

Environmental Statement: Volume III

Appendix 9F: Reptile Surveys

VPI Immingham OCGT Project

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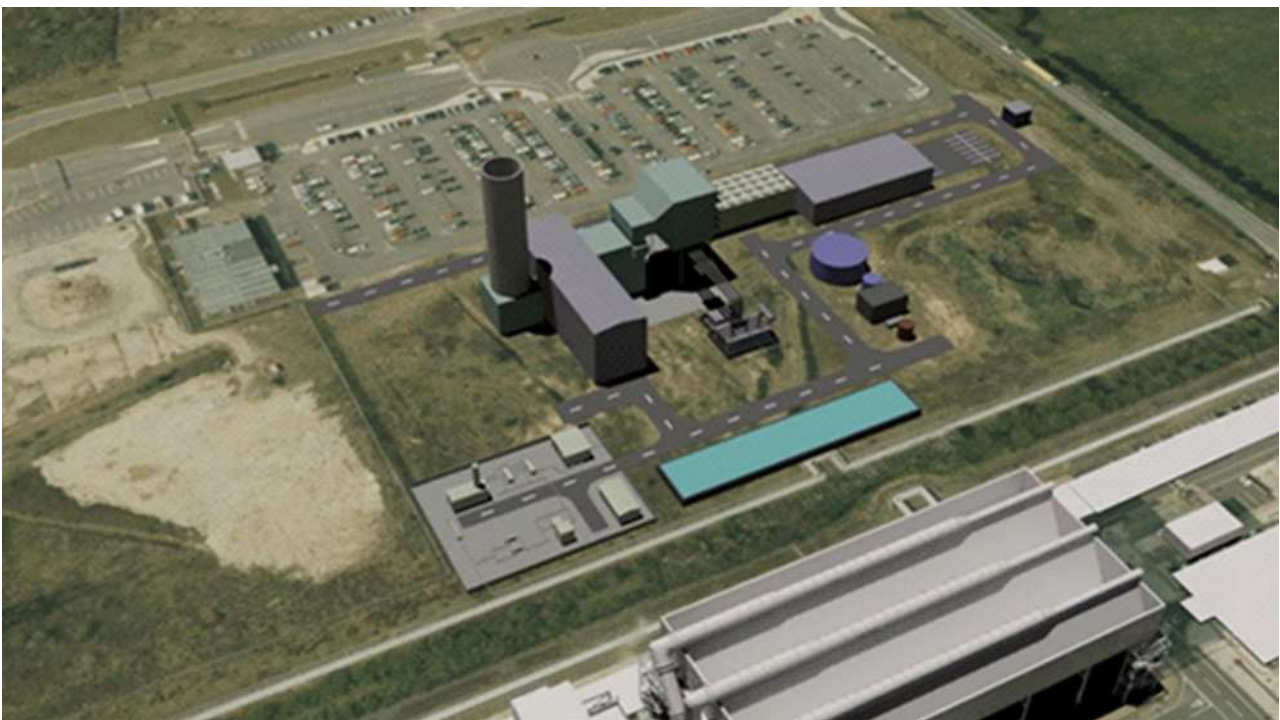
The Immingham Open Cycle Gas Turbine Order

Land to the north of and in the vicinity of the VPI Immingham Power Station, Rosper Road, South Killingholme, Lincolnshire, DN40 3DZ

Environmental Statement Volume III **Appendix 9F: Reptile Surveys**

The Planning Act 2008

The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 - Regulation 5(2)(q)



Applicant: VPI Immingham B Ltd

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GLOSSARY

Abbreviation	Description
ARS	Artificial Refuge Survey
ES	Environmental Statement
NERC	Natural Environment and Rural Communities
OCGT	Open Cycle Gas Turbine
PEA	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
PINS	The Planning Inspectorate
VES	Visual Encounter Surveys

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 This Appendix to the Environmental Statement (ES) presents the results of reptile surveys undertaken for the Proposed Development. The terms of reference used in this report are consistent with those defined within the main chapters of the ES (Volume I, Application Document Ref.6.2). This Appendix is intended to be read in conjunction with Chapter 9: Ecology of ES Volume I and the Preliminary Ecological Assessment (Appendix 9A, ES Volume III).

1.2 Survey Scope

1.2.1 Presence/absence surveys for reptiles were undertaken within the survey area. A total of seven visits were undertaken to meet the minimum requirements for determining presence/absence as set out in standard survey guidance (Froglife, 1999).

1.2.2 The survey area included all accessible habitats within the OCGT Power Station Site including an approximate 10 m buffer (see Chapter 3: Site Description (ES Volume I) for definitions and descriptions of the areas of the Proposed Development Site). This area is herein referred to as the 'Survey Area' and is shown on Figure 9F.1. Habitats within other parts of the Site were excluded from the reptile surveys because they do not provide the mosaic of habitats that reptiles require for basking, foraging and refuge.

1.3 Relevant Legislation

1.3.1 All widespread UK species of reptile (adder (*Vipera berus*), grass snake (*Natrix helvetica*), common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*) and slow worm (*Anguis fragilis*)) receive legal protection through their inclusion on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly kill or injure a reptile. However, unlike European protected species, their habitat does not receive legal protection.

1.3.2 All native UK reptile species are listed as 'Species of Principal Importance for Conservation in England' under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. Section 40 of the same Act requires that local and regional authorities have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in England, when carrying out their normal functions.

1.3.3 The Site lies well outside the known range of the sand lizard (*Lacerta agilis*) and smooth snake (*Coronella austriaca*) which are European protected species and given that the site lacks the necessary habitat to support these species, neither are considered further in this report.

2.0 METHODS

2.1 Desk Study

- 2.1.1 A desk study was undertaken as part of the scope of works for the Phase 1 Habitat survey and is reported in detail in the PEA Report (Appendix 9A in ES Volume III). Reptile records were obtained from the local ecological records centre (Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership) for the entirety of the Survey Area and a radius of 1 km around it.

2.2 Reptile Survey

- 2.2.1 A reptile survey was undertaken following best practice guidance as detailed in Froglife (1999) with reference to Gent and Gibson (1998) and English Nature (2004), comprising a combination of Artificial Refuge Survey (ARS) and Visual Encounter Surveys (VES).
- 2.2.2 The VES involved surveyors slowly walking along predetermined transects scanning the vegetation for reptiles. The walked transects were designed to include, where possible, a range of suitable vegetation types, south facing banks and suitable natural and artificial refuges and basking areas.
- 2.2.3 A total of 58 artificial reptile refuges (roofing felt tiles with an area of approximately 0.5 m²) were placed in suitable reptile habitat where they would receive direct sun in the morning and afternoon to warm up. These were set on 3rd April 2018 and left for a period of over two weeks to enable them to bed in prior to the first reptile survey being undertaken. More than ten refuges per hectare of suitable reptile habitat were installed in accordance with standard survey guidelines (Froglife, 1999).
- 2.2.4 A total of seven survey visits were undertaken between April and June 2018, during suitable weather conditions (temperature between 12 and 23°C, sunny with no rain or strong winds).

2.3 Limitations

- 2.3.1 There were no limitations to the completion of the reptile survey.

3.0 SURVEY RESULTS

3.1 Desk Study

3.1.1 The desk study did not return any records of reptiles within 1 km of the Survey Area .

3.2 Field Survey

3.2.1 The Phase 1 Habitat survey undertaken in 2017 identified suitable habitat within the Survey Area for reptiles (Appendix 9A, ES Volume III), with a mosaic of rough grassland, scrub and bare ground along with hummocks providing good potential basking, refuge and hibernation sites for reptiles.

Weather Conditions and Timings of Surveys

3.2.2 The weather conditions reported during the reptile surveys are presented in Table 9F.1 below. All surveys were undertaken in suitable weather conditions with light winds and no or very light rain.

Table 9F.1: Weather Conditions and Survey Times

Survey Date	Temperature	Wind speed (The Fujita Scale)	Cloud Cover	Weather	Survey Times
26/04/18	12°C	F3 – 4	80 %	Overcast with sunny spells	10.00-11.00
04/05/18	14°C	F1	90 %	Dry	10.10-11.00
10/05/18	12 - 14°C	F2	80 %	Dry	09:10 - 11:15
24/05/18	12 – 13°C	F1 – 2	90 – 100 %	Dry	10.10 - 10.40
04/06/18	12 – 14°C	F1 - 2	100 %	Dry	12:40 - 14:25
15/06/18	16°C	F2	85 – 95 %	Dry	13:55 - 14:50
25/06/18	23°C	F1	0 %	Dry	09:05 - 10:15

Artificial Refuge Surveys

3.2.3 No reptiles were recorded during the Artificial Refuge Survey (ARS).

Visual Encounter Surveys

3.2.4 No reptiles were recorded during the Visual Encounter Surveys (VES).

4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND EVALUATION

4.1.1 No evidence of reptile presence was recorded within the Survey Area, and it is reasonable to conclude that reptiles are currently absent from the Site.

4.1.2 However, given that there is suitable reptile habitat within the Survey Area and also within the wider local area, there is a low risk that reptiles could colonise habitat within the Survey Area in the future. It is therefore recommended that an updated reptile survey is undertaken prior to construction should there be more than a two year delay in the submission of the DCO application. This should be completed within the reptile active season (April to early October). In the unlikely event that reptiles be confirmed, an appropriate mitigation strategy should be developed for compliance with the W&CA.

5.0 REFERENCES

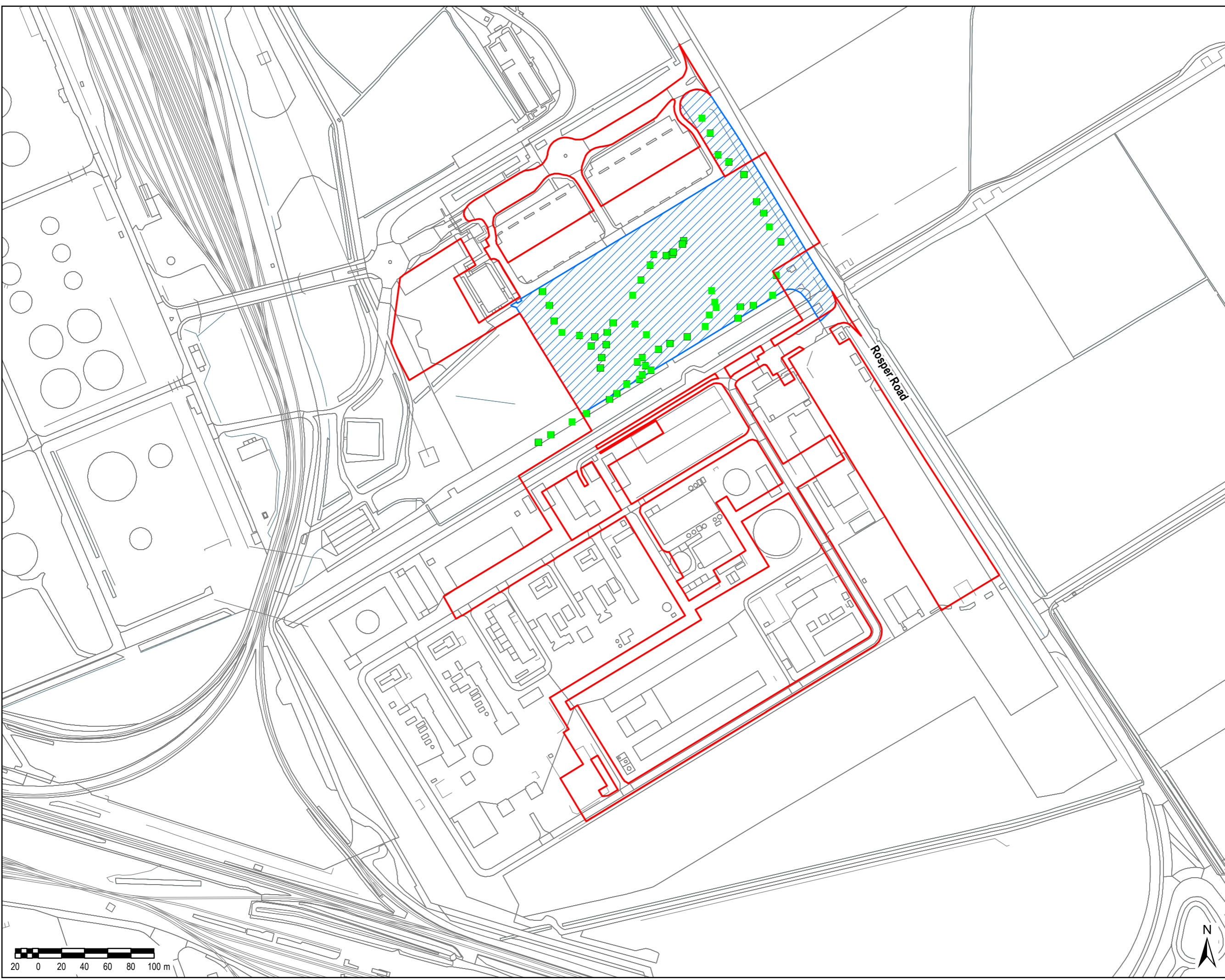
English Nature (2004) *Reptiles: guidelines for developers*. English Nature (now Natural England), Peterborough.

Froglife (1999) *Reptile survey: An introduction to planning, conducting and interpreting surveys for snake and lizard conservation*. Froglife Advice Sheet 10. Froglife, Halesworth.

Gent, T. and Gibson, S. (1998) *Herpetofauna Workers' Manual*. JNCC, Peterborough.

Figure 9F.1 Reptile Survey Area

File Name: \\ba-wip-004.scottwilson.co.uk\4400 - Management Services\004 - Information Systems\60547702 - Immingham Gas Pipeline\02 - Maps\Power Plant Site\OCGT - Full ES 2019\Ecology\PEA - Appendix to the ES\Figure 9G.1 Reptile Survey Locations.mxd



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LEGEND

	Proposed Development
	Reptile Survey Area
	Reptile Tile Location

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Purpose of Issue
ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

Client
VPI IMMINGHAM B LTD

Project Title
PROPOSED 299MW OCGT POWER STATION

Drawing Title
**REPTILE SURVEY LOCATIONS
FIGURE 9F.1**

Drawn JW	Checked BB	Approved MS	Date 21/03/2019
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