

LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CALLED IN PLANNING APPLICATION FOR PROPOSED HEYSHAM TO M6 LINK ROAD

LAND TO THE NORTH OF LANCASTER BEGINNING AT THE
END OF THE A683 HEYSHAM TO M6 LINK PHASE 1 AND
RUNNING IN AN EASTERLY DIRECTION TO CONNECT WITH
THE M6 AT JUNCTION 34 OF THE M6

Planning Inspectorate reference:
APP/Q2371/N/07/1200928 and
APP/Q2371/N/07/1200929

LPA reference:
01/05/1584

PROOF OF EVIDENCE - SUMMARY **BARRY WRIGHT** ADAS SENIOR ECOLOGIST

ECOLOGY DETAILS

June 2007

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 As part of the planning process for the creation of a bypass around the northern side of Lancaster to the port of Heysham the impact of the scheme on the ecology was considered.
- 1.2 A wide range of surveys were done in order to characterise and describe the ecological resources likely to be impacted upon by the development of the scheme. This included assessments of habitats and individual species (referred to as receptors) likely to be impacted upon.
- 1.3 Initial surveys indicated areas for further work either on existing receptors or on receptors that had not previously been identified as being at potential risk.
- 1.4 Key elements of the ecological resource that were identified as being potentially adversely affected by the scheme were uncommon wax cap fungi in a damp meadow, hedgerows, watercourses and ponds, veteran trees, mosses associated with trees, grassland containing wild orchids
- 1.5 Receptors potentially impacted upon were assessed to determine the significance of any adverse impacts. Mitigation proposals were devised based on a hierarchical system of preference ranging from avoidance of impact, through reduction of impact to compensation.

- 1.6 In order to protect the uncommon fungi in the valley meadow the proposal is to purchase 9.8ha of land and to manage this area in favour of the species, including opening up part of Howgill brook that is currently culverted.
- 1.7 The severance and removal of hedgerows will be compensated for by the creation of more than double the length of new and translocated hedgerow.
- 1.8 Some loss of watercourses may be inevitable and compensation measures are in place.
- 1.9 One pond is close to the scheme boundary and is expected to be retained, but its hydrology may not be guaranteed and three additional ponds are proposed.
- 1.10 A number of veteran trees will be lost. Short-term mitigation measures are proposed in the form of re-erecting the trunks and replacement planting (four for each tree lost) is scheduled.
- 1.11 In addition to veteran trees being redirected as habitat, a number of trees were identified as supporting uncommon moss floras. These will also be re-erected nearby in an attempt to perpetuate the species locally.

- 1.12 An area of grassland (formerly the construction compound for the M6 motorway) has become colonised by large populations of orchid species. Their loss will be mitigated against by translocating plants and using seed throughout the landscaping and ecological enhancement works.
- 1.13 Eight Habitat Creation Areas have been selected along the length of the scheme, totalling 12.8Ha.
- 1.14 Approx 12.8 Ha of new woodland and shrub planting is proposed.
- 1.15 In order to assure successful mitigation/compensation a 20 year after-care period will be maintained.
- 1.16 It is acknowledged that there will be some adverse impacts on some receptors, the mitigation and compensation measures are predicted to result in an overall net gain, in the long-term.