

From: Laura Downs <Laura.Downs@naturespaceuk.com>
Sent: 09 July 2026 17:30:00 UTC+01:00
To: "Andy Watt" <andy.watt@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: Oakwood GCN - DM/26/0171

Good afternoon Andy,

Thank you for reconsulting us on the above application.

Looking at the below chain I'm wondering if there may have been a slight misunderstanding regarding the amended GCN letter and our decision regarding the requirement for a licence. The applicant has been in conversation with our technical team regarding whether the DL could be an option for them. Originally the development was quoted as a high impact minor which would have incurred some high fees. However, after some discussions regarding whether some pond protection measures could be implemented, it was confirmed by my colleague that these measures agreed with the applicant would instead allow us to class the development as a low impact minor incurring a one-time fee. We said to the applicant if they still wish to defend the use of RAMs they can submit their GCN assessment into planning and we could provide a further consultation response (through the official channels) to comment on whether we believed a licence would be required. Alternatively they had the option instead of joining the DL under the low impact classification with the suggested pond protection measures in place. We hadn't agreed that the suggested RAMs within the GCN letter would be acceptable for the development, and unfortunately after further discussions with some colleagues to try and provide the most proportional response, we do still feel in the absence of survey information that a RAMs is not a suitable substitute here.

There are many ponds around the development site, and the onsite pond in particular will be directly impacted as some vegetation will be removed, as well as other vegetation onsite. Additionally, a building adjacent to the onsite pond will be removed and this is anticipated to also be impactful. If this pond does support GCN, the proposed works would constitute an offence through the disturbance of their habitat/the species. We do not believe sufficient evidence has been provided here to demonstrate that the risk is low enough for precautionary working methods to be an appropriate option, and therefore we would still recommend further information. However, if the LPA decide they are satisfied instead with the measures included within the GCN letter, we recommend that these measures are secured via condition.

I hope the above is all okay but please do let me know if you have any questions,

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

NatureSpace Partnership

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From: Andy Watt <andy.watt@midsussex.gov.uk>

Sent: 22 June 2026 16:08

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

Subject: FW: Oakwood GCN - DM/26/0171

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Hi Laura

Please see attached updated information for further comment. I have sent through a formal consultation request, and this letter is on the public file in any case.

Thank you

Andy Watt, BSc (Hons), MTPL, MRTPI

Senior Planning Officer

Development Management

01444 477517

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Working together for a Better Mid Sussex

From: michael@murrayplanning.co.uk <michael@murrayplanning.co.uk>

Sent: 18 June 2026 09:44

To: Andy Watt <andy.watt@midsussex.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Oakwood GCN

Andy,

Following my earlier email this week, please find attached an updated (and hopefully final) GCN letter for a formal NatureSpace consultation. I understand NatureSpace have already seen the letter and agreed it, but need to be formally consulted to respond.

Please disregard the letter attached to my email of 15 June and send the attached to NatureSpace at your earliest convenience.

Kind Regards,

Michael Bingham
Associate Planner



Ground Floor Office, Challenger House,
Rumbolds Hill, Midhurst
West Sussex GU29 9BY

Tel 07815 476205
michael@murrayplanning.co.uk

From: michael@murrayplanning.co.uk <michael@murrayplanning.co.uk>
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2026 8:53 AM
To: 'Andy Watt' <andy.watt@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Oakwood GCN

Andy,

Please find attached an updated great crested newt letter which I hope can be passed on to NatureSpace for another consultation.

Our ecologist is in direct contact with NatureSpace to sort out the license, so I am hoping that the next consultation response will result in agreement from NatureSpace on the proposed way forward.

I see we have no objection from the flood risk and drainage consultation, so unless you tell me otherwise, is it just the ecology issues left to resolve?

Kind Regards,

Michael Bingham

Associate Planner



Ground Floor Office, Challenger House,
Rumbolds Hill, Midhurst
West Sussex GU29 9BY

Tel 07815 476205

michael@murrayplanning.co.uk

From: michael@murrayplanning.co.uk <michael@murrayplanning.co.uk>

Sent: Wednesday, June 3, 2026 3:37 PM

To: 'Andy Watt' <andy.watt@midsussex.gov.uk>

Subject: FW: Oakwood GCN

Andy,

With regard to application DM/26/0171, our ecologist has spoken with NatureSpace, and has provided a summary of his dialog with them in his email below. In short, a proposal to remove all vegetation under ecological supervision with works to stop if any great crested newts are found and the appropriate license obtained.

I have asked our ecologist to update the working method statement document so that NatureSpace can be formally consulted again. Based on the dialog with them and our ecologist, I am hopeful they will agree to the proposed methodology put forward by our ecologist without needing surveys at this stage.

Our ecologist also said that the onus is on the local authority to decide what is the most appropriate way forward, and that NatureSpace are not necessarily the decision maker on this matter. As such, I don't know if you have any thoughts on this, or are you simply relying on NatureSpace advice?

Do you have any timescale for when we should get some feedback on the flood risk and drainage strategy document? That has been with you for a couple of weeks now so I am hoping to get some feedback ASAP.

Kind Regards,

Michael Bingham

Associate Planner



Ground Floor Office, Challenger House,
Rumbolds Hill, Midhurst
West Sussex GU29 9BY

Tel 07815 476205

michael@murrayplanning.co.uk

From: William Mills <W.Mills@wmecology.co.uk>
Sent: Wednesday, June 3, 2026 2:47 PM
To: Michael Bingham <michael@murrayplanning.co.uk>
Cc: 'Richard Murray' <richard@murrayplanning.co.uk>
Subject: Oakwood GCN

Hi Michael

It was good to have a chat earlier.

As we discussed, NaureSpace have stated that they would prefer more survey work; however, given the very small area of suitable habitat to be affected, they have said there may be a chance they are happy with a working method statement, though this will need to be updated to be more thorough and robust (happy to do this either Friday or early next week). I would suggest we push for all vegetation removal to be done under ecologist supervision, and should any GCN be found (highly unlikely in my professional opinion), all works will stop, and we then get a district level licence. To speed things up and confirm that if we really do need a DLL, we could begin an enquiry providing all the proposed RAMs and more detailed habitat info as NS said that they may have been a bit harsh on their assessment.

Kind Regards,

Will Mills
Consultant Ecologist
ACIEEM,
MSci (Hons)
M:07398398723



WM Ecology Ltd

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