



BSG | ecology

Project Profile

The National Football Centre:
Great Crested Newt
Mitigation Strategy

Background

BSG Ecology was commissioned by The Football Association to provide ecological advice in relation to proposals to construct a new National Football Centre at a site near Burton Upon Trent in Staffordshire.

BSG Ecology's Role in the project

The first step was to undertake an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey which established the baseline conditions on the site and identified the need for further surveys at the appropriate time of year.

These baseline surveys included a ground-based assessment of trees for bats, tree climbing surveys for bats, dawn re-entry bat surveys of trees, badger, invertebrates, reptiles and great crested newt.

Given the ecological sensitivities of the site, it was very important that BSG Ecology worked closely with the architects and the large team of consultants. This was crucial to ensuring that all the work was delivered on time and to a high standard, to enable planning permission to be granted for the proposed development.

Catering for the Great Crested Newts

One of the key ecological issues to address was the presence of a breeding population of great crested newts for which we successfully designed an extensive mitigation strategy and secured a European Protected Species (EPS) Licence from Natural England.

We then worked closely with the design and build contractors and other ground workers to implement the licence over two years through pitfall trapping, translocation and habitat creation, this included negotiation with Natural England to agree changes to the Licence in response to design and operational amendments to the development.

We continue to provide ecological advice and support during the construction phase. Our ecologists are working alongside the construction engineers and contractors, to ensure that the EPS Licence is implemented in full. This includes annual monitoring for a period of six years of the translocated great crested newt population to determine the success of the scheme.

In addition to BSG Ecology's role in relation to European Protected Species, we have also developed a twenty-five year Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) for the site which aims to both protect and manage existing habitats, and to ensure the creation of UK BAP Habitats including parkland. In addition, the BAP also sets out enhancement measures for bats, barn owl and nesting birds.

Outcome

BSG Ecology's flexibility and experience of dealing with large scale projects has been central to this project being delivered on time and has ensured that key site features have been protected, new habitats are being created and that the translocation scheme has been successful.

