

TECHNICAL NOTE

Project:	Manor Farm, Bedhampton	Subject:	Reptile Translocation
Reference:	21.0174.0001 F0	Date:	12 th November 2021
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Introduction

Ecological Survey and Assessment Limited (ECOSA) have been contracted by Bargate Homes to undertake a reptile translocation exercise at Manor Farm, Lower Road, Bedhampton, Havant, Hampshire, PO9 3LH (hereafter referred to as the site). The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) SU 7002 0613. The proposals are for the development of the site for 50 residential dwellings with associated access, landscaping and infrastructure. Aluco Ecology have previously undertaken an Ecological Assessment of the site¹ and an addendum² which confirmed the site remains unchanged since the previous assessment.

Background

Reptile surveys undertaken by Aluco Ecology during September 2016 recorded a small population of slow-worm *Anguis fragilis* on site, with a peak count of three adults and three juveniles recorded. All individuals were recorded along the northern boundary of the site with Lower Road.

The majority of the existing suitable reptile habitat on site is to be retained outside of the construction zone. However, two small areas of suitable reptile habitat within the site where the population of slow-worm were recorded as present are to be lost to facilitate new road and pedestrian access from Lower Road. In addition, other areas of suitable habitat including a track running north to south through the site and some arable margins along the southern boundary of the site are to be lost to the development.

ECOSA were commissioned to carry out a reptile translocation exercise, which involved the capture and translocation of reptiles to a receptor site. The receptor area is located on-site in the south-eastern

¹ Aluco Ecology Ltd (2019) *Land at Lower Bedhampton – Ecological Assessment*. Aluco Ecology, England

² Aluco Ecology Ltd (2020) *Land at Lower Bedhampton – Ecological Assessment Addendum*. Aluco Ecology, England

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corner of the site. The translocation work was undertaken in accordance with the strategy set out in the Ecological Mitigation Strategy³ prepared by ECOSA in 2021.

Reptile Translocation Methodology

Reptile exclusion fencing was installed along the northern and southern boundaries of the site located outside of protective fencing demarcating the construction area (e.g. Heras fencing), to ensure the reptile fencing is protected during construction works. The reptile fencing consisted of 1000-gauge geotextile fence buried into the ground by 100 millimetres with an external return to prevent reptiles burrowing beneath it. Posts erected at approximately one to two metre intervals support the fence. The fence is 750 millimetres to one metre in height.

The on-site receptor area is formerly arable but has been left unmanaged and has begun to develop into grassland, therefore providing suitable reptile habitat. It is also adjacent to the railway boundary and as a result is connected to a wider green corridor. The receptor area is considered to have more than adequate capacity to support the low numbers of slow-worm recorded on site.

A total of 91 reptile refugia, comprising approximately 500 millimetres x 500 millimetres sheets of bitumen roofing felt, were distributed throughout the translocation site in areas of suitable reptile habitat by an ECOSA ecologist on Thursday 2nd September 2021.

The reptile refugia were then inspected on a total of 30 occasions over 31 days until five clear days with no capture were recorded, after a minimum of 30 visits.

The translocation visits commenced on the 15th September 2021 and finished on the 15th October 2021. Captured reptiles were sexed and aged where possible and translocated to the receptor site. The details of weather conditions for each reptile translocation date are provided in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Reptile translocation details

Survey Date	Survey Time	Temperature (°C)	Weather Conditions
15 th September 2021	13:00	18	Warm, sunny
16 th September 2021	09:00	14	Cloudy, dry
17 th September 2021	08:45	15	Cloudy, dry
18 th September 2021	10:30	18	Dry, sunny
19 th September 2021	08:30	15	Light rain at start, then dry, overcast
20 th September 2021	09:00	16	Warm, sunny
21 st September 2021	09:15	15	Warm, Sunny
22 nd September 2021	09:10	16	Warm, Sunny
23 rd September 2021	09:25	16	Warm, Sunny
24 th September 2021	08:30	14	Sunny
25 th September 2021	09:30	17	Overcast
26 th September 2021	10:00	16	Dry

³ ECOSA (2021) *Manor Farm, Bedhampton – Ecological Mitigation Strategy*. ECOSA, North Baddesley

Survey Date	Survey Time	Temperature (°C)	Weather Conditions
27 th September 2021	08:45	15	Sunny
28 th September 2021	09:10	15	Overcast
29 th September 2021	12:00	15	Sun
30 th September 2021	09:00	15	Overcast
1 st October 2021	09:00	15	Overcast
2 nd October 2021	10:40	15	Overcast, wet
4 th October 2021	09:10	14	Sunny
5 th October 2021	09:10	13	Sunny
6 th October 2021	09:10	12	Sunny
7 th October 2021	09:15	16	Overcast
8 th October 2021	09:10	16	Overcast
9 th October 2021	11:00	11	Sunny
10 th October 2021	13:25	16	Overcast
11 th October 2021	09:15	11	Sunny
12 th October 2021	09:15	10	Sunny
13 th October 2021	09:15	10	Overcast
14 th October 2021	09:15	12	Sunny
15 th October 2021	09:10	12	Sunny

Following the completion of the translocation exercise a destructive search of the suitable reptile habitat to be lost to the proposals was undertaken. The destructive search comprised grubbing out tree roots from sections of the northern boundary hedgerow removed for new road and pedestrian access from Lower Road. The remaining suitable reptile habitat within the construction area was strimmed to ground level using hand tools under the supervision of an ecologist. Immediately prior to clearance, areas were inspected by the ecologist using a visual inspection and finger search through denser vegetation.

Reptile Translocation Limitations

There were no significant limitations recorded with the reptile translocation.

Results

A total of seven adult and three juvenile slow-worm were captured and relocated to the receptor site during the translocation. A summary of the reptile translocation undertaken is provided in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Summary of reptile translocation results

Survey Date	Number of slow-worm translocated*
15 th September 2021	2(1)
16 th September 2021	1(2)
17 th September 2021	1
18 th September 2021	1

Survey Date	Number of slow-worm translocated*
19 th September 2021	0
20 th September 2021	1
21 st September 2021	0
22 nd September 2021	0
23 rd September 2021	0
24 th September 2021	0
25 th September 2021	0
26 th September 2021	0
27 th September 2021	0
28 th September 2021	0
29 th September 2021	0
30 th September 2021	0
1 st October 2021	0
2 nd October 2021	1
4 th October 2021	0
5 th October 2021	0
6 th October 2021	0
7 th October 2021	0
8 th October 2021	0
9 th October 2021	0
10 th October 2021	0
11 th October 2021	0
12 th October 2021	0
13 th October 2021	0
14 th October 2021	0
15 th October 2021	0
Total Adults Relocated	7(3)

*Juvenile numbers provided in brackets

Following the completion of the translocation exercise, a destructive search of the suitable reptile habitat was undertaken. No reptiles were encountered during the destructive search. The site has now been cleared of reptiles.

Conclusion and Recommendations

A total of seven adult and three juvenile slow-worm were captured and relocated from the translocation site to the on-site receptor area.

The site should be kept clear of any vegetation with particular care taken not to leave spoil piles along the eastern and western site boundaries where no reptile exclusion fencing is present. This is because establishment of new vegetation and spoil piles could create suitable reptile habitat and may lead to recolonisation of the site by reptiles.

The installed reptile fencing should be maintained in a good state of repair throughout the construction phase of the development in order to ensure that reptiles do not recolonise the site. This is especially important given the location of the on-site receptor area adjacent to the construction area.

It is recommended that the reptile fencing continues to be protected by a semi-permanent barrier such as Heras fencing, hording or similar. Contractors should monitor the fence line for signs of any damage and repairs should be undertaken as necessary. This is essential in order to ensure that reptiles do not recolonise the site during the development works. As the works progress it may be appropriate to undertake fencing removal in sections as the development works are completed. However, it should be noted that fencing removal can only be undertaken in the active season (April to mid-October) and under supervision of an ecologist to ensure that reptiles are not harmed as part of this work.

It is also recommended that compliance checks to ensure the reptile fencing has been maintained in good condition, and that there is no risk of recolonisation, are undertaken monthly by an ecologist throughout the active season for reptiles beginning in March and continuing until October.