

Great Crested Newt Consultation Response

Application Ref:	F/26/101013	Date:	07/04/2026	From:	NatureSpace
Site Address:	Land Adjacent to Oak Cottage, Winchester Road, Boorley Green, SO32 2DH,				
Proposal:	Erection of part two, part three storey retirement living building with 50 apartments, associated communal lounge, house manager's office, external enclosed refuse and electric scooter/cycle stores and sub-station; erection of a pair of detached dwellings; improved vehicular access and new pedestrian access to Winchester Road, internal roads, car parking and hard and soft landscaping.				
Documents/Drawings:	Ecological Impact Assessment				
Response:	No further information required				
Summary:	I am satisfied that if this application was to be approved then it would be unlikely to have any impact upon great crested newts and/or their habitats. With the ecological appraisal and its recommendations being followed in full.				

Ecological information:

This planning application is for a retirement living building with 50 apartments; erection of a pair of detached dwellings; improved vehicular access and new pedestrian access to Winchester Road, internal roads, car parking and hard and soft landscaping

- The development falls within the amber impact risk zone for great crested newts. Impact risk zones have been derived through advanced modelling to create a species distribution map which predicts likely presence. In the amber impact zone, there is suitable habitat and a high likelihood of great crested newt presence.
- There are five ponds within 500m of the development proposal, The closest ponds is located 300m to the southwest of the site. Please note that not all ponds are shown on the map below.
- There is limited connectivity between the waterbodies/terrestrial habitat in the landscape and the development site, which could aid great crested newt dispersal into the development site.
- Natural England Standing Advice guidance for planning authorities advises that surveys on ponds up to 500m from development sites should be requested



Figure above: Outline of the site (red) in the context of the surrounding landscape, including the Impact Risk Zones for GCN. Ponds are shown in light blue. A 250m buffer is shown around the site in green and a 500m buffer in blue. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

The Ecological information submitted thus far includes an Ecological Impacts Assessment (EclA). Produced by EcoSupport, dated 11th February 2026.

- Habitats identified in report include; modified grassland, bramble scrub, native hedgerow and line of trees.
- Overall suitability and assessment determined in report, was that the on site habitats do offer some suitability for great crested newts, however the two road features separating the site from the easternmost pond and the four remaining ponds being newly created enhancement features attributed to unfinished development projects reducing the overall likelihood of great crested newts on site.

Conclusion:

We are satisfied with the information provided relating to the above application and that great crested newts and/or their habitats are unlikely to be impacted if the proposal was to be approved.

Contact Details: info@naturespaceuk.com

Relationship between NatureSpace and Eastleigh Borough Council

Eastleigh Borough Council holds a Great Crested Newt Organisational (or “District”) Licence granted by Natural England. This is administered by NatureSpace Partnership through their District Licensing Scheme as the council’s delivery partner. A dedicated ‘District Licensing Officer’ is employed by NatureSpace to provide impartial advice to the council and help guide them and planning applicants through the process. All services and arrangements are facilitated in an unbiased, independent and transparent manner.

You can find out more at www.naturespaceuk.com

Legislation, Policy and Guidance

Reasonable Likelihood of Protected Species

Permission can be refused if adequate information on protected species is not provided by an applicant, as it will be unable to assess the impacts on the species and thus meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), ODPM Circular 06/2005 or the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). The Council has the power to request information under Article 4 of the Town and Country (Planning Applications) Regulations 1988 (SI1988.1812) (S3) which covers general information for full applications. CLG 2007 ‘The validation of planning applications’ states that applications should not be registered if there is a requirement for an assessment of the impacts of a development on biodiversity interests.

Section 99 of ODPM Circular 06/2005 states:

“It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision. The need to ensure ecological surveys are carried out should therefore only be left to coverage under planning conditions in exceptional circumstances, with the result that the surveys are carried out after planning permission has been granted. However, bearing in mind the delay and cost that may be involved, developers should not be required to undertake surveys for protected species unless there is a reasonable likelihood of the species being present and affected by development. Where this is the case, the survey should be completed and any necessary measures to protect the species should be in place, through conditions and / or planning obligations before permission is granted.”

Great crested newts

Great crested newts and their habitats are fully protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Therefore, it is illegal to deliberately capture, injure, kill, disturb or take great crested newts or to damage or destroy breeding sites or resting places. Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) it is illegal to intentionally or recklessly disturb any great crested newts occupying a place of shelter or protection, or to obstruct access to any place of shelter or protection (see the legislation or seek legal advice for full details). Local planning authorities have a statutory duty in exercising of all their functions to ‘*have regard, so far is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving and enhancing biodiversity,*’ as stated under section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (as amended), as well as a duty under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) to have regard to the requirements of the Habitats Directive. As a result, GCN and their habitats are a material consideration in the planning process.

Lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys

Validity of ecological reports and surveys can become compromised overtime due to being out-of-date. CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing (CIEEM, 2017) states, if the age of data is between 12-18 months, “*the report authors should highlight whether they consider it likely to be necessary to update surveys*”. If the age of the data is between 18 months to 3 years an updated survey and report will be required and anything more than 3 years old “*The report is unlikely to still be valid and most, if not all, of the surveys are likely to need to be updated*”.