

Bolton Upon Dearne STW – Protected Species Walkover

Terms of reference:

PBA Applied Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Yorkshire Water Services (YWS) to undertake a Protected Species walkover at Bolton Upon Dearne STW, Barnsley, South Yorkshire (SE 45889 02224) prior to the installation of two new kiosks. The site comprises a sewage treatment works and associated infrastructure.

The focus of the walkover is to determine if badger setts are present within the areas of dense scrub on site. However, this walkover will also monitor whether there are further protected species present on site.

Legislation

Badgers *Meles meles* and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Under this legislation it is an offence to:

- Intentionally capture, kill or injure a badger;
- Damage, destroy or block access to their setts;
- Disturb badgers in setts;
- Treat a badger cruelly;
- Bait or dig for badgers.

Contravention of this law could result in a prison sentence of up to 6 months and/or an unlimited fine.

Natural England can grant mitigation licences which would allow for works within 30 m of a badger sett to be undertaken without contravening this legislation. In this instance a mitigation plan, prepared by a suitably qualified ecologist, would need to be put in place to ensure that badgers are protected throughout the works.

The survey was conducted on 24/04/24 by Assistant Ecologists Rachel Edgar BSc and Rhys Colenutt BSc. The weather conditions were partly sunny, with low wind and the temperature was ~7°C.

Results

There was no evidence of badgers observed on site, signs would include: setts, tracks, latrines, or feeding signs.

There was evidence of rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus* warrens and nesting birds present on site.

Potential evidence of American mink *Neovison vison* on site, as American mink scatt was observed.

Giant Hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum* was observed on site. Giant hogweed should be avoided as the sap can cause phytotoxic blistering on the skin; it is a Schedule 9 invasive non-native species.

Conclusion

There was no evidence observed on site of badger signs. However, due to the dense nature of the scrub, and presence of giant hogweed, certain areas could not be adequately searched. Therefore, it is recommended that prior to the works commencing an Ecologist should be present on site to conduct a toolbox talk of what protected species could be present on site. Additionally, an Ecological Clerk of Work (ECOW) can be present during the clearing of the scrub. Areas containing giant hogweed should be avoided due to health and safety concerns.

Survey Constraints:

Unless stated otherwise, the information provided within this report is valid for a maximum period of 24 months from the date of survey. If works at the site have not progressed by this time an updated site visit may be required in order to determine any changes in site composition and ecological constraints.

Written by:	Checked by:	Approved by:	Date:
R. Edgar	B.Davies	A. Macaulay	17/05/2024

Photograph	Notes
	Giant hogweed on site

Photograph	Notes
	Rabbit warrens
	American mink scat