# Precautionary Method Statement for Mobile Protected Species During PV Installation

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Project: Installation of a Domestic above ground mounted Solar PV array

## 1. Introduction

This method statement outlines the precautionary measures to protect mobile protected species during the installation of photovoltaic (PV) systems. The installation includes the use of screw piles to support PV array, laying of electrical cables with a mobile trenched digger (see fig.1 below for route), cables will be laid 500mm below ground level in 50mm plastic ducting, backfilled with sand to a level of 150mm and the remainder with earth.

## 2. Objectives

- To ensure the protection of mobile protected species during PV installation activities.
- To comply with relevant environmental laws and regulations.
- To minimize disturbance and potential harm to local wildlife.
- To protect tree roots and minimize environmental impact during excavation.

## 3. Scope of Works

- Installation of screw piles using a hydraulic driver.
- Trenching and cable laying using a mobile trenched digger (see image 1 & 2 for examples of trench and machinery)
- Backfilling and site restoration.

## 4. Pre-Installation Precautionary Measures

- Identify the presence of any mobile protected species (e.g., reptiles, amphibians, nesting birds, small mammals).
- Establish exclusion zones and buffer areas around known habitats if found.
- Ensure work is scheduled outside of critical breeding or hibernation periods where possible.
- Select trench route to avoid tree roots.

## 5. Installation Procedure and Mitigation Measures

### 5.1. Site Preparation and Clearance

- Conduct a walkover survey before commencing any works.
- If any protected species are found, cease work immediately and consult an ecologist.
- Install temporary fencing to prevent wildlife from entering active work areas.
- Identify and mark areas with tree roots to be protected.

### 5.2. Machinery Use and Access Routes

- Machinery will follow designated access routes to avoid unnecessary habitat destruction.
- Fuel, oil, and other potential pollutants will be stored securely to prevent contamination.
- A speed limit will be enforced on-site to reduce the risk of injury to mobile species.

**5.3. Trenching and Cable Laying**

- Use a mobile trenched digger with care to minimize habitat disruption.
- Ensure trenches are not left open overnight or install escape ramps to prevent entrapment of animals. Note trenches will only be max 100mm wide.
- Inspect open trenches regularly for the presence of wildlife.
- Lay cables 500mm below ground level in 50mm plastic ducting.
- Backfill with sand up to 150mm before completing with earth to restore the site as closely as possible to its original state.
- No cutting through or damaging tree roots over 25mm diameter. Where unavoidable, use hand tools to carefully expose and work around roots.
- Note the trenches will be dug and filled in sections during the same day to avoid animal entrapment.

**5.3. Screw Pile Installation Using Hydraulic Driver**

- Use a hydraulic driver to install screw piles, ensuring minimal ground disturbance.
- Position the piling rig at designated locations with care to avoid protected habitats.
- Rotate the screw pile into the ground, monitoring torque values to ensure correct depth and stability.
- Minimize noise and vibration to reduce disturbance to wildlife and nearby trees.
- Conduct post-installation checks to ensure proper alignment and stability of piles.

**6. Emergency Procedures**

- If a protected species is found during works, all activity in the area must stop immediately.
- Work may only resume once appropriate mitigation measures are implemented.

**7. Post-Installation Measures**

- Remove temporary exclusion zones and fencing gradually to allow wildlife to return safely.
- Restore disturbed areas with native vegetation where necessary.
- Report any encounters with protected species and follow relevant legal protocols.

**8. Health, Safety, and Environmental Considerations**

- Ensure all personnel are briefed on environmental protection measures and species identification.
- Dispose of waste responsibly and prevent contamination of nearby habitats.
- Have an emergency response plan in place for accidental wildlife disturbance.
- Reduce carbon footprint by using low-emission machinery where possible.
- Prevent soil erosion and protect water sources from contamination.

**10. Conclusion**

This method statement ensures that PV installation works are conducted responsibly with minimal impact on mobile protected species, tree roots, and the surrounding environment. Adherence to these measures will help maintain biodiversity and comply with environmental regulations.

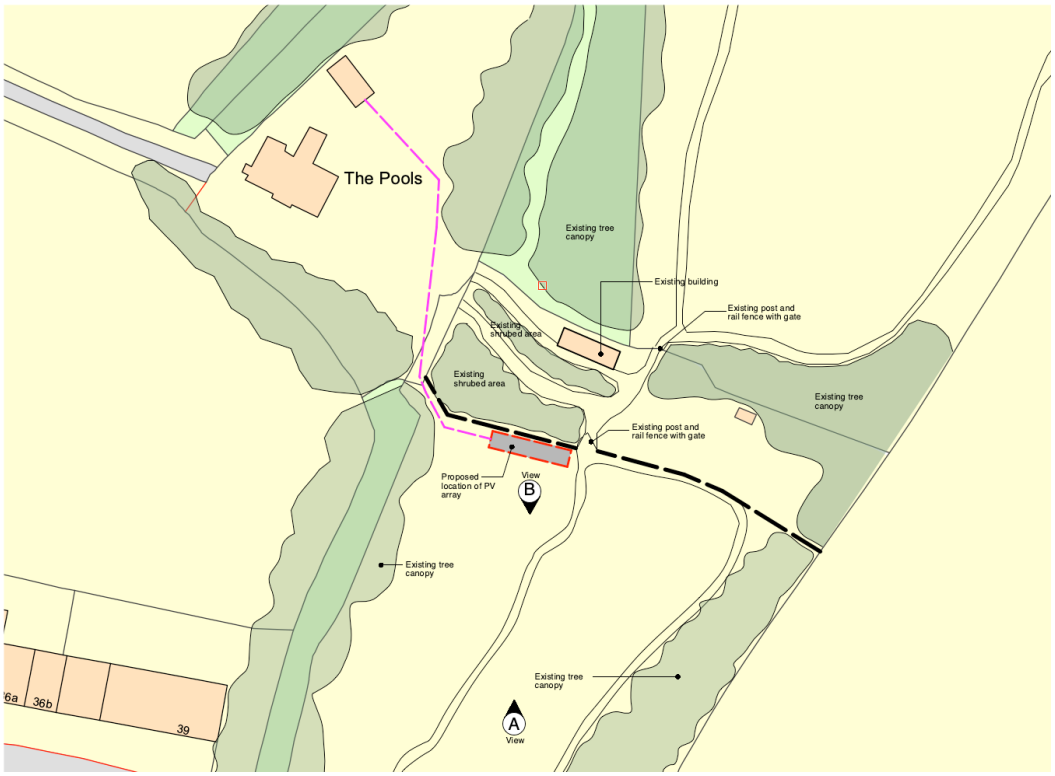


Figure 1 –red line indicating proposed cable route.






Image 1 & 2 above showing an example of proposed trench and equipment used.