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Reptile Survey Report

Bartons Road, Havant

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Report Summary:

- 1. A presence / absence survey was undertaken between the 18th August and 1st October by Matt Howard to ascertain what, if any, reptile species were present on a plot of arable land to the south of Bartons Road, Havant.**
- 2. The surveys were carried out by placing 24 artificial refugia upon and adjacent to land that is proposed for future residential development. A total of seven surveys were undertaken and the highest count of reptiles from these visits used to estimate the population of each reptile species on the site as low, good or exceptional.**
- 3. Peak counts of 5 adult and 3 juvenile slow worms and 2 common lizards were identified, suggesting low populations of both species.**
- 4. A site specific method statement should be produced as part of a planning condition to development, prescribing in detail the method for protecting reptiles at the site in the long-term.**

This report has been prepared by The Ecology Co-operation, with all reasonable skill, care and diligence within the terms of the Contract with the client.

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This report is confidential to the client and we accept no responsibility of whatsoever nature to third parties to whom this report, or any part thereof, is made known. Any such party relies on the report at their own risk.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Report

This report gives details of a presence / absence reptile survey carried out by Matt Howard, a freelance ecologist. The surveys have been carried out on behalf of Bidwells to support an application for planning permission for a parcel of land to the south of Bartons Road, Havant. The grid reference for the site is SU 734078.

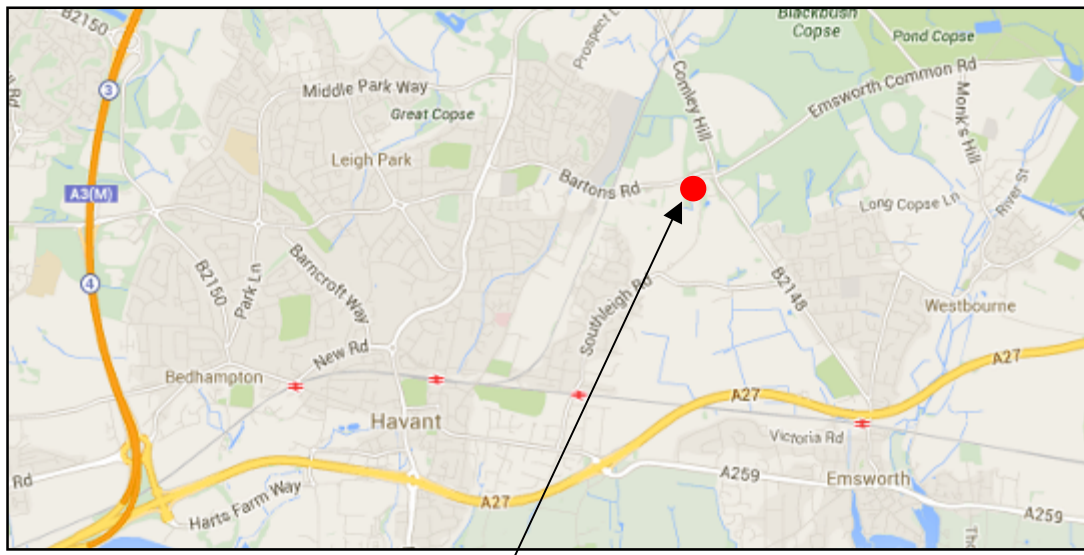


Figure 1 – The location of the site at Bartons Road shown by the red dot

1.2 Background

The need to complete a reptile presence / absence survey was identified during an extended phase 1 habitat survey conducted in July 2014 by the Ecology Co-op, which identified habitat that could support this group of species.

The objective of the survey was to identify the presence or absence of reptile species, determine approximate populations and provide mitigation advice should it be necessary.

1.3 Site Description

The site consists of two A very large arable field, with a grassy field corner at the northern end and narrow grassland margins around the northern, western and southern boundaries. All of the grassland habitats identified were considered as being suitable habitats for reptiles during the Phase 1 assessment.

Area 1, the northern area which consists of semi-improved un-kept grassland with a hedge boundary to the north, a woodland copse on the east and west boundaries, and an arable field to the south.

Area 2, to the south consists of a semi-improved grassland area which is surrounded by arable fields to the north, south and west. There are several residential properties to the south west and on the western edge of Area 2 there is a barn. Along the western boundary

Arable Land south of Bartons Road
which borders private gardens there is a narrow grass strip of interest.



Picture 1 - a large grassland field margin, with un-kept grass and surrounded by woodland copse



Picture 2 - grassland margin at the southern margin of the site and surrounding a disused agricultural building.



1.4 Legal Protection

This section briefly describes the legal protection afforded to reptiles. It is for information only and is not intended to be comprehensive or to replace specialised legal advice. It is not intended to replace the text of the legislation, but summarises the salient points.

Common Lizard (*Lacerta vivipara*), Grass Snake (*Natrix natrix*), Slow-Worm (*Anguis fragilis*), and Adder (*Vipera berus*) are listed under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), in respect of Section 9 (5) and part of Section 9(1). This protection was extended by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000. Under the legislation it is an offence to:

- Intentionally or deliberately kill or injure any individual of these species; or
- Sell or attempt to sell any part of these species either alive or dead.

2. METHODOLOGY

The survey was carried out by placing artificial refugia across suitable habitat at the northern and southern ends of the site, which heat up in the sun and provide cover. Twenty four roofing felt sheets were used, focussing on grassland habitat. Reptiles are attracted to these refugia to warm up in the mornings and late afternoon to regulate their temperature and a suitably qualified surveyor is able to count the number and in some cases the sex of each species present.

A total of seven surveys are undertaken and the highest count of reptiles from these visits is used to estimate the population of each reptile species on the site as low, good or exceptional. If no reptiles are identified upon the site following five visits, then the surveys can be ceased, with the conclusion that no reptiles are present.

3. RESULTS

A total of 24 survey sheets were placed along the grassy borders of the site on the 18th August 2014 and left for a minimum of ten days to 'bed in' before the commencement of the survey process.

Date	Start Time of Survey	Air Temp / Refugia Temp °C	Weather Notes, cc = cloud cover	Species Total
01.09.2014	09.15	17	80% cc, 0-5 mph, hazy	2 Male common lizards
04.09.2014	11.25	18	60% cc, 0-5 mph, hazy	0
05.09.2014	11.25	17	90% cc, 0-5 mph, humid & hazy	3 Female slow worms
08.09.2014	11.15	18	0% cc, 0-5 mph	0



Arable Land south of Bartons Road

09.09.2014	09.15	16	0% cc, 0-5 mph	0
30.09.2014	10.30	16	30% cc, 0-5mph, hazey	1 Male slow worm, 4 Female slow worms, 3 Juvenile slow worms
01.10.2014	10.45	17	5% cc, 0-5mph	0

Table 1 – The details of the data gathered during each survey



Figure 2 – Survey Areas 1 & 2 outlined in red. Green squares show where slow worms were found and orange squares representing where common lizards were found



4. CONSTRAINTS

All surveys were completed within the allocated temperature range (9-18°C) and without the influence of rain. All surveys were therefore deemed to be suitable.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The surveys conducted on the site have identified a low population of slow worms and a very low population of common lizards. Given the peak count of 5 adult and 3 juvenile Slow Worms and the area of suitable reptile habitat present, this narrow grassland margin can be considered to support a low slow worm population. The peak count of 2 common lizards suggests a very low population.

The identification of a reptile population means that precautions will be necessary in order to protect this species, however a translocation can be avoided in this instance because of the likely retention of all of the suitable habitat identified.

For any development to proceed at Bartons Road, it is important that site-specific mitigation and compensation measures are put in place to protect both individual slow worms and the longevity of the population. A Mitigation Statement that details all of the protection measures for reptiles should either support any future planning application, or be submitted as part of a planning condition to development. This mitigation should include:

1. The whole of the development site boundary would need to be fenced off with a rigid semi-permanent reptile proof fencing that is strong and durable.
2. A target of 60 trapping and translocation visits would need to be undertaken between 1st April and 15th October, with the trapping phase completed after five consecutive visits are made without finding reptiles during suitable weather conditions.
3. Habitat enhancements would need to be identified and put in place to ensure the continuing survival of the slow worm population upon the approved receptor site, with a long-term management strategy put in place.