

[REDACTED]

Sent: 21 July 2026 09:59
To: Daniel.Holmes; Planning
Subject: DC/25/2114 Newt Survey
Attachments: IMG_7416.jpeg; IMG_7417.jpeg

Categories: Comments Received

Dear Mr Holmes

It is noted that the Council's Ecologist has highlighted that no Great Crested Newt survey has been undertaken, when Smooth Newts have been recorded at the application site (please see attached photos).

Whilst the presence of Smooth Newts does not confirm the presence of Great Crested Newts, it clearly demonstrates that suitable amphibian habitat exists within the immediate area. This is supported by the presence of connected terrestrial habitat and nearby ponds that could provide breeding opportunities.

Of particular note is a substantial, well-established pond within the grounds of Sele Priory, together with a smaller pond within the neighbouring property adjoining the site entrance where Smooth Newts have been recorded. As far as I am aware, neither of these ponds has been identified or assessed within the ecological reports submitted by Eco Co-op, despite the larger pond appearing on other plans associated with the application.

Natural England's standing advice recognises that where suitable ponds and terrestrial habitat exist within dispersal distance of a proposed development, the potential presence of Great Crested Newts should be properly considered. In this case, the combination of confirmed Smooth Newts, nearby ponds and suitable surrounding habitat means the potential presence of Great Crested Newts cannot reasonably be discounted without appropriate assessment.

In the absence of appropriate survey evidence, it cannot be concluded that Great Crested Newts are absent from the site or that the proposed development would have no impact upon them. The absence of a survey should not be interpreted as evidence of absence. Given the availability of suitable habitat and the confirmed presence of Smooth Newts nearby, a precautionary approach should be adopted until the potential presence of Great Crested Newts has been adequately assessed.

I would therefore be grateful if the Council could clarify:

- whether all ponds within the relevant vicinity of the application site have been identified and assessed;
- how the potential presence of Great Crested Newts has been considered in the absence of any survey;
- whether the suitability of neighbouring ponds has been assessed, including where access may not have been available; and
- whether NatureSpace has been consulted regarding the need for further assessment or consideration under the Great Crested Newt District Level Licensing Scheme.

Given the ecological sensitivity of this site, including its location within the River Adur Water Meadows & Wyckham Wood Local Wildlife Site, I respectfully submit that sufficient ecological information should be available before any planning decision is made. Where uncertainty remains regarding potential impacts on protected species, the Precautionary Principle should be applied.

Yours Sincerely

[REDACTED]

Meadow View
Church Farm Walk
Upper Beeding
West Sussex BN44 3HD



Add a Caption

Tuesday • 3 Mar 2026 • 3:29 pm

[Adjust](#)

 IMG_4304

Apple iPhone 17 Pro Max

HEIF



Telephoto Camera — 100 mm $f2.8$

1 MP • 1541 × 1156 • 4.1 MB

STANDARD

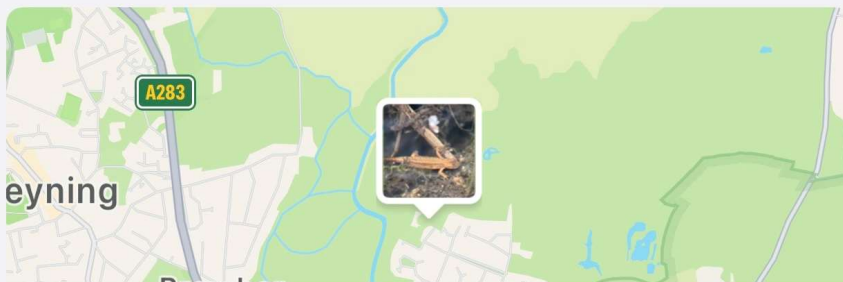
ISO 640

| 100 mm

| 0 ev

| $f2.8$

| 1/76 s



Steyping - Upper Beeding >

[Adjust](#)



Add a Caption

Saturday • 28 Feb 2026 • 2:37 pm

[Adjust](#)

 IMG_4162

Apple iPhone 17 Pro Max

HEIF



Main Camera — 24 mm $f1.78$

6 MP • 2920 × 2116 • 1.3 MB

STANDARD

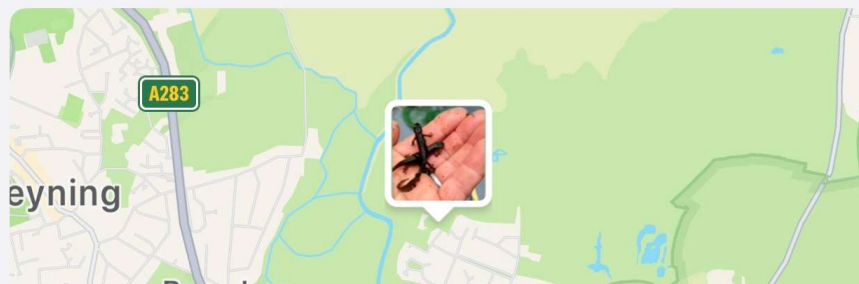
ISO 64

24 mm

0 ev

$f1.78$

1/208 s



Steyning - Upper Beeding >

[Adjust](#)