
IPSEN EAST, ASH ROAD NORTH, WREXHAM INDUSTRIAL ESTATE

GCN METHOD STATEMENT

1.1 Introduction

IPSEN are proposing to site a temporary prefabricated building on an area of land adjacent to their existing site off Ash Road North, Wrexham Industrial Estate (WIE). WIE is ecologically sensitive due to the presence of a significant population of great crested newts (GCN). The applicant is anticipating a Planning Condition that states:

“No development shall take place until an Amphibian Reasonable Avoidance Measures scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) shall include, but not necessarily be limited to:

- further details and associated plans concerning amphibian avoidance and mitigation measures including, but not limited to, one-way amphibian fence design and locations (prior to and throughout the duration of any work).*
- Measures to be taken to prevent or reduce accidental capture or killing of amphibians including installation of permanent amphibian fencing into the boundary fence line.*
- details of timing, phasing and duration of construction activities and conservation measures;*
- a timetable for implementation demonstrating that works are aligned with the proposed phasing of the development; and*
- persons responsible for implementing the works.”*

This document presents a scheme of Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) for GCN, aimed to prevent harm or disturbance to any individual GCN during the construction of the temporary building.

This document will be submitted to discharge the relevant planning condition and will be implemented in full if approved by Wrexham County Borough Council.

It is acknowledged that a more detailed GCN Mitigation Strategy will be required to support and facilitate the proposed development of the site, for which a separate planning application has been submitted. The more detailed strategy will include measures to prevent harm to GCN during construction (exclusion fencing and trapping) and the operation of the site (e.g. a carefully designed surface water drainage scheme) and measures to enhance existing features of value and to create new features for GCN to safely utilize outside of the operational area. These details will be provided separately as part of the relevant planning application.

1.2 GCN Method Statement

The footprint of the proposed building is set within a plot of land currently comprising a hard-standing car park and a small area of crushed hard-core and rubble from the demolition of the previous building in 2019. The site has been described within a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) Report¹ as having the potential to support GCN. The

¹ Cambrian Ecology, 2023 (Unpublished).

photographs provided below indicate that the potential for GCN is actually very low, given the made-ground that dominates the footprint of the scheme. It is acknowledged that there is suitable semi-natural habitat to the east of the site (Erlas Black Wood), but connectivity between that habitat and the development footprint is of low value to GCN, comprised of further rubble and crushed hard-core, thus the risk of encountering GCN is considered to be low.

The proposed building comprises a two-storey prefabricated unit. Shallow foundations will be required, to a depth of not more than 1m.

Construction vehicles and personnel will enter the site through the existing road network and site entrance off Ash Road North. The installation works will commence as soon as practicable and will be undertaken over a period of approximately 1 month.





Given the unsuitability of the site for GCN, there is no requirement for GCN exclusion fencing due to the low likelihood of causing harm / injury to or killing of GCN. However, works should be undertaken following a scheme of Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs). The works must be undertaken during the GCN active period; March to October inclusive, to ensure the protection of GCN.

Scheme of GCN Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs)

The low risk of disturbing or harming GCN during the construction works at the Ipsen East site will be mitigated through the implementation of the following RAMs:

- A pre-commencement Toolbox Talk will be delivered to the site personnel working on the development. This will provide information relation to GCN identification, ecology and legal status, as well as the details and requirements of these RAMs.
- A pre-commencement hand-search of areas due for breaking of ground will be undertaken by a GCN licensed ecologist.
- Clearance of ground vegetation, detritus and any other potentially suitable refugia for GCN (such as at the edges of the site, around mounds, piles of logs, brash, bricks and stones and in rough grassland) will be undertaken prior to any construction works.
- Any clearance works described above will be undertaken with care and by hand by a suitably experienced contractor.
- If any GCN are encountered, works in the area of the discovery should cease immediately and an experienced ecologist called for advice. Erlas Black Wood would be suitable as a receptor site for any GCN found during the works.
- During construction works;
 - all materials will be stored off-ground on stillages or pallets.
 - all rubble/spoil/earth arising from works will be skipped or removed from site on a daily basis.
 - any excavations left overnight will either be back-filled and compacted or else covered by plastic sheeting and secured by plywood batons (or similar) to prevent GCN from gaining access.
 - pre-start checks of the working area will be undertaken each morning, looking for any GCN.
 - all site workers will be made aware of the potential presence of GCN and an identified sheet will be kept on site in case any of these animals are encountered.

The above RAMs have been designed such that the site can be carefully cleared without harming GCN and that subsequently the site is kept tidy and unsuitable for these species to utilise, so that they do not take refuge within the working area.

Provided this scheme of RAMs is followed in full, the risk of encountering, disturbing or harming GCN is considered to be very low.

It is noted that if any GCN are encountered, then works in the area of the finding will cease until the risk posed to protected species is re-assessed by a suitably experienced ecologist. If the risk posed is considered to be significant, then a license *may* be required in order for works to recommence.

1.3 Timing of Works

The above RAMs must be initiated during the active GCN period, when any GCN that are encountered can be safely disturbed and moved without posing a serious risk of harm.

Works must therefore commence during the period March to October inclusive. Before the end of the period, all breaking of ground and clearance of the working area must have been completed. Construction works can continue outside of this period, provided the 'tidy-site' measures are implemented in full.

1.4 Roles & Responsibilities

The following roles and responsibilities are defined:

GCN Licensed Ecologist

- Preparing and delivering a pre-commencement Toolbox Talk to all site workers.
- Undertaking pre-commencement hand-searches of the working area.
- Being available on-call to respond to any incidental amphibian finds.
- Recording and reporting all actions taken under this RAMs.

Developer

- Marking out the required working area.
- Ensuring all site workers either attend the Toolbox Talk or cascade the Toolbox Talk to them at a later date.
- Record the attendance at Toolbox Talk(s).
- Appoint a suitably experienced contractor to undertake site clearance.
- Ensure that their Principal Contractor and all sub-contractors follows the 'tidy-site' measures described herein.
- To stop works if any amphibians are found.