

A556 Knutsford to Bowdon Improvement Scheme Altrincham, Cheshire

Costain Ltd

BIG Challenge 2015 submission category: Large scale permanent

Project overview

The project is to build a new dual carriageway between the M56 and M6 between Knutsford and Bowdon to the south west of Manchester.

The construction is through a rural landscape with a total project cost of £192,000,000.

What were the biodiversity conditions on site, prior to the enhancement?

The footprint of the construction site consists of agricultural fields with occasional ponds, woodlands and hedgerows bisecting the line of the new road.

Were there any specific conditions that led to you carrying out this work?

In order to minimise the effect of the construction of the new road planning conditions and biodiversity mitigation works are key to the project.

Additionally the works have been subject to a number of consents for works affecting protected species and some of the enhancements are a result of these licences.



Photo: New Badger Sett Underconstruction

What were the biodiversity measures taken?

Biodiversity works on the scheme include:

- 1 Green bridge containing a 7m wide section of habitat planting to maintain foraging route between woodlands.
- 5 Mammal Tunnels under the new road.
- Bat Hopovers along the route to maintain flight lines once the new road is constructed.
- Commitment to replace any Bat roost that is removed on a two for one basis. This is likely to see a minimum of 6 bat boxes erected.
- 21 new ponds created to replace the 5 removed to facilitate the new road. Each of these new ponds will be suitable for Great Crested Newts.
- 1 new Badger Sett - Building and gifting of 2 new Barn Owl Boxes to the Local barn Owl Group to mitigate for those that will be within 500m of the new road.
- Planting of in excess of 350,000m² of species rich, open and Newt mitigation grassland.
- More than 40,000m² of new native woodland - In excess of 60,000m² of scattered trees and shrub planting.

- Assisting a local conservation group to remove Himalayan Balsam from the river bank through providing Volunteers as part of the company bio-diversity week.

How would you best describe the project?

An enhancement.

Further information

The project is currently in the construction phase and to date has undertaken the following:

- Installation of 6 Bat Boxes - Built 2 and refurbished 1 Barn Owl box to provide to the group.
- Completed licenced Newt Exclusion works to ensure Newts are not affected by the works by removing them from the footprint.
- Built the new Badger Sett.

What was your personal motivation for carrying out the enhancement?

As an environmental advisor this project offered me the opportunity to work with a greater number of environmental issues than any of my previous projects in this role had offered.



Photo: Automatic camera image of a Badger exploring the new sett area