APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT OF A PROPOSAL LIKELY TO HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON A EUROPEAN SITE

CONSERVATION OF HABITATS AND SPECIES REGULATIONS 2017 (AS AMENDED)

wrexham COUNTY BOROUGH
BWRDEISTREF SIROL wrecsam

PART A: The Proposal

1. **Type of permission:**	2. **Consents and ROMP references:**	3. **National Grid reference:**
Prior notification: Demolition	P/2026/0187	SJ 31129 46207

Map of Application site with Permission reference(s) Map Attached Yes/**No**	4. **Brief description of consents and options** PRIOR NOTIFICATION FOR DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS
6. European site name(s):	Johnstown Newt Sites SAC – located c.25m northwest at the nearest point

7. List of interest features:

Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site:

1166 Great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*

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PART B: Identification of effects being considered and relevant features affected			
Significant effect being considered (attribute affected)	**Affected qualifying feature(s)**	**Favourable condition target(s) for relevant feature(s) based on conservation objectives set for SPA/ Ramsar**	**Contribution of attribute(s) to site integrity (ecological structure and functioning of site)**

Accidental injury, entrapment and / or mortality of GCN Disturbance Loss of habitat (for foraging and commuting)	1166 Great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*	The vision for this feature is for it to be in a favourable conservation status, where all of the following conditions are satisfied: • No less than 300 great crested newts will be present on the site • At least 30 display/breeding ponds will be found throughout the entire site • Great crested newt larvae will be found in 7 or more of the breeding ponds. • Half of the display/breeding ponds on the site will have a water depth of 10cm of more during the summer months. • Native macrophytes will cover at least half of the pond surface yet some of the water surface will still remain open. • Aquatic marginal vegetation will be present around the ponds. • Breeding/display ponds will not be heavily shaded by surrounding vegetation. • Algal blooms and surface sheens will be absent from display/breeding ponds. • Fish will not be present in breeding/display ponds which support great crested newts. • Only small numbers of water and wildfowl will be seen on the ponds • The terrestrial habitat surrounding breeding ponds will comprise of refuge areas for newts, foraging areas, areas of hibernacula and corridors which will aid the dispersal of great crested newts. • Off-site habitats that function as stepping stone or corridors located between SAC compartments will be maintained for migration, dispersal, foraging and genetic exchange purposes. • Off-site features that impact on successful dispersal, such as roadside gully-pots, will not be subject to future construction. • Non-native aquatic species will not be present. • Amphibian chytridiomycosis will not be present. • All factors affecting the achievement of the foregoing conditions are under control.	*GCN are the sole and primary reason for the site's designation.* *Therefore, the physical structure of the site is legally defined and sustained entirely by what GCN require to survive in the short and long-term.* *The application site and its environs support functionally required off site habitats*

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PART C: Assessment				
Significant effect being considered (attribute affected)	**Adverse Effect of proposal alone on attribute and/or feature and in relation to conservation objective for the feature.**	**Adverse Effect of proposal in combination with other plans or projects, on attribute and /or feature**	**Adverse effect on the integrity of the site? :** **Long term/ short term** **Yes/ Uncertain** **No**	**What mitigation could prevent an adverse effect on the integrity of the site?**

Accidental injury, entrapment and / or mortality of: *1166 Great crested newt Triturus cristatus* during demolition.	GCN are the sole reason for this site's designation. Avoiding the accidental injury and / or death of individuals is vital to ensuring that populations remain stable. Any killing or injuring of GCN, particularly during the terrestrial phase, directly undermines the SAC's target to maintain a stable population of at least 300 adults.	Reduction in GCN population	Yes, long term	• A GCN derogation licence must ~~should~~ be obtained from NRW prior to commencement of the works. The method statement shall confirm (a) The details of avoidance and mitigation measures in accordance with the below; (b) Measures to be carried out in the event of one or more GCN are found (c) Biosecurity (d) Ecological compliance audit including defined key performance indicators. Audits to be carried out by an externally appointed contractor (e) Long-term conservation measures • Timing of works: Restrict destructive groundworks or demolition to periods outside of the GCN hibernation period. [Note subterranean behaviour of the species and consider females do not breed every year)

				• ECoW to provide a toolbox talk on GCN to contractors on the first day of the works, prior to works commencing. This to include biosecurity owing to the amphibian fungus Chytrid being previously recorded at Johnstown • All vegetation and any suitable GCN refugia will be subject to a fingertip search by an ecologist to check for any GCN prior to works commencing on each day. Consideration will be given to use of conservation dogs to search appropriate areas before commencement of further demolition works • Vegetation removal will be staged, supervised, and soft-stripped by hand and light hand tools only. Material to be collected following each cut such that amphibians do not occupy the site. Any brash / vegetated arisings could be used to create a hibernacula in a suitable

				location away from the works at the discretion of the ecologist. • Contractor shall ~~should~~ avoid leaving stacked or piled materials / arisings on site as they could become occupied by GCN. • The boundary of the working area of the demolition shall be ring-fenced with one-way GCN exclusion fencing program prior to works commencing. The fencing must be inplace for at least three weeks before commencement of demolition works. • Implement a sensitive lighting strategy, including directing all lighting away from SAC habitats and other off site habitats suitable for the species. • Enforce a no-working buffer zone around the SAC boundaries and other off-site habitats where the

				species has previously been recorded. • Any excavations shall ~~should~~ be sealed overnight, or a ramp installed to enable GCN or any other trapped animal to escape. • An ECoW shall be present on site during the course of the works. • The works shall be subject to external ecological compliance audit • If any GCN are found, works must stop, the ecologist will then move the GCN to a suitable receptor site away from the works under licence.
Disturbance of: *1166 Great crested newt Triturus cristatus* during demolition.	Disturbance to GCN can disrupt their natural life cycle, lowering reproductive success and increasing mortality, influencing population numbers.	Reduction in GCN population	Yes, short term	As above

Loss of habitat (for foraging and commuting): *1166 Great crested newt Triturus cristatus following clearance*.	Loss of habitat on site could remove potential foraging and / or commuting routes for GCN, leading to reduced dispersal and foraging opportunities which influences population levels.	Incremental loss of suitable GCN habitat connected to the SAC	Yes, long term	Any loss of suitable terrestrial habitat shall ~~should~~ be compensated for by planting native locally-occurring trees and / or shrubs around the site. The local authority ecologist in consultation with NRW specialist staff will be able to advise on suitable locations for compensatory planting. The method statement will need to confirm, the detail of long-term measures as a material component of the method statement

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PART D: Wrexham County Borough Council's Conclusion
CAN IT BE ASCERTAINED THAT THE PLAN OR PROJECT WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE INTEGRITY OF THE EUROPEAN SITE(S)? Yes, provided that the mitigation measures above are implemented during the works and that these consider biosecurity, ecological compliance audit, and long-term conservation measures.
In Combination Effects None

Conclusion

The Appropriate Assessment has concluded three potentially significant impacts during the construction phase, including 'accidental injury, entrapment and / or mortality of GCN', 'disturbance to GCN (noise, light, vibration'), and 'loss of terrestrial foraging and / or commuting habitat for GCN'. Without mitigation, these impacts would directly undermine the SAC's Conservation Objectives by reducing population size, disrupting natural life cycles, and fragmenting existing connecting habitat to the SAC.

However, provided that the mitigation measures outlined in this document are implemented, the proposed development is not considered to adversely affect the integrity of the SAC, either alone or in combination with any plans or projects, provided any consent is subject to appropriate conditions and EPS licence. Material provisions of the overall scheme method statement to include avoidance and mitigation measures; biosecurity, ecological compliance audit and long-term conservation proposals

Name of Assessing Officer: Rebecca Price (BSc Hons, MCIEEM)		2. Name of Supervising Officer:	
Job Title: Technical Environment Officer / Ecologist			
SeSenior Species Signed: Rebecca Price	**Date:** 09/09/2026	**Signed:**	**Date:**

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CONSERVATION (NATURAL HABITATS & C.) (Continued)

PART E: Consultation with NRW on Part D	
3. Natural Resource Wales comment on conclusion:	
Name of NRW Officer:	4. Job Title:
Signed:	5. Date: