



BADGER SURVEY REPORT
WARBURTON LANE, TRAFFORD

REC REFERENCE: 1CO105698EC9R1

REPORT PREPARED FOR: REDROW HOMES NORTH WEST

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Site Address	Warburton Lane, Trafford, M31 4BN
Grid Reference	Land to the east of Warburton Lane, Trafford (Site 1): SJ 712 902 Land to the west of Warburton Lane, Trafford (Site 2): SJ 712 903
Site Area	The site comprises of two aspects separated by the A6144: Site 1: Approximately 12.3 ha Site 2: Approximately 12.5 ha
Current Site Use	The site comprises of four agricultural fields bordered by hedgerows and trees and Red Brook to the north.
Adjacent Site Use	The site is situated within an agricultural area to the south of Partington.
Results	[REDACTED]
Conclusions and Recommendations	[REDACTED]

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Resource and Environmental Consultants Ltd (REC) has been commissioned by Redrow Homes North West Ltd to undertake a badger survey at Warburton Lane, Trafford; hereafter referred to as the 'site'. The proposed development includes the erection of up to 400 residential units, with associated parking, road infrastructure, attenuation ponds and landscaping.

An Ecology Overview of the site was undertaken by The Environment Partnership (TEP) in November 2016 (Report Ref: 6138.001). The survey did not find badger signs during the site walkover; however, an exhaustive search was outside the scope of the commission. The survey concluded that the woodland, hedgerows and arable land provide foraging and possible sett-construction habitat for the species. Additionally, the desk study returned no records of badgers within 1 km of the site and it was concluded that the development will not affect badgers.

REC recommended an up to date site walk over to establish the presence/absence of badgers within the site boundary due to the suitability of the habitat and the potential for adverse impacts on the species.

1.2 Site Description

The eastern aspect is 12.3 ha in extent, consisting of three arable field parcels set within a large expanse of agricultural land. Access to site was gained via an existing track west of the site off the A6144. Whilst the Western Aspect is 12.5 ha in extent and consists of a portion of a large arable field. Access to the site was gained via an existing track east of the site off the A6144.

The surrounding area is dominated by large arable field parcels and residential properties. The site is bound bordered to south by Moss Lane. A watercourse (Red Brook), forms the northern boundary along with arable fields and the eastern boundary is formed by more arable land.

Please refer to **Appendix 1** for the Site Location Plan.

1.3 Objectives

The purpose of the badger survey was to identify:

- ▶ Any setts or setts in construction;
- ▶ Signs of badger activity within the site;
- ▶ Potential impacts of the proposed development on badgers; and,
- ▶ The need for mitigation.

The survey findings are presented in this report. The aim of this report is to provide an assessment of the likely importance of the site for badgers and badger conservation and to advise on any necessary mitigation and enhancement proposals which will enable the development to proceed in compliance with relevant wildlife and nature conservation legislation.

1.4 Legislative Framework

Badgers and their setts are legally protected under The Protection of Badgers Act (1992), which is based primarily on the need to protect badgers from baiting and deliberate harm or injury. Under this legislation it is illegal to:

- ▶ Wilfully kill, injure, take, or cruelly ill-treat a badger, or attempt to do so;
- ▶ Possess any dead badger or any part of, or anything derived from, a dead badger; and,
- ▶ Intentionally or recklessly interfere with a sett which includes, disturbing badgers whilst they are occupying a sett, damaging or destroying a sett, causing a dog to enter a sett, or obstructing access to it.

A badger sett is defined in the legislation as *“any structure or place, which displays signs indicating current use by a badger”*.

2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY

REC undertook an initial site walkover of the site and surrounding habitats in September 2017. The weather conditions during the survey were overcast and damp. The proposed site boundary was then reduced and a follow up badger walkover survey was carried out on the 9th October 2018.

Survey techniques followed guidance by English Nature (2002) and Natural England (2009). Within the survey area, all fence lines, grassland, woodland and scrub habitats were systematically surveyed for evidence of badgers in the form of:

- ▶ Faeces: badgers usually deposit faeces in characteristic excavated pits, concentrations of which (latrine sites) are typically found close to setts, at territory boundaries or adjacent to favoured feeding areas;
- ▶ Setts: comprising either single isolated holes or a series of holes likely to be interconnected underground;
- ▶ Paths between setts or leading to feeding areas;
- ▶ Scratching posts at the base of tree trunks;
- ▶ Hair traces caught on rough wood or fencing;
- ▶ Snuffle holes, formed during foraging and comprising characteristically disturbed ground vegetation; and,
- ▶ Footprints.

Where setts were found, activity levels were assessed using the following criteria:

- ▶ Well used – clear of debris, trampled soil mounds and obviously active, with signs of activity, such as presence of prints, dislodged guard hairs around the entrances;
- ▶ Partially used – some associated debris or plants at the entrance. Could be used with minimal excavation and usually with signs of activity within the vicinity, for example, badger pathways; and,
- ▶ Disused – partially or completely blocked entrances.

Setts were classified following definitions described in Roper (2010). A summary is provided in **Table 2.1**.

Table 2.1: Classifying badger setts

Type	Criteria
Main	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Multiple entrances with large spoil heaps and obvious paths emanating from and between sett entrances. A number of activity features suggesting continuous presence and use. ▶ Used for breeding.
Annex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Usually at least 50m from main sett with an intermediate number of entrances and no obvious paths connecting to other setts. ▶ May be used regularly/intermittently often relating to clan/territory size.
Subsidiary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Like an annex but some distance from the main sett. ▶ May not be in use all the time, even if main sett is very active.
Outlier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Usually only one entrance hole. ▶ Little spoil outside holes. No obvious paths connecting to other setts and only used sporadically. ▶ May be used by foxes and rabbits.

Where possible, all areas of the site were surveyed. However, in some areas the vegetation was so dense that a detailed inspection of the area could not be undertaken. These areas were very small and no signs of badgers, or mammal trails led into these areas.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Eastern Aspect

3.1.1 Initial Survey

The initial survey in 2017 found well-worn mammal paths around the boundaries of the site and fresh snuffle holes were found at the time of survey indicating recent activity (**Appendix 1**). No badger sett was located within the site boundary or within 30 m of the site boundary.

3.1.2 Second Survey

During the second site walkover, similar well-worn mammal paths and fresh snuffle holes were again found around the site border (**Appendix 1 & Appendix 2; Plate 4**). A latrine containing fresh faeces was also recorded to the centre of the site (**Appendix 1 & Appendix 2; Plate 3**). No badger sett was recorded within the site boundary or within 30 m of the site boundary.

3.2 Western Aspect

3.2.1 Initial Survey

The initial survey in 2017 also found well-worn mammal paths around the boundaries of the site and fresh faeces and snuffle holes were found at the time of survey indicating recent activity. A badger sett was recorded along the original western site boundary; however, this sett is now 700 metres from the current proposal (**Appendix 2; Plate 7 & 8**). No badger sett was recorded within the site boundary or within 30 m of the site boundary.

3.2.2 Second Survey

During the site walkover in 2018, a single badger foot print was found within the site boundary to the north (**Appendix 1**). No badger setts was recorded within the site boundary or within 30 m of the site boundary.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The mammal paths, latrines and snuffle marks found across both surveys confirm that badgers are in the area. However, no setts were found within the site boundary, or within 30 m of the site boundary. The nearest confirmed sett located 700 m west of the site boundary. Mammal paths, latrines and snuffle marks were found across both surveys of the eastern aspect, but there were no setts present within the site boundary, or within 30 m. It is unlikely that badgers are present on site.

The field signs found during the surveys are associated with the site's boundary features. The current development proposals indicate that the boundary features will be retained, and that a buffer zone will be implemented between Red Brook and the proposed development.

4.1 Precautionary Working Methods

Due to the badger activity recorded within the site, it is proposed that the following Precautionary Working Methods are implemented during activities throughout the site:

- ▶ Prior to works commencing, all contractors and site personnel will be briefed on the presence of badgers at the site, their legal protection and of working practices to avoid disturbing badgers;
- ▶ To avoid entrapment of foraging badgers within excavations, it is recommended that all excavations are back filled each evening. If this is not possible, any excavation left open overnight should either be sufficiently covered/fenced off to provide a 45 degree bank to facilitate escape; and,
- ▶ Due to the inquisitive nature of badgers it is recommended that during the construction phase, any litter, tools and machinery that could potential cause harm to badgers are kept away from badgers by appropriate overnight storage.

4.2 Updated Site Walkover

Due to the highly mobile nature of badgers, as well as their ability to rapidly excavate new setts, it is recommended that an updated badger walkover be undertaken immediately prior to the commencement of development on site. Any new setts that may have been excavated should be noted and a badger mitigation strategy formulated.

It is anticipated that the above mitigation is sufficient to ensure that there will be no negative effects on badgers as a result of the development.

5. REFERENCES

- ▶ English Nature (now Natural England) (2002) *Badgers and development*.
- ▶ Harris, S., Creswell. P., and Jefferies, D.J., (1989). *Surveying badgers*. Mammal Society, London.
- ▶ Natural England (2009a) *Badgers and Development: A Guide to Best Practice and Licensing*.
- ▶ Natural England (2009b) *Guidance on 'Current Use' in the definition of a Badger Sett*.
- ▶ Roper, T (2010). *Badger*. New Naturalist, HarperCollins, London

APPENDIX 1 - Site Location Plan and Location of Badger Evidence



APPENDIX 2 – Site Photographs



Plate 1: The site from the west



Plate 2: Red Brook on the northern border



Plate 3: Badger latrine to the east of the site



Plate 4: Badger snuffle mark to the north of the site



Plate 5: An overview of the site



Plate 6: Scrub along Red Brook along the northern border (himalayan balsam present)



Plate 7: One hole of Sett 1 found 700m outside of the current site on the first visit.



Plate 8: A second hole of Sett 1 found 700m outside of the current site on the first visit.

APPENDIX 3 – Site Parameter Plan

