

**Route 3 Country Park Section
Stage 2 Preliminary Design**

Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE)

**Highways Department Response to the
recommendations of the EIA Sub-committee**

At its meeting on 5 July 1994 the ACE EIA Sub-committee considered the EIA report for the captioned project and recommended the following:

- (a) additional ecological survey before commencement of works;
- (b) off-site compensatory planting at a ratio of no less than three to one;
- (c) the final EIA be submitted to the committee for consultation; and
- (d) off-site restoration of wet lands.

2. After careful consideration of the recommendations and following discussions with all parties concerned, Highways Department will undertake the following courses of action:

a) Consultants will be employed to undertake an additional ecological survey of the site until the franchise commences at which time the franchisee will be required to continue the survey until construction commences or four seasons elapse. A report and recommendations will be prepared on completion.

b) The franchisee will be required to provide off-site compensatory planting of natural woodlands on land adjacent to the site and on the basis of planting three times the area of natural woodland affected by the project. The area and species of compensatory planting, and the precise location will be determined as part of the detailed EIA study to be carried out by the franchisee. The franchisee will be responsible for maintenance of the new woodlands for an establishment period of 2 years from the completion date of the planting works, beyond which neither he, nor Highways Department will have any further responsibility.

It should be noted that Highways Department does not regard this course of action to be a precedent for future highway projects and similar recommendations made by ACE will need to be considered on their merit since significant administrative and financial implications need to be taken into account.

c) The detailed EIA study and recommendations will be presented to ACE in due course.

d) Off-site restoration of wetland is not viable under this project since suitable land is not easy to identify and if land resumption were involved this would be both expensive and time consuming. However the franchisee will be required, on completion of the construction works, to reinstate areas of fish ponds within his work site which are not required as part of the construction, operation and maintenance of the permanent works. These areas will be identified and reinstatement measures will be proposed as part of the detailed EIA. However neither the franchisee nor Highways Department will be able to undertake the longer term management and maintenance of these wetland, nor will they provide funds to others to undertake these functions.