



Great Crested Newt Survey Report 2015

Land at Wenny Road, Chatteris, Cambridgeshire

For: **Cannon-Kirk (UK) Ltd**
c/o
Andrew Hodgson BA (Hons)
BTP MRTPI AIEMA
Associate Director
Planning
Savills
Unex House
132-134 Hills Road
Cambridge, CB2 8PA

Darren Frost

BSc (Hons) CEnv MCIEEM CBiol MSB

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© **Cambridge Ecology**

Hilton House,
37 Hilton Street,
Over,
Cambridge,
CB24 5PU

Telephone: +44 (0)1954 231239

Fax: +44 (0)1954231093

E-mail: info@cambridgeecology.com

Web address: www.cambridgeecology.com

Notice to Interested Parties

To achieve the study objectives stated in this report, we were required to base our conclusions on the best information available during the period of the investigation and within the limits prescribed by our client in the agreement.

No investigative method can completely eliminate the possibility of obtaining partially imprecise or incomplete information. Thus, we cannot guarantee that the investigations completely defined the degree or extent of e.g. species abundances or habitat management efficacy described in the report.

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0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 0.1 On behalf of Cannon-Kirk (UK) Ltd, Cambridge Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Savills to carry out a Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*) survey of waterbodies in the survey area on land proposed for development at Wenny Road, Chatteris, Cambridgeshire. The survey was required to establish the presence/absence of Great Crested Newt, a protected species, at the site, which could be affected by the development proposals.
- 0.2 In order that the planning process for the proposed development at this site considered the potential for the site to support protected species and therefore ensured compliance to planning policy and wildlife legislation pertaining to Great Crested Newt, a series of surveys were carried out from early April to early June 2015. The Great Crested Newt survey followed recognised standard methods and was considered to provide a robust set of data, suitable to evaluate the presence of Great Crested Newt within the survey areas and identify any potential ecological constraints requiring particular attention.
- 0.3 A search revealed five waterbodies within proximity of the development site. The Great Crested Newt survey was carried out on four accessible waterbodies identified as being located within 250m of the boundary of the proposed development site.
- 0.4 The surveys were considered to provide a valid indication of the presence of Great Crested Newt and provided an estimate of the population size in 2015. It was noted that during the survey, two ponds dried out and one garden pond was in accessible.
- 0.5 The results showed that only one Great Crested Newt was found during the surveys. An adult male Great Crested Newt was found during the torch survey of Robin Knights Pond on the 4th survey visit (21st May 2015).
- 0.6 No Great Crested Newt eggs, larvae/Efts were found during the survey visits. Therefore there is currently no evidence that Great Crested Newt are breeding within the proposed development site.
- 0.7 The Great Crested Newt population class for Robin Knights Pond was considered to be small.
- 0.8 The meta-population for the complex of waterbodies present in the whole survey area was also classed as a small population.
- 0.9 The presence of only one male Great Crested Newt and no signs to suggest that the species was breeding within the proposed development site suggest that the individual was moving through the area.

- 0.10 The sub-optimal suitability of the waterbodies within the proposed development site would also suggest that the site would be unlikely to support a viable breeding population.
- 0.11 It was recognised that the terrestrial habitat was suitable to support foraging and hibernating Great Crested Newt and in other years (when/if the ponds do not dry out) the waterbodies could provide breeding opportunities.
- 0.12 As Great Crested Newt are protected under the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) no work, that may have a significant impact on the status of the local Great Crested Newt population or areas of suitable habitat, can be undertaken until a European Protected Species (EPS) licence is granted by Natural England.
- 0.13 None of the permanent waterbodies would be expected to be lost as a result of the site development proposals. However terrestrial habitat suitable for Great Crested Newt would be affected by the development proposals for the site. Therefore it is considered that the proposed development of the site could cause some loss to Great Crested Newt terrestrial habitat and cause a risk to direct mortality to dispersing Great Crested Newt during construction.
- 0.14 An EPS licence may be needed before the development could proceed for the site. A rapid risk assessment would be required to inform the need to apply for the EPS licence. If a licence was required a detailed method statement and mitigation strategy would be required, which would potentially require additional information from further Great Crested Newt survey results.
- 0.15 The mitigation measures to address the Great Crested Newt issues include habitat creation, restoration and enhancement and translocation. The areas where these could be implemented should be included in the scheme design for the development.
- 0.16 If the development proposals were likely to be delayed for three years from the date of this study, then a further equivalent Great Crested Newt survey would be required to update the results provided in this report and inform the development proposals in the future. To address this issue an equivalent Great Crested Newt survey should be carried out within three years.

1 INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

- 1.1 On behalf of Cannon-Kirk (UK) Ltd, Cambridge Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Savills to carry out a Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*) survey of waterbodies in the survey area on land proposed for development at Wenny Road, Chatteris, Cambridgeshire. The survey was required to establish the presence/absence of Great Crested Newt, a protected species, at the site, which could be affected by the development proposals.
- 1.2 An investigation of historical biological data gathered during the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey (Cambridge Ecology 2014) showed that within the last 10 years, there had been no records of Great Crested Newts in close proximity (within 2km) of the proposed development site. However, the results of the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey carried out in November 2014 considered that the habitat (namely the ponds, tall ruderal, scattered scrub, improved grassland, hedgerows, wet and dry ditches) within and adjacent to the proposed development site had potential to provide foraging, hibernating and commuting habitat for amphibians. Identified habitats present (including four ponds) including Great Crested Newt.
- 1.3 A Habitat Suitability Index Assessment was carried out in March 2015 (Cambridge Ecology 2015). The results of the HSI assessment indicated that three of the ponds (Nos. 1, 2 and 4), were categorised as being 'poor' in their suitability to support a breeding population of Great Crested Newt. Pond no. 3 located in a residential property located adjacent to the development site boundary was categorised as being 'average' to support a breeding population of Great Crested Newt.
- 1.4 Based on the findings of this HSI assessment survey, the ponds appeared to have a low potential to support the life-cycle of breeding Great Crested Newt; while the terrestrial habitat would appear to be moderately suitable. However, there are recognised limitations to relying solely on the results of the HSI assessment and biological records. Therefore as a precaution it has been recommended that a standard presence/absence survey for Great Crested Newt be carried out on the accessible ponds.

Aims and objectives

- 1.5 The 2015 Great Crested Newt survey provide information to inform the planning application process pertaining to the development proposals proposed development site. The aims of the survey would be expected to:
 - a) Confirm the presence of Great Crested Newt in waterbodies under investigation.
 - b) Identify which waterbodies supported Great Crested Newt.

- c) Identify which waterbodies showed signs of Great Crested Newt breeding activity (through the presence of eggs and/or larvae).
 - d) Assign a population size class to the current population of Great Crested Newt in each waterbody and to the meta-population in the survey area around the proposed development site.
- 1.6 The results of the survey would indicate whether Great Crested Newt were present within 500m of the proposed development site and whether the development proposals could affect the status of the Great Crested Newt population. If Great Crested Newt were present they could represent a potential constraint to the proposed works. The results of the survey could be used to provide guidance on the design layout for the site to minimise any potential adverse effects on the Great Crested Newt population, whether there were any requirements necessary for mitigation to meet legal obligations. This information gathered could also be used to inform any mitigation strategy or method statement production, should there be a need to apply for a European Protected Species Development Licence (EPS). An EPS licence may be necessary to enable the proposed development to proceed in accordance with wildlife legislation pertaining to protected species.
- 1.7 This report summarises the background to the study and details the results and key findings of the 2015 Great Crested Newt survey. The up-to-date data may then be used to provide guidance and inform the design process for the potential new development site.

Great Crested Newt Legislation and Ecology

Legislation

- 1.8 The information below is intended only as guidance to the legislation relating to these species. The Acts themselves should be referred to for the correct legal wording.
- 1.9 Great Crested Newt and their habitat are fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) making the Great Crested Newt a European Protected Species. Both the Great Crested Newt's aquatic habitat (typically ponds) and terrestrial habitat (areas surround ponds up to 500m) are protected from damage and destruction.
- 1.10 The Great Crested Newt is a priority species under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and has been adopted as a Species of Principal Importance in England under section 41 of the NERC Act 2006, Wales under section 42 and in Scotland under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act.
- 1.11 To summarise in combination, this makes it an offence to:
- kill, injure or take (capture etc.) a Great Crested Newt;

- possess a Great Crested Newt;
- intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy, obstruct access to any structure or place/habitat used by a scheduled animal for shelter or protection, or disturb any Great Crested Newt occupying such a structure or place; and
- sell, offer for sale, possess or transport for the purpose of sale (live or dead animal, part or derivative) or advertise for buying or selling such things.
- Full details of the legislation can be found at:
www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/490/contents/made,
- <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/contents>

1.12 It remains the client's responsibility to maintain legal compliance relating to national and international wildlife legislation.

1.13 A Great Crested Newt licence is required whenever disturbance of Great Crested Newt or damage to their habitat is likely to occur. This means that Great Crested Newt surveys can only be carried out by a licensed ecological consultant. If mitigation is required to take account of the presence of Great Crested Newt, a second licence application would be necessary, which would be accompanied by a detailed method statement setting out the activity to be carried out under the terms of the licence. The Great Crested Newt licence will only be granted for reasons of overriding public interest and it must be shown that the favourable conservation status of the Great Crested Newt is maintained and that there is no satisfactory alternative to the proposed development.

Ecology

1.14 The Great Crested Newt is the largest newt found in the UK, growing up to 170mm in length. The skin of adult Great Crested Newt is granular in appearance, a dark brown background colour with darker spots. Adult males have a striking jagged crest along the length of their body and a smoother crest along the tail. Breeding males also have a white-blue stripe along the tail. Females lack a crest and tail stripe but have a yellow-orange stripe running along the bottom edge of the tail. Both sexes have a vivid orange belly with an irregular unique pattern of dark blotches.

1.15 Great Crested Newt require specific pond conditions for breeding. Ponds ideally need to have neutral to alkaline water (pH 6 or above) with areas of open water and well vegetated margins. Breeding ponds tend to be nutrient rich, not too shaded, free of fish with not too many waterfowl present. Males use open water to perform a complicated courtship dance. Females lay the fertilised eggs individually on the leaves of submerged plants. Larvae hatch from April onwards and stay in the pond to feed and complete metamorphosis from aquatic larvae to juveniles that are adapted to life on

land. Adults usually leave the ponds before juveniles but the emergence from the pond is normally occurs over a prolonged period and can last several months.

- 1.16 Great Crested Newt depend on waterbodies for breeding by need both aquatic and terrestrial habitat and actually spend most of their time (e.g. eight months) on land. When on land, Great Crested Newt favour areas of lowland that contain medium sized ponds, rough grassland, scrub and woodland. They search for prey among rank grassland, scrub and woodland, sometimes returning to ponds to feed during the summer. They require suitable refuges to use in extreme weather and during daytimes, such as large pieces of rotting deadwood, rubble piles or disused mammal burrows.
- 1.17 Great Crested Newt over winter on land, normally hibernating underground and emerge soon after the first frost-free days in January or February to begin the migration to breeding ponds. Movement on land occurs almost exclusively at night and their progress is dependent on factors such as evening temperatures and rainfall, favouring wet or damp conditions with temperatures above 5 °C.
- 1.18 Great Crested Newt are quite widespread in the UK, found throughout England and Wales and also in southern Scotland. However, they have declined in numbers and their distribution is patchy. They are abundant in some small areas but nationally the species is threatened. The decline is primarily due to habitat loss, especially the loss of breeding ponds. Many ponds have disappeared due to water table reduction, infilling for development, farming, waste disposal, neglect or fish stocking. The quality and management of the habitat that surrounds the breeding ponds is very important to the survival and viability of Great Crested Newt breeding populations. Unfortunately, along with the loss of ponds, pollution and toxic effects of chemicals used in intensive farming and the degradation, loss and fragmentation of terrestrial habitats have all contributed to the decline of the Great Crested Newt.

Survey Area and Development Proposals

- 1.19 The Great Crested Newt survey area comprised waterbodies identified as being located within 250m of the within the red line boundary of the proposed development, where access was possible. as illustrated in Figure 1.1.
- 1.20 The survey area for the Great Crested Newt Survey comprised the red line boundary of the development site, plus an area up to 250m beyond the site boundary to the east and south (where access was possible). Due to the size and nature of the development and the character of the surrounding habitats, the 250m area was chosen as the maximum potential zone of influence. The area beyond the site boundary to the north and west was not included in the field survey because it comprised entirely of a built

environment with residential properties and roads, and therefore of very limited ecological value and access to these areas was not possible.

- 1.21 For clarity in this report reference to the 'development site' included the red line boundary of the proposed development site, while the survey area included the area covered by the ecology survey, comprising the red line boundary of the proposed development site and the 250m zone of influence, where access was possible.
- 1.22 The development site was located approximately 1 kilometre to the south east of Chatteris town centre and is bordered to the north and west by residential properties, part of Chatteris town and the west and south by the A142 road. Chatteris lies approximately 28km north of the city of Cambridge. The centre of the site is situated at Grid Ref TL 400 856. The total area of the development site covers an area of approximately 26 hectares (ha).
- 1.23 The land beyond the A142 on the east and southern boundary of the development site and in the wider area around Chatteris is primarily intensively farmed arable land. It was considered that this arable land would likely be unsuitable for Great Crested Newt and the main A142 road would act as barrier to the movement of amphibians from the arable land onto the development site
- 1.24 Within the survey area the habitats comprised:
- Arable land
 - Dry/Wet Ditches
 - Ponds/Standing Water
 - Amenity/Improved grassland
 - Scattered Scrub
 - Scattered Trees/Parkland/Broadleaved Woodland
 - Hedgerows
 - Tall Ruderal
 - Bare ground and Buildings
- 1.25 The development site and study area were primarily used for recreational dog walking and horse grazing.
- 1.26 The development proposals for the site adjacent to Wenny Road, Chatteris, would be for various residential properties.
- 1.27 Details of the number and layout of the scheme were not available at the time of preparing this report. However it would be expected that the results of this ecology survey (and other species specific surveys in the future) would help provide details that would influence the layout of the scheme and especially the landscaping and habitat creation.
- 1.28 Table 1.1 provides a description of each waterbody that was included in the Great Crested Newt survey.

Table 1.1. Description of Waterbodies included in the Great Crested Newt Survey

Waterbody Number	Waterbody Name	Waterbody Location (Grid Reference)	Waterbody Description	Approximate Area of Pond (M ²)	Photograph Number
1	Robin Knight's Pond	TL 401 857	A natural pond shown on the OS map as Robin Knight's Pond. permanent water filled no marginal or submerged aquatic plants, vegetation dominated by water logged grass in an improved grazing pasture field corner.	400m ²	1
2	Wenny Road Attenuation Pond	TL400 853	An attenuation pond located on the south side of and next to Wenny Road and created as part of the flood alleviation for the adjacent residential development along Wenny Road and Cricketer's Way. Vegetation dominated by bulrush and sedges no open water visible.	1300m ²	2
3	Parkside Garden Pond	TL397 856	A formal rectangular pond located within a residential garden created with a liner some margin and aquatic plants.	200m ²	3
4	Horse Paddock Pond	TL399 858	A natural pond shown on the OS map but was dry in November 2015, contained water in March 2015 but was dry again from April to June 2015. No marginal or submerged aquatic plants, vegetation dominated by grass and dock in an improved grazing pasture field corner.	300m ²	4
5	Drain	TL402 860 to TL404 860	Drainage ditch with flowing water over a shallow muddy bed. Aquatic vegetation including emergent and marginal vegetation including Bittercress and Bulrush.	250m	5

2 METHODS

- 2.1 The methods are described below and were performed in accordance with guidelines given by English Nature (2001), The Herpetofauna Workers Manual (Gent and Gibson 1998) and Froglife Great Crested Newt Surveying Guidelines (2001). Four survey methods (combination of torching, netting, egg searching and bottle trapping) were used during each visit to the waterbodies. Table 2.1 details the survey methods used on each waterbody.
- 2.2 A total of five waterbodies, as illustrated in Figure 2.1, were identified as being located within 250m of the boundary of the proposed development site.
- 2.3 All accessible waterbodies (a total of three ponds and one water-filled drain) considered to offer suitable aquatic habitat for Great Crested Newt were initially visited four times to determine their presence or absence. Two additional surveys were conducted on any waterbody found to contain Great Crested Newt during the first four survey visits. This was necessary to allow the population size class to be determined.
- 2.4 Pond number 3, for the purpose of this report called Parkside Garden Pond was not surveyed as access to the private residence was not obtained (at the request of the client - A. Hodgson pers.comm.).
- 2.5 The visits were undertaken between 1st April and 10th June 2015 in suitable weather (above 5°C, no rain and little wind). Table 2.2 details the survey dates and the overnight weather conditions, between setting traps (where appropriate) in the evening and checking these the following morning. All surveys were undertaken by suitably qualified and trained ecologists working under survey licences issued by Natural England (a licence to take/disturb Great Crested Newt for Science and Education, Class Licence Registration Number: 2014-6141-CLS-CLS).

Equipment disinfection

- 2.6 To minimise the risk of the spread of amphibian fungal diseases all the equipment used for this survey was thoroughly disinfected and rinsed.
- 2.7 A brush was used to scrub off any debris, plant fragments and mud from the equipment, which was then rinsed in water. The equipment (e.g. plastic bottles, canes, nets, poles and wellington boots) was then soaked in a bleach solution (1 measure of household bleach to 9 measures water) for 15 minutes.

Egg Searches

- 2.8 The aquatic and emergent vegetation in the pond edges were searched for characteristic folds in the vegetation and searched for Great Crested Newt (and other amphibian) eggs. Where there was an absence of such

vegetation, nets were used to collect detritus and decaying leaf/material to search for eggs. The egg searches were made during each visit to the waterbody. Any eggs found were identified as being Great Crested newt eggs by their colour, size and location.

Bottle Trapping

- 2.9 This method was only used on Robin Knights Pond because the character of the other ponds prevented traps from being installed correctly, the Wenny Road Flood Alleviation Pond and Horse Paddock Pond had dried up by mid April and the ponds were accessible to the general public (a reptile survey carried out in the same area indicated that the traps were likely to be disturbed, which could potentially endanger any Great Crested Newts caught). Trapping was carried out on six separate occasions between 1st April and 10th June 2015. Traps were constructed from two-litre plastic bottles and set around the margins of water bodies approximately every 2m where access allowed shortly before dusk. The traps were checked and removed the following morning between 06:00 and 10:30. All surveys were undertaken when air temperature exceeded 5°C.

Netting

- 2.10 The waterbodies were netted for Great Crested Newt and other amphibians for approximately 30 minutes before the bottle traps were set in the evening and after the bottles were decommissioned each morning. All amphibian life found was recorded and returned to the waterbody.
- 2.11 A long-handled pond net was used to sweep through the water around the edge of the waterbodies and the contents of the net searched for adult newts, larvae (efts) after each sweep.

Torching

- 2.12 This technique involved a visual search for individual newts inhabiting the perimeter of the waterbodies after dark. Torches rated at 1million candle-power were shone into the water. During the search the edge of each waterbody was searched once; care would be taken to only count individuals once. To maximise the reliability of this technique, all torch surveys were conducted while air temperature exceeded 5°C when Great Crested Newts are generally considered to be most active.

Table 2.1: Survey method used on each waterbody.

Waterbody	Name	Survey method used	Comment
1	Robin Knight's Pond	Torching, Netting, Bottle Trapping, Egg Searches	
2	Wenny Road Flood Alleviation Pond	Torching, Netting, Egg Searches	For the reasons set out below bottle trapping was not used on these ponds: (i) character of the site preventing traps from being installed correctly,(ii) the ponds dried up before the second visit in April and (iii) site open to public access so the
3	Parkside Garden Pond	None: no access available to this pond	
4	Horse Paddock Pond	Torching, Netting, Egg Searches	

Waterbody	Name	Survey method used	Comment
5	North East Drain	Torching, Netting, Egg Searches	traps could be interfered with.

Table 2.2 Date and weather conditions during Great Crested Newt Surveys in the survey area around the proposed development site.

Survey	Date	Time	Temperature (°C)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind Force (mph)	Wind Direction	Pond Visibility	Sun/Rain
1	01/04/14	2000-2130	9-6	10	5 Light	SW	Clear	Dry
	02/04/14	0730-0900						
2	13/04/15	2000-2130	8-7	10	5 Light	SE	Clear	Dry
	14/04/15	0730-0900						
3	12/05/15	2000-2130	16-11	10	9 Light	WSW	Clear	Dry
	13/05/15	0730-0900						
4	21/05/15	2030-2200	14-10	50	5 Light	W	Clear	Dry
	22/05/15	0730-0900						
5	28/05/15	2030-2230	13-11	50	9 Light	W	Clear	Dry
	28/05/15	0730-0900						
6	09/06/15	2100-2330	11-10	10	9 Light	NE	Clear	Dry
	10/06/15	0730-0900						

2.13 The number, location, age and sex of all Great Crested Newt caught were recorded. Other species of amphibians caught during the survey were also identified.

2.14 All amphibians caught were checked for signs of disease and poor condition; after which they were carefully released back to the waterbody from which they were caught.

3 RESULTS

- 3.1 The results from the Great Crested Newt surveys, involving a combination of four survey techniques are given in Table 3.1.
- 3.2 Peak count were determined by the total counts of netting and torching combined or by the peak count of the bottle trap catches. The netting and torching figures were not combined with the bottle trap counts to avoid duplicating counts of the same individuals.
- 3.3 Figure 3.1 shows the location of each waterbody surveyed and indicates which of these waterbodies contained Great Crested Newt and the peak count recorded from the population class size survey in spring 2015.

Table 3.1. Results of the six Great Crested Newt surveys

Date	Weather and Water Conditions			Pond No.	Bottle trapping			Torching/Netting			Eggs/ Larvae
	Air Temp. °C	Vegetation Cover %	Water Condition (Clear/Turbid)		Male	Female	Imm.	Male	Female	Imm.	
Survey 1 01/04/15- 02/04/15											
	9-6 and Dry	5	Clear	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		55	Clear	2	-	-	-	0	0	0	0
		0	Clear	4	-	-	-	0	0	0	0
		50	Clear	5	-	-	-	0	0	0	0
Totals					0			0			0
Survey 2 13/04/15 – 14/04/15											
	8-7 and Dry	10	Clear	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		100	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		100	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		50	Clear	5	-	-	-	0	0	0	0
Totals					0			0			0
Survey 3 12/05/15 – 13/05/15											
	16-11 and Dry	10	Clear	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		100	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		100	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		50	Clear	5	-	-	-	0	0	0	0
Totals					0			0			0
Survey 4 21/05/14 – 22/05/15											
	14-10 and Dry	20	Clear	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
		100	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		100	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		50	Clear	5	-	-	-	0	0	0	0
Totals					0			1			0
Survey 5 28/05/15 – 29/05/15											
	13-11 and Dry	20	Clear	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		100	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		100	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		50	Clear	5	-	-	-	0	0	0	0
Totals					0			0			0
Survey 6 10/06/15 – 11/06/15											
	11-10 and	20	Clear	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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Date	Weather and Water Conditions			Pond No.	Bottle trapping			Torching/Netting			Eggs/Larvae
	Air Temp. °C	Vegetation Cover %	Water Condition (Clear/Turbid)		Male	Female	Imm.	Male	Female	Imm.	
Dry	100	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	100	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	50	Clear	-	5	-	-	-	0	0	0	0
Totals					0			0			0

- 3.4 In Pond No. 1, Robin Knight's Pond; a peak count of one Great Crested Newt was recorded during survey 4. This was a male recorded during the torching survey. As a result of a Great Crested Newt being found two further surveys of this pond were carried out, but no further Great Crested Newts were recorded.
- 3.5 During the course of the surveys this pond remained full of water, there was little aquatic vegetation most of the vegetation comprised grass that was tolerant of and benefitted from being water logged.
- 3.6 No Great Crested Newt were recorded in Pond No. 2: the Wenny Road Flood Attenuation Pond. Between the first and second visits to this pond it had dried out and there was no standing water suitable for use by breeding Great Crested Newt. The sedge and bulrush swamp vegetation dominated this area.
- 3.7 Access was not possible to Pond No. 3: the Parkside Garden Pond. During the course of the surveys this pond remained full of water.
- 3.8 No Great Crested Newt were recorded in Pond No. 4: the Horse Paddock Pond. Between the first and second visits to this pond it had dried out and there was no standing water suitable for use by breeding Great Crested Newt. The only signs of the ponds' previous existence was the verdant area of fresh grass that was subsequently grazed by horses.
- 3.9 No Great Crested Newt were recorded in the North east Drain. During the course of the surveys this drain contained a constant flow of water. Over time the vegetation in the drain increased, comprising aquatic plants such as species of Bittercress and Bulrush.
- 3.10 No larvae were recorded in any of the waterbodies searched.
- 3.11 No other amphibians were caught and recorded during the surveys. However, Common Frog spawn was found in the North East Drain.

Limitations

- 3.12 It was recognised that one pond (No. 3; Parkside Garden Pond) was not accessible as part of the survey. Permission to access this pond to carry out surveys was not obtained.

- 3.13 However, the omission of the pond from the survey was not considered to significantly compromise the validity of the survey results because:
- visual observations of the character of the pond, suggested it was an ornamental garden pond with only average suitability for use by Great Crested Newt.
 - The pond would not be affected by the development proposals.
 - The results of the surveys carried out throughout other parts of the proposed development site would provide an indication of the presence, population size and breeding status of Great Crested Newt.
- 3.14 It was also recognised that two other ponds dried up very quickly at the start of the season, consequently a full set of survey visits was not completed.
- 3.15 The surveys were undertaken within the recommended survey period and all the surveys were carried out during suitable weather conditions when the temperature was in excess of 5°C at night.
- 3.16 Therefore overall it was considered that the Great Crested Newt surveys of the four waterbodies provided a valid and robust indication of the breeding status of Great Crested Newts within the proposed development site in 2015.

4 KEY POINTS AND FINDINGS

- 4.1 Between April and June 2015 Great Crested Newt surveys were carried out on four waterbodies (three ponds and one water-filled drain) within and adjacent to the proposed development site.
- 4.2 The surveys were carried out by professional, qualified and licensed ecologists, with experience in Great Crested Newt surveys and knowledge of their ecology. The surveys comprised a comprehensive set of surveys using a combination of four different methods of all areas of habitat within the proposed development site and adjacent habitats where access was possible.
- 4.3 The information gathered from the surveys was considered to provide a robust and valid indication of the presence, breeding status and population size of Great Crested Newt in the waterbodies surveyed within the proposed development site. It was noted that during the survey, two ponds dried out and one garden pond was in accessible.
- 4.4 These data may be used in any potential European Protected Species licence applications that may be sought during the next three years, in support of the proposed site development.
- 4.5 The survey fulfilled its objective of:
- identifying the presence of Great Crested Newt in the survey area;
 - identifying which waterbodies in the survey area supported Great Crested Newt;
 - identifying which (if any) waterbodies Great Crested Newt showed signs of breeding activity (through the presence of eggs and/or larvae) and,
 - assigning a population size class to the current population of Great Crested Newt in each waterbody and to the meta-population in the survey area around the proposed development site
- 4.6 Only one Great Crested Newt was found during the surveys. This comprised an adult male Great Crested Newt found during the torch survey of Robin Knights Pond on the 4th visit.
- 4.7 No Great Crested Newt were found in any of the other waterbodies surveyed.
- 4.8 No Great Crested Newt eggs, larvae/Efts were found during the survey visits. Therefore there is currently no evidence that Great Crested Newt are breeding within the proposed development site.

- 4.9 With a total of 1 individual Great Crested Newt recorded from the Robin Knights Pond, the population class in this pond was considered to be a small sized population.
- 4.10 With the peak count of one adult Great Crested Newt recorded during any one of the surveys; the meta-population for the complex of waterbodies present in the survey area as whole should be classed as a small population.
- 4.11 No other amphibians were recorded; although Common Frog spawn was found in the North East Drain.
- 4.12 The presence of only one male Great Crested Newt and no signs to suggest that the species was breeding within the proposed development site indicated that the individual was possibly moving through the area.
- 4.13 The sub-optimal suitability of the waterbodies within the proposed development site would also suggest that the site would not support a breeding population.
- 4.14 However, it was recognised that the terrestrial habitat was suitable to support foraging and hibernating Great Crested Newt and in other years (when/if the ponds do not dry out) the waterbodies could provide breeding opportunities.
- 4.15 As Great Crested Newt are protected under the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) no work, that may have a significant impact on the status of the local Great Crested Newt population or areas of suitable habitat, can be undertaken until a European Protected Species (EPS) licence is granted by Natural England.
- 4.16 None of the permanent waterbodies would be expected to be lost as a result of the site development proposals.
- 4.17 However terrestrial habitat suitable for Great Crested Newt would be affected by the development proposals for the site. Therefore it is considered that the proposed development of the site could cause some loss to Great Crested Newt terrestrial habitat and cause a risk to direct mortality to dispersing Great Crested Newt during construction.
- 4.18 An EPS licence may therefore be needed before the development could proceed for the site. A rapid risk assessment would be required to inform the need to apply for the EPS licence. If a licence was required a detailed method statement and mitigation strategy should be produced, which would potentially require additional information from further Great Crested Newt survey results.
- 4.19 In order to obtain the EPS licence, consideration of other development proposals for the area would need to be incorporated and the preparation of a Great Crested Newt master plan for phased or multi-plot development applications would be required (Natural England 2014).

- 4.20 The mitigation measures to address the Great Crested Newt issues include habitat creation, restoration and enhancement and translocation. The areas where these could be implemented should be included in the scheme design for the development.
- 4.21 If the development proposals were likely to be delayed for three years from the date of this study, then a further equivalent Great Crested Newt survey would be required to update the results provided in this report and inform the development proposals in the future. To address this issue an equivalent Great Crested Newt survey should be carried out after two years.

5 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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6 FIGURES

Figure 1.1.: Red line boundary of the proposed development site.

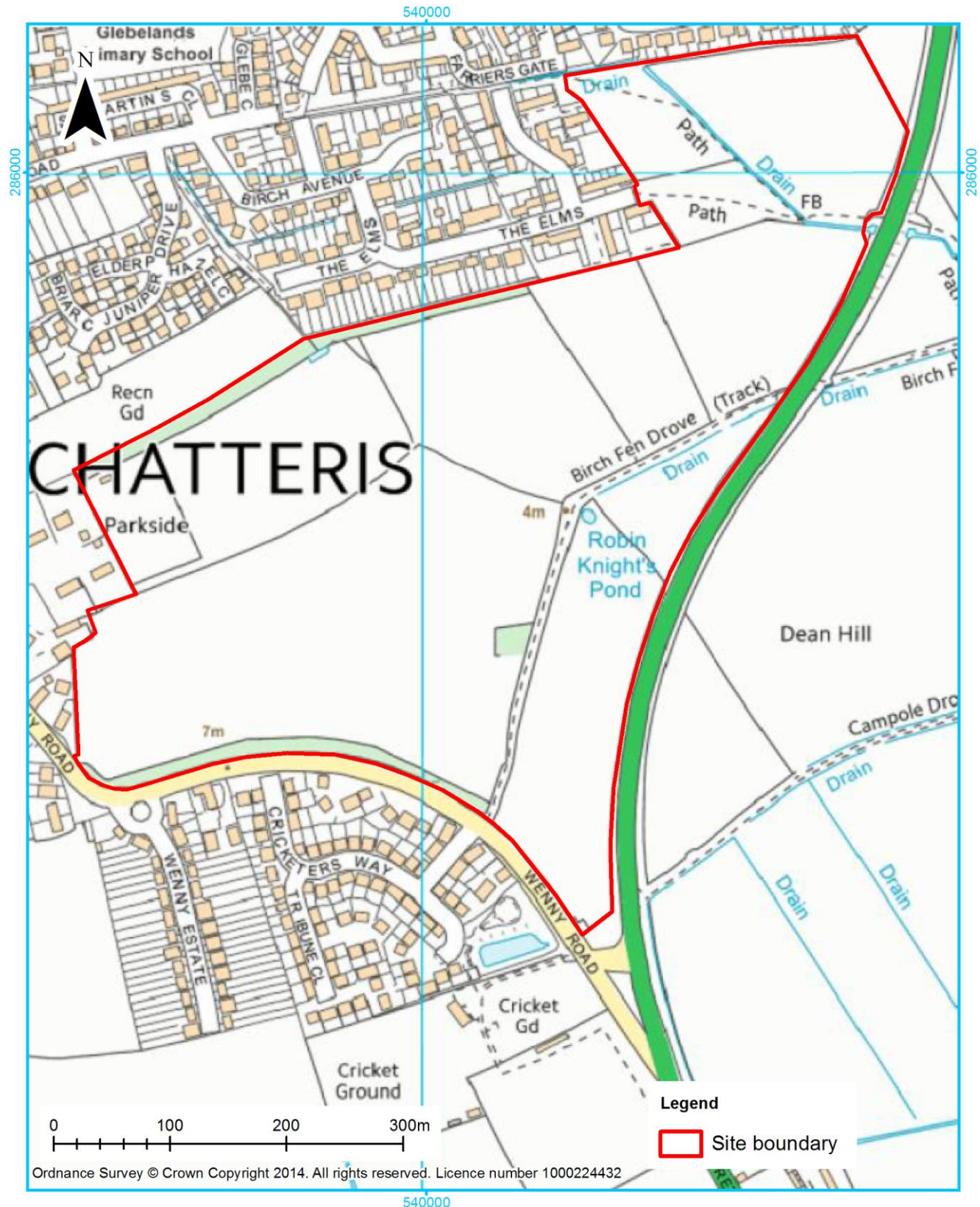


Figure 2.1.: Plan showing the location of the ponds and drain in the vicinity of the land adjacent to Wenny Road, Chatteris; the proposed development site

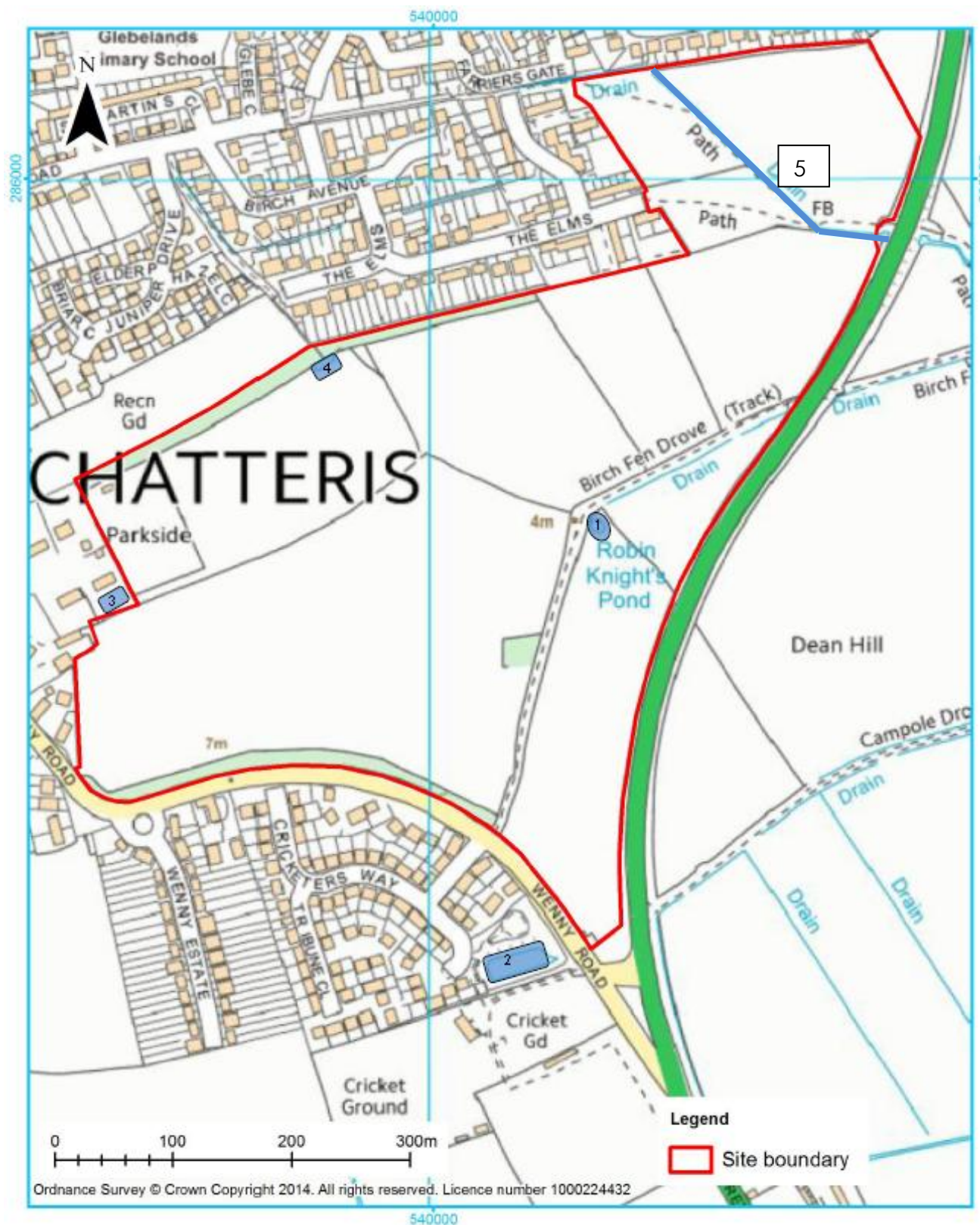
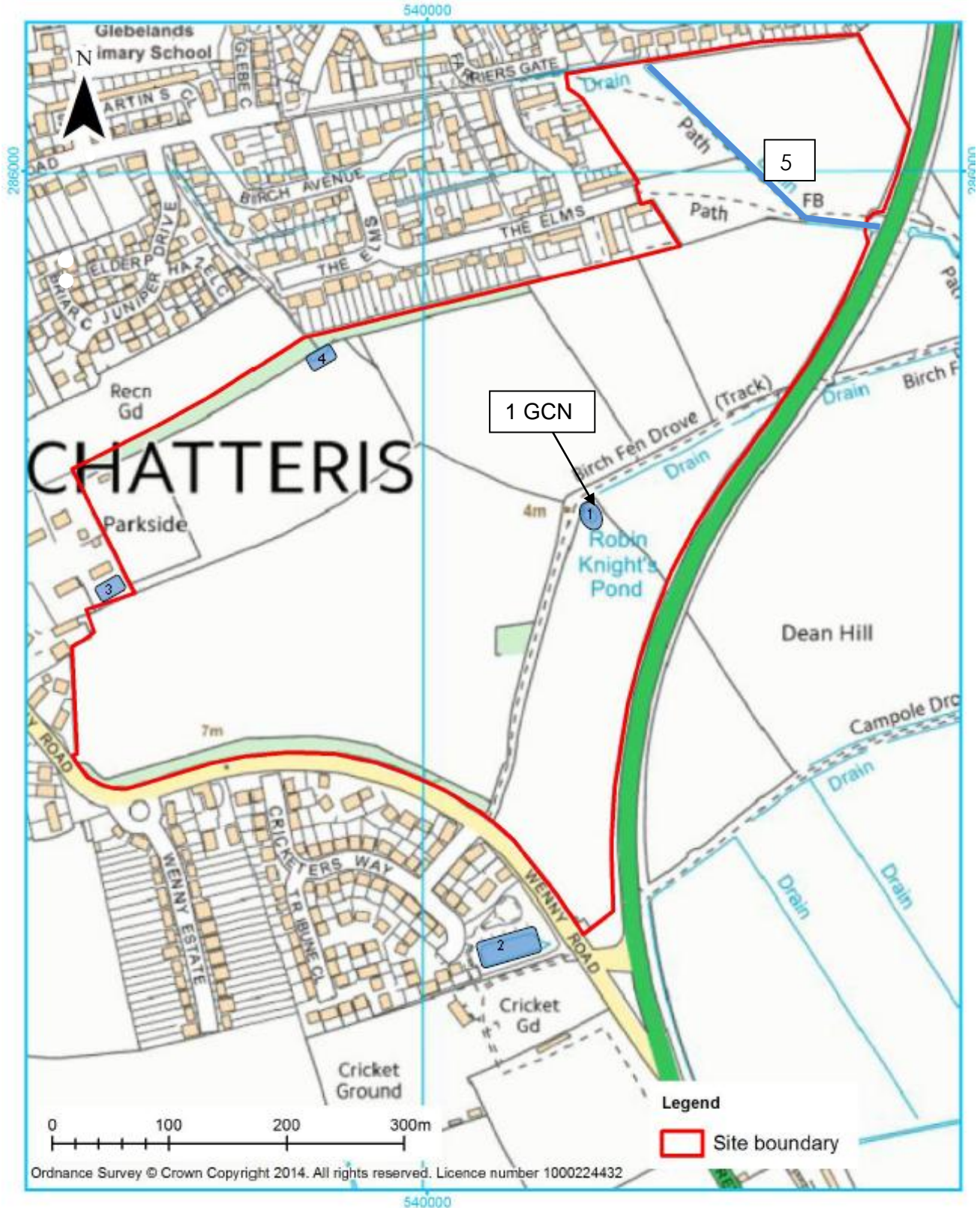


Figure 3.1 Map detailing which waterbody contained Great Crested Newt and the peak count recorded during the spring 2015 survey in the survey area around the proposed development site.



7 PHOTOGRAPHS

Pond 1: Robin Knight's Pond



Pond 2: Wenny Road Attenuation Pond



Pond 3: Parkside Garden Pond



Pond 4: Horse Paddock Pond



Waterbody 5: North East Drain



8 APPENDIX

2015 Great Crested Newt Survey Record Sheets

Pond reference (e.g. Pond 3) - enter in box below:				Method:	Torch			Bottle-trap			Net			Egg search eggs found?	Larvae larvae found? (any method)
Robin Knight's Pond Waterbody 1					Torch power:			No. of traps used in pond:							
No. of survey visits to this pond:		6		1 Million			18								
Sex/life stage:				Male	Female	Imm.	Male	Female	Imm.	Male	Female	Imm.			
(1) Date: 01-02/04/15	Air temp	Veg cover	Turbidity		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	9-6	5	clear	Adult totals:	0			0			0				
(2) Date: 13-14/04/15	Air temp	Veg cover	Turbidity		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	8-7	10	clear	Adult totals:	0			0			0				
(3) Date: 12-13/05/15	Air temp	Veg cover	Turbidity		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	16-11	10	clear	Adult totals:	0			0			0				
(4) Date: 21-22/05/2015	Air temp	Veg cover	Turbidity		1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	14-10	20	clear	Adult totals:	1			0			0				
(5) Date: 28-29/05/2015	Air temp	Veg cover	Turbidity		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	13-11	20	clear	Adult totals:	0			0			0				
(6) Date 10-11/06/2015:	Air temp	Veg cover	Turbidity		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	11-10	20	clear	Adult totals:	0			0			0				
Peak adult count for this pond in any one visit (by torch, trap or net):							1								

Comments and constraints: **Pond dry during second visit**

Great Crested Newt Survey Report 2015: Wenny Road, Chatteris, Cambridgeshire

Pond reference (e.g. Pond 3) - enter in box below:				Method:	Torch			Bottle-trap			Net			Egg search eggs found?	Larvae found? (any method)
Wenny Road Attenuation Pond Waterbody 2					Torch power:			No. of traps used in pond:							
No. of survey visits to this pond:		2		Sex/life stage:			Male	Female	Imm.	Male	Female	Imm.	Male	Female	Imm.
(1) Date: 01-02/04/15	Air temp	Veg cover	Turbidity		0	0	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0
	9-6	55	-	Adult totals:	0			-			0				
(2) Date: 13-14/04/15	Air temp	Veg cover	Turbidity		0	0	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0
	8-7	100	-	Adult totals:	0			-			0				
(3) Date: 12-13/05/15	Air temp	Veg cover	Turbidity												
	16-11	100	-	Adult totals:											
(4) Date: 21-22/05/2015	Air temp	Veg cover	Turbidity												
	14-10	100	-	Adult totals:											
(5) Date: 28-29/05/2015	Air temp	Veg cover	Turbidity												
	13-11	100	-	Adult totals:											
(6) Date: 10-11/06/2015:	Air temp	Veg cover	Turbidity												
	11-10	100	-	Adult totals:											
Peak adult count for this pond in any one visit (by torch, trap or net):															
Comments and constraints:					Pond dry during second visit										

Great Crested Newt Survey Report 2015: Wenny Road, Chatteris, Cambridgeshire

Pond reference (e.g. Pond 3) - enter in box below:				Method:	Torch			Bottle-trap			Net			Egg search eggs found?	Larvae found? (any method)
Horse Paddock Pond Waterbody 4					Torch power:			No. of traps used in pond:							
No. of survey visits to this pond:		2		1 Million			0								
Sex/life stage:				Male	Female	Imm.	Male	Female	Imm.	Male	Female	Imm.			
(1) Date: 01-02/04/15	Air temp 9-6	Veg cover 55	Turbidity clear		0	0	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0
Adult totals:				0			0			0					
(2) Date: 13-14/04/15	Air temp 8-7	Veg cover 100	Turbidity -		0	0	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0
Adult totals:				0			0			0					
(3) Date: 12-13/05/15	Air temp 16-11	Veg cover 100	Turbidity -												
Adult totals:															
(4) Date: 21-22/05/2015	Air temp 14-10	Veg cover 100	Turbidity -												
Adult totals:															
(5) Date: 28-29/05/2015	Air temp 13-11	Veg cover 100	Turbidity -												
Adult totals:															
(6) Date: 10-11/06/2015:	Air temp 11-10	Veg cover 100	Turbidity -												
Adult totals:															
Peak adult count for this pond in any one visit (by torch, trap or net):															
Comments and constraints:				Pond dry during second visit											

Great Crested Newt Survey Report 2015: Wenny Road, Chatteris, Cambridgeshire

Pond reference (e.g. Pond 3) - enter in box below:				Method:	Torch			Bottle-trap			Net			Egg search eggs found?	Larvae found? (any method)
North East Drain Waterbody 5					Torch power:			No. of traps used in pond:							
No. of survey visits to this pond:		4		Sex/life stage:			Male	Female	Imm.	Male	Female	Imm.	Male	Female	Imm.
(1) Date: 01-02/04/15	Air temp	Veg cover	Turbidity		0	0	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0
	9-6	0	average	Adult totals:	0			-			0				
(2) Date: 13-14/04/15	Air temp	Veg cover	Turbidity		0	0	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0
	8-7	0	poor	Adult totals:	0			-			0				
(3) Date: 12-13/05/15	Air temp	Veg cover	Turbidity		0	0	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0
	16-11	0	poor	Adult totals:	0			-			0				
(4) Date: 21-22/05/2015	Air temp	Veg cover	Turbidity		0	0	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0
	14-10	0	poor	Adult totals:	0			-			0				
(5) Date: 28-29/05/2015	Air temp	Veg cover	Turbidity		0	0	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0
	13-11			Adult totals:	0			-			0				
(6) Date 10-11/06/2015:	Air temp	Veg cover	Turbidity		0	0	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	0
	11-10			Adult totals:	0			-			0				
Peak adult count for this pond in any one visit (by torch, trap or net):								0							

Comments and constraints: **Common Frog spawn found 13/04/14**