

Mowbray

Employment Land ~

Reptile Survey Report

January 2026



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Derek Finnie Associates was commissioned by Legal & General (Strategic Land North Horsham) Limited (L&G) to undertake an ecological assessment in relation to an area of land within their wider Mowbray Development, known as the Employment Land, Horsham, herein referred to as the 'Site' (Figure 1).
- 1.1.2 The Site previously had planning permission for the construction of a business park, which implies the principle of any impact on ecology has been deemed acceptable. The previous permission, however, has subsequently expired and L&G are now seeking outline planning permission (all matters reserved) to provide an Employment Park comprising flexible commercial, industrial and logistics uses (Use Classes E(g), B2, B8), healthcare (Class E(e)) and commercial leisure.
- 1.1.3 To inform the application, a series of ecological surveys were undertaken to ensure that the findings and conclusions of the previous Environmental Statement, in as far as they relate to ecology, are still true and valid. The following report, therefore, presents the methodology and results of a reptile survey undertaken across the Site in 2025. The survey area (Figure 1) covers land associated with both the Employment Land application and the Employment Land Road application.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Desk Study

- 2.1.1 The Site sits within L&G's wider landholdings of their North Horsham (Mowbray) site, which has been subject to numerous ecological surveys since 2010; all of which have been considered in the context of the current assessment.

2.2 Reptile survey

- 2.2.1 During previous surveys, potentially suitable reptile habitat was identified within the Site, hence it was deemed appropriate to undertake a species-specific survey of this taxon.
- 2.2.2 A total of 95 refugia, consisting of heavy-duty roofing felt approximately 0.5m², were placed across the Site in line with best practice survey guidance. To maximise the efficiency of the survey the refugia were concentrated in areas which appeared to be more likely to support reptiles which was deemed to be the edges of the fields (Figure 1). The Site covers approximately 20ha, but the vast majority of this is former arable land with negligible potential to support reptiles, hence the placement of 95 refugia in areas deemed to be suitable for reptiles results in a density deemed to be sufficient.
- 2.2.3 The refugia generally heat up quicker than the surrounding environment, which makes them attractive to reptiles which need to attain a certain body temperature to hunt effectively. Thus, careful inspection of the refugia results in a more effective way to locate these often-elusive animals.
- 2.2.4 The refugia were placed on Site on the 19th April 2025 and allowed to 'bed in' for 7 days before the survey proper began. The refugia were checked on seven occasions throughout the survey period, on suitable days, which are classified as sunny, or partially sunny days, with little or no wind and an air temperature between 8°C and 19°C, as summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. Reptile Survey Dates and Conditions

Visit No.	Date	Weather
1	27/04/25	13°C, sunny, no cloud
2	02/05/25	15°C, 2/8 cloud
3	06/05/25	14°C, 1/8 cloud, light wind
4	21/05/25	16°C, sunny, 4/8 cloud
5	18/06/25	13°C, sunny, 2/8cloud
6	21/06/25	14°C, sunny, no cloud
7	14/09/25	17°C, sunny, 1/8 cloud

- 2.2.5 In addition to checking the artificial refugia, other suitable natural basking areas around the Site were carefully inspected from a short distance using Leica 10x32 BGA binoculars, expanding the search area to cover parts of the Site where refugia could not be placed.



2.3 Survey Constraints

- 2.3.1 The survey was undertaken in line with the latest sectoral guidance from the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and BS 42020: 2013 *Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development*.
- 2.3.2 All survey work was undertaken by Derek Finnie MSc DipCons CEnv MEnvSc MCIEEM, Director of Derek Finnie Associates who has over 30 years as a practicing ecologist.

3 SITE DESCRIPTION

3.1 Desk Study

- 3.1.1 Previous surveys undertaken across the wider site have identified populations of slow worm, grass snake common lizard, but none were noted from the current Site.

3.2 Reptiles

- 3.2.1 No reptiles were encountered within the Site during the current survey.



4 SUMMARY

- 4.1.1 The survey confirmed the results of previous reptile surveys within the Site which suggests an absence of reptiles.

