

**FAO: Rachael Allum**

Sycamore Lodge  
Green Lane  
Hickling Pastures  
Melton  
Leicestershire  
LE14 3QF

*Our ref: 11202/PB/23*

By email attachment: [REDACTED]

18<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Racheal

**Re: Sycamore Lodge: District level Licensing Scheme Project Licence WML-OR59 (DLL)**

***Introduction***

I can confirm that I visited the site on the 12<sup>th</sup> of **August 2022** to assess the site's potential for restoring a pond as part of the DLL scheme. A record of a single great crested newt (GCN) found a few years earlier, plus a favourable assessment of the surrounding countryside, connectivity, and the potential for GCN to use the ponds in the future. The pond was also considered in a poor enough state to fall within the DLL criteria to be included in the scheme. **The landowners signed an agreement (26/09/2022) with Natural England (NE) and EMEC to be part of the scheme for 25 years on completion of the restoration.** This included the restoration of the pond, the pond to be maintained in a favourable state for GCN and allowing a representative of NE to visit the pond from **2024** every year for the **first five** years with a single visit every **five** years for the remaining **20** to collect eDNA samples to test for presence of GCN.



*Pond prior to works*

**EMEC Ecology**

**A division of East Midlands Environmental Consultants Ltd.**

Registered offices: The Old Ragged School, Brook Street, Nottingham, NG1 1EA  
mail@emec-ecology.co.uk www.emec-ecology.co.uk

Telephone: 0115 964 4828 Fax: 0115 964 4829

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*Pond after works.*



*Pond after works. (3-month check)*

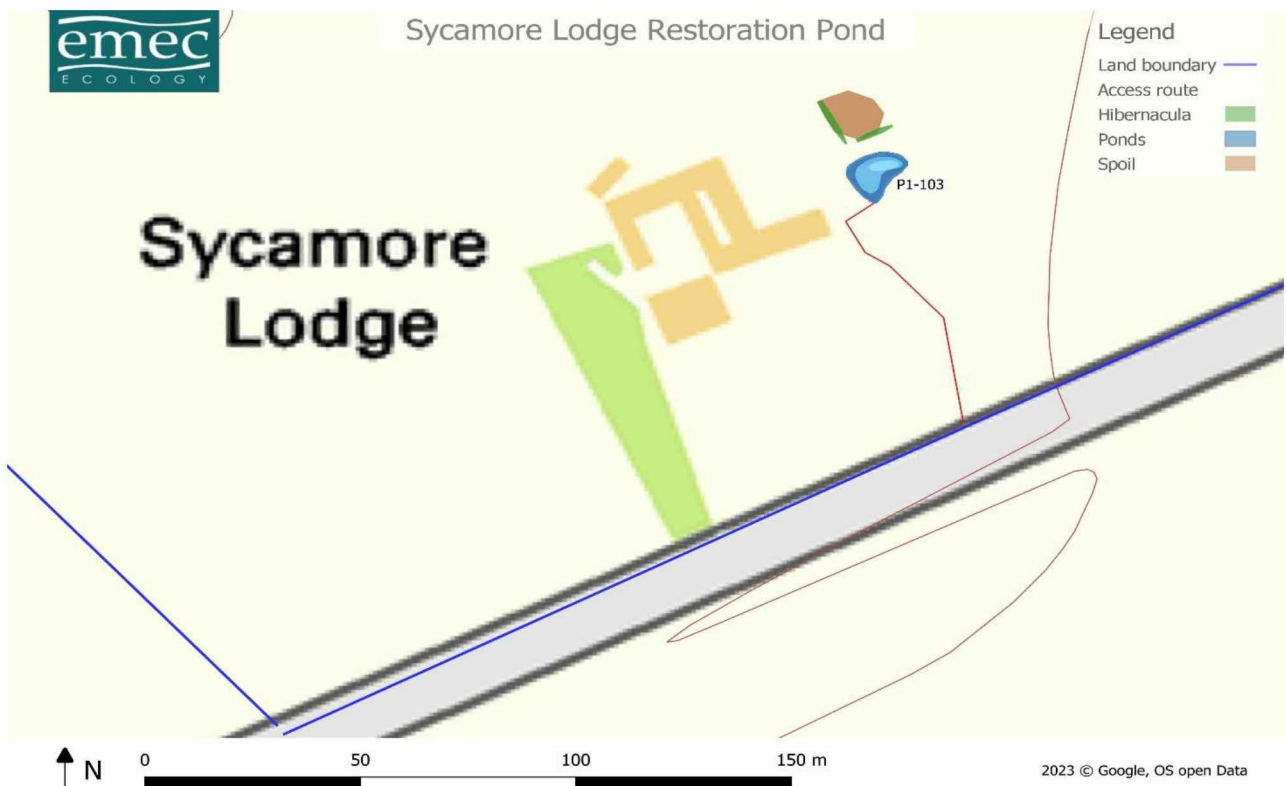
### ***Pond Restoration***

The works were completed on the 12<sup>th</sup> of October 2022. The works comprised of coppicing of surrounding bank vegetation and raising of canopy to allow more light into the pond. Excavation of the silt until the existing base was found. Retaining the bank and stone features as this would now be integral to the pond in retaining water and intertwined with roots.

As part of the project any soil and materials excavated were incorporated into an adjacent **hibernaculum** for GCN over wintering. It is also expected that they would use the mature garden adjacent to the pond. The small grazing field adjacent was used to hold the hibernacula and spoil from the pond.

The hibernaculum was created using old brick rubble and timber found on site, a layer of topsoil and dry pond silt with a top layer of subsoil. Clay pipes were also included to encourage other wildlife.

Several weeks post construction trail cameras picked up muntjac, rabbits, [REDACTED] fox, and pine martin all passing through and investigating.



*Site map of pond and hibernaculum location*

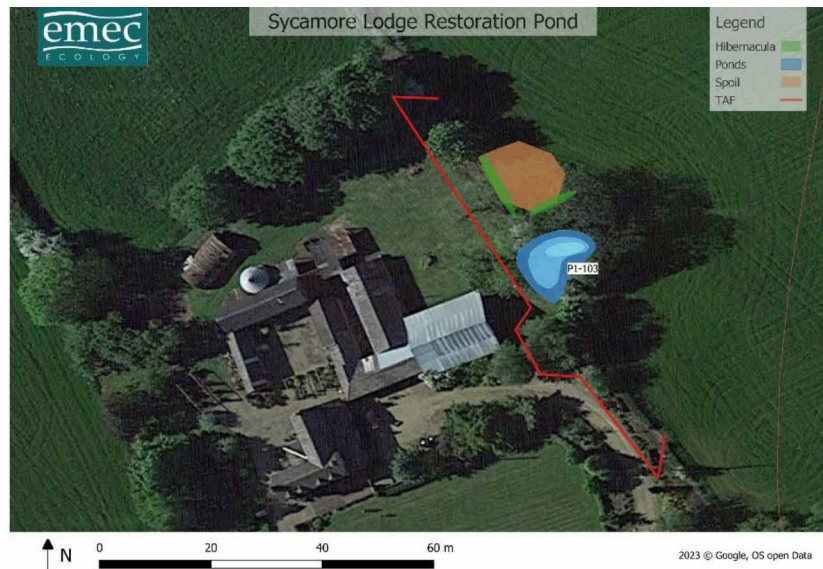
**Post restoration**

In 2024 between mid-April and end of June the first eDNA sample will be taken, with a pond and habitat suitability assessment (HSI). As per agreement and because this is essentially a large garden pond the owners will look after it and EMEC/NE will keep on monitoring the pond.

EMEC and NE have been aware of the plans for the demolition, design and building of a new farmhouse. The owners have been advised that Temporary Amphibian/Reptile Fencing (TAF) will need to be installed prior to any works. Below the TAF can be see on the amended map.

There has only been a single record from over a couple of years ago and no newts of any kind found during restoration of the pond. To ensure that no GCN or any wildlife is harmed that during a slow demolition of adjacent farm buildings, they have an **EcOW** present to monitor for GCN.

Have also advised that the remainder of the working site is Haras fenced to exclude other mammals.



*Site map with TAF*

Reg:



**Philip Bych** BSc Honours  
2021-10109-CL08-GCN  
DLL Project Supervisor/Land Management  
Office: 0115 964 4828 | Mob: 07796 400279



**Wildlife Trust  
Consultancies**