

Good afternoon Alice,

Thank you for re-consulting us on the above application. The applicant has submitted some updated ecological information in the form of, *Great Crested Newt eDNA Sampling, Cedar Cottage, Sandygate Lane, Lower Beeding, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 6LR, arbtech, June 2026*, which states that:

- *"Therefore, all ponds within 250m (P1-4) should be subject to an Environmental DNA (eDNA) survey to determine presence or absence of great crested newts."*
- *"Pond P1 and P3 contain a confirmed absence of great crested newts (GCN) and Pond P2 was dry at the time of the survey and so considered unsuitable for great crested newts."*
- *"There was no access granted to Pond 4."*
- *"Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to great crested newts, further surveys are considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented for common amphibians during construction, including the following measures:"*
- Some avoidance measures are then outlined within the report

Given the poor suitability of the onsite habitats, the intervening features between P4 and the site, and in light of the negative eDNA result for P3, it is considered that a PWMS may be an appropriate option here. Some measures have been outlined within the above report, however given that there are a number of ponds within 500m which remain unsurveyed, and due to the scale of the development, it is recommended that the statement is strengthened to improve the protection provided for GCN. In particular, we would recommend that a toolbox talk is carried out, and that any hibernacula features (rubble, brash, deadwood) are dismantled/removed under supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist. Once these amendments have been made, we would recommend that the statement is conditioned in order to secure the suggested measures.

Should the applicant wish to avoid all risk any risks relating to great crested newts, they have the option to enquire for Horsham District Council's District Licence, which provides full legal cover for any impacts to great crested newts and therefore removes the risk of having to stop works if great crested newts are found on site. More details on the District Licensing Scheme operated by the council can be found at www.naturespaceuk.com

Best wishes,

Laura Downs (*she/her*)

District Licensing Officer (Great Crested Newts) – West Sussex

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