

Date: 30 January 2026
Application: 260049



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

WBC Ecology Newts

Development Management &
Compliance

P.O. Box 157

Shute End, Wokingham

Berkshire, RG40 1BN

Tel: (0118) 974 6000

Minicom No: (0118) 974 6991

Dear WBC Ecology Newts,

Full Planning Approval Consultation

Application Number: 260049

Applicant: Mr D Phillips

Site Address: Pound Lane Cottage, Pound Lane, Hurst, RG10 0RS

Parish: St. Nicholas, Hurst

Grid Reference: Easting - 480967, Northing - 172236

Type of Development: Other Change of Use

Proposal: Full application for the proposed change of use of land to mixed used comprising of agriculture (keeping of goats) and storage of building materials together with the erection of 2no. storage buildings.

Case Officer: Kieran Neumann

Development Management has received the above application, and we require your comments on the proposal using the recommended memorandum below. The documents associated with this are available to view in NEC DM using the application number 260049. Alternatively, public documents are available to view on the Council's planning application search page: [Wokingham Borough Council Online Planning](#).

Please index your response into NEC DM against the application. If you are recommending conditions, you should give a reason with reference to relevant policies. A list of standard conditions can be requested from the case officer.

Your observations are required in respect of this application by **20 February 2026**.

Yours sincerely,
Development Management & Compliance

MEMORANDUM

From:	Berkshire District Licensing Officer		
Service	WBC Ecology Newts	App No:	260049
Address:	Pound Lane Cottage, Pound Lane, Hurst, RG10 0RS.		
Proposal:	Full application for the proposed change of use of land to mixed used comprising of agriculture (keeping of goats) and storage of building materials together with the erection of 2no. storage buildings.		
Type of Development:	Other Change of Use		
Site Visit Made:	No		

Summary Of Recommendations

- ☐ No comment
- ☐ No objection
- ☒ No objection subject to conditions (and reasons) **stated below**
- ☐ Request further information before determination as **stated below**
- ☐ Objection due to the reason(s) **stated below**

Comments On Proposal

Summary

- The development falls within the red impact 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 red impact zone, there is highly suitable habitat and a high likelihood of great crested newt presence.
- There are 3 ponds within 250m of the development proposal. The closest of these is 50m west of the site boundary.

Ecological Information

The applicant has provided an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA): 'Poundlane Cottage, Pound Lane, Hurst Reading, RG10 0RS', Darwin Ecology Ltd., December 2025. The assessment identified hedgerows and bramble scrub that would provide foraging, resting and commuting opportunities for amphibians, as well as multiple areas of refuge and hibernacula in the form of fallen deadwood, timber and rubble piles, and a derelict building. The assessment concludes:

"Due to this high level of connectivity, and the presence of some suitable opportunities for amphibians on site, it is anticipated that individual amphibians may

access and utilise the site on occasion. Due to the sparse nature of the ruderal vegetation, it is considered likely that amphibian presence on site is predominantly restricted to the boundary habitats.”

Conclusion

Section 6.38. of the EclA contains an avoidance and mitigation strategy that should be used to inform all works on site. These measures suitably mitigate against potential impacts, employing a precautionary approach and reducing the suitability of the site for GCN. As such, it would be recommended that the measures within section 6.38. of the report as secured by condition.

However, due to the suitable habitat on site, the proximity of the development to 3 ponds, and its position in a red impact risk zone, the following informative is included:

The applicant is reminded that, under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is an offence to (amongst other things): deliberately capture, disturb, injure or kill great crested newts; damage or destroy a breeding or resting place; deliberately obstruct access to a resting or sheltering place. Planning approval for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under these acts. Should great crested newts be found at any stages of the development works, then all works should cease, and Natural England should be contacted for advice.

Alternatively, should the applicant wish to pursue a risk-free approach, they may choose to join Wokingham Borough Council’s district licensing scheme (administered by NatureSpace Partnership). Under Wokingham Borough Council’s district licence, development works that may cause impacts upon GCN can be authorised as part of the planning process.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

Condition: The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in strict accordance with the avoidance and mitigation measures detailed in section 6.38. of the Ecological Impact Assessment prepared by Darwin Ecology Ltd. (2025).

Reason: To ensure the protection of Great Crested Newts and their habitat during the construction phase, in accordance with policy CP7 of the Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2010, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Date:	24/02/2026	Signed:	NatureSpace
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