

10th September 2024
Our Ref: P.2048.24A

Re: Badger Activity Survey

Ascerta has been instructed by Knowsley Council to carry out a badger activity survey at Halewood Leisure Centre. The OS grid reference is SJ 45275 85177 and the what3words reference is crowns.tiredness.rally.

A preliminary Ecological Appraisal was undertaken in August 2023 (WSP report 70112144, Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, September 2023). During the survey, no Badger signs were identified within the site, however it was noted that on site habitats (scrub and grassland areas) may provide suitable for badger.

The site was visited by Liz Kenyon BSc (Hons) on 29th August 2024 to assess if there was any badger activity throughout the site. The area surveyed is shown on drawing P.2048.24.E04, appendix 1. A woodland is present offsite to the east, this area was not surveyed during the visit due to access restrictions

Badger Survey Methods

The site was searched 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; and
- 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.

Badger Results

During the site walkover on 29th August 2024, no badger signs, including foraging activity, setts or latrines were noted within the site or the immediate areas to the site. No mammal paths, likely to have been created by badger were also noted.

The site is currently used for recreational activities throughout and is subject to a constant and high level of human disturbance, reducing the areas suitability for badger. With more favourable habitats to the north and east of the site, along with the railway corridor to the north.

Conclusion

During the walkover survey on 29th August 2024, no signs of badger were noted within the site or the adjacent areas, the site is also prone to a high level of human disturbance. Badger may be present within the offsite woodland, however the site provides very limited habitat for badger. Following the walkover surveys and the site suitability for badger, no further surveys in relation to badger are required, the Reasonable Avoidance Methods for badger within Ascerta report P.2048.24 Reasonable Avoidance Methods Statement should be followed and adhered to avoid harm to the species throughout the works.

Yours sincerely

Liz Kenyon
Ascerta



 Halewood Leisure Centre Survey Area

DO NOT SCALE.
ALL COORDINATES RELATED TO LOCAL GRID.
LOCATED TO NG BY BEST FIT TO DETAIL.
EXTRACTED FROM OS DIGITAL DATA.

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CLIENT:
Knowsley Council

PROJECT:
Halewood LUF

DRAWING TITLE:
Halewood Leisure Centre

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