

BADGER SURVEY TECHNICAL REPORT

LAND NORTH OF REBECCA ROAD, PERSHORE
WR10 2FB

for

LIONCOURT HOMES &
TOUCH DEVELOPMENTS LTD

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CONTROL SHEET

General Report Information	
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Ecologist	N Valori
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Contract manager	N Loben

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CONTENTS

CONTROL SHEET.....	2
REPORT VERSION CONTROL.....	2
CONTENTS.....	3
OBJECTIVES.....	4
GENERAL SITE DESCRIPTION AND METHODS.....	4
BACKGROUND.....	4
METHODS AND LIMITATIONS.....	5
RESULTS SUMMARY.....	7
WALKOVER SURVEY.....	7
CAMERA TRAP PRESENCE/ABSENCE.....	7
CAMERA LOCATION PLAN.....	9
PHOTOGRAPHS.....	10
CONCLUSION.....	12
LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS & RESOURCES.....	12
CAPABILITY & QUALITY ASSURANCE.....	14

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this survey were:

1. To undertake a badger walkover survey of the site and a 20m radius of its boundaries, to establish the extent of badger activity within and around the area.
2. To detect new badger setts on site, should there be any; and
3. To confirm whether any identified setts are currently in use through a presence/absence survey.

GENERAL SITE DESCRIPTION AND METHODS

Background

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was carried by Betts on 13 May 2024, at a field north of Rebecca Road, Pershore WR10 2FB (SO 93635 46328). During the walkover survey of the site and its boundaries, a single, potential outlier sett was identified on the site's western boundary. To further confirm whether this feature was in use by badgers, a follow-up badger presence/absence survey was carried out. Two camera traps were set out around the sett area for the period between 19 June to 3 July. The following document serves as a technical report detailing the survey findings.

The site is located within a large agricultural field 1km west of the town centre of Pershore. The surrounding landscape is primarily occupied by agricultural fields, with small residential properties extending beyond the eastern boundary. Tiddeseley Wood, a large patch of woodland 500m south-west of the site, and Bow Brook 800m

west of the site, represent two of the more significant semi-natural habitats within the site's otherwise primarily intensive agricultural surroundings.

The majority of the area is occupied by a field of cereal crop and is of limited ecological value. The field boundaries on the other hand are of considerable ecological interest, with a broad variety of both species and levels of maturity of the individual trees and shrubs present within.

A full description of the site, including a landscape plan of on-site habitats at the time, can be found in the proposal's Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Betts, July 2024).

Methods and limitations

Two motion-sensitive camera traps were set out around two burrow openings on 19 June, and left running until their retrieval on 3 July. While the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal included an inspection of both the site and a 10m buffer of its boundaries, this inspection was carried out again and extended further to a 30m buffer. Of this extended survey area, roughly 65% was accessible, as the private properties and reservoir immediately adjacent to the east of the site were not directly accessible. Most of these areas could however still be observed visually, with most providing sub-optimal, sealed surface areas unsuited for burrowing badgers.

The walkover inspection thoroughly examined the accessible survey area for evidence of badger activity including setts, spent bedding, footprints, runs, feeding signs, faeces and hairs. In particular, all holes of mammal artifice were closely scrutinised for evidence of badger activity such as:

Shape and dimension: Badger tunnel entrances are usually semi-circular in cross-section, wider than they are high, with dimensions 250mm wide by 200mm high, or greater. Rabbit burrows are usually round and 150mm in diameter or less.

- Spoil heaps:** Badger spoil heaps are usually larger than those of other species and often contain large quantities of spent bedding, unlike those of foxes and rabbits.
- Debris:** Badgers are animals with a squat stature, low to the ground. As the animals move, long ventral hair sweeps the ground resulting in any debris in the sett entrance being cleared out over time as the badgers leave. Therefore, setts that have been recently active have no, or very little, leaf litter or other debris in the mouth of the tunnels.
- Hairs:** The presence of badger hairs will indicate that badgers have used or investigated the hole, although it does not necessarily indicate that they are currently resident.
- Tunnel appearance:** If a tunnel is being frequently used by badgers and, depending on the suitability of the substratum, its walls will take on a polished appearance from being smoothed by the animal's fur.

RESULTS SUMMARY

Walkover survey

The previously identified sett is located within the site's western boundary tree line, among the roots of a veteran oak. Two large burrow openings are present, with an old badger latrine located nearby. No droppings, fresh or otherwise, were found within or around this latrine, suggesting a lack of recent use.

No other mammal burrows were observed across the survey area during the walkover inspection. Mammal runs were noted largely within sections of the south-eastern and southern boundary, but observed during the survey to largely be the result of commuting housecats from the neighbouring suburban properties.

No other signs of recent badger activity, such as further latrines, snuffling holes, foraging or claw marks were noted throughout the survey area. Two fur samples were found within the barbed wire fencing on the western boundary; however, closer inspection of these revealed them to be from hare or rabbit. No fur, badger or otherwise, was found around the mouth of the identified burrows.

Camera trap presence/absence

Upon retrieval and review of the camera footage, no badgers were detected or recorded from any of the two camera traps, and no animals were observed emerging or re-entering any of the burrows. Animal activity was nevertheless recorded in the area, namely hare, little owl and wren. No badgers however were observed moving through the area. Due to its relatively wider field of view, Camera 1 was the sole source of these fauna recordings during the survey period. Notably, no muntjac were recorded in spite of them and signs of their activity being widely observed during

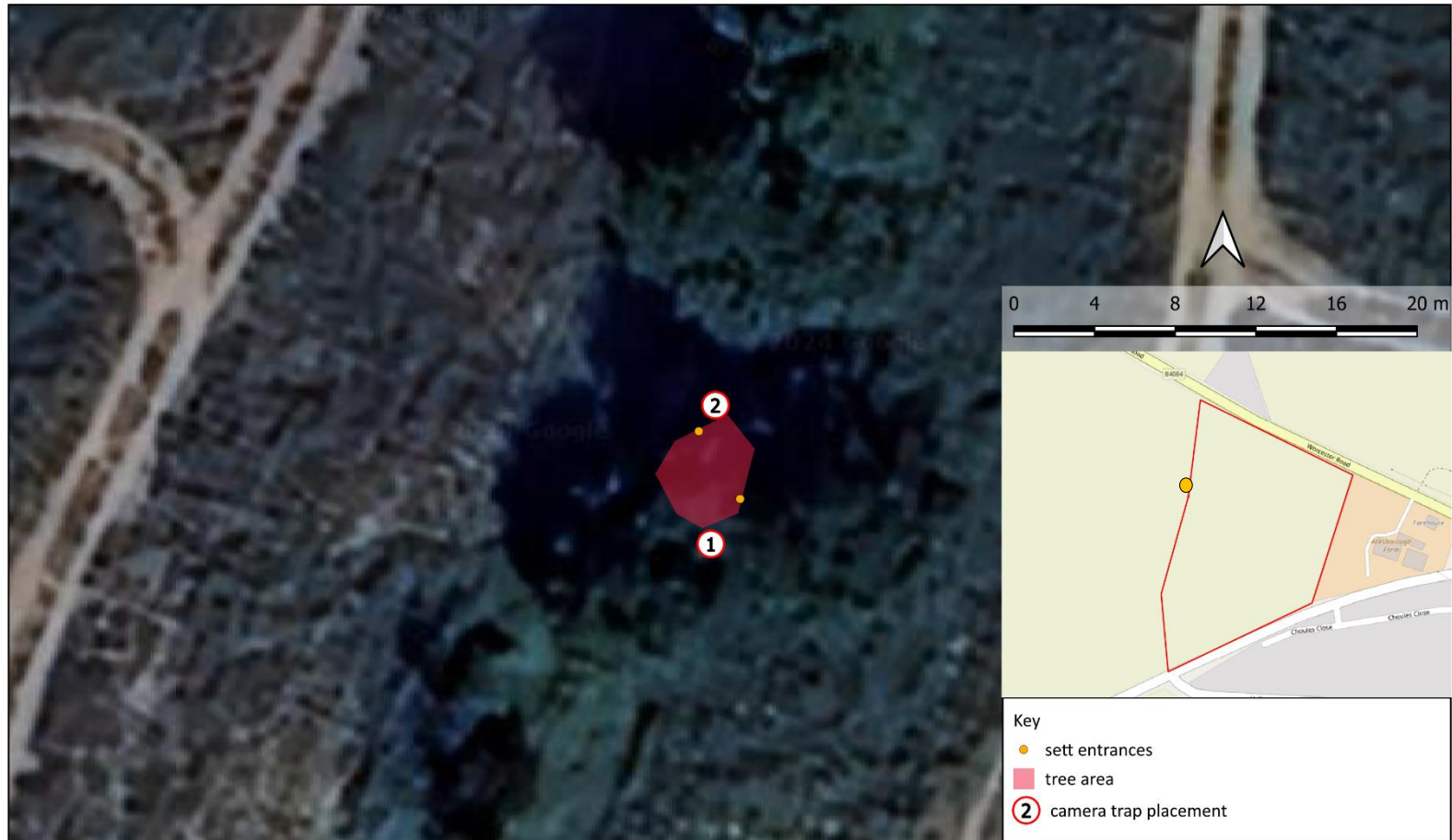
the day within the camera's surroundings, possibly suggesting the camera's angling recorded solely the area immediately in front of the burrows themselves.

Individual recordings are reported within Table 1 below.

Table 1. Camera trap fauna recordings throughout the survey period.

DATE	CAMERA NUMBER	COMMENTS
19/6/2024	Camera 1	21:26 - Little owl calls off-camera.
20/6/2024	n/a	No fauna recordings
21/6/2024	n/a	No fauna recordings
22/6/2024	n/a	No fauna recordings.
23/6/2024	Camera 1	6:08 - Wren rests atop camera.
24/6/2024	n/a	No fauna recordings.
25/6/2024	Camera 1	21:52 - Brief movement from of surrounding vegetation by little owl.
26/6/2024	Camera 1	5:14 - Little owl on ground, foraging.
27/6/2024	n/a	No fauna recordings.
28/6/2024	Camera 1	16:48 - Hare briefly halting and inspecting camera.
29/6/2024	n/a	No fauna recordings
30/6/2024	n/a	No fauna recordings
1/6/2024	n/a	No fauna recordings.
2/6/2024	n/a	No fauna recordings
3/6/2024	n/a	No fauna recordings

CAMERA LOCATION PLAN



PHOTOGRAPHS



Fig 1. Indicative view from Camera 1, looking northward along the fence line. The burrow entrance is in the lower left-corner of the shot.



Fig 2. Little owl foraging on the ground by Camera 1, around the burrow entrance.



Fig 3. Hare commuting along the fence line by Camera 1



Fig 4. Indicative view from Camera 2, looking downward towards the northwest-facing burrow entrance. No fauna was recorded by this camera throughout the duration of the survey.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of both the walkover survey and presence/absence camera footage, the identified badger sett is deemed to no longer be active, and no further badger setts appear to be present across the rest of the site or within a 30m radius of the site's surroundings

The scheduled construction works are unlikely to have significant impacts on any local badgers, with no setts being present within a 30m radius and similar foraging opportunities being widely available in the immediately adjacent fields throughout the work period. Permeability across the landscape for both badgers and other mammals will be ensured through the retention of current native hedgerow and tree lines, as well as the creation of new woodland across the site's western corners.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS & RESOURCES

For further information on the legal status of badgers and the protection of their setts, which is recognised as relatively complicated and rather subjective, please see the following. The statutory authority for the area in which this site lies is Natural England.

Forestry Commission (1995). *Forestry Practice Guide 9.* Forestry operations and badger setts.

Natural England (2009). *Badgers and Development: A guide to best practice and Licensing.*

Natural England (2009). *Guidance notes: Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (as amended).* Interpretation of 'disturbance' in relation to badgers occupying a sett.

Natural England (2009). *Guidance notes: Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (as amended)* Guidance on 'current use' in the definition of a badger sett.

Please also consult the current Natural England website.

Please note that other authorities may produce their own leaflets and guidance

IMPORTANT

Please be aware that, because the natural environment is dynamic, ecological reports generally have a limited period of currency. Many statutory authorities now regard one year as the maximum time that should elapse before a report will need to be updated, occasionally it may be longer but it may also be less.

Betts are a scientific practice. Any information relating to legal matters in this report is provided in good faith but does not purport in any way to give any advice on or interpretation of the law whatsoever. Professional legal advice should always be sought. Any designs, specifications, advice, suggestions, or comments written or verbal relating to construction or supervision of building-related work of any kind are provided for consideration only and under no circumstances are to be interpreted as provision of design, management or supervision *sensu* the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007.

The statutory agencies issue guidance on badgers and development from time to time and, whilst this report takes that guidance into account, for greater detail on specific points it is recommended that the relevant web site of the appropriate authority be consulted (Countryside Council for Wales, Natural England or Scottish Natural Heritage for example).

CAPABILITY & QUALITY ASSURANCE

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Nicholas Valori BSc MSc – Ecologist

Nicholas holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Zoology and a Masters in Ecological Consultancy from the Russell Group University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Modules encompassed Human-Wildlife Conflicts, Botany, Soil Surveys, use of Geographic Information Systems, Environmental Impact Assessment and Wildlife Legislation in theory and practice, plus a full range of other studies including Animal Behaviour, Applied Ecology, Biological Modelling, Ornithology, Entomology and small mammal trapping. Nicholas' field experience includes great crested newt surveying and trapping, bat surveys, habitat management and enhancement work, volunteer training and a variety of other UK, EU and international projects.

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