



## CS15. Protecting and improving our parks and open spaces and encouraging biodiversity

- 15.1 Camden has over 250 designated parks and open spaces and 36 sites of nature conservation importance. In addition many housing estates include green areas that play a role in meeting the open space needs of local people. Hampstead Heath is the largest open space in the borough, providing nearly half of our total area of open space and many of our outdoor sporting facilities. The openness and semi-rural feel of the Heath and its surrounding green areas is preserved through its designation as Metropolitan Open Land (MOL), broadly equivalent to the green belt.
- 15.2 The south of the borough is characterised by dense development with small enclosed spaces, many of which are preserved as London Squares. There are other small spaces scattered throughout the borough that provide various recreational and amenity opportunities. The most prominent open spaces near the centre of the borough are Regent's Park/Primrose Hill and the Regent's Canal. The Canal and railway sidings have an important role in nature conservation and provide habitat corridors (green chains) across Camden. Residents west of Finchley Road and in Central London have the lowest level of access to open space (not including land around housing estates), followed by Kentish Town, Somers Town and Gospel Oak.
- 15.3 Sites of nature conservation in Camden are generally small and undervalued, with pressure from adjoining sites and limited opportunities for expansion. However, green and brown roofs for both amenity and biodiversity value have been an increasing feature of new developments within Camden. Private gardens in Camden also provide a significant resource for biodiversity and amenity space.
- 15.4 Policy CS15 – *Protecting and improving our parks and open spaces and encouraging biodiversity* seeks to ensure that the growth in the number of residents and visitors to Camden, identified in policy CS1 – *Distribution of growth*, will be supported by increases and improvements in open space provision, including outdoor sport and recreation opportunities, and that development protects and makes provision for biodiversity.

### CS POLICY

## CS15 – Protecting and improving our parks and open spaces and encouraging biodiversity

The Council will protect and improve Camden's parks and open spaces. We will:

- a) protect open spaces designated in the open space schedule as shown on the Proposals Map, including our Metropolitan Open Land, and other suitable land of 400sqm or more on large estates with the potential to be used as open space;
- b) tackle deficiencies and under-provision and meet increased demand for open space by:
  - providing additional open space at King's Cross;
  - securing additional on-site public open space in the growth areas of Euston, West Hampstead Interchange, Holborn and Tottenham Court Road, and other parts of Central London. Where the provision of on-site public open space is not practical on a particular site in these areas, the Council will require a contribution to the provision of additional public open space on identified sites in the vicinity. If it can be demonstrated to the Council's satisfaction that no such suitable sites are available, we will require improvements to other open spaces in the area;
  - securing improvements to publicly accessible open land on the Council's housing estates; and
  - securing other opportunities for additional public open space.

## CS15 – Protecting and improving our parks and open spaces and encouraging biodiversity (*continued*)

c) secure from developments that create an additional demand for open space, where opportunities arise, improvements to open spaces, including to:

- the facilities provided, such as play and sports facilities;
- access arrangements; and
- the connections between spaces.

The Council will protect and improve sites of nature conservation and biodiversity, in particular habitats and biodiversity identified in the Camden and London Biodiversity Plans in the borough by:

- d) designating existing nature conservation sites;
- e) protecting other green areas with nature conservation value, including gardens, where possible;
- f) seeking to improve opportunities to experience nature, in particular in South and West Hampstead, Kentish Town and central London, where such opportunities are lacking;
- g) expecting the provision of new or enhanced habitat, where possible, including through biodiverse green or brown roofs and green walls;
- h) identifying habitat corridors and securing biodiversity improvements along gaps in habitat corridors;
- i) working with The Royal Parks, the London Wildlife Trust, friends of parks groups and local nature conservation groups to protect and improve open spaces and nature conservation in Camden;
- j) protecting trees and promoting the provision of new trees and vegetation, including additional street trees.

The Council will preserve and enhance the historic, open space and nature conservation importance of Hampstead Heath and its surrounding area by:

- k) working with the City of London, English Heritage and Natural England to manage and improve the Heath and its surrounding areas;
- l) protecting the Metropolitan Open Land, public and private open space and the nature conservation designations of sites;
- m) seeking to extend the public open space when possible and appropriate;
- n) taking into account the impact on the Heath when considering relevant planning applications;
- o) protecting views from Hampstead Heath and views across the Heath and its surrounding area;
- p) improving the biodiversity of, and habitats in, Hampstead Heath and its surrounding area, where opportunities arise.

The Council will preserve and enhance the Regent's Canal by:

- q) balancing the differing demands on the Canal, its towpath and adjoining land;
- r) implementing opportunities to make the Canal a safer place;
- s) applying the guidance in the Regent's Canal Conservation Area Management Strategy;
- t) implementing opportunities to provide additional nature conservation areas and improve the role of the Canal and its adjoining land as a habitat corridor (green chain);
- u) working with British Waterways, Natural England, other land owners/developers, users and the local community to improve the Canal and towpath.

## Camden's open spaces

### Protecting our open spaces

- 15.5 Camden's parks and open spaces are important to the borough in terms of health, sport, recreation and play, the economy, culture, biodiversity, providing a pleasant outlook and providing breaks in the built up area. They also help to reduce flood risk by retaining rain water and some are used for growing food. Camden's growth will increase the demand for our open spaces so it is important that we protect our existing parks and open spaces.
- 15.6 The Council will protect the open spaces designated in the open space schedule shown on the Proposals Map, as well as other suitable land with the potential to be used as open space. Camden has many large housing estates with land originally designed for use as open space, but has never been formally designated as such. The Council will continue to retain suitable land, not formally designated as open space for the use as open space on large estates, whilst providing the flexibility for various land uses to be re-configured across the estate, in conjunction with the re-provision of land for open space use. We will not allow development on these open spaces unless it is for limited development ancillary to a use taking place on the land and for which there is a demonstrable need. Extensions and alterations to existing buildings on open space should be proportionate to the size, including the volume, of the original building. We will only allow development on sites adjacent to an open space that respects the size, form and use of that open space and does not cause harm to its wholeness, appearance or setting, or harm public enjoyment of the space. We will take into account the cumulative impact of developments where appropriate. The poor quality of an open space will generally not be accepted as a reason for its partial development to fund improvements as, once built on, open space is lost to the community for ever.

### Metropolitan Open Land

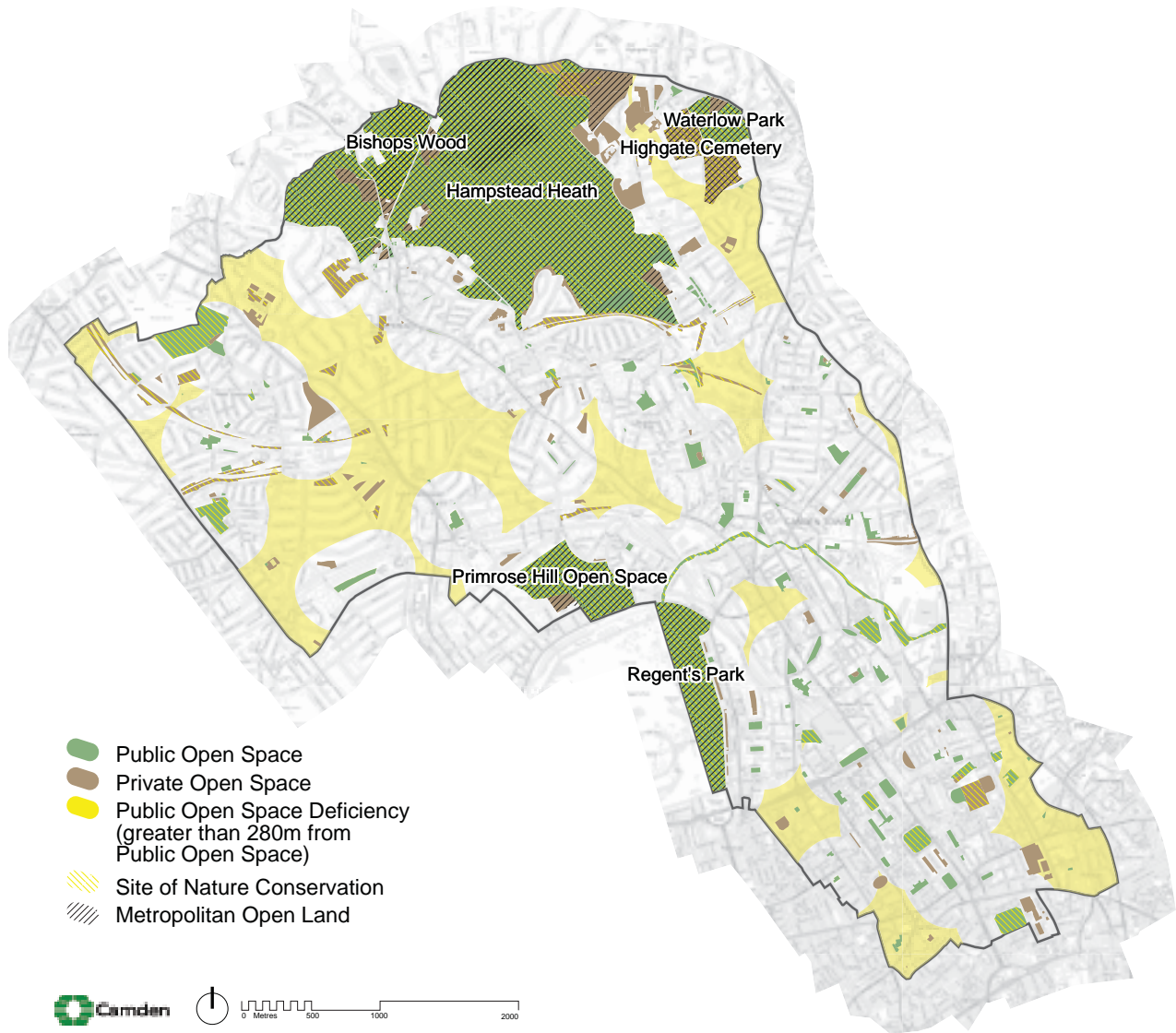
- 15.7 Camden's designated open spaces include Metropolitan Open Land. This is open space of London-wide significance that provides a break in the built up area and receives the same presumption against development as green belt land. There are four main areas of Metropolitan Open Land in Camden, which are of great importance to the borough and its character – Hampstead Heath and adjoining areas; Regent's Park; Primrose Hill/Barrow Hill Reservoir; and Highgate Cemetery/Waterlow Park/Fairseat. These will be protected in accordance with London Plan policy 3D.10. Guidance on Metropolitan Open Land and extensions to existing buildings within it is set out in government Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 2 – Green Belts.

### Tackling open space deficiency and securing additional and improved spaces

- 15.8 Camden's Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study 2004 and the needs assessment in Camden's Open Space Strategy demonstrated that nowhere in Camden had a surplus in open space. The Camden Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study Update 2008 found that there is currently 20sqm of public open space per person in the borough. This would drop to 17sqm by 2026 taking into account projected population increases and assuming no additional public open space is provided. The Study Update 2008 suggests standards for open space and highlights opportunities for improving the quantity and quality of open spaces in the borough, including play facilities and sports provision. These standards form the basis of our detailed policy on open space, sport and recreation in our Camden Development Policies Local Development Framework document (policy DP31 – *Provision of, and improvements to, open space and outdoor sport and recreation facilities*).
- 15.9 Most of Camden's population has reasonable access to a metropolitan or district park (that is Hampstead Heath or Regent's Park and Primrose Hill) but a large proportion of residents do not have reasonable access to local and small parks and open spaces. Camden's Annual Monitoring Report and the Camden Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study Update 2008 show that only a small amount of new public open space has been provided in the borough and therefore in many areas, including South and West Hampstead, Gospel Oak and Kentish Town and parts of central London, there is still poor access to small and local parks and open spaces. These areas are therefore considered to be deficient in public open space (see map 7). Areas deficient in public open space are defined as those without access to a public open space within 280m. The Camden Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study Update 2008 also identified areas where there is 'under-provision' of public open space. Although these areas do have access to open space, this is not adequate to

meet the level of local need due to the number of children, dwelling density, and social disadvantage in the area. These areas are identified in figure 4.4 (Composite Need) in Camden’s Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study Update 2008.

### Map 7: Open Space



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15.10 To tackle deficiencies and under-provision of public open space and to ensure adequate new open space is provided in Camden’s growth areas, we will secure additional on-site open space on all appropriately sized and located sites. The Council wants to promote a green network approach to open space, where open spaces are connected by landscaped corridors or habitat corridors. We recognise that the built-up nature of Camden makes it difficult to provide new open space. However, the deficiency areas of West Hampstead, Camden Town and western Central London are near significant development sites that may have the potential to accommodate new public open spaces. The under-provided areas of South Hampstead, Camden Town and Somers Town are also near potential development sites that may be large enough to accommodate new public open space. The growth areas of King’s Cross, Euston, and West Hampstead Interchange contain development sites that have potential to provide on-site open space. For example, two open spaces plus smaller play spaces and sports facilities will be provided as part of the redevelopment of King’s Cross, providing much-needed facilities on the edge of central London and near Somers Town. We will use Camden’s Site Allocations document to promote areas and development sites where the Council will expect new public open space to be incorporated within development proposals.



- 15.11 Where the opportunity arises in Kentish Town or Gospel Oak and other areas that suffer from deficiency or under-provision, the Council will expect the provision of on-site public open space. These areas contain large housing estates which could also provide new public open space as part of any estate regeneration programme. The Council has identified opportunities to improve open land around Alexandra and Ainsworth estate and surrounding sites on Abbey and Belsize Roads, with other open space improvements anticipated at Maiden Lane estate. Further open space improvements on housing sites can be identified as the Council's estate regeneration programme is extended.
- 15.12 The existing built up nature of large potential development sites in the growth areas of Holborn and Tottenham Court Road may make it difficult to secure a significant amount of new public open space at these locations. However, the Council will expect the provision of some public open space on suitable sites to remedy the recognised deficiency.
- 15.13 Where on-site provision of public open space is not possible, the Council will continue to seek other forms of open space provision. These may include the provision of open space off-site, or the payment of a financial contribution towards obtaining land for open space use, improving the quality of existing open spaces or improving access to them. When considering which open space to improve as a result of contributions, the Council will consider nearby deficiencies and under-provision in open space and existing plans for the management of open space. We will also take into account exercise rates and obesity levels in the surrounding area, a priority issue for the Camden Public Health Partnership. Our Camden Development Policies Local Development Framework document (policy DP31 – *Provision of, and improvements to, open space and outdoor sport and recreation facilities*) sets out our detailed approach towards the provision of open space.
- 15.14 The Council will continue to seek to secure public use of open spaces on appropriate sites wherever practical, for example by putting in place suitable public access arrangements or purchasing land. Potential sites include land around housing estates and large private spaces, such as those adjoining Hampstead Heath.

### Play facilities

- 15.15 Camden has numerous play facilities within open spaces and on housing estates. We will retain these, where appropriate, and seek to provide additional formal and informal play spaces in areas of deficiency or under provision in open space. The Council is providing and enhancing 28 play facilities as part of its Play Pathfinder project, including a new adventure playground at Kilburn Grange. This will significantly improve access for children and young people, particularly 8-13 year olds. Additional funding is also being provided by the NHS Camden. At least three play facilities for a range of ages will also be provided at King's Cross. Where additional demand for play space is created by development we will expect the provision of play space on the site, broadly in accordance with the Mayor's SPG on Providing for children and young peoples' play and informal recreation. See policy DP31 – *Provision of, and improvements to public open space and outdoor sport and recreation facilities* in Camden Development Policies for further details on the provision of play space expected. The Council's approach to play is set out in its Play Strategy 2007-2012.



## Sports facilities

- 15.16 Camden also contains several full-sized pitches for various sports located on Hampstead Heath and Regent's Park. As the Council does not own these, they are not within our control to retain, maintain or alter to meet the changing needs of the borough. Given the built up nature of Camden, it is unlikely that new full size pitches will be provided. However, we will continue to seek to protect existing outdoor sport facilities by working with the City of London and the Royal Parks, and we will encourage the improvement of existing facilities. We will also seek to retain privately owned playing pitches. The Council owns several tennis courts in Waterlow Park and multi-games areas and smaller pitches on housing estates, in schools and on open spaces, which we will continue to maintain. New facilities have been secured at King's Cross and our Camden Site Allocations document will identify sites where outdoor sports or related facilities may be expected as part of any open space proposals. The Council's approach to sport is set out in its ProActive Sport & Physical Activity Strategy 2008-2012. For details on our approach to indoor sports facilities see CS10 – *Supporting community facilities and services*.

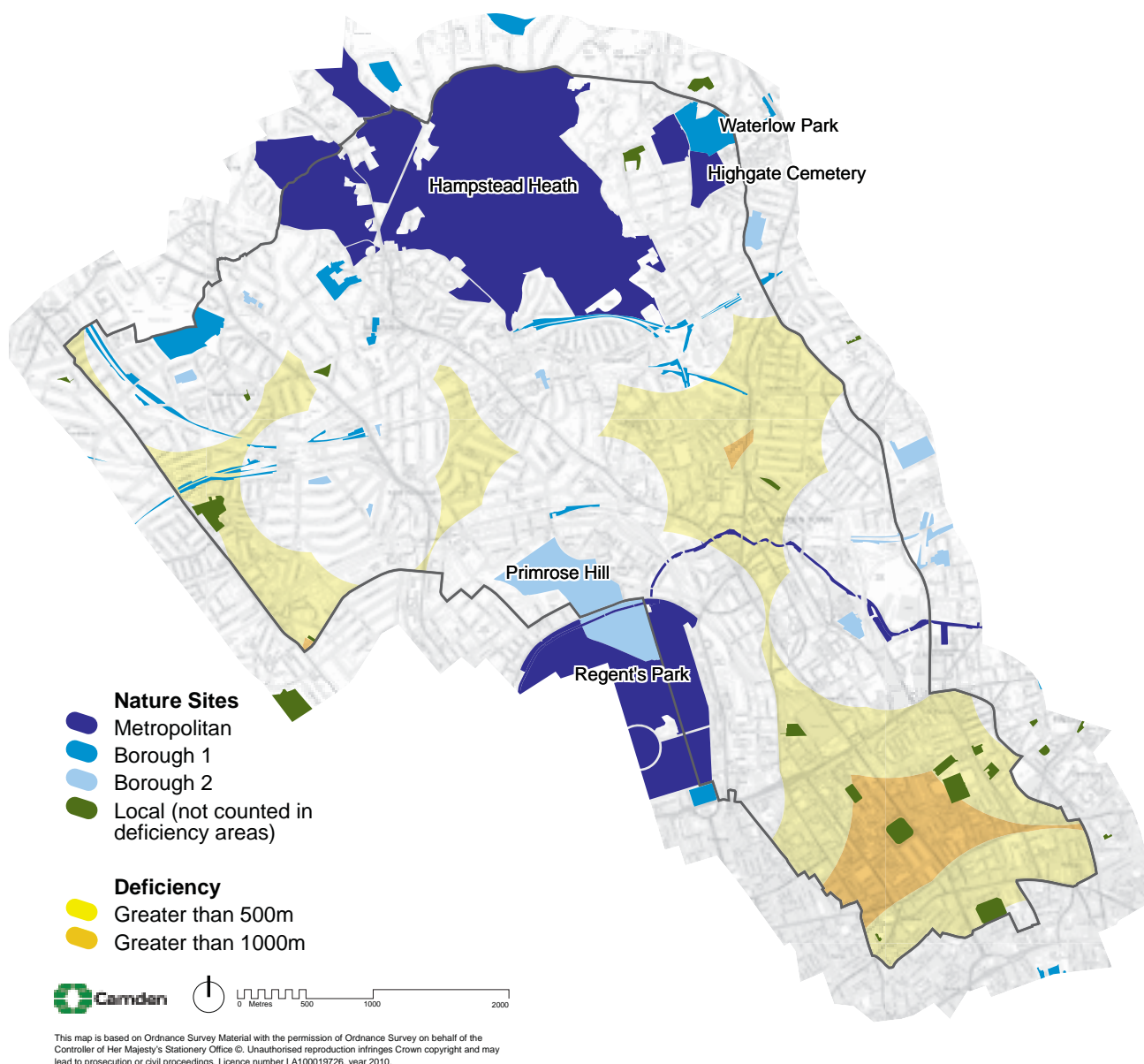
## Nature conservation

- 15.17 Green spaces play a vital role in nature conservation and provision for biodiversity. Camden is fortunate to have Camley Street Nature Park, Kentish Town City Farm and several local nature reserves, which provide educational tools and health benefits for residents. The Council will continue to protect all sites in the borough formally identified as being of nature conservation value (see Map 8). Where possible we will also protect an amount of green space or garden space on a site that reflects the local built form and landscape character. The Council and statutory undertakers, who own some of the designated sites, have a duty to have regard to conserving biodiversity. However, most Sites of Nature Conservation Importance in Camden are not in the Council's control and therefore it is difficult to protect species, habitats and foraging areas other than those formally protected by international and national legislation. To protect our existing sites, we will resist the development of designated sites where the nature conservation value has been diminished or lost, especially where this loss is due to neglect or damage, and we will seek the reinstatement, or an equivalent level, of biodiversity on the site. The Council will be particularly keen to protect habitats and species identified in Camden's Biodiversity Action Plan.





## Map 8: Locations Deficient in Access to Nature Conservation Areas



- 15.18 Residents and visitors further than 1km away from a metropolitan or borough Site of Nature Conservation Importance are considered to have poor access to the natural environment. These areas are shown on Map 8. Where opportunities exist in these areas we will explore ways to support biodiversity and nature conservation. We will use the Camden Site Allocations document to identify sites where enhanced or new measures to support biodiversity and nature conservation may be expected as part of any new proposals and new open spaces. Even where no additional open space is being created we will seek other forms of biodiversity such as biodiverse landscaping, habitat creation, green or brown roofs and, where appropriate, green walls. Camden's Biodiversity Action Plan identifies habitats and species that are particularly important in Camden. Our Camden Planning Guidance supplementary document will provide further information on the Council's expectations for improvements in nature conservation.
- 15.19 Developers and landowners should also give consideration to the need for species to move between different types of habitats which will help these species to cope with the effects of climate change. We will continue to retain habitat corridors in the borough, identify 'missing links' in these corridors and seek to secure habitat corridors as part of developments and through street improvements. Habitat corridors and missing links are identified on the Proposals Map. Areas that could provide habitat corridors or contribute to nature conservation include land adjacent to railway lines, where existing vegetation can be enhanced or new vegetation provided, and sites adjoining



existing open spaces. Opportunities for further links include around West Hampstead railway lands and from Kentish Town to Hampstead Heath (as shown on the Proposals Map).

- 15.20 There are limited opportunities to provide new ground-level habitats in the borough due to lack of space. Whilst the provision of habitat at ground level is important, there are opportunities on new and existing buildings to provide habitats in the form of green or brown roofs and green walls. We will expect developments to provide opportunities for biodiversity within the fabric and curtilage of buildings. Where redevelopment occurs on sites adjacent to existing wildlife sites we will expect developers to provide additional habitat of an appropriate scale. We will favour the provision of habitat for species identified in the Camden and London Biodiversity Action Plans. Where we secure additional land for nature conservation we will work with local nature conservation groups and social and corporate volunteers that help protect and enhance these new spaces in addition to the Council's existing Local Nature Reserves. Please see the Council's Camden Planning Guidance supplementary document for information on ways to improve biodiversity and on our areas of nature conservation deficiency.

### Trees

- 15.21 Trees are important for their aesthetic value, as habitat, in shading, cooling and filtering the air and in removing carbon dioxide and providing oxygen. They will play an increasingly important role in providing shade and refuge in the hotter summers predicted due to climate change. More guidance on trees and groups of trees can be found in Camden Development Policies and our Camden Planning Guidance supplementary document. There is often pressure for the removal of trees and groups of trees in the borough due to subsidence fears, perceived dangers, locations close to existing underground infrastructure and to facilitate development.
- 15.22 The Council has a Tree Strategy which deals with tree management on its land. This aims to retain trees and provide new trees on Council land. We have a tree planting programme which is increasing the number of trees in the borough, in streets, parks housing estates and schools. We will resist the loss of trees and groups of trees wherever possible and, where this is not possible, require their replacement on development sites or nearby streets and open spaces. The choice of species should consider historic context, availability of space, soil conditions, potential improvements to air and soil quality and reducing the effects of and adapting to climate change. Further information on protected trees and groups of trees, the procedures for seeking their removal and their replacement is set out in the Council's Camden Planning Guidance supplementary document.





### Hampstead Heath

- 15.23 Hampstead Heath has been a valuable recreational resource for Londoners since the mid-17th century and is Camden's largest open space. The City of London, who own and manage the Heath, has developed a management plan in consultation with the local interest groups and the wider community. We will work with the City, English Heritage and Natural England on preparing and implementing plans for the Heath.
- 15.24 The Heath and some of its surrounding areas are designated Metropolitan Open Land (see para 15.7 above). It is also important for its ecology being a Metropolitan Site of Nature Conservation, a Site of Special Scientific Interest and containing two areas of Ancient Woodland. There are also numerous large private gardens adjacent to the Heath that are designated open space.
- 15.25 We will continue to use the guidance in the conservation area statements, appraisals and management strategies for Dartmouth Park and Mansfield, Hampstead, Highgate Village, Redington and Frognal and South Hill Park to preserve and enhance the built environment around the Heath and preserve outlooks and views from it. Many views to and from the Heath are protected, for example the views from Kenwood House and Parliament Hill to St Paul's and from Parliament Hill to the Palace of Westminster (see policy CS14).

### The Regent's Canal

- 15.26 The Regent's Canal, Camden's only significant open watercourse, winds through the borough from Regents Park through Camden Town and King's Cross, and is undergoing significant regeneration. It serves several purposes, from its open space, leisure and recreational functions and biodiversity importance to its historic significance and commercial and transport role. The Canal forms part of London's Blue Ribbon Network, which has its own set of policies within the London Plan. The Canal is an important historical feature and it is important that development near the Canal reflects its unique character. The Council will therefore take into account the Regent's Canal Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy when assessing applications for sites along and adjacent to the Canal.
- 15.27 The Council has been working with the Metropolitan Police and British Waterways to improve security along the Canal. Its separation from streets and buildings is an important element of the Canal's character but this also makes it susceptible to crime and anti-social behaviour. Any development along the Canal needs to address these challenges.
- 15.28 The Canal is a main east-west pedestrian and cycle route through the borough linking Regents Park, Camden Town and King's Cross. Its role as a connecting route will increase as more activities locate in King's Cross. The Council will seek to improve conditions for users where possible and, where developments are proposed, will investigate opportunities to provide additional access to the Canal.
- 15.29 The Canal is also an important ecological corridor and is designated as a site of metropolitan importance for nature conservation. Camley Street Nature Reserve is located along the Canal and the section at Albert Road near London Zoo is especially important, particularly for foraging bats as an unlit green space at night. The Council will therefore prevent the loss and degradation of habitat including from overshadowing and lighting in especially sensitive areas. We will also work





with British Waterways to improve biodiversity within and along the Canal and with developers to improve biodiversity through planting, provision of green or brown roofs and green walls. The redevelopment of Hawley Wharf provides an opportunity to improve the nature conservation and open space functions of the Canal.

- 15.30 The part of the Canal that runs through Camden is mainly used for leisure boating rather than transportation of goods and waste. A flexible approach to canal-side development that provides for the delivery and removal of material from both the road and canalside will be encouraged to enable future use of the Canal for transportation of goods and materials. The use of the Canal for any energy saving or generation measures and as a water store will be welcomed subject to schemes not harming the Canal's special qualities.

#### Key evidence and references

- Camden Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study; KKP; 2004
- Camden Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study Review; Atkins; 2008
- Open Space Strategy for Camden 2006-2011
- Draft Camden Biodiversity Action Plan 2009
- Strategy for managing, maintaining and replacing Council owned trees 2007-2011
- Camden Sustainability Task Force Report on Food, Water, Biodiversity and Open Space; 2008
- The London Plan (consolidated with Alterations since 2004); Mayor of London; 2008
- Connecting with London's nature: The Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy; 2002
- Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 9: Biodiversity and Geologic Conservation; 2005
- Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 17: Planning for open space, sport and recreation; 2004
- Bringing your rivers back to life. A strategy for restoring rivers in North London; Environment Agency; 2006
- Hampstead Heath Management Plan Part 1. Towards a Plan for the Heath 2007-2017; City of London & Land Use consultants; 2007
- The Regent's Canal Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy
- Inland Waterways. Unlocking the Potential and Securing the Future of Inland Waterways through the Planning System; TCPA; 2009
- Under Lock and Quay. Reducing criminal opportunity by design; British Waterways and the Metropolitan Police; 2000





# Supplementary Planning Document

## Sites of Nature Conservation Importance in Camden



September 2006





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## Introduction and Background

Under the policies and procedures set out in the London Plan and the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy, Boroughs are expected to designate Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) in their Unitary Development Plan (UDP).

The London Borough of Camden replacement UDP was adopted in June 2006. The Schedule of Open Spaces contained in Appendix 5 of the replacement UDP 2006 contains the designation of SNCI and whether they are of Metropolitan, Borough or of Local importance. Policy N6 – *Nature Conservation Sites* of the replacement UDP 2006 sets out the Council's policy for SNCI.

The purpose of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) is to provide additional guidance on how policies in the UDP are interpreted and implemented. This document provides a list of sites identified as being of importance for nature conservation. The list has been produced jointly by the Greater London Authority's Biodiversity Strategy team and officers of Camden Council. It is based on a survey commissioned by the Greater London Authority in 2003 and updates the list of sites in the London Ecology Unit's handbook *Nature Conservation in Camden* of 1993.

The objective of this SPD is to protect SNCI by providing habitat and biodiversity information on each site. When a planning application is made for development on or adjacent to a SNCI, the Council will have regard to the information contained in this document.

It should be noted that many of the sites in this document do not have the same name as the sites listed in the Schedule of Open Spaces. Many of these sites were listed in *Nature Conservation in Camden* (1993) and have historically been known under these names. In addition, several of these SNCI are made up of a number of different designated open spaces and it would be cumbersome to name them after all these sites. **Appendix A** contains a list of all the Sites of Nature Conservation Importance and the corresponding replacement UDP 2006 open spaces of which they form part.

This SPD is accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal.

## **The Different Grades of Sites**

### **Sites of Metropolitan Importance**

Sites of Metropolitan Importance for nature conservation are those sites which contain the best examples of London's habitats, sites which contain particularly rare species, rare assemblages of species or important populations of species, or sites which are of particular significance within the otherwise heavily built-up areas of London. They are of the highest priority for protection. The identification and protection of Metropolitan Sites is necessary, not only to support a significant proportion of London's wildlife, but also to provide opportunities for people to have contact with the natural environment. The boundaries of the Metropolitan Sites in this report were endorsed by the Mayor of London on 25 November 2002.

### **Sites of Borough Importance**

These are sites which are important on a borough perspective in the same way as the Metropolitan sites are important to the whole of London. Although sites of similar quality may be found elsewhere in London, damage to these would mean a significant loss to the borough. As with Metropolitan sites, while protection is important, management of borough sites should usually allow and encourage their enjoyment by people and their use for education. Since 1988 Borough sites have been divided, on the basis of their quality, into two grades, but it must be stressed that they are all important on a borough-wide view.

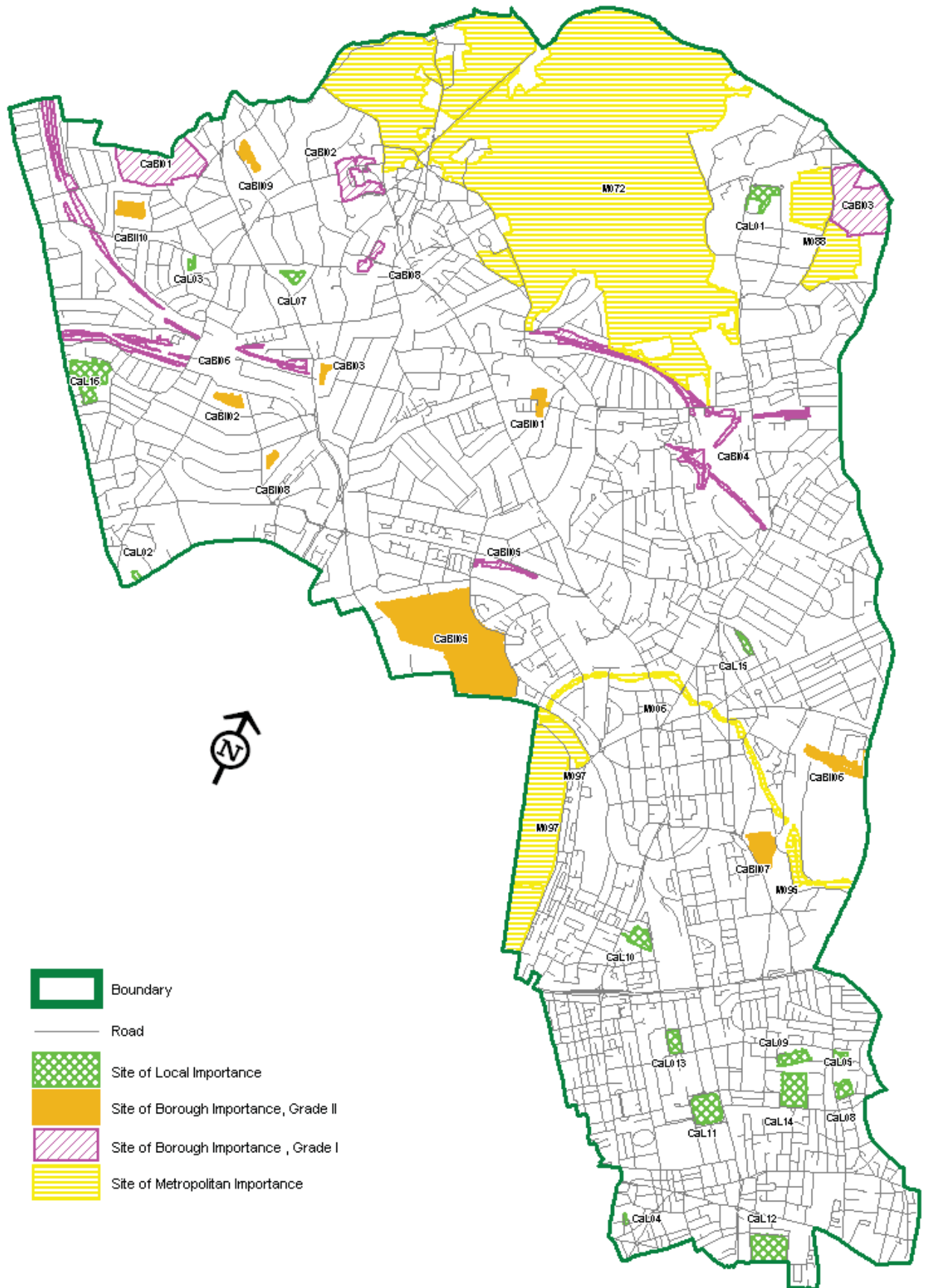
### **Sites of Local Importance**

A Site of Local importance is one which is, or may be, of particular value to people nearby (such as residents or schools). These sites may already be used for nature study or be run by management committees mainly composed of local people. These sites also deserve protection in planning.

Local Sites are particularly important in areas otherwise deficient in nearby wildlife sites. Areas of Deficiency are defined as built-up areas more than one kilometre from an accessible Metropolitan or Borough Site. Local Sites are chosen as the best available to alleviate this deficiency. Such sites need not lie in the Area of Deficiency, but should be as near to it as possible. Where no such sites are available, opportunities should be taken to provide them by habitat enhancement or creation, by negotiating access and management agreements, or by direct acquisition. To aid the choice of additional local sites, a map of Nature Conservation Deficiency Areas is contained in the replacement UDP 2006.



### Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) in Camden



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## CaBI06 West Hampstead Railsides, Medley Orchard and Westbere Copse

**Grade:**  
Borough I

**Grid ref:**  
TQ 249 845

**Area (ha):**  
7.94

**Borough(s):**  
Camden

**Site first notified:**  
01/01/1993

**Boundary last changed:**  
15/08/2004

**Citation last edited:**  
10/11/2005

**Habitat:**  
Scattered trees,  
Secondary woodland,  
Scrub, Orchard,  
Semi-improved neutral  
grassland,  
Tall herbs

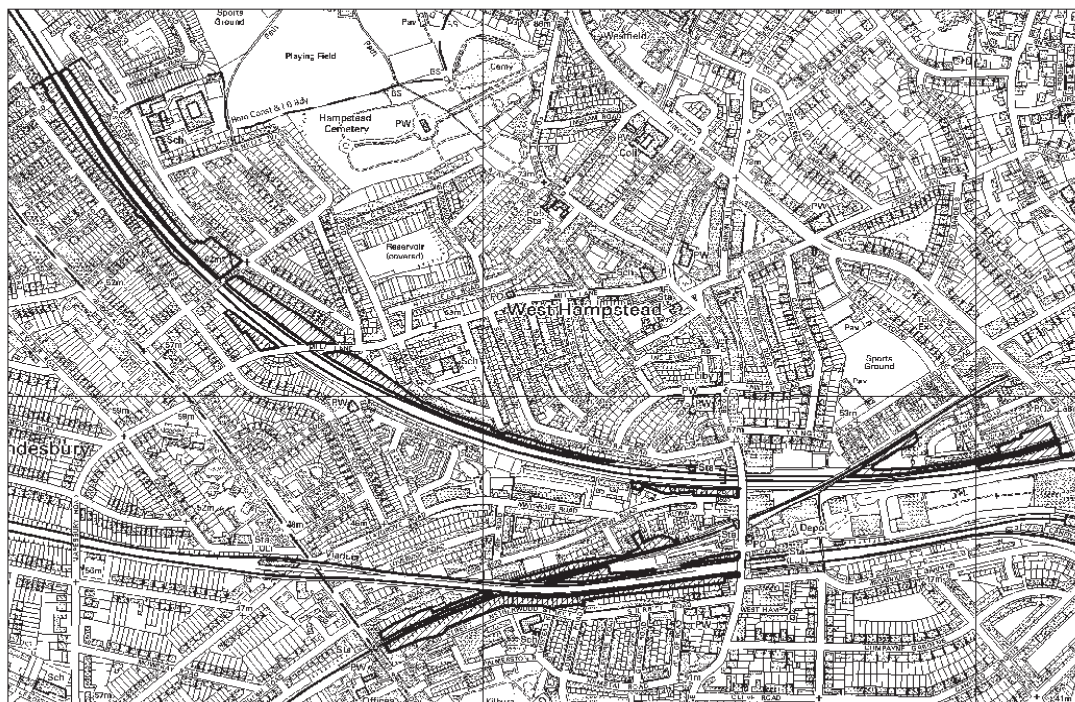
This site is composed of a number of sections of railside, an old orchard at Medley Gardens, and Westbere Copse in West Hampstead.

Land near Brondesbury is covered in a complex of scrub and secondary woodland, mostly sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and wild cherry (*Prunus avium*). More open areas support false oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), rosebay willowherb (*Chamerion angustifolium*), Michaelmas-daisy (*Aster* sp.) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.). Much of the length aside the Thameslink line is densely covered in secondary woodland, bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.), scrub and tall herb communities.

A small part of this stretch is Westbere Copse, which is managed as a nature reserve. The majority of Westbere Copse is woodland composed of sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), oak (*Quercus* sp.), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and aspen (*Populus tremula*). There is an understorey of snowberry (*Symphoricarpos rivularis*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*), elm (*Ulmus* sp.), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*). Ground flora is generally shade tolerant, for example cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), nettle (*Urtica dioica*), ivy (*Hedera helix*) and bramble. In areas with less shade these are joined by common toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*), Canadian goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*) and Michaelmas-daisy (*Aster* sp.). The London notable species common broomrape (*Orobanche minor*) has been recorded here. Common birds include blue tit, great tit, robin, blackbird, wren and dunnock.

The Medley Orchard is an old orchard, immediately adjacent to the railway behind the gardens of Medley Road. Old orchards are a rare habitat in London, and the fruit trees can support important communities of invertebrates. Medley Orchard is now largely secondary woodland of ash, but a few old fruit trees survive. It is owned by the Council.

There is free public access to the northern half of Westbere Copse. The southern part of the reserve is not open to the general public other than on workdays, which are held on the second Sunday of each month. There is no public access to railsides or to the Medley Orchard.



## List of Sites of Nature Conservation Importance in Camden

### Sites of Metropolitan Importance

<b>M006</b>	London's Canals
<b>M072</b>	Hampstead Heath
<b>M088</b>	Highgate Cemetery
<b>M095</b>	Camley Street Natural Park
<b>M097</b>	Regent's Park

### Sites of Borough Importance, Grade I

<b>CaBI01</b>	Hampstead Cemetery
<b>CaBI02</b>	Branch Hill
<b>CaBI03</b>	Waterlow Park
<b>CaBI04</b>	Kentish Town City Farm, Gospel Oak Railsides & Mortimer Terrace Nature Reserve
<b>CaBI05</b>	Chalk Farm Embankment and Adelaide Nature Reserve
<b>CaBI06</b>	West Hampstead Railsides, Medley Orchard and Westbere Copse
<b>CaBI08</b>	Hampstead Parish Churchyard

### Sites of Borough Importance, Grade II

<b>CaBII01</b>	Belsize Wood Nature Reserve
<b>CaBII02</b>	Broadhurst Gardens Meadow
<b>CaBII03</b>	Frognaal Court Wood
<b>CaBII05</b>	Primrose Hill
<b>CaBII06</b>	North London Line
<b>CaBII07</b>	St Pancras Gardens
<b>CaBII08</b>	Green Triangle
<b>CaBII09</b>	King's College Hampstead Campus
<b>CaBII10</b>	Gondar Gardens Covered Reservoir

### Sites of Local Importance

<b>CaL01</b>	Holly Lodge Gardens
<b>CaL02</b>	Greville Place Nature Reserve
<b>CaL03</b>	160 Mill Lane Community Garden
<b>CaL04</b>	Phoenix Community Garden
<b>CaL05</b>	Calthorpe Community Garden
<b>CaL07</b>	Frognaal Lane Gardens
<b>CaL08</b>	St Andrew's Gardens
<b>CaL09</b>	St George's Garden
<b>CaL10</b>	St James's Garden
<b>CaL11</b>	Russell Square
<b>CaL12</b>	Lincoln's Inn Fields
<b>CaL13</b>	Gordon Square
<b>CaL14</b>	Coram's Fields
<b>CaL15</b>	Rochester Terrace Gardens
<b>CaL16</b>	Kilburn Grange Park



**Appendix A: List of Sites of Nature Conservation Importance and corresponding Unitary Development Plan Open Space designations.**

<b>SNCI No.</b>	<b>SNCI Name</b>	<b>Open Spaces as named in the UDP</b>
<b>Metropolitan Importance</b>		
M006	London's Canals (Regent's Canal)	Regent's Canal
M072	Hampstead Heath	Athlone House Hampstead Heath also containing: part of Ken Wood Ancient Woodland part of Hampstead Heath Woods SSSI Kenwood Nursery Kenwood Estate also containing: part of Ken Wood Ancient Woodland part of Hampstead Heath Woods SSSI North Wood Ancient Woodland Hampstead Heath Woods SSSI contained within Hampstead Heath and Kenwood Estate North Wood Ancient Woodland contained within Ken Wood Estate Ken Wood Ancient Woodland contained within Ken Wood Estate
M088	Highgate Cemetery	Highgate Cemetery (East) Highgate Cemetery (West)
M095	Camley Street Natural Park	Camley Street Natural Park
M097	Regent's Park	Regent's Park
<b>Borough I Importance</b>		
CaBI01	Hampstead Cemetery	Hampstead Cemetery
CaBI02	Branch Hill	Spedan Close Gardens, Branch Hill Site I, Branch Hill Site II, Branch Hill Site III, Branch Hill SNI
CaBI03	Waterlow Park	Waterlow Park
CaBI04	Kentish Town City Farm, Gospel Oak Railsides & Mortimer Terrace Nature Reserve	Gospel Oak Ingestre SNCI, Gospel Oak Churchill SNI, Railway Embankment – Kentish Town Junction, Gospel Oak Woodyard SNCI, 184 Gospel Oak Cressfield SNCI, Kentish Town City Farm, Railway Embankment – Carlton Road Junction, Railway Embankments – Hampstead Heath, Gospel Oak Station Wood, Parliament Court Gardens, Mortimer Terrace Nature Reserve, Gospel Oak Gantry SNI, Gospel Oak Depot SNI, Railway Embankment – Oak Village, Gospel Oak Station SNCI
CaBI05	Chalk Farm Embankment and Adelaide Nature Reserve	Adelaide Road Private Nature Reserve, Adelaide Road Nature Reserve
CaBI06	West Hampstead Railsides, Medley Orchard and Westbere Copse	Westbere Copse, Jenny Wood Nature Reserve, SNCI rear of Westcroft Close, SNCI rear of Fordwych Road, SNCI rear of Iverson Road (North-East), Railway Embankments – Medley Road, SNCI between tracks west of West End Lane, SNCI west of West End Lane, Railway embankment – Netherwood Street, SNCI rear of Iverson Road (south-west), Railway embankment – Broomsleigh Street), Railway embankment – Westbere Road, Railway Embankment – Fordwych Road, Railway embankment – Rosemount Road, Medley Orchard
CaBI08	Hampstead Parish Churchyard	Hampstead Parish Churchyard

<b>SNCI No.</b>	<b>SNCI Name</b>	<b>Open Spaces as named in the UDP</b>
<b>Borough II Importance</b>		
CaBII01	Belsize Wood Nature Reserve	Belsize Wood Open Space, Belsize Wood Nature Reserve
CaBII02	Broadhurst Gardens Meadow	Broadhurst Gardens Meadows
CaBII03	Frognal Court Wood	Frognal Court Wood
CaBII05	Primrose Hill	Primrose Hill Open Space
CaBII06	North London Line	North London Line
CaBII07	St Pancras Gardens	St Pancras Gardens
CaBII08	Green Triangle	Greencroft Open Space, Goldhurst Open Space
CaBII09	King's College Hampstead Campus	King's College Hampstead Campus
CaBII10	Gondar Gardens Covered Reservoir	Gondar Gardens, Gondar Gardens Reservoir
<b>Local Importance</b>		
CaL01	Holly Lodge Gardens	Holly Lodge Gardens
CaL02	Greville Place Nature Reserve	Greville Place Nature Reserve
CaL03	160 Mill Lane Community Garden	Mill Lane (No.160)
CaL04	Phoenix Community Garden	Phoenix Community Garden
CaL05	Calthorpe Community Garden	Calthorpe Project
CaL07	Frognal Lane Gardens	Frognal Lane Gardens
CaL08	St Andrew's Gardens	St Andrew's Gardens
CaL09	St George's Garden	St George's Garden, Collingham Nursery
CaL10	St James's Garden	St James's Garden
CaL11	Russell Square	Russell Square Gardens
CaL12	Lincoln's Inn Fields	Lincoln's Inn Fields
CaL13	Gordon Square	Gordon Square Garden
CaL14	Coram's Fields	Coram's Fields
CaL15	Rochester Terrace Gardens	Rochester Terrace Garden
CaL16	Kilburn Grange Park	Kilburn Grange Park

*For more information please contact:*

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