

PLANNING STATEMENT

Hedgerow Removal Notice

For

W D Whistance
Greig Lodge Farm
Grosmont
Monmouthshire
NP7 8HN

Reference: EW-185-03

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This application is made on behalf of the owners (The Applicants) of Lower Celliau Farm, Llangattock Lingoed to remove 3 lengths of internal hedgerow amounting to approximately 474m.
- 1.2 The Applicants purchased Lower Celliau a number of years ago, and they farm it concurrently with their main holding Greig Lodge which is nearly adjoining.
- 1.3 In lieu of removing circa 474m of hedgerow, the applicants would seek to replant approximately 650m of new hedgerows to an agreed specification.

2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 The proposal is to remove 3 lengths of poor quality and gapped hedges shown on the site plan as red lines. These hedges are thin, and predominantly full of gaps, in the most instance they are less than 20m continuously, which would negate the need for this application, and they could simply be lawfully removed. However, the applicants would like to proceed with a formal application for avoidance of doubt, given the practicalities if a hedge is removed, and this is later deemed unlawful.
- 2.2 The hedgerows formed boundaries between two arable fields, and the removing of these hedgerows would all three fields to become a more practical single enclosure, and two fields to become a single enclosure. This would be better suited to modern machinery, which is considerably larger than when these hedges were originally planted and it was commonplace to have smaller fields.
- 2.3 The amalgamation of these fields is not creating especially big fields, but it would be considerably more practical for the Applicants and their contractors. The area amalgamated made up of three parcels would become approximately 16.5 acres, and the area amalgamated out of two parcels would become approximately 11 acres. Both field sizes would be more in line with modern management techniques and also very in keeping in the area. Moreover, by increasing the size of these fields, cultivation and working these fields would use less fuel which is more sustainable, this is due to a reduced requirement for turning. Additionally, ground compaction would be reduced tractors and machinery would not be travelling over the same small areas in each small enclosure, when there is a larger single enclosure with one set of field margins and so forth.
- 2.4 The Applicants would be seeking to plant new hedges extending to circa 650m, this would involve a length around Lower Celliau farmstead which would be traditional and in keeping. There would be a few small areas of gapping up where the hedges are better quality. There would also be a new hedgerow using the southern boundary of the same enclosures that the Applicants are seeking to remove the central hedge. The would like to gap up the tree line and creating a new hedge separating the arable field from the grassland field.
- 2.5 New hedgerows would offer greater environmental benefits, sequester carbon, and ultimately provide habitats for a wide variety of species. The hedges that are to be removed, are thin and poor quality, even if gapped up, its very unlikely it would ever be viable to lay these hedges. Whereas starting with a new hedge, in a few years time it will be possible to lay the new hedges and provide better quality wildlife corridors.

3.0 Photographs

- 3.1 On inspection on the 22nd January, the hedges were in poor condition, the hedges were photographed, and the site plan has been labelled with letters A - F to show the condition of the various lengths of hedgerow.

A - B



C - D





E - F





4.0 Proposed Hedgerow Planting Specification

- Hedging plants are to be 60-80 cm high, 1+1, bare-root, healthy and vigorous transplants to be planted in a double staggered row, 450mm apart, with 5 plants per linear metre.
- All transplants shall be protected with a 400mm high plastic spiral rabbit guard supported by a 750mm stake or cane. Stock proof fencing should be erected to protect hedging from grazing as required.
- The hedge is to be maintained for a period of 5 years following planting, ensuring adequate watering and fertilising is carried out to ensure good establishment and that all dead, diseased or damaged plants are replaced annually where required.

Species mix to be as follows:

- 30% Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)
- 20% Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)
- 20% Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)
- 10% Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*)
- 10% Field Maple (*Acer campestre*)
- 10% Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)

This hedgerow specification is commonly recommended, utilises British Native species and would also be suitable for any Rural Payment Wales schemes if the business was to explore that option. It provides a robust mix of native species, with no one species being too dominant.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 The application is to move circa 474m of poor quality internal hedgerows, which are species poor and very gapped. Even if left to grow up these hedgerows would be difficult to lay and ultimately improve.
- 5.2 The removal of these hedgerows would increase the field sizes to modest enclosures which would be beneficial for the Applicants and their contractors, as it would allow for greatly improved cultivations around the new enclosures.
- 5.3 The applicants would seek to replant approximately 650m of hedgerow in a traditional, native species mix which would create much improved wildlife corridors and ultimately improve biodiversity.