



GREAT CRESTED NEWT EDNA REPORT

Bramblewood, Newhouse Lane, Storrington

On behalf of: Folkes Architects

Client:	Folkes Architects			
Project:	Bramblewood, Newhouse Lane, Storrington			
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Validity:

This report is valid for 18 months from the date of the site visit. If works have not commenced by this date, an updated site visit should be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist to assess any changes in the habitats present on site, and to inform a review of the conclusions and recommendations made.

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LIZARD

Landscape Design and Ecology

SUMMARY

Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology has been commissioned by Folkes Architects to undertake amphibian surveys of ponds adjacent to the Bramblewood, Newhouse Lane (located around central grid reference: *TQ 11340 15256* – hereafter referred to as ‘the site’)

1no. pond was identified within the site, which was assessed as offering ‘good’ suitability for great crested newts.

The pond was subject to eDNA survey, with water samples collected on the 17th of April 2026 before analysis by SureScreen Scientifics.

Analysis of the samples indicated the likely absence of great crested newts within the on-site ponds therefore no specific mitigation measures with regards this species is required.

Ponds are however an important habitat for common amphibians, and invertebrates. The loss of any ponds on site as a result of the scheme should therefore be compensated for through the creation of new ponds within the wider site.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology has been commissioned to undertake great crested newt (GCN) surveys to inform the proposed development of the Bramblewood, Newhouse Lane, Storrington (*Grid Reference: TQ 11340 15256 – hereafter referred to as 'the site'*).

1.2 Surveys were recommended following the original ecology survey completed by this company in October 2025, which identified 1no. pond within or immediately adjacent to the proposed construction zone.

Survey Rationale

1.3 The site consists of modified grassland, surrounded by hedgerow and scattered trees. 1no. small pond c. 10m² is present within the site with introduced shrub species bordering.

1.4 Although the modified grassland within the site offers sub-optimal terrestrial habitat, proposals shall likely require the removal of 1no. small pond. Further survey work to assess the potential impacts upon GCN was therefore undertaken to rule out their presence within this pond.

Site Information

1.5 The site covers an area of c. 0.17 Hectares (ha) and is rectangular shaped. The site comprises a grassed amenity area, a number of individual trees, introduced shrubs, and associated access. The site is bound by Newhouse Lane to the north and by residential buildings and associated gardens, to the south, east and west.

Surrounding Landscape

1.6 The site is located within a semi-rural setting, to the northeastern extents of the village of Storrington. The town of Worthing is located c. 12.0km southeast and the town of Horsham lies c.16.0km northeast of the site. The overall surrounds are mostly residential buildings and associated gardens, with arable fields and areas of woodland in the wider area. The site is bound by a ditch which runs alongside Newhouse Lane. The soil composition is freely draining slightly acid loamy soils.

Development Proposals

- 1.7 It is understood that the proposals involve the demolition and rebuilding of the eastern aspect of the main residential building B1, and the demolition and rebuild of the garage/outbuilding B2, for residential use. Within the current proposals all habitats are scheduled to be retained, however, 2no. common birch trees may need to be removed.

Aims

- 1.8 The aim of the amphibian and great crested newt survey was;
- *To identify presence / absence of amphibians (including great crested newt (GCN) within the water bodies identified within 500.0m of the site.*
 - *To suggest population size classes for newt species recorded, where present;*
 - *To complete all data requirements for any possible application to Natural England for a mitigation licence if required; and;*
 - *To suggest mitigation to avoid / minimise impacts of the scheme to Protected Species if necessary.*

2.0 LEGISLATION

- 2.1 Legislation relating to wildlife and biodiversity of particular relevance to this report includes:

- *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017;*
- *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended);*
- *The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.*

- 2.2 The great crested newt is included on *Schedule 2 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)* and *Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)* which makes it an offence, amongst other things, to deliberately capture, injure, kill or disturb any such species. In addition, this notification also prohibits the deliberate taking or destroying of any eggs and the damaging, destroying or blocking access to a breeding site or resting place of any such species.

2.3 The common toad (*Bufo bufo*) is a target of UK and Local Biodiversity Action Plans and listed as *Species of Principle Importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006*. Local Authorities are obliged to have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity with particular emphasis on targeted species.

2.4 In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 sets out the government planning policies for England and how they should be applied. 'Chapter 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment' states that development should be '*minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.*'

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Desk Study

3.1.1 The Multi-Agency Geographical Information Centre (MAGIC) was consulted for information regarding granted EPS licences within 2.0km, and location of ponds within 500.0m radius of the proposed construction site.

3.2 HSI Assessment

3.2.1 The waterbodies within 500.0m of the site (*where access allowed*), were subject to a HSI assessment in March 2023.

3.2.2 The *Habitat Suitability Index (HSI)* was developed by *Oldham et al (2000)* as a way of providing a numerical index allowing a direct comparison to be made between different water bodies. This index assesses ponds against ten different criteria, each of which have a bearing on the likelihood of great crested newts (GCN) being present in the pond under consideration.

3.2.3 The ten attributes against which ponds are assessed are:

- *Geographic Location;*
- *Pond Area (at its highest water level);*
- *Permanence;*
- *Water Quality;*
- *Perimeter Shading;*

- *Numbers of Wildfowl;*
- *Numbers of Fish Present;*
- *Pond Count (within a 1.0km radius);*
- *Terrestrial Habitat (within 250.00m);*
- *Macrophyte Coverage.*

3.2.4 The HSI results in a score between 1 and 0; with 1 being optimal conditions and 0 being unlikely to support a population. However, the index merely gives an indication as to whether a pond has the potential to support GCNs and is not a substitute for more detailed presence / absence surveys for protected species of amphibian. The evaluation criteria is shown in *Table No. 01* below.

Table No. 01 – HSI Evaluation Criteria

HSI Score	Pond Suitability
<0.5	Poor
0.5-0.59	Below Average
0.6-0.69	Average
0.7-0.79	Good
>0.8	Excellent

3.3 eDNA Survey

3.3.1 An eDNA survey of the on-site pond was completed on the 17th of April 2026.

3.3.2 20no. water samples were collected from the margin of each pond, with samples spaced as evenly as possible to collect a representative sample. All samples were collected using a sterile sampling kit as supplied by SureScreen Scientifics.

3.3.3 Each sample was stored in a refrigerator before return to SureScreen Scientifics for analysis. The results of the survey indicate the presence of absence of great crested newt environmental DNA within the water body.

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Desk Study

- 4.1.1 The desk study returned a small number of records for great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* from within the search area; the records were recorded in close proximity to a single pond centred c. 530km southeast of site. The desk study also returned several records for common frog *Rana temporaria*, common toad *Bufo bufo*, and smooth newts *Lissotriton vulgaris*

4.2 HSI Assessment

- 4.2.1 Pond (P1) had a good macrophyte coverage, low water quality and appeared to contain no fish.
- 4.2.2 The HSI Index, as shown in the below table indicates the pond provides Good habitat suitability for great crested newt.

Table No.2 – Summary HSI Results

SI Description	P1
Location	1.0
Pond area	0.5
Permanence	0.9
Water quality	0.33
Shade	1.0
Waterfowl effect	1.0
Fish presence	1.0
Pond density	0.6
Terrestrial habitat	0.67
Macrophyte cover	1.0
HSI Score	0.75
<i>Pond suitability</i>	<i>Good</i>

4.3 eDNA Survey

- 4.3.1 The pond was negative for great crested newt environmental DNA, suggesting the absence of GCN within the waterbody.

4.4 Survey Constraints / Considerations

- 4.4.1 The eDNA survey was undertaken at the appropriate time of the year by trained, licenced surveyors. There were no constraints recorded relating to survey methodology, therefore the results are considered to a true representation of conditions on site.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Great crested newts were found to be absent from the on-site pond, therefore no specific mitigation with regards to this species is required.
- 5.2 Ponds are however an important habitat for common amphibians, and invertebrates. The loss of any ponds on site as a result of the scheme should therefore be compensated for, through the creation of new ponds within the wider site.
- 5.3 Provided compensatory habitat is provided, there will be negligible impact upon amphibians.

6.0 REFERENCES

English Nature (2001) Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines, English Nature.

Froglife (2001) Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook. Froglife.

Joint Nature Conservation Committee, (1998) Herpetofauna Workers' Manual. JNCC, Peterborough.

Natural England (2015) Template for Method Statement to support application for licence under Regulation 53(2)e of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) in respect of great crested newts (Triturus cristatus). Form WML-A14-2 (Version December 2015).

Appendix A – eDNA Results

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Contact: Lizard Landscape Design & Ecology
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GCN eDNA Analysis

Summary

When great crested newts (GCN), *Triturus cristatus* , inhabit a pond, they continuously release small amounts of their DNA into the environment. By collecting and analyzing water samples, we can detect these small traces of environmental DNA (eDNA) to confirm GCN habitation or establish GCN absence.

Results

Lab ID	Site Name	OS Reference	Degradation Check	Inhibition Check	Result	Positive Replicates
R26 00289	Bramblewood, Newhouse Ln - Pond 1	TQ 1133 1524	Pass	Pass	Negative	0/12

Matters affecting result: none

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