



Reptile Presence/Likely Absence Survey

Land at North Choller Farm



Contents

1.0 INTRODUCTION	3
BACKGROUND	3
SITE CONTEXT AND STATUS.....	3
LEGISLATION	4
2.0 METHODOLOGY	5
3.0 RESULTS	6
4.0 DISCUSSION	7
<i>ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY</i>	7
5.0 CONCLUSIONS	8
6.0 REFERENCES.....	9

LIABILITIES:

Whilst every effort has been made to guarantee the accuracy of this report, it should be noted that living animals and plants are capable of migration/establishing and whilst such species may not have been located during the survey duration, their presence may be found on a site at a later date.

The recommendations contained within this document are based on a reasonable timeframe between the completion of the survey and the commencement of any works. If there is any delay between the commencement of works that may conflict with timeframes laid out within this document, or have the potential to allow the ingress of protected species, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted.

It is the duty of care of the landowner/developer to act responsibly and comply with current environmental legislation if protected species are suspected or found prior to or during works.

1.0 Introduction

Background

- 1.1 The Ecology Partnership was commissioned by Cordial Investments to undertake reptile presence/likely absence survey for North Choller Farm – Holding 1, Choller Estate, Barnham Lane, Walberton, Arundel, hereafter referred to as ‘site’.
- 1.2 This report presents the results of the reptile surveys on site in 2026, which aim specifically to provide a current understanding of the population of reptile species onsite.
- 1.3 This report comprises:
- Introduction, including the legislative and planning context (Section 1);
 - Assessment methodology (Section 2);
 - Results of reptile surveys (Section 3);
 - Discussion and recommendations (Section 4);
 - Conclusions (Section 5).

Site Context and Status

- 1.4 The site is located to the south-west of Walberton (Central grid reference: SU 95836 05602). The site totalling c. 0.94ha, comprises a series of farm buildings, hardstanding, sections of modified grassland and tall forbs. To the east of site was also areas of mixed scrub and a small section of other broadleaved woodland to the south-east. The site is bordered by the wider North Choller Farm site with arable fields in use by cattle to the south and farm buildings to the north, Barnham Lane runs to the east.
- 1.5 The red line boundary of the site and the immediate surroundings are displayed in Figure 1.



Figure 1: The approximate red line boundary for site, and the immediate surroundings

Description of Proposed Development

- 1.6 The current proposals for the site involve the creation of a small housing development, including conversion of a number of existing barn buildings with associated access, and landscaping.

Legislation

- 1.7 In the UK, there are six native reptile species. The four widespread species are adder (*Vipera berus*), grass snake (*Natrix helvetica*), common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*) and slow worm (*Anguis fragilis*). The two rare species are smooth snake (*Coronella austriaca*) and sand lizard (*Lacerta agilis*).
- 1.8 The widespread reptiles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) against intentional killing and injuring and the sale of a wild reptile or any part of such animal. The rare reptiles also receive legal protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 against deliberate injury, killing, capture or disturbance of a rare reptile and damage or obstruction of any place used for shelter or protection.
- 1.9 All six reptile species are also listed as species of principal importance under Section 41 of

the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, which means local authorities have a legal duty to take their conservation into account.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 A terrestrial survey of the site for reptiles was carried out over seven survey visits between 1st May to 12th June 2026. Prior to the commencement of the survey, the site was set up with artificial refugia (roofing felt) for reptiles on 17th April 2026, with mats placed in areas of suitable reptile habitat, particularly areas within grassland and adjacent to tall forbs. The approximate mat locations are marked in yellow in Figure 2.



Figure 2: Approximate locations of the reptile mats during the survey (yellow dotted lines) on site (red line)

2.2 The mats were left in place for a bedding-in period of at least two weeks prior to the commencement of the reptile survey, meeting the required period as per standing advice from Natural England. The timing and number of surveys completed were based on guidelines produced by Froglife (1999) and Gent and Gibson (1998).

2.3 A total of seven survey visits were carried out to check the refugia for the presence of reptiles. Visits were only carried out if the weather conditions were suitable for locating

reptiles. Visits were carried out at a variety of times during the day to take any potential diurnal variation in activity into account. On each visit to the site, a minimum of one circuit to check all refugia was carried out.

- 2.4 In the event that reptiles were found on site, the size of the reptile population can be estimated using the Froglife (1999) scoring system. This assumes a density of 10 refugia per hectare of suitable habitat. A population size class assessment, which is based on the number of adults recorded in one survey visit, can be made using Table 1.

Table 1: Population class assessment categories (Froglife 1999)

	Low Population	Good Population	Exceptional Population
Adder	<5	5-10	>10
Common lizard	<5	5-20	>20
Grass snake	<5	5-10	>10
Slow worm	<5	5-20	>20

3.0 Results

- 3.1 Table 2 below documents the timings, weather conditions, and results of the reptile survey visits.

Table 2: Reptile survey results

Visit number	Date	Conditions	Results
1	01/05/2026	Temperature: 16°C Cloud cover: 0% Wind: 1 Beau Precipitation: None	None
2	08/05/2026	Temperature: 11°C Cloud cover: 70% Wind: 2 Beau Precipitation: None	None
3	15/05/2026	Temperature: 12°C Cloud cover: 40% Wind: 2 Beau Precipitation: None	None
4	22/05/2026	Temperature: 17°C Cloud cover: 0% Wind: 1 Beau Precipitation: None	None
5	02/06/2026	Temperature: 16°C Cloud cover: 100% Wind: 1 Beau	None

		Precipitation: None	
6	09/06/2026	Temperature: 14°C Cloud cover: 50% Wind: 2 Beau Precipitation: None	None
7	12/06/2026	Temperature: 17°C Cloud cover: 40% Wind: 2 Beau Precipitation: None	None
			Peak Count: None

3.2 Over seven survey visits, no reptiles or evidence of reptiles were identified onsite.

4.0 Discussion

4.1 A reptile presence/likely absence survey was undertaken within areas of suitable habitat within the red-line boundary of the site between 1st May and 12th June 2026.

4.1 The size of the reptile population can be assessed using the Froglife (1999) scoring system. This system assumes a density of 10 refugia per hectare of suitable habitat. Approximately 25 reptile mats were established across site which exceeds the recommended density. Refugia was established within areas of suitable habitat, therefore it is considered that the survey effort is sufficient to support a mitigation strategy based on the data.

4.2 No reptiles or evidence of reptiles were identified onsite during any of the survey visits. Therefore, it is not considered that reptiles will provide a constraint to proposed works.

Enhancement Strategy

4.3 Log piles can be created using any woody material removed during works for use as refugia by reptiles, amphibians, small mammals and invertebrates (Figure 3). They can be situated in a variety of locations, such as damp places with some situated in sunnier locations. They can be placed, around the very edges of the site and positioned under mature trees. These should be stacked and perhaps some leaf litter added. Planting around log piles with species such as honeysuckle or clematis can also add value.



Figure 3: Log piles and hibernacula can be created within the edges of the site or in the retained habitats on site

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 Reptile presence/likely absence survey was undertaken within areas of suitable habitat on site between 1st May to 12th June 2026. No reptiles or evidence of reptiles were identified onsite during any of the surveys conducted onsite. Therefore, it is not considered reptiles will provide a constraint to proposed works.
- 5.2 General site enhancements have also been recommended to provide new opportunities for a range of wildlife post-development.

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.

Gent, T. & Gibson, S. eds. (1998) *Herpetofauna Workers Manual*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough.

Herpetofauna Groups of Britain and Ireland (1998) *Evaluating local mitigation/translocation programmes: maintaining best practice and lawful stanadards*. HGBI advisory notes for local reptile groups (ARGs).

Google Earth: www.earth.google.co.uk

The Ecology Partnership Ltd

Thorncroft Manor

Thorncroft Drive

Leatherhead

KT22 8JB



www.ecologypartnership.com

Approved: Matt Pendry BSc (Hons) MCIEEM

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