



STEPHEN CUTMORE BSc(Hons), MICFor, MArborA

Arboricultural & Ecological Services



SURVEYS, INSPECTIONS, REPORTS

SITE OFF OAK DRIVE COLWYN BAY CONWY LL29 7YP

Great Crested Newt Survey Results

- The Cofnod (Local Ecological Records Centre) website was accessed (www.cofnod.org.uk) and a Cofnod Data Request [E07584] was made for a data search for Priority Species and designated wildlife sites within a 1km radius of the site. There are no records of Great Crested Newts within 1km radius of the survey site, according to the data search. There are records of other amphibian species (common frog, common toad, palmate newt) within 1km radius of the survey site, according to the data search.
- The nearest pond is some 350m to the Southeast of the site.
- The woodland copse, scrub and poor improved grassland has some potential to be used by GCN and other amphibians for foraging, emigration corridors and hibernation. There are fallen trunks and brash piles in the scrub and woodland copse areas, which provide some potential for use as hibernacula sites by GCN. If these features are to be removed, artificial amphibian hibernacula should be provided as mitigation.
- There will be no loss of connectivity to the site. The conclusion is that the proposed development would have a low scale of impact on the favourable conservation status of the locally recorded Great Crested Newts.



Registered Consultant



PRO3755



UK/I 0343A

Reasonable Avoidance Methods

Site Induction

- As part of the site induction process, all staff working on site will be made aware of the potential presence of GCN within the immediate landscape, and their status as a UK and European Protected Species. Great Crested Newts are protected in the UK under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and under Regulation 40 of the Habitats Regulations 2010. It is an offence to handle these animals without either a survey licence or a development licence obtained from Natural Resources Wales.
- The toolbox talk will set out what measures are being implemented to avoid affecting amphibians and will also give details of how to recognise GCN and a photographic reference summary of how to recognise GCN will be displayed in the site compound cabin at all times.
- Contractors will be instructed to cease work in the unlikely event that they discover a GCN within the site, and to contact a licenced ecologist and NRW (Bangor Office). Contact details will be displayed alongside the photographic identification sheets.
- A site log should be kept to ensure that all these precautionary measures are implemented, with dates and names of who implemented them.

Vegetation clearance

- The objective is to deter GCN from the grasslands/tall herb/scrub habitats within the site by making habitats unsuitable for use.
- For the initial stages of the development, vegetation clearance should be undertaken in a phased manner under the supervision of an ecologist. The optimum time for vegetation clearance is October-February, when GCN are hibernating and not dispersing across the site.
- Any potential natural refugia such as piles of rubble, piles of logs and metal debris which need to be removed, will be dismantled by hand in a 'soft demolition' by an ecologist prior to or following the winter hibernation period (November – February/March) in a careful and controlled manner, with constant vigilance for any sheltering GCN and/or any other potential species. Where possible and practical, the piles of rubble/logs etc. should be transferred to a suitable location adjacent the area to be developed, to provide alternative natural refugia for GCN and other species.
- A 1m wide buffer zone is to be retained around the boundaries as a wildlife corridor. Areas of tall, rough grassland and scrub elsewhere on site which need to be cleared should be strimmed to a height of 150mm under supervision of the ecologist and checked for GCN. All arisings should be immediately removed or stacked in a habitat pile outside the area to be developed, (to prevent risk of GCN using these as hibernacula or refugia). These cut areas must then be left undisturbed for at least 48 hours. Thereafter, areas which have been strimmed must be hand searched by the ecologist.
- Following any required tree felling, all rootballs should be removed by machine under the supervision of an ecologist, who will check the stump for crevices beforehand and inspect the rootball once removed. Large bucket machinery will reduce potential for injury of any amphibians present.



Vegetation clearance

- In order to ensure the development area remains unfavourable to GCN it is essential that the grassland is maintained as a short sward during the growing season. This will only be relevant if the development work is delayed.

Soil stripping

- If any soil stripping is required, light machinery with a gross weight of less than 1.5 tonnes will be used to clear the topsoil, under ecological supervision. First the top few centimetres of ground will be removed. Following this, larger and deeper excavations can be made.
- Appropriate method of working – all other vehicles to remain on existing surfaced tracks/hardstanding.
- Should any GCN be encountered on site, works will stop and not recommence until NRW have been consulted. A NRW licence would then be required, to translocate the GCN to a suitable receptor site.

Construction work

- Any loose aggregates and materials delivered to site in relation to the development are to be stored in bags on the site and not loose, to prevent amphibians from seeking shelter within the materials.
- Any building materials should be raised above ground by storing on pallets, to prevent amphibians from seeking shelter underneath. All waste materials should be removed from site immediately or placed in skips.
- If any trenches are to be excavated in grassed areas, a strip either side of the proposed site should be cut first, to create a short swathe, so there is no cover for foraging or resting newts. The short swathe should be checked each morning for newts, before commencing any works.
- Trenches should have a leading slope, so that any animal that enters the trench may escape.
- Where possible, any trenches that need to be excavated should be backfilled on the same day. The trench should be checked for newts before backfilling.
- If a trench is to remain open overnight, ensure that it is covered with sheet material and the edges sealed. The edges can be sealed with soil, which must be compressed down to prevent amphibians and other species from entering the trench.
- If any pipework (drainage etc.) are to be installed in the trench, the ends of the pipes must have baffles fitted, to prevent amphibians and other species from entering the pipe.
- No piles of rubble, soil or other debris should be left on site after the completion of works, unless they are left deliberate for mitigation (e.g. creation of artificial shelter/hibernacula).



Biodiversity improvements

- New shelter/hibernacula sites should be created on site (e.g. in the scrub/woodland areas), by forming uncompacted mounds/banks of soil, mixed with clean rubble, logs etc. The mound/bank should have minimum dimensions 2m length x 1m width x 1m height and be covered with turf.

