

From: Laura Downs <Laura.Downs@naturespaceuk.com>
Sent: 12 March 2026 19:33:51 UTC+00:00
To: "Joanne Fisher" <Joanne.Fisher@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: DM/25/2474 - Land South Hammerwood Road, Ashurst Wood

Good evening Joanne,

Thank you for sending on some further information from the application regarding the site suitability, this is very helpful.

Unfortunately, these photos have firstly demonstrated that the terrestrial habitat on site is more suitable than previously believed, as they demonstrate a larger degree of hibernacula in the form of tree crevices, deadwood and leaf litter, which we believe has been evidenced without the need for a site visit. To address the barriers which it is stated will prevent GCN from reaching the site, again we do not feel this has been demonstrated. The closed board fencing to the east of the site and Hammerwood road to the north of the site are considered more complete barriers which we agree would limit and prevent dispersal. The slope to the south of the site is just not deemed steep enough to constitute a barrier and it is not believed that this would effectively keep GCN off the site. The tracks within the site, whilst some are very deep in some areas, again have not been demonstrated to be continuous or extensive enough to make the site too difficult for newts to traverse or utilise. Whilst there is grazing land beyond the south of the site, aerial imagery demonstrates that there is connectivity between the site and nearby ponds through existing woodland/treelines. As the proposals would require nearly a full site loss of habitat, and as there is a lack of consistent and solid barriers to the site, we would consider that the Natural England guidance in relation to survey effort has not been adequately addressed here for a major development.

We are therefore still recommending that further information is required for this development to demonstrate that GCN concerns have been appropriately mitigated for. If the applicant would like to submit further information or comments in regards to this we are happy to look this over, however I think it is unlikely that there will be any further benefit in continuing to go back and forth on the same points and so we will defer to you as the LPA on whether you are satisfied with the information provided at this point. If you have any further questions or information please do get in touch.

Best wishes,

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

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From: Joanne Fisher <Joanne.Fisher@midsussex.gov.uk>

Sent: 24 February 2026 08:54

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

Subject: DM/25/2474 - Land South Hammerwood Road, Ashurst Wood

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Hi Laura,

I refer to your email of the 5th February concerning the above application which I have attached for ease of reference.

In this you requested further detail to aid your assessment. Please find attached the response from the agent in respect of this. I would be grateful if you could review this and provide further comments in a clean email.

Please note as set out in your previous correspondence I have suggested that an enquiry is submitted in respect of the District Licence scheme.

I look forward to hearing from you concerning this.

Kind regards

Joanne

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