



CLIENT: GREENTECH

SITE: SPENCERS WOOD SOLAR FARM

DATE: JANUARY 2026

TITLE: REASONABLE AVOIDANCE MEASURES REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

Background

- 1.1 This Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) document has been prepared as an appendix to the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) and Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for Spencer's Wood Solar Farm (the 'site') on Land North of Sheepbridge Court Farm, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, RG7 1PT. The LEMP and CEMP were prepared in relation to the discharge of Planning Conditions 17 and 18 of Full Planning Permission 232653.
- 1.2 This document sets out Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) that will be implemented to avoid harm to reptiles and amphibians during site preparation, construction and associated works.
- 1.3 Table 1 in the LEMP summarises the conclusions of the Ecological Appraisal and whether the habitat/species are considered to be Valued Ecological Receptors (VERs). With regards to great crested newts (GCN) and reptiles the table states:

GCN	Negative eDNA surveys for ponds located on site and within 250m of the site.	Not VER
Reptiles	Limited desk study records and sub-optimal habitats.	Not VER

- 1.4 Although not considered VER, RAMs for amphibians and reptiles will be followed to ensure there are no impacts to amphibians or reptiles.

Legislative Context

- 1.5 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) makes it an offence to intentionally kill or injure any native reptile species. Species include adder *Vipera berus*, grass snake *Natrix helvetica*, common lizard *Zootoca vivipara* and slow-worm *Anguis fragilis*.
- 1.6 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) make it an offence to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*.
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place.
- Deliberately disturb great crested newts in a way that is likely to impair their ability to survive, breed or rear young.

Potential Risks

1.7 Potential risks to reptiles and amphibians during site preparation and construction include:

- Injury or mortality during vegetation clearance and ground cultivation. This is limited to suitable habitats such as grassy field margins;
- Entrapment in excavations;
- Disturbance of sheltering or refugia habitat; and/or
- Attraction of amphibians to temporary features such as standing water or refuges created during works.

Reasonable Avoidance Measures

Timing of Works

1.8 To reduce the risk to reptiles and amphibians, vegetation clearance and ground disturbance/cultivation of suitable habitat will ideally take place during the reptile and amphibian active season (March to October inclusive), when animals are mobile and able to disperse away from works areas. Works should be avoided during periods of cold weather (generally below 5°C), prolonged heavy rain, or drought, when animals are less able to move.

Regular Vegetation Cutting

- 1.9 Vegetation within areas of proposed works will be maintained at a low level prior to works commencing, in order to discourage reptiles and amphibians from using the site.
- 1.10 Where applicable, an initial cut will reduce vegetation to approximately 150mm, followed by a second cut to approximately 50mm. A period of 24 hours will be left between the cuts. The vegetation will be maintained at 50mm height thereafter. Any arisings generated will be removed from site to avoid creating refugia.
- 1.11 Cutting should be undertaken outside periods of cold or wet weather where possible.
- 1.12 Where field margins and boundary habitats are to be retained, these areas will not be cut.

Removal of Refugia

- 1.13 Prior to works commencing any potential refuges such as logs or rubble piles will be carefully dismantled by hand under the supervision of a suitably experienced Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW).

Discouraging Animals from Entering the Site

- 1.14 Care will be taken to avoid the creation of temporary standing water, wheel ruts or flooded depressions. Any temporary water accumulation will be drained where safe and practicable.
- 1.15 Site materials will be stored on raised pallets or hardstanding areas rather than directly on the ground so as to prevent them creating artificial refugia and or cover for amphibians and reptiles.
- 1.16 Silt fencing will be installed around the perimeter of the site to prevent silt run off into adjacent habitats and to prevent accidental encroachment into retained habitats and tree protection zones. The removal of the silt fencing will be supervised by a suitably experienced ECoW to check for amphibians which may have taken cover/refuge in the base of the fencing. eDNA surveys for GCN have demonstrated that they are absent from ponds located within 250m of the site and therefore an offence in relation to GCN is considered to be highly unlikely. Should they be encountered, other common amphibian species can be carefully captured and relocated to suitable, undisturbed habitat, identified as being appropriate by the suitably experienced ECoW.

Excavations and Trenches

- 1.17 All excavations will be kept to the minimum size and duration necessary. Excavations which will remain open overnight will be covered or left with a means of escape, e.g., timber planks. Excavations will be checked regularly for trapped wildlife.

Precautionary Working Methods

- 1.18 The following measures will be followed:
- No chemicals, fuels or hazardous substances will be stored directly on bare ground.
 - Any spills will be dealt with immediately using appropriate containment measures.
 - Night-time working should be minimised where possible.

Toolbox Talks and Site Briefings

- 1.19 All site staff will receive a toolbox talk prior to commencement of works.
- 1.20 The toolbox talk will include:
- Identification of common reptiles and amphibians.
 - Legal protection and penalties for offences.
 - What to do if a reptile or amphibian is encountered.
- 1.21 Records of toolbox talks should be kept on site.

Procedure if Animals Are Encountered

- 1.22 Stop work immediately in the area where the discovery was made and allow the animal to move away unaided if possible.
- 1.23 If the animal is at immediate risk, contact a suitably qualified ecologist for advice.
- 1.24 In the unlikely event of suspected or confirmed great crested newt presence, works must cease and advice sought immediately from the site ecologist.