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MPP2 - Main Site DCO

Horizon Nuclear Power Wylfa Ltd.

Logistic Centre - reptile survey

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1. Introduction

Horizon is currently planning to develop a new Nuclear Power Station on Anglesey as identified in the National Policy Statement for Nuclear Power Generation (EN-6). The Wylfa Newydd Project (the Project) comprises the proposed new Nuclear Power Station (the Wylfa Newydd Power Station), including the reactors, associated plant and ancillary structures and features, together with all of the development needed to support its delivery, such as highway improvements, worker accommodation, logistics centre and specialist training facilities. As a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project under the *Planning Act 2008*, the construction and operation must be authorised by a Development Consent Order.

Jacobs was commissioned by Horizon to undertake a full ecological survey of the Logistics Centre site near Holyhead, the location of which is shown in Appendix A. The gathering of baseline data will inform the various applications, assessments and permits that will be submitted for approval to construct and operate this Associated Development of the Power Station.

1.1 Site Description

The Logistics Centre covers an area of approximately three hectares, the principal habitats within this being semi-improved and improved grassland which is currently used for pasture. Defunct hedgerows and stock-proof fencing border the site, and a small area of plantation woodland lies within the site's western corner. Next to the site entrance off the Parc Cybi service road is an area of hardstanding with a rocky outcrop and patch of scrub. An area of marshy grass is present in an adjacent field but extends slightly into the Logistics Centre site, and an attenuation pond for the A55 lies outside the site between its boundary and the A55.

1.2 Report Aims and Objectives

This report is intended to provide a summary of the data collected on reptiles within the Logistics Centre site during surveys undertaken during May and June 2017.

1.3 Legal Status

All native species of reptile receive protection under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) making it illegal to intentionally kill, injure or sell these animals.

2. Methodology

2.1 Desk study

Historic reptile data covering the Logistics Centre and a 2km buffer surrounding it were requested from Cofnod, the North Wales Environmental Information Service. Records included two species within this study area in the last 10 years: the closest records were two slow worm (*Anguis fragilis*) approximately 600m to the north-west from 2011, and four records of common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*) approximately 1.5km to the south from 2014.

2.2 Survey Locations

Survey locations within the study area were selected based on the habitats' potential to support reptiles. This was assessed by Jacobs ecologists prior to the deployment of the reptile refuges.

2.3 Survey Methodology

Artificial refuges in the form of 50cm x 50cm square bitumen roofing felt mats were placed in areas of suitable reptile habitat by Jacobs ecologists on 27 April 2017. A total of 24 refuges were deployed, the locations of which are shown in Appendix A, Figure 2.

Cambrian Ecology Ltd (CEL) ecologists commenced a suite of seven surveys following a three-week refuge bedding-in period. Surveys were undertaken by experienced ecologists Sam Dyer and Kate Williamson on 23, 26, 29 and 31 May; and 5, 7 and 12 June 2017. All reptile surveys involved a combination of visual checks of the survey site, and the checking and lifting of each artificial refuge.

All surveys were undertaken in accordance with best practice guidelines as outlined in the Herpetofauna Workers' Handbook (Gent and Gibson, 2003). Appendix B provides weather conditions during each survey visit.

In addition to reptile data collected during dedicated surveys, any relevant incidental sightings of other taxa made within the study area were also recorded.

2.4 Limitations

No significant limitations were encountered during these surveys.

3. Results

3.1 Background Data Search

Biological records for the period 2007 – 2017, provided by Cofnod, returned records of slow worm *Anguis fragilis* and common lizard *Zootoca vivipara* within 2km of the Logistics Centre site.

3.2 Field Survey Data

No reptiles were encountered during the first four surveys undertaken on 23, 26, 29 and 31 May 2017.

During the surveys undertaken on 5, 7 and 12 June 2017, a single slow worm was recorded under the same tile (Tile 12). It was identified as an adult female and was thought, with a high degree of confidence, to be the same individual on each survey.

An adult common toad *Bufo bufo* was also recorded under Tile 7, on 7 and 12 June 2017.

No other sighting of reptiles or incidental records of other species were made.

Full results can be seen in Appendix C.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The habitat suitability for reptiles across the Logistics Centre site varied greatly. The majority of the site is dominated by grazed improved grassland and is of very low value to reptiles. However, the southern side of the site (where the majority of refuges were located) is of far higher value (Appendix 1, Figure 3). This habitat suitability assessment is supported by the survey results which returned a single adult slow worm within this southern area. Although a full population estimate survey was not undertaken, it is considered that the presence/absence survey results of one adult slow worm indicates a low population of this species and an absence of other reptile species.

The presence of a common toad on site is relevant as it is identified as a species of key significance to sustain and improve biodiversity in Wales, listed in accordance with Section 7 of the *Environment (Wales) Act, 2016*.

Both reptiles and common toad should be taken into consideration as part of any strategy designed to mitigate the potential effects from the Logistics Centre development.

5. References

Gent, T. and Gibson, S., (2003), *Herpetofauna Workers manual*, JNCC: Peterborough.

Appendix A. Figures

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Figure 1: Map showing the location of the surveyed site



Figure 2: Map of the refuge locations



Figure 3: Map of the areas identified with the highest reptile potential

Appendix B. Survey Weather Conditions

Table 1: Reptile survey weather conditions

Date	Start time – end time	Temperature (degrees C)	Cloud cover (%)	Wind
23.05.17	12:00 - 12:45	16.7	30	Still
26.05.17	09:45 - 10:15	18.1	10	Still
29.05.17	09:40 - 10:10	17.3	100	Light breeze
31.05.17	10:50 - 11:20	19.0	0	Still
05.06.17	11:00 - 11:30	15.6	100	Light breeze
07.06.17	12:45 - 13:15	16.0	25	Light breeze
12.06.17	09:20 - 09:50	18.0	50	Still

Appendix C. Survey Results

Table 2: Reptile survey results

Date	Tile number	Species	Count	Sex/life stage
23.05.17	-	-	-	-
26.05.17	-	-	-	-
29.05.17	-	-	-	-
31.05.17	-	-	-	-
05.06.17	12	Slow worm	1	Female; adult
07.06.17	12	Slow worm	1	Female; adult
	7	Common toad	1	Adult
12.06.17	12	Slow worm	1	Female; adult
	7	Common toad	1	Adult



Photo 1: Adult female slow worm located under Tile 12