Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Fox Court

Clare Real Estate (14 Gray's Inn Road) Ltd

October 2023

Document Control

Document:	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
Project:	Fox Court
Client:	Clare Real Estate (14 Gray's Inn Road) Ltd
Job number:	0475
Date of issue:	DRAFT for Client Review/Comment: March 2023 DRAFT2 for Client Review/Comment: September 2023
Prepared by:	Aven Ecology Ltd 13 Hampden Road London N10 2HP
Project manager:	Kevin Hume
Field team:	Kevin Hume and Anna McDermott

Document checking			
Primary author:	Kevin Hume	Signed:	
Reviewed and Approved by:	Anna McDermott	Signed:	

Conditions of Use

This report has been prepared for the exclusive use of the named Client (and its Consultants and Contractors and the Local Planning Authority) in respect of the Project as described by Aven Ecology Ltd. The purpose of the report (i.e. the Project) is explicitly defined in the text. It is not to be used for any other purposes unless agreed with Aven Ecology Ltd. The copyright for the report rests with Aven Ecology Ltd unless otherwise agreed.

Contents

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Aven Ecology Ltd was commissioned in February 2023 by Clare Real Estate (14 Gray's Inn Road) Ltd (The Applicant) to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) at Fox Court, 14 Grays Inn Road, London WC1X 8HN, hereafter referred to as the 'Site'. The purpose of the survey was to determine the potential ecological impacts of the proposals for the refurbishment of the office building complex at the Site. This PEA was required to inform a Planning Application to be submitted to the London Borough of Camden ("LBC") for the proposals, and includes a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) calculation.

The PEA was also required to inform a BREEAM Bespoke/Refurbishment Fit-out (2014) Assessment of the proposals against Credit Criteria in the Land-Use and Ecology Category (Biodiversity Report and Ecological Management Plan (Aven Ecology, September 2023)).

1.2 Site Location and Description

The Site is located within the Holborn & Covent Garden Ward within the London Borough of Camden (LBC) (OS grid reference TQ31148170). It is a 9-storey purpose built office building (14,287 sqm GIA of Class E office floorspace), in a U-shape with an external courtyard space to the north of the building. The building is finished predominantly in red brick with glazing and cladding to the Grays Inn Road frontage. It is of no architectural merit.

To the south is the recently completed 150 High Holborn office and residential development. To the west, beyond Grays Inn Road, is an 8-storey building with retail at ground floor and residential above that turns the corner onto High Holborn and the office buildings surrounding Grays Inn South Square. To the north is a predominantly residential area comprising 6 storey buildings fronting Grays Inn Road, a 4 storey building facing Brookes Market and 2 storey buildings in Brookes Court, which also includes the Holborn Mosque. To the east, on the other side of Brook Street, is the Waterhouse Square office complex.

In terms of planning designations, the site lies within the Central Activities Zone (CAZ), the London View Management Framework (LVMF) protected vista from Primrose Hill to St Paul's Cathedral and the background areas of the views from Blackheath Point and Greenwich Park.

In terms of heritage assets, the site lies between two conservation areas, Bloomsbury Conservation Area on the west side of Grays Inn Road and Hatton Garden Conservation Area to the east of Brook Street. Waterhouse Square (The Prudential Insurance Building) is Grade II* listed and Church of St Alban the Martyr (Grade II*) and its associated Clergy and Railings (Grade II) to the north of the site are listed. Within the Grays Inn complex to the west are a number of listed buildings including The Hall (Grade I), The Chapel (Grade II) and Statue of Francis Bacon (Grade II), all set within the Grade II* Grays Inn Registered Park and Garden.

The surrounding area comprises a mix of office buildings, residential buildings, schools, and retail/commercial buildings; these are interspersed with patchworks of amenity and open space, including gardens and parks, including amenity grassland, street trees, and shrubs.

1.3 Development Proposals

The planning application seeks planning permission for the following description of development: 'Demolition of existing facades, retaining existing reinforced concrete frame and basement structures; refurbishment and reconfiguration of the existing office (Use Class E) building for continued office use including extensions with new facades to the west elevation fronting Grays Inn Road (9 storeys), to the northern courtyard elevation facing Brookes Court (9 storeys), to the existing 5 storey north-east wing fronting Brook Street (3 storeys) and to the south elevation (8 storeys); external alterations, provision of rooftop amenity terraces, landscaping and associated works'

The proposed development falls within one red line area and specifically comprises of the following components:

- Retrofit and extension of the existing office building to provide additional office accommodation, with an uplift of 8,579sqm GIA (9,652sqm GEA).
- Existing reinforced concrete frame to be retained, along with ground floor slab and basement structure.
- Extensions to west, north and south sides of the building with new facades.
- Provision of a central atrium space between the existing structure and the northern extension for internal circulation and rooftop amenity spaces for tenants, including urban greening.
- Provision of cycle parking and servicing at basement level, provision of plant space at roof and basement levels.

The proposed development has evolved through pre-application and wider stakeholder consultation process, which has included collaborative discussions with the Council and a number of other key stakeholders. The proposed development provides the opportunity to regenerate this important site through the sustainable retrofitting of the existing poor-quality office building to provide a highly sustainable and modern office building which reflects commercial demand in the area and seeks to support LBC's aspirations to provide a range of business premises within the Borough.

1.4 Survey Aims and Objectives

The aims of the survey were to:

- obtain information on the presence of important ecological features within the Site that may be affected by the proposals, and the potential Zone of Influence of the development.
- identify potential use of the Site by roosting bats; and
- advise on any further survey/mitigation work potentially required in respect of compliance with planning/legislation.

The objectives of the survey included:

- completion of a preliminary desk-study to identify protected/notable sites, habitats and species in the local area;
- completion of a combined extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey/UK Habitats Classification Survey and a Preliminary Roost Assessment in accordance with best practice guidelines;

- review of legislation relating to the relevant protected species (see Appendix 2);
- identify potential ecological constraints to works, as well as opportunities for mitigation, compensation, and enhancement, based on survey findings.
- Completion of a BNG calculation using Defra Metric 4.0 (see Appendix 6)

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal will also inform the completion of a BREEAM Land Use and Ecology Assessment (Fox Court Biodiversity Report, Aven Ecology August 2023).

1.5 Quality Assurance

All surveys are led by Ecologists who are members of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) at the appropriate level. By joining the CIEEM staff sign up to a professional code of conduct. The survey was carried out by licensed bat workers All surveys/reporting were undertaken by 'Suitably Qualified Ecologists' as required by BREEAM (see Section 2.4 below).

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Introduction

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was undertaken with reference to the Chartered Institute of Environmental Assessment's Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CIEEM, 2017) and BS 42020: 2013, and comprised a desk study and a field-based Phase 1 Habitat Survey/UK Habitats Classification Survey. A Preliminary Roost Assessment of the building complex and trees in respect of bat roost potential was also undertaken with reference to published guidance (including Collins, 2016[1]).

Using Biodiversity Metric 4.0., a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment was completed based on the areas of baseline and proposed UKHabitats for the Site (See Appendix 6).

2.1.1 Desk Study

The aim of the desk-study was to inform and supplement the field survey by collating and reviewing existing ecological information relevant to the Site and the local area. This included consultation with the Local Biological Records provider, Greenspace information for Greater London (GiGL), as well as a review of publicly available biodiversity information resources, including Defra's 'Magic' interactive map[2].

2.1.2 Statutory Designated Sites

A search was undertaken for statutory designated sites of importance for nature conservation within 2km of the Site, including:

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI);
- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs);
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs);
- Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) for the above;
- Ramsar Sites; and
- Local/National Nature Reserves (LNRs/NNRs)

The search radius was extended to 10km in the case of SACs designated for their bat interest.

2.1.3 Non-Statutory Designated Sites

A search was undertaken for non-statutory designated sites of importance for nature conservation within 2km of the Site. Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) are graded in terms of the scale of their contribution to biodiversity as follows:

- Metropolitan (SMINCs):
- Borough (SBINCs);
- Local (SLINCs);
- Areas of Deficiency (typically more than 1km from a SMINC/SBINC)

[1] Collins (2016) Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd edition, Bat Conservation Trust, London

[2] http://magic.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx

2.1.4 Protected and Notable Species/Habitats

GiGL records, as well as online databases, including Defra's 'Magic' interactive map, were reviewed for recent records of protected and notable species/habitats and for statutory sites designated for their bat interest, and for European Protected Species licences relating to bats, from within approximately 2km of the Site, covering the period 2000-2023.

Freely available online aerial photography was accessed to search for potential bat foraging habitat within the vicinity of the Site and connected by commuting routes such as treelines and open spaces.

2.2 Extended Phase 1 Habitat/UK Habitat Classification Survey

During the walkover field survey of the Site, dominant plant species were recorded and habitats were classified according to their vegetation types, as identified in the:

- Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey - Technique for Environmental Audit' (JNCC 2010); and
- The UK Habitats Classification User Manual, Version 1.1, (UKHab 2020)

Target notes (TN) were taken to denote species and habitats of conservation interest and to describe the vegetation in areas that were too small to map. Evidence of any species protected by law was recorded.

The results are presented in the standard Phase 1 Habitat Survey and UK Habitats Classification formats with habitat descriptions and a habitat map (see Figure 1 and Figure 2, Appendix 5). The presence (if any) of noxious and invasive species such as Japanese knotweed *Fallopia japonica* was also investigated during the field survey.

2.3 Preliminary Roost Assessment (Building and Trees)

The Preliminary Roost Assessment in respect of bats comprised an external and internal inspection of the building complex, as well as a ground level assessment of eight courtyard trees, to:

- Determine the presence and extent of potential bat roosting features;
- Categorise the building complex and trees in terms of their suitability for supporting roosting bats (see Table 1 below); and
- Search for signs indicating current or previous use by roosting bats, including:
  - bat droppings (these may accumulate under an established roost);
  - insect wings (from feeding);
  - oil (from fur) and urine stains;
  - scratch marks; and/or
  - actual sightings (including live bats or bat corpses).

The survey of the building complex comprised an inspection of all accessible parts of the structure for features providing potential bat access or roosting opportunities, including gaps/crevices and cavities in the brickwork/concrete/cladding. Roof-top plantrooms and the basement were accessed. Areas where bat signs may accumulate, such as on the ground, ledges, walls etc were also searched.

The assessment of the eight courtyard trees comprised a detailed ground-level inspection of accessible/visible areas of the trees for features providing potential bat access or roosting opportunities, including cracks and fissures, woodpecker holes, splits, loose bark, dense ivy and rot holes.

Table 1: Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of roosting habitats (structures/trees)

Suitability	Description of Roosting Habitats	Commuting and Foraging Habitats
Negligible	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats.
Low	A structure or tree of sufficient size and age to contain potential roosting features (PRFs) but with none seen from the ground or features seen with only very limited roosting potential.	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of commuting bats such as gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat. Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.
Moderate	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only).	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for commuting such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potential for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat.	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by commuting bats such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines or trees and woodland edge. High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.

2.4 Survey Dates, Surveyors and Equipment Used

The survey was undertaken by Dr Kevin Hume MCIEEM and Anna McDermott MCIEEM on 22nd February 2023. Kevin and Anna have worked in the ecology consultancy sector for more than 15 years and are registered users of the Natural England Class Licence (Level 2) in respect of bats. As Full Members of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), Kevin and Anna have signed up to their professional code of conduct. Kevin and Anna both hold degrees in ecology/ecology-related subjects:

- Kevin: BSc(Hons) Zoology and PhD Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Queen's University Belfast;
- Anna: BSc(Hons) Biology, University of Sheffield

Their 15 years+ of experience includes acting in an advisory capacity to provide recommendations for ecological protection, enhancement, and mitigation measures. This includes ecological impact assessments; Preliminary Ecological Appraisals (PEA); Phase 2 habitat and fauna surveys; and habitat creation, as well as protected species licensing and onsite Ecological Clerk of Works roles. For the purposes of BREEAM therefore (reported separately), Kevin and Anna both meet the requirements of 'Suitable Qualified Ecologists' (SQE).

The following equipment was used or available to use during the survey:

- close focusing binoculars;
- hand-held torch;
- endoscope; and
- camera.

The weather conditions recorded during the survey were cool, dry, and overcast, with a temperature of approximately 9ºC.

2.5 Limitations

The completeness of desk-study records is very much dependent on the activity of surveyors and the provision/processing of data, which can vary greatly between areas and over time; absence of desk-study records therefore should not be taken to confirm the absence of habitats/species of interest from a given area.

Any ecological survey represents a snapshot of ecological conditions at the time of survey; ecological conditions may change over time. Efforts to identify dominant plant species for the purposes of characterising broad habitat types do not constitute a detailed botanical survey. Definitive identification of plant species may be limited by the time of year, when some species (or the identifying characteristics of some species) may not be apparent. Ornamental/horticultural species vary greatly in characteristics from between cultivars, so identification is typically indicative.

Bats are a highly mobile species that may vary in their use of buildings/trees on a year-to-year, seasonal, and day-to-day basis. Therefore, the absence of signs of occupancy at the time of a single inspection does not preclude their presence on another occasion. The details within this

report will therefore remain valid for a period of up to 12 months; beyond that date it is advised that a review of ecological conditions is undertaken.

The absence of signs of bats within/on a building/structure/tree does not confirm absence of bats. Signs may deteriorate over time and/or be located within areas that are not accessible to surveyors. Ground level assessments of buildings/structures/trees may identify apparent potential access/roosting features at height, which closer inspection may reveal to be only superficial in extent or otherwise unsuitable for bats; conversely, cryptic potential access/roosting features at height may only visible during an up-close inspection and may therefore be missed by a ground-based assessment.

3.0 Results

3.1 Desk-Study

3.1.1 Summary

A summary of the desk-study information obtained from GiGL is provided in Appendix 1 and in Table 2 below. The detailed report[3] is retained by Aven Ecology.

Table 2: Summary of records obtained from GiGL

Designation	Records
Statutory sites	
SSSI	None present within search area
SAC	None present within search area
SPA	None present within search area
Ramsar	None present within search area
LNR	None present within search area
Non-statutory sites	
SINCs	43 SINCs
Proposed SINCs	1 Proposed SINC
Areas of Deficiency	Present within search area
Geological sites	1 site
Species	
Protected and notable species	13273 species records
London invasive species	777 species records
Notable Thames Structures	Not present within search area
Habitats	
BAP habitat suitability	Present within search area
Open space	Present within search area

3.1.2 Statutory Designated Sites

No records of statutory designated sites for nature conservation were found within/adjacent to the Site; nor is the Site located within an 'Impact Risk Zone' (IRZ) of any SSSI for which the LPA is required to consult with Natural England (NE) for developments of the scale of the current proposals. No SACs designated for bat interest were found within 10km of the Site.

No statutory sites for biodiversity were found within 2km of the Site, although one site, Camley Street Nature Park LNR, was located just outside the 2km radius.

3.1.3 Non-Statutory Designated Sites

No records of non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation were found within/adjacent to the Site. Records of 43 SINCs (and one proposed SINC) were found within 2km of the Site, with the vast majority of these more than 1km away; the nearest SINCs to the Site were:

[3] An Ecological Data Search for Fox Court, London, On behalf of Aven Ecology Ltd, Report reference 24217dr

- St John's Gardens SLINC: a small area of scattered trees, amenity grassland, and ornamental planting located approximately 460m to the northeast; and
- Lincoln's Inn Fields SLINC: a square supporting scattered trees, amenity grassland, and ornamental shrub planting located approximately 320m to the southwest.

The nearest 'Metropolitan' Grade SMINC is the Thames, approximately 1km to the south.

The Site is located within Holborn and Covent Garden (Camden) 'Area of Deficiency' (meaning that there are no publicly accessible SINCs of Borough or Metropolitan Importance within 1km).

3.1.4 Protected and Notable Habitats

No records for notable habitats were found within/adjacent to the Site, although several pockets of Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland were found within 2km of the Site, the nearest being:

- Grays Inn Gardens (approximately 120m to the northwest)

No other Priority Habitats were found within 1km of the Site.

Several 'Habitat Survey Parcels' (areas of vegetated habitat occurring within urban landscapes as identified by rolling surveys conducted by the Greater London Authority from the mid-1980s to 2009) were reported in the immediate vicinity of the Site (<250m). The habitats reported as present within these parcels can largely be summarised as a mix of amenity grassland; scattered trees; bare artificial habitat; planted shrubbery; and non-native hedges (i.e. typical of parks and open spaces in central London).

Review of aerial photography in reference to the above mapped parcels showed these to be typically amenity/recreational areas of amenity grassland bounded by tree-lines (often London plane trees).

3.1.5 Protected and Notable Species

Records of protected and notable species within 2km of the Site returned by GiGL numbered more than 13,000 and ran to more than 20 pages. The nature of the heavily urbanised habitats on Site and in the surrounding area was such that few of these were considered relevant. For example, the Site and its surrounds would be unlikely to support amphibian/reptile species, or bird species associated with wetlands and tidal mudflats; however, mobile species associated with urban environments, such as swifts and pipistrelle bats could be expected to occur on the Site. Table 3 below summarises the protected/notable species considered most likely to occur within the vicinity of the Site and therefore to be potentially impacted by the proposals (including the potential to benefit from targeted biodiversity enhancements within the proposals).

Table 3: Protected/notable species considered most likely to be associated with habitats within/near the Site

Species		Designation(s)/Legal Protection(s)
Birds		
Apus apus	Swift	London Priority Species
Passer domesticus	House Sparrow	NERC Act Section 41 London Priority Species Local Species of Conservation Concern Red List Species
Turdus philomelos	Song Thrush	London Priority Species Local Species of Conservation Concern Red List Species
Phoenicurus ochruros	Black Redstart	W&CA Sch1 Part 1 London Priority Species Local Species of Conservation Concern Red List Species
Bats		
Bats (at least 8 species recorded) See below:		Hab&Spp Dir Anx 4 Cons Regs 2010 Sch2 W&CA Sch5 Sec 9.4b W&CA Sch5 Sec 9.4c London Priority Species Local Species of Conservation Concern Red List Species
Eptesicus serotinus	Serotine	GB Red List: Vulnerable
Myotis daubentonii	Daubenton's Bat	As above
Nyctalus leisleri	Lesser Noctule	GB Red List: Not Threatened
Nyctalus noctula	Noctule Bat	NERC Act Section 41
Pipistrellus nathusii	Nathusius's Pipistrelle	GB Red List: Not Threatened
Pipistrellus pipistrellus	Common Pipistrelle	As above
Pipistrellus pygmaeus	Soprano Pipistrelle	NERC Act Section 41
Plecotus auritus	Brown Long-eared Bat	NERC Act Section 41

Most of the above bat species records were associated with substantial areas of greenspace (typically SINCs/SSSIs). No records were found for 'European Protected Species Mitigation Licences' having been granted by Natural England (in respect of any species) for development projects within 2km of the Site; however, Aven Ecology is aware of a Low Impact Class Licence granted in 2018 for the destruction of a common pipistrelle day roost for an adjacent site.

3.1.6 Non-native Invasive Species

No records of legally controlled/notifiable invasive species were reported within/adjacent to the Site; 777 London Invasive Species Initiative (LISI) records were reported for the area within 2km of the Site. Table 4 below summarises the species considered most likely to be of relevance to the Site.

Table 4: Non-native Invasive Species considered most likely to be associated with habitats within/near the Site

Species		**Designation(s)**
Birds		
Psittacula krameri	Ring-necked Parakeet	LISI category 4
Higher Plants		
Buddleja davidii	Butterfly-bush	LISI category 3
Cotoneaster	Multiple species	LISI category 2 WCA Sch9
Fallopia japonica	Japanese Knotweed	LISI category 3 WCA Sch9

3.2 Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey/UK Habitats Classification

3.2.1 Site Description

The Site area was taken up almost entirely by the footprint of a large office/retail building complex (three to eight levels) and associated hardstanding, with a small area of formal/ornamental planting set within a northern/central courtyard. The Site was set in a heavily built-up area of Holborn, and was bounded on all sides by large buildings and busy roads, with only occasional pockets of amenity planting/street trees in the wider surrounds, including lines of London plane street trees (offsite) along Grays Inn Road to the west, and green roof/amenity planting near to the northern boundary.

3.2.2 Phase 1 Habitats

The habitats identified are described below, with photographs provided in Appendix 3; an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Map and a UK Habitats Classification Map are provided in Appendix 5.

Scattered Trees/Individual Trees: Urban (u 11)

Set in the small area of formal/ornamental within the northern/central courtyard were eight immature trees in planters, all less than 10m in height and 15-30cm girth (ca. 5-10cm diameter). The trees were not in leaf/fruit at the time of survey and appeared to be non-native ornamental species.

Introduced Shrub/Ground Level Planters (u1140)

Set in the small area of formal/ornamental within the northern/central courtyard was a mix of non-native ornamental shrubs in planters.

Bare Ground/Artificial Unvegetated Unsealed Surface (u1c)

The central section of the courtyard comprised an ornamental gravel substrate.

Buildings/Buildings (u1b5)

Almost the entire area of the Site was taken up by the Fox Court office/retail building complex, the main part of which ranged in height from three-storey sections to the northeast/northwest (TN1; TN2), to a nine-storey section (including plant roofs) to the south (TN3). An upper basement level served as a carpark; a smaller, lower basement level served as a plant room.

Within the courtyard, adjacent to the northern boundary wall was a long, single-storey plant room, with a flat roof and louvred doors; this functioned to provide ventilation to the basement carpark beneath. A similar, smaller structure was located in the northwest corner of the courtyard.

In the southeast corner of the courtyard was a small wooden storage shed.

Hardstanding/Developed Land. Sealed Surface (u1b)

The outer areas of the courtyard, surrounding the central gravel substrate, were covered by paving slabs.

A tarmac-sealed ramp provided vehicular access from Brooke Street (offsite adjacent to the eastern Site-boundary) to the basement carpark.

3.2.3 UK Habitats Classification

The Site is composed entirely of the Primary (Level 4) UK Habitat: 'urban' developed land, sealed surface', represented by the UK Habitat Code: u1b. This habitat category may be further sub-classified as follows:

- Hardstanding: u1b urban; developed land, sealed surface;
- Buildings: u1b5 urban; developed land, sealed surface; buildings; and

In addition, the rear courtyard supported minor areas of unsealed urban landscaping, including:

- Scattered trees: u 11 urban; scattered trees.
- Introduced shrub (in planters): u1140 Ground Level Planters
- Bare Ground: u1c Artificial Unvegetated Unsealed Surface

3.2.4 Protected/Notable Species

The habitats within the Site and in its immediate vicinity supported little vegetation and had very limited potential to support protected/notable species. The protected species which it may support, bats and nesting birds, are discussed below.

Bats

Vegetation within the Site was limited to small area of ornamental tree/shrub planting in the courtyard. Vegetation in the immediate surroundings of the Site was similarly restricted to urban amenity planting (including the GLA Habitat Survey Parcels described in Section 3.1.4 above). The most substantial and proximate of these was the 'Grays Inn GLA Habitat Survey Parcel'.

Although limited in extent, these parcels of vegetated habitat likely support a sufficient abundance of flying insects, potential prey for small numbers of common/widespread bat species, such as pipistrelles.

Being a highly built-up urban landscape, the area was subjected to high levels of noise/vibration (from vehicles etc) and of artificial light pollution (street-lighting and interior lighting from the office/retail buildings). Most bat species are deterred from areas subject to high levels of artificial

light intrusion, and the ultrasonic noise associated with vehicle movements can interfere with bats' own use of ultrasonic navigation and prey detection. As such, foraging and commuting opportunities for bats were considered to be 'Low' within/near the Site.

Roosting opportunities were largely restricted to voids within the roof/parapet wall on Level 8 of the building, as well as the outbuildings associated with the courtyard, and minor fittings/fixtures associated with the courtyard-facing walls. It is possible that common/widespread bats species, such as pipistrelles, use the Site and/or its surrounds for foraging and commuting, and may occasionally roost within it. Bats are discussed further in Section 3.3 below.

Nesting Birds

Foraging opportunities for birds were low/negligible within the Site and its immediate surrounds, and were largely restricted to the ornamental planting in the courtyard, and the amenity habitats in the wider area. The building complex itself was suitably extensive and varied to afford opportunities for birds commonly associated with and adapted to the urban environment to nest; a pile of feathers was noted near an uncovered drain hole in one of the parapet/roof voids, indicating that this internal space was accessible to birds. The limited foraging opportunities in the immediate vicinity are such that the Site is unlikely to be particularly attractive to nesting birds. Black redstarts are known to occur within 1-2km of the Site, and are often associated with complex buildings in urban areas of London; however, more recent records tend to be restricted to the Thames corridor, so the likelihood of their occurrence on Site is considered to be very low.

3.2.5 Non-native Invasive Species

No legally controlled/notifiable invasive plant species, or a London Invasive Species Index (LISI) species, were recorded within/near the Site.

3.3 Preliminary Roost Assessment

Overview

No bat droppings, or other signs indicative of current/historic bat roosting, were found during the Preliminary Roost Assessment. However, the features noted and described in Table 5 below provided potential bat access points and/or roosting opportunities. Please note the photographs within the table provide only illustrative examples of the features described and are not intended to represent an exhaustive documentation of every such occurrence of those features.

The majority of the exterior of the building complex was in good condition, with few gaps in the brickwork suitable for bats to use as access points/roosting locations, with the exception of minor fittings/fixtures (suitable for occasional use by crevice-dwelling bats, such as pipistrelles), viewed in the brickwork from the courtyard.

Only two floors of the building were no longer in use, with the rest of the interior office space remaining occupied and well-lit- with electric lights.

The basement carpark of the building complex supported potential bat roosting features, as well as access to exterior; however, the basement was well-lit and subject to constant disturbance, therefore it was considered to be of limited potential for roosting bats.

The parapet/roof voids and the courtyard outbuildings were noted to support more substantial potential bat access/roosting features, and are therefore discussed in more detail below.

Parapet/Roof Voids

The parapet/roof voids were constructed from sloping metal-panels cladding the exterior of the upper-level parapet walls of the southern and eastern elevations. These were fixed on a metal framework with a thick, textured, plastic membrane and insulation between. Gaps around/between the metal panels, as well as along the uncovered drainage ducts between the wall and the metal cladding, offered potential access points for bats to the void within, providing roosting opportunities for void-dwelling bat species. Gaps and duct-holes in the brick- and block-work of the double-skinned cavity walls inside provided potential access and roosting features for crevice-dwelling bat species. The parapet/roof void was considered to offer 'Low' potential to support roosting bats.

Courtyard Plant/Vent Rooms

The structure was a double-skinned brick construction with cavity walls; the cavities within the walls offered potential roosting opportunities for crevice-dwelling bat species, and were accessible via gaps around the drainage holes at either end of the building. The interior offered roosting opportunities for both crevice- and void-dwelling bat species, and was accessible via the louvred doors, which were only partially covered by a wire grill backing. A similar, smaller structure was located in the northwest corner of the courtyard. The Plant/Vent Rooms were considered to offer 'Low' potential to support roosting bats.

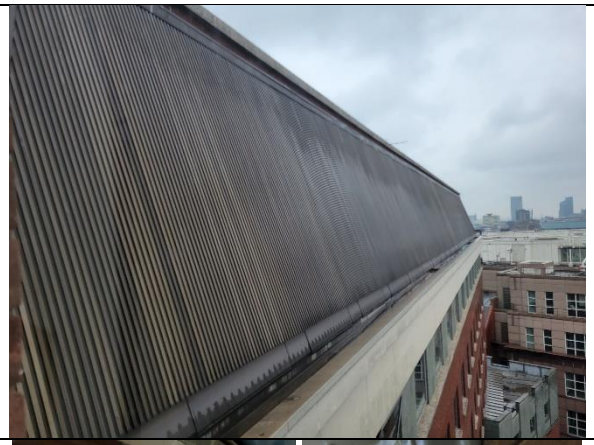
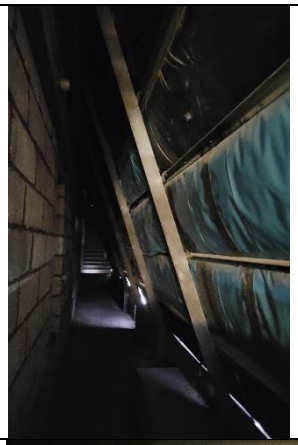
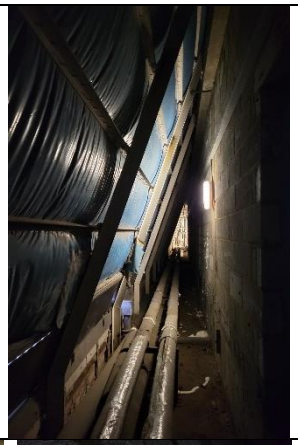
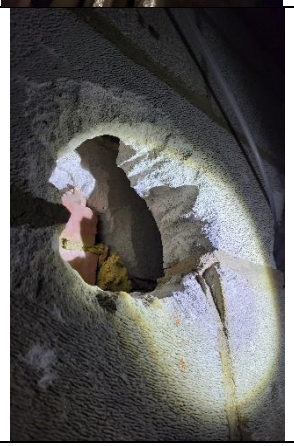
Wooden Shed

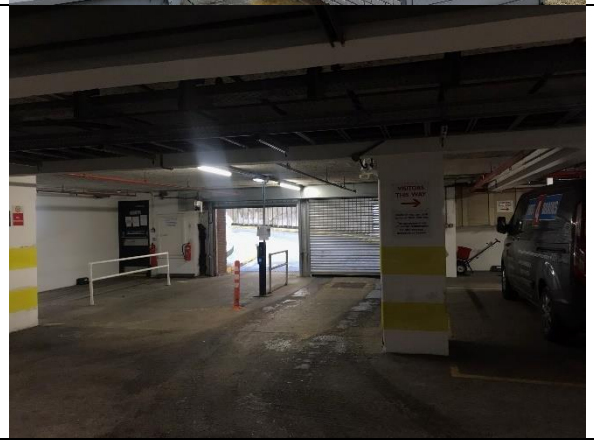
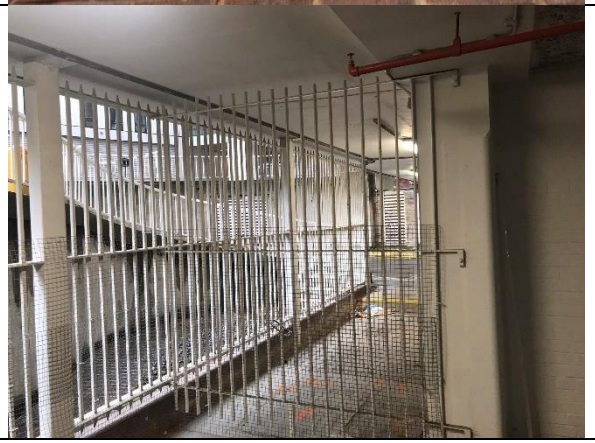
A small wooden shed with a slightly pitched, felt-clad roof offered minor roosting opportunities for both crevice- and void-dwelling bat species, accessible via gaps in the wooden cladding of the partially dilapidated structure. It was considered to offer 'Low' potential for roosting bats.

Ornamental Trees

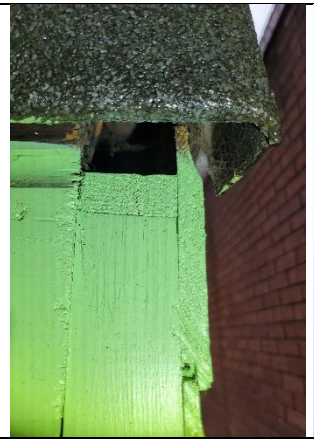
None of the eight courtyard trees were found to support any PRFs; the trees were therefore categorised as 'Negligible' in terms of bat roost potential.

Table 5: Preliminary Roost Assessment Results

Description	Photographs of the Feature	Potential Bat Roosting / Access Point
Main Building Complex		
Parapet/roof voids	  	Potential roosting locations for void-dwelling species
Gaps in metal cladding Holes in blockwork leading to internal wall cavities	   	Potential access points to void interior Potential roosting locations for crevice-dwelling species

Description	Photographs of the Feature		Potential Bat Roosting / Access Point
Main Building Complex			
Gaps between staircase fixtures and brick-walls			Potential roosting locations for crevice-dwelling species
Basement carpark Grilled section of carpark exterior wall			Potential roosting location, with access to exterior

Description	Photographs of the Feature		Potential Bat Roosting / Access Point
Outbuildings (Plant/Vent Rooms)			
Internal spaces			Potential roosting locations for crevice and void-dwelling species
Louvred doorways (with missing grills) Draining outflow with access to cavities within double-skinned walls			Potential access to interior of plant room Access to potential roosting features for crevice-dwelling species within cavity walls

Description	Photographs of the Feature	Potential Bat Roosting / Access Point
Outbuilding (Shed)		
Shed with gaps under overhanging roofing felt and around doorway	  	Potential roosting locations for void- and crevice dwelling species, with access to interior

Description	Photographs of the Feature		Potential Bat Roosting / Access Point
Ornamental trees			
Eight immature courtyard trees			No obvious PRFs

4.0 Discussion and Recommendations

4.1 Discussion

4.1.1 Proposals

The proposed development plans are for the refurbishment of the existing building for office space, as set out in Section 1.3 above. Regarding potential impacts on biodiversity within the Site, the elements of the proposals of relevance include:

- terraced infill construction within the existing courtyard area, which will result in the loss of the existing ornamental planting within the courtyard, as well as the remodelling of the existing outbuildings.
- intrusion/remodelling of the parapet/roof voids.

The Landscape Strategy comprises terraces of native species planting – including trees – and living/green roofs (extensive and intensive). The Landscape Strategy will also be informed by the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal to include biodiversity enhancement features, including the installation of various bat roost boxes and bird nest boxes on the refurbished building/new terraces, as well as provision for invertebrates on the living roofs (including 'bug hotels', log/brash/rubble-piles, and gravel/sand patches).

4.1.2 Statutory Designated Sites

No records were found of statutory designated sites within 2km of the Site; the scale of the proposals, as well as their distance and separation by urban landscape, is such that the likelihood of impacts on any such Sites further afield is considered to be negligible. As such, there are no recommendations arising in respect of Statutory Designated sites.

4.1.3 Non-Statutory Designated Sites

Records were found of 44 non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the Site; however, most of these were located more than 1km away and were separated from the Site by expanses of intensively urbanised landscape. The scale of the proposals, as well as their isolation by busy roads/urban landscape, is such that the likelihood of impacts on even the nearest SINCs is considered to be negligible. As such, there are no recommendations arising in respect of Non-Statutory Designated sites.

Furthermore, because the Site is located within an 'Area of Deficiency' (meaning that there are no publicly accessible SINCs of Borough or Metropolitan Importance within 1km), the proposals provide an opportunity to deliver biodiversity gains through planting/enhancement. The creation of an island of planting within an area currently impoverished in terms of vegetation could, in concert with similar planting schemes in the vicinity, lead to the development of vegetated links between the SINCs in the wider area, which are presently separated from each other by large expanses of built landscape.

4.1.4 Protected and Notable Habitats

No protected/notable habitats were recorded within the Site. The nearest substantial vegetated habitats were the GLA Habitat Survey parcels described in Section 3.1.4. The baseline habitat survey

classified the Site habitats as almost entirely 'urban; developed land, sealed surface' (ub1). The proposals are therefore considered highly unlikely to have any negative impacts on protected/notable habitats. As such, there are no recommendations arising in respect of Protected/Notable Habitats.

4.1.5 Protected and Notable Species

The features/habitats with the potential to support protected/notable species (specifically bats and/or nesting birds) included the buildings; the trees/shrubs offered minor nesting opportunities for birds, but no roosting opportunities for bats. Potential impacts on bats and nesting birds are discussed in further details in sections 4.1.6 and 4.1.7 below.

4.1.6 Bats

In accordance with the published guidance the eight courtyard trees were categorised as having 'Negligible' potential to support roosting bats; as such, there are no further recommendations in respect of bats and trees.

The building complex was considered to have limited potential to support bats, largely restricted to the upper level parapet/roof voids, and the courtyard outbuildings, as well as minor gaps in the brickwork of the external walls. In terms of the availability and quality of potential roosting features, the building complex was categorised as having 'Low' potential to support roosting bats; the almost total lack of vegetation within the Site was such that foraging opportunities were also very low. Foraging/commuting habitat in the immediate vicinity of the Site was restricted to the parcels of amenity grassland and tree-lines associated with urban amenity/open space and street trees. The high level of noise/light disturbance was such that foraging/commuting habitat in the immediate surrounds area was also categorised as 'Low'.

There is a small risk of individual bats of common/widespread species – those that are more habituated to the light disturbance associated with urban areas – occasionally roosting for a short period of time within the identified suitable features. For example, an occasional single common/soprano pipistrelle bat commuting occasional roosting within the area. The Site is considered less suitable for the more void-dwelling/dark-favouring species, such as brown long-eared bats, which are more sensitive to light/noise disturbance, and typically require more vegetated cover near their roosting locations.

The proposed development has a low (but non-negligible) risk of impacting negatively upon bats, owing to the relatively low likelihood of them roosting at this location; outline recommendations are therefore set out below for their safeguard.

Given that the proposals include the addition of substantial planting/landscaping (including targeted biodiversity enhancement) to a site with negligible existing vegetation, there is potential to deliver gains in terms of bat roosting and foraging potential.

Given that the likeliest scenario is that any bat roost present would be of low conservation significance (occasional use by individual common/widespread species), any Mitigation/Compensation potentially required to pass Natural England's 'favourable conservation status' test would be easily deliverable within the current Biodiversity Enhancement proposals, and there is therefore no reason to anticipate that a Mitigation Licence would be refused.

4.1.7 Nesting Birds

The building complex, as well as the ornamental courtyard vegetation, offer limited nesting potential for common nesting birds; the nests, eggs and young of all species of birds are legally protected from damage/destruction from the commencement of nest construction until complete fledging of any young. The relative absence of cover and foraging habitats in the vicinity does reduce the attractiveness of the Site to most nesting birds. In the absence of management (including maintenance of the bird exclusion devices), the main risk would be the colonisation by common pigeons. Black redstarts have been recorded within 1km of the Site, but are more typically associated with the urban/industrial habitats along the eastern section of the River Thames corridor through London; the Site is not optimal for this protected bird species, but the possibility of their presence in the area cannot be completely ruled out. As the proposed development has the potential (albeit minor) to negatively impact upon nesting birds, outline recommendations are set out below for their safeguard.

4.1.8 Non-native Invasive Species

No legally controlled invasive species (listed on the Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act) or LISI species were noted within Site. Care should be taken to avoid the introduction/spread of any such species to the Site and/or the surrounding area.

4.2 Mitigation Recommendations

4.2.1 Overview

In the absence of any substantial risks to Statutory/Non-statutory Designated Sites or to Protected/Notable Habitats, Mitigation Recommendations are largely limited to safeguarding from harm protected species potentially supported by the habitats on Site and its immediate vicinity.

4.2.2 Bats

The published guidance in respect of buildings with 'Low' potential to support roosting bats recommends that a minimum of one dusk emergence or dawn re-entry survey is carried out to determine the presence/likely absence of roosting bats. On this Site, the use of automated static detectors is also recommended as the most appropriate method, given the rooftop location and inherent difficulty of achieving full visual coverage; it is recommended that three static detectors are left within the parapet/roof voids for a period of two weeks. This would also establish the baseline of bat activity in the area, against which any future enhancement could be measured.

In the event that the presence of a bat roost is confirmed, and impacts on the roost cannot be avoided, a licence from Natural England would be required for the works to proceed lawfully; typically a total of three such survey visits (i.e. a further two visits) would be required for any licence application to Natural England. The active season for undertaking such bat surveys is typically May-September (location and weather dependent).

Depending on the findings of the bat survey, precautionary measures may be recommended to manage the residual risk during the works, particularly to the plantrooms and parapet roof voids, as well as the facades. Recommended precautions may include (but are not limited to):

- Soft removal of panels/roof lining sections of parapet roofs (under supervision of a licensed bat worker)
- In the event that bats are found within the works area at any stage, all works should cease and an Ecologist contacted; works should not resume until the need or otherwise for a licence has been considered and discussed with Natural England.

No intrusive works to the structures identified as having potential to support bat roosts should be undertaken until a survey confirms the likely absence of roosting bats. This includes any removal of/intrusion into, the fabric of the plantroom walls or parapet/roof voids.

4.2.3 Nesting Birds

To avoid killing/injury of nesting birds and/or damage/destruction of their nests, it is recommended that the proposed works are scheduled to commence outside of the bird nesting season (which typically runs from March to August inclusive). Should scheduling of works outside the bird nesting season prove infeasible, additional precautionary measures should be implemented, including:

- Pre-works check for active nests;
- Implementation of a 10m exclusion zone for works around any active nests until all young have fledged and the nest becomes inactive (a greater exclusion zone may be recommended in the unlikely event of breeding/nesting black redstarts being present).

4.2.4 Non-native Invasive Species

Introduction and/or spread of non-native invasive plant species should be avoided during site-preparation, construction and post-construction. The use of non-native invasive species should be avoided in any soft-landscaping proposals.

4.3 Biodiversity Enhancement Opportunities

4.3.1 Overview

Given the relative paucity of the existing ecology resource within the Site, as well its setting within an area more widely designated as an 'Area of Deficiency' in terms of biodiversity, the potential for even minor planting and enhancement to deliver biodiversity gains is substantial. The Landscape Strategy that would deliver these potential gains is in draft at the time of writing this Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, and is understood to include a green roof and planted terraces The following recommendations should therefore inform the ongoing design of the Landscaping Strategy in order to incorporate biodiversity enhancements appropriate to – and likely to succeed in – this area of London.

Further biodiversity enhancements are recommended targeting species/species groups likely to thrive at this location in the future, including:

- Nesting birds; and
- Common/widespread bat species

Inclusion of the following additional features would contribute to the above aims, as well as representing biodiversity enhancements in their own right:

- Native/wildlife-friendly plant species (particularly boundary shrub/understorey planting); and
- Habitat features for invertebrates.

Examples of typical commercially available enhancement features and indicative wildlife-friendly plant species are presented in Appendix 4 Tables 4.1-4.4.

4.3.2 Bats

Integral bat roosting boxes could be incorporated onto the building, and implementation of ecologically sensitive lighting and landscaping would encourage their use. Inclusion within the new landscaped/planted areas of non-cultivar native flowering species appropriate to the area would provide greater foraging opportunities for a range of invertebrate species, increasing the prey available for bats.

4.3.3 Nesting Birds

Integral bird nesting boxes could be incorporated onto the facades of the refurbished building. Nesting boxes likely to be of value at this location would include those designed for use by swifts, starlings and house sparrows. Inclusion within the new landscaped/planted areas of non-cultivar native flowering and berry-producing species appropriate to the area would provide greater foraging opportunities for a range of invertebrate species, increasing the prey available for birds. Green/brown roofs and bare/gravel patches would provide potential foraging habitat for black redstarts.

4.3.4 Native Species/Wildlife-Friendly Planting

A native species/wildlife-friendly landscaping scheme should include:

- Native (non-cultivar) plant species with functioning nectaries to provide a food source for invertebrates and birds;
- A shrub mix that produces berries (ideally with a range of flowering/fruiting periods so as to provide foraging opportunities throughout the year, and particularly during the winter);
- Shrubs that offer structural diversity in order to provide cover/shelter opportunities for wildlife.

Non-native plant species, particularly those known to be invasive, should be avoided. An indicative planting list is provided in Table 6.

4.3.5 Invertebrates

In addition to a native species/wildlife-friendly planting scheme, invertebrate diversity would be helped by the inclusion of 'Insect/Bug Hotels/Bricks'. Bug hotels are a feature particularly suitable for self-construction[4], as they often use materials that arise from site clearance/construction activities, and which may otherwise require disposal offsite (brash/logs; 'clean' rubble, etc). Inclusion of unvegetated gravel patches would provide further habitat diversity for invertebrates.

[4] For construction methods see:
https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/nature-on-your-doorstep/garden-activities/build-a-bug-hotel/
https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2019/09/how-to-build-a-bug-hotel/

5.0 Conclusion

The Site supports habitats of low biodiversity value, with limited potential to support protected/notable species, and is located in an 'Area of Deficiency' for biodiversity.
The refurbishment proposals include the incorporation of new green roof and planting terraces, which offer the potential for biodiversity enhancement within an ecologically impoverished area of London. The main ecological constraints to the proposals are the relatively low risks of:

- Roosting bats (for which further survey and precautionary working methods are recommended);
- Nesting birds; and
- Spread of non-native invasive species.

Provided the Mitigation Recommendations set out in Section 4.2 are adhered to, it is considered that these low risks are manageable within the proposals. Similarly, the delivery of Biodiversity Enhancement Opportunities as set out in Section 4.3 is considered feasible and straightforward. A separate Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Strategy – which includes a 5-year Landscape and Ecology Management Plan – has also been produced.

In terms of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), there is a substantial increase (more than double) in soft-landscaped area at the expense of built/sealed surface, as well as a general increase in Habitat Distinctiveness. The anticipat Biodiversity Net Gain resulting from the proposals is a **78% increase in value (**far in excess of the 10% target; see Appendix 6 for further detail).

6.0 References

Aven Ecology (October 2023), Fox Court, London. Bat Survey Report

Aven Ecology (October 2023), Fox Court, London. Biodiversity Report and Ecological Management Plan

British Standards Institute (2013) Biodiversity — Code of practice for planning and development BS 42020: 2013

Buckley Gray Yeoman (15/11/2022) Fox Court - Design Update

Buckley Gray Yeoman (07/09/2023) Fox Court – Stage 2 Report

CIEEM (2017) Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Second Edition

Collins (2016) Bat Surveys: Good Practice Guidelines, 3rd edition, Bat Conservation Trust, London

Defra – http://magic.defra.gov.uk/website/magic/

HMSO (1981) The Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended); London

HMSO (2010) The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (as amended); London

JNCC (2010) Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey - Technique for Environmental Audit

UKHab (2020) The UK Habitats Classification User Manual, Version 2.01

7.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Summary of GiGL Data

eCountability
Managing your biodiversity risks and opportunities

In Partnership with

GiGL Greenspace Information for Gr
the capital's environmental rec

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

Ecological Data Search 24217dr - Summary Page

A 2000m ecological data search was carried out for site Fox Court on behalf of Aven Ecology Ltd on 03 Jul 2023.

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	None present within search area
Non-statutory sites	
SINCs	43 SINCs
Proposed SINCs	1 Proposed SINC
Areas of Deficiency	Present within search area
Geological sites	1 site
Species	
Protected and notable species	13273 species records
London invasive species	777 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 03/07/2024 for the site named above.

Prepared by
03 Jul 2023

Appendix 2 – Relevant Legislation and Planning Policy

The below represents a summary of the key legislative drivers in respect of protected and controlled species relevant to the Site. This is not exhaustive, and reference to the original legislation is recommended. This does not represent a formal legal opinion, for which – if required – it is recommended that the advice of a legal professional (with expertise in environmental legislation) is sought.

Bats

All species of bat found in the UK are listed under Schedule 5 of *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) and are afforded protection under Section 9(4)(b&c) and Section 9(5) of Part 1 of the Act. Under this legislation, a person is guilty of an offence if he intentionally or recklessly:

- Kills or injures any bat;
- Disturbs any bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; or
- Obstructs access to any structure or place which any bat uses for shelter or protection.

Bats are afforded additional protection through their inclusion on Schedule 2 of *The Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations 2017* (as amended). Under Part 3 of this legislation, a person is guilty of an offence if he:

- Deliberately captures, injures or kills a bat;
- Deliberately disturbs a bat; or
- Damages or destroys a bat breeding site or resting place.

Disturbance of animals includes in particular any disturbance which is likely to impair their ability to survive, breed or reproduce, rear or nurture their young, migrate or hibernate. It also includes any disturbance likely to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species. Consequently, attention should be given to dealing with the modification or development of an area if aspects of it are deemed important to bats, such as flight corridors and foraging areas.

Nesting Birds

Wild birds, their nests and eggs, are afforded protection under Section 1(1) of *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended). Under this legislation, a person is guilty of an offence if he intentionally:

- Kills, injures or takes any wild bird;
- Takes, damages or destroys the nest of a wild bird included in Schedule 1;
- Takes, damages or destroys the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built; or
- Takes or destroys an egg of any wild bird.

Non-native Invasive Species

Certain non-native plant species identified as 'invasive' are listed under Schedule 9 of *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended); these include such species as Japanese knotweed *Fallopia japonica* (and relatives/hybrids); giant hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum*; and Himalayan balsam

Impatiens glandulifera. Under this legislation, a person is guilty of an offence if they plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild any plant listed in Schedule 9 to the Act.

Planning Policy Position

The statutory development plan for LBC, and in turn the proposed development consists of:

- • The London Plan (2021)
- • London Borough of Camden Local Plan (2017)

The Site is subject to the following site-specific planning policy designations as identified by the Council's adopted Proposals Map:

- Central Activities Zone
- Central London Area
- London View Management Framework viewing corridors

The below supplementary guidance documents, Camden Planning Guidance, are relevant to the proposed development:

- Access For All (2019)
- Air Quality (2021)
- Amenity (2021)
- Biodiversity (2018)
- Design (2021)
- Developer Contributions (2019)
- Employment Sites and Business Premises (2021)
- Energy Efficiency and Adaptation (2021)
- Housing (2021)
- Public Open Space (2021)
- Transport (2021)
- Trees (2019)
- Water and Flooding (2019)

The below supplementary guidance documents, London Plan Guidance, are relevant to the proposed development:

- Accessible London SPG
- Planning for Equality & Diversity in London SPG
- Character & Context SPG
- Draft Fire Safety LPG
- Optimising Site Capacity: A Design-led Approach LPG
- London View Management Framework SPG
- Urban Greening Factor LPG
- Air Quality Neutral LPG
- Circular Economy Statements LPG
- Whole Life Carbon LPG
- Energy Planning Guidance
- The Control of Dust and Emissions in Construction SPG
- Sustainable Transport, Walking & Cycling LPG

LBC is currently undergoing a review of its Local Plan and has carried out an initial consultation on issues and call for sites in winter 2022/23. LBC expect to consult on a draft Local Plan in autumn 2023. At this current time it is anticipated that the submission of the Plan to the Inspector will occur in late summer 2024 and examination in autumn-winter 2024, before adoption in summer 2025. At this time there is no draft plan and the draft plan planned for publication later this year would have very little weight until it has been through public consultation. The existing Local Plan (2017) continues to carry full weight in any planning application assessments.

Appendix 3 – Site Photographs

Eastern elevation (Waterhouse Square)

Western Elevation (Gray's Inn Road)

Courtyard with ornamental tree/shrub planting

Courtyard outbuildings

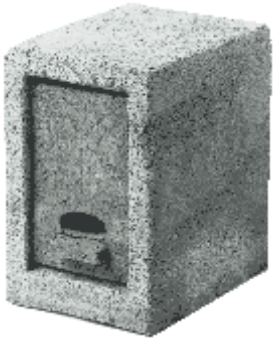
Appendix 4 – Proposed Biodiversity Enhancements

Table 4.1: Specifications of typical commercially available bird nesting bricks/boxes

Make and description	Photograph / Diagram
Manufacturer: Bird Brick Houses Model: Swift box	 Source: https://www.nhbs.com/no-16-schwegler-swift-box
Manufacturer: Bird Brick Houses Model: Starling box	 Source: https://www.nhbs.com/vivara-pro-woodstone-starling-nest-box
Manufacturer: Schwegler Model: 1SP Sparrow Terrace	 Source: https://www.nhbs.com/1sp-schwegler-sparrow-terrace

*Note: the above represents examples of commercially available bird nesting features meeting the requirements of the specification as set out in this document and is intended for reference purposes only; this does not represent an endorsement of a specific brand/manufacturer by Aven Ecology Ltd; nor does it commit the client/developer to the use of a particular brand/model/supplier.

Table 4.2: Specifications of typical commercially available bat boxes

Make and description	Photograph / Diagram
Height: 39cm Width: 29cm Depth: 6cm Weight: 4.4kg	 Source: https://www.nhbs.com/beaumaris-woodstone-bat-box?bkfno=231796
Manufacturer: Schwegler Model: Brick Box Type 27 Size/dimensions: 265 mm x 180 mm x 240 mm	  Source: http://www.schwegler-natur.de/index.php?main=produkte&sub=fledermaus&psub=sommerquartiere

*Note: the above represents examples of commercially available bat roosting features meeting the requirements of the specification as set out in this document and is intended for reference purposes only; this does not represent an endorsement of a specific brand/manufacturer by Aven Ecology Ltd; nor does it commit the client/developer to the use of a particular brand/model/supplier.

Table 4.3: Indicative native species/wildlife-friendly planting list for landscaping

Vernacular Name	**Scientific Name**
Small Tree/Shrub planting	
Pear	*Pyrus communis*
Apple	*Malus sylvestris*
Hawthorn	*Crataegus monogyna*
Guelder Rose	*Viburnum opulus*
Dog rose	*Rosa canina*
Herb planting	
Knapweed (common)	*Centaurea nigra*
Yarrow	*Achillea millefolium*
Ox-eye daisy	*Leucanthemum vulgare*
Mallow	*Malva sylvestris*
Bladder campion	*Silene vulgaris*
White campion	*Silene latifolia*
Night flowering catch-fly	*Silene. noctiflora)*
Centaury	*Centaurium erythraea*
Common bird's- foot trefoil	*Lotus corniculatus*
Mouse-ear hawkweed	*Pilosella officinarum*
Common knapweed	*Centaurea nigra*
Ox-eye Daisy	*Leucanthemum vulgare*
Cowslip	*Primula veris*
Yellow toadflax	*Linaria vulgaris*
Scented mayweed	*Matricaria recutita*
Ribwort plantain	*Plantago lanceolata*
Field scabious	*Knautia arvensis*
White dead nettle	*Lamium album*
Red clover	*Trifolium pratense)*
Perforate St. John's-wort	*Hypericum perforatum*
Viper's bugloss	*Echium vulgare*

The above list is intended to provide guidance on the species to be considered for inclusion in the planting scheme in order to apply the principles of native-species/wildlife-friendly landscaping, and is not intended to be restrictive/exclusive. Examples of small native trees/shrubs are suggested for inclusion within the roof terraces; however, it is understood that the final Landscape Strategy will need to balance planting choices with management feasibility in what will be the formal landscaping of an office development.

Table 4.4: Specifications of typical commercially available invertebrate hotels

Make and description	Photograph / Diagram
Height: 140mm Width: 215mm Depth: 70mm Weight: 2.83kg approx	 Source: https://www.nhbs.com/search?q=invertebrate+hotel&qtview=208603
Dimensions: 290 x 225 x 205 mm Weight: 5.7 kg Material: Schwegler woodcrete, clay, and reeds	 Source: https://www.nhbs.com/schwegler-clay-and-reed-insect-nest?bkfno=193069

*Note: the above represents examples of commercially available invertebrate boxes meeting the requirements of the specification as set out in this document and is intended for reference purposes only; this does not represent an endorsement of a specific brand/manufacturer by Aven Ecology Ltd; nor does it commit the client/developer to the use of a particular brand/model/supplier.

See also online resources for the self-construction of 'bug hotels' (large and small) – often from materials that arise from demolition and site clearance activities (roof tiles; pallets; clay plant pots; brash/logs from vegetation removals):
https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/nature-on-your-doorstep/garden-activities/build-a-bug-hotel/
https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2019/09/how-to-build-a-bug-hotel/

Appendix 5 – Figures

Figure 1: Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey Map

Figure 2: UK Habitats Classification Plan

Figure 3: Extract from Urban Greening Factor Assessment

Figure 4: Marked-up Draft Landscape Plan showing indicative locations of proposed biodiversity enhancements

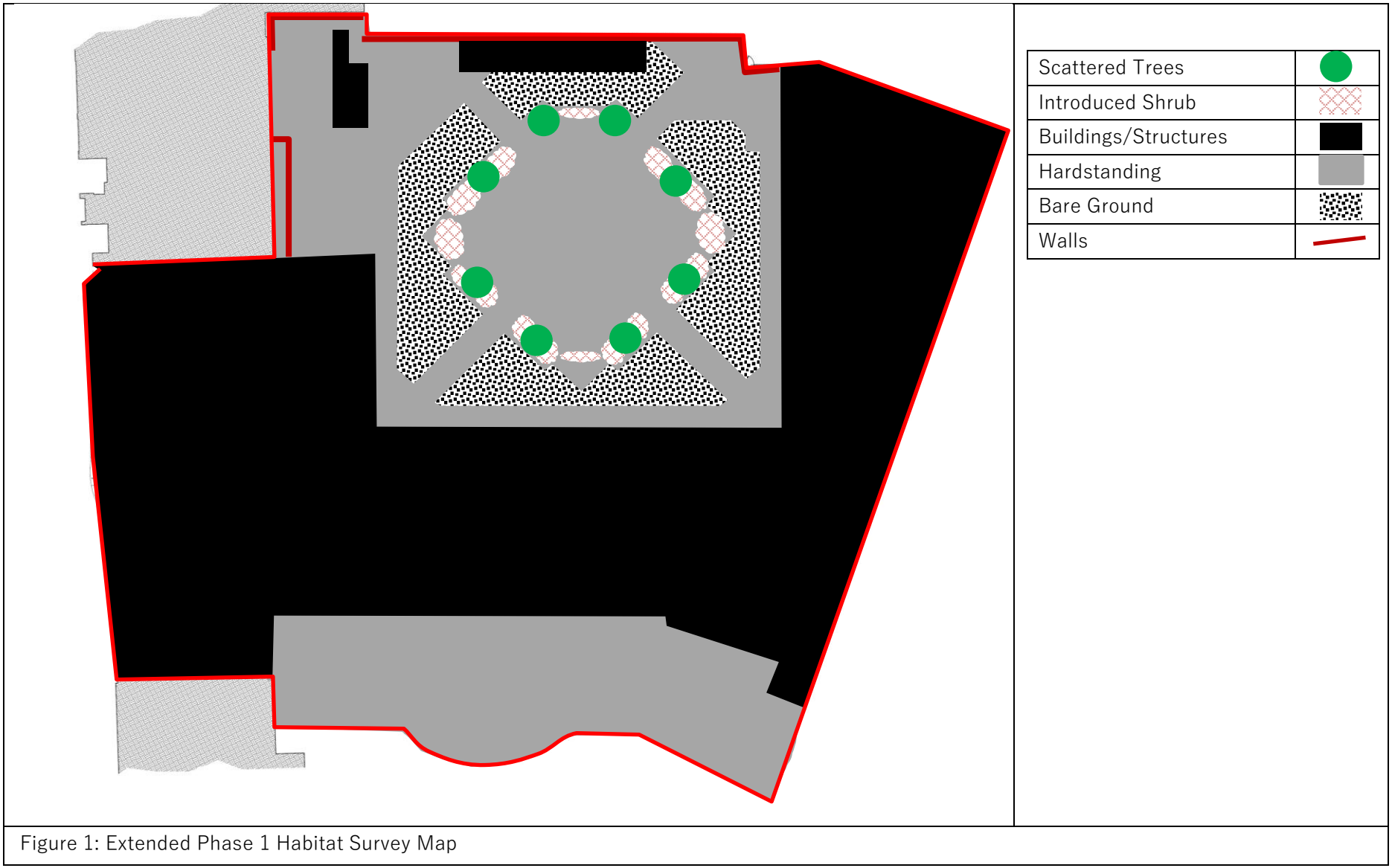
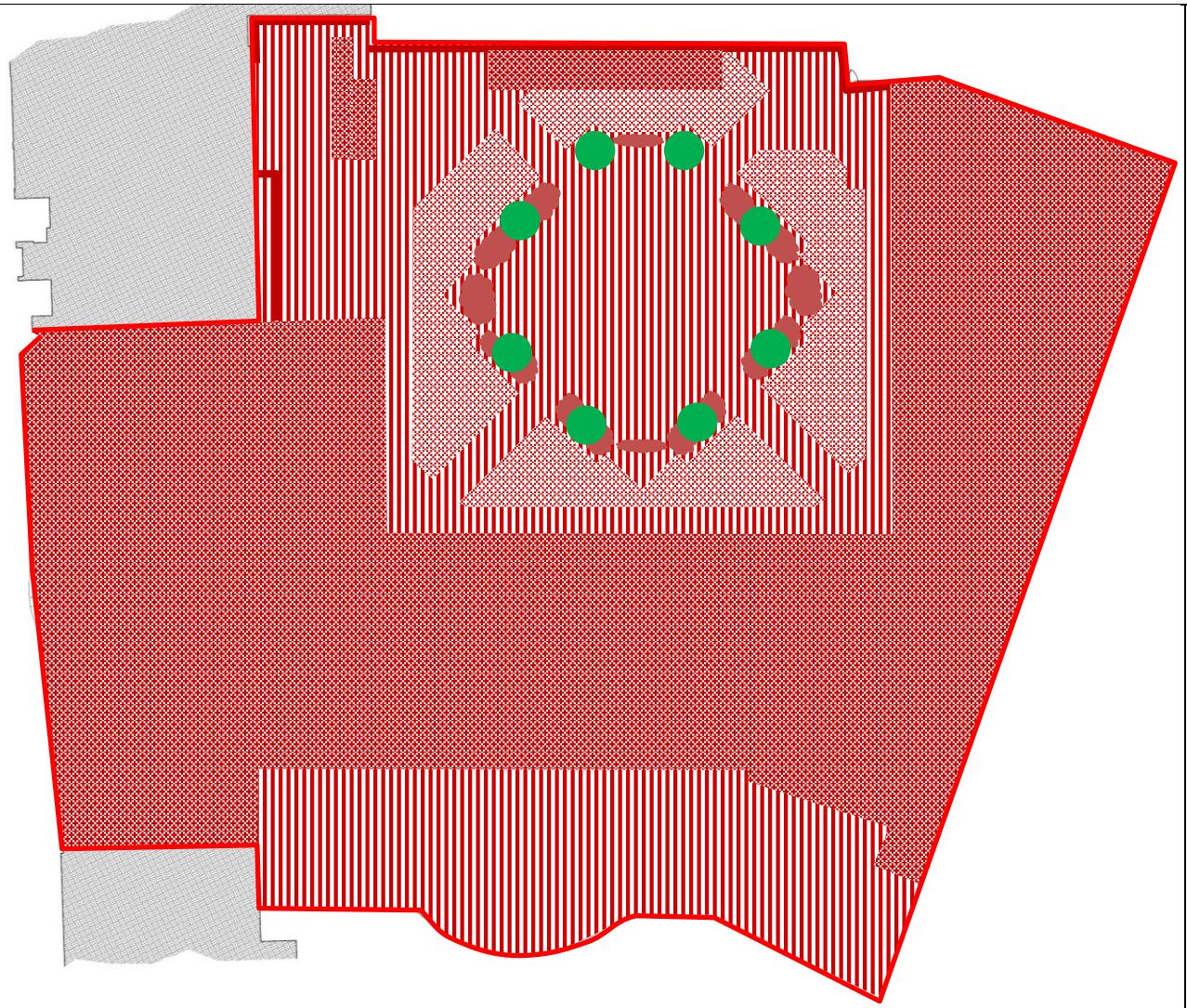


Figure 1: Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey Map



Ground Level Planters (u1140)	
Developed Land, Sealed Surface (u1b)	
Buildings (u1b5)	
Artificial Unvegetated Unsealed Surface u1c	
Built Linear Features (u1e)	

Figure 2: UK Habitats Classification Plan

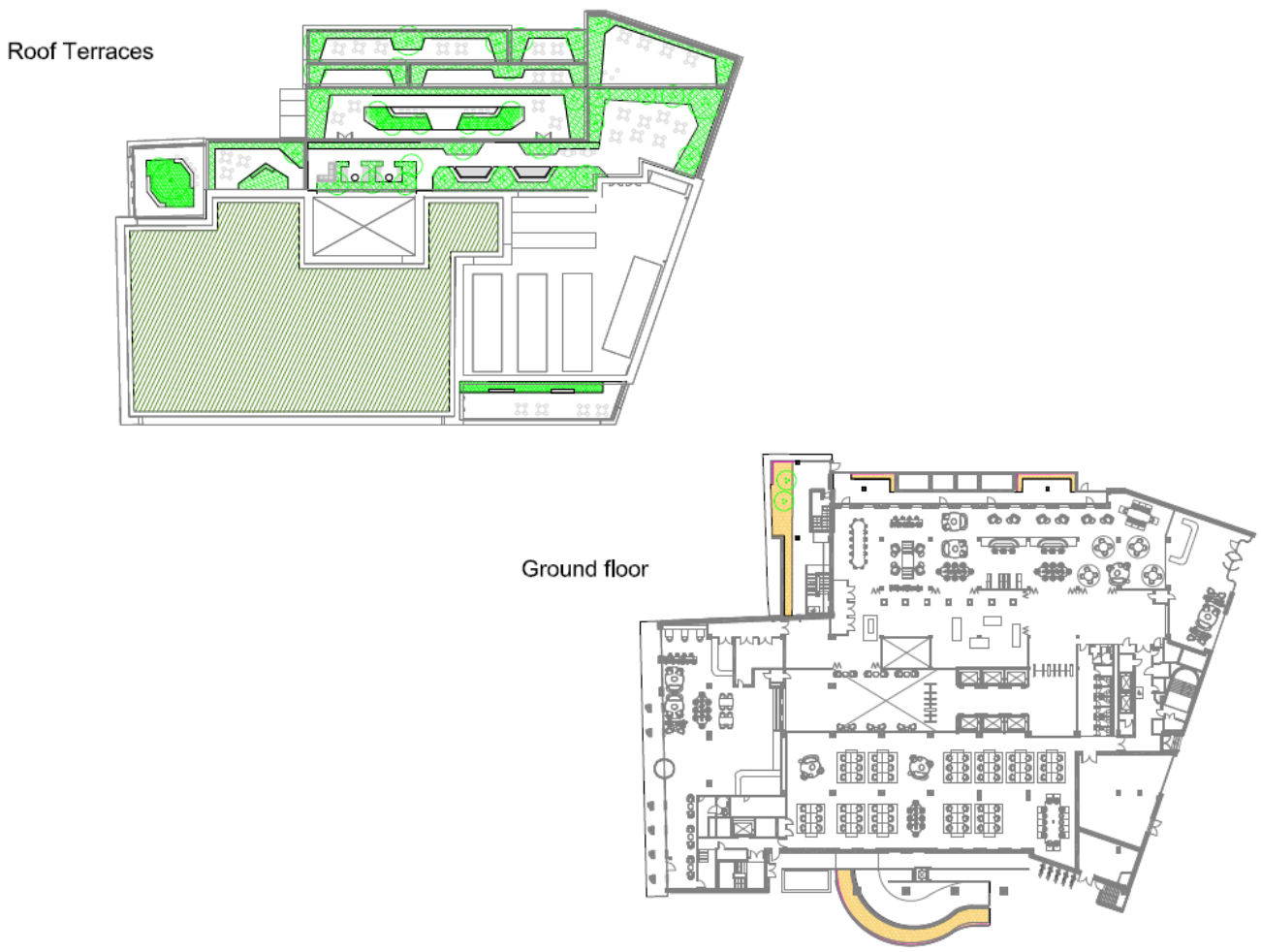


Figure 3: Extract from Urban Greening Factor Assessment (Grant Associates Drawing FCP667-AL-SK-021, October 2023)

Figure 4: Landscape Plan marked-up to show indicative agreed locations of Biodiversity Enhancement Measures (not to scale)

(Drawing from Grant Associates, FCP667-GRA-01-DR-L-1012)

Appendix 6 – Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Ecological/Habitat Areas Pre- and Post-Development

The Baseline habitat areas pre-development are summarised in Table 6.1, and comprise mainly buildings/hardstanding, with very little soft landscaping/vegetated area.

Table 6.1: Baseline Habitat Parcels by Area

Baseline Habitat Parcels	**Baseline Areas m^2**
Urban: Developed land; sealed surface	2,989.5
Urban: Bare ground	400
Urban: Ground level planters	80
Individual Trees: Urban tree	120
Total Site Area (excluding Individual Trees)	3,469.5

The Proposed habitat areas post-development are summarised in Table 6.2, and comprise a much higher proportion of soft landscaping/vegetated areas.

Table 6.2: Proposed Habitat Parcels by Area

Proposed Habitat Parcels	**Proposed Areas m^2**
Urban: Developed land; sealed surface	2,303.5
Urban: Intensive green roof	448
Urban: Intensive green roof (wildflower planting)	80.5
Urban: Other green roof (extensive)	637.5
Urban: Ground based green wall	70.5
Individual Trees: Urban tree	214
Total Site Area (excluding Individual Trees and Green Walls)	3,469.5

Biodiversity Net Gain Calculation

The habitat baseline, loss, creation, and enhancements identified above have been measured and entered into the Metric 4.0, Headline Results for which are presented in Table 6.3 below. Biodiversity enhancements, which are not catered for in the Metric – but which are anticipated to reduce biodiversity loss – include installation of bat roosting boxes and bird nesting boxes, as well as insect hotels/bug boxes and gravel patches.

Prior to development, the breakdown of Area Based Habitats can be summarised as follows:

- majority hard-landscape: 86% of the area;
- minority of soft-landscape: 14% of the area

No habitats of 'High/Very High Distinctiveness' were recorded within the Site. 'Medium Distinctiveness' habitats were represented by the eight urban trees in planters, occupying a minor area of the Site, and 'Low Distinctiveness' Habitats by the ground planters and bare ground. The Site comprised almost exclusively 'Very Low Distinctiveness' habitat types.

The Metric calculates that the pre-development Site comprises **0.14 Habitat Units**.

To achieve the target 10% increase in Biodiversity value, the post-development Site would be required to comprise **0.16 Habitat Units**.

Following development, the breakdown of Area Based Habitats can be summarised as follows:

- majority hard-landscape: 66% of the area;
- minority of soft-landscape: 34% of the area

No habitats of 'High/Very High Distinctiveness' are proposed for the Site. 'Medium Distinctiveness' habitats will be represented by the new urban tree-planting (enough to offset the loss of the eight existing trees). The inclusion of intensive/extensive green roofs (as well as a small area of green wall) will result in the conversion of a 'Very Low Distinctiveness' habitat to 'Low Distinctiveness' habitat.

As such, there is a substantial increase (more than double) in soft-landscaped area at the expense of built/sealed surface, as well as a general increase in Habitat Distinctiveness. The Metric calculates that the post-development Site will comprise **0.46 Habitat Units** (far in excess of the 0.16 Habitat Unit target). The 'Trading Rules' that require that Biodiversity Gains include an appropriate level of 'like-for-like' replacement appropriate to the level of Habitat Distinctiveness have also been satisfied.

The calculated Biodiversity Net Gain resulting from the proposals therefore is a **122% increase in value** (far in excess of the 10% target).

Table 6.3: Extracts from the Headline Results summary of the Metric 4.0 calculation

On-site baseline	*Habitat units*	0.14	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	*Habitat units*	0.46	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site net change (units & percentage)	*Habitat units*	0.32	222.30%
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%

FINAL RESULTS		
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	*Habitat units*	0.32
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	Watercourse units	0.00
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	*Habitat units*	222.30%
	Hedgerow units	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?		Yes ✓

Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit	
Habitat units	10.00%	0.14	0.16	0.00	Unit requirement met or surpassed ✓
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	Unit requirement met or surpassed ✓
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	Unit requirement met or surpassed ✓