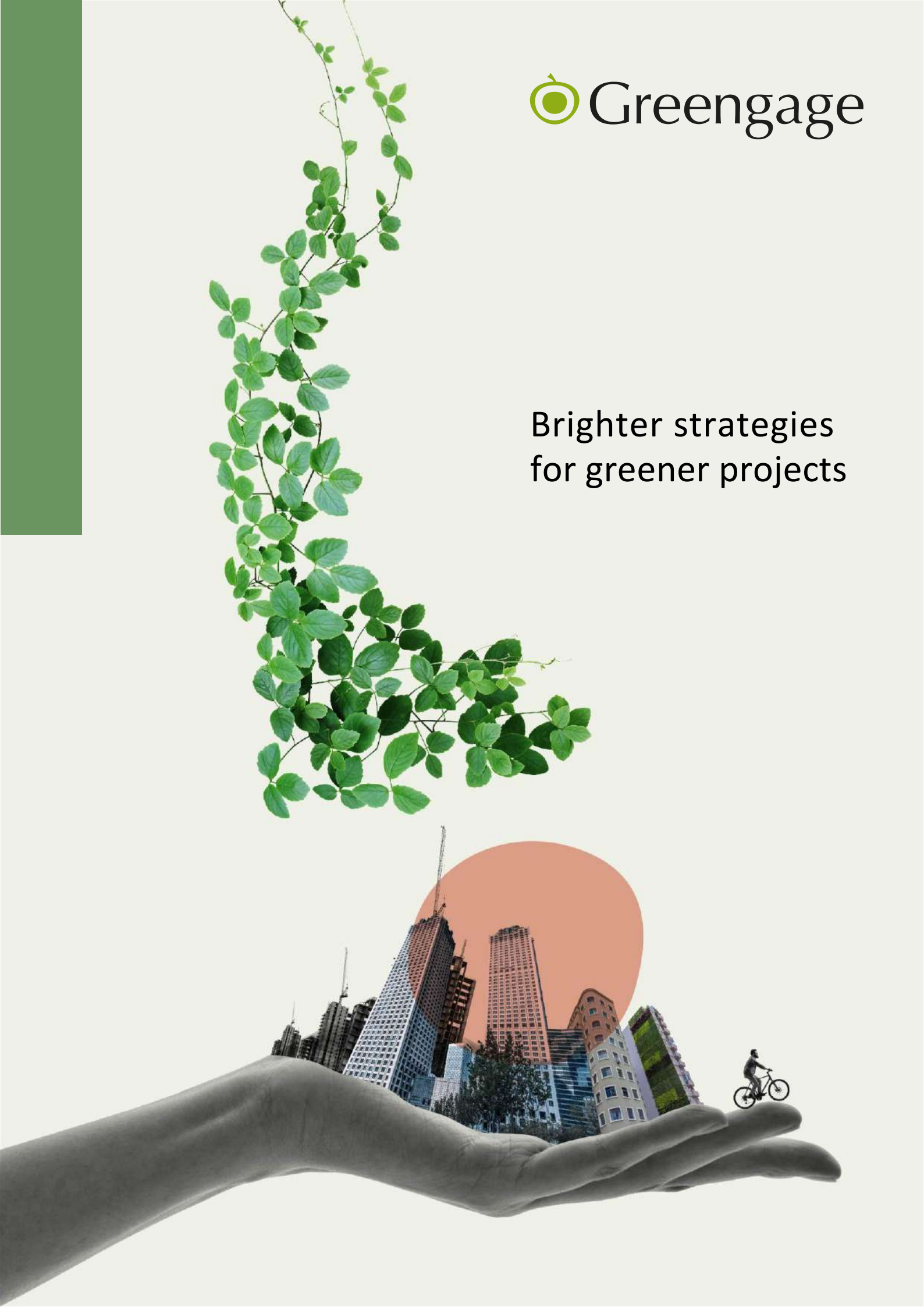




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Client: Portsmouth City Council
Project: Dunsbury Park Plot 600-601
Report: Reptile Survey Report

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Issue/Revision:	Draft	Final
Date:	June 2025	July 2025
Comments:		
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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Greengage Environmental Ltd was commissioned by Portsmouth City Council to undertake a Reptile Survey of a site known as Dunsbury Park Plot 600-601 within the administrative boundary of Havant Borough Council.

This report has been produced to support a planning submission for the site which seeks to construct a new industrial/warehouse unit on the site.

The survey area extends to 3.14 hectares (ha) and comprises a large area of modified grassland in an early stage of succession since being taken out of arable cultivation approximately 7 years ago.

Previous reptile surveys were undertaken in 2023 which recorded an 'exceptional' population of slow worms *Anguis fragilis*, a 'good' population of common lizard *Zootoca vivipara* and a 'low' population of adder *Vipera berus* and grass snake *Natrix helvetica*.

An updated reptile survey was undertaken between April and June 2025 which sought to confirm the presence/likely absence of reptiles from the site and assess their population size.

The survey confirmed the presence of an 'exceptional' population of slow worms, and a 'low' population of adder, grass snake and common lizard, with maximum peak counts of these species respectively of 55, 3, 1 and 5 individuals recorded on one single survey visit.

The proposed development stands to result in the removal of suitable reptile habitat, and as such may result in the killing of reptiles, if appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures are not followed. It is recommended that a reptile mitigation strategy is produced, detailing the following:

- Identification of a suitable reptile receptor site in advance of a translocation;
- Enhancement of the receptor site to increase the carrying capacity for the species being translocated;
- Erection of reptile fencing;
- Methodology for the translocation, and identification of indicators that the translocations has been satisfactorily completed; and
- A methodology for the sensitive clearance of the site to minimise the risk of injury/death of reptiles.

The proposed development should also seek to enhance the value of the habitats on site for reptiles post-development through creation of refugia, hibernacula and basking sites within the projects soft-landscaping.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Greengage was commissioned by Portsmouth City Council to undertake a Reptile Survey on a site known as Dunsbury Park Plot 600-601, within the administrative boundary of Havant Borough Council. The survey aims were to establish the presence or likely absence of reptiles and evaluate the population size of any reptiles recorded. This document is a report of that survey.

The overall assessment consisted of:

- Site specific biological information gained from statutory and non-statutory consultation; and
- An extended on site reptile survey.

The site-specific survey exercise, consisting of 7 visits, was undertaken throughout April, May and June 2025. An initial Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (hereafter 'PEA')¹ carried out by Greengage in 2023 identified the potential for reptiles to be present and provided the ecological context for the surveys.

The findings, recommendations and opinions expressed in this report are based on the combination of information stated, site observations and feedback from the consultation exercise.

3.0 SITE CONTEXT & STATUS

The site extends to approximately 3.14 hectares (ha) and is centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (OS NGR): SU701094, OS Co-ordinates 470170, 109474.

The site comprised an unmanaged field (modified grassland) with an area of bramble scrub surrounding an oak tree.

The site is located approximately 4km from the south coast at Bridge Lake, 2.5km north-west of the centre of Havant and approximately 320m east of the main carriageway of the A3(M). It is located within a field within the consented Dunsbury Park development, between the conurbations of Waterlooville and Leigh Park.

The site is situated in a mixed context, with residential developments, industrial developments and an extensive semi-natural habitat network all present in the close vicinity. The semi-natural habitat comprises woodland, scrub, grassland and parkland which are present in the immediate vicinity to the north, east and south of the site.

3.1 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This document is a report of the reptile survey and has been produced to inform a planning application for the site which seeks the construction of Plot 600 and Plot 601 of the Dunsbury Park development, which comprises two new industrial units with associated parking, service yards and landscaping, hereafter referred to as 'the development'.

3.2 PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

The scoping survey was carried out on 5th July 2023. The potential for reptile species on site was assessed during the walkover survey with likely possible species including grass snake (*Natrix natrix*), adder (*Vipera berus*), common lizard (*Lacerta vivipara*) and the slow worm (*Anguis fragilis*). These native reptile species generally require open areas with low, mixed-height vegetation, such as heathland, rough grassland, and open scrub or, in the case of grass snake, waterbody margins. Suitable well drained and frost free areas are needed so they can survive the winter.

During the site walkover habitats across the site were considered of high value for reptiles, consisting of rank modified grassland, with areas of open bare ground. There were also records for reptile species in the local area.

With suitable reptile habitat having been identified on-site it was recommended that reptile presence/likely-absence surveys, sufficient to detect species such as slow worm, common lizard, adder and grass snake, should be carried out in accordance with Natural England guidelines. Where habitat was not suitable for reptiles within the application site, no further surveys have been deemed necessary.

3.3 PREVIOUS REPTILE SURVEYS

A reptile survey was undertaken between May and July 2023. These surveys confirmed the presence of an 'exceptional' population of slow worm, a 'good' population of common lizard and a 'low' population of adder and grass snake.

Consultation with XX Environmental Records centre (XXXX) identified several records of reptiles within 2km of the assessment site boundary.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

A presence/absence survey and a population estimate survey for reptiles was completed between 20th April and 10th June 2025. This was carried out in accordance with Natural England and Froglife 1999 Guidelines².

Refugia ('mats') were constructed of approximately 0.5m x 0.5m square felt sheeting as recommended by Froglife and the HGBI³ for reptile surveys. Froglife guidelines recommend between 5 – 10 mats per hectare². The site in total is approximately 4.56 ha all of which was considered potentially suitable for reptiles. A total of 188 mats were placed across the site, locally sited in the most appropriate position for use by basking/sheltering reptiles. This equates to approximately 41 mats per hectare, far exceeding the recommended level increasing the likelihood of identifying reptile populations. Appendix A shows the placement of these mats across the site.

The density of refuge mats varied depending on the suitability of the area of habitat being surveyed. Reptiles are poikilothermic and are therefore dependent upon ambient temperatures to regulate their own body temperature. As such they will hide under the mats and use the heat generated from them to raise their own body temperature to a level where they become more active for foraging and other activities.

Seven survey visits were carried out, subsequent to the mats being distributed, to determine the presence/absence of reptile species on site and establish a population size from the data – mats were allowed to 'bed in' for five days following distribution. Typically, up-to 7 visits are deemed necessary for presence/absence surveys.

During each visit, the mats were checked visually from a distance to determine whether reptiles were basking on their surface. The mats are then carefully approached and lifted to check for reptiles sheltering beneath them.

Between mats the site was also walked carefully and slowly in an attempt to detect reptiles that may be basking away from the artificial refugia supplied. Other potential refugia/basking sites present within the site were visually checked in addition to the mats during the walkovers.

4.1 TIMING

Seven survey visits were conducted between the 20th April and 10th June 2025. Visits to the site were made between 08:15am and 11:00am when weather conditions were favourable, in accordance with good practice.

4.2 WEATHER CONDITIONS

Weather data for the survey is provided in Table 4.1 below:

Survey Number	Date	Time	Cloud Cover (%)	Rain	Wind	Temperature (°C)
Set Up	3rd April 2025	10:00	20%	None	Gentle Breeze	18

Survey Number	Date	Time	Cloud Cover (%)	Rain	Wind	Temperature (°C)
1	20th April 2025	10:30	70%	None	Gentle Breeze	11
2	30th April 2025	08:45	10%	None	Calm	17
3	2nd May 2025	11:00	10%	None	Light Breeze	18
4	10th May 2025	08:15	10%	None	Light Breeze	14
5	15th May 2025	10:30	40%	None	Gentle Breeze	16
6	22nd May 2025	10:45	70%	None	Moderate Breeze	16
7 (and collection)	10th June 2025	09:45	100%	None	Moderate Breeze	17

4.3 LIMITATIONS TO SURVEY

Reptiles are generally secretive animals and are often difficult to locate by virtue of their behaviour and habitat selection; it is therefore often difficult to prove absence². During surveys it is possible to unsettle basking reptiles by walking through nearby habitat. Therefore, binoculars were used to search for basking animals from a safe distance as well as the artificial refuge search to increase confidence in the survey.

4.4 SURVEYORS

Survey visits were carried out by Izabela Kennedy, Ecological Consultant, and this report was prepared by Brooke Waites, Principal Ecologist, which is a full member of CIEEM.

This report was reviewed by Daniel Perlaki, who has an undergraduate degree in Ecology (BSc Hons), a Master's degree in Conservation Science and Policy and is a Graduate member of CIEEM. Dan has over 5 years' experience in ecology survey and consultancy.

This report was written by Brooke Waites and reviewed by Daniel Perlaki who confirms in writing (see the QA sheet at the front of this report) that the report is in line with the following:

- Represents sound industry practice;
- Reports and recommends correctly, truthfully and objectively;
- Is appropriate given the local site conditions and scope of works proposed; and
- Avoids invalid, biased and exaggerated statements.

5.0 RESULTS

5.1 PRESENCE/ABSENCE SURVEY

The Table 5.1 below shows count data from reptile survey visits 1-7 with the peak counts highlighted in red. During the survey period, slow worm, common lizard, adder and grass snake were recorded at the site. Results of the reptile survey are presented in Table 5.1. Full detailed results are provided in Appendix B and the survey plan is shown in Appendix A.

5.2 OVERVIEW OF REPTILE SURVEY RESULTS

Table 5.1 Reptile Survey Results

Count				
Survey Number	Adder	Common Lizard	Grass Snake	Slow-worm
Survey Set Up	0	3	0	5
1	3	0	0	55
2	0	1	0	10
3	0	0	1	5
4	0	1	1	8
5	0	0	1	10
6	1	1	1	29
7	2	2	1	30

Maximum counts for the four species recorded are:

- Adder – 3;
- Common lizard – 3;
- Grass snake – 1; and
- Slow-worm – 55.

Table 5.2 Key Reptile Register Scoring System^{5, 4}

	Low Population Score 1	Good Population Score 2	Exceptional Population Score 3
Slow worm	<5	5-20	>20
Common lizard	<5	5-20	>20
Grass snake	<5	5-10	>10
Adder	<5	5-10	>10

This Key Reptile Register Classification System was designed to provide a basic evaluation of the size and importance of reptiles on a site and the scoring system enables an estimation of low, good or exceptional population size. The figures refer to the maximum number of reptiles observed under the mats by one observer on one day. In accordance with the Key Reptile Register Classification System (see Table 5.2) the population of slow worm is considered to be 'exceptional', and the populations of grass snake, adder and common lizard are 'low'. However, these population sizes are likely highly overstated due to the density of mats which were put out, which increased the recording rate.

Recommendations for mitigation are provided below to ensure no reptiles are affected during the proposed development.

6.0 MITIGATION & RECOMMENDATIONS

In the absence of mitigation, site clearance stands to result in the death of individual reptiles and the loss of suitable reptile habitat. As such, appropriate mitigation should be implemented to ensure that proposals are compliant with the relevant legislation and planning policy requirements. Owing to the size of the populations present on site, a translocation is considered to be the most appropriate mitigation strategy.

Potential Receptor Site

In order to translocate the reptiles, a suitable receptor site must be found and assessed for existing reptile populations. Receptor sites will likely require a degree of enhancement to improve their carrying capacity for reptiles in advance of the translocation. This could constitute establishing areas of bare ground for basking, creation of refugia such as log piles, creation of hibernacula (partially buried large particulate building waste and logs, capped with turf), creation of compost heaps and rockeries.

Exclusion Fencing

Prior to translocation, reptile exclusion fencing should be erected around the construction footprint of Plot 600-601. This should consist of polyurethane sheet, partially buried to a minimum of 30cm and secured with wooden stakes. This is to deter reptiles from re-entering the development site during or after the translocation. Areas where vehicular access to the development site is required should be identified and gates installed to allow vehicles to enter without damaging the fencing.

Reptile Translocation

Once a receptor site has been identified and enhanced, and reptile exclusion fencing is installed, the translocation should be undertaken. Reptile mats would be redistributed and on subsequent visits, reptiles would be captured by hand and temporarily placed in a container before being released into the receptor site.

Habitat manipulation during the translocation can be undertaken to render areas of the site less suitable, concentrating populations within the site in specific areas to increase capture rate. Once seven subsequent visits are undertaken during which no reptiles are recorded, they can be considered likely absent, and the translocation is considered complete.

Translocation visits should only be undertaken during months when reptiles are active, with April, May and September being the most productive months.

Should this not be completed in time before site clearance, but reptile capture numbers fall significantly from pre-commencement levels, a precautionary method of works may be acceptable.

Site Clearance

It is likely that site clearance, upon completion of the translocation, should be undertaken under a Precautionary Method of Works (PMoW) involving a multi-stage cut of vegetation under a watching brief.

Monitoring of Receptor Site

In order to ensure the success of the translocation, monitoring visits of the receptor site may be required. This would likely be secured through planning condition.

The above methodology should be expanded and compiled in a Reptile Mitigation Strategy once a suitable receptor site has been identified and secured.

1.2 ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT

The proposed development site also features areas of suitable reptile habitat which are to be retained. These should be further enhanced by:

- Improving species diversity of the grassland via harrowing and broadcast seeding an appropriate native seed mix;
- Provision of log piles, rockeries, hibernacula and compost piles amongst retained grassland habitat; and
- Managing scrub establishment within the grassland to an acceptable level.

If suitable mitigation measures are followed, it is predicted that the development will not result in any negative impacts upon local reptile populations.

Ecological enhancements should follow guidance in the Amphibian and Reptile Conservation: Reptile Habitat Management Handbook⁵ and would likely be through the installation of brash and log piles and hibernacula in fringing vegetation at site. Species rich areas of grass and shrub vegetation should also be provided within landscaping plans.

7.0 SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

Greengage was commissioned by Portsmouth City Council to undertake a Reptile Survey at a site known as Dunsbury Park Plot 600-601 in Havant in order to confirm the presence/likely absence of reptiles on site and estimate their population size.

The surveys undertaken between April and June 2025 confirmed the presence of an 'exceptional' population of slow worm and a 'low' population of adder, grass snake and common lizard, however the population size estimates are likely exaggerated by the increased refugia density.

A reptile translocation to a suitable receptor site should be undertaken in advance of site clearance following the methodology outlined in section 6.0. A full reptile mitigation strategy should be prepared in advance of works to provide further detail once a receptor site has been secured.

Ecological enhancements in the form of log piles and species rich landscaping to include areas of grassland and native shrub planting have been recommended to provide net gains in biodiversity.

APPENDIX A REPTILE SURVEY PLAN

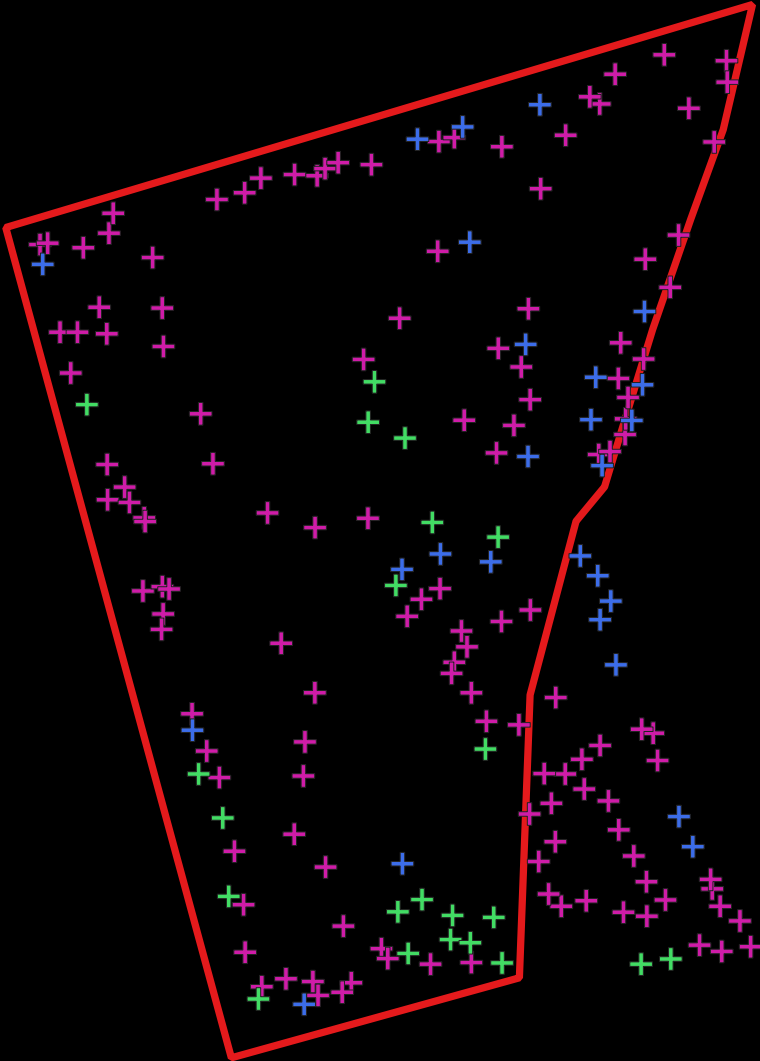
DUNSBURY PARK

PLOT 600-601

 Red Line Boundary

Refugia

-  Bitumen Felt
-  Onduline felt
-  Tin



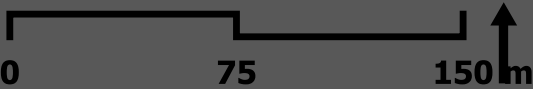
Title: Figure A.1 Reptile Survey Plan

Drawn by: DP
Date: 07/07/2025

Reviewed by: TBC
Date: TBC

Project number: 553134
Sources: Google Earth

1:2,500



DUNSBURY PARK

PLOT 600-601

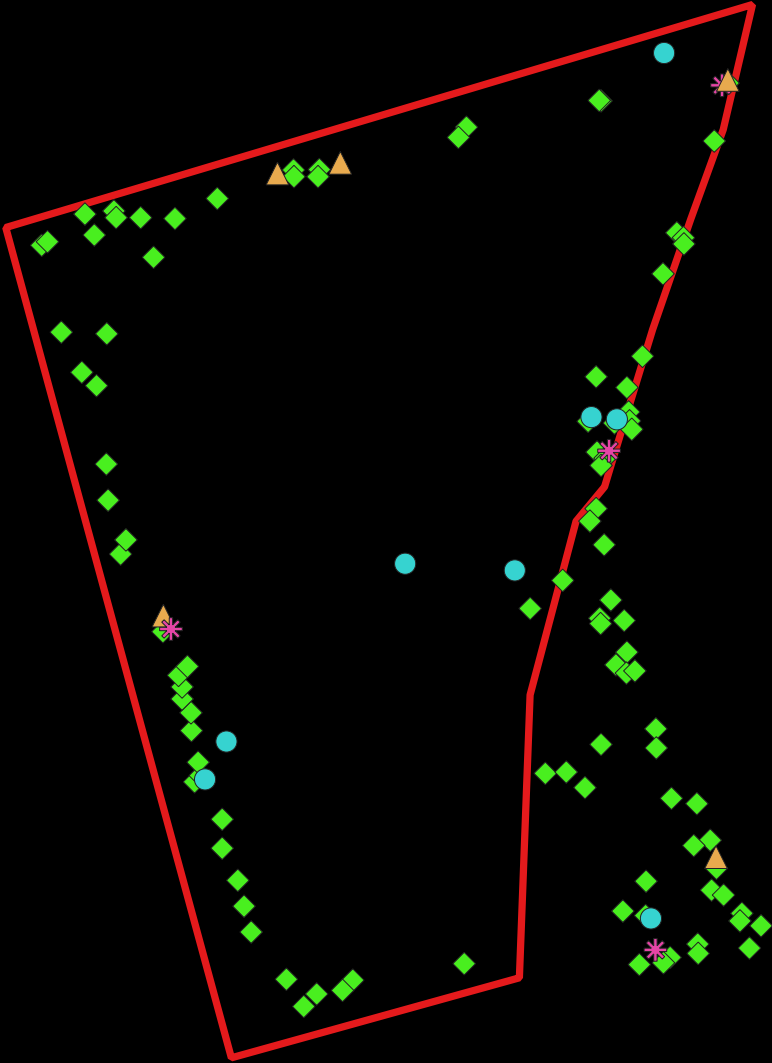
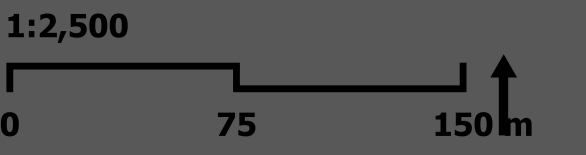
- Red Line Boundary
- Reptile survey results
- Adder
- Common lizard
- Grass snake
- Slow worm

Title: Figure A.2 Reptile Survey Results

Drawn by: DP
Date: 07/07/2025

Reviewed by: TBC
Date: TBC

Project number: 553134
Sources: Google Earth



APPENDIX B REPTILE SURVEY DATA

Table B.1 Detailed reptile survey results

Survey no	Species	Age	Sex
Set up	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
Set up	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
Set up	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
Set up	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
Set up	Common Lizard	Adult	Male
Set up	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
Set up	Common Lizard	Adult	Male
Set up	Common Lizard	Adult	Female
1	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
1	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
1	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
1	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
1	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
1	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
1	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
1	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
1	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
1	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
1	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
1	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Female
1	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
1	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
1	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
1	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
1	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
1	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
1	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
1	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
1	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
1	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
1	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
1	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
1	Slow-worm	Adult	Female

Reptile Survey Report

Survey no	Species	Age	Sex
2	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
2	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
2	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
2	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
2	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Female
2	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
2	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
2	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
2	Common Lizard	Adult	Female
2	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
3	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
3	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
3	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
3	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
3	Grass Snake	Adult	Male
3	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
4	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
4	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
4	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
4	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
4	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
4	Common Lizard	Adult	Female
4	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
4	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
4	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
4	Grass Snake	Juvenile	Unknown
5	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
5	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
5	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
5	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
5	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
5	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
5	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
5	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
5	Slow-worm	Adult	Male

Survey no	Species	Age	Sex
5	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
5	Grass Snake	Juvenile	Unknown
6	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
6	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
6	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
6	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
6	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
6	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
6	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
6	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
6	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
6	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
6	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
6	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
6	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
6	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
6	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
6	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
6	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
6	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
6	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
6	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
6	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
6	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
6	Adder	Adult	Female
6	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
6	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
6	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
6	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
6	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
6	Grass Snake	Adult	Female
6	Common Lizard	Adult	Female
6	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
6	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
7	Adder	Adult	Female

Survey no	Species	Age	Sex
7	Adder	Adult	Male
7	Common Lizard	Adult	Female
7	Grass Snake	Adult	Female
7	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
7	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
7	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
7	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
7	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
7	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
7	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
7	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
7	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
7	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
7	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
7	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
7	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
7	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
7	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
7	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
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7	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
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7	Slow-worm	Adult	Male
7	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
7	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
7	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
7	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
7	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
7	Slow-worm	Juvenile	Unknown
7	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
7	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
7	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
7	Slow-worm	Adult	Female
7	Common Lizard	Adult	Male

APPENDIX A LEGISLATION AND PLANNING POLICY

A.1 LEGISLATION

All species of reptile native to the UK are protected to some degree under national and/or international legislation, which provides mechanisms to protect the species, their habitats and sites occupied by the species.

Sand lizards and smooth snakes are European protected species and are afforded full protection under Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981⁶ and Regulation 39 of the Habitats Regulations 1994⁷ (and 2017)⁸. However, these species are rare and highly localised. Their occurrence is not considered as relevant in this instance, as the ranges and specialist habitats of these species do not occur at this site.

The remaining widespread species of native reptiles (adder, grass snake, slow worm and viviparous lizard) are protected under part of Section 9(1) and all of Section 9(5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. They are protected against intentional killing and injury and against sale, transporting for sale etc. The habitat of these species is not protected. However, in terms of development, disturbing or destroying reptile habitat during the course of development activities while reptiles are present is likely to lead to an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It is therefore important to identify the presence of these species within a potential development site. If any of these species are confirmed, all reasonable measures must then be taken to ensure the species are removed to avoid the threat of injury or death associated with development activities.

Each species of native reptile has specific habitat requirements, but general shared features include a structurally diverse habitat that provides for shelter, basking, foraging and hibernating.

A.2 POLICY

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021⁹ sets out the Government's planning policies for England, including how plans and decisions are expected to apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Chapter 15 of the NPPF focuses on conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, stating plans should 'identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity'.

It goes on to state: 'if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused'. Alongside this, it acknowledges that planning should be refused where irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland are lost.

All six reptiles are now listed as priority species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). Action plans have been produced for all of them. All BAP species have been included in Section 41 and 42 lists produced by the Secretary of State of England and the Welsh Assembly. These are lists of species that, as specified under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, are of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity. As such, all reptile species are of material consideration in the planning process due to the NPPF.

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