PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

BURGESS PARK OUTDOOR COOKING AREA,

ALBANY ROAD, LONDON SE5 0AL

Commissioned by: **London Borough of Southwark**

Report Number: ASW/LBS/004/29/2025
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The main protected species potential present within this application site, at the Burgess Park Outdoor Cooking Area, as identified during this 2025 ecological investigation, was for: breeding birds only.

- The individual trees, bushes and shrubs at this site, all have bird nesting potential, as would be expected at any similar property. A total of 3x bird nests were found within trees at the western boundary of the application site, belonging to magpie and carrion crow, although one nest may not be active.

- It is highly likely that further active nests were present in deep vegetation and shrubs within this part of the Park, for species such as robin, wren, blackbird and dunnock.

- The trees at this section of Burgess Park, had no bat roosting features, mainly due to the species present and the smaller specimens.

- However, bats such as noctule, Leisler's bat, common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle would be expected to forage and commute at night over the Park.

- The short mown grassed areas at the Park, had low ecological value only for wildlife, as these were clearly regularly managed, as would be expected by the Council.

- There were no other protected species issues present at the application site, other than the above.

- Within this section of Burgess Park, there were four species of invasive non-native plant species. The wall cotoneaster, periwinkle, green alkanet and variegated yellow archangel are the key invasive plant species noted. Although the wall cotoneaster and variegated yellow archangel are the most invasive out of these species and the most difficult to remove sometimes.

- It will be vital that no further non-native invasive plant species are installed at the Park for any new landscaping scheme or new planting regime. As such species can colonise greenspaces and gardens adjacent to the Park, further reducing the biodiversity in this part of the Borough.

- Overall, there should be a low ecological impact from the proposed development at this section of Burgess Park, as long as the recommendations are all followed in this report, especially in regards to nesting birds and vegetation removal.

- Various key recommendations are set out later in this report, including the removal of non-native invasive plant species, ongoing grassland management, ecological enhancements for the development and relevant best practice guidance being followed at all times by contractors.

- By following these recommendations, the impact on wildlife will be minimised and all legal obligations will be adhered to by the client by the proposed development.

1. INTRODUCTION

- A Preliminary Ecological Assessment was undertaken at the Burgess Park Outdoor Cooking Area, Albany Road, London SE5 0AL, during March 2025, for: the London Borough of Southwark.

- The national grid reference for this application site is: TQ330778.

- This assessment was required due to the proposed expansion of the outdoor cooking area at this Park.

- The main method used for this study, as well as the full results and the recommendations can be found within this report.

- Both this assessment and the report were undertaken and compiled by Mr Andrew S. Waller, Consultant Ecologist, ASW Ecology Ltd.

- Mr Andrew S. Waller MSc BSc (Hons) MCIEEM, Director of ASW Ecology Ltd - has been a Consultant Ecologist since 1997, and has very extensive experience/knowledge of protected wildlife species/issues including bats, for which he is fully licensed to survey throughout England by Natural England for consultancy purposes (Bat Class 2 Licence Registration Number: 2015-15703-CLS-CLS). He also has Natural England survey licences for great crested newts and barn owls. He has been studying bats for 32 years and wildlife in general for 43 years. He is a Full Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and meets the requirements of being a Suitably Qualified Ecologist.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Preliminary Ecological Assessment

- A daytime based Preliminary Ecological Assessment was undertaken at Burgess Park, on the 27/3/2025 by a qualified and experienced Consultant Ecologist.

- The method used for assessing habitat types followed that outlined by the Nature Conservancy Council Phase 1 survey methodology (JNCC, 1993). Please see Section 3.8 for the habitats/features at the development footprint, with the relevant codes.

- A 2km radius data search was kindly undertaken by Greenspace Information for Greater London (GIGL) to support this assessment, so to provide species and habitat information for the wider area.

- Weather conditions were good: clear (0/8CC), dry, warm, with a light wind and visibility was excellent on this ecological assessment visit. During the visit, the development footprint at the Park was assessed for its suitability for various protected wildlife species and habitats. The focus on habitats and protected species potential included on bats and breeding birds in particular. The key methods used for sites in general are listed below:

- **Bats:** The trees were assessed for any features that may have potential for roosting bats. Features that bats will use can include woodpecker holes, hazard beams, frost cracks, knot holes, cracks, wounds, dense ivy cover and bark plates, amongst other various features.

- **Badgers:** The presence of badgers at this site was assessed by finding potential evidence such as setts, latrines, feeding remains, badger paths and for badger hair on any fences

- **Breeding birds:** the presence of occupied or defunct bird nests was the key objective to find in the building as well as current evidence of breeding. Adults bringing in food for young in the nest was also searched for as were alarm calls by breeding adults.

- **Reptiles/Great Crested Newts:** The presence of both groups was assessed by habitat types present and if suitable for species such as great crested newts in their terrestrial phase and for reptiles such as slow-worm, common lizard, adder and grass snake.

2.2 Constraints

- Due to the timing of this assessment, only the early Spring period could be covered. This is a standard constraint for any study which can only investigate part of any year.

- As always though, without taking into account any further active surveying or monitoring, this study can only provide a “snapshot” of the presence of wildlife at the site during the period of this study.

- This assessment report is valid for 1 year only, as per current best practice guidelines for such studies in the UK. Although this can be extended to 1.5 years if the client can show that there has been no material change to the site in that duration.

3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

3.1 Birds

- There were three active bird nests at the Park, mainly at the western application site boundary for this project. These were two magpie nests and one carrion crow nest noted.

- The trees, hedges, bushes and shrubs all have potential though for occasional hidden bird nests to be present too.

- Bird species seen at the application site or over the area during the visit included herring gull, woodpigeon, feral pigeon, robin, wren, dunnock, blackbird, great tit, blue tit, carrion crow, magpie and goldfinch.

- It is highly unlikely though that any rare or notable breeding species could be nesting at this site.

- More information on this can be found in the Recommendations section of this report.

3.2 Bats

- There were no trees within the development footprint, with any obvious bat roosting features, as seen from ground level.

- The trees present within this specific survey area were either too small in girth to have any developed features for bats or were not suitable tree species to develop such features.

- However, bats will be both foraging and commuting at night at the Park, so it will be vital still that tree lines/hedge lines are retained for bats and that there are no new lighting impacts from any new development.

3.3 Badger

- There were no badger setts present at this section of the Park, with no burrows of any type seen.

- There was also no badger evidence such as latrines, tracks, footprints or hair present at this site.

- Badgers are not known to be present in the wider area, as shown in the desk study, so are not expected to be present in the application site.

3.4 Reptiles

- There is no reptile potential present at this application site, given the lack of tall herbs, bramble scrub and tall grassland.

- Reptiles are known to be present in the wider area, as shown from the desk study eg slow-worm, but are not expected at this site, given it is dominated by short mown parkland, trees and shrubs. Plus the human disturbance and lack of suitable cover, means that reptiles would not be found in the development footprint.

- Based on these assessment results, reptiles will not be an issue in relation to the development proposal here.

3.5 Great crested newts

- There is no great crested newt potential present at this application site, given the lack of tall herbs, bramble scrub and tall grassland.

- There are also no waterbodies at this section of the Park, such as ponds, pools, pits or ditches, so newts cannot breed here at any time.

- Great crested newts are not known to be present in the wider area, as shown from the desk study, so are not expected at this site, due to unsuitable habitats and lack of direct connectivity.

- Based on these assessment results, this species will not be an issue in relation to the development proposal here.

3.6 Hedgehogs

- Hedgehogs are present in the wider area, as shown in the desk study but there were no field signs such as droppings to suggest they have visited the application site. There is foraging habitat for this species at the site, with the grassed areas present.

- Hedgehogs are a Priority Species in England within the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. Therefore, it is still vital that hedgehogs are not impacted during the proposed development related works. This should include no uncovered hole left during the works, so there is no risk of hedgehogs becoming trapped especially at night.

3.7 Invasive plant species

- There were the following non-native invasive plant species present at this section of Burgess Park at the time of this assessment visit:

    - Green alkanet
    - Periwinkle
    - Variegated yellow archangel
    - Wall cotoneaster

3.8 Habitats present

- The main habitat types present within the overall development footprint at Burgess Park, are the following, with the relevant JNCC habitat codes included:

  (a) Parkland – A3.1 – Plants present at the short mown grassed areas and boundaries with this section of park include perennial rye grass, chickweed, green alkanet, periwinkle, variegated yellow archangel, Mediterranean spurge, ivy, dandelion, lawn daisy, yarrow, common mallow, red dead nettle, cleavers, common nettle, ragwort, cultivated daffodil, tulip, red clover, broad-leaved dock, lesser celandine, white dead nettle, germander speedwell, cow parsley, broad-leaved plantain, hawkweed species and annual meadow grass. Trees present include hornbeam and silver birch.

  (b) Introduced shrubs – J1.4 – Includes various ornamental shrubs such as wall cotoneaster and Mediterranean laurel.

  (c) Other habitat – J5 – Includes all hardstanding areas and paths.

3.9 Desk study

- A formal Greenspace Information for Greater London (GIGL) biological data search (2km radius) was requested for the client and the summary results can be found below. This is a selection of the results provided by GIGL. Please see the full GIGL data report (Ref 2365) for all species and site details included, which can be made available:

Statutory Sites	• None present in search radius
Non-Statutory Sites	• 36 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) present • Proposed SINC: None present • 1 RIGS/LIGS present: Rockingham Anomaly
Habitats	• Please see GIGL report - for Survey Data • BAP Condition Assessment & Habitat Suitability – present in report • Open Space Data – also present in the report
Species	• Protected and notable species – ○ **Amphibians** – including common toad and common frog ○ **Reptiles** – includes slow-worm ○ **Birds** – including skylark, kingfisher, tree pipit, swift, cuckoo, house martin, lesser spotted woodpecker, little egret, yellowhammer, reed bunting, brambling, linnet, crossbill, gadwall, red kite, yellow wagtail, spotted flycatcher, house sparrow, black redstart, sand martin, woodcock, tawny owl, starling, redwing, song thrush, fieldfare, mistle thrush and lapwing ○ **Terrestrial mammals** – hedgehog and water vole

	○ **Bats** – including noctule, serotine, Leisler's bat, common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, Nathusius's pipistrelle and Myotis species ○ **Flowering plants** – including juniper, stinking chamomile, box, cornflower, common cudweed, sea buckthorn, medlar, sainfoin, large leaved lime ○ **Invertebrates** – including stag beetle, small heath, dingy skipper, small copper, white-letter hairstreak, large skipper, small skipper, Essex skipper, Jersey tiger, cinnabar, banded dark bee • **London invasive species (LISI Species)** – ○ Including ring-necked parakeet, tree of heaven, buddleia, Cotoneaster (4x species), New Zealand pigmyweed, Japanese knotweed, giant hogweed, Spanish bluebell, least duckweed, parrot's feather, green alkanet, cherry laurel, Turkey oak, false acacia and snowberry

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Significance of the assessment results

- In summary, the main protected species potential present within this application site, at the Burgess Park Outdoor Cooking Area, was for: breeding birds only.

- The individual trees, bushes and shrubs at this site, all have bird nesting potential, as would be expected at any similar property. A total of 3x bird nests were found within trees at the western boundary of the application site, belonging to magpie and carrion crow, although one nest may not be active.

- It is highly likely that further active nests were present in deep vegetation and shrubs within this part of the Park, for species such as robin, wren, blackbird and dunnock.

- The trees at this section of Burgess Park, had no bat roosting features, mainly due to the species present and the smaller specimens.

- Bats such as noctule, Leisler's bat, common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle would be expected to forage and commute at night over the Park, as with any similar location.

- The short mown grassed areas at the Park, had low ecological value only for wildlife, as these were clearly regularly managed, as would be expected by the Council.

- There were no other protected species issues present at the application site, other than the above, with no badger setts present and no tall vegetation habitats for reptiles such as slow-worms.

- Within this section of Burgess Park, there were four species of invasive non-native plant species. The wall cotoneaster, periwinkle, green alkanet and variegated yellow archangel are the key invasive plant species noted. Although the wall cotoneaster and variegated yellow archangel are the most invasive out of these species and the most difficult to remove sometimes.

- It will be vital that no further non-native invasive plant species are installed at the Park for any new landscaping scheme or new planting regime. As such species can colonise greenspaces and gardens adjacent to the Park, further reducing the biodiversity in this part of the Borough.

- Overall, there should be a low ecological impact from the proposed development at this section of Burgess Park, as long as the recommendations are all followed in this report, especially in regards to nesting birds and vegetation removal.

- This is clearly a more suitable section of the Park, for the expansion of the Outdoor Cooking Area, given the lower quality habitats present. Great care is always still required though to keep all potential ecological impacts to a complete minimum.

- Recommendations can be found in the next chapter of this report, in regards to the key actions that now need to be followed at the application site.

4.2 Impact assessment

In the absence of any mitigation measures, the following potential impact status identified from the proposed works at Burgess Park, for this specific project, are considered to be:

- **Reptiles:** Without any mitigation, there is no risk of reptiles being injured or killed, during the proposed works within the application site. **Potential impact level: Nil**

- **Great crested newts:** Without any mitigation, there is no risk of newts being injured or killed, during the proposed works within the application site. **Potential impact level: Nil**

- **Bats:** Without any mitigation, bats would not be at risk of being disturbed, injured or killed by the works, with no bat roosts being damaged or destroyed. **Potential impact level: Nil**

- **Badgers:** Without any mitigation, there is no possibility that any badgers could be disturbed by any future works at the application site. There is no risk of any badger tunnels being collapsed or any setts being damaged in any way. **Potential impact level: Nil**

- **Nesting birds:** Without any mitigation, potential nesting bird species could be impacted by the proposed works. Bird nests may be present within the trees, shrubs, ivy cover and bushes, during the works and could be disturbed or accidentally damaged or destroyed. However, this risk will of course be eliminated by mitigation options such as a breeding bird watching brief and the correct timing of the stated works. **Potential impact level: Low/Moderate**

4.3 Summary of the legal protection of relevant wildlife in the UK (Simplified summary only of the legislation – please see other texts for full details)

4.3.1 THE LEGAL PROTECTION OF REPTILES IN ENGLAND AND WALES

In the UK, reptiles are legally protected from intentional killing and injuring, as well as against sale too under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The offences stated may be absolute, intentional, deliberate or reckless (English Nature, 2004).

This means that reasonable steps must always be taken to avoid killing or injuring all reptiles if they are known to be present within the development footprint. A criminal conviction for injuring or killing reptiles could result in large fines being imposed, imprisonment and/or seizure of the equipment involved.

4.3.2 THE LEGAL PROTECTION OF BATS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

Introduction

All species of bats in England and Wales are protected by law. Their legal protection derives from two sources:

- the strict species protection provisions of the EU Habitats Directive as implemented in England and Wales by Part 3 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (the **"2017 Regulations, amended by the 2019 Regulations due to Britain leaving the EU"**); and

- Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 ("2017 Regulations", as amended by the 2019 Regulations)

The 2017 Regulations came into force on 30th November 2017, amended by the 2019 Regulations. They replace the previously applicable regulations (Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c) Regulations 1994 and the 2010 Regulations) in relation to England and Wales. The 2017 Regulations are the principal means by which the EU Habitats Directive is transposed in England and Wales.

The Regulations contain a number of Parts which set out the protection to be afforded to "European Protected Species" ("EPS"), which includes all species of British bats. The list also includes other species which are rare on a European scale, such as great crested newts, otters and dormice.

Under the 2017 Regulations both bats themselves and their "breeding sites and resting places" (most commonly their roosts) are protected.

It is a criminal offence to do the following (note that this is not an exhaustive list of all offences but rather a list of offences which will be of most relevance to developers):

a. to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat (even if bats are not present at the time);

b. to deliberately capture, injure or kill a wild bat;

c. to intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat in its roost or to deliberately disturb a group of bats, in particular:

   i. any disturbance of bats which is likely to impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young; or

   ii. any disturbance of bats which is likely to impair their ability to hibernate or migrate; or

   iii. any disturbance of bats which is likely to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong;

d. to have in one's possession or to control or to transport or to sell or exchange or offer to sell or exchange any live or dead bat or part of a bat which has been taken from the wild; or any part of, or anything derived from, a bat or any part of a bat; and

e. to intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost.

The maximum penalty that can be imposed for the above offences is (as at May 2010) a fine of up to £5,000, and/or up to six months imprisonment. The offences can be committed by individuals or by bodies corporate. Where a body corporate has committed the offence, the directors or officers of the company may also be prosecuted if the offence has been committed with their consent or connivance, or is attributable to their neglect.

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 ("WCA 1981")

The WCA 1981 protects a wide range of animals, plants and habitats in the UK. All British bat species are afforded protection under Part 1 of the WCA 1981, in addition to the protection they have under the 2019 Regulations.

As regards England and Wales the following offences apply to protect bats under the W&CA 1981:

a. to intentionally or recklessly disturb any bat while it is occupying a structure of place which it uses for shelter or protection (s9(4)(b) WCA 1981);

b. to intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which any bat uses for shelter or protection (s9(4)© WCA 1981);

c. attempting either of the above (s18(1) WCA 1981).

The maximum penalty that can be imposed for the above offences is (as at May 2010) a fine of up to £5,000, and/or up to six months imprisonment. The offences can be committed by individuals or by bodies corporate. Where a body corporate has committed the offence, the directors or officers of that company may also be prosecuted if the offence has been committed with their consent or connivance or is attributable to their neglect (s69(1) WCA 1981).

4.3.3 THE LEGAL PROTECTION OF BIRDS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

All birds have the following legal protection (although there are exceptions for game birds, some waterfowl and designated pest species). This is listed below.

All birds, their eggs and nests are protected by law under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to kill, injure or take any wild bird, or to take or destroy their eggs. It is also illegal to take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built (RSPB, 2001). No provisions can be made for the destruction of occupied bird nests, eggs, or young for development purposes, and no licences are available for this purpose.

Certain rare and/or vulnerable bird species such black redstart, barn owl, red kite, peregrine and hobby are specially protected under Schedule 1, and have the following additional legal protection:

- It is an offence to intentionally (or recklessly, in England and Wales only) disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 whilst it is nest building or is at (or near) a nest with eggs or young; or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

4.3.4 THE LEGAL PROTECTION OF GREAT CRESTED NEWTS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

Great crested newts have strong legal protection under both British and European legislation. This is briefly summarised below:

Great crested newts are legally protected under provisions within the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Conservation Regulations 2010 and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. Taken together, it is illegal to:

- **Intentionally or deliberately capture or kill, or intentionally injure great crested newts.**
- **Deliberately disturb great crested newts or intentionally or recklessly disturb them in a place used for shelter or protection.**
- **Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place.**
- **Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a place used for shelter or protection.**
- **Possess a great crested newt, or any part of it, unless acquired lawfully.**
- **Sell, barter, exchange or transport or offer for sale great crested newts or parts of them.**

The maximum penalty that can be imposed for the above offences is (as at May 2010) a fine of up to £5,000, and/or up to six months imprisonment. The offences can be committed by individuals or by bodies corporate.

4.3.5 THE LEGAL PROTECTION OF BADGERS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

In the UK, the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, is the most relevant to this mammal species. Under this legislation, it is illegal to injure, kill or take any badger or attempt to do so without a special licence. It is also illegal to dig for a badger, and to damage, destroy or obstruct access

to any part of a badger sett, or to allow a dog to enter the sett, or to disturb a badger whilst it is occupying a sett.

Certain offences can be caused by reckless, intentional or wilful behaviour, and the Act should always be read in detail for the exact wording.

Penalties for such offences can be severe, and can include fines of up to £5,000 per offence eg per badger sett or per badger, and/or up to six months imprisonment.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Best practice guidelines – bats and tree management works

- As general guidance, during **any tree management works** at the Park, great care is always needed in regards to the felling, crown reduction and removal of branches on the existing trees. Best practice guidelines will always need to be followed at all times without exception, so to comply with current bat related legislation.

- It is recommended that a precautionary approach be taken when undertaking any tree works on larger trees especially. Contractors undertaking work on such trees should undertake a climbing inspection (as they will be able to examine the highest niches on the trees using harnesses and ropes since they are trained and qualified to do so) and look for bats and their field signs such as black streaks below a hole, crack or split in the tree; droppings in the entrance of any hole or crack; urine stains; smooth edged entrance holes with dark fur staining as well as actual scratch marks on entrance holes.

- The bat consultant could be present as part of a bat watch brief during the future most sensitive works on specific trees and can liaise with the tree surgeons throughout. A toolbox talk by the bat consultant should be undertaken with the tree surgeon before the tree works begin.

- The tree contractors must avoid cutting through any cavities in a trunk section or in a tree branch, and instead cut well above and below the cavity.

- Wherever possible and where relevant, branches and trunk sections with any cavities or splits, as well as dense ivy covered trees should be lowered carefully to the ground, so to avoid injuring or killing any hidden bats. These trees should then be left for 24 hours and most certainly overnight, so any potentially hidden bats can leave.

- Bark plates on any parts of the trees to be reduced or felled, especially large sized plates, should be removed by hand where this is possible. This will allow the inspection for any bats hiding behind these plates. This is especially important in regards to some rare bat species in the UK which do show a preference for roosting behind large bark plates.

- **If there is ever any future evidence that there are tree based bat roosts in any of the trees to be felled or managed, then a Bats European Protected Species (EPS) Licence in respect to "development" will be required to avoid triggering various offences. <u>So if bats or bat evidence are found unexpectedly during any tree check by tree surgeons, then work should stop immediately, and a licensed bat consultant urgently sought.</u>**

5.2 Best practice guidelines – Breeding birds and development

- As per any development related site, the general advice is that no vegetation eg trees, shrubs, hedges and bushes should be removed during the bird nesting season as all bird nests are fully protected by law, and this includes whilst a nest is being built by the adult birds.

- This includes both buildings and bird boxes, where nesting birds have been shown to be present.

- If any nests are present within the boundaries of the proposed development footprint during any clearance phase, then these must be left alone until the young birds have fully fledged from the nest and no further breeding attempts are to take place.

- The main bird nesting season in the UK, currently runs mainly from mid-January to September, but sometimes birds can start breeding before or after this period eg birds have been found by us nesting in early January at other sites due to milder winters.

- Therefore, September to mid-December are the best months for such vegetation clearance works.

- Although it is possible for a consultant ecologist to physically search trees, shrubs and vegetation at a site to ensure no hidden nests are present beforehand.

5.3 Vegetation management at the application site

- It will be important that the grassed areas at this section of the Park continue to be managed as very short mown as they are now.

- This would remove any possibility of reptiles using any new unmanaged tall vegetation for shelter or foraging purposes, then possibly entering the development footprint by accident. This is a reasonable step to avoid any possible impact on these species.

- This pro-active approach should continue especially up to the end of the development phase.

5.4 Ecological enhancements for the development scheme

The following recommendations are for the client to install where appropriate, in regards to enhancing the biodiversity at the Park, post-development for wildlife:

5.4.1 Bat boxes

- The client will install 4x bat boxes at the site boundaries, for bats to use for roosting purposes.

- The bat box model to be used would be the 2F Schwegler Bat Box and this is a high quality bat box which will be used by a number of different bat species, including for the bat species recorded here. This box is made of woodcrete and is a long lasting box.

- The bat boxes can be located onto any trees if possible, so there is a better chance of them being used by bats. Or onto buildings if needed.

- Bat boxes should be installed at least 6 metres up a tree trunk, facing mainly South-east or South-west but also 2x boxes facing West and North, so different microclimates are available and with enough space for bats to fly under the box easily. No artificial lighting must illuminate any of the installed bat boxes as this would deter bats from using the boxes.

- The NHBS is a good ecological equipment supplier and this bat box model can be purchased from them. The web link for this bat box is:

  http://www.nhbs.com/title/158629/2f-schwegler-bat-box-general-purpose

5.4.2 Wildlife friendly planting

- Wildlife friendly planting will also be introduced to any new landscaping scheme, by the use of night scented plants, which will attract insects which bats, for example, will prey on.

- Native plants should always be chosen ideally since these species will have the most benefits to wildlife. But the occasional non-invasive hybrid or exotic would be fine.

- Suitable border plant species can include corn flower, field poppies, mallow, evening primrose, ox-eye daisy, primrose and yarrow.

- Herbs can also be very good for insects and include borage, coriander, marjoram, fennel, lavender, rosemary, mint and thyme.

- Trees, shrubs and climbers suitable for insects, so to benefit bats, include rowan, dog rose, elder, gorse, guilder rose, hawthorn, blackthorn, silver birch, English oak, hazel, honeysuckle, ivy and jasmine. Further information can be provided on the above.

5.4.3 Bats and lighting

- It will be important that dark corridors are allowed for bats at night along the site boundaries. This will mean that bats, can use the wider park, especially whilst commuting between sites. This can be ensured by the use of dark buffer zones.

- Artificial lighting can cause a vacuum effect at greenspaces and at other sites, where such artificial light will pull flying insects at night away from areas where bats feed. So adjacent darker areas will have less insects for bats to survive on and that negatively affects the life cycles of the insect species present (BCT, 2023).

- The future lighting scheme must be bat friendly and adhere to best practice on this aspect. There must be no UV elements to the new lighting and no metal halide or fluorescent sources used (BCT, 2023).

- Additionally, a warm white spectrum should be used, with no blue light components. LED luminaires should also be used, as this has a reduced impact on bats.

- In regards to any future lighting, it would be beneficial for both insect populations and for bats, any new security lighting is set on motion sensors and with short timers (1 minute).

- Light spillage must also be curtailed, with reduced glare and light spillage with lighting near to windows.

- Such lighting within dwellings can be recessed. Lighting must be directed to where it is required only and baffles or hoods should be used to achieve this.

- Screening by vegetation such as new trees, bushes and shrubs can also be used to mitigate the effects of any new lighting scheme.

- The following latest best practice guidance note must be read and followed, in regards to how lighting affects bats and how to mitigate this at a site:

5.4.4 Bird nest boxes

- Bird boxes will also be installed at the gardens and 2x suitable bird boxes are recommended to be installed, with the details below.

- The 1B Schwegler Nest Box will be a good model to have installed at the site. This model would benefit blue and great tits especially.

- New bird nesting boxes should be installed as widely spaced apart as possible. The exact number of boxes will need to be appropriate for the size of the application site as nest boxes should not be located close together. But a total of 2x boxes would be suitable, with the trees being the most suitable locations. The NHBS is a good ecological equipment supplier and this nest box model can be purchased from them. The web link for this bat box is:

  http://www.nhbs.com/1b-schwegler-nest-box

- In general, bird boxes should be spaced widely apart, away from any bird feeders, quite high up a tree or building (ideally at least 5 metres up from ground level but higher in urban areas ideally), facing North to East only and away from cats.

- Further appropriate bird box models are also available including for starlings, robins and wrens. Advice can be given by the ecologist on these different models for the new builds. The NHBS is the best supplier for these bird boxes.

5.4.5 Insect nest boxes

- Insect nesting boxes should also be provided in any new landscape scheme. Such bug boxes should be installed in a warm and dry place at the site, near to vegetation. Such boxes will benefit lacewings, solitary wasps, ladybirds and other species.

- Suitable models from the NHBS include the following, with one of each box being installed in the gardens:

    - Schwegler Clay and Reed Insect Nest –

    https://www.nhbs.com/equipment/nest-boxes-habitats-and-feeders?hPP=30&idx=titles&p=0&hFR%5Bsubjects_equipment.lvl1%5D%5B0%5D=Nest%20Boxes%2C%20Habitats%20and%20Feeders%20%3E%20Insect%20Boxes&is_v=1&qtview=181090

    - Solitary beehive –

    https://www.nhbs.com/equipment/nest-boxes-habitats-and-feeders?hPP=30&idx=titles&p=0&hFR%5Bsubjects_equipment.lvl1%5D%5B0%5D=Nest%20Boxes%2C%20Habitats%20and%20Feeders%20%3E%20Insect%20Boxes&is_v=1&qtview=186142

5.5 Removal of non-native invasive plant species

- The **variegated yellow archangel planted close to the Park entrance must be completely removed from the application site since this plant species is very invasive and will hybridise with the native yellow archangel. This species should not have been planted and it is assumed this was by mistake.**

- The wall cotoneaster should also be reduced in the long-term and removed completely, to be replaced with native shrub species. Otherwise this ground level shrub will continue to spread within other areas of the Park and shade out the ground layer.

- The periwinkle should also be removed and replaced with native honeysuckle or clematis, so that the periwinkle does not become a dense mat smothering other plants.

- Within any new landscaping scheme, no non-native invasive plant species must be installed at any time.

- Further information and advice can be given by the ecologist on any new plant species that are to be proposed.

6. REFERENCES

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APPENDIX 1:

PHOTOGRAPHS A-J

(All photos are dated 27/3/2025)

Photograph A
The short mown grass areas were of low ecological value

Photograph B
The trees had some nesting bird potential

Photograph C
The shrubs and further trees also had nesting bird potential

Photograph D
View of grassed expanse, with minimal wildlife interest

Photograph E
Dense shrubbery with very good nesting bird potential

Photograph F
Several bird nests were present in trees at the western site boundary

Photograph G
There were trees with some ivy cover, which is suitable for nesting birds but not dense enough for roosting bats

Photograph H
Wall cotoneaster shrubs, which are a non-native invasive plant species, that ideally should be replaced by native shrubs or bushes

Photograph I
Close-up of wall cotoneaster

Photograph J
Variegated yellow archangel, planted near the site entrance, which must be removed urgently, as this is a highly invasive non-native species

APPENDIX 2:

MAP A – HABITAT MAP WITH TARGET NOTES