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**PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AT
LAND OFF BARTON ROAD
BARLESTONE NUNEATON
CV13 0EU**

**BADGER SURVEY REPORT
(CONFIDENTIAL)**

(December 2023)

REPORT REF: 2381 - PHA



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report was commissioned by MyPad to provide a protected species survey for badgers within the vicinity of the site of the proposed residential development at Land-off Barton Road, Barlestone, Nuneaton CV13 0EU.

It is concluded that a single badger sett is located within the hedgerow along the northern boundary of the existing field. The sett is located over 30m away from the boundary of the proposed development. A sett closure is not recommended at this time as it can be protected and retained as recommended by this report.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Paul Hicking Associates were commissioned by MyPad to conduct an updated Protected Species Assessment for Badgers for the proposed residential development at Land-off Barton Road, Barlestone, Nuneaton CV13 0EU.

Previous Survey History for Protected Species and Habitats

- 1.2 The site was previously surveyed by FPCR on 6th September 2019. The survey identified an active badger sett approximately 33m north of the site within the base of Hedgerow H3. The sett was recorded to comprise of a single entrance at the base of a dead tree stump with associated spoil heap and latrine nearby.

Site Description and Location

- 1.3 The site comprises of two grazing pastures enclosed and separated within native species hedgerow and with stock fencing. This c3.4ha rectangular shaped site is accessed via a single farm gate off Barton Road which runs along the southern boundary. The site is located at grid reference SK 4195 0569.



2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 This section describes how the essential evidence supporting this report was gathered and what equipment and techniques were used.

2.2 The site walkover survey was undertaken in good weather condition on 10th November 2023 to record the location of existing setts and signs of activity. Photograph and video footage were taken during the survey.

Topographical Survey

2.3 A topographical survey was made available for the site. This survey was provided in a CAD format and includes the position of all significant trees and hedgerows on or immediately adjacent to the site. The survey also includes all other landscape features such as the position of existing buildings and structures, pathways and access roads. Changes in ground levels were also recorded on the survey and are related back to known ordinance survey levels and co-ordinates.

2.4 Weather Conditions.

Table 1:

Date	Weather Conditions
10/11/2023	12.7°C Dry and sunny with light breeze 1-2, 30% cloud cover. Ground was heavily waterlogged following recent heavy rain.

Ambient temperature was recorded using an ETI Hygro-Thermometer.

Badger Survey

2.5 Badger (*Meles meles*): - are nocturnal animals and the survey therefore involved a site walk over survey searching for evidence of this species.

Specific signs which were searched for as follows:

- Setts and day nests (bundles of grass and other vegetation where badgers may sleep above ground);
- Dung pits and latrines (i.e. concentration of dung pits);
- Paw prints and paths;
- Hairs (which may be found at the sett or caught on fences and vegetation);
- Scratching posts (found at the base of trees);
- Feeding signs (i.e. 'snuffle holes' or small scrapes on the woodland floor and/or grassland where badgers have looked for earthworms and plant tubers etc.).

Survey Limitations

No limitations were identified to allow an assessment of the site for badger.

- 2.6 Mammals Generally – There is potential for the presence of small terrestrial mammals such as hedgehog, rabbit, brown hare and signs were looked for including runways and droppings. There are no watercourses, drains or dikes connected to the site and therefore there is no connectivity for water vole or otter.

Legislation

- 2.7 Badger – is a widespread and generally common species. However, they 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 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 by 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.
- 2.8 A badger sett is defined in the legislation as “any structure or place, which displays signs indicating the presence of a badger”.

3.0 RESULTS

3.1 The section states the findings of the survey effort.

Walkover Survey 10th November 2023

- 3.2 The location of a sett (SETT 1), was found within the hedgerow along the northern boundary of the site. This is at a different location to the sett previously identified by FPCR in 2019. At the FPCR location no presence for a sett or activity was found however, there is a sett at the base of a tree further north of the survey site which may be the correct location.
- 3.3 All pastures within and surrounding the site are currently grazed by sheep. There are access gaps within the central hedgerow to allow the sheep to pass between fields.
- 3.4 SETT 1 – is located within the northern hedgerow and is located within the centre and extending each side of a double-laid hedgerow structure comprising of two rows of predominantly hawthorn hedge laid in two parallel rows. There are extensive push thro's, runs and trails within and alongside this hedgerow. There is a clear large hole and earthworks on the southern side of the hedgerow. Along the northern side of the hedgerow there are numerous exit/entrance holes however, these are covered by dense grass and bramble vegetation forming a projecting mound into the field. These seem to be older than the fresh hole on the south side suggesting that there has been some periodic absence however, the presence of the new and fresh earthworks suggest a current presence and occupation.
- 3.5 CONNECTIVITY – there is good connectivity and route network within and alongside the existing hedgerows which provide a safe foraging route for both badger and other mammals. Whilst the field is generally well stock fenced there are access points at the junction with the adjacent housing development to the east and generally through gaps below the farm gates. There are extensive trails within and alongside all of the hedgerows. The central hedgerow leads to the pond along the southern boundary and road-side and there are tails within the hedge leading to this however, due the recent heavy rain this train is mostly flooded.
- 3.6 OTHER SPECIES – there are signs for the presence of smaller mammals and these are represented by the size of push thro's within the grassland and at the base of the hedgerow and the size and wide of trail which is far smaller than those created by badger and are more likely associated with species such as hedgehog.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SETT 1

- 4.1 This sett is sufficiently separated and isolated away from the construction works and final development footprint. This is potentially an outlier sett from the main setts known nearby. No further survey work is required on this sett at this time but it should be regularly monitored by the project ecologist on a regular basis. If the works are delayed by 6 months then the site should be again resurveyed and record any changes and/or the formation of new outlier setts.

4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.3 Badgers are able to co-habit with humans and ancient setts are still present within villages where houses have been built around them. In many cases of development there is normally pressure to close and/or relocate the sett. In this instance the sett can be protected and retained and allowed to develop naturally.
- 4.4 The proposed works are not invasive to the sett and therefore it can be protected and retained and therefore a formal sett closure is not advised or recommended at this time.
- 4.5 There are no setts or earthworks within the central hedgerow within the vicinity or 30m of the proposed development. At the time of the survey the majority of the base of the hedgerow contained flood water.
- 4.6 Badgers and small mammals - the following precautionary measures should be undertaken during the construction phase of the development:
- No foundation work should be left uncovered, overnight or for any length of time to avoid mammals becoming trapped in foundation or services trenches. Where this is unavoidable then trenches should be left with a sloping end or ramp to allow any animal that may fall in to escape.
 - The existing sett is to be protected by the erection of Heras fencing FULLY separating the development from the remaining pasture and retaining access to the north, east and west and is to be regularly monitored by a suitably experienced ecologist during the duration of the works. Ensure no gaps at ends of fencing – tie into stock fencing.
 - Pipes over 150mm in diameter should be capped off at night to prevent animals entering.
 - If mounds of earth or other materials are present on site then they should be checked regularly by the site manager and project ecologist to ensure that mammals have not excavated into these. Preferable earth mounds should be minimised and removed as quick as possible.

5.0 SITE STRATEGY



Sett location.



Foraging entrance and exit points to be maintained.



Line of Heras fencing.

