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Report for

Land at Willow Industrial Park, Stoke Golding, Leicestershire

Biodiversity and Protected Species Survey

Date of Report – 8th December 2008

Proprietors

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Biodiversity and Protected Species Survey at Willow Industrial Park, Stoke Golding

Name of Client: Autowash Engineering, contact Haydon Davies

Address of Client: Midland House, Willow Park, Stoke Golding, Nr Nuneaton Warks, CV13 6EU

Name of Agent: Chandlers Building Consultants, contact Iain Loveridge

Address Of Agent: 40 Barons Close, Kirby Muxloe, Leicester, LE9 2BW

Date of Survey: 8th December 2008

Weather Conditions: 100% cloud, cold, windy, 0.5^0C

Address of survey site: Land adjoining Midland House, Willow Park, Stoke Golding, Nr Nuneaton Warks, CV13 6EU

Planning Application Number:

Grid Reference of survey site: SP 3919 9749

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

Licence Numbers: Great Crested Newt 20082993 & Bat 20083261 issued by Natural England

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1) Background

1.1 Reason for survey

It is proposed to demolish the existing sheds/workshops and build an industrial unit at some time in the future. A biodiversity and protected species survey was requested as part of the Planning Permission conditions to carry on the development.

1.2 Description of site

The site was roughly oblong in shape measuring about 50m in length and about 30m at it's widest. The site was a former goods yard to a railway, and was mainly hard standing (gravel) with a ditch and hedgerow on the western boundary. The sheds/workshops, which it is proposed to demolish, are in the southeast corner of the site. There was no vegetation (other than the hedge, which is unaffected by the development) on the proposed site.

There were 5 water bodies situated within 500m of the site. [See table 1 for assessment of water-bodies]. One was a marina (No. 1- 50m NE of site), which was part of the nearby Ashby Canal, and the other 4 (No 2 was about 350m SW of site, south of Station road, Nos. 3-5 were about 250m W of site) were commercial fishing lakes which were heavily stocked with fish, all would be unsuitable for Great Crested Newt (T*riturus cristatus*) breeding ponds.

1.3 Description of the buildings

There were two buildings; both were tall, single storey buildings, which were used as workshops/ storage. Both had a mix of corrugated metal/asbestos walls on top of 1.5m single layer concrete block walls. The roofs were also corrugated asbestos, supported on a metal angle-iron framework. There were no ceilings, however there were some linings to some of the walls and roof. There was one roof height with equal pitches on each building. There were no soffits, bargeboards or guttering. Neither building was heated.

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2) Survey Methods

2.1 Methods and Limitations

The buildings were searched in a systematic pattern, all available spaces were searched, looking for signs of bats, in particular droppings, insect remains (where bats have fed), lack of spiders' webs (where bats have roosted), the bats themselves and body oils stains (where bats have squeezed through gaps). Particular attention was paid to undisturbed surfaces, walls (where bat droppings sometimes stick) and window sills (both inside and outside the buildings). The search was carried out with a high power torch inside the building and binoculars on the outside (particularly searching under eaves). All cavities were checked using an endoscope to establish if anything was within them. Bats would not be active at this time of year so an emergence survey could not be carried out.

Signs of birds were also noted, particularly old nests.

The site was searched for signs of Great Crested Newts, and particular attention was paid to habitat type and any suitable refugia, such as logs and rocks. It was not the correct time of year to search for adult newts, or their eggs and larvae.

A note was made of any signs of other protected species, or whether there was any appropriate habitat for other protected species.

The water-bodies that were within 500m of the proposed site were assessed for their suitability as great crested newt breeding ponds.

3) Results

3.1 Phase 1 habitat types found on the proposed site (letter/number in bracket refers to habitat codes from *Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey 2007*: The habitats found on the proposed site was 'built-up area (J3.6), bare ground (J4), ditch (G1.1) and species poor defunct hedgerow (J2.2.2)'. All habitats categorise the proposed site as a 'site of limited wildlife interest'.

3.2 Bats – There was no evidence found of bats using sheds/workshops and they seemed unsuitable for bats to use as roost sites. There were webs throughout and the temperatures of the buildings would vary too widely for bats to use them as roosts.

3.3 Birds – There were no signs of nests in or on either building, and they were both regularly used which would be likely to prevent birds attempting to nest in either building.

3.4 Great Crested Newt – There was no suitable terrestrial habitat for Great Crested Newts on the site. The water-bodies within 500m of the proposed site were unsuitable as breeding ponds for Great Crested Newts.

3.5 There was no evidence of any other protected species on the site.

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4) Conclusions

4.1 The habitats found on the proposed site were poor, the hedge would be considered the most important and is unaffected by the proposals.
4.2 The buildings affected by the proposals had not been used as a roost by bats, and would be unlikely to provide a suitable roost site for bats.
4.3 There was no evidence of birds nests found on the site, and the only suitable nest sites was the hedge which is unaffected by the proposed development.
4.4 The proposed site would be considered to be of very low value as a habitat for newts (Great crested newt mitigation guidelines) and the water-bodies in the area are unlikely to be breeding ponds for great crested newts.
4.5 There were no indications of any other protected species on the site.

5) Recommendations and Mitigations

None necessary

References & Bibliography

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. [ed.] (1999) *The Bat Workers' Manual* JNCC

K.Parsons (ed.) (2007) *Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines* Bat Conservation Trust

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

English Nature (2001) *Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines* English Nature

Langton, T., Beckett, C. & Foster, J. (2001) *Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook*. Froglife, Halesworth

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

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

Anon. (2007) *Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey – a technique for environmental audit* JNCC

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

Table 1. Habitat evaluation of water bodies 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)	Water bodies				
		1	2	3	4	5
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



Proposed Site



Example of nearby fishing lake

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