

Hedgerow Translocation Method Statement

Land at Yew Tree Farm
Pen y Cae
Wrexham
LL14 1UW

Formation of a new agricultural field access and associated works.

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Roger Parry & Partners LLP
www.rogerparry.net
gwyn@rogerparry.net
Tel: 01691 655334

Author:	Gwyn Humphreys BSc (Hons) MRTPI
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Roger Parry & Partners LLP
Mercian House
9 - 10 Darwin Court
Oxon Business Park
Shrewsbury
SY3 5AL

Tel: 01691 655334
01743 791336

gwyn@rogerparry.net

www.rogerparry.net

Ref: 82830

1.0 Introduction

This Hedgerow Translocation Method Statement supports planning application P/2026/0193 for the formation of a new agricultural field access and associated works at Land at Yew Tree Farm, Pen y Cae, Wrexham, LL14 1UW ("the Application Site").

The access would be formed from Lambspit Street into the adjoining agricultural field. A short section of the roadside hedgerow would be affected by the access and visibility requirements. The section identified for translocation will be moved into the field, while the remaining hedgerow will be retained wherever possible.

This Method Statement details the methodology to be adhered to for the translocation and aftercare of the hedgerow drawing on previous survey data.

This statement sets out the method for cutting, lifting, translocating and maintaining the affected hedgerow. It should be read alongside the Proposed Block Plan (drawing 82830 / GH / 003), Biodiversity Enhancement Plan (drawing 82830 / GH / 004) and Access Plan (drawing 82830 / GH / 005), which show the access, visibility splays and the section of hedge to be translocated.

2.0 Legislation & Policy

Hedgerows form a significant wildlife habitat and provide refuge for, act as wildlife corridors allowing migration and dispersal and provide feeding opportunities for a variety of animal species including small mammals and birds.

Between 1947 and 1985 about 22%, or 300,000 km, of hedgerows were lost in England and Wales.

Prior to the 1997 Hedgerow Regulations, the net loss of hedges was 1.7% through removal and 3.5% through neglect per annum. The 1997 Hedgerow Regulations make it an offence to remove a hedge without permission from the local planning authority in the majority of instances.

Hedgerows are a UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitat with a Habitat Action Plan (HAP).

With certain exceptions, all wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Therefore, it is an offence, inter alia, to:

- Intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built; or,
- Take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.

Bird species listed in Schedule 1 of the Act receive a higher level of protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), thus for these species it is also an offence to:

- Disturb any bird while it is nest building, or is at a nest containing eggs or young; or,
- Disturb the dependent young of any such bird. 1 Some species, such as game birds, are exempt in certain circumstances.

3.0 Methodology

Requirements

To translocate a length of existing mature mixed hedgerow from its existing location and move it into the application site, towards the proposed dwelling house.

All works should comply with the following:

- BS3998 (2010) Tree Works; and
- BS4428 Code of Conduct for General Landscape Operations.

Hedgerow translocation is subject to a number of variable factors such as soil type, age and type of hedge, root spread and depth, weather conditions, equipment and timing.

Contractors should also refer to the document 'Translocating Wildlife – A Guide for Civil Engineers'.

Timing

Hedgerow translocation is most successful when undertaken during the period October to late February. This allows the hedge to acclimatise to its new location before the summer.

Translocation should not be undertaken during hot dry spells or low temperatures resulting in ground frost. Ideal conditions are cool days with persistent light rain.

To ensure successful translocation it is essential that the hedgerow roots are exposed for as short a time as possible; they must never dry out completely. Sections of hedge must be removed and placed into the receptor trench as soon as possible.

Translocation should be undertaken with other protected species, specifically nesting birds, in mind.

The exact location of the receptor trench should be marked out in advance and fertiliser, water retention granules, watering equipment and topsoil (as detailed below) should be purchased and be ready for use on-site.

Hedge Cutting

Prior to translocation the hedge will require cutting back to reduce its size. This makes it easier to move but more importantly reduces the strain on the roots in the year following translocation.

The contractor should allow for cutting the hedge back to a height of approximately 30-60cm and reducing the side growth back to solid wood. Some additional cutting may be required.

Cutting should be undertaken with chainsaws, taking care to leave clean sloping cuts across stems of not less than 30 degrees.

All arisings must be removed from site (NB. they can be used to create habitat piles within areas which will remain undisturbed).

Receptor Trench Construction

The trench must be dug at least 750mm in from the proposed line of the boundary fence (i.e. the western edge of the trench should be at least 750mm from the proposed site boundary line). This is to ensure that where fencing is required, the fence posts are not driven into disturbed ground, and to give sufficient room for the hedge to grow out.

The width and depth of the receptor trench will vary depending on the size of the hedgerow plants. The width of the trench will be approximately 1.5m. The trench will vary in depth but on average will require excavating to a depth of approximately 0.9-1m.

The base of the trench should be scarified and slow release Fertilizer 20:4:10 N:P:K applied at a rate of 50g per metre. Broadleaf P4 water retention granules should also be spread along the base of the trench at a rate of 30g per metre length.

The trench must not be allowed to dry out, so where the weather is dry, only short lengths of ditch should be dug at any one time. In dry weather allow for the trench to be open for a maximum of 1 hour. This will equate to a length of approximately 20 – 30m at a time. In damp weather, it will be safe to dig up to 50m at a time.

Translocation

Short sections of hedge should be dug and transferred to the receptor trench in sequence. A chainsaw operative should be available to cut roots or stems rather than breaking them with the excavator (cleanly cut roots are less susceptible to

fungal infection). Safe working practices must be agreed between the plant operator and chainsaw operator.

The translocated sections must be set at the required depth within the trench, neither below of above ground level. Topsoil from around the original hedge can be used around the translocated sections.

Making Good

The translocated hedge to ensure it is sitting at the correct depth and that there is sufficient topsoil around the roots. This must be undertaken as soon as possible after translocation, but only when it is safe to do so. A site-specific risk assessment must be undertaken.

Any exposed roots should be carefully buried with a spade. Additional topsoil may be needed to place around the root plates and provision should be made for this. Topsoil should be firmed in by operatives. A dumper and small digger would facilitate this.

On completion the hedge should be well watered to ensure topsoil is washed in to fill any voids. Topsoil levels should be topped up if any roots become exposed.

The ground flora should be left to regenerate naturally from the translocated hedgerow root ball and soils.

Equipment

The contractor should use a suitable 360-degree excavator to be able to move the sections of hedge with the minimum ground disturbance. A low ground pressure tracked machine with a long reach should be used.

The recommended bucket width is 1.5m, but ground condition may require a narrower bucket to be employed. The bucket should be sufficient to remove roots from a depth of approximately 1m, though most roots will be within the first 500mm. The width of the hedge excavated will be approximately 1.5m.

Additional Hedgerow Planting

Where damage occurs during the translocation or where the new alignment is shorter (due to bunching up) than the original line of the hedgerow, additional planting will be required.

Contractors should allow for the planting of an additional 10m of hedgerow using bare root transplants.

Hedgerow plants should consist of 60% hazel, 40% hawthorn and 10% holly (as per the current hedge species). 750 - 900mm bare root transplants should be planted in a double staggered row with 300mm between plants and 300mm

between the two rows (minimum 9 plants per metre). Each plant should be protected with a 600mm spiral rabbit guard and a support cane.

The site should be dug over to a depth of 300mm prior to planting, incorporating slow-release fertilizer (20:4:10) as directed. Hedgerow planting should be undertaken during the dormant season (Nov – March) in suitable weather conditions.

Maintenance

If weather conditions following translocation remain dry for a period of more than 5 days, the hedgerow should be watered on a daily basis until it rains.

The hedgerow should be inspected in the growing season following translocation to assess the percentage take of the plants (following heavy pruning and translocation, some plants can be very late producing leaves).

Sections which have not transplanted successfully should be re-planted (as per specification above) during the following winter. Replacement sections are likely to be short (0.5m) but contractors should allow for at least 10m of additional replanting.

The translocated hedgerow will require trimming back after the first season's growth to encourage bushy growth, followed by annual cutting.

Newly planted sections of hedgerow should be spot weeded with a suitable herbicide for a five-year period. All plant failures should be replaced during a five-year period.