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26 June 2014

Walton – short day with ecology today, and I have no re-examination at all. I know that the programme officer has been calling around emailing to ask who would be available to cross-examine mr walker tomorrow – she has found half a day worth of examinations – I'll leave a bit of time to finalise that with mr walker.

Fitzsimmons – mr smith said that the line was unsuitable to be built on that land [Stourton park and ride] – can we have an answer to go on the record.

Ins – can you put your question on writing

Walton – if we saw that point in writing...

Ins – yes, to clarify what you exactly want answering – then you will get a written reply.

Walton – we were of course about to deal with EMC today but we learnt last night that first will put the points in writing – I was wondering whether we could have those by close of play tomorrow and get them sorted in the next two weeks and have it back to first

Alex – yes we have to check with mr jones – depends if he can get back to us on his holiday by close of play tomorrow

Cross examination of Purseglove by Bill McKinnon

[10:07]

Will only refer to your proof and the ES a-08-d

Ins – have you got an idea of how long you will take

Bm – half an hour – I'm representing friends of woodhouse moor

Bm – para 8.11 to 14 of your proof, you deal with the objections relating to woodhouse moor – you say that 'I have assumed that the objections relate to monument and woodhouse moor' – is it the case that you haven't read the objections?

P – I did read them – a while ago

Bm – is that why you have 'assumed' that the objections...

P – I assumed that those were the drawings you were using

Bm – I'm not sure exactly why you don't understand what I'm asking – the objections relating to woodhouse moor were clear but you said you 'assumed' it – are you talking about the land appropriations

P – I was talking about engineering and landscape proposals

Bm – why haven't you made reference to specific points raised by objectors

P – I'm only talking about ecology – my only concern was lost trees and grasslands

Bm – you've made no mention of cutting back of trees at the avenues – were you unaware of these?

P – I knew there was some cutting back and trees felled – would it be useful to look at the plan

Bm – habitat drawing 24-25 (towards end of ES appendix)

Bm – if you were aware that these trees were to be cut back why no mention?

P – I didn't think it was critical – it was cut back not cut down – I didn't consider it was a major issue in terms of ecology

Bm – we have no idea of the extent of the cut back

P – that is a landscape issue – my overall view of this area in terms of ecology e.g. birds is that it is regrettable that some trees will be lost but there is an enormous amount being planted so you get a pretty good linear tree belt

Bm – are you talking about woodhouse moor

P – I'm talking about the green area on the two plans – I'm assuming it's all woodhouse moor

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Bm – an enormous number?

P – well you can see on the plan that there a girdle of new tree planting going round one block of open space on one side of the road

Bm – I'm not sure the green circular blobs are indicative of individual trees...

P – it is for the landscape guy

Bm – were you unaware that cliff road is to be widened

P – I'm not aware

Bm – is that why you make no mention of it

P – I guess so yes

Bm – did you know that little moor is visited by these birds – [lists bird species]

P – it doesn't surprise me but those names I didn't know were recorded

Bm - why have you made no mention of the new roads through little moor

P – it was not something I'm aware of

Bm – but it's in the plans/drawings

P – show me where it is

Ins – top of 112

P – I have looked at the trees being lost there – I know that all those trees have been lost

Bm – but you made no mention in your proof

P – I'm afraid I didn't

Bm – you state in 8.13 – cinder moor will be grassed over with reinforced grass

P – as I remember it's an area used for fairs and things so harsh standing

[bm continues to ask P to point out Little Moor]

Walton – we all know where it is, this is not a quiz

Bm – I do need to clarify it

Ins – Yes I think this could be a reasonable point

P – I understand that it is the big area on the north side of the road

Bm – could you hold up the map for us all to see please

P – its on the edges of the main road isn't it...

Bm – that's not cinder moor, professor, you go on to say further tree planting is proposed on the edges of cinder moor – in relation to the statement

[P interrupts and points out he is wrong...]

Ins - the professor does realise now where cinder moor is

Bm – was your proof of evidence checked by several people

P – yes

Bm – you said that cinder moor was grassed –

P – I know that monument moor is the big one now

Bm – so that sentence doesn't make sense

P – [reads out 8.13] – it sounds correct to me

Bm – say that again please

P – “the existing one on monument moor will be grassed over and cinder moor grassed over by reinforced grass”

Bm – where have you got that from? Do you understand that cinder moor is area that is un-grassed

P – it is grassed over by reinforced grass

Bm – so you are saying that it makes sense because cinder moor is currently un-grassed..

P – no, cinder moor has grass on it

Bm – no it doesn't

P – I understood cinder moor to be this one

[points at the plan]

Ins – [think the professor has got it wrong...]

Bm – you are both wrong, cinder moor is the un-shaded area...[completely away from where they are both pointing] - there is no proposal of grass

Bm - This is all completely wrong, what you are saying.

Ins – yes now I understand where the mistake is...

Bm – so you now appreciate the area that is to receive plastic meshing is currently grass –

Walton – if mr mckinnon is reading the evidence and suggesting what he understands as cinder moor is not landscape and is outside the scheme boundary is to be covered in ..whatever – it is a terminology problem

Ins – but it sounds as though professor purselove has misunderstood...

Bm – what P thinks is that an area that is currently un-grassed is going to be grassed with reinforced meshing [follows through to ecological impacts being incorrectly assessed].

P – no I didn't, I understood it was a grassed area which will then be further covered with reinforced grass – dig it up and established with reinforced grass...e.g. concrete block

Bm – you've said within the last five minutes that it was an un-grassed area

P – no I was talking about a different bit

Bm – please, in your understanding of things...we've only been talking about the green areas shown on the plan – it's news to you that that is un-grassed. You had thought cinder moor was un-grassed.

Ins – so I think the reference to cinder moor is incorrect – I can see that on this plan it might be that the professor thought that cinder moor included that area that is going to be reinforced. So the naming is not quite correct.

Walton – it's the terminology

Bm – its obviously more than that...it's about the accuracy of professor P's report and the accuracy of the ecology tech appendix

Ins – ok then, do you want to carry on

Bm – are you aware that parks and countryside currently don't cut the grass on the lower area of monument moor as it is too rough

P – I didn't

Bm – would you say addition of plastic meshing and car parking is improvement

P – it's not a serious issue but it's not going to be a definite improvement compared to what it was before

Ins – would it be a detriment

P – if you have reinforced grass growing through it ecologically it wouldn't cause a detriment – you would have it at construction, a slight loss of not especially important grassland, if you look at 2.79 it is amenity grassland (e.g. sportsfield like grassland) – no real ecological value

Bm – and yet similar grassland in bodington is mentioned in the ecology tech appendix but this isn't

P – mostly we are concerned about the semi improved grassland ...

Bm – could you explain why one is mentioned in the ES and the other isn't?

P – I can't other than I don't reckon it as being a major issue

Bm – did you write your proof before you visited the site?

P – I wrote it after – I am very sorry of the terminology but my site visits/surveys were all along there and focused very much on the trees here

Bm – your proof relies solely on reports of others, why does it contain no first hand evidence that you had

P – I didn't think it was necessary

Bm – why do you only mention woodhouse moor in response to objections and not in the main body of proof

P – I see it as not an enormous issue overall but it is captured in the description of the loss of trees

Bm – are you aware the ES appendix doesn't mentioned woodhouse moor

P – yes

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Bm – are you aware that habitat map 24 in the ES shows a broad band of cinder moor as amenity grassland when in fact it's un-grassed

P – well yes...if it shows that its incorrect

Bm – the block of black building adjacent on the left of cliff road – that should be half that depth because half adjacent to cliff road is part of woodhouse moor and amenity grass land

Ins – so you are suggesting that this is all not correctly labelled as it should be

P – I'm afraid we can't deny that...

Bm – did your colleague miss cottell [Stephanie Cottell] do a site visit

P – I'm sure she did

Bm – you are 'sure' – so you don't know

P – no, I'm certain of it

Bm – are you aware habitat map 24 didn't show road widening on cliff road

P - yes

Bm – do you agree that it should do

P – no this is showing the existing base line habitat phase 1 survey but it wouldn't show the proposals

Bm – sorry, did you not discuss the onus of influence yesterday when you were questioned by mr graham – so you are surely looking at the effects of the scheme over a wider area than just the ngt route

P – we are looking at a corridor 15m either side of the route

Ins – I see this...it isn't going far enough to the north east as it's not taking in the 15m...

Bm – we've got the ngt scheme, and it cuts a new road across little moor and includes road widening all the way up cliff road – it's not taken in to account at all

Ins – so the band could have been extended to take it into account

P – I agree

Bm – do you agree the ES should assess the road widening on the moor e.g. tree loss

P – yes, the tree loss is the main thing, the loss of amenity grassland is not an issue ecologically. I know the corridor is drawn too tight but the bottom line on woodhouse moor in ecology is that some trees are lost but more are planted. The existing habitats are not of major concern because they are amenity grassland.

Bm – do you agree the ES should also consider the effect on bird life on little moor due to construction of new road

P – you mentioned a couple of species – the point about the bird life...is that e.g. bramlin won't be nesting as it's a winter bird etc... we will not be disturbing nesting... birds being seen onsite should not be a problem

Bm – it should have been assessed?

P – probably yes, but we made a decision where you pick out the main things on a report like this – we picked out the important species which are the bats and sch 1 birds – it would have been a huge waste of money to record presence/nesting of all urban birds along the route.

Bm – are you aware that habitat maps 18-20 follow the ngt route along the new alignment behind the back of the arndale centre but maps 24-25 don't show the new alignment of woodhouse moor...

Ins – I think we've dealt with that

Bm – no we haven't...

Ins – is this is a different point... ok you were talking about cliff road... I was assuming the whole thing...

P – yes...I thought there were errors in the whole monument moor [map] –

Ins – yes it should have been an extra 15m over... it looks to me that the corridor is not including enough.

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Bm – it seems to suggest that your colleague hasn't appreciated the fact that the trolley bus is going to be running across woodhouse moor – it shows no deviation whatsoever

P – we are talking about the phase 1 habitat maps – none of them show the engineering proposals... in the area at the back of the shops here, the route through the habitats isn't shown – just the area where the corridor is, with its different habitat – it should have included a wider corridor but it's not supposed to show changes in these plans – it's shown on the landscape plans but not on these.

Ins – it's difficult to know what your colleagues have done...but it looks to me that it doesn't include areas where the [NGT] work is [will be] carried out

P – if that's the case then I have to accept it

Ins – there are areas of cliff road where it looks to me as if the trees are taken and that's not included in the habitat map – and the extra width on monument moor

P – I think the trees are the issue here – ecologically cinder moor etc don't matter as much but it is true that the corridor should have been wider... but it is clearly marked on the landscape map

Bm- you said there should have been a bulge northward onto monument moor – miss Cottell's drawings aren't dated but the ES appendix is – from memory the final revision was about july 2013 – but you know that until june last year there were two options available (one through the moor and one around it) – is it possible that miss Cottell was not given the right plan

P – I can't answer that

Bm – it would explain why neither the ES nor your proof made no mention of it

P – you are probably very right about that...that would figure

Ins – this is speculation at the moment...

Walton – we'll clear that up

Ins – the applicant might be able to confirm whether that's the case...

Walton – we will try

Bm- why didn't miss cottell produce a proof since she's done all this work

Walton – it's a matter of interest for us not mr purse-glove

Ins – you can put that in writing to get an answer from the applicant

Bm – ok thank you I'm finished now

Inspector – you said you didn't have any re-examination, mr Walton?

Walton – yes but short points on those questions by mr mckinnon, please turn to 278 of 304 in the paginated technical appendix – the plans, the point about the building to the west of cliff road marked as a building as opposed to half open space and half building. Would your assessment change or remain same if that plan was drawn?

P – it would remain the same

Walton – what about how the amenity grassland etc. Does your assessment remain the same?

P – it doesn't change in any way (the overall ecological assessment of this area) except that I would say that it is true that...the amenity grassland is not of much interest ecologically, that would not have changed in any significant way as it is not a habitat of any value. The only habitat of value which unfortunately has not been recorded is the group of trees all along cliff moor – it would need to be resubmitted on the phase 1 but it wouldn't change the overall assessment.

[10:48]

Ins – I would like to get together and have a serious re-think the programme. So we can give an idea to other objectors about when they can come in to cross examine and give their own evidence.

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Walton – Stuart Natkus not going to be here to question Purseglove – I think he will have to put in questions in writing for Purseglove to answer as he is retiring after this.

Ins – yes... in that case the inquiry is adjourned till 9.30 tomorrow. Happy retirement Mr Purseglove!