

Brewery House, 5 Netherley Road,
Knowsley

RAMS (GCN)

Planning Reference Number:

23/02740/FUL



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Client Smith Young

Project Title Brewery House, 5 Netherley Road, Knowsley

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Revision			



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Reasonable Avoidance Method Statement

Background

Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2024 by Smith Young to provide a reasonable avoidance measures method statement for Great Crested Newt (GCN) for a proposed development at Brewery House, 5 Netherley Road, Knowsley, hereafter referred to as the 'site'. The site is the subject of a planning application (ref. 23/02740/FUL) for the refurbishment and change of use from agricultural use to children's care facility together with associated training and staff facilities (use class c2 residential institutions). Knowsley Council had advised a Habitat Suitability assessment, and a rapid risk assessment should be undertaken of ponds within 250m (where accessible) to inform requirements. However, neither of these could be undertaken due to a lack of access to the ponds around the site. A reasonable avoidance measures method statement was instead produced, under the assumption that GCN may be present.

Legal Context

GCN is fully protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (Amendment) (EU Exit) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

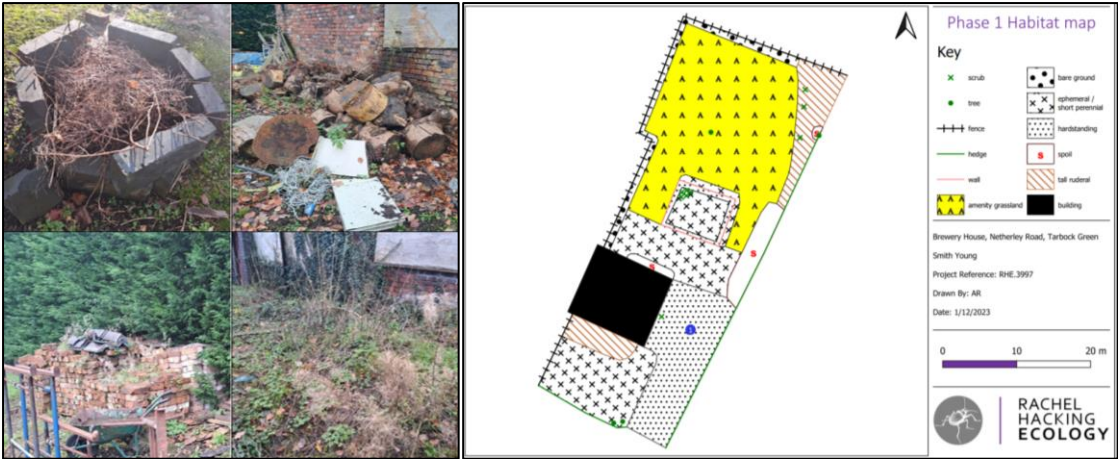
This makes it an offence to:

- To kill, injure or capture a Great Crested Newt
- Disturb a Great Crested Newt in its place of shelter or breeding.
- Obstruct, damage, or destroy the places where Great Crested Newts live.

Survey Information

During the ecological appraisal, the site was observed for signs of protected species, including GCN. No GCN were observed on site. In terms of habitats, no ponds exist on site. Piles of logs, sticks and building materials are all present throughout the garden. Rough, tussocky vegetation is present to the south of the property (see Figures 1 & 2). These features could provide foraging and sheltering opportunities for GCN, should this species be present in the local area.





Figures 1 and 2 showing potential foraging habitat and locations on site

Six ponds are present within 250m of the site, as identified in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal¹. The locations of the ponds are shown in Figure 3.

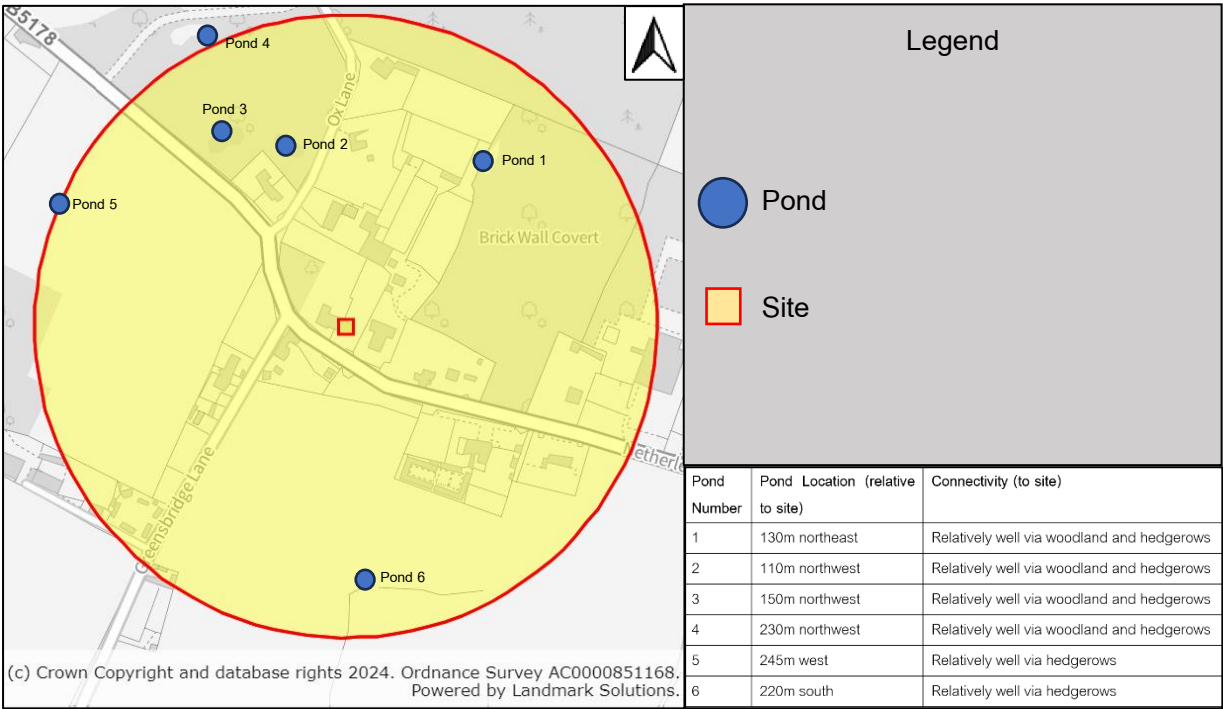


Figure 3 showing the ponds proximity to site

No surveys were undertaken to establish the status of GCN as the ponds were inaccessible. The ponds were instead briefly assessed via a desk study in order to best inform their likelihood of having GCN present.

¹ Ecological Appraisal at Brewery House, 5 Netherley Road, Tarbock Green, Knowsley 2023

The Magic website (Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside) was interrogated for the presence of European Protected Species licences (GCN) within a 2km radius of the site; no records were returned.

Ponds 1-4 are surrounded by woodland and Ponds 2, 3 and 4 appear to have been created as part of a GCN mitigation scheme. The presence of high-quality terrestrial habitat in the vicinity of these ponds means there is a low likelihood of newts using more distant, less suitable habitats on the site.

Ponds 5 and 6 are surrounded by arable farmland, with low quality foraging and sheltering habitat in the immediate vicinity. Both these ponds are over 200m from the site and the presence of a road means the likelihood of GCN being present on site is very low.

As such, there is a very low risk that GCN could be harmed or disturbed as a result of the proposed development. With the implementation of the Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) Method Statement this can be reduced to a negligible risk.

Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) Method Statement

- Prior to preparation and construction work starting on site, a toolbox talk will be given to all construction personnel, detailing Great Crested Newt legislation, identification, and the measures detailed below.
- The construction team will nominate a lead member of the team at that time to ensure the RAMs are carried out daily. All construction personnel will sign a register to confirm attendance at the toolbox talk and understanding of this RAMs.
- Prior to commencement of work each day, a brief site walkover will be undertaken by construction personnel to ensure no GCN or other wildlife have entered the construction site overnight.
- A copy of this RAMS (and the signed register) will be held in the Site Office at all times during the project.
- The ECoW will be on call throughout the construction work.
- Heavy vehicles will use existing tracks onto the site and within the construction zone, avoiding driving close to retained hedgerows and areas of potential habitat as identified above.
- It is advisable that only building products to be used on the day are brought and stored on the site. If building products need to be stored on site (e.g. overnight or for a few days) these products will be stored on pallets or retained in bags on pallets to reduce the risk of GCN sheltering beneath them. If possible, materials should be placed on existing hardstanding.



- Any excavations (holes) created as part of construction will be filled in and finished on the same day so as not to leave any 'pitfall' traps. If this is unavoidable, then one of the following measures needs to be implemented:
 - An escape route is provided overnight from the hole which can be in the form of a wooden plank, OR
 - The hole is completely covered by a heavy stone slab which is flush to the surrounding ground, so GCN cannot access the hole.
- Any spoil or loose stone will be either compacted at the end of the working day, or covered with sheeting, which will be weighed down with stones at the edges, to prevent GCN sheltering within it.
- Any retained vegetation will be maintained throughout the construction period by protective fencing.

Should a Great Crested Newt be found during site clearance and construction, **work will stop in that area immediately**, and the ecological clerk of works (ECoW) will be contacted for advice.



Appendix 1: Species Identification

GCN are 12-18cm long, with dark, warty skin and a yellow underside with dark pattern (see Figure 2). GCN breed in ponds between March and June. They can be found in suitable habitats within 250m of ponds, such as woodland, scrub and tussocky grass. They may also shelter beneath debris or stored materials. They are generally nocturnal and seek shelter during the daytime.

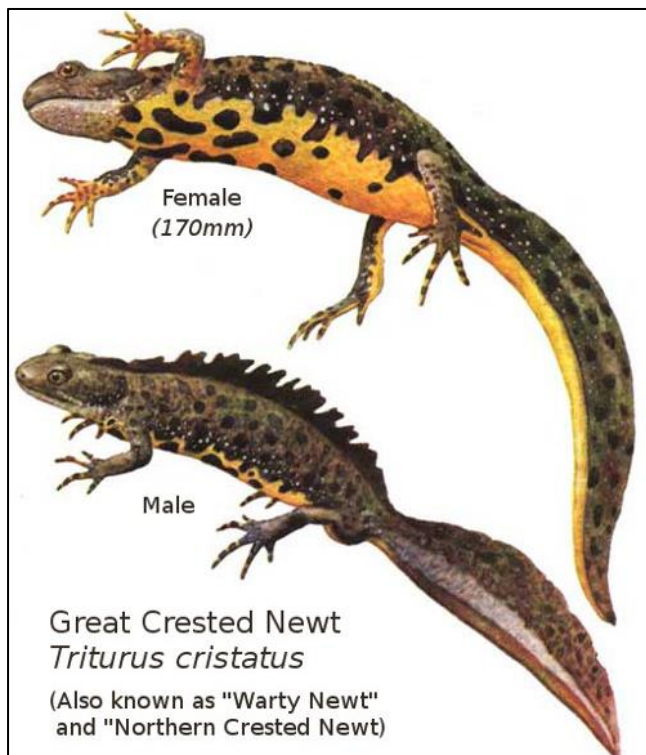


Figure 4 showing Great Crested Newt

Appendix 2: Site Register

CONFIRMATION OF TOOLBOX TALK – PROTECTED SPECIES

JOB: BREWERY HOUSE, 5 NETHERLEY ROAD, KNOWSLEY

I confirm that a toolbox talk was delivered prior to work commencing on the structure; that the talk discussed basic species and appropriate techniques and procedures.

I also confirm that all licensable works were undertaken under ecological supervision, and that I am aware of the appropriate procedures regarding protected species.

Name	Company	Signature	Date



[illegible]