

Report

Land to the North of The Drove Way, Istead Rise,
Gravesham

Badger Survey Report

For Ptarmigan Land A Ltd

3 June 2026

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1 Introduction

1.1 Project Background and Scope

Logika Consultants Ltd. ('Logika') has been commissioned by Ptarmigan Land A Ltd to undertake a survey to establish the status of badgers at Land to the North of The Drove Way, Istead Rise, Gravesham (hereafter referred to as 'the Site'). This survey has been undertaken to inform the assessment of the potential effects of a new residential development on badgers.

The Site, as defined by the red line boundary in **Figure 1-1**, is located within the village of Istead Rise, Gravesham, Kent and comprises an area of land under agricultural production. It is bounded to the north and west by further agricultural fields, to the east by woodland, and the south by a residential estate. The central grid reference for the Site is TQ 63383 70439 and is approximately 5.7ha in extent.

The Proposed Development comprises up to 100 residential dwellings (Class C3), including the formation of new accesses from The Drove Way, the provision of new areas of public open space and all other associated infrastructure and ancillary works (all detailed matters reserved other than means of access).

This baseline report provides the survey methodology and survey results of a badger activity survey undertaken on 11th March 2026

1.2 Legislation

Badgers are given legal protection across the UK through the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This legislation was brought in due to the levels of persecution suffered by this species. The Act makes it an offence (amongst other things) to:

- Wilfully kill, injure or take a badger (or attempt to do so)
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a badger sett
- Disturb a badger when it is occupying a sett

Due to ongoing issues of persecution this report is only provided in full for the Local Planning Authority, Natural England and other relevant specialist organisations. A redacted version of this report is provided for other stakeholders, with further details available on request.



Figure 1-1: Location Plan

2 Survey Methodology

2.1 Approach

A badger survey was conducted on the 11th of March 2026 by Alex Cartwright BSc (Hons) when weather conditions were dry and with good visibility. The methodology employed accorded with the Mammal Society publication 'Surveying Badgers' (Harris *et al* 1989¹) and guidance produced by Scottish Badgers (2018)².

The activity signs of badgers searched for included:

- Faeces: badgers usually deposit faeces in characteristic excavated pits, concentrations of which (latrine sites) are typically found at home range boundaries.
- Setts: comprising either single isolated holes or a series of holes, likely to be interconnected underground.
- Paths: between setts or leading to feeding areas.
- Scratching posts at the base of tree trunks.
- Snuffle holes: (small scrapes where badgers have searched for insects, earthworms and plant tubers).
- Day nests (bundles of grass and other vegetation where badgers may sleep above ground).
- Hair traces.
- Footprints.

In addition, vocalisations or sightings of individuals were also recorded.

Any setts located were classified using the following definitions³:

- Main - The continuously used, breeding and over-wintering sett for a social group of badgers. Only one main sett will exist in each social groups territory and will be relatively centrally located within the group's range. Main setts normally consist of several holes with large spoil heaps and obvious paths emanating from and between sett entrances.
- Annexe - An annexe of the main sett, linked by well-used surface paths to the main sett (but not connected underground). Not continuously used. Annex setts must be less than 150m from a main sett, comprising several holes. Will not be continuously used, even if main sett is very active.
- Subsidiary - Distant from main sett. Several entrances, but with no well-used paths connecting to main sett, and used only seasonally. Usually at least 50m from main sett.

¹ Harris S, Creswell P and Jeffries D (1989) Surveying Badgers, Occasional publication of The Mammal Society No 9, London

² Scottish Badgers (2018) Surveying for Badgers: Good Practice Guidelines. Version 1.

³ CIEEM (2013) Classification of badger setts *Meles meles* in the UK: A Review and Guidance for Surveyors. Richard Andrews published in CIEEM In Practice magazine, December 2013

- Outlier - Distant from the main sett. Small, with one or two entrances only. Used for short periods sporadically, with no obvious, well-used paths connecting to other setts. Often signs of little spoil outside holes. Outliers may be used by foxes and rabbits.

In addition to the dedicated survey effort described above, any field signs or sightings of badgers recorded during other ecology surveys were reported as incidental records and reported on within this report.

2.2 Limitations

Access across the Site was generally good and visibility was largely unobstructed. However, in areas of dense woodland understorey vegetation visibility was reduced. Whilst the surveyor inspected these areas as thoroughly as practicable, including entering dense vegetation where possible to view potential features from multiple angles, it remains possible that some burrow entrances or field signs concealed within dense vegetation were not recorded during the survey.

3 Survey Results

No signs of badger activity were recorded on Site or within 30m of the boundary. No latrines, scratching posts, hair traces, footprints, vocalisations or sightings of individuals were observed. Several paths were observed through the woodland however this was likely due to human activity, dog walking and other mammal use. No badger setts were recorded but burrows used by other mammals including rabbits and foxes were frequently observed. Although badger faeces were not observed, faeces from dogs, foxes and rabbits were seen frequently.

Habitats were recorded on Site and within 30m of the boundary that were considered suitable for badgers. The woodland to the east and southeast of the Site was suitable habitat for sett creation, commuting and foraging. There were several sloping embankments within the eastern woodland which other mammals had utilised to create burrows. To the north and west of the Site a thin woodland strip provided commuting and foraging habitat but was largely too flat for sett creation. The Site was comprised predominantly of an arable field which was unsuitable for sett creation. The urban habitat to the south was also unsuitable for sett creation but may provide some foraging opportunities.

A summary of the survey results is provided in **Table 3-1** and shown on **Figure 3-1**. Photographs are available in **Appendix A1**.

Table 3-1: Summary of Survey Results

Location	Activity Evidence	Notes
1	Burrow with several holes and spoil heap	Burrow with several holes. One hole large enough for badger included a spoil heap adjacent. Excavated material did not appear to be recent. A fox tail hair was observed at the entrance along with feeding remains. The remaining holes were too small for badger, and not all appeared to be in active use. No surrounding badger signs were identified.
2	Burrow with several holes	Burrow with several holes consistent with a rabbit warren. Rabbit droppings observed at the entrance. The holes appeared too small for badger.
3	Possible rabbit warren with several entrances	Burrow with several entrances. Closer inspection of the entrances revealed they branched into small tunnels that decreased greatly in diameter inside. Therefore, this burrow is likely a rabbit warren.
4	Burrow with several small holes	This burrow had several entrances that were too small for badger. Likely used by rabbits or foxes.
5	Partially used burrow	Partially used burrow with several holes that are too small for badger. Likely used by rabbits or foxes. Fox scat observed nearby and feeding remains.



Figure 3-1: Survey Results

4 Summary

Suitable habitat for badger sett creation, commuting and foraging was recorded along the periphery of the Site and surrounding area. Woodland habitat to the east of the Site provides opportunities for sett creation. The remainder of the Site provides foraging and commuting opportunities including woodland strips, hedgerows and arable fields.

No badger signs were observed on Site. Some of the burrows used by fox and rabbits have the potential to support badger, but there was negligible evidence that this species is utilising the Site. The woodland located to the east of the Site was the most suitable habitat for badgers and impacts on badgers foraging and commuting through this area and the wider landscape should be considered as part of the Proposed Development.

The risk to badger through the scheme is considered low, however, given the mobility of these species and presence of suitable sett-building habitat within the Site, consideration will be required for this species during the construction works.

To avoid risk to badger during the works, the following mitigation measures are required:

- Ensuring any open excavations left overnight are either fenced off, and/or have a means for any animals to escape that may enter or fall into the excavations.
- Capping off all exposed pipes at the end of each working day (where relevant).
- Covering of any stockpiled earth or materials to avoid offering sett-building opportunities for badger. Where possible, stockpiling of soils should be avoided, and if required, then moved regularly to avoid the deposition from setting.
- Undertaking a walkover of the Site to identify and sett building activity within the Site and/or within a 50m buffer where possible. This should be undertaken by an ECoW, and if a sett is located, then the ECoW will determine whether the proposed works could result in damage or disturbance to the sett.

Should a sett be recorded, then the following may need to be considered to progress the works:

- Alteration of the works to avoid any damage or disturbance to the sett. The type of works will determine what can be permitted within a 10m, 20m, 30m or 100m buffer from the sett without the need for a detailed method statement and/or mitigation licence to proceed.
- Provision of a detailed method statement to enable works to continue in such a manner as to avoid a breach in legislation.
- Application for a licence issued by Natural England to enable otherwise unlawful activities to progress.

A1 Photographs

Table A1-1: Habitat Photographs

Location & Notes	Photograph
1 – Burrow with spoil heap	
1 – Fox tail hair	

Location & Notes	Photograph
1 – Fox feeding remains	
1 – Smaller disused burrow	
2 – Possible rabbit warren	

Location & Notes	Photograph
2 – Possible rabbit warren	
3 – Possible disused rabbit warren	

Location & Notes	Photograph
4 – Burrow with several small entrances	
5 – Burrow that may be used by foxes or rabbits. Fox scat and feeding remains seen nearby.	



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