

ENGLISH HERITAGE

NORTH WEST REGION

Lancashire County Council
Environment Directorate
Development Control, Planning Service
Attn Jonathan Haine
PO Box 9, Guild House
Cross Street
Preston
PR1 8RD

Your ref: 01/05/1 584
Our ref: HD/R M6 Heysham
Telephone: 0161 242 1423

21 February 2006

Dear Mr Haine,

Application: 01/05/1584 Heysham to M6 Link

I refer to your letter dated 13th January 2006 consulting English Heritage on the above planning application and accompanying Environmental Statement (ES) and write to make the following comments.

Methodology

- Volume 3 Part A and Appendix 3 from Oxford Archaeology North relate specifically to built heritage however it is also important to consider the historic dimension to the landscape. Here the Lancashire Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) work will be of great assistance. Whilst the Lancashire Landscape Strategy which incorporates HLC is referred to in the ES it would be beneficial to have separate consideration of the specific impacts of the road proposal upon historic landscape character. Impact on designed parkland is identified but it is difficult to understand the impact of mitigation measures here.
- Chapter 5 of Volume 3 Part A looks at the impact of the proposed link road however Table 6 is flawed in the grading it allocates to different types of site. Also it conflicts with the grading system shown in Table 3. This needs reconciling. All listed buildings are nationally important. Listed buildings are graded to show their relative importance:
 - Grade I buildings are those of exceptional interest

- Grade II* are particularly important buildings of more than special interest
 - Grade II are of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve them.
- Individual Grade II listed buildings are not “Grade D Other buildings”. Locally important but unlisted buildings may fall into such a category. It is not clear if any work has been undertaken to identify or assess locally important buildings or curtilage buildings and structures.
- Additionally the grading of the severity of impact needs careful use. For example; destroying a small part of a listed building or scheduled monument may have a significant impact and could not be considered as “minor” paragraph 5.1.3.

Presentation

- Whilst Figure 2 shows the reference numbers for SMR and other sites it would be very helpful to have these sites shown on the set of three plans which show the whole length of the road proposals.
- This information would enable a better understanding of the impact of the road proposals upon the historic environment and interpretation of the Table 5 and 8 results.
- Additionally Appendix 3 only includes odd site numbers so it has not been possible to give consideration to any even numbered sites, e.g. site 136 Beaumont Grange which is categorised as one of the most severely affected sites.

Mitigation

- The appropriate mitigation identified in Tables 3 and 6 is also questioned. For example for Grade II listed buildings, “preferable to avoid if possible”, or grade D other sites “not necessary to avoid”. Volume 1 Part A paragraph 7.4.20 states; “mitigation measures have been recommended to reduce the impact along the entire route and with these in place the overall impact on Cultural Heritage will be a slight negative”. It is however difficult to pin point from the Volumes supplied the specific mitigation relating to cultural heritage matters.
- Volume 1 Part A includes details for the proposed scheme together with facing materials for the bridges and retaining walls proposed as part of the scheme. It is suggested as part of the mitigation greater consideration and care needs to be given to the choice of facing materials both in terms of landscape impact and cultural heritage. The textured finish concrete and reconstructed stone facing illustrated would do little to enhance the character and quality of the area. It would be particularly important for the canal bridge to respect the character of the traditional canal bridges on this stretch of the Lancaster Canal.
- The scheme includes a number of retaining walls which are proposed to be faced in ribbed/textured/ patterned concrete profile. It is important that such retaining

walls designed and faced in materials which mitigate their landscape impact. The impact of the retaining walls themselves upon the landscape needs careful assessment; the Beaumont Gate retaining wall is described as up to 12m in height and the Shefferlands retaining wall up to 15m. Detailed visualisations of the proposals would help in understanding the impact of the walls and bridges. For example what would the reclining crib wall look like after 1, 3 and 10 years for example?

In summary: the categorisation of site, grading and impact criteria needs reviewing and as a consequence the assessment may require re-working; cultural heritage sites need plotting on maps which show the road proposals; the missing even numbered site information should be provided; any locally important or curtilage buildings should be identified; mitigation in relation to the cultural heritage sites needs clear identification; impact on historic landscape character should be assessed together with the effects of the mitigation (retaining walls); detailed visualisations of retaining walls and bridges need to be provided, design and materials should reflect and enhance the local area

It is recommended that any decision on this application be deferred until this information has been provided and English Heritage given the opportunity to comment. Please contact me if you think a meeting to discuss the road proposals and impact upon the historic environment would be useful.

Yours sincerely

Judith Nelson
Regional Planner
E-mail: judith.nelson@english-heritage.org.uk

Copy to OAN, TSLM

SUITES 3.3 AND 3.4 CANADA HOUSE 3 CHEPSTOW STREET MANCHESTER M1 5FW
Telephone 0161 242 1400 Facsimile 0161 242 1401
www.english-heritage.org.uk

Please note that English Heritage operates an access to information policy.

Correspondence or information which you send us may therefore become publicly, available