

From: Laura Downs <Laura.Downs@naturespaceuk.com>

Sent: 23 June 2026 19:00

To: Sophie.Moore [REDACTED]

Subject: DC/26/0696 | Land North West of The Hermitage Tower Hill Horsham West Sussex

Good afternoon Sophie,

Thank you for consulting us on the above application. The applicant has submitted some ecological information in the form of, *Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and BNG Baseline Report, Land North of Parthings Lane, Horsham, December 2025*, which states that:

- *"On-site, terrestrial habitat, including patches of bramble scrub and modified grassland, lies within dispersal range and existing wildlife corridors leading to nearby ponds, including one approximately 50 m to the north, which was found to be dry at the time of survey (as shown in Figure 3) and is therefore considered unlikely to be suitable for GCN breeding."*
- *"The three ponds located 300–500 m to the south are separated from the site by roads that disrupt local wildlife corridors, and are surrounded by more extensive, higher-quality terrestrial habitat, reducing the likelihood of regular newt movement between them and the site."*

The pond located adjacent to the site was visited in July 2025 at which point it was found to be dry, however the spring and summer of 2025 was extremely hot and many ponds did dry out. This however is not necessarily representative of its usual condition and potential to support GCN, and ordinarily, more data would be requested in order to determine that a pond is permanently dry. In fact, ponds that occasionally dry out can support very good populations of GCN, as this process can reduce the abundance of predators. Therefore we would recommend that this pond is revisited to determine whether it is now possible to collect eDNA information.

Alternatively, if the applicant does not wish to undertake additional surveys, the District Licence scheme can be joined at any time. This method of licensing often removes the need for survey work and onsite mitigation for great crested newts as it provides compensation habitats off site. This would provide certainty to the applicant, as their licensing route can be determined within 10 working days at any time of the year. Should you wish to utilise Horsham District Licence then an enquiry can be made at www.naturespaceuk.com

Best wishes,

Laura Downs (*she/her*)

District Licensing Officer (Great Crested Newts) – West Sussex

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