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South Street, Bridport

Reptile Survey Report and Reptile Mitigation Strategy

Planning Issues Ltd

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Document prepared on behalf of Tetra Tech Limited



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GLOSSARY

Acronyms/Abbreviations	Definition
CEMP	Construction Ecological Management Plan
CIEEM	Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management
DEFRA	Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
ECow	Ecological Clerk of Works
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
LBAP	Local Biodiversity Action Plan
LPA	Local Planning Authority
MCIEEM	Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management
NERC Act	Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PEA	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
SAP	Species Action Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Contents	Summary
Site Location	The site is located west of South Street in Bridport, Dorset and is centred at Ordnance Survey (OS) National Grid Reference SY 46509 92260.
Proposals	The development proposals comprise a residential care home with associated parking, infrastructure and landscaping.
Scope of this Survey(s)	<p>The purpose of this assessment is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the presence or likely absence of reptiles within the site area. • Identify if any additional surveys are required to inform this assessment. • Determine if any potential impacts on reptiles are likely to arise from the development. • Provide advice and outline strategies to avoid/mitigate/compensate for any likely impacts on reptiles.
Results and Evaluation	<p>There is suitable habitat for reptiles present on site in the form of mixed scrub and grassland areas along the northern, north-western and southern edges of the site. The presence/ likely absence surveys recorded a breeding population of slow-worms on site. This is likely to equate to a 'good' population as defined by Froglife (1999).</p> <p>Slow-worms are protected from killing or injury under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended). Given the size of the site and its urban setting, the proposed development cannot provide an adequate area for reptiles to disperse or be moved to, and as such, reptiles will require translocation to an off-site receptor site.</p>
Recommendations	<p>On-Site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary reptile exclusion fencing is to be installed along the northern boundary of the site; • 30-day reptile translocation, if agreed with the LPA, to take place between March and October (active reptile season), including placement of artificial refugia, habitat manipulation and then a minimum of 30 days to trap and translocate reptiles. Once 5 clear days have passed with no reptiles found, no further visits will be required; • After 5 'clear days', this will be followed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Displacement strategy (directional vegetation clearance). ▪ Destructive search (top-soil clearance) under supervision of Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created and small areas of retained habitat to be enhanced through creation of wildflower meadow, relaxed mowing scheme and log piles for wildlife; and • Gaps created in fences to maintain connectivity to the immediate surrounding area, allowing wildlife to move through the site. <p>Receptor Site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A local site has been identified which has been confirmed as suitable to be used as a receptor site for the slow-worms; • Surveys of the receptor site are not required as the site offers opportunities for dispersal in all directions, and is therefore unlikely to negatively impact any existing populations of reptiles, if present; • The management regime of the receptor site is to continue as it has been historically, comprising occasional sheep grazing to reduce scrub encroachment; and • Log piles to be installed in receptor area prior to translocation. <p>Post-Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One year of post-development monitoring of receptor site to inform any remedial actions or management prescriptions to seek to ensure continued survival of the population and viability of the receptor site.
Conclusions	<p>The development proposals and urban setting of the site offer no suitable alternative other than the translocation of the ‘good’ population of slow-worms to an off-site receptor area. A suitable site has been identified locally and secured by legal agreement. Translocation and post-translocation monitoring will aim to avoid the illegal killing and injury of slow-worms during the works, and will seek to ensure the favourable conservation status of the species is maintained.</p> <p>Mitigation including a 30-day reptile translocation will be required to allow the works to proceed and in accordance with legal requirements for the protection of slow-worms. The current proposals will provide enhancements for biodiversity, and will include relaxed management of grassland and provision of log piles within retained habitat on-site to benefit reptiles and allow wildlife to colonise and move through the site, post-development.</p>

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Tetra Tech was commissioned by Planning Issues Ltd on 14th March 2024 to undertake a reptile survey and provide a reptile mitigation strategy of land at South Street, Bridport, hereafter referred to as “the site”. This report has been prepared by Consultant Ecologist Chloe Mockridge BSc (Hons), MSc and Assistant Ecologist Ryan Pearson BSc (Hons) and revised by Project Ecologist Izzy Frey BSc (Hons) AICEEM. The conditions pertinent to it are provided in Appendix A.

Reptiles are protected species, full details of that protection, including types of offences and policy position are provided in Appendix B.

1.2 SITE LOCATION

The site is located west of South Street in Bridport, Dorset and is centered at Ordnance Survey (OS) National Grid Reference SY 46509 92260 – See Figure 1. The site is situated in an urban setting towards the south of Bridport and is immediately bounded by the River Brit to the west and south, which forms a confluence with the River Asker, with a man-made weir directly to the south of the site. There is a residential area immediately to the north and industrial development to the east. Further urban development associated with Bridport and Bothenhampton lie to the north and east respectively. The wider landscape is more rural, with open space comprising arable land, small parcels of woodland and a network of hedgerows.

The site is currently an active building supply yard largely comprised of bare ground, with areas of grassland, scrub, lines of trees and ephemeral and ruderal vegetation.

1.3 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

The development proposals comprise a total of 48 retirement apartments and 25 cottages with associated parking, infrastructure and landscaping.

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this assessment is to:

- Determine the presence or likely absence of reptiles within the site area.
- Identify if any additional surveys are required to inform this assessment.
- Determine if any potential impacts on reptiles are likely to arise from the development.
- Provide preliminary advice and outline strategies to avoid/mitigate/compensate for any likely impacts on reptiles.

The details of this report will remain valid for a period of eighteen months from the date of the final reptile survey in May 2024 (November 2025), after which the validity of this assessment should be reviewed to determine whether further updates are necessary.

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.

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 HISTORIC SURVEYS

Tetra Tech completed a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the site in June 2023 (Tetra Tech, 2023) and condition assessments to inform the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment in April 2024 (Tetra Tech, 2024). The reports associated with these surveys have been reviewed and are discussed in Section 3.1 below.

Other than the surveys undertaken by Tetra Tech, Tetra Tech is not aware of any previous survey work carried out at the site nor reports pertaining to ecological conditions at the site.

2.2 DESK STUDY

The desktop study comprised two elements:

- A data search obtained from Dorset Environmental Records Centre (DERC) in April 2023 of records of reptiles within 2km of the site boundary.
- Online element including a 2km search using: Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) (<https://magic.defra.gov.uk>) website and Ordnance Survey (OS) and Aerial Imagery (<https://www.bing.com/maps>). This included a search for any designated sites within 2km supporting reptiles. The search was conducted in March 2024.

2.3 FIELD SURVEYS

2.3.1 Biosecurity

All surveys were conducted in accordance with Tetra Tech Biosecurity Policy (June 2023).

2.3.2 Presence / Likely Absence Surveys

All surveys were conducted by experienced surveyors, Principal Ecologist Alex Coggins, Project Ecologist Izzy Frey and Assistant Ecologist Ryan Pearson.

Surveys were undertaken in accordance with the Herpetofauna Workers' Manual (Gent & Gibson, 2003) and Advice Sheet 10 – Reptile Survey (Froglife, 1999) and comprised the use of two complementary methods – direct observation and artificial refuge checks. These two methods were applied over seven visits from 8th April 2024 to 8th May 2024 in suitable weather conditions.

Direct observation required surveyors to walk slowly towards suitable basking spots and artificial refuges, scanning 3-4 m ahead of footfall to observe any reptiles which may be basking out in the open or upon natural/artificial refuges. Natural refuges on site include features like sun traps, edge habitats, piles of logs, brash and bricks.

Artificial refuges are sections of bitumen roofing felts approximately 1x2m, which are clearly numbered and placed across the site in areas considered to have habitat suitable to support reptile activity (see Figure 2 for artificial refuge placement plan). As a general rule, the density of artificial refuges used should be 10 per ha. However, given the small area of the site, additional refugia were used in this instance.

On 26th March 2024, 50 refuges were set out in suitable areas, these were then left undisturbed on the site for 13 days prior to the commencement of surveys. This allowed the refuges to settle within the environment and reptiles, if present, to find and utilise them.

The refugia were checked on seven occasions, in accordance with Froglife (2016). On each visit, each refuge was first checked for basking individuals from a distance before being hand searched for sheltering reptiles. The location and species of each reptile sighting was recorded to allow for analysis of distribution across the site. Where possible to do so, life stage (i.e. adult/juvenile) and sex of individuals was recorded.

Reptiles are active from March to October however it is considered that the most successful months to survey are April, May and September (Froglife, 1999 and 2016); although it is recognised that the exact optimal timing to survey is dependent on environmental variables such as temperature, rainfall and wind. Heavy rain, strong wind and high temperatures are considered unsuitable conditions to survey for reptiles. Froglife (1999) states that the best time of day to survey for reptiles is between 08:30 to 11:00 and between 16:00 and 18:30 when air temperature is between 9°C and 18°C. Weather conditions were recorded for each survey are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Survey Dates and Weather Conditions – Presence / Likely Absence Survey

Survey No.	Date	Time		Air Temperature (°C)		Wind Speed	Cloud Cover Start (%)	Cloud Cover	Precipitation (%)
		Start	End	Initial	Final				
1	08.04.24	10:00	10:55	12.0	13.0	Light air	80		0
2	11.04.24	10:25	11:15	14.0	15.0	Light air	80		0
3	15.04.24	11:30	12:15	11.0	11.0	Gentle breeze	60		Very light rain shortly before start
4	18.04.24	14:00	14:50	12.0	12.0	Light Breeze	20		0
5	23.04.24	10:25	11:15	11.0	11.0	Light Breeze	80		0
6	01.05.24	09:50	10:20	10.0	10.0	Light air	100		Very light rain shortly before start
7	08.05.24	10:20	10:55	17.0	16.0	Light Breeze	40		0

2.4 LIMITATIONS

Due to unsuitable weather conditions during optimal timings, surveys three and four on 15th April 2024 and 18th April 2024 were both conducted outside of the optimal timings, although temperatures were suitable. As reptiles were recorded during these surveys, this is not considered to have affected the overall findings.

Prior to the commencement of surveys 3 and 6, there were short spells of light rain. The surveyor waited until the rain had stopped and the refuges had warmed up slightly, hence the survey started slightly later in the morning. It is noted that humid periods directly after light rain can also provide good conditions for

basking reptiles. Surveys were undertaken in the most suitable weather possible while spacing surveys out where possible. Reptiles were present during these surveys (despite being in suboptimal weather) and therefore this is not considered to have affected the overall finding during the surveys.

Some of the refugia were misplaced or buried due to the active work yard moving large amounts of debris, this meant that a few refugia could not be surveyed. As refugia were distributed across the site's suitable habitats exceeding the required 10 per hectare, it is considered that the site was sufficiently covered thus this does not pose an overall limitation to the survey findings.

Notwithstanding the limitations highlighted above, the survey effort applied is considered sufficient to meet the aims of the survey and this report, in accordance with the aforementioned guidelines.

The details of this report will remain valid for a period of 18 months from the date of the survey (November 2025), after which the validity of this assessment should be reviewed to determine whether further updates 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 which this report was based on.

3.0 RESULTS

3.1 HISTORIC SURVEYS

A PEA of the site was carried out in June 2023 (Tetra Tech, 2023). This found the site to be suitable for reptiles due to the grassland and scrub on site, as well as log piles and building materials piled up on site creating natural hibernacula. There is also anecdotal evidence from staff who work on the site of slow worms being present in the north-west of the site and an adder had been seen previously.

3.2 DESK STUDY

The data search identified no known statutory designated sites which are designated in part for reptiles or non-statutory sites which are known to support reptiles within 2km of the site.

DERC returned 17 records for reptiles between 2014 and 2017 comprising 12 records of slow-worm *Anguis fragilis*, three for grass snake *Natrix helvetica*, one for common lizard *Zootoca vivipara* and one for adder *Vipera berus*. The closest records to the site were of grass snake at the Watton Park development, 430m to the southwest. These records are isolated from the site by roads, residential development and the River Brit and River Asker. Although rivers are less of a barrier for dispersal for snakes, slow-worm and common lizard are unlikely to be able to disperse into the site from the wider landscape. The flood defence wall surrounding the site is considered to be a significant barrier to dispersal for slow worms, both into and out of the site, which is supported by Figure 4.

3.3 FIELD STUDY

Slow-worms were recorded on site, predominantly in the northern and southern areas of the site. See Table 2 for a summary of the survey results. When apparent, the sex of the individual was also recorded and noted within Table 2. Figure 3 shows the locations of reptile observations and the full results are given in Appendix C. No other reptiles were recorded.

Table 2. Survey Results of the Site

Survey No.	Date	Records			
		Species	No. Adults	No. Sub-Adults	No. Juveniles
1	08.04.24	Slow-worm	5♂, 10♀, 4 unknown sex	5	3
2	11.04.24	Slow-worm	11♀, 4♂	4	2
3	15.04.24	Slow-worm	6♀	-	5
4	18.04.24	Slow-worm	15♀, 4♂	5	-
5	23.04.24	Slow-worm	11♀, 5♂	6	-
6	01.05.24	Slow-worm	9♀, 2♂	2	4

Survey No.	Date	Records			
		Species	No. Adults	No. Sub-Adults	No. Juveniles
7	08.05.24	Slow-worm	18♀, 6♂	3	4
Key	♂ male, ♀ female				

As both male and female slow-worms were found along with sub-adults and juveniles, it can be assumed that the site or the immediate off-site areas hosts a breeding population.

Based on the peak counts recorded, indicative population estimates (Froglife 1999 would usually require 20 visits to fully inform a population estimate) have been made in accordance with criteria as set out in Table 3 and are shown in Table 4.

Froglife's *Advice Sheet 9* recommends using 10 refugia per hectare. 50 refugia were used on site due to the amount of suitable habitat. According to their guidance, 11.2 refugia should have been distributed on this 1.12-hectare site. This gives a multiplying factor of 4.46. The peak count of 24 adult slow worms thus can then be divided by this multiplying factor to obtain a more accurate population size for the site.

Table 3. Assessing Population Size using Peak Counts (Froglife, 1999)*

Species	Low population	Good population	Exceptional population
Adder	<5	5-10	>10
Grass snake	<5	5-10	>10
Common lizard	<5	5-20	>20
Slow-worm	<5	5-20	>20

* Figures in the above table refer to the maximum number of **adults** seen by observation and/or under refugia by one person in one day.

Table 4. Reptile Populations (Based on Adjusted Results to Compensate for Increased Number of Refugia)

Species	Peak Count	Population Estimate
Slow-worm	5.38	Good population

* Figures in the above table refer to the maximum number of adults seen by observation and/or under mats by one person in one day.

Based on the assessment in Table 4, it is considered that at present the site is likely to support a **good population of slow-worms**.

3.4 RESULTS SUMMARY

The site was found to support a good (breeding) population of slow-worm comprising male and female adults and juveniles. Suitable reptile habitat on site is restricted to grassland and scrub in the north and

west of the site, with a small area of scrub in the south of the site surrounded by large expanses of bare ground. The site is largely isolated from the surrounding area by South Street to the east, residential development to the north, and the concrete flood defence wall and river to the east, south and west. There may be some connectivity off-site via neighbouring residential gardens to the north, though this is considered extremely limited as there is only a very small strip of scrubby vegetation along Dr Roberts Close to the north.

4.0 DISCUSSION

4.1 IMPACTS

Following the desk study and field survey, a good population of breeding slow-worms has been identified on site.

Without mitigation there are likely to be adverse effects on reptiles through loss of habitat, severance of connectivity, killing and injury and disturbance during the construction and operational phase of the proposed development. This would constitute a breach of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and would be non-compliant with local and national planning policy.

Potential impacts to reptiles as a result of the development, in the absence of mitigation are described below.

4.1.1 Loss of Habitats

The majority of scrub and grassland habitats across the site will be lost permanently, with only some small areas retained in the north and south of the site. These habitats currently support a good population of slow worm including breeding individuals and juveniles, across the site.

The log piles and other man-made debris within the north-west of the site of the site will also be removed to facilitate redevelopment of the site, creating a loss in natural refuges and hibernacula for reptiles.

4.1.2 Loss of Connectivity

Most of the suitable habitat is on the north-west side of the site. A large, concrete flood defence wall adjacent to the River Brit bounds the site along the southern and western boundaries, which restricts the dispersal of reptiles in these directions, meaning reptiles are unable to disperse onto the adjacent riverbank – See Figure 4. The grassland and scrub habitat on the northern boundary has limited connectivity to a very small area of scrubby habitat on the southern side of Dr Roberts Close through the dilapidated fence along the northern boundary of the site. However, opportunities for reptile dispersal to and from the site are currently limited due to this, in addition to the site being otherwise bounded by residential development and the banks of the River Brit and River Asker, which is limited by the large concrete flood defence wall.

Despite small areas of grassland being proposed to be retained and / or reinstated post-development, due to the restricted size of the site, these habitats will be lost or degraded during construction. Any reptiles left within these areas during the construction and or operational phases would likely become isolated from the main population, negatively impacting their survivability. In summary, there is little to no connectivity to off-site suitable habitat from the site, and therefore a full reptile translocation is recommended to a suitable off-site receptor area.

4.1.3 Killing & Injury

Removal of suitable reptile habitat which supports slow-worms will be required to facilitate the proposed development. These works have the potential to kill and injure slow worms, if unmitigated, which is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended).

During the operational phase there is potential for an increase in the number of cats and other domesticated pets living in the area due to the increase in residential units (The Mammal Society, 1997). Studies have shown that domestic cats do predate on reptiles, affecting the level of biodiversity in the area (Trouwborst et al., 2020; Trouwborst & Homsen, 2020). Given the limited availability of suitable reptile habitat on the site post-development, this would exhibit an even greater pressure on the existing reptile population which already has limited opportunities for dispersal out of the site.

4.1.4 Construction-phase Disturbance

All works in suitable reptile habitat will cause disturbance to any reptiles within these areas of the site. Due to the small size of the site, there is not adequate retained habitat within the site for reptiles to move into during the works. Slow-worms are legless lizards and thus have limited dispersal abilities (even during the active season) due to their slow movement, especially if individuals are not warm. One area of scrub exists in the south of the site where slow-worms were found and increased movement of machinery and construction activities around the site have the potential to isolate this area of habitat even further. Disturbance can prove fatal, and individuals are at even greater risk should works be carried out during their hibernation period (generally accepted as October to March inclusive). During hibernation, reptiles are at increased risk as unseasonal moving utilises bodily resources and they are less able to move away from harm. Unmitigated, works to suitable habitat will therefore likely cause harmful disturbance to reptiles, and potentially kill or injure them which would constitute an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended).

4.1.5 Operational-phase Disturbance

Increased recreational use around the edges of the site would likely cause disturbance to reptiles, if they were to remain within the site. The limited amount of grassland habitat proposed is unlikely to be managed in a suitable condition for reptiles and the reduced area may struggle to have carrying capacity for the size of the current reptile population. The population is also isolated from any surrounding suitable habitat and therefore habitat availability would become very limited for new individuals over time. These impacts would not constitute an offence under the relevant wildlife legislation but would be undesirable as it could affect the ongoing viability of the on-site reptile population.

4.2 MITIGATION

As adverse effects on reptiles are anticipated, mitigation will be required to avoid an offence under the relevant wildlife legislation.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) states that it is illegal to cause injury or death to widespread reptile species such as those found on site. In addition to this, consideration must be given to Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (see Appendix B), which lists habitats and species of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England, including slow-worm and grass snake.

The Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan (2020-2036) (Appendix B) should also be reviewed in order to meet Policies L1 and L2 to ensure that the proposed development will not adversely affect the wider landscape setting, will demonstrate how they will provide a net gain in biodiversity and, where feasible, habitats and species, on the site.

The following principles and hierarchy (CIEEM, 2024) are used when determining requirements for mitigation and management measures:

- **Avoidance** – Seek options that avoid harm to ecological features (for example, by locating on an alternative site);
- **Mitigation** - Negative effects should be avoided or minimised through mitigation measures, either through the design of the project or subsequent measures that can be guaranteed – for example, through a condition or planning obligation;
- **Compensation** - Where there are significant residual negative ecological effects despite the mitigation proposed, these should be offset by appropriate compensatory measures; and
- **Enhancement** - Seek to provide net benefits for biodiversity over and above requirements for avoidance, mitigation or compensation.

With regard to the mitigation hierarchy, it is not considered possible to avoid harm to the population of slow-worms, if they were to remain in-situ whilst the site is redeveloped, due to the limited amount of habitat on site and the isolated nature of the site, with the flood defence wall to the south and west, Dr Roberts Close with its lack of green space to the north, and South Street to the east acting as significant barriers for dispersal.

Appropriate mitigation will therefore comprise translocating slow-worms from the site to a more suitable receptor site, prior to development. This should benefit the breeding population by providing increased space and better dispersal opportunities into the wider landscape than where they are located currently. Given the relatively small areas of suitable habitat on site and population size, the fact that the population is breeding and is already isolated from the surrounding landscape, it is possible that without translocation this population would be at risk of inbreeding and become unviable in the future.

There is a possibility that un-relocated slow-worms in adjacent rear gardens (if present) will experience loss of habitat from the site, however this will be compensated for as described below.

4.2.1 Loss of Habitats

Loss of suitable reptile habitat within the site which supports a good population of slow-worm is considered largely unavoidable, given the small size of the development area, limited off-site connectivity and isolation of the existing habitat across the site. For this reason, it is considered highly unlikely that the site itself can provide a suitable receptor site pre-development, nor suitable habitat to support a breeding population post-development. A translocation exercise is therefore proposed to relocate slow-worms to an off-site receptor area.

A local receptor site has been secured via a legal agreement which comprises a grassland field which is largely unmanaged, aside from occasional sheep grazing. The receptor site is 'land on the west side of Slape Hill, Netherbury, Bridport' and is hereafter referred to as the 'Receptor Site' – See Figure 5. The receptor site is approximately 6km (a 15-minute drive) from the proposed development site. Typically, surveys of a receptor site may be carried out to assess whether reptiles are currently present and to ensure adding new individuals would not negatively impact the existing population. These surveys are not considered necessary in this case, as the receptor site has full access to the surrounding landscape, into which translocated individuals can disperse into wider suitable habitat.

4.2.2 Loss of Connectivity

Existing suitable reptile habitat within the proposed development has very limited connectivity to the wider landscape. The grassland in the western edge of the site and scrub to the north has some potential connectivity to the scrubby road verge of Dr Robert Close to the north under fences, however the adjacent road, riverbank and concrete flood defence wall are considered significant barriers to dispersal for slow worm on or off the site. This is considered unlikely to improve following residential development of the site, given the increase in units and hardstanding. It is recommended that gaps are created in the bottom of fences at all intersections to allow connectivity for wildlife to move through the site in the event that there is a population in the limited habitat to the north of the site.

The receptor site comprises a rough grassland field located in a rural area between the villages of Netherbury and Weytown (see Figure 5), providing direct connectivity to large expanses of suitable reptile habitat within the wider landscape. This will ensure translocated individuals can move freely to and from the site and will provide an opportunity for individuals to mix with other populations of slow worms (if present), ensuring genetic viability as the likelihood of inbreeding will be reduced. The availability of space within the receptor site and unrestricted access to adjacent habitat will also allow juveniles to disperse and ensure the carrying capacity of the receptor site is highly unlikely to be exceeded.

4.2.3 Killing & Injury

With works anticipated to clear the majority of suitable reptile habitat to facilitate the development, there is the potential to kill and injure reptiles on site.

Prior to the commencement of any vegetation removal within the site, reptile exclusion fencing is to be installed along the northern boundary, followed by a translocation exercise, and then any areas of suitable habitat proposed for removal will be cleared following a systematic approach.

All works are to be conducted only under the strict supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist or Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) and are to be detailed within a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)

A brief summary of the mitigation required to prevent killing and injury of reptiles (with further details in sections below) is as follows:

- Installation of temporary reptile exclusion fencing around retained vegetation, which must remain secure and in place until the translocation and destructive search are complete;
- Translocation of the reptiles, involving a 30-day exercise (or until 5 clear days are reached with no animals found);
- Directional vegetation clearance and habitat manipulation to encourage reptiles into 'habitat islands' and to go under refugia; and
- Destructive search (top-soil clearance).

Reptile Exclusion Fencing

To protect reptiles from entering the active work site, resulting in killing or injury, temporary reptile exclusion fencing will be installed along the northern boundary of the site where there may be some connectivity to the scrubby road verge of Dr Roberts Close. No fencing should be installed along the southern and western boundaries, adjacent to the large, concrete flood defence wall, as this wall is

considered sufficient as a barrier to dispersal for reptiles. The installation of fencing adjacent to the defence wall may also impact the structure of the wall and is therefore not recommended. There is no connectivity to suitable habitat along the eastern boundary of the site, and therefore no need for reptile exclusion fencing in this location either. A reptile fencing plan is provided in Figure 6.

The diagram in Plate 1 shows an example specification for temporary fencing (a polythene and wood stake style is suggested) which is suitable for this purpose. This fencing is durable, lasts approximately two years and can be easily removed after the works are completed.

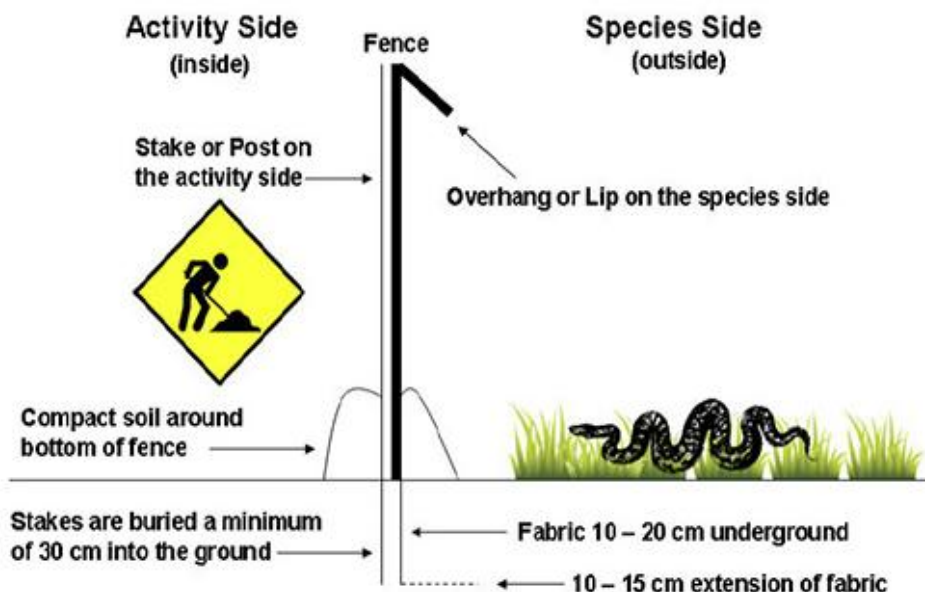


Plate 1 – Example specification for reptile exclusion fencing (Government of Ontario, 2023)

Any entrances or gaps in the fencing (i.e., to allow works access and around the newly created access roads and pathways) must be designed with ‘returns’ at the ends to direct animals away from the opening. Vegetation on the outer side of the fence must be managed to ensure it does not grow tall enough for animals to get back into the works area. The wooden stakes of the temporary fencing must also be placed on the inner (works) side of the fence to prevent animals climbing back in.

Fencing is to remain in-situ and must be maintained in secure condition throughout the construction phase, to prevent animals from returning to the site during the works. The CEMP document for the site will detail the ongoing monitoring of the fence during the construction phase.

Reptile Translocation

As a ‘good’ population of slow-worm has been identified, a translocation exercise will be carried out for a minimum of 30 suitable days (English Nature, 2004), to demonstrate that reasonable measures have been put in place to limit the potential for breaches in the legislative protection of reptiles on site. 30 days is considered to likely be sufficient due to the small size of the site and reptiles being recorded in small areas of grassland and ruderal habitat on site. Much of the site is compacted bare ground which is unsuitable for slow-worms. If reptiles continue to be found on the 30th visit, the translocation will continue until there have been five ‘clear’ days i.e. until reptiles have not been found for five consecutive visits.

The translocation exercise may only be carried out in the active reptile season March to October inclusive, although this also depends on overnight temperatures remaining above 5°C, to avoid animals going into hibernation. The optimum period for capturing reptiles is generally between late April and June, and late August to late September (HGBI, 1998). Translocation visits are to be conducted in line with reptile survey guidance, requiring temperatures of between 8°C and 19°C with no rain, when reptiles are most likely to bask or use refugia to thermoregulate. If it is anticipated that all reptiles have been translocated in a shorter period of time, a trapping period of less than 30 days may be agreed with the LPA. The translocation exercise will only end after 5 'clear' days of finding no animals and is to be agreed following consultation with the LPA and the project's Ecologist.

The translocation exercise comprises the following steps:

- Deployment of artificial refugia at a density of 50 refuges per ha (HGBI, 1998) in all suitable fenced reptile habitat;
- Trapping and translocation of all animals within the suitable habitat to be lost, and any areas likely to be impacted by the construction phase;
- Animals to be transported in low numbers, using appropriate sealed containers with ventilation holes and a small amount of bedding/grass material, as soon as possible to the translocation site;
- Translocated individuals will be checked for injury or disease, and sex and life stage will be recorded; and
- Habitat manipulation (at the discretion of the ECoW) to enhance capture methods, involving carefully reducing the amount of suitable vegetation to create patches of grass which work as islands where remaining reptiles tend to concentrate.

As previously mentioned, the translocation effort normally required for a **good** population of slow worms involves placing a minimum of 50 refuges per hectare, and a minimum of 60 days of trapping in suitable weather conditions, until there have been five days clear with no individuals found (HGBI, 1998). However, it is recommended that 30 days of trapping is likely to be sufficient for this site due to the small size of the site and the small areas of suitable reptile habitat within the site. Therefore, a review of the translocation effort will be undertaken after 30 days. If any changes are considered to the translocation, then this will be agreed with the LPA ecologist. The exact duration of the translocation period is therefore subject to weather conditions and the ability to achieve five 'clear' days.

Vegetation clearance

Once five clear days are achieved, remaining vegetation removal will consist of directional clearance so that suitable reptile habitat is not trampled during this process and to reduce the area reptiles are able to disperse to. Any animals left within the translocation area can then be safely moved to the receptor site. All works must be supervised by a suitably qualified ECoW, and must be carried out during the active season for reptiles (between March and October).

Clearance of vegetation will be completed in two stages:

- Vegetation must be cut down to 30cm in height and the arisings left for at least 24 hours.
- Vegetation will then be cut to ground level. All cuttings / arisings should be removed from the area to prevent reptiles using these vegetation piles for shelter. All vegetation removal should be done by hand and not using a rake in case any reptiles are still present.

Destructive search (top-soil removal)

This will need to take place in all areas of suitable reptile habitat which are being cleared prior to development (patches of grassland and scrub across the site).

This process is completed in two stages. Stage one is a hand / fingertip search and stage two involves topsoil removal.

Stage one will be conducted by an ECoW, who will search the ground for reptiles and remove any potential refuges (i.e. logs, brash, bricks or debris). This will be done at the same time as the grass cuttings which are to be removed. Any reptiles found will be collected by the ECoW and released at the receptor site.

On the completion of stage one, stage two can commence. This stage involves clearing the topsoil from the work area. This must be carried out with an ECoW present and follows the method below:

- The destructive search will be conducted using a medium sized excavator (approximately 8-10 tonnes) with a toothed bucket carrying out a gradual scrape of the top one to two inches (25 – 50 mm) of topsoil;
- The areas where soil is removed will be checked for reptiles by the ECoW and moved where necessary;
- Deeper scrapes will be completed where needed, such as beneath root systems, buried material, cracks or holes in the ground;
- The excavated spoil will be stored, as directed by the ECoW in consultation with the developers, in an area identified as unsuitable reptile habitat (i.e., bare ground already devoid of vegetation) during the topsoil strip; and
- After the strip is completed or a section is completed and a large enough area rendered unsuitable, the excavated spoil will then be compacted to prevent access by reptiles seeking refuge or hibernation within.

A proposed timetable for the works is provided in Table 5. Installation of reptile fencing, reptile displacement (including vegetation clearance) and destructive search can only be conducted during the active reptile season, to avoid disturbing or injuring hibernating reptiles.

Table 5. Proposed Timetable of Works

Proposed Works	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Installation of exclusion fencing	Red	Red	Amber	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Amber	Red	Red
Reptile Translocation	Red	Red	Amber	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Amber	Red	Red
Reptile Displacement (Vegetation Clearance)	Red	Red	Amber	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Amber	Red	Red
Destructive Search (Stage 1 and 2)	Red	Red	Amber	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Amber	Red	Red

Green=Works may proceed; Red = No works can be undertaken; Amber = Works can only be undertaken during suitable weather conditions.

For works to be undertaken in March, there must be a period of five days prior to works where overnight temperatures are consistently above 5 degrees Celsius, to ensure that hibernating reptiles are not disturbed. The same consideration must be made nearing October, where if temperature conditions overnight are consistently below this, works will need to stop as reptiles may be beginning to enter hibernation for winter. This is necessary to avoid the killing or injury of reptiles which would otherwise contravene the relevant wildlife legislation.

4.2.4 Construction-phase disturbance

The disturbance of the reptiles during the construction phase and appropriate mitigation is as described above. If any reptiles are found after the completion of the works to render the site unsuitable for reptiles, the ECoW will be called immediately and any changes or further works required to ensure the site remains unsuitable for reptiles will be carried out.

The temporary fencing will need to be maintained and will be checked daily for damage for the duration of the construction phase. This daily check will be conducted by either the site manager or designated personnel. If damaged, it will be repaired as soon as possible to ensure reptiles do not move back into the active site.

4.2.5 Operational-phase disturbance

The reptile habitat on site is largely isolated from the wider landscape, and it is considered unlikely that reptiles would move back into the site during the operational phase. However, should some connectivity remain, or reptiles exist within the residential gardens to the north, areas of retained grassland on site should be managed under a relaxed mowing scheme to provide an area of suitable habitat and gaps maintained within fences to the north to allow wildlife to pass through the site. A log pile could also be installed within any areas of grassland to provide shelter for reptiles and or other wildlife and invertebrates.

Considering the potential for domestic cats within the proposed development, as well as increased disturbance from residents, enhancing the retained habitats to provide additional shelter and enhanced foraging habitat is encouraged for wildlife.

4.3 ENHANCEMENT

It is a requirement of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (see Appendix B), the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan (2020-2036) (Appendix B) and the mitigation hierarchy (CIEEM, 2024) to provide enhancements for biodiversity as part of development. This will ensure that any residual negative impacts from the proposed development works and operational phase are countered.

On-Site Retained Habitat

Following a full translocation of the slow worm population on site, it is still possible that reptiles could recolonise the site following the completion of the works, once the reptile exclusion fence is removed. Some limited connectivity to gardens of the residential development to the north of the site may remain after the works. For this reason, enhancement measures for reptiles within the site, post-development, are recommended as a precaution. One log pile must be installed in the north-west of the proposed

development site within retained suitable reptile habitat, to provide shelter for any residual reptile population, if present, following the works.

To enhance the landscaped areas of the development site, topsoil preparation and sowing of wildflower meadow mixes will seek to create diverse species rich grassland in the north and west of the site, which will attract a greater diversity of invertebrates for reptiles to feed on - see landscape plan “JBA 23 126 SK02 Rev G Landscape Strategy”. Mowing of grassland areas around the site should also be minimised where possible, to create diversity in vegetation height and plant community structure.

Receptor Site

It is recommended that the current management regime of the site (comprising occasional sheep grazing) is continued, to prevent scrub encroachment within the grassland and to maintain a diverse sward. This has been secured within the legal agreement between the Owner and the Developer.

A minimum of two log piles are required to be installed within the receptor site prior to the works and translocation commencing, so that reptiles have an immediate location under which to take shelter once they are moved, as well as providing ongoing places in which individuals can shelter and over-winter safely. See Figure 5 for the location of the two log piles. A small number of artificial refuges may also be added to the site to provide additional shelter and basking opportunities, as long as their cover does not compromise open habitat availability.

The creation of at least one hibernaculum is also recommended to provide hibernation opportunities for translocated individuals. The hibernacula will be created under the supervision of a suitably experienced ECoW. The design of the hibernacula will follow that set out in Plate 2 below. This design includes the use of logs, stones and loose topsoil, with a covering of turf. Materials for the hibernaculum should be sourced from the receptor site itself (where possible) although may include sand and gravel. The turf required to top the hibernaculum can be obtained directly from the area beneath, during its creation.

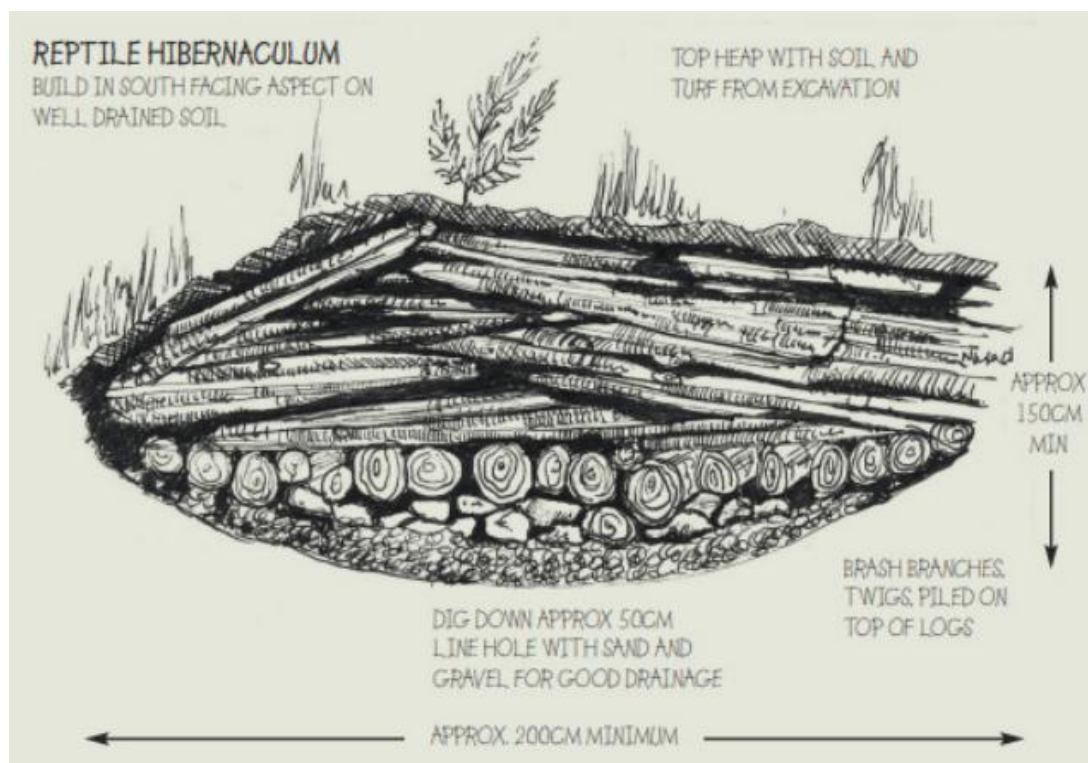


Plate 2 – Hibernaculum Design by Nigel Hand (ARG UK, 2018)**4.4 MONITORING**

Surveys to assess the existing population size of reptiles (if present) at the receptor site are not considered to be required and this approach has been agreed through consultation with the LPA ecologist. It is noted that given the suitable adjacent habitat and availability for reptiles to move freely into and out of the receptor site, lack of reptiles identified through surveys at the receptor site would not necessarily infer complete absence. Following the translocation exercise, for the same reason, it would not necessarily be possible to distinguish between newly translocated individuals and any previous existing animals unless a ‘capture, mark, recapture’ method was employed (which is considered to be unnecessarily invasive).

Despite this, post-translocation monitoring is proposed as this would identify whether the site remains suitable to support a population of reptiles. HGBI guidance recommends that post-translocation monitoring may be carried out for the five years following translocation, however in consideration of the reasons above, one year of monitoring is likely to be sufficient.

Monitoring surveys are to be conducted for one year, the following season after the translocation exercise is complete and will comprise a standard reptile survey involving deployment of refugia and seven visits from April to May and September. Results of the monitoring surveys will be detailed within a concise monitoring report and will inform the long-term management of the site by allowing prescriptions to be revised, for the benefit of reptiles and other wildlife.

5.0 SUMMARY

As a result of the findings of this reptile presence/likely absence survey it can be confirmed there is a good, breeding population of slow-worm on site.

There is a risk of the proposals contravening the wildlife legislation through unlawful killing and injury of slow-worms during the construction and operational phases. The existing reptile habitat is limited in size given the numbers of animals, is isolated from the wider landscape, and as such, is likely at carrying capacity and will be unable to sustain a breeding population following development. From this, the following measures are recommended:

- Installation of temporary reptile exclusion fencing along the northern boundary under supervision of the ECoW, prior to any works, to prevent the movement of reptiles back into the development area.
- A 30-day reptile translocation, if agreed by the LPA, to remove all reptiles from the development site, and relocate individuals to a nearby receptor site (unless a shorter period is agreed with the LPA).
- The receptor site is to be managed as it is currently managed, as per the legal agreement, and is prepared according to Section 4.3 with log piles to provide shelter for translocated individuals.
- During the translocation, any suitable reptile habitat that needs to be managed or removed will undergo a two-stage cut under supervision of the ECoW, and is to be carried out during the active reptile season (generally accepted as March-October (weather dependent)).
- Final clearance of suitable vegetation (directional clearance), and destructive search (top-soil clearance) to be conducted under supervision of the ECoW, once translocation is complete. Topsoil to be checked, stored and compacted under supervision in an area of unsuitable habitat i.e. bare ground.
- Enhancements to all retained suitable reptile habitats within the proposed development, including installation of a log pile within the retained north-western corner, species-rich meadow creation and relaxed mowing scheme.
- New fencing around residential gardens to have gaps at the base of the fencing to allow wildlife to move through the site.
- Any changes to the proposed development layout and/or management of the receptor site are to be reviewed by the ecologist to inform any required updates to the reptile mitigation and enhancement strategy.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The development proposals and urban setting of the site offer no suitable alternative other than the translocation of the 'good' population of slow-worms to an off-site receptor area. A suitable site has been identified locally and secured by legal agreement. Translocation and post-translocation monitoring will aim to avoid the illegal killing and injury of slow-worms during the works, and will seek to ensure the favourable conservation status of the species is maintained in line with national and local planning policy.

Mitigation, including a 30-day reptile translocation, is required to allow the works to proceed accordance with legal requirements for the protection of slow-worms. The current proposals will provide enhancements for biodiversity and will include relaxed management of grassland and provision of log piles within retained habitat on-site to benefit reptiles and allow wildlife to colonise and move through the site, post-development.

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Please note, the legislation referred to throughout the report is not listed above but is included within Appendix B.

FIGURES

Figure 1 – Site Location Plan

Figure 2 – Refuge Placement Plan

Figure 3 – Reptile Survey Results

Figure 4 – Environment Agency Flood Defences

Figure 5 – Reptile Receptor Site Location Plan

Figure 6 – Reptile Fencing Plan



Site Location Plan

South Street, Bridport

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Legend

Site Boundary

Notes:

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Office: Southampton

Figure No. 1

Revision No. A

10 April 2024

0 10 20 30 40 Meters

Scale 1:1,500 @A3

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Site Location and Artificial Refugia Location Plan

South Street, Bridport



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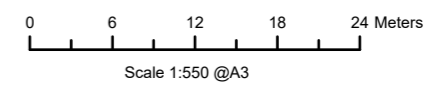
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- Refugia Mat Locations

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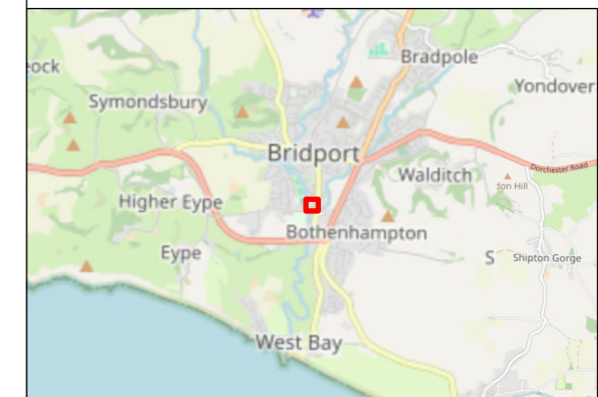
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Site Location and Artificial Refugia Location Plan - Survey 1

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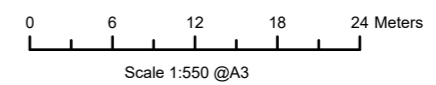
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- Site Boundary
- No reptile present
- Slow worm - Adult
- Slow worm - Adults & Juveniles
- Slow worm - Adults & Sub-Adults
- Slow worm - Juveniles

Notes:

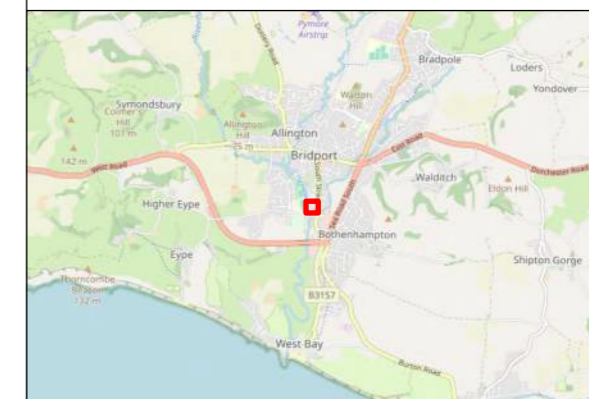
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Figure No. 3.1
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Site Location and Artificial Refugia Location Plan - Survey 2

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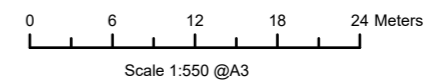
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- Site Boundary
- No reptile present
- Slow worm - Adult
- Slow worm - Adults & Sub-Adults
- Slow worm - Juveniles
- Slow worm - Adults, Sub-Adults & Juveniles

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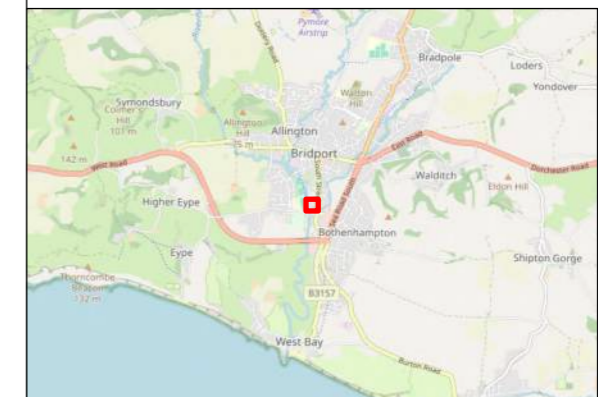
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Site Location and Artificial Refugia Location Plan - Survey 3

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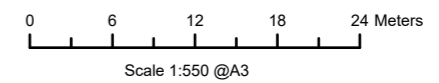
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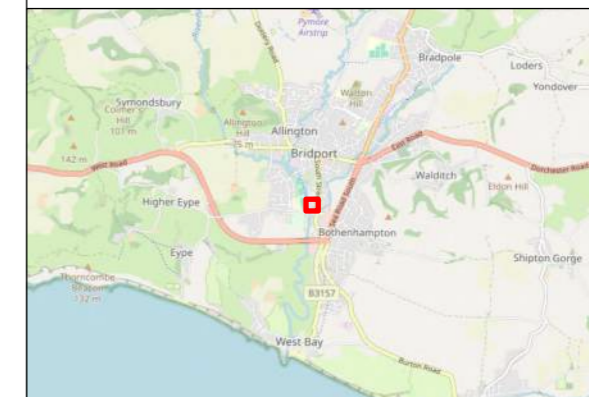
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Site Location and Artificial Refugia Location Plan - Survey 4

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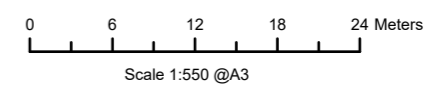
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- Slow worm - Adult
- Slow worm - Juveniles

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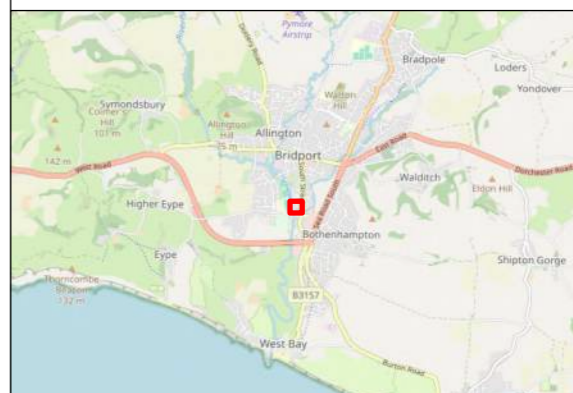
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Site Location and Artificial Refugia Location Plan - Survey 5

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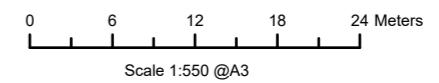
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- Slow worm - Adult
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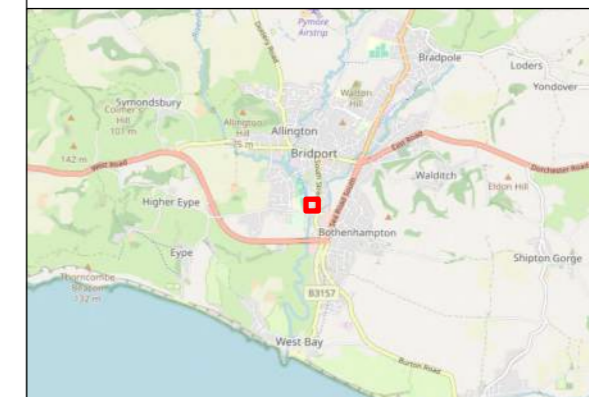
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Site Location and Artificial Refugia Location Plan - Survey 6

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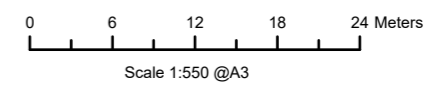
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- Slow worm - Adult
- Slow worm - Adults & Juveniles
- Slow worm - Juveniles
- Slow worm - Sub-Adults & Juveniles

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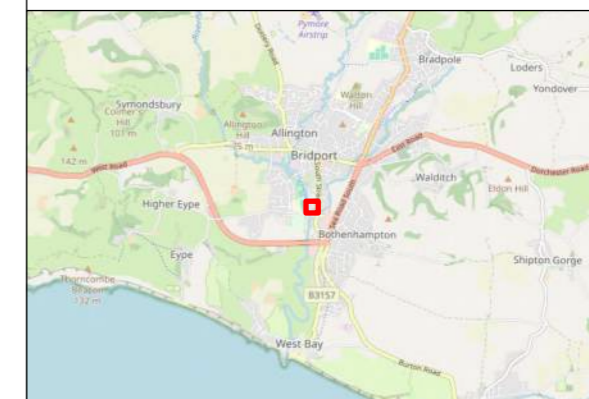
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Site Location and Artificial Refugia Location Plan - Survey 7

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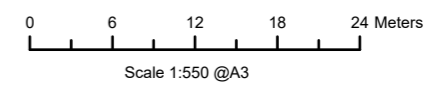
Legend

- Site Boundary
- No reptile present
- Slow worm - Adult
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- Slow worm - Juveniles
- Slow worm - Adults, Sub-Adults & Juveniles
- Slow worm - Sub-Adults

Notes:

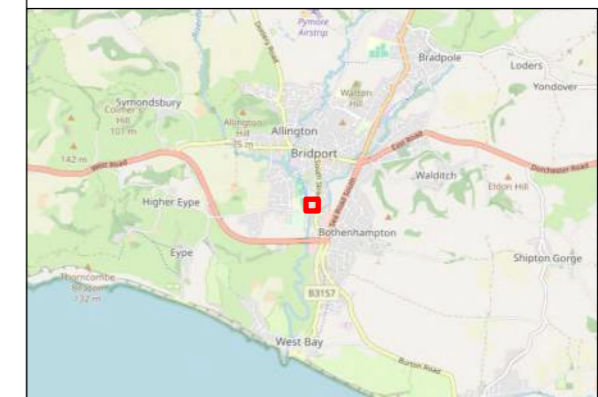
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 Office: Southampton

Figure No. 3.7
 Revision No. A
 13 June 2024

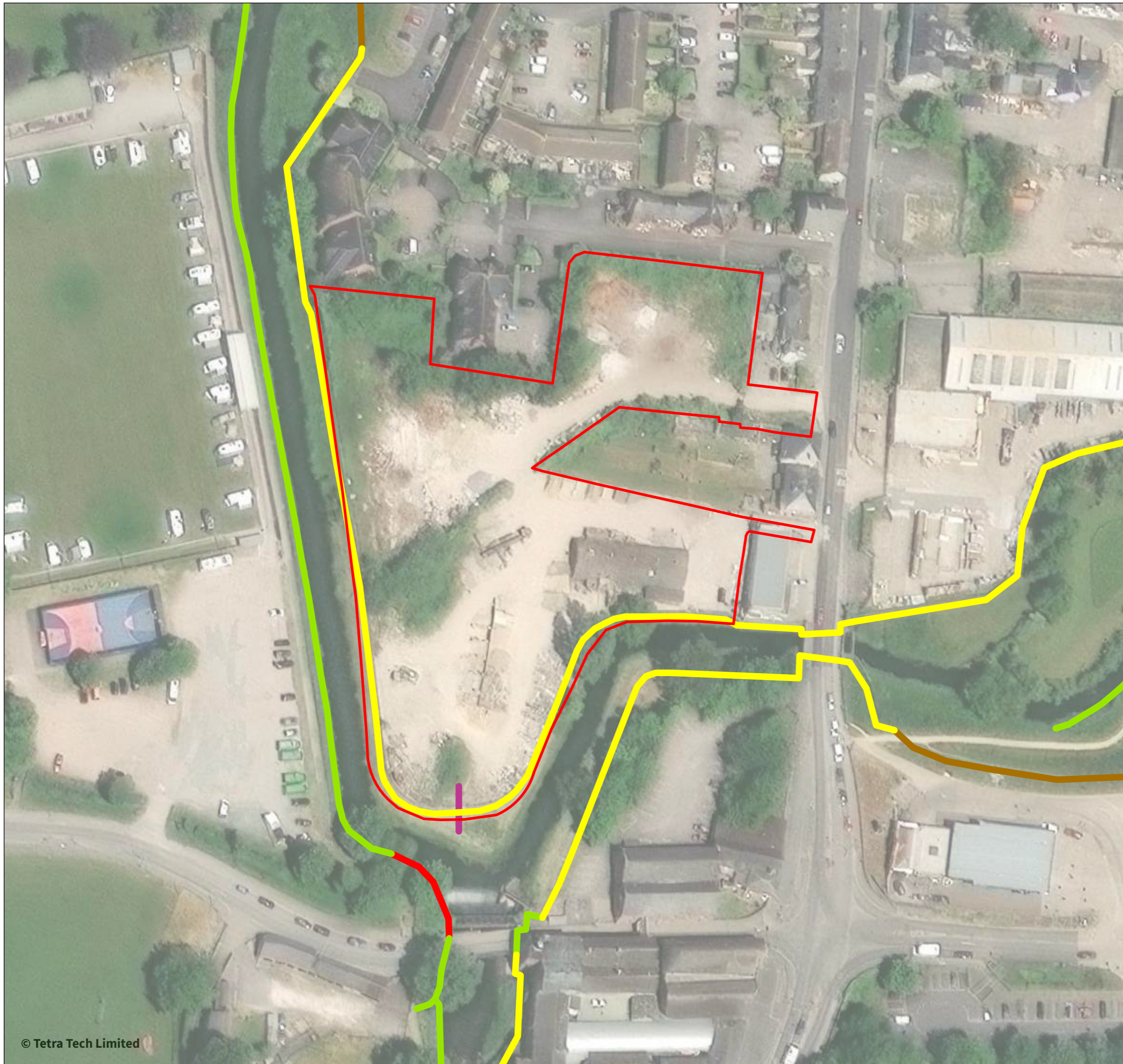


British National Grid
 NGR: 346518E 92268N

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The Pavilion, 1st Floor
 Botleigh Grange
 Office Campus
 Hedge End
 Southampton
 Hampshire, SO30 2AF



Environment Agency Flood Defences

South Street, Bridport



Planning Issues Ltd

Legend

- Site boundary
- Demountable Defence
- Embankment
- Engineered High Ground
- Natural High Ground
- Wall

Notes:

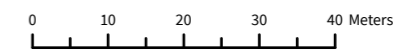
Drawn by: Chris Dawe

Checked by: Alex Coggins

Figure No. 4

Revision No. A

04 September 2025



Scale 1:1,000 @A3

British National Grid

NGR: 346518E 92266N

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United Kingdom
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Reptile Receptor Site Location Plan

South Street, Bridport



Planning Issues Ltd

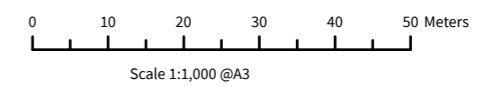
Legend

-  Reptile receptor site
-  Log pile

Notes:

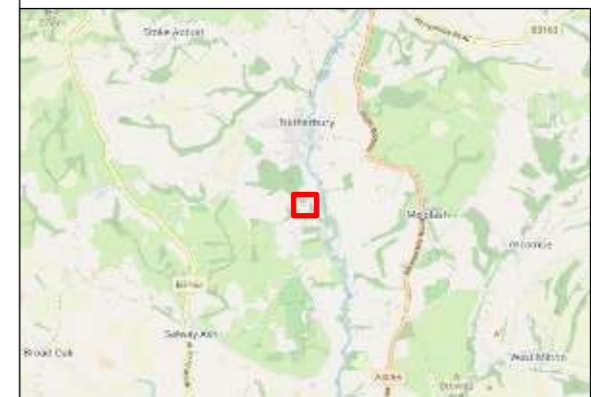
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Figure No. 5
 Revision No. A
 23 October 2025



British National Grid
 NGR: 347095E 98365N

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Reptile Fencing Plan

South Street, Bridport



Planning Issues Ltd

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Reptile fencing

Notes:

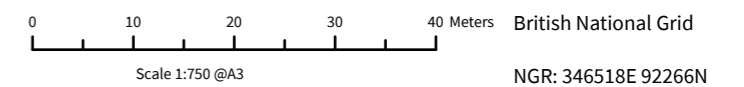
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Figure No. 6

Checked by: Alex Coggins

Revision No. A

22 October 2025



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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Report Conditions

Appendix B – Legislation & Policy

Appendix C – Survey results

APPENDIX A: REPORT CONDITIONS

This Report has been prepared using reasonable skill and care for the sole benefit of Planning Issues Ltd. (“the Client”) for the proposed uses stated in the report by [Tetra Tech Limited] (“Tetra Tech”). Tetra Tech exclude all liability for any other uses and to any other party. The report must not be relied on or reproduced in whole or in part by any other party without the copyright holder’s permission.

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The report refers, within the limitations stated, to the environment of the site in the context of the surrounding area at the time of the inspections'. Environmental conditions can vary and no warranty is given as to the possibility of changes in the environment of the site and surrounding area at differing times. No investigative method can eliminate the possibility of obtaining partially imprecise, incomplete or not fully representative information. Any monitoring or survey work undertaken as part of the commission will have been subject to limitations, including for example timescale, seasonal and weather-related conditions. Actual environmental conditions are typically more complex and variable than the investigative, predictive and modelling approaches indicate in practice, and the output of such approaches cannot be relied upon as a comprehensive or accurate indicator of future conditions. The “shelf life” of the Report will be determined by a number of factors including; its original purpose, the Client’s instructions, passage of time, advances in technology and techniques, changes in legislation etc. and therefore may require future re-assessment.

The whole of the report must be read as other sections of the report may contain information which puts into context the findings in any executive summary.

The performance of environmental protection measures and of buildings and other structures in relation to acoustics, vibration, noise mitigation and other environmental issues is influenced to a large extent by the degree to which the relevant environmental considerations are incorporated into the final design and specifications and the quality of workmanship and compliance with the specifications on site during construction. Tetra Tech accept no liability for issues with performance arising from such factors.

APPENDIX B: LEGISLATION & POLICY

Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

This is the principal mechanism for the legislative protection of wildlife in the UK. Since it was first introduced, the Act has been amended several times. All six species of reptile native to the United Kingdom are protected through inclusion under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and benefit from various levels of protection. 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.

The smooth snake, *Coronella austriaca*; and sand lizard, *Lacerta agilis* are also listed under Schedule 5 Section 9.4b and 9.4c which makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally disturb while occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection; and
- Obstruct access to such a site.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

Section 41 (S41) of this Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list (in consultation with Natural England) of Habitats and Species which are of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. The S41 list is used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies including local and regional authorities, in implementing their duty under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in England, when carrying out their normal (e.g. planning) functions. The S41 list includes 65 Habitats of Principal Importance and 1,150 Species of Principal Importance.

National Planning Policy Framework - Published the 27 March 2012, updated December 2024

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is the top tier of planning policy. The Framework provides guidance to local authorities and other agencies on planning policy and the operation of the planning system. Section 15 relates to 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment'. Paragraph 187- 201

Relevant policies in relation to planning application include Paragraphs:

“187. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local 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 and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs;
- 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.

188. 'Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework^[1]; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.

192. To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

- (a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity (2) wildlife corridors and

stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation (3), and

(b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

193. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

(a) 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;

(b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;

(c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons (4) and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and

(d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

194. The following should be given the same protection as habitats sites:

(a) potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation;

(b) listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and

(c) sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.

195. The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site

^[1] Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality

² Circular 06/2005 provides further guidance in respect of statutory obligations for biodiversity and geological conservation and their impact within the planning system

³ Where areas that are part of the Nature Recovery Network are identified in plans, it may be appropriate to specify the types of development that may be suitable within them

⁴ For example, infrastructure projects (including nationally significant infrastructure projects, orders under the Transport and Works Act and hybrid bills), where the public benefit would clearly outweigh the loss or deterioration of habitat

⁵ Potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation and proposed Ramsar sites are sites on which Government has initiated public consultation on the scientific case for designation as a Special Protection Area, candidate Special Area of Conservation or Ramsar site

See here for full details: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework>

Local Planning Policy

Bridport Area Neighbouring Plan 2020 -2036

Policy L2: Biodiversity

1. Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they will provide a net gain in biodiversity and, where feasible, habitats and species, on the site, over and above the existing biodiversity situation.
2. If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (For example through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission will not be supported.

Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP)

Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAP) identify habitat and species conservation priorities at a local level (typically at the County level) and are usually drawn up by a consortium of local Government organisations and conservation charities. Some LBAP's may also include Habitat Action Plans (HAP) and/or Species Action Plans (SAP), which are used to guide and inform the local decision-making process.

APPENDIX C: SURVEY RESULTS

Survey No.	Date	Records					Notes
		Mat No.	Species	No. Adults	No. Sub-Adults	No. Juveniles	
1	08.04.24	1	Slow worm	1 ♀			
		6	Slow worm	-		1	
		11	Slow worm	4	5		
		26	Slow worm	1 ♀	-	1	
		27	Slow worm	1 ♂			
		29	Slow worm	2 ♂ 2 ♀			
		35	Slow worm	1 ♂ 2 ♀			
		36	Slow worm	2 ♀			
		37	Slow worm	1 ♂			
		42	Slow worm	1 ♀			
		49	Slow worm	-		1	
		-	Slow worm	1 ♀	-	-	Under black mat in centre of the site
2	11.04.24	1	Slow worm	1	1		
		6	Slow worm	2	1	1	
		11	Slow worm	5	2		
		25	Slow worm	1			
		29	Slow worm	1			
		31	Slow worm	1			
		35	Slow worm	3			
		36	Slow worm	1			
		49	Slow worm	-		1	
3	15.04.24	5	Slow worm	1 ♀			

Survey No.	Date	Records					Notes
		Mat No.	Species	No. Adults	No. Sub-Adults	No. Juveniles	
		6	Slow worm	-		1	
		15	Slow worm	-		1	
		16	Slow worm	-		1	
		22	Slow worm	1 ♀			
		29	Slow worm	1 ♀			
		31	Slow worm	1 ♀			
		33	Slow worm	1 ♀			
		35	Slow worm	1 ♀			
		49	Slow worm	-		2	
4	18.04.24	4	Slow worm	1 ♂		3	
		6	Slow worm	-		3	
		11	Slow worm	1 ♂ 2 ♀			
		15	Slow worm	1 ♀			
		16	Slow worm	-	1		
		22	Slow worm	1 ♀			
		29	Slow worm	-	1		
		27	Slow worm	1 ♀			
		32	Slow worm	1 ♂ 1 ♀			
		35	Slow worm	1 ♂ 2			
		36	Slow worm	1 ♂			
		37	Slow worm	2 ♀			
		50	Slow worm	1 ♀			
5	23.04.24	1	Slow worm	1 ♀			
		3	Slow worm	1 ♂ 1 ♀			

Survey No.	Date	Records					Notes
		Mat No.	Species	No. Adults	No. Sub-Adults	No. Juveniles	
		11	Slow worm	2♂2♀			
		6	Slow worm	-	3		
		7	Slow worm	1♀			
		21	Slow worm	1♂1♀		1	
		29	Slow worm	1♂			
		32	Slow worm	1♂			
		33	Slow worm	1♀			
		35	Slow worm	1♀			
		45	Slow worm	1♀			
		49	Slow worm	-	2		
		50	Slow worm	1♀			
6	01.05.24	6	Slow worm	-	2		
		11	Slow worm	2♂3♀			
		26	Slow worm	1♀			
		29	Slow worm	1♀		1	
		30	Slow worm	1♀			
		32	Slow worm	1♀			
		49	Slow worm	-		2	
7	26.04.24	2	Slow worm	1♀		1	
		5	Slow worm	-		1	
		7	Slow worm	2♀	1		
		10	Slow worm	1♀			
		11	Slow worm	5♂5♀			
		18	Slow worm	-	1		

Survey No.	Date	Records					Notes
		Mat No.	Species	No. Adults	No. Sub-Adults	No. Juveniles	
		22	Slow worm	1 ♀			
		23	Slow worm	3 ♀			
		29	Slow worm	2 ♀			
		32	Slow worm	1 ♀		1	
		36	Slow worm	1 ♀			
		42	Slow worm	1 ♂			
		49	Slow worm	-	1		
		50	Slow worm	1 ♀			
Key	♂ male, ♀ female,						