

From: Laura Downs <Laura.Downs@naturespaceuk.com>
Sent: 05 August 2026 16:17:00 UTC+01:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: Fw: DC/26/0696 | Land North West of The Hermitage Tower Hill Horsham West Sussex
Categories: Consultations



Please see below.

Best wishes,

Laura Downs (*she/her*)
District Licensing Officer (Great Crested Newts) – West Sussex

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From: Laura Downs <Laura.Downs@naturespaceuk.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 05, 2026 16:15
To: Sophie.Moore <sophie.moore@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: DC/26/0696 | Land North West of The Hermitage Tower Hill Horsham West Sussex

Good afternoon Sophie,

Thank you for reconsulting us on the above application. The applicant has now provided an updated PEA (*Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and BNG Baseline Report- update, Land North of Parthings Lane, Horsham, Leith Ecology Consulting, July 2026*), which states that:

- *"On site terrestrial habitat lies within dispersal range of a pond approximately 50m north of the site boundary. This pond was dry at the time of the July 2025 walkover but was subsequently found to hold water. It was therefore samples for GCN eDNA on the 29th June 2026..."*
- *"A negative eDNA result, with valid degradation and inhibition controls, is treated under the WC1067 protocol as evidence of GCN absence from that waterbody at the time of sampling"*
- *"As a standard precaution, and because eDNA results reflect a single sampling season, reasonable avoidance measures (see Mitigation Hierarchy) should still be followed during any vegetation clearance or ground-breaking works."*

Due to the scale of this development and the mostly unsuitable habitat to be impacted by proposals, we would agree that in light of a negative eDNA result, a precautionary working methods statement is likely to be the most proportional approach. Whilst some more general measures have been included within the above report, we would recommend that a full and GCN specific PWMS is prepared by a suitably qualified ecologist due to the presence of unsurveyed ponds within the landscape. It should include steps to be taken should GCN be encountered on site and should either be submitted to the LPA for approval prior to determination or secured via a pre-commencement condition.

Best wishes,

Laura Downs (*she/her*)

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