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South Pavenhill Farm, Purton, Swindon, SN5 4FH

BADGER SURVEY,
BADGER MITIGATION AND WORKS SCHEDULE

Lovell

P.1464.21
June 2026

Ascerta
Mere One, Mere Grange, Elton Head Road, St Helens WA9 5GG
T: 0845 463 4404 E: info@landscapetreesecology.com
www.landscapetreesecology.com

Reference	Site	Client	Date
P.1464.21	South Pavenhill Farm, Purton, Swindon, SN5 4FH	Lovell	15 June 2026

Field work	Document author(s)	Technical review	Quality & approval
Jack Kay MRes, Ecologist	Jack Kay MRes, Ecologist	Liz Kenyon BSc (Hons), Head of Ecology	Richard Anderson, Quality & Office Administrator
Rebecca Donnan MRes, Assistant Ecologist			

Revision	Date	Details	Name
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This document contains sensitive information regarding the location of a badger sett. The report is issued in confidence and on the basis that the material will not enter the public domain.

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Appendix no.	Name
1	P.1464.21.E21 Phase One Habitat Survey P.1464.21.E23 Badger Survey
2	Precautionary Method of Works (PMW) and Work Schedule

Executive Summary

A survey of the badger (*Meles meles*) setts, foraging habitats and activity at South Pavenhill Farm, Purton, Swindon, SN5 4FH has been carried out by Jack Kay and Rebecca Donnan (suitably qualified ecologists) in May 2026.

The purpose of this report is to identify the impact to badgers in regard to any works within the vicinity of badger setts and to provide avoidance, mitigation or compensation measures to ensure completion of these works without the risk of disturbing badgers.

Based on the findings of the site walkover surveys and camera trap surveys, a Mitigation Strategy and Precautionary Method of Work (PMW) statement has been produced. These include the following:

- PMWs will be followed during the construction phase of the development as detailed in **Appendix 2**
- Traffic calming measures will be incorporated into the road system to reduce road traffic speed. In any poorly lit areas, reflectors on the kerbs will be used to warn badgers of approaching traffic
- Lighting on the site will be directed away from off-site habitats, particularly to the west

1. Introduction

Ascerta has been instructed by Lovell to carry out a survey of badger activity at South Pavenhill Farm, Purton, Swindon, SN5 4FH (hereafter referred to as the site). The site OS grid reference is SU 07735 87406 and the What3Words reference is [vented.occu.r.guitar](#).

The information contained in this plan is based on data gathered during the site visit in April 2021, October 2021 and May 2026 detailed within reports *P.1464.21A Ascerta Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, South Pavenhill Farm, 2021*, *P.1464.21A Ascerta Badger Activity Survey Letter Report, 2021* and *P.1464.21 Ascerta Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, South Pavenhill Farm, 2026*.



Figure 1.1: Extent of the site

The site is primarily a large area of improved grassland lined by both species-rich and species-poor hedgerows with trees. There is a small section of scrub to the east of the site between two residential properties.

2. Relevant Legislation

The legislation protecting badgers in England is the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 it is an offence *inter alia* to:

- Wilfully kill, injure or take a badger, or to attempt to do so
- Cruelly ill-treat a badger
- Intentionally or recklessly interfere with a badger sett by:
 - a. damaging a sett or any part of one
 - b. destroying a sett
 - c. obstructing access to or any entrance of a sett
 - d. causing a dog to enter a sett
 - e. disturbing a badger when it is occupying a sett

The Badger Act 1992 defines a badger sett as 'any structure or place which displays signs indicating current use by a badger'.

3. Survey Methods

The daytime survey was carried out by Ascerta in May 2026, in order to search for setts and badger field signs including foraging areas, latrines and tracks. Attention was paid to the presence of the following field signs:

- Setts: Single holes or a series of holes likely to be interconnected underground
- Latrines: Badgers usually deposit faeces in excavated pits
- Paths and footprints
- Scratching posts: At the base of trees
- Snuffle holes: Areas where badgers have searched for insects
- Day nest: Bundles of vegetation where badgers may sleep above ground
- Traces of hair

Any setts recorded were categorised into sett types using the following criteria (Thornton, 1988):

- Main sett: Usually appearing well-used, well established and having a large number of holes with big spoil heaps, often with piles of old bedding outside
- Annexe sett: Annexe setts are always close to the main sett and are usually connected by one or more obvious well-worn paths. They consist of several holes but are not necessarily in use the whole time, even if the main sett is very active.
- Subsidiary sett: Often these have very few holes, are usually at least 50m from the main sett and do not have an obvious path connecting them with another sett
- Outlying sett: Usually comprising one or two holes with very little spoil outside (thus indicating that the tunnel system underground is not extensive), outlying setts have no obvious path connecting them with another sett and are used only sporadically

4. Survey Results

4.1 Limitations

The site visit was undertaken in May 2025 with the survey conducted within the sub-optimal time of year for recording badger activity and signs. Due to this, certain areas were too dense to assess thoroughly. This limitation has been taken into account within this report.

4.2 Desk Study Results

The desk study returned four records for badgers within 2km of the site. The closest of which was a 2016 record located 140m southeast of the site within agricultural land. The most recent of which was a 2020 record located 450m north of the site within agricultural land.

4.3 Field Study Results

During the survey undertaken in May 2026, one off-site disused sett was identified (drawing P.1464.21.E23 Badger Survey, Appendix 1). The results of the survey are detailed in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Badger Sett Classification and Use.

Sett Number	Sett Classification	Sett Use	Sett Description
Sett 1 (S1) comprising of holes 1-3 (H1- H3)	Three-hole outlier sett	Disused	Three-hole disused outlier sett. Both holes are full of debris including sticks, leaf litter and wooden planks. No fresh soil was present and no obvious mammal paths surrounding the sett.

4.4 Summary of Badger Activity

During the survey conducted on 19 May 2026, one sett was recorded. This was a disused outlier sett. Mammal paths were recorded along the western, eastern and southern site boundaries (drawing P.1464.21.E23 Badger Survey, Appendix 1).

Photograph 1:

H1 present in 3-hole outlier sett



Photograph 2:

H2 present in 3-hole outlier sett



Photograph 3:

H2 present in 3-hole outlier sett



Photograph 4:

H3 present in 3-hole outlier sett



5. Impact on Badgers

5.1 Badger Requirements and Potential Impacts

Badgers require access to certain habitat resources and require certain conditions in which to thrive and prosper. Key requirements include homes in which to live (setts), access to food resources and lack of continual disturbance so that feeding and other activities may occur unimpeded.

Badgers prefer an undulating mosaic landscape of wood and pasture, favouring deciduous woodland with clearings. Other habitats include open pasture which is farmed for hay or silage and grazed by cattle or other animals. Badgers can use areas of amenity grassland i.e. playing fields and golf courses and can also be found on railway embankments and in domestic gardens.

Badgers live in social groups (clans) of 2–20 animals, with the average clan size being six animals. Population density can range from 2–20 adults per 100 hectares, though typically 10 per 100 hectares. A badger's home range is dependent on the availability of suitable habitats. Average territory size is around 50 hectares, and can be 30 hectares in a good quality habitat. In an urban environment, a territory can be five hectares and 150 hectares in marginal habitats.

Badgers are omnivorous and opportunistic feeders – their main diet consists of earthworms. They will also feed on fruits, berries and bulbs. In urban areas, badgers will feed in gardens, from waste bins and on food left out by residents (cat and dog food). In the autumn, badgers can be out foraging for up to 10 hours a night as they put on weight to enable them to overwinter. Breeding can take place any time of the year, but badgers only have one litter of cubs a year. From November, badgers start to spend longer in the sett, emerging less frequently as they enter winter lethargy. Between December and June, the setts are likely to also have pregnant and nursing sows in them. Disturbance to setts could cause badgers to abandon them and create setts elsewhere, potentially impacting on overwintering and breeding success.

Badgers are habitual animals and prefer to use established routes to reach foraging areas. However, badgers may use man-made pathways along linear features such as hedgerows to traverse across the site. Roads and houses may act as barriers to badger movement or put them at greater risk from traffic-related injuries if mitigation is not provided. A loss of badger foraging habitat may have an impact on the badgers, forcing them to extend their territory in order to forage. Foraging behaviour may also alter, leading to increased foraging in residential gardens. Residential gardens do not necessarily provide ideal badger-foraging habitat, although they will be used if better habitat is not available.

5.2 Badger Impacts and Mitigation Strategy

The proposed development of the site would currently be unlikely to have a direct impact on outlier sett S1 with construction currently planned to take place within 30m of this sett. S1 is disused and unlikely to cause concern. Badger commuting and foraging habitat will be available following development, predominately within the off-site woodland, where S1 was found, with access to the wider environment. The impacts are not considered to be long term or significant and badgers will be able to commute and forage in the vicinity of the site during and after development with limited adverse impact on the badger population.

Foraging habitat impacts and mitigation

Habitats within the southern section of the site and the western boundary will be retained and enhanced within the proposals as well as suitable foraging and commuting habitat remaining adjacent to the west, south and east of the site. It is considered that there will not be a significant loss in foraging habitat for badgers with more favourable foraging habitat within the woodland to the west of the site. Any loss of foraging habitat will be mitigated for by utilising the southern section of the site which has been left free of development to allow for ecological compensation. Therefore, the proposals are not likely to result in a significant loss of badger foraging habitat that could impact on badger populations in the area.

Commuting impacts and mitigation

Badgers may commute across the site as indicated by the wear on the paths. However, the majority of this activity was within the woodland adjacent to the western and eastern site boundary and the southern section of the site, however, these mammal trials are dominated by rabbit. Badger commuting habitat will be disrupted by the proposals during construction; however, as the habitats are alongside the western and eastern site boundary and southern section of the site, badgers will still be able to move across the site.

Once construction is complete, badgers will be free to move across the site but may be at risk from traffic impact. The roads are designed to slow traffic, with bends and differential paving in places. These measures will mitigate for the potential increased risk in badger collision with traffic. Badger commuting habitat may be temporarily obstructed during construction, but badgers will be able to move freely across the site following development.

Sett impacts and mitigation

The outlier setts S1 will not be impacted by the proposed development as these entrances lie within 30m of the proposed built form; however, the sett is disused and is of less concern.

Should badgers be found to be utilising these setts, closures and monitoring may be necessary. This would require a Natural England Licence to be undertaken.

No further setts were identified; however, survey limitations due to dense vegetation and health and safety concerns mean that unidentified setts may be present. A precautionary check for badgers prior to construction beginning is recommended to determine whether badgers have encroached further onto the site.

Should further encroachment occur, monitoring of these setts would be required to determine badger activity and potentially a Natural England Licence may need to be applied for to allow for the closure of these setts.

If the sett is not closed under a Natural England Licence, badgers could be at risk during the proposed development from impacts such as noise and vibrations. The closure of the outlier setts will minimise risk to badgers during the proposed development and encourage them to utilise other setts within the woodland west of the site and to forage and commute within retained habitats along the west boundary and southern section of the site, as well as off-site within the adjacent and favourable habitats to the west.

Once a licence from Natural England is granted, the existing outlier setts will be closed under licence. This will take a minimum of 21 days to complete. Following completion of the closure process, the main sett will be excavated under licence and destroyed using a small excavator (3–5 tonne maximum).

6. Mitigation Strategy

Installation of camera traps at S1 is not required to determine whether badgers are currently using the setts. These are currently the only setts identified which are likely to be impacted by the current proposals for the site. A precautionary check for badgers prior to works commencing should also be undertaken to determine whether further setts can be identified and may require further monitoring or mitigation as well as to monitor whether these setts have encroached further onto the site.

6.1 Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures are required to avoid harm to badgers:

- PMW will be followed during the construction phase of the development as detailed in **Appendix 2**
- Traffic calming measures will be incorporated into the road system to reduce road traffic speed. In any poorly lit areas, reflectors on the kerbs will be used to warn badgers of approaching traffic.
- Lighting on the site will be directed away from off-site habitats, particularly to the west

6.2 Post-Development Monitoring

To ensure badgers are not impacted by the development, monitoring surveys will be conducted for a year if required by the licence.

7. References

English Nature, (2002) Badgers and development. http://www.badgerland.co.uk/help/en_badgers_development.pdf [Accessed 06.02.2024].

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Appendix 1



Legend

- Site Boundary
- Hedges and trees - native species rich
- Hedges and trees - species poor
- Dense scrub
- Improved grassland
- Target Notes

TN1 - Wall cotoneaster



T: 0845 463 4404
E: info@landscapetreeseecology.com
W: landscapetreeseecology.com

CLIENT:
Lovell

PROJECT:
South Pavenhill Farm, Purton,
Swindon, SN5 4FH

DRAWING TITLE:
Phase One Habitat Survey

SCALE:	DRAWN BY:	DRAWING NO:
A3	JK	P.1464.21.E21
DATE:	CHKD BY	REV:
20/05/2026	LK	-



Legend

Badger Survey

30m

20m

10m

Mammal trails

Sett

Site Boundary



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E: info@landscapetreeseecology.com
W: landscapetreeseecology.com

CLIENT:

Lovell

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DRAWING TITLE:

Badger Survey

SCALE:	DRAWN BY:	DRAWING NO:
A3	RD	P.1464.21.E23
DATE:	CHKD BY:	REV:
03/06/2026	LK	-

00.0002 km



All spatial data referenced to EPSG:27700 – OSGB36 / British National Grid. Base mapping: OS Google Satellite and OpenStreetMap.
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Appendix 2

Appendix 2: Precautionary Method of Works and Work Schedule

Actions to be taken prior to the commencement of works stage	Works	Methods	Timing	Person responsible	Person required to carry out the work	Completed (name, company and signature)
1	Appoint ecological clerk of works / ecologist and environmental champion	A suitably experienced ecological clerk of works ECoW (external person) / ecologist to provide an advisory role (external person). The appointed environmental champion will be responsible for the monitoring and conformance of environmental documents such as this PMW (this should be a person from the main contractor who will be on site for the life of the project).	Prior to works	Main site contractor	Developer / Main site contractor to appoint clerk of works / ecologist and environmental champion	
2	Natural England Licence application	An application to Natural England will be submitted using the Badger Class Licensing System. This includes the completion and submission of an application form and associated documents where required (i.e. previous reports, method statement, plans etc.).	Prior to works	Main site contractor / licenced badger ecologist	Licenced badger ecologist	
3	Closure of the outlier sett	A one-way gate will be installed across each opening of the sett entrance to be closed, which will allow badgers to exit the sett but not to enter once outside. Badger-proof mesh will be installed at the gate and sett entrances (a minimum of 1m radius surrounding the entrance) to deter further excavation during this period. Sett exclusion will run for an initial minimum period of 21 days. Installation of the fencing and gate will be undertaken by a licenced badger ecologist and named ecologist.	Prior to works	Main site contractor	Licenced badger ecologist / ecologist	

Actions to be taken prior to the commencement of works stage	Works	Methods	Timing	Person responsible	Person required to carry out the work	Completed (name, company and signature)
4	Sett monitoring	Monitoring of affected sett will take place throughout the duration of the exclusion period (minimum 21 days). This will involve installation of an infrared remote movement activated camera overlooking the sett, the smoothing of the sand/soil in front of the gates in order to detect badger footprints, and installation of sticks at the front of each entrance (behind the gates) to determine movement from within the setts. The sett will be visited at intervals of no more than three days to inspect the gates to ensure that they open and close freely, and to check for signs of badgers having regained entry to the sett (i.e. Monday, Wednesday and Friday each week of the closure period). Camera footage will also be reviewed during each visit.	Prior to works	Main site contractor	Licenced badger ecologist / ecologist	
5	Sett destruction	The setts will be destroyed following completion of the closure process. A mini excavator (1–3 ton) and operator will be required to slowly excavate each sett entrance back to its chamber or natural end. However, where the tunnels lie within the root protection zone for the trees to the northern site boundary, hand tools will be used only. Once the direction of the tunnels within the sett are established, this may require excavation to the off-site habitats to the north of the site. Following the excavation, the areas will be back filled and flattened so as not to encourage the re-establishment of a badger sett or cause harm to any animal.	Following stages 2–4	Main site contractor	Main contractor / licenced badger ecologist / ecologist	
6	Post-development monitoring	To ensure badgers are not impacted by the development, monitoring surveys will be conducted for one year if required by the licence.	Post-development	Main site contractor	Ecologist	

Actions to be taken during the construction phase

The following Badger Protection Measures will be implemented during the construction phase.

Works	Methods	Timing and frequency	Person responsible	Person required to carry out the work	Completed (name, company and signature)
Excavation of trenches	All steep-sided excavations will be covered overnight or fitted with ramps to prevent any mammals including badgers from getting trapped within them; these will be checked to make sure they are in place at the end of each day.	Throughout construction on a daily basis as appropriate	Main site contractor	Environmental champion	
Pipe work	Any exposed open pipe systems will be capped to prevent badgers gaining access. These will be checked to make sure they are in place at the end of each day.	Throughout construction / daily as appropriate	Main site contractor	Environmental champion	
Topsoil storage	Topsoil storage mounds will be fenced off and kept in locations where badgers are unlikely to create new setts. Soil heaps will be checked for signs of protected species.	Throughout construction/ weekly	Main site contractor	Environmental champion	
Water sources	Water sources (for badgers) will always be safeguarded.	Throughout construction	Main site contractor	Main site contractor	
Fires and chemicals	Fires and chemicals will not be used within 20 metres of a sett.	Throughout construction	Main site contractor	Environmental champion	
Pile driving, loud noise and vibration	No pile driving will take place within 100 m of the badger setts. Disturbances, such as loud noise or vibrations, that might agitate badgers occupying a sett will be avoided or limited to areas well away from the sett. If pile driving is required, this will be included within the licence application to Natural England.	Throughout construction	Main site contractor	Environmental champion	
Consideration to wildlife	Staff will remain vigilant throughout works. Should any additional badger setts or other protected species be encountered during the works, works will cease and advice will be sought immediately from the appointed ecologist.	Throughout construction	All site staff	All staff	

Ecological Compliance Register

To be signed by all contractors to say they have read and understand the PMW and toolbox talk.

[illegible]

Ascerta

Mere One, Mere Grange, Elton Head Road, St Helens WA9 5GG
T: 0845 463 4404 E: info@landscapetreeseecology.com
www.landscapetreeseecology.com



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