

Land at Trumpet, Herefordshire

Appeal Ref: APP/W1850/W/16/3148136 / LPA Ref: 150765

JUSTIFICATION FOR PROPOSED WOODLAND BELT PLANTING

(Drawing No. TFP-008)

17th June 2016

1. The proposed woodland belt planting shown on Drawing No. TFP-008 did not form part of the original planning submission. It was drawn up later by the Appellant's landscape architect, partly in response to the agreement with Herefordshire Council to close the existing access off the A438 to the north of the site and create a new one further east, and partly to increase the amount of environmental benefit which would arise from the scheme.
2. The new access arrangement is similar to the existing one, and includes an area large enough for lorries to turn around. This area is situated on the highest part of the site, in the north-eastern corner of Field 1.
3. These proposals included new hedge planting around part of the perimeter of the new turning area, in order to help screen views of vehicles which could potentially be visible from elevated long-distance viewpoints to the south west.
4. It was concluded that planting a belt of native woodland along the upper, northern edge of Field 1 would result in several benefits:
 - a) The woodland belt would, within a relatively short space of time (c. 5 years) help to screen views into the site from the A438 to the north, reinforcing the screening provided by the existing roadside hedge (which has already been gapped-up by the Appellant).
 - b) It would eventually close up the gap between the existing woodland and roadside hedge where the existing access is, which would screen views in to the site from the north west (VPs 1 and 11 in the Landscape Appraisal).
 - c) It would form a more appropriate and meaningful feature in the landscape than the hedge proposed around the new turning area. It would integrate well within the surrounding landscape context, and would be in keeping with the countywide landscape character type (Estate Farmlands) described in the Council's LCA (SPG). The LCA notes that in terms of Management Guidelines and Environmental Mitigation for this type, *'These are landscapes of limited value to wildlife but with the potential to increase their ecological interest [see below] whilst strengthening the landscape character. They can accommodate considerable new woodland planting...'*
 - d) In terms of 'wildlife' and biodiversity, the planting would provide a relatively large area of new woodland and associated habitats which would enhance local

biodiversity. The detailed planting scheme would be drawn up in collaboration with the Appellant's ecologist, taking into account the ecology survey's findings and recommendations (see submission document). The woodland would be managed alongside the other habitats which are already proposed as part of the scheme, in accordance with advice contained in the submitted Management Plan.

- e) The Council's comments on the application included concerns about the visibility of polytunnels from long-distance viewpoints along the Herefordshire Trail on Marcle Ridge, especially cumulatively with other polytunnels in the area. In consideration of this, the south east-facing edge woodland belt was designed as a curve so as to adjust and minimise the 'rise' of the tunnels which would be perceived in some of the views from the Ridge. Although appearing as a minor adjustment in the broader panorama, it would help to visually align the proposed tunnels more closely with the existing ones which are visible in these views.