

Reptile Survey Report

May 2026

**Kilnwood Apartments,
Rocky Lane,
Haywards Heath**

Prepared by
CSA Environmental

On behalf of
Cross Homes (Sussex) Ltd

Report No: CSA/7606/05

This report may contain sensitive ecological information. It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to determine if this should be made publicly available.

Report Reference	Revision	Date	Prepared by	Approved by	Comments
CSA/7606/05	-	01/05/2026	AC	JT	First issue



1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by CSA Environmental on behalf of Cross Homes (Sussex) Ltd. and details the methods and results of reptile surveys undertaken at Kilnwood Apartments, Rocky Lane, Haywards Heath (hereafter referred to as 'the Site').

2.0 Legislation

- 2.1 All native British reptile species are listed within Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and are afforded protection against killing and injury under parts of sub-section 9(1) of the Act. In addition, all native British reptile species are adopted as Species of Principal Importance for the Conservation of Biodiversity in England in respect of Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

3.0 Methods

- 3.1 A total of 20 reptile refugia, comprising rectangles of roofing felt measuring 1.0 x 0.5m, were installed in areas of suitable habitat present at the Site on 24 February 2026 by Nathaniel Scott. The location of these refugia is shown on the Reptile Survey Plan (Appendix A)
- 3.2 Following an initial 2-week 'bedding-in' period for refugia, surveys were carried out on seven occasions during favourable weather conditions (e.g. intermittent or hazy sunshine, not too windy, sunny spells following wet or cloudy weather) between March and April 2026. The surveys were undertaken by Sam Ashby ACIEEM, Will Campbell, Amia Chalk, Corie Lee, and Jasmine Cacioppo. Each survey visit comprised a slow walk of the Site to visually and physically check refugia for the presence of reptiles. On each occasion a visual search was also carried out within areas of suitable habitat whilst walking between refugia locations.
- 3.3 The primary aim of the reptile survey was to establish the presence or likely absence of widespread reptile species within the survey area, rather than to estimate abundance or population size. To this end, seven survey checks, an effort generally considered 'reasonable effort' in establishing the presence or likely absence of reptiles at a Site, were carried out.
- 3.4 Given the inherent problems in detecting reptiles, greater survey effort and/or identification or marking of individuals would be required to establish the actual or relative abundance of reptile populations. However, as reptiles are confirmed to be present and mitigation action is required, an approximation of population size is useful in guiding reptile mitigation strategies and has therefore been reported below.
- 3.5 There are several published methods for broadly 'categorising' reptile population sizes in the UK, with the most commonly employed by

ecological consultants being HGBI (1998), Froglife (1999) and/or Natural England (2011 [now rescinded]). These three approaches vary in their application, assumptions and limitations, and therefore outputs have been reported for all three methods for comparison below.

Limitations

- 3.6 The three metrics referenced below, HGBI (1998), Froglife (1999) and/or Natural England (2011; now rescinded), rely on varying proxies to calculate/estimate reptile populations. The HGBI categories are based on adult population densities, as opposed to peak counts. Moreover, the categorisation by HGBI is intended to inform capture effort for translocation exercises and, therefore, is not directly applicable to providing a population size class estimate, though it is widely applied within the industry for this purpose.
- 3.7 The Froglife method is based on peak adult counts where surveys have used refugia densities of 10 per hectare. Surveys carried out by CSA used densities of c. 118 per ha of suitable reptile habitat to maximise site coverage and opportunities to confirm the presence or likely absence of reptiles. Therefore, to enable comparison with the Froglife categories, peak counts have been divided by a factor of 11.8 so that they are proportionate to the Froglife survey effort of 10 refugia per ha.
- 3.8 Finally, the Natural England methods provide population class size estimates based upon a refugia density of 100 per ha and, in addition, goes on to consider habitat suitability. As with the Froglife method, survey results have been scaled to be proportionate to a survey effort of 100 refugia per ha. The consideration of peak counts and habitat suitability may be the most ecologically sound, or holistic, of the three indices. However, in light of the guidance having been rescinded, this metric cannot be exclusively relied upon.
- 3.9 It should be noted that it became apparent on the 23 March survey that nine of the reptile mats had been removed by residents during the survey period. The removed refugia were replaced during the next subsequent survey on 1 April. The survey on 15 April found that some of the removed refugia had been replaced within the survey area, and the number of mats present was >20.
- 3.10 There were no specific limitations to the reptile surveys, which were conducted at an optimum time of year and in good conditions.

4.0 Results

- 4.1 Slow worm *Anguis fragilis* and common lizard *Zootoca vivipara* were recorded onsite. Peak counts of 23 adult slow worm and four adult common lizard were recorded. Peak counts of three subadult slow worm and five subadult common lizard indicate these species are breeding onsite, although records of sub-adults are not counted towards

population totals. Survey results are summarised in Table 1 below and provided in full in Appendix B.

- 4.2 It should be noted that the Site is c. 0.17ha, and the entirety of the Site comprises suitable reptile habitat including grassland, scrub and field margins. Within this area 20 artificial refugia were used to provide a survey refugia density of 118 refugia per ha.

Table 1. Reptile population size category estimates

Method	Species	
	Slow worm	Common lizard
Peak count between March and April (2026)	23	4
HGBI (1998)	High	Low
Froglife (1999)	Low	Low
Natural England (2011)	Medium	Small

- 4.3 It is acknowledged that the above metrics have their limitations. However, in consideration of this information, balanced against an ecological understanding of the Site and survey findings, it is estimated that the Site supports a 'high' population of slow worm and 'low' populations of common lizard.

5.0 Discussion and Conclusions

- 5.1 The survey area supports a 'high' population of slow worm and a 'low' population of common lizard. Most reptiles recorded within the survey area were evenly distributed throughout the Site, likely due to its' small size. Full results are provided in Appendix B.
- 5.2 As all native British reptile species are listed within Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and are Section 41 Species of Principal Importance in England, the populations of reptile species using the Site are considered important at the Local level.
- 5.3 The proposed development would result in the permanent loss of c. 0.013ha/130m² of low-value 'modified grassland' and 0.003ha/30m² of mixed scrub, to facilitate an increase in c. 0.016ha/160m² of developed land. The removal of this habitat has the potential to directly impact high numbers of common reptiles. The killing and injury of individual reptiles is unlawful; however, such impacts are considered unlikely to represent a significant negative effect on the viability of the local population of reptiles due to large areas of connected suitable grassland and scrub habitat both on-Site and adjacent to the site and along the adjacent railway line.
- 5.4 Under the scheme it is considered possible to retain c. 0.063ha/630m² of grassland and c. 0.004ha/40m² of bramble scrub, which will be enhanced to mixed scrub for biodiversity net gain purposes. These

retained areas of grassland provide the opportunity to implement a beneficial management regime that can continue to provide suitable habitat for reptiles long-term. This will be secured through the approved scheme design, a LEMP as part of a condition of planning and through on-Site BNG efforts.

- 5.5 Furthermore, in order to minimise the potential for direct impacts on individual reptiles during construction, it is considered that a programme of capture, exclusion and translocation would be disproportionately ecologically invasive relative to any benefit gained. Instead, in order to avoid the killing and injury of individual reptiles during construction activities, a detailed Reptile Mitigation Strategy (RMS) will be prepared at reserved matters and shall be informed by update surveys following best practice guidance. The RMS will set out how reptiles will be safeguarded during construction and accommodated on-Site post development. This will be secured by way of an appropriately worded planning condition.
- 5.6 Following the delivery of the above mitigation measures, no significant effects are anticipated for reptiles.

6.0 References

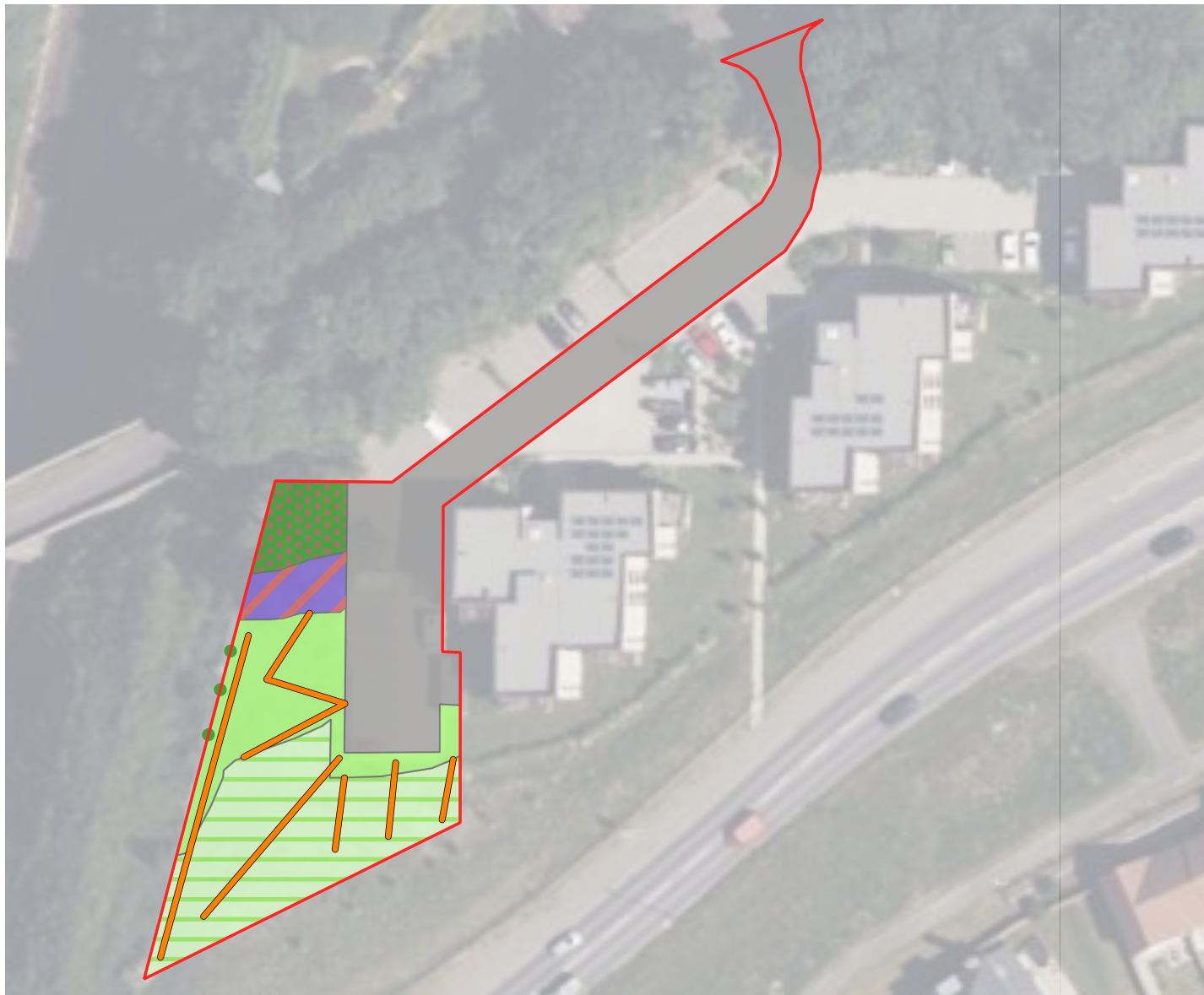
Froglife, 1999. Reptile Survey: an introduction to planning and interpreting surveys for snake and lizard conservation. Froglife Advice Sheet 10. Halesworth: Froglife.

HGBI, 1998. Evaluating local mitigation/translocation programmes: Maintaining Best Practice and lawful standards. HGBI advisory notes for Amphibian and Reptile Groups (ARG's). Halesworth: Herpetofauna Groups of Britain and Ireland.

Natural England, 2011. Reptile Mitigation Guidelines. Natural England Technical Information Note TIN102. York: Natural England.

Appendix A

Reptile Survey Plan



- Site boundary
- Reptile Refugia
- Baseline Trees
- Other neutral grassland (g3c)
- Modified grassland (g4)
- Other woodland-broadleaved (w1g)
- Dense scrub (h3)
- Developed land. sealed surface (u1b)



Project	Kilwood Apartments, Rocky Lane, Haywards Heath	Date	April 2026	Drawing No.	CSA/7606/107
Drawing Title	Reptile Survey Plan	Scale	1:1000	Rev	-
Client	Cross Homes (Sussex) Ltd.	Drawn	AC	Checked	JT

Appendix B

Full Reptile Survey Results

Set-Up Date	24/02/2026		Total Number of Refugia				20	Beaufort Scale: 0. Calm, Vertical smoke. 1. Light air. Smoke drifts. 2. Light breeze. Leaves rustle. 3. Gentle breeze. Small twigs constantly move. 4. Moderate breeze. Small branches begin to move. 5. Fresh breeze. Small trees in leaf begin to sway. Precipitation: [Type] No Rain / Light / Moderate / Heavy [Duration] Intermittent / Continuous											
Date	Start/End Times	Surveyor	Weather				Area/ Field No.	Slow worm <i>Anguis fragilis</i>					Common lizard <i>Zootoca vivipara</i>						
			Temp (°C)	Cloud Cover (Okta; n/8)	Wind (Beaufort Scale)	Rain (Type & Duration)		Adult Male (>230mm)	Adult Female (>230mm)	Unidentified Adult	Sub-adult	Newborn	Male	Female	Unidentified Adult	Sub-adult	Newborn		
Survey 1																			
10/03/2026	11-11:30	WC/AC	10	8	1	No Rain	3		2										
							1		1										
							N/A							1					
23/03/2026	PM	SA	11	4	2	No Rain	10	1											
							14	1											
01/04/2026	09:45-10:15	CL	13	6	1	No Rain	8	1											
09/04/2026	10:50-11:15	JC	19	1	1	No Rain	4-7	4	5	3	1					1			
							9		1										
							10	1	1								2		
							11	1											
15/04/2026	13:30-14:15	AC	15	7	3	No Rain	11	1	6										
							2	1				1							
							10	1	3										
							5				1	1							
							6				1								
							9		1										
							8		1										
							17								2				
							13								1				
							14					1							
							18		3		1								
							N/A	2	1										
							N/A										1		
N/A		2									1	3	1						
21/04/2026	12:40 - 13:10	JC	12	8	1	No Rain	1	2		1									
							2	2	1	2									
							4-5	3	2	2	2								
							7		1										
							9		1		1								
							13-14	1	1								1		
							17								1		3		
							19	2	1	1							1		
							20										1	1	
28/04/2026	12:20 -12:50	JC	13	2	2	No Rain	1								1				
							4		3		1								
							9		1										
							11	1	1	1									
							12			1									
							13									1			
							19		1										
							20										1		
							N/A										1		
								Total Adult			Total Juvenile		Total Adult			Total Juvenile			
								76			11		12			13			



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