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Ecological Surveys • Habitat Management • Arboricultural Surveys • Vegetation Clearance

Precautionary Method of Working Statement (Ecology) (PMWS)

**Barkway, Church Lane, Langham
[NGR:TL380355]**

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DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

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1.0 Introduction

1.1. Purpose of Report

Greenwillows Associates Ltd. has been commissioned to provide a Precautionary Method of Working Statement (Ecology) (PMWS), to comply with Condition 11 of the planning permission pertaining to a new development at Langham, Church Lane, Barkway, Hertfordshire, SG8 8EJ (Planning Ref. to Variation to Condition 11: 25/02642/S73). The purpose of PMWS is to detail mitigation measures following best practices to minimise ecological impact and protect great crested newts (GCN) during construction activities.

1.2. Background Information

Planning permission was granted by North Hertfordshire District Council on 20th December 2024 for the proposed 'Erection of one detached 5-bed dwelling, garage and associated parking, access and amenity land' (Ref: 24/00386/FP).

Ecological surveys previously carried out include:

- Land to the west of Langham, Church Road, Barkway, Hertfordshire Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Produced for Barley Properties Ltd By Applied Ecology Ltd. 2019.
- Re: Great Crested Newt eDNA presence/absence survey results – Land West of Langham, Barkway (Applied Ecology - By Email, 2023).
- Great Crested Newt Mitigation Options for Proposed Development, Land West of Langham, Church Lane, Barkway, Hertfordshire, SG8 8EG (Greenwillows Associates Ltd. 2025).

This report should be read in conjunction with the findings of the above.

The construction footprint comprised short mown amenity grassland with no potential for resting/sheltering GCN. Most recent eDNA surveys identified the two onsite ponds as Negative for presence of GCN. Given the lack of resting/sheltering habitats and breeding ponds for GCN within the construction footprint, a non-licensed installation of a temporary amphibian exclusion fencing will be undertaken, following this PMWS in accordance with Condition 11 set out below to ensure the works will be conducted with minimal ecological impact.

Condition 11

No works are in any circumstances to commence until a Precautionary Method of Working Statement (Ecology) for protected species, specifically GCNs, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This approved method statement shall be implemented for the duration of the development.

Reason: To ensure that works do not result in adverse impacts to protected species in line with Policy NE4 of the Local Plan

2.0 Precautionary Method of Working Statement

2.1 General Site Clearance

Prior to exclusion fence installation (as set out below) and construction mobilisation, the ground vegetation will be retained as a short sward by the current occupier with all arisings removed from site to avoid the creation of thatch under which GCN can shelter. A final walkover and visual inspection will be undertaken by an experienced GCN ecologist prior to breaking ground.

2.2 Newt Fencing Installation and Removal

A fingertip search by a licensed ecologist will be conducted along the proposed temporary amphibian fencing (TAF) and designated construction footprint prior to the installation of the TAF, in accordance with English Nature (now Natural England) Great Crested Newt Mitigation Principles (2001).

TAF will be installed and removed under ecological supervision, ensuring works only proceed during the active newt season when overnight temperatures exceed 5°C (typically March - October). The fencing will be placed around the site to exclude the ponds and ditch from the working area while still maintaining connectivity to the wider environment. Daily inspections will be conducted and logged by a designated named site operative to ensure compliance and to maintain the integrity of the fence.

2.3 Monitoring and Maintenance

An experienced GCN ecologist will carry out monthly checks of the newt fencing to supplement the daily inspections conducted by the site manager or nominated officer. A site log will be maintained to document inspections, necessary repairs, and any damage. Any damage to the fence will be repaired immediately to ensure its continued effectiveness. It is the client's responsibility to ensure their site supervisor complies with all of the above.

A toolbox talk pertaining to GCN ecology, identification and procedures to be adopted if a newt is found will be delivered to all construction staff during their site induction, and all staff will comply with the guidelines contained therein. This will initially be delivered by a member of the Greenwillows ecological team and cascaded down to the workforce by the Construction Site Manager and/or other appointed person. A record of all personnel receiving the toolbox talk will be kept in the site office for inspection by the Greenwillows ecologists during site visits. Each person receiving the toolbox talk will sign and date the record sheet.

All construction works including storage of materials and spoil arisings will be confined within the exclusion area.