



Precautionary Working Methods Statement (PWMS)

Great Crested Newts (*Triturus cristatus*)

Project: Proposed Replacement Summerhouse

Site Address: Tyes Place, Brantridge Lane, Staplefield, RH17 6EW

Applicant: Dominic Samengo-Turner

Date: 28th May 2026

1. Introduction

This Precautionary Working Methods Statement (PWMS) has been prepared in support of a planning application for the **removal of an existing dilapidated summerhouse and the construction of a replacement summerhouse** within a domestic garden.

The site lies within a designated Impact Risk Zone for Great Crested Newts (GCN). In the absence of detailed ecological surveys, a precautionary approach will be adopted to ensure that the proposed works are undertaken in a manner that avoids harm to protected species.

This document sets out reasonable avoidance measures proportionate to the scale and nature of the development.

2. Purpose and Objectives

The objectives of this PWMS are to:

- Minimise the risk of harm to Great Crested Newts during demolition and construction works
- Ensure works are completed in accordance with relevant wildlife legislation
- Provide clear and practical guidance for contractors undertaking the works

3. Site Description



The application site comprises a private residential garden consisting primarily of maintained lawn and planting beds. The site currently contains a **dilapidated timber summerhouse**, which is to be removed and replaced.

Key characteristics:

- No ponds or waterbodies are present within the application site
- The site is regularly maintained and subject to human activity
- The existing structure is in poor condition and sits within a managed garden environment
- Surrounding land comprises residential properties and managed gardens

While the habitat within the site is considered to be of low suitability for GCN, there remains a small possibility of individuals dispersing through the wider area.

4. Risk Assessment

Due to the site's location within a GCN Impact Risk Zone, there is a **low but precautionary risk** that Great Crested Newts could occasionally be present.

The proposed works involve:

- Removal of an existing above-ground structure
- Limited ground disturbance associated with the new summerhouse

The existing structure may provide incidental refuge (e.g. beneath the base or within debris), therefore a precautionary method of working is considered appropriate.

5. Reasonable Avoidance Measures

5.1 Timing of Works

- Works will be undertaken during **daylight hours only**
- Night-time working will be avoided
- Particular care will be taken during **mild and wet conditions**, when amphibian activity may increase



5.2 Removal of Existing Summerhouse

- The structure will be **carefully dismantled by hand or using light tools**, avoiding sudden or destructive collapse
- Any debris or materials in contact with the ground will be **lifted carefully and checked visually before removal**
- The base area beneath the structure will be inspected prior to further works

5.3 Site Preparation and Good Practice

- The working area will be kept **tidy and free from unnecessary debris**
- Materials will be stored in an organised manner and **raised off the ground where practicable** (e.g. on pallets)
- Demolition and construction materials will not be left in unmanaged piles

5.4 Vegetation Clearance

Where vegetation clearance is required:

- Clearance will be undertaken using a **two-stage approach**:
 - Initial cut to approximately **150mm above ground level**
 - Followed by a second cut to ground level after a short delay
- Vegetation will be cleared in a **directional manner**, moving from the centre of the site outward

5.5 Excavations and Groundworks

- Any excavations left open overnight will either:
 - Be **securely covered**, or
 - Include a **gentle escape ramp** (e.g. a plank)
- All excavations will be **visually inspected each morning** prior to recommencing works



5.6 Storage of Materials

- Materials will not be stored directly on bare ground where possible
 - Creation of temporary refuges (e.g. timber stacks, rubble piles) will be avoided
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5.7 Workforce Awareness

- All contractors will be made aware of this PWMS prior to works commencing
 - Contractors will be informed of:
 - The legal protection afforded to Great Crested Newts
 - The procedure to follow if a newt is encountered
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6. Procedure if a Newt is Encountered

In the unlikely event that a Great Crested Newt (or any amphibian) is found:

1. **All works in the immediate area will stop immediately**
 2. The animal will **not be handled or harmed**
 3. The newt will be allowed to move away naturally
 4. If the animal does not move away, or further advice is required, a **designated Ecologist will be contacted**
 5. Works will only recommence once it is confirmed safe to do so
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7. Ecological Oversight

Given the small scale and low-risk nature of the development:

- Continuous ecological supervision is **not considered necessary**
 - A **designated Ecologist will be available on a call-off basis** should advice be required during the works.
 - Designated Ecologist – Lizard Landscape Design
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8. Conclusion

The proposed development involves the replacement of an existing dilapidated structure within a managed residential garden of low ecological value.

By implementing the precautionary measures outlined in this document, the risk of harm to Great Crested Newts will be effectively minimised during both the removal of the existing summerhouse and construction of the new structure.

This approach is considered proportionate and appropriate to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and planning requirements.