

DC/22/94079 Land South of Maddoxford Lane, Boorley Green, Botley, Southampton, SO32 2DB

Discharge of condition 6 (reptile monitoring survey) of planning permission F/19/84937 for demolition of an existing residential dwelling and associated farm buildings and construction of a residential development of 73 dwellings, associated landscaping, and amenity areas with access from Maddoxford Lane. (Amended Description).

Rachael Morris

8/12/22

I have reviewed the Reptile Monitoring survey report by Ecosupport (October 2022) and am not able to discharge condition 6 at this time.

A monitoring survey was conducted in September 2022. As the reptile fencing had been damaged for some time (and not reported) I am not sure that the results of this survey meet their original purpose. The objective was to determine the status of the reptile population in the receptor area. This was reported as reduced compared to the initial presence/absence surveys, and a lower number than expected based on numbers of reptiles caught during the capture process.

The report states that *Additionally, the habitats to the south (which had previously been destructively searched for reptiles) are now considered suitable again for reptiles (Fig 3), with the habitats immediately surrounding the receptor area also suitable for reptiles (particularly along the hedge which lines the stream on the western site boundary).*

Scrub planting that was required within the reptile receptor area had not yet been completed although the habitats within the receptor area were reported to have established to provide dense cover at ground level. Vegetation had re-established in the area adjacent to but outside the receptor area, providing suitable but sub-optimal reptile habitat for reptiles. A male slow worm was found outside the receptor area, which was assumed to have escaped back into the site through the damaged reptile exclusion fence.

Ecosupport has repaired the reptile fence and is proposing a small-scale reptile capture followed by a destructive search in the area adjacent to the receptor area which had re-vegetated after being destructively searched. I agree that this must be done before any construction work is done in any suitable habitat that has developed connected with this re-vegetated area.

Reptile capture and translocation can only be carried out when reptiles are active (which is usually between late April and June and again in late August and September) and in suitable temperatures (air temperature between 10 and 20 °C). This area must be marked out and protected from development with appropriate fencing until the capture and destructive search has been completed, which would be either in June or September of 2023.

It must be made clear that it is the responsibility of the site manager to inspect the reptile fencing for any damage and ensure that it is repaired immediately so that this situation does not re-occur. The site manager must be informed in writing as to why this is important. I recommend that Enforcement be kept informed of this situation as well.

The report cautions that *Should habitats be left and become suitable for reptiles again before all works in this area are complete, further mitigation measures will be required before works can recommence.*

Since this monitoring survey (September 2022) was supposed to be done one year post translocation but was rendered invalid due to lack of an intact reptile fence, an additional monitoring survey will be required one year after the new translocation, ie. by the end of September 2024. Condition 6 can be re-assessed once this one-year post-translocation monitoring survey has been done.

Lisa Malter

Ecologist