

**Ecological
Assessment**
Litcham Road



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PREPARED FOR CLIENT: Bee Developments Norwich

SITE ADDRESS: Litcham Road, Mileham Norfolk

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Applicant	Bee Developments Norwich
Site Address	Litcham Road, Mileham, Norfolk
Grid reference	TF 91098 19092
Our Reference	J3896
Report Revision	V1

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1. Executive Summary

Parker Planning Services have been instructed by Bee Developments Norwich to produce an Ecological Assessment of the land at Litcham Road, Mileham, Norfolk, in relation to an application for planning.

The survey found the habitats on the site to consist of modified grassland and arable land, bordered by dykes. The habitats are considered to be of low ecological value. The removal of modified grassland due to the proposals will, in the absence of further mitigation, result in a negative ecological impact. It is recommended that this is compensated by the incorporation of further planting into the proposals and enhancement of arable habitat within the site boundary.

Any artificial lighting incorporated into the proposals may impact upon bats and other nocturnal wildlife. It is recommended either that the use of artificial lighting is avoided or that any artificial lighting is designed to minimise impacts to wildlife.

Hedgehogs (*Erinaceous europaeus*) have been identified within the surrounding area and in the absence of mitigation the development may sever terrestrial connectivity of this species. It is recommended that proposed properties are either delineated by hedgerows, or if fences to be used hedgehog access holes should be installed at the base of fence panels.

There are two ponds within 250m of the site, one with confirmed presence and one with confirmed absence of great crested newts. Despite the confirmed presence of the proposals, the distance of the site from the pond and the scale of the proposals means that the chances of an offence being committed are highly unlikely. As a precautionary measure, it is recommended that works follow a method statement to avoid impacts to great crested newts and other amphibians.

2. Introduction

2.1. Instruction

Parker Planning Services have been instructed by Bee Developments Norwich to produce an Ecological Assessment of the land at Litcham Road, Mileham, Norfolk (hereafter referred to as 'the site').

2.2. Aims and Objectives

The purpose of the report is to identify the habitat types on the site, along with the presence or absence of any protected or notable species. The impacts of the proposed development are assessed, and recommendations are made regarding mitigation, compensation and ecological enhancement.

2.3. Site Details

The site consists of an area of agricultural land adjacent to Litcham Road (B1145). The site is bordered by Litcham Road to the north, a residential property to the east and agricultural land to the south and west. There are dykes adjacent to the north and west boundaries.

2.4. Development Proposals

The development proposals are to construct six residential properties on the site.

2.5. Legislation

A summary of relevant legislation and policy can be viewed in *Appendix 5: Legislation and Policy*.

2.6. Qualifications of the Author

David Watts is a suitably qualified ecologist who is a full member of CIEEM, holds a BSc (Hons) Ecology, a PGCert Biological Recording, and holds Natural England class licences to survey bats, great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) and barn owls (*Tyto alba*).

3. Methods

3.1. Desk-Based Study

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' (DEFRA) Magic Maps and Natural England websites were consulted as to any land-based designations and priority habitats within a 2km radius of the site.

Aerial imagery was assessed using OS maps and Google Earth Pro to give an appraisal of the surrounding land use.

A consultation was undertaken with the local biological record centre, Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service (NBIS).

3.2. Survey Timing

The site survey was carried out in suitable weather conditions by David Watts on 19th April 2023.

3.3. Habitat Survey Methods

The study area was surveyed in accordance with UK Habitat Classification (UKHab, 2018) guidelines. Habitat types were assigned a primary code to a hierarchical level of at least two, and secondary codes to further clarify the habitat.

Habitats and species present on or adjacent to the site were assessed using CIEEM's (2018) guidelines. Ecological features were classed as being of either international, national, regional, district, local or low importance (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 Importance of ecological features

Value of feature	Key examples
International	Internationally designated sites (e.g. SPA, SAC); internationally significant habitat listed in Annexe 1 of the Habitats Directive; a regularly occurring globally threatened species
National	A nationally designated site (SSSI, NNR, LNR), a regularly occurring significant number/population of a nationally important species; a feature identified as being of critical importance.
Regional/County	Viable areas of key habitat identified in the regional or county BAP; a regularly occurring significant population/number of any species important at regional/county level; sites of conservation importance which exceed the district selection.
District	Areas of habitat identified in District/City/Borough BAP; sites/features which are scarce within the District/City/Borough; a regularly occurring significant population/number of any species important at District/City/Borough level.
Local	Areas identified in a Local BAP; sites/features which are scarce in the locality or which are considered to enrich the habitat resource within the local context (e.g. species-rich hedgerows); any populations, species or habitats of local importance.
Low	Habitats of moderate to low diversity which support a range of locally and nationally common species, the loss of which can be easily mitigated.

3.4. Protected and Notable Species

A survey of the site was undertaken for signs of and suitable habitat for any protected and notable species.

Buildings and trees were assessed for their potential for roosting bats using methods prescribed by the Bat Conservation Trust (Collins, 2016). A walkover inspection was made for any other notable mammal species, including badgers (*Meles meles*), otters (*Lutra lutra*) and water voles (*Arvicola amphibius*).

The site was assessed for its suitability for reptiles and amphibians. Any ponds within 250m of the site were identified through an assessment of Ordnance Survey maps and aerial imagery.

The site was assessed for its suitability for nesting birds. Any bird species identified during the survey were recorded.

The habitats on the site were assessed for their suitability for invertebrates, although a detailed invertebrate survey was not undertaken.

3.5. Invasive Species

Any invasive species listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) on or immediately adjacent to the site were recorded.

3.6. Constraints

The site survey was constrained by the season in which it took place. Although undertaken within the optimal period for habitat surveys, some species are only visible at certain times of year and may not have been present at the time of the survey.

4. Results

4.1. Designated Sites

NBIS, DEFRA (2023) and Natural England (2023) hold records of designated sites within 5km of the site. These include:

- River Nar Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), approximately 500m west of the site. The site is within the impact zone of this designated site.
- Horse Wood SSSI, approximately 1.5km southeast of the site. The site is within the impact zone of this designated site.
- River Wensum SSSI and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) approximately 5km north of the site.
- Honeypot Wood SSSI, approximately 5km south of the site.

NBIS hold records of seven County Wildlife Sites (CWS) within 2km of the site. These include:

- Land adjacent to River Nar CWS, approximately 500m west of the site.
- Lounds Wood CWS, approximately 1km northwest of the site.
- Mileham Castle CWS, approximately 1km east of the site.
- Mileham Common CWS, approximately 1.2km southwest of the site.
- Land adjacent to Warren Woods CWS, approximately 1.6km southwest of the site.
- Warren Woods CWS, approximately 1.7km southwest of the site.
- Tittleshall Woods CWS, approximately 1.8km north of the site.

4.2. Habitats within the Surrounding Area

The surrounding land use is a mixture of agricultural and residential. The village of Mileham is located to the east of the site, while the majority of the land surrounding the site consists of intensively managed arable land delineated by dykes.

DEFRA hold records of a number of Priority Habitats within 2km of the site, including coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, good quality semi improved grassland, lowland meadows, lowland fens, chalk rivers and deciduous woodland.

4.3. Habitats within the Site

The majority of the site consisted of improved grassland (*g4 modified grassland*). The southeast of the site and adjoining land consisted of arable land (*c1c5 cereal crops: winter stubble*). There were dykes (*r1 standing open water*) adjacent to the north and west boundaries.

The modified grassland was dominated by perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*), with cocks foot (*Dactylis glomerata*) and Timothy (*Phleum pratense*). Forb species were typical of cultivated land, including hairy bittercress (*Cardamine hirsutum*), creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), spear thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), greater willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), meadow cranesbill (*Geranium pratense*), hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*), white deadnettle (*Lamium album*), red deadnettle (*Lamium purpureum*), field forget-me-not (*Myosotis arvensis*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*),

broadleaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), lesser stitchwort (*Stellaria graminea*), chickweed (*Stellaria media*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale* agg.) and Dutch clover (*Trifolium repens*).

The arable land to the southeast consisted predominantly of bare ground, with some ephemeral forb species as described above.

The dykes consisted of shallow, slow moving watercourses, approximately 1cm deep and heavily eutrophied. Shade tolerant species were growing at the banks, including cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), hedge garlic (*Alliaria petiolata*), soft rush (*Juncus effusus*) and common nettle (*Urtica dioica*). Sections of the dyke to the west were culverted.

4.4. Invasive Species

No invasive species were identified on the site.

4.5. Mammals

NBIS hold records of bat species within 2km of the site, including brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*), barbastelle (*Barbastella barbastellus*), serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*), common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) and Daubenton's bat (*Myotis daubentonii*).

There were no trees or artificial structures on the site suitable for roosting bats. There were no trees, shrubs or other vegetation likely to offer commuting and foraging opportunities for bats. Generalist species of bats may however utilise the site for commuting and foraging purposes.

No badger setts or signs of badgers were identified on the site.

No signs of water voles or otters were identified within the watercourses at the site boundary.

NBIS hold records of hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*) within 2km of the site.

No signs of any other protected or notable mammal species were identified on the site.

4.6. Herpetofauna

NBIS hold no records of reptiles within 2km of the site. NBIS hold records of amphibian species within 2km of the site, including great crested newt, common frog (*Rana temporaria*), common toad (*Bufo bufo*) and smooth newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*). The closest record of great crested newt is 115m from the site.

The site provides suboptimal habitat for reptiles and amphibians.

There are two ponds within 250m of the site.

- Pond 1, at grid reference TF 91249 19033, is located 115m east of the site. This pond is located within adjacent land and could not be accessed during the survey. The data search has confirmed the presence of great crested newts within this pond.

- Pond 2, at grid reference TF 91073 18880, is located 150m south of the site. This pond could be accessed from the adjacent road. Samples were taken and sent for eDNA analysis for great crested newts, which confirmed this species to be absent (see *Appendix 3: eDNA Results*).

4.7. Bird Species

NBIS hold records of notable bird species within the surrounding area, including nightjar (*Caprimulgus europaeus*), marsh harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*), merlin (*Falco columbarius*), peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*), hobby (*Falco subbuteo*), brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*), Mediterranean gull (*Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*), red kite (*Milvus milvus*), golden plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*), redwing (*Turdus iliacus*), fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*) and barn owl (*Tyto alba*).

Common bird species were identified during the survey, including house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), carrion crow (*Corvus corone*), goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*), starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), blackbird (*Turdus merula*), wood pigeon (*Columba palumbus*), robin (*Erithacus rubecula*), chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*), garden warbler (*Sylvia borin*) and wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*).

4.8. Invertebrates

No notable invertebrate species were identified during the survey. The habitats on the site are highly modified and are unlikely to support notable invertebrate species.

5. Assessment

5.1. Designated Sites

The site is within the impact zones of Horse Wood SSSI and River Nar SSSI. Regarding residential developments, Habitat Regulations Screening is only required for developments within these impact zones of 50 units or more. Therefore, due to the scale of the proposals there are no foreseeable impacts upon these designated sites.

5.2. Habitats

The habitats on the site are highly modified and are of low ecological value. The removal of modified grassland will, in the absence of further mitigation, result in a minor negative ecological impact.

There is an area of arable land which is within the site boundary but outside the development area, which offers ecological enhancement opportunities.

5.3. Mammals

In the absence of further mitigation, the installation of artificial lighting due to the proposals may impact upon foraging and commuting bats and other nocturnal wildlife.

In the absence of further mitigation, the development may sever terrestrial connectivity of hedgehogs.

5.4. Herpetofauna

There are no foreseeable impacts of the development upon reptile species.

Great crested newts have been confirmed present in Pond 1, 115m from the site and absent in Pond 2, 150m from the site. Using the Natural England Rapid Risk Assessment Calculation Tool, it is determined that the chances of breeding great crested newts within Pond 1 being harmed by the proposals are highly unlikely (see Table 5.1). This is confounded by the poor structural of the grassland in the site, which provided suboptimal habitat for great crested newts and other amphibians.

Table 5.1 Natural England Rapid Risk Assessment Calculation Tool

Component	Likely effect (select one for each component; select the most harmful option if more than one is likely; lists are in order of harm, top to bottom)	Notional offence probability score
Great crested newt breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Land within 100m of any breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Land 100-250m from any breeding pond(s)	0.1 - 0.5 ha lost or damaged	0.1
Land >250m from any breeding pond(s)	0.1 - 0.5 ha lost or damaged	0.005
Individual great crested newts	No effect	0
	Maximum:	0.1
Rapid risk assessment result:	GREEN: OFFENCE HIGHLY UNLIKELY	

5.5. Bird Species

A number of notable bird species have been identified within the surrounding area, however the site does not support suitable habitat for nesting birds. There are therefore no foreseeable impacts of the proposals upon bird species.

5.6. Invertebrates

There are no foreseeable impacts of the proposals upon notable invertebrate species. The removal of modified grassland may have a minor negative impact upon pollination resources within the surrounding area.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1. Avoidance of Ecological Impact

Great crested newts have been identified in a pond 115m from the site. The site provides suboptimal habitat for great crested newts, and due to its distance from the pond, it is not anticipated that great crested newts will be impacted by the development proposals. As a precautionary measure, it is recommended that works proceed subject to a method statement, detailed in *Appendix 4: Precautionary Method Statement for Great Crested Newts and other Amphibians*.

To avoid impacts to bats and other nocturnal wildlife, if possible, the use of exterior lighting as part of the proposals should be avoided. If for any reason exterior lighting is required, the following recommendations prescribed by the Institute of Lighting Professionals (2018) should be followed:

- All luminaires should lack UV elements,
- LED luminaires should be used where possible,
- A warm white spectrum (<2700 kelvin) should be adopted to reduce blue light,
- External security lighting should be set to a short timer or motion sensor
- The spread of light should be at, or near horizontal level,
- The times that lights are used should be limited to provide some dark periods

To avoid fragmentation of hedgehog habitat, it is recommended that proposed properties are divided by hedgerows, or if fences are to be used, that holes 15x15cm are cut into the base of fence panels to enable hedgehog access. Hedgehog access holes should be clearly labelled to discourage them being blocked up by residents.

6.2. Compensation and Ecological Enhancement

It is recommended that the removal of modified grassland is compensated by the incorporation of further planting into the proposals. This should consist of trees and shrubs which are native or of known benefit to local wildlife. The arable land to be retained within the site boundary offers opportunities to compensate for habitat loss and to enhance the ecological value of the site and the surrounding area.

6.3. Timespan of Report

In accordance with CIEEM's guidelines on the lifespan of ecological reports and surveys, it is recommended that the findings of this report remain valid for a period of up to 18 months.

7. References

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- Institute of Lighting Professionals (2018). *Guidance Note 08/18 Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK*. Institute of Lighting Professionals, Rugby
- Natural England (2023). *Designated Sites View* [online]. Available at: >www.designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk< [accessed 2nd May 2023]
- UK Habitat Classification Working Group (2018). *UK Habitat Classification User Manual*. Ecountability Ltd, Kentisbeare.

Appendix 1: Photographs



Plate 1: Modified grassland, arable land in background



Plate 2: Dyke to north

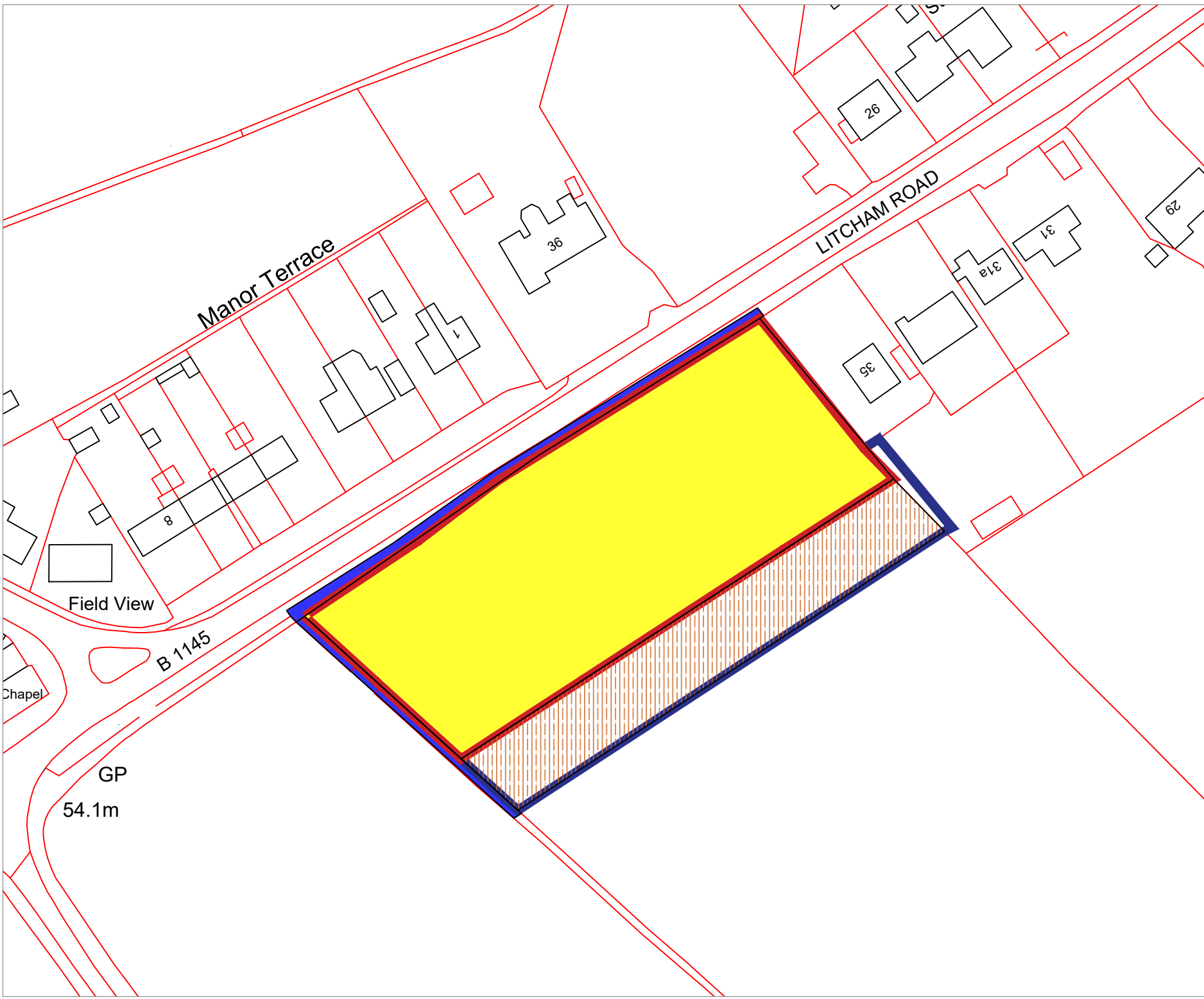


Plate 3: Dyke to west








Plate 4: Pond 2

Appendix 2: Habitat Plan



Key:

	g4 modified grassland
	c1c5 cereal crops - winter stubble
	r1 standing open water (dykes)
	Development boundary
	Site boundary



Drawing title:	Habitat Plan
Project:	Litcham Road
Drawing number:	P1H-1707-01
Drawn by:	David Watts
Date:	02/05/2023
Scale:	1:1000 @ A4

To be reproduced in colour only.



Appendix 3: eDNA Results

Folio No: E17056
Report No: 1
Purchase Order: 1707
Client: DAVID WATTS ASSOCIATES LTD
Contact: David Watts

TECHNICAL REPORT

ANALYSIS OF ENVIRONMENTAL DNA IN POND WATER FOR THE DETECTION OF GREAT CRESTED NEWTS (*TRITURUS CRISTATUS*)

SUMMARY

When great crested newts (GCN), *Triturus cristatus*, inhabit a pond, they continuously release small amounts of their DNA into the environment. By collecting and analysing water samples, we can detect these small traces of environmental DNA (eDNA) to confirm GCN habitation or establish GCN absence.

RESULTS

Date sample received at Laboratory: 02/05/2023
Date Reported: 11/05/2023
Matters Affecting Results: None

Lab Sample No.	Site Name	O/S Reference	SIC	DC	IC	Result	Positive Replicates
R337	Litcham Road - WB1	TF 9046 18912	Pass	Pass	Pass	Negative	0

If you have any questions regarding results, please contact us: ForensicEcology@surescreen.com

Reported by: Jennifer Higginbottom

Approved by: Jackson Young



METHODOLOGY

The samples detailed above have been analysed for the presence of GCN eDNA following the protocol stated in DEFRA WC1067 'Analytical and methodological development for improved surveillance of the Great Crested Newt, Appendix 5.' (Biggs et al. 2014). Each of the 6 sub-sample tubes are first centrifuged and pooled together into a single sample which then undergoes DNA extraction. The extracted sample is then analysed using real time PCR (qPCR), which uses species-specific molecular markers to amplify GCN DNA within a sample. These markers are unique to GCN DNA, meaning that there should be no detection of closely related species.

If GCN DNA is present, the DNA is amplified up to a detectable level, resulting in positive species detection. If GCN DNA is not present then amplification does not occur, and a negative result is recorded.

Analysis of eDNA requires scrupulous attention to detail to prevent risk of contamination. True positive controls, negative controls and spiked synthetic DNA are included in every analysis and these have to be correct before any result is declared and reported. Stages of the DNA analysis are also conducted in different buildings at our premises for added security.

SureScreen Scientifics Ltd is ISO9001 accredited and participate in Natural England's proficiency testing scheme for GCN eDNA testing. We also carry out regular inter-laboratory checks on accuracy of results as part of our quality control procedures.

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

SIC: **Sample Integrity Check** [Pass/Fail]

When samples are received in the laboratory, they are inspected for any tube leakage, suitability of sample (not too much mud or weed etc.) and absence of any factors that could potentially lead to inconclusive results.

DC: **Degradation Check** [Pass/Fail]

Analysis of the spiked DNA marker to see if there has been degradation of the kit or sample between the date it was made to the date of analysis. Degradation of the spiked DNA marker may lead indicate a risk of false negative results.

IC: **Inhibition Check** [Pass/Fail]

The presence of inhibitors within a sample are assessed using a DNA marker. If inhibition is detected, samples are purified and re-analysed. Inhibitors cannot always be removed, if the inhibition check fails, the sample should be re-collected.

Result: **Presence of GCN eDNA** [Positive/Negative/Inconclusive]

Positive: GCN DNA was identified within the sample, indicative of GCN presence within the sampling location at the time the sample was taken or within the recent past at the sampling location.

Positive Replicates: Number of positive qPCR replicates out of a series of 12. If one or more of these are found to be positive the pond is declared positive for GCN presence. It may be assumed that small fractions of positive analyses suggest low level presence, but this cannot currently be used for population studies. In accordance with Natural England protocol, even a score of 1/12 is declared positive. 0/12 indicates negative GCN presence.

Negative: GCN eDNA was not detected or is below the threshold detection level and the test result should be considered as evidence of GCN absence, however, does not exclude the potential for GCN presence below the limit of detection.



Appendix 4: Precautionary Method Statement for Great Crested newts

1.1. Site Induction

Before works commence, all site operatives should receive a briefing by a Natural England licensed ecologist. The briefing should include details on the legal status and protection of great crested newts, the procedures of the precautionary method statement, and of the identification of great crested newts and procedures if this species is discovered during construction works.

1.2. Pre-Construction Search

All working areas on the site should be hand searched for great crested newts no more than 24 hours prior to any digging, excavation or vegetation clearance by a Natural England great crested newt licensed holder. During the search, any debris will be lifted and removed from the area, and any areas of dense vegetation will be parted to look for newts.

1.3. Vegetation Removal

Following the pre-construction search, vegetation should be removed from the working area. All vegetation removal should be supervised by a Natural England licensed ecologist.

1.4. General Working Methods

All material storage and vehicle/plant parking must be within the hand searched area, or on areas of hard standing away from the working area. There should be no material storage and/or vehicle tracking outside hardstanding areas which have not previously been hand searched (e.g., adjacent agricultural land).

Great crested newts and other amphibians are at risk from any chemicals they encounter. No chemicals such as herbicides should be used during vegetation clearance works. No chemicals or hazardous substances which can be harmful to great crested newts should be stored on the site.

1.5. Procedure if Great Crested Newts or Other Amphibians are Discovered

If great crested newt or other amphibians are found at any time during construction, all works should cease immediately. An ecologist should be contacted and should determine whether a Natural England European Protected Species License will be required before works continue.

1.6. Persons Responsible

It is the responsibility of Bee Developments Norwich to implement the method statement and ensure that a suitably qualified ecologist is present to supervise the works.

Appendix 5: Legislation and Policy

Statutory Designated Sites

Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are European designated sites and have been identified by JNCC/Natural England as being of interest for their bird species classified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). SPAs are classified in accordance with the European Council Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds, also known as the Birds Directive. SPAs are of international importance and have statutory protection.

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) protect special habitats and species listed in the Habitats Directive and are of international importance.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are first-tier sites for conservation. They are identified by JNCC/Natural England as being of interest by reason of their flora, fauna, geological or physiological features. The legal framework for SSSI is within the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). They are of national importance and have statutory protection.

Ramsar Sites are wetlands of international importance that have been designated under the criteria of the Ramsar Convention of Wetlands for containing representative, rare or unique wetland types or for their importance in conserving biological diversity.

Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are statutory sites of at least local importance. They are declared under section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and amended by Schedule 11 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. All district and county councils have powers to acquire, declare and manage LNRs. Parish and town councils can also declare LNRs but they must have the powers to do so delegated to them by the principal local authority. To qualify for LNR status, a site must be of importance for wildlife, geology, education or public enjoyment. Some are also nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

Non-Statutory Designated Sites

A County Wildlife Site (CWS), is a designation which recognises a site's high value for biodiversity. CWSs raise awareness of a site's importance for wildlife, particularly with regard to planning and land management.

Hedgerow Regulations 1997

The Hedgerow Regulations set out criteria that must be used by the local planning authority to determine whether hedgerows are important. These relate to the values of hedgerows from an archaeological, historical, landscape and ecological perspective. They exclude hedgerows that are less than 30 years old. Removal of a hedgerow in contravention of the regulations is a criminal offence.

Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulation 2017 makes it an offence to deliberately capture, kill or disturb any animal protected under Schedule 2 of the regulations. It is also an offence to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of an animal, even if the animal is not present at the time.

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (As Amended), makes it an offence to:

- Deliberately or recklessly injure, kill or capture any animal protected under Schedule 5 of the act.
- Deliberately or recklessly kill, injure or take any wild bird; to take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while occupied or being built, or to take or destroy the egg of a wild bird. Additional protection is afforded to bird species listed under Schedule 1 of the Act.
- Intentionally pick, uproot or destroy any wild plant included in Schedule 8 of the Act.

Badger Protection Act 1992

Badgers (*Meles meles*) benefit from specific protection under the provisions of the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Under the Act, it is an offence to wilfully kill, injure or take a badger (or attempt to do so), to cruelly ill-treat a badger, to interfere with a sett, cause a dog to enter a sett, and to disturb a badger while it is occupying a sett.

Biodiversity Action Plan

The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) includes a list of 943 national priority species and 56 habitats of principal importance, with all species and habitats having specific action plans defining the measures required to ensure their conservation. Although the UKBAP has since been superseded by the UK-Post 2010 Biodiversity Framework and a focus on County Biodiversity Plans, it remains a useful point of reference.

Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006 required that any public bodies take into consideration any species and habitats listed in the UKBAP when implementing their duty and exercising any normal functions.

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that planning decisions should aim to protect or enhance biodiversity and conservation interests, and where possible any development should aim to increase net gains in biodiversity.

