

Date: 30 January 2026
Application: 260049



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

WBC Ecology Newts

Development Management &
Compliance

P.O. Box 157

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Berkshire, RG40 1BN

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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:	Molly Thompson 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. If these ponds form a connected cluster, then there may be great crested newt movement across the site.
- Images provided in the arboriculture report ('Land at Pound Lane', Duckworths Arboriculture Ltd., December 2025) display the site supporting tall ruderal vegetation, scrub, and piles of gravel and debris, which may facilitate newts in their terrestrial phase.

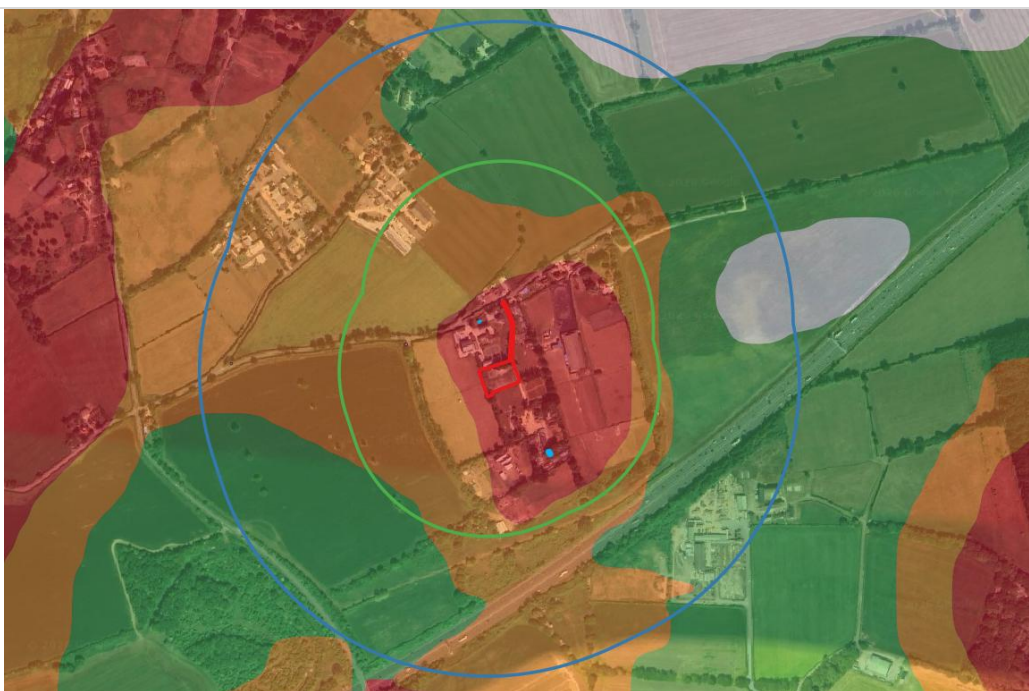


Figure above: Outline of the site (red) in the context of the surrounding landscape, including the Impact Risk Zones for GCN. Ponds are shown in light blue. A 250m buffer is shown around the site in green and a 500m buffer in blue. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government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

Ecological Information:

The applicant has not provided any ecological information for great crested newts on the site. Therefore, it cannot be determined if there is a likely impact.

Conclusion:

We are not satisfied that the applicant has adequately demonstrated that there will be no impact to great crested newts (GCN) and/or their habitat as a result of the development being approved.

Three ponds are present surrounding the site. The closest of these is 50m west of the site boundary, with one 130m northwest and another 130m south. While much of the land surrounding these ponds is managed farmland which is unsuitable for the species, hedgerows between these water features and the site do provide some connectivity, with the potential unmanaged nature of the site offering a refuge if GCN are present.

Further information in the form of an ecological assessment is recommended, to establish whether the habitat on would be suitable for supporting GCN.

Given the reasons described above, one of the following options is required to be undertaken **prior to determination** of the application:

1. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) is required to establish the ecological value of the site and the sites potential to support protected or priority habitats and species, including use of standard habitat classification techniques such as Phase 1 Habitat Survey (JNCC, 2010).

A PEA must be completed by a suitably qualified ecologist and reported in accordance with CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing (CIEEM, 2017), the British Standard BS42020:2013 Biodiversity — Code of practice for planning and development, and the Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CIEEM, 2017). Please note that the PEA is not time-constrained but if further surveys are recommended, these may be restricted to optimum periods throughout the year dependent upon the target habitat and/or species.

Dependent on the outcome of the PEA, further surveys to rule out the possibility of GCN on the site in the form of eDNA survey may be necessary.

N.B. All survey reports must be submitted prior to determination if not already available.

Alternatively, if the applicant would not like to undertake survey work, then a district licence may be acquired.

2. The District Licence scheme (administered by the NatureSpace Partnership) should be applied for. Under the Wokingham Borough Council district licence, development works that may cause impacts upon GCN can be authorised as part of the planning process.

N.B. The applicant is required to submit a NatureSpace Report or Certificate prior to determination if this option is pursued.

Date:	18/02/2026	Signed:	NatureSpace
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