

# Reptile Mitigation Strategy

Eastleigh Works, Campbell Road, Eastleigh SO50 5AD

Presented to Diageo Pension Trust Ltd

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Delta-Simons Project No. 17-1080.22

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## 1.0 Context and Purpose

Delta-Simons Environmental Consultants Ltd was instructed by Savills on behalf of Diageo Pension Trust Ltd ('the Client') to produce a reptile mitigation strategy for land at Eastleigh Works ('the Site'), which lies to the east of Eastleigh in Hampshire (see Figure 1). This follows the recommendations of the Delta-Simons reptile survey report issued in November 2020 (Delta-Simons Project no. 17-1080.18).

### 1.1 Site Description

The Site is centred at Ordnance Survey (OS) grid reference SU 45902 18245, to the east of Eastleigh in Hampshire. The Site covers an area of 18.73 hectares (ha) and is a locomotive, carriage, and wagon building and repair facility. At the time that it was surveyed by Delta-Simons it comprised railway tracks and ten buildings with uses related to the purpose of the Site. There was a palisade fence surrounding the boundaries of the Site and small amounts of vegetation along these boundaries, however the majority of the Site comprised hardstanding with small areas of amenity grassland, bare ground, dense scrub and conifers. The Site did not support standing water at the time of the survey.

To the north of the Site lie further railway infrastructure, residential housing and commercial premises. South of the Site is residential development, and beyond Campbell Road, further railway infrastructure and residential housing lies Southampton Airport. To the south-east a number of agricultural fields are bordered by dense hedgerows. To the east, further commercial development is present together with a waterworks complex, and beyond that the River Itchen and associated wetland habitat. Residential housing lies to the west beyond a railway line and Southampton Road.

### 1.2 Proposed Development

Full planning permission has been granted for:

*"demolition of existing Units 3, 4 and 8 and erection of up to 2,258 sq. m of floorspace (GIA) for use within: Class B1(c); Class B2 and/or Class B8; provision for 'open storage' (Class B8) from up to circa 2.5 hectares (part permanent and part temporary); alterations to access including road widening, new footpath and creation of new vehicular access via Campbell Road; installation of acoustic barrier; and associated works including parking, services, landscaping, infrastructure and groundworks."*

Acoustic fencing needs to be installed along the southern boundary of the Site, adjacent to residential properties, and hardstanding is proposed in the south-east. This will require an area of scrub and fly tipping to be cleared to make way for the proposals.

## 2.0 Background Information and Project Understanding

The survey that forms the basis for this mitigation strategy was undertaken in the southern extent of the Site between September and October 2020. As stated above, vegetation clearance is required in this location to facilitate the installation of acoustic fencing along the southern boundary and creation of a hardstanding area.

The survey confirmed the presence of a medium population of slow worm *Anguis fragilis* and a small population of grass snake *Natrix helvetica*. Smooth newt *Lissotriton vulgaris* and common frog *Rana temporaria* were also recorded, with low populations of both species present. The locations where reptiles and amphibians have been recorded on-Site are shown on Figure 1.

At the time of writing, it is understood that a 3 m-wide habitat checked to allow the installation of the acoustic fencing along the south west boundary, as well as an area of scrub in the south-east corner of the site (see Figure 2).

Clearance of this habitat strip presents a risk to reptiles and nesting birds and as such the mitigation strategy presented at section 4.0 below is required.



Figure 2 – Area where ecological supervision required

## 3.0 Legislation

### Reptiles

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

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

### Nesting Birds

All wild birds are protected under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Subsection 1(1) makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure, or take any wild bird; take, damage or destroy the nest of any such bird whilst it is in use or being built; or take or destroy an egg of any such wild bird. It is, furthermore, an offence to either intentionally, or recklessly, disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird. The law covers all species of wild birds including common, pest or opportunistic species.

## 4.0 Mitigation Methodology

### Toolbox Talk

Prior to the commencement of any works at the Site, the Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) for the Site will provide a toolbox talk to all site operatives, including contractors and sub-contractor staff involved in any vegetation clearance or acoustic fencing installation works. The briefing will include details of the legal protection of reptile species and nesting birds, the precautionary methods of working (outlined below), tips on the identification of reptiles and nesting birds, and the procedures to follow should any protected species be discovered during the works.

### Vegetation Clearance

- ▲ The ECoW will supervise the vegetation clearance within the 3 m working corridor to allow the acoustic fencing to be installed and the area of scrub within the south-eastern extent of the Site;
- ▲ The scrub clearance works will be completed outside of the main hibernation period for reptiles (i.e. outside of November – March inclusive), which will ensure that, if present, any reptiles that have not been captured will not be buried deep in rock piles nor down small mammal burrows;
- ▲ The ECoW will check for the presence of reptiles and nesting birds prior to the initial vegetation clearance works, working ahead of the subcontractor team, and any reptiles found will be carefully relocated to the areas of retained scrub;
- ▲ Scrub / grassland vegetation will be strimmed back to a height of no less than 15 cm to ensure that if any reptiles are sheltering within it, they are not harmed. The strimmed areas will be left for at least 24 hours for any reptiles to move to suitable off-Site habitats;
- ▲ After a period of at least 24 hours, the scrub will be removed to ground level and any rubble piles and/or mammal holes will be thoroughly checked under ECoW supervision prior to their removal;
- ▲ The ECoW will supervise plant movements as the acoustic fencing is installed, checking for any signs of reptiles at regular intervals; and
- ▲ If any evidence of active bird nests is recorded then an appropriate buffer of at least 5 m around the nest will be established and the vegetation left undisturbed until any chicks have fledged or the nest is no longer

active (e.g. as a result of predation). All Site clearance works should be undertaken within 24 hours of the bird nesting check.

## 5.0 Enhancements

A 5 m strip of grassland / scrub will be left within the south-eastern extent of the Site and enhanced with log piles from the arising of the scrub clearance. This will allow any reptiles to remain on Site but also allow for reptiles to disperse on and off Site to wider habitats.

## 6.0 References

Edgar, P., Foster, J. and Baker, J. (2010). Reptile Habitat Management Handbook. Amphibian and Reptile Conservation, Bournemouth.

Froglife (1999). Froglife Advice Sheet 10: reptile survey. Froglife, London.

Gent, T. and Gibson, S. (2003). Herpetofauna Workers Manual. JNCC, Peterborough.

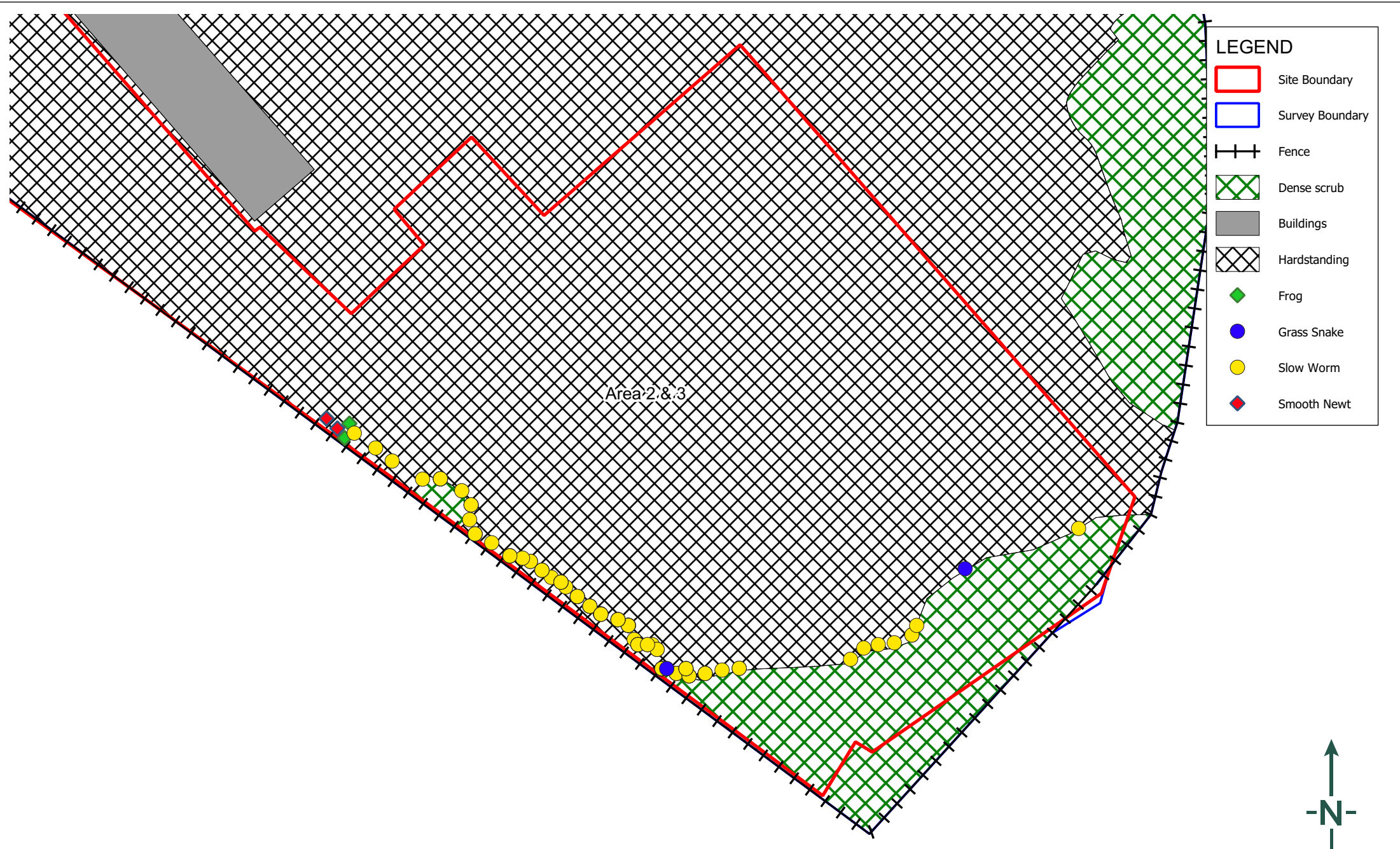
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), HMSO.

## Enclosed

### Figures

- |          |                                                          |
|----------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Figure 1 | Reptile Survey Results                                   |
| Figure 2 | Area where ecological supervision required (within text) |

## Figure 1 – Reptile Survey Results



**LEGEND**

- Site Boundary
- Survey Boundary
- Fence
- Dense scrub
- Buildings
- Hardstanding
- Frog
- Grass Snake
- Slow Worm
- Smooth Newt

Site Plan Provided by Client



TITLE:  
 Reptile Survey Results  
 Eastleigh Works  
 Eastleigh

|                           |                         |                           |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
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