

Planning Inspectorate Appeal – Reference CROW/5/M/04/2406 – Dimple Hole

The East Yorkshire and Derwent Ramblers' Association (EY&D RA) disagree with the appellants Grounds of Appeal and make the following comments.

1. 'Ecologically the land fails to meet the Countryside Agency's downland criteria'.

The evidence supplied by Dr Mark McLellan and enclosed with Birdsall Estates Company Ltd Appeal states that this area is mostly improved and semi-improved grassland. The information supplied previously by EY&D RA (see submission no 18D) does not agree with this. It indicates that this area is unimproved calcareous grassland. The Phase II Habitat Survey shows that the area immediately to the east of Dimple Hole (as marked on OS maps) is unimproved calcareous grassland. The Phase I Habitat Survey and the SSSI citation support the classification of unimproved calcareous grassland in this part of the dale.

During his visit to the site in January 2004 Dr McLellan records the rank grasses, including cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*). Typically during the winter months rank grasses are in evidence on the calcareous grassland of the Yorkshire Wolds. This may give the area the appearance of being semi-improved. Cock's-foot is a coarse grass which has a tendency to persist throughout the winter. The majority of the indicator species are not visible during winter months or are not easy to identify.

2. 'The site is fully enclosed and is therefore not open country'.

The description of Down as applied to the Yorkshire Wolds is, 'generally within an open landscape and whilst individual land parcels might comprise enclosures of varying size, they will be part of a typical chalk landscape sometimes with open vistas across undulating countryside and sometimes comprising steep-sided scarp slopes and dry valleys with more limited views.'

The area complies with this description and is part of a steep-sided dale typical of the Yorkshire Wolds.

We believe that with the exception of the newly seeded area in the northern part of the parcel, the area fulfils the downland criteria and has been mapped correctly as open country on the provisional map and although small in area is adjacent to another parcel in the east which is mapped as open access on the provisional map.