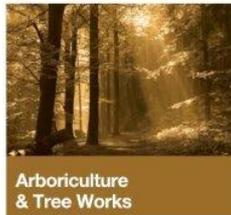




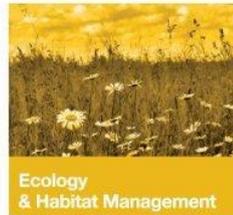
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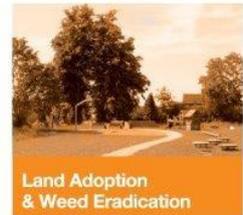
Landscape  
Planning



Arboriculture  
& Tree Works



Ecology  
& Habitat Management



Land Adoption  
& Weed Eradication

James Blake Associates Ltd

## Reptile Survey

of

## Land at Back Lane, Long Lawford, Warwickshire

On behalf of

**Bloor Homes South Midlands**

**September 2017**

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Over 25 Years of Service, Value and Innovation

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		SR	PL	JBA	September 2017
<b>Job Number:</b>  JBA 17/099		 <p><b>JAMES BLAKE</b> A S S O C I A T E S</p> <p><b>Title:</b> Reptile Survey of Land at Back Lane, Long Lawford in Warwickshire</p>			

**Disclaimer**

*James Blake Associates Ltd have made every effort to meet the client’s brief. However, no survey ensures complete and absolute assessment of the changeable natural environment. The findings in this report were based on evidence from thorough survey: It is important to remember that evidence can be limited, hard to detect or concealed by site use and disturbance. When it is stated that no evidence was found or was evident at that point in time, it does not mean that species are not present or could not be present at a later date: The survey was required because habitats are suitable for a given protected species, and such species could colonise areas following completion of the survey.*

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## CONTENTS

<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Background to the study .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2 Methods.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>3 Results.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>4 Discussion and Enhancement.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5 Enhancement Recommendations .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>6 References .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>7 Bibliography.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>8 Appendices .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Appendix A: Location of reptile mats .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Appendix B: Relevant protected species legislation .....</b>	<b>12</b>

## **Executive Summary**

A reptile survey of land at Back Lane, Long Lawford in Warwickshire was undertaken between the 3<sup>rd</sup> July and 29<sup>th</sup> August 2017.

The aim of the survey was to establish the presence or likely absence of reptiles across the site following Natural England approved guidelines. Froglife (1999).

No reptile species were recorded using the site during the survey period. Therefore, no mitigation or constraints to the development apply to the site, with respect to reptiles.

If development does not begin within two years, then it is recommended that the surveys should be updated to ensure that reptiles have not colonised the site in the interim.

Enhancement suggestions are also included in the report.

## **1 Introduction**

### **Background to the study**

- 1.1 James Blake Associates Ltd was commissioned by Bloor Homes South Midlands to carry out a reptile survey of land at Back Lane, Long Lawford in Warwickshire.
- 1.2 The site has no designated conservation status assigned to it.
- 1.3 All reptiles are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Reptiles such as grass snakes, common lizards and slow worms are also species of principle importance in England under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, and are a material consideration under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2012).

### **Site Description**

- 1.4 The site was located to the north of Coventry Road and to the west of Back Lane which is on the southern border of Long Lawford village in Rugby, Warwickshire. Adjacent to the west and eastern site boundaries were residential areas with a new residential development in progress to the north of the site. The wider landscape was dominated by agricultural land interspersed with fragmented woodland and the town of Rugby approximately 1.3km east. The river Avon ran east to west to the north of Long Lawford. (see Figure 1 below).
- 1.5 The site itself was a grazing field of improved grassland. Mixed hedgerows with mature trees lined the site boundary, with two hedgerows and associated dry ditches dividing the site. The northern boundary lay adjacent to a construction site for residential housing development. Back Lane and the A428 lay along the eastern and southern boundary respectively. Gardens from residential houses backed onto the western boundary.

**Figure 1: Site location**



## **Aims and objectives**

- 1.6 The aims and objectives of this survey were to;
- identify the presence of any reptile species using the site;
  - advise of any implications their presence would have on the proposed development; and
  - suggest appropriate mitigation methods where necessary.

## **2 Methods**

- 2.1 The reptile surveys were undertaken by Adam Dayman BSc (Hons) MSc, Emma Bruce BSc (Hons) MSc and Samantha Rigg BSc (Hons) from James Blake Associates Ltd between the 3<sup>rd</sup> July and 29<sup>th</sup> August 2017, on days with suitable weather conditions for finding reptiles (Froglife 1999).
- 2.2 To undertake the reptile survey, artificial refuges (roofing felt mats) were used. These increase the chances of observing otherwise elusive reptiles, which are attracted to these 'refuges' as they can bask on top or regulate their body temperature below the refuges, out of sight from predators.
- 2.3 Sixty refuges, measuring approximately 0.25m<sup>2</sup>, were laid down on the 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2017. The refuges were laid in all areas of suitable reptile habitat throughout the site.
- 2.4 The refuges were left for ten days prior to the commencement of the survey to allow any reptiles present to begin using the refuges and were surveyed on eight subsequent visits to the site. On each visit, refuges were observed from a distance to record any reptiles basking in the sun. Following this, each refuge was approached cautiously and turned over to survey for reptiles sheltering beneath.

### 3 Results

- 3.1 The Warwickshire Biological Records Centre was consulted for records of non-statutory sites and protected and rare species within a 2km search radius (WBRC data provided on the 6<sup>th</sup> April 2017). Records show that common lizards and grass snakes were found within 2km of the site in 2010 and 2011 respectively.

#### Survey Results

- 3.2 No reptiles were recorded using the artificial refuges during the survey period. Records from the seven survey visits are detailed in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Summary of results for protected reptile species

Visit	Date	Weather conditions	Reptiles observed
1	03/07/17	Temperature: 21°C Cloud cover: 90% Beaufort: 1 Dry	0
2	10/07/17	Temperature: 19°C Cloud cover: 80% Beaufort: 1 Dry	0
3	21/07/17	Temperature: 16°C Cloud cover: 100% Beaufort: 3 Dry	0
4	01/08/17	Temperature: 18°C Cloud cover: 80% Beaufort: 1 Dry	0
5	10/08/17	Temperature: 17°C Cloud cover: 60% Beaufort: 0 Dry	0
6	14/08/17	Temperature: 16°C Cloud cover: 100%	0

		Beaufort: 1 Short rain spell	
<b>7</b>	21/08/17	Temperature: 15°C Cloud cover: 100% Beaufort: 1 Dry	0
<b>8</b>	29/08/17	Temperature: 17°C Cloud cover: 100% Beaufort: 1 Dry	0

## **4 Discussion and Enhancement**

- 4.1 Survey visits were all carried out in suitable weather conditions at the optimal time of year for reptile surveys. The density of refuges used was sixty refuges across approximately 6.3ha of land. However the refuges were only set in marginal habitat suitable for reptiles avoiding the main cattle grazed areas.
- 4.2 No reptiles were recorded using the artificial refuges during the survey period. Therefore, there are no constraints or mitigation requirements for the development, with respect to reptiles.
- 4.3 However, habitats on and adjacent to, the site were considered suitable for reptiles and it is possible that if the site remains unchanged, reptiles could colonise in the future. Therefore, if development has not commenced within two years from the date of the surveys then it is recommended that the surveys be updated to ensure that reptiles have not started using the site in the interim. Such further surveys can be made a condition of planning permission where necessary.

## **5 Enhancement Recommendations**

- 5.1 The following suggestions could enhance the value of the site for reptiles and other wildlife post-development.
- Landscaping should include native or wildlife attracting plants particularly a rough grassland area or wildflower meadow to attract invertebrates and foraging reptiles.
  - Grass clippings and other vegetation could be collected and composted in a corner of the site. This may (in time) become suitable for breeding grass snakes and other wildlife.
  - Log or rock piles located around the edges of the site could provide potential refuge habitat for reptiles and other wildlife.

## 6 References

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

## 7 Bibliography

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**8 Appendices**

**Appendix A: Indicative location of reptile mats**



**Appendix B: Relevant protected species legislation**

Species	Relevant Legislation	Level of Protection
Reptiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partially protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act.</li> </ul>	The WCA (1981) makes it an offence to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>intentionally kill or injure these animals</li> <li>sell, offer for sale, advertise for sale, possess or transport for the purposes of selling any live or dead animals or part of these animals</li> </ul>