

## METHOD STATEMENT – BADGER

### INFORMATION FOR CONTRACTORS

#### MARTINS GREEN, BERDEN.

##### *Relevant Legislation*

Badgers are a high profile species, popular in the public perception, and fully protected by law, mainly as a result of badger baiting. Under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 the law offers considerable protection to both badgers and badger setts. It is an offence to kill or take badgers or cause a dog to enter an occupied sett and also to intentionally or recklessly:

- Damage a badger sett or any part of it
- Destroy a badger sett
- Obstruct access to, or any entrance of a badger sett
- Disturb a badger whilst it is occupying a badger sett

In addition, the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996 makes it illegal to subject badgers to any wilful act of cruelty or abuse.

##### *Species Ecology*

The European Badger (*Meles meles*) is one of the larger British mammals, weighing around 10kg. Although comparatively common, its distribution is uneven, with about one third of the national population being found in the south west of England. They are rarely seen due to their nocturnal lifestyle.

Badgers rely upon a variety of types of habitat for food and shelter. The majority of setts are found within woodland, though they can occur within scrub, on hedgebanks, or other areas with well-drained soils, a lack of disturbance and suitable foraging areas in the vicinity. Typical badger habitat is in the lowlands, below 1000m AOD, including old woodland on sloping ground, a network of pastures and hedgerows and perhaps other food sources such as arable fields and old orchards. Permanent pasture is particularly important, as it supports high earthworm populations, one of their key food sources. Other food sources are small mammals, insects, fruits, nuts and crops.

##### *Field Signs*

Badger holes are usually at least 250mm in diameter and entrances form a semi-circular shape with a flattening base and dome shaped roof and sides. Entrances commonly have large spoil heaps outside the entrance of earth and old bedding and there may be hairs in the soil that can be identified as badger. Other field signs include the presence of latrines, broad well-flattened trails and footprints.



If the entrance hole is only partially used it is likely to have debris such as leaves or twigs in the entrance and have vegetation growing around the entrance. If the hole is disused it is likely to be partially or completely blocked. The remains of old spoil heaps may be covered by moss or plants.



### *Visual Surveys*

Our visual survey has indicated that there is a risk that badgers may enter the footprint of the Proposed Development as there is stock fencing which allows wildlife to pass through.

There are not any signs of any Badgers present on the property Martins Green.

There is not any signs of any Badger Setts.

### *Working Methods*

To minimise the risk of harm, and to help ensure that conservation status is maintained, the following procedures must be implemented:

- Fires will not be permitted, as part of the works and any chemical stores will be secure.
- Wherever possible, works within open trenches will be completed and refilled within one day, to minimise the risk of badger, or other animals, falling into any open trenches. (Open trenches will be minimal as the Cartlodge does not require large openings).
- Prior to the commencement of ground clearance works, a visual check to ensure that no Badgers have taken up residence since this current survey. In the unlikely event that this has occurred, and the sett is in such a position that it will be disturbed by the development, a licence from Natural England will be required to re-locate the sett into an area where it will not be impacted on by construction activities. Please note the area being used to construct the new Cartlodge is in place of an old shed, so it is very unlikely badgers would be present as it is in place of a
- All ground works will take place during daylight hours when no Badgers will be active. Deep holes and open trenches could potentially trap Badgers (and other wildlife), especially if these fill up with water. Escape routes will therefore be provided if holes and/or trenches cannot be infilled immediately. These will be in the form of branches or boards placed on the bottom of the trench, with their upper ends above ground level and touching the sides, or sloping ends left in trenches.
- At all times care will be taken if required to remove vegetation and stripping topsoil, as other mammals and reptiles could be present. Any mammals or reptiles disturbed or uncovered will either be caught by hand and relocated to a safe area in the adjacent wild meadow or will be left to vacate the work site in their own time.