

# Woolley Colliery Road, Barnsley



## Reptile Survey - Interim Report

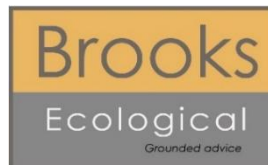
ER-6218-03

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Report Title:	Reptile Survey - Interim Report Woolley Colliery Road, Barnsley
Report Reference:	ER-6218-03
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## **Summary Statement**

Following the first two survey visits, no evidence of reptile activity has been recorded anywhere within the Site.

The remaining five survey visits are scheduled for September to mid-October 2022 to provide a good spread of results across the reptile survey season.

## Introduction

1. Subsequent to recommendations set out in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (ER-6218-01A), Brooks Ecological was commissioned to carry out a detailed Reptile Survey at the proposed development Site at Woolley Colliery Road, Barnsley.
2. The survey covered all land within the red and blue line boundaries, as defined in Figure 1 opposite.

## Legislation & Guidance

3. The Site lies within the natural range of four widespread species of reptile (common lizard, slow worm, adder and grass snake). These all receive limited protection under part of subsection 9(1) and all of subsection 9(5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This affords protection against intentional and reckless killing or injuring and trade.
4. Destruction of known habitats whilst reptiles are present may therefore lead to an offence of killing or injury.
5. Destruction of known habitat without provision for the safe escape of animals into further suitable habitat able to support them can lead to offences under the Abandonment of Animals Act 1960 (as amended).
6. The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 sets out the responsibility of public authorities to Biodiversity. This Act provides lists of habitats and species to which the LPA's consideration must be given when exercising their functions (e.g. considering planning permission). All reptile species are listed under Section 41 of the Act making them and their habitat a consideration of planning.

## Records

7. Barnsley Biological Records Centre and West Yorkshire Ecology have returned five records for reptile within a 2km radius of the Site; these all relate to common lizard recorded in summer 2019, on an offsite section of the Former Woolley Colliery circa. 540m - 1.1km north.
8. A dedicated Reptile Survey was undertaken at the Site by Ecus Environmental Consultants Ltd. in June to September 2019 (Report Ref. 13165). This survey confirmed the likely absence of reptiles from the two red-line boundary areas at this time.

**Figure 1** The Site boundary - red & blue line



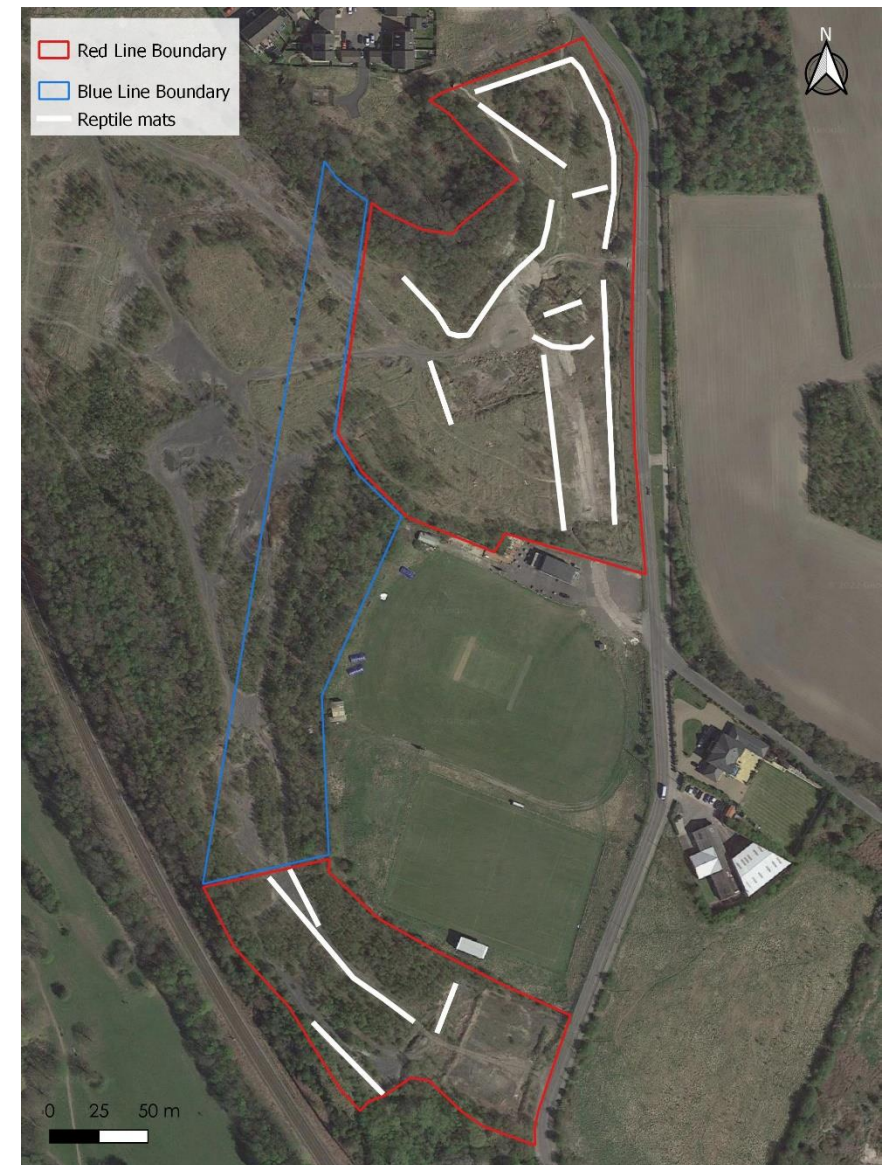
## Method

9. Reference is made to The Herpetofauna Worker's Manual (Gent and Gibson, 2003) for the survey methodology with seven official reptile survey visits being carried out.
10. Survey were scheduled for the main active season, with visits spread across the period of July and September 2022 and undertaken during suitable weather conditions and time of day. At present, 2 of the 7 visits have been completed.
11. Each visit comprised a walked transect looking for reptiles that may be basking or foraging, and a hand search of refugia. An appraisal of the site by the surveyor allowed an assessment of the location of target habitat features such as potential hibernaculae, refuges and foraging grounds. This allowed surveys of the site to be targeted, depending on season and conditions - a strategy which will considerably increase the potential of surveyors encountering reptiles.
12. The Site contains numerous rubble piles, which present suitable areas of refuge. In order to increase the chance of finding any reptiles present, artificial refuges were placed in strategic locations across the site, in locations most likely to support reptiles. A total of 100 black corrugated coralline sheets were deployed - this far exceeds the recommended guideline of using a minimum of 5-10 refuges/ha set out in the Froglife Advice Sheet 10.
13. Refuges were placed on the site in July and left undisturbed for a short period prior to the commencement of surveys.
14. Walked transects were carried out carefully with the surveyor walking slowly and looking well forward to attempt to spot reptiles at distance. This technique is necessary because reptiles have very good eyesight and sense of vibration and generally are aware of surveyors at short distances, rapidly taking cover to avoid detection.
15. Both the existing and new artificial refugia were approached quietly to observe any basking reptiles. These were then lifted to observe any reptiles that may be sheltering beneath.
16. In addition to physical sightings, reptiles can also leave evidence of their presence in the form of shed skin and holes in the ground (e.g. from lizard burrows or grass snake egg laying pits). This form of evidence was also searched for during the survey.

### Constraints

17. Each survey visit was undertaken during suitable weather conditions, time of day and time of year.

**Figure 2** Approximate location of x100 reptile sheets (white line)



## Results

18. Two out of the seven surveys visits have thus far been completed, with surveys undertaken across July 2022. No reptiles or evidence thereof have been identified on Site during these surveys. A summary of the survey conditions and results is present in the table below.
19. The remaining five visits are programmed in for September to mid-October 2022.

**Table 1** Summary of survey results.

Survey	Date	Conditions	Results/ Notes
1	07/07/2022	Temperature 18-20°C. Intermittent sunshine. Light breeze (B2). No precipitation.	Reptile mats deployed No reptiles found
2	25/07/2022	Temperature 16-18°C. Overcast, 90% cloud cover. Light wind (B3). No precipitation.	No reptiles found
3	-		
4	-		
5	-		
6	-		
7	-		

## Conclusion & Recommendation

20. Following the first two survey visits, no evidence of reptile activity has thus far been recorded anywhere within the Site.
21. The remaining five surveys visits are scheduled for September to mid-October 2022 to provide a good spread of visits across the peak reptile survey seasons.
22. Should reptiles be found later in the season, a suitable Reptile Mitigation Strategy will be produced to demonstrate how development can proceed without significant impact on local reptile populations.
23. Sufficient greenspace has already been incorporated into the scheme, and further offsite land is available to the north and thus a positive result during the final five survey visits is unlikely to trigger the need for amendments to the Site Layout.

### Ecological enhancement

24. The requirement for development to make a positive contribution to biodiversity is clearly set out guidance such as the NPPF and BS:42020 - over and above mitigating or compensating any potential impacts.
25. Within the blue line land, habitat creation and management could be targeted at enhancing the Site's value to common lizard. This could include creating additional areas of refuge such as introducing bolder/ rock piles, log piles and bespoke hibernacula (to frog life prescription), whilst vegetation could be managed to increase invertebrate abundance and diversity, thus increasing prey availability.

## References

- Froglife (1999) Reptile Survey: an introduction to planning, conducting and interpreting surveys for snake and lizard conservation. Froglife Advice Sheet 10. Froglife, Halesworth.
- Gent T and Gibson S, 2003, Herpetofauna Workers' Manual, JNCC
- Hill et al. 2005, Handbook of Biodiversity Methods. Cambridge.