

From: Laura Downs <Laura.Downs@naturespaceuk.com>
Sent: 10 September 2026 17:02
To: Alice.Johnson
Cc: Planning
Subject: DC/26/0933 | Land Between Muntham Drive and Smugglers' Lane Chapel Road
Barns Green West Sussex

Categories: Consultations

Good afternoon Alice,

**Planning reference: DC/26/0933 | Land Between Muntham Drive and Smugglers' Lane Chapel Road
Barns Green West Sussex**

Thank you for consulting me on the above planning application. The applicant had provided an ecological report in the form of - *Preliminary Ecological Assessment Report, Chapel Road, Barns Green, HCUK Group, June 2026*, which states:

- *"The Site is dominated by horse grazed grassland, which maintained a short grass sward for the majority of the habitat."*
- *"An fenced off area in the north-west corner of the Site is dominated by unmanaged tall forbs and ruderal. This habitat also contains a compost heap and discarded metal debris."*
- *"A small area of mixed scrub is present in the south-east corner of the Site."*
- *"A total of 16 waterbodies (12 pond / fishing lakes and four ditches) were identified within 500m of the Site, shown in Figure 6, Appendix 1. Three waterbodies are present within 250m of the Site, including one pond, one fishing lake, and one ditch."*
- *"Records from one pond within 250m of the Site surveyed in 2025 by the Ecology Partnership²⁴ (listed as P2 in Figure 6 Pond Plan, in Appendix 1) returned a negative result for GCN"*
- *"Precautionary Method Statement for breeding birds, reptiles, amphibians, bats, hazel dormice, hedgehogs, for inclusion within a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP: Biodiversity)"*

There are a number of ponds surrounding the development site. We are aware that the ponds to the south are commercial fishing lakes and therefore agree that these can likely be ruled out from consideration. P2 has been surveyed under a previous application in 2025 which returned a negative result, and as such this can also be ruled out from consideration, however the pond located next to P2 has not been assessed thus far. Whilst taking into consideration the majority of the onsite habitat being sub-optimal, and also the intervening features between the site and the northern ponds, we feel that requesting further survey work may not be proportionate to the likely impacts of the development. However, given the lack of survey information on the remaining pond within 250m (and others within 500m) we are in agreement with the above report that some precautionary measures will be necessary here. We are in agreement that a GCN specific method statement can be secured via a CEMP condition. We would recommend that this statement includes measures such as ecological supervision and sensitive vegetation clearance methods, as well as the steps to be taken should GCN be discovered onsite.

Best wishes,

Laura Downs (*she/her*)

District Licensing Officer (Great Crested Newts) – West Sussex

NatureSpace Partnership

e: Laura.Downs@naturespaceuk.com

m: 07356 159774

w: www.naturespaceuk.com

Company operating hours: Monday to Thursday 09:00 - 17:00

