
Great Crested Newt
Mitigation Strategy

The Land at Mold Road,
Gwersyllt, Wrexham

Ref: P.1626.22

Date: April 2025

(See revision dates below)

Rev	Date	Details
A	19 th March 2025	Updates following revised landscaping to developable area
B	4 th April 2025	General updates

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P.1626.22

Great Crested Newt Mitigation Strategy

Of

The Land at Mold Road, Gwersyllt, Wrexham

For

Castle Green Homes

7 April 2025

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QA Review & Approval	Ciaran Power – Operations Manager

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Appendix 1 Drawing P.1626.22.04D Landscape Layout (Sheets 1-2)

Appendix 2 Drawing P.1626.22.03 Phase One Habitat Survey

1.0 Introduction

Ascerta has been instructed by Castle Green Homes to carry out a Great Crested Newt Mitigation Strategy for the land at the land at Mold Road, Gwersyllt, Wrexham, (hereafter referred to as the site). The site OS grid reference is SJ 3221 5253 and the What3Words reference is things.full.resort. and the extent of the site is displayed in photograph 1.1 below.



Photograph 1.1: Extent of site

This mitigation strategy has been produced to ensure that the proposed development will not have any detrimental impact on the conservation status of GCN in the local area.

The site was visited on 7th March 2022 by Liz Kenyon BSc (Hons) when a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site was carried out (*Ascerta Report P.1626.22 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report*).

2.0 Objectives

Our objective is to ensure that the proposed development complies with current wildlife legislation and that the requirements of The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (The Habitats Regulations) are met. Natural England can only issue a European Protected Species licence to development that meets the following criteria outlined with Regulation 53;

1. The purposes are for preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment;
2. That there is no satisfactory alternative;
3. That the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

3.0 Survey Results and Site Assessment

3.1 Habitats

The site comprises an agricultural field that is bound by species poor hedgerows and pockets of bramble scrub, with scattered trees throughout the boundaries. Ditches (D1 & D2), that form part of a drain network line the southern and eastern boundaries. The ditch (D1) to the south feeds into a pond (P1) that lies adjacent to the site boundary. Three further ponds (P2 - P4) lie adjacent to the eastern site boundary. The locations of the ponds and ditches are shown on plan P.1626.22.03 (Appendix 2). The agricultural field was in grass cover and had been recently grazed at the time of the site visit in 2022 by the ecologist and landscaper for the project.

4.0 Development Mitigation Assessment Without Impact

4.1 Pre and Mid Development Impacts

Site clearance works, earth works, drainage works as well as construction works have the potential to injure or kill GCN and create temporary habitats, such as spoil piles, which may be utilised by GCN.

4.2 Long Term Impacts

The proposed development will result in the permanent loss of agricultural land within the site that provides connectivity from the offsite ponds (P2 -P4) to and further pond approximately 180m west of the site. A seasonally wet areas is also present within a fields approximately 200m south of the site. The loss of the onsite habitat will have a significant impact on GCN without mitigation. Ponds P2-P4 lie within an existing GCN mitigation area for a housing development to the north

With the incorporation of the mitigation area to the east of the proposed development site, it is not considered that the proposed development will isolate GCN populations within the existing offsite mitigation area. Furthermore, it is not anticipated that there will be a detrimental impact to dispersal in the wider landscape.

4.3 Post development Interference

Without mitigation there is a risk of interference to the new ponds, such as introduction of fish, and vandalism.

5.0 Mitigation Proposals

5.1 Mitigation Area/Receptor Site

An area to the east of the application site will be designated as an area of mitigation for GCN and strengthen the existing offsite mitigation, providing an enhanced area for GCN. This area will not be subject to any development works and access to the area will be restricted to members of the public by the use of fencing, hedges and lockable gates. Enhancement measures within the mitigation area will include creating two ponds, planting new hedge line, installing hibernacula, and maintaining the area as rough grassland, with pockets of scrub, wildflower planting, marginal planting and scattered trees. Exclusion fencing with the receptor site will only run along the western boundary adjacent to the construction zone. Therefore, dispersal between the mitigation area and the surrounding land as well as breeding ponds will not be restricted. On completion of the development Castle Green Homes will appoint an appropriate company to manage and maintain the area.

5.2 Habitat Creation, Restoration and Enhancement

To mitigate for the loss of a breeding pond, two ponds will be created within the mitigation area (see drawings P.1626.22.04D Landscape Layout (Sheets 1-2) Appendix 1).

A total of two hibernacula will be constructed within the mitigation area. These will consist of inert rubble, logs as well as loose topsoil and will be capped with turf. They will have several entrance points around the base. The minimum dimensions for the hibernacula will be 2m length x 1m width x 1m height.

New hedge will be planted along the boundaries of the mitigation area. In addition, approximately new hedge will be planted to the south of proposed development site. A minimum of five species per 30m will be planted and will include native species such as hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), and hazel (*Corylus avellana*). dog rose (*Rosa canina*).

Existing grassland habitat will be retained and managed for the benefit of GCN. The aims of the grassland management will be to provide a diverse sward, to increase the number of invertebrates, and create a varied structure. A margin of uncut grassland will be left beside the hedges on the site boundaries to provide dense cover throughout the year. The area around the new ponds will be sown with Germinal RE3 River Floodplain/ Water Meadow (MG8 Grassland), along with marginal and aquatic planting.

5.3 Avoidance of Disturbance, Killing and Injury

Before development works commence, all site personnel will be made aware of the legal protection of GCN, tips on identification of GCN, the mitigation methods that are being employed, and the procedures to follow should the species be discovered during development works. This will be achieved by way of a toolbox talk made by the project ecologist. If a GCN is discovered on site during construction, then all works will cease immediately, and the project ecologist will be contacted for advice.

5.4 Biosecurity Measures

The following biosecurity measures will be employed:

- Disposable vinyl gloves will be worn and discarded after every visit;
- Disinfectant will be provided at the site entrance and all amphibian workers will be instructed to disinfect all footwork and equipment.

5.5 Mitigation Contingencies

The exclusion fencing will be checked periodically for any damage, if repairs are required the licence holder will be contacted immediately and remediation action will be conducted the same day. If the development is delayed for any reason the exclusion fencing will be maintained. If there is a gap within the exclusion fencing for a significant period of time the capture programme will be repeated before development works resume.

5.6 Post Development Habitat Management, Site Maintenance and Population Monitoring

On completion of the development, the mitigation area will be subject to ongoing management. The management of the ponds will aim to maintain open water as well as sufficient aquatic and marginal vegetation. The vegetation will be monitored and thinned when required. Any encroaching scrub in the vicinity of the ponds will be removed when necessary to control the amount of shading. The grassland will be cut annually on a rotation schedule to encourage diversity while maintaining a varied structure. Any introduced fish will be removed from the pond. The removal of litter or dumped rubbish will also be conducted when required.

6.0 Summary

The application site supports favourable terrestrial habitat for foraging and hibernation. Therefore, without mitigation the proposed development will have a detrimental impact on the local GCN population.

As part of the proposed development an area of the site will be enhanced and managed for the benefit of GCN. Within this designated mitigation area two ponds will be created, hibernacula will be installed, additional hedges will be planted, along with scrub areas and scattered trees with wildflower planting and the grassland will be maintained to provide a varied structure.

Measures to protect GCN during development works will include the installation of exclusion fencing and the implementation of a trapping program which will remove GCN from the construction footprint.

Once the development is complete the mitigation area will be subject to a long-term management plan which will aim to maintain the area for the benefit of GCN.

7.0 References

English Nature (2001) *Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines* [online] Available at <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/810429> [Accessed 28.11.2024];

Froglife (2001). *Great Crested Newt Mitigation Conservation Handbook*. Suffolk:Froglife;

Gent, T. & Gibson, S. (2003). *Herpetofauna Workers Manual*. Peterborough: Joint Nature Conservation Committee.



DO NOT SCALE

ALL COORDINATES RELATED TO LOCAL GRID LOCATED TO OS NG BY BEST FIT TO DETAIL. EXTRACTED FROM OS DIGITAL DATA.

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Landscape Layout Key:

- Site Boundary
- Public open space boundary
- Existing trees and hedgerows to be retained and protected during the works.
- Existing trees and hedgerow to be removed.
- Proposed ornamental planting on 400mm depth of topsoil with 75mm bark mulch.
- Proposed native tree planting, tree pit and stake as detailed in the specification.
- Proposed ornamental tree planting, tree pit and stake as detailed in the specification.
- Proposed mixed native hedgerow planted in a double staggered row at 0.33m centres and 0.3 offset. Bare root transplants, each with a 60cm high Tubex shrub shelter, two cable ties and a timber stake.
- Proposed single species formal hedge planted in a single row (3 or 5 no. plants per linear metre dependant on stock size). Container transplants.
- Front gardens and verge to be turfed on 150mm topsoil.
- Public open space and verges to be sown with Germinall AberSustain mix, or similar approved, to be sown at a rate of 40g/m2 on 150mm topsoil.
- Public open space to be sown with Germinall Eco Species Rich Lawn mix, or similar approved, to be sown at a rate of 10g/m2 on 150mm topsoil.
- Native scrub mix planting to be planted as 60-80cm whip planting at 1m centres, for additional wildlife habitat.
- Native woodland mix planting to be planted as 60-80cm whip planting at 2m centres, for additional wildlife habitat.
- Wildflower seeding, Germinall RE3 River Floodplain / Water Meadow (MGS Grassland), to the existing water course to public open space to be sown at 5g/m2.
- Retain existing grassland and overseed with Tussock grass mixture, Emorsgate Seeds EG10 in GGN mitigation area to be sown at 2.5g/m2.
- Wildflower seeding, WFG8 Hedgerows and Shaded Areas, to the public open space to be sown at 5g/m2.
- Marginal planting mix outside of water level of Great Crested Newt ponds.
- Marginal/ aquatic planting mix within shallow water level of Great Crested Newt ponds.

Paving Key:

- Main roads, and private drives including raised/ feature junctions and ramps/ transition strips to be tarmac.
- Plot driveways and parking spaces- Private driveways and parking spaces in Mona Precast Monopave concrete block paving in 'Blend', with contrasting blocks in 'Charcoal' to demark parking spaces or similar approved.
- Private pathways and patios to be Mona PreCast Monopave Slab concrete paving slabs in 'Buff' or similar approved.
- Gravel areas; Polar white gravel - 20mm chippings
- Hibernacula detailed in GGN report

Boundary key:

- 1.8m high screen wall/fence
- 1.8m timber close boarded fence to side and rear

D	updated to "...Rev H"	07/04/25
C	updated to "...Rev G"	18/03/25
B	updated to "...Rev F"	22/11/24
A	updated to "...Rev D"	25/11/22
REV	DESCRIPTION	DATE

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CLIENT: Castle Green Homes
PROJECT: Land at Mold Road, Gwersyllt, Wrexham

DRAWING TITLE: Landscape Layout (Sheet 1 of 2)
SCALE: 1:200 @ A0
DRAWN BY: SC
CHKD BY: CN
DATE: 01/06/2022
DRAWING NO: P.1626.22.03
REV: D

0 1 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16
SCALE 1:200

FOR EASTERN PART OF SITE REFER TO LANDSCAPE LAYOUT (SHEET 2 OF 2)



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D updated to "... Rev H"

07/04/25

C updated to "... Rev G"

18/03/25

B updated to "... Rev F"

22/11/24

A updated to "... Rev D"

25/11/22

REV DESCRIPTION DATE

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CLIENT: Castle Green Homes

PROJECT: Land at Mold Road, Gwersyllt, Wrexham

DRAWING TITLE: Landscape Layout (Sheet 2 of 2)

SCALE: 1:200 @ A0

DRAWING NO:

REV:

DRAWN BY: SC

CHECKED BY: CN

DATE: 01/06/2022

P: 1626.22.03

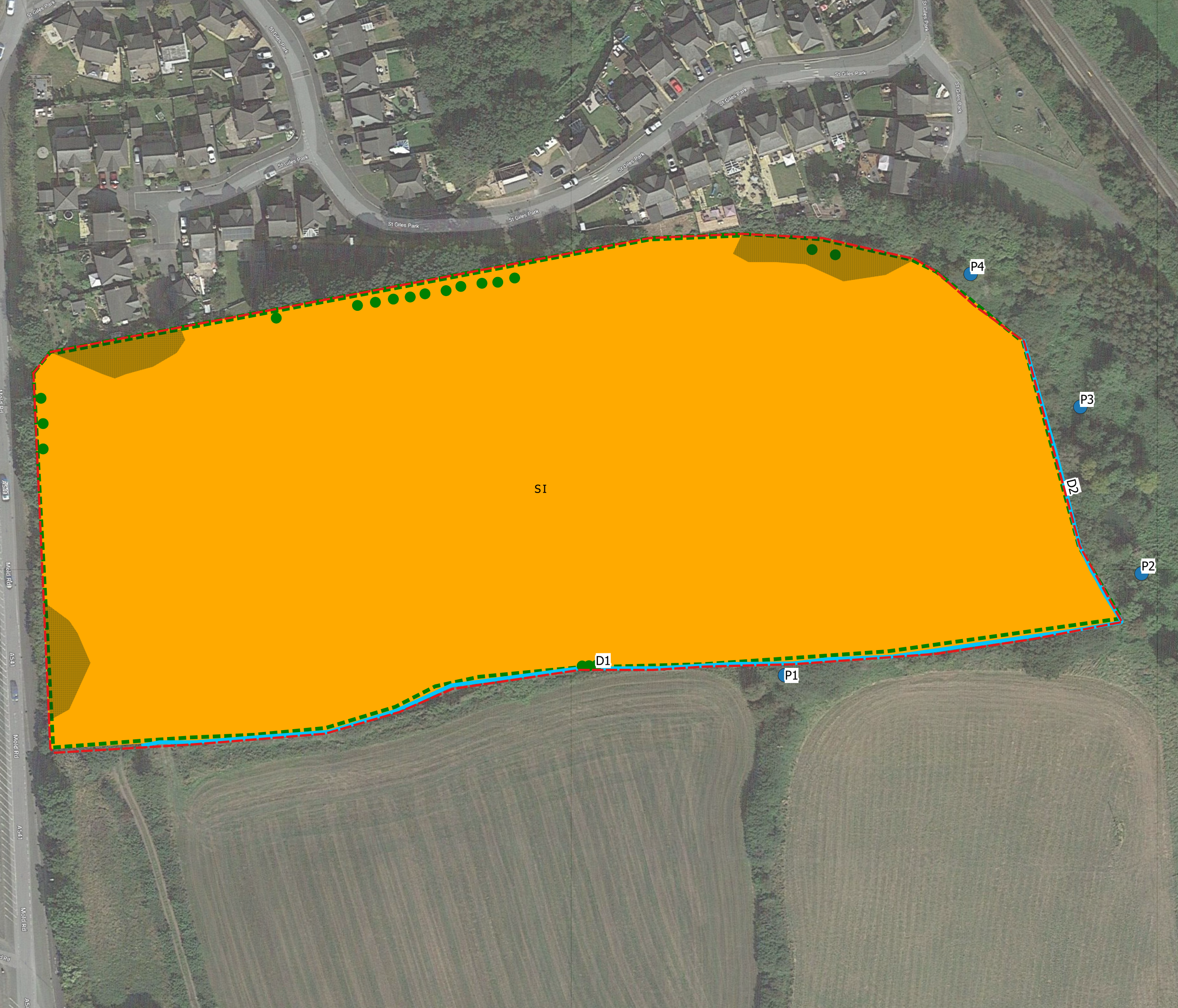
D:

FOR WESTERN PART OF SITE REFER TO LANDSCAPE LAYOUT (SHEET 1 OF 2)

0 1 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16

SCALE 1:200

C:\Users\LAV\Ascerta\Ascerta Team Site - Server\All Jobs\1626.22 Land at Mold Road, Gwersyllt, Wrexham LL11 4AX\03 Working\01 CAD_Drawings\1626.22.03D Landscape Layout



KEY

- Survey area
- SI Semi improved grassland (B2.2)
- Bramble scrub (A2.1)
- Scattered trees (A3.1)
- Species poor hedgerow (J2.2.2)
- Pond (G1)
- Wet ditch (G2)

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CLIENT:

Castle Green Homes

PROJECT:

The land at Mold Road

DRAWING TITLE:

Phase One habitat Survey

SCALE:

NTS@A3

DRAWN BY:

LK

DRAWING No:

P.1626.22.03

DATE:

28/03/2022

CHKD BY:

LA

REV:

-