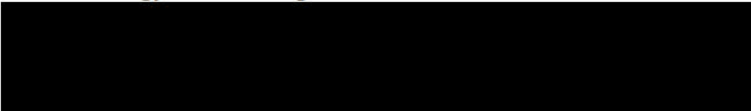




Great Crested Newt eDNA Survey

Land at North Choller Farm

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 [W ecologypartnership.com](http://ecologypartnership.com)

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LIABILITIES:

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

This report provides a snap shot of the species that were present at the time of the survey only and does not consider seasonal variation. Furthermore, where access is limited or the site supports habitats which are densely vegetated only dominant species maybe recorded.

The recommendations contained within this 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 or during works.

1.0 Introduction

Background

- 1.1 The Ecology Partnership was commissioned by Cordial Investments to undertake a Great Crested Newt (GCN) eDNA survey for a waterbody close to North Choller Farm – Holding 1, Choller Estate, Barnham Lane, Walberton, Arundel, hereafter referred to as ‘site’.
- 1.2 This report presents the results of the eDNA survey, which aims to specifically determine the presence or likely absence of great crested newts within the waterbody surveyed and inform a suitable mitigation strategy if presence is established.
- 1.3 This report comprises:
- Site context including previous surveys conducted on site (Section 1);
 - Assessment methodology (Section 2);
 - Results (Section 3);
 - Discussion and recommendations (Section 4);
 - Conclusions (Section 5).

Site Context and Status

- 1.4 The site is located to the south-west of Walberton (Central grid reference: SU 95836 05602). The site totalling *c.* 0.94ha, comprises a series of farm buildings, hardstanding, sections of modified grassland and tall forbs. To the east of site was also areas of mixed scrub and a small section of other broadleaved woodland to the south-east. The site is bordered by the wider North Choller Farm site with arable fields in use by cattle to the south and farm buildings to the north, Barnham Lane runs to the east.
- 1.5 The red line boundary of the site and the immediate surroundings are displayed in Figure 1.

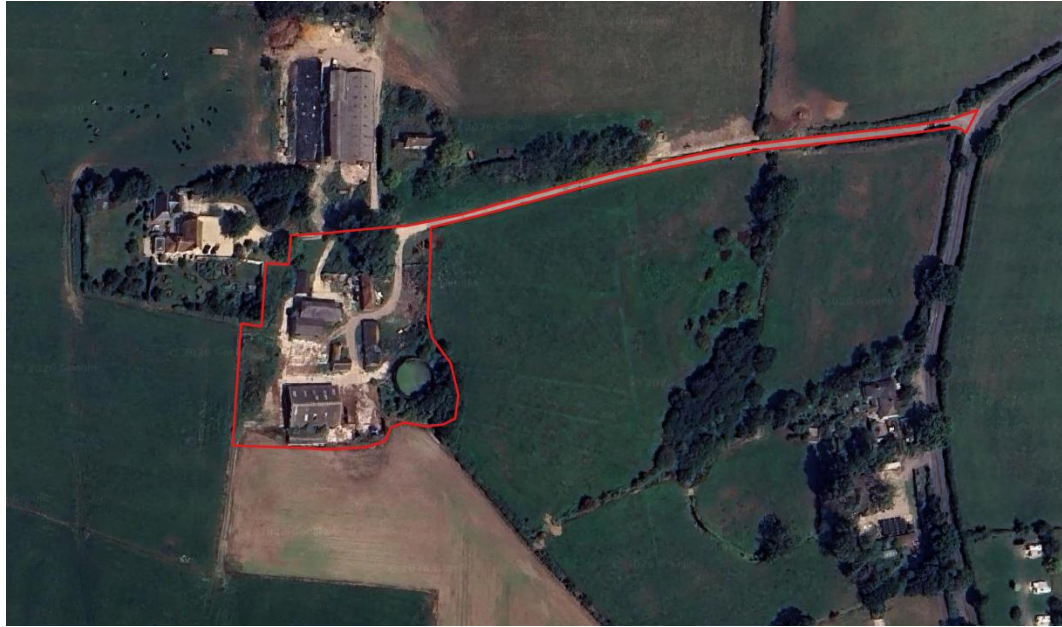


Figure 1: The site red line boundary and immediate surroundings

Description of Proposed Development

- 1.6 The current proposals for the site involve the creation of a small housing development, including a number of barn conversions with associated access, and landscaping.

On-site Survey Work

- 1.7 A preliminary ecological appraisal was carried out by The Ecology Partnership's Matt Pendry BSc (Hons) MCIEEM and Sophie Baker BSc (Hons) MSc on the 17th March 2026. This included an assessment of both the habitats and protected species potential of the site. Prior to this assessment, a desktop study was undertaken to ensure any required survey work could be undertaken within the relevant GCN survey season.
- 1.8 The site was characterised by majority developed land in the form of farm buildings associated with North Choller Farm, hardstanding, and artificial unvegetated unsealed surface around site. There were also sections of modified grassland and tall forbs. Parcels of bramble scrub and mixed scrub were also present, with an area of other broadleaved woodland also present to the south-east of site.
- 1.9 OS colour mapping identified three ponds located within 250m of the red line boundary (Figure 4); these were located c. 90m – 100m from site. However, satellite imagery indicated the waterbodies labelled P2 and P3 appeared dry and were not present.

- 1.10 The PEA conducted in March 2026 confirmed P2 and P3 were absent, discussions with the client determined P2 was formerly a slurry pit owned by the wider North Choller Farm that has since been filled. P3 appears to be an area of flooding that appears seasonally within the cow grazed fields. These were therefore not considered to provide potential for breeding GCN.

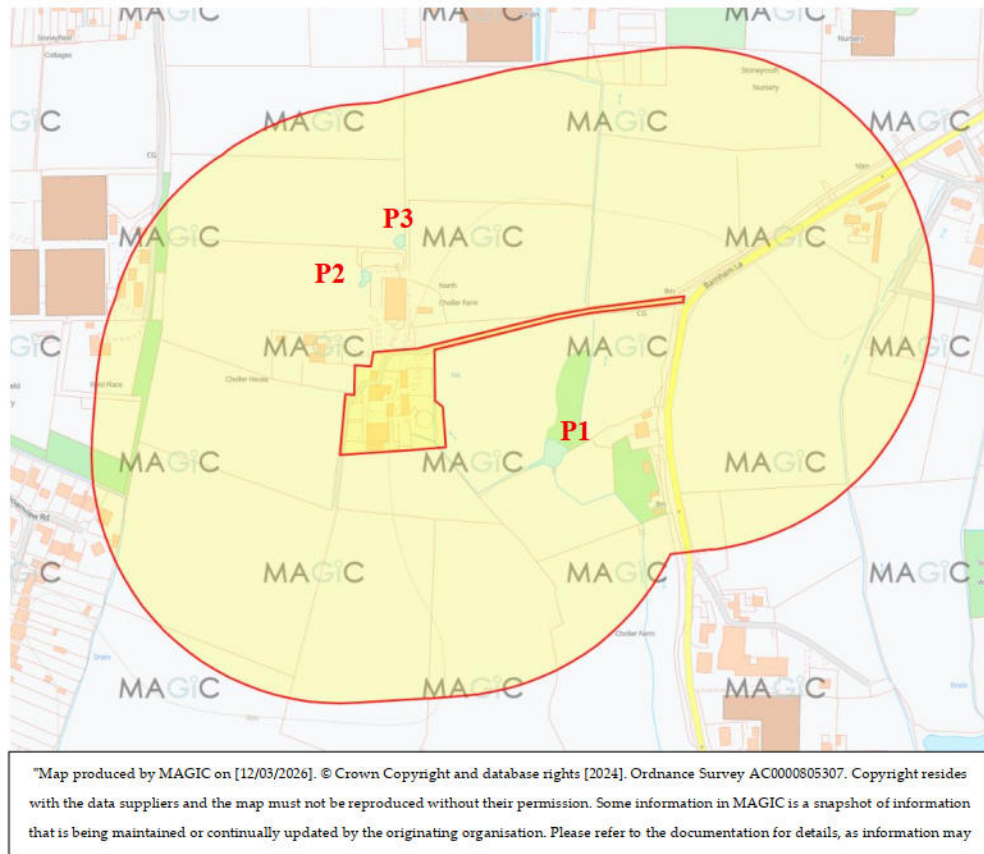


Figure 2: Ponds located within 250m of the site red line boundary

- 1.11 P1 located 100m south-east of site was considered to provide some potential for breeding GCN owing to the emergent and marginal vegetation suitable for egg laying and did not appear to have any fish within. Although this pond is separated from site by short sward cow grazed fields considered unsuitable for GCN in their terrestrial phase, it was considered that some onsite habitat including the woodland, scrub and tall forbs may provide some suitability for the species.

2.0 GCN eDNA Survey Methodology

- 2.1 Pond 1 was sampled on 17th April 2026; water samples were taken by Natasha Wilson BSc (Hons) and Sophie Baker BSc (Hons) MSc. All samples were analysed by SureScreen Scientifics and were submitted for eDNA analysis to the protocol stated in DEFRA WC1067 (latest amendments).
- 2.2 The survey was undertaken in line with the GCN mitigation guidelines (Natural England 2001).

3.0 GCN eDNA Survey Results

- 3.1 The water sample analysis confirmed likely great crested newt **absence** within **Pond 1**, full results and methods can be found in Appendix 1.

4.0 Discussion

- 4.1 One pond located within 250m of the site was subject to environmental DNA testing, for the potential presence of great-crested newts (GCN). Water sample analysis tested negative for GCN eDNA, indicating likely absence of GCN within this pond.
- 4.2 Regarding onsite habitats, the woodland, tall forbs, and scrub were considered to provide some suitable habitat for GCN to forage or seek refuge within. However, due to the negative eDNA result and distance from other ponds within the local area, it is considered that GCN are likely absent from site and will therefore not provide a constraint to proposed works.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 Some habitats within the application site offers suitable terrestrial habitat for great crested newts, notably the woodland, tall forbs, and scrub, whilst much of the centre of the site was less suitable. No waterbodies are located onsite and only one pond is located within 250m of the site boundary.

- 5.2 Pond one was surveyed using eDNA survey techniques and tested **negative** for GCN presence and therefore the species are considered likely absent from site. As such, it is not considered that the species will provide a constraint to proposed works.

6.0 References

Biggs, J., Ewald, N., Valentini, A., Gaboriaud, C., Griffiths, R.A., Foster, J., Wilkinson, J., Arnett, A., Williams, P. & Dunn, F. (2014) *Analytical and methodological development for improved surveillance of the Great Crested Newt*. Defra Project WC1067. Freshwater Habitats Trust, Oxford.

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The Ecology Partnership (2026) *Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Land at North Choller Farm*.
Leatherhead.

Internet sources:

Google Earth: www.earth.google.com

Magic Maps: www.magic.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Photographs

Photograph 1: Pond P1	 A photograph of a pond, identified as Pond P1. The water is dark and still, reflecting the surrounding trees and branches. The banks are covered with fallen leaves and debris. The trees are mostly bare, suggesting a late autumn or winter setting.
Photograph 2: Pond P1	 A photograph showing a dense thicket of trees and shrubs surrounding a pond. The foreground is dominated by tall, thin, light-colored branches, possibly dead or dormant. The background shows a dense canopy of green foliage, indicating a lush, wooded area.

Photograph 3:
Area wherein
OS mapping
indicates P2 is
located



Photograph 4:
Area wherein
OS mapping
indicates P3 is
located



Appendix 2: eDNA Results

Folio No: 463-2026
Purchase Order: W5US 8252
Contact: The Environment Partnership (TEP)
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GCN eDNA Analysis

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 analyzing water samples, we can detect these small traces of environmental DNA (eDNA) to confirm GCN habitation or establish GCN absence.

Results

Lab ID	Site Name	OS Reference	Degradation Check	Inhibition Check	Result	Positive Replicates
R26 00198	Choller Farm 1a	SU 96013 05581	Pass	Pass	Negative	0/12

Matters affecting result: none

Reported by: Chelsea Warner

Approved by: Alice Cunningham



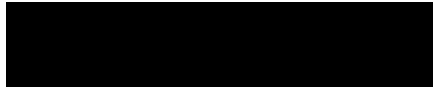
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