



PADDOCK ROAD, STAINCROSS.

OS REF: SE 33411 10311.

**PRECAUTIONARY WORKING METHOD
STATEMENT.**

Ref No: 200748/PWMS.

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1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. Planning consent has been granted for a residential development on the land of and adjacent to Woodview Farm on Paddock Lane in Staincross.

1.2. Condition 24 of that consent states -

“No development shall take place (including vegetation/site clearance) until a Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS) for amphibians, bats (including details regarding the soft felling of trees with bat roost potential) and small mammals has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The PWMS will be completed by a suitably qualified ecologist and the approved PWMS shall be implemented in full according to the specified timescales, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.”

1.3. This document has been prepared to satisfy that condition.

2. PRECAUTIONARY WORKING METHOD STATEMENT.

2.1. Amphibians

2.1.1. All onsite personnel will be briefed on the potential presence of amphibians. A toolbox talk has been provided at the end of this document to assist with this.

2.1.2. Any stored materials moved from the ground where possible will be carefully lifted and not dragged along the ground to prevent harm to any amphibians that may be sheltering beneath.

2.1.3. Any vegetation to be cleared will be first cut to a minimum of 200mm to make the area less desirable to fauna species such as amphibians and small mammals and to encourage them to vacate the area before the area is then cleared down to ground level.

2.1.4. In the highly unlikely event that a great crested newt is found, all works must stop immediately, and Whitcher Wildlife should be contacted for further advice.

2.1.5. If any other amphibians are discovered during the works, they will be moved safely by hand to an area of vegetation outside of the work site where they will remain unaffected by the works.

2.2. Bats

2.2.1. If it is necessary to fell any of the trees identified as having bat potential, they will be soft felled in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust's 'Good Practice Guidelines'. Sections should be lowered to the ground slowly and carefully, and left on the ground for a minimum of twenty-four hours to allow individual bats to escape before being chipped or removed from the site.

2.3. *Small mammals*

2.3.1. The measures described in section 2.1. will also prevent any harm to small mammals.

2.3.2. Any excavations will either be covered overnight or will be left with a mammal ramp/sloping edge to allow any animals that fall in a chance to escape. Any open excavations will be checked each morning before any works proceed.

2.3.3. If any small mammals are discovered during the works, works should stop temporarily to allow the mammal to escape the work area unharmed.

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Toolbox Talk: Amphibians

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Identification: Smooth Newts.

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.



Other Amphibians.

In addition to the common amphibians listed adjacent there are also three other species present in the UK, those being great crested newts, natterjack toads and pool frogs. These species are less common.

The species are also afforded a higher level of protection because they are European Protected Species.

Identification: Palmate Newts.

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.



Habitat.

Amphibians predominantly live on land but breed in ponds. 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 logs protected from the cold and predators.



Identification: Common Frogs.

Common frogs are one of the more common amphibians in the UK. They have smooth skin with a distinctive patch behind their eyes. They are predominantly green or brown with black patches although their colour can vary through orange, red or black.



Identification: Common Toads.

Common toads are a Species of Principal Importance in the UK.

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



Legislation.

The 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. Collection and keeping of these amphibians is not an offence.

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

If amphibians are identified during works, allow them to move away of their own accord.

If large numbers or amphibians (5+) are identified stop works and contact Whitcher Wildlife Ltd directly on 01226 753271 or at info@whitcher-wildlife.co.uk

Toolbox Talk: Great Crested Newts

The great crested newt population has suffered a major decline in Britain over the last century. Numerous ponds have been lost, unmanaged ponds have become silted up and over-shaded, development has destroyed ponds and associated terrestrial habitat and caused fragmentation of populations. The loss of grassland, scrub and woodland has resulted in fewer opportunities for foraging, dispersal and hibernation.

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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.

Habitat.

Great crested newts live predominantly on land but breed in ponds between March and June.

Great crested newts may be found on land almost all year round. They spend the daytime under rocks or logs, in cracks, crevices or holes, or anywhere that is moist and cool and 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, recently modified by the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000. The great crested newt is therefore subject to the provisions of Schedule 9, which make it 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.

The great crested newt is also listed on Annex II and Annex IV of The Conservation (Natural Habitats & C) Regulations 1994. Regulation 39 makes it an offence to:

- Deliberately capture or kill a great crested newt.
- Deliberately disturb a great crested newt.
- 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.

The legislation applies to all life stages of great crested newts.

The maximum fine on conviction of offences under Section 9 and Regulation 39 currently stands at £5,000. The CroW Act 2000 amendment also allows for a custodial sentence of up to six months instead of, or in addition to, a fine. In addition, items, which may constitute evidence of the commission of an offence, may be seized and detained.

If great crested newts are identified during works, stop all works and contact Whitcher Wildlife Ltd directly on 01226 753271 or at info@whitcher-wildlife.co.uk