

Construction Ecological Management Plan

Widnam Farm, Purton, Wiltshire

16 October 2025

Ecology
Arboriculture
Land Management





Site Details

Site Name and Location	Widnam Farm, Purton, Wiltshire
Central OS Grid Reference	SU092883
Client	Wain Homes Severn Valley

Report Details

Report Title	Construction Ecological Management Plan
Report Reference	2746-CEMP-EB

Quality Assurance & Revision Record

Revision	Date	Author	Checked By	Approver	Summary of Changes
V2	16 October 2025	Ella Bond BSc	Ryan Yeates BSc ACIEEM	Richard Pash BSc MCIEEM	Addressing LPA comments including update reptile survey results and mitigation strategy.
V1	06 August 2025	Ella Bond BSc	Ryan Yeates BSc ACIEEM	Richard Pash BSc MCIEEM	

Disclosure

The content of this report that has been provided by GE Consulting is true, and has been prepared and submitted in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct. Its contents are compliant with British Standard BS42020: 2013 Biodiversity Code of Practice for Planning and Development.

This report has been prepared for the exclusive use of the stated client and unless otherwise agreed in writing by GE Consulting, no other party may use, make use of or rely on the contents of the report. No liability is accepted by GE Consulting for any use of this report, other than for the purposes for which it was originally prepared and provided.

GE Consulting has exercised due care in preparing this report. It has not, unless specifically stated, independently verified information provided by others. No other warranty, express or implied, is made in relation to the content of this report and GE Consulting assumes no liability for any loss resulting from errors, omissions or misrepresentation made by others.

Any recommendation, opinion or finding stated in this report is based on circumstances and facts as they existed at the time that GE Consulting undertook the work. Nothing in this report constitutes legal opinion. If legal opinion is required the advice of a qualified legal professional should be secured.

© Copyright GE Consulting Services (UK) Limited 2024

Contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Background	1
1.2	Aims	1
2	Roles & Responsibilities	2
2.1	Contact Details	2
2.2	Ecological Clerk of Works	2
2.3	Incident Recording	2
2.4	Procedure to Follow if Protected Species are Discovered	2
3	Ecological Features and Protection Zones	3
4	Timetable for Ecological Mitigation	3
4.1	Construction Timetable	3
4.2	Programme for Ecological Work	3
5	Method Statements	4
5.1	Pre-construction Phase	4
5.2	Construction Phase	5
6	Construction Monitoring	6

Figures

- 1: Biodiversity Protection Zones
- 2: Reptile Felt Locations and Survey Results

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Construction Ecological Mitigation Records Sheets	9
Appendix 2 – Update Reptile Survey	10

1 Introduction

This report has been produced by GE Consulting on behalf of Wain Homes Severn Valley for a development at Widnam Farm, Purton, Wiltshire.

The area within the application boundary is hereafter referred to as the 'Site'.

1.1 Background

The Site was granted outline planning permission at appeal in 20th November 2024 (planning ref: PL/2021/06918) for 61 dwellings, access and open space following the demolition of two dwellings on Site.

The outline application was accompanied by an ecology report (Tyler Grange, 2021) which detailed various surveys undertaken in 2021.

1.2 Aims

This work was commissioned in order to discharge Condition 10 of the Appeal Decision. Condition 10 states:

"No development, including demolition, ground works/excavation, site clearance, vegetation clearance and boundary treatment works, shall commence within the residential development hereby permitted until a Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEcMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEcMP shall provide details of the avoidance, mitigation and protective measures to be implemented before and during the construction phase, including but not necessarily limited to, the following:

-  *Identification of ecological protection areas/buffer zones and tree root protection areas and details of physical means of protection, such as exclusion fencing; <https://www.gov.uk/planning-inspectorate/20-Appeal-Decision-APP/Y3940/W/24/3347445>*
-  *Working method statements for protected/priority species, such as nesting birds and reptiles;*
-  *Mitigation strategies, insofar as relevant to pre construction/construction activities, already agreed with the Local Planning Authority prior to determination, such as for great crested newts, dormice and bats;*
-  *Work schedules for activities with specific timing requirements in order to avoid/reduce potential harm to ecological receptors, including details of when a licensed ecologist and/or ecological clerk of works (ECoW) shall be present on site;*
-  *Key personnel, responsibilities and contact details (including the Site Manager and ecologist/ECoW);*
-  *Timeframe for provision of compliance report to the Local Planning Authority, to be completed by the ecologist/ECoW and to include photographic evidence. Development shall be implemented in full accordance with the approved CEcMP."*

This document sets out ecological protection measures and has been prepared to provide sufficient information to satisfy Condition 10 of the above appeal decision. It relates to the Site layout as shown with **Figure 1** and was informed by the above report.

The contractor will keep a copy of this document on site at all times and ensure that the workforce is aware of its contents.

2 Roles & Responsibilities

2.1 Contact Details

Ecological queries should be made to GE Consulting, as detailed below.

Role	Organisation	Address	Phone/ email
Client	Wain Homes Severn Valley	Building 2, Great Park Court, Bradley Stoke, Bristol, BS32 4PY	0117 3744300 John- rhys.davies@wainhomes.co.uk
Ecological Clerk of Works (EcoW)	GE Consulting	Unit 11 Gidleys Meadow Business Park, Christow, Devon, EX6 7QB	info@ge-consulting.co.uk 01647 253652

2.2 Ecological Clerk of Works

An ecological clerk of works (ECoW) will be present during certain tasks.

The roles and responsibilities of the ECoW are:

- Understanding of ecological features and constraints, including sensitive timings;
- Knowledge of construction risks and proposed biodiversity protection zones;
- Understanding of ecological mitigation, compensation and enhancements proposed and knowledge of methods to achieve them;
- On site practical undertaking of clerk of works to avoid/ reduce ecological impacts and provision of ecological advice;
- To deliver a Toolbox talk in relation to the great crested newt/reptiles/nesting birds/hedgehog prior to enabling or construction.
- Regular reporting to client, site manager and principal contractor;
- Delivering a toolbox talk to contractors regarding the ecological constraints on Site, prior to works commencing;
- Monitoring and reporting on unplanned incidents and compliance with legal, planning and contract requirements, including a report to certify that the required mitigation and/or compensation measures identified in the CEMP have been completed. This shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval within 3 months of the date of substantial completion of the development or at the end of the next available planting season, whichever is the sooner.

2.3 Incident Recording

Appendix 1 provides record sheets which the Principal Contractor will use to document actions taken to protect biodiversity and monitor their effectiveness during the construction process.

2.4 Procedure to Follow if Protected Species are Discovered

In the event that any protected species are found during construction works, all works will stop immediately, and advice sought from an ECoW immediately on how to proceed.

3 Ecological Features and Protection Zones

All site personnel should be aware of the key ecological features:

- 🦉 Mature trees on Site with knot holes which could provide potential roosting features
- 🦉 Species rich hedgerows of principal importance and hedgerows supporting commuting bats
- 🦉 Population of reptiles - grass snake, slow worm and common lizard as confirmed by 2021 survey and update survey in 2025 l
- 🦉 Stream- a potential wildlife corridor
- 🦉 Offsite records of great crested newt within 2km

A risk assessment of damaging activities has been undertaken, and the following ecological features will be safeguarded as part of the Biodiversity Protection Zones (BPZs) illustrated in **Figure 1**:

- 🦉 Tree root protection areas
- 🦉 Hedgerows and trees, except those requiring removal for access
- 🦉 An area of rough grassland in the northwest retained and managed as a wild area
- 🦉 Stream corridor and a 5m wide strip next to the play area and attenuation pond

No clearance, storage or construction activities will take place within these zones unless agreed by an ecologist.

4 Timetable for Ecological Mitigation

4.1 Construction Timetable

Construction is expected to commence in May 2025 and be completed in December 2026.

4.2 Programme for Ecological Work

Certain activities are seasonally constrained due to ecological, legal or licensing.

The below timetable shows when specific measures need to be undertaken to avoid or reduce impacts. Methodologies are provided in **Sections 6** and **7** below.

Task	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Directional strimming of grassland under two-stage cut methodology			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Hedgerow, scrub and tree removal	✓	✓	Can be undertaken during these months however an ECoW check will be required a maximum 48 hours prior to works starting for nesting birds						✓	✓	✓	✓
Building demolition	✓	✓	Can be undertaken during these months however an ECoW check will be required a maximum 48 hours prior to works starting for nesting birds						✓	✓	✓	✓

5 Method Statements

5.1 Pre-construction Phase

The below section defines the practical avoidance measures to be undertaken prior to construction to protect ecological features, minimise adverse impacts and prevent any breaches of legislation; also illustrated in **Figure 1**, which shows **Biodiversity Protection Zones**.

5.1.1 Habitat Removal

5.1.1.1 Hedgerow and Trees

Install temporary fencing in accordance with the Arboricultural Impact Assessment (2746-AIA-MU) for the duration of construction. The hedgerows should be protected by suitability robust fencing (weldmesh or similar) for the duration of construction. This should be installed outside the nesting bird season or preceded by a check by the ECoW to check for the presence of nesting birds that could be subject to disturbance.

5.1.1.2 Nesting birds

Vegetation removal/building demolition should be undertaken between September and February inclusive to avoid the breeding bird season for most British bird species. If this is not possible then a pre-works check by an ecologist must be undertaken. If nesting birds are found to be present then a minimum buffer of 5m will be implemented around the nest, in which no works can take place until all birds have fledged.

5.1.1.3 Reptile Mitigation Strategy s

As requested in the consultation response (Elizabeth Burrows WC 05/09/2025) update reptile surveys have been undertaken by GE Consulting during September and October 2025. Full details and results of the survey are provided in **Appendix 2** and **Figure 2**. The survey confirmed that a 'good' population of slow worm and 'low' population of common lizard within discreet areas of the site.

On this basis and following further consultation with WC the following reptile mitigation strategy is proposed:

- 🦎 Hybrid habitat manipulation and trapping to be employed rather than fencing and full translocation.
- 🦎 Habitat manipulation will be undertaken prior to site clearance. Habitat manipulation works shall be undertaken within the active season (March to October) and during suitable weather conditions – no heavy rain and temperature above 10°C. The process will involve suitable reptile habitat being cut down to approximately 15cm initially with a second cut after 48hrs to ground level.
- 🦎 Habitat to be manipulated in two stage cut process from the site access/ entrance in an east-west direction and then south-north direction as shown on **Figure 2**. The clearance should be undertaken under the supervision of the ECoW in a directional manner working to encourage reptiles to disperse into the retained habitat to the northwest.
- 🦎 This work will be undertaken in a slow and systematic manner in order to encourage any animals to move of their own accord. Any rubble/log piles shall be subject to a destructive search.
- 🦎 Supervising ecologist will reposition reptile felts within areas of the site providing the most suitable habitat and in locations where reptiles have been recorded during the update surveys and check felts twice daily (or more often if capture rates are good) during habitat manipulation. Felts to be repositioned as necessary and concentrated in areas with the best capture rates.
- 🦎 Any reptiles that are caught will be moved to the identified receptor area (see **Figure 2**) off site within the field parcel to the east of the site. The employment land will NOT be used for this purpose.

- 🦎 If a critical number of reptiles are captured (100 adults total cumulatively including all species) during this process then works will cease and WC will be re-consulted to agree an appropriate alternative approach.
- 🦎 Once completed, the cut areas should be maintained at a short swart <50mm or clear of vegetation until construction activities are complete in order to prevent re-colonisation of the construction footprint by reptiles.

5.1.2 Badger walkover

An update badger survey will be undertaken no longer than one month prior to works commencing to confirm the status of the badger setts. Any active setts that will not be impacted by site clearance/ construction activities will have a 20m buffer clearly marked out. No works or storage of equipment will take place within this buffer.

5.2 Construction Phase

The below section defines the practical avoidance measures to be undertaken during construction to protect ecological features, minimise adverse impacts and prevent any breaches of legislation.

5.2.1 General Environmental Measures

- 🦎 Trenches or large excavations will be covered overnight to prevent wildlife falling in and failing to escape, or a strategically placed plank will provide a means of escape. Any large bore pipes will be capped at the end of the day to reduce the potential for wildlife to enter and become trapped.
- 🦎 Fencing to ensure badger and other species still have access to surrounding landscape, for example allowing a 150mm gap below security/ temporary fencing.
- 🦎 Pollution prevention measures to be employed as per the standard Pollution Prevention for Businesses (2024) guidance.

5.2.2 Lighting

Construction lighting permitted at a low level within the habitat buffers, with lighting directed away from trees with bat roost potential as well as habitat corridors favoured by bats (southern boundary).

Construction will be restricted to daylight hours, finishing at least 30 minutes before sunset and commencing at least 30 minutes after sunrise during the main bat activity season (April to October inclusive). Where this is not possible, any lighting that is considered necessary will be on motion sensors and timers to reduce duration of light spill.

5.2.3 Stream

Construction activities within 25m of waterbodies will be avoided during heavy rain to minimise risk of sediment or pollution entering water. Silt fencing or temporary drainage channels will be used to block or divert runoff from stockpiles of materials as required. Refuelling and wheel washing will only be carried out in a designated area at least 15 metres from any watercourse, surface drain or potential pollution pathway. A spill kit must be kept on site. The Environment Agency will be contacted in the event of a pollution incident to a watercourse.

5.2.4 Reptiles/ amphibians/ hedgehogs

Once cut, grass will be kept short throughout the construction period until soil is stripped to reduce likelihood of protected/ notable species crossing Site. Brash piles to be removed by hand, checking for

wildlife. Any animal found to be moved to a nearby place of safety (e.g. the reptile receptor area identified in **Figure 2**).

Works taking place between October and March will be carefully undertaken to avoid injuring hibernating animals by proceeding with caution where suitable.

5.2.5 Trees and hedgerows

Maintain fencing in accordance with Arboricultural Method Statement (2746-AMS-MU).

6 Construction Monitoring

Appendix 1 provides record sheets which the Principal Contractor will use to document actions taken to protect biodiversity and monitor their effectiveness during the construction process, with key elements checked by an ecologist/ arboriculturist as appropriate.



Key:

 Site Boundary

 Biodiversity Protection Zones



Imagery ©2025 CNES / Airbus, Getmapping plc, Infoterra Ltd & Bluesky, Maxar Technologies. Map data ©2025 Google

Figure 1:
Biodiversity Protection Zones

Project:
Widham Farm, Purton

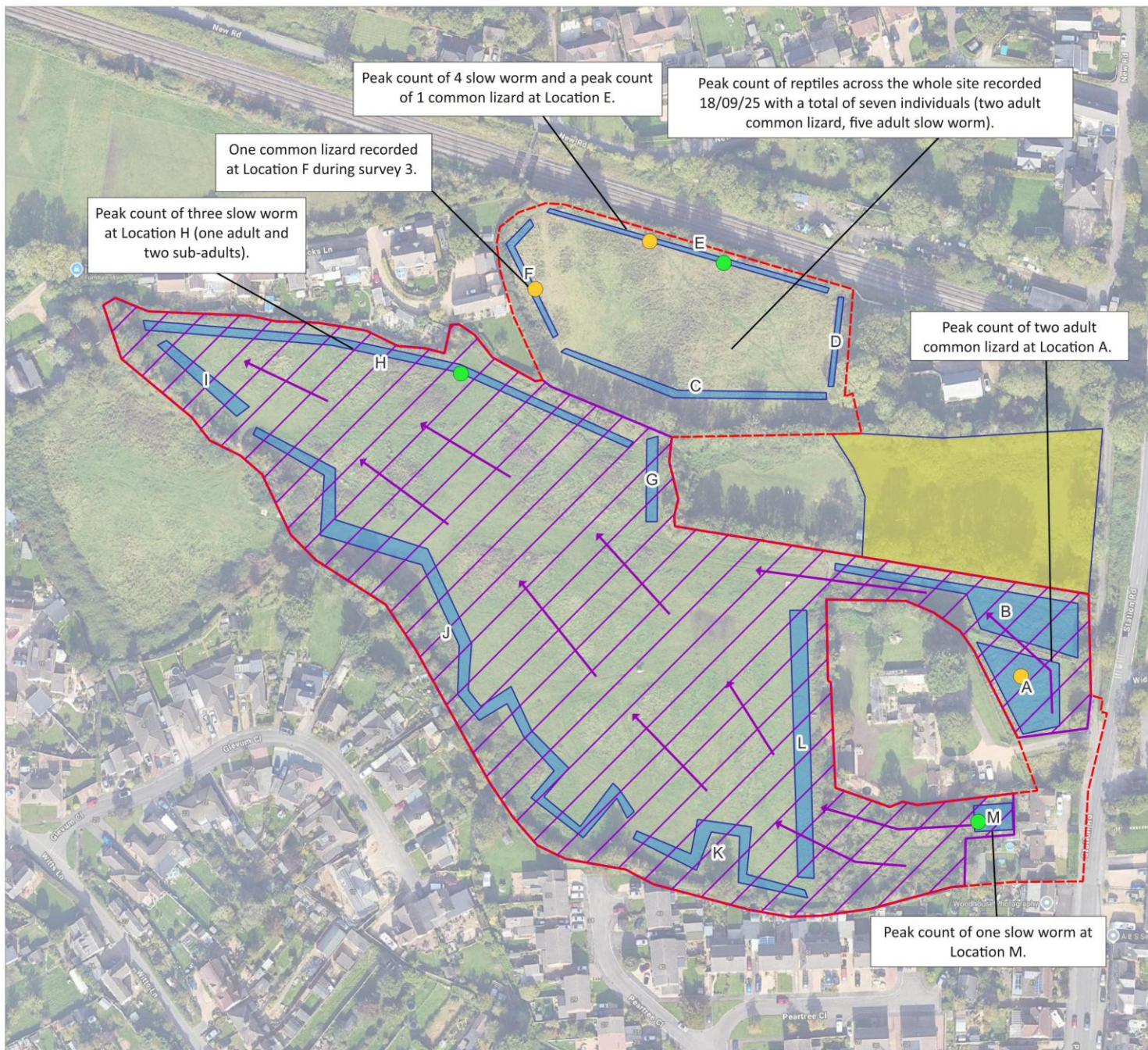
Client:
Wain Homes Severn Valley

Date:
3/2/2025

Ref:
2746-CEMP-F1

Drawn:
EB
Revision:
-





Key:

- Site Boundary
- Reptile Felt Locations
- Common Lizard
- Slow Worm
- Reptile Receptor Area
- Two stage cut habitat manipulation area
- Cut Direction



Imagery ©2025 CNES / Airbus, Getmapping plc, Infoterra Ltd & Bluesky, Maxar Technologies. Map data ©2025 Google

Figure 2:
Reptile Felt Locations and Results

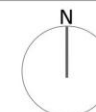
Project:
Widnam Farm, Purton

Client:
Wain Homes Severn Valley

Date:
13/10/2025

Ref:
2746-Reptile-F2

Drawn:
LO
Revision:
-



Appendix 1 – Construction Ecological Mitigation Records Sheets

The following form should be used to record actions taken to protect biodiversity and monitor their effectiveness during the construction process. Signatures should be provided where applicable.

DAILY RECORD OF ECOLOGY MATTERS

To be used as and when required by the Principal Contractor/ site team to keep a record of ecology incidents and procedures undertaken to minimise adverse effects.

If any protected species is found, or in the event of any potentially damaging incidents, the appointed ecologist should be contacted for advice.

Date:		Reported By:	
Summary of Incident/ Activity:			
Ecologist Contacted:	Yes: ☐ No: ☐ N/A: ☐		
Action Taken:			
Outcome (if appropriate):			

Appendix 2 – Update Reptile Survey

Methods

Surveys to ascertain the likely presence/ absence of reptiles were undertaken following current good practice methodologies (Froglife, 1999). This involved the deployment of 85 0.5m² artificial refuges (roofing felt) on 11 September 2025 by Nick Cooke BSc in areas of suitable habitat.

Refuges were left to ‘bed-in’ for a week prior to a series of seven visits in which a search for reptiles was made both under/ on-top of refuges and within open habitats. Dates, personnel and weather conditions for visits are detailed in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Reptile survey dates and weather conditions

Visit	Date	Time	Surveyor	Temperature (°C)	Weather
1	18/9/25	15:15	NC	17	60% cloud cover, dry and partly sunny.
2	23/09/25	14:00	MW	16	10% cloud cover, dry and sunny.
3	25/09/25	10:30	ET	15-16	20-40% cloud cover, dry and sunny.
4	30/09/25	13:25	ET	17-18	20-40% cloud cover, dry and sunny.
5	06/10/25	12:30	AR	17	0% cloud cover, dry and sunny.
6	08/10/25	15:30	NC	18	20% cloud cover, dry and sunny.
7	10/10/25	12:30	NR	15	100% cloud cover, dry/

Results

A total of 10 slow worm were recorded during the seven survey visits, with a peak count of 5 adults on any one survey. Slow worms were found at the hedgerow bases around two of the margins of the Site as well as the northern-most garden, as shown in **Figure 2**. The results indicate a breeding population due to the presence of juveniles.

This peak count of 5 slow worm corresponds to an ‘good’ population (Froglife, 1999). However, the guidance assumes a density of 5-10 per hectare of suitable habitat whilst the density of reptile mats deployed was ~23 per hectare of suitable habitat, far exceeding the minimum requirements. As such this peak count provides an overestimate of the size class at the Site.

A total of 6 common lizards were recorded during the seven survey visits, with a peak count of 2 adults on any one survey. Common lizards were found at the hedgerow bases around three of the margins of the Site, in particular in section A, as shown in **Figure 2**. This peak count of 2 common lizard corresponds to a ‘low’ population (Froglife, 1999).

Website: www.ge-consulting.co.uk
Phone: 01647 253652
Email: info@ge-consulting.co.uk

GE Consulting is a trading name for
GE Consulting Services (UK) Ltd
registered number 08435536

Registered office: Unit 11A, Gidleys
Meadow Business Park, Christow,
Devon, EX6 7QB.
VAT Number 160595992

Ecology
Arboriculture
Land Management

