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COMMERCIAL PROPERTY ADVICE



Badger Survey Report

This report may contain sensitive ecological information, it is the responsibility of the Local Authority to determine if this should be made publicly available.

Berrowgreen Road, Martley

On Behalf Of:

Hayfield Homes Construction Ltd

Prepared By: Abigail Lloyd BSc MSc

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Badger Survey Report

Berrowgreen Road, Martley

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Date: 27.02.2024

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CONFIDENTIAL

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.0 Site location

1.0.1 Harris Lamb Property Consultancy (HLPC) was commissioned by Hayfield Homes to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) of Land off Berrow Green Road, Martley (central national grid reference SO 74991 59561) hereafter termed the ‘site’ (see Figure 1 below).

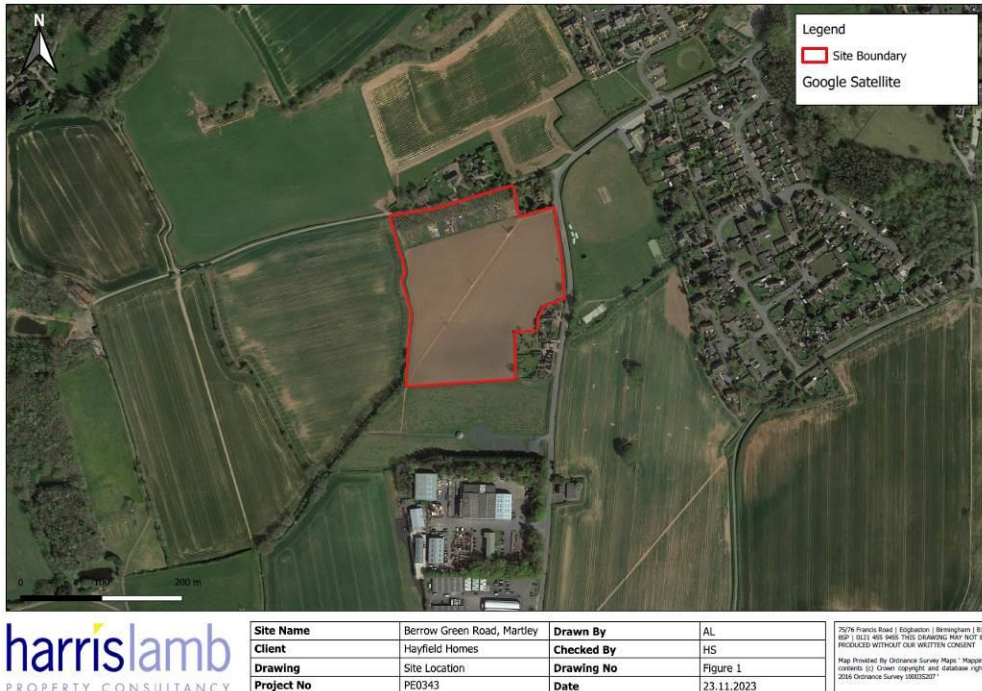


Figure 1: Site Location.

1.0.2 The site is c. 3.8 ha and is located to the south of Martley, which is a small village in the Malvern Hills district in Worcestershire. The site is dominated by arable land with hedgerow boundaries, and smaller sections of allotments and broadleaved woodland to the northern extent of the site. A public footpath crosses the site.

1.1 Legislation

1.1.1 The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 makes it illegal to wilfully kill or injure a Badger or attempt to do so, and also makes it illegal to intentionally or recklessly interfere with a Badger sett. This includes damaging or destroying a sett, obstructing access to a sett and disturbing a Badger while it is

occupying a sett. Full details of legislation can be found at www.legislation.gov.uk.

1.2 Proposed development

1.2.1 The Applicant is submitting an outline planning application for the construction of c. 50 dwellings with driveway parking, access roads, drainage system, and blue and green infrastructure.

1.3 Purpose of this report

1.3.1 The purpose of this report was to help determine the following:

- the presence/absence of Badgers within or immediately surrounding the site.
- identify further survey work or mitigation requirements.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Field survey

2.1.1 The survey was undertaken on the 13th of February 2024 and conducted by an HLPC' ecologist with 6 years' field survey experience. Survey methods followed best practice guidance from the Mammal Society¹.

2.1.2 All badger setts found on site were recorded. During the survey, the level of activity associated with badger hole/s was graded into one of three categories as described below:

- **Well used** – clear of any debris or vegetation, are obviously in regular use and may or may not have been excavated recently.
- **Partially used** – Not in regular use and have debris such as leaves and twigs in entrance or have moss or other plants growing around entrance. Partially used holes could be in regular use after a minimal amount of clearance.
- **Appears disused** – Do not appear to have been used for some time and are partially or completely blocked.

2.1.3 Setts were also classified according to the four recognised types according to the Mammal Society guidance¹, namely; Main Sett, Annexe Sett, Subsidiary Sett and Outlying Sett.

2.1.4 A thorough walkover survey was completed to check for the presence of badgers and the survey area included the proposed development site along with survey of wider greenspace where accessible. The survey area is shown in Figure 1. Key signs that were searched for included:

- sett entrances, e.g. entrances that are normally 25 to 35 cm in diameter and shaped like a 'D' on its side;
- large spoil heaps outside sett entrances;
- bedding outside sett entrances;
- badger footprints;

¹ Harris S, Cresswell P and Jefferies D (1989) Surveying Badgers, Mammal Society.

- badger paths;
- latrines;
- badger hairs on fences or bushes;
- scratching posts, and
- signs of digging for food.

2.1.5 Georeferenced photographs were taken of any setts found and all Badger activity was mapped.

2.2 Limitations

2.2.1 Access into adjacent private gardens was not granted and 30 m beyond the site boundary was not surveyed in these incidents.

3.0 RESULTS

3.0 Background data

3.0.1 The data search by Worcestershire Biological Records Centre (WBRC) provided ten records of badgers to be within 2 km of the site. The closest record being located c. 0.55 km north of the site in 2014.

3.1 Survey data

3.1.1 Although no definitive evidence of badger was recorded during the initial site walkover survey in 2022 a single hole was monitored by means of an infrared trail camera in August 2023 to determine presence/absence of badger. Review of the trail camera footage determined that the hole was not in use. No evidence of badger was recorded entering or exiting the hole.

3.1.2 During the detailed badger survey undertaken in 2024, a large number of small mammal holes were identified within the site and beyond the site boundary. All holes within site boundary were present along the arable field margins (Figure 2) and were indicative of rabbit occupancy due to the size and shape of the holes. In addition, rabbit droppings were present outside the majority of holes (Plate 1), and on one occasion fox *Vulpes vulpes* scat was also observed (Plate 2).



Plate 1: Small mammal hole with rabbit droppings at entrance.



Plate 2: (right) Rabbit droppings and fox scat nearby hole entrance.

- 3.1.3 A single possible hole outlier sett was recorded off-site, approximately 32m south-west of the site boundary (See Figure 2 and Plate 3).



Plate 3: Possible off-site outlier badger sett (SO 74881 59428)

- 3.1.4 Evidence of small mammal foraging such as rabbit was observed (Plate 4) located on the south-eastern boundary of the site within the arable field

margins. In addition, small mammal pathways were identified within this area heading into the residential private gardens.



Plate 4: Foraging activity along south-eastern site boundary (SO 75046 59517)



Site Name	Berrow Green Road, Martley	Drawn By	AL
Client	Hayfield Homes	Checked By	CG
Drawing	Small Mammal Holes & Possible Badger Sett	Drawing No	Figure 2
Project No	PE0343	Date	26.02.2024

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Figure 2: Small mammal activity and possible off-site outlier badger sett (SO 74881 59428)

4.0 ASSESSMENT & RECOMMENDATIONS

4.0 Proposed Development

Potential impacts

4.0.1 No badger sett has been recorded within the site boundary or within 30m of the site boundary where access was available. A possible single hole outlier sett was recorded approximately 32m south-west of the site. As such badger are not considered a statutory constraint to the proposed works.

4.0.2 However, due to the possible presence of a single hole off-site outlier sett approximately 32m south-west of the site, and likelihood of badger of commuting / foraging in the local area works should be carried out in a precautionary approach following the below method statement.

Method Statement

4.0.3 A precautionary approach should be adopted during the construction phase. In order to prevent any badger (or other small mammal) becoming trapped within any footings/trenches these should be securely covered where possible or profiled to allow an escape route from any such trench within the development site. If this is not feasible, sturdy wooden planks should be placed within each trench at the end of each working day, to provide a ramp by which trapped animals may escape.

4.0.4 Any trenches/pits will be inspected each morning to ensure badgers or other mammals have not become trapped overnight. Should a badger become trapped in a trench it will likely attempt to dig itself into the side of the trench, forming a temporary sett. Should a trapped badger be encountered, a suitably qualified ecologist will be contacted immediately for further advice.

4.0.5 Any open drainage or pipework with a diameter of 150 mm or above should be capped at the end of each day and secured to prevent access to badger. The storage of any chemicals at the site will be contained in such a way that they cannot be accessed or knocked over if investigated by badgers or other mammals.

4.0.6 The site manager will ensure the above methods are carried out at the end of each works day until the completion of all ground works are complete. In

the unlikely event that a badger is seen or suspected to be on site, works must stop immediately, and a suitably qualified ecologist consulted.

- 4.0.7 Careful consideration will also be given to the location of topsoil storage mounds that can readily be used by badgers for the creation of new setts.
- 4.0.8 As the site supports suitable areas of habitat including a broadleaved woodland belt and is connected to a wider expanse of suitable habitat, it is recommended that prior to construction commencing an update badger survey should be undertaken by a suitably experienced ecologist. Should an active badger sett be found, works within 30 m of the sett should not occur until appropriate mitigation, and if necessary, a Natural England licence is in place.
- 4.0.9 If construction works have not commenced within 12 months of issuing this report, it is recommended that a detailed badger survey is completed to verify the findings of this report.
- 4.0.10 The site manager will ensure the above methods are carried out at the end of each works day until all ground works are complete.