



Mammal and Reptile Method Statement

Lench Road, Hareholme

Reference: 80-502-R2-1

Date: February 2024



# MAMMAL AND REPTILE METHOD STATEMENT

Lench Road,  
Hareholme

Prepared for:  
**Andrew Darbyshire/ John Hardie**

**Report Ref: 80-502-R2-1**  
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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. BACKGROUND**

E3P has been instructed by John Hardie to produce a Mammal and Reptile Reasonable Avoidance Measures Method Statement for the proposed development at Lench Road, Hareholme, hereafter referred to as “the site”.

### **1.2. PROPOSED WORKS**

This Method Statement has been prepared to facilitate the removal of pre-existing vegetation and the proposed construction works on site.

### **1.3. DISCHARGE CONDITIONS**

This report has been prepared by E3P to discharge Condition 15 of Planning Application 2021/0147:

*15. Prior to any earthworks or vegetation clearance a Reasonable Avoidance Measures Method Statement for mammals including hedgehog and reptiles shall be supplied to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with any recommendations contained therein.*

### **1.4. PREVIOUS SURVEYS**

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was carried out by Ecology Services Ltd in February 2021. The site comprised a farm with associated hardstanding, poor semi-improved grassland, tall ruderal, dry swamp, introduced shrub, hedge with trees, scattered scrub, species-poor hedgerow and scattered trees. The site was assessed as having the potential to support roosting bats, badger (*Meles meles*), nesting birds and mammals including hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*).

Nocturnal Bat Surveys were carried out by E3P in May 2021 on the on-site building and wall that are to be demolished. A moderate amount of foraging and commuting activity was recorded, however there were no observed emergences from the building or the wall.

### **1.5. SITE DESCRIPTION**

The site comprised two buildings, a stable and tack room and a pump/storage house. Habitats within the site include poor semi-improved grassland, scattered trees, scattered scrub, tall ruderal, introduced shrubs, a stream and a dry-stone wall. The surrounding habitat to the south includes agricultural land, with industrial units to the north east. The River Irwell is located approximately 16 m north east of the site at its closest point. Figure 1.1 shows the approximate site location.



FIGURE 1.1 APPROXIMATE SITE LOCATION



## 2. REASONABLE AVOIDANCE MEASURES

### 2.1. MAMMALS

The on-site habitats suitable for mammals included introduced shrub, tall ruderal and hedgerow which was found to provide suitable habitat for mammals such as hedgehogs. Given that vegetation is to be removed prior to start of construction, the following Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) will be adhered to during the vegetation removal on a precautionary basis:

- ✿ All contractors working on the site will be briefed with a Toolbox Talk (see Appendix I) by a qualified ecologist, on the legal protection afforded to hedgehogs, and on how to proceed if a hedgehog is discovered during the course of the work.
- ✿ No vegetation to be cleared unless under the supervision of an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW). Areas of vegetation must be checked for small mammals by the ECoW before clearance. If the area cannot be easily checked, strimming to 50 cm then is permitted if the area is then checked. Once deemed clear of hedgehogs and small mammals, the vegetation will be immediately cleared to ground level.
- ✿ The vegetation will be hand checked by an ECoW prior to works. If a hedgehog is found, they will be carefully translocated to a suitable off-site area which will be unaffected by works (habitat located to the west of the site). If a hedgehog nest is found, works must cease in the immediate area surrounding the nest until the hedgehogs have moved. Avoid touching any young as this may cause the hedgehog to kill or abandon the hoglets.
- ✿ During site clearance, the vegetation will be removed using hand tools to ensure no sheltering hedgehogs are impacted by the works. Vegetation and debris piles must also be removed off-site to ensure no hedgehogs can refuge on site post site clearance.
- ✿ During the construction phase of works, any excavations will be battered to 45 degrees to allow animals to escape will they become entrapped. Alternatively, the excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed.

With the aforementioned RAMs in place, it is unlikely that hedgehogs will be negatively impacted by the development.

### 2.2. REPTILES

The tall ruderal, scattered scrub and grassland were assessed as being suitable for reptiles. As such, the following RAMs will be adhered to during vegetation removal on a precautionary basis:

- ✿ All site contractors are to be briefed with a Toolbox Talk (see Appendix I) as to the potential presence of the species group, their legal responsibilities and working limits, by a suitably qualified experienced ecologist.
- ✿ Any area of vegetation to be removed will be strimmed to a length of approximately 50 cm under the supervision of the ecologist. It will be checked by an ecologist for the presence of reptiles, and once the area is deemed free, the area will be turfed with a toothed bucket.
- ✿ Ecological supervision will be provided during any hedgerow clearance. Any debris and natural refugia such as rocks and stones will be dismantled and inspected by the ecologist prior to



works commencing. Any reptiles found will be captured and moved to the closest available retained habitat.

- ✚ During works the site will be kept tidy of debris and material, and any vegetation within the working areas will be maintained below 50 mm in height to discourage reptiles from re-entering these areas.
- ✚ Construction items will be kept on pallets or similar to discourage reptiles from using the construction areas.
- ✚ If a reptile is identified at any point during the construction works, works will cease and the project ecologist contacted immediately to capture the individual.

With the aforementioned RAMs implemented, it is unlikely that reptiles will be negatively impacted by the development.





### 3. REFERENCES

- ✦ E3P (2021). Nocturnal Bat Survey Report – Lench Road, Hareholme. 80-502-R1.
- ✦ Ecology Services Ltd (2021). Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report – Crabtree Hurst Farm. Report reference: 21009.

**END OF REPORT**



# APPENDIX I

# TOOLBOX TALK

## WHAT?

- ✿ Hedgehog numbers have been declining across the UK as a result of habitat loss from development, habitat fragmentation, road casualties and injuries (e.g. from strimmers, netting and dogs).
- ✿ They are protected under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

## HOW YOU COULD BREAK THE LAW

- ✿ Hedgehogs are protected by British law under the Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and countryside Act 1981, making it illegal to kill or capture them. They are also protected in Britain under the Wild Mammals Protection Act (1996), prohibiting cruelty and mistreatment.
- ✿ It is illegal to intentionally or recklessly damage or destroy a hedgehog nest or obstruct access to it and it is illegal to disturb a hedgehog when it is occupying a nest.

## IDENTIFICATION



## WHAT TO DO

- ✿ If at any time a hedgehog is found, works must be paused immediately and a E3P ecologist should move it to a safe area, away from the works.
- ✿ Do not move or disturb a hedgehog on its nest unless there is an immediate risk to its safety. Carefully replace any material that the hedgehog was nesting under and avoid touching any hoglets.



## PRECAUTIONARY WORKING METHODS

To avoid committing a criminal offence and to reduce the risk of killing or injuring hedgehogs the following measures should be enforced:

- ✦ Before commencing any work on site, all builders and contractors should be inducted to make them aware of the possible presence of hedgehogs, their legal protection and of working practices to avoid harming them;
- ✦ No works to ground are to be completed unless under the supervision of an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW);
- ✦ Removal of vegetation and debris piles off-site to ensure no hedgehogs can refuge post site clearance;
- ✦ Areas of scrub and tall grassland must be strimmed to 30 cm then checked for hedgehog by the ECoW. Once deemed clear of hedgehogs, the vegetation should be immediately cleared to ground level;
- ✦ The base of hedgerow, dense scrub, log piles and natural refugia should be hand checked by an ECoW prior to works;
- ✦ If a hedgehog found, they should be carefully translocated to a suitable off-site receptor area which will be unaffected by works;
- ✦ If a hedgehog nest is found, works must cease in the immediate area surrounding the nest until the hedgehogs have moved. Avoid touching any young as this may cause the hedgehog to kill or abandon the hoglets.

**PLEASE SIGN BELOW TO INDICATE THAT YOU HAVE UNDERTAKEN AND UNDERSTAND THE TOOLBOX TALK PRESENT ABOVE.**

NAME	DATE	SIGNED



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## WHAT?

- ☛ Reptiles experiencing population decline, mainly due to habitat loss.
- ☛ These reptiles and their habitats are protected under UK and EU law.
- ☛ There are four common species of reptile in the UK, including common lizard, slow worm, grass snake and adder. The site has the potential value for common lizard within the broadleaved woodland and scrub.

## HOW YOU COULD BREAK THE LAW

- ☛ It is illegal to intentionally kill, injure or trade (i.e. sale, barter, exchange, transporting for sale and advertising to sell or to buy) reptiles.

## IDENTIFICATION

Grass snake



Slow worm



Common lizard



## WHAT TO DO

- ☛ If at any time a reptile is found, works must be stopped immediately and the site supervisor must call an E3P ecologist, so the appropriate action can be taken prior to works restarting.
- ☛ Do not move or disturb the reptile unless there is an immediate risk to its safety. Immediately replace material that the reptile was taking refuge under, being careful not to harm the reptile.



## PRECAUTIONARY WORKING METHODS

It is recommended that works are undertaken under Precautionary Working Methods (PWMs) listed below:

- ✦ All contractors are to be inducted and informed of the potential presence of the species and their legal responsibilities;
- ✦ Site clearance of large rubble and debris piles, are to be moved by machinery under the supervision of an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) and checked for reptiles;
- ✦ Small rubble and debris piles are to be checked by hand and cleared by an ECoW,
- ✦ Strimming of any vegetation to a length of 150 mm under supervision by the ECoW to allow species dispersal;
- ✦ Following strimming, the area should be deemed clear of reptiles by the ECoW (through fingertip searching) and then turfed immediately;
- ✦ Removal of vegetation and debris piles off site to ensure no reptiles can refuge post site clearance;
- ✦ If any reptiles are found, they are to be removed from site by a qualified ecologist, offsite, to the tree line located to the north east of the site; and,
- ✦ No contractors are to handle reptiles, unless it appears to be in immediate danger.

**PLEASE SIGN BELOW TO INDICATE THAT YOU HAVE UNDERTAKEN AND UNDERSTAND THE TOOLBOX TALK PRESENT ABOVE.**

NAME	DATE	SIGNED



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