

Great Crested Newt Survey

Survey site:

Kyngs Golf and Country Club, Station Road, Market Bosworth, Leicestershire, CV13 0NP

Client:

George Denny

Report date:

29th July 2025

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application for: a HYBRID planning application seeking Full Planning Permission for the Erection of a Golf Wellness Spa & Leisure Centre with associated works and an Outline Planning Permission (all matters reserved excepted for access) for the Erection of up to 126 Golf Holiday Homes

The survey results and recommendations contained within this report are valid for 18 months. An updated site visit may be required if the report is to be used any longer than 18 months after completion.

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Industry Guidelines and Standards

This report has been written with due consideration to:

- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. 2nd edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2018). Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine. Version 1.1. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017). Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2020). Guidelines for Accessing, Using and Sharing Biodiversity Data in the UK. 2nd Edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- British Standard 42020 (2013). Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development.
- British Standard 8683:2021 (2021). Process for Designing and Implementing Biodiversity Net Gain.

Proportionality

The work involved in preparing and implementing all ecological surveys, impact assessments and measures for avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement should be proportionate to the predicted degree of risk to biodiversity and to the nature and scale of the proposed development. Consequently, the decision-maker should only request supporting information and conservation measures that are relevant, necessary and material to the application in question. Similarly, the decision-maker and their consultees should ensure that any comments and advice made over an application are also proportionate.

The desk studies and field surveys undertaken to provide a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) might in some cases be all that is necessary.

(BS 42020, 2013)

Executive Summary

Arbtech Consulting Limited was instructed by George Denny to undertake a great crested newt (GCN) survey at Kyngs Golf and Country Club, Station Road, Market Bosworth, Leicestershire, CV13 0NP (hereafter referred to as “the site”). The survey was required to inform a planning application for a HYBRID planning application seeking Full Planning Permission for the Erection of a Golf Wellness Spa & Leisure Centre with associated works and an Outline Planning Permission (all matters reserved excepted for access) for the Erection of up to 126 Golf Holiday Homes (hereafter referred to as “the proposed development”) as a **District Level License (DLL) application was refused for the development due to a lack of compensation ponds available in the area.**

The GCN survey has been informed by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) which was completed by Arbtech Consulting Ltd in December 2024. The survey concluded that there were 17 ponds present within 250m of the site, 14 of which are within site ownership. Further habitats on site such as shortly mown modified grassland provide suboptimal foraging and commuting opportunities for GCN, whilst the bramble scrub, dry ditches and trees provide sheltering and hibernation opportunities. As a result of this report, the 14 onsite ponds were subject to an eDNA survey, which returned that 11 out of the 14 onsite ponds tested were positive for GCN (referred to as P1-P14 within this report). The purpose of the GCN surveys was to provide GCN population data from these ponds to inform a planning application and European Protection Species License (EPSL) application once planning is granted, as the District Level Licensing (DLL) scheme was unable to provide the number of compensation ponds required for the development.

The following is work you will need to commission to comply with planning policy and legislation. Further information is outlined in Table 6 of this report.

Survey Results Summary	Impact Assessment	Recommendations
14 of the 17 ponds within 250m of the site were subject to eDNA survey. 11 of the ponds returned positive for GCN and were subject to further surveys. GCN eggs and the newts themselves were found in 9 ponds surveyed (P1, P2, P4, P5, P7, P8, P9, P11 & P13) and are therefore classed as GCN breeding ponds. Pond 6 returned a low positive eDNA score (3/12 replicates), however due to the pond having dried out, full surveys could not be conducted. The pond was subject to torching and egg searching throughout the surveys, however no evidence of GCN was recorded. Pond 10 returned a weak positive eDNA result (2/12 replicates); however, no great crested newts or evidence of their presence was recorded during follow-up field surveys,	All ponds are to be retained; however the proposed development will result in the loss and degradation of approximately 4.5ha of suboptimal and optimal GCN habitat (i.e. regularly modified grassland, other neutral grassland and ruderals) due to the addition of 126 golf holiday lodges on stilts, a new spa building and reinstating an overgrown access track through the site. Further, the access track proposed across the site from north to south could sever connectivity for the population on site. With 9 breeding ponds confirmed on site and within the wider ownership, the development is likely to have the following impacts on GCN without suitable mitigation: - Significant loss of terrestrial habitat in close proximity to breeding ponds, resulting in impacts to GCN resting places. - Killing/injuring individual newts	An EPSL application to Natural England will be required to legally permit impacts to GCN terrestrial habitat within influencing distance of confirmed GCN ponds. The EPSL will detail any mitigation and compensation measures that will be required for the proposed development to comply with the standing advice and will be designed to reduce any impacts to an acceptably low level so as to maintain (or enhance) the Favourable Conservation Status (FSC) of the local GCN population. The EPSL will include the following measures: • Timing of works to avoid the hibernation season (November to February)

which included bottle trapping, torching, netting, and egg searches. Other amphibian species such as smooth/palmate newt were observed. The weak eDNA result may have been due to a transient individual, and the survey findings conclude that Pond 10 does not support a breeding population of great crested newts. For the purposes of classifying the population size, the peak (maximum) count for each pond for each survey has been combined. This is due to the proximity of all ponds (within 250m of each other), meaning GCN for all ponds are likely associated with the same metapopulation. As such, the peak count was 94 GCN during V6 (50 juvenile GCN found). Given the peak count of 94 (with multiple limitations across the site, including no access to pond 17 that has been recorded to contain a medium population previously) the metapopulation associated with the site is considered to be large.	- Sever connectivity between breeding ponds to the east and west of the site When inputting these impacts into the Natural England Rapid Risk Assessment, it produces a 'Red' result (ie. Offence Highly Likely) for the southern development sites, and an 'Amber' risk score (ie. Offence Likely) for the northern site and reinstatement of the access track.	• The installation Temporary Amphibian Fencing (TAF) including sections of one way GCN fencing around the working area and completion of a trapping scheme of at least 90 days in appropriate conditions with a designated receptor site (suitable to the size of the GCN population that is present). • The provision of a toolbox talk to contractors, by the Named Ecologist or an Accredited Agent, to inform them of the presence of GCN. • Staged vegetation clearance under the supervision of the Named Ecologist or an Accredited Agent including hand searches where appropriate. Habitat creation and/or enhancement suitable for GCN and other amphibians to compensate for loss of terrestrial habitat.
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1.0 Introduction and Context

1.1 Background

Arbtech Consulting Limited was instructed by George Denny to undertake a Great Crested Newt (GCN) survey at Kyngs Golf and Country Club, Station Road, Market Bosworth, Leicestershire, CV13 ONP (hereafter referred to as “the site”). The survey was required to inform a planning application for a HYBRID planning application seeking Full Planning Permission for the Erection of a Golf Wellness Spa & Leisure Centre with associated works and an Outline Planning Permission (all matters reserved excepted for access) for the Erection of up to 126 Golf Holiday Homes (hereafter referred to as “the proposed development”). A plan showing the proposed development is provided in Appendix 1.

The GCN survey has been informed by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) which was completed by Arbtech Consulting Ltd in December 2024. The survey concluded that there were 17 ponds present within 500m of the site, 14 of which are within site ownership. Further habitats on site such as shortly mown modified grassland and other neutral grassland provide suboptimal foraging and commuting opportunities for GCN, whilst the bramble scrub, dry ditches and trees provide sheltering and hibernation opportunities. As a result of this report, the 14 onsite ponds were subject to an eDNA survey, which concluded that 11 out of the 14 onsite ponds tested were positive for GCN (referred to as P1-P14 within this report). **The purpose of the GCN surveys was to provide GCN population data from these ponds to inform a planning application and European Protection Species License (EPSL) application once planning is granted, as the District Level Licensing (DLL) scheme was unable to provide the number of compensation ponds required for the development.**

1.2 Site Location and Landscape Context

The site comprises of Kyngs Golf and Country Club, with two development areas within the site and an access track that connects the two sections. The proposed works consists of the addition of golfing holiday lodges at the north of the site, a 25000 square ft spa facility to the south of the site and reinstating the existing, over grown access track across the site. Each site will be assessed individually and referred to as the ‘northern site’, ‘southern site’ and ‘access track’. The sites are situated within a golf course (under the same ownership) located to the northwest of the town of Market Bosworth, with a road and residential dwellings to the south and a stream to the north. There are scattered trees and ponds within the wider site boundary, with dwellings in the wider landscape. Aerial imagery shows the local landscape to have scattered areas of woodland, with several small copses and deciduous woodland in close proximity to the site, including on the eastern and northern boundary of the wider ownership. Water bodies can be found nearby, with a stream running adjacent to the northern boundary and Ashby de la Zouch Canal ~150m to the west, separated from the sites by a railway line adjacent to the western boundary.

The northern development site is centred on National Grid Reference SK 39478 04129 and has an area of approximately 3.1ha. The site comprises modified grassland, scattered trees, bramble scrub, ponds and dry ditches that form bunkers across the golf course. The site is bordered by a stream that is lined with trees and bramble scrub to the north, deciduous woodland at the eastern end of the northern border and scrub to the west. The habitats to the south and east are similar to that within the development boundary and golf course.

The southern development site is centred on National Grid Reference SK 39665 03455 and has an area of approximately 1.06ha. The site comprises modified grassland, scattered trees, one pond and a dry ditch with ruderal vegetation. The site is bordered by further modified grassland with scattered trees of a similar nature to habitats within the development site that form the golf course. There is an access track directly to the west. Surveys have been undertaken previously within the wider ownership boundary of the site to support multiple planning applications.

The two development sites are connected by an existing access track that runs through the wider site ownership and has an area of approximately 0.93ha. This area is unmanaged and comprises other neutral grassland in various conditions due to previous usage. The northern end of the track is overgrown, with some ruderal species present whilst the southern end of the track appears to be used often, with small areas of gravel and bare ground and managed under the current mowing of the wider golf course site.

A site location plan is provided in Appendix 3.

1.3 Scope of the Report

This report describes the suitability of the habitats on the site and any surveyed ponds for GCN and identifies the presence or absence of GCN in these ponds, as well provide population data for GCN. It identifies possible constraints in relation to GCN as a result of the proposed development and summarises the requirements for further surveys and mitigation measures to inform subsequent mitigation proposals, achieve planning or other statutory consent and to comply with wildlife legislation.

To achieve this, the following steps have been taken:

- A field survey has been undertaken, including an assessment of the suitability of the site and any ponds within influencing distance of the site for GCN.
- Of the 17 ponds within 250m of the development, eDNA surveys have been undertaken on the 14 ponds within the client ownership.
- Population surveys (including bottle-trapping, egg searching and torching) carried out to determine peak count of GCN across all ponds which return GCN presence.
- An outline of potential impacts on GCN has been provided, based on the proposed development.
- Advice on the requirements for a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) for GCN.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Desk Study

A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for great crested newts within 2km of the site. Further, no positive class survey licence return or DLL historic survey data (2017 – 2019) were present within 2km of the site. A previous medium Great Crested Newt (GCN) population was identified in 2018 and 2019 within a pond located 200m south of the site as part of a previous planning application within the wider ownership boundary (Mitigation Strategy, Wildlife Consultants Limited 2019). There are two ponds within the northern development site and no ponds within the southern development site or access track. It is understood that all ponds will all be retained as part of the proposed development.

Previous survey data:

The previous application at the site was for: Erection of Golf Club House and 6 Holiday Units, with associated access, parking and landscaping. A Proposed Mitigation Strategy Review was written by Wildlife Consultants Limited (2019) that determined boundary GCN fencing would be suitable mitigation for the development. This was based on records data obtained that showed a medium population of GCN was identified within 100m of the site (referenced as P17 in this report), through previous surveys in 2016 by FPCR. This noted 12 individuals within P17, up from the previous 6 identified in 2013. Further surveys conducted in 2018 found a peak count of 2 GCN within the pond.

2.2 Field Survey**Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) Assessment**

Ponds were assessed for their suitability to support GCN using the Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) Assessment Methodology (Oldham et al, 2000).

HSI is a standard measure of calculating the suitability of a pond to support breeding great crested newts, based on an assessment of 10 characteristics (indices), including size, shading, depth and vegetation profile. The assessment generates a number between 0 and 1 for each of the indices which are combined to provide an overall assessment of a pond's suitability to support GCN on a categorical scale (Table 1). The assessment has not been designed for or tested on other waterbodies such as ditches.

Table 1: HSI Suitability Scores

HSI Score	Suitability	Predicted GCN Occupancy of Ponds in each Category
<0.5	Poor	3%
0.5 to 0.59	Below Average	20%
0.6 to 0.69	Average	55%
0.7 to 0.79	Good	79%
>0.8	Excellent	93%

EDNA sampling

Sample kits and analysis was provided by SureScreen. Sampling followed the relevant sections of the method set out in the DEFRA funded study endorsed by Natural England (Biggs et al 2014).

In summary the sampling protocol is as follows:

- 20 samples were taken from around the entire perimeter of the waterbody.
- The surveyor stayed out of the water while taking the samples (extension poles were used in situations where open/sufficiently deep water was at a distance from the dry banks.
- Survey locations were distributed around the pond perimeter but micro-siting was used to select locations most likely to be used by GCN.
- At each sample location the water column was stirred prior to taking the sample but care was taken to avoid disturbing the sediment on the base of the pond.
- Once all 20 samples were taken, 15ml of the total sample were pipetted into each of the 6 sampling tubes, whilst ensuring that the water in the sample bag was mixed before taking each 15ml sample and that only one sample tube was opened at any one time.

- At all times the surveyor ensured that the risk of contaminating the sampling equipment was minimised by avoiding the placement of the ladle or pipette on the ground or on any otherwise potentially contaminated surfaces and by changing gloves between the initial sampling stage and the pipetting stages of the method.

Samples were sent to SureScreen for analysis.

Population Surveys

A combination of survey techniques were carried out; bottle-trapping surveys, torchlight surveys, netting and egg searches. All surveys were carried out in accordance with the best practice survey methods presented in *Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook* (Langton et al. 2001).

- **Bottle-trapping Surveys**

This method involves setting bottle/funnel traps around the pond margin and leaving the traps overnight at a density of one trap per two metres of bank/margin where safe and accessible to do so. Bottle trapping can be used to catch adults during the breeding season and larvae during the summer. This technique is only used when the night-time air temperature is >5°C. All traps were newly prepared for the site and have only been used at the site for biosecurity reasons. All normal survey disease control measures (disinfection of footwear after surveys etc. have been used).

- **Torchlight surveys**

This method involves searching for great crested newts by shining a torch (1 million candles) in the water body. In clear ponds this can be a simple and very effective way of detecting newts, but in heavily weeded or turbid ponds this method is limited. Bright light may cause newts to seek the cover of vegetation, possibly affecting survey results and disrupting their breeding activity. The entire margin of the pond is walked once, slowly checking for great crested newts and other species.

- **GCN netting**

This method involves using a long-handled dip net to sweep through aquatic vegetation and open water along the pond edge. Netting is undertaken primarily at night when great crested newts are active and more easily detected in the water.

- **Egg searching**

This method involves searching submerged vegetation for great crested newt eggs. This is done by walking around the perimeter of the pond, checking for any folded over leaves/vegetation, carefully unfurling the leaf and checking for the presence of newt eggs. Where a GCN egg is found, no further vegetation is checked.

The surveys were undertaken by Georgia Knight BSc (Hons), Consultant Ecologist, Accredited Agent on Natural England Great Crested Newt Licence Number: 2019-41392-CLS-CLS. The eDNA surveys of the ponds was undertaken on 6th May 2025. The further GCN surveys were undertaken between 14th May 2025 and 11th June 2025.

2.2 Limitations

This survey provides a 'snap-shot' of the assessed habitat and wildlife value of the site at the time of survey for the current development proposals only and may require further survey effort to provide robust, scientifically valid evidence of GCN status for any future development of the site.

Specific limitations include:

- **A District Level License (DLL) application was refused for the development due to a lack of compensation ponds available in the area.** The delay in this refusal has resulted in the delayed start of the traditional licensing methods. This is not thought to be a major limitation as the surveys were mobilised quickly and have been undertaken during optimal conditions as close as practicable to optimal timings of three surveys completed during the optimal period of mid-April and mid-May, and a total of 6 visits before mid-June. It should be noted that due to the quick mobilisation of the surveys, V1 was split across two visits. This resulted in all the ponds being surveyed across two consecutive nights.
- **On the dawn visit of V4 (03/06/25), a deceased water shrew was identified within one of the bottle traps in P4. Bottle trapping was immediately stopped at all ponds due to the high connectivity across the site and Natural England were informed.** The two remaining surveys that followed this utilised the remaining survey methods, with the ponds subjected to netting, torching and egg searching for the last two visits. This ensured there was a robust data set to inform a license from 6 visits.
- No access was provided for the surveys for the three offsite ponds (P15, P16 & P17), including P17 which through previous survey work in 2018 and 2019 was found to host a medium population of GCN. The lack of access to these ponds has been considered in the recommendations and population size assessment.
- Overgrown vegetation surrounding P7 prevented full access to the pond perimeter, as well as a large island at the centre of the pond that was not safely accessible. As such the bottle traps were set out across 85% of the pond's perimeter. Further, the larger size of P7 inhibited the ability to net the entire pond safely.
- Overgrown vegetation surrounding P8 prevented full access to the pond perimeter, as such the bottle traps were set out across 80% of the pond's perimeter.
- Overgrown vegetation surrounding P11 prevented full access to the pond perimeter, as such the bottle traps were set out across 80% of the pond's perimeter.
- Nesting birds within the western end of P9 on V4 & V5 prevented full access to the pond perimeter, as such the bottle traps were set out across 70% of the pond's perimeter. Further, the larger size of P9 inhibited the ability to net the entire pond safely.
- Nesting birds within the western end of P5 on V4, V5 and V6, as well as P5 having an inaccessible island at the centre of the pond, prevented full access to the pond perimeter. As such the bottle traps were set out across 70% of the pond's perimeter. Further, the larger size of P5 inhibited the ability to net the entire pond safely.
- P6 was dry throughout the duration of the surveys, therefore the pond was unable to be surveyed by bottle trapping or netting methods. Where possible, the pond was torched and egg searched throughout the survey duration to collect any information possible.
- P10 has approximately 30% covering of duckweed, which reduced the areas that were visible during torching. However, despite this, newts were still recorded during the torching surveys, so this is not considered a major limitation.

3.0 Results and Evaluation

An onsite pond plan is provided in Appendix 4. Full eDNA results are provided in Table 2 below, with the Surescreen lab results included in Appendix 5.

The dates, weather conditions and surveyors of each survey are presented in Table 3. Pond descriptions are provided in Table 4, HSI assessment in Table 5 and population survey results and peak count in Table 6 and Table 7 respectively.

Table 2: eDNA survey results

Pond Ref	eDNA Result
1	Positive
2	Positive
3	Negative
4	Positive
5	Positive
6	Positive
7	Positive
8	Positive
9	Positive
10	Positive
11	Positive
12	Negative
13	Positive
14	Negative

Table 3: Survey schedule and weather conditions

Visit Number	Survey date	Weather Conditions (dusk set up)	Weather Conditions (dawn retrieval)	Surveyors
V1 (across 2 visits)	14/05/2025 (dusk) 15/05/2025 (dawn)	Air temp: 16°C Rain: None	Air temp: 12°C Rain: None	Georgia Knight, Consultant Ecologist, Accredited agent on GCN licence Millie Holland, Consultant Ecologist, Accredited agent on GCN licence Nicole Gullan, Principal Ecologist, GCN licence holder Inez Daly, Graduate Ecologist – safety assistant Joshua New, Assistant Ecologist – safety assistant Zoe Cox, Assistant Ecologist – safety assistant
V1 (across 2 visits)	16/05/2025 (dusk) 17/05/2025 (dawn)	Air temp: 14°C Rain: None	Air temp: 11°C Rain: None	Georgia Knight, Consultant Ecologist, Accredited agent on GCN licence Millie Holland, Consultant Ecologist, Accredited agent on GCN licence Will Burdett, Assistant Ecologist – safety assistant Ellie King – safety assistant

V2	19/05/2025 (dusk) 20/05/2025 (dawn)	Air temp: 16°C Rain: None	Air temp: 11°C Rain: None	Georgia Knight, Consultant Ecologist, Accredited agent on GCN licence Millie Holland, Consultant Ecologist, Accredited agent on GCN licence Katie Whitfield, Graduate Ecologist, Accredited agent on GCN licence Joshua New, Assistant Ecologist – safety assistant Zoe Cox, Assistant Ecologist – safety assistant Jess Brasier, Assistant Ecologist – safety assistant
V3	21/05/2025 (dusk) 22/05/2025 (dawn)	Air temp: 11°C Rain: None	Air temp: 9°C Rain: None	Georgia Knight, Consultant Ecologist, Accredited agent on GCN licence Millie Holland, Consultant Ecologist, Accredited agent on GCN licence Sally Hall, Consultant Ecologist, GCN licence holder Inez Daly, Graduate Ecologist – safety assistant Joshua New, Assistant Ecologist – safety assistant Jess Brasier, Assistant Ecologist – safety assistant Maddy Morgan, Assistant Ecologist – safety assistant
V4	02/06/2025 (dusk) 03/06/2025 (dawn)	Air temp: 17°C Rain: None	Air temp: 11°C Rain: Light	Georgia Knight, Consultant Ecologist, Accredited agent on GCN licence Millie Holland, Consultant Ecologist, Accredited agent on GCN licence Emma Platts, Consultant Ecologist, Accredited agent on GCN licence George Collier-Smith, Consultant Ecologist, GCN licence holder Beth Swain, Graduate Ecologist – safety assistant Jess Brasier, Assistant Ecologist – safety assistant Zoe Cox, Assistant Ecologist – safety assistant
V5	09/06/2025 (dusk)	Air temp: 19°C Rain: None	N/A	Georgia Knight, Consultant Ecologist, Accredited agent on GCN licence Jamie-Lee Smith, Consultant Ecologist, Accredited agent on GCN licence Olga Hermann, Consultant Ecologist, Accredited agent on GCN licence Kit Bullard, Assistant Ecologist – safety assistant
V6	11/06/2025 (dusk)	Air temp: 22°C Rain: None	N/A	Georgia Knight, Consultant Ecologist, Accredited agent on GCN licence Millie Holland, Consultant Ecologist, Accredited agent on GCN licence Sally Hall, Consultant Ecologist, GCN licence holder Chloe Quinn, Assistant Ecologist – safety assistant

Table 4: Surveyed Ponds

Pond Ref	Description	Photograph
1	Pond located at northwestern end of the site, within the northern development boundary	
2	Pond located at the northern end of the site, within the northern development boundary	

Pond Ref	Description	Photograph
3	Pond formed from old gold course bunker, located at the northern end of the site, to the south of the northern development boundary	
4	Pond located towards the centre of the wider site ownership, with large decorative boulders on eastern boundary	

Pond Ref	Description	Photograph
5	Horseshoe shaped pond with island at centre located at the northeastern end of the wider site ownership	
6	Pond located at the northeastern end of the wider site ownership	

Pond Ref	Description	Photograph
7	Large pond at the centre of the wider site ownership, with large island at centre	

Pond Ref	Description	Photograph
8	Pond that drains to the west of the site, located at the west of the wider site ownership	
9	Large pond at the centre of the wider site ownership	

Pond Ref	Description	Photograph
10	Pond located at the eastern end of the wider site ownership, to the east of the access track	
11	Pond located at the eastern end of the wider site ownership, to the east of the access track	

Pond Ref	Description	Photograph
12	Pond located at the eastern end of the wider site ownership	
13	Pond located at the southeastern end of the wider site ownership	

Pond Ref	Description	Photograph
14	Pond located at the southern end of the site, with a large population of fish	

Table 5: HSI Assessment Results

SI Description	SI Value													
	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14
Geographic location	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Pond Area	0.5	0.4	0.05	1	0.8	0.4	/	1	0.8	1	0.6	0.6	1	0.9
Pond Permanence	1	1	0.1	0.9	0.9	0.1	0.9	1	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	1	0.9
Water Quality	0.9	0.9	0.33	1	1	0.33	0.67	1	1	0.33	0.67	0.67	1	0.33
Shade	0.9	1	1	1	1	1	1	0.8	1	1	0.6	1	1	1
Waterfowl Effect	0.67	0.67	1	0.67	0.67	1	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.01
Fish Presence	0.33	0.33	1	1	0.33	1	0.67	1	0.67	0.67	1	1	1	0.01
Pond Density	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Terrestrial Habitat	0.67	0.67	0.67	1	1	1	0.67	1	0.67	0.33	0.67	0.67	1	0.33
Macrophyte Cover	0.9	0.8	0.7	1	0.9	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.9	0.4	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.4
HSI Score	0.75	0.73	0.49	0.95	0.82	0.63	0.79	0.93	0.85	0.67	0.78	0.82	0.94	0.28
HSI Category	Good	Good	Poor	Excellent	Excellent	Average	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Average	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Poor

Table 6: Survey Results (Survey Method Code: T = Torching B = Bottle Trapping N = Netting E = Egg Searching, / = not surveyed)

Dates	Pond reference	Water Turbidity for torching (0=clear, 5= turbid)	GCN count										GCN max count	Other notes
			Male			Female			Juvenile			Eggs		
			T	B	N	T	B	N	T	B	N			
V1 (across 2 visits) 14/05/2025 15/05/2025	P1	1	0	3	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	N	3	1 x smooth male (B)
	P2	2	0	2	/	0	1	/	0	0	/	Y	3	1 x smooth female (B), 1 x common frog (T), sticklebacks
	P4	1	4	2	/	1	4	/	0	0	/	Y	11	22 x smooth male (B, T), 8 x smooth female (B, T), 1 x common frog (B)
	P5	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
	P6	DRY	0	/	/	0	/	/	0	/	0	N	0	Dry at time of survey
	P7	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
	P8	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
	P9	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
	P10	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
	P11	1	0	0	/	0	1	/	0	0	/	N	1	4 x smooth male (B)
	P13	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
V1 (across 2 visits) 16/05/2025 17/05/2025	P1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
	P2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	sticklebacks
	P4	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
	P5	1	0	1	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	N	1	5 x efts (B), 2 x smooth female (B), 1 x smooth male (B), frogspawn and tadpoles present, sticklebacks
	P6	DRY	0	/	/	0	/	/	0	/	/	N	0	Dry at time of survey
	P7	3	0	2	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	N	2	1 x eft (B)
	P8	1	0	1	/	0	4	/	0	0	/	Y	5	1 x eft (B), 2 x smooth female, 2 x smooth male, smooth/palmate eggs, 1 x common frog (T)
	P9	2	0	1	/	0	2	/	0	0	/	Y	3	
	P10	1	0	0	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	N	0	
	P11	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
	P13	1	2	1	/	1	7	/	0	0	/	Y	11	Gravid females, smooth/palmate eggs
V2 - 19/05/2025 20/05/2025	P1	1	0	2	/	1	3	/	0	0	/	N	6	1 x female smooth (B), 1 x male smooth (B), 2 x efts (B)
	P2	1	0	1	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	N	1	sticklebacks
	P4	2	0	4	/	1	5	/	0	0	/	N	10	5 x smooth newts (T), 10 x smooth female (B), 2 x smooth male (B)
	P5	1	0	1	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	Y	1	2 x smooth females (B), tadpoles, sticklebacks
	P6	DRY	0	/	/	0	/	/	0	/	/	N	0	Dry at time of survey
	P7	3	0	1	/	1	3	/	0	0	/	N	5	1 x eft (B)
	P8	1	0	4	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	N	4	Smooth/palmate eggs, 3 x smooth female (B), 5 x smooth male (B)
	P9	1	0	1	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	Y	1	2 x smooth (T), 1 x female smooth (B), 1 x male smooth (B)
	P10	1	0	0	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	N	0	1 x smooth female (B), 1 x smooth male (B)

V3 - 21/05/2025 22/05/2025	P11	1	0	1	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	Y	1	
	P13	1	0	3	/	4	2	/	0	0	/	Y	9	3 smooth male (B)
	P1	1	2	2	/	0	2	/	0	4	/	N	10	1 x male smooth (T), 2 x female smooth (T), 7 x undetermined S/P (T), 2 x smooth male (B), 2 x smooth female (B)
	P2	2	0	0	/	0	3	/	0	0	/	N	3	3 x undetermined S/P (T), 1 x common frog, 1 x smooth male (B), 1 x smooth female (B), sticklebacks
	P4	2	0	1	/	1	5	/	0	0	/	Y	7	5 x female smooth (T), 8 x male smooth (T), 4 x undetermined S/P (T), 2 x common toad, 5 x smooth female (B), 5 x smooth male (B)
	P5	2	0	0	/	0	0	/	1	0	/	N	1	5 x female smooth (B), 2 x male smooth, tadpoles, sticklebacks
	P6	DRY	0	/	/	0	/	/	0	/	/	N	0	Dry at time of survey
	P7	2	0	4	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	N	4	1 x smooth male (B)
	P8	1	1	4	/	0	2	/	0	0	/	N	7	Smooth/palmate eggs, 1 x common toad, 2 x female smooth (B)
	P9	1	0	1	/	0	2	/	0	0	/	N	3	1 x female smooth (B), 2 x male smooth (B)
	P10	2	0	0	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	N	0	11 x male smooth (B), 3 x female smooth (B)
	P11	2	0	0	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	N	0	2 x undetermined (T), 3 x female smooth (T), 3 x male smooth (B)
	P13	1	0	5	/	0	5	/	0	0	/	N	10	
V4 - 02/06/2025 03/06/2025	P1	1	1	2	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	Y	3	2 x efts (B), 1 x female smooth (B)
	P2	1	0	0	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	N	0	sticklebacks
	P4	1	2	0	/	2	0	/	0	0	/	Y	4	5 x female smooth (B), 2 x male smooth (B), Suspected water shrew (B)
	P5	1	0	0	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	N	0	2 x male smooth (B), 1 x female smooth (T) common frogs present, sticklebacks
	P6	DRY	0	/	/	0	/	/	0	/	/	N	0	Dry at time of survey
	P7	3	0	4	/	0	1	/	0	0	/	Y	5	1 x eft (B)
	P8	1	1	0	/	0	3	/	0	0	/	Y	4	1 x female smooth (B), 2 x smooth (T)
	P9	2	2	0	/	0	1	/	0	0	/	N	3	Nesting birds at western end, 2 x smooth female (B)
	P10	1	0	0	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	N	0	
	P11	1	0	0	/	0	1	/	0	0	/	N	1	
	P13	1	1	5	/	1	3	/	0	0	/	Y	10	2 x male smooth (B), 2 x female smooth (B), 2 efts (B)
V5 - 09/06/2025	P1	1	0	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	5	N	5	3 x smooth (T), 21 x undetermined juveniles (N)
	P2	1	0	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	1	N	1	5 x smooth (T), sticklebacks
	P4	1	1	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	0	Y	1	6 x undetermined (T)
	P5	1	0	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	0	N	0	Large numbers of common froglets, sticklebacks
	P6	DRY	0	/	/	0	/	/	0	/	/	N	0	Dry at time of survey
	P7	2	0	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	11	N	11	2 x SP efts (N)
	P8	1	0	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	0	Y	0	
	P9	1	0	/	0	1	/	0	0	/	1	Y	2	
	P10	2	0	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	0	N	0	
	P11	3	0	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	0	N	0	

	P13	1	0	/	0	1	/	0	0	/	4	Y	5	2 x smooth (T), 25 x undetermined juveniles (N)
V6 - 11/06/2025	P1	2	0	/	0	1	/	0	12	/	50	N	63	2 x smooth female (T)
	P2	2	0	/	0	1	/	0	0	/	0	N	1	Sticklebacks
	P4	1	0	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	1	Y	1	
	P5	1	0	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	1	N	1	1 x smooth (T), froglets, sticklebacks
	P6	DRY	0	/	/	0	/	/	0	/	/	N	0	Dry at time of survey
	P7	2	1	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	9	N	10	
	P8	1	3	/	0	2	/	0	0	/	0	Y	5	
	P9	2	1	/	3	0	/	2	0	/	0	N	6	
	P10	2	0	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	0	N	0	
	P11	1	0	/	0	0	/	0	0	/	1	N	1	2 x smooth female (N)
	P13	1	0	/	0	2	/	0	0	/	4	Y	6	

Table 7: Peak count for survey

V1 (across 2 visits)	40
V2	38
V3	45
V4	30
V5	25
V6	94

4.0 Conclusions, Impacts and Recommendations

Taking the field survey results into account, Table 6 presents an evaluation of the value of the site for great crested newts and other amphibians in relation to the proposed development which will comprise the a HYBRID planning application seeking Full Planning Permission for the Erection of a Golf Wellness Spa & Leisure Centre with associated works and an Outline Planning Permission (all matters reserved excepted for access) for the Erection of up to 126 Golf Holiday Homes.

Table 6: Evaluation of site for GCN

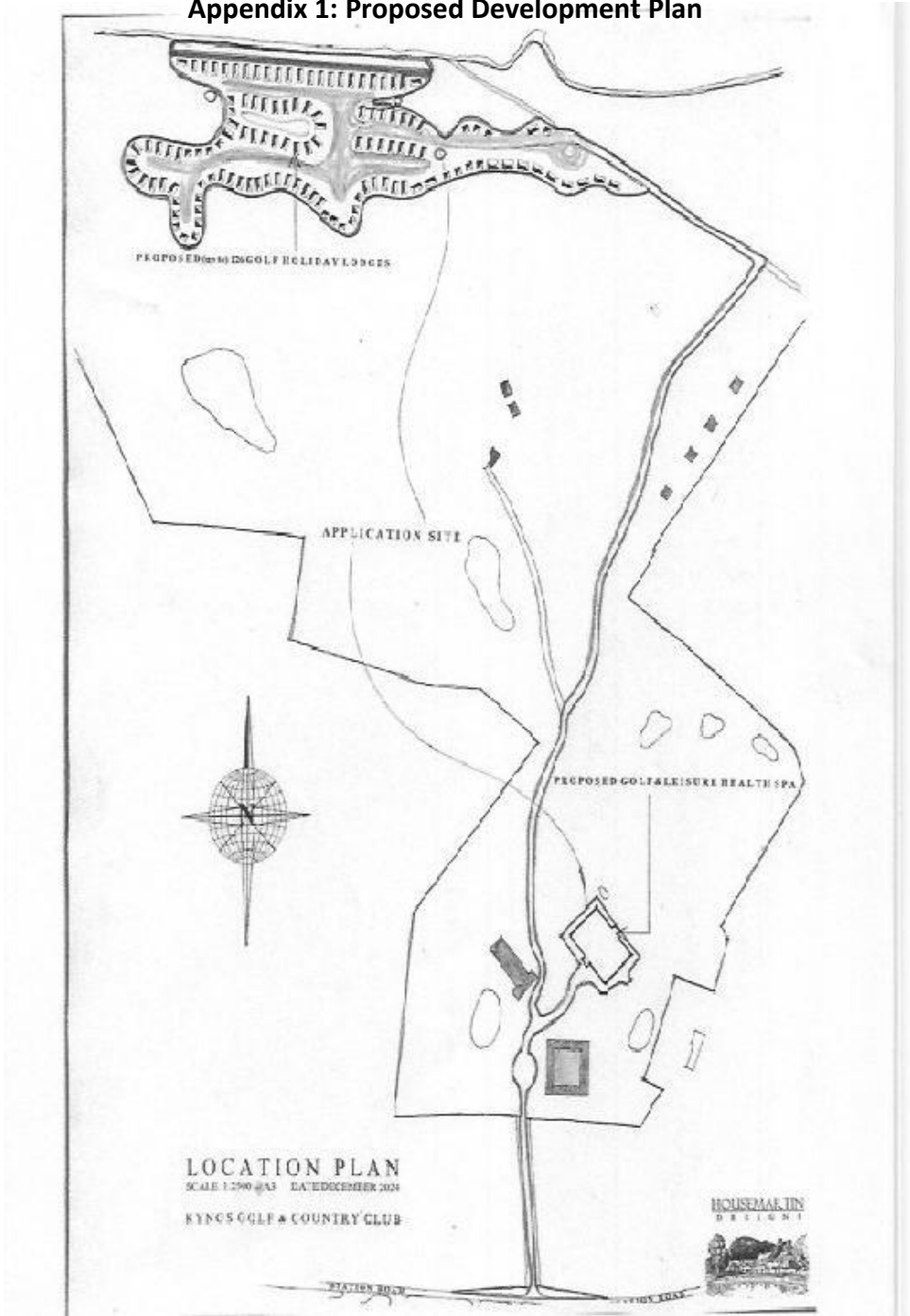
Survey Results Summary	Impact Assessment	Recommendations
14 of the 17 ponds within 250m of the site were subject to eDNA survey. 11 of the ponds returned positive for GCN and were subject to further surveys. GCN eggs and the newts themselves were found in 9 ponds surveyed (P1, P2, P4, P5, P7, P8, P9, P11 & P13) and are therefore classed as GCN breeding ponds. Pond 6 returned a low positive eDNA score (3/12 replicates), however due to the pond having dried out, full surveys could not be conducted. The pond was subject to torching and egg searching throughout the surveys, however no evidence of GCN was recorded. Pond 10 returned a weak positive eDNA result (2/12 replicates); however, no great crested newts or evidence of their presence was recorded during follow-up field surveys, which included bottle trapping, torching, netting, and egg searches. Other amphibian species such as smooth/palmate newt were observed. The weak eDNA result may have been due to a transient individual, and the survey findings conclude that Pond 10 does not support a breeding population of great crested newts. For the purposes of classifying the population size, the peak (maximum) count for each pond for each survey has been combined. This is due to the proximity of all ponds (within 250m of each other), meaning GCN for all ponds are likely associated with	All ponds are to be retained; however the proposed development will result in the loss and degradation of approximately 4.5ha of suboptimal and optimal GCN habitat (i.e. regularly mown modified grassland, other neutral grassland and ruderals) due to the addition of 126 golf holiday lodges on stilts and a new spa building. Further, the access track proposed across the site from north to south could sever connectivity for the population on site. With 9 breeding ponds confirmed on site and within the wider ownership, the development is likely to have the following impacts on GCN without suitable mitigation: - Significant loss of terrestrial habitat in close proximity to breeding ponds, resulting in impacts to GCN resting places. - Killing/injuring individual newts - Sever connectivity between breeding ponds to the east and west of the site When inputting these impacts into the Natural England Rapid Risk Assessment, it produces a 'Red' result (ie. Offence Highly Likely) for the northern and southern development sites, and an 'Amber' risk score (ie. Offence Likely) for the reinstatement of the access track.	An EPSL application to Natural England will be required to legally permit impacts to GCN terrestrial habitat within influencing distance of confirmed GCN ponds. The EPSL will detail any mitigation and compensation measures that will be required for the proposed development to comply with the standing advice and will be designed to reduce any impacts to an acceptably low level so as to maintain (or enhance) the Favourable Conservation Status (FSC) of the local GCN population. The EPSL will include the following measures: • Timing of works to avoid the hibernation season (November to February) • The installation Temporary Amphibian Fencing (TAF) including sections of on- way GCN fencing around the working area and completion of a trapping scheme of at least 90 days in appropriate conditions with a designated receptor site (suitable to the size of the GCN population that is present). • The provision of a toolbox talk to contractors, by the Named Ecologist or an Accredited Agent, to inform them of the presence of GCN. • Staged vegetation clearance under the supervision of the Named Ecologist or an Accredited Agent including hand searches where appropriate. Habitat creation and/or enhancement suitable for GCN and other amphibians to compensate for loss of terrestrial habitat.

the same metapopulation. As such, the peak maximum count was 94 GCN during V6 (50 juvenile GCN found). Given the peak count of 94 (with multiple limitations across the site, including no access to pond 17 that has been recorded to contain a medium population previously) the metapopulation associated with the site is considered to be large.		
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5.0 Bibliography

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- Wildlife Consultants Limited (2019), Proposed Mitigation Strategy Review

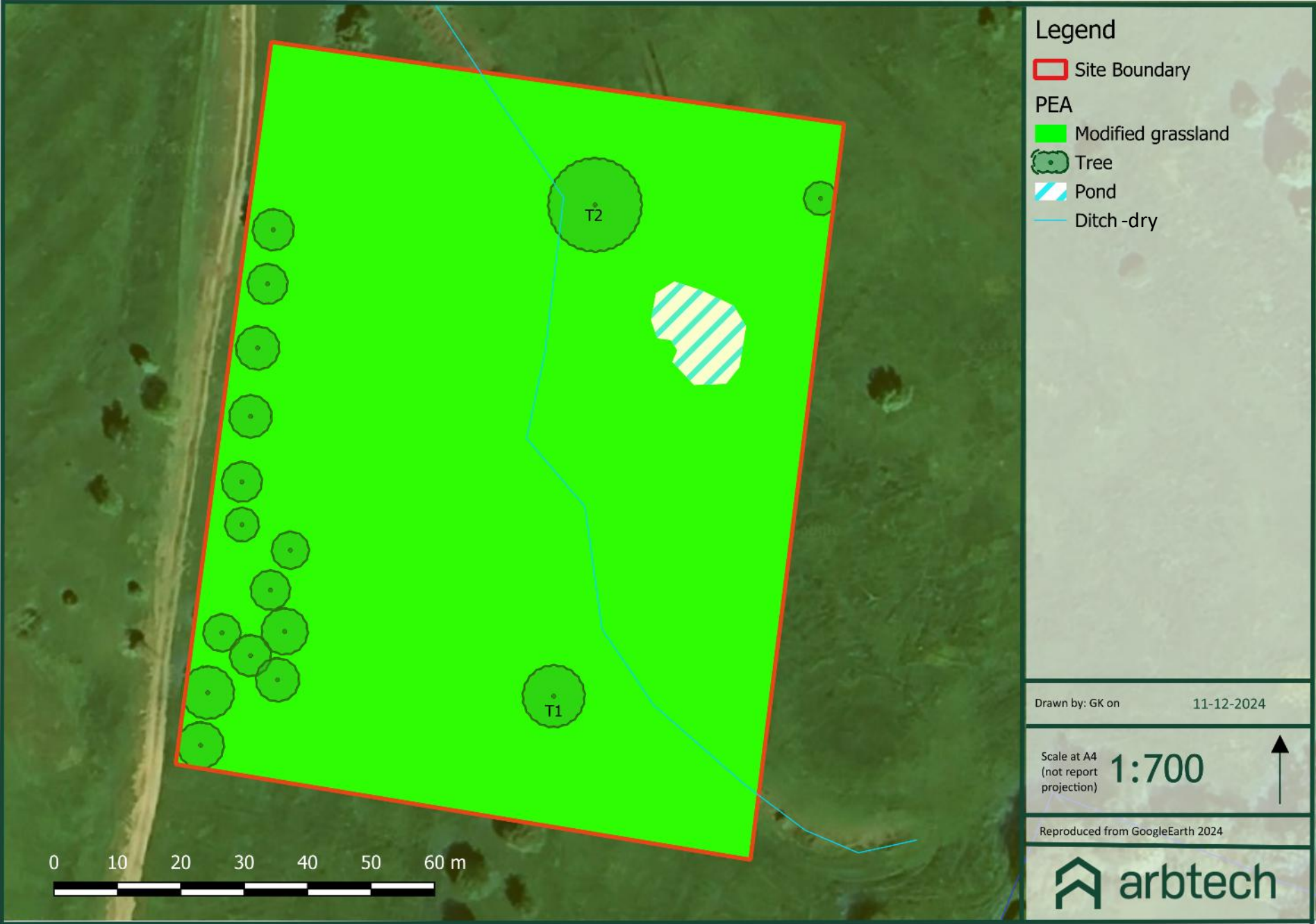
Appendix 1: Proposed Development Plan



Appendix 2a: Habitat Map – northern site



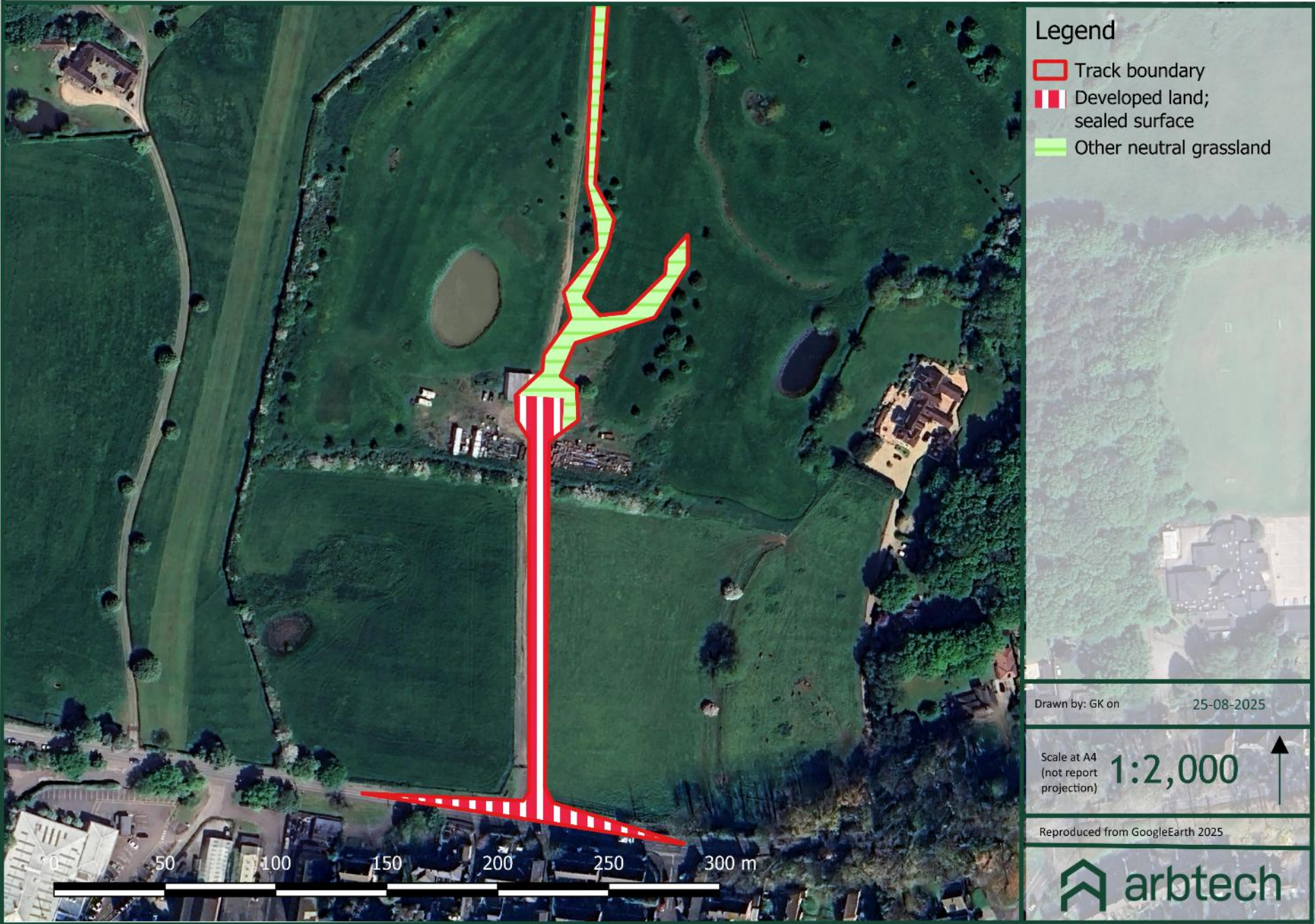
Appendix 2b: Habitat Map – southern site



Appendix 2c: Habitat Map – Access track







Appendix 3: Site Location Plan



Appendix 4: Pond Plan



Appendix 5: EDNA Results

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
GCN25 5065	CV13 ONP - P14	SK 39560 03384	Pass	Pass	Negative	0/12
GCN25 5066	CV13 ONP - P2	SK 39590 04113	Pass	Pass	Positive	9/12
GCN25 5067	CV13 ONP - P13	SK 39713 03358	Pass	Pass	Positive	7/12
GCN25 5069	CV13 ONP - P8	SK 39238 04072	Pass	Pass	Positive	6/12
GCN25 5070	CV13 ONP - P4	SK 39735 03996	Pass	Pass	Positive	12/12
GCN25 5071	CV13 ONP - P10	SK 39752 03600	Pass	Pass	Positive	2/12
GCN25 5072	CV13 ONP - P5	SK 40013 03992	Pass	Pass	Positive	6/12
GCN25 5073	CV13 ONP - P12	SK 39854 03576	Pass	Pass	Negative	0/12
GCN25 5074	CV13 ONP - P1	SK 39391 04147	Pass	Pass	Positive	12/12
GCN25 5076	CV13 ONP - P7	SK 39356 03919	Pass	Pass	Positive	4/12

GCN25 5077	CV13 ONP - P11	SK 39811 03594	Pass	Pass	Positive	2/12
GCN25 5078	CV13 ONP - P9	SK 39595 03742	Pass	Pass	Positive	12/12
GCN25 5079	CV13 ONP - P3	SK 39570 04076	Pass	Pass	Negative	0/12
GCN25 5080	CV13 ONP - P6	SK 40102 04012	Pass	Pass	Positive	3/12

Matters affecting result: none

Reported by: Amy Bermudez

Approved by: Consuela Sopronyi

Appendix 6: Photos

Photo	Description
	Example of GCN egg found on vegetation in P4
	Male GCN observed during torching of P9 on 02/06/2025

	5 female GCN from bottle traps in P4 on 20/05/2025
	Male and female GCN from bottle trap in P13 on 22/05/2025

Appendix 7: Legislation and Planning Policy

LEGAL PROTECTION

The great crested newt receives full protection under Habitats Regulations through their inclusion on Schedule 2. Regulation 41 prohibits:

- Deliberate killing, injuring or capturing of Schedule 2 species
- Deliberate disturbance of species in such a way as:
 - To impair their ability to survive, breed, or reproduce, or to rear or nurture young;
 - To impair their ability to hibernate or migrate
 - To affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species
- Damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place

This species are also listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act and they are additionally protected from:

- Intentional or reckless disturbance (at any level)
- Intentional or reckless obstruction of access to any place of shelter or protection
- Selling, offering or exposing for sale, possession or transporting for purpose of sale.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

The National Planning Policy Framework promotes sustainable development. The Framework specifies the need for protection of designated sites and priority habitats and species. An emphasis is also made on the need for ecological infrastructure through protection, restoration and re-creation. The protection and recovery of priority species (considered likely to be those listed as UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species) is also listed as a requirement of planning policy.

In determining a planning application, planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by ensuring that: designated sites are protected from harm; there is appropriate mitigation or compensation where significant harm cannot be avoided; opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments are encouraged; and planning permission is refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats including aged or veteran trees and also ancient woodland.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and the Biodiversity Duty

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, requires all public bodies to have regard to biodiversity conservation when carrying out their functions. This is commonly referred to as the 'biodiversity duty'.

Section 41 of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of 'principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity'. This list is intended to assist decision makers such as public bodies in implementing their duty under Section 40 of the Act. Under the Act these habitats and species are regarded as a material consideration in determining planning applications. A developer must show that their protection has been adequately addressed within a development proposal.

EFFECT OF LEGISLATION AND POLICY ON DEVELOPMENT WORKS

A European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) issued by the relevant countryside agency (i.e. Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage) will be required for works likely to affect the breeding sites or resting places of great crested newts protected. A licence will also be required for operations liable to result in a level of disturbance which might impair their ability to undertake those activities mentioned above (e.g. survive, breed, rear young and hibernate). The licences are to allow derogation from the relevant legislation, but also to enable appropriate mitigation measures to be put in place and their efficacy to be monitored.

Status	Issue	Name	Date
Draft	0.1	Georgia Knight BSc (Hons), Consultant Ecologist, Accredited Agent on Natural England Great Crested Newt Licence Number: 2019-41392-CLS-CLS	23/07/2025
Proof	0.2	Leo Plevin Bsc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM Principal Ecologist Great Crested Newt Licence Number: 2019-41392-CLS-CLS	29/07/2025
Final	1.0	Georgia Knight BSc (Hons), Consultant Ecologist, Accredited Agent on Natural England Great Crested Newt Licence Number: 2019-41392-CLS-CLS	29/07/2025
Updated	2.0	Georgia Knight BSc (Hons), Consultant Ecologist, Accredited Agent on Natural England Great Crested Newt Licence Number: 2019-41392-CLS-CLS	25/08/2025