Client – Peter Mellor

Site – 2 Mill Lane Cottages

Reference – 20260014

Location – Horseman's Green, Whitchurch

Central Grid Reference – SJ 45092 40852

Date – 5th February 2026

Reasonable Avoidance Measures Statement (RAMS)

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Revision: 1

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1. Introduction

1.1. Planning permission has been passed for the '*demolition of existing dwelling and erection of replacement dwelling*' at 2 Mill Lane Cottages in Horseman's Green, reference P/2025/0567.

1.2. Condition 11 of the planning permission states:

'*No part of the development shall commence until a detailed mitigation strategy for the translocation of great crested newts to a suitable receptor site, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The mitigation strategy shall thereafter be completed in all respects in strict accordance with the strategy as may be approved no later than within 2 years of the date of the approval of the Local Planning Authority, and prior to commencement of any other part of the development hereby approved, including demolition.*'

1.3. This document outlines measures that will be implemented during the development to reduce the likely impact amphibians, including great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*).

2. Summary of the Survey Findings

2.1. Switch Ecology Ltd carried out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the site during June 2024, reference 20240052.

2.2. A data search submitted to Cofnod in support of the PEA returned records of amphibians within 2km of the site, with the closest record of great crested newts located over 1km to the northwest of the site.

2.3. The survey identified the presence of ten ponds within 500m of the site, with three located within the core habitat area, 250m, of the site. The ponds were found to be concentrated to the northwest of the site around the village of Horseman's Green.

2.4. The site was assessed to provide a low value terrestrial habitat for amphibians due to the lack of high value terrestrial refugia, although some localised areas of scrub were present, providing low value areas of terrestrial refugia.

2.5. The PEA went on to assess that the site was unlikely to be utilised as a terrestrial habitat due to the proximity of the ponds, the low value habitats present on site and the presence of higher value terrestrial habitat surrounding the ponds.

2.6. The PEA recommended precautionary working methods for amphibians be implemented during the development.

3. Method Statement

3.1. All personnel working on the site will be briefed on the contents of this document and will sign the briefing record in Appendix II to confirm the methods outlined in the document have been understood.

3.2. Prior to works commencing on the development the tree removal required to facilitate the development will be carried out with care, ensuring limited impact on the areas of suitable terrestrial habitat on the site. The removed trees will be cut to uniform lengths, approximately 1-1.5m, and used to create a habitat pile on an area of grassland to the west (under the same ownership as the site), as shown approximately in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Showing the development site and proposed receptor site.

3.3. Following the creation of the habitat pile, which will act as a receptor site for terrestrial amphibians encountered during the development, the development works will commence on the site with works avoiding the winter months, when amphibians are less active.

3.4. The clearance of the scrub on the site will be carried out in a careful manner using hand tools with the clearance progressing across the site to the west, pushing any amphibians present towards the receptor site.

3.5. The clearance will initially be carried out to no lower than 150mm, to allow an inspection of the area underneath for amphibians. The area will then remain undisturbed for a period of at least 24 hours, to allow amphibians to move away. Following the 24 hour period the vegetation will be cleared to ground level.

3.6. On completion of the vegetation clearance the development works will commence. The following precautionary measures will be implemented during the development, to reduce the likely impact on amphibians:

- Materials stored on the site will be placed on pallets or batons to prevent amphibians from seeking refuge underneath,
- Loose materials will be stored in bags or compacted mounds, where appropriate,
- Any excavations created on the site will have at least one sloping side, to allow amphibians or other animals that may become trapped to escape,
- Exposed pipe ends will be blocked between shifts to prevent amphibians, or other animals, from seeking refuge in the pipes,
- Parking will utilise existing areas of hard standing ground.

3.7. In the event that common amphibians are encountered during the works they will be carefully moved to the receptor site.

3.8. In the event that any great crested newts are encountered, works on site will cease and further advice will be sought regarding the need for a Natural Resources Wales (NRW) licence to allow the translocation of great crested newts from the site to the receptor site.

4. References

BTHK (2018). Bat Roosts in Trees – A Guide to Identification and Assessment for Tree-Care and Ecology Professionals. Exeter: Pelagic Publishing.

BRHK (2021). Bat Roosts in Rock – A Guide to Identification and Assessment for Climbers, Cavers & Ecology Professionals. Pelagic Publishing, Exeter.

Collins, J. (ed.)(2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Bat Conservation Trust and Institute of Lighting Professionals (2023) Guidance Note 08/23: Bats and artificial lighting at night. ILP, Rugby

CIEEM (2017) Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

Legislation and Policy.

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Available at http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/1012/contents/made (Accessed 20th March 2023).

Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000. Available at http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/contents (Accessed 20th March 2023).

The Habitats Directive. Available at http://www.ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/habitatsdirective/index_en.htm (Accessed 20th March 2023).

National Planning Policy Framework (2021). Available at http://www.gov.uk/guidance/nationa-planning-policy-framework (Accessed 20th March 2023).

Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. Available at http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents (Accessed 20th March 2023).

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Available at http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69 (Accessed 20th March 2023).

Appendix I: **Planning Policy and Species Legislation Summary**

1. Planning Policy

1.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the governments planning polices and how they should be applied. Section 15 of the polices refers to 'Conserving and enhancement the natural environment'. This outlines how local authorities should deal with biodiversity when considering planning applications.

1.2. NPPF paragraph 193 States:

When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

a) *If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;*
b) *Development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;*
c) *Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and*
d) *Development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.*

2. Legislation Summary

Species	Legislation	Offences include
Bats	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	○ Deliberately kill, injure or capture a bat; ○ Deliberately disturb bats; ○ Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat. ○ Obstruct access to any structure or place which any bat uses for shelter or protection; or ○ Disturb any bat while occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose.
Birds	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	○ Intentionally kill, injure, or take any wild bird; ○ Intentionally take, damage or destroy a nest of any such bird whilst it is in use or being built; or ○ Intentionally take or destroy an egg of any such bird.

Local authorities therefore have a duty to consider protected species as a material consideration when assessing planning applications. The ODPM Government Circular 06/2005 states: '*It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision.*'

Appendix II: **Briefing Record**

Site Name	2 Mill Lane Cottages, Horseman's Green
Briefing carried out by	
Date of Briefing	

By signing this form you are confirming that you have been briefed on the working methods outlined in this document.

Name	**Position**	**Signature**	**Date**