

**Our ref: BOW0017/293**  
**LPA ref No: 03/2011/0892**  
**PINS ref No: APP/T2350/A/12/2181354**

**Proof of Evidence- Appendix B**  
**Appeal against refusal of consent**  
**Land off Milton Avenue Clitheroe**

**October 2012**

**Hedgerow survey**

**Ecological Assessment**

Introduction

The survey was undertaken by Emma Kilduff, BSc (Hons) and Member of the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management. Emma has seven years' experience of undertaking ecological surveys including a range of protected species surveys and detailed botanical surveys, including hedgerow assessments.

Bowland Ecology Ltd was commissioned by The Huntroyde Estate to undertake a hedgerow survey of the hedge situated along the eastern boundary of the appeal site.

This survey was undertaken in September 2012. It was selected for a detailed survey because it will be partially lost by the proposed development in order to allow the creation of an access upon completion of the development. The survey was undertaken in full accordance with the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. This report provides the results of the hedgerow survey.

Results

The targeted survey of the hedgerow bordering the eastern boundary of the site supports the following canopy species: hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and crab apple (*Malus sylvestris*). The hedgerow had not been recently laid or coppiced and was between 1 and 2 m in width and 2 and 4 m in height. No adjacent ditches or other features were present. The ground flora comprised grassland species similar to those recorded from the adjacent species-poor grassland.

An assessment using the criteria in the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 was carried out; due to the few canopy species present and the absence of any additional features, the hedgerow is not classified as "important" under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

The hedge provides suitable habitat for common nesting birds such as blackbird, robin and wren.

Appraisal of Ecological Effects

The proposed development will result in the loss of a section of this hedge (approx. 10m) to provide access. However the hedge is not considered to be important under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. Furthermore it is considered to be only of limited ecological value ie in a site context only. The loss of this habitat is not considered to be of any significance in ecological terms.

Hedgerow clearance would be undertaken outside of the breeding bird season, which runs from February to September, to avoid adverse effects on breeding birds and avoid offences under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). A condition to this effect would be appropriate.

Hedgerow loss would be mitigated for as part of the overall landscape proposals for the scheme; planting proposals would use a range of native species and would provide a more diverse range of species than is currently present in this hedge. The process of hedgerow creation in the context of a development facilitates the ability to achieve diversity from the outset, thereby creating a richer habitat than that which the proposal replaces. Habitat linkages will be retained across the site and will be supplemented by extensive additional planting (approx. 0.06 ha). Extensive native hedgerows have been planted within the last 10 years at Proctor's Farm, Slaidburn; the results of survey and monitoring by Bowland Ecology Ltd have demonstrated the success of this scheme in terms of establishment. Furthermore, hedgerow planting is a common method of ecological mitigation which is known to be successful.

Given that the loss of this habitat is not considered to be significant, there is no ecological reason why this appeal should not be allowed. It is considered that due to the small loss in hedgerow length (approx. 10 m) and the retention and enhancement of habitat linkages across and surrounding the site no significant impacts on wildlife are anticipated as a result of the proposed application. It is my professional view that there is opportunity for enhancement by improving the quality of the retained hedgerow along with the creation of additional areas of planting.