

Appendix 8.4: Badger Survey

Land at Barkham Square

Land at Barkham
Square: Badger
Survey
Draft
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Approval for issue

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Contents

1 INTRODUCTION 2

1.1 Overview.....2

1.2 Site Description.....2

1.3 Legislation 2

2 METHODOLOGY 3

2.1 Desk Study 3

2.2 Field Survey.....3

2.3 Limitations 4

3 RESULTS 6

3.1 Desk Study 6

3.2 Badger Survey.....6

4 SUMMARY 7

5 REFERENCES 8

Annex

Annex A Badger Survey Results 9

Glossary

Term	Meaning
The Applicant	Crest Nicholson Operations Limited (Chiltern m Division)
The Project	Land at Barkham Square

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
ES	Environmental Statement
TVERC	Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre.
WCA5	Animal species protected from intentional killing injuring or taking under schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Units

Unit	Description
Km	Kilometres
m	metre
Ha	hectare

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 This Appendix of the Environmental Statement (ES) has been prepared by RPS on behalf of Crest Nicholson Operations Limited (Chiltern Division).
- 1.1.2 The purpose of this technical report is to present the methodology and results of the badger survey for the Project. The results of this report have been used to inform Chapter 8: Ecology and Nature Conservation the ES.

1.2 Site Description

- 1.2.1 The site is located at Barkham Square, Arborfield south-east of Reading, Berkshire (the Site). It comprises approximately 61.3 ha of mainly grassland grazed by sheep. There are blocks of ancient woodland found on Site. There is a pond located to the south, adjacent to the Barkham Brook. The Barkham Brook runs through the centre of the Site in a north-south orientation.
- 1.2.2 The wider landscape is generally rural in nature with parcels of woodland, including ancient woodland. Arable fields are found to the east and north of the Site. Waterman's Lake is located approximately 30m south of the Site boundary.

1.3 Legislation

- 1.3.1 Badgers are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. This act is based on the need to protect badgers from baiting and deliberate harm or injury. The act makes it an offence to:
 - Wilfully kill, injure, take, possess or cruelly ill-treat a badger, or attempt to do so; and
 - Intentionally or recklessly interfere with a sett. Sett interference includes disturbing badgers whilst they are occupying a sett, as well as damaging or destroying a sett or obstructing access routes.
- 1.3.2 A sett is defined as “any structure or place that displays signs indicating current use by a badger”.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Desk Study

- 2.1.1 A data request was submitted to Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) for records of protected species including badger within 2 km of the Project site as part of the ecology desk study. The full results of the desk study are presented in ES Appendix 8.1: PEA. The results of the desk study pertaining to badger are presented in this report.

2.2 Field Survey

- 2.2.1 A badger survey can be carried out at any time of year, as badgers do not hibernate. Winter surveys are often preferred as the vegetation levels are likely to be reduced, facilitating visibility of setts. However, levels of badger activity using other signs such as runs and foraging may be more easily understood when vegetation growth is present, and this also tends to make it easier to understand how recent and how frequent such activity might be.
- 2.2.2 The survey sought to identify and record all signs of badger activity based primarily on field signs. Evidence of badger activity can be identified in the following ways:

Setts

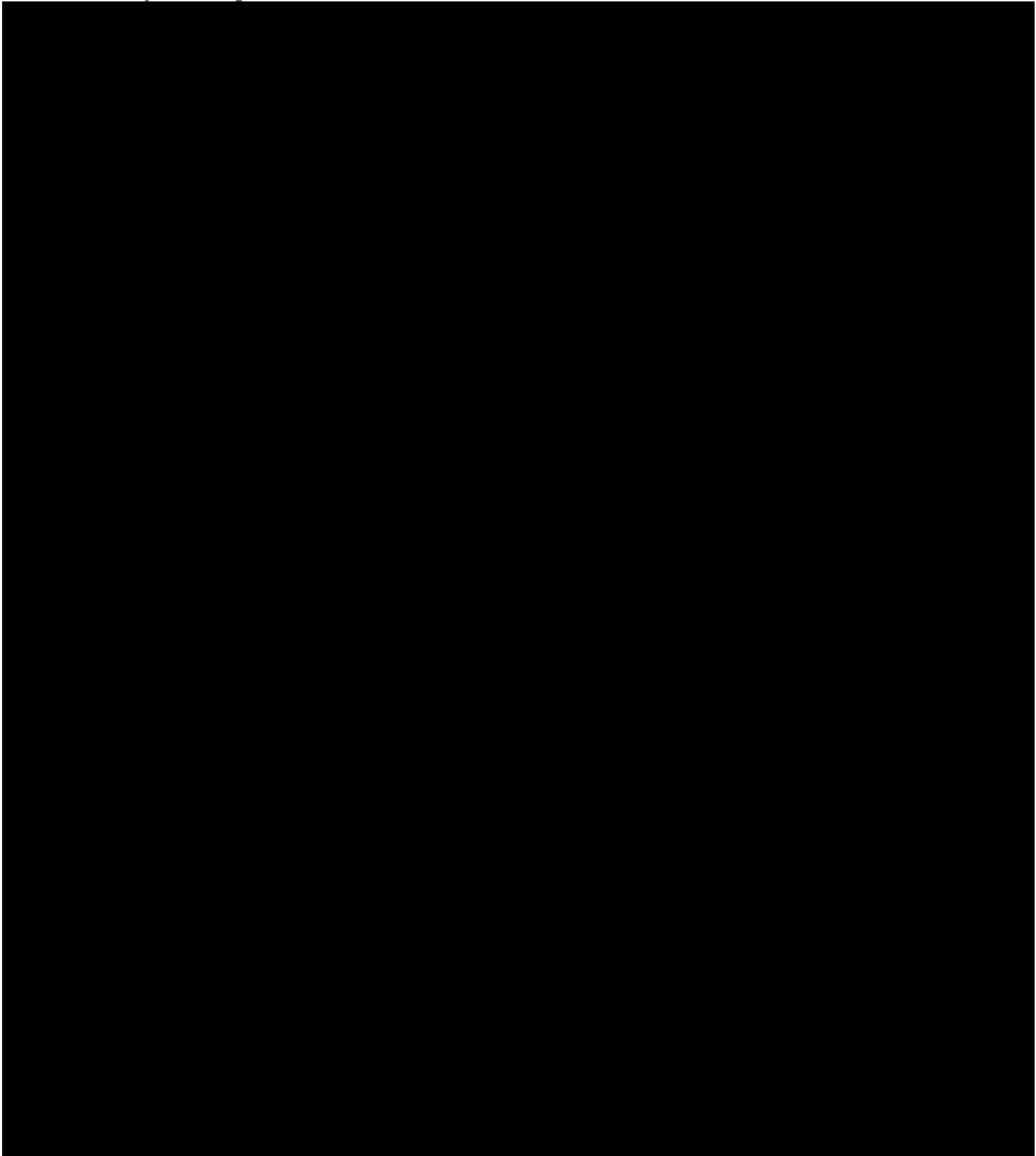
- 2.2.3 A sett is defined as “any structure or place, which displays signs indicating current use by a badger”. Natural England guidance (Natural England, 2009) regarding “current use” takes into account the fact that badgers may use setts on an occasional basis and therefore, suggests that signs of activity recorded within weeks of proposed works schedules, rather than months or days, should be taken as an indication of current use. Signs that could indicate the absence of badgers should also be surveyed for, such as absence of signs of activity or debris in sett entrance ways.
- 2.2.4 Setts are identified on the basis of their size, location and form. To establish relatively recent badger activity, and to confirm that the structure really is a sett, spoil heaps are inspected for badger hair or footprints. Activity is gauged by general demeanour, with fresh spoil and unobstructed holes. They are categorised as:
- Well used: being clear of debris or vegetation or obviously in regular use and may or may not have been excavated recently;
 - Partially/ occasionally used: not in regular use, with debris such as leaves and twigs in the entrance, or moss and/or other plants growing in or around the entrance. Partially used holes could be in regular use after a minimal amount of clearance; or
 - Disused: not been in use for some time, with partially or completely blocked entrances which could not be re-used without a considerable amount of clearance effort. If the hole had been disused for some time, all that may be visible is a depression in the ground where the hole used to be and the remains of a spoil heap, which may be covered in moss or plants.

Setts are generally classified as one of four types:

- Main: normally the focal point sett of a group of badgers. Generally, always occupied, main setts usually have several active holes with radiating tracks, latrines and other signs of activity. The actual number of holes can vary greatly, depending on social group size and soil conditions;

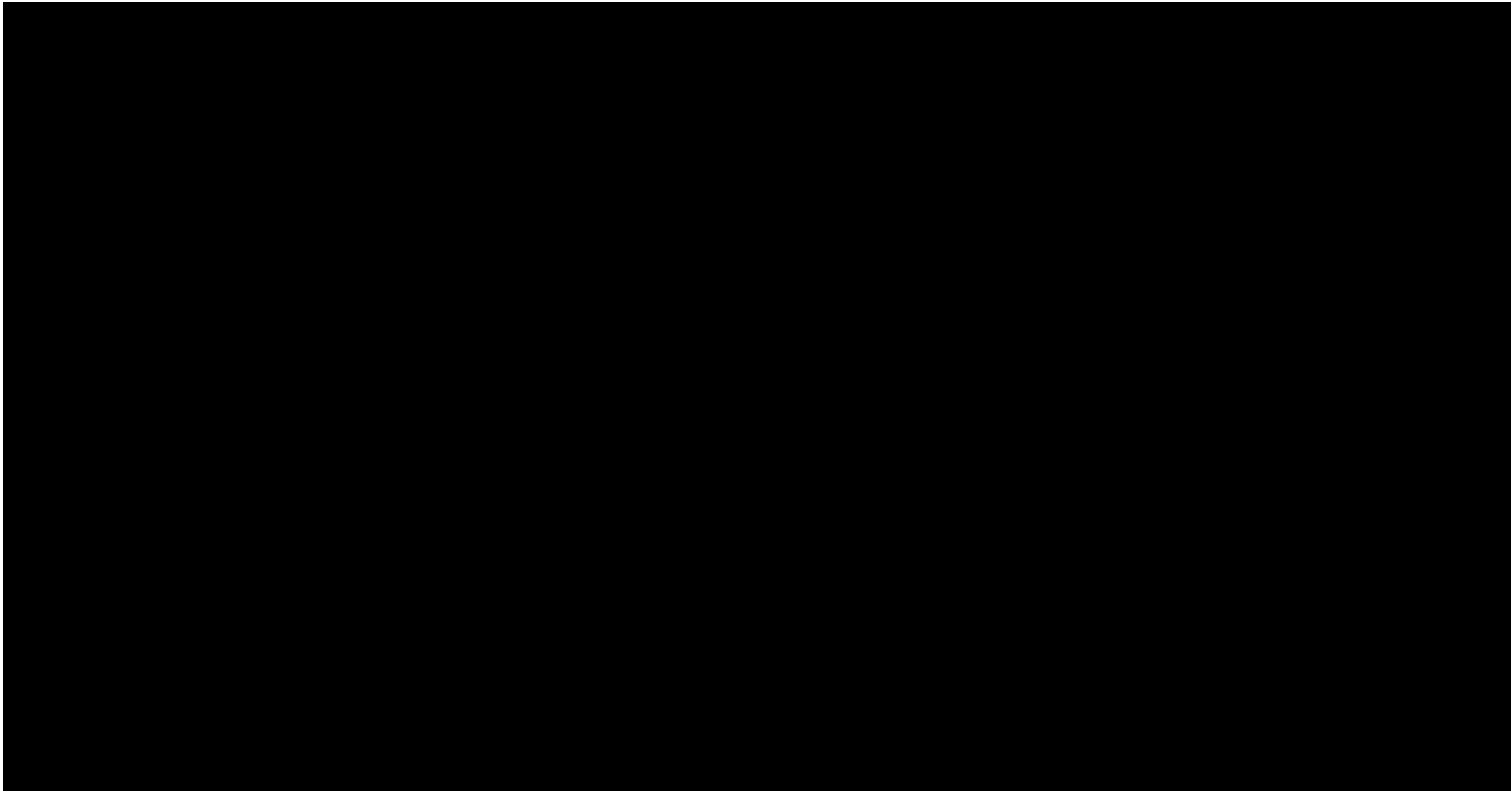
- Annexe: a secondary sett, close to the main sett. Will normally be connected to the sett with very obvious tracks. Annexes may not be occupied constantly, even when the main sett is very active;
- Subsidiary: occurring at a greater distance from the main sett and not as clearly linked to it as an annexe. These setts will fall clearly within the territory of a social group and may be seasonally used by badgers; or
- Outlier: less frequently used, these setts may be colonised by other species when not in use by badgers.

Exploratory Holes



accurate for two years, assuming no significant considerable changes to the Site conditions.

3 RESULTS



4 SUMMARY

5 REFERENCES

Harris, S., Cresswell, P. And Jeffreies, D. (1989a) *Surveying Badgers*. The Mammal Society. No9.

Harris, S. Bright, P. And Jeffries D. (1989b) *Projects on Badgers* Occasional Publication No 12, The Mammal Society London

Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1992/51>

Annex A Badger Survey Result



