneaster *Cotoneaster sp.*, Hellebore *Helleborus sp.*, Camellia



*Camellia sp.*, Gum Eucalyptus *Eucalyptus gunnii*, Firethorn *Pyracantha sp.*, St. John's Wort *Hypericum perforatum*, Rose *Rosa sp.*, Forsythia *Forsythia sp.*, Choisya *Choisya sp.*, Yew *Hypericum perforatum*, Hibiscus *Hibiscus sp.* and Laurel *Laurus nobilis*.

### 3.8. Background Records

- 3.8.1. The desk study undertaken with GiGL did not return any records of protected or notable plant species within or directly adjacent to the application site. The closest recent record was for Large-leaved Lime *Tilia platyphyllos* from a location approximately 0.3km to the southwest of the application site at its closest point.
- 3.8.2. Additionally, several records of non-native invasive species, including those listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), were returned from locations within the local area, including Tree-of-heaven *Ailanthus altissima*, Butterfly-bush *Buddleja davidii*, Tree Cotoneaster *Cotoneaster frigidus*, Japanese Knotweed *Fallopia japonica*, Spanish Bluebell *Hyacinthoides hispanica*, Highclere Holly *Ilex aquifolium x perado* = *I. x altaclerensis*, Cherry Laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*, Turkey Oak *Quercus cerris*, False-acacia *Robinia pseudoacacia* and Snowberry *Symphoricarpos albus*.

#### **4. WILDLIFE USE OF THE APPLICATION SITE**

4.1. During the survey work, general observations were made with specific attention paid to the potential presence of protected species. Specific surveys were also undertaken in respect of bats.

##### **4.2. Bats**

4.2.1. The existing building within the application site was assessed for its potential to support roosting bats, in addition to the trees present within and immediately adjacent to the application site.

4.2.2. The existing building was recorded to be in very good condition, with no potential access points identified during the external and internal survey work. As outlined in detail at Appendix 3, the building is of brick construction, with a pitched roof supporting clay tiles and a small number of hanging tiles adjacent to dormer windows. At either end of the house, large chimneys project up from the roof.

4.2.3. Both the brickwork and tiles throughout the property were recorded to be in excellent condition, with no gaps, voids or cracks observed which could provide potential access points for roosting bats.

4.2.4. The interior of the building comprises large rooms, with closed doors dividing the interior space into distinct areas. Moreover, large windows on the north-eastern and south-western aspects of the building provide light internal conditions. Windows are a mixture of single-glazed wood frames, and more modern double-glazed UPVC. All are in good condition. One of the windows at the rear was recorded to be open during the survey (potentially due to recent high winds); however, further inspection during the survey of the second floor showed no indication of entry or presence by bats. Several rooms have fireplaces which were carefully inspected. One has been sealed with a metal plate, and all were surrounded by undisturbed dust and cobwebs.

4.2.5. In the southwestern corner of the existing building lies a greenhouse and orangery. Both have roofs constructed from glass plates, some of which have fallen loose. Despite providing potential means of entry to the interior, no signs of the presence of bats were observed within either of these areas, with very light internal conditions present, and it is considered highly unlikely that they provide any opportunities for this group.

4.2.6. From the internal survey, the loft void appears to be completely sealed and recently re-insulated and is therefore considered to not offering any potential roost feature to bats. In addition, the flat felt roof over the garage and the lead flashing along the front of the building do not support any features which could potentially be utilised by roosting bats.

4.2.7. No evidence to indicate the presence of roosting bats, in the form of droppings, feeding remains or bats themselves, was recorded at any point during the detailed internal and external inspection survey.

4.2.8. Given the condition of the building and the lack of any evidence to indicate use by bats, it is therefore considered that the existing building present within the application site is not utilised by roosting bats.

- 4.2.9. There are no trees present within or adjacent to the application site which offer potential opportunities for roosting bats, lacking any features of potential value for this group such as cracks, splits or holes.
- 4.2.10. The habitats present within the application site itself are unlikely to be of any particular value for foraging or commuting bats in the local area, although bats could feasibly use gardens in the local area. Street lighting and exterior lighting of residential dwellings around the application site is also likely to restrict opportunities for this group.
- 4.2.11. **Background records.** The data search undertaken with GiGL returned a number of records of bats from the local area. The closest records returned were of Common Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, Soprano Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and Noctule *Nyctalus noctula* from a location approximately 0.2km to the north-west of the application site from 2016.
- 4.2.12. Other species recorded within 2km of the application site include Serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*, Leisler's Bat *Nyctalus leisleri*, Daubenton's Bat *Myotis daubentonii*, Nathusius' Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus nathusii*, Whiskered/Brandt's Bat *Myotis mystacinus/brandtii*, Natterer's Bat *Myotis nattereri*, and Brown Long-eared Bat *Plecotus auritus*.

#### 4.3. Birds

- 4.3.1. The existing building and areas of hardstanding which comprise the majority of the proposed development footprint do not provide any opportunities for birds, with no evidence to indicate use (current or historical) recorded during the course of the survey. Whilst trees and areas of ornamental planting associated with the property provide some areas which could be used by birds, it is apparent that the application site as a whole offers few opportunities for this group at present.
- 4.3.2. **Background Records.** The data search undertaken with GiGL did not return any records of birds within or directly adjacent to the application site. The closest recent record was for Tawny Owl *Strix aluco* and was returned from a location approximately 0.3km to the southwest of the application site at its closest point.
- 4.3.3. A number of records of notable bird species were returned from the local area of the site; however, given the limited opportunities within the application site boundary it is considered unlikely that any would be reliant upon the habitats present.

#### 4.4. Other Protected and Notable Species

- 4.4.1. No evidence to indicate the use of the application site other protected or notable species was recorded during the course of the survey. Opportunities for such groups are considered to be limited, with the existing building, hardstanding and amenity grassland providing few, if any, opportunities for faunal species.

## 5. ECOLOGICAL EVALUATION

### 5.1. The Principles of Ecological Evaluation

- 5.1.1. The latest guidelines for ecological evaluation produced by CIEEM proposes an approach that involves professional judgement, but makes use of available guidance and information, such as the distribution and status of the species or features within the locality of the project.
- 5.1.2. The methods and standards for site evaluation within the British Isles have remained those defined by Ratcliffe<sup>7</sup>. These are broadly used across the United Kingdom to rank sites so priorities for nature conservation can be attained. For example, current sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) designation maintains a system of data analysis that is roughly tested against Ratcliffe's criteria.
- 5.1.3. In general terms, these criteria are size, diversity, naturalness, rarity and fragility, while additional secondary criteria of typicalness, potential value, intrinsic appeal, recorded history and the position within the ecological/geographical units are also incorporated into the ranking procedure.
- 5.1.4. Any assessment should not judge sites in isolation from others, since several habitats may combine to make it worthy of importance to nature conservation.
- 5.1.5. Further, relying on the national criteria would undoubtedly distort the local variation in assessment and therefore additional factors need to be taken into account, e.g. a woodland type with a comparatively poor species diversity, common in the south of England, may be of importance at its northern limits, say in the border country.
- 5.1.6. In addition, habitats of local importance are often highlighted within a local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). Camden's Biodiversity Action Plan identifies and lists several priority species and habitats.
- 5.1.7. Levels of importance can be determined within a defined geographical context from the immediate site or locality through to the international level.
- 5.1.8. The legislative and planning policy context has also been given due regard throughout this assessment.

### 5.2. Designated Sites

#### Statutory Sites

- 5.2.1. There are no statutory designated sites of nature conservation interest within or adjacent to the application site. The nearest statutory site is Westbere Copse Local Nature Reserve (LNR), which lies approximately 1.3km to the south-west of the application site at its closest point (see Plan ECO1).

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<sup>7</sup> Ratcliffe, D A (1977). *A Nature Conservation Review: the Selection of Study areas of Biological National Importance to Nature Conservation in Britain*. Two Volumes. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

- 5.2.2. The closest Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is Hampstead Heath Woods SSSI, located approximately 1.4km to the north-east of the application site at its closest point (see Plan ECO1).
- 5.2.3. Hampstead Heath Woods SSSI is designated on account of the woodland habitats that it supports, including over mature trees which are of value for a range of invertebrate species.
- 5.2.4. Given the significant separation between the application site and these statutory sites by extensive areas of existing development and roads, in addition to the nature of the proposals (renovation and works to extend an existing residential building), it is considered that the proposals would not lead to any significant direct or indirect impacts to statutory designated sites either during construction or operation.

#### Non-statutory Sites

- 5.2.5. There are no non-statutory designated sites of nature conservation interest within or adjacent to the application site. However, there are a number of non-statutory sites situated in the local area, as illustrated on Plan ECO1 and listed below:
- Branch Hill Site of Borough Grade 1 Importance for Nature Conservation (SBG1INC), situated approximately 0.2km to the east of the application site at its closest point;
  - King's College Hampstead Heath Site of Borough Grade 2 Importance for Nature Conservation (SBG2INC), situated approximately 0.2km to the west
  - Hampstead Heath Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation (SMINC), situated approximately 0.4km to the north-east;
  - Hampstead Cemetery SBG1INC, situated approximately 0.5km to the south-west;
  - Hampstead Heath Parish Church SBG1INC, situated approximately 0.6km to the south-east; and
  - Gondar Gardens SBG2INC, situated approximately 1km to the south-west.
- 5.2.6. The application site is separated from all of these non-statutory designated sites by areas of existing residential development and roads. Given the nature of the proposals (renovation and works to an existing residential building), it is considered highly unlikely that any potential direct or indirect effects would arise to non-statutory designated sites.
- 5.2.7. Nonetheless, standard engineering protocols and best practice shall be employed throughout the duration of works at the site, with particular regard to measures such as the storage of materials and dust suppression techniques such as wheel washing.

### 5.3. Habitat Evaluation

- 5.3.1. As outlined in Section 3 above, the application site primarily comprises existing built form, specifically a residential building and areas of clear hardstanding. These areas do not support any vegetation at all and as such are not of any ecological value.
- 5.3.2. Moreover, the areas of ornamental planting and amenity grassland present within the application site are of limited ecological value, supporting little diversity with a complement of common and widespread species, including many non-native plants.
- 5.3.3. The development proposals require only a small expansion beyond the existing footprint of built form towards the west, and as such existing trees and most of the ornamental planting within and adjacent to the application site are beyond the proposed works and will be fully retained. This includes existing trees situated to the front of the building. Through the implementation of standard mitigation measures, such as the use of temporary protective fencing (Heras or similar) and ensuring that materials are stored away from these areas, impacts to retained vegetation during the construction period can be avoided.
- 5.3.4. To provide an enhancement for biodiversity, new landscape planting is proposed in the eastern part of the application site, in a location which currently comprises existing hardstanding. As illustrated on the planting plans produced by Charlotte Rowe Garden Design, a variety of habitats are proposed, including new trees, hedgerow, scrub and ground level planting, in addition to a green roof over a new bin store.
- 5.3.5. These habitats will be planted with a range of ornamental and native species, including nectar-rich flowering species of known value for wildlife such as *Amelanchier lamarckii*, *Verbena bonariensis*, *Persicaria amplexicaulis*, *Viburnum tinus* and *Hydrangea arborescens*. This will provide improved opportunities for faunal groups such as invertebrates, and in turn foraging birds and bats.
- 5.3.6. With the provision of new planting, in conjunction with a suitable management regime, it is considered that net gains in biodiversity would be secured compared to the existing situation.

### 5.4. Faunal Evaluation

#### Bats

- 5.4.1. **Legislation.** All bats are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and included on Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (“the Habitats Regulations”, as amended). These include provisions making it an offence:
- Deliberately to kill, injure or take (capture) bats;
  - Deliberately to disturb bats in such a way as to be likely to significantly affect:-
    - (i) the ability of any significant group of bats to survive, breed or rear or nurture their young; or to hibernate; or

- (ii) to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species concerned;
    - To damage or destroy any breeding or resting place used by bats;
    - To intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any place used by bats for shelter or protection (even if bats are not in residence).
- 5.4.2. While the legislation is deemed to apply even when bats are not in residence, Natural England guidance suggests that certain activities such as re-roofing can be completed outside sensitive periods when bats are not in residence provided these do not damage or destroy the roost.
- 5.4.3. The words 'deliberately' and 'intentionally' include actions where a court can infer that the defendant knew 'the action taken would almost inevitably result in an offence, even if that was not the primary purpose of the act.
- 5.4.4. The offence of damaging (making it worse for the bat) or destroying a breeding site or resting place is an absolute offence. Such actions do not have to be deliberate for an offence to be committed.
- 5.4.5. All bats are London Priority Species, and seven species of bat are Priority Species in England; specifically, *Barbastelle* *Barbastella barbastellus*, Bechstein's *Myotis bechsteinii*, Noctule, Soprano Pipistrelle, Brown Long-eared *Plecotus auritus*, Greater Horseshoe *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, and Lesser Horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*.
- 5.4.6. **Application Site Evaluation.** As outlined above, detailed internal and external inspection survey work undertaken of the existing building and trees present within and adjacent to the application site have confirmed that they do not provide any opportunities for roosting bats. As such, the development proposals would not result in any potential loss or damage to bat roosts.
- 5.4.7. Moreover, the habitats present within the application site are unlikely to be of any particular value for foraging or commuting bats in the local area.
- 5.4.8. **Avoidance, Mitigation and Enhancements.** As outlined above, the development proposals are broadly restricted to the footprint of existing built form within the application site. As a result, and mindful of the existing baseline situation, existing opportunities for foraging and commuting bats are unlikely to be affected by the development proposals.
- 5.4.9. The provision of new wildlife-beneficial planting within the application site is likely to benefit invertebrates in the local area, and in turn provide additional foraging resources for bats. Whilst the extent to which this is likely to be beneficial may be limited, this would provide opportunities for more light-tolerant bats such as Pipistrelles which may utilise residential gardens.

### Birds

- 5.4.10. **Legislation.** Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) is concerned with the protection of wild birds, whilst Schedule 1 lists species that are protected by special penalties. All species of birds receive general protection whilst nesting.

- 5.4.11. **Application Site Usage.** The existing building and areas of built form which primarily comprise the footprint of the development proposals do not provide any opportunities for nesting and foraging birds, with no evidence of identified during the survey work undertaken. Whilst trees and ornamental planting within the wider application site provide some opportunities, these are limited and are unlikely to be of any particular value for this group.
- 5.4.12. **Avoidance, Mitigation and Enhancements.** On a precautionary basis the removal of vegetation which provides suitable nesting opportunities for birds will be undertaken either outside of the main bird nesting season (March to June inclusive), or alternatively following the completion of a nesting bird check by a suitably qualified ecologist to confirm that there are no nests present. The use of temporary protective fencing would also prevent potential for harm to arise to retained vegetation within the application site.
- 5.4.13. To provide an enhancement for birds, it is recommended that nesting boxes are provided, either on the exterior of the building or on suitably mature trees within the application site boundary. The provision of nesting opportunities for Swifts or House Sparrows would contribute towards targets set out in the Camden BAP.



## 6. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

6.1. The planning policy framework that relates to nature conservation at Hampstead is issued at three main administrative levels: nationally through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); regionally through the London Plan; and locally through the Camden Local Plan. The proposed development will be judged in relation to the policies contained within these documents.

### 6.2. National Policy

#### National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

6.2.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system and was adopted on 27th March 2012 and subsequently revised on the 24 July 2018, 19 February 2019 and 20 July 2021.

6.2.2. The key element of the NPPF is that there should be "a *presumption in favour of sustainable development*" (paragraphs 10 to 11).

6.2.3. The revised NPPF is comparable to previous versions (which it replaces), including reference to minimising impacts on biodiversity and provision of net gains to biodiversity where possible (paragraph 179) and ensuring that Local Authorities place appropriate weight to statutory and non-statutory nature conservation designations, protected species and biodiversity.

6.2.4. The NPPF also considers the strategic approach that Local Authorities should adopt with regard to the protection, maintenance and enhancement of Green Infrastructure, priority habitats and ecological networks, and the recovery of priority species.

6.2.5. Paragraph 180 of the NPPF comprises a number of principles which Local Authorities should apply, including:

- encouraging opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments;
- provision for refusal of planning applications if significant harm cannot be avoided, mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for; and
- the provision for the refusal for developments resulting in the loss or deterioration of 'irreplaceable' habitats unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.

6.2.6. National policy therefore implicitly recognises the importance of biodiversity and that with sensitive planning and design, development and conservation of the natural heritage can co-exist and benefits can, in certain circumstances, be obtained.

### 6.3. Regional Policy

#### The London Plan

6.3.1. Policies providing guidance on the relationship between development and nature conservation in London can be located in The London Plan, adopted in March 2021. The plan is the overall strategic plan for London and sets

out an integrated framework for the development of the capital for the next 20 – 25 years. This document replaces the London Plan, which was published in March 2016.

- 6.3.2. There are four key policies within the London Plan which relate to ecology and nature conservation at the site.
- 6.3.3. **Policy G1: Green Infrastructure.** This policy deals with the protection and expansion of London’s green infrastructure network. It states that green infrastructure should be planned to integrate within a wider network. Development plans should incorporate appropriate elements of green infrastructure.
- 6.3.4. **Policy G5: Urban Greening.** This policy states that major developments should contribute to the greening of London by including urban greening as a fundamental element of site and building design. The policy notes that Boroughs should determine the amount of greening required in new developments and existing green cover retained onsite will contribute to green target scores.
- 6.3.5. **Policy G6: Biodiversity and access to nature** states that SINCs should be protected and that development plans should: identify SINCs and ecological corridors to identify coherent networks; support the protection and conservation of priority species and habitats that sit outside the SINC network; search for opportunities to create other habitats or features such as artificial nests; and clearly identified designated sites of European or national importance and assess any impacts. The policy notes that where harm to a SINC is unavoidable measures should be taken to avoid, minimise and lastly compensate for any losses. The policy also states that development proposals should aim to secure net gains in biodiversity.
- 6.3.6. **Policy G7: Trees and woodlands.** This policy states that London’s urban forests and woodland should be protected and maintained, and new trees and woodland should be planted in appropriate locations to increase the urban forest. The policy notes that development proposals should ensure that where possible existing trees of value are retained, and any losses should be replaced.

#### 6.4. **Local Policy**

##### Camden Local Plan 2016-2031

- 6.4.1. The Camden Local Plan was adopted in July 2017. Policy A3 is the key policy within the Local Plan which relates to biodiversity and ecology Borough.
- 6.4.2. **Policy A3. Biodiversity:** This policy states that the council will “assess developments against their ability to realise benefits for biodiversity through the layout, design and materials used in the built structure and landscaping elements of a proposed development, proportionate to the scale of development proposed”.

- 6.4.3. Additionally, policies A1 and A2 provide further guidance regarding the importance of considering ecology during the planning phase.
- 6.4.4. **Policy A1. Managing the impact of development:** This policy relates to the need to reduce pollution and ensure that development will not harm the quality of life of local people as well as the environment. The policy states that developments must minimise light, noise and vibration, odour, contamination, and impacts from construction.
- 6.4.5. **Policy A2. Open Spaces:** This policy states that the Council will protect and enhance the city's green infrastructure to maximise its environmental, social and economic value.
- 6.4.6. Of additional relevance to this project given its demolition component, the plan states that the council expects "the demolition and construction phase of development, including the movement of works vehicles, to be planned to avoid disturbance to habitats and species and ecologically sensitive areas, and the spread of invasive species".
- 6.4.7. Finally, the plan indicates that the council expect development to retain and protect gardens and trees.

## 6.5. Discussion

- 6.5.1. Recommendations have been put forward in this report that would fully safeguard the existing ecological interest of the application site. Based on the survey and assessment work undertaken, the presence and potential presence of protected and notable species has been given due regard and measures which may be incorporated within the development proposals to enhance the site for such species have been put forward.
- 6.5.2. In conclusion, implementation of the measures set out in this report would enable the development proposals at the application site to fully accord with planning policy and guidance for ecology and nature conservation at all administrative levels.

## **7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 7.1. Ecology Solutions was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Burns in February 2022 to undertake an Ecological Assessment of 61 Redington Road, Hampstead.
- 7.2. There are no designated sites of nature conservation interest in close proximity to the application site. Given the nature of the development proposals, it is considered that adverse effects would not arise as a result of the proposals either during the construction or operational period.
- 7.3. The application site comprises an existing building and hardstanding, with trees and ornamental planting. The development proposals primary involve works to areas of existing built form, will retain most of the existing vegetation and provide an opportunity to deliver enhancements in the form of additional planting, resulting in net gains in the biodiversity value of the site post-development.
- 7.4. No evidence of roosting bats was recorded during the specific internal and external survey undertaken, and the building and trees present within and adjacent to the application site are not considered to offer suitable opportunities for this group. The provision of new landscape planting, adoption of a precautionary approach in relation to nesting birds, and the provision of new bird nesting boxes would deliver ecological enhancements.
- 7.5. In conclusion, on the evidence of the ecological survey undertaken, the application site is not considered to be of any significant value from an ecology and nature conservation perspective. The design of the proposed development and the implementation of mitigation and enhancement measures as recommended in this report will ensure that there are no adverse effects on any designated sites or protected species as a result of development, and moreover ecological enhancements will be delivered compared to the existing baseline.
- 7.6. As such it is considered that the development proposals accord with legislation and planning policy of relevance to biodiversity and nature conservation.

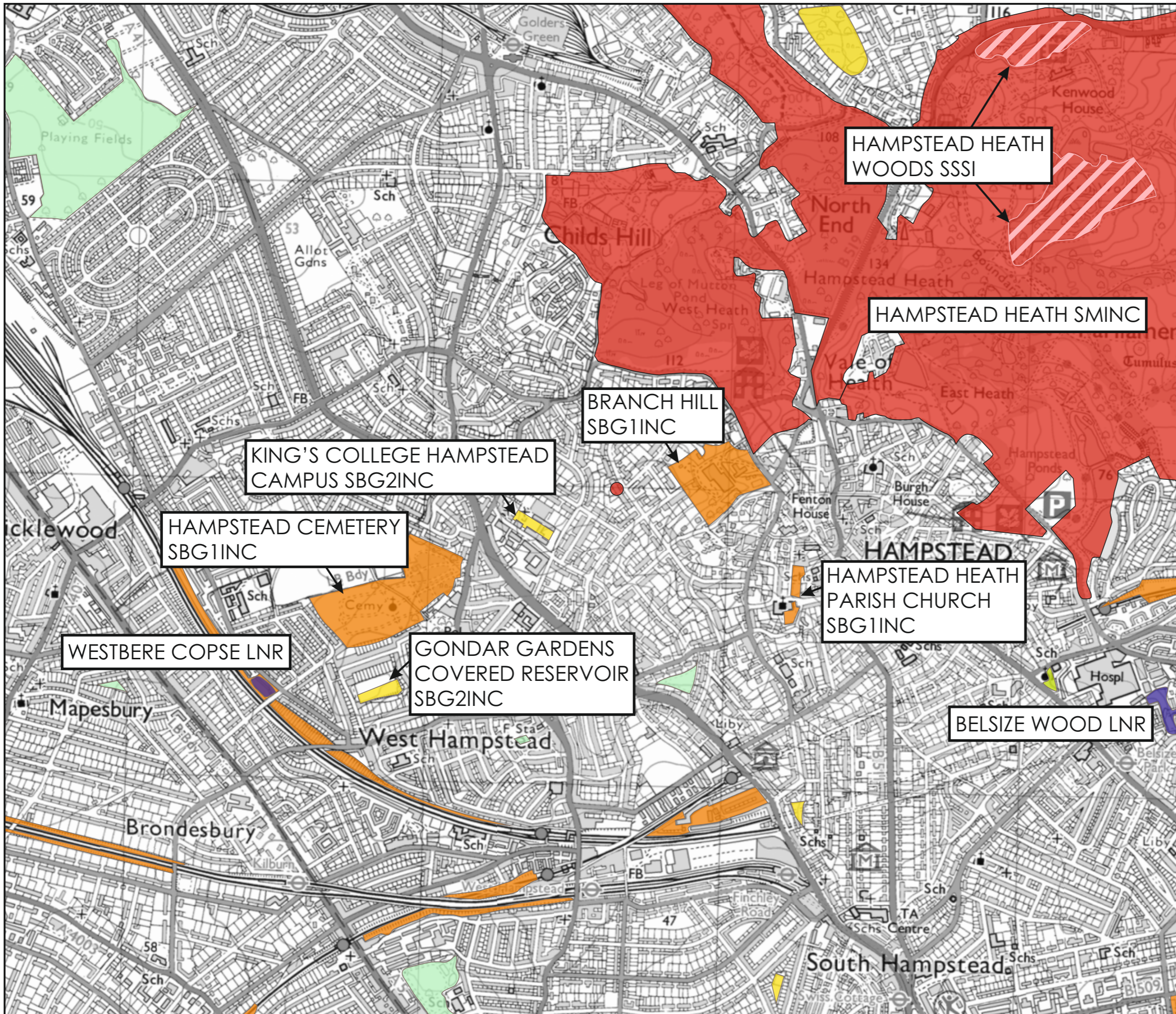
## **PLANS AND APPENDICES**








## PLANS

## **PLAN ECO1**

Statutory Designated Sites Locations





- KEY:**
-  APPLICATION SITE LOCATION
  -  SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (SSSI)
  -  LOCAL NATURE RESERVE
  -  SITE OF METROPOLITAN IMPORTANCE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION (SMINC)
  -  SITE OF BOROUGH IMPORTANCE GRADE 1 FOR NATURE CONSERVATION (SBG1INC)
  -  SITE OF BOROUGH IMPORTANCE GRADE 2 FOR NATURE CONSERVATION (SBG2INC)
  -  SITE OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION



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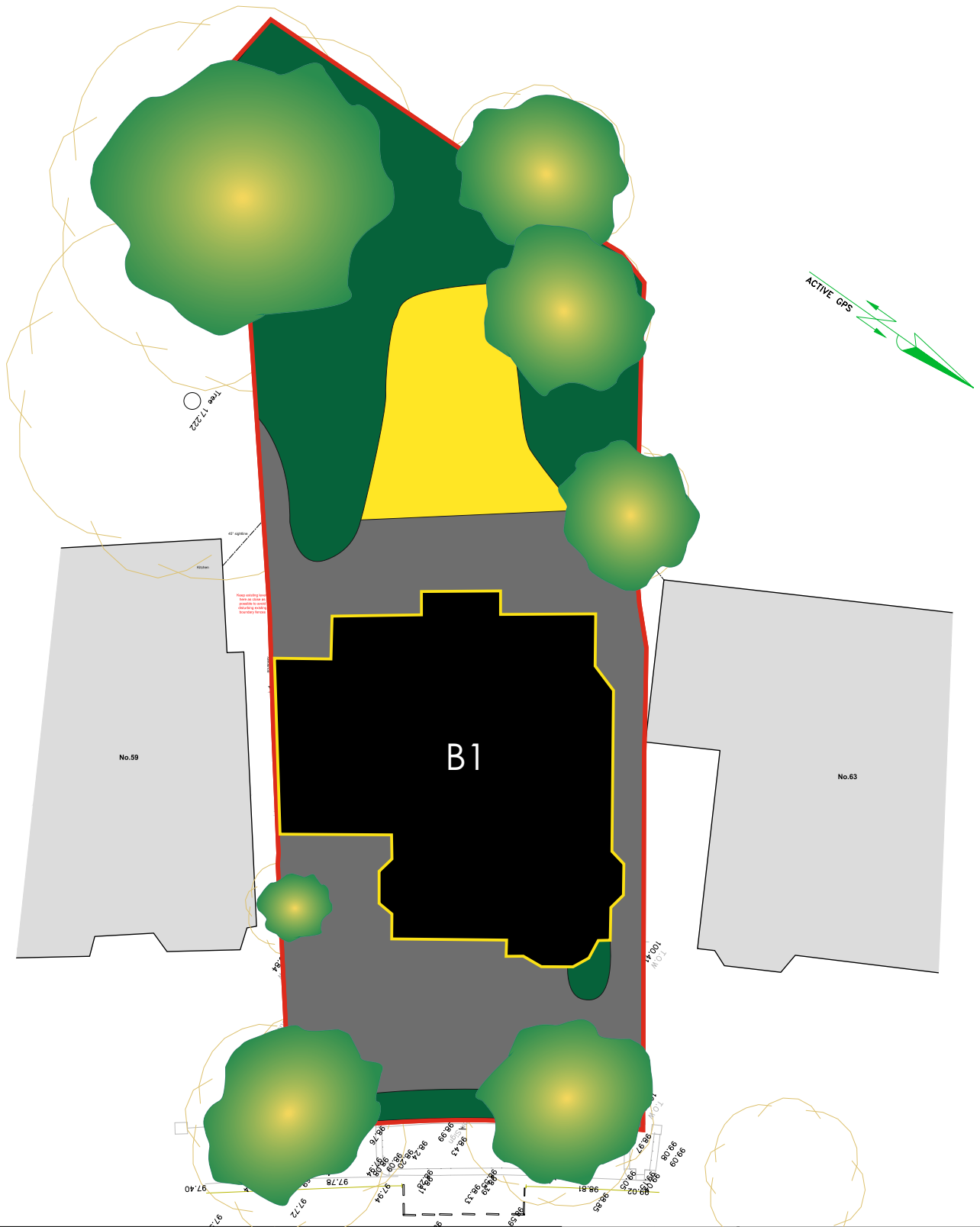
PLAN ECO1:  
 APPLICATION SITE LOCATION  
 AND ECOLOGICAL DESIGNATIONS

Rev: A  
 Mar 2022



## **PLAN ECO2**

Ecological Features



**KEY:**

-  APPLICATION SITE LOCATION
-  BUILDING
-  HARDSTANDING
-  MODIFIED GRASSLAND
-  ORNAMENTAL PLANTING
-  MATURE TREE



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PLAN ECO2:  
 ECOLOGICAL FEATURES

Rev: A  
 Mar 2022

## **APPENDICES**

## **APPENDIX 1**

Information Obtained from GiGL (Summary Page)



THIS SUMMARY PAGE MAY BE PUBLISHED  
THE FULL REPORT AND MAPS MAY NOT BE PUBLISHED IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

### Ecological Data Search 22908dr - Summary Page

A 2000m ecological data search was carried out for site 61 Redington Road, Hampstead on behalf of Ecology Solutions on 01 Mar 2022.

The following datasets were consulted for this report:

- Statutory sites ✓
- Non-statutory sites ✓
- Non-statutory sites (Proposed) ✓
- Protected species ✓
- London invasive species ✓
- Notable Thames Structures ✓
- Habitats ✓
- Open space ✓

### Results

Statutory sites	1 statutory site and 2 LNRs
Non-statutory sites	
SINCs	20 SINCs
Proposed SINCs	None present within search area
Areas of Deficiency	Present within search area
Geological sites	1 site
Species	
Protected and notable species	5102 species records
London invasive species	960 species records
Notable Thames Structures	Not present within search area
Habitats	
BAP habitat suitability	Present within search area
Open space	Present within search area

The report is compiled using data held by GiGL at the time of the request. Note that GiGL does not currently hold comprehensive species data for all areas. Even where data is held, a lack of records for a species in a defined geographical area does not necessarily mean that the species does not occur there.

### Permission

This data search report is valid until 01/03/2023 for the site named above.

Prepared by  
01 Mar 2022

## **APPENDIX 2**

Information Obtained from MAGIC

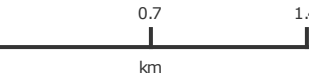




**Legend**

-  Local Nature Reserves (England)
-  National Nature Reserves (England)
-  Ramsar Sites (England)
-  Proposed Ramsar Sites (England)
-  Sites of Special Scientific Interest (England)
-  Special Areas of Conservation (England)
-  Possible Special Areas of Conservation (England)
-  Special Protection Areas (England)
-  Potential Special Protection Areas (England)

Projection = OSGB36  
 xmin = 517100  
 ymin = 181800  
 xmax = 534400  
 ymax = 190500



Map produced by MAGIC on 9 March, 2022.  
 Copyright resides with the data suppliers and the map must not be reproduced without their permission. Some information in MAGIC is a snapshot of the information that is being maintained or continually updated by the originating organisation. Please refer to the metadata for details as information may be illustrative or representative rather than definitive at this stage.



## **APPENDIX 3**

### Detailed Description of Existing Building



## **61 Redington Road, Hampstead – Detailed Description of Existing Building**

### Exterior

1. The application site supports a large existing residential building on the southern side of Redington Road. It is a brick building with a pitched roof covered by clay tiles. In general terms, the building is considered to be in excellent condition.
2. To the front of the building is a portico covered by lead flashing. This extends most of the width of the property, and also covers a bay window to the northern end of the front (eastern) elevation.
3. At either end of the house (northern and southern aspects), large chimneys project up from the roof. The condition of the brickwork on these structures is similar to the rest of the exterior, with no gaps or cracks observed during the external survey.
4. There are a few hanging tiles around the dormer window on the eastern elevation of the property, with no slipped tiles or large gaps recorded to be present which could provide potential opportunities for roosting bats.
5. Windows are a mixture of single-glazed wood frames, and more modern double-glazed UPVC (primarily on the western, rear elevation). All are in good condition. One of the windows at the rear was open during the survey, which was investigated more closely during the internal survey of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor (see below).
6. The rear of the building was recorded to be in excellent condition, with brick walls and some areas of pebbledash screed.
7. On the southern side of the property is a garage, above which sit some ground floor rooms. This part of the property is covered by a flat felt roof at the level of the first floor. The garage roof was recorded to be in good condition, with no gaps or holes observed.
8. Climbing plants were recorded on the south-eastern corner of the building; however, it was possible to clearly see the walls and soffit in this location, such that this does not pose a constraint to the assessment of condition.
9. While most of the soffits were recorded to be in excellent, a number of small cracks were recorded in the south-eastern corner of the property. The cracks present appear to be exceptionally small and are considered unlikely to provide any potential opportunities for faunal species, including bats.
10. On the northern aspect of the property at lower ground level is a small alcove comprising a bin storage area, with slatted gates. This area was recorded to be open and relatively exposed to the elements. No evidence to indicate the presence of roosting bats was recorded and given the absence of potential features for perching it is considered that this would not provide any opportunities for this group (for either hibernation or breeding roosts).

### Lower Ground Floor

11. The rooms on the lower ground floor of the existing building were recorded to support light internal conditions, with large windows (lacking curtains). No potential access points from the outside were recorded to be present, with a lack of alcoves or other features which could provide roosting opportunities. A small cast iron fireplace was recorded to be

present in the central room; however, the presence of cobwebs and material indicates that this has remained undisturbed for a significant amount of time.

12. The garage on the lower ground floor was recorded to be dark but is fully sealed. Apart from a few small gaps around pipes the ceiling is covered by contiguous wooden boards which provide negligible opportunities for bats in any event.
13. In the south-western corner of the lower ground floor was a small lean-to greenhouse area. Whilst gaps as observed associated with missing plates of glass, internal conditions were recorded to be very light with no opportunities for roosting bats.
14. As with other floors within the building, rooms in the lower ground floor were separated from one another with closed doors.
15. No evidence to indicate the presence of roosting bats, such as droppings, feeding remains or bats themselves, was recorded during the internal survey of the lower ground floor area.

#### Ground Floor

16. As with the lower ground floor, rooms throughout the ground floor were also similarly light and well-sealed from outdoors.
17. A cast iron fireplace was recorded to be present in the northernmost room, however the flue is sealed with a large metal plate. There are a number of built-in cupboards and wardrobes throughout the ground floor and the rest of the property, these were all closed, with well-fitting doors.
18. On the south-western corner of the ground floor is a conservatory/orangery. There are a few gaps in the roof where glass panes have slipped out of position. Internal conditions were recorded to be very light.
19. No evidence to indicate the presence of roosting bats, such as droppings, feeding remains or bats themselves, was recorded during the internal survey of the ground floor area.

#### First and Second Floors

20. Conditions associated with rooms on the first and second floors of the building are identical to those in the lower ground and ground floors. Rooms were separated by closed doors, supported light internal conditions due to large windows, and no access points from outside were recorded.
21. On the western side of the building a window on the second floor was recorded to be open at the time of survey (potentially following high winds). However, no evidence was recorded to suggest that this represents a regularly open access point which could be used by bats or other species.
22. Internally, part of the ceiling in the north-western corner of the second floor had collapsed to reveal the construction. However, the damage recorded pertained to plaster only, with the roof structure, comprising wooden panels and slats, fully intact. As such, this does not provide any potential access points for bats to enter the second floor or indeed any void between the exterior and roof.

23. No evidence to indicate the presence of roosting bats, such as any droppings, feeding remains or bats themselves, was recorded in the first or second floor areas.

#### Loft Void

24. The loft void of the dwelling comprises wooded cross beams with wood panel cladding and fiberglass insulation. Whilst safe access into the loft void was not possible, it was apparent that the roof structure had been subject to renovation in recent years, with an installation note recorded to be present.
25. Internally the loft void was recorded to be completely dark, with no light sources indicating potential access points and draughty conditions absent.
26. No evidence to indicate the presence of roosting bats, such as any droppings, feeding remains or bats themselves, was recorded within the loft void.



Photo 1: Front aspect of existing building



Photo 2: Rear aspect of existing building



Photo 3: Flat felt roof covering the rooms over the garage on the southern side of the existing building



Photo 4: Climbing plants on the south-eastern corner of the existing building



Photo 5: Cast iron fireplace on lower ground floor



Photo 6: Interior of the small greenhouse at the rear of the existing building





Photo 7: Conservatory/orangery at the rear of the existing building on the ground floor



Photo 8: During the survey a window was recorded to be open on the second floor; no evidence of entry by bats was observed



Photo 9: Internal damage to the ceiling on the second floor, showing the construction of the roof – no access point



Photo 10: The loft void was well-sealed and recently re-insulated





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