

TFL_PSF_9131 SITE INVESTIGATIONS: SMALL SITES INITIATIVE WAPPING WHARF, TOWER HAMLETS, E1W 3NJ

Summary Report

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CONSULTANCY


 **Hyder**

Wapping Wharf, Tower Hamlets, E1W 3NJ

Summary Report

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1 Introduction

Arcadis Consulting (UK) Limited (Arcadis) has been commissioned by Transport for London (TfL) to undertake a number of technical surveys for a site referred to as Wapping Wharf, Tower Hamlets ('the Site').

TfL is aiming to divest a number of small sites to enable prospective regeneration. The objective of the Small Sites Initiative is to provide robust and pragmatic advice that sensibly de-risks each of the sites such that unreasonable "abnormal" development costs are not incurred by developers.

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 is located to the north of Wapping High Street in a generally urban setting, surrounded by residential, commercial, public buildings and public open spaces. The Site consists of three separate plots (Sites A, B and C), with a combined area of 0.25 hectares.

Site A covers 0.17 hectares, centred at National Grid reference (NGR) 535000 180220. Land use consists of hardstanding and a former warehouse building that has fallen into disrepair. The site is bound by Cinnamon Street to the north, Clave Street and warehouses to the east, Wapping High Street to the south and residential properties to the west. There is an air vent and emergency exits associated with the railway tunnel below in the northern part of the Site.

Site B occupies a corner site at the junction of Cinnamon Street and Clegg Street and is currently occupied by a single storey warehouse and a two storey annex building, both of which are vacant. The site covers 0.05 hectares and is centred at NGR 534975 180260.

Site C fronts Clegg Street and is occupied by a single storey warehouse and a residential flat. The site covers 0.03 hectares and is centred at NGR 535000 180280.

The surveys carried out for Wapping Wharf, Tower Hamlets comprise the following;

- Topographical and Buried Services Survey (Ref 1);
- Flood Risk Review (Ref 2);
- Archaeological Desktop Review (Ref 3)
- Ecology Assessment (Ref 4); and
- Preliminary Geotechnical and Geo-Environmental Report.

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

2 Topographical and Buried Services Survey

The survey includes the entire area of Site A and the outside parameters of Sites B and C.

The overall area slopes gently upwards towards the south, with levels ranging from 2.72m AOD at the northern extents of Sites B and C and 4.37m AOD along the southern extent of Site A.

Features such as the air-vent and SME stairs buildings associated with the railway tunnel under the site are indicated on Site A.

Buried services are present within the pavements around the Sites. A number of traces were recorded on Site A but were not continuous across the area.

3 Flood Risk Review

Following an assessment of flood risk to the Site, it is considered that there is a **Low** risk of flooding from all sources. The degree of tidal and fluvial flood risk is dependent on the installed defences on the River Thames. These defences protect the Site up to the 0.1% flood event in the present day. In accordance with TE2100 policy these assets should be maintained to provide the same level of protection into the future, accounting for the predicted effects of climate change.

Following the NPPF guidance, the Site would be suitable for '*Water Compatible*' and '*Less Vulnerable*' development types but would trigger application of the Exception Test for '*More Vulnerable*' (which includes residential land use) and '*Essential Infrastructure*' uses. The Site would not be appropriate for '*Highly Vulnerable*' development types (which notably includes basement dwellings).

As a defended Site, there is a residual risk of flooding, and any future planning application for development of the Site would need to be informed by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA). The FRA would present a more detailed assessment than is provided by this Flood Risk Review and would need to be specific to the type and layout/configuration of development that is proposed. The FRA should demonstrate that any proposed development would not be subject to an unreasonable risk of flooding and would not increase flood risk to third parties. If proven, this would satisfy the NPPF Exception Test.

It is considered that there is a low risk of surface water flooding and sewer flooding, however there is an increasing risk of surface water and sewer flooding in the Borough. Surface water drainage and runoff from the Site, including available connections with and capacity of the local sewer network, should be further investigated. It should be ensured that drainage is managed to a high standard. Further investigation should include the calculation of current rainfall-runoff rates and volumes, greenfield runoff rates for the Site and confirmation of the available capacity of the local and wider sewer networks.

The air-vent has a very high residual risk to flooding from all sources and may provide a pathway for groundwater emergence. An assessment of the flood risk to the air-vent would need to be considered as part of the Flood Risk Assessment.

A Drainage Strategy should be developed in consultation with the Lead Local Flood Authority, detailing methods to manage runoff from the Site, which would ideally be controlled to match greenfield rates by adopting suitable Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) techniques.

Overall, it is considered that, except for basement dwellings, the Site is appropriate for residential and most other forms of development.

4 Archaeology Desktop Review

An archaeological desk-top review for the sites located at Wapping Wharf has been carried out. This involved a 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. Although the site has potential for buried archaeological remains to exist, these heritage assets are not considered likely to be a barrier to development on the site.

The review has assessed that there is low to medium potential for buried archaeological remains to survive at the site. Whilst the site is located within Wapping Archaeological Priority Area (APA), which covers the historic settlement of Wapping as well as the infilled docks and Thames foreshore, there has been much disturbance from more recent developments and bombing in World War II.

There are no scheduled monuments within the site, however there are two within the study area. Similarly, there are no listed buildings within the site but there are 67 within the study area, the nearest of which to the site is Wapping Underground station which is situated 30m to the south-west.

Sites A and C are located within Wapping Wall Conservation Area whilst Site B is located directly adjacent to it. Wapping Pierhead Conservation Area also falls within the 500m study area. A further two conservation areas are also located within the 500m study area, these are situated on the southern banks of the River Thames and comprise Edward II's Rothermite and St Marys Rothermite.

There are no Registered Parks and Gardens or London Squares or Historic Green Spaces within the study area.

For any future planning application, the potential for below ground remains need to be fully evaluated. The Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS), who advise the local planning authority, are likely to recommend a full archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) for the site as well as an evaluation to be undertaken prior to planning permission being determined. The DBA would include a specific archaeology site walkover, a visit to the record office to gather historic maps and relevant documentary evidence, a map regression exercise as well as preparation of distribution maps showing designated and undesignated heritage assets. The evaluation would likely consist of a programme of trial trenching and subsequent reporting. If heritage assets of significance are encountered during the evaluation stage, there may be a requirement for further recording in the form of an excavation or watching brief. This may be delivered through a post-determination condition.

5 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.

The habitats on Sites A, B and C were assessed as having limited green infrastructure with no protected or notable flora. The Sites were suitable to support nesting birds including the Schedule 1 Black Redstart with low potential to support roosting bats.

No Statutory or non-statutory designated sites (including ancient woodlands or woodlands listed on the AWI) were identified within the vicinity of the Site A, B and C that have the potential to be significantly impacted by development on the sites.

Legislative ecological constraints are listed below:

- There is potential for nesting birds to utilise the dense introduced shrub within Site A, the ornamental planting on the party wall located between the eastern boundary of Site C and the houses on Cinnamon Street and the numerous features identified on the buildings located within Sites A, B and C. Vegetation clearance and demolition works will need to be conducted outside of the bird nesting season (March to August inclusive) or under an ecological watching brief. The buildings within Sites A, B and C support features suitable for use by nesting birds. Should direct impacts be likely (i.e. demolition), a check for active nests should be undertaken by a suitably experienced ecologist prior (within 48 hours) to works commencing.
- Sites A, B and C have been identified as suitable for use by nesting Black Redstarts. Should works be programmed to take place during the Black Redstart nesting season (beginning of April to end of July inclusive) targeted Black Redstart surveys, would be required prior to works commencing and for the duration of works (if these span multiple years). The surveys should be conducted from mid-April to the end of June once every fortnight. to determine if nesting Black Redstarts are present and to ensure that nesting pairs of Black Redstart (that may be present) are not disturbed.
- The buildings within Sites A, B and C support features with potential for supporting roosting bats. In accordance with Bat Conservation Trust good practice guidelines a targeted bat survey, comprised of a single dusk emergence or dawn re-entry survey is recommended at each of the buildings in Sites A, B and C.

Policy considerations are listed below:

- There will be some ecological benefit from the removal of Butterfly-bush, a non-native, invasive species listed on the LSI which was recorded in Site A and C. There is no legal obligation to control any of the LSI species recorded on the Site or to remove them as controlled waste but it is good practice to remove them and to avoid their spread.

Compliance with local, London and national policy will be required. For example, biodiversity enhancements, such as the creation of green infrastructure, wildlife-friendly soft landscaping and the provision of bat and / or bird boxes could be selected to comply with net positive policy.

6 Preliminary Geotechnical and Geo-Environmental Desk Study and Investigation

A preliminary ground investigation is being undertaken across the three sites at Wapping Wharf. A report detailing the findings of the investigation and desk-based information will be made available when the report has been completed.

7 References

1. 40Seven (Sept 2018) Topographical and Utility Mapping Survey. Wapping TfL Sites
2. Arcadis Consulting (UK) Limited (October 2018) Wapping Wharf, Tower Hamlets, Flood Risk Review. (Report Number 10024781-ARC-01-XX-RP-YY-0001-01-Flood Risk Review)
3. Arcadis Consulting (UK) Limited (October 2018) Wapping Wharf, Tower Hamlets, Archaeology Desktop Review (Report Number 10024781-ARC-01-XX-RP-YY-0001-02- Archaeology Desktop Review)
4. Arcadis Consulting (UK) Limited (October 2018) Wapping Wharf, Tower Hamlets, Ecology Assessment (Report Number 10024781-ARC-01-XX-RP-YY-0001-02-Ecological Assessment)

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