

Birchen Bower

GREAT CRESTED NEWT AVOIDANCE MEASURES METHOD STATEMENT

It is proposed to build a double garage linked to the existing house which has been previously extended. The area where the building will take place is predominantly hardstanding. An existing storage building will be removed and effectively replaced.

There are records of great crested newts (GCNs) in the area and five ponds exist within 250 metres of the site which may have a newt population. The method statement is needed to prevent any harm to newts which would be an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, and Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations.

The proposed development does not justify a great crested newt assessment but a reasonable avoidance method statement is required. Great crested newts (GCNs) are a European Protected Species and works with the potential to disturb them requires a licence. In this instance a reasonable Avoidance Measures Method Statement would ensure compliance with wildlife legislation.

Workers on site will be provided with a copy of this statement with advice on what needs to be done. They will be made aware of what a GCN looks like and provided with a photograph. Newts are up to 190mm in length, dark brown or black with a bright orange underbelly. They live in water or on land. Individual animals can be found in grassland, scrub, under rocks or in stored materials.

It is an offence to disturb or handle a GCN and if one is found a licensed conservationist should be contacted for advice. It is possible that work may need to be suspended until a development licence is obtained.

The proposed development itself is unlikely to be prejudicial to newts but the associated activities need to acknowledge that they may be present. Stored materials may provide shelter for newts.

- The site needs to be hand searched for the presence of newts before work commences.
- During works on site staff need to be aware that newts may be present.
- Loose materials delivered to site should be stored off the ground on pallets.
- Spoil or rubble should not be left on the ground and either removed immediately or placed in a skip.