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Report for

The Bungalow, Hydes Lane, Hinckley, Leicestershire
Biodiversity & Protected Species Survey

Date of Report – 20th March 2009

Proprietors

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Protected Species Survey at The Bungalow, Hydes Lane

Name of Client: Mr E. Sykes

Address of Client: The Bungalow, Hydes Lane, Hinckley, Leicestershire, LE10 3DP

Name of Agent: Mr A. Statham

Address Of Agent: Garland Stud, Bagworth Road, Barlestone, Nr Nuneaton, Warwickshire, CV13 0JA

Date of Survey: 20th March 2009

Weather Conditions: 0% cloud, dry, sunny, slight breeze, 15^0C

Address of survey site: The Bungalow, Hydes Lane, Hinckley, Leicestershire, LE10 3DP

Planning Application Number: 09/00075/COU

Grid Reference of survey site: SP 4113 9234

Name of Surveyor: A.B.Gibney BSc (Hons), MIEEM

Licence Numbers: Great Crested Newt 20082993 issued by Natural England

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1) Background

1.1 Reason for survey

It is proposed to change the use of part of the site for siting 5 Gypsy caravans. A protected species survey (particularly for great crested newts *Triturus cristatus* and badgers *Meles meles*) was requested as part of the Planning Permission conditions to carry on the development.

1.2 Description of site

The site was on the edge of the Hinckley conurbation, and adjoined a detached bungalow. It consisted of hardstanding (gravel) and a grazed paddock. The site was surrounded by wooden panel fencing. The surrounding area was mainly agricultural with a mix of arable and permanent grass.

The paddock was grazed very short, and was species poor improved grassland.

There were no ponds or other water features within the proposed site.

There were three ponds shown on the map, within 500m of the proposed site, two to the south, and one to the north, adjoining the Ashby canal. To the south, one was a stocked fishing lake about 280m from the site, and the other was completely dried up. The pond to the north was a boating lake, about 400m from the proposed site, with fishing platforms. It was deep; steep sided, with no emergent vegetation and very little marginal vegetation.

2) Survey Methods

The grounds were searched for signs of Great Crested Newts (*Triturus cristatus*), by searching under logs, rocks, slabs and any other appropriate refuges, and a note was made of any appropriate newt habitat types. An assessment was made of the suitability for great crested newt, of the two ponds and associated terrestrial habitat that were within 500m of the proposed site.
Badgers- The area was searched for badger field signs. In particular grassland areas were searched for footprints, dung pits, snuffle holes and runways through the vegetation. Boundary hedges, walls and fences were searched for latrines. Runways under boundary fences were searched for stray hairs. Hedgerows and earth banks were searched for signs of sett building activity, including dung pits and hairs close to the sett entrance, footprints, discarded bedding and recent spoil heaps.
A note was made of any signs of other protected species, or whether there was any appropriate habitat for other protected species.

3) Results

3.1 General – The site was a poor habitat for biodiversity, being either gravel hardstanding, or heavily grazed paddock.

3.2 Great Crested Newt – There was no suitable terrestrial habitat for Great Crested Newts on the site. The ponds would be unsuitable as breeding ponds for great crested newts, and they were a long way from the proposed site, the nearest being 280m from the site.

3.3 Badgers – No evidence of badgers was found during the survey, on site, or within at least 30m of the site.

3.4 There was no evidence of any other protected species on the site, and there was no suitable habitat for any protected species.

4) Conclusions

4.1 The proposals would have no effect on the local biodiversity.

4.2 There was no evidence of great crested newts, and there was no suitable habitat for great crested newts on site, none of the ponds within 500m of the site would be suitable breeding ponds for great crested newts.

4.3 There was no evidence of badgers found.

4.4 There were no indications of any other protected species on the site.

5) Recommendations and Mitigations

None necessary

References and Bibliography

Gent,T. & Gibson,S. [Eds] (2003) *Herpetofauna's Workers' Manual* JNCC

Hill, D., Fasham, M., Tucker, G., Shewry, M. & Shaw, P. (Eds) (2006) *Handbook of Biodiversity Methods: Survey, Evaluation & Monitoring* Cambridge

Heaton, A. (1998) *Rare Wildlife in Leicestershire and Rutland* Kairos Press

Betts, C.J. (2001) *Checklist of Protected British Species* Christopher Betts Environmental Biology



Report Produced by
Alan Bernard Gibney BSc (Hons), MIEEM - Ecologist (Curious Ecologists)

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Table 1. Habitat evaluation of Ponds for great crested newt. Sites, which matched suitability criteria for a given attribute, are marked as favourable (+); those, which did not, are marked as unfavourable (-).

Survey Criteria	Optimal characteristics (from Langton *et al.* 2001)	Fishing Lake South of site	Fishing Lake North of site
Terrestrial habitat	Close proximity to grassland, scrub, woodland, hedgerows *etc.*, for cover and feeding. Close proximity to other ponds.	-	-
Accessibility/ barriers	Easily accessible margins and few or no barriers to movement.	-	-
Pond size	Small to medium sized (50-250m^2)	-	-
Water depth	Some deep and some shallow water. Seasonally dry ponds can be favoured.	-	-
Water quality	Good water quality preferred.	-	-
Shade/cover	Mixture of shaded and open areas.	-	+
Marginal vegetation	Emergent vegetation for cover, shade and food sources. 25% cover is good.	-	-
Foods	Healthy invertebrate fauna and amphibian spawn on which to feed.	-	-
Aquatic vegetation	Submerged vegetation on which newts can lay eggs. 60% cover is good.	-	-
Predators: waterbirds	Absence of water birds (may predate and consume eggs and larvae).	-	-
Predators: fish	Absence of fish (may predate and consume eggs and larvae).	-	-

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Appendix 1: Photographs of Site



Photo1 - Proposed Gypsy Site



Photo 2 - Grazed Paddock

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