



Great Crested Newt Reasonable Avoidance Measures Statement

Peckleton Barn

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0. Executive Summary

This report has been prepared at the request of Toby Morrison. It relates to the potential presence of great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) and other amphibians at the proposed development site located at Peckleton Barn, Church Road, Peckleton, Leicester, LE9 7RA.

The report has been prepared in support of a planning application for the construction of a new stable building together with associated landscaping. The proposals will result in the loss of a small area of modified grassland and the creation of mixed scrub and hedgerow planting. As no specific great crested newt survey information has been provided, this document outlines Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) to minimise the risk of harm to amphibians during construction.



Contents

0. Executive Summary	2
1. Introduction	4
1.1 Report Rationale	4
1.2 Site Description and Works	4
1.3 Previous Surveys	6
2. Impact Assessment	7
3. Method Statement	8
4. References	12
5. Appendices	13
Appendix A: Site Plans	14
Appendix B: Legislation and Policy	15
6. Notice to Readers: Conditions of this Report	16

1. Introduction

1.1 Report Rationale

This report has been prepared at the request of Toby Morrison. It relates to the potential presence of great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) and other amphibians at the proposed development site located at Peckleton Barn, Church Road, Peckleton, Leicester, LE9 7RA.

This report has been prepared to provide a precautionary Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) Method Statement to minimise the risk of harm to amphibians during the proposed construction works. No dedicated great crested newt survey data has been made available, therefore the recommendations are based on the habitats present within the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and apply a precautionary approach.

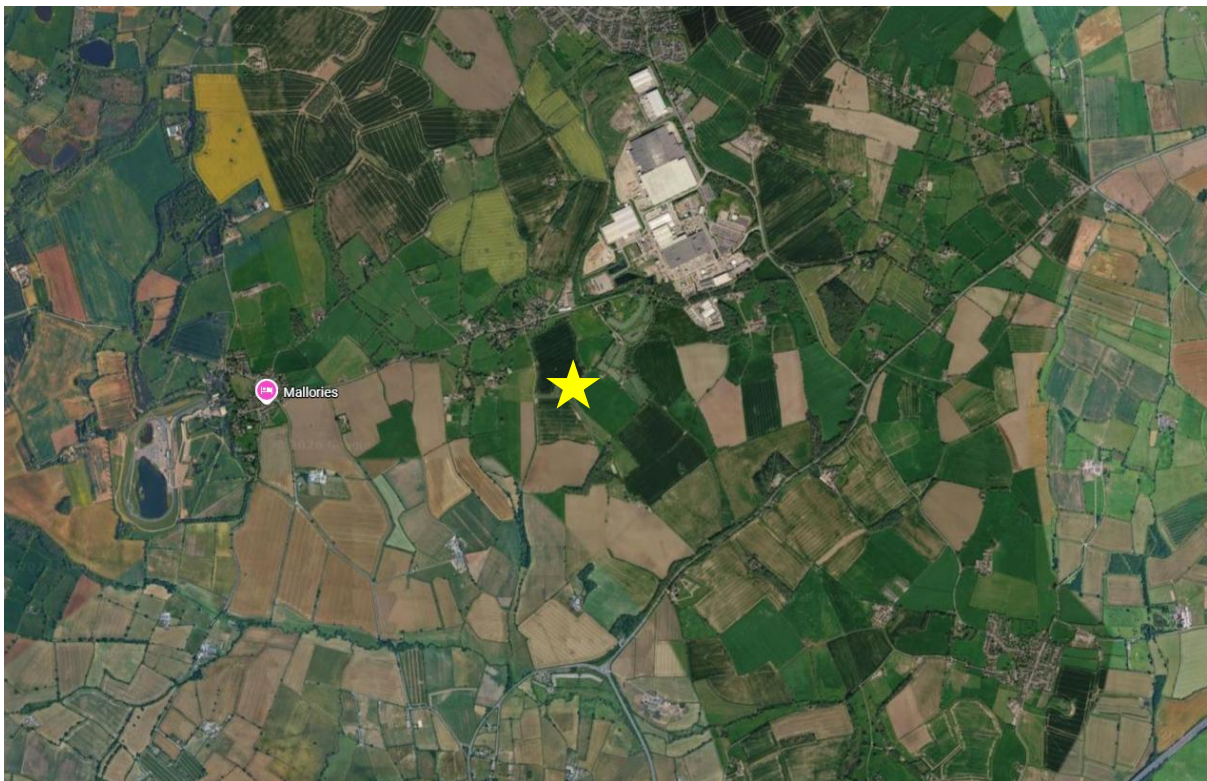
1.2 Site Description and Works

The site is located at Peckleton Barn, Church Road, Peckleton, Leicester, LE9 7RA. The site comprises an existing residential property with associated hardstanding, areas of vegetated garden and extensive areas of modified grassland. The surrounding landscape is predominantly rural in character and comprises agricultural land, residential properties and associated grassland habitats. This report has been prepared in support of a planning application for the construction of a new stable facility together with associated soft landscaping. The proposals will result in the loss of a small area of modified grassland and the creation of new landscaping, including mixed scrub and hedgerow planting.

Figure 1: An aerial map showing the location of the surveyed site (outlined in red) in relation to the local landscape.



Figure 2: An aerial map showing the location of the surveyed site (yellow star) in relation to the wider landscape.



1.3 Previous Surveys

Eco 360 has not been provided with any dedicated great crested newt survey information for the site. The information available comprises a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment prepared by ACP Consultants following a habitat survey undertaken in July 2025.

Habitats identified within the application site include:

- Buildings
- Other developed land (hardstanding)
- Modified grassland
- Vegetated garden

The proposed development will result in the loss of a small area of modified grassland. In the absence of species survey information, a precautionary approach is recommended during construction.

2. Impact Assessment

The proposed development will involve the removal of a limited area of modified grassland together with associated groundworks required for construction of the proposed stable building.

Although no dedicated great crested newt surveys or pond assessments have been undertaken, terrestrial habitats within the site could be used opportunistically by common amphibian species and, potentially, great crested newts dispersing through the wider landscape. Construction activities, vegetation clearance and excavation therefore have the potential to cause accidental injury or mortality should amphibians be present.

The area of habitat affected is relatively small and the proposals include habitat enhancement through the creation of approximately 360m² of mixed scrub together with new hedgerow planting, resulting in an overall biodiversity net gain of **10.55%**. Subject to implementation of the precautionary measures detailed within Section 3, significant impacts upon amphibians are considered unlikely.

3. Method Statement

The site contains potential for any terrestrial amphibians, including great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*). Therefore, the method statement (as outlined below) is deemed the most suitable option for this project. This method statement needs to be adhered to ensure that no amphibians get harmed by the works.

The following methods should be adhered to:

- Keep the vegetation below 15cm in height to ensure that amphibians are deterred from using the site.
- Prior to day one of the works onsite, one artificial hibernaculum will need to be created just offsite. The specification for this is found below.
- On day one of the works, a toolbox talk will be undertaken by a licenced great crested newt ecologist. This will educate contractors in relation to the amphibians that could be encountered and the legislation covering them. Associated documentation will be left with the site manager/project manager. This documentation will include contact details for Eco 360 and the licenced ecologist appointed to the project.
- Prior to the commencement of the construction works, a fingertip search of the area will be undertaken by a licenced great crested newt ecologist. Any rubble on site will need to be removed by hand, under the supervision of the licenced ecologist.

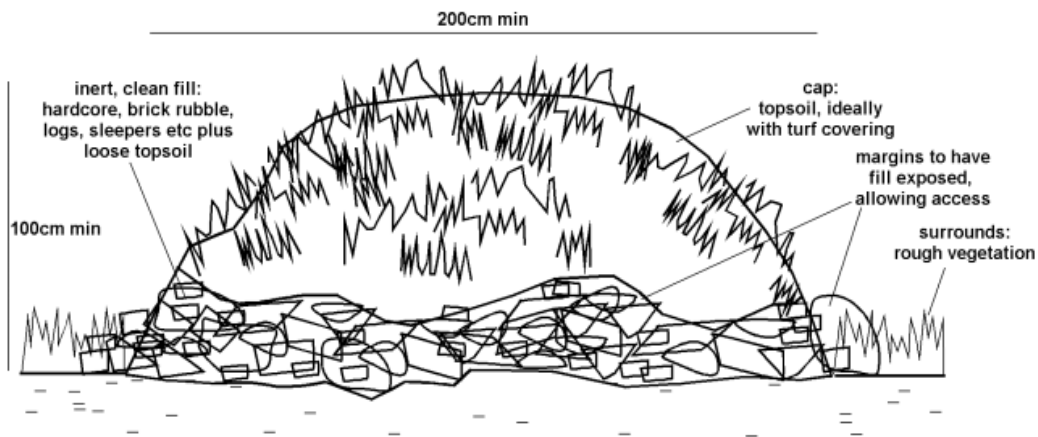
The overnight temperature before this fingertip search is required to be 5°C or higher. This is to ensure that no hibernating amphibians are affected by the works and therefore put at undue risk by translocation.

- Any open excavations and trenches should be backfilled before nightfall or, alternatively, escape ramps should be installed to allow newts to escape if they become trapped. If any amphibians are found within trenches dug into the ground, the licenced ecologist shall be contacted, and these amphibians translocated to the chosen site. In addition to this, if any great crested newts are found during the construction phase, then works will stop immediately and the licenced ecologist contacted.
- At the end of every working day, all construction materials need to be stored on raised platforms (i.e. pallets). This is to deter the amphibians from using the construction materials as temporary resting sites.
- At the completion of the works, Eco 360 will produce a letter statement to detail all amphibians captured and translocated. This will include photographic evidence of the works, the amphibians translocated and the site at the completion of the works.

Please note: If any great crested newts are encountered during the above methods, then works need to cease, with both the Local Planning Authority and Natural England contacted for more information.

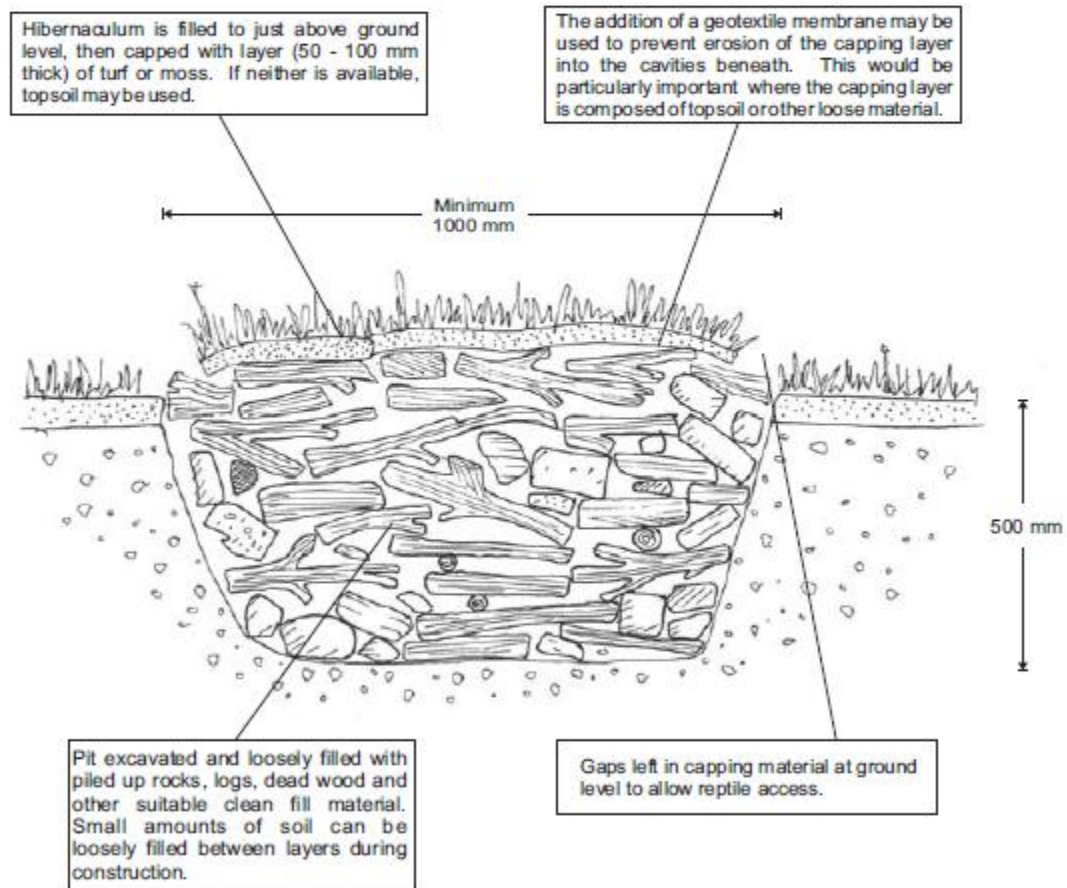
It is recommended as much scrubland, hedgerows, woodland, and/or rough grassland as possible is retained or planted around the site. It is also recommended that at least one hibernaculum is included into the design scheme. These are usually comprised of rubble, rock, log piles and earth banks. An example design for the hibernaculum can be seen within **Figure 3** and subsequent diagrams.

Figure 3: A diagram illustrating the recommended hibernacula (GCN Mitigation Guidelines)



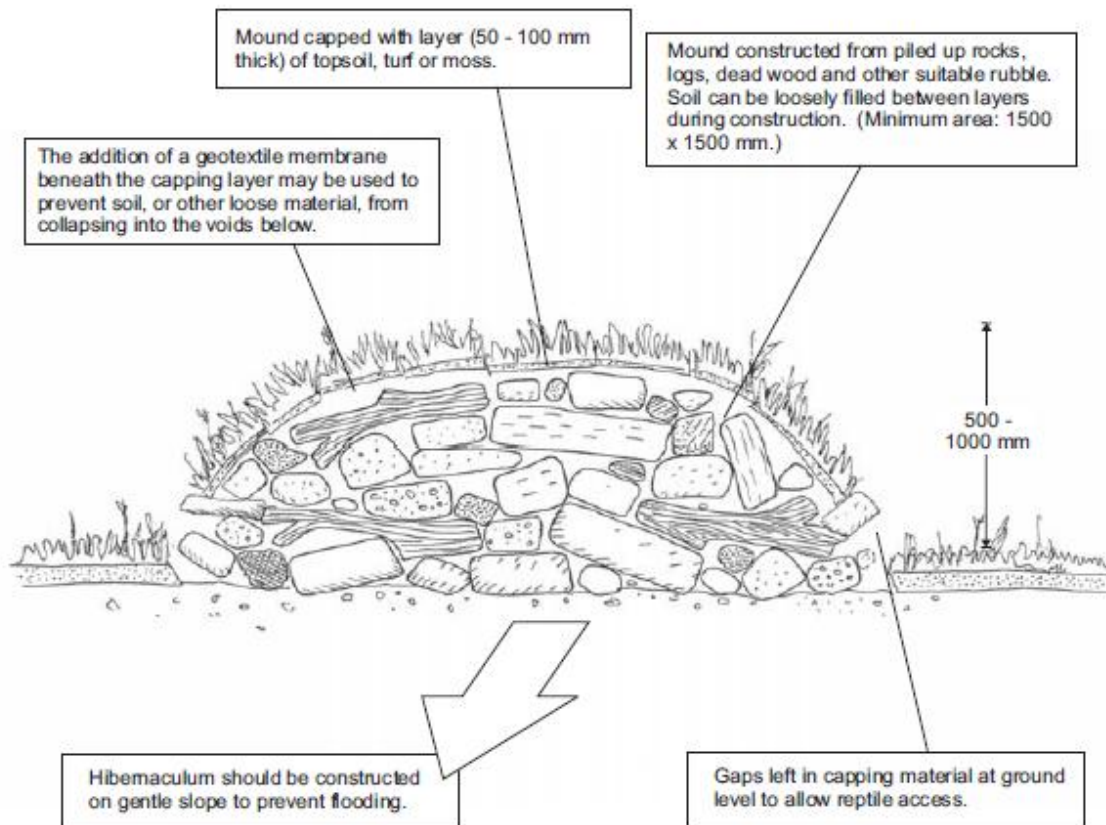
Hibernaculum on free-draining ground

Where ground conditions allow, the hibernaculum should be incorporated into a shallow pit. This design is more likely to remain frost-free, and will be less obtrusive and thus unlikely to be subject to interference.



Hibernaculum on impermeable ground

Where ground conditions are impermeable, then an 'above-ground' or mounded design should be utilised in order to prevent the hibernaculum from flooding. This design should also be used if it is not possible to excavate a pit for any other reason.



4. References

Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000).

Joint Nature Conservation Committee (1990). Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey.

Natural England (2001). Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines.

The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations 1994. HMSO.

Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981).

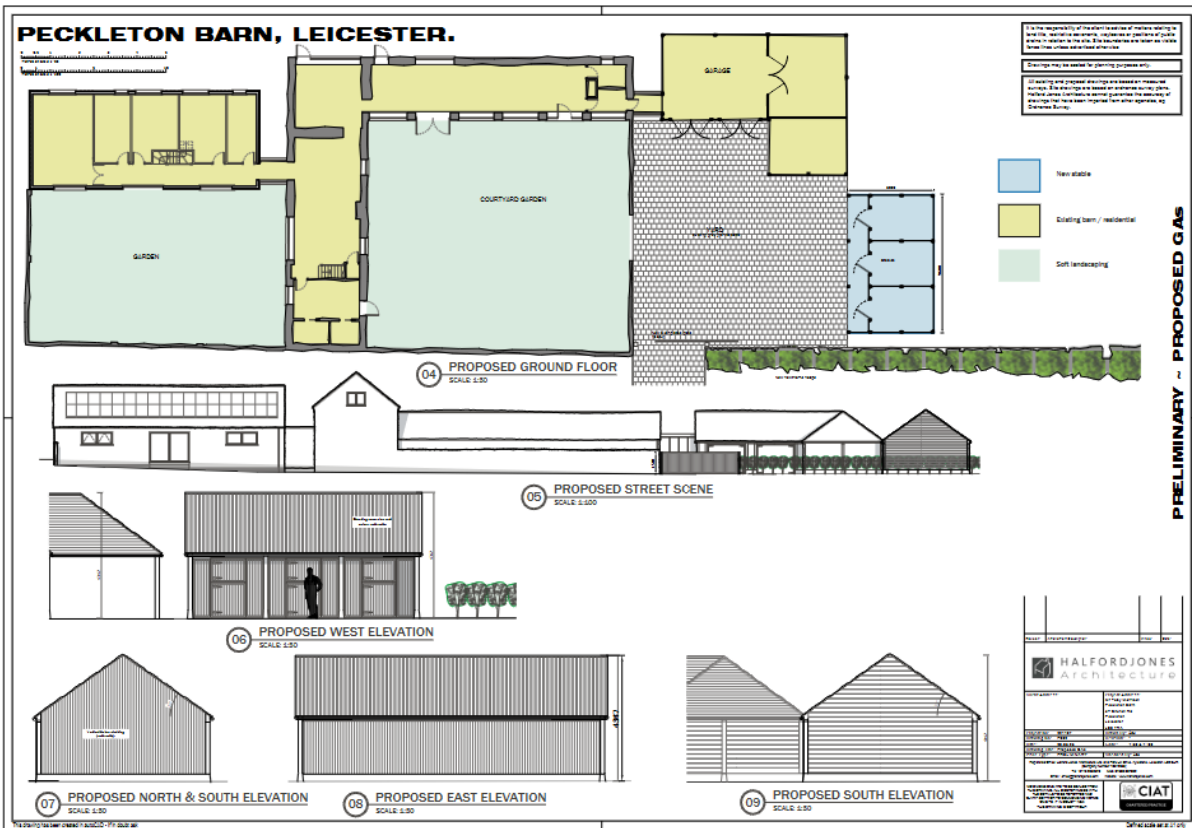
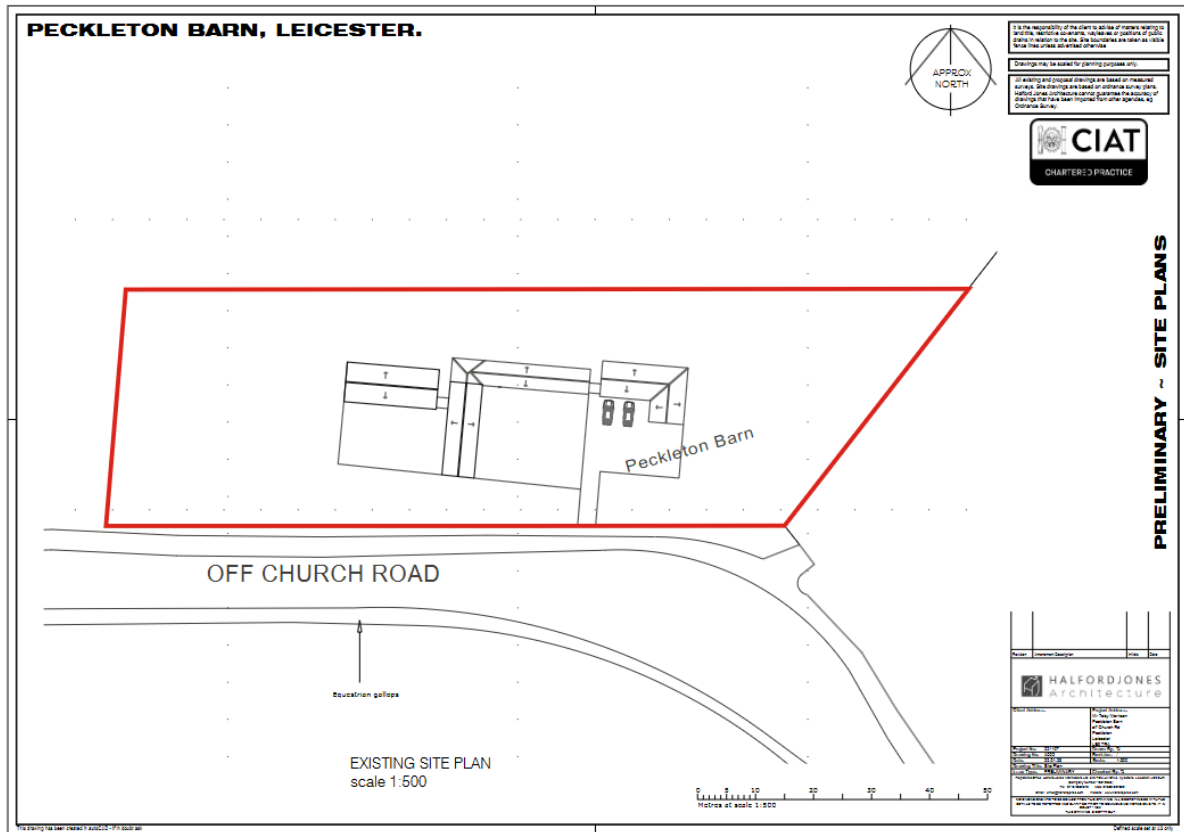
Williams, P. (2013). GCN eDNA Protocol. Freshwater Habitats Trust.

5. Appendices

Appendix A: Site Plans

Appendix B: Legislation and Policy

Appendix A: Site Plans



Appendix B: Legislation and Policy

The great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*) is fully protected under a variety of legislation and conventions. These include:

- Bern Convention (Appendix II)
- Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended)
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017
- EU Habitats Directive (Annex II and IV)
- Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004
- NERC Act 2006 (Section 41 England; Section 42 Wales)
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

In addition to this, the great crested newt has been listed as a priority species on the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP).

This legislation covers all aspects of newt life stages (eggs, efts and adult newts) and makes it illegal to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter, protection or breeding, and to intentionally disturb a great crested newt while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose.

Licenses can be obtained from Natural England (DEFRA) under the Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations 1994, to permit activities for the purposes of:

- Regulation 44(2)(e): Preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment, or
- Regulation 44(2)(f): Preventing the spread of disease
- Regulation 44(2)(g): Preventing serious damage to any form of property or fisheries

Or

- If there is no satisfactory alternative.

The above regulations allow people to carry out activities which would otherwise be illegal.

6. Notice to Readers: Conditions of this Report

All reports are certified products and cannot be shown, copied, or distributed to third parties without the written permission of Eco 360. No liability is accepted for the contents of the report, other than to that of the client(s).

Eco 360 agrees to supply ecological consulting services and advice of a preliminary or thorough nature as advised or commissioned. Upon commissioning Eco 360 to undertake the work, the client(s) grant access to the site upon the agreed date. If no site access is available upon this date, Eco 360 holds the right to charge the client(s) for lost staffing time and additional travel costs.

Eco 360 undertake all site surveys with reasonable skill, care, and diligence, within the terms of the contract that has been agreed with the client and abiding by Eco 360's Terms and Conditions. The actions of the surveyors on site, and during the production of the report, were undertaken in accordance with the Code of Professional Conduct for the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management.

The latest good practice guidelines put in place by Natural England or the relevant statutory conservation bodies have been followed by the surveyors on site. If those methodologies fail to identify a protected species during the survey efforts, no responsibility can be attributed to Eco 360. If any of these guidelines are adapted between the date(s) of the surveys being undertaken and the submission of this report, then Eco 360 takes no responsibility for this.

Should any equipment be damaged or lost on site at the fault of the client(s), then Eco 360 withholds the right to charge 100% above the current market value for that exact product or the nearest similar product.

The survey results purport the current status of the site and its potential for protected species utilisation at the time of surveying. It should not be viewed as a complete list of the possible flora and fauna species that could be using the site at different times of the year.

Eco 360 has been provided with full payment for this report and thus the product has been released to the client(s) for the purpose of their planning application. If any part of the report is lost or altered without the written permission of Eco 360, then the entire report becomes invalid. Due to the potential for continual change within the natural world, this report is valid for **2 years only** from the date of the last survey visit. If this report is submitted after the 2-year deadline, then a further updated inspection will be required to ascertain whether the site remains in the same condition as it was when initially inspected.

No reliance should be made on any such comments in relation to the structural integrity of the features located on the surveyed site. All information within the report is based solely on evidence that has been found on site during the service provided. No individual opinion or inference will be made other than that of the suitably qualified ecologist appointed to the project.