

**CRICK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**SUMMARY OF GREAT CRESTED NEWT**

**MITIGATION**

A Report to: PHP Architects

Report No: RT-MME-117652

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## REPORT VERIFICATION AND DECLARATION OF COMPLIANCE

Report Version	Date	Completed by:	Checked by:	Approved by:
Final	04/12/2014	Indre Barsketyte GradCIEEM (Ecological Consultant)	Charlotte Lea MCIEEM (Ecological Projects Manager)	David Smith (Ecology and Landscape Director)

The information which we have prepared is true, and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct. We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Tina Cuss, a Senior Environmental Planner at Northampton Council, has requested Middlemarch Environmental Ltd (MEL) to produce a short summary of Great Crested Newt Mitigation for Crick Primary School. The school is located on Main Road in Crick, Northamptonshire.
- 1.2 Mel has been working with PHP Architects to obtain a great crested newt development license for this site. It is proposed to create a new teaching building and associated temporary access and working area on site.
- 1.3 Four ponds were identified to be present within 500m of the site. All these ponds were surveyed for great crested newts in 2013 and a medium population of newts was identified within Pond 1 which is 10 m from the proposed working area (see Drawing C117652-E3.1).
- 1.4 Due to the potential presence of great crested newts on site a Natural England Development License will have to be obtained once planning permission is granted. This report summarizes mitigation outlined in the method statement of the development license. For full details please refer to the license documents.

## **2. TRAPPING, TRANSLOCATION AND SITE CLEARANCE**

- 2.1 To comply with the license, the working area will be cleared of great crested newts through trapping and translocation. Trapping and translocation can only be carried outside the hibernation season which is weather dependent but generally extends from March to October inclusively. No works will commence on site before there are five consecutive nights of above 5°C at in March.
- 2.2 Once the five consecutive nights of above 5°C are achieved then an amphibian fence and pitfall trap installation will commence. This will be done under supervision of suitably qualified ecological clerk of works (ECoW).
- 2.3 The whole site, including the access road will be fenced. Fencing, and pitfall traps will be installed as per NE Mitigation Guidelines (2001).
- 2.4 Once the fencing is installed the trapping and translocation will commence. The trapping will continue for 45 days and if there are no GCN captures between days 40 and 45 then trapping will cease. If GCNs are captured between days 40 and 45 then trapping will continue until day 60 and until 5 clear days of no GCN captures are achieved.
- 2.5 If the temperatures falls below 5°C at night for 5 consecutive nights then the trapping will cease until the weather is suitable again.
- 2.6 Any captured newts will be released in the receptor area to the north-west of the site. This area includes one of the GCN breeding ponds (P3) as well as areas of rockery, a beech hedgerow and long grass. The receptor area is connected to the wider habitat including the amenity grassland play area to the west, which the GCNs are thought to utilise, despite being sub-optimal habitat.
- 2.7 Once the trapping and translocation is complete, the site will be first cleared of vegetation and then cleared of top soil. All clearance works will be supervised by an ECoW and contractors will follow the guidance of the ECoW on how the clearance works need to be undertaken with best ecological practise.
- 2.8 When the roots of the trees are removed, this will be carried out by hand and under supervision of ecological clerk of works. This will ensure that any GCNs using the roots are not harmed and can be moved to the receptor site.

- 2.9 A report detailing the results of a trapping and translocation exercise will be produced and submitted to the CPA and the client.
- 2.10 Amphibian fencing will remain in situ throughout the development. It will be the contractor's responsibility to ensure that it remains intact throughout the development. A newt friendly grill will be installed across the contractors' access point. This will maintain connectivity for GCNs throughout the construction period.

### 3. TIMINGS

Activity	Timing	Comments
Newt Fence Installation	March 2015	Once NE license is obtained and weather conditions are suitable
Newt Trapping and Translocation	March – April/May 2015	Once NE license is obtained and weather conditions are suitable
Destructive searches	April/May 2015	Once trapping and translocation has been completed and in suitable weather conditions.
Drift fence removal	April/May 2015	Once trapping and translocation has been completed and in suitable weather conditions
Construction period	April/May 2015 – May 2016	Once trapping and translocation has been completed and destructive searches undertaken.
Site checks and maintenance during construction	Monthly	Checks will be undertaken throughout the construction period from March 2015
Newt fence removal	May 2016	Once all construction work is completed
Habitat reinstatement	May/June 2016	Once all construction work is completed
Post construction mitigation/compensation	May/June 2016	Once all construction work is completed

### 4. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 It is a responsibility of site ecologist to provide the developer with best possible advice on how works should be undertaken in order to comply with the Natural England development license.
- 4.2 It is responsibilities of the developer to make sure that ecologist guidance is followed.

### 5. COMPENSATION

- 5.1 The area which is being temporarily impacted will be re-instated as amenity grassland post-development. A 1m wide strip of wildflower planting with scattered, low lying scrub will be planted along the west and south of the building (0.005ha). This will ensure that post-development, optimal connecting habitat is created between the two ponds. This will improve upon the connectivity that is currently present. One hibernacula will be installed to the south of the site as per Natural England guidelines. This hibernacula will be installed within the area of wildflower planting and low lying scrub.
- 5.2 For locations of the proposed planting and hibernacula creation please refer to Middlemarch Environmental Drawing C117652-E3.1.

## 6. LONG TERM HABITAT MANAGEMENT

6.1 The school will maintain the wildflower area, hibernacula and scrub planting.

### 6.2 Wildflower Area Management

6.2.1 A wildflower mix of similar composition to an EM1F – Basic General Purpose Wild Flowers, will be used.

#### **Establishment Year 1:**

6.2.2 To prevent flush of grass, cut to a height of no less than 4cm in mid-March, mid-April and mid-May.

6.2.3 Ensure the soil remains nutrient poor by removing all arisings.

6.2.4 Following the mid May cut the meadow should be left and allowed to establish.

#### **Years 2 and onwards:**

6.2.5 Cut in late July to late August and remove the arisings.

#### **General Management:**

6.2.6 Litter picking should take place as necessary and prior to cutting.

6.2.7 The use of chemicals such as herbicides, pesticides and inorganic fertilisers should be avoided.

### 6.3 Scrub Management

6.3.1 Native low laying species such as dog rose, dogwood, guelder rose, hazel, goat willow and juniper will be planted.

6.3.2 Trim every third year, at the end of the winter, avoiding periods of hard frost and after berries have been eaten by birds.

6.3.3 Trimming should ensure scrub retains a dense form, while preventing encroachment onto the surrounding areas, this operation should also include dead-heading and removal of winter damage.

6.3.4 Clearance of leaf litter within shrub beds should be kept to minimum in order to preserve a habitat suitable for invertebrates.

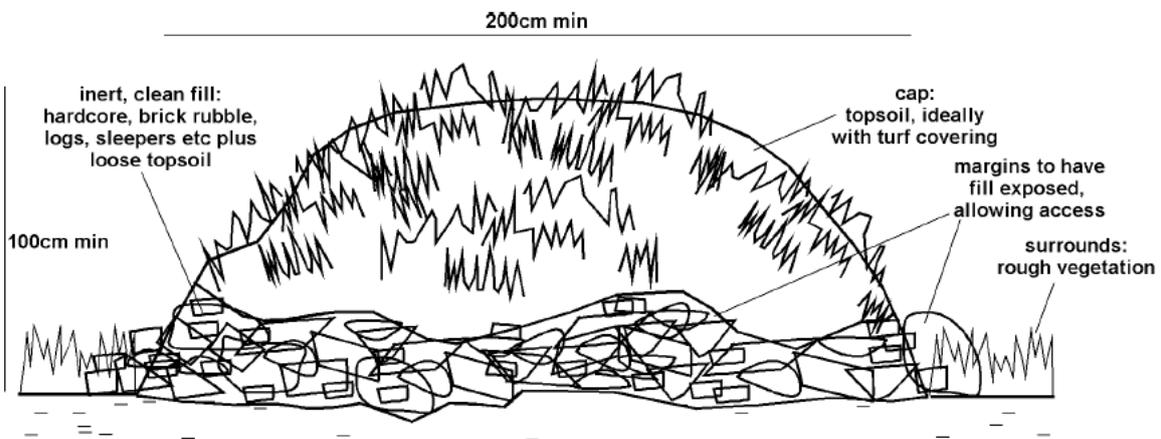
6.3.5 At the end of the defects period, reapply bark mulch beneath the shrubs where required to ensure that the area remains weed free. Any weeds found should be removed by cultivation.

6.3.6 Maintenance of scrub should be conducted outside of the bird nesting season, to avoid damaging or destroying bird nests.

### 6.4 Hibernacula Management

6.4.1 No specific management is required as long as it's not blocked and remains intact.

6.4.2 If it gets damaged it should be recreated using the specification below.



## 7. DRAWINGS

