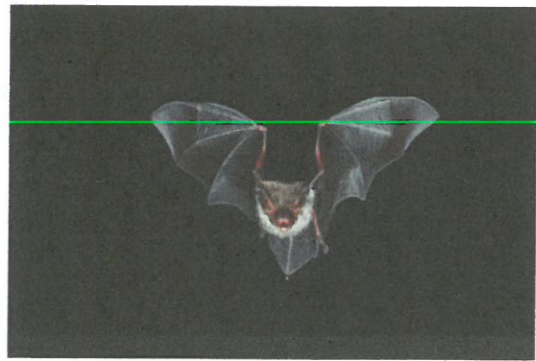
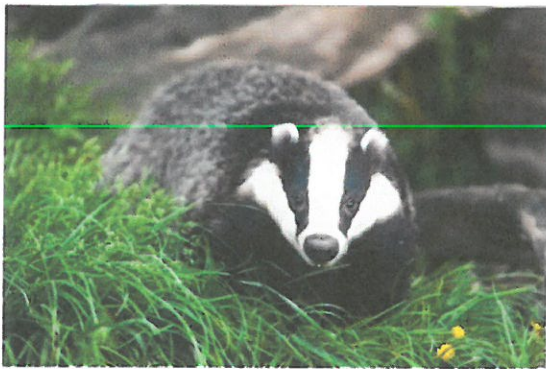


# Badger Survey Of Colesdale Farm Cuffley



**Badger Survey  
of  
Colesdale Farm  
Cuffley**

**On behalf of:**

**Mr Humphrey Brosnan  
2 Cygnet Close  
Borehamwood  
Hertfordshire  
WD6 5NG**

**Prepared by:**

**John Dobson B.Sc  
Essex Mammal Surveys**

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**John Dobson**  
**Essex Mammal Surveys**  
**148 Main Road**  
**Danbury**  
**Essex**  
**CM3 4DT**  
**1) Summary**

In May 2018, as part of a planning proposal involving a series of buildings in storage use at Colesdale Farm, Northaw Road West, Cuffley, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 4QZ, a site visit was conducted to determine whether the buildings had been used by bats. At that time, the report concluded that: *'The lack of potential roosting places and absence of any evidence of the presence of bats means that **no** further surveys are required for these buildings'* and that *'Since there was no evidence of bats at the site, a European Protected Species Licence will **not** be required for this project.'*

Following a lapse of nine months, a second survey was undertaken on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2019 to see if there was evidence of badgers at the site. This second survey concentrated on the site boundaries of the storage area and the perimeter of a paddock and lawn to the east, the subject of a further planning proposal.



**Photo 1:** Looking eastwards across the paddock. The boundary fences to the north and east can be seen. The line of *leylandii* in the distance is outside the site boundary

The survey area is a rectangular field that is regularly grazed and/or mown. The site boundaries comprised a scrubby, gappy, hedge to the north, a post and rail fence with a line of *leylandii* and farm drive to the east, a maintained hedge and Northaw Road East (the B156) to the south and Colesdale Farm and farmhouse to the west. Managed grass (where occasional concerts are held) borders the storage site to the north and west. The entire site perimeter was walked and, although there was plenty of evidence of digging by rabbits, no evidence of badgers was found. It is understood that all the existing hedges and trees are to be maintained, including a line of six mature trees along the southern boundary. At present, these boundaries are dark corridors that will be used by wildlife, and it is therefore recommended that on the developed site, no additional artificial lighting should illuminate these boundaries.

Since there was no evidence of badgers at the site, a European Protected Species Licence will **not** be required for this project.

Although no evidence of the presence of badgers was found at the site, it is recommended that during the building work a wooden ramp should be placed in any trench left open overnight so that a foraging badger, hedgehog or common toad would be able to escape. All trenches should be inspected every morning. Since there is no evidence of badgers at the site, a licence will not be required for this project, which will not have a detrimental impact on the local badger population.

## 2) Introduction



Cuffley to investigate for signs indicating the presence of badgers. The identification of protected species is vital in the proposed development of a site to comply with existing legislation and also allows any work that may otherwise be detrimental to badgers to be appropriately scheduled. John Dobson, a bat worker and trainer licensed by Natural England (Licence No. 2015-15258-CLS-CLS) and author of *Mammals of Essex* (Essex Field Club, 2014), carried out the survey on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2019. John Dobson has been elected a Fellow of the British Naturalists' Association and received the David Bellamy Award for natural history in 2015. The site is located at Grid Reference: TL297018.

### **3) Legislation and planning policy relating to badgers in the UK**

Paragraph 98 of Circular 06/2005 states that '*the presence of a protected species is a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a development proposal that, if carried out, would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat*'.

Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018 (NPPF) states that '*the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by ... minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity....*'

In relation to the badger, the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and its subsequent amendment (1985) made it an offence to take, kill, injure or ill-treat a badger. The badger gained further protection under the auspices of The Protection of Badgers Act (1992) which consolidates all former protective legislation in relation to badgers, except their inclusion on Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Under the 1992 Act, the badger sett is protected against obstruction, destruction, and damage; furthermore the animal's access to and from the sett must not be impeded. It should be noted that the concept/definition of the sett extends beyond the main sett to include annexe, subsidiary and outlying setts. However, it must be noted that although the badger and its sett are protected (including access to the sett), the wider habitat and foraging ground is not.

With legal responsibilities and planning implications, it is essential that any ecological assessment of a potential development site, including the area of this report, must determine the possible presence or absence of any protected species as part of any planning development consideration.

Without this assessment the potential developer would be unable to demonstrate due diligence in his responsibilities. Furthermore the local planning authority would not have been provided with sufficient information for a planning decision to be made. This could result in the application being designated incomplete and not determined, or simply refused.

### **4) Methods**

The survey area (extending 30m beyond the site boundary) was investigated for evidence of badgers such as setts, well-worn paths, footprints, guard hairs caught on wire or vegetation and latrines.



**Photo 2:** Looking westwards along the northern boundary. The vegetation is to be retained. The survey area is a rectangular field that is regularly grazed and/or mown. The site boundaries comprised a scrubby, gappy, hedge to the north, a post and rail fence with a line of *leylandii* and farm drive to the east, a maintained hedge and Northaw Road East (the B156) to the south and Colesdale Farm and farmhouse to the west. Managed grass (where occasional concerts are held) borders the storage site to the north and west. The entire site perimeter was walked and, although there was plenty of evidence of digging by rabbits, no evidence of badgers was found. It is understood that all the existing hedges and trees are to be maintained, including a line of six mature trees along the southern boundary. At present, these boundaries are dark corridors that will be used by wildlife, and it is therefore recommended that on the developed site, no additional artificial lighting should illuminate these boundaries.





**Photo 3:** Looking eastwards along northern boundary



**Photo 4:** The northern boundary with the storage area



**Photo 5:** Looking northwards along hedge that leads from storage area (eastern side)







**Photo 7:** Boundary with storage area to west of site



**Photo 8:** The eastern boundary fence with the paddock



**Photo 9:** Looking S-N across the paddock towards northern boundary



**Photo 10:** The western boundary of the paddock with the storage area



**Photo 11:** A line of mature trees and the hedge bordering Northaw Lane East to the south are to be retained





**Photo 12:** A pond is present on the northern boundary. It held four Mallard at the time of the survey and is understood to be stocked with fish. The presence of fish and wildfowl would preclude the presence of great crested newts. With managed grassland to the north and south, there was no suitable terrestrial dispersal habitat in the vicinity

No evidence of the presence of badgers was found at this site.

## **6) Discussion**

Although no evidence of the presence of badgers was found at the site, it is recommended that during the building work a wooden ramp should be placed in any trench left open overnight so that a foraging badger, hedgehog or common toad would be able to escape. All trenches should be inspected every morning. Since there is no evidence of badgers at the site, a licence will not be required for this project, which will not have a detrimental impact on the local badger population.