

**Hollyrood
Ardingly Road
Lindfield
Haywards Heath
RH16 2QY**

Herpetofauna Risk Assessment

June 2025

FINAL

Produced by
*Ecology and Land
Management*
For and on behalf of
St Marks Properties Ltd.

Henriette
Westergaard



Ecology & Land
Management

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Herpetofauna Risk Assessment

**Land at Hollyrood, Ardingly Road,
Lindfield, Haywards Heath RH16 2QY**

Report to:
Ecology and Land Management

13th June 2025



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Information, including any survey data, contained within this report must only be relied upon for a maximum period of 18 months from the date of the report. If there is any alteration to site conditions within this period, the assessment should be updated.

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1. Summary

Background

- 1.1 Land at Hollyrood House has been proposed for a new development project.
- 1.2 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has previously been prepared by Ecology and Land Management.
- 1.3 Calumma Ecological Services was subsequently commissioned to undertake a herpetofauna risk assessment of the site and accessible ponds.

Habitats and Designated Sites

- 1.4 The application area is a former care home set in landscaped grounds with buildings and access road.
- 1.5 In June 2025, available vegetation was found to include grassland, tall ruderal vegetation and mature trees/shrubs.
- 1.6 The application area includes trees, several of which are mature.
- 1.7 The application area is located within the High Weald National Landscape.**

Reptiles

- 1.8 In October/November 2024 ground vegetation within the application area was found to be dominated by short sward grassland and precautionary mitigation was recommended in the PEA.
- 1.9 In June 2025, vegetation was found to have developed into a long sward that, if left unmanaged, could be colonised by reptiles.
- 1.10 Reptile survey work will be required if management of vegetation within the site allows a structurally complex sward to develop. Otherwise, precautionary mitigation actions are considered appropriate for the scale of proposed disturbance.**

Amphibians

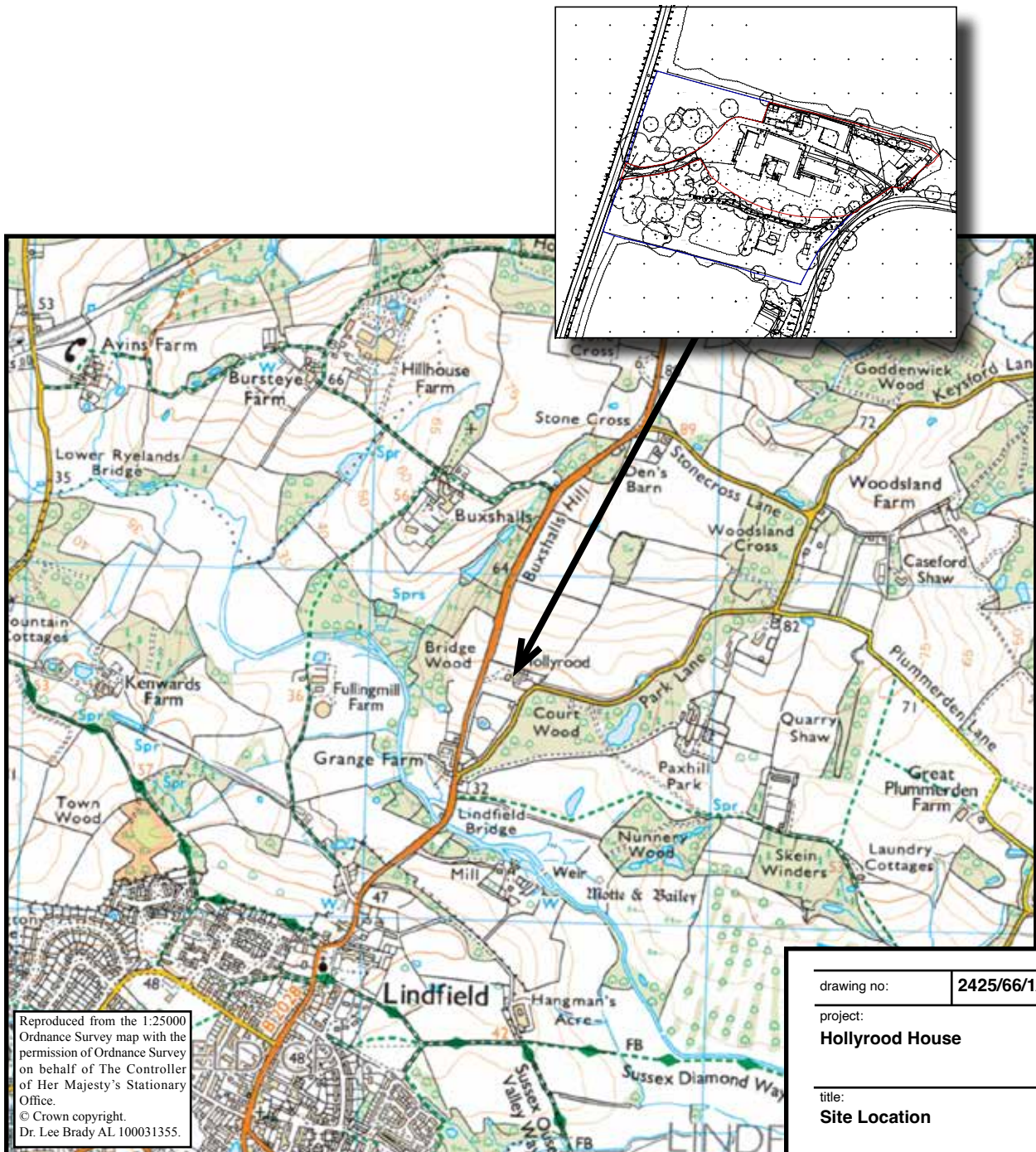
- 1.11 No ponds are located within the application area.
- 1.12 Eleven ponds are known to be located within 500 m of the site boundary. Two of these ponds are located within 250 m. Access permission for offsite ponds was not available.
- 1.13 A great crested newt EPS licence has previously been issued for works within 1 km of the red line application area (to the south).
- 1.14 Great crested newt has also been recorded within 1 km of the red line application area (to the east).
- 1.15 In June 2025, available terrestrial habitat was found to offer potential sheltering habitat for amphibians.
- 1.16 Survey and/or mitigation work for great crested newt is recommended.**

2. Site Location and Assessment

Site Name:	Hollyrood - <i>the site</i> ; Fig. 2.1
Grid Reference:	TQ 354 267
County:	West Sussex
Planning Authority:	Swale Borough Council
Planning Refs:	Tbd
National Character Area:	High Weald
Client:	Ecology and Land Management
Proposed Disturbance:	Redevelopment of existing care home
Red Line Application Area:	~ 0.63 Ha
Development Size:	Small
Ecological Zone of Influence:	1 km
Survey Request:	Herpetofauna Risk Assessment
Surveyor:	Lee Brady PhD, BSc (Hons), MCIEEM Great Crested Newt Class Licence: 2015-19076-CLS-CLS Accredited Under Level 2 Bat Licence: 2023-11064-CL18-BAT
Assessment Period:	4 th June 2025
Limitations:	This assessment did not include detailed surveys of protected species. Risk assessments assess likely presence of species on a site and recommend follow-up survey work, management and mitigation as appropriate. This report may need to be updated if new information becomes available (e.g. ponds not previously known to be present).
Reliance:	Information, including any survey data, contained within this report must only be relied upon for a maximum period of 18 months from the date of the report. If there is any alteration to site conditions within this period, the assessment should be updated.

Fig. 2.1 Land at Hollyrood House (TQ 354 267)

Location of study site.



13 Woodside Cottages,
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Kent ME13 9NY
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3. Legal Protection and Planning

The protection of animals and plants in the United Kingdom is governed by several different regulations and conventions. Principally, these include:

- The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- The Habitats and Species Directive (92/43/EC) enacted through the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (updated in 2017)
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- The Hedgerow Regulations 1997
- The National Planning Policy Framework (as amended)
- Biodiversity Net Gain

3.1 The Mitigation Hierarchy

The mitigation hierarchy is a widely accepted framework used in UK planning policy and environmental regulation to manage the impacts of development on biodiversity. It is structured as a sequence of steps that must be considered in order of priority:

Avoid – Prevent impacts on biodiversity wherever possible, through careful site selection and design.

Minimise – Reduce the extent of any unavoidable impacts through design and management changes.

Mitigate – Implement measures to reduce the severity or duration of impacts on habitats and species.

Compensate (or Offset) – Where impacts remain after avoidance and mitigation, provide biodiversity gains elsewhere to ensure no net loss, or ideally, a net gain.

This framework is embedded in national planning policy and biodiversity legislation, including the National Planning Policy Framework and the Environment Act 2021. It provides a structure for ensuring that development decisions are consistent with legal obligations to protect biodiversity and deliver Biodiversity Net Gain.

3.2 Species Protections

Species receive legal protection under different legislation that may prohibit sale, disturbance and/or killing/injury.

3.2.1 Reptiles

All native reptiles are listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act. It is an offence for anyone to intentionally kill or injure a so-called ‘widespread’ reptile species (viviparous lizard, slow-worm, grass snake or adder), or sell or offer for sale without a licence.

The sand lizard and smooth snake, their breeding sites or resting places (any structure that may offer refuge) are protected under Regulation 41 of The Conservation of Habitats and

Species Regulations. It is an offence for anyone intentionally to kill, injure or handle either of these two species, to possess an animal (whether live or dead), deliberately disturb a sheltering animal, or sell or offer an animal for sale without a licence. It is also an offence to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by sand lizards and smooth snakes for shelter.

3.2.2 Amphibians

All native amphibians are listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act. It is an offence for anyone to sell or offer for sale any native amphibian species without a licence.

The great crested newt and natterjack toad, their breeding sites (typically ponds) or resting places (typically a terrestrial habitat that offers refuge) are protected under Regulation 41 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations. It is an offence for anyone to intentionally kill, injure or handle either of these two species, to possess an animal (whether live or dead), deliberately disturb a sheltering animal, or sell or offer an animal for sale without a licence. It is also an offence to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by natterjack toads or great crested newts for shelter.

3.3 Ecological Zone of Influence

The Ecological Zone of Influence (ZOI) is the area around a development project where ecological features might be affected by biophysical changes resulting from the project. This includes impacts during construction, operation, decommissioning, and restoration phases. The ZOI considers the type of project, the sensitivity of ecological features, project activities, environmental processes, and regulatory guidelines. It is a dynamic concept, regularly updated based on new information and project progression.

It can sometimes be useful to review some ecological data outside of the ecological zone of influence. For example, species records collected from a wider area may provide insights into likely occupancy within the ecological zone of influence.

For the purposes of this report the ZOI has been defined according to the following criteria:

3.3.1 Small Development Projects

Examples: single-family homes, small commercial buildings, minor road expansions.

Area: Red line application areas are usually up to 1 Ha.

ZOI Distance: for very small projects up to 500 m may be sufficient, but 1 km often used to overcome constraints imposed by data providers.

3.3.2 Major Development Projects (medium scale)

Examples: Residential developments with multiple units, small industrial facilities, moderate road construction.

Area: Red line application areas are typically between 1 and 10 Ha.

ZOI Distance: Up to 5 km.

3.3.3 Major Development Projects (large scale)

Examples: large industrial complexes, major highways, extensive urban developments, airports.

Area: Red line application areas are typically greater than 10 Ha.

ZOI Distance: Can be up to 50 km or more.

4. Desktop Study

4.1 MAGIC Geographic Information System

The MAGIC website offers reliable geographic information on the natural environment in Great Britain, encompassing rural, urban, coastal, and marine areas. Managed by Natural England and overseen by a Steering Group representing the MAGIC partnership organisations, the website presents this information through an interactive map equipped with mapping tools for exploration and analysis.

<http://magic.defra.gov.uk>

4.1.1 Priority Habitat Designations

Information available through MAGIC indicates that habitat within the application area has no priority habitat designations associated with it.

4.1.2 Statutory Designated Areas

Information available through MAGIC indicates that land within the application area is located with the High Weald National Landscape (formerly AONB).

4.1.3 Non-statutory Designated Areas

Information available through MAGIC indicates that the application area has no non-statutory designated sites associated with it.

4.1.4 Site of Special Scientific Interest Impact Risk Zone

Natural England has created a tool that is accessed via MAGIC to determine the risk of development impact on designated areas (including SSSIs, SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites). Available information indicates that the proposed development is located within a SSSI risk zone.

The SSSI risk tool provides guidance on when the Local Planning Authority should consult Natural England. Natural England will then provide advice on any potential impacts and how these might be avoided or mitigated.

4.1.5 European Protected Species Licences

The locations of nearby EPS licences are illustrated in Appendix I.

Information available via MAGIC reveals that EPS mitigation licences have been issued within the ZOI. Species identified include great crested newt (2017-28100-EPS-MIT).

4.1.6 Great Crested Newt Class Survey Licence Returns

The locations of nearby great crested newt survey records are illustrated in Appendix II.

Information available via MAGIC reveals that great crested newt has previously been recorded from locations close to the ZOI.

4.2 Records Searches

Available records for protected species have been obtained from Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre.

Note that the availability of records is directly related to survey effort. A lack of records does not necessarily indicate the absence of protected species.

Available information indicates that common frog, common toad, smooth newt and great crested newt have previously been recorded within the ZOI. Viviparous lizard and grass snake have also been previously recorded within the ZOI.

5. Proposed Development and Summary Site Description

5.1 Site Location

The application area includes a former care home set in grounds within the High Weald National Character Area. The site is accessed from a track leading from Buxshalls Hill.

5.2 Proposed Development

Conversion of existing buildings and landscaping of grounds.

The red line application area is ~ 0.6 Ha and illustrated in Fig. 5.1.

5.3 Available Habitat

Habitat within the red line application area was assessed during a daytime walkover survey on 4th June 2025.

Weather conditions during the assessment: 17°C; no precipitation; fresh WSW; dry ground.

5.3.1 Aquatic Habitat

Ponds located within the local area have been identified using the following sources:

- Ordnance Survey (<https://www.bing.com/maps>);
- MAGIC (<http://magic.defra.gov.uk>);
- Google Earth.

No ponds are located within the red line application area. Eleven ponds are known to be located within 500 m (Table 5.1), with two of these located within 250 m. Other small ponds could be located in nearby residential gardens.

The search area for waterbodies is illustrated in Fig. 5.2.

5.3.2 Terrestrial Habitat

Land within the proposed application area includes landscaped grounds. Available habitat includes grassland, ruderal vegetation and mature trees/shrubs. A full site description is available in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Ecology and Land Management 2024).

Habitat available within the proposed development area is illustrated in Figs. 5.3 - 5.4.

5.4 Buildings

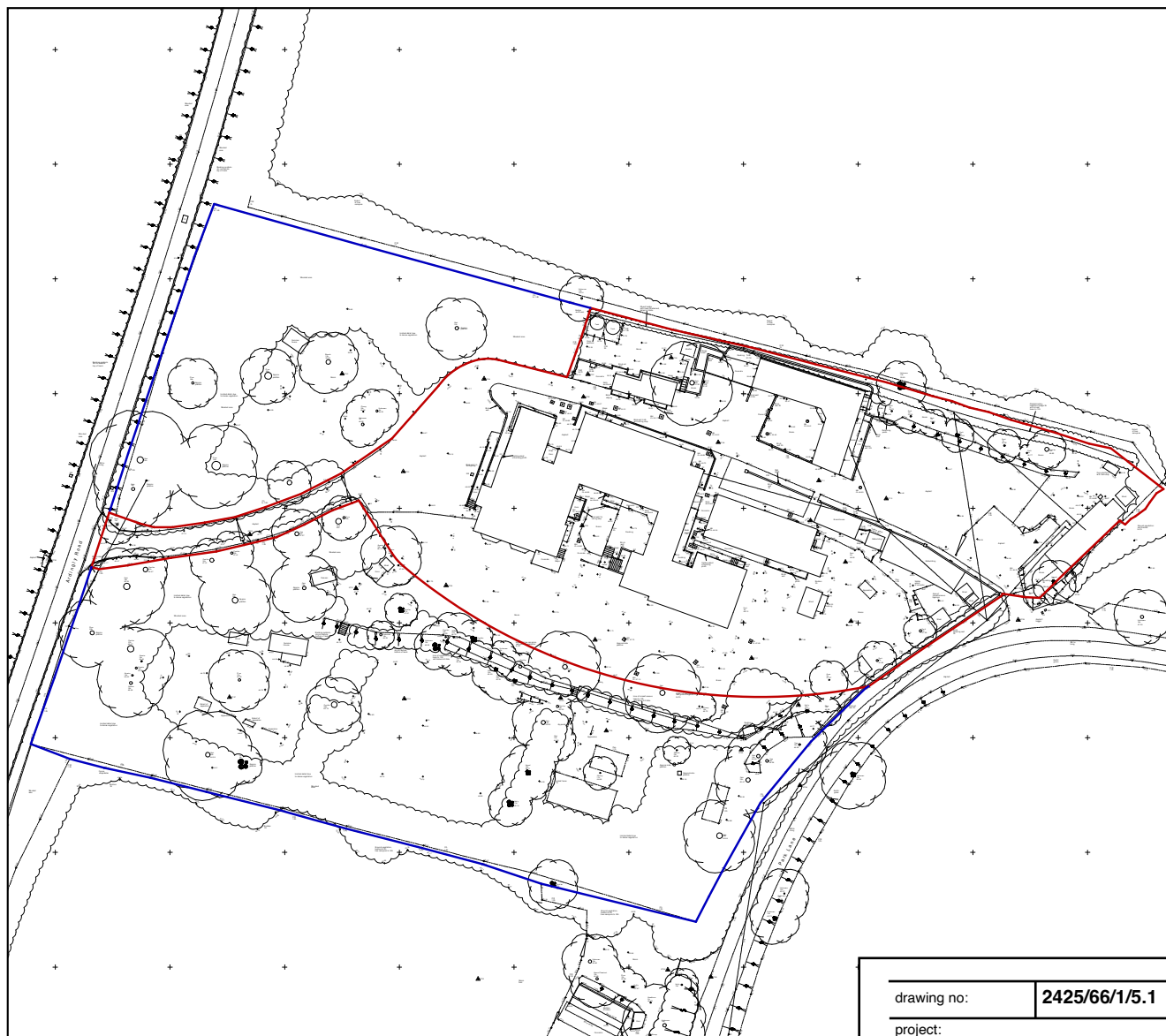
Several building and other structures are located within the red line application area. These are subject to a separate assessment undertaken by Ecology and Land Management.

WB	Grid Reference	Distance (m)	Notes
1	TQ 35335 26572	120	Field pond. No access permission.
2	TQ 35220 26610	140	Garden pond. No access permission.
3	TQ 35274 27017	310	Woodland pond. No access permission.
4	TQ 35381 27115	385	Woodland pond. No access permission.
5	TQ 35650 27149	470	Situated along hedgerow. No access permission.
6	TQ 35802 26706	290	Woodland pond. No access permission.
7	TQ 35744 26553	275	Large pondf situated within woodland. No access permission.
8	TQ 35607 26355	340	Field pond. No access permission.
9	TQ 35468 26161	490	Possible mill pond. No access permission.
10	TQ 35010 26370	465	Woodland pond. No access permission.
11	TQ 34859 26748	480	Field pond. No access permission.

Table 5.1. Summary information for ponds (WB) known to be located within 500 m of the proposed development site. The locations of ponds are illustrated in Fig. 5.2.

Fig. 5.1 Proposed Development Site

Application area = ~ 0.6 Ha.



drawing no: 2425/66/1/5.1

project:
Hollyrood House

title:
Development Area

scale: **N.T.S.**

date: **Jun 2025**



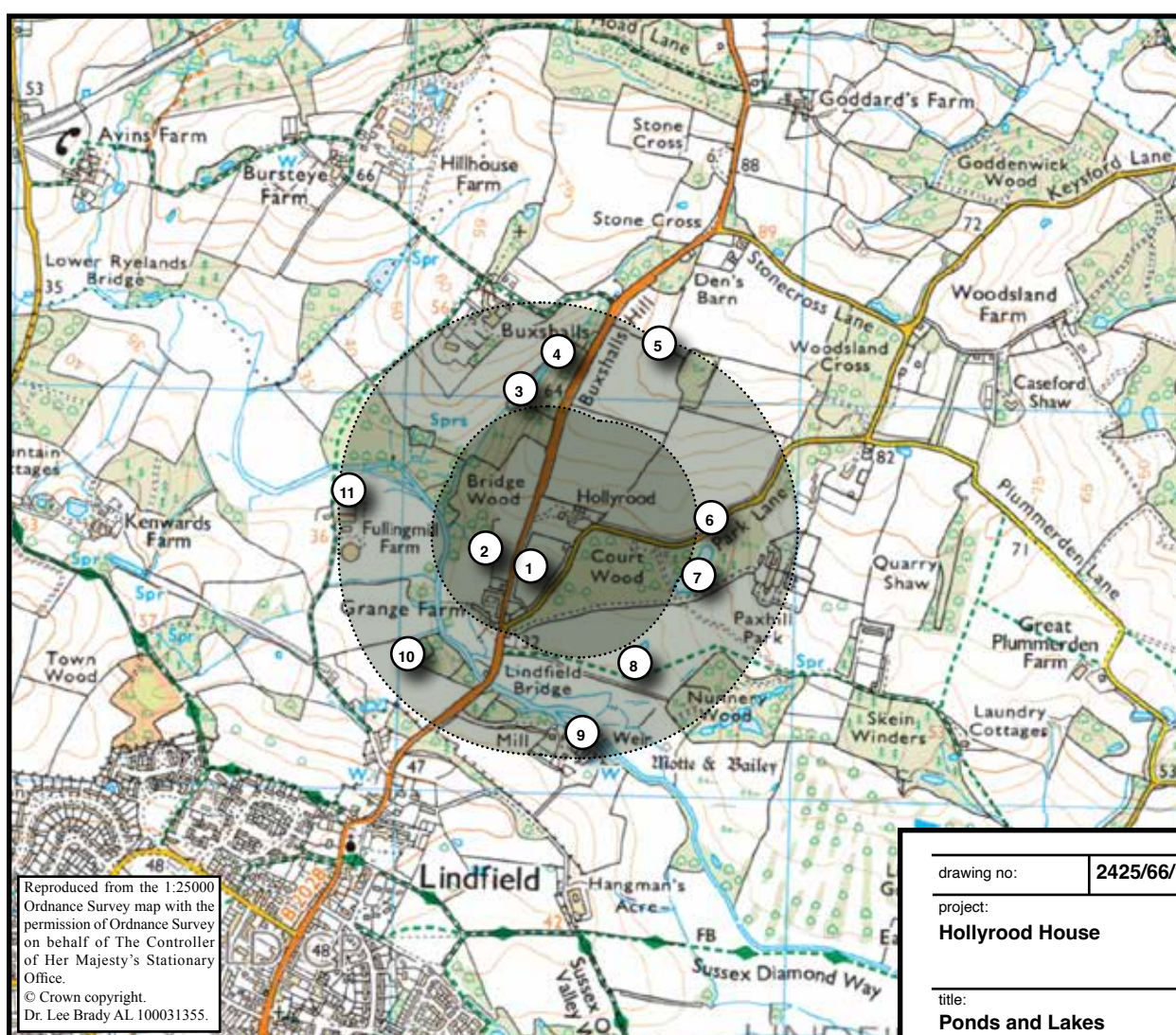
13 Woodside Cottages,
Dunkirk,
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Fig. 5.2 Ponds and Lakes

Figure illustrates ponds and lakes known to occur within recommended area of search for great crested newt.

Eleven waterbodies are known to be located within 500 m of the site, with two situated within 250 m. Other small ornamental ponds may also be present in nearby residential gardens.

For ponds located more than 250 m from a proposed development, Natural England recommend that survey work is most appropriate when (a) the pond has the potential to support a large population, (b) the development includes particularly favourable habitat, (c) the development will have a significant impact on available habitat, (d) there is an absence of dispersal barriers.



Key to Symbols

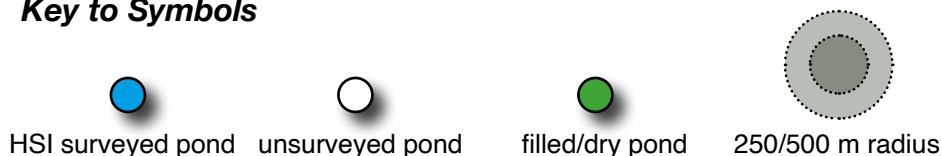


Fig. 5.3 Habitats

Indicative location of study area, illustrating existing habitat (main plate 2023; latest available image, ground conditions broadly similar in 2025).

The proposed development site is located within the study area and dominated by a former care home that includes several buildings with associated vehicle access, parking and grounds. Available vegetation includes grassland, tall ruderal vegetation and mature trees/shrubs.





Fig. 5.4 Site Photographs

Figure illustrates habitat features located within the study area.

The red line application area includes a former care home that includes several buildings and associated vehicle access/parking.

Vegetation observed within the site in June 2025 includes grassland, tall ruderal vegetation and mature trees/shrubs.



Available vegetation is starting to develop structural complexity and if left unmanaged could be colonised by amphibians and reptiles.

If vegetation within the site is not maintained in the condition described within the PEA, reptile survey work will be required across suitable habitat areas.

drawing no:	2425/66/1/5.4
project:	Land at Hollyrood House
title:	Site Photographs
scale: N.T.S.	date: Jun 2025

6. Protected Species Assessment

6.1 Reptiles

In October/November 2024, ground vegetation within areas proposed for disturbance was found to be dominated by a short sward grassland sward that is regularly managed.

In June 2025, ground vegetation was found to have developed into a longer sward with light scrub and tall ruderal vegetation starting to establish around some boundaries.

If vegetation within the site is left unmanaged and become more structurally complex, available habitat is likely to be colonised by reptiles that occur in nearby locations.

If ground vegetation is maintained as a short sward, appropriate mitigation can be achieved through precautionary mitigation as recommended in the PEA.

6.2 Amphibians

No ponds are located within the red line application area. Eleven ponds are known to be located within 500 m, two of these ponds are situated within 250 m.

Whilst all reasonable effort is made to identify ponds located around the site, small garden ponds and recently constructed ponds may not be included in available information sources. If additional ponds are subsequently identified close to the site, the amphibian risk assessment may need to be updated.

6.2.1 District Level Licence Risk Zone

The proposed development site is located within a local authority area where risk zones are calculated by NatureSpace.

<https://naturespaceuk.com/district-licensing/impact-map/>

NatureSpace risk zones are defined as follows:

Black – nationally or regionally important site for great crested newt that are excluded from development impacts under the NatureSpace District Licence Scheme;

Red – highly suitable habitat representing the most important areas for great crested newts;

Amber – suitable habitat where great crested newts are likely to be present;

Green – moderate habitat suitability where great crested newts may be present;

White – low habitat suitability with low probability of great crested newt presence.

6.2.1.1 Use of NatureSpace Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) Mapping

The NatureSpace IRZ maps are subject to specific usage restrictions as outlined in the NatureSpace Partnership Ltd Terms and Conditions. The maps are of low resolution and are intended only to provide a general overview of potential risk to great crested newts at a regional scale. They are not suitable for assessing small development parcels and NatureSpace advise that they cannot replace targeted surveys or a comprehensive desk study.

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6.2.2 Terrestrial Habitat Suitability

Habitat suitability within the red line application area was assessed during a daytime walkover survey.

The application area includes existing buildings, sealed surfaces and ~ 0.27 Ha of vegetation. At the time of the June 2025 survey assessment, ground vegetation displayed a developing sward with some light scrub and tall ruderal vegetation. Habitat appeared to offer potential for sheltering amphibians.

6.2.3 Aquatic Habitat Suitability

No ponds are located within the red line application area.

The likely presence of great crested newt in offsite ponds could not be determined due to a lack of access permission.

6.2.4 Natural England Risk Assessment

Natural England has published a risk assessment tool for determining whether development activities are likely to result in significant disturbance to great crested newt (Natural England, 2008). Natural England advise:

“This risk assessment tool has been developed as a general guide only, and it is inevitably rather simplistic. It has been generated by examining where impacts occurred in past mitigation projects, alongside recent research on newt ecology. It is not a substitute for a site-specific risk assessment informed by survey. In particular, the following factors are not included for sake of simplicity, though they will often have an important role in determining whether an offence would occur: population size, terrestrial habitat quality, presence of dispersal barriers, timing and duration of works, detailed layout of development in relation to newt resting and dispersal. The following factors could increase the risk of committing an offence: large population size, high pond density, good terrestrial habitat, low pre-existing habitat fragmentation, large development footprint, long construction period. The following factors could decrease the risk: small population size, low pond density, poor terrestrial habitat, substantial pre-existing dispersal barriers, small development footprint, short construction period. You should bear these mitigating and aggravating factors in mind when considering risk..”

The following calculations indicate the risk of disturbance depending on whether the closest waterbodies are occupied by newts. The calculations take into consideration any actions that may be undertaken to avoid disturbing or harming individual newts, but do not consider barrier effects. The calculations also take into consideration quality of available habitat.

Whole Site, including areas of buildings and hardstanding (0.63 Ha).

Component	Likely effect (select one for each component; select the most harmful option if more than one is likely; lists are in order of harm, top to bottom)	Notional offence probability score
Great crested newt breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Land within 100m of any breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Land 100-250m from any breeding pond(s)	0.5 - 1 ha lost or damaged	0.3
Land >250m from any breeding pond(s)	0.5 - 1 ha lost or damaged	0.03
Individual great crested newts	No effect	0
Maximum:		0.3
Rapid risk assessment result:	AMBER: OFFENCE LIKELY	

"Amber: offence likely" indicates that the development activities are of such a type, scale and location that an offence is likely. In this case, the best option is to redesign the development (location, layout, methods, duration or timing; see Non-licensed avoidance measures tool) so that the effects are minimised. You can do this and then re-run the risk assessment to test whether the result changes, or preferably run your own detailed site-specific assessment. Bear in mind that this generic risk assessment will over- or under-estimate some risks because it cannot take into account site-specific details, as mentioned in caveats above. In particular, the exact location of the development in relation to resting places, dispersal areas and barriers should be critically examined. Once you have amended the scheme you will need to decide if a licence is required; this should be done if on balance you believe an offence is reasonably likely.

Vegetated Habitat Areas Within Site Only (0.27 Ha)

Component	Likely effect (select one for each component; select the most harmful option if more than one is likely; lists are in order of harm, top to bottom)	Notional offence probability score
Great crested newt breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Land within 100m of any breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Land 100-250m from any breeding pond(s)	0.1 - 0.5 ha lost or damaged	0.1
Land >250m from any breeding pond(s)	0.5 - 1 ha lost or damaged	0.03
Individual great crested newts	No effect	0
Maximum:		0.1
Rapid risk assessment result:	GREEN: OFFENCE HIGHLY UNLIKELY	

"Green: offence highly unlikely" indicates that the development activities are of such a type, scale and location that it is highly unlikely any offence would be committed should the development proceed. Therefore, no licence would be required. However, bearing in mind that this is a generic assessment, you should carefully examine your specific plans to ensure this is a sound conclusion, and take precautions (see Non-licensed avoidance measures tool) to avoid offences if appropriate. It is likely that any residual offences would have negligible impact on conservation status, and enforcement of such breaches is unlikely to be in the public interest.

6.2.5 Great Crested Newt Impact Assessment

The proposed works will not significantly impact on the local conservation status of great crested newt for the following reasons:

- No direct impacts on breeding pond(s).
- Relatively large area of unsuitable habitat within the application area.

The applicant is advised that under NatureSpace's District Level Licensing, all land within the red-line boundary (even areas with buildings, hardstanding or roads) may be considered when assessing potential impacts on newts. While such features may offer low suitability, they contribute to total site area, influence connectivity and affect compensation requirements.

6.2.6 Great Crested Newt Survey

Available terrestrial habitat includes vegetation and features that offer potential foraging and sheltering habitat for newts. Without further evidence that newts do not occupy nearby ponds, NatureSpace may still recommend to the LPA that the applicant apply for a DLL.

Although survey work of all ponds located within 500 m can sometimes be necessary, Natural England recommends a more proportionate approach to survey work. For small projects, survey work of ponds within 250 m is more typically recommended:

"In keeping with a proportionate and risk-based approach, surveys need reasonable boundaries. The Great crested newt mitigation guidelines explain that surveys of ponds up to around 500m from the development might need to be surveyed. The decision on whether to survey depends primarily on how likely it is that the development would affect newts using those ponds. For developments resulting in permanent or temporary habitat loss at distances over 250m from the nearest pond, carefully consider whether a survey is appropriate. Surveys of land at this distance from ponds are normally appropriate when all of the following conditions are met: (a) maps, aerial photos, walk-over surveys or other data indicate that the pond(s) has potential to support a large great crested newt population, (b) the footprint contains particularly favourable habitat, especially if it constitutes the majority available locally, (c) the development would have a substantial negative effect on that habitat, and (d) there is an absence of dispersal barriers."

6.2.7 Other Widespread Amphibian Species

Common frog, common toad and smooth newt are likely to breed in nearby ponds, including those in residential gardens and ponds supporting fish.

The proposed development will not have a significant negative impact on the local conservation status of widespread amphibian species.

7. Recommendations

Appropriate actions should be undertaken to ensure that there is minimal disturbance to protected species and any retained habitat. Retained habitat should be managed to promote biodiversity interest.

If any areas with potential for protected species are proposed for management or other disturbance (e.g. ground investigations or archaeological excavations), all works should first be discussed and agreed with a suitably experienced ecologist.

7.1 Reptiles

7.1.1 Reptile Survey

If left unmanaged, habitat could be colonised by one or more reptile species. In this situation, a presence/likely absence survey work would be required in order to inform appropriate mitigation.

- Survey all suitable terrestrial habitat within the application area.
- Survey work should be undertaken by a suitably experienced ecologist using appropriate methods (preferably artificial cover object survey).
- A minimum of 7 survey visits are required to reliably confirm presence/likely absence.
- Survey visits should be undertaken during suitable weather conditions from April to September.

If reptiles are subsequently confirmed present a suitable mitigation strategy should be prepared.

For more information see:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/reptiles-protection-surveys-and-licences>

7.1.2 Precautionary Mitigation

If vegetation within the site is maintained as a short sward, precautionary mitigation for reptiles can be undertaken.

- **Remove ground objects:** Any ground objects suitable for sheltering animals should be removed and checked for sheltering reptiles. Such work must not be undertaken during the winter hibernation period (November to February).
- **Vegetation management:** Vegetation in areas proposed for disturbance should be strimmed to ground level and vegetation maintained at this height until completion of all works.
- **Avoid disturbance:** All reasonable effort will be undertaken to minimise disturbance to habitat outside of the red line development area. This may include installation of Heras fence (or similar) as appropriate.

- **Exclusion fencing:** If the site is likely to be left unmanaged for a period of time, ground vegetation may recover and reptile exclusion fencing may be necessary. If site management is maintained, exclusion fencing will not be required.
- **Reptile captures:** If any reptiles are found within the working area, they will be relocated to a suitable area that will not be disturbed by proposed works. Further advice should be sought from a suitably experienced ecologist if required.

7.2 Great Crested Newt

All land within the application boundary, including areas of buildings, access roads, and hardstanding, has been considered in this assessment. While these features are of negligible habitat suitability for great crested newts, their inclusion is necessary to assess overall habitat availability, connectivity, and potential impacts associated with development

Based on available information, the development size and proximity to one or more ponds that could support breeding great crested newt means that works may have to be undertaken under an appropriate mitigation licence. For more information see:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/great-crested-newts-surveys-and-mitigation-for-development-projects>

The following options are proposed: (1) survey ponds to determine likely presence of newts or (2) apply for District Level Licence that does not require survey work.

7.2.1. Pond Survey

If additional pond survey work is undertaken, particular attention should be focussed on WBs 1 & 2. If these ponds are not found to be occupied by great crested newt, a more limited mitigation strategy may be sufficient for the proposed scheme.

- Ideally, all accessible ponds located within 500 m of areas proposed for disturbance should be surveyed by experienced and licensed personnel. This should also include any garden ponds that are subsequently found to be present.
- General survey priority is as follows: (1) all ponds within 100 m of the application area; (2) all ponds within 250 m of application area; (3) all ponds within 500 m of application area.
- Access permission to survey ponds on land owned by third parties will be required.
- If great crested newts are not confirmed present, no further mitigation actions are required.
- If a Low Impact Class Licence is required only presence information is required.
- Four survey visits to each pond are required to confirm presence using traditional survey methods. If eDNA sampling is undertaken only one visit to each pond is required.
- If newts are confirmed present and a full mitigation licence is required a total of six survey visits will be required to each occupied pond to determine relative population size(s).
- Mitigation actions and licence requirements will depend upon survey results.

7.2.2 District Level Licence

A District Level Licence (DLL) that aims to fundamentally change the approach to great crested newt mitigation licensing has been launched by Natural England.

- Under the DLL, development over a whole district is covered by a single licence. In some counties this licence is issued by Natural England. In other counties the licence may be issued by local authorities or even private companies (e.g. NatureSpace).
- Compensatory habitat is created off site by a third party prior to development and developers pay a fee based on an estimated impact on great crested newts for each development.
- No amphibian survey work, mitigation or other compensatory habitat works are required on the development site in order to apply for a DLL. However, the applicant is advised that such works may still be required to satisfy local planning obligations or licenses issued by private companies such as NatureSpace.
- Calumma Ecological Services considers that the DLL offers a useful tool to help provide suitable compensation for development projects that will have only a low impact on great crested newt.
- The applicant is advised that the cost of a District Level Licence is determined by the total area of the proposed development located within 250 m of a pond and subject to modifiers that are based on risk zones and whether great crested newt has recently been confirmed present. Natural England identifies ponds based on OS mapping data and these can sometimes include garden ponds and ponds that are no longer extant. Other organisations/companies may calculate costs differently and require the applicant to identify ponds on a site plan.

For more information see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/great-crested-newts-district-level-licensing-schemes>

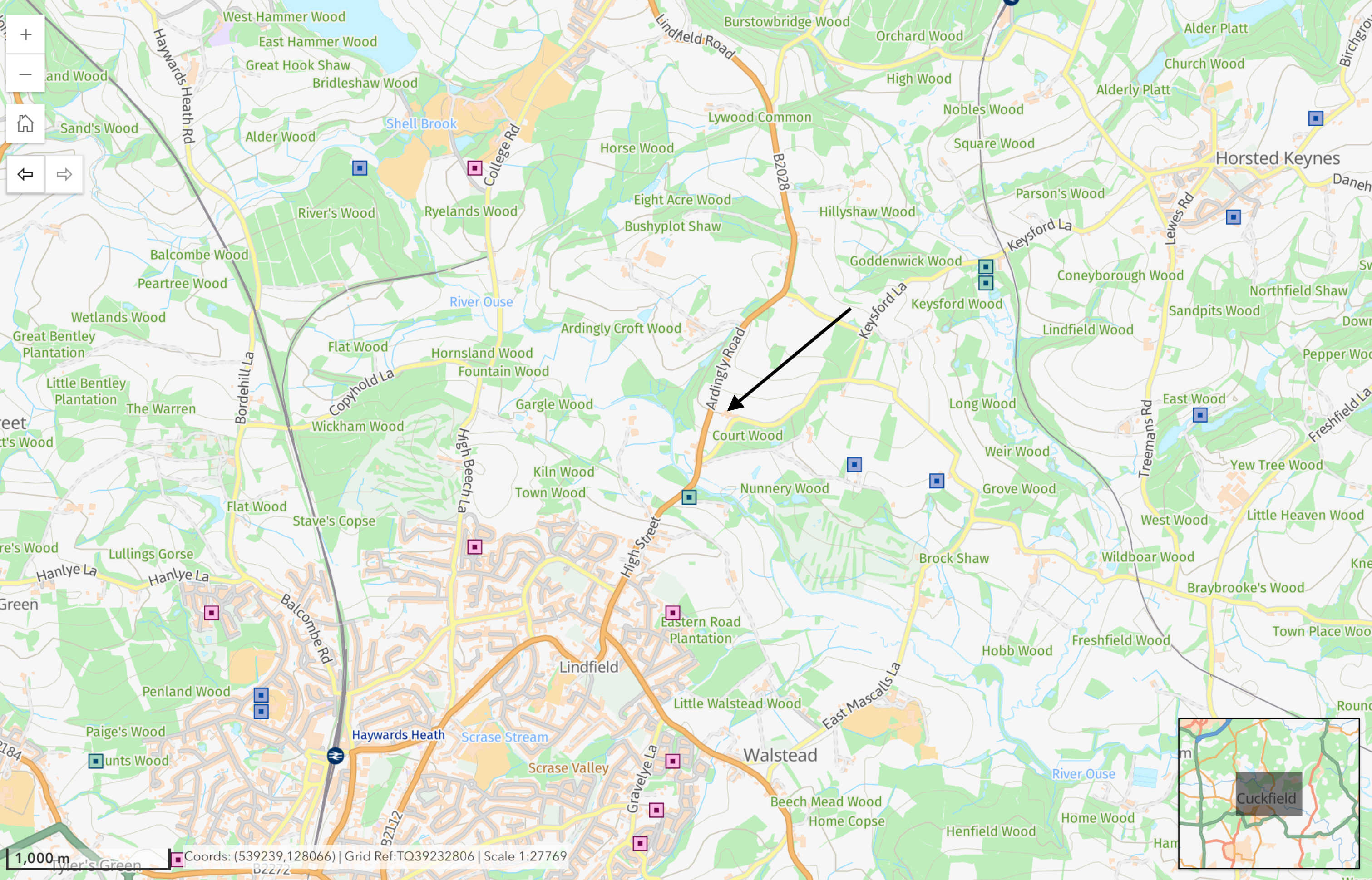
8. References and Further Reading

- Ecology and Land Management (2024) Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. Hollyrood, Ardingly Road, Lindfield, Haywards Heath, RH16 2QY
- English Nature (2001) Great crested newt mitigation guidelines. English Nature, Peterborough.
- English Nature (2005) Reptiles: guidelines for developers. English Nature, Peterborough.
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- Gent, T. and Howarth, W. (1998) Amphibians and reptiles and the law. In: Herpetofauna Workers' Manual. Gent, A. H. & Gibson, S. D. (eds.), Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough, pp. 75 - 93.
- Griffiths, R. A. and Inns, H. (1998) Surveying. In: Herpetofauna Workers' Manual. Gent, A. H. & Gibson, S. D. (eds.), Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough, pp. 1 - 6.
- Herpetofauna Groups of Britain and Ireland (1998) Evaluating local mitigation/translocation programmes: Maintaining Best Practice and lawful standards. HGBI advisory notes for Amphibian and Reptile Groups (ARGs). HGBI, c/o Froglife, Halesworth.

Appendix I: European Protected Species Mitigation Licences

Source:

MAGIC (<http://www.magic.gov.uk>)



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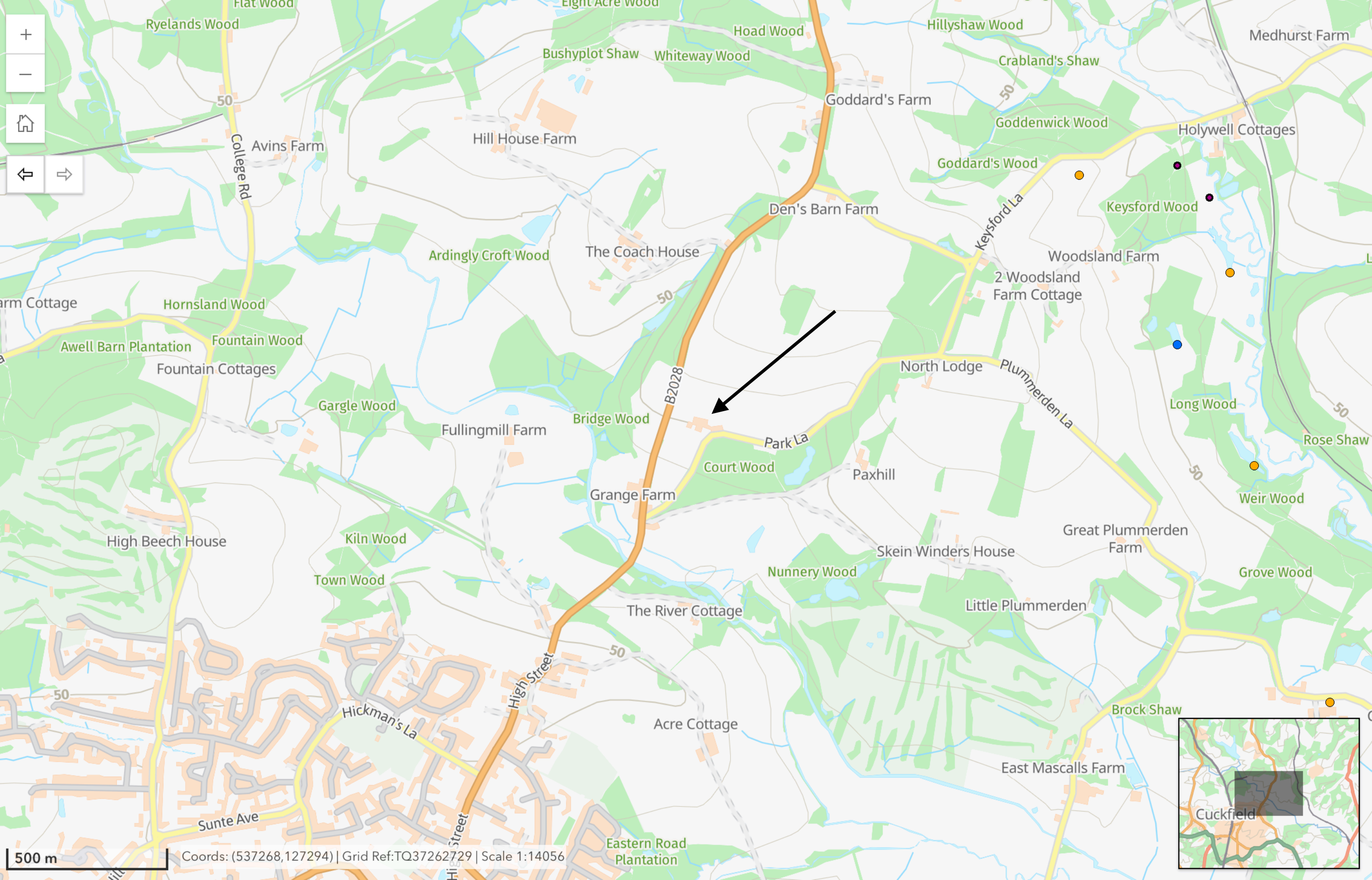
1,000 m Coords: (539239,128066) | Grid Ref:TQ39232806 | Scale 1:27769



Appendix II: Great Crested Newt Records

Source:

MAGIC (<http://www.magic.gov.uk>)

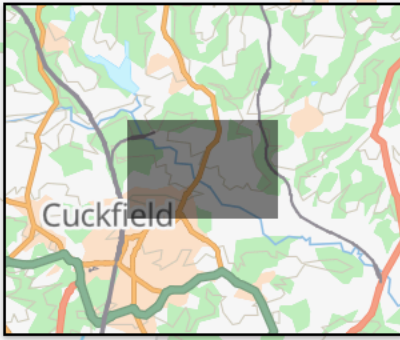


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500 m

Coords: (537268, 127294) | Grid Ref: TQ37262729 | Scale 1:14056



Appendix III: Great Crested Newt Licences and Surveys

Sources:

Natural England and Calumma Ecological Services

Licence Level	Licence Type	Notes
1	No Licence	No or negligible impacts on gcn.
2	Non-Licensed Method Statement	Negligible or low impacts on gcn that can be prevented using avoidance measures.
3	Low Impact Class Licence	Low impacts on gcn in relatively small areas over short periods of time. No impacts on ponds.
4	Full EPS Licence	Impacts on gcn in larger areas or over longer periods of time.
5	District Level License	Permits development without the need for survey and/or mitigation works.

Available licence categories for development projects affecting great crested newt (gcn). Note that DLL is not currently available for all counties.

Licence Level	Mitigation Licence	Disturbance Threshold (relative to gcn occupied pond)	Recommended Pond Survey
1	No licence	No disturbance to pond. No disturbance within 100 m and < 0.5 Ha within 250 m of pond	None required, but presence/likely absence survey of all ponds within 100 m beneficial.
2	Non-Licensed Method Statement	No disturbance to pond. No disturbance within 50 m and < 0.01 Ha within 100 m and < 0.5 Ha within 250 m of pond	Presence/likely absence survey all ponds within 100 m. Presence/likely absence survey of all ponds within 250 m beneficial.
3	Low Impact Class Licence	No disturbance to pond. < 0.01 Ha within 50 m and < 0.2 Ha within 100 m and < 0.5 Ha within 250 m of pond	Presence/likely absence survey all ponds within 250 m.
4	Full EPS Licence	Any	Relative population survey all accessible ponds within 500 m.
5	District Level Licence	Any	None required.

Recommended survey work required for great crested newt mitigation. Area values for disturbance thresholds refer to area of land within application site regardless of apparent suitability for newts.



Calumma Ecological Services is an independent wildlife consultancy. *Calumma Ecological Services* offers a full range of specialist services to private companies, local authorities, government agencies, wildlife organisations and members of the public.

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