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Great Crested Newt eDNA Sampling

Survey site:

Land North of Normandy Way, Hinckley, Leicestershire LE10 1SW

Client:

Morro Partnerships

Survey date:

17th April 2025

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council. The proposal is described as: The construction of up to 25 new residential dwellings along with access.

Survey methodology and legislation can be found in Appendix 4

<p>The site survey was undertaken by Victoria Walters BSc (Hons) MSc Graduate Ecologist (Natural England Protected Species Licence Numbers: [Bats] (Accredited Agent on Natural England Bat Licence Number: 2018-33540-CLS-CLS).</p>					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (m/h)	Rain
17 th April 2025	13	70	30	4	None

Ecological Survey Factor	Detailed using desk study and site survey (carried out under good weather conditions). Any specific limitations noted within relevant section. This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.
Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations	
<i>Scope of report</i>	<p>This report describes the suitability of the habitats on the site and any surveyed ponds for GCN and identifies the presence or absence of GCN in these ponds. It identifies possible constraints in relation to GCN as a result of the proposed development and summarises the requirements for further surveys and mitigation measures to inform subsequent mitigation proposals, achieve planning or other statutory consent and to comply with wildlife legislation.</p> <p>To achieve this, the following steps have been taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A field survey has been undertaken, including an assessment of the suitability of the site and any ponds within influencing distance of the site for GCN. • An outline of potential impacts on GCN has been provided, based on the proposed development. • Recommendations for further surveys and mitigation have been made, along with advice on the requirements for a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) for GCN if appropriate. <p>Opportunities for the enhancement of the site for GCN have been set out.</p>

<i>Site location and context</i>	The survey site is centred on National Grid Reference SP43199580 and has an area of approximately 0.8ha. The site is currently disused and is formed of a series of allotments. A number of small outbuildings in the form of timber sheds are seen, along with a garage in the western corner. As a result of a lack of management and maintenance, bramble scrub and self-set saplings are a common feature throughout the space, along with more mature trees. A pond is also found in the northeastern corner of the site. Habitats within the site are common and widespread. No protected or notable plant species were recorded during the survey.						
<i>Field survey results</i>	<p>Pond descriptions</p> <p>A review of OS and aerial imagery identified 1 pond within 500m of the site. This pond was subject to survey, however upon assessment, the pond had dried up. As a result of the pond being dry, a current Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessment or sampling of water for eDNA analysis could not be carried out.</p> <p>Full pond descriptions are provided in Table 1 below.</p> <p><i>Table 1: Surveyed Ponds</i></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Pond Ref</th> <th>Description</th> <th>Photograph</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Dried up</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Pond Ref	Description	Photograph	1	Dried up	
Pond Ref	Description	Photograph					
1	Dried up						
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	As the pond has dried up, during GCN breeding season, it is scoped out of being a potential breeding pond. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.						

<i>Recommendations</i>	<p>Owing to the pond being scoped out due to season dryness, GCN licencing is considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A staged approach will be adopted for vegetation clearance, whereby the vegetation will be strimmed to 15cm and left overnight to allow any amphibians to disperse. The vegetation can then be cleared to ground level and must be maintained at this level for the duration of construction to deter amphibians from the working area.• Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby aquatic habitats that amphibians could use.• Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.• If any common amphibians are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.• In the unlikely event that a great crested newt is identified, works must cease and advise must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.
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Appendix 1: Survey map



Appendix 2: Location map



Appendix 3: eDNA results

N/A

Appendix 4: Legislation and planning policy

LEGAL PROTECTION

The great crested newt receives full protection under Habitats Regulations through their inclusion on Schedule 2. Regulation 41 prohibits:

- Deliberate killing, injuring or capturing of Schedule 2 species
- Deliberate disturbance of species in such a way as:
- To impair their ability to survive, breed, or reproduce, or to rear or nurture young;
- To impair their ability to hibernate or migrate
- To affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species
- Damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place

This species are also listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act and they are additionally protected from:

- Intentional or reckless disturbance (at any level)
- Intentional or reckless obstruction of access to any place of shelter or protection
- Selling, offering or exposing for sale, possession or transporting for purpose of sale.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

The National Planning Policy Framework promotes sustainable development. The Framework specifies the need for protection of designated sites and priority habitats and species. An emphasis is also made on the need for ecological infrastructure through protection, restoration and re-creation. The protection and

recovery of priority species (considered likely to be those listed as UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species) is also listed as a requirement of planning policy.

In determining a planning application, planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by ensuring that: designated sites are protected from harm; there is appropriate mitigation or compensation where significant harm cannot be avoided; opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments are encouraged; and planning permission is refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats including aged or veteran trees and also ancient woodland.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and the Biodiversity Duty

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, requires all public bodies to have regard to biodiversity conservation when carrying out their functions. This is commonly referred to as the 'biodiversity duty'.

Section 41 of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of 'principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity'. This list is intended to assist decision makers such as public bodies in implementing their duty under Section 40 of the Act. Under the Act these habitats and species are regarded as a material consideration in determining planning applications. A developer must show that their protection has been adequately addressed within a development proposal.

EFFECT OF LEGISLATION AND POLICY ON DEVELOPMENT WORKS

A European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) issued by the relevant countryside agency (i.e. Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage) will be required for works likely to affect the breeding sites or resting places of great crested newts protected. A licence will also be required for operations liable to result in a level of disturbance which might impair their ability to undertake those activities mentioned above (e.g. survive, breed, rear young and hibernate). The licences are to allow derogation from the relevant legislation, but also to enable appropriate mitigation measures to be put in place and their efficacy to be monitored.

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