



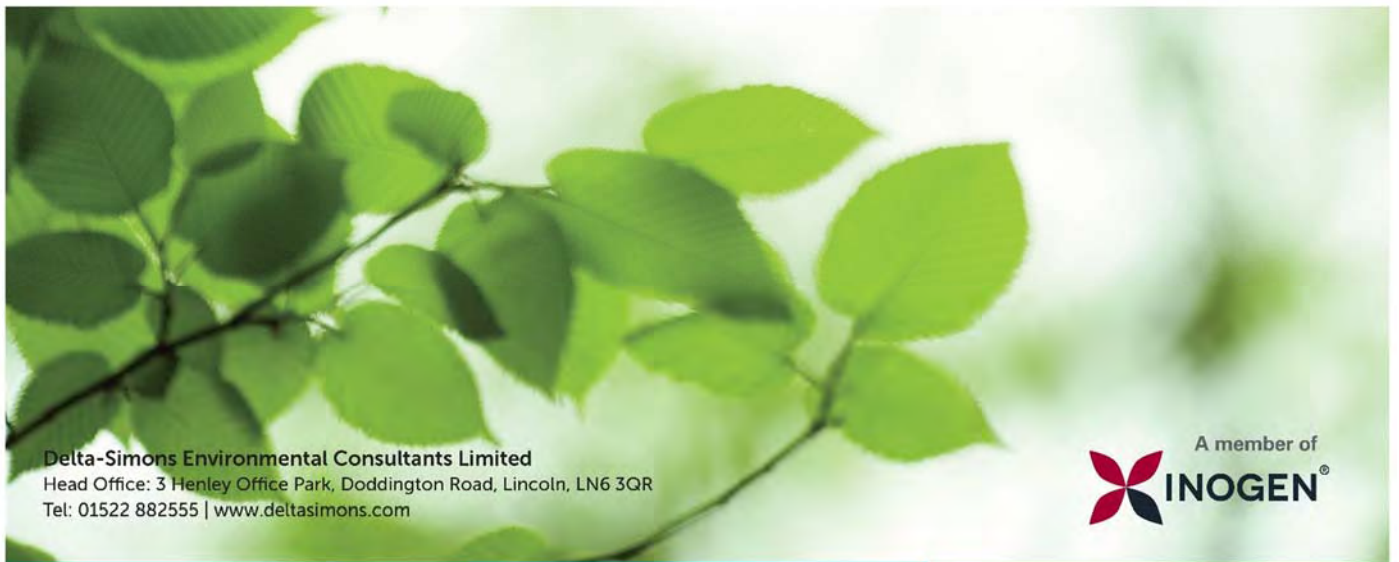
Reptile Survey Report

Hospital Bridge Road, Whitton

Presented to **Bowmer and Kirkland Ltd.**

Issued: July 2018

Delta-Simons Project No. 18-0170.02



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Report Details

Client	Bowmer and Kirkland Ltd.
Report Title	Reptile Survey Report
Site Address	Hospital Bridge Road, Whitton
Project No.	18-0170.02
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Quality Assurance

Issue No.	Status	Issue Date	Comments	Author	Technical Review	Authorised
2	Final	26/07/2018		<i>Barnaby Coupe</i>	<i>Britt</i>	<i>Charlotte J</i>
				Barnaby Coupe Graduate Ecologist	Jennifer Britt Senior Ecologist	Charlotte Sanderson- Lewis Associate and Ecology Team Leader

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Executive Summary

Scope of Works	Delta-Simons Environmental Consultants Ltd. was instructed by Bowmer and Kirkland Ltd. ('the Client') to undertake a Reptile Survey of land to the west of Hospital Bridge Road, Whitton, London ('the Site'). The aim of the survey was to determine the presence or likely absence of reptiles following feedback from a pre-application submission for a new school at the Site.
Current Site Status	The Site covers an area of 6.7 hectares (ha) and comprises rough grassland and scattered scrub, with the eastern extent used as a storage area for the adjacent landscaping and garden centre. A railway line runs adjacent to the northern Site boundary, and a garden centre lies adjacent to the eastern Site boundary, with residential properties further to the north and east of the Site. Heathfield Recreation Ground lies to the south of the Site, and Borough Cemetery borders the western Site boundary.
Proposed Development	It is understood that the proposed development comprises the construction of a three-storey teaching block and a two-storey sports complex in the north-eastern corner of the Site, with associated hard and soft landscaping. It is understood that the western extent of the Site will comprise green space playing fields.
Results:	No reptiles, or evidence of reptiles, was recorded during any of the seven survey visits, such that reptile species are considered to be absent from the Site.
Recommendations	No further reptile surveys, or mitigation, are considered necessary and no restrictions to the proposed development in relation to reptiles have been identified. There are, therefore, no further recommendations with regards to reptiles at the Site currently. However, should at least two years pass by, and/or conditions on-Site/ Site usage change prior to the commencement of works, it is recommended that an update survey is undertaken.
<p>This Reptile Survey Executive Summary is intended as a summary of the assessment of the Site based on information received by Delta-Simons at the time of production. This Executive Summary should be read in conjunction with the full report.</p>	

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Scope of the Survey

Delta-Simons Environmental Consultants Ltd was instructed by Bowmer and Kirkland Ltd. ('the Client') to undertake a Reptile Survey of land to the west of Hospital Bridge Road, Whitton, London ('the Site'). The Site Location is shown in Figure 1. This follows the recommendations of the LPA in response to the findings of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) survey undertaken by Campbell Reith Hill LLP in May 2017 (report reference 11677-14) which identified the Site as offering potential habitat for reptiles, with records of grass snake *Natrix helvetica*, slow-worm *Anguis fragilis* and common lizard *Zootoca vivipara* in the local area. Feedback from the LPA also identifies adder *Vipera berus* as present within Hounslow Heath within 1 km of the Site. The survey was undertaken following feedback from a pre-application submission and to inform a planning application for a new school at the Site.

The aim of the reptile survey was to:

- ▲ Determine the presence or likely absence of reptiles at the Site;
- ▲ Where reptiles are present, determine the size class of any populations of individual species;
- ▲ Assess the results of the survey and determine the potential impact of the proposed development works on any reptile population(s); and
- ▲ Provide recommendations for further surveys and/ or mitigation measures that may be necessary.

1.2 Site Description

The Site is centred at Ordnance Survey (OS) grid reference TQ 13336 73585, to the west of Hospital Bridge Road, Whitton, London. The Site covers an area of 6.7 hectares (ha) and comprises rough grassland and scattered scrub, with the eastern extent used as a storage area for the adjacent landscaping and garden centre.

A railway line runs adjacent to the northern Site boundary, and a garden centre lies adjacent to the eastern Site boundary, with residential properties further to the north and east of the Site. Heathfield Recreation Ground lies to the south of the Site, and Borough Cemetery borders the western Site boundary.

The Site layout is shown in Figure 2.

1.3 Proposed Development

It is understood that the proposed development comprises the construction of a three-storey teaching block and a two-storey sports complex in the north-eastern corner of the Site, with associated hard and soft landscaping. It is understood that the western extent of the Site will comprise green space, which will be used as playing fields (Figure 3).

2.0 Legislation and Policy

Reptiles

All six species of reptiles native to the United Kingdom, including common lizard, slow-worm, adder, grass snake, smooth snake *Coronella austriaca* and sand lizard *Lacerta agilis* are protected under the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) (as amended), from intentional killing or injury. As such, all reasonable steps must be taken to avoid their incidental mortality when carrying out works.

Smooth snake and sand lizard receive further protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, which makes it an offence to damage or destroy places that they use for breeding, resting, shelter and protection. It is also an offence to deliberately capture, injure or kill these species, and to intentionally or recklessly disturb them while occupying a structure or place it uses for shelter or protection; or to obstruct access to any structure or place which it uses for that purpose. Further it is illegal to damage/ destroy a breeding site or deliberately take/ destroy the eggs of such an animal.

Planning

As referenced in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2012), the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Circular (2005) advises that ecological surveys are undertaken before planning permission is determined. The circular states *“The need to ensure that ecological surveys are carried out should therefore only be left to coverage under planning conditions in exceptional circumstances”* (see References, Appendix A).

The NPPF also states *“The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: Minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government’s commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity...”*;

3.0 Methodology

This Reptile Survey has been undertaken to the following current guidelines: Gent & Gibson (2003) Herpetofauna Workers Manual, Froglife (1999) Advice Sheet 10, and BS 42020: 2013 Biodiversity. Code of Practice for Planning and Development.

3.1 Desk Search

3.1.1 Data Search

The results of the data search reported within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal report by Campbell Reith Hill LLP (Report reference 11677-14) were reviewed for records of reptiles, and for any statutory and non-statutory designated sites known to support reptile species, within a 2 km radius of the Site centre.

3.1.2 Review of Previous Surveys

Where available, information was gathered on any previous ecological surveys that have been conducted at the Site. The following survey reports were reviewed:

- ▲ Hospital Bridge Road, Whitton; Preliminary Ecological Appraisal 11677-14, September 2017, Campbell Reith Hill LLP

3.2 Preliminary Habitat Assessment

A preliminary habitat assessment was undertaken by Delta-Simons in June 2018 to inform the most appropriate and effective placement of artificial refugia across the Site.

3.3 Refugia Survey

Survey methodologies followed recommendations in the Herpetofauna Workers' Manual (Gent and Gibson (JNCC), 2003) and comprised the placement, and seven checks, of artificial refugia within areas of suitable reptile habitat across the Site.

A total of 80 artificial refugia were placed across the Site in order to ensure a minimum density of 10 refugia per hectare as recommended by Froglife (1999), with the location of the artificial refugia shown in Figure 2. These comprised corrugated bitumen roofing sheets, each measuring 0.5 m x 0.5 m. After allowing 14 days for the artificial refugia to settle into the sward they were all checked, above and below, on seven separate occasions for reptile presence. In addition to checking artificial refugia, a cold search of natural refugia and on-Site debris was also undertaken during each check. This involved any rocks or debris being overturned to check for reptiles. Any reptiles found were identified to species, and where possible, an approximate age category and sex was determined. The location of any reptiles found was recorded to understand the general usage of the Site by reptile species.

The survey was undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist during appropriate weather conditions between the 13th June and the 13th July 2018. A viable survey was considered to be within a temperature range of between 10 - 20 °C (Edgar *et al.*, 2010) with no heavy rain or considerable overnight frost.

3.4 Limitations to the Survey

There were no limitations to the surveys in regard to access, timing of surveys, or weather conditions. However, whilst mowing of the grassland on-Site, following the third survey visit, may have increased the suitability of the habitat for reptile species, it would have also caused at least short-term disturbance were any reptiles present, but there were adequate areas of alternative habitat that could have supported these species that remained undisturbed throughout the entire survey period, such that the mowing was not considered to deter reptiles from the Site. Generally the survey refugia were not disturbed by the grassland management, although during the sixth survey visit, a small number were disturbed by the works. However, given that the number of refugia set out were at a far higher density than that required for a viable survey, and these continued to provide a level of shelter and basking opportunities for reptiles such that they continued to be surveyed during the seventh and final visit, this was not considered to impact the robustness of the overall survey.

The baseline conditions described in this report were accurate at the time at which the survey was undertaken. Should at least two years pass by, and/or conditions on-Site/ Site usage change prior to the commencement of works, it is recommended that an update survey is undertaken.

3.5 Details of Surveyors

The reptile survey visits were undertaken by the following ecologists, both of whom have previous reptile survey experience, and have handled reptiles previously:

- ▲ Barnaby Coupe, Graduate CIEEM, 2 years of reptile survey experience; and
- ▲ Craig Dickson, Graduate CIEEM, 1 year of reptile survey experience.

4.0 Results

4.1 Desk Study

4.1.1 Data Search

The results of the data search reported by Campbell Reith Hill LLP indicated that there is one statutory designated and one non-statutory designated sites designated for, or known to support, reptiles within 2 km of the Site centre. The details of the sites identified are provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Statutory and Non-Statutory Designated Sites within 2 km of the Site

Site Name	Designation	Distance and Direction from Site Boundary	Designation Criteria Summary
Hounslow Heath	Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	520 m north-west of the Site	The LNR consists of woodland, neutral grassland, and acidic grassland communities with several small ponds. The site is important for slow worms, viviparous lizard, and grass snake.
Hanworth Park and Longford River	Borough Grade I Site of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC)	1.6 km south-west of the Site	Hanworth Park contains acid grassland, woodland and a stretch of river. The park and river are important for grass snakes.

Additionally, the data search provided nine records of slow-worm, seven records of grass snake, and 19 records of common lizard, with the most recent and closest records for all species from 2013 in Hounslow Heath LNR.

4.1.2 Review of Previous Surveys

The PEA report prepared by Campbell Reith Hill LLP assessed the Site as having potential to be suitable for reptiles. Several piles of refugia within the north of the Site were identified and the railway line to the north was considered to provide an ecological corridor between the Site and Hounslow Heath LNR. However, whilst the perimeter of the Site and earth embankment were identified to provide potential opportunities for reptile species, the majority of the Site was recorded to comprise regularly maintained rough grassland, providing a homogenous habitat less suitable for reptiles. During the PEA, crates and rubble were lifted, however, no reptiles were observed.

4.2 Preliminary Habitat Assessment

The majority of the Site was characterised by semi-improved grassland subject to regular management. The grassland supported a tall sward at the start of the survey period (Photograph 1), which was considered to be sub-optimal habitat for reptiles due to the absence of suitable basking opportunities. The grassland was subject to cutting over the course of the survey, such that the suitability of this habitat for reptiles improved (Photograph 2). Suitable basking and refuge opportunities were present around areas of tall ruderal vegetation on the earth embankment in the eastern extent of the Site and along the edges of bare ground used by the adjacent garden centre for storage. Scattered scrub, trees and hedgerow were present along the perimeter of the Site, with several scattered trees present throughout the grassland habitat providing a mosaic of structures and micro-habitats (Photograph 3).

Following this assessment of habitat suitability and variation during a walkover of the Site, the artificial refugia were placed in a variety of micro-habitats across the Site. Their locations are shown in Figure 2 and habitat details are given in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Number and Associated Micro-Habitats Supporting Artificial Refugia

Group	Micro-Habitat	Number of Refugia
A	Grassland edge habitat along the boundary with the railway line.	5
B	Rough grassland and scattered trees.	5
C	Grassland edge habitat following the line of the hedgerow.	15
D	Rough grassland along track edge.	5
E	Rough grassland with scattered scrub and trees.	10
F	Rough grassland along the Site boundary to the cemetery.	5
G	Rough grassland and tall ruderal habitat.	10
H	Rough grassland and bare ground around earthen bund.	10
I	Rough grassland along southern Site edge.	10
J	Rough grassland along southern Site edge.	5

4.3 Refugia Survey

No reptiles, or evidence of reptiles, such as shed skins, were recorded during any of the seven survey visits, such that reptile species are considered to be absent from the Site.

The dates the survey checks were undertaken and weather conditions are given in Table 3. Weather conditions were assessed using the Beaufort wind force scale and the okta scale of cloud cover.

Table 3: Survey Timings and Weather Conditions

Reptile Check	Date	Start Time	Weather Conditions	Cloud Cover	Temperature	Wind
No. 1	13/06/2018	9:00	Dry with partial cloud	3/8	18	4
No. 2	18/06/2018	8:30	Dry with partial cloud	4/8	19	2
No. 3	22/06/2018	9:00	Dry and clear	0/8	19	2
No. 4	26/06/2018	7:00	Dry and clear	0/8	17	2
No. 5	29/06/2018	8:00	Dry and clear	0/8	18	1
No. 6	09/07/2018	5:45	Dry and clear	2/8	17	1
No. 7	13/07/2018	9:30	Dry and Clear	2/8	19	1

5.0 Conclusions

5.1 Conclusions

Despite the presence of suitable basking, sheltering, hibernation and foraging habitat on the Site, and immediately adjacent to it, no evidence of reptiles was recorded during the surveys. The weather conditions during the checks were considered suitable for recording reptile activity and a greater density of refugia were set across the Site than required by the standard guidance such that the potential to record reptiles during each of the survey visits, if present, was high. It is, therefore, considered unlikely that the Site supports any reptile species.

5.2 Recommendations

No further reptile surveys, or mitigation, are considered necessary and no restrictions to the proposed development in relation to reptiles have been identified. There are, therefore, no further recommendations with regards to reptiles at the Site currently. However, should at least two years pass by, and/or conditions on-Site/ Site usage change prior to the commencement of works, it is recommended that an update survey is undertaken.

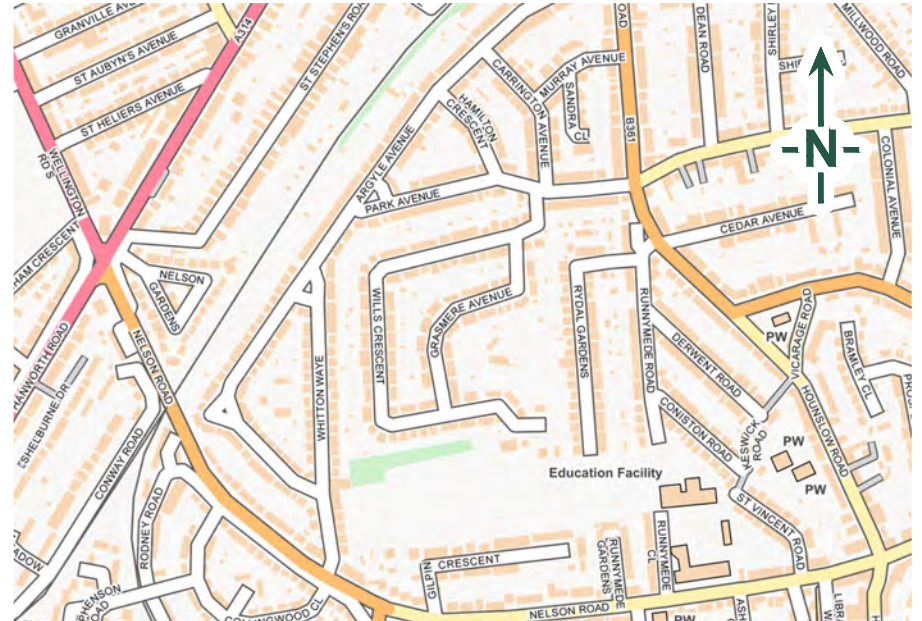
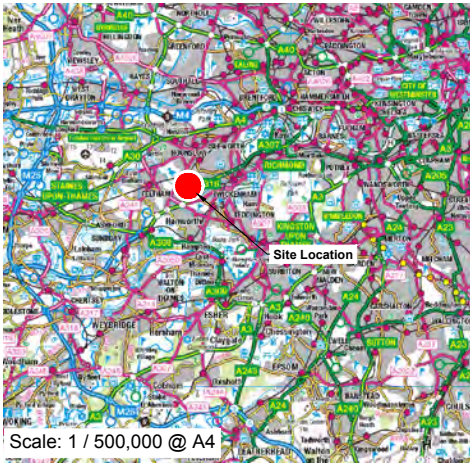
6.0 Disclaimer

The recommendations contained in this Report represent Delta-Simons' professional opinions, based upon the information referred to in Section 4.0 of this Report, exercising the duty of care required of an experienced Ecology Consultant.

The behaviour of animals can be unpredictable and may not conform to characteristics recorded in current scientific literature. This Report, therefore, cannot predict with absolute certainty that animal species will or will not occur in apparently suitable locations or habitats or that they will not occur in locations or habitats that appear unsuitable.

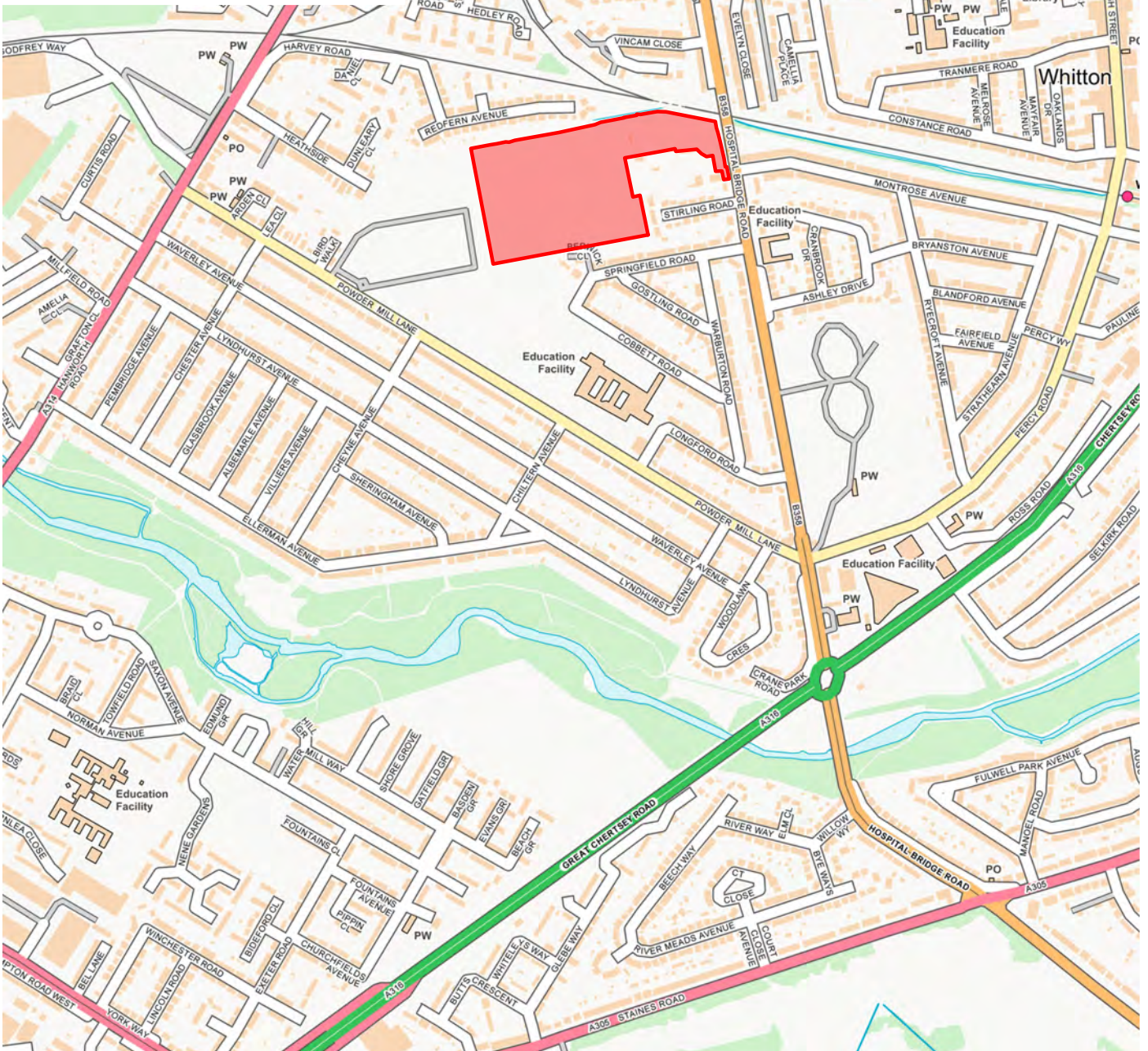
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Figure 1 – Site Location Map



LEGEND

 Site Boundary



Scale: 1 / 10,000 @ A4

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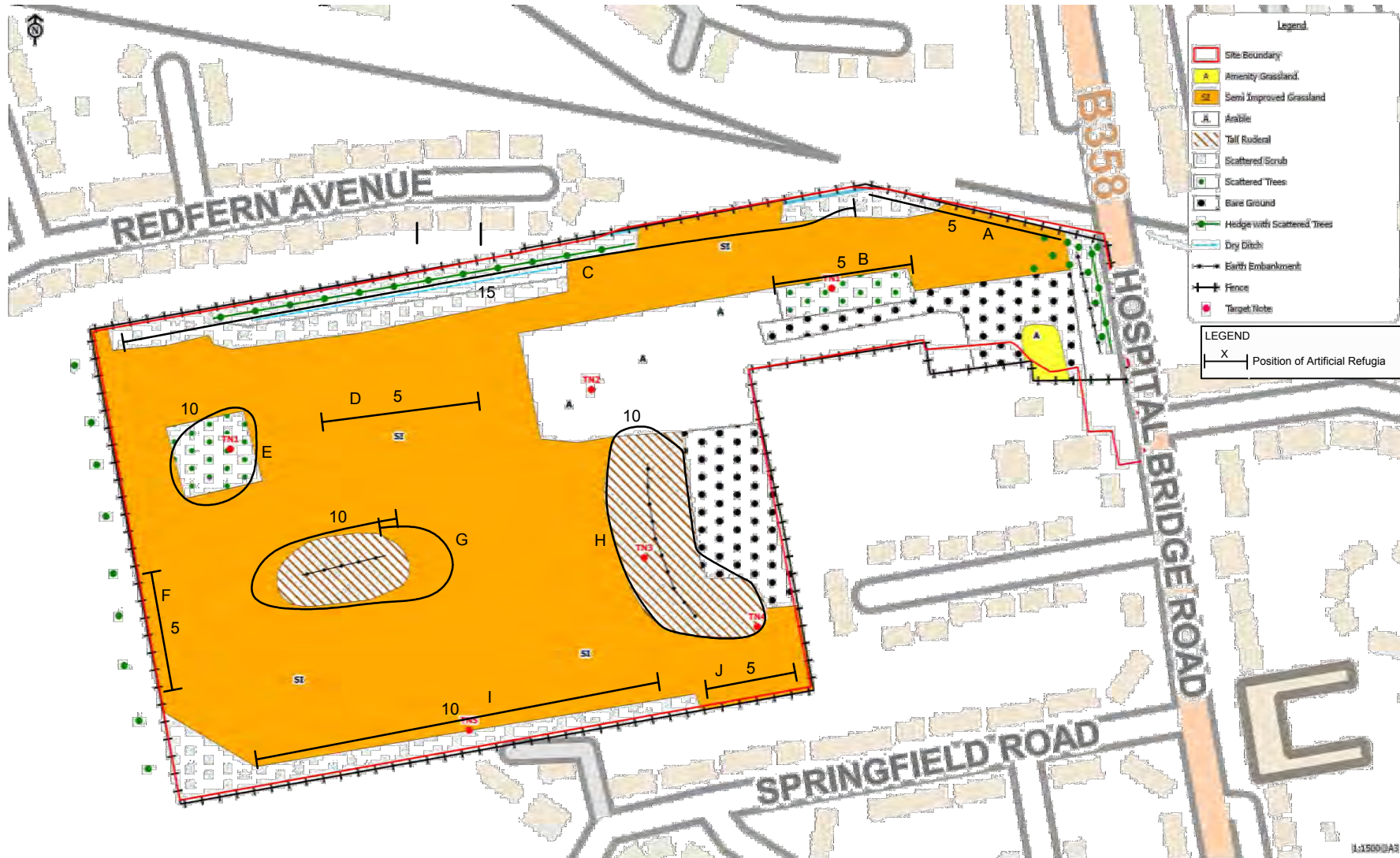


TITLE:
Site Location Map
Hospital Bridge Road
Whitton

DRAWN BY:	EN	SCALE:	To Scale@A4
CHECKED BY:	BC	REVISION:	1
DATE:	15 July 2018		

PROJECT NO:	18-0170.02
FIGURE NO:	1

Figure 2 – Site Layout and Location of Artificial Refugia



Legend

- Site Boundary
- Amenity Grassland
- Semi Improved Grassland
- Arable
- Tall Ruderal
- Scattered Scrub
- Scattered Trees
- Bare Ground
- Hedge with Scattered Trees
- Dry Gitch
- Earth Embankment
- Fence
- X Target Note

LEGEND

- X Position of Artificial Refugia

Turing House, Hounslow
 Client: Turner and Townsend Project Management Ltd
 Phase 1 Habitat Survey

Scale: 1:1500
 Date: 15/07/2018
 Project No: 18-0170.02
 Drawing No: 18-0170.02-02
 Title: Site Layout and Location of Artificial Refugia
 Date/Revision: 15/07/2018 (15, Redfern, Hounslow, E12 9JF)

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Site Plan Provided by Client

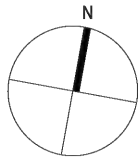
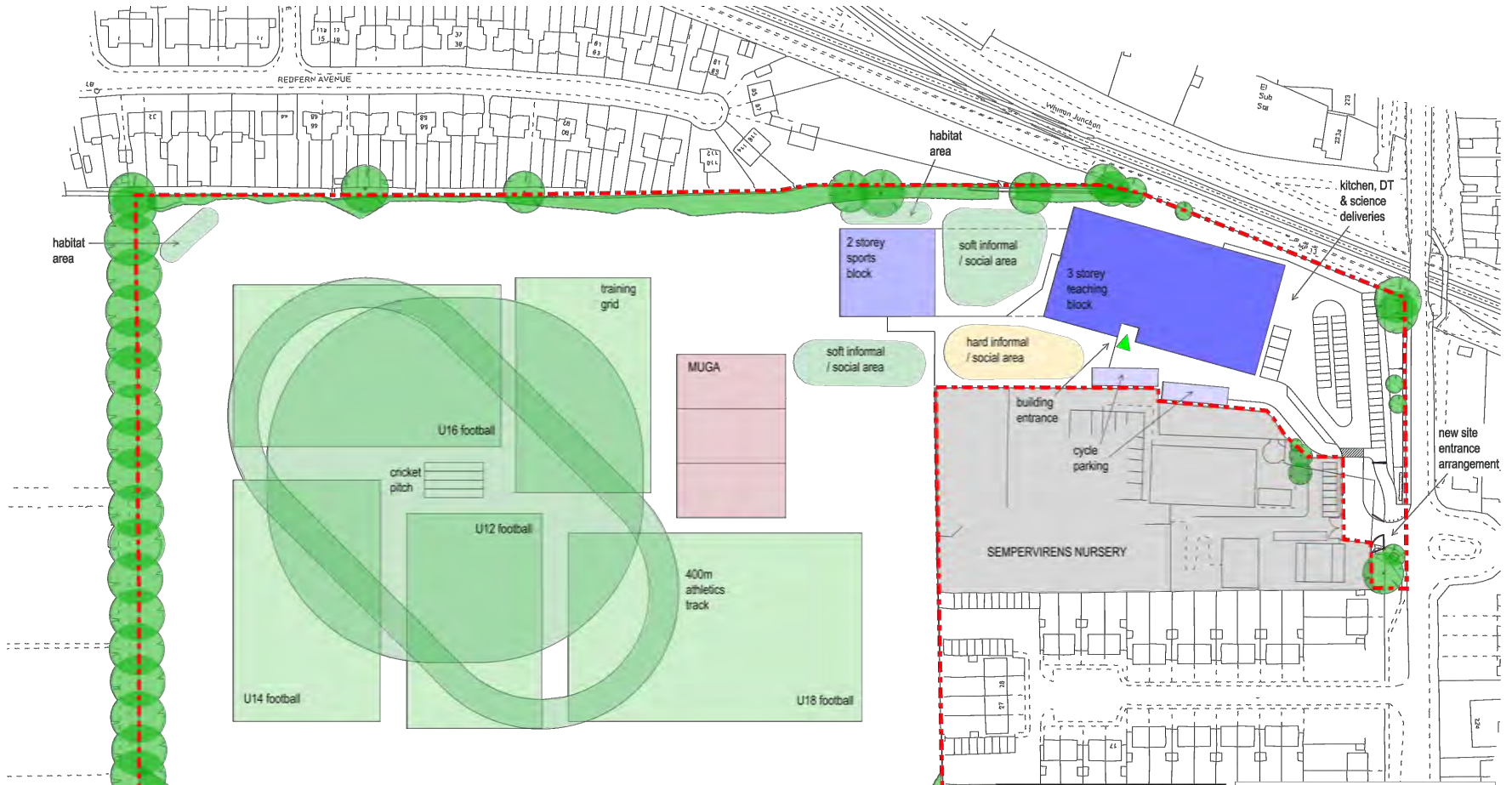
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TITLE:
 Site Layout and Location of Artificial Refugia
 Hospital Bridge Road
 Whetton

DRAWN BY: EN	SCALE: Not to Scale	PROJECT NO: 18-0170.02
CHECKED BY: BC	REVISION: 1	FIGURE NO: 2
DATE: 15 July 2018		

Figure 3 – Proposed Development Plan



SITE AREA:

site area:	66,570m ²
soft sports:	51,000m ²
hard sports:	1,975m ²
hard informal:	1,250m ²
soft informal:	2,700m ²
habitat:	525m ²
non-net area:	9,120m ²
green space:	54,225m ² (81%)
buildings + hard surface:	12,345m ² (19%)

Revision C
 mackenzie wheeler
 Turing House Free School
 SITE OPTION 1
 showing cycle track
 scale 1:1250 at A3
 1284/SK9/PG06-01-17

Site Plan Provided by Client



TITLE:
 Proposed Development Plan
 Hospital Bridge Road
 Whitton

DRAWN BY: EN	SCALE: Not to Scale
CHECKED BY: BC	REVISION: 1
DATE: 16 July 2018	

PROJECT NO: 18-0170.02
FIGURE NO: 3

Appendix A – References

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BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity. Code of Practice for Planning and Development

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Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2005): Circular 06/05: Biodiversity and geological conservation - statutory obligations and their impact within the planning system.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. HMSO

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

Appendix B – Photographs

Hospital Bridge Road, Whitton
Delta-Simons Project No. 18-0170.02



Photograph 1 – Rough grassland featuring a tall sward (survey start)



Photograph 2 – Recently mown grassland (survey end)



Photograph 3 – Scattered trees