

As per E-Mail Contact
Notification of Works

15 September 2016

Our Ref:2330106/COH.AM/EM-O-6871

Dear Sir/Madam

A590 Morecambe Bay (Nature Improvement Area) Green Transport Corridor Project (GTCP)

Kier Highway Services Ltd, as agents of Highways England are to undertake environmental works on the verges alongside the A590 Trunk Road, at various locations. Below explains what we are doing, why, where and when.

About the Scheme:-

The GTCP is an innovative project designed to coordinate and support the trialing of new approaches to soft estate management to enhance ecological connectivity and ecosystem services, whilst enhancing the resilience and operational efficiency of the road network. The scheme is to be funded by Highways England and delivered by Kier Highways in partnership with Cumbria Wildlife Trust GTCP Officer.

The scheme location:

Works will be taking place in verges in both directions between Hincaster Railway Bridge and Meathop Roundabout, approx.12km. The works will take place in over 70 plots within the verge, with all works taking place within Highways England land.

What have we done so far?

So far we have:

- In March 2016 we carried out scrub clearance from 36 grassland sites.
- Liaised with Natural England, Cumbria Wildlife Trust (CWT), Network Rail, Butterfly Conservation Trust, Natural England, Buglife, Plantlife and the Deer Initiative.
- In Summer we organised and carried out reptile surveys, using local ecologists – the results of these are informing management decisions.
- Removed rhododendron from the verge adjacent to Foulshaw Nature Reserve. We are better connecting roadside habitat with Latterbarrow Nature Reserve in collaboration with CWT Reserve Officer.
- Developed and co-ordinated botanical monitoring for 20 of the sites, some of which are being carried out by CWT volunteers, to capture baseline data.

- We have arranged for volunteers from the Butterfly Conservation Trust to carry out a butterfly survey at one of the sites.

What's next?

In Autumn 2016 to end of March 2017 we will be:

- Grass cutting and removing arisings (grass cutting). This will involve machinery and hand held strimming depending on the sensitivity/accessibility of the site. Areas of scrub will be left for overwintering pollinators, birds and mammals. Reptile hibernation habitat will be created (hibernacula) as part of this work.
- Woodland thinning and planting of native species to improve habitat for pollinators, to include some species specific planting such as Hornbeam for Hawfinch near to the Sizergh estate. This will also include woodland restructuring around Brettargh Holt roundabout and work to remove scrub encroachment on species rich grassland in this area.
- Felling Poplars – this is being carried out for road safety and ecological reasons. The poplars are getting old and are becoming diseased. The trees have been assessed by a local ecology consultant and are not found to be providing valuable habitat for wildlife.
- Planting hedgerows to connect areas of habitat along the road corridor.
- Organising a local volunteer day for tree planting and scrub clearance on the verge.

How will these works affect the travelling public?

Works will take place with as little disruption as possible but will require lane closures for safety. This will include Lane 1 closures on dual carriageway sections, single lane lights and mobile works on single lane sections of the carriageway. Progress and timing of works will be dependent on weather conditions and access off network will be sought wherever possible. Information regarding the traffic management will be circulated as and when it has been agreed.

If you have any comments on the scheme then please contact the Project Manager Chloe O'Hare (Network Ecologist), on 01768 861000, or Highways England on 0300 1235 000.

Yours faithfully

Greig Crawford

Greig Crawford
Environmental Manager

