

GREAT CRESTED NEWT METHOD STATEMENT

Application Number: 251701

Applicant Name: Ms C Miller

Site Address: 33 New Road, Ruscombe, Wokingham, RG10 9LN

Proposal: Householder application for the proposed erection of rear and side extension

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Great Crested Newt (GCN) Method Statement has been prepared at the request of Wokingham Council in resolving matters relating to GCN as Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) are considered to be required ahead of impacting construction works.
- 1.2 The RAMs set out within this Method Statement shall be adopted and enshrined within a forthcoming Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

2. RISK OF ENCOUNTERING GCN

- 2.1 The site falls within/or is close to a Great Crested Newt Habitat Zone.
- 2.2 As the risk of encountering GCN within the site is low, it is proposed that works proceed without a GCN development mitigation licence provided that RAMs are implemented prior to and during the works.

3. REASONABLE AVOIDANCE MEASURES

- 3.1 As a precautionary approach RAMs will be adopted in order to avoid and/or minimise any unforeseen disturbance impacts on local GCN populations.

The following measures shall be adopted:

Site Induction

- 3.2 All staff working on site will be made aware of the potential presence of GCN including their legal status as a UK as a protected species.
- 3.3 The legal protection afforded to GCN makes it an offence to handle these animals without either a survey licence or a development mitigation licence to be obtained from Natural England. Accordingly, through the measures set out in this GCN Method Statement, all site staff will be made aware that if GCN are found onsite there is a correct procedure in place to follow, and failure to halt works may result in committing an offence under relevant wildlife legislation.

Timing of Works

- 3.4 All works to prepare the site ahead of development will be undertaken during the spring/summer period when GCN are in their active phase, thereby avoiding the hibernation period (November – February inclusive).
- 3.5 All works will take place over an existing lawn and stone patio area. There are no ponds in the area where construction works will take place.
- 3.6 The lawn area involved will be cut to a height of 150mm and the area will be left undisturbed for at least 48 hours. Thereafter, the relevant area will be hand searched where required.
- 3.7 Soil stripping works will progress in a phased manner using a suitable excavator thereby limiting ground disturbance through tracking. Any amphibians/reptiles encountered during works will be relocated.
- 3.8 In the event that any individual GCN is found during these works, then all works must cease immediately and advice sought from Natural England.
- 3.9 Although considered unlikely, in the event that a significant impact to GCN population(s) is identified at any point during the works, then all works must cease immediately and a development mitigation will likely be required from Natural England.

Work Protocol

- 3.10 Care will be taken that all works, plant and materials remain on already cleared ground avoiding any encroachment on retained/boundary features (e.g. hedgerows and tree root protection zones).
- 3.11 Building materials should be stored on pallets (or other suitable means) to avoid contact with the ground to prevent amphibians seeking refuge beneath (and resulting disturbance/killing/injury of any amphibians).
- 3.12 Any aggregates such as gravel and sand must be delivered in bulk bags and stored on pallets.
- 3.13 Waste materials should be removed from site immediately or placed in skips.
- 3.14 No piles of rubbish or waste should be allowed to remain on site as this could create further refuge sites for amphibians.
- 3.15 Trenches and other excavations should be backfilled before nightfall. If this is not possible, ramps must be left to allow any GCN a suitable means of exit.

4. SUMMARY

- 4.1 Through these RAMs potential impacts to any GCN can be avoid and reduced to a sufficiently low level impact.
- 4.2 A copy of this GCN Method Statement will be made available on-site.