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CONSULTANT ECOLOGISTS

Kilnwood Vale Ph6b

Reptile Mitigation Strategy

25th August 2026



Commissioned by
Crest Nicholson South
500 Dashwood Lang Road
Bourne Business Park
Addlestone, Surrey
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Kilnwood Vale Ph6B

Reptile Mitigation Strategy

25th August 2026

Report Ref: DFA26060

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

1.1.1. Derek Finnie Associates was commissioned by Crest Nicholson to provide ecological advice in relation to Phase 6B of their wider Kilnwood Vale development, herein referred to as the 'Site'.

1.1.2. The Phase 6B land benefits from full planning permission for the constitution of 115 dwellings with associated parking, landscaping and drainage infrastructure (Ref: . DC/21/2246). The permission was granted subject to numerous condition. Condition 5 of the permission states:

Condition 5

Pre-Commencement Condition*: No development shall commence until a Reptile Method Statement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. This will contain precautionary mitigation measures and/or works to reduce potential impacts to reptiles during the construction phase. The measures and/works shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved details and shall be retained in that manner thereafter.*

Reason: To conserve Protected and Priority species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

1.1.3. The following mitigation strategy, therefore, has been prepared to discharge Condition 5 of the planning permission.

1.2. Legislation

1.2.1. Under of Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, a person is guilty of an offence if he intentionally kills, injures or takes any wild animal included in Schedule 5, which includes reptiles, [Section 9 (1)] unless the act was the incidental result of a lawful operation and could not reasonably have been avoided [Section 10 (3)(c)].

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2. Site Description

2.1. Habitats

2.1.1. The Site was previously an arable field, but has been subject to extensive clearance works during the construction of the neighbouring Phase 6A of the wider development. Currently the area supports a mixture of bare ground and developing species poor grassland, spread over several spoil heaps.

2.1.2. A hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* hedgerow, that also contains blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, field maple *Acer campestre* and elder S*ambucus nigra*, runs more or less along the entire length of the western boundary of the Site. A linear belt of broad-leaved trees forms the eastern boundary to the Site. Oak *Quercus* sp. is the most apparent species, although ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* were also noted.

2.1.3. An area of open water is present within the attenuation basin towards the north of the Site, where aquatic species such as curled pondweed *Potamogeton* and common water starwort *Callitriche stagnalis* are present. The marshy grassland around the attenuation basin reflects the original planting mix that was introduced around this feature after its construction as part of Phase 1 of the scheme. Species noted include meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, gipsywort *Lycopus europaeas*, water mint *Mentha aquatica*, water figwort *Scrophularia auriculata*, common spike rush *Eleocharis palustris*, common club rush *Scirpus lacustris* as well as other species such as soft rush *Juncus inflexus* and reedmace *Typha latifolia*.

2.2. Reptile Survey

2.2.1. Previous reptile survey undertaken in 2021 found a small population of slow worms spread across the Site.

Table 1. Reptile Survey Results 2021

Date	Slow worm		
	Male	Female	Sub-adult
29/08/21	-	2	3
31/08/21	2	1	4
03/09/21	1	4	2
05/09/21	3	2	4
07/09/21	-	5	3
11/09/21	1	1	5
15/09/21	-	2	2

2.2.2. Th reptiles identified within the Site were subject to a translocation scheme in 2022, with the slow worm population being caught and translocated to a dedicated receptor site at the north west of the Site.

2.2.3. However, damage occurred to the reptile fence around the receptor area, which may have allowed some of the reptiles to re-colonise the Phase 6B land. There, a repeat translocation scheme is necessary.

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3. Mitigation Scheme

3.1. Rational

3.1.1. To avoid incidental harm, injury or death to the population of reptiles known to be potentially present within the Site as a result of the potential re-colonisation, a limited capture and exclusion exercise within the construction zone of the development has been undertaken. Artificial refugia were used, as in the survey stage of the scheme, in conjunction with a limited amount of habitat manipulation, to catch the reptile population within the Site and transfer them to the dedicated receptor area. The construction zone has been fenced off with semi-permanent reptile fence that confirms to an accepted standard for the duration of the works to prevent reptiles re-entering the Site (Figure 1).

3.2. Capture Scheme

3.2.1. Artificial refugia, in the form of heavy-duty roofing felts measuring approximately 0.5m^2, were placed around the Site at equivalent density of approximately 100ha^{-1}. The refugia will be placed in areas deemed to be suitable for reptiles, although care will be taken to ensure adequate coverage is achieved across the entire site. Once installed, the felts were left to bed in for seven days.

3.2.2. The refugia were then checked on suitable days, deemed to be sunny or partially sunny, with little wind and a temperature between 8°C and 19°C. Any reptiles encountered during these checks were caught and immediately transferred to the receptor site where they were released into suitable habitat. Given the assumed population density within the Site, 15 days of capture were planned initially; however, capture was extend beyond this time frame, until five capture free days have been achieved.

3.3. Receptor Site

3.3.1. Previously, the reptile receptor site had been identified as an area of rough grassland and scattered scrub in the northwest corner of the Site. Here, a large refugia was built in 2016 as part of the reptile mitigation strategy of the wider site.

3.3.2. However, the receptor site has been extended to incorporate all the grassland around the attenuation basin as well as the original receptor area, which has undergone habitat management to maximise its value for reptiles.

3.3.3. It is envisaged that, on completion of the construction of Phase 6B, the exclusion fence will be removed.

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3.4. Personnel

3.4.1. The works were undertaken by a Derek Finnie MSc DipCons CEnv MIEnvSc MCIEEM, Director of Derek Finnie Associates who has over 30 years as a practicing ecologist.

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4. Results

4.1. Capture Results

4.1.1. A total of 47 slow worm were caught within the Phase 6B land as summarised in Table 2. All reptiles were immediately translocated to the receptor area. Table 2 presents a summary of the reptiles caught in 2026.

Table 2. Reptile Survey Capture 2026

Visit No.	Date	Slow worm		
		Male	Female	Sub-adult
1	07/07/2026	-	2	1
2	09/07/2026	2	3	2
3	10/07/2026	3	2	1
4	14/07/2026	-	3	1
5	15/07/2026	1	-	2
6	16/08/2026	-	2	4
7	18/07/2026	1	1	5
8	20/07/2026	1	2	2
9	23/07/2026	-	-	2
10	28/07/2026	-	2	-
11	02/08/2026	1	-	1
12	05/08/2026	-	-	-
13	07/08/2026	-	-	-
14	10/08/2026	-	-	-
15	12/08/2026	-	-	-
16	14/08/2026	-	-	-
Total		**9**	**17**	**18**

4.1.2. Five capture free days were achieved after 16 days of the translocation scheme. Therefore, the Phase 6B land is now considered to be free of reptiles, and will remain so as long as the exclusion fence in maintained in good order.

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5. Management and Monitoring

5.1. Management

5.1.1. To ensure that a diverse sward is maintained and scrub encroachment is minimal, approximately one third of the grassland within the original receptor area will be mown every three years on a cyclic basis.

5.1.2. The grassland around the attenuation basin will be managed as a hay meadow, with a cut taken in late July/early August each year with the arisings being removed.

5.1.3. Any mowing should not go below 150mm.

5.2. Monitoring

5.2.1. Monitoring of the reptile population will be undertaken in years 1, 3 and 5 post translocation. Monitoring will comprise a repeat survey utilising 20 refugia places in appropriate locations around the receptor area. The refugia will be checked five times in suitable condition each year.

5.2.2. Changes to the management regime within the receptor site will be considered if a decline the population is noted during this period.

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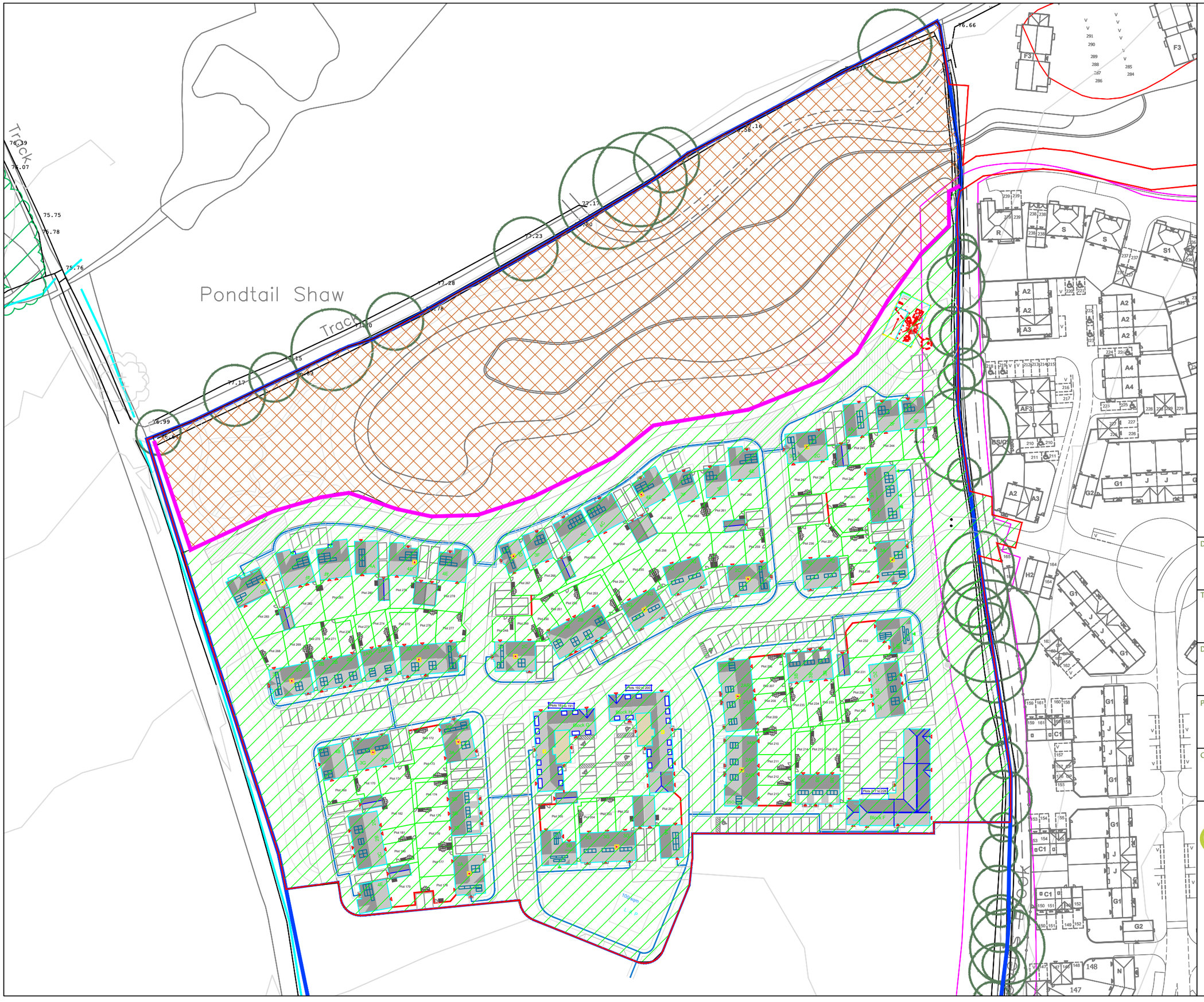

Drawing Number:
Figure 1

Title:
Reptile Mitigation

Date:
August 2026

Project:
Kilnwood Vale PH6B

Client:
Crest

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Derek Finnie Associates *offers over 30 years of professional ecological expertise to a wide range of clients, principally within the development arena, but also offering advice to the public and voluntary sectors. Based in Wokingham within the Thames Valley, we are ideally located to provide services to developers within the south and south-east of England.*



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