Land at College Road, Campdown

REPTILE SURVEY REPORT

784-B038823, V1

Dandara Southern Ltd.

June 2023

Prepared on Behalf of Tetra Tech Limited. Registered in England number: 01959704

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CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION 4
1.1 Background Information 4
1.2 Site Location 4
1.3 Site Description 4
1.4 Development Proposals 4
1.5 Existing Site Information 4
1.6 Purpose of the Report 4
2.0 METHODOLOGY 5
2.1 Field Surveys 5
2.2 Calculating Populations 5
2.3 Limitations 6
3.0 RESULTS 7
3.1 Weather Conditions 7
3.2 Survey Results 7
3.3 Interpretation of Results 8
4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY & LEGISLATION 9
4.1 Planning Policy 9
4.1.1 Revised National Planning Policy Framework 9
4.1.2 Local Plan 9
4.2 Legislation 10
4.2.1 Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) 10
4.2.2 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) 10
5.0 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 11
5.1 Assessment of Possible Impacts 11
5.1 Mitigation and Compensation 11
6.0 REFERENCES 12
FIGURES 13
APPENDIX A – REPORT CONDITIONS 14

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Contents	Summary
Site Location	The site, Campdown, is located 2.5km south-east of Waterlooville, Havant in Hampshire and is centred at Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference SU 69069 06995.
Proposals	The proposed development plans for the site include the creation of 628 residential properties, with associated landscaping, public open space, allotments, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and access routes.
Existing Site Information	The proposed site has been subject to a range of ecological baseline surveys which informed an Environmental Statement (ES) in 2019 (WYG, 2019). At the time, the site was identified as having negligible suitability for reptiles due to grazing on site. Tetra Tech completed an update Ecological Appraisal of the site on 30th June 2022, which identified the presence of suitable terrestrial reptile habitat on site, following the cessation of grazing (Tetra Tech, 2023a).
Scope of this Survey(s)	The purpose of the presence / absence reptile surveys and the subsequent report were to: Determine the presence or absence of reptiles on site; Estimate the population size class (if possible) of any reptile species present; and Assess the impact of the development proposals on reptiles.
Results	The site supports a good population of common lizards and a low population of slow worms. The population of common lizards is just below the qualifying value for an 'exceptional' population with a peak count of 17 adult individuals found on one survey visit. Juvenile common lizards and slow worms were also identified thus confirming that the site supports breeding populations. Further discussion regarding development impacts and mitigation are discussed in the Environmental Statement (Tetra Tech, 2023b).

GLOSSARY

ACO	Artificial Cover Objects
BNG	Biodiversity Net Gain
EA	Ecological Appraisal
ES	Environmental Statement
ECoW	Ecological Clerk of Works
LBAP	Local Biodiversity Action Plan
LERC	Local Ecological Record Centre
NERC Act	Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
SAP	Species Action Plan
POS	Public Open Space
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage System
W&CA	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Tetra Tech was commissioned by Dandara Southern Ltd in June 2022 to undertake reptile presence / absence surveys at Land at College Road, Campdown, hereafter referred to as “the site”.

This report has been prepared by Tetra Tech Consultant Ecologist Harriet Kimber and the conditions pertinent to it are provided in Appendix A.

1.2 SITE LOCATION

The site is located approximately 2.5km west of Havant and is centred on Ordnance Survey (OS) National Grid Reference SU 69069 06995. The A3 is situated immediately east of the site, Portsmouth Golf Club and Widley are found to the west. To the south lies the outer reaches of the city of Portsmouth, with Langstone Harbour beyond.

1.3 SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is shown in Figure 1 and comprises approximately 26.6 hectares of land consisting of a series of large, connected fields with areas of scrub and hedgerow. The site was formerly grazed but, following the removal of livestock from the site, is now largely overgrown. The A3 is situated immediately east of the site, Portsmouth Golf Club and Widley are found to the west. To the south lies the outer reaches of the city of Portsmouth, with Langstone Harbour beyond.

1.4 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

The proposed development plans for the site (as shown in Appendix B) include mixed use residential development comprising 628 dwellings, community centre, allotments, public open space including play areas, new junction to College Road, related internal access roads, footways and cycleways, pumping station and sustainable drainage (SuDs) basins.

1.5 EXISTING SITE INFORMATION

The proposed site has been subject to a range of ecological baseline surveys which informed an Environmental Statement (ES) in 2019 (WYG, 2019). At the time, the site was identified as having negligible suitability for reptiles due to grazing on site.

Tetra Tech completed an update Ecological Appraisal of the site on 30th June 2022, which identified the presence of suitable terrestrial reptile habitat on site, following the cessation of grazing (Tetra Tech, 2023a).

1.6 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of the survey work and the subsequent report were to:

- Determine the presence or absence of reptiles on site;
- Estimate the population size class (if possible) of any reptile species present;
- Assess the impact of the development proposals on reptiles.

Further discussion regarding development impacts, mitigation and compensation are discussed in the Environmental Statement (Tetra Tech, 2023b).

Note that scientific names are provided at the first mention of each species and common names (where appropriate) are then used throughout the rest of the report for ease of reading.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 FIELD SURVEYS

The site was surveyed in accordance with industry standard best practice guidance as outlined in the Herpetofauna Workers' Manual (Gent and Gibson, 2003) and Advice Sheet 10 – Reptile Survey (Froglife, 1999).

Artificial Cover Objects (ACO) were placed in areas of suitable habitat throughout the site at a minimum density of 10 per hectare. The main areas identified as having suitability for reptiles included the scrub and grassland habitat types present on site which provide suitable foraging, basking and sheltering opportunities.

Each ACO was spray-painted with a number and location recorded using Mapit (GPS-enabled recording software). For the areas of suitable habitat on site, a total of 223 ACO (0.5m x 0.5m sections of bitumen roofing felt) were used. The ACO were installed on the 30th August 2022 and were left for a settling-in period of 17 days. Exact locations of the ACO placed across the site are shown in Figure 2.

Seven checks were then undertaken between 16th September and 6th October 2022. Each refugia was first checked for basking / resting individuals from a distance before being slowly approached and searched for sheltering reptiles. As well as checking the ACO, surveyors conducted a visual search of the nearby terrestrial habitat and checked any suitable natural refuges (for example, existing debris or log piles). Details including ACO number, species, life stage (adult, sub-adult, juvenile), and sex (where possible), were recorded. All refugia were collected and removed from site during the final survey visit. Each visit was conducted during the following conditions (Froglife, 1999):

Time: conducted between 08:30 and 11:00 or 16:00 and 18:30;
Air temperature: 9°C - 18°C;
Wind: still to moderate (equivalent to Beaufort 4; 13 – 17 miles per hour); and
Rain: no or light rain only at the time of the survey.

The metadata for each survey is provided in Section 3.1.

The reptile surveys were carried out by Tetra Tech Field Ecologists Lydon Trowbridge and Ryan Pearson.

2.2 CALCULATING POPULATIONS

Based on the data gathered from the surveys, it is possible to assign a population class to the species recorded. This is based on a maximum number of adults recorded by observation and/or under ACO placed at a density of up to 10 per hectare, by one person in one day. The different classifications for populations of slow worm and grass snake are provided in Table 1, as stipulated in the guidance from Froglife (1999).

Table 1: Population Classes of Reptiles

Species	Low population	Good population	Exceptional population
Common Lizard	<5	5 – 20	>20
Slow worm	<5	5 – 20	>20

As a rule, sites are automatically classed as of importance to reptile species if they:

- Support three or more reptile species;
- Support two snake species;
- Support an exceptional population of a single reptile species;
- Support an assemblage of species scoring at least four; and
- Are of significant regional importance due to local rarity.

2.3 LIMITATIONS

The surveys were carried out between 16th September and 6th October 2022. This period featured the optimal month of September with the survey visits being spread across several weeks. To allow for suitable spacing, surveys continued into October. October is known to be a sub-optimal month for surveying for reptiles in the UK as temperatures tend to cool. However, the confidence in the findings throughout this month is high as two reptile species were found, including juveniles. There are not thought to be any significant limitations to the results of this report, as all visits were carried out well within the optimum temperature conditions, as stated by the survey guidelines.

Due to the very large size of the site, all surveys extended and finished outside of the optimal timing window. Only two surveys, on 26th September 2022 and 3rd October 2022, began outside of the optimum timings window. However, as discussed above, temperatures at these times were within the optimum window.

The details of this report will remain valid for a period of two years from the date of the last survey (October 2024), after which the validity of this assessment should be reviewed to determine whether further surveys are necessary. Note that the recommendations within this report should be reviewed (and reassessed if necessary) should there be any changes to the red line boundary or development proposals upon which this report is based.

3.0 RESULTS

3.1 WEATHER CONDITIONS

The weather conditions were recorded for each survey and can be found in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Reptile Survey Metadata

Visit No.	Date	Survey Timings	Air Temperature (ºC)		Wind (Beaufort scale)		Cloud Cover (%)		Rain	
			Start	End	Start	End	Start	End	Start	End
1	16.09.22	09:45 to 13:45	12	17	2	2	5	10	0	0
2	20.09.22	08:50 to 12:00	12	18	1	2	10	20	0	0
3	22.09.22	10:30 to 14:00	16	18	2	2	20	30	0	0
4	26.09.22	12:30 to 15:30	15.8	15.6	2	3	60	60	0	0
5	30.09.22	11:00 to 14:00	15.2	15.7	1	3	75	95	0	0
6	03.10.22	11:15 to 14:35	16.2	17.8	2	2	15	75	0	0
7	06.10.22	09:40 to 14:10	11	17	2	3	0	50	0	0

3.2 SURVEY RESULTS

The results of the reptile surveys are provided in Table 3. The peak count for the species comes from the total number of adult individuals found by one person in one visit and forms the calculation of population size for each species in accordance with the guidance from Froglife (1999).

Table 3. Reptile Survey Results

Visit No.	Species	Adult Male	Adult Female	Unknown Adult	Juvenile	Total
1	**Common Lizard**	1	0	1	0	**2**
	Slow worm	0	0	1	2	**3**
2	**Common Lizard**	0	0	8	1	**9**
	Slow worm	0	0	2	3	**5**
3	**Common Lizard**	7	1	0	0	**8**

	Slow worm	1	0	0	1	**2**
4	**Common Lizard**	10	4	3	3	**20**
	Slow worm	0	1	0	0	**1**
5	**Common Lizard**	3	2	1	1	**7**
	Slow worm	1	2	0	1	**4**
6	**Common Lizard**	5	2	2	1	**10**
	Slow worm	2	2	0	0	**4**
7	**Common Lizard**	1	2	4	0	**5**
	Slow worm	3	1	0	3	**7**

The peak count (during any one survey by one person) of adult common lizards was 17, recorded on the 26th September. The peak count of adult slow worms was four, recorded on both the October survey visits. Gravid female slow worms were identified during the surveys which is supported by having also found very small juveniles (less than 5cm long) on site which constitute this years' offspring.

3.3 INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

The site supports a good population of common lizards and a low population of slow worms. The peak count of adult common lizards (excluding juveniles) during any one survey was 17, just below the qualifying value for an 'exceptional' population on site.

The presence of juveniles of both reptiles encountered during surveys confirms that the site supports a regularly breeding population. The variety of sizes and ages classes observed on site also suggests good age diversity within the population.

Though a small number of common lizards and slow worms were identified in the boundary habitats of the southern portion of the site, the majority of the recordings were made in the north. This is thought to be due to the damper conditions in the southern sections, providing less favourable habitat for basking and sheltering.

Recordings appear particularly concentrated along the north-western and north-eastern boundaries of the site as well as the central areas of the northern portion of the site, where long grasses and tall ruderal vegetation provided features for foraging and sheltering. Overall, the majority of habitat on site is suitable for reptiles and it is reasonable to conclude that the populations present make use of a large extent of the site for foraging, basking and dispersal.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY & LEGISLATION

4.1 PLANNING POLICY

4.1.1 Revised National Planning Policy Framework

A revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was issued on 20th July 2021 (Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government, 2021) and currently supplements government Circular *06/2005, Biodiversity and Geological Conservation: Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System* (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2005).

Circular 06/2005 states that the presence of protected species is a material consideration in the planning process. Paragraph 174 of the NPPF also states that:

'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural environment by:

a. *protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)*
b. *recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland*
c. *maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate*
d. *minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures*
e. *preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and*
f. *remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.'*

4.1.2 Local Plan

The site falls under the jurisdiction of Havant Borough Council and the relevant local plan document for this site is the Havant Borough Local Plan (pre-submission version with changes) (Havant Borough Council, 2020).

Policy E14, The Local ecological Network, states:

All development in Havant Borough is expected to protect, conserve and enhance the Borough's Local Ecological Network. Planning permission will only be granted where:

a. The development results in biodiversity net gain;

b. The development avoids the fragmentation of the Local Ecological Network including across administrative boundaries;

c. The applicant has identified and assessed the level of ecological value of the site through adequate and proportionate information and any matters arising have been addressed through an avoidance or mitigation plan; and

d. Any necessary mitigation plan includes provision for ongoing management and maintenance.

Policy E15, referring to protected species, of the plan goes on to state:

Development proposals which are likely to affect protected species, and/or their supporting habitats, must undertake appropriate surveys to establish their presence/likely absence. In using the findings of such surveys, proposals should, in the first instance, avoid an impact on a protected species. If this is not possible proposals should mitigate and compensate. Planning permission will only be granted where:

> *a. A Mitigation Plan, or if this is not possible a Compensation Plan, is provided to the satisfaction of the Council; and*
>
> *b. A Monitoring and Review Plan is put in place.*

Where the above measures cannot be met planning permission will be refused, unless the applicant can show, subject to meeting the tests of the Habitats Regulations, that there would not be an adverse effect on the population of the relevant protected species.

Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPs) identify habitat and species conservation priorities at a local level (typically County by County) and are usually drawn up by a consortium of local Government organisations and conservation charities. Although they are no-longer managed at a national level, many are still reviewed and updated at a local level.

The Biodiversity Action Plan for Hampshire is the relevant document for this site (Hampshire Biodiversity Partnership, 2000) and contains Species Action Plans (SAPs) for smooth snake *Coronella austriaca*,and sand lizard *Lacerta agilis*. It should be noted that the existence of a SAP does not always infer an elevated level of importance for those features. These plans may be designed to encourage an increase in these species, rather than to protect a county-scarce feature (for example).

4.2 LEGISLATION

4.2.1 Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981)

There are six reptile species native to the UK; these include slow worm, smooth snake *Coronella austriaca*, sand lizard *Lacerta agilis*, grass snake, adder *Vipera berus* and common lizard. All six are protected under the W&CA and benefit from various levels of protection. Sand lizard and smooth snake are the rarest of the six species and are afforded additional protection as European Protected Species under the Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations (2017).

The more commonly encountered reptile species are adder, grass snake, slow-worm and common lizard which receive partial protection under Section 9 of the W&CA. This legislation makes it an offence to:

> Intentionally or recklessly kill or injure these animals; and
> Sell, offer for sale, possess, or transport for the purpose of sale or publish advertisement to buy or sell individual reptiles.

4.2.2 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)

All reptiles in the UK are listed as species of principal importance under Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006).

The NERC Act (2006) imposes a duty on all public bodies, including local authorities and statutory bodies, in exercising their functions, to have due regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity [Section 40 (1)]. It notes that conserving biodiversity includes restoring or enhancing a population or habitat [Section 40 (3)]. Consequently, attention should be given to dealing with the modification or development of an area if aspects of it are deemed important to reptiles, such as foraging, basking and resting areas.

5.0 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 ASSESSMENT OF POSSIBLE IMPACTS

The extent and continuity of habitat for foraging and sheltering is important to the conservation status of common lizard and slow worm populations. Slow worms have limited dispersal abilities, particularly for small juveniles as they cannot cross large expanses of unsuitable terrain. This makes them particularly susceptible to the effects of habitat loss and fragmentation. Without mitigation, the removal of habitat to faciliate the proposals has the potential to kill or injure individuals and reduce the amount and quality of habitat required to maintain a viable population. Mitigation measures are therefore required to prevent an offense from being committed under the W&CA and to contribute to the maintenance of the local populations of reptiles.

Firstly, the mitigation hierarchy must be applied to these effects. This comprises:

Avoidance – avoid adverse effects as far as possible by designing out or using preventative measures during the construction process thus resulting in an environmental effect of neutral significance.
Reduction – minimise adverse effects as far as possible.
Compensation – involves the creation of habitats same value to off-set the impact.

The potential impacts of the development proposals mean that there is a risk of common lizards and slow worms being killed injured and / or disturbed without appropriate mitigation. The legal protection afforded to these species under the W&CA requires that these effects be prevented. These effects are most likely to occur during the vegetation removal and clearance phases of the construction works.

It is also a requirement of the NPPF for impacts to protected species (including common lizards and slow worms) to form material considerations in the planning process. The NPPF also includes the requirements for development to deliver net gain for biodiversity where possible. It is therefore important for reptile populations to be conserved in the local area. This requires habitats to be retained that could support reptiles following on from the construction phase and into the occupational (operational) phase of the development.

5.1 MITIGATION AND COMPENSATION

Measures designed to avoid, mitigate, and compensate for the likely impacts identified above are discussed in detail in the Environmental Statement (Tetra Tech, 2023b).

6.0 REFERENCES

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FIGURES

Figure 1 – Site Location Plan
Figure 2 – Reptile Refugia Locations
Figure 3 – Reptile Survey Results

Site Location Plan

Campdown

Dandara Southern Ltd.

F

Legend

Site Boundary

Notes:

Drawn by: EC

Checked by: HK

Office: Southampton

Figure No. 1

Revision No. A

0 50 100 150 Meters

Scale 1:3,000 @A3

10 January 2023

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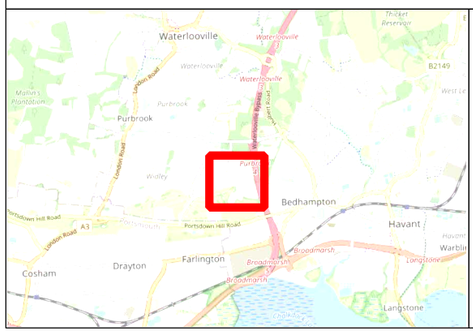

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Reptile Refugia Locations

Campdown

F

Dandara Southern Ltd.

Legend

Site Boundary

Reptile Mats

Notes:

Drawn by: EC

Checked by: HK

Office: Southampton

Figure No. 2

Revision No. A

0 50 100 150 Metres

Scale 1:2,681 @A3

10 January 2023

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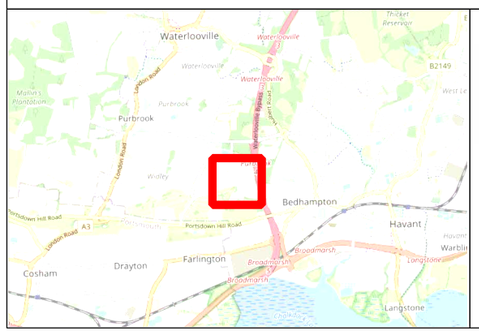

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Reptile Survey Results

Campdown

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F

Legend

Site Boundary

Reptile Mats

Species Present

Common Lizard

Common Lizard and Slow Worm

Slow Worm

Notes:

Drawn by: EC

Checked by: HK

Office: Southampton

Figure No. 3

Revision No. A

0 50 100 150 Meters

Scale 1:3,000 @A3

10 January 2023

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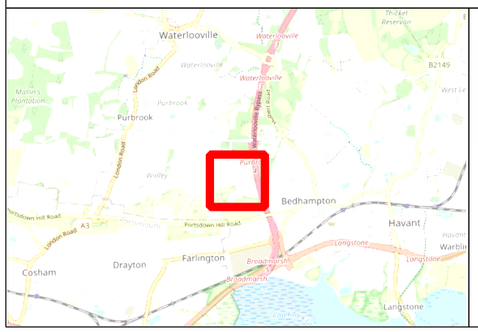

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APPENDIX A – REPORT CONDITIONS

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