
Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) Statement

Great Crested Newt –
Oaklands Farm

April 2025

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Management Ltd
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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 In April 2025, Seasons Ecology was instructed by Arena Global Management Ltd, to produce a Great Crested Newt Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) Statement in response to comments from NatureSpace, dated 25th March 2025, on *DM/24/3065 Re-positioning and minor amendments to the owner's/manager's house, already permitted under planning application reference DM/18/2071, Oaklands Farm, Slaugham Lane, Warninglid, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RM17 5TJ*.
- 1.1.2 A Preliminary Ecology Appraisal of the site was undertaken by Arbtech, dated 10th December 2024, recommending presence/absence surveys of nearby ponds. However, owing to barriers within the landscape, the nature of the closest ponds and the suboptimal habitats within the area of the proposed works, NatureSpace concluded that the most appropriate mitigation for great crested newt is to follow a series of RAMs.
- 1.1.3 This Statement provides RAMs for the pre-construction and construction phases of the proposed development of the site for one residential dwelling, replacing the existing dwelling.
- 1.1.4 A summary of relevant legislation and species information is provided in Annex 1.

1.2 Objectives

- 1.2.1 This RAMs Statement sets out required measures to be implemented prior to and during the construction works to ensure the protection of great crested newts (and other fauna, where appropriate).
- 1.2.2 This document is aimed at all site contractors that will be involved in the works. The following tables detail the sequence of works that will be undertaken prior to (Section 2) and during (Section 3) construction. The timing takes into consideration seasonal constraints posed by great crested newts.
- 1.2.3 The area to which this RAMs Statement applies is shown at Annex 2.



2. Precautionary Measures Pre-Construction

Table 1: Sequence of measures to be implemented prior to any construction works commencing.

Stage	Precautionary Measure	Details/Methods	Responsibility	Stage Completed? Person(s) responsible to sign & date to confirm completion
1	Identify and appoint persons responsible for ensuring the implementation of RAMs	Appoint the following: • <u>Ecologist</u> (external professional to provide an advisory role) • <u>Ecological Clerk of Works</u> (external professional to prepare the site and provide a supervisory role) • <u>Biodiversity Champion</u> (member of the main site contracting team who will be present for the duration of the works to be responsible for the implementation of RAMs). Complete contact details in Annex 3.	Main site contractor	
2	Management of low suitability habitat on site (grassland)	The landowner/main site contractor should ensure that the low suitability habitat (grassland across the site) within the works areas is maintained (such as ongoing cutting) prior to works starting to maintain low/negligible suitability to amphibians (refer to METHOD STATEMENT 1 below).	Landowner (responsibility moves to main site contractor once appointed)	
3	Provide Ecological Toolbox Talk to site staff	Ecological Clerk of Works to provide initial briefing (the Ecological Toolbox Talk) to site staff or the Biodiversity Champion, to explain: • The species at risk • Relevant legislation • Suitable habitats on site • Method statements for habitats	Ecological Clerk of Works and Biodiversity Champion	



Stage	Precautionary Measure	Details/Methods	Responsibility	Stage Completed? Person(s) responsible to sign & date to confirm completion
		The Ecological Clerk of Works will ensure copies of this RAMs Statement and species identification guidance (Annex 4) is available on site as a reference document at all times. Subsequent talks to new staff to be provided by the Biodiversity Champion during all site inductions.		
4	Installation of Heras fencing (or similar)	Site contractors to install Heras fencing (or similar) around construction footprint/development site boundaries to ensure no accidental damage to adjacent on and off-site habitats.	Main site contractor	
5	Pollution Control Method Statement	Site contractors to provide and implement a Pollution Control Method Statement, if appropriate, to ensure that run-off, dust and chemical pollution incidents are avoided, and managed where accidents occur, including: • Ensuring competency of all site staff • Methods of working in alignment with the Environment Agency's Pollution Prevention Guidelines • Adherence to Health and Safety legislation and the Control of Pollution Act • Effective contingency plans	Main site contractor	
6	Refuge/Hibernacula Creation	Prior to any works commencing, one refuge/hibernacula will be created along the west site boundary, on the edge of the adjacent woodland. Annex 5 provides a specification for the refuge/hibernaculum to be constructed (refer to Annex 2 for location).	Ecological Clerk of Works	



Stage	Precautionary Measure	Details/Methods	Responsibility	Stage Completed? Person(s) responsible to sign & date to confirm completion
		The new refuge/hibernaculum will form the receptor site for any animals found during the works (common amphibian and reptile species, and small mammals).		
7	Implement METHOD STATEMENTS 1-4 for habitat removal	METHOD STATEMENT 1 - GRASSLAND POTENTIAL FORAGING AND COMMUTING HABITAT – NO TIMING CONSTRAINTS - The appointed Ecological Clerk of Works will carry out a hand search of all grassland on site to be removed, with any potential refuges (logs, rocks etc.) checked beneath and then removed. - The grass and any ruderal vegetation, will then be directionally cut to a height of around 5cm, moving from one side of the site to the other, under the supervision of the Ecological Clerk of Works. - Directional cutting will be repeated twice monthly during the growing season, up to the start of construction, to prevent taller growth and suitability to great crested newt (and other fauna). Should any fauna be found, then these will be relocated to the purpose-built refuge/hibernacula along the west site boundary (see 6 above).	Landowner/Biodiversity Champion/ Ecological Clerk of Works	



Stage	Precautionary Measure	Details/Methods	Responsibility	Stage Completed? Person(s) responsible to sign & date to confirm completion
		Should a great crested newt be found at any stage of the works, works will cease, and advice sought from the Ecologist.		
		METHOD STATEMENT 2 – RESIDENTIAL DWELLING (B1) AND LIVESTOCK SHELTER (B2), INCLUDING HAY PILES POTENTIAL REFUGE AND HIBERNATION HABITAT – FOOTINGS SHOULD BE REMOVED BETWEEN MARCH AND OCTOBER, WHERE POSSIBLE - The Ecological Clerk of Works will carry out a hand search of hay piles located within the livestock shelter and elsewhere on site, if removal is required, before they are removed off site, or relocated elsewhere on site. - Once demolition of the existing residential dwelling and livestock shelter have reached ground level, the Ecological Clerk of Works will carry out an inspection and hand search of any suitable refuge/hibernacula provided by the footings of the dwelling/livestock shelter. - Once searched, the footings will be dug out by excavator, in the presence of the Ecological Clerk of Works, with further hand searches as deemed necessary by the Ecological Clerk of Works.	Biodiversity Champion/ Ecological Clerk of Works	



Stage	Precautionary Measure	Details/Methods	Responsibility	Stage Completed? Person(s) responsible to sign & date to confirm completion
		Should any fauna be found, then these will be relocated to the purpose-built refuge/hibernacula along the west site boundary (see 6 above). Should a great crested newt be found at any stage of the works, works will cease, and advice sought from the Ecologist.		
		METHOD STATEMENT 3 – GRAVEL DRIVEWAY, BRICK PAVING, BARE GROUND AND MANURE PILES POTENTIAL FORAGING AND COMMUTING HABITAT, LIMITED REFUGE HABITAT – NO TIMING CONSTRAINTS - The Ecological Clerk of Works will walk these areas prior to removal, to identify any potential refuge habitat. - Selective areas may need to be hand searched by the Ecological Clerk of Works prior to removal. - The Ecological Clerk of Works will carry out a search of manure piles located on bare ground, if removal is required, before they are removed off site, or relocated elsewhere on site. Should any fauna be found, then these will be relocated to the purpose-built refuge/hibernacula along the west site boundary (see 6 above). Should a great crested newt be found at any stage of the works, works will cease, and advice sought from the Ecologist.	Biodiversity Champion/ Ecological Clerk of Works	



Stage	Precautionary Measure	Details/Methods	Responsibility	Stage Completed? Person(s) responsible to sign & date to confirm completion
		METHOD STATEMENT 4 - SCRUB POTENTIAL REFUGE AND HIBERNATION HABITAT – REMOVE BETWEEN MARCH AND OCTOBER, WHERE POSSIBLE - Should scrub removal occur between 1st March and 31st August, then the Ecological Clerk of Works will carry out a check for nesting birds. - Should evidence of nesting birds be found, then the Ecological Clerk of Works will report back to the Biodiversity Champion informing of the location of the nest(s). - An exclusion zone will be set up around the nest(s) as advised by the Ecological Clerk of Works. - The nest(s) will be monitored weekly by the Ecological Clerk of Works until all chicks have fledged and the nest is deemed empty. - The exclusion zone will then be removed, and works can continue. - Scrub will be cut using hand tools to 15cm above ground level. - The Ecological Clerk of Works will carry out hand searches, then remaining above and below-ground	Biodiversity Champion/ Ecological Clerk of Works	



Stage	Precautionary Measure	Details/Methods	Responsibility	Stage Completed? Person(s) responsible to sign & date to confirm completion
		structures will be removed with the use of a mini-digger under the supervision of the Ecological Clerk of Works. Should any fauna be found, then these will be relocated to the purpose-built refuge/hibernacula along the west site boundary (see 6 above). Should a great crested newt be found at any stage of the works, works will cease, and advice sought from the Ecologist.		



3. Precautionary Measures During Construction

Table 2: Sequence of measures to be implemented during the works

Timing	Precautionary measure	Details/methods	Responsibility	Stage completed? – person(s) responsible to sign & date to confirm completion
At all times during works	Material storage	The Biodiversity Champion will be responsible for ensuring that any materials stored on site are stored off the ground on pallets and moved regularly to prevent them from being used for shelter by amphibians.	Biodiversity Champion	
At all times during works	Closure of open trenches	The Biodiversity Champion will be responsible for ensuring that any shallow trenches (less than 1m deep) or open pipework left overnight are provided with a ramp at a suitable angle to allow any animals to escape. Any deeper trenches will be covered.	Biodiversity Champion	
Daily during works	Monitoring and site inspections	The Biodiversity Champion will carry out daily inspections of the site to include: • A walkover of the area prior to works commencing each day • Checks of covered trenches and trenches with ramp provided prior to works commencing each day • Checks of Heras fencing (or similar).	Biodiversity Champion	
At all times during works	Consideration to wildlife	Should any great crested newts be encountered during the works, work must stop and advice will be sought immediately from the Ecologist (see Annex 3 for contact details and Annex 4 for great crested newt identification).	All site workers	



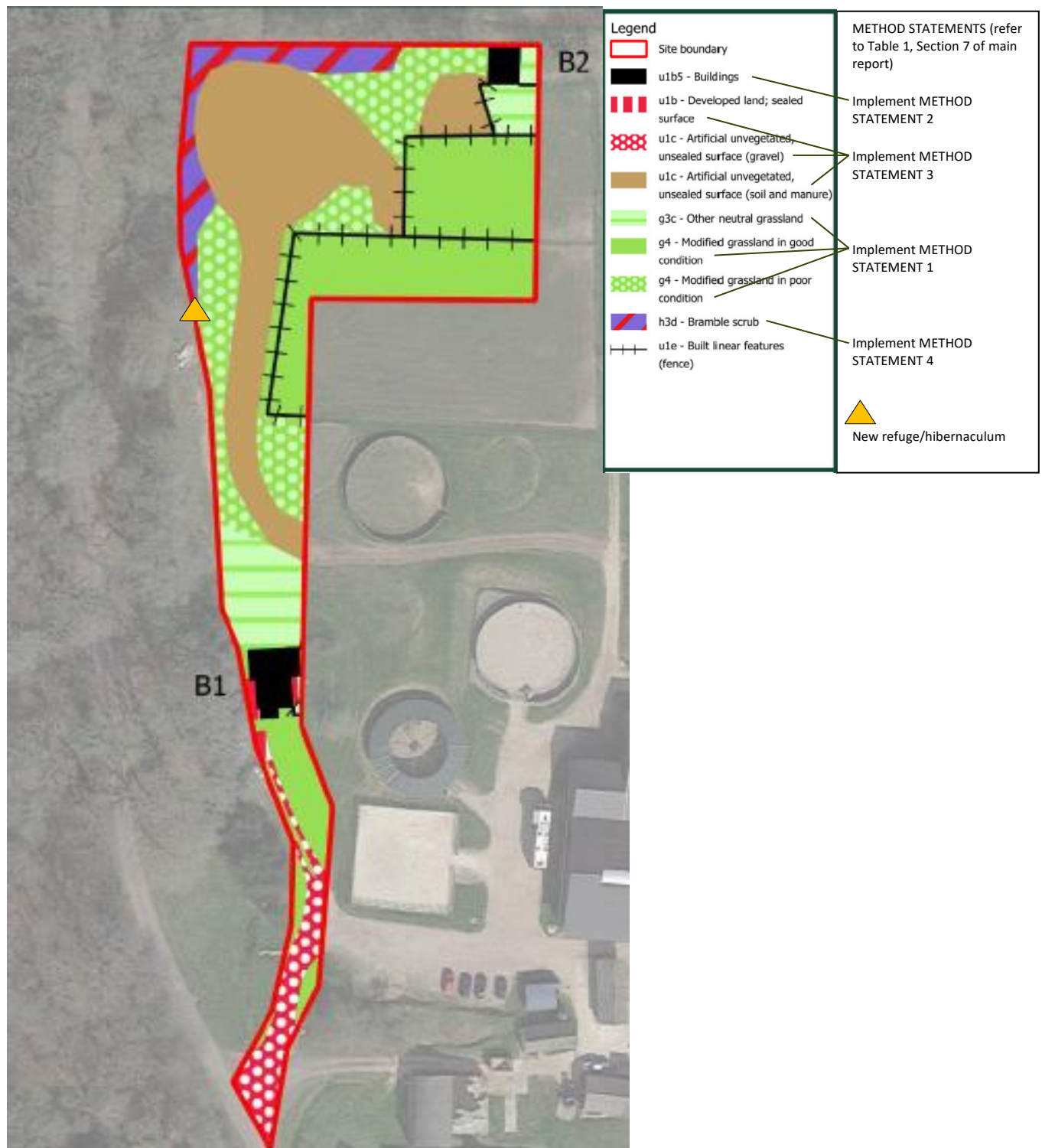
4. Annexes

Annex 1: Species Information and Summary of Legislation

Species/Species Group	Legislation Summary	Sensitive Periods
Great crested newt <i>Triturus cristatus</i>	Great crested newts in England and Wales are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended) (EU Exit) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to: • Deliberately capture, injure or kill a great crested newt; • Intentionally or recklessly disturb a great crested newt; • Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which a great crested newt uses for shelter or protection; and • Deliberately damage or destruct a breeding site or resting place. Great crested newt is a priority species in England.	Hibernation period is generally from November through to February (when night time temperatures are consistently below 5°C).
Nesting birds	All wild birds in England and Wales are granted legal protection under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to: • Kill, injure or take any wild bird; • Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built; and, • Take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.	Nesting season, which is generally from 1 st March to 31 st August



Annex 2: Areas Subject to RAMs, Oaklands Farm (Habitat Map taken from the Preliminary Ecology Appraisal report, Arbtech, 2024)



Annex 3: Contact Details

Role	Name	Phone number	Email
Ecologist			
Ecological Clerk of Works			
Biodiversity Champion			



Annex 4: Great Crested Newt Identification Guide



Annex 5: Refuge/Hibernacula Specification

To be constructed in advance of any construction works (refer to Annex 2 for location).

Figure 1. Specification for refuge/hibernaculum (source: Natural England, 2001)

