
GREAT CRESTED NEWT
PRESENCE / ABSENCE SURVEY REPORT

LAND EAST OF STOKE ROAD AND NORTH OF NORMANDY
WAY (A47), HINCKLEY, LEICESTERSHIRE, NR LE10 1YA

ON BEHALF OF

MR & MRS ADCOCK C/O RICHBOROUGH ESTATES

REFERENCE: ZEL_203
DATE: November 2022
V1

30 St Georges Square | Worcester |
WR1 1HX
01905 947558



Report Data	
Report Title	Great Crested Newt Presence / Absence Survey
Report Reference	ZEL_203
Client	Mr and Mrs Adcock c/o Richborough Estates
Site	Land east of Stoke Road and north of Normandy Way (A47), Hinckley, Leicestershire, Nr LE10 1YA
Author	E. Seaton BSc (Hons) MCIEEM

Rev	Report	Author	Date Issued
V1	Great Crested Newt (eDNA) Report	E. Seaton BSc (Hons) MCIEEM	18 November 2022

Disclosure:

This document has been prepared by Zebra Ecology Ltd for the sole use of the commissioning client/s. It has been provided in accordance with the agreed scope and intended purpose. No other warranty is made as to the professional advice included in this document. It does not purport to give legal advice.

This report should not be copied or relied upon by any third party without the express prior written agreement of Zebra Ecology Ltd and the commissioning client/s.

The evidence gathered, and the opinions provided, have been prepared in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Code of Professional Conduct.

Where any appraisal is based upon information provided by third parties, it is assumed that this information is relevant, correct and complete; there has been no independent verification of information obtained from third parties unless otherwise stated. Where field investigations have been carried out these have been appropriate to the agreed scope of works and carried out to a level of detail required to achieve the stated objectives.



CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	1
2.0 INTRODUCTION	2
Site Location and Summary	2
3.0 METHODOLOGY	3
Desk Study	3
Pond Access.....	3
Manual Surveys	3
Limitations.....	4
5.0 RESULTS AND CONCLUSION.....	5
Desk Study.....	5
Presence / Absence Survey	5
6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS	6
7.0 REFERENCES.....	7

APPENDIX A: Photographs

APPENDIX B: Summary of great crested newt results

APPENDIX C: Pond plan showing results

APPENDIX D: Legislation

APPENDIX D: Qualifications

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Zebra Ecology Ltd were commissioned by Richborough Estates on behalf of Mr & Mrs Adcock to undertake a presence / absence survey of the ponds within 500m of the land east of Stoke Road and north of Normandy Way (A47), Hinckley, Leicestershire (centred on Ordnance Survey grid reference SP 420 956).
- Access was requested to all off-site ponds within 500m of the application boundary. Access was granted to ponds 1-4 and P6. Ponds 1-3 were subject to survey due to suitability. Pond 4 and 6 were dry.
- Four survey visits were completed during the survey period utilising a combination of torchlight surveys, bottle trapping and egg searching to determine presence / absence of great crested newts. All visits were completed by during suitable weather conditions with temperatures between 5°C and 19°C, limited wind and avoidance of heavy rain as recommended by Gent & Gibson (2003).
- No great crested newts were recorded within any of the ponds during the survey visits:
 - Pond 1: No great crested newts recorded. Smooth newts present (peak count: 7).
 - Pond 2: No GCN or other newt species recorded.
 - Pond 3: No GCN or other newt species recorded. Common frog present (peak count: 1).
- Full results are summarised within Appendix B (see Tables 3-5) and Appendix C below.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Site Location and Summary

- 2.1 Zebra Ecology Ltd were commissioned by Richborough Estates on behalf of Mr & Mrs Adcock to undertake a presence / absence survey of the ponds within 500m of the land east of Stoke Road and north of Normandy Way (A47), Hinckley, Leicestershire (centred on Ordnance Survey grid reference SP 420 956).
- 2.2 The site is 25.4ha in area and comprises five separate fields subject to cattle grazing with a further parcel of land (arable) located to the west of Stoke Road surrounded by mixture of native species-rich and species-poor hedgerows.
- 2.3 Two ponds are present on-site (P1 & P2), with a further two ponds (P3 & P4) within 250m and five ponds within 500m (P6-P9). Pond 4 and Pond 6 are dry (P6 has been partially backfilled due to absence of water). Pond 9 forms a complex of fishing lakes. The application site boundary, on-site and surrounding ponds are shown in Figure 1:



Figure 1: Application Site Boundary and Ponds 1-9

- 2.4 Planning consent is being sought from Hinckley and Bosworth Council for 'outline permission for the erection of up to 475 dwellings, including public open space, land reserved for a primary school together with future expansion land (Use Class F1(a)), landscaping, drainage and associated infrastructure'.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

Desk Study

- 3.1 Existing ecological and nature conservation data relevant to the site was collated from various sources including the Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) online database (<http://magic.defra.gov.uk>) and Leicestershire and Rutland Environment Records Centre (LRERC).
- 3.2 A third-party data search was undertaken to attain biological records from Leicestershire and Rutland Environment Records Centre (LRERC) during November 2021 to identify any great crested newt records within a 2km radius of SP 420 956. It should be noted that the absence of biological records for an area does not imply that taxa are not present.

Pond Access

- 3.3 Zebra Ecology requested access to all off-site ponds within 500m of the application boundary. Where landowners were unknown, details were attained from the land registry and permission sought to survey.

Manual Surveys

- 3.4 Manual great crested newt surveys were undertaken following current guidance (Gent and Gibson, 1998; Froglife, 2001). Surveys were completed by at least one appropriately licensed great crested newt surveyor during suitable weather conditions. Four manual surveys are required to establish great crested newt presence / absence within the survey period mid-March to mid-June (with at least two surveys during mid-April to mid-May). At least three survey techniques were utilised on each pond as appropriate:
 - Torchlight survey. A high-powered torch was used to illuminate the surface of the water and allow the surveyor to record any amphibians. The perimeter of the pond was walked (where accessible) with particular attention being paid to marginal vegetation and display areas. The same power of torch (between 100,000 – 1,000,000 candlepower) was used to allow comparison between ponds.
 - Bottle trapping. Temporary traps made from two litre plastic bottles were set around the pond margin at a density of one trap per 2m, where access was possible. Traps were laid in the evening and collected in the early morning. Strict adherence to guidelines set out by Natural England, Froglife and the Herpetofauna Workers Manual ensured the welfare of any trapped great crested newts / other fauna.
 - Egg searching. Emergent and submerged vegetation was carefully checked for the presence of newt eggs.

- Netting. A long-handled dip-net was used to sample the area around the pond edge for at least 15 minutes per 50m of margin. Netting was carried out after dusk, when adult newts are active within the water column.

3.5 Survey visits were completed during May 2022. The ponds were visited four times within the survey period. All visits were completed by during suitable weather conditions with temperatures between 5°C and 19°C, limited wind and avoidance of heavy rain as recommended by Gent & Gibson (2003). Details of surveyors and weather conditions are detailed within Table 2.

Table 2: Surveyor Details and Weather Conditions

Date	Survey No.	Surveyor & Licence Number	Weather Conditions
10-11 May 2022	Visit 1	E. Seaton (2015-16623-CLS-CLS) A. Elliott (n/a)	Temperature: 12 °C, overnight temperature: 10°C, cloud cover: 100%, wind: still, rain: none.
12-13 May 2022	Visit 2	D. Howgego (2022-10345-CL08-GCN) V. Del-Greco (n/a)	Temperature: 14°C, overnight temperature: 10°C, cloud cover: 80%, wind: still, rain: none.
13-14 May 2022	Visit 3	A. Martin (2016-24654-CLS-CLS) G. Cope (n/a)	Temperature: 16°C, overnight temperature: 13°C, cloud cover: 100%, wind: slight breeze, rain: none.
27-28 May 2022	Visit 4	A. Martin (2016-24654-CLS-CLS) G. Cope (n/a)	Temperature: 15°C, overnight temperature: 12°C, cloud cover: 50%, wind: still, rain: none.

Limitations

- 3.6 Amphibians are active within ponds and can be detected in appropriate weather conditions between March and June inclusive. The survey visits were completed during May. Weather conditions were suitable for all surveys.
- 3.7 Limited access was possible surrounding P3 for survey due to dense vegetation; however, 30 bottle traps were deployed in areas of suitability.
- 4.0 Pond 1 was dry on survey visit 4 (27-28 May 2022). Pond 2 had also significantly dried but sufficient water remained to deploy a reduced number (5) of bottle traps.

5.0 RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

Desk Study

- 5.1 Six records of great crested newts have been returned by the third-party data search. No records have been returned within 1km of the application site. The closest record has been returned c.1km south-west from a pond within Springfield Park.

Presence / Absence Survey

- 5.2 No great crested newts were recorded within any of the ponds during the survey visits:
- Pond 1: No great crested newts recorded. Smooth newts present (peak count: 7). Pond was dry on survey visit 4 (27-28 May 2022).
 - Pond 2: No GCN or other newt species recorded. Pond had significantly dried by survey visit 4 (27-28 May 2022) but sufficient water for five bottle traps to be deployed.
 - Pond 3: No GCN or other newt species recorded. Common frog present.
- 5.3 The full results are summarised in Appendix (see Tables 3-5)

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 No further survey work for amphibian species is recommended for this site. The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Zebra Ecology, 2022) should be referred to for other recommendations.

7.0 REFERENCES

Biggs, J., Ewald, N., Valentini, A., Gaboriaud, C., Griffiths, R.A., Foster, J., Wilkinson, J., Arnett, A., Williams, P. and Dunn, F. (2014). *Analytical and methodological development for improved surveillance of the Great Crested Newt. Appendix 5. Technical advice note for field and laboratory sampling of great crested newt (Triturus cristatus) environmental DNA*. Freshwater Habitats Trust, Oxford, UK.

Cresswell, W. and Whitworth, R. (2004). An assessment of the efficiency of capture techniques and the value of different habitats for the great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*. English Nature Research Reports, English Nature, Peterborough, UK.

English Nature (2001). *Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines*. English Nature, Peterborough, UK.

Froglife (2001). *Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook*. Froglife, Halesworth, UK.

Gent, A. and Gibson, S. (1998). *Herpetofauna Workers Manual*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough, UK.

Natural England (2015). Guidance – Great Crested Newts: Surveys and Mitigation for Development Projects. Standing advice for local planning authorities to assess impacts of development on great crested newts. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/great-crested-newts-surveys-and-mitigation-for-development-projects> [Accessed September 2021]

Natural England (2020). Template for Method Statement to support application for licence under Regulation 55(2)(e) of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) in respect of great crested newts *Triturus cristatus*. Form WML-A14-2 (Version April 2020). Natural England, Bristol, UK. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/great-crested-newts-apply-for-a-mitigation-licence> [Accessed September 2021].

Oldham R.S., Keeble J., Swan M.J.S. & Jeffcote M. (2000). *Evaluating the suitability of habitat for the Great Crested Newt (Triturus cristatus)*. Herpetological Journal 10 (4), 143-155.

Zebra Ecology Ltd (2022). Preliminary Ecological Appraisal – Hinckley North. Zebra Ecology, Worcester, UK

APPENDIX A

Photographs



Photograph 1: pond 1 (on-site)



Photograph 2: pond 2 (on-site)



Photograph 3: pond 3 (off-site)



Photograph 4: smooth newt recorded within pond 2.

APPENDIX B

Summary of great crested newt results

APPENDIX B

Great Crested Newt Survey Results

Table 3: Pond 1

Date	No. of bottle traps	Torch air temp °C	Veg cover (0=none, 5=complete)	Turbidity (0=clear, 5=turbid)	Torching: number of newts								Bottle Trapping: number of newts									Presence of eggs (Y/N)	Immature or GCN larvae (Y/N)	Other
					GCN			Lv	Lh	Lv /Lh			GCN			Lv			Lh					
					M	F	US	M	M	M	F	US	M	F	US	M	F	US	M	F	US			
10-11/05/2022	15	12	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N	N	N
12-13/05/2022	15	14	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	N	N	N
13-14/05/2022	15	16	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	1	0	0	0	0	N	N	N
27-28/05/2022	n/a	15	n/a	n/a	Pond dry																	N	N	N

GCN: great crested newt, Lv: smooth newt, Lh: palmate newt

Table 4: Pond 2

Date	No. of bottle traps	Torch air temp	Veg cover (0=none, 5=complete)	Turbidity (0=clear, 5=turbid)	Torching: number of newts								Bottle Trapping: number of newts									Presence of eggs (Y/N)	Immature or GCN larvae	Other
					GCN			Lv	Lh	Lv /Lh			GCN			Lv			Lh					
					M	F	US	M	M	M	F	US	M	F	US	M	F	US	M	F	US			
10-11/05/2022	15	12	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N	N	N
12-13/05/2022	15	14	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N	N	N
13-14/05/2022	15	16	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N	N	N
27-28/05/2022	5	15	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N	N	N

GCN: great crested newt, Lv: smooth newt, Lh: palmate newt

Table 5: Pond 3

Date	No. of bottle traps	Torch air temp	Veg cover (0=none, 5=complete)	Turbidity (0=clear, 5=turbid)	Torching: number of newts								Bottle Trapping: number of newts									Presence of eggs (Y/N)	Immature or GCN larvae	Other
					GCN			Lv	Lh	Lv /Lh		GCN			Lv			Lh						
					M	F	US	M	M	M	F	US	M	F	US	M	F	US	M	F	US			
10-11/05/2022	30	12	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N	N	N
12-13/05/2022	30	14	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N	N	RT
13-14/05/2022	30	16	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N	N	N
27-28/05/2022	30	15	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N	N	N

GCN: great crested newt, Lv: smooth newt, Lh: palmate newt, RT: common frog

APPENDIX C

Pond plan showing results



Great Crested Newt
Survey Results

-  Red Line Boundary
-  500m Buffer
-  250m Buffer
-  Dry
-  Dry and partially backfilled
-  Fishing pond
-  GCN Absent
-  Access Not Granted



Richborough Estates
Land east of Stoke Road and north of
Normandy Way (A47), Hinckley

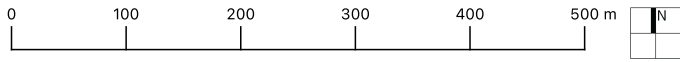
Leicestershire

Great Crested Newt Survey Results Plan

July 2022

Zebra Ecology Ltd | 30 St George's Square | Worcester | WR1
1HX
hello@zebraecology.co.uk | 01905 947 558

Copyright is reserved by Zebra Ecology. The drawing is issued
on the condition that it is not copied either wholly or in part
without first obtaining written consent.



APPENDIX D

Legislation

The great crested newt is a 'European Protected Species' and is listed on both Annex II and IV of the EC Habitats Directive. The Directive is transposed into UK law through the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. They are also protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. These pieces of legislation combine to give substantial protection to great crested newts and their breeding ponds and terrestrial habitat, making it an offence to:

- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a great crested newt;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a great crested newt in a structure or place that they use for shelter or protection or deliberately disturb a group of a great crested newts;
- Damage or destroy a great crested newt resting place/shelter (even if they are not occupying it at the time);
- Possess or advertise/sell/exchange a great crested newt (dead or alive) or any part of a great crested newt (including eggs and all life-stages);
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a great crested newt resting place/shelter.

APPENDIX E

Qualifications and Experience

Zebra Ecology Ltd is Registered Practice of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). A comprehensive range of ecological services are offered including Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA), Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA), Biodiversity Impact Assessment (BIA) and European Protected Species (EPS) Surveys / Licensing.

The practice works closely with clients to achieve their aspirations alongside securing the best outcomes for the environment. With wildlife legislation and policy as its basis; commercial awareness, pragmatism and defensible advice is combined to form Zebra Ecology's approach.

As well as offering a wide range of ecological services, Zebra Ecology forms part of Zebra Group offering an in-house collaborative approach in conjunction with Zebra Architects, Zebra Landscape Architects, Zebra Trees and Zebra Land and Development.

Emma Seaton BSc (Hons) MCIEEM

Emma holds a BSc (Hons) degree in Biology from the University of Sheffield and has since gained a postgraduate certificate in Ecological Consultancy. Her ecological experience includes Preliminary Ecological Appraisals, Ecological Impact Assessments (EcIA), surveying for notable / European Protected Species, mitigation / licensing advice and providing Continued Professional Development (CPD) sessions for developers on Biodiversity Net Gain. She has held Natural England survey licences for bats (Class 2), great crested newts and white-clawed crayfish since 2015. She is also a Registered Consultant under the Bat Mitigation Class Licence (BMCL) licence and an Earned Recognition (ER) consultant under the Natural England bat pilot project.. Emma is a Full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management.

Andrew Elliott BSc (Hons)

Andy holds a BSc (Hons) degree in Biological Sciences (Zoology) from the University of Birmingham, and has a particular passion for ornithology, as well as social ecology. Since graduating, Andy has spent considerable time on the African continent, contributing to research projects in fields such as evolutionary sociality in birds, black rhinoceros behavioural ecology and linear infrastructure wildlife-mortality mitigation. Andy holds a Class 1 survey licence for bats, and has a broad range of consulting experience, working on large and small-scale projects across the UK.