

Locogen

20/11/2023

Attn: Brendan Mackinnon

Dear Brendan

Badger survey of proposed solar farm at Allington Lane, Eastleigh, Hampshire, SO30 3HQ
Summary: No badger setts or evidence of badger activity on site.

The surveys aimed to record any evidence of badgers including setts, latrines, feeding signs and paths. Other evidence of badgers would be recorded where encountered (such as suspected infilled setts. Badger holes and setts are classified according to Harris *et. al.* (1989) as active, partially disused or disused as follows:

- **Active** holes or setts show obvious signs of recent use by badgers, including fresh spoil, bedding, fresh claw marks, dung, hair and footprints.
- **Partially disused or inactive** holes or setts show no signs of recent use. The entrance may be partially blocked by leaf litter or small plants but could be easily cleared and re-used by badgers. This category includes sets that are only used occasionally or for part of the year.
- **Disused** holes or setts show no sign of use by badgers for many months if not years. They often show signs of collapse and may be barely discernible. Such setts could not be re-used by badgers without substantial effort. Disused setts do not represent current badger activity, but do give an indication of past badger activity in the area. Badgers may occasionally re-excavate such setts, particularly if territories change or other setts are lost.

Where possible the status of any sett was also be classified according to Harris *et. al.* (1994) and English Nature (2003) as follows:

- **Main setts.** These are occupied continually throughout the year, and are generally used by at least one sow to rear young in the breeding season. They usually have a large number of holes with large spoil heaps, and the sett generally looks well-used. They usually have well-used paths to and from the sett and between sett holes. Although normally the breeding sett is in continual use all year round, it is possible to find a main sett that has become disused because of excessive disturbance or for some other reason.
- **Annexe setts.** These are always close to a main sett and are usually connected to the main sett by one or more obvious, well-worn paths. They consist of several holes, but are not necessarily in use all the time, even if the main sett is very active. They will generally only be used for breeding when the main sett is in use by another breeding sow.
- **Subsidiary setts.** These are situated away from the main sett and often have only a few holes, are usually at least 50m from a main sett, and do not have an obvious path connecting them with another sett. They are not continuously active but are used occasionally throughout the year and occasionally for breeding, but are more likely to be used to exploit a seasonal food source.
- **Outlying setts.** These are away from the main sett, usually only have one or two holes, often have little spoil outside the hole, have no obvious path connecting them with another sett, and are only used sporadically and rarely in continuous occupation. They are most often used either to exploit a seasonal food source or as a temporary refuge.

Whilst these four sett categories appear distinct, classification is often difficult even following extensive survey work. Outside the UK, badger setts are often simply classified as 'main' or 'other'. The designation of a sett may change over time (and new setts may appear). Many badger social groups do not have an annex sett and some setts may become abandoned. Badger territories may change and a non-main sett may be converted into

a main sett. The conversion of a non-main sett into a main sett does not always mean that there are more badgers in the locality; they may have moved out of their main sett to adopt another sett as a replacement.

It should be noted that main setts are normally at least 500m apart.

A thorough search for evidence of badgers was carried out to within at least 30m of all areas potentially affected by the works (where access was possible). This includes setts, latrines, feeding signs and paths. Areas within 30m of development activities are usually searched for setts (where access is possible) as former guidelines suggest badgers and their setts could be disturbed by work using heavy machinery within 30m of a badger sett, light machinery within 20m, and light work (such as digging) within 10m.

No evidence of badgers was found on the following dates (undertaken at the same time as the breeding bird surveys):

- 16/04/23
- 07/05/23
- 17/05/23
- 11/06/23
- 27/06/23

Since these were all negative, a final dedicated badger check was carried out by John Poland CEnv MCIEEM CBiol MSB on the following dates:

- 29/06/23
- 30/06/23

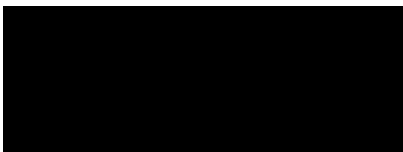
John Poland CEnv MCIEEM CBiol MSB is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), a Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv), a Chartered Biologist (CBiol) and multi-species licence holder with over 23 years of experience in ecological consultancy. In addition to multiple Natural England badger WML A01 mitigation licences, John is also a Badger Class Licence (CL35) holder.

As no badger setts were found on site, development works are free to proceed without further regard to this species, although if a badger sett is subsequently discovered within 30m of the proposed works then it may require a licence from Natural England to proceed. Guidance to what may be classed as disturbance to a badger (when occupying a sett) can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/badgers-protection-surveys-and-licences>.

Given the mobility of badgers, it is essential that a pre-works badger check is undertaken by an ecologist prior to the development commencing.

Yours sincerely,



John Poland CEnv MCIEEM CBiol MRSB
Principal Ecologist

For and on behalf of HAMPSHIRE ECOLOGICAL SERVICES LTD