

Bexhill to Hastings Link Road - Notes of a meeting

9.2.07 – 10.00

Wildlife issues

Present

David Vickers (Planning Authority) -DV

Dr. Alex Tait (County Ecologist) –AIT

Philip Masters - PM

Nigel Marshall - NM

The purpose of the meeting was to update both parties on wildlife issues and some requirements from the Planning Authority.

Route selection – In spite of getting to this stage in the design process it was the view of the AIT that he needs to be satisfied that there is no practical alternative to the selection scheme, particularly where the road goes through GCN (Greta Crested Newts) habitat in the railway cutting near Ninfield Road bridge.

Regulations are likely to make the County Council licence holder for GCN, rather than the consultant.

Bats – Nursery School – the balance of probability is that bats (Pipistrelle) do exist in the roof of the building.

Adams Farm barns may be a brown long eared bat roost.

Barn Owl and bat roosts should be provided so that there is no loss of population.

Road verges – Keep them long where ever possible to avoid barn owl foraging. We don't want to attract bats and owls to the road verges.

Badgers – There are likely to be 2 or more setts to be moved. Where artificial setts are proposed, they should be kept simple.

As many badger crossing as possible should be provided. AIT suggested that 1way badger gates may be worth considering – to let them out of the road corridor, should they get in through the fencing.

AIT would accept the harvesting of seed from the existing species rich meadows, for seeding new meadow areas. However, he would favour transplanting existing turf where this is to be lost, by way of transplanting the seed source. He would also welcome the moving of topsoil from the high quality existing species rich areas but not other areas.

Newts – Limited sections of permanent ACO fencing should be provided, particularly at Decoy Pond.

Mitigation for impact newts would be required – e.g. moving habitats and providing tunnels. Some compensatory new habitat would also be beneficial.

Where severance of wet fields occurs then the provision of reed beds with shallow water would be beneficial and help meet national biodiversity targets.

END