

Opes MRF 2013 Limited
The Mill
Pury Hill Business Park
Alderton Road
TOWCESTER
Northamptonshire
NN12 7LS

Issued by email only

RE: INGLENOOK FARM, BARWELL - EDNA

Dear Lance,

BACKGROUND

RammSanderson Ecology undertook a preliminary ecological appraisal (RSE_6764_01_V1) , at Inglenook Farm, Barwell to inform the proposed construction of holiday pods and lodges on the site. Therefore this letter is therefore treated as an addendum to the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. The site is 1.5 ha in size and comprised of modified grassland, ponds (non-priority), other neutral grassland, mixed scrub, unvegetated unsealed surfaces, and lowland mixed deciduous woodland habitats.

Two ponds were located on site and RammSanderson was then instructed to undertake an eDNA survey for great crested newt (GCN) on these two ponds.

SURVEY METHODS- GCN ENVIRONMENTAL (EDNA) ANALYSIS

This technique has been approved by Natural England as an acceptable means of determining GCN presence within a waterbody provided it is undertaken at an appropriate time of year following the prescribed protocols. The technique is based on the principal that should GCN be present then genetic material such as skin cells, eggs and excretion will be present within the water column. The survey involves one visit during the day taking a series of 20 water samples from at least 80% of the pond perimeter decanting into sample bottles containing a primer which is a short section of DNA. The samples are then sent to a lab for analysis, providing a positive or negative result (occasionally samples come back inconclusive where the sample has been corrupted). In the laboratory, a process called Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) is undertaken, if present this results in the synthesis of new DNA of the target species (GCN). This amplifies the amount of DNA present within the sample to detectable levels.

There are a number of limitations associated with this technique, however provided it is undertaken by trained surveyors following the protocols at an appropriate time of year it is an acceptable means of determining GCN presence/absence.

RESULTS

Great crested newt were confirmed as absent from both waterbodies on site.



Table 1: Summary of eDNA results

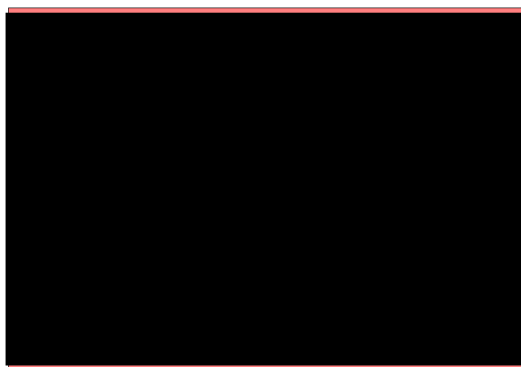
Pond No	Description	eDNA	Photographs
1	Pond with high turbidity and contained very limited vegetation with some bulrush identified. The pond appeared to be artificially created with the banks reinforced by wood.	Negative	
2	Pond with high turbidity and limited emergent vegetation. Water lilies (<i>Nymphaea sp.</i>) and bankside rushes were present. The pond appeared to be artificially created.	Negative	

EVALUATION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The eDNA surveys confirmed GCN are likely absent from the two ponds on site. Presence of GCN within the locality is therefore extremely unlikely. No further survey or mitigation with respects to GCN is therefore considered necessary or proportionate. However, whilst the ponds are retained, the site does provide habitats suited to common amphibians which may be present locally and as such it is recommended that a precautionary approach be adopted to site clearance works. Any amphibians found on site should be removed carefully (observing good hygiene practices) from harms way and placed in undisturbed habitats in proximity to the water bodies. In the extremely unlikely event a GCN is found, contrary to the findings of this survey, works must cease whilst further ecological advice is sought.

I trust the information provided here is satisfactory at this time, should you have any queries, or require any clarifications, please do not hesitate to call me directly.

Yours sincerely,



For and on behalf of RammSanderson Ecology Ltd.