

Client Name: Lightsource Renewable Energy Ltd.

Site Name: Acrefair Solar Farm

Project Ref: Light-068-407

Date: 26 August 2015

Pre-construction Badger Survey Report

Introduction

Avian Ecology Ltd. was commissioned to undertake a pre-construction survey for badger *Meles meles* in relation to Acrefair Solar Farm and associated cable route, Penycae, Wrexham (the 'Site').

Legislation

Badgers and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Under the Act it is an offence to: wilfully kill, injure, take, possess or cruelly ill-treat a badger; to attempt to do so: or, intentionally or recklessly interfere with a sett.

Sett interference includes damaging or destroying a sett, obstructing access to a sett, and disturbing a badger whilst it is occupying a sett. It is not illegal, and therefore a licence is not required, to carry out disturbing activities in the vicinity of a sett if no badger is disturbed and the sett is not damaged or destroyed.

Where an activity is likely to result in an offence under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 a licence from Natural England is required.

Methodology

The pre-construction badger survey was carried out in accordance with Natural England guidance¹².

The survey area comprised all habitats within the Site boundary as shown on the pre-construction badger survey plan, and a 50m buffer (where access permitted).

During the survey, an intensive search was undertaken for signs indicative of badger activity including setts, latrines, mammal paths, snuffle holes, hair caught on barbed wire. Particular attention was paid to boundary features.

The survey area was visited on 5th August 2015 by Mr C. Davies MSc, ACIEEM.

Results

No setts or other signs indicative of badger activity were recorded either within the Site or within 30m of the Site boundary or associated cable route.

¹ Natural England (2013) Standing Advice Species Sheet: Eurasian Badger (Badger). Natural England, Peterborough.

² Natural England (2006) Badgers and Development: A Guide to Best Practice and Licensing. Natural England, Peterborough

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made in relation to the development:

- *Recommendation:* To protect any individuals should they be present in the wider area and moving around the Site, open excavations will be kept to a minimum, and covered overnight or fitted with a means of escape to prevent badgers or other animals becoming trapped. All materials will be stored in secured compounds or raised off the ground.

Reason: To safeguard badgers that may be active on Site during non-operational hours.

- *Recommendation:* Sections of the perimeter fence should be lifted by c. 20mm - 30mm at ground level.

Reason: To maintain free movement and access to badgers across the Site post construction.

Additional Notes

If the start of works on site is delayed beyond 3 months, further surveys may be required in order to ensure that the ecological baseline remains valid.

Prepared by: A Logan

Reviewed by: U Maginn