



LAND AT REAR OF 210 CARLTON ROAD.

OS REF: SE 35648 08591.

PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL.

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1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. There are plans to erect an outbuilding suitable for storage of feed and machinery on the land to the rear of 210 Carlton Road. A development plan can be found in Appendix VI.

1.2. Whitcher Wildlife Ltd has been commissioned to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site to establish whether there are any issues that may affect the proposed works.

1.3. The site survey was carried out on 26th September 2022 and this report outlines the findings of that survey and makes appropriate recommendations.

1.4. Appendices I to III of this report provide additional information on specific species and are designed to assist the reader in understanding the contents of this report.

2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY.

2.1. Prior to visiting the site, the survey area was cross referenced to maps and aerial photographs to give a general idea of the habitats and potential issues within the area and to identify potential access and walking routes.

2.2. The survey area was walked where access was agreed and public rights of way were used where no access was agreed. All habitats within and immediately around the survey area were documented and the dominant species within that habitat listed in line with the JNCC Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat surveys.

2.3. The survey area and immediate surrounding area was thoroughly searched for evidence of badger (*Meles meles*) activity by looking for the following signs in line with Harris S, Cresswell P and Jefferies D (1989). *Surveying Badgers*. Mammal Society: -

- * Badger setts.
- * Badger latrines or dung pits.
- * Badger snuffle holes and evidence of foraging.
- * Badger paths.
- * Badger prints in areas of soft mud.
- * Badger hairs caught on fencing.

2.3. The survey area was searched for watercourses and where found all watercourses within the survey area and for approximately 100m in each direction were thoroughly searched for evidence of water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) activity by looking for the following signs, in line with Dean M, Strachen R, Gow D and Andres R (2016). *The Water Vole Mitigation Handbook (The Mammal Society Mitigation Guidance Series)*. Eds Fiona Mathews and Paul Chanin. The mammal Society, London: -

- * Water vole burrows.
- * Water vole faeces and latrines.
- * Water vole feeding stations.
- * Water vole runs.
- * Water vole prints in areas of soft mud.
- * Water vole lawns.
- * Predator field signs.

2.5. The survey area was searched for watercourses and where found all watercourses within the survey area and for approximately 50m in each direction were thoroughly searched for evidence of otter (*Lutra lutra*) activity by looking for the following signs in line with the P Chanin (2003). *Monitoring the Otter and Conserving Natura 2000 Rivers: Monitoring Series No10 Guidelines*: -

- * Otter prints in soft mud.
- * Otter spraints.
- * Otter Holts.

2.6. The survey area was searched for watercourses and waterbodies. Where found, and where safe to enter the water, all were thoroughly searched for the presence of crayfish, for approximately 50m in each direction of the site, by searching under rocks and logs. Where stated, crayfish traps were also deployed into the watercourse. All survey work was carried out in accordance with the *Conserving Natural 2000 Rivers Monitoring Series No 1, Protocol for Monitoring the White Clawed Crayfish*.

2.7. The survey area was searched for trees and structures and where found these were checked for potential bat roosting sites in line with Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edition)* by looking for the following signs: -

- * Holes, cracks or crevices.
- * Bat Droppings.

2.8. The land immediately adjacent to the survey area was assessed for bat roosting potential and bat foraging potential. Connective routes and flight lines were also assessed whilst on site and using maps of the area.

2.9. The area within 500m of the survey site was cross referenced to maps to highlight all ponds close to the site. Where possible, all ponds identified were accessed using agreed access or public rights of way to assess the potential for great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) to be present.

2.10. The survey area was assessed for the potential for reptiles and suitable reptile habitats. Where applicable the area was also searched for the presence of reptiles.

2.11. Where appropriate, the habitat within and surrounding the survey area was searched for species such as hazel, oak, honeysuckle, bramble and other species which may provide potential habitat for hazel dormice (*Muscardinus avellanarius*). Field signs such as feeding remains and nests were also searched for where possible,

in line with P Bright, P Morris and T Mitchell-Jones *The Dormouse Conservation Handbook 2nd Edition*.

2.12. Where appropriate, the area within and surrounding the survey area was assessed for its potential to house habitat for red squirrels. Field signs of red squirrels were searched for at least every 50m, looking for any dreys, feeding signs or sightings of red squirrels.

2.13. All surveys were carried out in line with the Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management (CIEEM) survey standards and advice.

2.14. This document is prepared in line with The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This sets out the government policy on biodiversity and nature conservation and places a duty on Planning Authorities to give material consideration to the effect of a development on legally protected species when considering planning applications. The NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance on “Natural Environment” also promote sustainable development by ensuring that developments take account of the role and value of biodiversity and that it is conserved and enhanced within the development.

2.15. This report is prepared in line with the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act that came into force on 1st Oct 2006. Section 41 (S41) of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England.

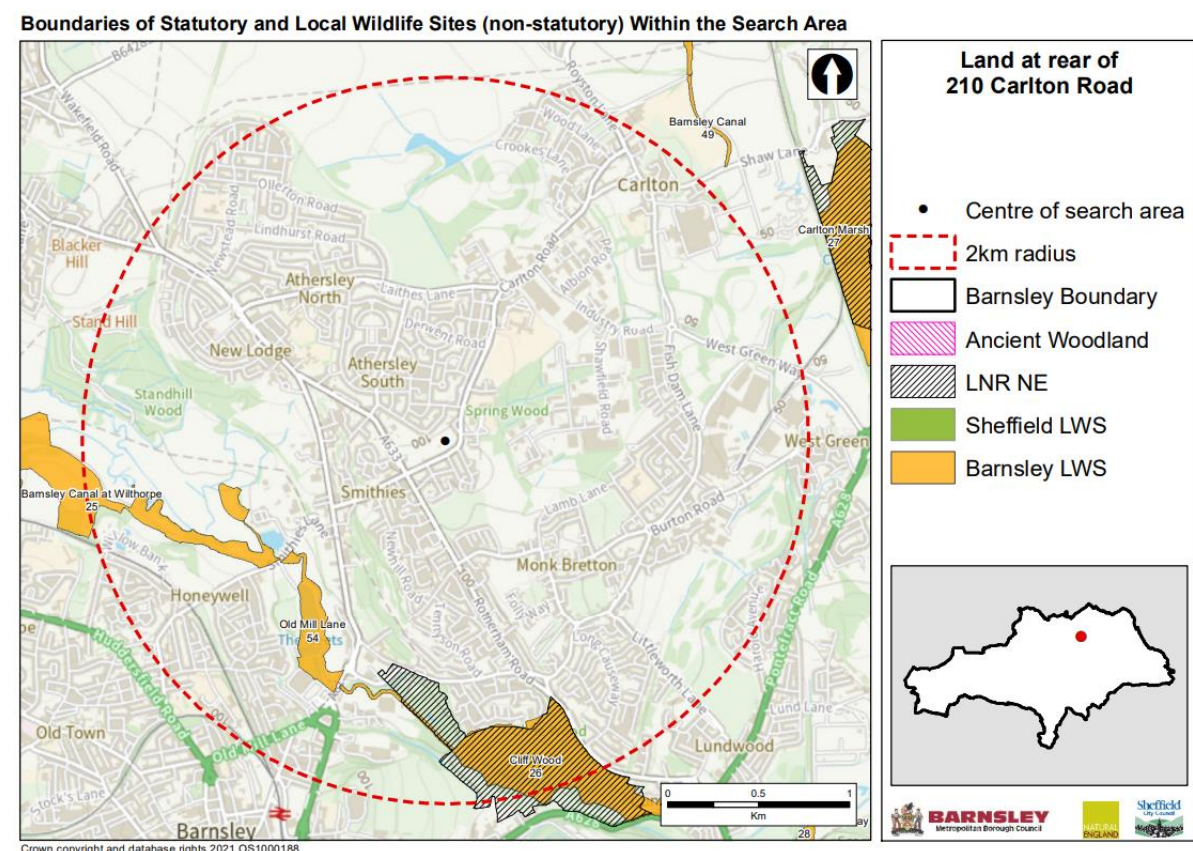
2.16. This survey was carried out by Alex White BSc, MSc, ACIEEM. Alex has had experience in a professional capacity as a Graduate Ecologist carrying out ecology and protected species surveys and Phase 1 Habitat surveys and joined Whitcher Wildlife in 2016 as a Wildlife Consultant. Alex holds Natural England Survey Licences for Great Crested Newts, Bats, Hazel Dormice and Barn Owls and is currently working towards gaining further Natural England survey licences. She also holds Scottish Natural Heritage and Natural Resources Wales Licences for Great Crested Newts. She has successfully completed courses run by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and The Mammal Society to further her knowledge of protected species and plant identification. Alex is also an Associate member of CIEEM.

3. SURVEY RESULTS.

3.1. Data Search Results.

3.1.1. Barnsley Biological Records Centre, the South Yorkshire Badger Group and South Yorkshire Bat Group were contacted for data searches of designated sites and protected species within 2km of the survey area.

3.1.2. There were three Local Wildlife Sites and one Local Nature Reserve within 2km of the survey area; none were within, or adjacent to, the survey area. The map below highlights the local of the survey area with 2km buffer and the designated sites.



3.1.3. The following recent relevant records were returned:

- Three great crested newt records, the closest was approximately 1.8km west of the survey area and was recorded in 2019.
- There were thirty-seven common toad, common frog and smooth newt records, none of these were within close proximity to the survey area.
- A grass snake was recorded approximately 1.3km east of the survey area in 2015.

- Two records of common lizard, the closest was approximately 1.8km south of the survey area in 2019.
- Four records of water vole were recorded approximately 1.9km northeast in 2013 and 2015.

3.1.4. The South Yorkshire Bat Group has twenty records of bats within 2km of the survey area. None of these were within, or close to the survey area.

3.1.5. The data searches are available to the client upon request although this must not be placed within the public domain.

3.2. The Surveyed Area.

3.2.1. The survey area included the land to the rear of 210 Carlton Road. The aerial photograph below highlights the survey area in red.



3.2.2. The area of land to be affected is a very small footprint comprising of bare ground and buildings. The photograph below shows the site.



3.2.3. This area is surrounded by grassland surrounded by hedgerows and planting. The wider site is shown below.



3.2.4. The survey area was situated within an urban location with residential properties to the east, south and southwest. There is a field to the north and west with further residential properties beyond this. The aerial photograph below highlights the location of the survey area within the wider landscape.



3.3. Description of Habitats.

3.3.1. Appendix IV of this report contains annotated maps marked up with the varying habitats that are cross referenced to target notes in Appendix V of this report. The habitats on and adjacent to the site are: -

- Bare Ground
- Buildings
- Poor Semi-Improved Grassland
- Ornamental Planting
- Species Poor Intact Hedgerow
- Broadleaved Scattered Tree
- Fence
- Wall
- Hardstanding

3.3.2. **Bare Ground:** There is an area of bare ground on the eastern boundary, this is where the new building will be situated.



3.3.3. **Buildings:** There is one outbuilding with two larger storage areas, a toilet and a small lean to, to be removed for the proposals. This is shown below.



3.3.3.1. There were other buildings on site including a stable, shed, kennel and large outbuilding; these will not be affected by the proposals.

3.3.5. **Poor Semi-Improved Grassland:** The majority of the wider site comprised of short, grazed grassland. This included: perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*), fescue (*Festuca* sp), creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), knotgrass, common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), common daisy (*Bellis perennis*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*) and broadleaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*).



3.3.6. **Ornamental Planting:** Small areas of boundary planting were located on the western and southern boundaries of the survey area. The species included: privet (*Ligustrum* sp.), hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*).



3.3.7. **Species Poor Intact Hedgerow:** A hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) hedgerow was located on the northern boundary of the survey area.



3.3.8. **Mixed Scattered Tree:** There were four semi-mature trees including Leyland cypress (*Cupressus x leylandii*) and sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) trees. These will not be affected by the proposals.



3.3.9. **Fence:** There were a variety of fencing types around the survey area which were predominantly timber and palisade panels. An electric fence was present across the grassland habitat.



3.3.10. **Wall:** Around the access and driveway were low brick walls.



3.3.11. **Hardstanding:** An area of hardstanding allowed for the access and drive.



3.4. Description of Fauna.

3.4.1. No badger setts or their field signs were identified within the survey area and the site offers no suitability for badgers.

3.4.2. There are no watercourses within the survey area and therefore, no suitable habitat for water vole, otter or white clawed crayfish.

3.4.3. There were a variety of buildings on site, one of which will be demolished as part of the works. All buildings were assessed for their bat roost potential.

3.4.3.1. **Building 1.**

The building to be demolished was an outbuilding with two large storage areas and an outside toilet. There was a mix of construction materials used for the walls including brick, breezeblock, pebble dashing, and metal. The roof was a flat corrugated metal roof with metal fascia. The photographs below highlight this building.



3.4.3.2. Internally, the building was predominantly metal and breezeblock with no suitable areas for roosting bats. The photographs show the internals to the two main storage areas.



3.4.3.3. Therefore, this building was assessed as having negligible bat roost potential.

3.4.3.4. All other buildings will remain unaffected by the works, even so, all were assessed as having negligible bat roost potential due to the construction materials or being well sealed and in good condition. The photographs below highlight the buildings within the survey area which will remain.



3.4.4. During the survey, a thorough ground level examination was carried out on all trees within the survey area to check for potential bat roost features such as knot and rot holes, lifted bark, storm damage or voids. No such features were identified, and all trees were assessed as having negligible bat roost potential.

3.4.5. The hedgerow, planting and scattered trees within the survey area will likely be used by light tolerant species of bats foraging and commuting. However, the boundary vegetation is due to remain and therefore, no fragmentation will occur.

3.4.6. There are no ponds or other water bodies close to the survey area to provide suitable habitat for great crested newts or other amphibians. The habitat is also very poor quality for amphibians whilst they are terrestrial. Furthermore, there are no records of great crested newts within 1km of the survey area.

3.4.7. The buildings and mature vegetation on site provide opportunities for nesting birds during the nesting season, which extends from March to September each year. No evidence of nesting birds was identified during the survey although no full nesting bird survey was conducted as the preliminary ecological appraisal was undertaken outside of the nesting bird season.

3.4.8. The habitat within the survey area offers limited suitability for reptiles as the site is mainly short grassland with regular disturbance. Given the location of the site and the surroundings this is considered highly unlikely. There are records of common lizard and grass snake in the local area.

3.4.9. The habitat within the survey area is unsuitable for hazel dormouse and there were no substantial areas of woodland to support this species. Furthermore, the site lies outside of their known natural home range and there are no reintroduction schemes within this county.

3.4.10. The survey area lies outside of the known UK range of red squirrel and therefore this species will not be considered further.

3.4.11. The survey area provides suitable habitat for hedgehogs and a large log pile was identified within the survey area (T1). It is understood this log pile is not left in situ for long periods of time.



3.4.12. No invasive, non-native plant species listed on schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) were identified within the survey area.

4. EVALUATION OF FINDINGS.

4.1. There were no statutory or non-statutory designated sites within, or adjacent to, the survey area. Therefore, no such sites will be affected by the proposals.

4.2. The area to be affected by the proposals include the bare ground and current building.

4.3. The proposals will have a very small loss in biodiversity as a small area of bare ground will be lost to accommodate the building. The total baseline biodiversity units for the site, as calculated using the Small Sites Metric, are shown in the table below.

4.3.1. *Area habitats.*

Habitat Type	Area in m ²	Distinctiveness	Biodiversity Units
Urban: Developed Land, Sealed Surface	922	N/A	0.0000
Urban: Bare ground	197	Low	0.0788
Grassland; Modified Grassland	2342	Low	0.9368
Urban: Introduced Shrub	155	Low	0.0310
Urban: Scattered Tree	18	Medium	0.0145
Total	3634		1.0611Bu

4.3.2. The species poor intact hedgerow scores an addition 0.2720 hedgerow units. This habitat will not be affected by the proposed works.

4.3.3. Overall, there is a loss of 0.0788 Biodiversity Units due to the bare ground being lost for sealed surface. Barnsley Council require a 10% Net Gain to be shown within the Biodiversity Net Gain Calculation and therefore, this has not been achieved and mitigation will be required.

4.4. No badger setts or their field signs were identified within the survey area. Furthermore, the site offers no suitable habitat for badger. Therefore, the works will have no impact on badger.

4.5. There are no watercourses on, or near to, the site to offer habitat to otter, water vole or white-clawed crayfish. Therefore, the works will have no impact on otter, water vole or white-clawed crayfish.

4.6. All trees within the survey area were thoroughly assessed from ground level for potential bat roost features. No such features were found and therefore in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust's Good Practice Guidelines, all trees were assessed as having negligible potential for roosting bats. Therefore, no roosting bats within trees will be affected by the proposed works.

4.7. All buildings were assessed as having negligible bat roosting potential. Therefore, no roosting bats within buildings will be affected by the proposed works.

4.8. The mature areas of vegetation on the boundaries do provide suitable habitat for foraging and commuting bats. The works are to remain within bare ground, buildings and grassland and therefore, boundary vegetation will remain.

4.9. There are no ponds close to the survey area to provide suitable habitat for great crested newts and other amphibians. The survey area is also unsuitable for this species due to the bare ground and short, heavily disturbed, grassland. Therefore, the works will have no impact on great crested newts.

4.10. The area to be affected provided little suitable habitat for nesting birds although the building could support nesting birds. No evidence of birds utilising the building was identified during the survey although the survey was conducted outside of the nesting bird season. Therefore, any works to the building could have a high impact on nesting birds.

4.11. The survey area offers very limited suitability for reptiles due to the lack of suitable habitats and high level of disturbance although there are records within the local area. It is therefore assessed that the works will have no impact on reptiles although precautions will ensure no harm if individual reptiles are present.

4.12. The survey area is outside of the known UK range of hazel dormouse and red squirrel. Therefore, neither species will be affected by the proposals.

4.13. The survey area is suitable for hedgehogs and the boundary vegetation and log piles provide suitable areas for hibernating and sheltering. Therefore, hedgehogs

could be affected by the proposal if the log pile is to be removed to allow for access during the construction.

4.14. No invasive, non-native plant species listed on schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), were identified within the survey area. Therefore, the proposals will not spread such species.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.1. This Preliminary Ecological Appraisal report is designed to advise the client of the initial survey results so that they may be considered within the site development plan.

5.2. Once the recommendations have been agreed, the report must be converted into an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) where details of further survey results, mitigation and biological enhancements are included, to arrive at an assessment of the residual impact of the proposed development. This format will be suitable to submit to the Local Authority.

5.3. It is recommended that a planting scheme is prepared for the site utilising native species. That planting scheme along with species lists and areas will be used to calculate the Biodiversity Net Gain for the site. Net gain can be more easily achieved by the use of higher value habitats such as scrub or a species rich lawn mix. Enhancement of the existing grassland could also be an option.

5.4. It is recommended that works are undertaken outside of the nesting bird season, which extends from March to September each year.

5.5. If any works commence between March and September, these should be immediately preceded by a thorough nesting bird survey carried out by a suitably experienced person. Any nests identified must remain undisturbed until the young have fledged from the nest.

5.6. Any additional lighting should be downlit and directed away from any boundary vegetation to prevent disturbance for foraging and commuting bats.

5.7. In the highly unlikely event a large number of reptiles are identified (5+), the works in that area should stop and the undersigned will be contacted for further advice.

5.8. The client has expressed an interest in installing a tawny owl box on site as a tawny owl has been previously seen. There is no mature vegetation in which to site a box as they need to be above 3m from the ground. The best option would be to pole mount a box. NHBS have a variety of tawny owl nest box options available such as the one shown below.



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Checked by:	
Ruth Georgiou. BSc, MCIEEM.	Date: 7 th October 2022.

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Appendix I. BAT INFORMATION.

Ecology

There are currently 18 species of bat residing in Britain, 17 of which are known to breed here. They are extremely difficult to identify in the hand and even more so in flight.

All appear to be diminishing in numbers, probably due to habitat change and shortage of food, caused by pesticides, as insects are their sole diet.

As their diet consists solely of insects, bats hibernate during the winter when their food source is at its most scarce. They will spend the winter in hollow trees, caves, mines and the roofs of buildings.

Certain species, particularly the pipistrelle (the commonest and most widespread British bat) can quickly adapt to man-made structures and will readily use these to roost and to rear their young.

Surveys

During walkover surveys, bat roosts can be identified by looking for:

- Suitable holes, cracks and crevices within any building, tree or other structure.
- Bat droppings along walls, window cills, or on the ground.
- Prey remains, such as insect wings.

Further investigations can be made using endoscopes, by carrying out aerial inspections of trees or by conducting bat activity surveys during dusk and dawn over summer months.

Legislation

Bats are protected under Appendix II and III of the Bern Convention (1982), Schedule 5 and 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), Annex IV of the Habitats Directive (some species under Annex II), Annex II of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010) and EUROBATs agreement. Numerous species are also listed under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) making them species of principal importance.

All bats and their roosts are therefore protected in the UK. This makes it an offence to kill, injure or take any bat, to interfere with any place used for shelter or protection, or to intentionally disturb any animal occupying such a place.

The UK has designated maternity and hibernacula areas as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's) under the Habitats Directive. Implementation of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan also includes action for a number bat species and the habitats which support them.

Where development proposals are likely to affect a bat roost site, a licence is required from Natural England.

Appendix II. NESTING BIRD INFORMATION.

Ecology

The nesting season will vary according to the weather each year but generally commences in March, peaks during May and June and continues until September. It is also worth remembering that some birds nest in trees and scrub, but others are ground nesting or prefer man-made structures or buildings.

Surveys

Nesting bird surveys search for potential nest sites in vegetation, buildings etc. Potential nesting sites are observed over a suitable period of time for bird movements or calling male birds that would indicate the presence of a nest. The presence of a nest can be identified from the field signs without the necessity to see the nest itself, thereby avoiding any disturbance of the nests. The best way to avoid this issue is to plan for vegetation clearance to be carried out outside the bird-nesting season.

Legislation

Nesting birds are protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Part 1. -(1) Of the Act states that: - If any person intentionally: - kills, injures or takes any wild bird; takes, damages or destroys the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built; or takes or destroys an egg of any wild bird, he shall be guilty of an offence.

Part 1.-(5) of the Act states that:- If any person intentionally:- disturbs any wild bird included in Schedule 1 while it is building a nest or is in, on, or near a nest containing eggs or young; or disturbs young of such a bird, he shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a special penalty.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 amends the above by inserting after “intentionally” the words “or recklessly”.

Appendix III. REPTILE INFORMATION.

Ecology

There are five main species of reptile that reside in the UK; Common or Viviparous Lizard (*Lacerta vivipara*); Sand Lizard (*Lacerta agilis*); Slow Worm (*Anguis fragilis*); Grass Snake (*Natrix natrix*) and Adder (*Vipera berus*). The Adder is the only native species that is venomous although this is rarely harmful to humans.

Reptiles occupy a wide range of habitats including woodland, marshes, heathland, moors, sand dunes, hedgerows and bogs. Sand Lizards are confined to moorland and coastal sand dunes where they lay their eggs in the warm sand. The range of the Sand Lizard in the UK is therefore very limited. Slow Worms can be found in a wide variety of habitats throughout Britain and is the most likely reptile to be found in urban and suburban environments.

Maintaining the right body temperature is vital to reptiles' survival. In the morning, they find a warm basking site to heat up their bodies, then later they may move back into the shade because they do not sweat and have to be careful not to overheat. During hot summers, Adders will try to move to damper, cooler sites.

Over winter reptiles will hibernate in burrows or under logs where they are protected from the cold and predators, emerging from February onwards as the weather warms up.

Reptiles generally begin to mate April to May with young born in late July to September. The Common Lizard gives birth to live young, hence the term viviparous, meaning live bearing.

Surveys

Reptile surveys involve the searching of refuge such as logs and stones for any animal sheltering below. Artificial refuge may be laid out on site for the purpose of reptile surveys.

Legislation

Reptiles are protected under Appendix II (sand lizards) and Appendix III (common lizard, slow worms, smooth snake, grass snake and adders) of the BERN Convention (1982), partially protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), Annex IV of the Habitats Directive and are all listed under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Communities Act (2006) making them a species of principal importance.

This makes it an offence to disturb any reptile while it is occupying a structure or place it uses for shelter or protection or to obstruct access to such a place.

Appendix IV. ANNOTATED MAP OF THE SURVEY AREA.



Appendix V. TARGET NOTES.

T1. Large Log Pile.

Appendix VI. DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

