

# LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS – SMALL SITES INITIATIVE PIGOTT STREET, E14 7DN

## Summary Report

AUGUST 2019





# Pigott Street, E14 7DN

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## 1 Introduction

Arcadis Consulting (UK) Limited (Arcadis) has been commissioned by London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH) 'the Client' to undertake a number of technical surveys for a site referred to as Pigott Street, London, E14 7DN ('the Site').

LBTH is seeking to unlock small, publicly owned sites in the borough. This is with the aim to increase the supply of small surplus sites to market, potentially increase affordable housing availability and, at the same time, to encourage individual and community led housebuilders to take on the sites for development.

This report provides a summary of the technical surveys commissioned for the Site and reference should be made to the individual reports for further detailed information.

The Site covers approximately 0.03 hectares on Pigott Street and is surrounded by apartment blocks, centred on National Grid reference 537054, 181183. The Site is situated within an area of predominantly high-density residential housing with some green space and commercial areas to the north and west.

The surveys carried out for Pigott Street comprise the following;

- Topographical Survey (Ref 1);
- Archaeological Desktop Review (Ref 2);
- Ecology Assessment (Ref 3);
- Arboricultural Survey (Ref 4); and
- Geotechnical and Geo-Environmental Desk Study Report (Ref 5)

A summary of the findings of these surveys are detailed in the following sections.

## 2 Topographical Survey

The topography of the site is generally flat and at approximately 6-7m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD).

Site survey plans show the Site to be mostly Tarmac and brick paving, The Site is boarded to the west by close board fences, and by brick walls to the north, east and south, with gates on the central west side and northern east side. There are 5 trees detailed in the south and west of the Site.

Within the centre of the Site are bollards and two gullies. A low raised brick wall is located in the northern portion of the Site. Two lampposts are noted, one in the north and one in the south, on the Site and an inspection cover is located in the north of the Site.

### 3 Archaeology Desktop Review

An archaeological desk-top review for the Site has been carried out. This involved rapid information-gathering and review of the Site and a 500m study area using information from publicly held sources. A brief assessment of potential heritage/archaeological constraints and opportunities at the Site has been made.

Based on the current data there are no known heritage assets recorded within the Site, however there is a potential for unrecorded archaeological remains to be present within the Site.

This potential is based on the number of known non-designated heritage assets within the study area and located close to the Site. A total of thirty-five non-designated heritage assets are located within 500m of the Site; the closest being 123m from the Site. These range in significance from Prehistoric findspots to Medieval village settlements. The Site is not located within an Archaeological Priority Area. The closest one to Site is Limehouse Cut. This is recognised as having high archaeological potential for remains dating to the Medieval and Post Medieval Periods.

Evidence from historic mapping indicates that the Site was part of a residential complex which remained largely unchanged between 1873 and 1938. Between 1945 and the present, the Site and the surrounding area underwent significant redevelopment likely due to bomb damage during WW2.

The designated heritage assets consist of thirty-four Listed Buildings, six Conservation Areas, three Archaeological Priority Areas, one locally listed building, and three locally listed war memorials. The Site is not located within a Conservation Area. The nearest designated heritage asset to the Site is 115m west. Due to the location of the Site, any future development at the Site would likely not impact the setting of any designated or non-designated built heritage assets.

For any future planning application, early consultation with The Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) is recommended to fully understand the requirements to submit a planning application for the Site. An archaeological desk-based assessment will likely be a minimum requirement for the Site.

## 4 Ecology Assessment

The ecological assessment comprised a desk-based study using publicly available information and an ecological constraints survey to identify potential constraints present on Site.

Based on the assessment undertaken to date, there are no likely significant ecological constraints with regards to the development of this Site.

No Statutory or non-statutory designated sites (woodlands listed on the Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI)) identified within the vicinity of the Site have the potential to be significantly impacted by development on the Site.

A number of non-statutory designations are present within the area surrounding the Site, the closest of which is a portion of London Canal's (Limehouse Cut) Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), located approximately 135m to the north-west of the Site. Given the proximity of the Site to this metropolitan grade designation, recreational pressures on the designated site were considered, however due to the size of the Site and the limited number of units that the developable area could accommodate, in addition to the size and scale of the designation, it is considered that any additional recreational pressures that would arise as a result of the future development of the Site are to be of negligible impact to this SINC.

Constraints are listed below:

- The Site was dominated by hardstanding which supported significant areas of ephemeral/ short perennial vegetation, along with areas of scattered scrub and a number of scattered trees. The habitats on Site were generally un-diverse due to the lack of positive management. However, these habitats have value in terms of green infrastructure, likely performing important ecosystem services (such as water quality and volume attenuation and air quality attenuation etc.).
- There is potential for nesting birds to be utilising the trees within the Site, including species listed on S41 and the London BAP such as house sparrow. Removal of suitable vegetation on Site will need to be conducted outside of the bird nesting season (March – August inclusive) or under an ecological watching brief.
- There will be some ecological benefit from the removal and control of non-native and invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the WCA and on LISI. It is recommended that the Schedule 9 Himalayan cotoneaster be removed, and the arisings disposed of as controlled waste with biosecurity measures to prevent its spread. Whilst there is no legal obligation to control the LISI species, The Butterfly-bush should be removed with care taken not to spread this species as it is damaging to buildings and hardstanding.. The mature False-acacia provides ecosystem services benefits but should be managed to prevent its spread.
- Trees and other vegetation should be replaced within any proposed soft landscaping and these designs should be evolved in liaison with an ecologist and arboriculturist. In addition, rain gardens, biodiversity roofs and other green infrastructure should be considered within any development.

Biodiversity net gain is due to become mandatory for new development. There are opportunities for the incorporation of integral bird and bat boxes, micro SuDS, the implementation of permeable fencing to benefit small mammals such as hedgehog which is a priority species currently in decline, sensitive lighting strategy, tree replacement and new tree planting where feasible



## 5 Arboricultural Survey

An arboricultural constraints walkover and assessment was conducted to describe the general arboricultural features and potential constraints with regards to trees on Site.

A total of five arboricultural items were recorded within the study area as follows:

- Five individual trees on Site.

No individual trees were graded Category A (trees of high quality). Three individual trees were graded as Category B (trees of moderate quality). Two individual trees were graded as Category C (trees of low quality). No individual trees have been graded as Category U (trees of poor quality unsuitable for retention).

There is currently no proposed design layout and therefore it is not possible to say whether the trees would need to be removed and if there is space for any new trees to be re-provisioned on the Site. This can be determined once designs are developed.

While unlikely to prevent development, tree protection for trees to be retained and tree re-provisioning for any trees lost due to development are a material consideration for planning determination. If trees cannot be replaced on-Site due to development, off-Site options for tree re-provisioning to ensure no net loss should be considered. Individual Local Planning Authorities may ask for re-provisioning in excess of 1 to 1 for trees of Category B grade.

The main development considerations for the trees are:

- The Root Protection Area (RPA) and crowns of trees (particularly the Category B trees) to be retained within the Site; and
- The planting location, height, width and density of the crowns will cast shade on to the Site.

Should any future proposed development require tree removals or RPA incursions within RPAs of the retained trees an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) will be required by the LPA in support of a planning application.

A bespoke Arboricultural Method Statement may be required post planning and when the construction details are known to protect the retained trees within and adjoining the Site.

All new tree planting should be in accordance with British Standard 8545: Trees: From Nursery to Independence in the Landscape – Recommendations, 2014 and all tree works must be carried out by a qualified contractor in accordance with BS3998:2010: Tree Work – Recommendations.

## 6 Geotechnical and Geo-Environmental Desk Study

The geo-environmental and geotechnical desk study comprises a review of existing historical and current information on the Site. No intrusive site investigations have taken place.

The site is currently a vacant and fenced off plot of land with two raised planting areas, lamp posts and several trees located along the southwest edge of the Site.

Historically, the Site was previously developed as housing, which was demolished in the 1960s, therefore Made Ground is anticipated to be present. An electricity substation was previously present approximately 50m north of the Site and several works and factories were historically present 50-100m to the north and northwest of the site, which are potential off-site sources of contamination that could impact the site.

Potential risks to human health, controlled waters and the built environment have been identified along with a number of potential geotechnical development constraints. It is recommended that an intrusive site investigation should be undertaken prior to redevelopment to quantify these risks and collect information to inform redevelopment design. This should include for chemical and geotechnical testing of soils, groundwater (if present) and gas monitoring in accordance with best practice and current guidance.

Potential founding solutions will be dependent on the encountered thickness of Made Ground and the geotechnical properties of the natural deposits, and the proposed development. Made Ground is generally considered unsuitable for foundations due to its variable composition and its potential for high total and differential settlement. Below ground structures associated with previous structures may be present and will require removal prior to redevelopment.

At this stage and depending on the redevelopment, conventional shallow foundations may not be appropriate for the site, but this would depend on the thickness of the Made Ground and the underlying ground conditions. Deeper trench fill may be possible although the maximum practical extent of this type of foundation is in the region of 2-2.5m. In areas of deeper Made Ground, or where deeper soft / loose bands are recorded either piling or ground treatment e.g. vibro-stone columns should provide a suitable foundation solution. The advice of a specialist ground improvement contractor should be sought to verify the suitability of the ground for treatment.

There is a potential risk from UXO, and it is recommended that a site-specific detailed desk study is undertaken prior to any intrusive investigations or earthworks. A watching brief from a UXO specialist may be required.

Underground services may be present beneath the Site associated with the lamp posts on site, adjacent properties, and the potential underground infilled cellars (noted on surrounding sites) will need to be taken into consideration during the proposed development.

## 7 References

- 1) John Vincent Surveys (2019), Pigott Street, Tower Hamlets Site Survey
- 2) Arcadis Consulting (UK) Limited (2019) Small Sites Initiative, Pigott Street E14 7DN, Archaeology Desktop Review (Report Number 10030721-ARC-02-XX-RP-YY-0001-01-Archaeology Desktop Review)
- 3) Arcadis Consulting (UK) Limited (2019) Small Sites Initiative Pigott Street E14 7DN Ecological Assessment (Report Number 10030721-ARC-02-XX-RP-YY-0001-01-Ecological Assessment)
- 4) Arcadis Consulting (UK) Limited (2019) Small Sites Initiative Pigott Street E14 7DN Preliminary BS5837:2012 Tree Survey Report (Report Number 10030721-ARC-02-XX-RP-YY-0001-01-Arboricultural Report)
- 5) Arcadis Consulting (UK) Limited ((2019) Pigott Street E14 7DN Geotechnical and Geo Environmental Desk Study (Report Number 10030721-ARC-02-XX-RP-YY-0001-01-Geotechnical and Environmental Desk Study)

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