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Statement of Progress: Trevor Basin WHS Arrival Site

Note to reader: The site comprises two distinct areas and will be referred to as:

- Rewilding area – wider area of site not subject to development, currently set aside for unspecified rewilding
- Development boundary – smaller area of the site in which planned development (car park etc.) would take place

GREAT CRESTED NEWTS (GCN)

Results Summary:

- Survey status: **Complete**
- Three ponds present. All situated outside of the development boundary within the rewilding area.
- Habitat Suitability Index survey carried out:
 - Pond 01: Average suitability and situated approximately 40m south of the development boundary.
 - Pond 02: Good suitability and situated approximately 10m south of the development boundary.
 - Pond 03: Poor suitability and situated approximately 10m north of the development boundary.
- eDNA analysis confirmed GCN presence within all three ponds. They are situated within close proximity and likely part of the same metapopulation.
- One incidental sighting of a female GCN found within the development boundary under a discarded wooden board during a reptile survey.
- Terrestrial habitats across the development boundary and wider rewilding site provide multiple opportunities for GCN, comprising areas with scrub, grassland and woodland and multiple artificial refuge piles (e.g. debris/brick piles, cracked/lifted concrete) that may support resting and overwintering.

Next Steps:

- A derogation licence will be required for works to proceed within the construction boundary. The licence will detail how impacts to GCN will be mitigated, including the identify of donor and receptor locations and the provision of habitat for them.
NRW have been contacted to discuss the requirements of this licence (as specified above).
- The recommended approach (following discussion with NRW) is two separate licences – one Conservation Licence for creating two additional ponds (outside of the development boundary) ASAP,

pre-planning, then the Development Licence (which can only proceed after planning permission has been granted and all conditions discharged).

- The turnaround for a Development Licence application is 40 days, which leaves a small window for mitigation/licensable activities in October (installation of fences and destructive searches). Though NRW may grant a license for activities (including trapping) over winter, this is dependent on environmental conditions (e.g. temperatures) and poor conditions could prevent any winter activities from being undertaken.
- The Conservation Licence approach could also be used as an opportunity to commence habitat management on site (to use arisings for habitat creation) and 'ready' the site for the Development Licence activities (saving time on the difficult programme).
- A long-term management plan will be required as part of the Development Licence. This should extend to 25-years post-development and include the monitoring and management of all habitats created/used for GCN mitigation in the licences. NRW recommend the management and monitoring be carried out by a suitable body (as defined by Part 7 of the Environment Act) such as North Wales Wildlife Trust, Wild Ground or an Amphibian and Reptile Group (ARG), by transferring ownership or granting an extended lease to the chosen body.

REPTILES

Results Summary:

- Survey Status: **Ongoing** (4/7 completed). Remaining surveys programmed to be completed by W/C 9th September (timing necessary to provide confidence in survey results)
- Max count of two female and one juvenile grass snake (no common lizard or slow-worm found to date). Slow-worm present in the area according to the desk study so possibility that presence will be established during September surveys when juveniles disperse.
- As with GCN, habitat within the development boundary and wider rewilding area are suitable for reptiles.

Next Steps:

- A mitigation strategy will be required for works to proceed within the construction boundary. The strategy will detail how impacts to reptiles will be mitigated, including the identity of donor and receptor locations and the provision of habitat for them.
- Habitat requirements are similar to those required for GCN and it is envisaged that any habitat creation/enhancement will be targeted at both GCN and reptiles.
- Timescales should be in line with those required for GCN as many elements will be targeting both GCN and Reptiles simultaneously.

BATS

Activity Survey Results Summary:

- Survey Status: **Ongoing** (3/6 monthly activity surveys completed by 23rd July). Remaining surveys programmed to be completed by end of October 2024.
- Activity has been recorded widely across both the development boundary and rewilding area, with a slightly greater density of foraging activity around the two ponds to the south of the development boundary.
- Species identified so far (data analysis not yet carried out, so below are likely present but not confirmed):
 - Lesser horseshoe
 - Common pipistrelle
 - Soprano pipistrelle

- Nyctalus sp.
- Myotis sp.

Next Steps:

- The site provides a valuable foraging resource for multiple species of bat; therefore, lighting schemes would need to be designed to cause minimum impact to bats, and the development should at least result in no net loss of foraging resources (i.e. flying invertebrates).

Ground Level Tree Assessment Survey Results Summary:

- Survey Status: **Complete** (for current expected extent of potential tree loss – if this area is extended further surveys would be required)
- Three trees could not be completely surveyed due to access prevented by dense scrub. The surveyors suggested that Potential Roost Features (PRFs) for bats are unlikely from what could be seen (though not impossible).
- All other trees within areas of potential tree loss had no PRFs.
- Remaining derelict structures and cavities (e.g. gaps in stonework, underground ducts/tunnels) within the rewilding area (two within approximately 20m of the development boundary), may have the potential to support roosting bats.

Next Steps:

- The three trees with incomplete surveys would require further inspection before removal.
- Any tree or structure found to have PRFs for bats would need further inspection in the case of it being potentially affected by the development.

BUTTERFLIES

Results Summary:

- Survey Status: **Ongoing** (3/6 completed). Remaining surveys are programmed to be completed W/C 5th August (timing necessary to allow presence/likely absence of white-letter hairstreak butterfly to be established)
- Notable species identified so far on site:
 - Dingy skipper
- Notable species identified by desk study which may be present in later surveys:
 - White-letter hairstreak

Next Steps:

- In order to maintain the conservation status of the protected butterfly species found on site, there should be no net loss of the relevant habitat types. This can be achieved by including appropriate species (e.g. Bird's-foot Trefoil for dingy skipper and Elm species for white-letter hairstreak, if found to be present) in the proposed grassland and tree planting within the development area.

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