



**Curraghinalt Gold Project,
County Tyrone,
Northern Ireland**

**Badger Survey Report 2025
CONFIDENTIAL**

November 2025

Dalradian Gold Limited

**DALRADIAN
GOLD**

Reference: DGL-25.001 v1.1

REVISION HISTORY


Date	Version	Issued To	Comments
September 2025	DGL-25.001 v1.0	Dalradian Gold Limited	Draft Report issued to client for review and comment.
November 2025	DGL-25.001 v1.1	Dalradian Gold Limited	Final Report issued to client.

CONTRACT

This document has been prepared by Green & Blue Ecology for Dalradian Gold Limited to provide information on the ecological monitoring programme for badger carried out in 2025 as part of the gold mine development at Curraghinalt, County Tyrone.

Prepared by:



 Sc(Hons), MIEEM
Principal Ecologist
Green & Blue Ecology

Date: November 2025

DISCLAIMER

This document has been prepared by Green & Blue Ecology for sole use of our client (Dalradian Gold Limited) in accordance with generally accepted consultancy principles and as part of the services and terms of reference agreed between Green & Blue Ecology and Dalradian Gold Limited.

Any information provided by third parties and referred to herein has not been checked or verified by Green & Blue Ecology, unless otherwise expressly stated in the document. No third party may rely upon this document without the prior and express written agreement of Green & Blue Ecology.

Green & Blue Ecology accepts no responsibility or liability for any use that is made of this document other than by the Client for the purposes for which it was originally commissioned and prepared.

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Background	1
1.2. Legislation and Planning Policy Context	1
1.3. Survey Aims and Objectives	1
2. METHODOLOGY	2
2.1. Study Area	2
2.2. Field Survey	2
2.3. Determination of Sett Class and Activity Levels	3
2.4. Uncertainty of Data and Limitations	4
3. RESULTS	5
3.1. Contextual Information and Historical Records	5
3.2. General Habitat Description	5
3.3. Field Survey Results	5
4. DISCUSSION	13
4.1. Discussion of Results	13

TABLES

Table 1: Criteria for the Classification of Badger Setts	3
Table 2: Criteria for the Measurement of Activity at Badger Setts	3

FIGURES

Figure 1: Badger Survey Results 2025

APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Summary of Monitoring Results (2017 – 2024)
- Appendix B: Mammal Burrow Entrance Description and Photographs

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

A planning application for the development and operation of an underground gold mine, as part of the Curraghinalt Project at Greencastle in County Tyrone, was submitted to the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) by Dalradian Gold Limited (DGL) in November 2017. Further revisions to the planning application were made in 2019.

To inform an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), that formed part of the wider Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the proposed gold mine development and submitted as part of the planning application, a suite of ecological surveys were carried out in 2015/16, including a badger survey.

Since the submission of the planning application in 2017, an annual programme of ecological monitoring has been commissioned by DGL to ensure the adequacy of ecological information for the decision making process is in line with British Standard 42020:2013, Biodiversity - Code of Practice for Planning and Development and advice from the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM)¹, and where necessary inform any application for a wildlife licence from Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) to ensure the development will comply with legislation and planning policy.

The monitoring programme includes an annual inspection of all identified badger setts, other holes/burrows with the potential to be used by badgers and walkover survey to identify any newly created setts at the proposed Infrastructure Site for the mine development.

This report has been prepared by Green & Blue Ecology on behalf of DGL and presents the findings of the 2025 badger survey carried out at the proposed Infrastructure Site to support the original badger survey by SLR Consulting Limited (SLR) in 2015/16, and which was submitted as part of the original planning application in 2017 (Appendix C8 Annex E).

1.2. Legislation and Planning Policy Context

The badger (*Meles meles*) and its setts are afforded full protection under The Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 (as amended) which, amongst other actions, makes it an offence:

- intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or take a badger;
- damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place that a badger uses for shelter or protection;
- damage or destroy anything which conceals or protects any structure or place a badger uses; and
- disturb a badger whilst it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection.

The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) for Northern Ireland, published in September 2015, states that planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that is not likely to harm a statutorily protected species, that includes the badger, and which can be adequately mitigated or compensated against.

1.3. Survey Aims and Objectives

The aim of the survey was to provide up to date baseline information on the current status of the badger at the proposed Infrastructure Site of the Curraghinalt Project, in accordance with the specific requirements of the NIEA², and inform where appropriate mitigation measures will be required to ensure the above ground development at the proposed Infrastructure will comply with statutory requirement of the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985.

¹ CIEEM Advice Note on the lifespan of Ecological Reports and Survey dated April 2019.

² NIEA (2017). *Badger Surveys - NIEA Specific Requirements* dated 17th February 2017. Northern Ireland Environment Agency, Lisburn.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Study Area

The Curraghinalt gold deposit is located in the South Sperrin Mountains approximately 7.5km east of the village of Gortin, and between the settlements of Rouskey and Greencastle, County Tyrone.

The application area has five component project sites that include:

- i. **Infrastructure Site (Area A).** The site where the process plant and dry stack facility (DSF) will be located and includes the access road from the Crockanboy Road near Greencastle.
- ii. **Mineral Extraction Area (Area B).** The area where the mineral deposit is known to occur and the maximum extent of the underground mine workings.
- iii. **Existing Surface Infrastructure Site (Area C).** The existing surface infrastructure that was developed for the underground exploration programme that will be retained for use as an early works base and for underground development and future training.
- iv. **Passing Bays on Camcosy Road and a Proposed Turning Point for Heavy Goods Vehicles off Lenagh Road (Area D).** The existing passing bays developed for the Curraghinalt Underground Exploration Programme and proposed turning point for heavy goods vehicles during the construction phase of the development.
- v. **Mineral Exploration Area (Area E).** The target area for future exploration of the Curraghinalt deposit by means of underground drifts (essentially exploration tunnels).

The area of study for the badger survey was based on all areas of habitat considered suitable for this species within the proposed Infrastructure Site and with the potential to be directly affected by any above ground development at this site (please refer to Figure 1). Where possible adjacent land was also visually inspected from DGL's landholding for any evidence of badger setts.

2.2. Field Survey

A walkover survey of the study area was undertaken on 18th June 2025 and involved a detailed search for signs for badger activity in accordance with a standard survey methodology³. This included a check on all previously identified confirmed and potential badger setts from the original 2015/16 survey and subsequent monitoring. Any evidence of badger activity was recorded including:

- sett entrances;
- badger paths and footprints;
- latrines and/or dung pits;
- scratching posts;
- evidence of digging for food; and
- badger hair on fences or bushes.

Badger setts are distinguished from other mammal entrances by generally having a typical D-shaped entrance and tunnel that is wider than it is tall with a width of between 25 - 30cm and a height of 20 - 30cm, as described in standard published literature on badgers⁴ and badger surveys. Therefore where holes/burrows clearly displayed the aforementioned characteristics they were classified as badger setts, unless otherwise stated. It is however, recognised that any determination if a hole/burrow is a badger sett will ultimately be determined by NIEA and as such all holes/burrows are reference with individual sett number.

³ Harris, S., Cresswell, P & Jefferies, D., (1989). *Surveying Badgers – An Occasional Publication of the Mammal Society, No. 9.* Mammal Society, London.

⁴ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/advice-badgers>

2.3. Determination of Sett Class and Activity Levels

A sett is defined as “any structure or place which displays signs indicating current use by a badger”. Current use is recognised as having been used at any point in the last 12 months where it would be expected that there would be no significant accumulation of leaf litter and other debris at or in an entrance to a sett.

Where a sett was recorded, it was classified in accordance with the criteria in Table 1⁵.

Table 1: Criteria for the Classification of Badger Setts

Sett Class	Description
Main	These usually have a large number of holes with large spoil heaps, and look well used. They usually have well used paths to and from the sett and between sett entrances. Although normally the breeding sett, and in continual use all year round, it is possible to find a main sett that has become disused because of excessive disturbance or for some other reason.
Annexe	These are always close to a main sett and are usually connected to the main sett by one or more obvious, well-worn paths. They usually consist of several holes, but are not necessarily in use all the time, even if the main sett is very active.
Subsidiary	Often these have only a few holes, are usually at least 50m from a main sett, and do not have an obvious path connecting them with another sett. They are not continuously active.
Outlier	These usually only have one or two holes, often have little spoil outside the entrance(s), have no obvious path connecting them with another sett, and are only used sporadically.

The levels of activity at each sett was assessed using a qualitative measure based on the criteria detailed in Table 2

Table 2: Criteria for the Measurement of Activity at Badger Setts

Activity Levels	Description
Inactive	Badgers may use a particular sett for only a short period each year. This means that there will sometimes be very few physical indicators of activity at a sett that is never-the-less active and considered to be so under the governing legislation. As a result a sett will not be described as inactive unless there is conclusive evidence that it has been disused for a period of greater than twelve months
Very Low	A sett described as having a very low frequency of activity will either be blocked or partially blocked with leaf-litter and other natural debris. Vegetation will most likely be encroaching onto the spoil heap and into the mouth of the tunnel, and there will be no freshly excavated soil or discarded bedding on the spoil heap. A sett with a very low activity level is estimated to be used by badgers on average of only once every two or more months or less, but displays evidence of use within the preceding twelve months. Setts where no field signs of badger activity are recorded but the sett cannot conclusively be demonstrated to have been inactive for a period of more than twelve months are recorded as being of very low activity.

⁵ Andrews, R. (2013). *The Classification of Badger Meles meles Setts in the UK: A Review and Guidance for Surveyors*. In Practice, Issue 82, December 2013, pp. 27-31.

Activity Levels	Description
Low	Setts considered to be of low activity level will contain significant volumes of leaf-litter and other natural debris as the frequency of badger passage will not be sufficient to sweep it from the tunnel mouth, but the tunnel will not usually be blocked and badgers will be able to gain access. There will not usually be significant volumes of freshly excavated earth on the spoil heap but a scattering of soil may be present. There may also be some vegetation encroachment upon the spoil heap or sett entrance. A sett considered to be of low activity level is estimated to be used approximately once per month.
Moderate	Setts displaying moderate levels of activity will usually be swept clean of leaf-litter or contain just a scattering of freshly gathered leaves. There will usually be a covering of freshly excavated soil on the spoil heap and this may also contain fragments of discarded bedding materials. Dropped bundles of bedding material may also be present in the vicinity of the tunnel entrance. The passing of the badgers may have begun to sweep a path over the spoil heap and leading away from the sett. A sett described as being moderately active is estimated to be used by badgers approximately on a monthly to weekly basis.
High	A sett with a high level of activity will be swept clear of leaf-litter and debris and there will usually be a significant volume of freshly excavated soil on the surface of the spoil heap (however, very old setts in stable substrates may be highly active without having large volumes of fresh soil on their associated spoil heaps). Fresh paw prints may be noted if the surface of the spoil heap is soft. Large volumes of discarded bedding may be present. There will be no encroachment by vegetation and a well-worn path will issue from the tunnel mouth and cross the spoil heap. Highly active setts will be in use several times per month, if not several times per week
Very High	A sett considered to be very highly active will usually have large volumes of freshly excavated soil and discarded bedding on the associated spoil heaps. Badger paw prints will likely be numerous were the surface of the spoil heap is appropriate. There will be no encroachment by vegetation and a well swept path will issue from some or all of the sett entrances. Where the substrate into which the sett is dug is suitable the frequency of the passage of the badgers may lead to the walls of the tunnel and the path in front of the sett taking on a smoothed or “polished” appearance as they are regularly brushed by the animals’ coats. Such a sett will be in constant or near constant occupation by badgers.

2.4. Uncertainty of Data and Limitations

No access to land outside of DGL’s landholding was permitted during the badger survey. Therefore whilst every effort was made to establish the presence of setts within the immediate and adjoining surrounding area of the proposed Infrastructure Site this could only be done visually from within DGL’s landholding.

The average group size of badgers in Northern Ireland is 2–6 adults, although in upland areas they often live singly or in pairs. As such, sett size in Northern Ireland can be smaller than that in the rest of Britain limited by the availability of suitable habitat⁶. Therefore when assessing any sett professional judgement has been used based not only on the number of sett entrances but also the levels of activity associated with each sett to inform the classification of any sett.

Badgers are highly capricious animals that move between setts in response to changes in environmental factors and whilst the survey provides a baseline of the conditions at the time of the surveys, the activity of setts and of the badgers within any given area can change from year to year.

⁶ NIEA (2011). *Badgers and Development*. Northern Ireland Environment Agency, Belfast.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Contextual Information and Historical Records

Monitoring of badger setts at the proposed Infrastructure Site has been undertaken from 2017 to 2021 by SLR Consulting and since 2022 by Green and Blue Ecology. This monitoring programme to date identified 20 individual or groups of holes/burrows within the proposed Infrastructure Site confirmed as being used or with the potential to be used by badger. A summary of the monitoring results 2017 to 2024 including the assessed sett class, activity levels and number of entrances is provided at Appendix A.

3.2. General Habitat Description

The proposed Infrastructure Site lies on the south side of a topographic ridge that forms the drainage divide between the Owenkillew and the Owenreagh rivers. The ridge runs in a northwest / southeast direction and rises up to the Mullydoo, Crocknamoghil and Crockanboy Hill supporting blanket bog habitat.

The open areas of blanket bog give way to a patchwork of fields typically bounded by earthbanks at higher elevations that are replaced by hedgerows further downslope. The fields are predominantly under improved and semi-improved grassland, many of which due to poor drainage and low grazing have typically developed into marshy grassland. However, pockets of peat remain supporting a mosaic of mire and wet heath habitats.

The proposed Infrastructure Site generally provides poor habitat for badgers due to shallow waterlogged peats and soils that are unable to support badger setts and which provide poor foraging habitat with the exception of sections of the [REDACTED].

3.3. Field Survey Results

The 2025 monitoring programme recorded mammal burrows at 21 locations within and immediately adjacent the proposed Infrastructure Site for the mine development (Figure 1). Further details for each individual and group of mammal burrows is provided below and a description of each sett entrance and photograph recorded in 2025 is provided at Appendix B.

3.3.1. S1 (Grid Reference [REDACTED])

S1 is located on the [REDACTED] (Plate 1) and lies [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Historically this sett was the most active and continuously used sett within the overall proposed Infrastructure Site. Based on the constant very high levels of activity and assessed highly likely it was being used for breeding this sett was classified as a main sett.

During 2022 and 2023 badgers stopped using this sett and no activity was recorded during this period. However, in 2024 very high levels of activity was once again recorded.

In 2025, no evidence of current activity by badgers was recorded at S1. Vegetation has started to cover the sett entrance with no fresh excavated soil or bedding present, but has been used within the previous 12 months. The sett is currently assessed as having Very Low activity levels and may no longer constitute a main sett.

3.3.2. S2 (Grid Reference [REDACTED])

S2 is located on an area [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The location of the sett is partially covered by dense gorse. Historically, the number of entrances has varied and which may be attributable to livestock grazing and new excavated burrows by rabbits, which have and still remain in this location.

During the visit in 2025, no sett entrances were found with all areas heavily overgrown and no evidence of badger activity was present. S2 is assessed as Disused with no badger activity recorded over the last 5-years.

3.3.3. S3 (Grid Reference [REDACTED])

S3 is located at the [REDACTED] (Plate 2), outside [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. The sett has one entrance that extends [REDACTED].

In 2025, no evidence of current activity by badgers was recorded at S3 with vegetation covering the sett entrance. S3 is assessed as being Disused with no badger activity recorded over the last 4-years.



Plate 1: S1



Plate 2: S3

3.3.4. S4 (Grid Reference [REDACTED])

S4 is located at the [REDACTED] (Plate 3), [REDACTED]. The sett has three entrances although only one of the entrances has been in continuous use throughout the survey period and with well-worn paths extending along the [REDACTED] of the entrance and linking to other setts. This is also the only sett where dung pits have been recorded in close proximity to the sett entrance. It was for the constant use all year round and level of activity that it is was classified as a main sett in 2022

In 2025, no evidence of current activity by badgers was recorded at S4. At entrance 4a although the sett entrance was swept clean, there was no fresh excavated soil or bedding present, but had been used within the previous 12 months. Entrance 4b was found to be fully blocked due the collapse of the tunnel. Entrance 4c was found with vegetation growing over the entrance and no evidence was present to indicate badger activity. However, there was a strong odour of fox at this entrance. S4 is currently assessed as having Low activity levels for entrance 4a only.

3.3.5. S5 (Grid Reference [REDACTED])

S5 is located in an [REDACTED] (Plate 4)

Historically classed as a one entrance outlier sett present under dense gorse.

During the visit in 2025, entrance 5a was found to be completely filled with gorse litter with no evidence of recent badger activity. In an adjacent earth/stone bank, two rabbit burrows with rabbit droppings at each entrance were also found to be present. Whilst both entrances 5b and 5c had enlarged entrances, the tunnels quickly narrow. There was no excavated soil at the front of the entrances and no evidence of badger activity found.

S5 is assessed as being Disused with no badger activity recorded over the last 4-years at entrance 5a and with entrances 5b and 5c too small for badger.



Plate 3: S4 (Entrance 4a)



Plate 4: S5 (Entrances 5b and 5c)

3.3.6. S6 (Grid Reference [REDACTED])

S6 is located in [REDACTED] (Plate 5) [REDACTED]. Historically the five entrances were recorded as an outlier sett by SLR.

In 2025, only three entrances were found. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] destroying two of the previously recorded entrances. All of the entrances are considered to be too small for badger and no evidence of badger activity found at this location.

Rabbit are still active in the location with rabbit dropping present on both mounds.

S6 is assessed as being Disused with no badger activity recorded over the last 4-years.

3.3.7. S7 (Grid Reference [REDACTED])

S7 is located a [REDACTED] (Plate 6) [REDACTED]. Historically the one entrance was recorded as an outlier sett by SLR.

In 2025, the entrance is enlarged but the tunnel quickly narrows. There was no excavated soil at the front of the entrances and no evidence of recent badger activity found.

S7 is assessed as being Disused with no badger activity recorded over the last 6-years.

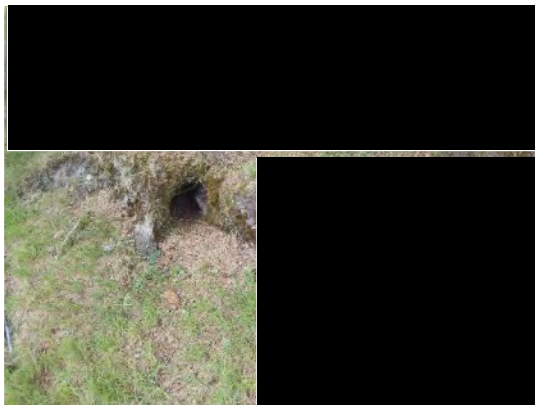


Plate 5: S6 (Entrance 6c)



Plate 6: S7

3.3.8. S8 (Grid Reference [REDACTED])

S8 is [REDACTED] (Plate 7) [REDACTED]. Historically the two entrances recorded in 2019 have not been found since and it was believed these were lost due to trampling of cattle.

In 2025, an entrance was found in the historic location of S8. It is unsure if this is one of the original hole recorded, but the entrance considered to be too small for badger and no evidence of badger found.

S8 is assessed as being Disused with no badger activity recorded over the last 6-years.

3.3.9. S9 (Grid Reference [REDACTED])

S9 is located a [REDACTED] (Plate 8) [REDACTED]. Historically the one entrance was recorded as an outlier sett by SLR.

In 2025, the entrance was found to be enlarged but the tunnel quickly narrows. There was no excavated soil at the front of the entrances and no evidence of badger activity found.

S9 is assessed as being Disused with no badger activity recorded over the last 6-years.



Plate 7: S8



Plate 8: S9

3.3.10. S10 (Grid Reference [REDACTED])

S10 is located a [REDACTED] (Plate 9) [REDACTED]. Historically the one entrance was recorded an outlier sett by SLR.

In 2025, the entrance was found to be enlarged but the tunnel quickly narrows. There was some fine excavated soil at the front of the entrances but no evidence of badger activity found.

S10 is assessed as being Disused with no badger activity recorded over the last 7-years.

Rabbit footprints and droppings were present in front of the entrance.

3.3.11. S11 (Grid Reference [REDACTED])

S11 is located a [REDACTED] (Plate 10) [REDACTED]. Historically the one entrance was classified an outlier sett by SLR.

In 2025, the entrance was found to be enlarged but the tunnel quickly narrows and no evidence of badger activity found.

S11 is assessed as being Disused with no badger activity recorded over the last 6-years.5

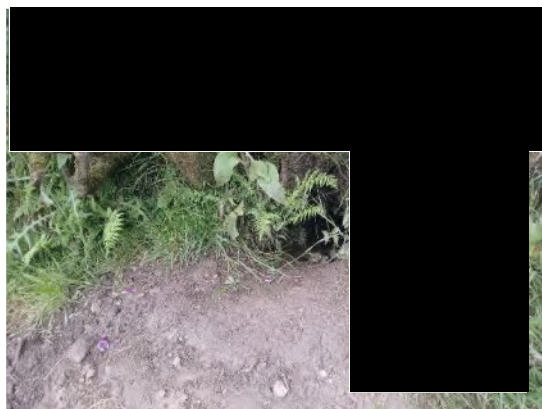


Plate 9: S10



Plate 10: S11

3.3.12. S12 (Grid Reference [REDACTED])

S12 is located in a [REDACTED] (Plate 11) [REDACTED]. Historically the one entrance sett was classified an outlier sett.

In 2025, no evidence of current activity by badgers was recorded at S12. Although the entrance is clear of debris there was no fresh excavated soil or bedding at the sett entrance. On further inspection it was found that there was a potential tunnel collapse approximately 4m from the sett entrance evidence by a relatively large and recent hole formed in the ground along the likely line of the sett. The sett is currently assessed as having Low activity levels based on likely usage in the last 12 months.

3.3.13. S13 (Grid Reference [REDACTED])

S13 is located in a [REDACTED] (Plate 12) [REDACTED]. Historically this sett was very active and continuously used. Based on the constant very high levels of activity was classified as a main sett. However, during 2022 and 2023 badgers stopped using this sett and no activity was recorded during this period. However, in 2024 low levels of activity was once again recorded.

In 2025, a relatively large amount of fresh excavated soil and bedding was present at entrance 4d. The fresh bedding extended for some distance along a defined path leading [REDACTED]. Other well defined paths connect to and lead from entrances 4a and 4b although no fresh excavated soil and bedding was present at these entrances. Badger footprints were evident at the entrance 4d and along the paths leading from this entrance. S13 is currently assessed as having Very High activity levels, particularly in respect to entrance 4d although 4a and 4b are also likely to be currently used by badgers.



Plate 11: S12

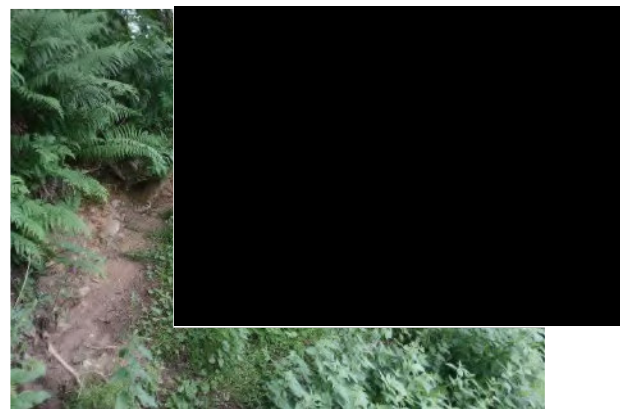


Plate 12: S13

3.3.14. S14 (Grid Reference [REDACTED])

S14 is located [REDACTED]

Historically the one entrance sett was classified an outlier sett, but had been inactive since 2021.

S14 was not found in 2025. At its location there was evidence of bank slippage and it is likely that the sett has been lost.

3.3.15. S15 (Grid Reference [REDACTED])

S15 is located [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Historically the one entrance sett was classified an outlier sett, but had been inactive since 2021.

S15 was not found in 2025. At its location there was evidence of bank slippage and it is likely that the sett has been lost.

3.3.16. S16 (Grid Reference [REDACTED])

S16 is located [REDACTED]

(Plate 13)

[REDACTED] Historically the one entrance sett was classified as an annexe sett connected to S4.

In 2025, no evidence of recent or current activity by badgers was recorded at S16 with the twigs and needles present in the entrance and on the path leading from the sett entrance. A well defined path runs along the [REDACTED] the sett that remains relatively clear of debris. S16 is assessed as being Inactive with no evidence of badger activity within the last 12 months.

3.3.17. S17 (Grid Reference [REDACTED])

S17 is located on [REDACTED]

(Plate 14)

[REDACTED] Historically the one entrance sett was classified as an annexe sett connected to S4.

In 2025, no evidence of current activity by badgers was recorded at S17. Although the entrance is largely clear of debris some vegetation is beginning to grow over the entrance and there was no fresh excavated soil or bedding at the sett entrance. A well-defined path runs along the [REDACTED] the sett up and [REDACTED] S17 is assessed as having Low activity levels.



Plate 13: S16



Plate 14: S17

3.3.1. S18 (Grid Reference [REDACTED])

S18 is located in [REDACTED]

(Plate 15)

[REDACTED] Historically classified as a rabbit warren

comprising of six burrows. Although some of these have enlarged entrances the tunnels narrow a short distance from the entrances.

No access was permitted during 2025 but the warren does not appear to have significantly altered, still used by rabbit by the presence of rabbit droppings and with no obvious signs of badger activity. It is assessed that this this remains a rabbit warren.

3.3.2. S19 (Grid Reference [REDACTED])

S19 is located in [REDACTED] (Plate 16) [REDACTED] Historically classified as a rabbit warren comprising of six burrows. Although some of these have enlarged entrances the tunnels narrow a short distance from the entrances.

In 2025, three entrances were found with some trees having been uprooted due to storm damage at this location or completely obscured by woody debris and needles. All the tunnels are considered to be too small for badger and no evidence of badger found at any of the entrances. It is assessed that this remains a rabbit warren.



Plate 15: S18

Plate 16: S19

3.3.3. S20 (Grid Reference [REDACTED])

S20 is located on [REDACTED] (Plate 17) [REDACTED] Historically classified as a rabbit burrow with an enlarged entrance but which narrows past the entrance and considered to be too small for badger with no evidence of badger was found at the entrance.

3.3.4. S21 (Grid Reference [REDACTED])

S21 is located a [REDACTED] (Plate 18) [REDACTED] There are three rabbit burrows recorded in 2025, but all tunnels are considered to be too small for badger and no evidence of badger found at any of the entrances.



Plate 17: S20



Plate 18: S21

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. Discussion of Results

The badger survey carried out in 2025 recorded badger activity at five setts (S1, S4, S12, S13 and S17) and where activity was also recorded during the 2024 survey. There was an increase in activity level at S13 from 2024 to 2025 (Low to Very High), no change of activity levels at S17 (Moderate) and a reduction in activity levels at S1 (Very High to Very Low), S4 (Moderate to Low) and S12 (Moderate to Low). The reduction of activity levels at S12 is attributed to the partial tunnel collapse at this sett.

No recent badger activity was recorded at S3, S5 and S16 in 2025 and continues inactivity at these locations since 2022. In addition, no sett entrances were located at S2, S14 and S15 in 2025.

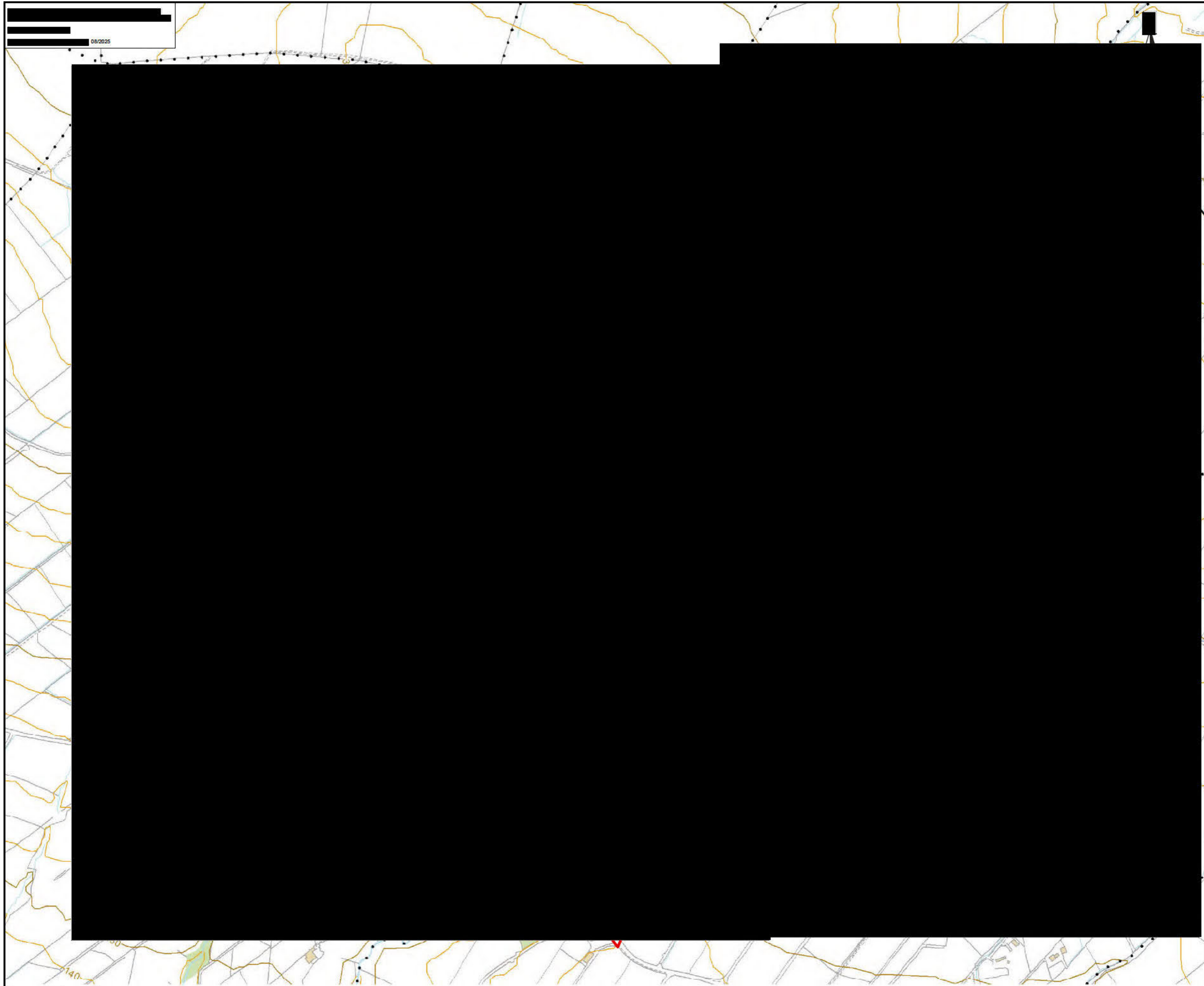
Although all other mammal burrows (S6, S7, S8, S9, S10, S11, S18, S19, S20 and S21) typically have enlarged entrances but soon narrow down and are not likely to be utilised by badger.

Based on the current levels of activity, [REDACTED] still supports a low resident badger population. Monitoring would indicate that badger activity in the study area has and continues fluctuate and moves between setts. No main sett has been identified within the wider surrounding area.

The development of [REDACTED] will result in the loss of one active sett [REDACTED] No active sett currently lie within a [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

In view of the evidence, it is considered that that mitigation and/or compensation measures will only be necessary with the need of an appropriate derogation licence, issued by NIEA Wildlife Licensing, for one sett at [REDACTED].

FIGURES



[Redacted]
[Redacted]
08/2025

[Redacted]

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

[Redacted] [Redacted]

APPENDICES



**APPENDIX A:
SUMMARY OF MONITORING RESULTS (2017 - 2024)**



Ref	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
S1	Main Very High 1 Entrance	Main Very High 1 Entrance	Main Very High 1 Entrance	Not Checked	Main Moderate 1 Entrance	Main Inactive 1 Entrance	Main Inactive 1 Entrance	Main Very High 1 Entrance
S2	Main Inactive 3 Entrances	Main Inactive 3 Entrances	Main Low 7 Entrances	Main Inactive 4 Entrances	Main Inactive 5 Entrances	Main Inactive 3 Entrances	Main Inactive 3 Entrances	Main Inactive 3 Entrances
S3	Outlier Moderate 1 Entrance	Outlier Moderate 1 Entrance	Outlier Moderate 1 Entrance	Outlier Low 1 Entrance	Outlier Moderate 1 Entrance	Annexe Inactive 1 Entrance	Annexe Inactive 1 Entrance	Annexe Inactive 1 Entrance
S4	Outlier Moderate 1 Entrance	Outlier Low 1 Entrances	Outlier Low 3 Entrances	Outlier Low 3 Entrances	Outlier High 1 Entrance	Main Moderate 3 Entrances	Main Moderate 3 Entrances	Main Moderate 3 Entrances
S5	Outlier Inactive 1 Entrance	Outlier Inactive 1 Entrance	Outlier Very Low 1 Entrance	Outlier High 1 Entrance	Outlier Low 1 Entrances	Outlier Inactive 1 Entrances	Outlier Inactive 1 Entrance	Outlier Inactive 1 Entrance
S6			Outlier Moderate 2 Entrances	Not Checked	Outlier Moderate 5 Entrances	Rabbit burrow Inactive 5 Entrances	Rabbit burrow Inactive 5 Entrances	Rabbit burrow Inactive 5 Entrances
S7			Outlier Moderate 1 Entrance	Outlier Inactive 1 Entrance	Outlier Inactive 2 Entrances	Rabbit burrow Inactive 1 Entrance	Rabbit burrow Inactive 1 Entrance	Rabbit burrow Inactive 1 Entrance
S8			Outlier Low 2 Entrances	Not found	Not found	Not found	No found	No found
S9			Outlier High 1 Entrance	Outlier Inactive 1 Entrance	Outlier Inactive 1 Entrance	Rabbit burrow Inactive 1 Entrance	Rabbit burrow Inactive 1 Entrance	Rabbit burrow Inactive 1 Entrance

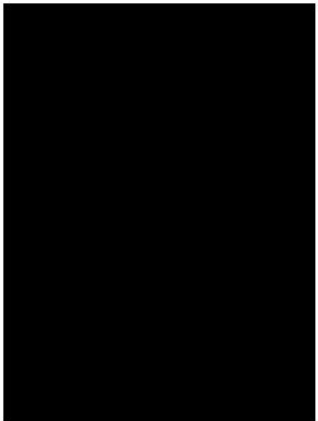



Ref	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
S10			Outlier Inactive 1 Entrance	Outlier Inactive 1 Entrance	Outlier Inactive 1 Entrance	Rabbit burrow Inactive 1 Entrance	Rabbit burrow Inactive 1 Entrance	Rabbit burrow Inactive 1 Entrance
S11			Outlier Moderate 1 Entrance	Outlier Low 1 Entrance	Outlier Inactive 1 Entrance	Rabbit burrow Inactive 1 Entrance	Rabbit burrow Inactive 1 Entrance	Rabbit burrow Inactive 1 Entrance
S12			Outlier High 1 Entrance	Outlier High 1 Entrance	Outlier Moderate 1 Entrance	Outlier Moderate 1 Entrance	Outlier Moderate 1 Entrance	Outlier Moderate 1 Entrance
S13			Main Very High 4 Entrances	Main Moderate 4 Entrances	Main High 3 Entrances	Subsidiary/Outlier Inactive 3 Entrances	Subsidiary/Outlier Inactive 3 Entrances	Subsidiary/Outlier Low 3 Entrances
S14				Outlier High 1 Entrance	Outlier Moderate 1 Entrance	Outlier Inactive 1 Entrance	Outlier Inactive 1 Entrance	Outlier Inactive 1 Entrance
S15				Outlier Moderate 1 Entrance	Outlier Moderate 1 Entrance	Outlier Inactive 1 Entrance	Outlier Inactive 1 Entrance	Outlier Inactive 1 Entrance
S16						Annexe Inactive 1 Entrance	Annexe Inactive 1 Entrance	Annexe Inactive 1 Entrance
S17						Annexe Inactive 1 Entrance	Annexe Inactive 1 Entrance	Annexe Low 1 Entrance
S18						Rabbit warren Inactive 6 Entrances	Rabbit warren Inactive 6 Entrances	Rabbit warren Inactive 6 Entrances

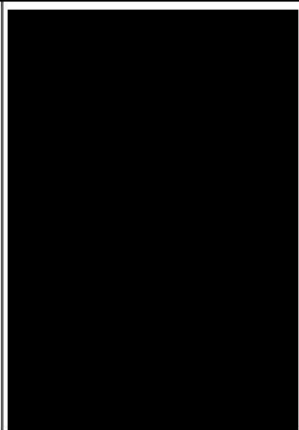



Ref	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
S19						Rabbit warren Inactive 6 Entrances	Rabbit warren Inactive 6 Entrances	Rabbit warren Inactive 6 Entrances
S20						Rabbit burrow Inactive 1 Entrance	Rabbit burrow Inactive 1 Entrance	Rabbit burrow Inactive 1 Entrance

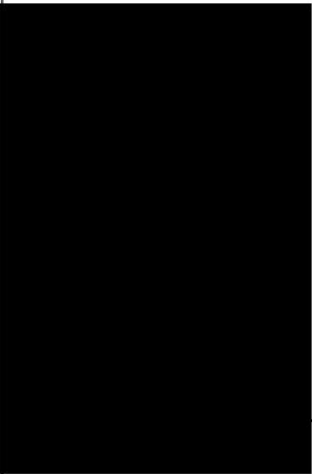


APPENDIX B: MAMMAL BURROW ENTRANCE DESCRIPTIONS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

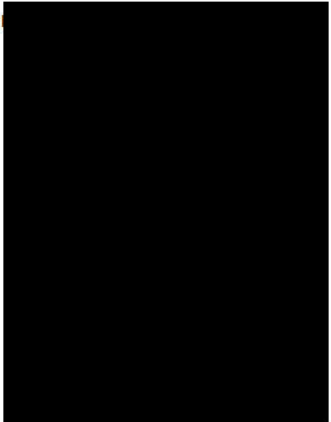



Ref	[REDACTED]	Burrow Reference	Description	Photograph of Sett Entrance
S1	[REDACTED]	1a	<p>The entrance is 36cm wide and 21cm high, with a tunnel direction of 90^o (east). The tunnel drops slightly and continues straight</p> <p>A moderate sized old spoil heap is at the entrance with some evidence of old bedding but not freshly excavated material present. Vegetation has started to cover the entrance.</p>	
S2	[REDACTED]		No sett entrances found all areas heavily overgrown with no evidence of badger activity.	
S3	[REDACTED]	3a	<p>The entrance is 30cm wide and 17cm high with a tunnel direction of 313^o (north west).</p> <p>No spoil heap or recent excavations at entrance. Entrance overgrown with vegetation with twigs and leaves also present in tunnel. No evidence of badger recently using this entrance.</p>	



S4	[REDACTED]	4a	<p>The D-shaped entrance is 26cm wide and 23cm high with a tunnel direction of 315° (north west).</p> <p>Large spoil heap at front of entrance but with no recent excavated material. Old bedding on spoil heap but no fresh material. Entrance clear of leaves and other debris.</p> <p>Well worn path extending along the [REDACTED] of the entrance.</p>	
		4b	<p>Former entrance which is now fully blocked due to tunnel collapse. No evidence of badgers trying to re-excavate.</p>	

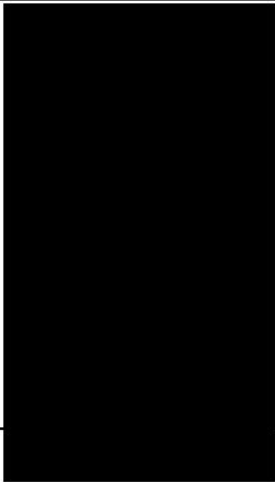



		4c	<p>A rounded entrance that is 20cm wide and 20cm high with a tunnel direction of 316° (north west).</p> <p>No spoil heap or recent excavations at entrance. Some vegetation growing over entrance. No evidence of badger recently using this entrance, but strong odour of fox.</p>	
S5		5a	<p>An enlarged rabbit burrow with the potential to be used by badger. Entrance not accessible to measure due to dense gorse covering its location.</p> <p>No spoil heap or recent excavations at entrance. Entrance completely filled with gorse litter. No evidence of badger recently using this entrance.</p>	



		5b	<p>An enlarged rabbit burrow with a D-shaped entrance that is 26cm wide and 16cm high with a tunnel direction of 61° (north east). The tunnel narrows approximately 50cm from entrance.</p> <p>No spoil heap or recent excavations at entrance. No evidence of badger recently using this entrance.</p> <p>Rabbit droppings present near entrance.</p>	
		5c	<p>An enlarged rabbit burrow with a D-shaped entrance that is 16cm wide and 36cm high with a tunnel direction of 61° (north east). The tunnel narrows approximately 30cm from entrance.</p> <p>No spoil heap or recent excavations at entrance. No evidence of badger recently using this entrance.</p> <p>Rabbit droppings present near entrance.</p>	

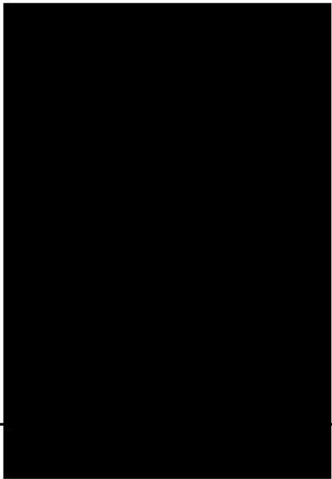


S6		6a	<p>The entrance is 12cm wide and 15cm high with a tunnel direction of 325° (north west).</p> <p>No spoil heap or recent excavations at entrance. Large sticks at entrance accumulation of needles in tunnel.</p> <p>Entrance considered to be too small for badger and no evidence of badger found.</p> <p>Rabbit droppings present on mound in vicinity of entrance.</p>	
		6b	<p>The entrance is 19cm wide and 16cm high with a tunnel direction of 35° (north east). Tunnel narrows 30cm inside of entrance.</p> <p>No spoil heap or recent excavations at entrance. Accumulation of needles in front of entrance.</p> <p>Entrance considered to be too small for badger and no evidence of badger found.</p> <p>Rabbit droppings present on mound in vicinity of entrance.</p>	



		6c	<p>The entrance is 17cm wide and 13cm high with a tunnel direction of 30° (north east).</p> <p>No spoil heap or recent excavations at entrance. Accumulation of needles in front of entrance.</p> <p>Entrance considered to be too small for badger and no evidence of badger found.</p> <p>Rabbit droppings present on mound in vicinity of entrance.</p>	
S7		7a	<p>An enlarged rabbit burrow with an entrance that is 21cm wide and 17cm high with a tunnel direction of 10° (north).</p> <p>The tunnel narrows to less than 20cm once past the entrance and becomes more rounded.</p> <p>Tunnel considered to be too small for badger and no evidence of badger found.</p>	



S8		8a	<p>A rabbit burrow with an entrance that is 12cm wide and 15cm high with a tunnel direction of 10° (north).</p> <p>Entrance considered to be too small for badger and no evidence of badger found.</p>	
S9	[REDACTED]	9a	<p>A rabbit burrow with an entrance that is 21cm wide and 17cm high with a tunnel direction of 10° (north). The tunnel narrows to less than 20cm once past the entrance and becomes more rounded.</p> <p>No spoil heap or recent excavations at entrance. No evidence of badger recently using this entrance.</p>	

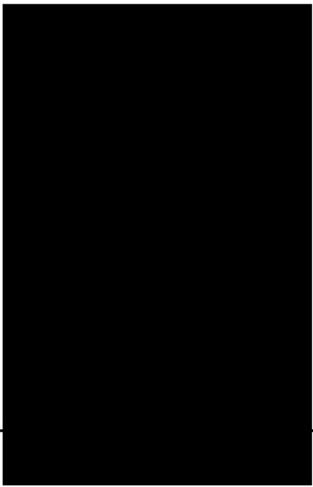


S10		10a	<p>The entrance is 25cm wide and 24cm high with a tunnel direction of 90° (east). The tunnel narrows to less than 20cm once past the entrance and becomes more rounded.</p> <p>Recent excavations at entrance but no evidence of badger recently using this entrance.</p> <p>Rabbit footprints and droppings near entrance.</p>	 A photograph showing a badger entrance in a bank of earth. The entrance is a dark, rectangular hole. A yellow measuring tape is placed horizontally across the entrance to indicate its width. The surrounding area is covered with green ferns and other vegetation.
S11		11a	<p>The entrance is 20cm wide and 18cm high with a tunnel direction of 90° (east). Entrance considered to be too small for badger and no evidence of badger found.</p>	 A photograph showing a badger entrance in a bank of earth. The entrance is a dark, rectangular hole. A yellow measuring tape is placed horizontally across the entrance to indicate its width. The surrounding area is covered with green grass and other vegetation.

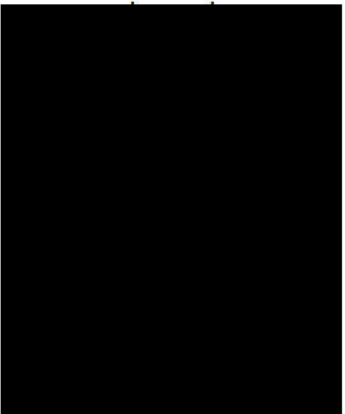



S12	[REDACTED]	12a	<p>The entrance is 29cm wide and 28cm high with a tunnel direction of 15° (north). The tunnel narrows slightly approximately 1m from entrance. Potential tunnel collapse approximately 4m from the entrance</p> <p>A moderate spoil mound with no recent excavated material at entrance.</p> <p>A worn path leading along the [REDACTED] of the entrance.</p>	
S13		13a	<p>The entrance is 46cm wide and 25cm high but within a much larger cavity void with entrance 13b. It has a tunnel direction of 20° (north). The tunnels narrows and appears to bend to the right approximately 1.5m from the cavity entrance.</p> <p>No recent excavated material evident but some evidence of old bedding at entrance of cavity void.</p> <p>Path leading along the [REDACTED]. The [REDACTED] direction path forks a short distance from the cavity void with one path moving towards the open field and the other connecting to another clear path from [REDACTED]. The [REDACTED] direction path runs short distance along the [REDACTED] before disappearing.</p>	

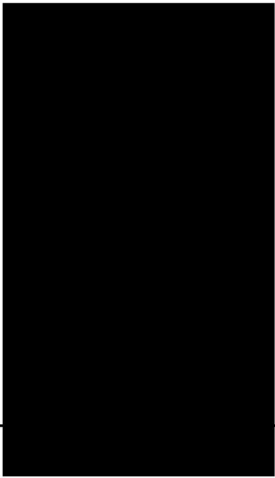


		13b	<p>The entrance is 43cm wide and 22cm high but within a much larger cavity void with entrance 13a. It has a tunnel direction of 115° (east).</p> <p>As per entrance 13a no evidence of recent excavations but some evidence of old bedding at entrance of cavity void.</p>	
		13c	<p>The D-shaped entrance is 30cm wide and 20cm high, with a tunnel direction of 50° (north east). The tunnel drops very slightly and continues straight.</p> <p>No spoil heap or recent excavated material at entrance. Some vegetation growing over entrance that would indicate this entrance is not well used.</p>	


		13d	<p>The D-shaped entrance is 30cm wide and 23cm high with a tunnel direction of 45° (north). The tunnel drops very slightly and continues straight.</p> <p>Recent excavated material evident at the entrance along with fresh bedding both near the entrance and along a clear path leading [redacted] and heading [redacted]. Another path leads on the [redacted] before crossing the [redacted] of the sett. Badger footprints also present.</p>	
S14			<p>No sett entrance found, evidence of [redacted] at this location.</p>	
S15			<p>No sett entrance found evidence of [redacted] at this location.</p>	
S16		16a	<p>The D-shaped entrance is 27cm wide and 22cm high with a tunnel direction of 315° (north west).</p> <p>No spoil heap or fresh excavated material at entrance. Twigs and needles present at entrance indicating not recently used by badger.</p> <p>Well defined path running along the [redacted] the [redacted]</p>	

S17	[REDACTED]	17a	<p>A rounded entrance that is 22cm wide and 22cm high with a tunnel direction of 314° (north west).</p> <p>No spoil heap or fresh excavated material at entrance but entrance swept clear of leaves and other debris.</p> <p>Well defined path running along the [REDACTED] entrance with badger footprints present.</p>	
S18			<p>All entrances located outside DGL landholding with no access and no measurements taken.</p>	

S19		19a	<p>An enlarged rabbit burrow with an entrance that is 21cm wide and 15cm high with a tunnel direction of 135° (south east). The tunnel narrows to less than 20cm once past the entrance and becomes more rounded.</p> <p>No spoil heap or fresh excavated material at entrance. Accumulation of needles at entrance.</p> <p>Tunnel considered to be too small for badger and no evidence of badger found.</p>	
		19b	<p>An enlarged rabbit burrow with an entrance that is 22cm wide and 21cm high with a tunnel direction of 140° (south east). The tunnel narrows to less than 20cm once past the entrance and becomes more rounded.</p> <p>No spoil heap or fresh excavated material at entrance. Accumulation of needles at entrance.</p> <p>Tunnel considered to be too small for badger and no evidence of badger found.</p>	

		19c	<p>An enlarged rabbit burrow with an entrance that is 20cm wide and 19cm high with a tunnel direction of 130° (south east). The tunnel narrows to less than 20cm once past the entrance and becomes more rounded.</p> <p>No spoil heap or fresh excavated material at entrance. Accumulation of needles at entrance.</p> <p>Tunnel considered to be too small for badger and no evidence of badger found.</p>	 A photograph showing a dark, circular burrow entrance in a grassy area. A yellow measuring tape is placed horizontally on the ground next to the entrance, with the black casing of the tape visible on the right side.
S20		20a	<p>An enlarged rabbit burrow with an entrance that is 21cm wide and 13cm high with a tunnel direction of 145° (south east). The tunnel narrows to less than 20cm once past the entrance and becomes more rounded.</p> <p>No spoil heap or fresh excavated material at entrance. Accumulation of needles at entrance.</p> <p>Tunnel considered to be too small for badger and no evidence of badger found.</p>	 A photograph showing a dark, circular burrow entrance in a wooded area with many dry sticks and twigs. A yellow measuring tape is placed horizontally on the ground next to the entrance, with the black casing of the tape visible on the right side.

S21		21a	<p>An enlarged rabbit burrow with an entrance that is 15cm wide and 20cm high with a tunnel direction of 325° (north west east).</p> <p>No spoil heap or fresh excavated material at entrance. Accumulation of needles at entrance.</p> <p>Tunnel considered to be too small for badger and no evidence of badger found.</p>	
		21b	<p>An enlarged rabbit burrow with an entrance that is 18cm wide and 21cm high with a tunnel direction of 325° (north west east).</p> <p>No spoil heap or fresh excavated material at entrance. Accumulation of needles at entrance.</p> <p>Tunnel considered to be too small for badger and no evidence of badger found.</p>	

	[REDACTED]	21c	<p>An enlarged rabbit burrow with an entrance that is 14cm wide and 14cm high with a tunnel direction of 325° (north west east).</p> <p>No spoil heap or fresh excavated material at entrance. Accumulation of needles at entrance.</p> <p>Tunnel considered to be too small for badger and no evidence of badger found.</p>	
--	------------	-----	--	---

