

Highgate Newtown Community Centre and  
Fresh Youth Academy

# Preliminary Ecological Survey

NOVEMBER 2018





Highgate  
Newtown  
Community  
Centre,  
25 Bertram  
Street,  
London,  
N19 5DQ

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## Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report

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October  
2018

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Ref: 18-4442



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<i>Revision</i>	-	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>
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### Validity of Data

The findings of the site survey are valid for a period of 24 months from the date of the survey. If approved works have not commenced by this date, then an updated site survey could be required to inform any changes to the habitats present on site in order to inform any updated mitigation and or precautionary measures required on site.

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## Executive Summary

Highgate Newtown Community Centre, London, N19 5DQ, is being promoted for development by the applicant, London Borough of Camden Development Division. The proposed development is mixed commercial facilities and residential housing. In order to accommodate the new proposals, the existing buildings will either be demolished or converted.

The proposed development site comprises of four detached buildings and one semi-detached building set within hardstanding. The site is mainly hard standing with boundary defunct hedgerows, areas of garden typical and scattered scrub. The site is bound by further residential land. The buildings on site was subject to a preliminary roost assessment. The community centre (for ease in this report is referred to building 2), noted potential access points and crevice roosting spaces within the tiled roof. The former cottage (referred to as building 1 in this report), noted potential access points and crevice spaces within the soffit boards. The workshop building (referred to as building 3) noted potential access points and crevice roosting spaces within a series of cracks and recesses within the brick wall. No signs of bats in the form of droppings, marks, stains and or debris were noted during the inspections.

Habitats on the site are considered to be of some ecological value and the presence of protected species is of moderate potential. The boundary habitats provide limited potential traversing and foraging grounds for local bats. Three buildings on site noted potential crevice roosting features and were deemed as low potential. Nest boxes within the eastern boundary wall of site provides potential nesting sites for local birds. The boundary hedgerow on site provides some potential for use by nesting birds. The site's garden areas provide potential foraging habitat for local invertebrates, one active bee hive was located within the rear of building 2.

The nature of the proposed development (i.e. demolish and convert buildings on site to provide new buildings for residential, recreational and business use), and the size of the site are all factors which will combine to result in a minor positive impact upon surrounding habitats, protected species and wildlife in general, which can be compensated with precautionary measures and enhancement in place. With targeted recommendations to enhance biodiversity, the development of the site is likely to increase its ecological value and provide net gains to biodiversity in accordance with section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (DfCLG, 2018), Policy A3 of The Camden Local Plan and relevant wildlife legislation. The following further surveys and precautionary methods are recommended:

- Three of the buildings on site noted potential crevice roosting features, two of the three potential areas are recent compared to the previous 2016 inspection, records of crevice species bats are within 1km of the site, it is recommended that a detailed endoscope inspection is carried out on the three areas of noted potential, should signs of bats be found then further echolocation surveys will be required in the active survey season (May to August inclusive).
- Removal of the nesting boxes outside of the active nesting bird season (March to August inclusive), with compensation for the loss of these sites by incorporating nesting bricks/boxes into the design of one or more of the buildings on site.
- Site clearance of any offsite/overhanging boundary vegetation, to be undertaken outside the bird nesting season (March to the end of August) or immediately after an ecologist has confirmed the absence of active nests.
- A lighting plan that is direct, low lux and low light spill to ensure future use as potential traversing grounds.
- Works to the boundary hedgerow should be carried outside of the nesting bird season to ensure minimal disturbance to potential nesting sites.

## Contents

1.0 Introduction and Aims	7
2.0 Methodology	8
3.0 Constraints	10
4.0 Results	11
5.0 Impact Assessment and Recommendations	16
6.0 Conclusions	27
7.0 References	30

## Appendices

Appendix I:	Statutory Sites of Nature Conservation within 1km
Appendix II:	Non- Statutory Sites of Nature Conservation within 1km
Appendix III:	Photos of the Site
Appendix IV:	Extended Phase Habitat 1 Map
Appendix V:	Legislation

## 1.0 Introduction and Aims

- 1.1 Syntegra Group was commissioned by the applicant, London Borough of Camden Development Division to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) at Highgate Newtown Community Centre, 25 Bertram Street, London, N19 5DQ (Grid ref: TQ 2880 8648).
- 1.2 This report has been prepared in support of the Section 73 application being submitted by the London Borough of Camden Development Division ('the Applicant') to the London Borough of Camden ('the Council') for the redevelopment of the Highgate Newtown Community Centre, 25 Bertram Street, London, N19 5DQ ('the site'). The Section 73 application seeks to modify extant planning application 2016/6088/P for the following revised description of development:

"Redevelopment of the existing Highgate Newtown Community Centre and Fresh Youth Academy and the change of use of the People's Mission Gospel Hall to provide replacement community facilities (Use Class D1) and 41 residential units (Use Class C3) together with associated public open space, landscaping, cycle storage, plant and other associated infrastructure."

- 1.3 The objectives of this PEA and PRA were to:

- Map the main ecological features within the site and compile a plant species list for each habitat type;
- make an initial assessment of the presence or likely absence of species of conservation concern, survey the dwelling on site, and identify the presence or likely absence of bats and nesting birds;
- identify any legal and planning policy constraints relevant to nature conservation which may affect the development;
- determine any potential further ecological issue;



- determine the need for further surveys and mitigation; make recommendations for minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity, where possible, in accordance with Section 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment, of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (DfCLG,2018) and policy A3 of the Camden Local Plan 2017.

1.4 The site survey was undertaken by suitably qualified ecologist Patricia Holden MSc MCIEEM on the 8<sup>th</sup> October 2018. The weather conditions were suitable with 50% overcast with a slight breeze.

1.5 The current site comprises of residential accommodation, hall, gymnasium, and community buildings and one former cottage. Four out of the five buildings on site are actively used. The grounds on site show signs of regular management.

## 2.0 Methodology

### *Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*

2.1 The methods outlined in the CIEEM Guidance for Preliminary Ecological Appraisals (2017) were used for this survey. The field survey comprised of an extended Phase 1 survey (JNCC, 2010) of the proposed development site. This is a standard technique for obtaining baseline ecological information for areas of land, including proposed development sites.

2.2 Incidental records of fauna were also made during the survey and the habitats identified were evaluated for their potential to support legally protected species and other species of conservation concern.

2.3 Syntegra Consulting commissioned a record search from Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC (GiGL). The record search focused on local, statutory and non-statutory designated sites along with protected species records within a 1 km radius from the sites central grid point.

### Preliminary Roost Assessment

- 2.4 The surveys were carried out by Patricia Holden MCIEEM, an experienced ecologist who has undertaken numerous bat and nesting bird surveys and has undergone professional training in bat surveying techniques (Bat Licence # 2016-20365-CLS-CLS). The survey followed guidelines by the Bat Conservation Trust (2016) Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. The building was assessed as either negligible, low, moderate, high or confirmed, refer to table 1 below.

Table 1: Roost Classification, adapted from Collins 2016

Category	Description of Roosting Habitat	Number of Surveys Required
Negligible	Little to no suitable locations for roosting, not ideal for supporting bats	No further surveys
Low	A structure with one or more potential roosting spaces that could be used by opportunistic individual. The features and surrounding habitats do not provide enough suitable conditions and or space for use as a maternity or hibernation roost	One Survey carried out between the May and August (dusk or dawn)
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roosting spaces that could be use by individuals based on the features (size, shelter, conditions and surrounding habitat) but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation value	Two further surveys (one dusk and one dawn, spaced two weeks or more) between May-September with one survey between May and August.
High	A structure with one or more potential roosting spaces that are suitable for use regular use and or larger numbers of bats for a more prolonged period due to the conditions and surrounding habitats	Three further surveys (at least one dawn) carried out between May to September with two undertaken between May to August. The surveys must be undertaken two weeks apart, spaced surveys are preferred
Confirmed	Positive evidence of bats - i.e. droppings, individuals or bat records	

### 3.0 Constraints

- 3.1 The surveys were undertaken during the sub-optimal period in the year for botanical surveys, although some short-lived annual species may not have been identified. It is considered that no rare or threatened plant species are present on the site and therefore the timing of the survey does not significantly impact upon the findings detailed in this report.
- 3.2 The building inspection was undertaken during a time when bats are active on warmer evenings and have moved into transitional roosting spaces (BCT 2016). Whilst evidence of roosting can be confirmed by a daytime inspection, very often features that could support bats cannot be searched thoroughly to confirm whether bats are indeed roosting.
- 3.3 The record search obtained from GiGL contains sensitive records and therefore the exact locations cannot be disclosed within the report. The record search informs known protected species within 1km of the site, however, is not a definitive list of all species within 1km of the site.
- 3.4 The former cottage and the surrounding grounds were not accessible for the surveyor.
- 3.5 The client is responsible for reading and understanding the advice given in this report. The client must ensure that, where recommended, mitigation is followed through.

## 4.0 Results

### Extended Phase 1 Survey

- 4.1 The site contains the existing buildings of the Highgate Newtown Community Centre (HNCC), the Fresh Youth Academy (FYA), the People's Gospel Mission Hall, a vacant caretaker's cottage and two residential flats. These buildings are one to three storeys in height and are situated around a centralised courtyard that is used for informal parking and a community garden.
- 4.2 The site is irregular in shape and 0.27ha in size. The site comprises of five buildings set within areas of hardstanding. The site is mainly hard standing with pockets of scrub, areas of amenity space comprising of garden typical planting areas and a defunct hedgerow. The northern boundary has hard standing, buildings and a small section of defunct hedgerow. The eastern boundary has hard standing and buildings with scattered areas of garden typical planting. The southern section of the site is hardstanding and buildings. The western section of the site is hard standing and buildings with areas of residential gardens and a defunct hedgerow. The wider landscape comprises of further urban land consisting of residential and commercial buildings, roads and parks.



Figure 1: Google Map Image of the site, noted by a red pin.

- 4.3 No ponds are located within 500m radius of the site.

4.4 There are four broad habitat types found within the site and on the site boundaries, these are:

- Hard standing
- Scattered Scrub
- Defunct Hedgerow
- Amenity Areas/Garden Typical

#### Hard standing

4.5 The site's main habitat type is hard standing. Within the site are five buildings. The hard standing/car park areas noted little to no emergent vegetation. An area of AstroTurf is located within the eastern section of the building.

#### Scrub

4.6 Areas of dense and scattered scrub are located within the north-western corner and north-eastern corner of the site. Within the grounds of the former cottage (referred to as building 1 in this report) had scattered fly tipping. No access was granted to the area around building 1, as a result the species composition was observed from gaps in the defunct hedgerow and it is likely that some species were missed and are not listed in this section. Occasional emergent scrub is located within the southern boundary of the site.

4.7 Species within these areas include: sycamore saplings, bramble (*Rubus sp.*), ivy (*Hedera helix*), nettle (*Urtica dioica*), dandelion (*Taraxacum sp.*), herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum*), bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), ground ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*), sun spurge (*Euphorbia helioscopia*), annual meadow grass (*Poa annua*) and groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*).

#### Defunct Hedgerow

4.8 Within the western boundary and north-western corner of the site is a defunct hedgerow. The hedgerow shows signs of regular management with average heights of 2 metres and a width of 0.5 metres. The hedgerow consists of one species: privet (*Ligustrum sp.*) with occasional ivy.



#### Amenity Space/Garden Typical

- 4.9. Within the eastern area of the site adjacent to the AstroTurf area is a small area of raised beds. The area appears to have been left unmanaged and was once used for growing various vegetables. Within the western boundary adjacent to the buildings and defunct hedgerow is an area of amenity space with garden typical plantings. The area had limited access due to an active bee hive and the species within this area was limited to one area and likely a representative of the further residential amenity space.
- 4.10 Species within these areas include: nasturtiums (*Tropaeolum sp.*), buddleia (*Buddleja davidii*), herb Robert, groundsel, sorrel (*Rumex sp.*), clover (*Trifolium repens*), climbing rose (*Rosa sp*), dandelion, sun spurge, annual meadow grass, hop vine (*Humulus lupulus*), nettle, ash saplings (*Fraxinus excelsior*), pendulous sedge (*Carex pendula*), bindweed, strawberry, rosemary, hedge mustard (*Sisymbrium officinale*), ivy, buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*) and thistle (*Cirsium sp.*).

#### Preliminary Roost Assessment

- 4.11 The daytime internal and external inspections consisted of five buildings set within hard standing. The exteriors of the buildings were inspected for access points, and evidence of bats and nesting birds. The internal inspection of the buildings examined features of interest, potential bat roost sites and bird nesting areas. For ease of reference in this report, the buildings have been numbered and can be seen overleaf in Figure 2.

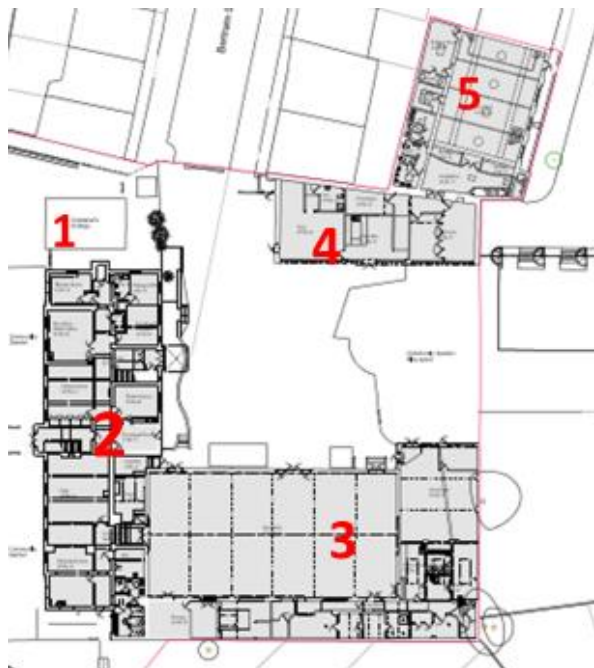


Figure 2: Layout of Buildings and Numbered for Ease of Reference in the Report

- 4.12 In summary, building 1, is a detached derelict building. The building was surrounded by a locked gate and the surveyor had limited views of the building. Building 2, consists of a three-story bricked wall under a plain tiled gable roof. Building 3, is a semi-detached building comprising of a gymnasium and a workshop. The building has brick walls under a pitched felt roof and a flat felt roof. Building 4, has brick, stone and cement walls with a flat cement roof space. Building 5, has painted brick walls under a slate roof. The table below identifies confirmed and potential features along with the potential of the buildings. Under the section, Confirmed Evidence/Potential, green denotes limited to low potential for use by roosting bats and yellow denotes potential for use by roosting bats.

Table 2: Summary of the Buildings Features, Confirmed Presence and or Potential

Building	Location	Feature	Confirmed Evidence/Potential
1	walls	brick	limited visual inspection, walls seen were in a good state of repair with no cracks, gaps or holes noted. Windows and doors enclosed with wire and metal. Areas that were viewed by ecologist show limited potential for use by crevice bats or potential access points.
	roof	cement tiled	limited visual inspection, tiles appear to be in an average state of repair. Areas that were viewed by ecologist show limited potential for use by crevice bats or potential access points.
	barge and soffits	wooden	limited visual inspection, gaps noted between walls and eastern wall, however the actual size is unknown could host potential for access and crevice space
2	walls	brick	walls in a good state of repair with no gaps, holes, cracks or missing sections - limited crevice spaces and access areas.
	roof	areas of flat cement and pitched clay tile	lifts in tiled roof noted along southern end of roof space, 10th ridge tile has missing cement with broken tile - potential for access and crevice spaces by opportunistic crevice species
	roof	brick chimneys	three enclosed in lead, lead and bricks in a good state of repair - limited potential for access and crevice opportunities.

3	walls	brick	cracks noted between two semi-detached buildings, recessed and runs longer than a metre, spacing greater than 15mm and very little to no cobwebs present - potential for access and crevice opportunities for crevice roosting species
	roof	tar/felt	pitched roof in a good state of repair. Flat felt roof in a good state of repair - limited potential for access and crevice spaces
	soffits	wooden	boxed soffits, no gaps, weathered areas, cracks or missing areas - limited potential for access and crevice spaces
4	walls	brick, stone and cement	good state of repair, no holes, cracks, gaps or missing sections - limited potential for access and crevice spaces
	roof	flat lead and flat cement	good state of repair, no holes, lifts, or missing sections, limited potential for access and crevice spaces
5	walls	painted brick and adjoin to adjacent residential building with flashing	good state of repair, no holes, gaps, cracks or missing sections, adjoining flashing had no lifts, gaps or missing sections - limited potential for access and crevice spaces
	roof	slate	areas of slight lifts in three tiles on eastern slope, but not of significant space, slate ridge in good state of repair - limited potential for access and crevice spaces
	roof	chimney, brick with flashing	good state of repair, no holes, gaps or lifts noted - limited potential

- 4.13 The internal inspection consisted of one loft space within building 2. The roof space had a ridge height of 2.2 metres. The roof space consisted of bitumen felt with timber battens and timber trusses. The roof space had two chimneys, one sitting central and one within the southern section of the loft. The floor space consisted of insulated floors cluttered with stored items. Potential access points were noted around the southern chimney with visible light noted. Crevice spaces were noted around the chimneys with gaps between the roof space and the breast and within the ridge space. No signs of bats in the form of droppings, marks, stains and or debris were noted during the inspection.
- 4.14 It is unknown whether building 1 has a loft space. Building 3 had an open planned roof space with no areas of potential access and or crevice spaces. Building 4 had drop ceilings and no loft spaces. Building 5 had an open planned roof space with no access and or crevice spaces. No signs of bats in the form of marks, stains, droppings and/or debris were noted during the inspections of building 3, 4 and 5.

## 5.0 Impact Assessment and Recommendations

### Statutory and Non-Statutory Sites

- 5.1 There are no statutory sites of nature conservation within 1km of the site. When the search is extended to 2km, there are three statutory sites, Hampstead Heath Woods Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is within 1.5km of the site, Belsize Wood and Park Wood, Local Nature Reserves (LNR). There are fourteen Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) within 1km of the site. These SINC, are local designations and recognised as important wildlife sites. The SINC have three tiers: Sites of Metropolitan Importance, Sites of Borough Importance (Grade I and II), Sites of Local Importance. The table below details the SINC sites, their location and qualifying features. The location of these SINC can be viewed in Appendix I.

**Table 3: Summary of Local Wildlife Sites Within 1km of Site**

Site Name	Designation	Location	Features
Hampstead Heath	M072 – Metropolitan	TQ 273 866	317.63 ha, noted for unique mix of habitats, deadwood, important



			site for inverts, rare jewel beetle, rare plants, birds
Highgate Cemetery	M088 – Metropolitan	TQ 287 867	14.81ha, noted for diversity of moss, lichens and ferns, important for birds and inverts
Kentish Town City Farm, Gospel Oak Railsides and Morimer Terrace Nature Reserve	CaBI04 – Borough Importance Grade I	TQ 286 853	6.72, noted for hedge, pond/lake, scrub, ruderal, Semi-Improved Neutral grassland, tall herbs, hosts population of common frogs and house sparrows
Waterlow Park	CaBI03 - Borough Importance Grade I	TQ 286 871	10.61ha, noted for ponds and wet grassland, supports waterfowl and important plant species
Dartmouth Park Hill and Reservoir	IsBI01 - Borough Importance Grade I	TQ 290 863	3.14 ha, noted for variety of grassland communities which grade from neutral to acidic types, important site for butterflies
Archway Road Cutting	IsBI02 - Borough Importance Grade I	TQ 291 872	0.71ha, noted for Secondary woodland, Semi-improved neutral grassland, important for breeding common bird species and several erected bat boxes
Upper Holloway Railway Cutting	IsBI07 - Borough Importance Grade I	TQ 299 868	4.71ha, noted for mosaic habitats important for inverts, mammals, birds, important dispersal routes

Junction Road Railway Cutting	IsBI08 - Borough Importance Grade I	TQ 291 860	0.5ha, noted for mosaic habitats important for inverts, mammals, birds, important dispersal routes
St Joseph's Social Centre	IsBII14 – Local	TQ 289 871	Infrequently used gardens of Social Centre with orchard, hedges, woodland, flowerbeds and grassland areas. Orchard habitat is extremely rare across the borough and includes mature and semi-mature trees.
Holly Lodge Gardens	CaL01-Local	TQ 281 869	1.39ha, two parkland areas with wooded avenue, uncommon mouse's-ear hawkweed ( <i>Pilosella officinarum</i> ) present and important for local birds
Harrington Site	HgL05- Local	TQ 286 875	1.32ha, noted for community horticulture project and adjacent sycamore wood, hosts greater burdock, uncommon in London
Archway Park	IsL01 – Local	TQ 294 870	0.83ha, variety of trees, shrubs and wildflowers presenting valuable features to a host of common wildlife
Foxham Gardens	IsL02- Local	TQ 296 861	0.61, noted for abundance of native trees and shrubs. The densely-planted border along the southern edge provides food and shelter for common birds and insects.

Whittington Park	IsL27- Local	TQ 297 864	3.77ha, noted wildflower meadows, native hedgerows and a small plot of woodland, important for birds included house sparrows, mistle thrush, goldfinch, greenfinch
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- 5.2 The development of the site is unlikely to have impacts upon the nature conservation status of the statutory sites within 2km and the local non-statutory sites within 1km of the site due to the small scale and nature of the proposals (i.e. placement of a new mixed use units within an already existing hard standing yard with limited habitats) the distance between them (0.25-1.8km respectively) and the intervening habitats (urban industrial and residential, railway and roads). The proposed development with further echolocation surveys and precautionary measures in place will not cause impacts on local wildlife and will ensure connectivity within the wider landscape. The site can incorporate further native and wildlife planting within the site boundaries and within the plot. The site has potential to enhance the area for local wildlife by incorporating integrated nesting features, integrated bat crevice features and bee bricks.

#### Protected Habitats

- 5.3 The site contains private gardens, a listed London priority habitat and built structures, and the site meets the criteria for other important habitats: Built Structures. The main aims for private gardens are: *'To highlight and protect the overall resource for wildlife provided by private gardens in London. To improve individual private gardens as habitat for a range of local wildlife'*. The main target for Built Structures is to encourage the provision of wildlife habitat to be incorporated into the urban and built environment through the Planning system, and in particular the Local Development Frameworks. Policy A3 of the Camden Local Plan includes the following: *'require the demolition and construction phase of development, including the movement of works vehicles, to be planned to avoid disturbance to habitats and species and ecologically sensitive areas, and the spread of invasive species and grant permission for development unless it would directly or indirectly result in the loss or harm to a designated nature conservation site or adversely affect the status or population of priority habitats and species'*

- 5.4 The site has some potential for use by crevice roosting bats (i.e. pipistrelle bats), nesting sites for local birds, potential for use by foraging invertebrates and limited traversing grounds for roosting bats. In line with Bat Conservations Trust Survey Guidelines (Collins 2016), buildings with features suitable for use by crevice species require further investigation surveys to inform likely absence. The further surveys will inform the mitigation required. New crevice roosting features are to be incorporated into the design of the buildings by use of integrated nest tubes. Nesting birds will require precautionary measures in place along with compensatory measures for the loss of nesting sites. The loss of foraging sites by local invertebrates will be compensated by use of native and wildlife friendly species. The use of green roofs (biodiverse roofs containing a wildflower and grass mixture rather than sedum mats) would be an overall positive impact as it would create additional foraging grounds for local birds, bats and invertebrate species.

#### Protected Species

##### Plants

- 5.5 All plant species recorded on the site are common and widespread, and it is considered that no rare or threatened plant species are present on the site. It is likely that some short-lived annual species were missed due to the timing of the survey. There is scope to enhance the site by incorporating wildlife planting within the plot, use of green roofs, biodiverse ones rather than use of sedum mats, particularly would be attractive for use and benefit both local invertebrates and foraging birds.

##### Bats

- 5.6 All bat species are legally protected under Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Regulation 43 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (from hereon, the '2017 Habitats Regulations'), making bats a material consideration in the planning process. The MAGIC search for an EPSL within 2km returned no known applications. The GiGL record search returned crevice roosting bat records within 152m, 249m and 250m of the site and are highlight in the table overleaf. The table below details bat records within 1km of the site.

<i>Species</i>	<i>Number of Records</i>	<i>Closest Record (m)</i>
<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>	1	644
<i>Myotis</i>	3	547
<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	20	564
<i>Myotis nattereri</i>	1	644
<i>Nyctalus</i>	2	740
<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>	3	644
<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	21	249
<i>Pipistrellus</i>	31	250
<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>	1	644
<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	22	249
<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	15	152
<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	1	644
<i>Vespertilionidae</i>	3	882



- 5.7 The roof space of building 2, the wall of building 3 and potentially the soffits of building 1 (limited access available for surveyor to complete assessment) noted potential for access and crevice space and were deemed as moderate potential for crevice roosting bat species. A previous 2016 survey noted the wall space of building 3 having notable cobwebs and the cracks were less than 20mm, since the updated survey, the cracks have less cobwebs noted and the upper sections have cracks that are greater than 15mm but less than 20mm. The missing cement within the ridge space of building 2 was not noted during the 2016 survey, so likely a more recent feature. The internal survey of the loft space of building 2, noted an open ridge space and found no droppings, marks or stains, it was considered that if crevice species were present droppings would have been found during the inspection. It is recommended that a detailed endoscope inspection is carried out to look for signs of roosting bats, should signs be found then further surveys will be required in the active survey season (May to September inclusive, with at least two surveys between the peak active season, May to August). The further surveys will inform the mitigation strategy. The spaces were unlikely to provide suitability for hibernating bats given the majority of the building's fabric are exposed to the elements and are likely to be subject to sub-zero conditions in winter.
- 5.8 The site is classified as 'small' in size under The Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines and sections of the site are considered to contain 'low to medium' quality foraging habitat, as it largely comprises of hard standing, boundary hedgerows, private gardens and some scrub. The boundary trees, provide some limited traversing habitats; however, the site is enveloped by further roads and buildings. It is thought the site has limited potential use for foraging and traversing grounds for local bats.
- 5.9 The proposed works can maintain good potential foraging and traversing grounds for local bats by a lighting scheme that is low lux, and of low level and direct lighting. Future enhancements for bats, including UK BAP priority species such as soprano pipistrelle bats, can be achieved by planting vegetation of native and wildlife friendly species that attract insects (such as jasmine or honeysuckle) to provide good foraging grounds for local bats. It is recommended that the new buildings incorporate crevice roosting designs; this can be achieved by use of bat tubes incorporated into the walls, at a height of 3-5 metres, facing southerly.

### Birds

- 5.10 The site is characterised by hard standing, boundary hedgerows, private gardens and scrub. The denser scrub areas on site and the hedgerows within the boundaries some suitability for use as nesting sites. The buildings noted no areas of remnant or active nesting sites. Nesting boxes were located on the eastern wall but had no signs of active or remnant use. The GiGL record search returned several species of birds within 1km of the site including: Swift, Water Rail, Goldcrest, Tawny Owl, Redwing, Fieldfare, Mistle Thrush, Lapwing, Song Thrush, Fieldfare, Ring Ouzel, House Martin, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Kestrel, Herring Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Linnet, Common Crossbill, Red Kite, Grey Wagtail, Spotted Flycatcher, House Sparrow, Willow Warbler, Dunnock, Firecrest, Goldcrest, Sand Martin, Woodcock, Common Tern, Starling, Redshank and Redwing, Skylark, Wigeon, Meadow Pipit, Grey Heron, Cuckoo and Mute Swan.
- 5.11 The versatility of most bird species means they can utilise almost any habitats encountered, and it is considered that the shrub on the south eastern side has some nesting bird potential. Site clearance of vegetation must be carried outside of nesting bird season (March to August inclusive) or unless first checked by a suitably qualified ecologist. The boxes within the western wall must be removed outside of the active nesting season.
- 5.12 It is considered that an appropriately designed landscaping scheme could enhance the site for nesting and foraging birds and that the development will not significantly affect local bird populations as there was limited nesting opportunities on site. Furthermore, the installation of various bird boxes on site, will provide nesting sites for a variety of species post-development, given the records of redwing, house sparrow and swift within 1km of the site, boxes that support these species are recommended for use.

### Badgers

5.13 Badgers (*Meles meles*) are legally protected under The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and, as such, are of consideration when applying the principles of the NPPF (DfCLG, 2018). It is a criminal offence to:

- Wilfully kill, injure, or take any badger;
- Possess or cruelly ill-treat a badger;
- Possess any dead badger or part of one;
- Possess or control a living, healthy badger;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a sett, or disturb a badger whilst it is occupying a sett.

5.14 No evidence indicating that badgers have excavated setts on the site was found during the survey and no evidence of foraging or dispersal activity was found (e.g. snuffle holes, latrines, pathways, hair, feeding remains). No setts were seen in the adjacent habitats surrounding the site, and the surrounding habitats offer limited potential that a population is within the area. The GiGL record search results returned no known records of badgers within 1km of the site.

### Great Crested Newts

5.15 GCN are legally protected under section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and regulation 43 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) thus making GCN a material consideration of the planning process.

5.16 From studying OS maps and aerial photographs, no ponds were identified within 500m of the site. It is considered unlikely that newts are on or within close proximity of the site. It is not considered that GCN will be impacted by the proposals and no further surveys are recommended. The GiGL record search returned no known records for gcn within 1km of the site.

### Reptiles

- 5.17 The site's habitats offer limited to no potential foraging and sheltering opportunities as well as traversing grounds for local reptiles. The site is enveloped by further urban land with limited vegetation and the site itself is bound by roads or brick walls reducing the likelihood of any individuals gaining access to the site from the adjacent properties. It is not considered that reptilian species will be impacted by the proposals and no further surveys are recommended. The GiGL record search returned no known records for reptilian species within 1km of the site.

### Hedgehogs

- 5.18 Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) are protected under UK law, by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The sites habitat provide very limited to no potential habitat for hedgehogs. The site is bound by dense urban land reducing the overall likelihood of individuals being present on site. It is considered of lower potential that hedgehogs are on site and precautionary measures will be required, these include careful clearance of vegetation on site and mammal ladders provided for all trenches, ditches and or holes during the construction period. The record search returned 13 known records within 1km of the site for hedgehog with the closest record 207m from the site.

### Invertebrates

- 5.19 The site's habitats are likely to support limited amounts of notable invertebrate species, such as butterflies, moths and beetles. An active bee hive likely used by European Honey Bees was located within the rear gardens of building 2. This active hive will need to be removed prior to the works. Considering the quality habitat, impacts upon notable invertebrate species or significant populations of widespread species from the proposed development are extremely low. It is unlikely that the habitats on the site provide habitat for common and widespread species, it is not considered that any further surveys are required nor does the site host important habitats for use by local species. The GiGL record search returned numerous records of invertebrates within 1km of the site including: *Nigma walckenaeri*, *Lucanus cervus*, *Limenitis camilla*, *Acrionicta psi*, *Acrionicta rumicis*, *Agrochola litura*, *Agrochola lychnidis*, *Amphipyra tragopoginis*, *Apamea anceps*, *Apamea remissa*, *Atethmia centrargo*, *Calophasia lunula*, *Caradrina morpheus*, *Cirrhia icteritia*, *Diarsia rubi*, *Ecliptopera silaceata*, *Ennomos fuscantaria*, *Graphiphora augur*, *Gripotia aprilina*, *Leucania comma*, *Lycia hirtaria*, *Malacosoma Neustria*, *Oegoconia caradjai*, *Scopula marginipunctata*, *Spilosoma lubricipeda*, *Spilosoma lutea*, *Tyria jacobaeae*, *Watsonalla binaria* and *Volucella zonaria*.

5.20 Given the records of moths and butterflies within 1km of the site it is recommended that the site includes a landscaping design that includes nectar rich plants and use of biodiverse green roofs, coupled with the installation of 'insect hotels/bug boxes' would provide good invertebrate habitat on the site post-development. The building can incorporate bee bricks into the design of the buildings.

## 6.0 Conclusions

6.1 Habitats on the site are considered to be of some ecological value and the presence of protected species is of moderate potential. Further surveys, mitigation and precautionary measures must be in place to ensure no harm comes to potential protected species on and adjacent to the site. Building 1, 2 and 3 noted features that have the potential to support individual crevice roosting bat species and were deemed as moderate potential. The record search returned known records of crevice roosting bats including common and soprano pipistrelle within 250 metres of the site. The denser scrub areas and hedgerows provide potential for use by nesting birds. The gardens and scrub areas provide potential for use by local invertebrates. There is nil potential for use by reptiles, great crested newts, badgers and hedgehogs. The nature of the proposed development, with additional surveys, precautionary and mitigation measures in place, will ensure that the proposals will have no adverse impacts upon surrounding habitats, protected species and wildlife in general. The following further mitigation and precautionary methods are recommended:

- Three of the buildings on site noted potential crevice roosting features, two of the three potential areas are recent compared to the previous 2016 inspection, records of crevice species bats are within 1km of the site, it is recommended that a detailed endoscope inspection is carried out on the three areas of noted potential, should signs of bats be found then further echolocation surveys will be required in the active survey season (May to August inclusive).
- Removal of the nesting boxes outside of the active nesting bird season (March to August inclusive), with compensation for the loss of these sites by incorporating nesting bricks/boxes into the design of one or more of the buildings on site.
- Site clearance of any offsite/overhanging boundary vegetation, to be undertaken outside the bird nesting season (March to the end of August) or immediately after an ecologist has confirmed the absence of active nests.

- A lighting plan that is direct, low lux and low light spill to ensure future use as potential traversing grounds.
- Works to the boundary hedgerow should be carried outside of the nesting bird season to ensure minimal disturbance to potential nesting sites.

6.2 The table below summarises the potential protected species on site, proposed mitigation methods and prescribed enhancements for the site.

**Table 4: Potential Protected Species/Habitats on Site and Proposed Mitigation and Enhancement**

<i>Species/Habitats</i>	<i>Impact</i>	<i>Mitigation</i>	<i>Compensation</i>
Private Gardens Priority Habitat and Built Structure – Other Habitat Listed under London BAP Priority Habitats	Potential loss of foraging roosting and nesting sites	<i>Further echolocation surveys to determine likely absence and inform mitigation. Site clearance and building works near vegetation to be outside of nesting bird season or unless first checked by a suitably qualified ecologist</i>	Incorporation of future nesting sites on site by use of swift bricks, house sparrow boxes and bat tubes within southern facing walls at a height of 3-5 metres, planting of native and wildlife friendly species and use of biodiverse green roofs
Bats	Moderate Potential for use by Crevice Roosting Species	FURTHER SURVEYS – endoscope inspections first to determine next steps	Planting of wildlife-friendly species within the site, to encourage insect biomass. Bat boxes incorporated into building to provide future crevice roosting areas
Nesting Birds	Potential loss of nesting sites	Take down nest boxes and works on or adjacent to onsite vegetation outside nesting bird season (March to August inclusive), unless first checked by SQE	Incorporation of future nesting sites on site by use of swift bricks, redstart boxes and house sparrow boxes



6.3 It is considered that any potential adverse impacts from the proposed development upon specific protected species will be able to be wholly mitigated through an ecologically lead design process. In addition, a sensitive landscape design could provide enhancements to the habitats on and adjacent to the site which in turn will benefit multiple species and biodiversity in general, in accordance with section 15 of the NPPF (DfCLG, 2018). Proposed enhancements include:

- Nesting and Bat Boxes placed incorporated into the design of the buildings
- Wildlife-friendly planting scheme, where ever possible use of biodiverse green roofs, non-sedum types
- Bee Bricks incorporated into the design of the buildings

## 7.0 References

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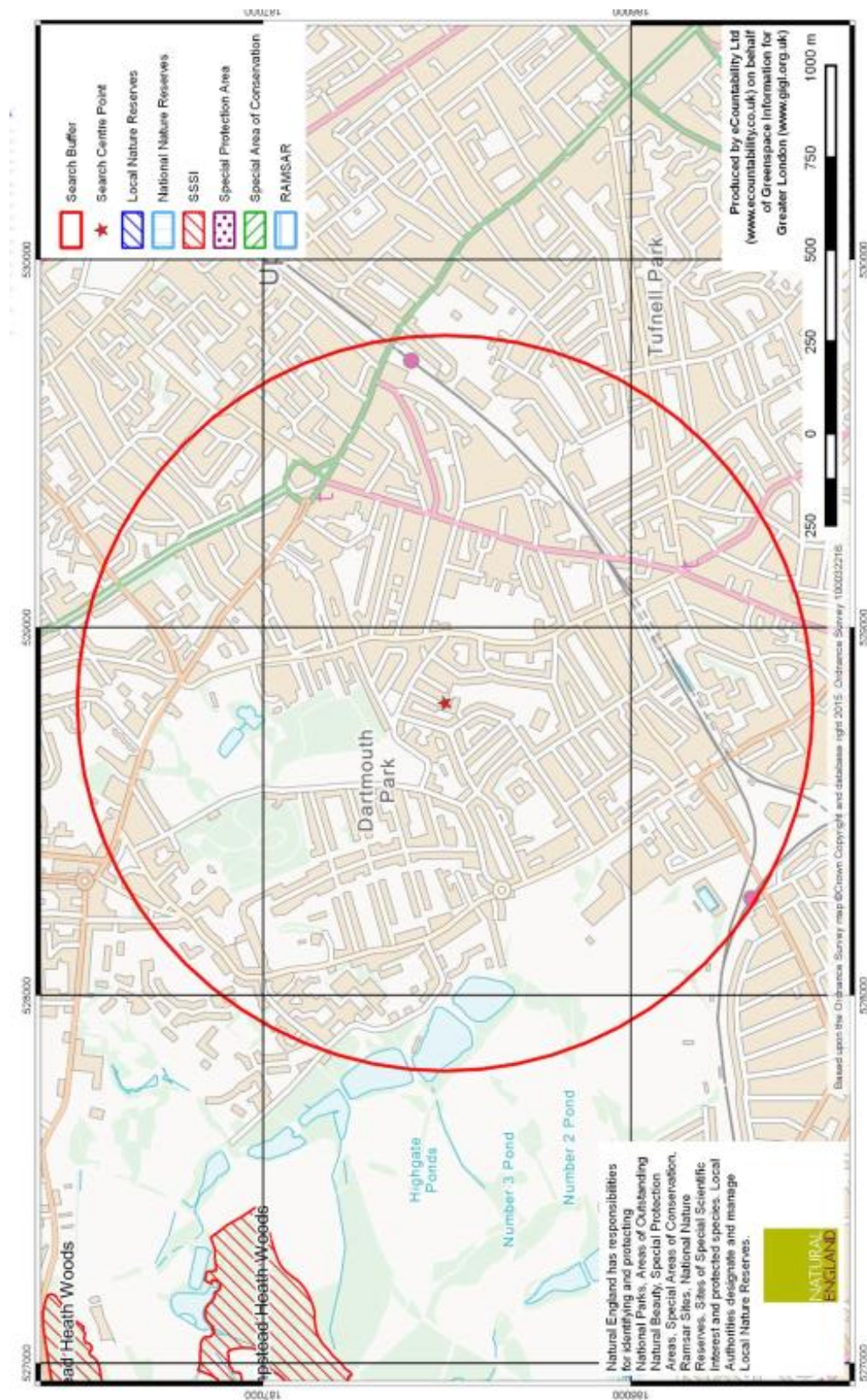
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JNCC (2010) *Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey- A technique for environmental audit*. ISBN 0 86139 636 7.

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## Appendix I: Statutory Nature Conservation Sites within 1km





The map displays the following information:

- Legend:**
  - Search Buffer (Red outline)
  - Search Centre Point (Red star)
  - Metropolitan Importance (Red hatched area)
  - Borough Importance Grade 1 (Orange hatched area)
  - Borough Importance Grade 2 (Yellow hatched area)
  - Local Importance (Green hatched area)
  - Areas of Deficiency (Blue hatched area)
- Map Labels:**
  - Highgate Ponds
  - Number 3 Pond
  - Number 2 Pond
  - Number 1 Pond
  - Number 4 Pond
  - Number 5 Pond
  - Number 6 Pond
  - Number 7 Pond
  - Number 8 Pond
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  - Number 100 Pond
- Scale:** 0 to 1000 m
- Production:** Produced by eCountability Ltd (www.eCountability.co.uk) on behalf of Greenspace Information for Greater London (www.gigl.org.uk)

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### Appendix III: Photos of the Site



Hole and missing section of ridge tile in building 2



Crack in brick wall building 3



No access to building 1



Garden typical areas to rea of building 2



Fly tipping and scrub within gardens of building 1



Hedgerow within western boundary





Bird boxes within eastern section of site

## Appendix IV: Extended Phase 1 Habitat Map



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## Appendix V: Legislation

This section details the legislation relevant to the protection of species and habitats. It also details the relevant policies within national, regional, and local planning policy.

### *NPPF*

The National Planning Policy Framework in summary requires that the planning system should aim to contribute and enhance the natural and local environment. The aims are to: protect and enhance valued landscapes as well as geological conservation interests and soils; recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services; and minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible.

### *UK BAP*

The UK Biodiversity Action Plan was published in 1994 in response to the Biodiversity Convention. The plan aims to enhance biological diversity of the UK through implementation of the Habitat Action Plans (HAPs) and Species Action Plans (SAPs), written for priority habitats and species.

### *Biodiversity Laws*

Statutory protection is afforded to certain wild habitats and species through European Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora (the 'Habitats Directive'). This has been adopted into UK legislation under the 2017 Habitats Regulations. At the national level protection is found in the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA 1981; as amended) and it is designed to protect species and habitats considered to be of principal importance in order to conserve biodiversity.

Under Regulation 43 of the 2017 Habitats Regulations it is an offence to deliberately capture or kill a wild animal of a European protected species, deliberately disturb any such animal and to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting site. Since August 2007 amendments to the Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994 have changed the term 'deliberately disturb' such that it is an offence if the species are disturbed in such a way that it is likely to significantly affect the colony's ability to survive, breed or rear their young; or affect the local distribution or abundance of that species.

The WCA 1981 (as amended) is the principle mechanism for the statutory protection of wild flora and fauna in the United Kingdom. Reptiles, including slow worms and grass snakes, are protected under Schedule 9(1) against intentional killing and injuring. Nesting birds are also protected under the WCA 1981 (as amended) which makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take them, take, damage or destroy their nest whilst in use or being built, or to take or destroy their eggs.

All species of bats are strictly protected through UK and European regulations. Bats have been placed on protected lists due to the overall steady decline of species over the last century. Under section 9 in conjunction with Schedule 5 of the WCA 1981 (as amended), all bats are protected from intentional or reckless disturbance. Additional protection for all bat species is provided under Schedule 2 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Licences are needed if the disturbance is to produce a significant effect on the bat colony, which would otherwise be an offence. These may be granted for the purposes specified under section 16 of the WCA 1981 as well as under Section 55 under the Habitat Regulations, following the submission of a licence application to Natural England.

Badgers are protected under the Badger Protection Act 1992 and under Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended); badgers are classified as a species of conservation concern under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and listed under Appendix III of the Bern Convention.