

Single storey side extension at:
11, Mayflower Meadow
Spencers Wood,
Wokingham,
RG7 1YD

Great Crested Newt Statement

The proposal is to construct a single storey side extension to create a storeroom/workshop on the Western side of the house.

The site falls within the amber risk zone for Great Crested Newts which suggest that it is a suitable habitat, although there are no ponds on the site or in the immediate vicinity.



Existing paving to side of house

No. 11, Mayflower Meadow is on a relatively new development by Taylor Wimpey (approx. 5 years old) and was approved with a Biodiversity Strategy report dated 5th November 2020. In this report, the only reference to Great Crested Newts is as follows.

Whilst potentially suitable terrestrial habitat exists both in and around the Site, no evidence of Great Crested Newt Triturus cristatus was found in suitable connected ponds within 500m of the Site.

The site falls within a Great Crested Newt Impact Resistance Amber Zone. It can therefore be assumed that Great Crested Newts may be present in surrounding habitats including a pond which is located to the South-West of the site.

Due to the small size of the extension, which impacts just 40 sq.m of existing paving, it is concluded that the risk to great crested newts from the proposal is very low. Although hedgerows that bound the site could serve as terrestrial habitat for amphibians and reptiles, these are to remain unaffected by the development works and will not be subject to post-development enhancement.

Natural England state that 'licensable activities should ideally be designed out of developments...with careful planning of the development combined with simple precautionary measures as stated below. Given the small scale of this development, impacts should be able to be avoided in this manner thus negating the need for a licence.

Basic Protection

The basic protection afforded to great crested newts is listed below:

It is illegal to:

- deliberately kill, injure or capture (or take) great crested newts
- deliberately disturb great crested newts
- deliberately take or destroy the eggs of great crested newts
- recklessly disturb great crested newts while it is occupying a structure of place which is used for shelter or protection or obstruct access to their places of shelter or protection;
- damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of great crested newts;
- possess or transport a great crested newt or any part of a great crested newt, unless acquired legally;
- sell (or offer for sale) or exchange great crested newts or parts of great crested newts.

Common reptile species (slow worm, grass snake, adder, common lizard) are protected against killing, injuring and sale under UK legislation.

Other amphibians – common frog, common toad, smooth newt and palmate newt, are not offered the same legal protection but it is good practice to try to avoid harm to these species. Common toad is listed on Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 is a species of principle importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity and thus must be regarded by the planning authority in exercising any of its functions.

Avoidance Measures:

The works are planned to take place from approximately January through March. The project is of short-term in nature, and the duration of groundworks will be kept as short as possible.

Works will be undertaken during daylight hours only (except for internal works) as Great Crested Newts are most active at night.

Site Vigilance and Sympathetic Working - - Site staff must be made aware that if great crested newts are found onsite there is a correct procedure in place to follow, and failure to halt works may result in committing an offence under the Habitats Regulations 2010.

If it is suspected that a Great Crested Newt has been found, work must be suspended and the advice of a suitably licensed GCN ecologist sought.

At no point should any worker handle a Great Crested Newt or suspected Great Crested Newt. Unlicensed handling is illegal and untrained handling may cause the newt unnecessary stress and injury.

Access to the site will be via the existing vehicular entrance and all material storage will be within the driveway.

Trenches and other excavations should be backfilled before nightfall.

No fires will be allowed

All debris, rubble etc. collected during site clearance should be placed directly into skips or removed from the site immediately to avoid it becoming used as refugia by amphibians and reptiles. All new building materials should be stored on pallets or in bags to prevent them becoming used by terrestrial newts, amphibians and reptiles. Keep the site tidy.