

LAND AT KINGS COPSE AVENUE, HEDGE END

GREAT CRESTED NEWT PRECAUTIONARY WORKING METHODS STATEMENT 2ND DECEMBER 2025

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. In November 2025, ACD Environmental Ltd were instructed by Eastleigh Borough Council to prepare a Precautionary Working Methods Statement (PWMS) regarding great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* at a parcel of land known as Land at Kings Copse Avenue, Hedge End. The Ordnance Survey Grid Reference for the approximate centre of the site is SU 49841 12033. Hereafter, the site is referred to as 'the Application Site'.
- 1.2. The Application Site (**Image 1**) is located at the south-eastern extent of Hedge End. The site is surrounded by a residential development to the north, Manor Farm LNR to the east, a combination of arable farmland and woodland to the south, and a combination of residential development and sports pitches to the south.



Image 1: Approximate location of the Application Site boundary shown in red. Google Earth (2025).

- 1.3. Full planning permission is being sought for a residential development of 192 dwellings comprising houses and apartments, to include access, parking, landscaping and other associated works, along with off-site footway and bridleway improvement (Planning Reference: F/25/100141). The residential units will be comprised of a mixture of 2 and 2.5 storey houses and apartment blocks with mixed tenure. A 3m wide tarmac path is being created along the footpath to the north of the Application Site. Offsite works to an electrical pylon will be completed south of the Application Site. The development will result in the loss of other neutral grassland, sections of scrub, and small sections of tree line.
- 1.4. NatureSpace was consulted in October 2025 in relation to the impact of this new application on great crested newts (GCN). NatureSpace advised that a precautionary working methods statement for GCN is required prior to construction, due to several factors including the Application Site being within a green impact risk zone for GCN, the presence of four ponds and a known record of GCN within 500m of the site, and the presence of suitable terrestrial habitat for newts within the site boundary.
- 1.5. NatureSpace advised that the PWMS should include information regarding the following:
- Definition of a working corridor and access route to ensure that surrounding habitat is not impacted as a result of the proposals.
 - Toolbox talk for contractors working on site including great crested newt ecology, features, and what to do if a great crested newt is found.
 - Managing vegetation to ensure it does not become suitable.
 - Removing waste off site, storing materials properly, and excavation best practice for great crested newts.
 - Additional site-specific best practice measures required to ensure no impacts to great crested newts.
- 1.6. This report serves as the PWMS required by NatureSpace, providing detailed mitigation measures to protect great crested newts and prevent harm to the species during the development.

2. ECOLOGICAL BASELINE

2.1. The Application Site has been subject to a wide range of ecological surveys by ACD Environmental Ltd including an initial UK Habitat Classification Survey in November 2023 and an updated UK Hab Survey in July 2024. An updated walkover survey of the site was carried out in September 2025.

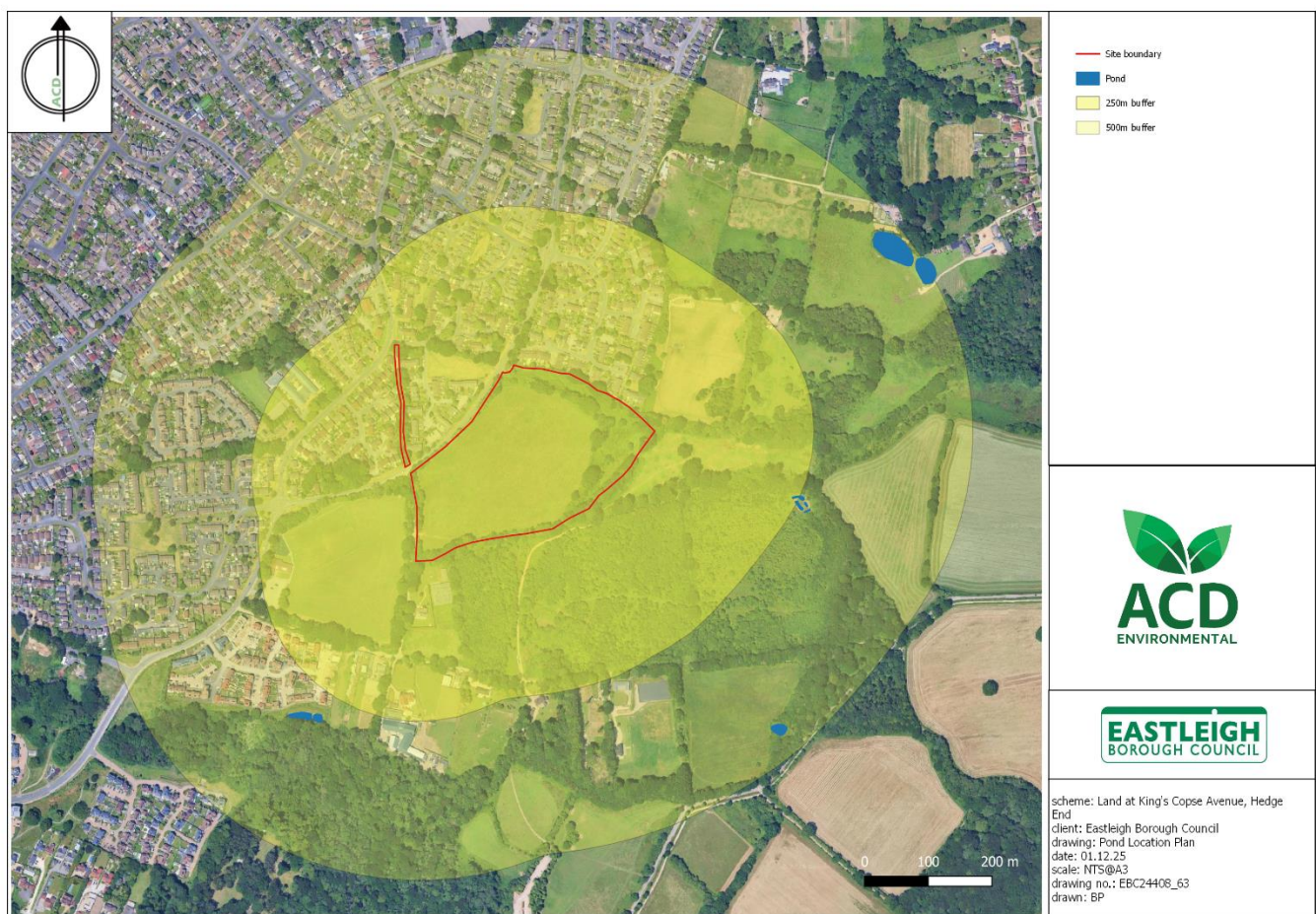


Image 2: Pond Location Plan (QGIS, 2025).

2.2. There are no ponds within the Application Site boundary, however, there are several collections of ponds scattered in the surrounding landscape within a 500m buffer of the site (**Image 2**). These ponds are all surrounded by suitable terrestrial habitat and it was considered that if great crested newts are present in these ponds, it is highly unlikely that they would disperse to the Application Site given the suitability of the adjacent habitat.

- 2.3. The habitats on-site are considered largely suitable to support great crested newts during their terrestrial phase. These habitats consist of the woodland, grassland, hedgerows, scrub, and log piles, which provide opportunities for foraging and refuge. There is also a small stream within the SINC/LNR area however this is considered too fast flowing to support great crested newts.
- 2.4. The data search returned one record of great crested newt within 2km of the Application Site, located approximately 1.4km south-west of the Application Site, dated to 2021. Additionally, as identified on MAGIC Maps, one EPS licence has been granted within 5km of the Application Site. This licence was located approximately 3.5km east of the Application Site and was granted in 2018.
- 2.5. The ponds in the surrounding area were not accessible during the UK Habitat Classification surveys and therefore an HSI assessment of the ponds was not feasible.
- 2.6. The ponds to the south-west of the Application Site appear to be drainage basins for a new development and are likely to be dry or holding little water for long periods throughout the year. As such, it is unlikely that these ponds support amphibians. Additionally, these ponds are separated from the Application Site by numerous dispersal barriers including residential dwellings, farm buildings, and roads.
- 2.7. The ponds located to the north-east, east, and south-east are all surrounded by suitable terrestrial habitat for great crested newts including woodland, hedgerows, tree lines and tussocky grassland, which are functionally linked to the Application Site. These ponds are all situated over 250m from the Application Site boundary.
- 2.8. The dispersal distance of great crested newts from breeding ponds depends upon the quality of surrounding terrestrial habitat, the connectivity of these habitats, and the lack of dispersal barriers. Core terrestrial habitat for GCN is considered to be up to 250m, whilst distances of up to 500m require consideration.^{1,2} Given that there is suitable terrestrial habitat for GCN functionally linking the ponds in the surrounding area to the Application Site, it is considered possible that GCN may disperse to the site.

¹ HM Government (26/07/2022). *Guidance Great crested newts: advice for making planning decisions*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/great-crested-newts-surveys-and-mitigation-for-development-projects>

² Langton, T., Beckett, C. and Foster, J. (2001). *Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook*. Froglife, Halesworth.

- 2.9. Given the lack of great crested newt records in the local area, and the presence of suitable terrestrial habitat immediately adjacent to the ponds in the surrounding area, it is considered that GCN are likely absent from the Application Site. Additionally, no amphibians have been found on-site; however, due to the presence of suitable habitat on-site there is the potential for presence unseen.

3. GREAT CREST NEWT MITIGATION MEASURES

- 3.1. There are no ponds within the Application Site, and no amphibians have been found on-site. However, due to the presence of suitable terrestrial habitat on-site that is connected to ponds in the wider landscape, a precautionary approach is required as below.
- 3.2. Without appropriate mitigation, there is the potential for animals to be harmed or killed during the proposed works (if present). Without site supervision there would be possible direct harm to animals that may be crushed or excluded during the course of the works and potential disturbance from noise, dust and lighting associated with the works.
- 3.3. The following pollution prevention measures must be followed:

Pollution - prevention

- The works will be carried out in accordance with guidance on pollution prevention for businesses³ to prevent pollutants from entering the water table and other habitats and to appropriately deal with any pollution incidents should they arise.

Pollution - chemical contamination

- All chemicals will be carefully stored within the site compound/s.
- Should any chemical spills occur then they must be traced, recorded and addressed in compliance with COSHH.
- A spill kit must be available at all times.
- Information on dealing with chemical spills is contained in PPG21 'Dealing with Spills' and a copy of this guidance should be kept on site during the construction works.

³ HM Government (last updated 02/05/2023). *Guidance Pollution prevention for businesses How businesses and organisations can avoid causing pollution from oil and chemical storage, car washing, construction and other activities*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pollution-prevention-for-businesses>

- If required, any refuelling of vehicles or any use of chemicals is to be carried out within designated areas on an impermeable surface.
- Should any drums be damaged or leaking, then these should be removed from the construction site immediately and disposed of in an appropriate manner.

Pollution - dust

- Any exposed areas of soil and piles of sand, soil or other small particle materials should be kept damp and/or covered by a geotextile membrane whilst not being worked on, especially on days of high winds.
 - Geotextile membrane must be installed on the Heras fencing surrounding the construction site.
- 3.4. Prior to the commencement of works, contractors will be made aware of the potential presence of protected species, their legal protection and safe working practices to avoid harming protected species (if present). They will be informed that if a protected species is found when a suitably licenced ecologist is not in attendance they must not be handled, works must stop and advice sought from a suitably licenced ecologist.
- 3.5. Care must be taken during any works to ensure wildlife is not harmed and in the event any protected species are found when the ecologist is not in attendance, works must stop, they must not be handled and ACD Environmental Ltd contacted in the first instance.
- 3.6. Prior to the commencement of site clearance, a methodology for reptiles will be implemented, which is also relevant for great crested newts. The following methodology will be used:
- Reptile exclusion fencing will be established around the perimeter of the Application Site prior to the commencement of any construction works. This will ensure that reptiles and great crested newts (and other wildlife) will not be able to access the site during construction and therefore will not be harmed. The reptile exclusion fence will be approximately 100cm high and comprise Biodegradable bio-polymer material, with wooden stakes at 1.5m intervals. At least 15cm of the sheet will be buried in the ground to provide a suitable sub-surface barrier (**Figure 1**).

- The installation of this fencing should be carried out under the supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist.
- The state of the fencing will be inspected daily during the construction phase, and any breaches will be fixed immediately.

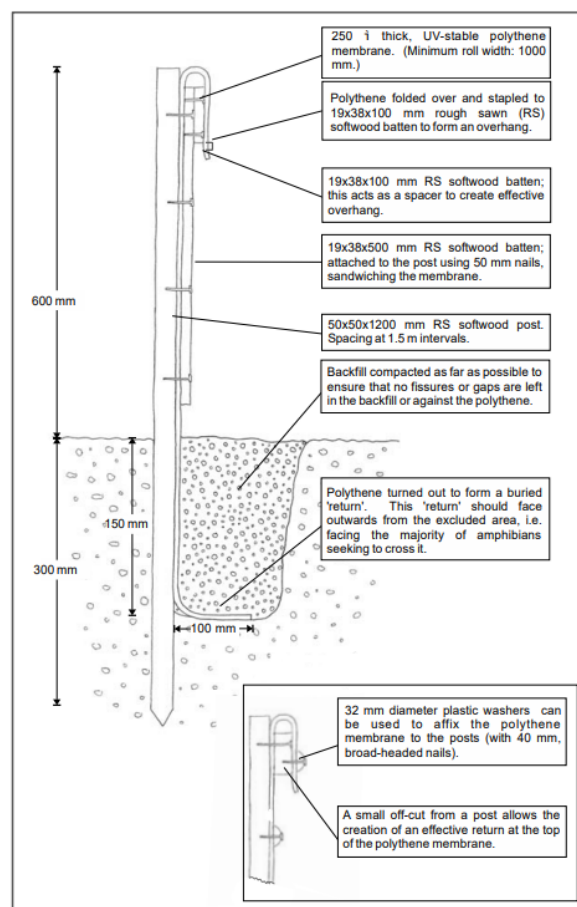


Figure 1: Reptile exclusion fencing specifications.

- As a precaution, any vegetated habitat to be cleared within the Application Site should be done sensitively using a phased approach whereby vegetation is first cut to 10-15cm in a directional manner, starting at the north of the Application Site and moving south. This area should then be left for 24 hours to allow any great crested newts (or other wildlife) that may be present to move out of the area into surrounding habitats. Vegetation can then be cut down to ground level, again using directional cutting. Following the cut to ground level a soil strip can take place as necessary. If hand tools are not used, appropriate machinery must be capable of being adjusted to the desired heights, to enable the first cut to be high.
- This must be carried out during suitable weather conditions when great crested newts are active between April to September inclusive and when the air temperature is between 9-18°C and will be undertaken under the supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist. If any great crested newts are found during this process, works should stop immediately and ACD Environmental Ltd or NatureSpace should be contacted.
- Throughout the construction phase, any grassland or overgrown scrub present within the construction zone should be maintained at a short height to prevent any great crested newts (or other wildlife) moving into the Application Site.

General mitigation measures

3.7. During the construction phase, the following general, good practice measures must be adopted to safeguard great crested newts and other wildlife that may be present as follows:

- Heras fencing will be installed around the site boundaries. This will be maintained throughout the construction phase and will be subject to daily checks by the contractors to ensure this is still in place and is not damaged or compromised.
- There will be appropriate fencing and signage to delineate clear boundaries of movement for vehicles/people and working/storage zones.
- Any excavations (e.g. trenches/pits) are to be covered when works are not taking place to ensure that they are not filled with water and prevent the potential for great crested newt (and other wildlife) to become trapped.

- Any excavations that must be left open overnight will be provided with a means of escape should great crested newts (and other wildlife) enter. This would simply be in the form of a roughened plank of wood placed in the excavation as a ramp to the surface. This is particularly important if the excavation fills with water.
- Any excavations would be inspected each morning to ensure no great crested newts (or other wildlife) have become trapped overnight.
- All temporarily exposed pipes must be capped overnight to prevent great crested newts (and other wildlife) gaining access and later becoming trapped.
- Mounds and piles of materials (e.g. bark mulch) would be kept to a minimum and any essential piles kept off the ground and subject to daily inspections.
- Machinery and building tools/materials must not be stored within or in close proximity to the site boundaries. Where possible, machinery and building tools/materials should be stored in containers.
- The storage of any chemicals within the construction site will be contained in such a way that they cannot be consumed or knocked over by any wildlife.
- The construction site must be left clean and tidy at the end of each working day and food and litter must not be left out overnight.

3.8. Arisings from the removal of diseased trees, including trees with ash dieback, will be safely removed from the Approved Development Site. However, other arisings can be used to create new log/brush piles along the edge of the strip of neutral grassland to be retained.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1. There are no ponds within the Application Site, and no amphibians have been found on-site. However, due to the presence of suitable terrestrial habitat on-site that is connected to ponds in the wider landscape, a precautionary approach is required as detailed within this report.
- 4.2. This Precautionary Works Methods Statement outlines the necessary mitigation measures to safeguard great crested newts and other wildlife during the construction phases of the proposed development within the Application Site.
- 4.3. By implementing the recommended measures, such as the installation of reptile exclusion fencing, phased vegetation clearance, and maintaining a safe working environment for wildlife, potential harm to great crested newts and other protected species will be effectively prevented.