Ein cyf/Our ref: CAS-293896-V3M7
Eich cyf/Your ref: P/2025/0638

Wrexham County Borough Council
The Guildhall
Wrexham
LL11 1AY

Dyddiad/Date: 12 December 2025

Annwyl Syr/Madam/Dear Sir/Madam,

BWRIAD/PROPOSAL: ERECTION OF REPLACEMENT INDUSTRIAL BUILDING

LLEOLIAD/LOCATION: R AND R ENGINEERING WORKSHOP, OAK ROAD, WREXHAM INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, WREXHAM, LL13 9RG.

Thank you for consulting Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru (CNC)/Natural Resources Wales (NRW) about the above, which we received on 24 November 2025.

We have concerns with the application as submitted because inadequate information has been provided in support of the proposal. To overcome these concerns, you should seek further information from the applicant regarding protected species and land contamination. If this information is not provided, we would object to this planning application. Further details are provided below.

Protected Species

Great Crested Newts

We have reviewed the following information which has been submitted in support of the application:

- (Preliminary Ecological Appraisal by Elite Ecology, dated September 2025).

The information has identified that great crested newts (GCN) are material to the application site.

The proposal has the potential to kill, injure, disturb GCN, or damage or destroy their breeding sites and resting places at this site. GCN and their breeding sites and resting places are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Where GCN are present and a development proposal is likely to contravene the legal protection, they are afforded, the development may only proceed under licence issued by Natural Resources

Wales, having satisfied the three requirements set out in the legislation. A licence may only be authorised if:

- The development works to be authorised are for the purpose of preserving public health or safety, or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment;
- There is no satisfactory alternative; and,
- The action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in its natural range.

To avoid developments with planning permission subsequently not being granted a licence, the Local Planning Authority should take Planning Policy Wales and Technical Advice Note 5 into account when considering development proposals where a European Protected Species is present. Please note, for the purposes of providing advice at the planning application stage, our comments are limited to compliance with the third test only.

We consider that the current submission is insufficient for the purposes of demonstrating that the proposal is not likely to be detrimental to the maintenance or restoration of the favourable conservation status of GCN.

Section 5.3.1 of the ecology report confirms that the site could be used by commuting amphibians but that "The road present immediately to the north of the site is likely to be busy and thus may serve as a deterrent, but it is not impossible for amphibians to cross". The report then states that "there is hedgerow and mixed scrub on site that may be utilised by amphibians and their terrestrial habitat" and that a "herptile method statement is required to ensure there is no harm to any specimens that may be using the site during the construction phase".

Our records indicate that GCN have been recorded within approximately 95m North of the application site. We are also aware of recent surveys confirming GCN presence in a pond in adjacent land approximately 25m to the West of the application site.

The application site appears to be predominantly hardstanding, however we are aware of recent works to an area of hardstanding where over 100 GCN were found on site and required relocation under license.

Therefore, given the existing records in close proximity to the application site, we have concerns regarding the proposed development and potential impacts on GCN as the following information has not been provided or considered:

- Details of either an on-site or off-site conservation (compensation) scheme;
- Details of avoidance and mitigation measures to be undertaken during the construction phase of the proposals;
- No apparent consideration of incidental capture / killing of amphibians in gully pots or similar features during the operational phase of the proposal;
- Biosecurity,
- No measures to evidence compliant implementation of conservation;

We therefore advise that the additional information is provided to satisfy the following:

To demonstrate no detriment to the maintenance/restoration of the favourable conservation status of the local population of great crested newt, we require the submission of an amended ecological scheme that includes, but not necessarily limited to the following:

- The submission of compensatory / mitigation habitats by either on site or off-site conservation proposals. This could include provision of an on-site or off-site conservation scheme or commuted sum.
- Submission of further details and associated plans concerning GCN avoidance and mitigation measures including, but not limited to: fence design, specifications and locations; considerations of access issues. Submission to include proposed timescales and reporting requirements;
- Submission of measures designed to prevent the accidental capture/killing of newts (amphibians) during operational (and decommissioning) phases of the scheme (i.e. post construction). This is essentially the installation and maintenance of an amphibian friendly surface water management system that does not include gully pots (or other similar features).
- Details of timing, phasing and duration of construction activities and conservation measures.
- Timetable for implementation demonstrating that works are aligned with the proposed development.
- Persons responsible for implementing the works.
- Submission of a biosecurity risk assessment.

We advise that a revised report and conservation status is submitted (or proposals for a commuted sum in agreement with LPA) to address the above matters prior to determination, to inform the decision-making process. The submission must demonstrate that the proposed development would not be likely to be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in its natural range.

Contaminated Land

The application site is located on a principal aquifer, we therefore consider the controlled waters at the site to be vulnerable to pollution and any new development needs to consider the risk to controlled waters.

We note that no information regarding contaminated land investigations has been submitted in support of this application.

Given the historic ammunitions production at Wrexham Industrial Estate and the existing industrial nature of the site and surrounding area, we strongly suspect there could be contamination at the application site.

We consider that insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate that the risk of pollution to controlled waters is acceptable. Therefore, we advise that a preliminary risk assessment that satisfactorily addresses the potentially unacceptable risks should be submitted to demonstrate that a viable generic remediation option is available if required.

On this basis, if no further information is submitted in support of the application then we would object to the proposed development.

Informative / advice to applicant

Natural Resources Wales recommends that developers should:

1. Follow the risk management framework provided in Land contamination risk management (LCRM)
2. Refer to 'Development of Land Affected by Contamination: A Guide for Developers' (WLGA, 2017) for the type of information that we require in order to assess risks to controlled waters from the site. The Local Authority can advise on risk to other receptors, such as human health.
3. Refer to our groundwater protection advice on www.gov.uk.

Protected Sites and Foul Drainage

We note the application site is within the catchment of the River Dee and Bala Lake Special Area of Conservation (SAC). In line with our Advice to Planning Authorities for Planning Applications Affecting Nutrient Sensitive River Special Areas of Conservation (22 October 2025), under the Habitats Regulations, Planning Authorities must consider the impact of proposed developments on water quality within SAC river catchments.

However, recognising the specific nature of the application submitted we are satisfied that there is unlikely to be a source of additional nutrients and/or a pathway for impacts. As such, in our opinion, it would be reasonable for your Authority to screen out this proposal as not likely to have a significant effect on the River Dee and Bala Lake SAC in relation to nutrient inputs.

Other Matters

The advice in this letter relates to matters which are included on our consultation topics list. We do not rule out the potential for the proposed development to affect other environmental interests that are not included on this list.

We advise the applicant that, in addition to planning permission, it is their responsibility to ensure they secure all other permits/consents/licences relevant to their development. Please refer to our website for further details.

If you have any queries on the above, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yn gywir / Yours faithfully,

John Littlemore
Cynghorydd - Cynllunio Datblygu/Advisor - Development Planning
Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru/Natural Resources Wales

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Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg a byddwn yn ymateb yn Gymraeg, heb i hynny arwain at oedi./Correspondence in Welsh is welcomed, and we will respond in Welsh without it leading to a delay.