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COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES**

SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

WREXHAM

STRYT LAS A'R HAFOD

<u>Date of Notification:</u>	1997, 2000
<u>National Grid Reference:</u>	SJ298459
<u>O.S. Maps:</u>	1:50,000 Sheet number: 117 1:10,000 Sheet number: SJ24NE, SJ34SE
<u>Site Area:</u>	69.4 ha

Description:

Stryt Las a Hafod is a composite site located close to the village of Johnstown, south west of Wrexham, at an altitude of 130m. It is of special interest for its amphibians. Of particular interest is the population of the great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*. This species has suffered a marked decline throughout Great Britain and Continental Europe as a result of habitat loss. Great Britain is considered to be one of the strongholds for this species in western Europe.

The Bettisfield Formation feldspathic sandstone and coal measures underlie the site and a number of capped mine shafts are present within the boundaries of the site. Where present, natural soils are of overconsolidated till (boulder clay) origin. The majority of the water bodies originated following the cessation of mineral extractive industries including coal mining and quarrying for clay and associated industrial developments. Certain ponds, particularly at Hafod, were specifically created for amphibian conservation purposes.

The water bodies at Stryt Las and Hafod support one of the largest known breeding populations of the great crested newt in Great Britain. Torch night counts undertaken during the spring have revealed over 250 adult and sub-adult animals on several occasions. They also support significant populations of the commoner amphibian species notably smooth newt *Triturus vulgaris*, palmate newt *T. helveticus*, common frog *Rana temporaria*, and common toad *Bufo bufo*.

Surrounding areas of land support a mosaic of scrub and planted trees, grassland, and tall ruderal vegetation. These form important foraging and over wintering areas for adult and juvenile amphibians.

Remarks:

The great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* is protected under the EC Habitats and Species Directive (as implemented in Great Britain by Statutory Instrument 2716: The Conservation (Natural Habitats & c.) Regulations 1994).

Stryt Las is managed by Wrexham County Borough Council as a community nature park.

Land at Hafod is to be managed as a community woodland.

The great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* is listed in the UK's Biodiversity Action Plan as a Priority Species.

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