

**2 Carina Drive,
Wokingham,
RG40 1EF**

**REASONABLE AVOIDANCE
MEASURES FOR
GREAT CRESTED NEWT**

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Prepared by

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SUMMARY

A reasonable avoidance measures (RAM) strategy was created to ensure that no harm /unforeseen impacts on the great crested population in the vicinity of 2 Carina Drive, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 1EF (grid ref: SU827691) and provides recommendations to ensure that the works can reasonably avoid or mitigate for any such effects.

A site visit was conducted on the 1st April 2025 and background data search was also undertaken to obtain records for sites in the area.

The balancing pond is 20m to the north and included in the Wokingham Borough Council amber risk zone. However, it is not known to support GCN with a negative survey return in 2018.

The habitats in proximity of the property are hostile to amphibians (hard-standing and close mown lawns/amenity planting) and the rear garden is fenced off from the surrounding environment at ground level: Therefore, it is highly unlikely that GCN will be adversely impacted.

However, protocols to ensure that surface refugia are not created on site are included.

EXPERTISE

Dr. Jonty Denton Bsc (Hons) D(Phil) FRES FLS CEcol MCIEEM has studied and held handling licenses for Great Crested Newts since 1985. He produced the then largest countywide study of the species (Denton, J. (1991) The distribution and breeding site characteristics of newts (*Triturus* species) in Cumbria, England. *Herpetological Journal*. **1**: 12, 549-554. He has carried out over 100 population assessments and translocation projects across England & Wales, relocating over 6600 GCN and establishing over a dozen new self-sustaining populations.

INTRODUCTION

Site Proposals

The proposals for the site are for a loft conversion only and would not impinge on the terrestrial habitats save for where scaffolding feet would be placed around the property, on hard standing and amenity grassland and plantings. The rear garden is lined with tall wooden panel fencing which sits on a cement skirt which prevents movement by any animals at ground level.

Background Data Search

A desk-based assessment was carried out using the DEFRA MagicMap website <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx> to identify where GCN returns have been made in the area.

Great Crested Newts are protected under schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 2010 from intentional killing and injury and from intentional damage, destruction or obstruction of access to a place of shelter. In addition Great Crested Newts and Common Toads are UK BAP Priority species and SPI.

According to DEFRA's MagicMap the nearest GCN return is from 1440m to the southwest, and a negative survey return was made on the balancing pond in 2018. However, the pond is included in the Wokingham Borough Council amber risk zone.

RAMs (REASONABLE AVOIDANCE MEASURES)

Timing of works

In the unlikely event a GCN is found works should be stopped and a qualified ecologist holding a GCN handling license should be contacted.

Work protocols

The grounds are hostile to amphibians with no potential refugia present.

Building materials should be stacked only on hard standing areas and should be placed on pallets off the floor. Materials arising from foundation trenching should be removed ASAP, if temporary storage is unavoidable be placed on sheeting with sufficient area to be foldable back over the debris to prevent any animals entering the spoil.

No debris piles should be left onsite which could be utilised as refugia by amphibians.

REFERENCES

English Nature (2001). *Great crested newt mitigation guidelines*. English Nature, Peterborough.

JNCC (1998) *Herpetofauna Workers' Manual*. JNCC, Peterborough.