

UNIT 10, UPTREAM FACILITY, ASH ROAD, WREXHAM LL13 9UF

GCN METHOD STATEMENT & BIOSECURITY RISK ASSESSMENT

1.1 Introduction

Conditions 4 and 5 of the planning consent for the development of the site at Unit 10, Upstream, Ash Road, Wrexham requires that:

“Prior to the start of works a Great crested newt (GCN) Method Statement (MS) is submitted to the Local Planning Authority; and

Prior to the start of works a biosecurity risk assessment containing appropriate measures will be submitted to and approved by Wrexham County Borough Council. Implementation shall be in accordance with the approved scheme.”

This document presents a scheme of Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) for GCN and a tabulated Risk Assessment for those non-native species that have been identified as having the potential to be imported or spread during the construction phase of the project. The likely pathways and operational mitigation have also been identified in relation to the non-native species of flora.

This document will be appended to the contractors Construction Method Statement for use on site.

1.2 GCN Method Statement

The site is surrounded by Abenbury Way, Ash Road North and industrial units within Wrexham Industrial Estate. The footprint of the site is not suitable to support GCN as there are no semi-natural habitats present, on hard-standing, buildings and bare ground. The tarmacked roads surrounding the site create a significant barrier to GCN dispersal from the closest sites where they are known to be present; ~190m to the southeast of the site, within Erlas Black Wood.

Most of the proposed work is located within the footprint of the existing Unit 10 building, and it is proposed to increase the height of the structure to accommodate a further floor, with access via a new stairwell. The groundwork on site is limited to an area 13.5m x 4m and will require ground excavation to allow for the creation of the stairwell. Construction vehicles and personnel will enter the site through the existing road network and site entrance. The construction programme will commence as soon as practicable, with a starting date of April/May 2022 and will be undertaken over a period of approximately six months.

Given the unsuitability of the habitat for GCN, there is no requirement for GCN exclusion fencing around the site due to the very low likelihood of causing harm, injury or killing GCN. However, works should be undertaken following a scheme of Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs). There is no conflict between implementing these measures and the timing of construction work 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 Unit 10 will be mitigated through the implementation of the following RAMs:

- 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. A small pond and an area of semi-natural habitat is located within the Ipsen site, at grid reference SJ37465039, which 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

Biosecurity Risk Assessment

Species	Potential contamination route	Likelihood of risk	Operational Procedure
Himalayan balsam	Spread of species via construction machinery/ movement of soil. Introduction of seeds via contaminated soil.	Low. Himalayan Balsam is not known to be present on site. Low. There are no requirements to import soil.	Ensure contractors know what Himalayan Balsam looks like. If any plants are identified these should be pulled up and left to dry before the seeds set (July/ August).
Japanese knotweed	Spread of species via construction machinery/ movement of soil. Introduction of rhizome via contaminated soil.	Low. Japanese knotweed is not known to be present on site. Low. There are no requirements to import soil.	Ensure contractors know what Japanese knotweed looks like. If it is identified on site, refer to the Welsh Government guidance on 'The Control of Japanese Knotweed in Construction and Landscape Contracts'.
Garden escapes (Montbretia and Cotoneaster)	Spread of species via construction machinery/ movement of soil.	Low. Neither species known to be present on site.	Ensure contractor is aware of what these species look like. If identified on site these should be dug-out and disposed of appropriately. Construction vehicles to keep to established access routes, to park on hardstanding and not to encroach on any adjacent land.

Species	Potential contamination route	Likelihood of risk	Operational Procedure
Rhododendron	Spread via natural propagation of viable seeds from existing plants on site. Spread of species via construction machinery/ movement of soil. Introduction of seeds via contaminated soil.	Low. Species is not known to be present on site. Low. There are no requirements to import soil.	Identification of all rhododendrons on site and eradication of plants prior to the commencement of earth works/excavations in the affected areas. Eradicate via mechanical means (excavate and chip or burn). Ensure any regrowth or new shoots are treated immediately with a suitable herbicide.