



4 Upavon Avenue, Greasby, Wirral, CH49 3PL
TEL: 07725 488648 - Web: www.ebsols.co.uk – email: admin@ebsols.co.uk

REPTILE SURVEY – POPULATION ASSESSMENT

**Practice Range at Littlehampton Golf Course,
Littlehampton, BN17 5DL
(Grid Ref: TQ 025 013) – June - September 2017**



Conducted by EBS on behalf of Mathews Group.

Client:	Mathews Group
Issue Date:	10 th October 2017
Surveys Conducted:	June – September 2017

1 Introduction

Planning permission is being proposed for the to redesign the current practice into a more interesting landscape and to improve the biodiversity of the area by the creation of habitat corridors and native planting at **Littlehampton Golf Club, Littlehampton, BN17 5DL (Grid Ref: TQ 025 013)**. A Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) of the area was conducted during June 2017 by Environmental Business Solutions (EBS). The PEA confirmed the presence of suitable habitat for breeding reptiles within the Site and records obtained from Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre (SxBRC) showed the presence of breeding Sand Lizard immediately south of the Site and Slow worm present within parts of the Golf Course. EBS recommended that a precautionary approach to the possibility of reptiles being present should be taken and a set of Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) should be agreed prior to any work commencing. However, after further discussions with the client, it was agreed that full presence / absence surveys should be conducted.

Environmental business Solutions (EBS) were commissioned to conduct full reptile presence / absence surveys to fully assess the site. The objectives of the surveys were to:

- Determine presence/likely absence of reptiles on site
- Determine the population size if reptiles are present
- Determine if the site qualifies as a "Key Reptile Site"
- To advise on future possible surveys
- To advise on possible mitigation should development commence

All reptile surveys (10 in total) were conducted as per JNCC Herpetofauna Working Manual and Frog life's guidelines over the months of April to August 2016. The results showed no signs of reptiles being present on Site. It is therefore the opinion of EBS that a Natural England Protected Species Licence is not required for this site, however; as Sand Lizards are known to breed within 100m of the proposed works, a set of Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) should be agreed prior to works commencing.

This report should be read in conjunction with Environmental Business Solutions report "Preliminary Ecological Appraisal – Practice Range at Littlehampton Golf Course, Littlehampton, BN17 5DL (Grid Ref: TQ 025 013) – June 2017"

Bill Gaudie
Hons. (Wildlife Conservation), MCIEEM
Ecological Consultant- Environmental Business Solutions

2 Methodology

- 2.1 The reptile presence / absence survey was undertaken during July – September 2017.
- 2.2 The survey was supervised by Mr Bill Gaudie Bsc (hons) (Wildlife Conservation) MCIEEM.
- 2.3 The survey was conducted using artificial refugia made from roofing felt (tins) approximately 0.5m² at a density ≥ 25 tins per ha. They were placed to provide shelter and basking opportunities for reptiles, which can be recorded on or under the refugia in suitable weather conditions. Natural refugia (rocks, logs etc) were also searched. The survey followed the recommended methodology outlined in the Herpetofauna Workers' Manual (JNCC, 2003) and Froglife's Advice Sheet 10 (1999).
- 2.4 Tins were placed on the 26th June 2017 (See Fig 1 for areas of tins placement). The tins were thought to be bedded in by 9th July 2017.
- 2.5 The area also contained some 'natural' refugia and basking areas (logs, rocks etc), these areas were subjected to searches along with the above tins.
- 2.6 A total of 10 survey visits were conducted with inspections to both the artificial refugia and the newly marked 'natural' refugia.
- 2.7 On each visit, all refuge was lifted and the number, sex and species of any reptile observed were recorded (if any).
- 2.8 Transects were also walked in desirable areas for signs of reptile activity.
- 2.9 All visits were conducted in weather conditions suitable for recording reptile activity i.e. Temperature between 9 and 18°C.
- 2.10 All refugia was replaced as near as possible to original position after examination.
- 2.11 See Appendix 1 for site layout, tins positions and transect.

3 Results

- 3.1 In all 10 site visits were made from the 9th July to 25th September 2017 after tins were bedded in.
- 3.2 No reptiles were noted on any visit
- 3.3 No signs of reptile presence was noted on any visit.
- 3.4 Using The Herpetofauna Workers' Manual (JNCC, 2003) and Froglife's Advice Sheet 10 (1999). The site does not qualify as a "Key Reptile Site".
- 3.5 Natural England Protected Species Licence is not required for this Site.
- 3.6 Sand Lizards are known to breed within 100m of the proposed works, therefore a set of Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) should be agreed prior to works commencing.

Table 1 Reptile survey results with date and weather conditions for each visit.

Key: M = Male Adult; F = Female Adult; Ad = Unsexed Adult; I = Immature, Y = Young

Reptile Population Surveys – Littlehampton GC Practice Range Area - 2017						
Date / Weather	Sand Lizard (<i>Lacerta agilis</i>)	Adder (<i>Vipera berus</i>)	Grass Snake (<i>Natrix natrix</i>)	Slow Worm (<i>Anguis fragilis</i>)	Common Lizard (<i>Lacerta vivipara</i>)	Comments
	Number (Area)	Number (Area)	Number (Area)	Number (Area)	Number (Area)	
260617 - Noon Temp 18°C - Rain Nil	0	0	0	0	0	"Tins" laid down.
020717- Noon Temp 20°C - Rain Nil	0	0	0	0	0	Tins not fully bedded
090717 - Noon Temp 17°C - Rain Nil	0	0	0	0	0	Tins fully bedded
120717 - Noon Temp 18°C - Rain Light shower	0	0	0	0	0	
260717 - Noon Temp 18°C - Rain Nil Clear						
020817- Noon Temp 16°C - Rain Nil Overcast						
160817- Noon Temp 18°C - Rain Nil Part cloudy						
290817- Noon Temp 20°C - Rain Nil Part cloudy						
060917- Noon Temp 17°C - Rain Nil Part cloudy						
120917- Noon Temp 16°C - Rain Nil Part cloudy						
250917- Noon Temp 16°C - Rain Nil Overcast						Tins removed

4 Reasonable Avoidance Measures.

4.1 Pre-development Construction of Exclusion Fence.

- 4.1.1 Terrestrial surveys to be conducted immediately prior to commencement of exclusion fence erection.
- 4.1.2 A destructive hand-search will be conducted under the strict supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist along route of proposed fencing prior to installation to ensure that no reptiles are harmed during the operation.
- 4.1.3 Amphibian / reptile fencing will be erected to standards set out in "Great crested newt Mitigation guidelines (English Nature 2011).
- 4.1.4 The barriers will be installed under the strict supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist.
- 4.1.5 Amphibian fences will be positioned so as land deemed as suitable habitat for reptiles outside of the Site is protected.
- 4.1.6 If any evidence of reptile presence is discovered at any time of the operation then the agreed RAMs will be re-addressed and discussed with the Local Authorities Ecologist

4.2 Surveying of proposed development site.

- 4.2.1 Prior to any works commencing on site surveys will be concluded to ensure that no reptiles have migrated onto proposed development site.
- 4.2.2 Refugia searches. Natural refugia will be searched during period immediately prior to development commencements.
- 4.2.3 If any evidence of reptile presence is discovered at any time of the operation then the agreed RAMs will be re-addressed and discussed with the Local Authorities Ecologist.

4.3 Release of Site.

- 4.3.1 The site will only be released to operations once the above have been successfully confirmed with no evidence of reptiles being found.

4.4 Amphibian Fence Monitoring.

- 4.4.1 Daily inspection of the entire fence will be conducted by a responsible member of The Littlehampton Golf Club staff (or a suitably qualified ecologist at EBS) with a daily log book being maintained and any defects reported to a nominated suitably qualified ecologist at EBS immediately.
- 4.4.2 A nominated suitably qualified ecologist at EBS will conduct monthly visits to the site to ensure conditions of barriers are acceptable and the log book maintained.

4.5 Scrub / Vegetation Removal

- 4.5.1 Any scrub / vegetation removal will be directly supervised by a suitably qualified ecologist at EBS to ensure no reptiles or breeding birds are disturbed during clearance.

4.6 General.

- 4.6.1 If reptiles are discovered or suspected to be on site then EBS are to be notified immediately and all work on site stopped until otherwise advised by a suitably qualified ecologist at EBS.
- 4.6.2 See Appendix 2 for positioning of amphibian fencing and survey areas.

Conclusions

Thorough reptile presence / absence surveys were conducted over the months of July - september 2017 on land at **Littlehampton Golf Club Practice Area, Littlehampton, BN17 5DL (Grid Ref: TQ 025 013)**. All reptile surveys (10 in total) were conducted as per JNCC Herpetofauna Working Manual and Frog life's guidelines over the months of July - September 2017. The results showed no signs of reptiles being present on Site. It is therefore the opinion of EBS that a Natural England Protected Species Licence is not required for this site. Sand Lizards are known to breed within 100m of the proposed works, therefore a set of Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) should be agreed prior to works commencing.

Bill Gaudie
BSc hon's (Wildlife Conservation), MCIEEM
Ecological Consultant- Environmental Business Solutions

References.

Froglife, 1999 **Froglife Advice Sheet 10**

Gent, T and Gibson, S (Eds.), 2003 **Herpetofauna Worker's Manual**. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough.

HMSO, 1981 **Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)** HMSO, London. The Stationery Office, Norwich.

HMSO, 1994 **Conservation (Natural Habitats (&c.) Regulations 1994**. HMSO, London. The Stationary Office, Norwich.

1998 **HGBI Advisory Notes for Amphibians and Reptiles Groups**

Appendix 1

Site Layout and Artificial Refugia (Tins) Placements Littlehampton Golf Club Practice Area July - September 2017

