
From: Paul Siddall <paul.siddall@gmail.com>
Sent: 10 May 2017 12:45
To: Programme Officer
Cc: Irene Brierton
Subject: Fwd: Watery Lane Sett

Hi Carmel

I hope the email below can be added into the record and given an ex number (as the letter from Derbyshire County Council this morning was). I am somewhat irritated that the agenda for today's meeting states

"A badger survey indicates that any setts on the site are likely to be annexes or subsidiaries."

The survey actually says "Peak ecology **would consider** classifying the activity at the site as being that of either an annex sett or a subsidiary sett, which would be connected to a main sett located within the wider area. **Further survey (sic) to establish the occupation of entrances by badgers is recommended within section 5 of the report"**

So I contacted Irene Brierton (Mid Derbyshire Badger Group) regarding the status of setts on the site and she wrote back to me as below. I can further add following a conversation this lunchtime that Irene and Mid Derbyshire Badger Group have footage of badgers on the site taken this week on a Bushnell Trail Camera (I don't know if a Bushnell Trail Camera is significant but as Irene specifically mentioned it I think it must be important!). In short I think a second opinion or a further survey at an appropriate time should be undertaken to confirm the status of the sett - the opinion of the Mid Derbyshire Badger Group who also surveyed the sett in 2005 is very much at odds with the findings as quoted in today's agenda.

Many thanks in anticipation, see you later,

Paul Siddall

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Irene Brierton <irene_brierton@btopenworld.com>
Date: 9 May 2017 at 22:15
Subject: Watery Lane Sett
To: Paul Siddall <paul.siddall@gmail.com>

Dear Paul

I had not realised that the ecologists had classified the sett on land to the rear of the recycling yard, off Watery Lane as an annexe or subsidiary sett. I had advised last year that it would be near impossible to undertake a survey during the summer months, for valid reasons stated within this email, but I understand one went ahead anyway and is likely to be the reason why their assessment differs from our own.

I am prepared to challenge that sett classification. The Mid Derbyshire Badger Group, which I represent, having been its chair for 26 years, refute any suggestion that this is an annexe or subsidiary sett. We are confident that it is in actual fact a long established main breeding sett to a social group of badgers. As such, there will have been badger cubs born there this spring.

We have known of its existence since 2005 when we made representation to Derbyshire County Council to ensure that the land it is on was not incorporated into the then proposed new recycling yard. A site meeting was held and it was not incorporated within the boundary of that site. We knew that cubs had been born there at that time.

Having since been made aware that it was now threatened, following the application passed for a traveler site, on Sunday 31 January 2016 we undertook a further survey of the land in question. We found high levels of badger activity and the sett at least as active, probably more so, than it had been eleven years previously. In the intervening years we had been aware of occasional road casualty badgers from the site, indicating it remained active. From that 2016 survey we have a set of notes and photographs showing active sett entrances with associated badger field signs, well used pathways connecting the entrances, latrines and foraging activity, taken at the time.

We returned this year on Monday 13 March 2017 to re-survey the sett, making notes in situ and took another series of photographs. On both occasions high levels of current badger activity were evident, with excellent field signs which continue to support our view that this is definitely a main sett, and as such, one that this group of badgers will occupy throughout the year.

This sett completely disappears from view under dense vegetation during the growing season, hidden below extensive shoulder height plant growth for several months of the year, hence our surveys were conducted during the winter months when the ground is clear. We would be happy to attend a site meeting with representatives of DDDC to back up our claims, though already vegetation growth has begun to largely obscure the view.

It should be noted that we have considerable practical experience and extensive knowledge of badgers and sett activity, gained over 27 years, on which we base its classification as a main sett.

Whatever decisions are reached regarding the consideration about traveler sites and the planning permission already granted, they should be taken in the certain knowledge that there is an active main badger sett within the land in question.

Kind regards

Irene Brierton

Mid Derbyshire Badger Group