

BADGER SURVEY

**32 KINGSEND,
RUISLIP, MIDDLESEX HA4 7DA**



Commissioned by: **B. G. Ackland**

Report Number: ASW/BGA/146/26/2023
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. There were no badger (*Meles meles*) setts or field signs present anywhere within the application site at 32 Kingsend.
2. The front and rear gardens were thoroughly surveyed for badger presence, with no constraints present.
3. Fox and domestic cat evidence were found within the gardens, but no fox earths were noted.
4. There were fox scrapes within the rear lawn as well as a hole dug by foxes during foraging within the dense shrubs at the very end of the garden.
5. Mammal runs, made by foxes and cats mainly, are present within the rear lawn.
6. Clearly, there was no evidence that badgers have ever visited this property.
7. There are no constraints in regards to badgers and the future site redevelopment by the client.

1. INTRODUCTION

- A Badger Survey was undertaken at 32 Kingsend, Ruislip, Middlesex HA4 7DA, during February 2023, for: B. G. Ackland.
- The national grid reference for the site is: TQ090871.
- This badger survey was required due to the proposal by the client to demolish the existing house and to replace with new dwellings.
- The main method used for this survey, as well as the full results and photographs can be found within this report.
- Both this assessment and the report were undertaken and compiled by Mr Andrew S. Waller, Consultant Ecologist, ASW Ecology Ltd, with the help from an assistant ecologist.
- Mr Andrew S. Waller MSc BSc (Hons) MCIEEM, Director of ASW Ecology Ltd - has been a Consultant Ecologist since 1997, and has very extensive experience and knowledge of protected wildlife species including badgers and for bats, for which he is fully licensed to survey throughout England by Natural England for consultancy purposes (Bat Class 2 Licence Registration Number: 2015-15703-CLS-CLS). He also has Natural England survey licences for great crested newts and barn owls. He has been studying bats for 30 years and wildlife in general for 41 years. He is a Full Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and meets the requirements of being a Suitably Qualified Ecologist.

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2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Badger survey

- A daytime based badger survey was undertaken at the stated application site, on 27/2/2023.
- A 2km radius online data search was also undertaken to support this survey, using the NBN Atlas website, as well as records from the ASW Ecology database.
- Weather conditions were very good eg dry, cool, part cloudy, calm, plus visibility was excellent on the visit.
- The presence of badgers at the existing site, especially the front and rear gardens, was assessed by finding potential evidence such as setts, latrines, snuffle holes, paw prints, scratch marks, feeding remains, badger paths, push ups and for badger hair on any fences

2.2 Constraints

- The main constraint to this daytime based badger survey was the timing of this study, where it was only possible to survey during the late Winter period, for example, due to the commissioning of this study.
- However, given the actual survey results, and with badgers active at this time of year, this is seen as a minor constraint only, since it is not possible to survey any site all year round.
- As always though, without taking into account any further active surveying or monitoring, this study can only provide a “snapshot” of the potential presence badgers species at the site during the time of the survey visit.
- This report is valid for 1 year only, which is standard for species survey reports.

3. BADGER SURVEY RESULTS

3.1 Badger survey

- **There were no badger field signs at the property, with no setts, latrines, badger hair, feeding remains or other evidence recorded at this site.**
- Badgers are known to be present in the wider area, as shown in the desk study for this report.
- But the presence of barriers such as main roads and urban conurbations will likely prevent direct connectivity from this property to the nearest badger population.
- Further information on the survey results can be found in the next chapter of this report.

3.2 Desktop study

- A 2km radius online badger related desk study was undertaken by us for the application site. This does not replace a full biological records search, which was not selected by the client, but does contain some of the same information to support this report. The NBN Gateway (with strict permission) was mainly used.
- The ASW Ecology database was also used for a data trawl for badger records as this has collated records in the UK for 41 years.
- The key summary findings were:
- **Badger records are present within 2km of the application site, with the nearest record about 1km or less away from the property.**

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Significance of the survey results

- In summary, there were no badger setts or field signs present anywhere within the application site at 32 Kingsend.
- Only fox and domestic cat evidence were found within the gardens at this property, but no fox earths were noted.
- There were fox scrapes within the rear lawn as well as a hole dug by foxes during foraging within the dense shrubs at the very end of the garden.
- There were also mammal runs, made by foxes and cats mainly, present within the rear lawn.
- There was no indication that badgers have ever visited this property and the house owner had never seen badgers here previously either.
- There are no follow-up actions required, in regards to badgers, based on the results of this investigation.

4.2 Impact assessment

In the absence of any mitigation measures, the following potential impacts identified from the proposed development related works on badgers, are considered to be:

- **Badgers:** Without any mitigation, no badgers would be disturbed by the proposed development works. There is no risk of badger tunnels being collapsed or setts being damaged and destroyed. **Potential impact level: Nil**

4.3 Summary of the legal protection of badgers in the UK (Simplified summary only of the legislation – please see other texts for the full details)

4.3.1 THE LEGAL PROTECTION OF BADGERS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

In the UK, the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, is the most relevant to this mammal species. Under this legislation, it is illegal to injure, kill or take any badger or attempt to do so without a special licence.

It is also illegal to dig for a badger, and to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any part of a badger sett, or to allow a dog to enter the sett, or to disturb a badger whilst it is occupying a sett.

Certain offences can be caused by reckless, intentional or wilful behaviour, and the Act should always be read in detail for the exact wording.

Penalties for such offences can be severe, and can include fines of up to £5,000 per offence eg per badger sett or per badger, and/or up to six months imprisonment.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Best practice guidelines – breeding birds and development

- **FOR AWARENESS ONLY:** As per any development related site, the general advice is that no vegetation eg trees, bushes, shrubs, hedges, bramble scrub or dense ivy cover should be removed during the bird nesting season as all bird nests are fully protected by law, and this includes whilst a nest is being built by the adult birds.
- This includes both buildings and bird boxes, where nesting birds have been shown to be present.
- If any nests are present within the boundaries of the proposed development footprint during the clearance phase, then these must be left alone until the young birds have fully fledged from the nest and no further breeding attempts are to take place.
- The main bird nesting season in the UK, currently runs mainly from early January to September, but sometimes birds can start breeding before or after this period eg birds have been found by us nesting in late December at other sites due to milder winters.
- Therefore, September to mid-December are the best months for such vegetation clearance works.
- Although it is possible for a consultant ecologist to physically search any trees, hedges, bushes and shrubs at a site to ensure no hidden nests are present beforehand.

6. REFERENCES

- (1) Clark, M. (2017) Badgers. Stansted, Whittet Books.
- (2) Pearce, G.E. (2011) Badger Behaviour, Conservation and Rehabilitation. Exeter, Pelagic Publishing.

APPENDIX 1:

PHOTOGRAPHS A-H

(All photos dated 27/2/2023)



Photograph A

The rear garden had no evidence of badgers



Photograph B

The end of the rear garden has a lot of cover but no badgers have visited here



Photograph C

The front garden also had no badger evidence



Photograph D

No hidden badger setts were present in the dense shrubs and trees



Photograph E

Fox evidence was present in the rear garden



Photograph F

Mammal runs were also present in the rear garden, made by foxes and cats



Photograph G

A small burrow in the rear garden, was probably made by foxes, as no rabbits are known to be present



Photograph H

Cat faeces were present in the front garden

APPENDIX 2:

MAP A – SITE PLAN WITH TARGET NOTES

