

Date: 20 May 2026
Application: 260684



**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: 260684

Applicant: Mr Neil Shields

Site Address: Longmoor Lodge, Park Lane, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 4PT

Parish: Finchampstead

Grid Reference: Easting - 477949, Northing - 165317

Type of Development: Other Householder

Proposal: Full application for the proposed erection of 1no. detached outbuilding, to include solar panels (Retrospective).

Case Officer: Claire Moore

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 260684. 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 **11 June 2026**.

Yours sincerely,
Development Management & Compliance

MEMORANDUM

From:	Berkshire District Licensing Officer
Service	WBC Ecology Newts
App No:	260684
Address:	Longmoor Lodge, Park Lane, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 4PT.
Proposal:	Full application for the proposed erection of 1no. detached outbuilding, to include solar panels (Retrospective).
Type of Development:	Other Householder
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

Overview

The fully retrospective nature of this application with works completed on 09/02/2026 means that the district licence is not applicable. However, any future planning applications for this site will need to provide up to date information to show that great crested newts (GCN) have been accounted for.

Summary

- The development falls within the amber 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 amber impact zone, there is suitable habitat and a high likelihood of great crested newt presence.
- There are 4 ponds within 250m of the development proposal. A further 6 ponds are within 500m of the development. Please be aware that not all ponds are displayed in the image below.
- There are records of GCN within 250m of the site boundary.
- Suitable habitat for GCN is present on site.
- There are no barriers that would inhibit GCN movement in the immediate or wider landscape.
- The creation of a wildlife pond on site will increase the sites potential for GCN and may be used as breeding habitat.

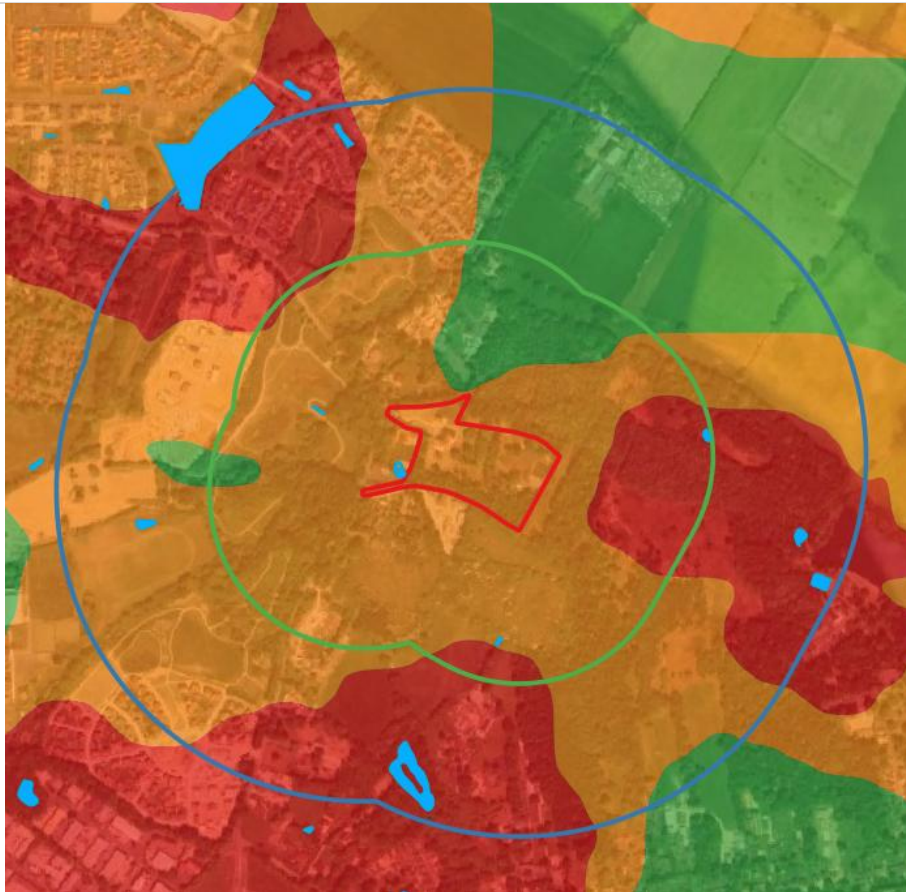


Figure above: Outline of the site (red) in the context of the surrounding landscape, including the Impact Risk Zones for GCN. Ponds are shown in light blue. A 250m buffer is shown around the site in green and a 500m buffer in blue. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government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

Ecological Information

The applicant has provided ecological information: Great Crested Newt Impact Statement, 'LAND AT LONGMOOR LODGE, PARK LANE, FINCHAMPSTEAD, WOKINGHAM, RG40 4PT', Phillips Ecology, April 2026.

Habitat on site is described a managed grassland with a high degree of landscaping. It is assumed that the habitat in the developed area was a continuation of this habitat, however, it cannot be confirmed with the indication from aerial imagery (Google Earth, 2022) showing an area of potentially rougher grassland and scattered trees. Areas of highly suitable habitat are present adjacent to the site in the form of woodland with deadwood, providing refugia for amphibians. It was concluded:

- 'The site supports terrestrial habitat for GCN, with woodland and rough wet grassland adjacent to the application area. It is therefore possible that suitable GCN terrestrial habitat was present.'

Conclusion

Records from within 250m of the site show that GCN are present locally. The pond network and highly connected habitat surrounding the site means that the potential for a GCN metapopulation cannot be ruled out. It is highly likely that individuals of the species are present on site when moving between their aquatic and terrestrial habitats, or when dispersing from their breeding ponds.

The creation of a new pond on site increases the suitability of the area for GCN and may be used as a breeding pond. Similarly, the meadow planting and hedgerow installation surrounding the installed solar panels will increase GCN movement and foraging opportunities.

Any future planning applications for this site will need to provide up to date information to show that great crested newts have been accounted for and may be required to join the District Licence.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

Please use this section to detail any conditions that are required to make this development acceptable in planning terms. All conditions should be accompanied by reasons.

Date:	10/06/2026	Signed:	NatureSpace
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