

Benchmark

Benchmark Development Planning Ltd
Chartered Town Planners & Development Advisers

Ecology Evidence Summary Note 22/01/26

Application Proposal: Replace shed with double garage and hard and soft landscape.

- Not in a conservation area; no protected trees (TPO).
- Trees and Biodiversity: Within catchments for several protected ecological sites (River Test, Solent Maritime SAC, New Forest buffer, Mottisfont Bat SAC) – see Ecological and Nutrient Neutrality Evidence submitted.

Ahern Ecology have been advising about biodiversity at this property from the outset – and recently issued a report dated 21st January 2026 (**Appendix 1**):

- **The Ponds and GCN:** agreed the property is in an Amber Risk Area for GCN (see **Appendix 1**) and would score c. 0.53 on the test (below the threshold);
- Only scores of 0.6 or greater require an ecologist to undertake the EDNA Test between 15/04/26 and 30/06/26;
- Ahern Ecology have offered two scenarios to the Applicant: (i) wait for the results of the GCN surveys; or, (ii) if you submit planning applications now, you should include:
- Commitment to pay c. £2K to District Licence Scheme, if needed
- A Construction GCN Management Statement (draft prepared by Benchmark at **Appendix 2**).

Richard Greenwood BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

Director

APPENDIX 1

The Shed at Parkwater Farm, Cowesfield Green

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Survey Report



21st January 2026

Document Control

Document:	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
Project:	The Shed at Parkwater Farm PEA
Client:	Mr John Snow
Project number:	5815
Document reference:	5815.4
Date of issue:	21 st January 2026
Prepared by:	Daniel Ahern Ecology Ltd Home Farm House, Tidworth SP9 7BE Email: info@danielahernecology.co.uk Telephone: 01980 842709
Project manager:	Daniel Ahern CEnv MCIEEM FLS
Field team:	Ashleigh Cairns, BSc MRes
Report author:	Ashleigh Cairns BSc MRes

Copyright: Daniel Ahern Ecology Ltd.

This report is intended for the commissioning party only and should not be copied or reproduced in any way without prior written permission from Daniel Ahern Ecology Ltd.

This report has been prepared for the sole use of the client. Any third party referring to this report or relying on the information contained herein, does so entirely at their own risk.

Whilst every effort has been made to guarantee the accuracy of this report, it should be noted that living creatures are capable of migration and whilst protected species may not have been located during the survey duration, their presence may be found on site at a later date.

The views and opinions contained within the document are based on a reasonable timeframe between the completion of the survey and the commencement of any works. If there is any delay between the commencement of works that may conflict with timeframes laid out within this document or have the potential to allow the ingress of protected species, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted.

It is the duty of care of the landowner/developer to act responsibly and comply with current environmental legislation if protected species are suspected or found prior to work

Executive Summary

Purpose of the report

To provide a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the proposed development site, involving,

- Evaluation of its conservation status based on a desktop review that summarises information collated on protected species and nature conservation designations in the area.
- Assessment of habitat composition on site, derived from a UKHabitat 2.0 survey.
- Assessment of the likelihood of protected, or otherwise notable, species occurring on site.

Context of the development

The proposed householder planning application:

- Demolish existing shed and replace with two bay garage
- Reduce existing vegetation and build new driveway

Methods

The project requirement was to assess the existing ecological value of the site, identify potential ecological issues associated with the proposed development and make recommendations for general mitigation, compensation, enhancement and further surveys, as appropriate. A desk study and a UKHabitat 2.0 survey were carried out.

Key issues

The Site had MODERATE potential for nesting birds due to the suitable habitat adjacent to the Site for nesting, foraging and commuting.

The shed had NEGLIGIBLE bat roost potential and the overall Site had MODERATE foraging and commuting bat potential due to the suitable habitats on and adjacent to the Site.

There was MODERATE potential for reptiles and foraging and commuting badgers due to the suitable woodland and grassland habitats adjacent to the Site.

The Site also had MODERATE potential for amphibians due to the multiple ponds within 250m of the Site boundary and suitable commuting and foraging habitats. The Site is also within the AMBER great crested newt risk zone.

Further surveys required

A great crested newt eDNA survey is required for the pond within 250m of the site.

Conclusions

As the planning application is for a self-build this project is exempt from requiring a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment.

Declaration

I confirm that the information provided in this document is truthful and accurate at the time of completion.

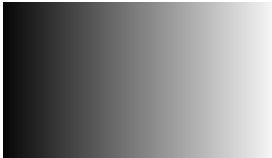
Project manager: Daniel Ahern CEnv MCIEEM FLS

Signature:



Lead ecologist & Report writer: Ashleigh Cairns BSc MRes

Signature:



Date: 21st January 2026

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

- 1.1.1. In July 2025, Daniel Ahern Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Mr John Snow to undertake an ecological appraisal of a shed and its grounds located within Parkwater Farm situated to the southwest of Cowesfield Green in Wiltshire. The purpose of the survey was to provide an assessment of the current ecological conditions and to evaluate the ecological constraints in order to inform development proposals.
- 1.1.2. The purpose of this report is to identify key ecological constraints, in order to inform the project planning such that significant ecological impacts are avoided or minimised. It also aims to highlight any further ecological surveys that may be required to inform any future Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), so that they can be appropriately designed. Finally, the report aims to provide the information required in order to develop appropriate mitigation or compensation measures.

1.2. Site description

- 1.2.1. The Shed at Parkwater Farm and its surrounding land, hereafter referred to as 'the Site', measures approximately 0.06 ha and is situated to the south of Romsey Road, which runs to the north of the site (approximate OS grid reference: SU 26018 23290), see Fig. 1 below.
- 1.2.2. The Site of proposed development at Parkwater Farm is comprised of the shed and surrounding grounds. The Site is a building with some developed land, modified grassland, broadleaved woodland and hedgerow.
- 1.2.3. The proposed developments and alterations to the site are as follows:
- Demolish existing shed and replace with garage
 - Reduce existing vegetation and extend existing driveway

Figure 1. Site location with the red line boundary.



2. Planning & Legislation

2.2. Legislation

The following legislation informed the survey approach and considerations.

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- The Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).
- Wild mammals (protection) Act 1996
- Protection of Badgers 1992
- Environment Act 2021
- European Habitats Directive

2.3. Planning policies

- 2.3.1. This report is prepared with reference to the National Planning Policy Framework 2024.

3. Methods

3.3. Desk study

- 3.3.1. The following publicly accessible websites were searched for relevant ecological information:
- <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>
 - <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1376> (summary of nature conservation legislation)
 - www.ukbap.org.uk (archived 2012)
 - www.gridreferencefinder.com for aerial photography
 - <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/magicmap.aspx>
- 3.3.2. Data relating to statutory & non-statutory sites and all protected species records within 1km of the red line boundary was requested from the Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC).

3.4. Field survey

- 3.4.1. A UKHab 2.0 habitat survey of the site was undertaken with reference to the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CIEEM, 2017).
- 3.4.2. The survey was conducted on the 10th October 2025 by Ashleigh Cairns.
- 3.4.3. The weather conditions were good with an average temperature of 14°C.
- 3.4.4. During the survey, dominant plant species were recorded, and habitats were classified according to their vegetation types, as identified in the UKHab 2.0 users handbook. Target notes (TN) were taken to denote species and habitats of conservation interest and to describe the vegetation in areas that were too small to map. Evidence or habitat suitable for any legally protected species was recorded, where appropriate.
- 3.4.5. The presence of any Category 9 invasive non-native plant species was recorded.
- 3.4.6. The results are presented in the standard format with habitat descriptions and a UK Hab 2.0 map (see Figure 3).
- 3.4.7. The Site was inspected for direct evidence and habitat suitability for protected and notable species. Particular attention was given to those species listed under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). This included searching for signs of badger activity and habitats suitable for amphibians, dormice, bats and reptiles.
- 3.4.8. In the event that habitats suitable for protected species are identified, it may be necessary to undertake further seasonal surveys to confirm

presence/absence. In the event that no suitable habitats or features are identified, a UK Hab 2.0 survey is sufficient to determine the potential impacts associated with a proposed development.

3.5. Limitations

- 3.5.1. The data provided by the online resources were not exhaustive. It is possible that species and habitats not found in the data search occur within the vicinity of the proposed development site.
- 3.5.2. The details within this report will remain valid for a period of 12 months; beyond that date it is advised that a review of ecological conditions is undertaken.

4. Baseline Ecological conditions

4.3. Desk study

- 4.3.1. The WSBRC data search confirmed that there were three statutory wildlife sites recorded within 1km of the Site, the details of which are in Table 1 and Figure 2 below.

Table 1. The details of the statutory wildlife sites within 1km of the Site.

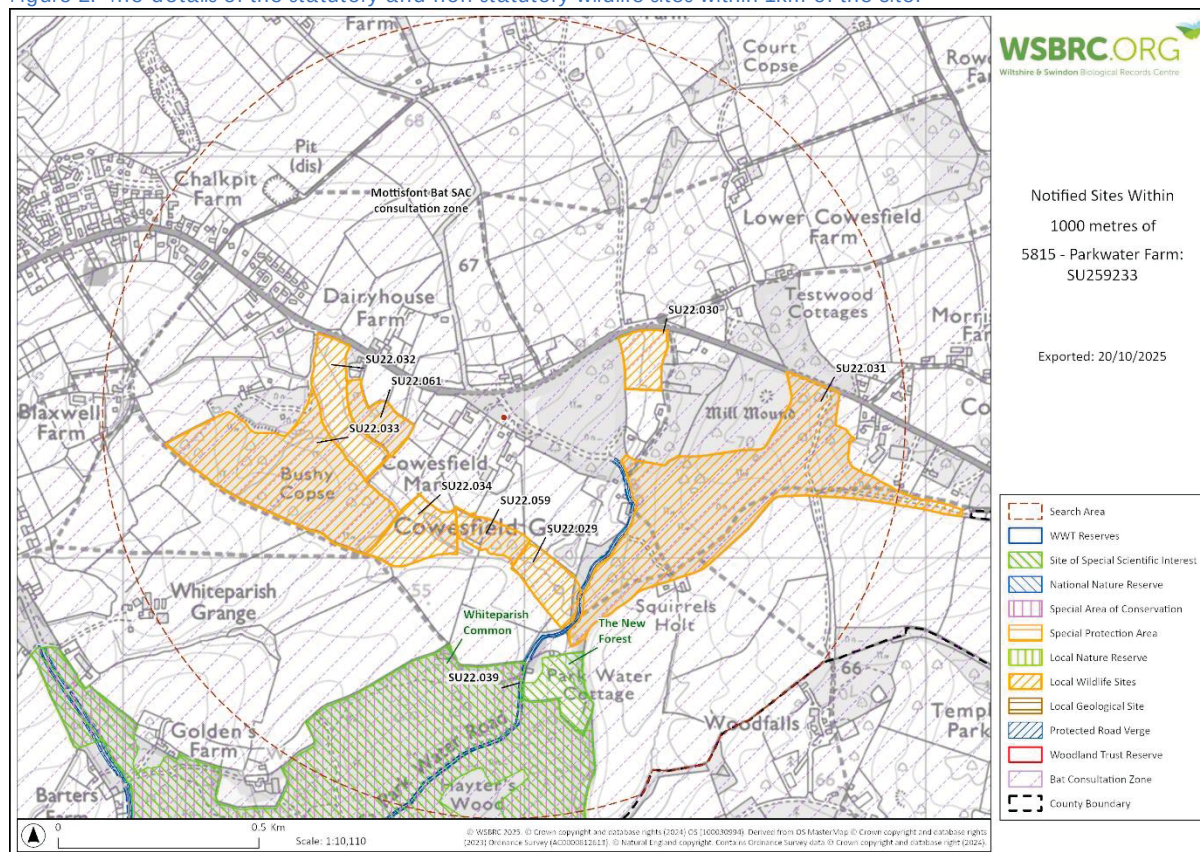
Designation	Name	Area (ha)
SSSI	Whiteparish Common	63.95
SSSI	The New Forest	28924.5
SAC	The New Forest	29254.11

- 4.3.2. The WSBRC data search confirmed that there were seven non-statutory wildlife sites recorded within 1km of the Site, the details of which are in Table 2 and Figure 2 below.

Table 2. The details of the non-statutory wildlife sites within 1km of the Site.

Designation	Name	Area (ha)
LWS	Aldermoor Copse, Landford	1.28
LWS	Frogmore Meadow	1.47
LWS	Shortlands Row	1.48
LWS	Cowesfield Manor Meadow	1.84
LWS	Cowesfield Manor Meadow West	2.41
LWS	Rosemead Farm Meadow	2.82
LWS	Bushy Copse	10.38
LWS	Cowesfield Wood	16.92

Figure 2. The details of the statutory and non-statutory wildlife sites within 1km of the Site.



4.3.3. No bat EPSLs have been granted within 1km of the Site.

4.3.4. Protected species records from 1955-2025 for the following taxa recorded within 1 km of the Site are set out in Table 3, below.

Table 3. Protected species records within 1km of the Site.

Species name	Number of records
Birds	
cuckoo	1
crossbill	10
firecrest	18
golden plover	34
hen harrier	7
lapwing	209
lesser spotted woodpecker	3
little egret	1
merlin	2
nightingale	1
osprey	1
red kite	1
redwing	20
spotted flycatcher	3
turtle dove	1
whimbrel	12

wood warbler	1
yellowhammer	33
Mammals	
badger	5
barbastelle	1
brown long-eared bat	51
hazel dormouse	1
pipistrelle bat species	2
red squirrel	1
soprano pipistrelle	1
Reptiles	
adder	5
common lizard	1
grass snake	1
slow worm	1

4.2. Site survey

4.2.1. Habitat type and areas recorded on and adjacent to the Site are set out in Table 4, below.

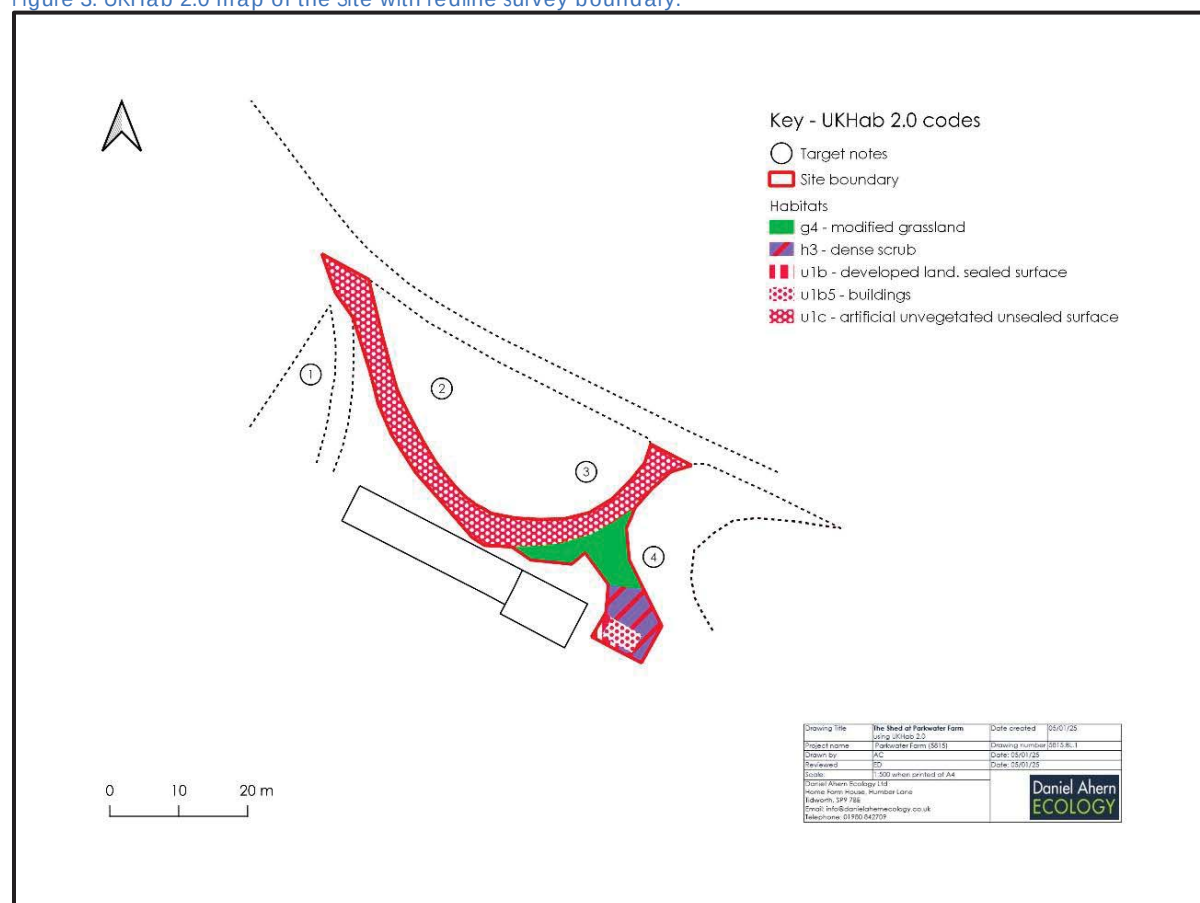
4.2.2. A UKHab 2.0 map of the site is set out in Figure 3 below.

Table 4. UKHab 2.0 types recorded on or adjacent to the Site.

UKHabitat type	Species recorded	Percentage present
g4 – modified grassland	Perennial Rye-grass - <i>Lolium perenne</i>	90%
	White clover - <i>Trifolium repens</i>	10%
h3h – mixed scrub	Beech – <i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	40%
	Rhododendron sp	30%
	Laurel sp	20%
	Ornamental sp	10%
u1b – developed land, sealed surface	-	-
u1b5 – buildings	-	-
u1c – artificial unvegetated unsealed surface	-	-
Target notes: 1 – cluster of trees (Sycamore & Yew) 2 & 3 – cluster of three Silver Birch trees 4 – Priority Deciduous Woodland (Oak, Yew & Ash dominant)		

4.2.3. No category 9 invasive plants were recorded within the survey area.

Figure 3. UKHab 2.0 map of the Site with redline survey boundary.



4.2.4. Table 5 contains details of the potential for protected species and groups to be present.

Table 5. Protected species potential on Site.

Species (group)	Habitat availability	Records	Impact assessment
Amphibians	MODERATE	no	Multiple ponds within 250m of the Site boundary across an open field, but adjacent to woodland which they may use to commute or forage. Site is within the AMBER great crested newt risk zone. HSI score of the closest pond within 250m was 0.53 – below average (see appendix 2). MODERATE potential for amphibians in their terrestrial phase to pass through Site.
Badgers	MODERATE	yes	No evidence recorded on or within 30m of the Site. Site is adjacent to priority habitat deciduous woodland which is suitable for badger, therefore there is MODERATE potential for badger to pass through Site.
Bats	MODERATE foraging and commuting LOW roosting	barbastelle, brown long-eared, pipistrelle	MODERATE foraging and commuting potential in the suitable habitats on and adjacent to the Site along scrub and woodland habitats.

		species and soprano pipistrelle	NEGLIGIBLE roosting potential in the shed.
Birds	MODERATE	yes, see table 3	Suitable habitat adjacent to the Site in priority habitat deciduous woodland which birds may use for foraging, commuting and nesting. Suitable habitats on Site in scrub for nesting.
Dormice	LOW	no	No suitable habitat recorded on Site. Suitable priority habitat deciduous woodland adjacent to the Site which connects to the wider community. However, there is LOW potential for this woodland to be impacted by the proposed development.
Otter	NEGLIGIBLE	no	No suitable habitat recorded on Site.
Reptiles	MODERATE	adder, common lizard, grass snake and slow worm	Suitable habitats in vegetation and log piles on Site and in adjacent priority habitat deciduous woodland. MODERATE potential for reptiles to pass through Site.
Water vole	NEGLIGIBLE	no	No suitable habitat recorded on Site.

5. Ecological constraints and opportunities

5.3. Designated nature conservation sites

- 5.3.1. The WSBRC data search confirmed that there were three statutory and eight non-statutory wildlife sites recorded within 1km of the Site. The nearest non-statutory wildlife site, Aldermoor Copse, Landford, is located approximately 150m to the north of the Site boundary.
- 5.3.2. It is considered highly unlikely that the proposed development will have a significant negative impact to the conservation status of any of the statutory or non-statutory wildlife sites present within 1km of the Site.

5.4. Habitats

- 5.4.1. The proposed development of the Site will result in the modification and loss of some of the existing homogenous habitats on Site, principally areas of modified grassland, scrub, developed land and buildings. These habitats are widespread in the area, as such the impact is assessed to be restricted to Site level.
- 5.4.2. During the construction phase, mitigation measures should be taken to reduce root damage and pollution to the adjacent priority deciduous woodland. These measures include but are not limited to;
- Dust suppression measures
 - Protective fencing 2m high
 - Immediate containment procedures for spillages
 - Ecological clerk of works (ECoW) for sensitive operations

5.5. Fauna

- 5.5.1. The shed was assessed to have NEGLIGIBLE bat roost potential and the Site had MODERATE commuting and foraging potential for bats due to the suitable habitat on and adjacent to the Site.
- 5.5.2. There should be no additional external lighting to ensure that there is no change to the ambient night time light levels as a result of the proposed development.
- 5.5.3. There was MODERATE potential for nesting birds in the scrub and adjacent woodland to the Site. Care should be taken when removing vegetation and should happen outside of bird nesting season (October-February). Should it become necessary to remove vegetation within bird nesting season, an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) is required and a staged process to vegetation removal should be employed.
- 5.5.4. There was MODERATE potential for amphibians in their terrestrial phase due to the number of ponds within 250m of the proposed development. The closest pond was across an open field from the Site boundary, but adjacent to the woodland which provided suitable commuting habitat. A HSI assessment was completed for this pond which returned a score of 0.53 – below average (see appendix 2) and the Site was within the AMBER great crested newt risk zone.
- 5.5.5. A great crested newt eDNA survey is advised for the pond on the wider site to determine the presence or likely absence of great crested newt.
- 5.5.6. There was MODERATE potential for reptiles due to previous records, log piles and scrub on site and the suitable habitats adjacent to the Site within the woodland.
- 5.5.7. The Site had MODERATE potential for badger to pass through Site due to the suitable foraging and commuting habitats on and adjacent to the Site. There were also a number of records of badger within 1km of the Site boundary.
- 5.5.8. Any ground excavation works should be fenced off at the end of the work day with HERRIS fencing to prevent access to terrestrial mammals. Any excavation works should include a ramp to be installed as an exit route for any animals that may fall in.
- 5.5.9. If any protected species are found during construction, works should stop immediately and a suitably qualified ecologist should be contacted.

5.6. Requirements

5.6.1. Habitat enhancement measures:

- One Harlech bat box - https://www.birdfood.co.uk/harlech-woodstone-bat-box-black?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIwIbT2pqD_gIVyZ7tCh1AoAVbEAAYAiAAEgLxGfD_BwE. Installed at a height of at least 3m above the ground on a west facing tree or building elevation.
- One Woodstone bird box - https://www.birdfood.co.uk/national-trust-woodstone-32mm-nest-box-green?utm_source=google_shopping&gclid=EAIaIQobChMI-ef86JqD_gIVjdPtCh21_QonEAQYASABEgLZcPD_BwE. Installed at a height of at least 3m above the ground on a west facing tree or building elevation.
- One insect block - https://www.birdfood.co.uk/woodstone-insect-block-grey?utm_source=google_shopping&gclid=EAIaIQobChMIrZm8-ZqD_gIVEmHmCh2g5g_FEAQYAiABEgJu4fD_BwE. Installed at a height of 1.5m above the ground on a south facing tree or building elevation.

6. References

- CIEEM (2017) *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*; CIEEM
- Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (4th edn.) The Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- English Nature (now Natural England) (2002) *Badgers and Development*; English Nature, Peterborough, UK
- Forestry Commission (2005) *Managing Woodland Open Space for Wildlife*
- Gent, T. & Gibson, S. (2003) *Herpetofauna Workers' Manual*; JNCC, Peterborough
- Gunnell, K., et al (2010) *Designing for Biodiversity: A technical guide for new and existing buildings*. (2nd edn). RIBA.
- Harris, S., Cresswell, P. & Jeffries, D. (1989) *Surveying Badgers – An occasional publication of the mammal society – No. 9*. Mammal Society, London
- HMSO (1981) *The Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended)*; London
- HMSO (1992) *The Protection of Badgers Act*; London
- HMSO (1994) *Biodiversity: The UK Action Plan*; London
- HMSO (2000) *The Countryside and Rights of Way Act*; London
- HMSO (2010) *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (as amended)*; London
- Mitchell-Jones, A. J. (ed.) (2004) *Bat Workers' Manual* (3rd edn). JNCC.
- Rose, F. (1981) *The Wild Flower Key*; Frederick Warne
- Rose, F. (1989) *Colour Identification Guide to the Grasses, Sedges, Rushes and Ferns of the British Isles and North Western Europe*; Viking
- UKHab Ltd (2023) *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0* (<https://www.ukhab.org/>)

7. Appendices

APPENDIX 1 – Site photographs

Photo 1 – south elevation of the shed



Photo 2 – north elevation of shed with mixed scrub



Photo 3 – east elevation of shed with Laurel sp



Photo 4 – beech hedge and broadleaved woodland to the northeast of shed



(application shown in purple)

Photo 5 – existing driveway with modified grassland facing woodland



(application shown in purple)

Photo 6 – internal view of shed showing no PRF's



APPENDIX 2 – Great crested newt HSI score

Habitat Suitability Index Survey

An assessment of the habitat potential within the Site, were completed following the Amphibian & Reptile Group (ARG) methodology, ARG UK Advice Note 5 - Great Crested Newt Habitat Suitability Index, 2010.

Based on the score achieved a pond is awarded one of the following assessment criteria. Further presence/absence surveys are recommended for all ponds achieving a HSI score of 0.60 – Average or higher.

Table 6: HSI score & pond suitability.

HSI Score	Pond Suitability
< 0.50	Poor
0.50 - 0.59	Below average
0.60 - 0.69	Average
0.70 - 0.79	Good
> 0.80	Excellent

Table 7: Parkland Farm pond HSI scores

	Pond Name	<i>Parkwater Farm Pond</i>
	Grid Ref	<i>SU 26105 23014</i>
SI No	SI Description	<i>SI Value</i>
1	Geographic location	1
2	Pond area	0.8
3	Pond permanence	1
4	Water quality	0.67
5	Shade	1
6	Water fowl effect	0.67
7	Fish presence	0.01
8	Pond Density	1
9	Terrestrial habitat	1
10	Macrophyte cover	0.5
HSI Score		<i>0.53 – Below Average</i>

Appendix 3 – Legislation

Legislation and Policy

Great Crested Newts

Great crested newts (gcn) *Triturus cristatus* are listed under Schedule 5 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and are afforded protection under Section 9(1), Section 9(4)(b&c) and Section 9(5) of the Act. Under this legislation, a person is guilty of an offence if he intentionally or recklessly:

- Kills or injures a gcn;
- Disturbs any gcn while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; or
- Obstructs access to any structure or place which any gcn uses for shelter or protection.

GCN are afforded additional protection through their inclusion on Schedule 2 of The Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations 2010 (as amended). Under Part 3 of this legislation, a person is guilty of an offence if he:

- Deliberately captures, injures or kills a gcn;
- Deliberately disturbs a gcn;
- Deliberately takes or destroys the eggs of a gcn; or
- Damages or destroys a gcn breeding site or resting place.

This legislation covers all life stages and includes both aquatic and terrestrial habitats.

Disturbance of animals includes in particular any disturbance which is likely to impair their ability to survive, breed or reproduce, rear or nurture their young, migrate or hibernate. It also includes any disturbance likely to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species.

APPENDIX 2

Site: Parkwater Farm, Cowesfield Green, Wiltshire, England
Nearest Medium-Potential Ponds: Approximately 250 metres from site boundary

1. Introduction

This Construction Great Crested Newt (GCN) Management Statement (the “Statement”) has been prepared to support planned development activities at the above-referenced site in Wiltshire. The purpose of this Statement is to outline the measures that will be implemented to avoid adverse impacts on Great Crested Newts (*Triturus cristatus*) and their habitats during pre-construction and construction works. The approach reflects national and local biodiversity policy requirements, including the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), and Natural England standing advice for Great Crested Newts.

Great Crested Newt is a protected species under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Habitats Regulations. Any impacts on GCN or their habitats during works must be avoided or appropriately mitigated to ensure compliance with legislation.

2. Context and Survey Findings

Preliminary ecological assessment and desk study information indicate the presence of ponds with **limited potential to support Great Crested Newts** located approximately **250 metres** from the proposed development area. Habitats within the development footprint include semi-improved grassland, scattered scrub, and limited standing water features.

Given the proximity of limited-potential ponds, because the Applicant is a keen conservationist, he has agreed to be open to there being GCN, in the terrestrial habitats near the site, even though **there is no binding duty to pause this application** – and complete the GCN survey in the Spring of 2026. Even if planning permission is granted before the Spring of 2026, the scheme will not be implemented until later in 2026/7. Thus, the timings align.

3. Legislative and Policy Requirements

Great Crested Newts and their breeding sites and resting places are protected. It is an offence to:

- Deliberately capture, injure, kill or disturb GCN;
- Damage or destroy a site used for shelter or breeding;

- Obstruct access to resting places.

Appropriate avoidance, mitigation and, if necessary, licensing must be implemented to ensure legal compliance.

4. Risk Avoidance and Mitigation Measures

To avoid harm to GCN and to ensure compliance with legislation, the following measures will be implemented:

4.1 Pre-Construction Measures

- 1. Detailed Ecological Survey**

Even though not essential, the Applicant will commission licensed Great Crested Newt surveys (eDNA and/or presence/absence and population class surveys) on his pond(s) within 250 metres to confirm presence/absence and inform mitigation. Surveys will follow best practice guidance and be undertaken during appropriate seasonal windows (March–June for eDNA; March–June and September for presence/absence).

- 2. Appointment of Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW)**

A suitably qualified ECoW will oversee implementation of all ecological mitigation and monitoring on site, if needed.

- 3. Toolbox Talks**

All site operatives will receive briefings on Great Crested Newt ecology, legal protection, and procedures to follow if newts are encountered.

4.2 Construction-Phase Measures

- 1. Creation of Exclusion Fencing**

Prior to ground-disturbing activities, if needed, the applicant will install GCN exclusion fencing around the works area to prevent newts entering active construction zones. Fencing will be installed under ECoW supervision and maintained throughout works.

- 2. Supervised Vegetation and Habitat Clearance**

Removal of terrestrial habitats (e.g., scrub, grassland) within the development footprint will be conducted under ecological supervision where risk is identified. If necessary, vegetation clearance should avoid the core GCN activity period (March–June).

- 3. Habitat Pile and Material Management**

Storage of materials, debris or spoil will be minimised or kept in raised, sealed containers to avoid creating refuge opportunities for newts.

- 4. Accidental Discovery Protocol**

Should a newt be encountered during works, all activities in the immediate vicinity will cease, and the ECoW will implement appropriate procedures, including relocation to suitable habitat if required.

5. Post-Construction Habitat Provision

Where feasible, the design will incorporate enhancements for GCN and wider biodiversity, which may include:

- Native planting and habitat corridors linking retained semi-natural habitats;
 - Creation of refugia (e.g., log piles, hibernacula) in retained green spaces;
 - Sensitive lighting design to avoid illuminating retained habitat.
-

6. Monitoring and Reporting

The ECoW will maintain records of compliance with this Statement and provide a completion report summarising implementation of measures and any adaptive responses taken in the event of GCN encounters.

7. Conclusion

Implementation of the measures outlined in this GCN Management Statement will minimise risk to Great Crested Newts during construction and ensure compliance with relevant legislation and planning policy. The measures are designed to be proportionate to the LOW risk profile of the site given the proximity of low-potential ponds at approximately 250 metres. This approach is sensitive and aimed at delivering on the applicant's strong desire to deliver a scheme that minimises harm to nature.
