Westcombe Group

Kingston Bridge House
Hampton Wick

Ecological Report

Job No: 213346
July 2021

Environmental Consultants

AA Environmental Ltd
Units 4-8 Cholswell Court
Shippon
Abingdon
OX13 6HX
T 01235 536042
F 01235 523849
www.aae-ltd.co.uk

Kingston Bridge House
Hampton Wick

Report for:
Westcombe Group
7 Churchill Court
58 Station Road
Harrow
Middlesex
HA2 7SA

Issued by

……..
H R Simpson MSc BSc (Hons)

Approved by

……..
A R Beaumont MSc BSc (Hons) MCIEEM

Issue Date	Issue
19 July 2021	Final

AA Environmental Limited (Registered Office)
Units 4-8
Cholswell Court
Shippon
Abingdon
Oxon
OX13 6HX
T 01235 536042
F 01235 523849
E info@aae-ltd.co.uk
W www.aae-ltd.co.uk

Company No. 8474322

Table of Revisions

Issue	Description of status

Contents

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Overview

1.1 AA Environmental Limited (AAe) has been commissioned by Westcombe Group to carry out an ecological survey of the redevelopment proposals at Kingston Bridge House, Hampton Wick. The aims of the survey were to:

- provide a description of the existing habitat types;
- determine the existence and location of any ecologically valuable areas; and
- identify the presence of any protected species.

1.2 This information will serve to assess the ecological impact of the proposals and identify any ecological constraints and/or mitigation measures required and also identify any enhancement measures that may be available.

1.3 The redevelopment proposals are for the erection of two storey and single storey extensions to the roof, an infill extension at ground floor level, façade improvements and change of use of the building to provide 89 residential units with associated landscaping, parking/refuse provision and external alterations.

Site Description

1.4 The site is located off Church Grove, at the corner of its junction with Hampton Court Road in London, centred at national grid reference: TQ 174694 and covers approximately 0.3 of a hectare. The site comprised an 'L' shaped block of flats, with associated hard and soft landscaping. The flats were vacant at the time of the survey, with the eastern section of the building fronting onto Hampton Court Road being of 7 storeys and the western section fronting onto Church Grove of 4 storeys (incorporating an undercroft). The site is bordered by Church Grove to the south-west, Hampton Court Road to the south-east, St. Johns Church to the north-west, with commercial properties to all other sides.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

General

2.1 The study comprised two key phases: a desk-top study; and a walk-over field survey. The study was undertaken with reference to the Institute of Environmental Assessment's '*Guidelines for Baseline Ecological Assessment*' (1995), Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) '*Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*' (2017) and BS 42020: 2013 '*Biodiversity - Code of practice for planning and development*'.

Desk-top Study

2.2 Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL) was consulted in order to obtain baseline data held for the Site and the surrounding 2 km study area.

2.3 As certain baseline data is now readily available on the internet, the Multi-agency website (http://magic.defra.gov.uk/) was consulted to determine whether any part of the Site or nearby habitats have been statutorily or otherwise designated and a review of Google Earth's satellite imagery (http://www.google.co.uk/intl/en_uk/earth/index.html) was completed to determine past land uses of the Site and surrounding land.

Field Survey

2.4 It was necessary to supplement the information obtained from the desk-top study with a walk-over field survey, in order to:

- ascertain whether, while the Site itself or nearby habitats might not be covered by any ecological designations, they could be of ecological interest and/or contain protected species; and
- establish the ecological value of the Site in order for the overall disturbance to ecosystems within the area to be fully evaluated.

2.5 The walk-over survey of the site was carried out on Wednesday 16 June 2021. The dominant plant species were recorded and habitats classified according to their vegetation types and presented in the standard Phase 1 habitat survey format (Joint Nature Conservation Committee, 2010). The weather conditions at the time of survey were: 0% cloud cover; wind speed 0 (Beaufort scale); temperature 24°C; and no precipitation.

Habitat Evaluation

2.6 By applying recognised criteria produced by Ratcliffe (1977), the following seven-point scale was used to rank the importance of the habitat types and species they support. The value of each habitat was ranked according to its importance in a local context (a summary of the Ratcliffe criteria is attached at Appendix A):

- low value;
- low to intermediate value;
- intermediate value;
- intermediate to high value;
- high value (Local/District importance);
- very high value (County importance e.g. Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), County Wildlife Site); and
- exceptional value (National importance e.g. Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)).

Fauna

2.7 Particular attention was paid to record the presence of/or suitable habitat for badgers, bats and herpetofauna (amphibians and reptiles) that may be present on the Site or within adjacent habitats, in accordance with the following survey methodologies:

Badgers

2.8 Badgers (*Meles meles*) and their setts are protected by *The Protection of Badgers Act 1992,* under which it is an offence to harm badgers or their setts. A sett is defined as "*any structure or place which displays signs indicating current use by a badger*". Natural England has provided the following guidance on the interpretation of current use:

A sett is defined as such (and thus protected) as long as signs indicative of 'current use' are present. Thus, a sett remains protected by the Act until such times as the signs (i.e. 'field signs') have deteriorated or decayed to such an extent that they indicate that the sett is no longer in 'current use'.

2.9 A thorough survey of the whole site and adjacent habitats, where access was available, was carried out. Particular attention was paid to dense areas of vegetation to check for any evidence of badger activity, which is usually detected by any one or more of the following signs:

- presence of holes with evidence of badger such as footprints, discarded hair, etc.;
- presence of dung pits and latrines;
- presence of well used runs with subsidiary evidence of badger activity; and
- presence of other indications of badger activity, such as signs of foraging and footprints.

Bats

2.10 Currently there are 17 species of bat known to breed in the UK. All species and their roosts are protected under Regulation 41 of *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended)*. As a signatory to the *Bonn Convention* (Agreement on the Conservation of Bats

in Europe) the UK is also required to protect their habitats. This legislation makes it illegal to kill, injure, capture or disturb bats or to obstruct access to, damage or destroy bat roosts. Under the law, a roost is any structure or place used for shelter or protection.

2.11 A visual survey of the Site was completed to record any evidence of bats or features that could provide potential roosting opportunities. The survey was carried out following the guidelines provided by the Bat Conservation Trust[1]. A thorough internal and external examination of the existing buildings on the Site was carried out, with any potential access points inspected for evidence of bats.

2.12 In addition, a careful inspection of each tree on the Site was carried out to identify those features that are important for roosting bats. Surveying trees presents particular problems at any time of the year as bats will use a wide variety of roost sites in cavities, splits, cracks, knotholes and under loose bark, many of which are not easily detected from the ground.

Each tree was assessed in accordance with the following criteria:

- **Negligible** – negligible habitat features likely to be used by roosting bats.
- **Low** – a tree of sufficient size and age to contain potential roosting features (PRFs) but with none seen from the ground or features seen with only very limited roosting potential.
- **Moderate** – a tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.
- **High** – a tree with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat.

2.13 The surrounding habitat was also surveyed to identify any important features such as mature trees with suitable features for roosting bats and any established lines of vegetation that might provide important flightlines.

2.14 Evidence of bats is usually detected by any one or more of the following signs:

- the presence of bat droppings, which tend to accumulate under established roost sites or at roost entrances;
- the accumulation of large numbers of moth wings, which have been discarded by feeding bats;
- areas of staining by urine or from fur rubbing; and
- the presence of bats themselves or their corpses.

2.15 The visual survey was facilitated by the use of binoculars, ladders, powerful torches (1M candlepower) and a Ridgid Micro CA-350 Inspection Camera endoscope. A heterodyne bat detector (Pettersson D200) was also used during the inspection to record any bat calls.

Herpetofauna

Amphibians

2.16 All amphibian species have some level of protection under *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).* Great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) are protected under *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)* and *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended)*. The intentional or reckless killing, injury or taking, and intentional or reckless disturbance of great crested newts whilst occupying a 'place used for shelter or protection', is prohibited, as is the destruction of these places.

[1] Collins, J. (ed) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Reptiles

2.17 All reptile species are protected at some level under Schedule 5 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)* and *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended)*. The more common species of reptiles, which include slow-worm (*Anguis fragilis*), common or viviparous lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*), adder (*Vipera berus*) and grass snake (*Natrix helvetica*) are protected by the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)* by part of *Section 9(1)* and all of *Section 9(5).* This means that they are protected against intentional or reckless killing and injuring (but not 'taking') and against sale and transporting for sale.

2.18 An assessment of the Site was carried out to determine its suitability for herpetofauna by recording the habitats present. In addition, any natural/artificial refugia present on the Site was lifted to check for any sheltering animals or evidence of animals, such as sloughs (shed skins).

Other Species

2.19 In accordance with good practice, the Site was checked for any evidence of other protected species or species of particular note.

3.0 RESULTS

Desk-top Study

3.1 A summary of the baseline data obtained from GiGL has been provided and detailed in Table 1; please note, due to sensitivity/copyright, a copy of the report cannot be reproduced[2].

3.2 There are no ecological designated sites located on or directly adjacent to the site. The only statutory designated site located within the 2 km study area was Bushy Park and Home Park Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), located 0.03 km to the south of the site. Full details of the designated sites located within the 2 km study area are provided in Table 1.

3.3 There were no records of protected species located on or adjacent to the site. There are a number of records of protected species within the 2 km study area, the majority of which were supplied with specific 6-figure grid references allowing a high-resolution indication of their locations. Further details of protected species recorded within 2 km of the site are provided in Table 1.

3.4 According to the Multi-agency website, there is an area of Woodpasture and Parkland Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitat located directly adjacent to the western and southern site boundaries, however, they are intersected by Church Grove to the west and Hampton Court Road to the south.

3.5 Google Earth Imagery shows that site has remained largely unchanged since at least 2003, being dominated by the existing buildings and associated hardstanding areas.

Table 1: Summary of Data Search Results (GiGL)

Statutory Designated Sites		
Description	**Protection/designation**	**Distance/direction**
Bushy Park and Home Park	SSSI	0.03 km to the S
Protected/notable Species		
Description	**Protection/designation**	**Distance/direction**
Common Reed Bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*)	Priority Species	0.16 km to the S
Natterer's Bat (*Myotis nattereri*)	European Protected Species & Protected Species	0.21 km to the SE

[2] GiGL data is subject to copyright and therefore cannot be passed on to any third parties.

Small Heath (*Coenonympha pamphilus*)	Priority Species	0.38 km to the SW
European Otter (*Lutra lutra*)	European Protected Species, Protected Species & Priority Species	0.43 km to the SE
Grey Partridge (*Perdix perdix*)	Priority Species	0.46 km to the NW
Mottled Rustic (*Caradrina morpheus*)	Priority Species	0.46 km to the NW
Northern Hawk's-beard (*Crepis mollis*)	Priority Species	0.46 km to the NW
Black Redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*)	Protected Species	0.65 km to the SE
August Thorn (*Ennomos quercinaria*)	Priority Species	0.72 km to the W
Ear Moth (*Amphipoea oculea*)	Priority Species	0.72 km to the W
Feathered Gothic (*Tholera decimalis*)	Priority Species	0.72 km to the W
Hedge Rustic (*Tholera cespitis*)	Priority Species	0.72 km to the W
Oak Hook-tip (*Watsonalla binaria*)	Priority Species	0.72 km to the W
Rustic (*Hoplodrina blanda*)	Priority Species	0.72 km to the W
Small Square-spot (*Diarsia rubi*)	Priority Species	0.72 km to the W
White-line Dart (*Euxoa tritici*)	Priority Species	0.72 km to the W
Red Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra*)	Protected Species	0.74 km to the SE
Red Kite (*Milvus milvus*)	Protected Species	0.74 km to the SE
Red-backed Shrike (*Lanius collurio*)	Protected Species & Priority Species	0.77 km to the W
True Fox-sedge (*Carex vulpina*)	Priority Species	0.79 km to the NW
Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)	European Protected Species & Protected Species	0.79 km to the SE
Noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*)	European Protected Species, Protected Species & Priority Species	0.79 km to the SE
Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*)	European Protected Species, Protected Species & Priority Species	0.79 km to the SE
Wood Warbler (*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*)	Priority Species	0.85 km to the W
Wryneck (*Jynx torquilla*)	Protected Species & Priority Species	0.87 km to the W
Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*)	Protected Species (against sale)	0.99 km to the SE
Long-eared Bat (*Plecotus sp.*)	European Protected Species, Protected Species	1.18 km to the E
Brown Hairstreak (*Thecla betulae*)	Protected Species & Priority Species	1.18 km to the N
Pipistrelle Bat (*Pipistrellus sp.*)	European Protected Species, Protected Species	1.2 km to the SE
Brown Long-eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus*)	European Protected Species, Protected Species & Priority Species	1.2 km to the SW
Linnet (*Linaria cannabina*)	Priority Species	1.2 km to the SW
Redwing (*Turdus iliacus*)	Protected Species	1.2 km to the SW
European Eel *(Anguilla anguilla*)	Priority Species	1.21 km to the SE
Turtle Dove (*Streptopelia turtur*)	Priority Species	1.23 km to the W
Slow-worm (*Anguis fragilis*)	Protected Species & Priority Species	1.35 km to the SE
Bewick's Swan (*Cygnus columbianus*)	Protected Species & Priority Species	1.4 km to the W
Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*)	Priority Species	1.4 km to the W
Fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*)	Protected Species	1.4 km to the W

Lesser Redpoll (*Carduelis cabaret*)	Protected Species	1.4 km to the W
Marsh Tit (*Poecile palustris)*	Priority Species	1.4 km to the W
Merlin (*Falco columbarius*)	Protected Species	1.4 km to the W
Pintail (*Anas acuta*)	Protected Species	1.4 km to the W
Tree Pipit (*Anthus trivialis*)	Priority Species	1.4 km to the W
Western Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)	Protected Species	1.4 km to the W
Slavonian Grebe (*Podiceps auritus*)	Protected Species	1.43 km to the NW
Chamomile (*Chamaemelum nobile*)	Priority Species	1.55 km to the W
Unknown Bat (*Vespertilionidae sp.*)	Protected Species	1.6 km to the SE
Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*)	Protected Species	1.6 km to the SE
Large-mouthed Valve Snail (*Valvata macrostoma*)	Priority Species	1.6 km to the W
Eurasian Bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*)	Protected Species & Priority Species	1.65 km to the S
Daubenton's Bat (*Myotis daubentonii*)	European Protected Species & Protected Species	1.66 km to the S
Green Sandpiper (*Tringa ochropus*)	Protected Species	1.66 km to the S
Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*)	Priority Species	1.66 km to the S
Common Firecrest (*Regulus ignicapilla*)	Protected Species	1.67 km to the W
Eurasian Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*)	Priority Species	1.67 km to the W
Eurasian Hoopoe (*Upupa epops*)	Protected Species	1.67 km to the W
European Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*)	Priority Species	1.67 km to the W
Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*)	Protected Species	1.67 km to the W
Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*)	Priority Species	1.67 km to the W
Variable Chafer (*Gnorimus variabilis*)	Priority Species	1.67 km to the W
Western Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*)	Priority Species	1.67 km to the W
Yellowhammer (*Emberiza citrinella*)	Priority Species	1.67 km to the W
Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*)	Protected Species	1.69 km to the W
Lesser Noctule (*Nyctalus leisleri*)	European Protected Species & Protected Species	1.72 km to the NW
Nathusius's Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus nathusii*)	European Protected Species & Protected Species	1.72 km to the NW
Serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*)	European Protected Species & Protected Species	1.72 km to the NW
Unidentified Myotis Bat (*Myotis sp.*)	European Protected Species, Protected Species	1.72 km to the NW
Blood-vein (*Timandra comae*)	Priority Species	1.74 km to the W
Rosy Rustic (*Hydraecia micacea*)	Priority Species	1.74 km to the W
Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*)	Priority Species	1.74 km to the W
Ladybird Spider (*Eresus sandaliatus*)	Protected Species & Priority Species	1.75 km to the S
Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*)	Priority Species	1.77 km to the E
Dunnock (*Prunella modularis*)	Priority Species	1.79 km to the E

House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)	Priority Species	1.79 km to the E
September Thorn (*Ennomos erosaria*)	Priority Species	1.81 km to the W
Cinnabar (*Tyria jacobaeae*)	Priority Species	1.83 km to the W
White Ermine (*Spilosoma lubricipeda*)	Priority Species	1.83 km to the W
Unknown Bat (*Chiroptera sp.*)	European Protected Species, Protected Species	1.85 km to the N
Mab's Lantern (*Philorhizus quadrisignatus*)	Priority Species	1.85 km to the W
Grass Snake (*Natrix helvetica*)	Protected Species & Priority Species	1.87 km to the W
Common Toad (*Bufo bufo*)	Protected Species (against sale) & Priority Species	1.9 km to the N
European Water Vole (*Arvicola amphibius*)	Protected Species & Priority Species	1.9 km to the SE
Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*)	Protected Species	1.9 km to the SE
Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*)	Protected Species & Priority Species	1.9 km to the SW
Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*)	Protected Species	1.9 km to the SW
Common Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*)	Protected Species & Priority Species	1.9 km to the SW
Eurasian Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*)	Priority Species	1.9 km to the SW
Eurasian Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*)	Protected Species	1.9 km to the SW
European Honey Buzzard (*Pernis apivorus*)	Protected Species	1.9 km to the SW
Ring Ouzel (*Turdus torquatus*)	Priority Species	1.9 km to the SW
Tree Sparrow (*Passer montanus*)	Priority Species	1.9 km to the SW
White-fronted Goose (*Anser albifrons*)	Priority Species	1.9 km to the SW
Stag Beetle (*Lucanus cervus*)	European Protected Species, Protected Species (against sale) & Priority Species	1.91 km to the SE
West European Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*)	Priority Species	1.94 km to the N
Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*)	European Protected Species, Protected Species & Priority Species	1.96 km to the SE
White-letter Hairstreak (*Satyrium w-album*)	Protected Species & Priority Species	1.96 km to the SE

NB: All distances are calculated from the centre of the Site, National Grid Reference: TQ 174694.
SSSI = Special Site of Scientific Interest; SINC = Site of Importance for Nature Conservation.
European Protected Species = species listed under *The Habitats Directive* Annexes II and IV.
Protected Species = species listed under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)* Schedules 1, 5 and 8.
Priority Species = species listed under the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006* Section 41.

Field Survey

Introduction

3.6 The results of the survey are presented as a series of habitat descriptions for each of the areas on the site. The Phase 1 Habitat Plan is shown on Figure 2 and the habitat descriptions should be read in conjunction with this Plan. An indicative plant species list is attached at Appendix B (nomenclature follows Stace, 2010) and a series of site photographs is attached at Appendix C.

Habitat Types and Evaluation

Buildings and Hardstanding

3.7 The site was dominated by the existing block of flats, with associated hardstanding areas, including car park and residents seating areas. The block of flats comprised two sections (east and west), of 7 storeys and 4 storeys respectively. An undercroft/parking area was present beneath the western section. The buildings were previously used as student accommodation but have been vacant since 2020. The buildings were concrete constructed with metal framed windows and flat roofs. Internally, the buildings were divided into a number of student accommodation blocks, with a central stairway and elevator shaft. The building was well-lit by the central glazed stairway. No separate roof voids were recorded, with a number of service units and the elevator maintenance room located at the top floor. The flat roofs were all metal clad, with a central asphalt walkway and in good repair. Decorative concrete plinths were present at the top of the front elevation, which were well-sealed and in good repair.

3.8 The block of flats was of limited value for wildlife however they did provide some bird nesting opportunities, with feral pigeon (*Columba livia domestica*) recorded within the elevator maintenance room at the top floor and roosting within the undercroft. The car park, dominated by hardstanding, had a few, restricted areas of colonising vegetation at the boundaries, including common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), ornamental poppy (*Papaver sp.*), butterfly-bush (*Buddleja davidii*), American willowherb (*Epilobium ciliatum*) and smooth sow-thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*). Two seating areas were present on the site, both of which were paved. Overall the building and hardstanding areas provided limited value for any species of wildlife.

Habitat value: **Low**

Bare Ground

3.9 The margins of the north-western seating area comprised bare ground with only colonising poppy recorded.

3.10 The areas of bare ground were of limited ecological value, due to their limited extent and restricted species diversity, with only a few areas of colonising vegetation recorded.

Habitat value: **Low**

Hedgerows

3.11 There were a few low hedgerows present on the site. One hedgerow enclosed the north-western seating area, dominated by yew (*Taxus baccata*), with holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), fuchsia (*Fuchsia sp.*) and an ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) sapling also present. The hedge was well-maintained. Other hedging on the site was located at the south-western and south-eastern boundaries, with species recorded including box (*Buxus sempervirens*), firethorn (*Pyracantha sp.*), holly and yew.

3.12 The hedgerows provide some limited foraging habitat and bird nesting opportunities but are of reduced ecological value, due to their well-maintained state and limited extent.

Habitat value: **Low to intermediate**

Mixed Scrub/Ornamental planting

3.13 The site included a number of planted borders near the south-western and south-eastern site boundaries and surrounding the seating areas. Species recorded included cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*), Mexican orange (*Choisya ternata*), butterfly-bush, lavender (garden) (*Lavandula angustifolia*), rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*) and pendulous sedge (*Carex pendula*), with bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*), American willowherb, Canadian fleabane (*Conyza canadensis*), dandelion (*Taraxacum* agg.) and common ivy (*Hedera helix*) also present.

3.14 The areas of ornamental planting were of limited ecological value, due to the prevalence of non-native species and reduced diversity, however, the range of flowering plants will provide some foraging opportunities for invertebrates.

Habitat value: **Low to intermediate**

Individual trees

3.15 Individual trees around the site included young whitebeam (*Sorbus sp.*) and willow (*Salix sp.*), with two semi-mature lime (*Tilia sp.*) trees present on the south-western site boundary, adjacent to Church Grove. There was also an old trunk of a felled false acacia (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) with some regrowth recorded within the site along with some ash saplings.

3.16 The trees on the site provided some foraging and sheltering opportunities for wildlife as well as some bird nesting opportunities.

Habitat value: **Intermediate**

Adjacent habitat

3.17 The site is bordered by Church Grove to the south-west, Hampton Court Road to the south-east, with a church and commercial properties to all other sides.

Fauna

Badgers

3.18 No evidence of badgers or their setts was recorded on the site.

Bats

3.19 No evidence of bats was recorded during the careful internal and external inspection of the buildings. The block of flats, due its construction type, concrete constructed with a flat roof and no separate roof void did not provide suitable roosting opportunities for bats. Access was gained into all service units, including the elevator maintenance room at the top of the building, with no evidence of bats recorded.

3.20 A single semi-mature lime tree provided **low** opportunities for roosting bats due to its age and size but lacking obvious PRF's. All other trees recorded on the site, due to their age, species and lack of any visible PRFs, were assessed to provide **negligible** opportunities for roosting bats. The buildings and associated hardstanding areas provide limited foraging habitat, with the nearby Bushy Park and Home Park affording more suitable foraging habitat for bats.

Herpetofauna

3.21 There were no ponds recorded on the site and therefore there were no breeding opportunities for any species of amphibian. The nearest pond was located approximately 0.1 km to the south-west of the site but was separated from the site by Hampton Court Road. The site is dominated by the existing block of flats and associated hardstanding areas did not provide suitable terrestrial habitat for any species of herpetofauna. In addition, the site is surrounded by built development with no direct links to the nearby open spaces and despite a careful search of the site, no species of herpetofauna was seen or found sheltering under any refugia lifted.

Other Wildlife

3.22 Apart from feral pigeon already mentioned and a few other common species of birds, either recorded on the site or flying overhead, no other species of any note were recorded.

4.0 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The development proposals are for the erection of two storey and single storey extensions to the roof, an infill extension at ground floor level, façade improvements and change of use of the building to provide 89 residential units with associated landscaping, parking/refuse provision and external alterations.

4.2 The site is of overall low ecological value, with the species recorded described as common or abundant and are found in similar places across much of Britain, with no evidence of protected species recorded. Although there are no habitats of international, national, county or local importance that would be directly affected by the proposals, Bushy Park and Home Park (which

is a Site of Special Scientific Interest) is located close by to the south of the site. Although the park is already well-used by the local population, it is anticipated that the re-development proposals will result in an increase in the number of visitors using the park for recreational purposes. However, this can be mitigated for in part by providing on-site provision for the new residents and by educating the new residents on the sensitivity of the nearby SSSI.

4.3 In additional to any specific measures to be adopted in order to minimise disturbance and to offset any adverse impacts on the nearby SSSI, a series of mitigation measures, as detailed below, will be implemented to reduce any impact the development proposals may have on local wildlife. There is also an opportunity to implement some enhancement measures to increase the nature conservation value of the site in the long term in accordance with Government guidance as set out in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019[3].

4.4 Although no evidence of bats was recorded with the buildings assessed to provide **negligible** roosting opportunities for bats, all site operatives should be made aware of current legislation protecting bats and their roosts. In addition, if the semi-mature lime tree requires felling to facilitate the redevelopment, then this should be felled by competent Tree Surgeons, who are fully aware of current legislation protecting bats and their roosts. In the unlikely event of any bats being encountered, then works should stop immediately and Natural England or AAe contacted so that appropriate advice can be provided.

4.5 It should be noted that all species of wild bird and their nests are protected under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)*. Therefore, site clearance should be timed to avoid the main bird nesting season, which, in general, runs from March to August inclusive. If this is not possible, a check should be carried out prior to any clearance works to ensure there are no active nests present.

4.6 In order to protect any vegetation to be retained, suitable fencing may be required at certain locations to reduce the possibility of any damage that could be caused during the works. To minimise accidental damage, any overhanging branches should be pruned back to suitable live growth points. All works should be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced specialist contractor and should conform to current industry best practice, i.e. BS 3998: 2010 '*Tree Work - Recommendations*'.

4.7 Any new boundary treatment should be designed to promote permeability of the site to minimise fragmentation and allow free movement of wildlife throughout the site, for example by strengthening/enhancing the existing boundary vegetation, planting up a series of new hedgerows and/or installing post and rail fences. If close boarded fences are required for security reasons these should be minimised and raised slightly off the ground (c. 150-200 mm) to allow animals to pass underneath.

4.8 The effects of lighting on plants and animals are difficult to assess, but it is thought that lighting can adversely affect invertebrates, birds and bats. Although the site, being located within an inner-city area, currently experiences high levels of lighting[4], in accordance with best practice, a sensitive lighting scheme will be designed to minimise light spillage and pollution.

4.9 In order to increase the biodiversity of the site in the long-term a range of measures could be incorporated into the redevelopment proposals. Suggested measures have been provided below:

- soft landscaping will be carried out. This should be designed to provide a range of new habitats for species and in particular, flowering plants will be of benefit to invertebrate species and shrubs and trees may provide nesting opportunities for birds once they become established.
- New habitats in the form of green roofs could be included within the design. Green roofs provide an environment for the development of wildlife, especially bird, plant and insect life,

[3] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019). *National Planning Policy Framework*. London.
[4] Light Pollution Map - https://www.lightpollutionmap.info

increasing overall biodiversity. In the context of an urban environment they provide *wildlife corridors and refuge* in areas that lack biodiversity. The green roofs should be a mix of wildflowers, sedums, sand and shingle along with a series of log piles and this mosaic of habitats will aim to maximize the biodiversity potential of the site.

- A series of wildlife boxes will be installed to provide enhanced opportunities for roosting bats, nesting bords and nesting/sheltering sites for a range of invertebrates.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 The redevelopment proposals are for the erection of two storey and single storey extensions to the roof, an infill extension at ground floor level, façade improvements and change of use of the building to provide 89 residential units with associated landscaping, parking/refuse provision and external alterations.

5.2 An ecological survey has been carried out, supplemented by obtaining available baseline data from Greenspace Information for Greater London. The findings from the survey and review of baseline data have provided information to assess the impact of the proposals on species and/or features of ecological/biodiversity value.

5.3 Overall the findings of this ecological appraisal indicate that there are no over-riding ecological constraints to the proposals that would preclude planning permission being granted at this stage, subject to an appropriately worded condition. There are no statutory designated sites that would be directly affected by the proposals and the site is of overall limited ecological value, with the species recorded described as common or abundant and are found in similar places across much of Britain, with no evidence of protected species recorded. A range of mitigation measures have been suggested and, if implemented effectively, would ensure that there would be no adverse impact on local wildlife that are using the site or the nearby Bushy Park and Home Park (SSSI), along with control measures to be applied to ensure that there is no contravention of current legislation. In addition, enhancement measures can be delivered to increase the nature conservation value of the site in the long term, in accordance with Government guidance as set out in National Planning Policy Framework.

213346/HRS AA Environmental Limited

July 2021

REFERENCES

Agreement on the Conservation of Bats in Europe. HMSO, London

BS 3998: 2010 *Tree Work - Recommendations*.

BS 42020: 2013 *Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development.*

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) (2013) *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*. http://www.cieem.net/data/files/Resource_Library/Technical_Guidance_Series/GPEA/GPEA_April_2013.pdf

Collins, J. (ed) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Institute of Environmental Assessment (1995). *Guidelines for Baseline Ecological Assessment*. E & FN Spon, London.

Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2010) *Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey: a technique for environmental audit*. JNCC, Peterborough.

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019). National Planning Policy Framework. London: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Protection of Badgers Act 1992. HMSO, London.

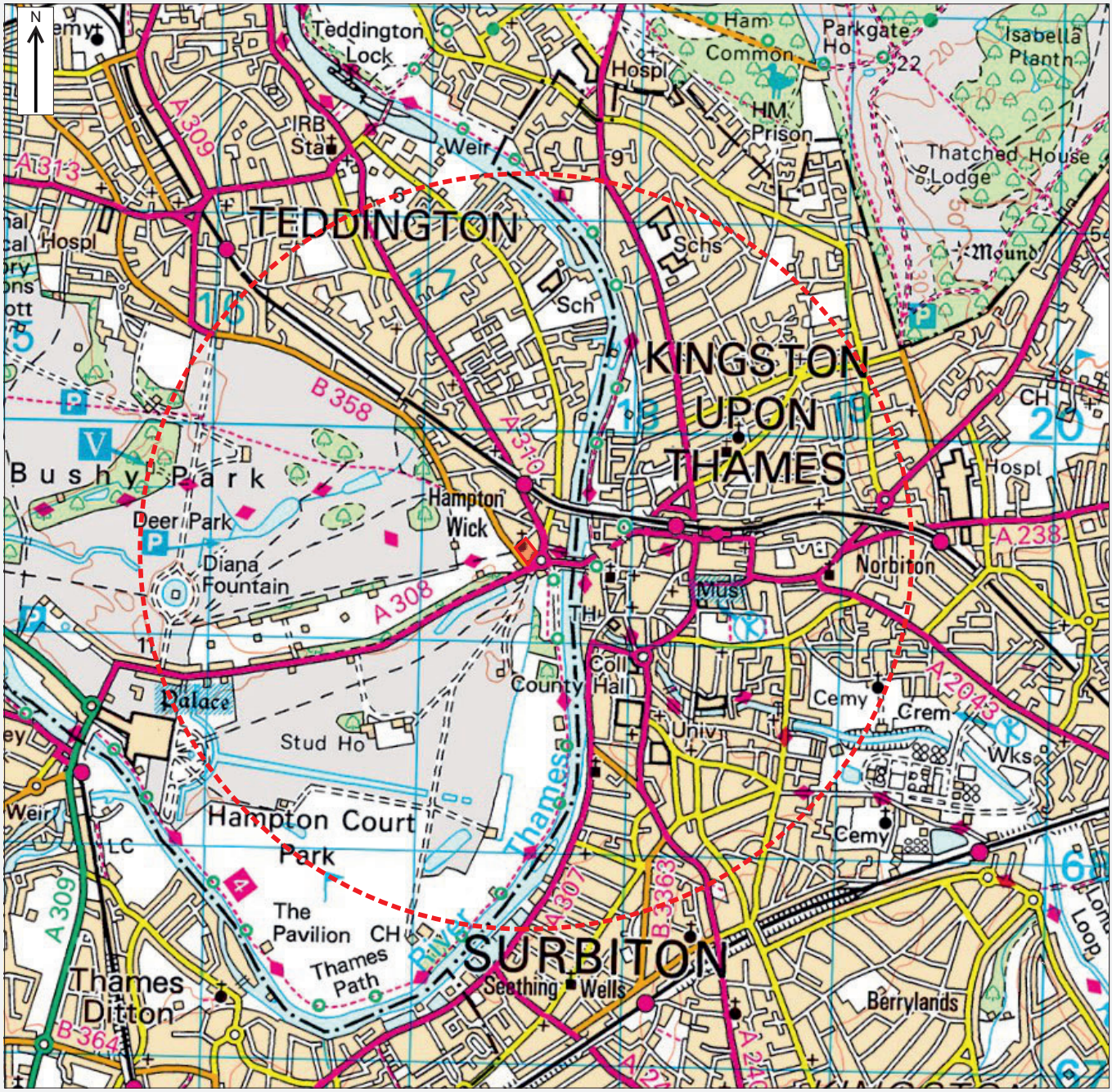
Ratcliffe, D.A. (ed). (1977) *A Nature Conservation Review (vols I & II)*. Cambridge University Press.

Stace, C. (2010) *New Flora of the British Isles (3rd edition)*. Cambridge University Press.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended). TSO, London.

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

Figures



Scale (km)

0 0.5 1

KEY

Site Boundary:

1 km Study Area:

Ordnance Survey Explorer™ 161

UK Location:

Rev.	Details	Drawn / Chkd.	Date

AA Environmental Ltd
Units 4-8
Cholswell Court
Shippon, Abingdon
Oxon OX13 6HX

T: 01235 536042
F: 01235 523849
info@aae-ltd.co.uk
www.aae-ltd.co.uk

AAe
Environmental Consultants

Project
213346
Kingston Bridge House
Hampton Wick

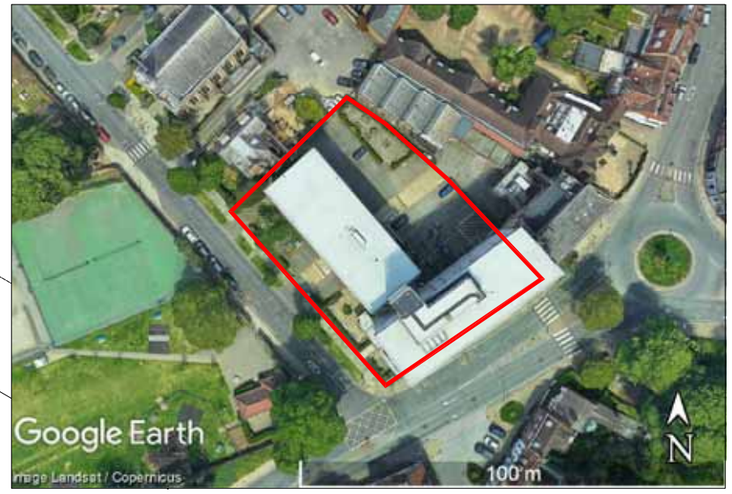
Title
Location Map

Scale	Date	Drawn	Chkd.	Drg. No.	Rev.
As shown	19.07.21	KC	JDT	Figure 1	

Scale (m)

0 10 20

N



Church Grove

Hampton Court Grove

KEY

- Site Boundary (Indicative)
- Buildings and Hardstanding
- Introduced Shrub (Ornamental Planting)
- Hedgerow
- Individual Trees
- Bareground

Rev.	Details	Drawn / Chkd.	Date

Project

213346
Kingston Bridge House
Hampton Wick

Title

Phase 1 Habitat Plan

AA Environmental Ltd
Units 4-8
Cholswell Court
Shippon Abingdon
Oxon OX13 6HX

T: (01235) 536042
F: (01235) 523849
Info@aae-ltd.co.uk
www.aae-ltd.co.uk

Scale	Date	Drg. No.	Rev.
As shown	19.07.21	Figure 2	
	Drawn: KC / Chkd.: ARB		

Appendix A

Summary of Ratcliffe Criteria

Fragility – some habitats, communities and species are particularly sensitive to environmental change and as such tend to be rare.

Rarity – the threat of loss of a particular habitat or species lends value to the organism and the Site it occupies. Whether a species has rarity value is largely dependent upon the context, as a species or habitat can be internationally rare, but relatively common locally or nationally. Likewise, a nationally rare species can in some circumstances be more common at internationally level.

Size (area or extent) – size does play an important part in determining the ecological interest of an area, but is also a relative concept. For example, a 30 acre woodland or a one acre meadow could have a similar degree of nature conservation importance.

Diversity – the diversity of a site can be expressed in a number of ways and both low and high diversity can have a high nature conservation value under different circumstances.

Potential value – some sites have the potential to provide greater nature conservation interest than presently exists.

Position within the Ecological/Geographical Unit – a site which is near or adjacent to other similar habitats may have a higher nature conservation value than an isolated one because the range of fauna can be greater.

Typicalness – certain habitats have become important as they are good examples of what is, or has historically been, typical of the area. Efforts have been made to safeguard representative areas to prevent what was once common becoming fragmented or rare.

Recorded history – a well-documented site with detailed biological and/or natural history records presents a valuable insight into the ecology of a site. Such information is important for current and future management.

Naturalness – this is a measure of the degree to which an area has been modified by human activity. In England unmodified habitats are extremely rare being restricted to remote, inaccessible areas such as cliffs, and some saltmarshes. The bulk is either semi-improved, improved or artificial.

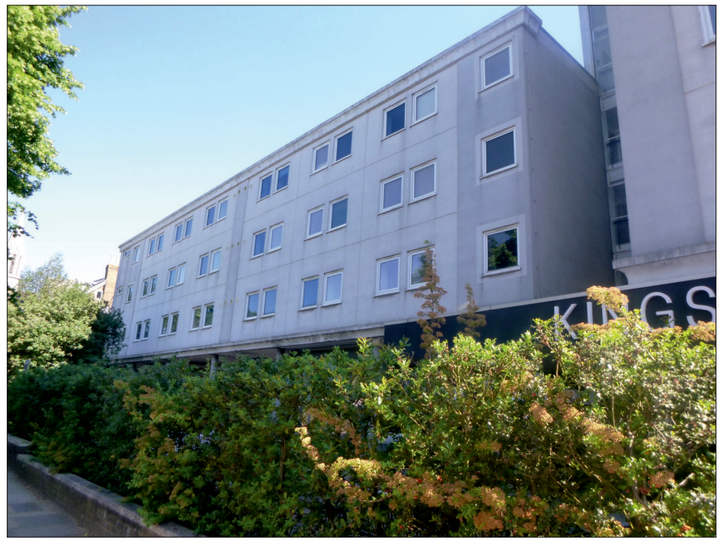
Intrinsic Appeal – this refers to value in a popular rather than ecological sense, and highlights the fact that value is also derived from society's preferences for landscape and other aesthetic features and is not just based on ecological considerations.

Appendix B

PLANT SPECIES LIST

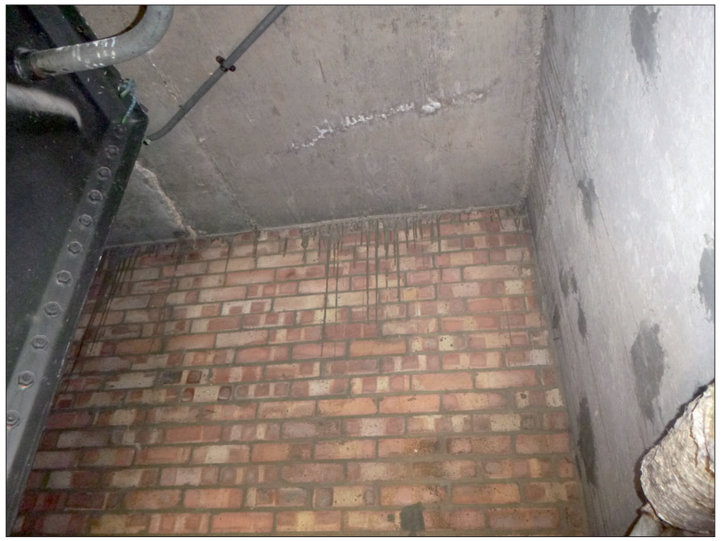
Buddleja davidii	Butterfly-bush
Buxus sempervirens	Box
Carex pendula	Pendulous sedge
Choisya ternata	Mexican orange
Conyza canadensis	Canadian fleabane
Epilobium ciliatum	American willowherb
Fraxinus excelsior	Ash
Fuchsia sp.	Fuchsia
Hedera helix	Common Ivy
Ilex aquifolium	Holly
Lavandula angustifolia	Lavender (garden)
Papaver sp.	Ornamental poppy
Prunus laurocerasus	Cherry laurel
Pteridium aquilinum	Bracken
Pyracantha sp.	Firethorn
Robinia pseudoacacia	False-acacia
Rosmarinus officinalis	Rosemary
Salix sp.	Willow
Sonchus oleraceus	Smooth sow-thistle
Sorbus sp.	Whitebeam
Taraxacum agg.	Dandelion
Taxus baccata	Yew
Tilia sp.	Lime
Urtica dioica	Common nettle

Appendix C



Photograph 1: Showing the front of the building.

Photograph 2: Showing the rear of the building.



Photograph 3: Showing the well-sealed service unit.

Photograph 4: Showing an aerial view of the site and some of the restricted planting.

Rev.	Details	Drawn / Chkd.	Date

PROJECT

Kingston Bridge House
Hampton Wick

TITLE

Photograph Record Sheet

AAe
Environmental Consultants

AA Environmental Ltd
Units 4-8
Cholswell Court
Shippon Abingdon
Oxon OX13 6HX

T: 01235 536042
F: 01235 523849
info@aae-ltd.co.uk
www.aae-ltd.co.uk

Scale	Date	Drg No.	Rev.
NTS	19.07.21	Appendix C	
	Drawn: KC / Chkd.: ARB		

Printed on 100% recycled paper