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Closing Out Report

Reptile Translocation

71 Oak Tree Road, Tilehurst

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Report Summary

1. A total of 10 translocation visits were completed between the 19th May 2023 and 6th June 2023 with one male slow worm found (31st May) and a juvenile that escaped capture (22nd May). Six consecutive days of null results were completed (1st June-6th June 2023) prior to a destructive search of the site completed under ecological supervision.

2. The destructive search found one female slow worm during the pre-works check. No other reptiles were found during the search.



CONTENTS PAGE

1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1	Purpose of the Report.....	1
1.2	Background	1
2	TRANSLOCATION RESULTS	2
3	CONCLUSION	3



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Report

The Ecology Co-operation was commissioned by The Keen Partnership to provide a closing out report following the reptile translocation and destructive search for the proposed development at 71 Oak Tree Road, Tilehurst. This document concludes the site works undertaking at this stage. It will be submitted to Reading Borough Council in line with the reptile mitigation statement ¹.

This report was commissioned and produced at the request of Ryan Willmott.

1.2 Background

The Ecology Co-op has been commissioned to comply with the reptile mitigation statement¹ to fulfil condition 5 of the approved planning application at Reading Borough Council (ref:220221).

The reptile translocation process including destructive search was completed by Linda Pryke ACIEEM and Rachel Richards Qualifying CIEEM.

A total of 56 reptile mats were set up on 2nd May 2023, with 6 additional (total number 62) added on 30th May 2023. Approximate location of refugia is located in Figure 1 below.

¹ The Ecology Co-op (2023) Reptile Mitigation Statement (Rev 05) – 71 Oak Tree Road

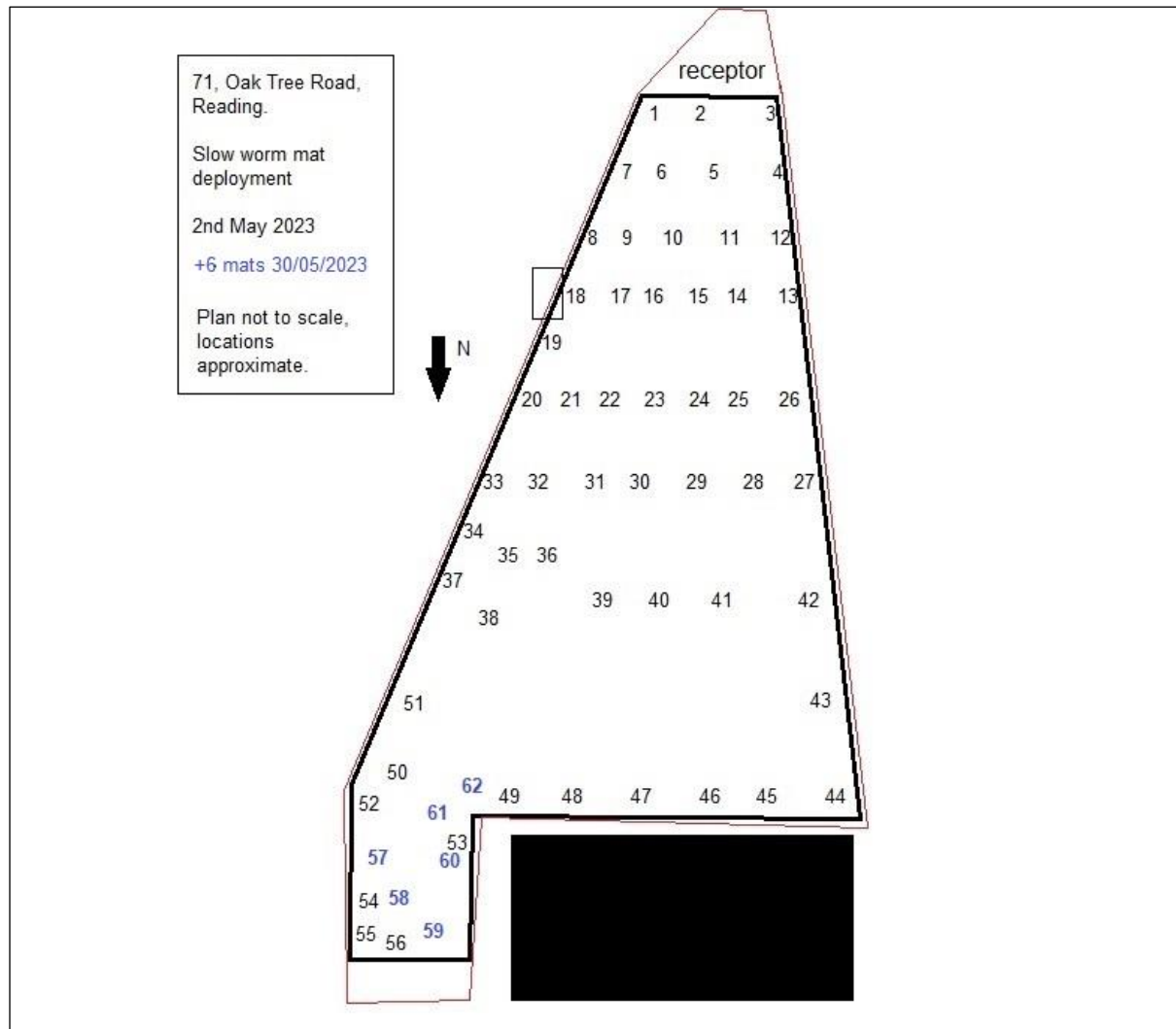


Figure 1. Approximate location of reptile refugia. Map, numbers indicate reptile refugia, receptor indicates the previously created on site receptor area, with the solid black box indicating the existing house. Image produced courtesy of Linda Pryke, 2023.

2 TRANSLOCATION RESULTS

Following six clear days a destructive search was completed on site. This was completed by Rachel Richards on the 13th June 2023. A final check was conducted at 08:00 with the artificial refugia collected. A single female slow worm (*Anguis fragilis*) was found under a felt and translocated to the on-site receptor area. Following this a toolbox talk was provided to on site workers regarding reptile ecology, identification and habitats. Following this a supervised two phased strim was completed with a hand search of vegetation undertaken between cuts. No reptiles found at this stage. Following the second cut the soil scrape was undertaken removing the first 10cm of soil using a toothed bucket digger slowly with the ecologist monitoring for any potential reptiles. The scrapes were completed across the development site moving from north to south as to avoid compacting unscraped soil reducing the risk of damage to potential reptiles.

A total of three slow worms were recorded during the translocation results, two adults (one male and one female) and a juvenile that escaped capture.



During the translocation a small tear was noted during the later stages. As such it is expected that any slow worms that may have remained on site but not captured (the juvenile noted) is likely to have naturally dispersed to the adjacent allotment area (the suspected origin of this low population). The tear was repaired three days prior to the destructive search and with no reptiles found during the search it is considered that this is not to have been a significant constraint upon results or to reptile survivability.

As a total of two reptiles were translocated these were moved to the on-site receptor site, in line with the reptile mitigation plan¹.

3 CONCLUSION

A total of two slow worms were moved to the on-site receptor area with a single juvenile slow worm avoiding capture early during the translocation process. The collective high temperatures exhibited across country during this time has likely reduced the likelihood of basking reptiles with sustained ambient temperatures being suitable for activity. Given results indicating one slow worm found during the pre-destructive search check and none found during it is considered that all reptiles on site have been safely moved to the receptor area with no risk of harm caused to these individuals and no risk of future injury to reptiles on site.

Should you need any further advice on the information provided above, please do not hesitate to contact The Ecology Co-op.



Appendix 1 – Translocation Results

Surveyor	Date	Previous Days Weather Notes		Start time	Temp °c	Wind (Beufont Scale)	Cloud Cover	Precipitation	Results	Notes	Other notes
		Day	Night								
LP	19.05.23	High 20c, Sunny.	low 11c, overcast, light wind.	08:00	12	0	low thin cloud	0	-	Mats warm to the touch.	
LP	22.05.23	High 19, Sunny.	Low 7c, Clear, light wind	17:00	19	2	20% hazy	0	-	Juvenile under 53. escaped.	Dismantling and re-stacking of waste wood piles
LP	24.05.23	High 18, occasional cloud.	Low 5, clear, light wind	17:00	22	2	20% hazy	0	-		Sub-optimal. Too hot.
RR	31.05.23	17c Cloudy	11c Overcast, Light wind	09:30	12	2	High thin clouds	0	1 M Slowworm	found under mat 59	
RR	01.06.23	17c cloudy with sunny intervals	11c Overcast, Light wind	09:15	11	2	High thin clouds	0	-		
RR	02.06.23	17c cloudy with sunny intervals	11c Overcast, strong wind	09:45	12	3	High thin clouds	0	-		
RR	03.06.23	18c cloudy with sunny intervals	9c no cloud with light breeze	09:15	13	2	small, low clouds	0	-	60% mats warm to touch	
RR	04.06.23	20c with scattered clouds	11c no clouds light breeze	09:15	17	0	None	0	-	all mats warm to touch	
RR	05.06.23	low 20c with strong sunshine	10c, no clouds light breeze	09:45	12	1	High thin clouds	0	-	grass under mats still warm	
RR	06.06.23	17c cloudy with sunny intervals	11c Overcast, strong wind	16:00	16	2	small high clouds	0	-	all mats warm to touch	