

Reasonable Avoidance Measures – Badgers.

**Barn on land adjacent to Miles Hill,
Moor Lane,
Billington,
BB7 9JH**



**Report prepared by:
Batworker Ecological Consultancy
Batworker.com**



Summary

In May 2024 Batworker consultancy was commissioned to undertake a survey of a barn at land adjacent to Miles Hill, Moor Lane, Billington, BB7 9JH to assess the potential for use by bats and breeding birds.

A daytime survey was carried out on 30th May 2024 to support development plans.

The site for proposed residential dwelling consists of an area of hardstanding unsuitable for the location of badger setts.

No evidence to suggest use of the wider site by badgers was recorded.

In May 2023 in relation to a previous planning application Batworker consultancy was made aware of a request from Lancashire Badger Group:

"Lancashire Badger Group holds the most comprehensive database of badger setts within Lancashire and I write to inform you that there are 14 setts within a 2km radius of this site, the nearest being 0.41km.

We would respectfully request therefore that RAMS be implemented to protect any inquisitive badgers that may wander across the site, should this development receive approval."

This method statement is designed to minimise or remove any potential disturbance to badgers as a result of development works.

By following the Reasonable Avoidance Measures and mitigation included in this document the work can take place, ensuring the Continued Ecological Functionality of the site.

Legislation

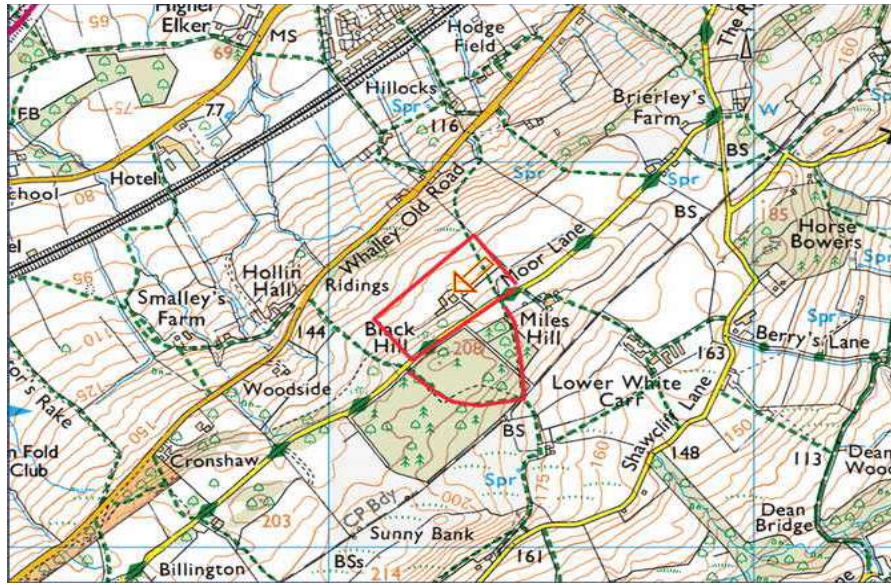
Badgers and their setts are protected under the protection of Badgers Act 1992. This means that it is unlawful to knowingly kill, capture, disturb or injure an individual or intentionally damage, destroy or obstruct an area used for breeding, resting or sheltering by badgers.

The Protection of Badgers Act is essentially animal welfare law as opposed to conservation legislation, specifically badgers are generally too common to be included under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act.

The Protection of Badgers Act is not therefore intended to prevent development work when badger setts are present, but rather ensure that the animal's welfare is preserved.

To allow for derogation of the protections afforded to badger under this legislation Natural England can issue licences to allow for the disturbance of badger setts and their destruction subject to a number of conditions.

Walkover survey - 30th May 2024.



Survey area and line of rights of way to the south

On the 30th of May 2024 a walkover of the wider site surrounding the proposed development was made to search for evidence of use by badgers including field signs such as paths, hairs, footprints, and latrines.

Special attention was made to wire fencing along the field boundary along Moor Lane separating the site from semi natural deciduous woodland to the south where badger may be expected to cross to forage.

Evidence in the form of stands of hair trapped in wire fencing and worn paths through or under fencing in particular was searched for.

A search along rights of way that pass through Billington Moor Plantation, an area of semi natural deciduous woodland to the south of the site supplemented survey effort.

While animal paths were recorded crossing the rights of way within the woodland to the south of the site, no evidence to suggest use of the site by badgers was recorded.



Fencing along Moor Lane to south west of site



Fencing to immediate south of site.

Method Statement – Reasonable Avoidance Measures.

A precautionary site walkover should be carried out following grant of planning permission, but prior to commencement of development works to confirm continuing lack of badger activity on site.

If an active sett is present, which will be affected by development works and further reasonable avoidance measures (RAMs) cannot mitigate risk, a license will be required from Natural England.

If this is required development works which may disturb the sett must cease until a licence is obtained.

If no active setts are identified then development works should proceed following the RAMs below:

No work should commence without contractors receiving a toolbox talk.

All contractors will be made aware of the legal protection afforded to badgers in the UK and the procedures to be in place to mitigate for the potential impact before any building work is undertaken.

Attention will be paid to site hygiene and food and food wrappings disposed of appropriately

Any chemicals will be stored securely, in badger proof containers, in accordance with the best practise guidelines.

Avoid works between dusk and dawn as this is the period when badgers are most active.

Avoid additional lighting of the northern and eastern site boundaries.

Ensure any excavations i.e., footings for property, trenches and drainage are closed over at night with heavyweight boards/plywood sheet or an egress ramp such as a scaffold board at a shallow angle is installed to allow any badgers that enter the excavation to escape.

Open pipe-work larger than 150mm outside diameter should be blocked off at the end of each day.

All excavations to be inspected at start of each day and if badger found additional means of egress to be provided and no works to begin until badger has vacated excavation.

An emergency procedure should be implemented by site workers if badger / badger setts are unexpectedly encountered.

In the event badgers are discovered during works, contact Batworker Consultancy for further advice.

All work within 30 m (100 m for high noise/vibration activities) should cease the ecologist has inspected the site and determined the appropriate course of action.

