

Midland Goods Shed

Planning Consent Report for Condition 1

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Contributions

Name Helen Lee
Company Bennetts Associates Architects
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Name Edward Marchand
Title Associate
Address Bennetts Associates Architects
1 Rawstorne Place
London EC1V 7NL

Bennetts Associates Architects

www.bennettsassociates.com

London 1 Rawstorne Place, London EC1V 7NL • T +44 (0)20 7520 3300 • F +44 (0)20 7520 3333 • mail@bennettsassociates.com
Edinburgh 3 Boroughloch Square, Edinburgh EH8 9NJ • T +44 (0)131 667 7351 • F +44 (0)131 662 1867 • edin@bennettsassociates.com

Condition 1: Prior to commencement on the relevant part of the development hereby approved, details of bird and bat box locations and types, and an indication of species to be accommodated, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Thereafter, the relevant part of the works shall not be carried out otherwise than in accordance with the details thus approved. The works shall be permanently retained and maintained thereafter.



Images above and left show bird boxes as installed - they are painted to match the colour of the beam to be as unobtrusive as possible. Birds have been spotted using the boxes throughout the summer.

Bird Box Location Report by Kelly Shakespeare, RPS Ecologist attached.



Midland Goods Shed



Scope for Bird Box Location

Rev 1 – 2/9/13

Midland Goods Shed – Bird Box Location Scope



East Handyside Canopy – Bird Inspection Carried Out by Kerry Shakespeare, RPS Ecologist

Following on from my recent site visit, please find below the results from the detailed bird inspection of the East Handyside Canopy at the Midland Goods Shed, Kings Cross Central in London.

Background

The Midland Goods Shed (MGS) forms part of the wider Kings Cross Central redevelopment project. House sparrows have been known to use the East Handyside Canopy of the MGS in previous years.

During a walkover with Argents site manager on Tuesday 3rd June 2013, a number of house sparrows were recorded within the East Handyside Canopy. Kier subsequently requested that RPS undertake a more detailed inspection to map the current house sparrow activity in the canopy and provide recommendations for mitigation that would now be required as part of the redevelopment of the MGS.

Inspection Results

The detailed bird inspection was conducted within the East Handyside Canopy on the 11th June 2013.

The inspection was undertaken from the ground but also aerially from a cherry picker in order to accurately map the current bird nesting activity. The cherry picker was used in a sensitive manner so not to disturb nesting birds i.e. kept a good distance from nesting birds/chick feeding and the engine was switched off at each survey point.

The results of the inspection can be seen on the enclosed Figure 1. 64 breeding pairs of house sparrows were recorded within the East Handyside Canopy (128 individuals). A pair of starlings was also recorded nesting within the canopy at the time of the inspection.

All wild birds and their nests are protected during the breeding season under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). House sparrows and starlings are also included on the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and on the Red List under the criteria set out in the RSPB's Birds of Conservation Concern. Inclusion in these lists means the populations of these species are threatened or have suffered declines in range or numbers.

Figure 1 shows that the house sparrow nests are distributed primarily along the eastern side of the East Handyside Canopy which makes sense as this is south east facing (ideal location for bird nesting). The nests were not located in the purlins as previously thought but are situated between the purlin and the corrugated asbestos sheets. The house sparrow and starlings nests are all located in the first purlin between the ridge and the gutter line.

The house sparrows are also nesting within the open areas of the canopy at the north end, adjacent to the West Handyside Canopy.

No nests were located along the enclosed north canopy along the actual MGS. This area provides less favourable nesting locations as its much darker and damp.

During the inspection the following house sparrow activity was also recorded:

Courtship and mating

Nest building (using vegetation growing from the guttering of the canopy)

Active nesting (some sat on eggs, others with chicks present)

Food carrying and feeding chicks

Dust baths on the floor of the canopy

Midland Goods Shed – Bird Box Location Scope



Recommendations from Kerry Shakespeare, RPS Ecologist letter 12th June 2013

Mitigation

A large colony of house sparrows and a single pair of starling have been recorded breeding within the East Handyside Canopy. Both house sparrows and starlings would now breed into August. The birds cannot be disturbed or nests removed until their breeding season is over.

These species of birds are loyal to their nesting sites and would in future return year on year to nest in the same location. As the East Handyside Canopy is to be completely renovated in 2013 and would form an enclosed structure, permanent compensation would need to be provided in a suitable location for both these species this autumn/winter period, in time for when they return next spring 2014.

It is understood that as part of the renovation works, the external edge of the East Handyside Canopy cannot be used for compensatory measures for the house sparrows as the structure is listed. This location would have been ideal to provide compensation as it would have been within the immediate vicinity of their current breeding sites and its south east facing.

An alternative location that could be sufficient for compensation is the West Handyside Canopy, shown on Figure 1. However, the corrugated sheeting within the West Handyside Canopy is too modern and well fitted, thus no nesting opportunities for birds are present. This canopy would need to be adapted and the existing light fixtures adjusted/repositioned to provide more suitable conditions for nesting house sparrows.

The provision of 24 house sparrow terraces (3 pairs per box) or boxes fitted in a row in the West Handyside Canopy should be positioned in locations similar to what is used in the East Handyside Canopy (specifications enclosed). 24 boxes would provide compensation but also enhancement for this species (space for 72 breeding pairs). Alternatively, the West Handyside Canopy could be adapted to provide nesting opportunities for birds i.e. reuse of some of the materials within the East Handyside Canopy.

Starling boxes would also need to be provided within the West Handyside Canopy, box specifications are enclosed. Four boxes (1 pair per box) are suggested to provide not only compensation but enhancement for this species.

It is understood that the redevelopment proposals for the Kings Cross project would include Handyside Park which would be located to the south of the East Handyside Canopy. This would provide ideal foraging habitats for the house sparrows and starlings currently using the East Handyside Canopy.

The hawk should not be flown in this area now the breeding colony of house sparrows and the pair of starlings are known to be present.

Midland Goods Shed – Bird Box Location Scope



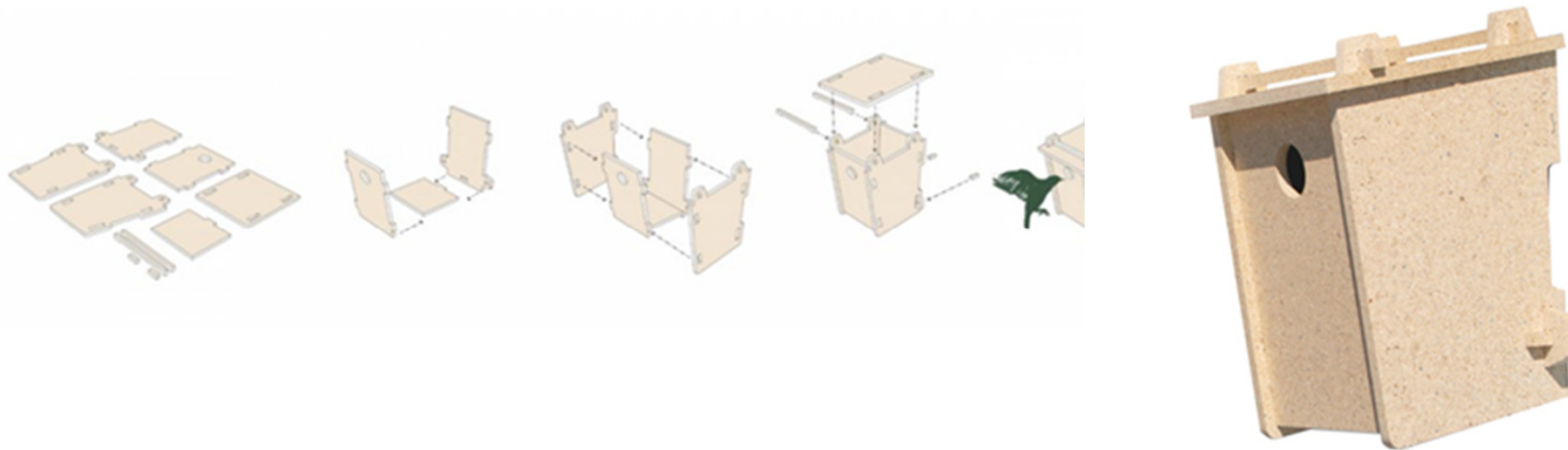
- **Habi-Sabi Starling Box**

- Habi-Sabi is a new concept in urban wildlife support based on the Japanese Wabi-Sabi principle of finding beauty in simplicity, austerity and natural variation. Their range of wildlife habitat products are constructed entirely from an up-cycled material called Barsmark PT-200 which is made from recycled waste insulation. As well as being aesthetically beautiful, this material is 100% resistant to moisture, has a lifespan of 20-25 years and weathers to a soft golden finish.
- The Habi-Sabi Starling Box is supplied flat-packed and the ingenious design ensures that it is lightweight and simple to construct, requiring no nails or screws. The nest box is designed to be attached to exterior walls of buildings using a simple piece of wire (not supplied), but could also be attached to trees or fences using the same method. Starlings often prefer to roost in cities as they tend to be a couple of degrees warmer than more rural areas and, although the difference is slight, it may be the key to their survival through winter. Starlings have been in decline since the 1970s and as a result are red listed in the UK as a bird of high conservation concern so providing suitable nesting sites is of critical importance.

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- Specifications

- External dimensions: 350mm long x 260mm wide x 260mm deep, with a 10mm wide overhanging roof
- Flatpack weight: 3kg



Midland Goods Shed – Bird Box Location Scope

Schwegler 1SP Sparrow Terrace



The Sparrow Terrace has been designed to help redress the balance of falling house sparrow numbers. The current UK population of 6 million pairs is half what it was in 1980. Sparrows are social birds and like to nest in company. The terrace provides nesting opportunities for three families. Made of Schwegler's revolutionary wood-concrete mix, this terrace is durable, breathable and will last many decades. The terrace may occasionally also attract tits, redstarts and spotted flycatchers.

The terrace can be fixed on to the surface of a suitable wall or incorporated into the wall. It is suitable for all types of houses in built-up areas, and on industrial and agricultural buildings such as barns, sheds and factories. Due to its weight (15kg), it is not suitable for fences or garden sheds. Ideally place the terrace 2 metres or more above the ground. Either install on the surface of the wall using the plugs and screws provided, or install directly into the wall (see the images tab for illustrations). Cleaning is advisable but not necessary. The front panel can be removed by turning the screw hook.

The Sparrow Terrace is available in either Stone or Brown.

Specifications

External dimensions: H 245 x W 430 x D 200 mm

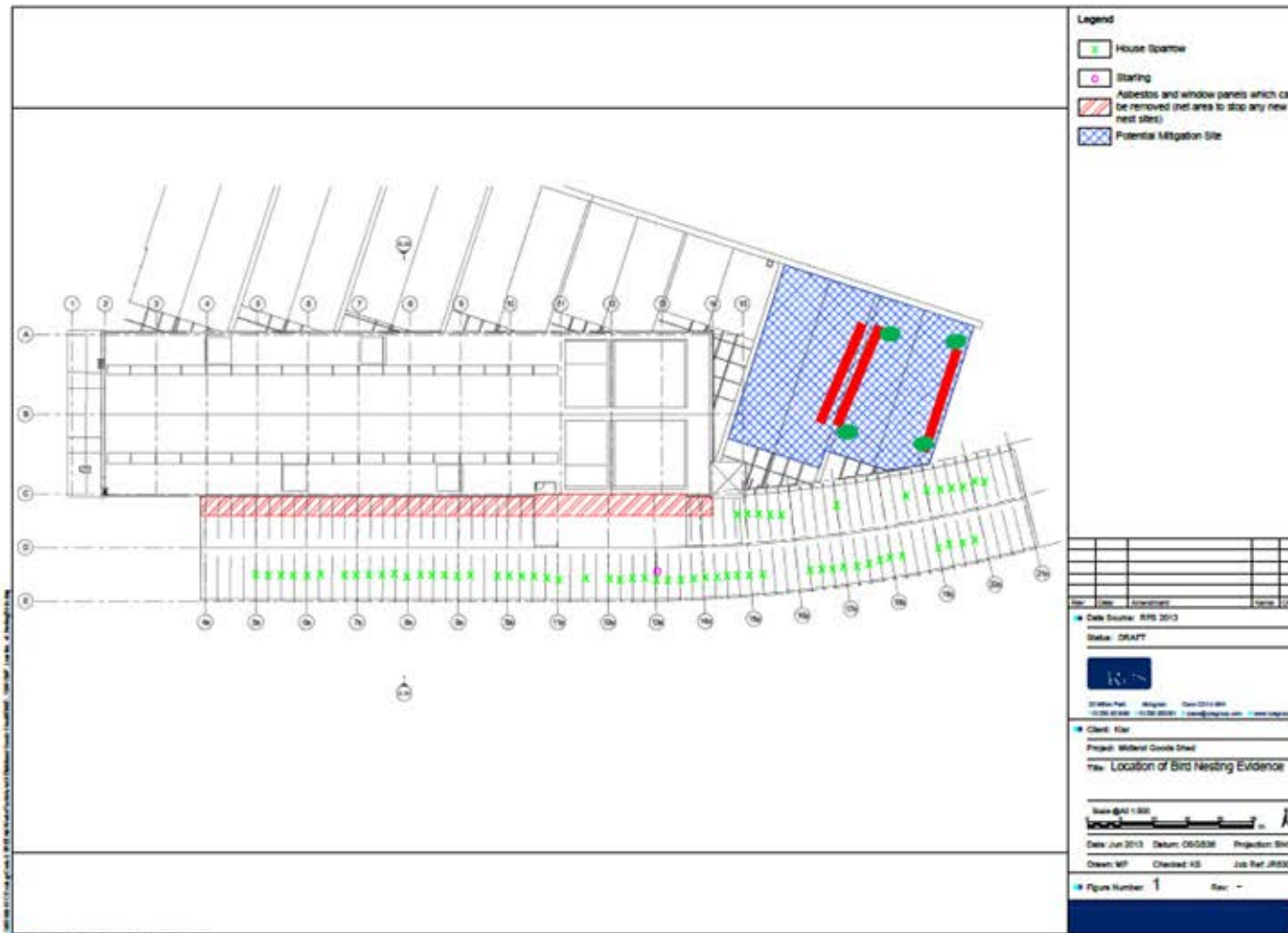
Brood chamber dimensions: H 160 x W 105 x D 150 mm

Weight: 15 kg

Midland Goods Shed – Bird Box Location Scope



- Location Plan for Potential Mitigation Site



- Location of Mitigation Bird Boxes 3 rows of 8 Sparrow Terraces
- Location of Mitigation Bird Boxes 4 individual Starling Boxes

Midland Goods Shed – Bird Box Location Scope



West Handyside Canopy North Beam south elevation 4 x 2 sparrow Terrace + 2 starling Boxes



West Handyside Canopy 2nd North Beam North elevation 4x2 sparrow Terrace + 2 Starling Boxes



West Handyside Canopy 2nd North Beam South elevation 4 x 2 Sparrow Terrace