

From: Roger Pike <roger@neilpikearchitects.co.uk>
Sent: 17 February 2026 16:40:52 UTC+00:00
To: "Anna Tidey" <anna.tidey@midsussex.gov.uk>
Cc: "Laura Downs" <laura.downs@naturespaceuk.com>
Subject: FW: Newt Officer comments for DM/25/1800 - Woodside Grange Woodland Road Hassocks West Sussex
Attachments: 26_PWMS_02_23.pdf

Good Afternoon both,

Hope you're well.

Further to our previous email dialogue below, please find attached the Precautionary Working Method Statement relative to the above.

I would greatly appreciate your acknowledgment of this email and the attachment and look forward to your comments. I trust this is considered acceptable, however if you have any queries, please let me know,

Kind regards

Roger Pike

Roger Pike BA(Hons) PGDipSurv



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From: Roger Pike
Sent: 16 January 2026 13:55
To: 'Laura Downs' <Laura.Downs@naturespaceuk.com>
Cc: Anna Tidey <anna.tidey@midsussex.gov.uk>; Info <info@neilpikearchitects.co.uk>
Subject: RE: Newt Officer comments for DM/25/1800 - Woodside Grange Woodland Road Hassocks West Sussex

Hi Laura,

Thank you for your reviewing this and coming back to me on the matter. I appreciate your stance and guidance here and subsequently, we are now in dialogue with our ecologist consultant regarding the Precautionary Working Methods.

Once I have established this in detail with our consultant, I will then update Anna accordingly.

Thanks again,

Kind regards

Roger Pike

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

Sent: 15 January 2026 17:00

To: Roger Pike <roger@neilpikearchitects.co.uk>

Cc: Anna Tidey <anna.tidey@midsussex.gov.uk>; Info <info@neilpikearchitects.co.uk>

Subject: Re: Newt Officer comments for DM/25/1800 - Woodside Grange Woodland Road Hassocks West Sussex

Good afternoon Roger,

Thank you for your email, I have reviewed your case again and discussed with some colleagues to ensure I am providing advice proportional to the likely impacts of this development. The reason that I had requested further information (e.g. updated survey information or proof of DL scheme entry) prior to determination is because protected species are a material consideration, and mitigation schemes should be based upon in date survey information. Within the GCN report submitted with the applicant's outline application, it is stated that if works have not commenced within 2 years (i.e. by May 2025) that GCN surveys should be updated. I would still

recommend that due to the nature of the proposed works (i.e. removal of a pond without up to date information), and due to the suggested use of fencing, that a licence would be a sensible option here in the absence of updated surveys.

However, if the LPA are satisfied with the use of Precautionary Working Methods (PWMS) here, then this route would also be an option. I would however suggest that if this route is taken, that the LPA is provided with a full and robust statement which should be written by a suitably qualified ecologist. This statement should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval prior to determination or secured in a pre-commencement condition such as below. This statement should include a measure detailing that all works must cease and advice be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist should GCN be found.

Condition: "No development shall take place until a Precautionary Working Methods Statement for GCN written by a suitably qualified ecologist has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority".

Please let me know whether you have any questions,

Best wishes,

Laura Downs (*she/her*)

District Licensing Officer (Great Crested Newts) – West Sussex

NatureSpace Partnership

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From: Roger Pike <roger@neilpikearchitects.co.uk>

Sent: 09 January 2026 11:02

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

Cc: Anna Tidey <anna.tidey@midsussex.gov.uk>; Info <info@neilpikearchitects.co.uk>

Subject: FW: Newt Officer comments for DM/25/1800 - Woodside Grange Woodland Road Hassocks West Sussex

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Good Morning Laura,

Hope this email finds you well.

I am writing to you in response to your recent review of and subsequent comments concerning the above Reserved Matters Application.

These were kindly forwarded to me from the case officer and we appreciate your guidance.

In recent months we have been exploring the Newt situation and working with our ecologist consultant to ascertain both our options to move this forward in accordance with relevant policy and the timescales and aspiration of our client.

From the dialogue with our consultant and from their recommendations and suggestions documented with their supporting reports, they stated:

'Pre-commencement: No intrusive works to the existing pond, pond margins or excavation of new ponds until DLL certificate is issued or updated survey confirms a non-licensable risk with LPA agreement. Low-risk activities away from the pond may proceed under RAMs with ECoW agreement.'

Their advice suggests, based on their professional experience, that works may commence on site provided that there is no disruption to the existing pond in any way, shape, or form. This advice has therefore informed and underpinned the Applicant's proposed development programme and timeline. On this basis, the Applicant has progressed a range of preparatory and enabling matters, including—but not limited to—financial arrangements, tendering exercises, and site preparation activities, all of which are separate from the planning process itself. As a result, there is a clear and pressing need to be able to commence works on site at the earliest possible opportunity, in accordance with the agreed programme, while fully respecting the necessary ecological safeguards.

The issue that has now arisen relates to the comments indicating that the survey work, or alternatively entry into the District Level (DL) scheme, is required to be undertaken prior to the determination of the application. This is a requirement that we are extremely puzzled by, as we do not consider it either necessary or proportionate at this stage. In our view, this matter can be

appropriately and robustly addressed through the imposition of a suitably worded planning condition, to be agreed by all parties.

Such a condition could clearly stipulate that no substantive works shall commence on site, and in particular, that no works within a specified buffer distance of the pond, shall take place until the updated survey work has been undertaken, submitted, and formally approved by the Local Planning Authority. This approach would provide the necessary safeguards, ensure full policy compliance, and avoid any risk of ecological harm, while allowing the application to be determined in a timely manner.

We would welcome your thoughts on this approach, particularly given that we have engaged the appropriate professional ecological consultancy and have been advised that this represents an entirely acceptable and standard mechanism for dealing with this matter.

In light of the above, we would respectfully request that this particular stipulation be reconsidered and that a suitably worded condition be agreed. This would enable the application to be determined on a conditional basis and within the currently agreed timescales, thereby supporting the overall deliverability and viability of the development.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Kind regards

Roger Pike

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