41 Old Barn Way

Reptile Mitigation Strategy

A Report for 'Mrs J. Constable'

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41 OLD BARN WAY

Reptile Mitigation Strategy

Controlled Copy

01 of 02

01 Mrs. J. Constable

02 Greenspace Ecological Solutions Ltd

This report was compiled by Guy Newman MCIEEM

The content of this report are the responsibility of Greenspace Ecological Solutions Ltd.
It should be noted, that whilst every effort has been made to meet the client's requirements, no site survey can ensure complete assessment or prediction of the changeable onsite environment.

Report Number J20176

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1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

Client: Mrs J. Constable

Site Address: 41 Old Barn Way, Worthing, BN42 4NS.

Ecologist: Guy Newman (GCN Class 1 Licence Holder, Class 2 Bat Licence Holder)

Site Proposals: Construction of new build detached three bedroom house with bike store.

Associated Planning Reference Number: ASWDM/0572/14

Source of Relevant Documents:

Document:	Source:
Site Plan -	Google Earth

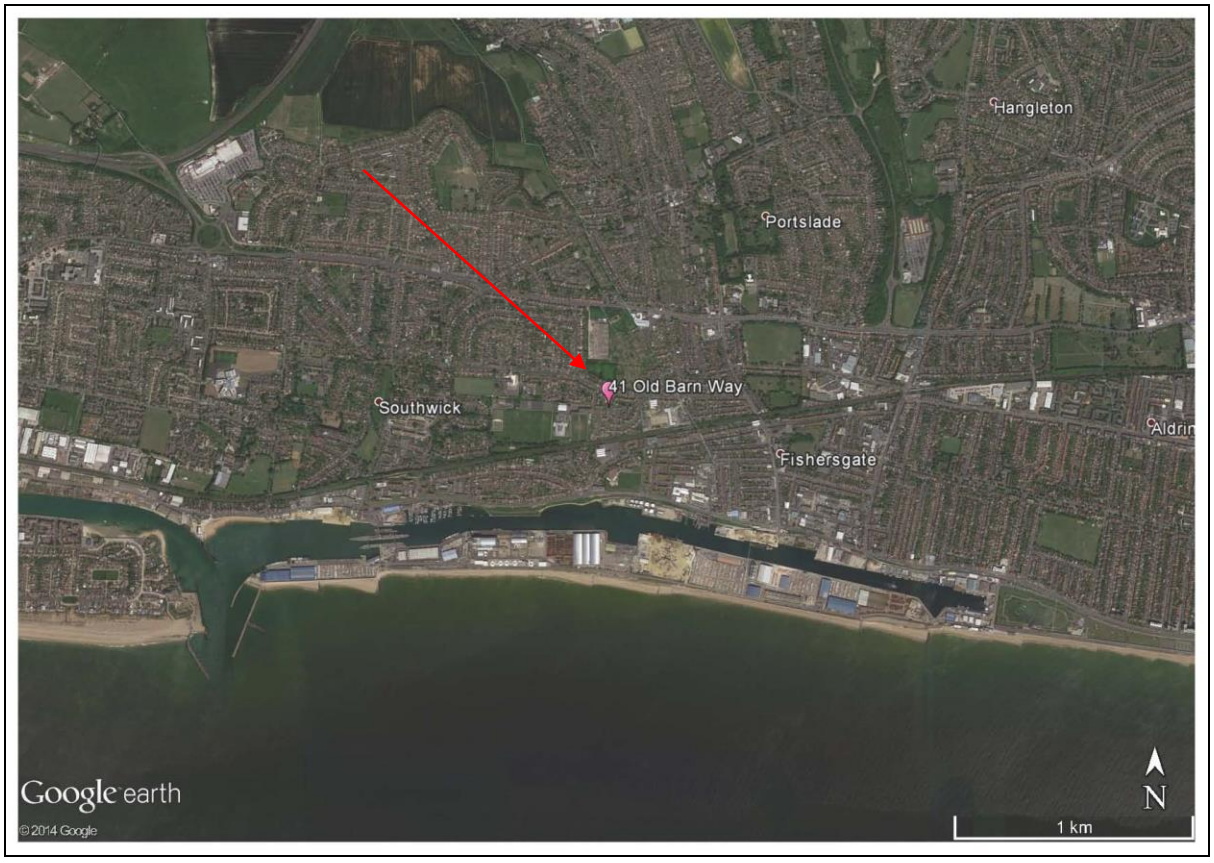
2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Site Description

2.1.1 Located in an urban location, the site is situated within the town of Worthing, East Sussex (National Grid Reference (NGR) – TQ251054). The site covers approximately 270m², of which the areas suitable to support reptiles are restricted to a single 27m boundary hedgerow which lies on the eastern and northern site boundary. The dominant habitat within the site is well maintained amenity grassland. The surrounding habitats include residential housing, amenity parkland, schools, power stations, marine harbours and roads.

2.1.2 The geographical location of the site is depicted in Plate 1.

Plate 1 – Site Location



2.2 Site Proposals / Background

2.2.1 The planning statement produced by Claire Haigh Associates (May 2014) states that "*the proposed house will be an end of terraced house attached to 41 Old Barn Way and will be in keeping with the existing terraced row of houses which were built in the early 1970's. The existing houses are two storey three bedroom houses with front and back gardens and unmarked parking spaces. The site is the side garden of No.41 and is a similar width to the width of the house with room for a path at the side. The*

proposed development will meet the need for extra housing in the area whilst making good use of an underused garden".

2.2.2 A planning application for the above development has been submitted to the local planning authority (LPA). The proposed development will involve the removal of approximately 17m of hedgerow and an earthen bank colonised by well-maintained amenity grassland.

2.2.3 The recommendations provided below are provided to ensure the proposed is conducted in an appropriate manner and within the constraints of wildlife legislation and planning policies which serve to protect such species.

2.2.4 It should be noted that although the suitable habitats for reptiles are restricted to the hedgerow to be removed from the sites northern boundary, the presence of slow worms within the adjacent habitats has been highlighted within an object letter from a Mr Porter's (June 2014) and furthermore, photgraphic evidence of a single adult slow worm was presented within the objection document. It is understood that Mr Porter has made a concerted effort to ensure the adjacent habitats are managed specifically for the benefit of slow-worm and as a result it is considered likely that suitable foraging, resting and hibernation opportunities for slow-worms exists in close proximity to the proposed development. This said, no slow-worms have been recorded within the site itself and the amenity grassland habitat which dominates the plot is considered unsuitable for reptiles.

2.2.5 Consequently, the application of a 7 visit presence / likely absence survey for reptiles was considered onerous in this instance and the the following document has been provided to ensure that the welfare of the slow-worm *Anguis fragilis* population known to reside in adjacent gardens is maintained throughout the development.

3 Policies and Legislation

3.1 All reptile species, inclusive of adder *Vipera berus*, grass snake *Natrix natrix*, slow worm and common lizard *Lacerta vivipara*, are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended). This legislation also makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or sell native reptile species.

3.2 Although considered highly unlikely to be identified within the site, *the* European Protected species of reptile such as smooth snake *Coronella austriaca*, sand lizard *Lacerta agilis* are also protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended).

4 Habitat Description

4.1 The habitats within the site are typical of those expected within a residential location and include a single residential dwelling with a garden that comprises amenity grassland, hard standing, ornamental planting and a heavily managed hedgerow.

4.2 Habitats within the site are presented in Plates 2 and 3. The grass bank and hedgerow to be affected by the proposed is presented in Plate 4.



Plate 2 – Eastern Elevation of Existing Dwelling



Plate 3 – Site viewed from north-west



Plate 4 – Grass bank and hedgerow to be removed.

5 Impact Assessment

5.1 The proposed development will require the removal of areas of hard standing, amenity grassland and approximately 17 metres of the amenity hedgerow which extends along the sites eastern and northern boundary.

5.2 Although predominantly unsuitable for use by reptiles, some potential for reptiles exists within the base of the hedge to be removed and without mitigation the removal of this habitat has potential to result in direct injury and/or mortality of reptiles. Consequently this action may result in an offence under current legislation.

5.3 The mitigation strategy presented below has been compiled to ensure the suitable habitats are removed in a manner sensitive to the presence of reptiles and to ensure suitable resting/foraging areas for slow-worm are retained post development.

5.4 It is suggested that so long as the recommendations provided are adhered to, then the proposed will result in no long term detriment to the reptile population known to reside within the area.

6 Mitigation and Recommendations

6.1 The following recommendations are provided in order of implementation;

1. To ensure reptiles are suitably active to relocate of their own volition, all works to the hedgerow should be conducted in suitable weather conditions and during the active period or reptiles of April – early October inclusive. Suitable weather conditions are considered to be daytime temperatures of ≥8C for a period of 3 consecutive days.

2. All personnel to assist with the removal of the hedgerow to be subject to a Tool Box Talk prior to the start of works by a suitably qualified ecologist. The Tool Box Talk will highlight the potential for reptiles to reside within the site, safe methods of working to minimise any potential impacts on reptiles and the possible implications should reptiles be uncovered during the clearance process.

3. In the first instance, all hedgerow vegetation will be cut to a height of approximately 20cm using hand tools only (petrol strimmers / brush cutters / chainsaws are acceptable).

4. To ensure the habitat is left in a state unsuitable for use by reptiles, all arising's resulting from the cut will either be removed from site or placed into a suitable container/skip on the same day.

5. After a period of ≥5 days the root ball of the remaining hedgerow material will be removed under the supervision of a suitably experienced ecologist. In the unlikely event that reptiles are still present within the hedgerow, they will be retained in an appropriate receptacle and released in a suitable location upon completion of the days work. Given the restricted nature of the site it is recommended that any reptiles captured during this process be released into the adjacent suitable habitats or into the section of hedgerow at the north western end of the site which is to be retained. The location of the hedgerow to be retained is presented in Figure 1.

6. To improve the sites suitability for reptiles post development, a single hibernacula is to be constructed within the currently unsuitable amenity grassland in the north-west corner of the

site and this area is to be isolated from the plot through the use of close board panel fencing (or similar). The resulting parcel of land will serve to provide a wildlife area within the north-west corner of the site. To increase the vegetation within this corner, it will be left un-managed, this will allow the grassland habitat to become more established and for the hibernacula to become suitably vegetated to ensure its viability for reptiles throughout the winter months. The location of the hibernacula and wildlife area is depicted in Figure 1. The design of the hibernacula will follow that depicted in Figure 2.

7. It is understood that retention of the earth in the location of the hedge and bank to be removed will be achieved through the installation of a retaining wall. To ensure reptiles do not enter the site during the construction of both this wall and the residential dwelling, upon removal of the hedge, the site will be isolated through the use of reptile exclusion fencing. Reptile exclusion fencing will be installed under the advice of the suitably qualified ecologist in the location depicted in Figure 3. The design of the reptile exclusion fencing will follow that depicted in Figure 4.

8. Upon completion of the development the reptile exclusion fencing will be removed by hand and reptiles allowed to re-enter the site, should they choose to do so.

6.2 It is suggested that through the application of the above strategy the welfare of reptiles in close proximity to the site will be retained throughout the development. Furthermore, the installation of the hibernacula and wildlife area in the north-west corner of the site will improve the sites suitability to support reptiles and will therefore ensure the proposed is in keeping with current legislation and planning policy which serves to protect reptiles.

6.3 So long as the above methodology is implemented in full, no further consideration to the presence of reptiles within the grounds of 41 Old Barn Way is required in this instance.

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http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69

FIGURES



Figure 1	Hedgerow, Hibernacula and Wildlife Area
Site Name	41 Old Barn Way
Author	GN
Checked	HF
Date	24-07-14
Scale : NTS	GES Greenspace Ecological Solutions

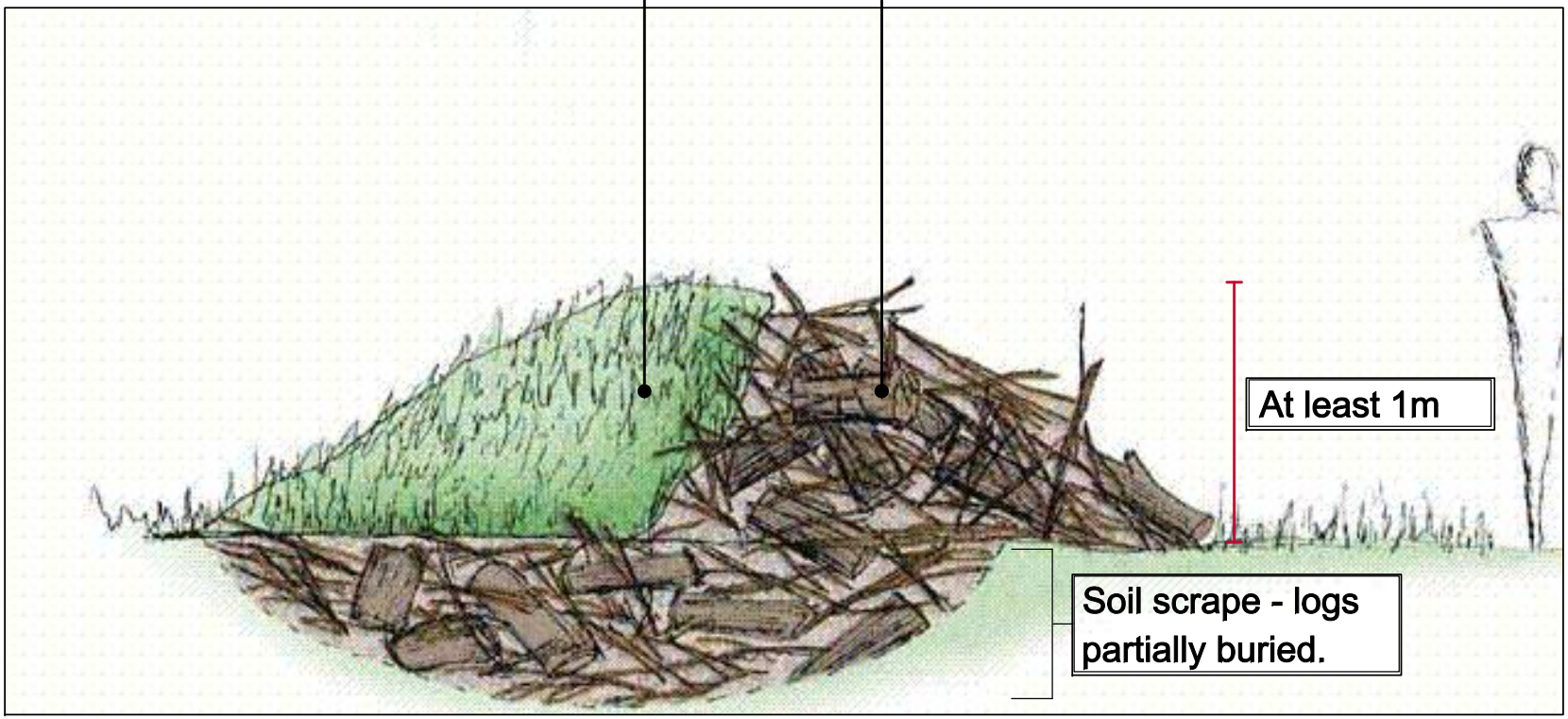
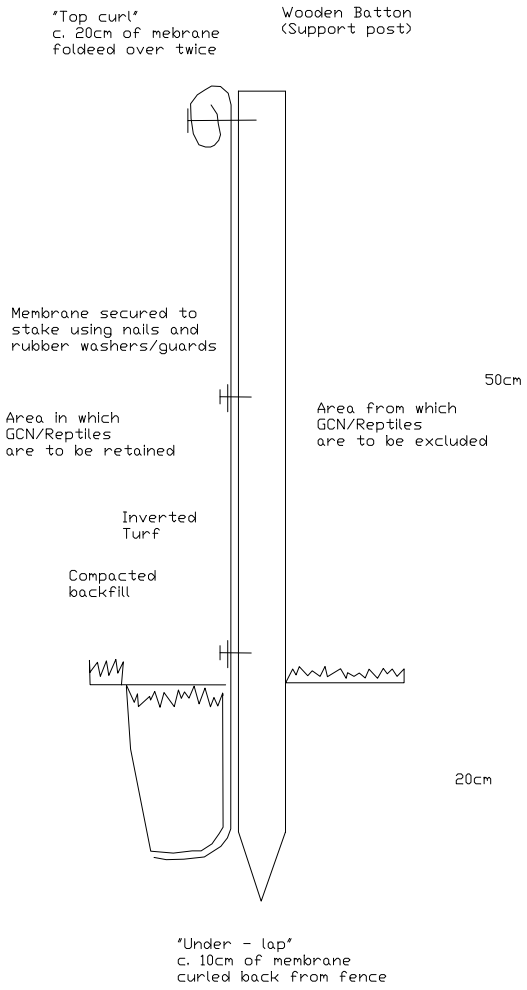


Figure 2	Hibernacula Design
Site Name	41 Old Barn Way
Author	GN
Checked	HF
Date	24-07-14
Scale : NTS	GES Greenspace Ecological Solutions



Figure 3	Exclusion Fence Location
Site Name	41 Old Barn Way
Author	GN
Checked	HF
Date	24-07-14
Scale : NTS	GES Greenspace Ecological Solutions

Exclusion Fencing For Soft Ground



Exclusion Fencing For Hard Standing

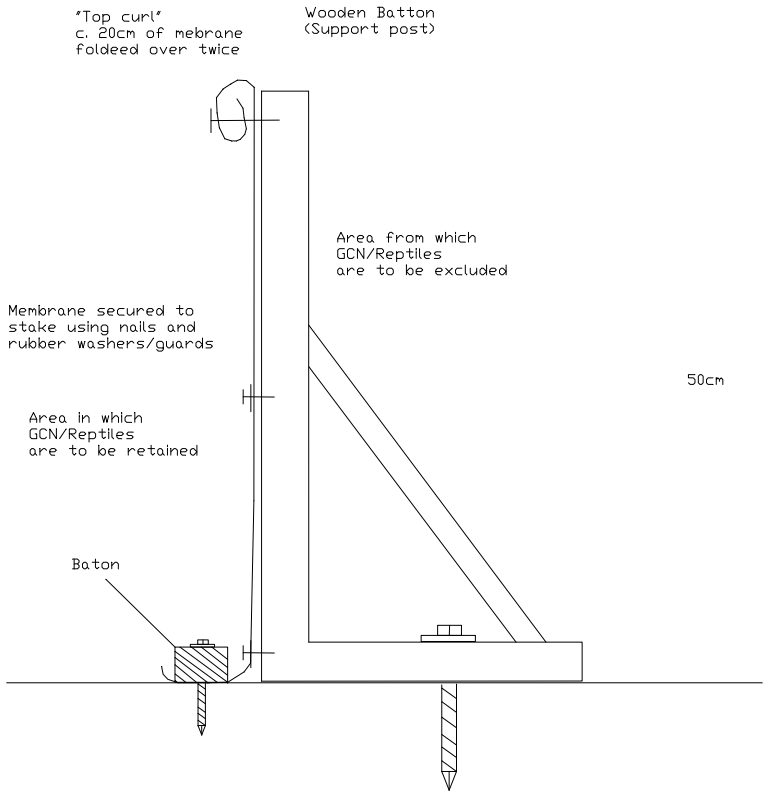


Figure 4	Exclusion Fence Design
Site Name	41 Old Barn Way
Author	GN
Checked	HF
Date	24-07-14
Scale : NTS	Greenspace Ecological Solutions