



**PLOT AT HILL CREST
PENLEY
WREXHAM
LL13 0NL**

Reptile Survey Results

- The Cofnod (Local Ecological Records Centre) website was accessed (www.cofnod.org.uk) and a Cofnod Data Request [E12011] was made for a data search for Priority Species and designated wildlife sites within a 1km radius of the site. There are no records of reptiles within 1km radius of the survey site, according to the data search .
- The scrub and adjacent woodland have potential as terrestrial habitat to be used by reptiles for foraging and emigration corridors.
- The scrub will need to be removed, to facilitate the proposed development, which will result in some minimal loss of habitat. The piles of brash may need to be removed, if they are within the development area. New tree/shrub/hedge planting will compensate for any loss of habitat. There will be no loss of connectivity to the site.
- If mitigation and Reasonable Avoidance Measures are implemented, the proposed development should have no detrimental effect on the favourable conservation status of reptiles.

Reasonable Avoidance Methods

- As part of the site induction process, all staff working on site will be made aware of the potential presence of reptiles within the immediate landscape, and their status as a UK and European Protected Species. Reptiles (Common Lizard, Grass Snake, Adder and Slow Worm) are protected in the UK under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This protection was extended by The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (as amended). Under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (as amended), these species are also considered Species of Principle Importance for (Biodiversity) Conservation in Wales. Sand lizard and smooth snake are also protected under Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2017 (as amended) and listed under Annex II and Annex IV of the EC Habitats Directive. This has been amended by The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (as amended). It is an offence to handle these animals without either a survey licence or a development licence obtained from Natural Resources Wales.

Site Induction

- The toolbox talk will set out what measures are being implemented to avoid affecting reptiles and will also give details of how to recognise reptiles and a photographic reference summary of how to recognise reptiles will be displayed in the site compound cabin at all times.
- Contractors will be instructed to cease work in the unlikely event that they discover a reptile within the site, and to contact a licenced ecologist and NRW (Buckley Office). Contact details will be displayed alongside the reptile photographic identification sheets.
- Contractors will be instructed not to handle or move a reptile, (unless NRW issue specific instructions), as that could constitute an offence.
- A site log should be kept to ensure that all these precautionary measures are implemented, with dates and names of who implemented them.

Vegetation clearance

- The objective is to deter reptiles from the scrub habitat within the site by making habitats unsuitable for use.
- For the initial stages of the development, vegetation clearance should be undertaken in a phased manner under the supervision of an ecologist. The optimum time for vegetation clearance is October-February, when reptiles are hibernating and not dispersing across the site.
- A 1m wide margin strip of vegetation should be retained around the boundaries of the site, to provide a wildlife corridor for foraging and emigration.
- All potential natural refugia such as piles of logs & brash that need to be removed will be dismantled by hand by an ecologist **prior to or following** the winter hibernation period (November – March) in a careful and controlled manner, with constant vigilance for any sheltering reptiles and/or any other potential species. Where possible and practical, the piles of logs/brash etc. should be transferred to a suitable location adjacent the area to be developed, to provide alternative natural refugia for reptiles and other species.



Reasonable Avoidance Methods

Vegetation clearance

- Areas of tall vegetation which need to be cleared should be strimmed (using hand-held tools, not a tractor and flail) to a height of 150mm under supervision of the ecologist and checked for reptiles. All arisings should be immediately removed or stacked in a habitat pile outside the area to be developed, (to prevent risk of reptiles using these as hibernacula or refugia). These cut areas must then be left undisturbed for at least 48 hours. Thereafter, areas which have been strimmed must be hand searched by the ecologist.
- In order to ensure the development area remains unfavourable to reptiles it is essential that the vegetation is maintained as a short sward during the growing season. This will only be relevant if the development work is delayed.
- Should any reptiles be encountered on site, works will stop and not recommence until NRW have been consulted. A NRW licence would then be required, to translocate the reptiles to a suitable receptor site.

Soil stripping

- If any soil stripping is required, light machinery with a gross weight of less than 1.5 tonnes will be used to clear the topsoil, under ecological supervision. A larger machine with a long reach, using a large, toothed bucket could be used, if the machine could be positioned outside the working area, to avoid soil compaction. First the top few centimetres of ground will be removed. Following this, larger and deeper excavations can be made.
- Appropriate method of working – all other vehicles to remain on existing surfaced tracks/hardstanding.
- Should any reptiles be encountered on site, works will stop and not recommence until NRW have been consulted. A NRW licence would then be required, to translocate the reptiles to a suitable receptor site.

Construction work

- If any trenches are to be excavated in grassed areas, a strip either side of the proposed site should be cut first, to create a short swathe, so there is no cover for foraging or resting reptiles. The short swathe should be checked each morning for reptiles, before commencing any works.
- Trenches should have a leading slope, so that any animal that enters the trench may escape.
- Where possible, any trenches that need to be excavated should be backfilled on the same day. The trench should be checked for reptiles before backfilling.
- If a trench is to remain open overnight, ensure that it is covered with sheet material and the edges sealed. The edges can be sealed with soil, which must be compressed down to prevent reptiles and other species from entering the trench.
- If any pipework (drainage etc.) are to be installed in the trench, the ends of the pipes must have baffles fitted, to prevent reptiles and other species from entering the pipe.



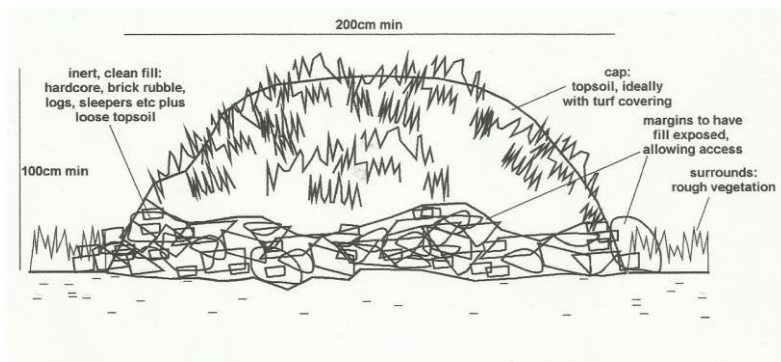
Reasonable Avoidance Methods

Construction work

- No piles of rubble, soil or other debris should be left on site after the completion of works, unless they are left deliberate for mitigation (e.g. creation of artificial shelter/hibernacula).

Biodiversity improvements

- A new shelter/hibernacula site should be created on the mitigation land (e.g. in the woodland area adjacent to the West boundary [prior permission required from the landowner]), by forming an uncompacted mound/bank of topsoil, mixed with clean rubble, logs etc. The mound/bank should have minimum dimensions 2m length x 1m width x 1m height and be covered with turf.



- A log pile for a refugia and basking site should be created on the mitigation land (e.g. in the woodland area adjacent to the West boundary [prior permission required from the landowner]), in a warm sunny area with direct sun, by burying logs a few centimetres into the soil (use a mixture of diameters with the bark retained). Heap the logs into a small pile about 30cm off the ground.

