

GLEBELANDS HOUSE

Great Crested Newt Statement

The proposed Lift and Link works at Glebelands House are identified as being within a Great Crested Newt Habitat Zone. Wokingham Borough Council's planning validation guidance requires that a statement is prepared that:

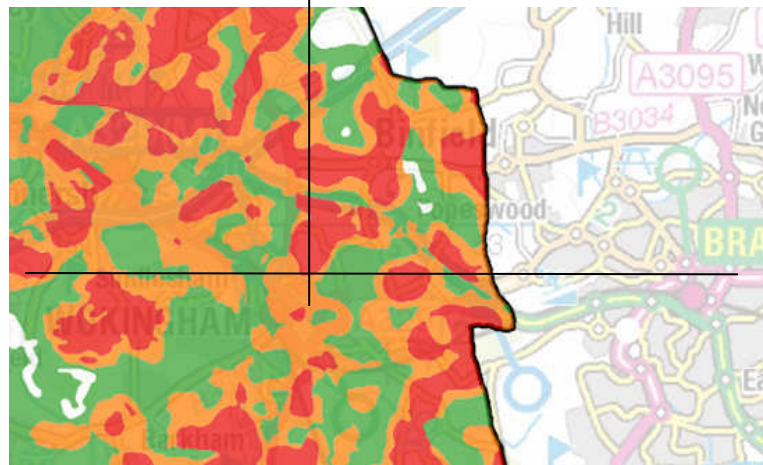
- Explains why the proposal is unlikely to harm GCN; or
- Explain what non-licensable measures will be used to avoid harm to GCN; or
- Give details of surveys that demonstrate harm is unlikely; or
- Give details of surveys that demonstrate the risk of harm needs to be mitigated through licensable measures.

This statement contends that the proposal is unlikely to harm any species or habitat.

1. LOCATION



Detailed Site Location Map



Habitat Zone Map (Nature Space)

The site is believed to be just adjacent the red zone that is centred on Cantley Park and thereafter Ashbridge and Kentwood Meadows to the north that are bounded by the A329M. The ariel map mark up (below) indicates the site to be within the amber or green zone and bounded by residential development to the south and east. The site area contains no ponds, water courses, rivers or ditches and whilst there are wooded areas to the periphery the majority of the external areas are landscaped lawns and hardstanding. Cantley Park is noted as having a pond though OS mapping does not identify an internal water source.



Aerial Map (Site outlined in yellow / GCN Red Zone outlined in blue)

2. ACCESS

There are two vehicular entrances to the site. The original from Milton Road is no-longer used and runs through a wooded area to the northwest of the proposed site. The current and principal vehicular access runs from Glebelands Road in the southeast and provides access to the housing on Acorn Drive and Academy House located south of Glebelands House. The two access roads connect to form Woolf Drive which runs the length of the existing building frontage and gives access to all parts of the home. Whilst private it is in continual use and is a metalled carriageway some 5m in width. It provides the only access to the site which is enclosed continuously by hardstanding and does not pass any known habitat.

3. DEVELOPMENT

Development is confined to the curtilage of the existing building and no virgin land is broken. The area directly south of the Link Wing forms the extreme end of the landscaped garden front and the existing retaining wall between it and the lower (Broccoli) Cloister is retained. It is further constrained by a projection of the original building to the east (1950s Wing) and a mature Cedar tree that imposes an exclusion zone around that part of the site and to which there is only pedestrian access. On the northern side of the Link Wing the area is almost entirely hard surfaced and in any case is screened from the periphery of the site by buildings on three sides. For this reason, the site is not considered to trigger any Biodiversity Net Gain obligations and by association does not disturb any natural habitats.

4. HABITATS

The less cultivated areas of the home tend towards the boundaries of Glebelands House and in particular the margin with Cantley Park, the area surrounding the carpark and concentrated along the eastern boundary with Milton Road. These areas are wooded with rough terrain and are rarely disturbed by building users. Despite a large area of the grounds being laid to lawn this is fairly manicured whereas the fringes offer abundant natural habitat. The proposed Link alterations are located at least 50m away from these areas or are otherwise screened by other buildings on the site.

5. MITIGATIONS

The layout of the site and pre-existing built stock offer the greatest mitigation to protected species. Whilst the southern aspect offers the greatest exposure to areas of potential habitat access is confined and works otherwise constrained by natural features. There is no water source to encourage newt migration to and from ponds and the road into the site is extant. An amphibian fence could be employed to enclose the periphery of the works area on the south side of the Link Wing but would achieve little as there is no migration pathway from the garden front to the north or east in any case. Nor has any central habitat been identified to justify a relocation plan.

6. CONCLUSION

The proposals do not alter the footprint of the existing building in any meaningful way and no soft landscaping is lost to the works. During the construction phase vehicles will need use the existing entrance into the site and any compound will be limited to the north (east) of the existing buildings. On this basis the proposal is considered unlikely to harm any species or habitat.

OWLA / 05.03.25