



7th January 2026

For the attention of Hinckley & Bosworth Council,

This letter has been written by Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited (RHE) in response to concerns raised by Hinckley & Bosworth Council regarding Planning Application 23/01023/HYB about the protection measures recommended to avoid harm to reptiles.

Concerns have been raised regarding the following measure included in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP): Biodiversity (RHE, 2025)¹ which states: *"If vegetation clearance works need to be undertaken outside the above-mentioned window. These may proceed under supervision and only if overnight temperatures are above 5°C for five consecutive nights previously."*

This is considered an appropriate level of protection to sufficiently avoid potential harm to reptiles at the Site based on the following:

- Previous reptile survey work undertaken in 2023 (RHE, 2023)² resulted in a peak count of one Grass Snake *Natrix helvetica*. This species is unlikely to brumate within tall grass and/or ruderal vegetation as it normally utilises woodland and hedgerow habitats during the winter months with periods of torpor spent underground in disused mammal burrows, compost heaps, rock piles or in deep leaf/bracken litter. Given that the vegetation clearance works currently proposed are restricted to tall ruderal and grassland habitats, with an absence of hibernacula and will involve no uprooting of woody vegetation, it is considered highly unlikely that Grass Snake may be present and therefore, the risk of causing harm to this species is very low.
- As an additional precaution all vegetation clearance works will be undertaken only under direct ecological supervision and following a fingertip search of grassy tussocks (where present) and dense vegetation. It has been agreed with the client that, in the unlikely event of a brumating reptile being found by the Suitably Qualified Ecologist (SQE) undertaking the supervision, a buffer of 5m will be enforced to protect the hibernacula.
- It is also considered relevant that this approach has already been accepted by Rugby Borough Council as sufficient to avoid potential harm to reptiles at the Site.

For these reasons, it is considered that the recommended protection measures are sufficient for the proposed vegetation clearance to proceed in agreement with the relevant legal requirements.

Lucia Ruiz Mut

Senior Ecologist

¹RHE (2025). Stretton Point, Hinckley, Leicestershire. Discharge of Condition 7. CEMP: Biodiversity. 23/01023/HYB

²RHE (2023). Stretton Point, Hinckley. Ecological Appraisal & Reptile Survey