

From: Laura Downs <Laura.Downs@naturespaceuk.com>
Sent: 30 April 2026 11:31:05 UTC+01:00
To: "Joanne Fisher" <joanne.fisher@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: DM/26/0833 | Chownesmead Chownes Mead Lane Cuckfield Haywards Heath
Attachments: image001.png, image002.png, image003.png, image004.png, image005.png, image006.png, image007.png, image008.png, Outlook-A green an.png, Outlook-A blue and.png, Outlook-A logo for.png, Outlook-A logo wit.png, Outlook-A green an.png, Outlook-Blue text .png, Outlook-A blue and.png

Good morning Joanne,

Thank you for consulting us on the above application. I have reviewed the applicant's *Great Crested Newt eDNA Report, Lizard ecology, May 2024*, which states:

- *"The site is dominated by short lawns, buildings and hardstanding areas which are of negligible suitability for amphibians. Areas of scrub, rough grassland and tall ruderal with spoil and debris piles were however recorded on site. These habitats were considered to be potentially suitable for supporting great crested newt and other amphibians during their terrestrial phase."*
- *"8no. ponds are located within 500m of the site, of which 6no. lie within 250m of the proposed development area. 1no. of these ponds (P3) was found to be dry and was therefore discounted from further survey, while no access was available to pond P4."*
- *"An eDNA survey of P1, P2, P5 and P6 was completed on the 26th of April 2024."*
- *"Each sampled waterbody was negative for great crested newt environmental DNA, suggesting the absence of GCN within these ponds. The results suggest it is highly likely that GCN are absent locally."*
- *"Given the known population of GCN to the north, basic avoidance measures should be implemented on site during works."*

The above ecological report has recommended that Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) are implemented during the construction process. Due to the nearby negative eDNA returns, we are in agreement that this would likely be the most proportional route forward and would recommend that a RAM statement is written by a suitably qualified ecologist and submitted to the LPA for approval. It should outline measures including but not limited to: ecological supervision, vegetation clearance, pollution prevention, material storage, trench management, and steps taken should GCN be discovered. However it is important to note that there is a risk associated with this approach because the results are nearing two seasons old, this means they are almost out of date and may not provide an accurate assessment of likely GCN presence/absence. If the applicant wishes to completely avoid any risks relating to great crested newts, they have the option to enquire for Mid Sussex District Council's District Licence, which provides full legal cover for any impacts to great crested newts and therefore removes

the risk of having to stop works if great crested newts are found on site. More details on the District Licensing Scheme operated by the council can be found at www.naturespaceuk.com

Best wishes,

Laura Downs (*she/her*)

District Licensing Officer (Great Crested Newts) – West Sussex

NatureSpace Partnership

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