

Locogen

24/11/2023

Attn: Brendan Mackinnon

Dear Brendan

Great Crested Newt (GCN) eDNA survey of ponds within area of proposed solar farm at Allington Lane, Eastleigh, Hampshire, SO30 3HQ.

Summary: No GCN DNA from the on-site pond (negative)

This letter is produced as a rapid addendum to a planning application whilst the terms of the District Level Licensing scheme (and accompanying information) are being discussed. According to aerial photographs (GoogleEarth™) and online Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 maps there are approximately 15 ponds within 250m of the site, including one on site. These include:

- Allington Lane Pond SINC (on site)
- Hog Wood & Gravel Pits SINC (c.33m to the west of the site)
- Hearts Copse SINC pond (c.40m to the south of the site)
- An unnamed pond (c.105m east of the site)

In addition, there are numerous drainage ditches on and within 250m of the site.

All on-site ponds and water bodies were assessed and surveyed on the 29th and 30th June 2023. This was led by John Poland CEnv MCIEEM CBiol MSB. John is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), a Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv), a Chartered Biologist (CBiol) and multi-species licence holder with over 23 years of experience in ecological consultancy. In addition to holding a personal GCN 'survey' licence (2022-60603-SCI-SCI), he has held multiple Natural England GCN WML A14 mitigation licences and is also a GCN Low Impact Class Licence (CL33) holder.

Only the Allington Lane Pond SINC had formal permission to survey. The water samples collected from the pond tested negative for the presence of great crested newt DNA. The results are shown below:

Date collected				29/06/2023			
Date sample received at Laboratory:				28/07/2023			
Date Reported:				31/07/2023			
Matters Affecting Results:				None			
Lab Sample No.	Site Name	OS Reference	Sample Integrity Check	Degradation Check	Inhibition Check	Presence of GCN eDNA	Positive Replicates
5490	Pond 1 (Allington Lane Pond SINC)	SU477169	Pass	Pass	Pass	Negative	0

Habitat Suitability Indices (HSI) had been carried out by Ecus Ltd in their *P28 Allington Lane Preliminary Ecological Appraisals* (2023).

The absence of GCN DNA from this pond does not mean there is no impact on great crested newt as the site is suitable terrestrial habitat for this species and there have been adjacent breeding records. The *Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036 Great Crested Newt Study* (also known as the *North Eastleigh Strategic GCN Survey*) published in June 2018, states:

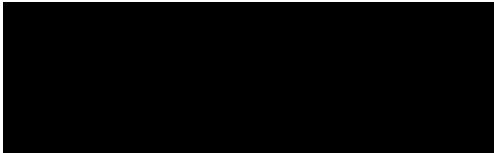
“No records of any newt species or the presence of any newt species were recorded within the waterbody located within the Allington Lane Pond SINC. Hog Wood and Gravel Pits was the only SINC within the study area to have a confirmed breeding presence with GCN eggs recorded within the ponds on-site”.

The survey work for this report was conducted in 2016. Based on the current 2023 eDNA survey on the on-site pond, this is still likely to be the case.

It should be noted that the network of drainage ditches accessed were all dry at the time of survey. These drainage ditches may act as corridors for GCN connectivity and dispersal but highly unlikely to be used for breeding.

I look forward to discussing the proposals of the GCN licensing scheme in due course but if you require any further information in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



John Poland CEnv MCIEEM CBiol MRSB
Principal Ecologist

For and on behalf of HAMPSHIRE ECOLOGICAL SERVICES LTD