

Appendix 7.5

Confidential sections of this report
are included in Annex C.2

2014 Badger Survey of the Proposed Douglas West & Dalquhandy DP Renewable Energy Project, South Lanarkshire



Dunnock Environmental Services

Final Report

Disclaimer

This document has been prepared by Dunnock Environmental Services (DES) for the exclusive use of the client and for the purpose(s) for which it was originally commissioned and prepared.

Unless otherwise agreed in writing, DES accepts no liability for the use of or reliance on the contents of this document in full or in part by any third party. Through release of this document to a third party under the above terms, the third party does not acquire any rights, contractual or otherwise, whatsoever against DES and DES declines any duties, liabilities, obligations, etc. to that third party.

DES accepts no responsibility for any loss or damage incurred by the client as a result of the client releasing this document to a third party.

This document has been prepared in good faith based on the information made available to DES by the client and on guidance, guidelines, good practice notes, etc. available at the time of writing. DES accepts no liability for the accuracy and completeness of such information or for any decisions, conclusions or losses derived or resulting from this information.

Advice, opinions and recommendations contained in this document should be used only in the context of the entirety of the document. These do not constitute, imply or shall be interpreted directly or indirectly as legal advice or opinion in any way.

No part of this document may be copied or reproduced by any means, written, electronic or otherwise without the prior written permission of the client or DES.

Following final submission of this document by DES to the Client, all obligations between DES and the client cease and no further duties to the client arise. This includes changes, amendments, iterations, developments, etc. that may affect the information, advice, opinions, recommendations, etc. contained in this document.

Version	Date	Status	Comments
1	19/12/2014	Draft	
2	26/05/2015	Final	Minor client comments of 20/05/2015 incorporated

For any queries relating to this document, please contact:

Dunnock Environmental Services

Dr. Alison Hannah, MCIEEM

Tel.: 01382 330486

Mob.: 07913 308893

Email: alisonhannah@live.co.uk

1. Introduction

A planning application is being drawn up by 3R Energy for a 15-turbine wind farm and associated wood drying facility at Douglas West and Dalquhandy DP, located to the north west of the village of Douglas in South Lanarkshire (central OS grid reference: NS 820 325, see Figure 1).

In addition to the turbines and wood drying facility, the proposed development would contain associated infrastructure, such as substation/control building, hardstandings, crane pads, access tracks, etc. It is anticipated that the grid connection would be laid largely underground along the former Dalquhandy access road which leaves the north-eastern corner of the site and runs northwards past the Dewars bonded warehouses towards the M74 motorway.

As part of this planning application, a suite of ecological and ornithological surveys is being carried out to feed into the Environmental Impact Assessment process. Dunnock Environmental Services (DES) were commissioned by 3R Energy in September 2014 to document and evaluate evidence of use of the site by badgers (*Meles meles*). This report describes the methods and results of that survey.

2. Site Description

The site (excluding the access track) is 318 ha in area and consists of two distinctive sections: a northern section and a southern section, which are separated by the former coal haul road, now a tarmac road that crosses the site in an east-west direction.

The northern half of the site consists of previously worked opencast coal land which was restored in the mid-1990s and which has reverted predominantly to a rough grassland consisting of a mixture of Soft-rush (*Juncus effusus*) and Tufted Hair-grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*) with patches of more open and improved grassland scattered in between. A number of small waterbodies, including former settlement lagoons, and running streams are scattered across the site. The concrete hardstanding of the former dispatch point (DP) in the north-east corner of the site and the tarmac road are remnants of the previous opencast coal infrastructure.

The southern section of the site consists of unworked land that is more semi-natural in character, although has been drained in the past and consists of a mixture of Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*) dominated wet heath, marshy grassland and acidic grassland. There is also a band of young mixed woodland plantation along the southwestern site boundary.

The Poniel Water corridor, deeply incised in the west, runs along the northern boundary of the site (in a diverted channel), while dense Sitka Spruce plantation borders the western boundary and a mixture of broadleaved woodland, coniferous woodland and a disused railway flanked by broadleaved trees border the eastern boundary. The access track to the Hagshaw Hill Wind Farm forms the southern boundary of the site beyond which the rough grassland of the southern section continues south-eastwards for some distance.

The entire site is grazed by sheep and there is a low level of informal recreational use of the site, primarily along the former coal haul road in the centre of the site.

3. Legislation

Badgers are protected by the Protection of Badgers Act (1992), which protects them against deliberate cruelty and incidental effects of otherwise lawful activities. It is an offence, amongst others¹, to:

- wilfully kill, injure, take, possess or cruelly ill-treat a badger or attempt to do so
- damage, destroy or obstruct access to a badger sett or part of a sett
- disturb a badger when it occupies a sett.

The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 also made the above actions unlawful if carried out recklessly (as opposed to intentionally). The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act (2011) (the WANE Act) has strengthened the protection afforded to badgers further by making it an offence, amongst others², to knowingly cause or permit an unlawful act to be carried out.

4. Methodology

The approach adopted consisted of a desk exercise and a field survey, as described in sections 4.1 and 4.2 below.

4.1 Desk Study

For the desk study a data request was made to Scottish Badgers on 15th January 2015 for badger records within 2 km of the site boundary.

4.2 Field Survey

The site was surveyed on 8th, 10th and 16th October 2014 at a time when badger territorial marking is high following standard methodologies (Harris *et al.*, 1989, Hutchison, 2005). Incidental signs were also noted on 26th September and 19th October 2014 during the course of other survey work.

Badger signs surveyed for included:

- Setts: holes of generally at least 25 cm diameter and oval in shape
- Paths: regularly used badger routes, producing well-worn paths from setts to feeding areas

¹ This is a summary of the protection afforded to badgers. Full details are available at: <http://www.snh.gov.uk/about-scotlands-nature/species/mammals/land-mammals/badger-protection/>

² Full details of the WANE Act are available at <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/52-WildNatEnv/b52bs3-aspassed.pdf>.

- Dung pits: shallow holes containing faeces
- Latrines: groups of dung pits, which can indicate territorial boundaries
- Scratching posts: scratch marks on the bases of tree trunks in the vicinity of setts
- Hair: found, amongst others, on low strands of barbed wire across badger paths
- Prints: foot registrations in soft muddy areas
- Foraging digging: clusters of small holes and dug out soil
- Snuffle holes: holes in the ground produced by a badger pushing its snout into the soil to search for food

A hand held GPS was used to record any badger signs found. The survey area included the development boundary and a surrounding 100 m buffer zone, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Sections 5 and 6 and Figure 1 are included in confidential Annex C.2

7. References

Harris, S., Cresswell, P. & Jefferies, D. (1989) *Surveying Badgers*. The Mammal Society. Occasional Publication No. 9.

Hutchison, I. (2005) Ed. *Badger Awareness Manual: Guidance for monitoring and surveying*. Scottish Badgers.

