



Church Road North, Wavertree, Liverpool L15 6TF

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal



Landscape Ecology Limited

Warrington Business Centre
Gilbert Wakefield House
67 Bewsey Street
Warrington WA2 7JQ

Tel: +44 (0)1925 574451

www.landapeecology.co.uk

Church Road North, Wavertree, Liverpool L15 6TF

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Author Don Kernott MCIEEM



Reviewer Adrian Taylor CEnv
MCIEEM



Report No LEL_CRN_L156TF_PEA_001_REV A

Date June 2020

CONTENTS

1	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
2	INTRODUCTION	3
	2.1 Background and Purpose of Appraisal	3
	2.2 Site Location	4
	2.3 Proposed Works	4
3	APPRAISAL METHODS	5
	3.1 Desk Study	5
	3.2 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal	5
	3.3 Legislation	5
	3.4 Limitations	6
4	APPRAISAL RESULTS	7
	4.1 Desk Study	7
	4.2 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal	8
5	EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	9
6	REFERENCES	11

Appendix A

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Plan

Appendix B

Site Images

Appendix C

Summary of Legislation

Cover Photo - view looking south-east from the junction of Church Road North and Childwall Road towards the structure on the site.

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Contents	Summary
Site Location	'The site' centre is located at Grid Ref: SJ3927 8937 lying at the junction of Church Road North and the B5178 Childwall Road, Wavertree, Liverpool L15 6TF
Previous Appraisals	None known.
Scope of Works	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.
Results	<p>There were no known Statutory Site within 2km of the centre of 'the site'.</p> <p>Likewise, there are no Local Wildlife Trust or RSPB local reserves within 2km of the of the centre of 'the site'.</p> <p>Childwall Fields & Woods Local Nature Reserve is 1.9km east of the centre of 'the site'.</p> <p>Nearby green spaces include managed grasslands (150m), allotments (300m) and railway corridors (900m).</p> <p>The nearest pond is 1.1km from 'the site'.</p> <p>'The site' is located in a predominantly urban residential/commercial area. 'The site' comprises predominantly a large four-storey brick-built structure with associated parking and limited poorly managed landscape planting</p>
Evaluation/Recommendations	<p>Statutory sites will remain unaffected by the proposals. Other local notable green spaces are also likely to be unaffected by the proposals.</p> <p>No evidence of protected species was encountered. None of the trees inspected as part of the appraisal exhibited features that might be suitable for roosting bats species.</p> <p>Due to distance of the ponds from 'the site' and the habitat on and surrounding the immediate vicinity of 'the site' it is not anticipated that great crested newts are present and therefore will not be negatively affected.</p> <p>A check on the external features of the structure revealed no evidence of use by bats. However, potential external roosting features were identified. It is recommended, where safe to do so, that an internal inspection of the structure for use by bat species is undertaken, in particular roof spaces and voids, where accessible. A thorough external review for evidence of use by bats should also be undertaken with any potential bat roosting features mapped.</p>

	<p>No common bird species were heard or observed during the appraisal. It would be expected that birds have the potential to be sheltering and breeding within the structure, scrub and trees on 'the site'. It is therefore recommended that demolition and site clearance take place outside the bird breeding season (1st March to 31st August inclusive). If vegetation clearance has to be undertaken during the breeding season, then a suitably qualified ecologist should make appropriate checks immediately prior to commencement of the works.</p> <p>Due to the poor habitat connectivity and surrounding urban habitat it is considered unlikely that hedgehog is present. However, during site clearance if any hedgehog is encountered, then works shall cease and a suitably qualified ecologist contacted to provide advice.</p> <p>It is recommended that Cotoneaster plant species and soil it is growing in is disposed of at an authorised landfill site via a licenced waste carrier.</p> <p>It is anticipated that 'the site' will essentially be cleared of vegetation. To mitigate and offset the loss of habitats it is suggested that appropriate landscaping be incorporated into the scheme at the design stage. Should this not be possible, off-site planting by agreement should be considered to ensure net gain of biodiversity.</p>
--	--

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background and Purpose of Appraisal

Landscape Ecology Limited was instructed by Lidl GB Limited to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) on a plot of land at Church Road North, Wavertree L15 6TF (hereafter referred to as 'the site'). The overall aim of PEA is to rapidly map existing habitats and determine the potential for presence/absence of protected species.

Should protected species be present or have the potential to be present, further survey work may be required and potentially appropriate mitigation to avoid adverse effects.

The PEA site visit was undertaken on Monday 1st June 2020 by Mr Donald Kernott of Landscape Ecology Limited. Donald is a full member of The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM) and also holds a Level 1 Licence for great crested newts (No. 2014-5448-CLS-CLS) and a Level 2 Licence for bats (No. 2015-16995-CLS-CLS).

The compilation of this report has been cross referenced with CIEEM report writing standards (CIEEM 2017) and the British Standard (BS) 42020 Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development (BSI 2013).

The PEA plan (see **Appendix A**) has been prepared with reference to Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey (JNCC 1993).

Images of 'the site' can be found at **Appendix B**.

2.2 Site Location

'The site' centre is located at Grid Ref: SJ3927 8937 (see **Figure 1**) lying at the junction of Church Road North and the B5178 Childwall Road, Wavertree, Liverpool L15 6TF.

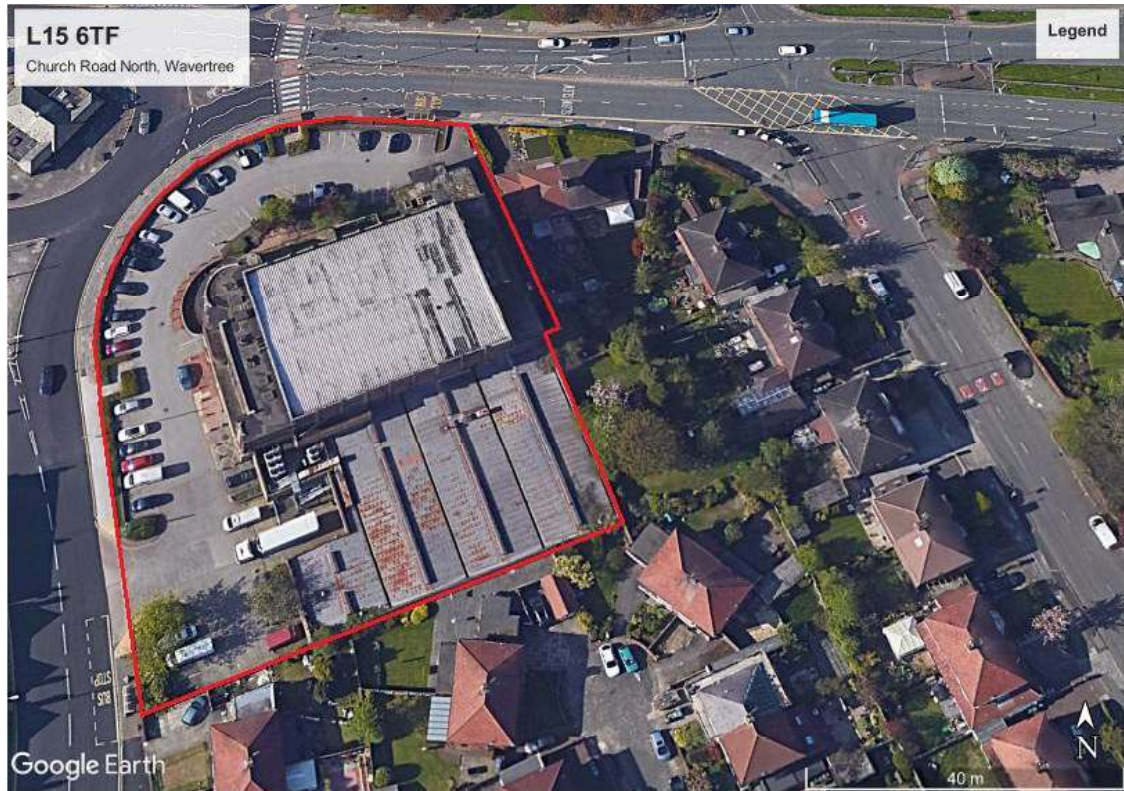


Figure 1: shows location of 'the site' with indicative red line site boundary.

'The site' is located approximately 4.5km west of Liverpool City Centre in a predominantly suburban residential/commercial area. 'The site' comprises predominantly a large four-storey brick-built structure with associated parking and limited poorly managed landscape planting (see **Cover Image**). 'The site' was until recently occupied by the Cooperative Society supermarket with a closed snooker hall upstairs. Before that it was understood to have been a bingo club, Lennon's supermarket and originally the Abbey Cinema, constructed circa. 1939.

2.3 Proposed Works

From discussions with Lidl GB Limited it is understood there are proposals to demolish the structure and clear the site to develop a retail premises with associated parking and landscaping.

3 APPRAISAL METHODS

3.1 Desk Study

The Multi-Agency Geographical Information System (MAGIC) website (www.magic.gov.uk) was used to search for any statutory designated sites of nature conservation importance (Special Protection Areas (SPA), Ramsar sites, Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and National Nature Reserves (NNR)) within 2km from the centre of 'the site'. Any Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) or similar encountered as part of the search are also referenced. Identified Historical European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) applications were also reviewed.

Local Wildlife Trust websites were also visited to search for any Wildlife Trust Nature Reserves within 2km from the centre of the site.

In addition, the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) was reviewed, with reference to the potential value of habitats and species present, or potentially present, within or adjacent to 'the site'.

The National Biodiversity Network (NBN) was also accessed and records of protected species noted.

Google Earth was also explored enabling an overview of the surrounding landscape and assessing its suitability to support protected species.

Due to the scale of the proposals, location and the habitats to be affected it was considered that detailed historical ecological information from the centre of 'the site' obtainable from the Local Record Centre (Merseyside Biobank) is unlikely to reveal any additional important information.

3.2 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

The PEA referenced Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CIEEM 2017). The purpose of the CIEEM guidance is to set out the appropriate approach to undertaking PEAs and the appropriate application of such assessments within the planning process.

PEA is the term used to describe a rapid assessment of the ecological features present, or potentially present, within a site and its surrounding area in relation to a proposed development and usually comprises a desk study and a walkover appraisal.

The PEA also includes a brief assessment of the likely presence or use of the Site by species protected under UK and European legislation; primarily the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and of habitats and species included within the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

3.3 Legislation

Here pertinent legislation relating to species potentially on site and the environment is outlined.

All bat species protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). This makes it an offence to kill or injure or damage or destroy a place of shelter or protection. Deliberate or reckless

disturbance which could affect the ability of any significant group of animals to survive, breed, rear or nurture their young may also result in an offence (see **Appendix C** for further details regarding European Protected Species).

Breeding birds are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), whereby it is illegal to intentionally or recklessly:

- Kill, injure or take any wild bird;
- Damage or destroy or otherwise interfere with the nest of any wild bird;
- Take or destroy an egg of any wild bird.

Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) make it illegal to plant or grow in the wild any plant species listed in Schedule 9 of the Act.

A list of UK BAP priority species was originally created between 1995 and 1999, and subsequently updated in response to the Report on the Species and Habitat Review in 2007. This includes the common toad *Bufo bufo* and West European hedgehogs *Erinaceus europaeus*.

Further, Schedule 14 of the Environment Bill 2020 introduces a mandatory requirement for biodiversity net gain in the planning system, making its provision a condition of planning permission in England.

3.4 Limitations

It is understood that a search of MAGIC website only provides a snapshot of data between circa 2012 and 2015. A Freedom of Information request could potentially source further information but may prove costly and provide limited additional information. There is an option to request further information but it is considered unlikely that it would yield any further data.

Using data gained by viewing information on the NBN for commercial purposes is a breach of the NBN licence and therefore information from it cannot be communicated in reports. However, as an overview, NBN was accessed and information noted.

4 APPRAISAL RESULTS

4.1 Desk Study

MAGIC indicated there were no known Statutory Sites within 2km of the centre of 'the site'. The nearest Statutory Site is Mersey Estuary SSSI, SPA & Ramsar, approximately 4.0km south-west of 'the site'.

Childwall Fields & Woods LNR is approximately 1.9km east of the centre of 'the site'.

A review of the Local Wildlife Trust and RSPB websites indicates that there are no Local Wildlife Trust or RSPB local reserves within 2km of the of the centre of 'the site'.

MAGIC indicates that the nearest known historical granted EPSL applications within 2km of the centre of the 'the site' is approximately 1.6km to the south-west and associated with common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and soprano pipistrelle *P. pygmaeus*. The next nearest known historical granted EPSL applications are approximately 2.8km north-east and 3.0km west, both associated with common pipistrelle bats.

The nearest pond identified on OS mapping is approximately 1.1km north-west and appears to be associated with the southern end of Wavertree Technology Park.

A review of Google Earth identified the following urban greenspace features within the vicinity of 'the site';

- Wavertree Green (maintained grassland) approximately 150m south.
- Approximately 300m west are the maintained grasslands of Liverpool Aquatics Centre/Wavertree Playground. Approximately 900m beyond that is a railway corridor.
- Approximately 300m east there is Thingwall allotment gardens.
- Approximately 900m north, another railway corridor.
- Greenbank Park and Sefton Park are approximately 1.4km to the south west and Calderstones Park is approximately 1.8km south-east.

4.2 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Approximately 50% of 'the site' is occupied by a four-story brick-built structure. The remainder of 'the site' is predominantly hardstanding with a narrow band of landscaping to the front. Several other small and poorly managed landscaping plots are scattered to the north and the west of the structure.

Built circa. 1939, the structure is quite imposing in the local area. The north section comprises a four-storey brick-built structure while the adjoining section to the south appears to be a more recently added single-storey, in part, brick-built warehouse type structure. The roofing material for both sections of the structure appears to be a metallic material when looked at aurally on Google Earth.

Externally the structure was appraised via the use of binoculars. The only opportunities the structure might have for protected species, such as bats, are occasional gaps and crevices which are to be expected in a structure of this age, either via modifications or deterioration.

Much of the remaining site is given over to hardstanding, predominantly car parking. The little vegetation there is, is either unsympathetically managed ornamental species or naturally self-colonising woody and herb species. Ornamental species include; Cherry *Prunus* sp. Norway Maple *Acer platanoides*, Laurel *P. laurocerasus*, Cotoneaster sp. Berberis sp. Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and Spanish Bluebell *Hyacinthoides hispanica*. Self-colonising woody or ruderal species identified include; Elder *Sambucus nigra*, Buddleia *Buddleja davidii*, Tutsan *Hypericum androsaemum*, Ribwort Plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, Herb Robert *Geranium robertianum*, Black Medick *Medicago lupulina*, Ragwort *Senecio jacobaea*, Dandelion *Taraxacum* sp. Common Sow Thistle *Sonchus oleraceus* and Common Vetch *Vicia sativa*.

Other than Cotoneaster, no Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 Schedule 9 invasive plant species were identified within 'the site' boundary at the time of the appraisal walkover.

During the walkover no common bird species were heard or observed and no protected species or evidence of protected species were encountered.

5 EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There were no known Statutory Site within 2km of the centre of 'the site'. The nearest Statutory Site is Mersey Estuary SSSI, SPA & Ramsar approximately 4km south-west of 'the site'. It is considered that due to the distances involved and the limited nature of the works there will be no negative impacts to the SSSI, SPA & Ramsar identified as part of the desk study. Likewise, there are no Local Wildlife Trust or RSPB local reserves within 2km of the of the centre of 'the site' and therefore negative impacts are not anticipated.

Childwall Fields & Woods LNR is approximately 1.9km from 'the site'. It is therefore unlikely that it will be negatively impacted by the proposals.

It is considered unlikely great crested newts would be present within 'the site' as it is largely hard standing with pockets of poor terrestrial newt habitat such as introduced shrubs. In addition, the site is located within an urban area where habitats have been fragmented by roads and development limiting the possibility of newts being able to access the site. Finally, the nearest known pond is approximately 1.1km north-west from 'the site' and great crested newts will typically travel up to 500m from a breeding pond. However, this distance is dependent upon a number of factors including the quality of the habitat surrounding the pond and if the newts are migrating, in which case distances may be less or more. With the above taken into consideration, it is unlikely great crested newts are present on 'the site' and are not considered further in this assessment.

'The site' itself is dominated by a four-storey brick-built structure with the remainder predominantly hardstanding with small, poorly manged ornamental tree and shrub planting. None of the trees inspected as part of the appraisal exhibited features that might be suitable for roosting bats species. At the time of the appraisal, no nesting birds were seen to be using the trees & shrubs.

A check on the external features of the structure revealed no evidence of use by bats. However, potential roosting features were identified (**Appendix B - Figure 7**) including gaps in cement rendering and brickwork. However, based on the urbanised and fragmented habitat surrounding the immediate vicinity of 'the site' it is estimated that opportunities for foraging and commuting bats is likely to be poor. Nevertheless, due to the size, age and opportunities that the structure might provide for roosting bats **it is recommended, where safe to do so, that an internal inspection of the structure for use by bats is undertaken, in particular roof spaces and voids, where accessible. A thorough external review for evidence of use by bats should also be undertaken and any potential roosting features mapped.** Methods used should follow Bat Conservation Trust Best Practice Guidelines (Collins 2016).

Although no common bird species were heard or observed during the appraisal. It would be expected that birds have the potential to shelter and breed within the scrub and trees on 'the site'. Further, the structure may also provide opportunities for sheltering and breeding birds. It is therefore recommended that demolition and site clearance take place outside the bird breeding season (1st March to 31st August inclusive). **If demolition and vegetation clearance have to take place during the bird breeding season, then a suitably qualified ecologist should make appropriate checks immediately prior to commencement of the works.**

Though unlikely, West European hedgehogs may use 'the site' incidentally for commuting but are unlikely to be permanently present. **However, during site clearance if any hedgehogs are encountered, then works shall cease and a suitably qualified ecologist contacted to provide advice.**

Other than Cotoneaster, no invasive species were identified within 'the site' boundary at the time of the appraisal walkover. Nevertheless, **it is recommended that the Cotoneaster and soil it is growing in is disposed of at an authorised landfill site via a licenced waste carrier.**

Looking at the proposals (Space Architects Drawing No. ZZ-XX-DR-A-91-0001) it is anticipated that 'the site' will essentially be cleared of vegetation. To mitigate and offset their loss it is suggested that appropriate landscaping be incorporated into the scheme at the design stage. Should this not be possible, off-site planting by agreement should be considered to ensure net gain of biodiversity.

The appropriateness of trees/shrubs for planting and their ongoing management in townscape environments should be given careful consideration. Small to medium sized native trees that would be tolerant of such locations could include Field Maple *Acer campestre*, Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*, Hornbeam *Carpinus betulus* or Birch *Betula* sp., in particular fastigate hybrids, where available. Medium sized non-native trees such as Callary Pear *Pyrus calleryana* 'Chanticleer', Sweetgum *Liquidambar styraciflua* or Maidenhair *Ginkgo biloba* are all tolerant of urban environments and would provide reliable alternatives/replacements to native trees.

The details of this report will remain valid for a period of eighteen months. Beyond this period, if any additional recommended surveys and works to convert the structure and modify the landscape have not commenced, it is recommended that a further ecological review is undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist.

6 REFERENCES

British Standards Institution (2013). *BS42020:2013 Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development*. British Standards Institution, London.

CIEEM (2017) *Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

CIEEM (2017) *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2nd Edition*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

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

<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5705> - accessed 10/04/2020

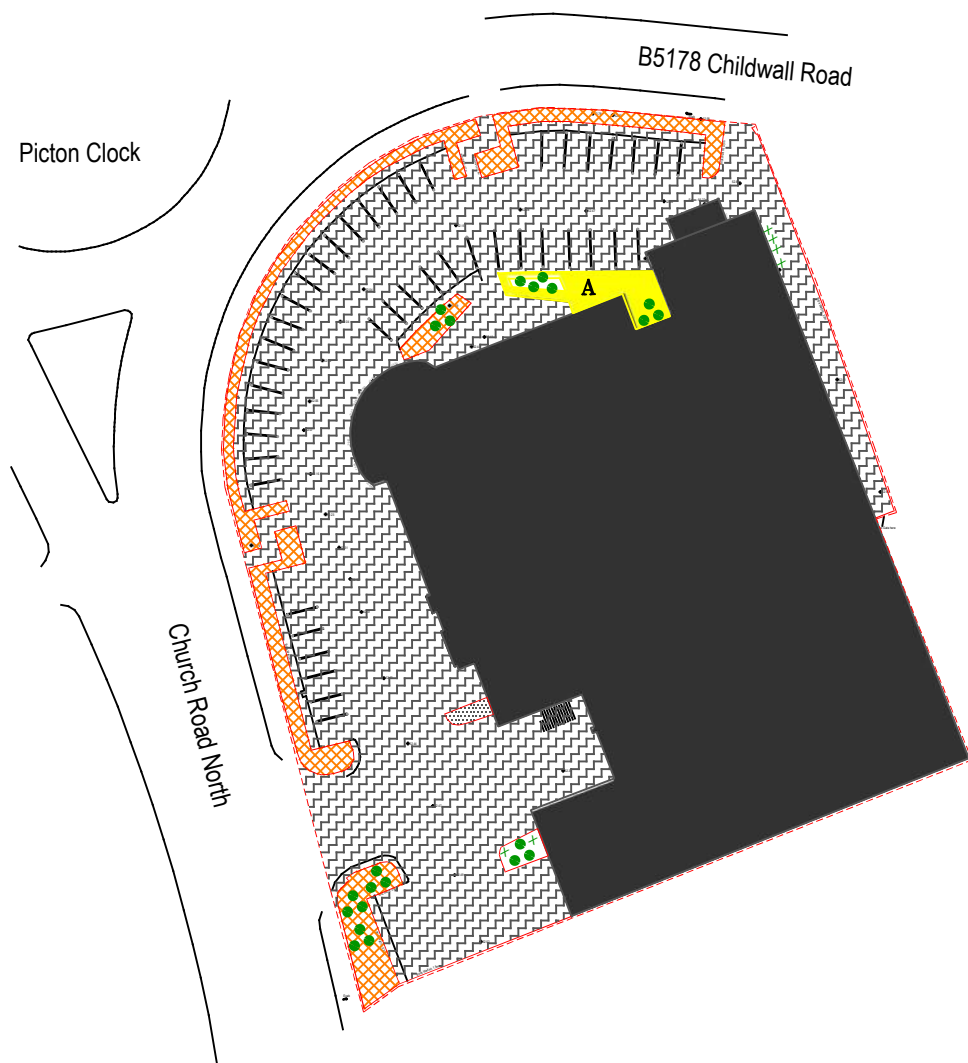
JNCC, (2010), *Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey - a technique for environmental audit*, ISBN 0 86139 636 7

MAGIC <http://www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk/> - accessed 06/04/2020

NBN Atlas <https://nbnatlas.org/> - accessed 06/04/2020

Appendix A

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Plan



KEY

SCRUB

 SCATTERED SCRUB

PARKLAND/SCATTERED TREES

 BROAD-LEAVED -
SCATTERED TREES

GRASSLAND

 AMENITY GRASSLAND

MISCELLANEOUS

 BUILDINGS/STRUCTURES

 HARD STANDING

 BARE GROUND

 INTRODUCED SHRUB

BOUNDARIES

 BRICK WALL

 INDICATIVE SITE BOUNDARY

SCALE 1:200@A0

DRAWN BY DK

CHECKED BY AT

Church Road North, Wavertree, Liverpool L15 6TF
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Plan

Report No. LEL_CRN_L156TF_PEA_001_REV A
June 2020

Appendix B

Site Images



Figure 1: view looking north from south end of 'the site'.



Figure 2: view looking west from the south end of 'the site' towards Church Road North.



Figure 3: view of the south aspect of the structure as viewed from the south end of 'the site'.



Figure 4: view looking east from Church Road North shows the imposing nature of the structure. To the front can be seen the narrow linear belt of poorly managed Cotoneaster and Berberis. Its main function is probably to screen the car park and/or soften the structure, it offers little in terms of biodiversity or environmental benefit.



Figure 5: view south from the north end of 'the site'. Here we see scruffy, poorly managed landscape planting (Cherry and Elder) partly softening the structure, but offering little in terms of biodiversity or environmental benefits.



Figure 6: view looking south along the east aspect of the structure – access was not possible as the palisade fencing is secured. Here some self-colonising Elder is the only vegetation present although in the background can be seen vegetation overhanging from adjacent properties.



Figure 7: showing crack in cement rendering on the west aspect of the structure providing potential roosting opportunities for crevice dwelling bat species.

Appendix C

Summary of European Protected Species Legislation

This includes a brief summary of legislation relevant to wildlife. The original texts of the relevant legislation or specific legal advice should be consulted in individual cases where appropriate. This section does not constitute legal advice.

European Protected Species

European Protected Species (EPS) include those species present on Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 transpose Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora (Habitats Directive) into English Law. EPS referred to within the evaluation and recommendation section of this report include:

All EPS also receive legal protection under the national legislation within the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). When these two pieces of legislation are considered together, it makes it an offence to:

- Deliberately capture (or take), injure or kill any wild animal of these species.
- Possess or control any live or dead specimens or any part, or anything derived from animals of these species.
- Deliberately disturb wild animals of such species, where the disturbance is likely to:
 - a) impair their ability to
 - i) survive, breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young, or
 - ii) in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate
 - b) affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species.
- Intentionally, deliberately or recklessly damage or destroy the breeding or resting place of such an animal, or obstruct access to such a place.
- Sell (or offer for sale) or exchange parts of these species (alive or dead).

