

Strategic Ecology Corridor, Wrexham

Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS)

Prepared For: Net World Sports

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1.0 Introduction

Background

1.1 The Environment Partnership (TEP) was commissioned by Mauna Kea Limited, a fully owned subsidiary of Net World Sports, (hereafter referred to as 'the client') to complete a protected/priority species Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS) for the Strategic Ecology Corridor (SEC) within Wrexham Industrial Estate in Wrexham.

1.2 The SEC is comprised of three parcels of land as indicated by the following parcels in the Great Crested Newt Off-Site Mitigation Phasing Plan (Drawing G9134.042):

- Parcels 1-3: Land to the west of the B5130 (central grid reference SJ 39627 50490);
- Parcel 4: Land off Francis Lane (central grid reference SJ 38100 51300); and
- Parcel 5: Land to the east of the B5130 (central grid reference SJ 40135 50455).

1.3 TEP has previously undertaken ecological surveys and reports for sites within the SEC, and this PWMS should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Land adjacent to B5130 Ecological Desk Study (TEP Report Ref: 10944.001);
- Land adjacent to B5130 Ecological Assessment (TEP Report Ref: 10944.002);
- Land off Francis Lane Ecological Desk Study (TEP Report Ref: 10934.001); and
- Land off Francis Lane Ecological Assessment (TEP Report Ref: 10934.002).

1.4 Proposals within the SEC are to provide off-site mitigation in relation to three separate Net World Sports development proposals at Wrexham Industrial Estate.

1.5 The Ecological Assessments listed above identified that specific measures are required to ensure the protection of common amphibians, badger and hedgehog during vegetation clearance and construction works.

1.6 Furthermore, the pre-application consultation provided by Natural Resources Wales (NRW Ref: CAS-278307-G5J1) in relation to the SEC reaffirmed the requirement for a PWMS.

Scope

1.7 This PWMS document sets out the precautionary working measures to ensure that site works will minimise significant impacts on protected and notable species, including common amphibians, badgers and hedgehogs.

1.8 All clearance works are to be undertaken under the supervision of the appointed Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW), where necessary.

1.9 The method statement details all works required to minimise impacts on and avoid killing or injury of individual species which may be present on site. The methodologies detailed follow best ecological working practices in respect of the habitats identified within the working areas as well as the protected and/or notable species which may be present.

1.10 This PWMS must be adhered to at all times by the project manager, Net World Sports, and all contractors working on site.

Key Contacts

1.11 Any contractors requiring advice with regard to this PWMS are welcome to contact the TEP Head Office for further information:

- TEP - Head Office (01925 844004)

1.12 If an injured animal is found on site, it should be taken to a nearby wildlife rescue centre or vet that accepts wild animals. Information regarding the nearest wildlife rescue centres to the site is provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Contact details for the nearest Wildlife Rescue Centres to the site

Name	Address / Location	Telephone Number(s)	Distance and Direction from site
RSPCA Stapeley Grange Wildlife Centre	Stapeley Grange, London Road, Nantwich CW5 7JW	0300 123 0722	22 miles east
Lower Moss Wood Wildlife	School Lane, Knutsford WA16 8SJ	01565 755082	45 miles northeast
The Hulse Towers Hedgehog Refuge	39 Lownorth Rd, Wythenshawe, Manchester M22	0161 437 8395	46 miles northeast

2.0 Amphibians

Baseline Ecology Information

Parcels 1-3: Land to the West of the B5130

2.1 The following records of amphibians were returned from within 2km of the land to the west of the B5130 site (TEP Report Ref: 10944.001):

- 17 records of great crested newt (GCN) *Triturus cristatus*;
- 16 records of smooth newt *Lissotriton vulgaris*;
- 9 records of common frog *Rana temporaria*;
- 4 records of common toad *Bufo bufo*; and
- 3 records of palmate newt *Lissotriton helveticus*.

2.2 There are three ponds within this site, one of which (Pond A5) returned a positive result for GCN eDNA. An additional 35 ponds are located within 500m of the site.

2.3 The Ecological Assessment (TEP Report Ref: 10944.002) identified onsite habitats that are suitable for breeding, foraging, ranging and hibernating common amphibians.

Parcel 4: Land off Francis Lane

2.4 The following records of amphibians were returned from within 2km of the Land off Francis Lane site (TEP Report Ref: 10934.001):

- 115 records of GCN; and
- 15 records of common toad.

2.5 No ponds were identified within 250m of the site, however the Ecological Assessment (TEP Report Ref: 10934.002) identified onsite grassland and hedgerow habitats that are suitable for foraging and ranging amphibians, and the root balls of onsite hedgerows, scattered trees and scrub provide suitable habitat for hibernating common amphibians.

Parcel 5: Land to the East of the B5130

2.6 GCN were identified within the pond located along the northern boundary of the land to the east of the B5130 and the onsite habitats are suitable for breeding, foraging, ranging and hibernating common amphibians.

Relevant Legislation

2.7 GCN and their habitats (aquatic and terrestrial) are afforded full protection by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (Section 9, Schedule 5) and the Conservation Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (Annex II and Annex IV). GCN, along with common toad and smooth newt are species of principal importance (SPI) for biodiversity as listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 and Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

2.8 Smooth newts and common toads are only offered limited protected by section 9(5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, prohibiting the sale, barter, exchange or transport for sale or advertising to sell or to buy.

Method Statement

Toolbox Talk

2.9 A GCN-licenced Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) will be appointed, and a toolbox talk will be delivered to all contractors before site clearance and commencement of construction activities. All staff on site should be made aware of the potential presence of amphibians and reptiles on site.

2.10 The toolbox talk will include identification of these species, details of their legislative protection, details of the method statement, and what to do in the eventuality that these species are found.

Vegetation Clearance

2.11 Vegetation clearance should not be undertaken during winter (November to January inclusive). The GCN-licenced ECoW will supervise the clearance of vegetation.

2.12 Prior to commencement of works, any potential sheltering and hibernation features for amphibians within the works area will be removed by hand by the ecologist, where size allows. This includes logs, rocks, boulders, and scrub.

2.13 Clearance of any scrub will be undertaken using a staged approach. The ecologist will hand search the vegetation for amphibians. Following the hand search, the vegetation may be cut to 200mm. A final check will then be conducted by the ecologist. Once confirmed clear, the vegetation will be cut to ground level. Pulling up of root systems of scrub must be supervised by the ECoW. The ECoW will hand search the root balls for amphibians, following which they can be removed from site.

2.14 Any common amphibians encountered during the works will be captured by the ecologist and translocated to suitable habitat located within the wider area.

Standard Precautionary Working Measures

2.15 The following standard precautionary working measures will also be implemented during the works:

- Excavations will be boarded or otherwise suitably covered at night. Where this is not practicable, a ramp will be provided (at an angle of no more than 45°) to allow any animal that may become trapped to escape.
- Materials for works should be stored off the ground on pallets or in bags where possible.
- Spoil piles should be kept off the ground on pallets or in skips where possible.
- Any spoil piles present on site will be compacted to prevent them being used as refugia by amphibians.

3.0 Badgers

Baseline Ecology Information

Parcels 1-3: Land to the west of the B5130

3.1 [redacted]

3.2 The onsite grassland offers suitable foraging and ranging habitat for badger and the hedgerows and trees within and adjacent to the site provide potential suitable cover for sett excavation for badger (TEP Report Ref: 10944.002).

Parcel 4: Land off Francis Lane

3.3 [redacted]

3.4 The onsite grassland offers suitable foraging and ranging habitat for badger and the hedgerows, scattered trees and scrub within and adjacent to the site provide potential suitable cover for sett excavation for badger (TEP Report Ref: 10934.002).

Parcel 5: Land to the east of the B5130

3.5 The grassland habitats within the land to the east of the B5130 provide suitable foraging and ranging habitat for badger and the hedgerow and scattered tree habitats provide potential suitable cover for sett excavation for badger.

Relevant Legislation

3.6 Badgers and their setts are protected under Protection of Badgers Act 1992, which makes it illegal to kill, injure or take badgers or to interfere with a badger sett, interference with a sett includes blocking tunnels or damaging the sett in any way.

3.7 Setts are defined in the Act as 'any structure or place which displays signs indicating current use by badger'. Setts are therefore only protected under the Act when they display such signs.

3.8 Section 3(e) of the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 makes it an offence for a person to interfere with a badger sett by disturbing a badger that is occupying the sett.

Pre-Commencement Check

3.9 If, prior to works commencing, it has been six months since a badger survey was last conducted on the site, a pre-commencement check for badger setts will be undertaken by the ecologist prior to works commencing to confirm that no new setts have been excavated on or within 30m of the site.

3.10 If no badger setts are identified during the pre-commencement check, the works may commence.

3.11 In the event that a sett is identified, either during the pre-commencement check or during any vegetation clearance or construction works, works must stop immediately, and advice sought from the ecologist.

3.12 An appropriate exclusion zone of up to 30m will be established around any potentially active sett entrance. There should be no works within the exclusion zone of an active sett. If works are required within the exclusion zone, further monitoring will be necessary to determine the activity status of the sett. If an active set cannot be retained or if high levels of noise/vibration disturbance are anticipated, then a licence from Natural England must be obtained to allow works to continue.

Method Statement

3.13 All hazardous materials will be kept off the ground or otherwise stored in protected and fenced areas to prevent badger access.

3.14 Soil storage mounds must be compacted before the end of each day's work to ensure they do not become attractive refuges and to prevent use by badgers for sett construction.

3.15 Excavations will be boarded or otherwise suitably covered at the end of each working day, overnight to prevent entrapment of badgers. Any excavations which cannot be covered will include badger ramps (at an angle of no more than 45°) to allow any animal that may become trapped to escape.

3.16 Pipes stored on site must be capped or if caps are not available, stored vertically to prevent entrapment.

3.17 In the event that any underground void is exposed, works must stop immediately, and an ecologist consulted to ascertain if the void is likely to form part of a tunnel network of a badger sett. Unless this can be completely ruled out, works will stop and Natural England will be contacted for advice on how to proceed.

3.18 If works must be undertaken at night, lighting should be kept to a minimum and follow a sensitive lighting strategy addressing four key design principles:

- Use of unnecessary lighting will be avoided, particularly on to retained trees within the site, and areas of woodland and dense scrub adjacent to the site.
- Spatial spread of lighting – the horizontal and vertical spread of artificial light will be minimised and take into account both primary and reflected light sources. Directional lighting can be achieved by angle and orientation of beam, use of a cowl, louvre or other light shield, or a combination of these.
- Variable lighting regime – timers and bespoke dimming regimes may be used to ensure that luminaires are reduced at times of predicted low use. Timers will be used to switch off lights when human activity is low (e.g., 12.30 – 5.30am). Motion sensors provide further control to ensure that areas are illuminated only when required. Alternatively, lights can also be dimmed (e.g., to 30% power), during periods of high bat activity, for example the periods of two hours following sunset and two hours before sunrise. These can be set to change with the seasons and therefore reflect the shifting time of dusk and dawn throughout the year.
- Intensity and colour of lighting – light intensity will be as low as possible whilst meeting the objectives of the intended function. The colour of lighting will need to take into account the sensitivity of the ecological receptors on site. Light sources selected will emit zero ultra-violet light wherever possible. Guidance from the Bat Conservation Trust (2018) recommends that white and blue spectrum light should be avoided or, where white lights are required, these should be of warm/neutral colour and have a peak wavelength above 550 nanometres. Narrow spectrum light sources should be used (to lower the range of species affected by lighting).

3.19 During construction, the Heras security fencing should be positioned so as not to impede mammal movement around the site.

3.20 If an injured animal is found on site, this should be taken to a nearby wildlife rescue centre or vet that accepts wild animals. The nearest wildlife rescue centre to the site is provided in Table 1.

4.0 Hedgehogs

Baseline Ecology Information

Parcels 1-3: Land to the west of the B5130

4.1 Two records of hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* were returned from within 2km of the Land to the West of the B5130 site (TEP Report Ref: 10944.001).

4.2 The onsite hedgerows provide potential sheltering and hibernating habitat for hedgehog and the grassland habitats within the site are suitable to support foraging and ranging hedgehog. (TEP Report Ref: 10944.002).

Parcel 4: Land off Francis Lane

4.3 Five records of hedgehog were returned from within 2km of the Land off Francis Lane site (TEP Report Ref: 10934.001).

4.4 The onsite hedgerows provide potential sheltering and hibernating habitat for hedgehog and the grassland habitats within the site are suitable to support foraging and ranging hedgehog. (TEP Report Ref: 10934.002).

Parcel 5: Land to the east of the B5130

4.5 The hedgerows within the land to the east of the B5130 provide suitable sheltering and hibernating habitat for hedgehog and the grassland within the site is suitable to support foraging and ranging hedgehog.

Relevant Legislation

4.6 Hedgehogs are considered species of principal importance under Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. Hedgehogs are also partially protected under Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, in that they are protected from being killed, injured or taken by certain methods.

Method Statement

4.7 It is recommended that the early hibernation period (November to December inclusive) is avoided where possible in relation to the clearance of scrub vegetation. The risk of hedgehog death is increased if they are disturbed during this period.

Works during hibernation period (November to March)

4.8 If site investigation and vegetation clearance works are undertaken during the winter months, the following precautionary working methods should be followed to

increase the risk of hedgehog survival, if discovered during the site clearance works:

4.9 Prior to vegetation clearance works commencing, a refuge area will be created within an area of the site where the trees and vegetation are undisturbed. The refuge area will be created with arisings from scrub and grass clearance within the site. A hedgehog box will also be placed at this location, filled with bedding, and supplied with a bowl of food. The box must not be disturbed until the end of the hibernation period.

4.10 Clearance of the areas of grassland habitats on site, including those within woodland areas, should be undertaken in stages. These habitats should be strimmed by hand, under supervision of an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW), to a height of 300 mm to prevent any harm to hibernating or sheltering hedgehogs. A thorough hand search should be carried out by the ECoW in advance of site clearance and any hedgehogs found will be relocated to the hedgehog box by the ECoW.

Works during active season (April - October)

4.11 Clearance of the areas of grassland habitat suitable for hedgehogs should be undertaken in stages. These habitats should be strimmed by hand, under supervision of an ECoW, to a height of 30cm to prevent any harm to sheltering hedgehogs. A thorough hand search should be carried out by the ECoW in advance of site clearance and any hedgehogs found will be relocated to a suitable receptor area within the wider site by the ECoW.

4.12 Regular strimming works within the development area should take place to keep any retained habitats short, which will make the area unattractive to foraging or resting hedgehogs. This will deter hedgehogs from the site thereby reducing the risk of harm occurring to this species.

Standard Precautionary Working Measures (at any time)

4.13 As part of the site induction process, all staff working on site should be made aware of the potential for presence of hedgehog within the site and their status as a protected species during a toolbox talk delivered by the ECoW.

4.14 The following standard precautionary working methods will also be implemented during the works:

- Arisings from the work i.e., brash, trunks, grass cuttings, must be removed from site on the same day as the work takes place. This is to avoid providing refuge opportunities for hedgehog, which would then have to be hand searched by a suitably qualified ecologist prior to their removal at a later date.

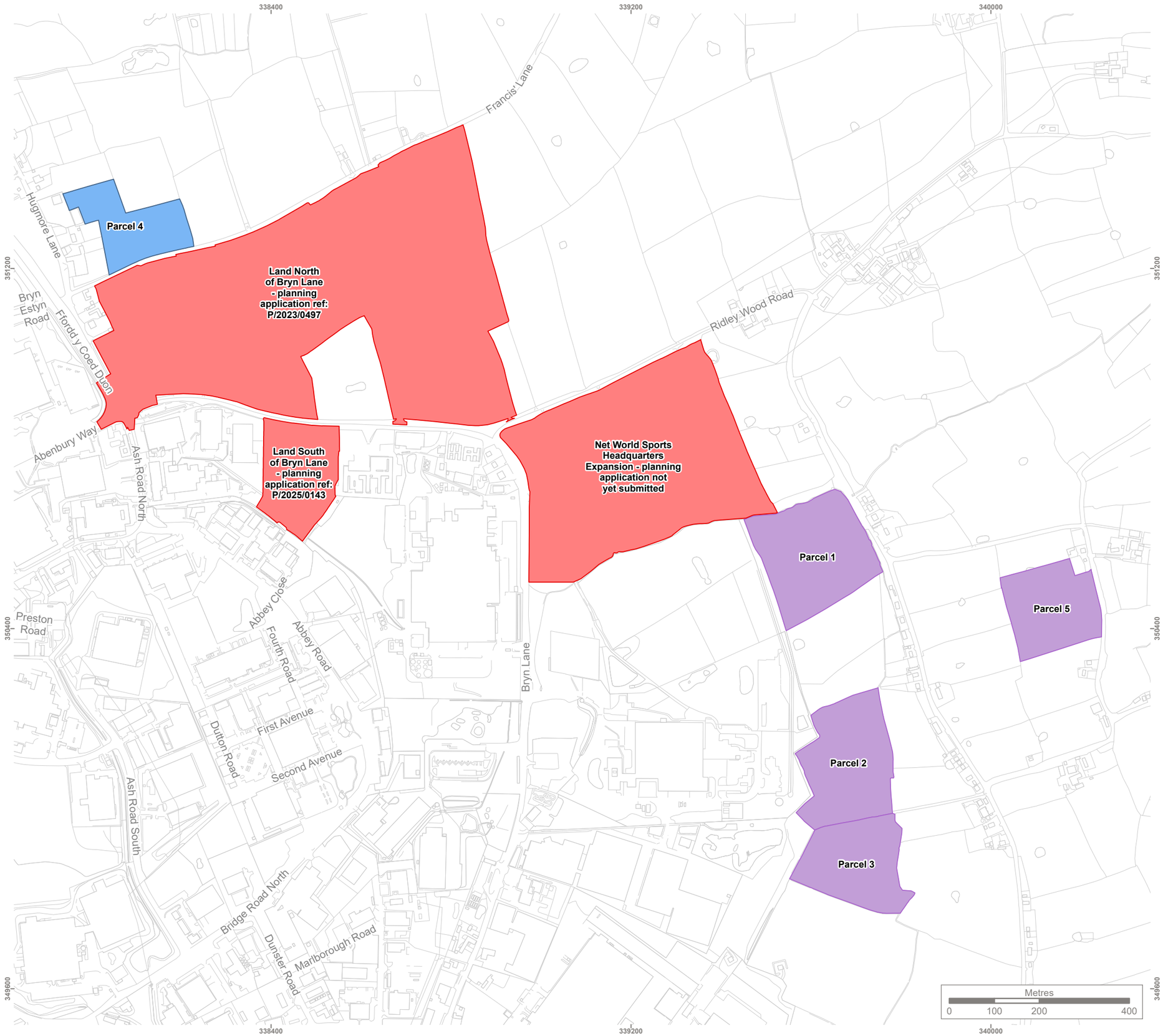
- No site compounds, stored materials and soil piles sited within the core terrestrial habitat will be left uncovered. Soil storage mounds must be compacted before the end of each day's work to ensure they do not become attractive refuges. All stored materials and soil piles must be suitably covered with an inaccessible covering such as tarpaulin to prevent hedgehogs using this material as refugia.
- Open excavations should be covered overnight using plyboard and sandbags to fully seal any gaps. If this is not possible, a plank of wood placed at an angle no steeper than 40° should be left within the excavations, or sloping exits to trenches provided, so any hedgehogs or small mammals which fall into the trenches are able to escape.
- Existing access tracks into the site will be maintained. Vehicular or plant access should adhere to these access routes where feasible to prevent tracking over areas where hedgehogs could be present. If it is not possible to do so, an ecologist should be contacted for advice.
- Agreed access tracks into the site will be maintained. Vehicular access should adhere to these access routes where feasible to prevent tracking over areas where hedgehogs could be present.
- Pipes stored on site would be capped or if caps are not available, stored vertically to prevent entrapment of hedgehogs.

4.15 If an injured hedgehog is found on site, this should be taken to a nearby wildlife rescue centre or vet that accepts wild animals. Additionally, if any young hedgehogs are found during the autumn, immediately prior to the hibernation period, these should also be taken to a wildlife rescue centre as it would be unlikely that these would survive the winter. Details of the nearest wildlife rescue centres to the site are provided in the Table 1.

4.16 If a situation arises regarding hedgehogs and the contractor is unsure what action to take, advice should be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.

Drawings

Drawing 1: G9134.042 Great Crested Newt Off-Site Mitigation Phasing Plan



KEY

Construction Phase

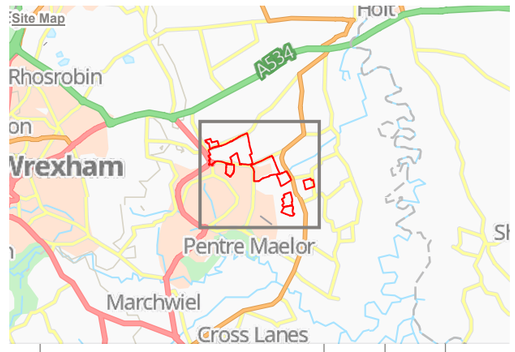
- Autumn 2025
- Autumn 2026

Applicant Owned Land

- Other land in applicant ownership

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Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date

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Project
Land North of Bryn Lane, Wrexham

Title
Great Crested Newt Off-Site Mitigation Phasing Plan

Drawing Number
G9134.042

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
MG	SP	MT	1:8,500 @ A3	18/07/2025

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