



**RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED
AUTHORITY
(Not a Key Decision)**

Date of Decision: 25th February 2015

**Executive Decision or 'Other Decision' to be
published?:** Yes

(See definition Appendix J at paragraph 4 & 5 – e-mail this record to Member Services for publication, unless it is exempt or contains confidential information or you are including it in a 'Members Update'.)

TITLE: USE OF SECTION 106 MONIES FOR ECOLOGY PROJECT

DECISION: That £15,885 of Section 106 monies from application 2012/0809/OUT should be allocated to habitat improvement works to farmland at Mere Sands Wood Nature Reserve, Rufford

1.0 BACKGROUND & CURRENT POSITION

- 1.1 As part of the permission granted to application 2012/0809/OUT, a Section 106 agreement was signed that committed the developer of the application site to contribute £20,000 to the Council to spend on the conservation of declining farmland birds in the administrative area of the Council. The money was received by the Council in September 2012.
- 1.2 Officers made contact with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and Lancashire Wildlife Trust (LWT) to request the identification of suitable schemes for the conservation of declining farmland birds. In response, LWT have provided a proposal for habitat mitigation works to improve nesting, roosting and feeding sites for farmland birds at Mere Sands Wood Nature Reserve, Rufford.
- 1.3 Mere Sands Wood is surrounded by Grade 1 intensively farmed land around a 2.7km perimeter and therefore is ideally located to provide habitat for farmland birds, especially roosting and nesting sites. Fifteen of the nineteen species of farmland birds in the British Trust for Ornithology's Farmland Bird Indicator already visit the site or neighbouring fields to forage, roost or breed. These birds include starlings, linnet, lapwing, skylark, reed bunting and whitethroat. Seven of the nineteen species are found on the UK BAP Priority Bird Species list of endangered or threatened birds.
- 1.4 The site is already owned by a conservation charity (LWT), guaranteeing it will be managed for the interests of wildlife in perpetuity and the mix of current habitats means it can meet the needs of a range of farmland bird species. The site is publically accessible and free of charge so people can visit and learn about the wildlife there.

- 1.5 The Section 106 monies would be used to undertake habitat improvement works which include:
- Removal of scrub from dry heath, and removal of tree belt, to improve nesting areas for lapwing, skylark and ground nesting birds
 - Plantation of native hedging along boundaries, and create areas of coppice, to provide shelter and nest sites for tree sparrow, linnets, greenfinch and goldfinch
 - Enhancement for Wet Heath to provide wet, rough grassland with improved water level management, removal of encroaching scrub and small ponds to provide foraging areas for young farmland birds such as lapwing
- 1.6 The cost of such improvements has been calculated at a total of £15,885.
- 1.7 The proposed farmland habitat enhancements conform with the requirements of the S106 agreement, and will help conserve declining farmland birds in the Borough, whilst also providing an opportunity for continued leisure and education access.
- 1.8 It is therefore proposed that LWT be allocated £15,885 of S106 monies from application 2012/0809/OUT to the
- 1.9 Following the allocation of this S106 funding as described above, LWT will draw up a schedule of works for agreement with the Council. Upon agreement of a satisfactory schedule of works, the S106 monies will be paid to the Lancashire Wildlife Trust to enable them to undertake the works.

3.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED (IF ANY):

- 3.1 None

4.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial and resource implications to the Council arising from the proposal as any costs will be sourced from the S106 monies specifically designated for such purposes. Approximately £4000 of the S106 money from 2012/0809/OUT will remain available for any further proposals for conserving farmland birds. These monies must be spent by 2022 or returned with interest to the developer.

5.0 REASONS FOR DECISION

- 5.1 The reasons for the decision are as set out above.

6.0 COMMUNITY STRATEGY/SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 These farmland habitat enhancement works will provide a positive benefit for

NOTES

(Executive Decisions)

1. **ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARED BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER (Only required where decisions taken in consultation with):** None

(Executive Decisions)

2. **IF CONFLICT OF INTEREST EXISTS, DETAILS OF DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE HEAD OF THE PAID SERVICE:** N/A

('Other Decisions')

3. **THE NAMES OF ANY COUNCILLOR WHO HAS DECLARED A CONFLICT OF INTEREST IN RELATION TO THE DECISION;** None

4. **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:**

Contact Officer: Helen Hatch

Directorate & Service: Transformation (Planning)

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Exempt Information

None

Appendices

None

sustainability by helping to conserve declining species of farmland birds and their native habitat. As the site is publically accessible, and free of charge, it will also contribute to the sustainability of education and leisure facilities.

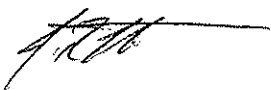
7.0 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 The proposal relates to conservation of farmland birds and consequently does not have any direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders. Therefore no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

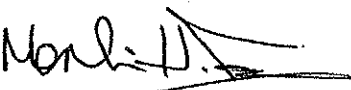
8.0 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

8.1 There are no background documents (as defined in the 2012 or 2014 Regulations) in making this Decision.

Decision taken under Constitution 4.2 Paragraph 5.6

Name	Title	Signature	Date
J Harrison	Assistant Director Planning		25 th February 2015

In consultation with:

Name	Title	Signature	Date
Cllr Forshaw	Planning & Development Portfolio Holder		25 th February 2015