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SURVEYS, INSPECTIONS, REPORTS

SITE OFF OAK DRIVE COLWYN BAY CONWY LL29 7YP

Reptile Survey Results

- The Cofnod (Local Ecological Records Centre) website was accessed (www.cofnod.org.uk) and a Cofnod Data Request [E07584] was made for a data search for Priority Species and designated wildlife sites within a 1km radius of the site. There are records of reptiles (adder, common lizard, grass snake, slow worm) within 1km radius of the survey site, according to the data search.
- No reptiles were observed on the site, however, the poor improved grassland has some potential to be used by reptiles for foraging, basking and emigration corridors. There are fallen trunks and brash piles in the woodland copse area, which provide some potential for use as hibernacula sites by reptiles. If these features are to be removed, artificial reptile hibernacula should be provided as mitigation.
- Some low quality trees and scrub require felling and some grass areas will be lost, to facilitate the proposed development, which will result in some limited habitat loss on site. New tree and hedge planting and grassed areas will mitigate for any loss of habitat. The predicted impact of the proposed development on reptiles is low, provided that appropriate Reasonable Avoidance Measures are followed, in order to minimise the impact on locally recorded reptiles.

Reasonable Avoidance Methods

- As part of the site induction process, all staff working on site will be made aware of the potential presence of reptiles within the immediate landscape, and their status as a UK and European Protected Species. Reptiles (Common Lizard, Grass Snake, Adder and Slow Worm) are protected in the UK under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. This protection was extended by The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. They are also protected under Regulation 40 of the Habitats Regulations 2010. Under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, these species are also considered Species of Principle Importance for (Biodiversity) Conservation in Wales. It is an offence to handle these animals without either a survey licence or a development licence obtained from Natural Resources Wales.



PRO3755



UK/I 0343A

Site Induction

- The toolbox talk will set out what measures are being implemented to avoid affecting reptiles and will also give details of how to recognise reptiles and a photographic reference summary of how to recognise reptiles will be displayed in the site compound cabin at all times.
- Contractors will be instructed to cease work in the unlikely event that they discover a reptile within the site, and to contact a licenced ecologist and NRW (Bangor Office). Contact details will be displayed alongside the reptile photographic identification sheets.
- A site log should be kept to ensure that all these precautionary measures are implemented, with dates and names of who implemented them.

Vegetation clearance

- The objective is to deter reptiles from the grasslands/tall herb/scrub habitats within the site by making habitats unsuitable for use.
- For the initial stages of the development, vegetation clearance should be undertaken in a phased manner under the supervision of an ecologist. The optimum time for vegetation clearance is October-February, when reptiles are hibernating and not dispersing across the site.
- All potential natural refugia such as piles of rubble, piles of logs and metal debris will be dismantled by hand by an ecologist prior to or following the winter hibernation period (November – March) in a careful and controlled manner, with constant vigilance for any sheltering reptiles and/or any other potential species. Where possible and practical, the piles of rubble/logs etc. should be transferred to a suitable location adjacent the area to be developed, to provide alternative natural refugia for reptiles and other species.
- A 1m wide buffer zone is to be retained around the boundaries as a wildlife corridor. Areas of tall, rough grassland and scrub elsewhere on site which need to be cleared should be strimmed to a height of 150mm under supervision of the ecologist and checked for reptiles. All arisings should be immediately removed or stacked in a habitat pile outside the area to be developed, (to prevent risk of reptiles using these as hibernacula or refugia). These cut areas must then be left undisturbed for at least 48 hours. Thereafter, areas which have been strimmed must be hand searched by the ecologist.
- Following any required tree felling, all rootballs should be removed by machine under the supervision of an ecologist, who will check the stump for crevices beforehand and inspect the rootball once removed. Large bucket machinery will reduce potential for injury of any reptiles present.
- In order to ensure the development area remains unfavourable to reptiles it is essential that the grassland is maintained as a short sward during the growing season. This will only be relevant if the development work is delayed.



Soil stripping

- Light machinery with a gross weight of less than 1.5 tonnes will be used to clear the topsoil, under ecological supervision. First the top few centimetres of ground will be removed. Following this, larger and deeper excavations can be made.
- Appropriate method of working – all other vehicles to remain on existing surfaced tracks/hardstanding.
- Should any reptiles be encountered on site, works will stop and not recommence until NRW have been consulted. A NRW licence would then be required, to translocate the reptiles to a suitable receptor site.

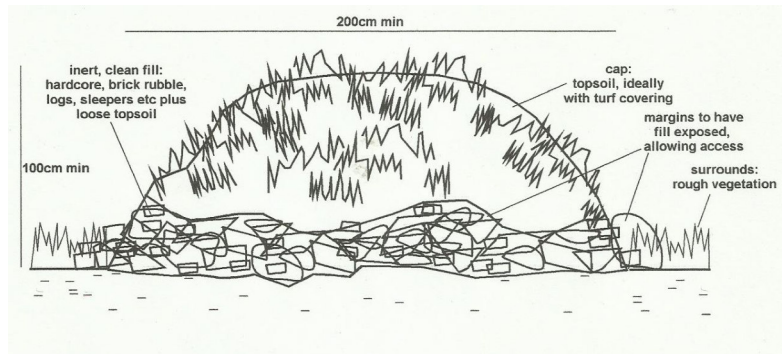
Construction work

- If any trenches are to be excavated in grassed areas, a strip either side of the proposed site should be cut first, to create a short swathe, so there is no cover for foraging or resting reptiles. The short swathe should be checked each morning for reptiles, before commencing any works.
- Trenches should have a leading slope, so that any animal that enters the trench may escape.
- Where possible, any trenches that need to be excavated should be backfilled on the same day. The trench should be checked for reptiles before backfilling.
- If a trench is to remain open overnight, ensure that it is covered with sheet material and the edges sealed. The edges can be sealed with soil, which must be compressed down to prevent reptiles and other species from entering the trench.
- If any pipework (drainage etc.) are to be installed in the trench, the ends of the pipes must have baffles fitted, to prevent reptiles and other species from entering the pipe.
- No piles of rubble, soil or other debris should be left on site after the completion of works, unless they are left deliberate for mitigation (e.g. creation of artificial shelter/hibernacula).



Biodiversity improvements

- Biodiversity enhancement for reptiles can be made by creating an artificial shelter/hibernacula on site, by forming an uncompacted mound/bank of loose topsoil mixed with clean brick rubble, hardcore, logs etc., capped with topsoil. The mound/bank should be have minimum dimensions 2m length x 1m width x 1m height and ideally be covered with turf. The lower margins should have the fill exposed to allow access. The immediate area surrounding the hibernacula should be rough vegetation, to provide cover for reptiles to disperse to the new hedgerow, which will provide a valuable wildlife corridor.



- Log piles for refugia and basking sites can be created in areas benefitting from direct sunlight by burying logs a few centimetres into the soil (use a mixture of diameters with the bark retained). Heap the logs into a small pile about 30cm off the ground.

