

From: Laura Downs <Laura.Downs@naturespaceuk.com>
Sent: 16 July 2026 17:53:16 UTC+01:00
To: "Sam.Whitehouse" <Sam.Whitehouse@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: DC/26/0266 | Thakeham Mushrooms Storrington Road Thakeham Pulborough



Good afternoon Sam,

Thank for re-consulting us on the above application. Within the applicant's PEA, it is stated that:

- *"An eDNA survey was carried out to determine the presence/absence of Great Crested Newt within a single off-site pond, labelled P1 on Plan 6612/ECO3 in 2023. No update surveys were undertaken in 2025 as the update Phase 1 survey confirmed the site to remain broadly similar to that in 2023, whilst the 2023 survey work remained in date."*
- *"Following CIEEM guidance²⁶, it was determined that the lifespan of the previously completed Great Crested Newt was two years given there were no changes to the condition of habitats present on-site and given the local distribution Great Crested Newt had not changed."*
- *"Within the north of the site, arable fields were previously present in 2023, but at the time of the update survey work this field had evidently been left fallow and is currently long-sward grassland"*

As three years have now elapsed since eDNA surveys were undertaken, it is recommended that updated surveys are obtained, both for the pond located adjacent to the site, as well as others with ecological connectivity to the development (e.g. 130m north east). The updated habitat information indicates that site has become more suitable for GCN as time has passed and according to the CIEEM advice note on the lifespan of surveys, data older than 3 years is unlikely to still be valid. Should GCN be occupying the ponds with connectivity to the site, it is considered that the proposed works would be high risk and could lead to an offence being committed.

Best wishes,

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

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