

Transport of Works Act Order 1992.
The proposed Network Rail (East
West Rail Bicester to Bedford
Improvements) Order

Summary of Proof of Evidence in
relation to Ecology - Dr Ian Fairclough
156/4/3

(on behalf of O&H Q6 Ltd and O&H Q7 Ltd)

- 1.1 My name is Ian James Fairclough. I have been a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management for over fourteen years. I hold a PhD in entomology and Master of Science (by Research) in Environmental Monitoring. I am employed as a Principal Ecologist at BSG Ecology.
- 1.2 The evidence which I have prepared and provide in this proof is true and has been prepared and is given in accordance with the guidance of my professional institution and I confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions.
- 1.3 The scope of evidence that I present concerns four land holdings of O&H (O&H Q6 and Q7 Ltd).
- 1.4 Where relevant, for each of these sites my evidence considers, from an ecological perspective, whether the Ecological Compensation Sites proposed by East West Rail are justified and whether they need to be fixed in their current locations. I consider if they could be positioned elsewhere, and if so, whether this could potentially be to better effect. Finally, I consider the proposed location of Compensatory Flood Storage Areas and whether the positioning of these is likely to compromise existing or proposed land-uses from an ecological perspective.
- 1.5 In summary, I conclude that, based on the evidence, there is insufficient survey information to the required standard to inform the nature of impacts on bats and water vole that are deemed to be among the reasons for the designation of Ecological Compensation Sites on O&H land. Only once full surveys have been undertaken will it be possible to understand what the appropriate form of mitigation / and or compensation should be and the best location for this.
- 1.6 It is my opinion that the approach to selection of Ecological Compensation Sites in Route Section 2D is not transparent. It is my interpretation that sites have been selected to provide compensation for 'overall' biodiversity losses across the Route Section rather than to offset specific impacts on protected species that need to be located as close to the source of impact as possible. This raises the question as to whether such sites could potentially be located in other areas, or that are potentially not justified at all (although the outcome of survey would decide this); and I conclude that there may be suitable alternatives. The Ecology Chapter of the

Environmental Statement fails to explain why alternative sites could not be chosen.

- 1.7 Overall it is my understanding that consultation with O&H has been limited and the Ecology Chapter of the ES does not demonstrate that future proposals for land development by O&H (such as the outline planning application for Marston Valley) have been factored in, especially since there could be opportunities for synergistic habitat creation (notably concerning Compensatory Flood Storage Areas) that does not constrain development in the areas of Woburn Sands and Lidlington.