



LAND AT SHELLEY WOODHOUSE

OS REF: SE 21903 10861

**PRECAUTIONARY WORKING METHOD
STATEMENT (PWMS)**

Ref No: 260910/PWMS

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1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. Kirklees Council have granted outline planning permission for the construction of a residential dwelling at Shelley Woodhouse.

1.2. Condition 11 requires a Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS) for reptiles and amphibians. The condition is as follows:

‘Prior to the commencement of development, a detailed Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS) in respect of reptiles and amphibians shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. In order to minimise risk and avoid harm to reptiles and amphibians, the PWMS shall include (but not be limited to) toolbox talks provided by a suitably qualified ecologist, attendance of an ECoW (Ecological Clerk of Works) as required, and careful hand search around potential reptiles and amphibians features. In the event of encountering a reptiles or amphibians, all work must cease until the ecological clerk of works and Natural England are contacted for advice on the best way to proceed lawfully. All contractors working on site should be made aware of this advice and provided with the contact details of the ecological clerk of works.’

1.3. This document is designed to satisfy that condition.

2. PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES.

2.1. Site clearance in preparation for the development will be undertaken between April and the end of October to avoid the hibernation season.

2.2. Prior to any clearance, amphibian and reptile toolbox talks will be provided to all on-site personnel by a suitably qualified ecologist. This will include a specific toolbox talk for great crested newt.

2.3. All vegetation clearance will be carried out under supervision of an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW).

2.4. All vegetation on site will initially be cut back to a height of 150mm above ground using hand tools and the arisings collected up and stored away from construction works, ready to create habitat pile(s) post-development.

2.5. The site will then be left for a period of at least twenty-four hours to allow any amphibians, reptiles or small mammals to safely move off the site.

2.6. Prior to ground level clearance, the ECoW will perform a hand search. Any reptiles or common amphibians identified will be relocated carefully off site by the ECoW. If a great crested newt is identified at any point, works will stop immediately and licencing will be required.

2.7. The use of strimmers will be avoided during clearance to ground level.

2.8. All rubble piles will be dismantled carefully by hand, under direct supervision of the ECoW.

2.9. All equipment and materials will be stored above ground on pallets.

2.10. If there is any doubt about compliance with this procedure, Whitcher Wildlife should be contacted for further advice.

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Toolbox Talk: Amphibians



The four most common amphibian species in Great Britain include the smooth newt, palmate newt, common frog and common toad. There are also three other species, the great crested newt, natterjack toad and pool frog which are afforded a higher level of protection as they are European Protected Species (EPS).

General precautions to avoid impact on common amphibians where works are deemed to be low risk:

(Always refer to site-specific reports for additional recommendations)

- Where possible, vegetation clearance should be carried out to a minimum of 150mm in height.
- Care should be taken when lifting materials and they should not be dragged across the ground.
- Amphibians should be allowed to move away from the site of their own accord.
- If it is necessary to move an amphibian, they should be placed into a similar habitat. They should only be released into water if found in water.

Legislation:

The four common amphibians listed above are protected only by Section 9(5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. This section prohibits sale, barter, exchange, transporting for sale and advertising to sell or to buy.

The common toad is also listed as a Species of Principal Importance in the UK.

Habitat:

Amphibians predominantly live on land but breed in ponds and other areas of standing water. The aquatic requirements for each species vary slightly although the presence of one species does not rule out the potential presence of the other species. When not in their ponds amphibians require a variety of refugia for shelter and can therefore be found under log piles, in rubble, under tree roots or within areas of scrub or rough grassland. Amphibians hibernate, spending the winter in burrows or under refugia protected from the cold and predators.

Identification – Common Frog:

Common frogs have smooth skin with a distinctive patch behind their eyes. They are predominantly green or brown with black patches, although their colour can vary to orange, red or black.



Identification – Common Toad:

Common toads have rough warty skin with two distinctive lumps behind the eyes. When disturbed they have a tendency to remain still and when moving they crawl rather than hopping.



Identification – Smooth Newt:

Smooth newts can grow to around 10cm in length. They are usually brown in colour, often with visible black spots on the upper body. Their belly is pale orange with black spots fading away to the sides. The males have a wavy crest running from head to tail, although this can sometimes only be visible in water.



Identification – Palmate Newt:

Palmate newts are very similar to smooth newts but are usually smaller, to around 9cm. Their throat is usually pink and unspotted. The males often have webbed back feet and a fine filament at the end of the tail during the breeding season.



If you have any concerns regarding amphibians, contact Whitcher Wildlife at info@whitcher-wildlife.co.uk or 07947 828137.

Toolbox Talk: Great Crested Newts

The great crested newt population has suffered a major decline in Britain over the last century. Development has caused a loss of ponds and terrestrial habitat and fragmented populations and lack of pond management has led the conditions to become unsuitable.

General precautions to avoid impact on GCN where works are deemed to be low risk:

(Always refer to site-specific reports for additional recommendations)

- All on-site personnel should be briefed on how to identify a great crested newt.
- Vegetation clearance carried out to a minimum of 150mm in height.
- No refugia or habitat piles should be disturbed.
- All equipment should be removed from the site overnight or stored above ground on pallets.
- No materials or equipment should be dragged across the ground.

Habitat:

Great crested newts live predominantly on land but breed in ponds between March and June. They use refugia including stones, logs and cracks or crevices that provide a moist and cool environment. They emerge at night to forage. During the winter months great crested newts hibernate deep down away from frost.

When disturbed in terrestrial habitats newts will usually be very sluggish and will take time to move away.

Legislation:

The great crested newt is listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, modified by the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000. It is also listed on Annex II and Annex IV of The Conservation (Natural Habitats & C) Regulations 1994. It is therefore an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take a great crested newt.
- Possess or control any live or dead specimen or anything derived from a great crested newt.
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection by a great crested newt.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a great crested newt while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose.
- Deliberately take or destroy the eggs of a great crested newt.
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a great crested newt.



Identification - Great Crested Newts:

Great crested newts are dark, nearly black in colour with a speckled belly, distinctly orange in colour and with orange stripes across their toes. Great crested newts can grow up to 15cm in length.



Identification - Smooth and Palmate Newts:

Smooth newts are predominantly lighter in colour although their colour may vary from sandy coloured to very dark. Smooth newts also have a speckled orange belly but the orange colour fades to pale. Palmate newts are similar to smooth newts but with a pinker belly and webbed feet.



If a great crested newt is identified at any point, stop works immediately and contact Whitcher Wildlife at info@whitcher-wildlife.co.uk or 07947828137.

Toolbox Talk: Reptiles



There are four common reptile species in Great Britain, the grass snake, adder, slow worm and common lizard. There are also two much rarer species, the sand lizard and smooth snake which are afforded a higher level of protection as they are European Protected Species.

General precautions to avoid impact on reptiles where works are deemed to be low risk:

(Always refer to site-specific reports for additional recommendations)

- All on-site personnel should be briefed on how to identify common reptile species.
- Vegetation clearance carried out to a minimum of 150mm in height.
- No refugia or habitat piles should be disturbed.
- All equipment should be removed from the site overnight or stored above ground on pallets.

Legislation:

Reptiles are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. They received greater protection following reviews of the schedules published in 1988 and 1991. This means they are protected against intentional or recklessly killing and injuring and against sale or transporting for sale.

Habitat:

Maintaining the right body temperature is vital to reptiles' survival. In the morning, they find a warm basking site to heat up their bodies and then later they may move back into the shade so as not to overheat. Hence, reptiles require a habitat that provides a range of suitable refugia for shelter such as dense vegetation, rubble or log piles, or crevices and open areas for basking such as bare ground, rocks or railway ballast shoulders. During hot summers reptiles may be found in damper, cooler sites. Reptiles hibernate, spending the winter in burrows or under logs protected from the cold and predators. When disturbed in their natural habitat reptiles will usually move away quickly.

Identification – Grass Snake:

The grass snake can be up to 120cm long. It is generally dark green in colour but may occasionally appear grey with vertical black bars and spots that run along its sides. There is usually a yellow marking around the neck.



Identification – Adder:

The adder is the only native species that is venomous, but it is rarely harmful to humans. Adult adders are generally up to 66cm long. Back ground colouration is a light shade of grey or brown with a black zigzag marking along the length of the back.



Identification – Slow Worm:

Slow worms grow to around 45cm in length. The males and females display a marked difference in colour when fully grown with the females often displaying a dark vertebral stripe. Their colouring varies from light brown, dark brown, grey, bronze to brick red and they can display occasional markings on the flanks.



Identification – Common Lizard:

Common lizards grow to around 16cm. They are grey-brown to dark brown, often with a darker streak that may run the entire length of the spine. A continuous dark band bordered by light yellow or white spots is often seen on either side of the body. The underside of the males is egg yolk yellow to orange spotted with black. Females are yellowish grey.



If multiple or hibernating reptiles are identified, stop works immediately and contact Whitcher Wildlife at info@whitcher-wildlife.co.uk or 07947828137.