

## **APPENDIX 2.3: ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL**



# **Mount Pleasant, London**

## **Ecological Appraisal**

November 2012

### **Waterman Energy, Environment & Design Limited**

Merchants House, Wapping Road, Bristol BS1 4RW , United Kingdom  
[www.watermangroup.com](http://www.watermangroup.com)



# Mount Pleasant, London

## Ecological Appraisal

**Client Name:** Royal Mail Group  
**Document Reference:** EED13235-R-3-1-2-HMB  
**Project Number:** EED13235

### Quality Assurance – Approval Status

This document has been prepared and checked in accordance with Waterman Group's IMS (BS EN ISO 9001: 2008 and BS EN ISO 14001: 2004)

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Issue	Date	Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by
First	November 2012	Hayley Bishop Consultant Ecologist	Fiona McKenzie Technical Director	Fiona McKenzie Technical Director

### Comments

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### Comments

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#### Our Markets



Property & Buildings



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## Disclaimer

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## Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
2. Methodologies .....	2
3. Legislation and Policy.....	4
4. Results and Evaluations .....	9
5. Discussion and Recommendations.....	14
6. Conclusions .....	16

## Tables

Table 1: Statutory Designated Sites within 2km of the Site .....	9
Table 2: Non-Statutory Sites within 500m of the Site.....	9
Table 3: Desk-Based Study Records of Flora and Fauna within 2km of the Site .....	10

## Figures

Figure 1: Habitat Features Plan – E13235-100\_GR\_EC\_1A

## Appendices

A. Photographs

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. Waterman Energy, Environment & Design Ltd (Waterman EED) was commissioned by Royal Mail Group (hereafter referred to as the 'Applicant') to undertake an ecological appraisal of land surrounding the existing Royal Mail Sorting Office at Mount Pleasant, Clerkenwell, London (hereafter referred to as the 'Site').

### **The Site**

- 1.2. The Site is approximately 4.8 hectares (ha) in area and is located at Ordnance Survey (OS) Grid Reference TQ 312818, within the administrative boundaries of both the London Borough of Islington (LBI) and the London Borough of Camden (LBC). The Site is separated into two distinct areas by Phoenix Place; referred to as the 'Calthorpe Street site' and the 'Phoenix Place site' respectively. Phoenix Place itself forms the administrative boundary between LBI and LBC, with the Calthorpe Street site being located within LBI and Phoenix Place site within LBC. The Site is bound by Farringdon Road to the north-east, Calthorpe Street to the north-west, Gough Street to the south-west and Mount Pleasant to the south-east.

### **The Development**

- 1.3. The Applicant is seeking to obtain full planning permission for a residential led mixed-use development (hereafter referred to as the 'Development').

### **Aims and objectives of this assessment**

- 1.4. The purpose of this report is to:
- Establish and evaluate the ecological value of the existing habitats on the Site;
  - Highlight any possible ecological issues identified through the appraisal and background data searches as well as identify opportunities for the development of the Site; and
  - Make recommendations for the protection of ecological features within the Site, as well as mitigation and enhancement measures, where appropriate, and specify further work required.

## 2. Methodologies

- 2.1. This section summarises the methodology used for undertaking the ecological appraisal, which included an ecological data search and Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey. The basis for evaluating the ecological resources is also described in this section.

### Ecological Data Search

- 2.2. The aim of the ecological data search is to collate existing ecological records for the Site and adjacent areas. Obtaining existing records is an important part of the evaluation process because it provides additional information that may not be apparent during a site survey.
- 2.3. An ecological desk study was undertaken in October 2012, during which all records of protected species, Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species, and/or other notable fauna and flora from within 2km of the centre of the Site were requested from Green Space Information for Greater London (GIGL).
- 2.4. Given the scale of the development, the context of the Site and the fact that the development is confined to the area within the Site itself, it is considered that an ecological data search area of 2km was a sufficient ecological Zone of Influence (ZoI) to sought records.
- 2.5. Records of important statutory and non-statutory sites designated for their nature conservation value were also requested from GIGL. Sites with statutory, national or international designations could typically include Local Nature Reserves (LNR), notified or candidate Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), National Nature Reserve (NNR), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA) or Ramsar sites. Sites with non-statutory designations of local value would typically include Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).
- 2.6. Habitats and species plans in the National Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP)<sup>1</sup> as well as the London BAP<sup>2</sup> and Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAP) for Camden<sup>3</sup> and Islington<sup>4</sup> were consulted with regards to species and habitats that might be present on or adjacent to the Site. Such action plans have been produced for a whole suite of habitats and species as part of the Government's commitment to maintain and enhance local and national biodiversity.

### Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

- 2.7. An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey of the Site was undertaken on 19 September 2012 using the Joint Nature Conservancy Council (JNCC, 1990)<sup>5</sup> standard 'Phase 1' survey techniques (at a level intermediate between the NCC Standard 'Phase 1' and 'Phase 2' Survey). The survey was used to determine the habitats present on the Site, the dominant plant species and any obvious faunal activity. The survey also aimed to identify the presence of, or potential for, protected species within and surrounding the Site. All habitat types within the Site were mapped (see Figure 1).
- 2.8. The Site survey was conducted within the optimum survey season (April-September) when the majority of plant species are visible; all plants were identified through their floristic and vegetative characteristics.

<sup>1</sup> UK Biodiversity Action Plan available at: [www.ukbap.org.uk](http://www.ukbap.org.uk)

<sup>2</sup> London Biodiversity Action Plan available at <http://www.lbp.org.uk/londonpriority.html>

<sup>3</sup> LBC (2002). Camden Local Biodiversity Action Plan, 2002.

<sup>4</sup> LBI (2011) Islington's Biodiversity Strategy 2011-2013: Spaces for wildlife, places for people.

<sup>5</sup> JNCC (1990). Handbook for Phase I Habitat Survey. Nature Conservancy Council.



## Evaluation

- 2.9. The habitat and species evaluations are based on published guidance from the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (IEEM, 2006)<sup>6</sup>. The value of specific ecological receptors is assigned using a geographic frame of reference, i.e. international value being most important, then national, regional, county, district, local and lastly, within the boundary of the Site only. A negligible value is assigned where the habitat offers no value to wildlife.
- 2.10. Value judgements are based on various characteristics that can be used to identify ecological resources or features likely to be important in terms of biodiversity. These include site designations (such as Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)), or for undesignated features, the size, conservation status (locally, nationally or internationally), and the quality of the ecological resource. In terms of the latter, 'quality' can refer to habitats (for instance if they are particularly diverse, or a good example of a specific habitat type), other features (such as wildlife corridors or mosaics of habitats) or species populations or assemblages.

<sup>6</sup> Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2006). *Guidelines for Baseline Ecological Assessment in the United Kingdom*. E & F.N. Spon, Chapman & Hall, London.

### 3. Legislation and Policy

#### Legislation

- 3.1. Specific habitats and species of relevance to the Site receive legal protection in the UK under various pieces of legislation, including:
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010<sup>7</sup>;
  - The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)<sup>8</sup>;
  - The Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000<sup>9</sup>; and
  - The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006<sup>10</sup>.
- 3.2. Where relevant, this appraisal takes account of the legislative protection afforded to specific habitats and species.

#### Planning Policy

##### National Planning Policy

###### National Planning Policy Framework, 2012

- 3.3. The National Planning Policy Framework<sup>11</sup> (NPPF), which was adopted in March 2012, replaces Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation<sup>12</sup> (PPS9) with respect to ecology and biodiversity.
- 3.4. The NPPF encourages the planning system to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. This should be achieved by:
- *“Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;*
  - *Recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services;*
  - *Minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the government’s commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;*
  - *Preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at an unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability; and*
  - *Remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate”.*
- 3.5. The NPPF also stipulates that Local Planning Authorities, when determining planning applications, should seek to conserve and enhance biodiversity, by applying the following principles:
- Proposed development on land within or outside a SSSI likely to have an adverse effect on a SSSI (either individually or in combination with other developments) should not normally be

<sup>7</sup> HMSO, 2010 ‘The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations’

<sup>8</sup> HMSO, 1981 ‘The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) (as amended)

<sup>9</sup> HMSO, 2000, ‘The Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act’

<sup>10</sup> ODPM, Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)

<sup>11</sup> Department of Communities and Local Government (March 2012) ‘National Planning Policy Framework, 2012’

<sup>12</sup> Office of Deputy Prime Minister DPM (2005): Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation.

permitted. Where an adverse effect on the sites notified special interest feature is likely, an exception should only be made where the benefits of the development, at this site, clearly outweigh both the impacts that it is likely to have on the features of the site that will make it of special scientific interest and any broader impacts on the national network of SSSI;

- Development proposals where the primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be permitted;
  - Opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged;
  - Planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and the loss of aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland, unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss; and
  - The following wildlife sites should be given the same protection as European sites:
    - potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation
    - listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and
    - sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on European sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar site.
- 3.6. If significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts) adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.

## Regional Planning Policy

### Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London (The London Plan), (July 2011)

- 3.7. The London Plan<sup>13</sup> is the overall strategic plan for London, and it sets out a fully integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of the capital to 2031.
- 3.8. London Plan Policy 7.17: Metropolitan Open Land states that:
- “The strongest protection should be given to London’s Metropolitan Open Land and inappropriate development refused, except in very special circumstances, giving the same level of protection as in the Green Belt. Essential ancillary facilities for appropriate uses will only be acceptable where they maintain the openness of MOL.”*
- 3.9. Policy 7.18: Protecting Local Open Space and Addressing Local Deficiency states that:
- “The loss of local protected open spaces must be resisted unless equivalent or better quality provision is made within the local catchment area. Replacement of one type of open space with another is unacceptable unless an up to date needs assessment shows that this would be appropriate.”*
- 3.10. Policy 7.19: Biodiversity and Access to Nature states that:
- “The Mayor will work with all relevant partners to ensure a proactive approach to the protection, enhancement, creation, promotion and management of biodiversity in support of the Mayor’s Biodiversity Strategy. This means planning for nature from the beginning of the development process and taking opportunities for positive gains for nature through the layout, design and*

<sup>13</sup> The London Plan - Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London (July 2011)

materials of development proposals and appropriate biodiversity action plans. Development Proposals should:

- a) wherever possible, make a positive contribution to the protection, enhancement, creation and management of biodiversity;
- b) prioritise assisting in achieving targets in Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) and/or improving access to nature in areas deficient in accessible wildlife sites;
- c) not adversely affect the integrity of European sites, and be resisted where they have significant adverse impact on European or nationally designated sites or on the population or conservation status of a protected species or a priority species identified in a UK, London or borough BAP;
- d) On Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation development proposals should:
  - give the highest protection to sites with existing or proposed international designations (SACs, SPAs, Ramsar sites) and national designations (SSSIs, NNRs) in line with the relevant EU and UK guidance and regulations
  - give strong protection to sites of metropolitan importance for nature conservation (SMIs). These are sites jointly identified by the Mayor and boroughs as having strategic nature conservation importance
  - give sites of borough and local importance for nature conservation the level of protection commensurate with their importance.
- e) When considering proposals that would affect directly, indirectly or cumulatively a site of recognised nature conservation interest, the following hierarchy will apply:
  - 1 avoid adverse impact to the biodiversity interest;
  - 2 minimize impact and seek mitigation; and
  - 3 only in exceptional cases where the benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh the biodiversity impacts, seek appropriate compensation.”

3.11. Policy 5.3: Sustainable design and construction, suggests that London Boroughs should ensure future development meets the highest standards of sustainable design, including measures to conserve and enhance the natural environment, particularly in relation to biodiversity and green infrastructure.

#### [The Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy: Connecting with London's Nature \(2002\)](#)

3.12. The Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy<sup>14</sup> aims to protect and enhance the natural habitats of London. The strategy identifies the key issues, and outlines how biodiversity in London can be maintained and enhanced. The following proposal is considered relevant to the Site:

3.13. Proposal 6: Greening new developments states that:

*“The Mayor will and Borough's should ensure that new development capitalises on opportunities to create, manage and enhance wildlife habitat and natural landscape. Priority should be given to sites within or near to areas deficient in accessible wildlife sites, areas of regeneration, and adjacent to existing wildlife sites”.*

<sup>14</sup> Greater London Authority (2002) The Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy

The London Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance: Sustainable Design and Construction, 2006

- 3.14. The Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Guidance<sup>15</sup> (SPG) states that new development should meet the highest standards of sustainable design and construction which will include measures to conserve and enhance the natural environment, particularly in relation to biodiversity. In addition the SPG gives essential and preferred standards with regard to the natural environment and biodiversity as:
- **“Essential Standards:** No net loss of biodiversity and access to nature on the development site; and no reduction in areas of deficiency of access to nature; and
  - **Preferred Standards:** Net gain of biodiversity and access to nature on the development site.”

### Local Planning Policy

Camden Local Development Framework, Camden Core Strategy, 2010-2025, Adopted November, 2010

- 3.15. Policy CS15 (Protecting and improving our parks and open spaces and encouraging biodiversity) of LBC’s Core Strategy<sup>16</sup> sets out relevant requirements to protect and improve parks, open spaces and to encourage biodiversity. To achieve this, the council state they 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:*

- *protecting other green areas with nature conservation value, including gardens, where possible;*
- *expecting the provision of new or enhanced habitat, where possible, including through biodiverse green or brown roofs and green walls; and*
- *protecting trees and promoting the provision of new trees and vegetation, including additional street trees.”*

Camden Local Development Framework, Camden Development Policies, Adopted November 2010

- 3.16. DP31 (Provision of, and improvements to, open space and outdoor sport and recreation facilities) of the Development Policies supports Policy CS15 of the Core Strategy; however this focusses primarily on open space, not biodiversity.

Islington Local Development Framework, Islington Core Strategy, Adopted February 2011

- 3.17. Policy CS10 (Sustainable Design) of LBI’s Core Strategy<sup>17</sup> seeks to minimise Islington’s contribution to climate change and ensure that the borough develops in a way which respects environmental limits and improves quality of life. This policy make specific reference to ecology:

*“Requiring all development to demonstrate that it protects existing site ecology and makes the fullest contribution to enhancing biodiversity, both through on-site measures and by contribution to local biodiversity improvements.”*

<sup>15</sup> Greater London Authority (2006). The London Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance: Sustainable Design and Construction. [On-line]. Available from <http://static.london.gov.uk/mayor/strategies/sds/docs/spg-sustainable-design.pdf> [Accessed: 18/01/10].

<sup>16</sup> London Borough of Camden (LBC) (2010). Camden Local Development Framework, Camden Core Strategy, 2010 -2025, Pre-Adoption Version, September 2010.

<sup>17</sup> London Borough of Islington (LBI) (2011). Islington Local Development Framework, Islington Core Strategy, February 2011.

3.18. Policy CS10 (Open Space and Green Infrastructure) of LBI's Core Strategy states the council will provide inclusive spaces for residents and visitors, and create a greener borough by:

*"Protecting and enhancing biodiversity across the borough and addressing deficiencies in access to nature. Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation will be protected in line with their hierarchical importance and improvements to their biodiversity value will be supported. SINC's will be identified and designated in the Development Management Policies. Other key habitats, and priority species within them, will also be protected and enhanced including:*

- *Built environment;*
- *Canals, waterways and standing water (this includes ponds);*
- *Parks and urban green spaces;*
- *Private gardens, community gardens, and allotments;*
- *Railside land;*
- *School grounds;*
- *Woodland;*
- *Acid grassland;*
- *Cemeteries; and*
- *Other habitats deemed important for London."*

3.19. Policy CS10 also make reference to green roofs, stating:

*"Maximising opportunities to 'green' the borough through planting, green roofs, and green corridors to encourage and connect green spaces across the borough, identifying streets, sites and strategic development areas where greening measures could happen."*

## **Biodiversity Action Plans**

3.20. The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP)<sup>18</sup> lists a number of priority habitats and species for conservation action in the UK. Although the UK BAP does not confer any statutory legal protection, in practice many of the species listed already receive statutory legal protection under UK and / or European legislation. In addition, there are Priority Species and Habitats in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan which are also Species and Habitats of Principal Importance for the Conservation of Biodiversity under Section 74 of the CRoW Act 2000. This places a duty on government departments to have regard for these species and habitats when carrying out their functions.

3.21. The UK BAP was set up to identify species and habitats under threat and deliver coordinated and targeted progress towards their conservation. This is achieved through the production of Habitat Action Plans (HAPs) and Species Action Plans (SAPs). Habitats on the UK BAP are incorporated into Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAP) at local (London, Camden and Islington) levels.

3.22. The following UK, London, Camden and Islington SAPs and HAPs are relevant to the Site:

- Built Environment;
- Parks, Open Spaces, allotments and Private Gardens;
- Bats;
- House sparrow *Passer domesticus*; and
- Swift *Apus apus*.

<sup>18</sup> JNCC (2008). UK Biodiversity Action Plan: New List of Priority Species and Habitats. [On-line]. Available from <http://www.ukbap.org.uk/NewPriorityList.aspx>.

## 4. Results and Evaluations

### Statutory Sites

- 4.1. The Site is not subject to any statutory ecological designation. However, there are two Local Nature Reserves within 2km of the Site which are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: Statutory Designated Sites within 2km of the Site

Site Name	Designation	Distance / Direction from Site (km)	Description / Citation
Barnsbury Wood	LNR	1.9km north	The woodland is a valuable wildlife habitat in a borough with very little mature broad-leaved woodland.
Camley Street Nature Park	LNR	1.4km west north	This site is an urban wild space containing a range of habitat examples created on former vacant land.

### Non-statutory Sites

- 4.2. Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) have been identified by the Greater London Authority on account of their flora and fauna. There are three tiers of sites; Sites of Metropolitan Importance (SMI), Sites of Borough Importance (SBI) and Sites of Local Importance (SLI). The Site itself is not within or adjacent to any non-statutory designated sites. However there are 42 SINCs within 2km of the Site and those closest to Site (within approximately 500m) have been detailed in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Non-Statutory Sites within 500m of the Site

Site Name	Designation	Distance / Direction from Site (km)	Description/Citation
Calthorpe Community Garden	SLI	450m north west	An attractive garden with a good range of wildlife habitats.
St. Andrews Gardens	SLI	100m north west	A former churchyard, now an attractive small park with plenty of trees and shrubs.
St. George's Gardens	SLI	500m north west	A former churchyard, now a small park with plenty of trees and shrubs.
Coram's Fields	SLI	500m west	A park with many facilities for children, including playgrounds, sports facilities and a pets corner. The eastern area is being developed as a wildlife garden.
Lloyd Square	SLI	450m north east	Lloyd Square is a small privately managed square with a charming, unkempt feel perfect for encouraging wildlife.
Wilmington Square	SLI	140m north east	A picturesque town square with the unusual feature of a pedestrian walkway rather than a road along its northern edge.



- 4.3. The Site is within an 'Area of Deficiency' which has been defined as a built up area more than 1km actual walking distance from an accessible Metropolitan or Borough Site.

### Protected, BAP and Other Notable Species

- 4.4. Records of legally protected or otherwise notable species of flora and fauna within 2km of the Site were provided by GIGL. A summary of the most significant protected, BAP and other notable species records are provided in Table 3.

**Table 3: Desk-Based Study Records of Flora and Fauna within 2km of the Site**

Species	Location	Protection / Status
<p><b>Amphibians</b></p> <p>Records of interest include smooth newt <i>Lissotriton vulgaris</i>, palmate newt <i>Lissotriton helveticus</i>, common frog <i>Rana temporaria</i> and common toad <i>Bufo bufo</i>.</p>	<p>Records within 2km of the Site</p> <p>Closest record to Site (approx. 352m west) is for smooth newt in 2004.</p>	<p>All common amphibians receive partial protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).</p> <p>Common toad is listed on the UK BAP.</p>
<p><b>Badger</b></p> <p>A single badger <i>Meles meles</i> record.</p>	<p>Record from 2003 located within 2km of the Site.</p>	<p>Badgers are protected at all times under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).</p>
<p><b>Bats</b></p> <p>Records include pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus sp. myotis</i> <i>Myotis sp.</i>, <i>Nyctalus Nyctalus sp.</i>, common pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>, soprano pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>, Nathusius's pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>, Kuhl's pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus kuhlii</i>, Daubenton's bat <i>Myotis daubentonii</i>.</p>	<p>Records within 2km of the Site.</p>	<p>All bat species are fully protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).</p> <p>Soprano pipistrelle is listed on the UKBAP.</p>
<p><b>Birds</b></p> <p>Records include peregrine falcon <i>Falco peregrinus</i>, honey-buzzard <i>Pemis apivorus</i>, black redstart <i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>, fieldfare <i>Turdus philomelos</i>, redwing <i>Turdus iliacus</i>, firecrest <i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>, brambling <i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>, Mediterranean gull <i>Larus melanocephalus</i>, black tern <i>Chlidonias niger</i> and kingfisher <i>Alcedo atthis</i>.</p>	<p>Records within 2km of the Site.</p>	<p>All breeding birds (with some exceptions for pest species) are protected under current UK legislation through the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended.</p> <p>All bird species detailed are Schedule 1 (S1) Species of the Wildlife &amp; Countryside Act, 1981, as amended, are protected at all times.</p>
<p><b>Flora</b></p> <p>Records of interest include triangular club-rush <i>Schoenoplectus</i>, creeping marshwort <i>Apium repens</i>, caraway <i>Carum carvi</i>, cornflower <i>Centaurea cyanus</i>, chamomile <i>Chamaemelum nobile</i>, pennyroyal <i>Mentha pulegium</i>,</p>	<p>Records within 2km of the Site.</p>	<p>Protection for wild plants is afforded predominantly by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended, under Schedule 8.</p> <p>All plant species detailed are listed on the UKBAP.</p>



Species	Location	Protection / Status
corn buttercup <i>Ranuncula arvensis</i> and divided sedge <i>Carex divisia</i> .		
<b>Invasive Species</b> Records include three-cornered garlic <i>Allium triquetrum</i> , giant hogweed <i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i> , New Zealand pigmyweed <i>Crassula helmsii</i> , Japanese knotweed <i>Fallopia japonica</i> , contoneaster <i>Contoneaster</i> sp. and European pond terrapin <i>Emys orbicularis</i> .	Records within 2km of the Site.	Invasive species are listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Country Act 1981 (as amended).
<b>Invertebrates</b> Records include stag beetle <i>Lucanus cervus</i> , white-letter hairstreak <i>Satyrium w-album</i> , small blue <i>Cupido minimus</i> , wall <i>Lasiommata megera</i> , and bombus <i>Bombus (Thoracombus) ruderarius</i> .	Records within 2km of the Site.	Certain invertebrate species receive strict protection under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended.  All invertebrate species detailed are listed on the UKBAP.

## Habitats

- 4.5. The following habitat types, described in more detail below, were identified on the Site during the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey:
- Amenity grassland;
  - Buildings;
  - Hard standing;
  - Ornamental planting;
  - Scattered trees; and
  - Tall ruderal
- 4.6. The habitat descriptions given below should be read in conjunction with Figure 1 and a selection of photographs given in Appendix A.

### Amenity Grassland

- 4.7. Two small amenity grassland verges are located in the north west of the Calthorpe Street Site (see Plate 1). This habitat lacks any value for ecology and is therefore considered to be of **negligible** ecological value.

### Buildings

- 4.8. There are several buildings located in, and immediately adjacent to, the northern part of the Phoenix Place Site, being mostly of brick construction. There are no buildings on the Calthorpe Street Site, though the Royal Mail Central London Mail Centre, which is a large industrial-type building, is located immediately adjacent to the south. The buildings present on, and immediately adjacent to, the Site are not considered to offer any opportunities for wildlife and therefore are of **negligible** value.

### Hard Standing

- 4.9. Hard standing is present around the majority of the Site in terms of access roads and car park areas. This habitat lacks any value for ecology and is therefore considered to be of **negligible** ecological value.

### Ornamental Planting

- 4.10. There are several small areas of ornamental planting in the northern and north western areas of the Calthorpe Site. The ornamental planting is low growing and has been largely swamped by ivy *Hedera helix*. The ornamental habitat areas within the Site are small in area and isolated. As such, the ornamental planting offers very limited opportunities for local wildlife and thus this habitat is considered to be of **negligible** ecological value.

### Scattered Trees

- 4.11. There are several trees present in the northern area of the Calthorpe Site. Species recorded include cherry *Prunus* sp., false acacia *Robinia pseudoacacia*, silver birch *Betula pendula* and London plane *Platanus x hispanica*. These trees are considered to offer limited potential for common bird and invertebrate species. As such, the scattered trees are considered to be of value **within the boundary of the Site only**.

### Tall Ruderal

- 4.12. Tall ruderal plant species were frequently recorded in the Phoenix Place Site (see Plate 2), in particular along the south western boundary. Canadian fleabane *Conyza canadensis* is the most abundant species, plus groundsel *Senecio vulgaris*, smooth sow-thistle *Sonchus oleraceus*, prickly sow-thistle *S. asper*, willowherb *Epilobium* sp., fat-hen *Chenopodium album*, annual mercury *Mercurialis annua*, petty spurge *Euphorbia peplus*, nettle *Urtica dioica*, yellow corydalis *Pseudofumaria lutea*, shaggy soldier *Galinsoga quadriradiata* and the occasional butterfly bush *Buddleja davidii*. The tall ruderal habitat areas within the Site are small in area and isolated. As such, the tall ruderal habitat offers very limited opportunities for local wildlife and thus this habitat is of **negligible** ecological value.

## Fauna

### Amphibians

- 4.13. The data search provided records of four species of amphibian with 2km of the Site. The closest amphibian record relates to smooth newt, which was identified 352m west of the Site.
- 4.14. The Site is not connected to, nor has any habitats of value for the aquatic or terrestrial phases of amphibian species. The Site is therefore considered to be of **negligible** value in relation to amphibians and as such, they are not considered further in this report.

### Badgers

- 4.15. The data search returned a single badger record from within 2km of the Site. It should be noted that the exact badger record locations are no longer disclosed by GIGL due to data sensitivity.
- 4.16. No badger setts were found to be present on the Site and no signs of badger were recorded. The Site offers limited suitable foraging habitat for this species. The Site is therefore considered to be of **negligible** value to badgers and as such, this species is not considered further in this report.

## Bats

- 4.17. GIGL hold numerous records of bat species within 2km of the Site. The closest record to Site is a common pipistrelle located 163m northwest of Site from 2010. It should be noted that bat roost locations are no longer disclosed by GIGL due to data sensitivity.
- 4.18. The buildings on site are considered to have **negligible** potential to support roosting bats. The majority of roofs are flat, and where there are tiled pitched roofs, there are no obvious entry points for bats. In addition, the location and nature of the site and its surrounds further reduces the likelihood of bats roosting on Site.
- 4.19. None of the trees present within the Site have potential to support roosting bats owing to the absence of bat roosting features such as woodpecker holes and cavities. Therefore, the trees on the Site are considered to have **negligible** bat roosting potential.
- 4.20. Owing to the Site's urban context and limited potential foraging and commuting habitat available for bats, it is currently considered that the Site is of **negligible** value for foraging and commuting bats.

## Birds

- 4.21. The data search returned numerous records of notable bird species listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended), as summarised in Table 3. However, given the existing habitats present on the Site, suitable nest sites and foraging resources for birds are considered to be limited on the Site.
- 4.22. There is some limited potential for black redstart to occur, as with almost any built form in London. The most suitable areas are on the Phoenix Place site but they are very small, and surrounded by relatively unsuitable areas, whilst high levels of disturbance throughout daylight hours and the location of the site itself (away from the main distribution of breeding black redstarts) further reduces the likelihood of this species occurring at the site.
- 4.23. The trees on Site have some potential to support common bird species during the breeding season; however this is considered limited due to the age and isolation of the trees. Therefore, the Site is considered to be of value **within the boundary of the Site only** for birds.

## Invasive Species

- 4.24. Japanese knotweed was known to previously occur at the site but was subject to an eradication programme. There was no sign of this species during the current survey which suggests that the programme was successful (see Plate 3).
- 4.25. No other invasive species were recorded on the Site during the visit. As such, no further consideration is given to invasive species within this report.

## Invertebrates

- 4.26. The data search provided records of notable invertebrate species within 2km of the Site. There is no suitable habitat for such species to occur at the Site. As such, the habitats present within the Site are considered to be of **negligible** value to notable or protected species of invertebrate. However, areas of tall ruderal and ornamental planting, along with the trees, provide some potential habitat for common species of invertebrate.

## Other Protected / Notable Species

- 4.27. No notable flora species were recorded during the Site visit. The habitats present on the Site are not considered suitable for any other protected or notable species.

## 5. Discussion and Recommendations

### Designated / Non-Statutory Sites

- 5.1. It is considered unlikely that there would be any direct effects on statutory or non-statutory sites as a result of the redevelopment of the Site owing to the separation and distance of the statutory or non-statutory sites from the Site by surrounding urban development and infrastructure.
- 5.2. The nearest designated site is St. Andrews Gardens SLI which is situated approximately 100m to the northwest of the Site. The proposed Development could have an indirect effect on nearby designated sites as a result of increased levels of light, dust, noise and vibrations. As such, the implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) is recommended to minimise potential adverse effects on any ecological features within the local area during the construction phase of the proposed development.

### Habitats

- 5.3. The Site comprises habitats considered to be of negligible ecological value, with the exception of the scattered trees which are of value within the boundary of the Site only.
- 5.4. In line with NPPF, The London Plan and Local Planning Policy the following recommendations and enhancements at the Site should be considered to increase the ecological value of the Site, as part of the proposed Development:
  - The use of native species or species of benefit to wildlife within the proposed landscape scheme to provide foraging opportunities for birds, bats, invertebrates and other wildlife is recommended to enhance the Site for wildlife;
  - Retention of trees, where possible;
  - The walls of any new buildings could be enhanced by creating green walls. These could be created simply by designing features such as trellis on external walls of any buildings included within future development proposals. A range of native climbing plants could be used including ivy *Hedera Helix*, honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*, white bryony *Bryonia dioica*, black bryony *Tamus communis*, hop *Humulus lupulus* and wild clematis *Clematis vitalba*. These species can provide an invaluable food source for invertebrates which feed on the leaves, flowers and nectar of certain species, and can also provide over-wintering and hibernation habitat. Green walls can also be created by the construction of an irrigated peat free soil / compost system; and
  - Dependant on future re-development proposals, additional habitat could be created above ground level utilising roof top space. Green roofs could be provided by creating grassland on roofs by sowing sedum and hardy plant species in shallow low-nutrient soils and/or areas of brown roof could be provided with a gravel substrate and could be sown with London rocket *Sysimbrium irio* and tower mustard *Arabis glabra* (London SAP) if seed is available from local populations. The roofs could otherwise be allowed to self-seed with ruderal species. This would potentially provide a food source for invertebrates on which, in turn other invertebrates and birds and bats may feed. They can also provide breeding and nesting habitat for invertebrates and birds (including the House Sparrow, a UK & London BAP priority species) and green/brown roofs are ideal for including bird boxes on. Brown roofs would also provide suitable foraging for black redstarts (London BAP priority species) and nest box provision for this species could also be provided on overlooking vertical structures. Rooftop provision of this kind

as well as green walls (see above) are in line with London Planning Policy and the 2008 'Living roofs and walls' technical report (produced by GLA)<sup>19</sup>.

## **Fauna**

### **Bats**

- 5.5. The buildings have negligible potential to support roosting bats. Best practice guidelines (BCT, 2012) state that buildings with negligible potential for bats do not require further survey. However, if a significant period of time elapses between this report being produced and the proposed refurbishment works being undertaken, the buildings may deteriorate in condition and should be subject to an update survey to determine if the rating of the buildings has changed.
- 5.6. There are opportunities to provide enhanced roosting and foraging / commuting opportunities for bats by the placement of bat boxes and bat bricks within the proposals and through new landscape planting. The use of native plants species, as recommended, above would provide additional foraging habitat for bats.

### **Birds**

- 5.7. The Site has negligible potential to support notable bird species and therefore no further survey is considered necessary.
- 5.8. The buildings and vegetation on Site provide limited opportunities for common bird species during the breeding bird season. As a precautionary measure however, any tree / building works or demolition should be undertaken outside of the breeding bird season (February to September inclusive), unless a prior survey by an ecologist confirms no active nests would be affected. Should evidence of nesting birds be discovered then clearance of the feature containing the nest and within a 6m radius around the feature should cease until the young have fledged.
- 5.9. Opportunities to enhance the Site for birds should be incorporated into the design of the development to increase the value of the Site for bird species. Simple measures include provision of artificial nest sites upon buildings and mature trees. The use of native plants species, as recommended above, would provide additional foraging habitat for birds.

### **Invertebrates**

- 5.10. Only common UK invertebrate species are considered likely to be present on the Site given the low value habitats available and therefore no further survey is considered necessary.
- 5.11. Enhancement features for invertebrates should be incorporated into the design of the development, where possible, such as the provision of native plant species to create foraging opportunities within the proposed landscaping.

<sup>19</sup> Living Roofs and Walls Technical Report: Supporting London Plan Policy (2008); Greater London Authority

## **6. Conclusions**



- 6.1. The majority of the Site comprises habitats considered to be of negligible ecological value. The scattered trees on Site are considered to be of value within the boundary of the Site only. No protected or notable species are considered to utilise the Site.
- 6.2. The Site is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory designations. It is considered that the implementation of a CEMP during the construction phase would adequately mitigate for any effects to statutory or non-statutory sites within proximity to the Site as a result of the proposed Development.
- 6.3. The buildings and trees on the Site offer limited foraging and nesting opportunities to local bird species. As a precautionary measure, where building demolition / vegetation clearance is required it should be undertaken outside of the breeding bird season or, if this is not possible, an ecologist should be deployed to inspect such features prior to clearance works.
- 6.4. The provision of artificial roosting and nesting opportunities for bats and birds and inclusion of native seed and fruit bearing trees within the landscape strategy of the development, could deliver a net biodiversity gain in accordance with national and local planning policy.
- 6.5. It is considered that following implementation of the recommended mitigation measures, the impact upon the ecological value of the Site as a result of the development would be negligible. Indeed, depending on the extent of ecological enhancements incorporated within the development design, there is the potential for the proposals to result in a net benefit in terms of ecological value.
- 6.6. If there is a significant period of time (most local authorities consider this period to be 2 years) between this report and the proposed development, the ecological value of the Site habitats may change and should be subject to an update survey.

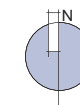
## Figures

Figure 1: Habitat Features Plan – E13235-100\_GR\_EC\_1A





-  Site boundary
-  Building
-  Ornamental Planting
-  Trees
-  Amenity Grassland
-  Tall Ruderal
-  Hard Standing



Project Details	EED13235-100: Mount Pleasant
Figure Title	Figure 1: Phase 1 Habitat Plan
Figure Ref	EED13235-100_GR_EC_1A
Date	November 2012
File Location	\\nt-incs\weed\projects\eed13235\100\graphics\ec\issued figures





## APPENDICES

## A. Photographs



Plate 1 – Calthorpe Street site viewed from the roof of the Mail Centre, showing the isolated trees, and the amenity grass verges towards the left of the photograph.



Plate 2 – An area of tall ruderal habitat located at the far south of the Phoenix Place site.



Plate 3 – The southern part of Phoenix Place. Japanese knotweed used to occur along the far edge.

