

LIZARD

Landscape Design and Ecology

REPTILE SURVEY REPORT

Land to the West of Crookthorne Byre, Brookpit Lane, Climping

On behalf of: Mr C. Beckhurst

Client:	Mr C. Beckhurst			
Project:	Land to the West of Crookthorne Byre, Brookpit Lane, Climping			
Reference:	LLD3352-ECO-REP-001-00-Reptiles			
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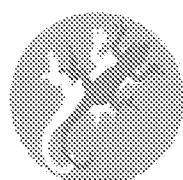
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Validity:

This report is valid for 18 months from the date of the site visit. If works have not commenced by this date, an updated site visit should be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist to assess any changes in the habitats present on site, and to inform a review of the conclusions and recommendations made.



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L I Z A R D

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SUMMARY

Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology has been commissioned by Mr C. Beckhurst to complete a reptile presence / absence survey and population assessment of Land to the West of Crookthorne Byre, Brookpit Lane, Climping (Grid Reference: TQ 00791 01630 – *hereafter referred to as 'the site'*).

16no. artificial reptile refugia (*roofing felt; 1.0 x 0.50 m*) were laid out around the site on the 11th of September 2024. Mats were distributed throughout the site within all areas of suitable reptile habitat. The refugia were allowed to bed-in for 22 days prior to survey visits being undertaken between 4th of October and 21st of October 2024.

No reptiles were recorded anywhere on site during the survey period. The results suggest that the proposed works would accord with the protection afforded reptiles under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). As no reptiles were found whatsoever on site, no impacts are predicted, and implementation of mitigation measures are not required. In the highly unlikely scenario that any reptiles are found on site during clearance or construction, all works should cease while a suitably qualified ecologist is contacted for advice.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology has been commissioned by Mr C. Beckhurst to complete a reptile presence / absence and population assessment of Land to the West of Crookthorne Byre, Brookpit Lane, Climping (Central Grid Reference: TQ 00791 01630 – hereafter referred to as ‘the site’).

1.2 The site was subject to a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal in July 2023 by Arbtech Consulting Limited. The site was found to contain a mosaic of habitats which included vegetative cover, open areas suitable for basking, and a range of flora able to support viable invertebrate populations, making it suitable for supporting reptiles. A full reptile survey was recommended to ascertain the presence or absence of reptiles on site.

1.3 This report has been compiled in accordance with current guidelines, including British Standard 42020:2013 Biodiversity. Code of Practice for Planning and Development, 2013 and CIEEM, 2017 and 2018.

Site Information

1.4 The site covers an area of c. 0.1 hectares (ha) and consists of a roughly rectangular shaped plot. The site is located within Climping, is a village and civil parish in the Arun District of West Sussex. There is a diverse assemblage of habitat onsite including unmanaged grassland, trees and scrub.

Surrounding Landscape

1.5 The site is directly surrounded by a dirt track with some residential dwellings to the north, west and east and agricultural fields to the south. The wider landscape comprises of the town of Littlehampton to the north-east and village of Horsemere Green to the north-west. The river Arun runs 1.5km east of the site and the coastline is present 0.8km south.

1.6 The surrounding landscape is suitable for common UK reptile species, however no suitable habitat for sand lizard *Lacerta agilis* or smooth snake *Coronella austriaca* exists in the vicinity.

Development Proposals

1.7 It is understood that the proposals include the construction of 1no. residential property, including a drive and garage.

Scope of the Survey

1.8 The aim of the updated reptile survey has been to:

- Determine whether reptiles exist on site;
- Provide an assessment of the distribution and population of reptiles within the site, if present; and
- Provide a mitigation strategy to ensure reckless killing / injury of reptiles is avoided, such that works would comply with *The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended)* and net gains for reptiles are achieved.

2.0 LEGISLATION

2.1 All species of UK reptile are listed under Schedule 5 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Reptiles are afforded protection under section 9(1) and section 9(5) against intentional killing or injuring, offering for sale, transport for sale or advertisement of any live or dead reptile. All UK reptile species are also recognised as species of principal importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, meaning that local authorities must take into account the conservation of reptiles when assessing a planning application.

2.2 Smooth Snake and Sand Lizard receive additional protection under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) which makes it an offence to kill, injure, capture or disturb them; damage or destroy their habitat; or to possess or trade in them.

Licensing

2.3 If a site is found to support Smooth Snake or Sand Lizard and disturbance or removal or habitat is unavoidable, a licence will be required from Natural England to allow work to proceed.

2.4 A licence must show that there is no satisfactory alternative to the works proposed, and that they are for reasons of health and safety or overriding reasons of public interest. Licenses are only issued once planning permission has been granted.

2.5 There is no formal licensing requirement for sites which support only common UK reptile species (slow worm, common lizard, adder or grass snake *Natrix helvetica*).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Field Survey

3.1.1 16 no. artificial reptile refugia (*roofing felt; 1.0 x 0.50 m*) were laid out around the area on the 11th of September 2024. Mats were distributed throughout the site. The refugia were allowed to bed-in for 22 days prior to survey visits undertaken between 4th of October and 21st of October 2024. The locations of artificial reptile refugia are detailed within *Figure No. 01*.

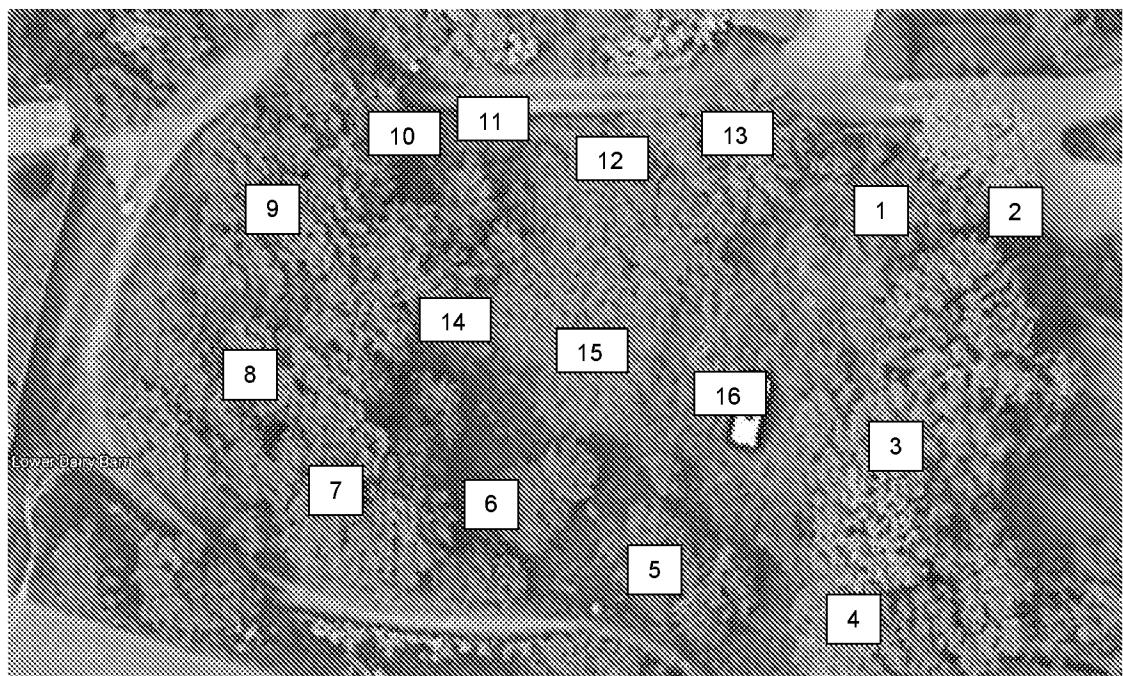


Figure No. 01 – Location of Reptile Refugia

3.1.2 7 no. site visits were conducted, where the number, species, age and sex of any reptile present were recorded. Debris piles on-site considered suitable as reptile refugia were checked during the surveys, and repeated walkovers of the site were used to search for active reptiles.

3.1.3 Surveys were undertaken during recommended times (*08:00–11:00 and 16:00–18:30*) with suitable weather conditions for surveying reptiles wherever possible (*guidelines recommend temperatures 9–18°C*) with due regard to professional judgement and best practice guidance (Froglife, 1999).

Table No. 01 – Weather Conditions during Surveys

Survey	Date of Visit	Time	Temp.	Weather Conditions
1	04/10/2024	10:30	15°C	Clear & Sunny, WF1, Cloud 10%
2	07/10/2024	16:00	16°C	Overcast, WF3, Cloud 65%
3	10/10/2024	10:20	10°C	Light Rain, WF2, Cloud 100%
4	15/10/2024	16:00	13°C	Light Cloud, WF2, Cloud 30%
5	16/10/2024	10:45	17°C	Clear & Sunny, WF1, Cloud 10%
6	18/10/2024	08:30	10°C	Clear & Sunny, WF0, Cloud 0%
7	21/10/2024	09:00	17°C	Overcast, WF0, 100%

3.2 Population Assessment

3.2.1 Where found, reptile populations were assessed in accordance with population level criteria as stated for the Key Reptile Site Register (*Froglife, 1999*). This system classifies populations of individual reptile species into three population categories assessing the importance of the population. These categories are based on the total number of adult animals observed during individual survey occasions and based upon a survey density of 10/Ha.

Table No. 02 – Population Size Assessment

Species	Low Population	Good Population	Exceptional Population
Slow Worm	<5	5-20	>20
Common Lizard	<5	5-20	>20
Grass Snake	<5	5-10	>10
Adder	<5	5-10	>10

3.3 Details of Surveyors

3.3.1 The reptile survey was undertaken by the following ecologists, all of which have extensive experience undertaking both reptile surveys and reptile translocation:

- Hayley Swann – Consultant Ecologist, 3 years' experience.
- James Tann – Assistant Ecologist, 1 year experience.
- Ben Lapham – Assistant Ecologist, 1 year experience.

3.4 Constraints and Limitations

3.4.1 All survey visits were completed within an appropriate time of year and in suitable weather conditions for reptiles to be active.

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 *Field Survey*

No reptiles of any species, nor any signs of their presence such as sloughs, were identified on site during the surveys. A summary of each visit is detailed below:

Table No. 03 – Summary of Results

Survey	Date of Visit	Results
1	04/10/2024	No Reptiles
2	07/10/2024	No Reptiles
3	10/10/2024	No Reptiles
4	15/10/2024	No Reptiles
5	16/10/2024	No Reptiles
6	18/10/2024	No Reptiles
7	21/10/2024	No Reptiles

4.2 Generally, reptile surveys are unlikely to reliably determine the true population of reptiles across a site due to natural variability of individuals and standard detection rates, these are constraints acknowledged by current best practice guidance (Froglife, 1999) (Natural England, 2011) and do not cast doubt on the validity of the results, or population estimates from this assessment. If reptiles are present, given that none were detected, any populations would be of negligible size.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Targeted reptile presence / absence surveys of the site from the 4th October to the 21st of October 2024 recorded no reptiles on site; therefore, reptiles are likely absent, or if present the population is so low that it falls below the survey detection rate. The potential for reptiles to occur will no longer be considered within the application.
- 5.2 In the unlikely event that any reptile species be found on site during site clearance or construction, all works should cease while a suitably qualified ecologist is contacted for advice.
- 5.3 As suitable reptile habitat exists on site, if planning permission is not granted within 18 months of the final reptile survey date or habitats on site develop to become more suitable to support reptiles, then updated reptile surveys would be required.

6.0 REFERENCES

Froglife (1999) *Reptile Survey: an introduction to planning, conducting and interpreting surveys for snake and lizard conservation*. Froglife Advice Sheet 10. Froglife: Halesworth

Herpetofauna Groups Of Britain And Ireland (1998) *Evaluating local mitigation/translocation programmes: Maintaining Best Practice and lawful standards*. HGBI advisory notes for Amphibian and Reptile Groups (ARGs). HGBI, c/o Froglife: Halesworth.

Joint Nature Conservation Committee (1998) *Herpetofauna Worker's Manual* (Gent, T. and Gibson, S. eds) JNCC: Peterborough

Appendix A – Full Survey Results

MR C. BECKHURST
LAND TO THE WEST OF CROOKTHORNE BYRE, BROOKPIT LANE, CLIMPING
REPTILE SURVEY REPORT
LLD3352-ECO-REP-003-00

Visit 1

Surveyor	HS			
Date	04/10/24			
Time	10:30			
Temperature	15°C			
Wind (Beaufort)	1			
Cloud Cover %	10%			
Weather	Clear & Sunny			
Tile No.	Species	Ad/J	Sex	Notes
no reptiles found				

Visit 2

Surveyor	JT			
Date	07/10/2024			
Time	16:00			
Temperature	166°C			
Wind	3			
Cloud Cover %	65%			
Weather	Overcast			
Tile No.	Species	Ad/J	Sex	Notes
no reptiles found				

Visit 3

Surveyor	JT			
Date	10/10/2024			
Time	10:20			
Temperature	10°C			
Wind	2			
Cloud Cover %	100%			
Weather	Light Rain			
Tile No.	Species	Ad/J	Sex	Notes
No reptiles found				

Visit 4

Surveyor	HS			
Date	15/10/24			
Time	16:00			
Temperature	13°C			
Wind	2			
Cloud Cover %	30%			
Weather	Light Cloud			
Tile No.	Species	Ad/J	Sex	Notes
no reptiles recorded				

Visit 5

Surveyor	BL			
Date	16/10/2024			
Time	10:45			
Temperature	17°C			
Wind	1			
Cloud Cover %	10			
Weather	Clear & Sunny			
Tile No.	Species	Ad/J	Sex	Notes
no reptiles found				

Visit 6

Surveyor	JT			
Date	18/10/2024			
Time	08:30			
Temperature	10°C			
Wind	0			
Cloud Cover %	0			
Weather	Clear & Sunny			
Tile No.	Species	Ad/J	Sex	Notes
No reptiles found				

Visit 7

Surveyor	JT			
Date	21/10/2024			
Time	09:00			
Temperature	17°C			
Wind	0-1			
Cloud Cover %	100			
Weather	Overcast			
Tile No.	Species	Ad/J	Sex	Notes
no reptiles found				