

Durham Wildlife Trust

For you, for wildlife, for the future



Durham Wildlife Trust visited the land west of Crook's House Farm on 21st Jan 2021

Pond overview and suitability

The proposed ponds lie within Natural England's Strategic Opportunity Areas for great crested newts. Each pond will have an adjacent pond of a similar size created within 250m. There is an existing wetland area (approx. 8,600m² open water) 343m which attracts wading birds eg. Curlews, lapwings.

Each pond location ensures there is no shading on the south side of the pond to allow them to warm adequately. The pond locations are within parcels of land which have formerly been used for livestock grazing/arable farming, however, they are no longer used for this purpose and will be left as semi-improved grassland. The provision of ungrazed and uncut grasslands is of benefit to newts that may occupy the ponds, in addition, the close proximity of hedgerows and mixed woodland add to the suitability of the site.

Pollution and contamination risk

There is no risk of contamination from agricultural run-off from adjacent fields.

There is no public access to the fields, low risk of disturbance from people or dogs. A public footpath is located 40m to the East of the eastern most pond. This footpath is seldom used and future plans include planting native hedgerow along the edge of this footpath which will reduce risk of public or dogs accessing the ponds.

The ponds are all at least 10m apart to ensure - even in flood- they remain distinct bodies of water to reduce the risk of cross-contamination (in the event that one pond becomes contaminated with pollution or an invasive species).

Construction damage to habitats and species

The construction of the ponds will ensure minimal disturbance to existing habitats. Access for a mini digger and each pond will be across landowners land and be low impact. Each pond will be completed within 2 days.

Priority species and habitats

The creation of the ponds will not impact any priority species or habitats. The addition of new ponds will benefit the mammals and invertebrates that are found in the area.

Ongoing maintenance

Ongoing maintenance of the pond will be low due to the low levels of disturbance and the lack of over shading of trees. Durham Wildlife Trust will visit the pond 3 months after creation and an annual visit, for the first 4 years, to assess the pond and survey for newts. Any adjustment required to the pond

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design will be made to ensure it holds water for 12 months of the year at least 1 in 3 years. In the event that the pond requires any adjustments after creation, these will be delivered in September - October and ensure that some areas of the pond are left untouched during any management works eg. De-silting or clearing plants to ensure at least 1/3 open water.

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Durham Wildlife Trust