
Ampney Park

Great Crested Newt Presence/Absence Survey

May 2022

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Architects Ltd
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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 In May 2022, Seasons Ecology was instructed by Simon Morray-Jones Ltd on behalf of their client, to undertake a presence/absence survey for great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* of four water bodies located within the grounds of Ampney Park, Ampney Crucis, Cirencester (central OS grid reference: SP 06456 01901). The survey was recommended to inform development proposals across the estate.
- 1.1.2 The Preliminary Ecology Appraisal undertaken of the site by Seasons Ecology in May 2021, was accompanied by a desk study, which identified one record for great crested newt for a location approximately 400m to the north. The desk study also identified that a Natural England 2017-2019 great crested newt pond survey had been undertaken of a pond within the grounds of Ampney Park (referred to as Pond P2 in this report), which reported absence of great crested newt.
- 1.1.3 This report details the method and results of the presence/absence survey undertaken of two lakes (Lakes 1 and 2) and two ponds (Ponds P1 and P2) within the grounds of Ampney Park, and provides a subsequent approach to the works, including requirement for further surveys and licensing, an outline of methods for working and timing of works.

2. Method

2.1 Great Crested Newt Presence/Absence Survey

- 2.1.1 eDNA sampling was undertaken of Lakes 1 and 2 and Ponds P1. Pond P2 was dry at the time of sampling. The methodology was undertaken in line with the current Technical Advice Note (Freshwater Habitats Trust, 2014)¹. Samples were collected on 18th May 2022 and sent to an accredited laboratory (Cellmark) for testing.

¹ Biggs J, Ewald N, Valentini A, Gaboriaud C, Griffiths RA, Foster J, Wilkinson J, Arnett A, Williams P and Dunn F 2014. *Analytical and methodological development for improved surveillance of the Great Crested Newt. Appendix 5. Technical advice note for field and laboratory sampling of great crested newt (Triturus cristatus) environmental DNA*. Freshwater Habitats Trust, Oxford.

3. Descriptions of Water Bodies

3.1.1 Descriptions of the water bodies on site are provided below, taken from the Preliminary Ecology Appraisal report (Seasons Ecology, May 2021).

3.2 Ponds

3.2.1 Pond P1 is located within woodland and is approximately 0.12 hectares (1,200m²) in size and appears over 1m deep at its centre. There is extensive submerged fool's water-cress with water mint, soft-rush and yellow iris along the margins. Large, mature trees overhang the pond and a layer of pondweed covers approximately 20% of the water's surface. Mallard was present at the time of the survey.

3.2.2 Pond P2 is located along the northern boundary of the sheep-grazed pasture in the north-west of the grounds and is approximately 0.006 hectares (60m²) in size. The pond is shallow, appearing less than 50cm deep, and features a mature, overhanging willow with part of its root system exposed. The banks are gently shelving and poached by sheep. There was no aquatic vegetation evident at the time of the survey.

3.3 Lakes

3.3.1 Lake 1 is located in woodland and is approximately 0.08 hectares (810m²) in size. It appears over 1m deep at its centre. The banks of the lake are shallow and vegetated with well-maintained amenity grassland and woodland flora such as daffodils, English bluebell and snake's-head fritillary, with a small patch of bur-reed species. A low number of mature trees overhang the lake and pondweed covers approximately 10% of the surface area.

3.3.2 Lake 2 is located in the south of the site, within woodland. It is approximately 0.77 hectares (7,700m²) in size and appears up to 2m deep in places. The banks of the lake are shallow and predominately grass-covered with occasional patches of marginal vegetation, ornamental planting and woodland ground flora, including cow parsley and wood spurge. A small section of the southern bank is constructed of stone. A patch of common reed grows at the western margin of the lake. Mature trees and cherry laurel shrubs overhang and partially shade the lake. The lake features an island approximately 0.08 hectares (800m²) in size. The island is tree-covered with brash and log piles. Mallard and moorhen were present on the lake at the time of the survey.

4. Results

4.1 Great Crested Newt Presence/Absence Survey

4.1.1 eDNA samples from Pond P1 and Lakes 1 and 2 returned a negative result; evidence that this species is absent from these water bodies. Pond P2 was dry at the time of the survey and water samples could not be collected.

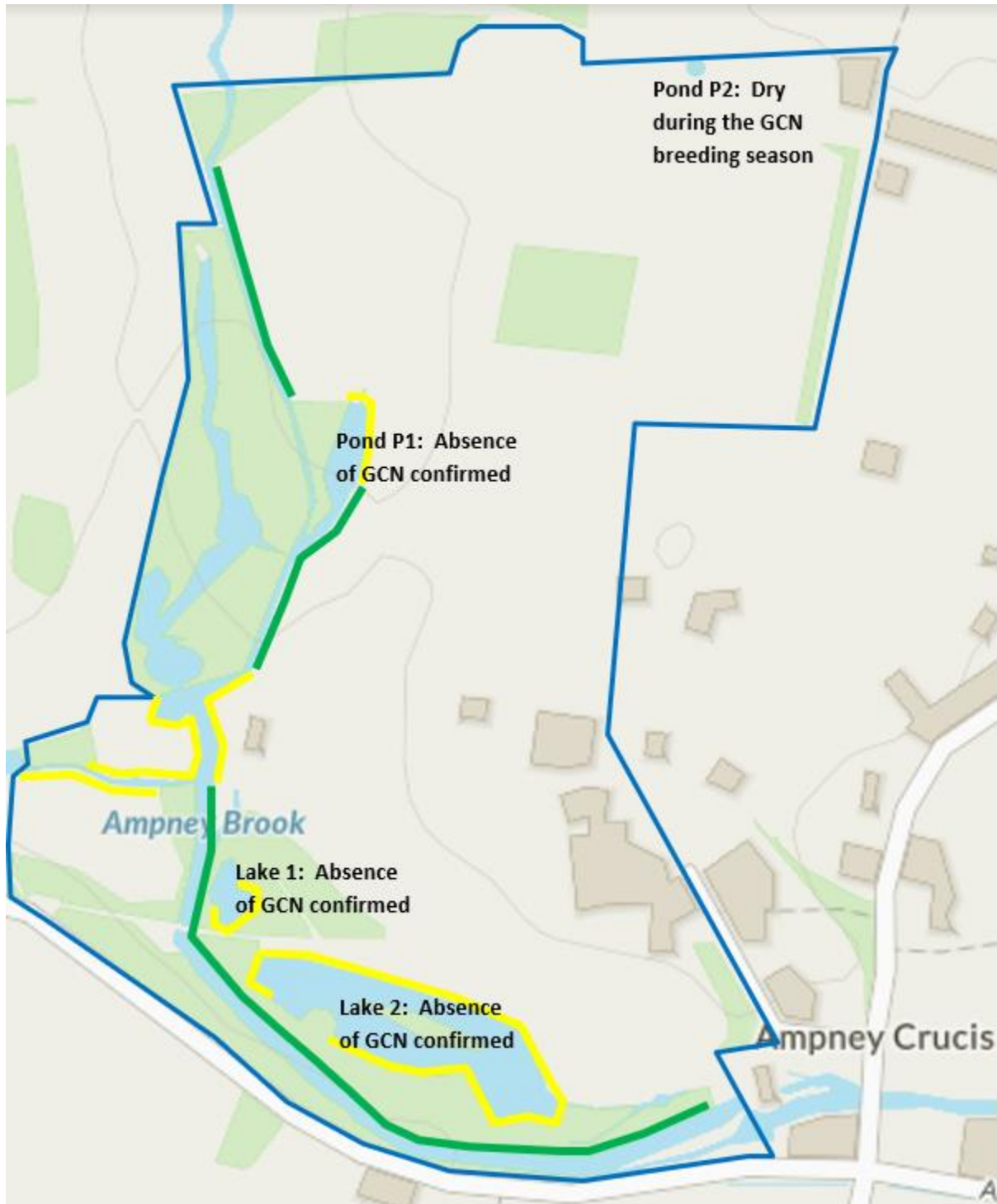
4.1.2 Annex 1 provides a location plan of the water bodies. Annex 2 provides the eDNA results.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1.1 The eDNA results of the water sampling provided a negative result for great crested newt presence in Pond P1 and Lakes 1 and 2. Pond P2 was dry during the survey (main breeding season for great crested newt). Therefore, no further surveys are required and there are no European Protected Species licensing requirements for great crested newt.
- 5.1.2 The water bodies offer suitable aquatic habitat to common and widespread amphibian species, including common frog and common toad. The water bodies will not be affected by the proposal being outside of the development sites.
- 5.1.3 As recommended in the Preliminary Ecology Appraisal, a precautionary approach to clearance of any suitable habitats is recommended. Dismantling of any piles of brash, logs and compost across the site should be undertaken by hand by an Ecological Clerk of Works and should occur between March and October to avoid the reptile and amphibian hibernation season. Any vegetation removal should be preceded by a hand search and supervision during its removal.
- 5.1.4 Trenches should be covered overnight or a means of escape should be provided such as a plank angled from the bottom to the top of the trench to allow animals to escape. Trenches should be checked every morning before works commence.
- 5.1.5 All site clearance should avoid the winter months to avoid the risk of encountering hibernating animals.

6. Annexes

Annex 1: Locations of Water Bodies and Results (May 2022)



Annex 2: eDNA Results (May 2022)

eDNA Technical Report



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Report Reference	R0000226
Report Date	17 Jun 2022
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Site Name	Pond P1						
Site Location	Ampney Park Cirencester						
OS Reference	N/A						
Barcode	Received Date	Sampled Date	Sample Check	Degradation Check	Inhibition Check	Result	Positive Replicates
GCN002814	06/06/2022	18/05/2022	PASS	PASS	PASS	NEGATIVE	0 out of 12

Site Name	Lake 1						
Site Location	Ampney Park Cirencester						
OS Reference	N/A						
Barcode	Received Date	Sampled Date	Sample Check	Degradation Check	Inhibition Check	Result	Positive Replicates
GCN002798	06/06/2022	18/05/2022	PASS	PASS	PASS	NEGATIVE	0 out of 12

eDNA Technical Report



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Dispatch Order Reference	P0000195						
Site Name	Lake 2						
Site Location	Ampney Park Cirencester						
OS Reference	N/A						
Barcode	Received Date	Sampled Date	Sample Check	Degradation Check	Inhibition Check	Result	Positive Replicates
GCN002780	06/06/2022	18/05/2022	PASS	PASS	PASS	NEGATIVE	0 out of 12