

Barham Court Farm, Barham, Kent

Reptile Survey and Mitigation Strategy

12th October 2021 / Ref No 2011/05/02

Client: Roma Capital



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1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the Scheme

Following a 'Preliminary Ecological Appraisal'¹ which identified the risk of reptiles being present along a proposed new access road, KB Ecology Ltd was commissioned to undertake a reptile survey with regards to a proposed development at Barham Court Farm, Barham CT4 6PB, Kent, in support of the redevelopment of the site.

1.2 Survey Objectives

The purpose of the survey was to assess the likely impact of the scheme on reptiles, and to assist in demonstrating compliance with wildlife legislation and planning policy objectives.

The key objectives of this survey were to:

- Confirm the presence / likely absence of reptile species within suitable terrestrial habitat.
- Provide recommendations for necessary mitigation work.

1.3 Limitations

This report records the potential for flora and fauna evident on the day of the site visit. It does not record any flora or fauna that may appear at other times of the year and, as such, were not evident at the time of visit.

The findings of this report represent the professional opinion of a qualified ecologist and do not constitute professional legal advice. The client may wish to seek professional legal interpretation of the relevant wildlife legislation cited in this document.

2 Methodology

Detailed reptile surveys were undertaken using artificial refuges, in accordance with best practice guidelines (Froglife, 1999). Artificial cover objects were installed on 6th September 2021. They were then checked on seven separate occasions in September 2021. Numbers of each reptile species were recorded, as well as the air temperature. Naturally occurring refuges were also checked for reptiles, and any additional incidental sightings were also recorded.

Surveys were only undertaken during suitable weather, they were not carried out during wind or rain. They were undertaken by Katia Bresso CEnv MCIEEM, a qualified professional consultant ecologist with over 20 years of experience, and Steve Stanley, who has over ten years' experience in reptile survey and mitigation work.

¹The reader is referred to the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal report by KB Ecology Ltd dated 11th October 2021 / Ref No 2011/05/02

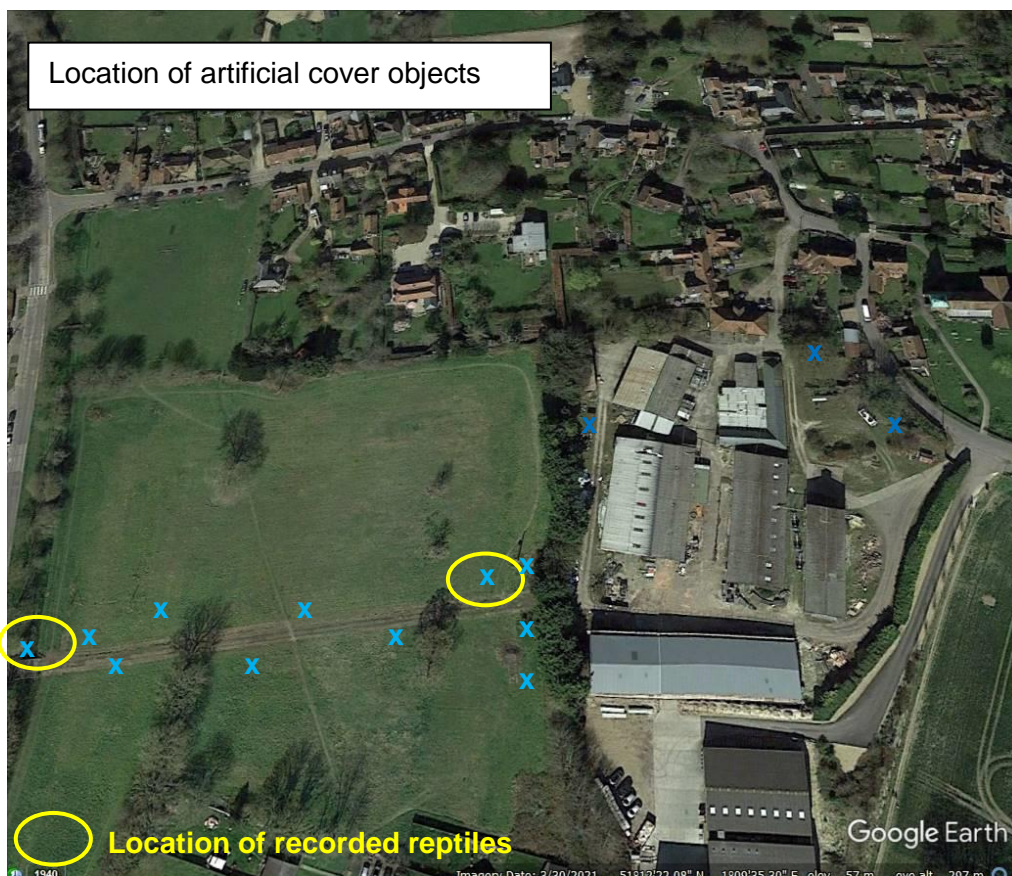
3 Results

The survey recorded slow worms *Anguis fragilis*. Table 1 below gives the details of the survey.

Table 1: Results and weather conditions for each survey visit

Reptile survey, Barham Court Farm, Barham, CT4 6PB

| Survey | Date | Time | Average Air Temp. deg C: | Cloud cover, % | Wind | Slow worms | |
|--------|-------------|-------|--------------------------|----------------|------|------------|-----------|
| | | | | | | adults | juveniles |
| 1 | 13 Sep 2021 | 16:00 | 18 | 60% | 1 | | |
| 2 | 17 Sep 2021 | 10:00 | 16 | 50% | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| 3 | 19 Sep 2021 | 9:30 | 15 | 20% | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 4 | 21 Sep 2021 | 15:30 | 18 | 40% | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 5 | 24 Sep 2021 | 10:45 | 17 | 0% | 2 | 1 | |
| 6 | 26 Sep 2021 | 10:00 | 16 | 30% | 2 | 2 | |
| 7 | 29 Sep 2021 | 11:45 | 15 | 40% | 3 | | |



4 Legislation

All British native reptiles are listed under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA). This legislation prohibits to:

- Intentionally or deliberately capture, kill or injure a common reptile species (which includes slow worms).
- Sell, barter, exchange, transport or offer for sale reptiles or any part of them.

The Abandonment of Animals Act 1960 (as amended) may also apply when translocation of reptiles are proposed as part of a mitigation strategy. As such, care must be taken to ensure that any receptor sites are suitable for the species in terms of habitat and carrying capacity in order that minimal stress and suffering is imposed upon the reptiles concerned.

5 Mitigation Strategy

The proposal will entail the loss of a small amount of reptile habitat but the population can be retained on site by enhancing the areas of land outside the works footprint through the implementation of a biodiversity-focused management plan and by creating three brash/log piles² and one hibernaculum³.

Prior to any ground works starting, a translocation exercise should take place, entailing the erection of reptile-proof fence around all area of the site where ground works will take place, following some vegetation management, the installation of refuges and the trapping of animals for a number of sessions⁴ between April and September⁵, during suitable weather conditions (i.e. cool weather with no heavy rain but sunny intervals between showers, and ambient air temperatures between 10-20°C).

The receptor site would be managed to keep it in a mid-successional state and establish a grassland/scrub mosaic – a key reptile habitat which creates transitional areas of shelter for reptiles from the elements and predators. It would be subdivided into two plots and managed by experienced operatives on a two-year rotation with one plot cut each year (in late summer after flowering plants have set seed, between mid-August and end September, using hand held machinery only, to 15cm height minimum to ensure no reptiles are injured; and reduction of nutrients by collection of arisings, some of which will be composted in two heaps for the benefit of grass snakes and other wildlife). Buffer zones of longer vegetation should be kept around the hibernacula and around any scrub and brash piles.

² Brash and log piles will be at least one meter high and two metres in diameter. They will comprise a mix of large and small diameter material. The centre of the pile will be compacted, but the outer part will be un-compacted. They will be located in sunny positions. They will be topped up periodically (for example every five years) with further material.

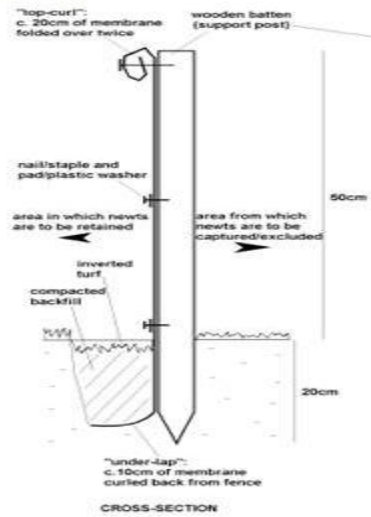
³ to meet the minimum specifications as per Pg 42, in the GCN mitigation guidelines (2m length x 1m width x 1m height), and capped with topsoil

⁴ trapping ceasing after five clear days with no trapping during suitable weather conditions. Number of trapping needed likely to be circa 30

⁵ Natural England advises against trapping in autumn

Figure 1: Reptile Mitigation Strategy

Reptile-proof fence to stay in place during trapping and throughout ground works:



In areas of hard standing, the fence shall be held in place using tight fitted sand bags



| Rev | By | Date | Description |
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|-----------|----------------------------------|
| Client | HARR HARRIS |
| Job Title | VALLEY ROAD BARHAM COURT FARM |



1:1000 scale bar
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100m

| | |
|---------------|----------------------------------|
| Drawing Title | Proposed Site Plan In Context |
|---------------|----------------------------------|

| Rev | By | Date | Description |
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