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Report prepared for: JK Rudkin Builders Ltd c/o Brian Parker (planner)

For the Site of: Bricket Lodge Sport & Country Club on Lye Lane AL2 3TF

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Cherryfield Ecology has prepared this report for the named clients use only.

Ecological reports are limited in shelf life, Natural England usually expect reports for licenses to be from the most recent or current season. Therefore, should the project not proceed within 12 months of this report an updated survey should be undertaken in order to check for changes that may have occurred on site. Information is believed to be accurate at the time of survey; recommendations are made without bias based on good practice guidelines within the industry. However, species presence and ecological parameters can change over time.

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Full Common Reptile Survey

0.0 Non-Technical Summary

0.1 Background

The survey follows national guidelines allowing for refuges, commonly known as ‘felts’, to be placed across the site and then checked for reptiles. Recommendations for mitigation if considered necessary are detailed in section 4. If a deviation from the guidelines has been made, this will be detailed in the Method Section.

The following report details the findings and recommendations for the site of Bricket Lodge Sport and Country Club, Lye Lane, Hertfordshire AL2 3TF.

The client commissioned Cherryfield Ecology to undertake an EA as the proposals include for the demolition of existing buildings to be replaced with residential buildings and associated landscaping.

0.2 Results and Findings

- Following a Stage 1 Ecological Appraisal undertaken on 05/01/2022 (Cherryfield Ecology, 2022), further surveys were recommended, which included for seven checks across the months of March to September.
- These surveys have shown the presence of a single numbers of Slow Worms *Anguis fragilis*.

0.3 Impact Assessment and Recommendations

Reptiles - Minor impacts are foreseen (see section 4 for details)

No further surveys, or mitigation, is required; however:

- If works are not carried out within 12 months of this report, an update survey is recommended.
- If reptiles are found throughout the development, all works must stop, and advice sought.

1.0 Introduction

The client, JK Rudkin Builders Ltd, has commissioned Cherryfield Ecology to undertake a full reptile survey (FRS) for the site of Bricket Lodge Sport and Country Club, Lye Lane, Hertfordshire AL2 3TF. Planning permission is being sought for the demolition of existing buildings to be replaced with residential buildings and associated landscaping. This survey has utilised standard methods for checking for reptiles, by placing out felts, tins or carpet tiles across the site. These are then checked in suitable weather for reptiles. Whilst checking the felts, the surveyor also looks for reptiles moving around the site.

The inspections were conducted on the 17/03/2022 (set-up), 24/03/2022, 05/04/2022, 12/04/2022, 21/04/2022, 26/04/2022, 03/05/2022, and 10/05/2022.

The survey can only ever provide a ‘snapshot’ of the site at the time of the survey and circumstances may change following this report. Health and Safety restrictions or obstructions may limit the ability to find reptiles e.g. flooding.

Biological records have been requested to give the report context and allow a study of the surrounds. The information is often sensitive and, therefore, a synopsis is provided and the full data released separately for verification.

The survey can be conducted between March to October when temperatures of between 9-18°C are generally accepted to be the optimum for reptiles to be active. These months are generally considered optimal for observing active reptiles, except the warmest summer months (where temperatures can exceed 18°C, which are considered sub-optimal).

There are six species of reptiles in Great Britain (Edgar *et al.* 2010) and four of these are commonly found; the Grass Snake *Natrix natrix* and/or the Barred Grass Snake *Natrix helvetica*), Adder *Vipera berus*, Common Lizard *Zootoca vivipara* and Slow Worm *Anguis fragilis*.

All native British species of reptiles are legally protected through their inclusion in Schedule V of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. As such, all species are protected from deliberate killing or injury. Therefore, where development is permitted, and there

will be a significant change in land use, a reasonable effort must be undertaken to avoid committing an offence. The same act makes the trading of native reptile species a criminal offence without appropriate licensing.

Two species of reptile; the Smooth Snake *Coronella austriaca* and Sand Lizard *Lacerta agilis* are further protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019, which defines UK protected species of animals (“rare reptiles”).

2.0 Methods

The survey follows the national guidelines, which is taken as following:

- Froglife (1999), Reptile Survey, Froglife Advice Sheet 10, Froglife, Halesworth.
- Herpetofauna Groups of Britain and Ireland (1998). Evaluating local mitigation/translocation programs: Maintaining Best Practice and Lawful Standards. HGBI.
- JNCC (2004). Common Standards Monitoring Guidance for Reptiles and Amphibians.
- Edgar et al. (2010). Reptile Habitat Management Handbook. Amphibian and Reptile

The survey consists of placing out felts, tin or carpet tiles across the site. These are then checked for reptiles in suitable weather and notes made of the species, sex and age.

From this information, an estimate of the population can be made e.g. more than 5 slow-worms on the site would be a good population.

If a deviation from the guidelines has been made, the reason and justification will be explained below:

No deviation from the standard guidelines has been made for this survey.

3.0 Results

The following section details the results of the desk study, inspection and survey, it includes MAGIC information, biological records data and map/aerial photo information.

3.1 Desk Study

The desk study is centred on Grid Reference - TL134028 and Postcode - AL2 3TF.

Table 1: Weather Records.

Date	Survey	Weather: Start	Weather: Finish
17/03/2022	Set Up	Temp: 12 °C Wind: 0/12 Cloud: 20% Precip: None	Temp: 12 °C Wind: 0/12 Cloud: 25% Precip: None
24/03/2022	1 st Check	Temp:13 °C Wind: 0/12 Cloud: 5% Precip: None	Temp:15 °C Wind: 0/12 Cloud: 10% Precip: None
05/04/2022	2 nd Check	Temp: 13°C Wind: 3 /12 Cloud: 50% Precip: None	Temp: 14°C Wind: 3 /12 Cloud: 50% Precip: None
12/04/2022	3 rd Check	Temp: 15°C Wind: 2/12 Cloud: 50% Precip: None	Temp: 15°C Wind: 2/12 Cloud: 50% Precip: None
22/04/2022	4 th Check	Temp: 17°C Wind: 2/12 Cloud: 30% Precip: None	Temp: 17°C Wind: 2/12 Cloud: 30% Precip: None
26/04/2022	5 th Check	Temp: 13°C	Temp: 13°C

		Wind: 2/12 Cloud: 5% Precip: None	Wind: 2/12 Cloud: 5% Precip: None
03/05/2022	6 th Check	Temp:12 °C Wind: 2/12 Cloud: 100% Precip: None	Temp:12 °C Wind: 2/12 Cloud: 100% Precip: None
11/05/2022	7 th Check	Temp:19 °C Wind: 2/12 Cloud: 45% Precip: None	Temp: 19°C Wind: 2/12 Cloud: 45% Precip: None

3.2 MAGIC

The following statutory sites and Natural England Protected Species (NEPS) have been located within the 2km search area (Figure 1).

- There are two statutory sites located within the search area. Bricket Wood Common Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located approx. 1.1km south-west of the site. Moor Mill Quarry West SSSI is located approx. 650m east of the site.
- There are no NEPS licences granted for European protected species within the search area.

MAGiC

Bricket Lodge Country Club

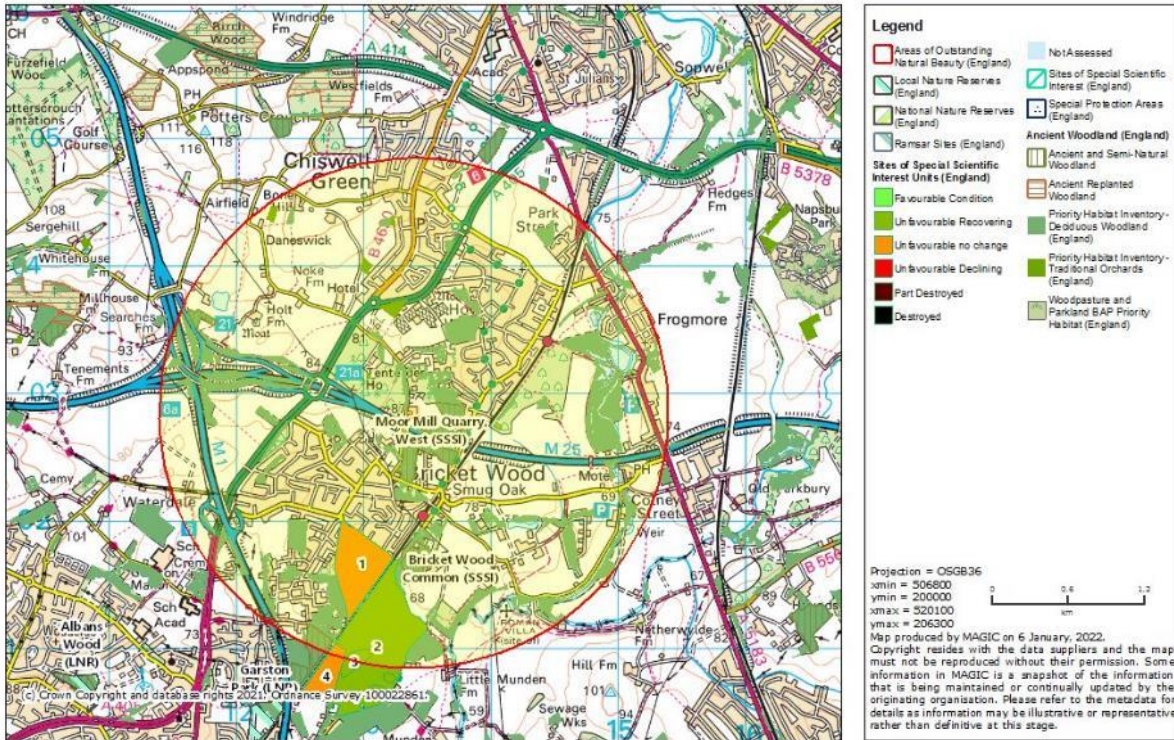


Figure 1: Magic Map Search

3.3 Biological Records Data

A standard 1km data search of existing records for protected species and nature reserves has been commissioned, below details the results and site context.

Biological records were obtained from Herts Environmental Records Centre (HERC) (2021), with a total of 5347 biological records provided.

Table 3: Biological Records

Species	Number of Records	Closest Record (accuracy)	Most Recent Record (year)
Amphibians Great Crest Newt <i>Triturus cristatus</i>	11	Approx. 305m (6 fig. grid ref.)	1998
Bats			

Brown Long-Eared <i>Plecotus auratus</i>	2	Approx. 1.9km (4 fig. grid ref.)	Not provided
Common Pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	19	Approx. 1.9km (4 fig. grid ref.)	2020
Daubenton's <i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	2	Approx. 600m (4 fig. grid ref.)	Not provided
Noctule <i>Nyctalus noctule</i>	7	Approx. 1.9km (4 fig. grid ref.)	2013
Soprano Pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	7	Approx. 1.9km (4 fig. grid ref.)	2013
Unidentified Bat <i>Chiroptera sp.</i>	13	Approx. 600m (4 fig. grid ref.)	2020
Mammals (exc. Bats)			
Badger <i>Meles meles</i>	19	Approx. 890m (4 fig. grid ref.)	2019
Hazel Dormouse <i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i>	1	Approx. 1.1km (4 fig. grid ref.)	Not provided
Water Vole <i>Arvicola amphibius</i>	3	Approx. 1.1km (4 fig. grid ref.)	1987
Reptiles			
Common Lizard <i>Zootoca vivipara</i>	1	Approx. 1.1km (4 fig. grid ref.)	Not provided
Grass Snake <i>Natrix Helvetica</i>	3	Approx. 430m (6 fig. grid ref.)	1991
Slow-Worm <i>Anguis fragilis</i>	1	Approx. 1.1km (4 fig. grid ref.)	1985
Other			
Birds	3832	Approx. 0m (6 fig. grid ref.)	2020
Invertebrates	1313	Approx. 0m (6 fig. grid ref.)	2020
Plants			
Non-Statutory Sites			
Name	Reference No.	Type	Description/designated for
How Wood	76/021	Local wildlife site	Not provided

Birch Wood	76/020	Local wildlife site	Not provided
Blackgreen Wood	76/014	Local wildlife site	Not provided

3.4 Site Location and Surrounds

The site is in Bricket Wood, Hertfordshire and is surrounded by woodland and low-density urban sprawl in the immediate local. Table 4 details the commuting, feeding and habitat features in a 1km radius of the site.

Table 4: Habitat features suitable for use by protected species

Feature	Description
Water course	The River Ver is located approx. 1.4km east of the survey site.
Water bodies	The closest water body is located approx. 750m south-east of the site. In addition, there are water bodies located 815m south-east, 825m south-east, 850m north, 920m north and 960m north of the site.
Woodland	Woodland is located on site to the south and in its immediate surrounds to the east and west. There is also woodland located approx. 500m north-east, 350m south and 675m south-west of the survey site.
Linear e.g., hedgerows	There are numerous hedgerows scattered throughout the search area. The closest is located approx. 500m north of the site.
Pasture/arable/grassland	There is scattered arable land within the north-west and south-east of the search area. The closest arable field is located 460m north of the survey site.
Other	There are no other significant features within the search area.

3.5 Observations

Table 4: Results and observations of the surveyors' checks (see Figure 3 for Site Plan)

Surveyor	Survey	Reptile Activity Observed and Other Observations
MOC	Set Up	No reptiles found.
MOC	1 st check	No reptiles found. No incidental records.
HS	2 nd check	No reptiles found. No incidental records.
HS	3 rd check	No reptiles found. No incidental records.
LB	4 th check	No reptiles found. No incidental records.


LB	5 th check	No reptiles found. No incidental records
LB	6 th check	No reptiles found. No incidental records
LB	7 th check	<p>Slow Worm <i>Anguis fragilis</i> found along wooded entrance to the paintball site.</p>  <p>10 May 2022 17:15:52 Lye Lane Cherryfield Ecology Ltd</p>

Figure 2: slow worm



Figure 3: Site Plan

4.0 Conclusions, Discussion and Recommendations

The following section details the conclusions, discussion and recommendations in the context of the proposed works.

4.1 Conclusion and Discussion

Following a Stage 1 Ecological Appraisal, a full set of reptile surveys was recommended, as the mixed mosaic of habitats on site provides high potential for reptiles to be present on site. The surveys showed a single slow worm on the site. Therefore, a proportionate approach to dealing with common reptiles is given below.

4.2 Potential Impact

Impact assessments must be proportionate to the scale of the development (CIEEM, 2018) and the following details a proportionate impact assessment based on current information.

Table 5: Impact Assessment.

Impact	Reptile habitat will be lost in the development.
Characterisation of unmitigated impact on the feature	Reptile habitat will be lost when the clearance of the site is carried out creating a negative impact in the local area.
Effect without mitigation	Deliberate killing and injuring of reptile species.
Mitigation	A proportionate search will be carried out during a destructive search. See Section 4.3 for details.
Significance of effects of residual impacts (after mitigation)	Habitat will be retained, and a buffer formed around it, to allow local populations to be maintained at their current levels, resulting in no net loss to the conservation status.

4.3 Recommendations

Reptiles - Minor impacts are foreseen.

No further surveys, or mitigation, is required; however:

- If works are not carried out within 12 months of this report, an update survey is recommended.
- If reptiles are found throughout the development, all works must stop, and advice sought.

Proportionate approach to the common reptile on site:

As a single slow worm has been found it is likely that the population on site is very low. Therefore, a proportionate means of clearing the site is offered below to prevent deliberate killing of common reptiles.

- All debris piles, junk and general rubbish will be removed by hand only and under the supervision of an Ecologist.
- A check of any vegetation to be removed will be made beforehand (Ecologist to fingertip search), the ecologist will oversee the following -
- All vegetation removal will be completed by hand, starting in the centre of the site and working outwards, this will push any reptiles on site to the edges and away from danger.
- Area of longer vegetation will be created or left to allow passage of common reptiles around the works zone.
- All trenches will either be filled in over night or a rough sawn plank laid into the trench to allow an escape route should an animal fall in.
- All chemicals will be stored as per the COSHH guidelines.
- Materials should be placed on hardstanding only to prevent artificial refuges being created on grassland/woodland edge habitat.

5.0 References

CIEEM (2018) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland:

Terrestrial, Freshwater and Coastal, September 2018. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester, online at

<https://www.cieem.net/data/files/ECIA%20Guidelines.pdf>

Froglife Advice 'Sheet 10' Reptile Survey. An introduction to planning, conducting + interpreting surveys for snake + lizard conservation.

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2005a). Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation. London: HMSO.

Paul Edgar, Jim Foster and John Baker (2010). Reptile Habitat Management Handbook. Amphibian and Reptile Conservation, Bournemouth

Records: Hertfordshire and Middlesex Environmental Records Centre (2022)

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2005). Circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation. Para.99