

# Hedgerow translocation method statement

Conversion of vacant barn into its former use of cottage and garden. Works to include small side extension, construction of domestic stable block, stand alone bat house, and restoration of historic landscape to include restoration of field boundaries and orchard.

Land North of Rock Cottage,  
Arcade Road,  
Penhow

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Hedgerow Method Statement has been prepared for the translocation and aftercare of approximately 75m<sup>2</sup> hedgerow along the road frontage boundary of the proposed site on the Land North of Rock Cottage. The Method Statement details the methodology to be adhered to for the translocation and aftercare of the hedgerow.

### 1.2 Site Context

The hedgerow for translocation is approximately 75m<sup>2</sup> and forms the field boundary with the access road. The hedgerow comprises a regularly managed field boundary on an earth bank. The hedge is up to c.2m in height (with some higher new growth) and up to 2m wide supporting majority Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), with frequent Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*).

The site is situated to the North East of Parc Seymour. Habitats within the wider area comprise agricultural/grazing pasture, with associated hedgerows and scattered trees. There are Woodlands to the north, east and west, with grazing pasture to the South.

It is proposed that approximately 75m<sup>2</sup> of the hedgerow, forming the roadside boundary, is translocated to allow for the necessary visibility splays to be created. The soft landscaping plan in Figure 1 shows the two small sections of translocated hedgerow, one to the north of the access track and the second screening the stable block.



Figure 1. Proposed development layout

## 2.0 LEGISLATION AND POLICY

### 2.1 Hedgerows

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. The 1997 Hedgerow Regulations make it an offence to remove a hedge without permission from the local planning authority. Hedgerows are a UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitat with a Habitat Action Plan (HAP).

### 2.2 Nesting Birds

Wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Therefore, it is an offence, 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 on 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. Some species, such as game birds, are exempt in certain circumstances.

## 3.0 METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Requirements

To translocate 75m<sup>2</sup> of broad-leaved hedgerow from its existing location and move it to create a hedge lined visibility splay and stable screening, All works should comply with 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. A suitably experienced and qualified ecological clerk of works (ECoW) should be appointed to supervise key aspects of the work. Contractors should also refer to the document 'Translocating wildlife – a guide for Civil engineers' (Document 97).

### 3.2 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.

### 3.3 Site Preparation

The ECoW should meet the landscape team prior to the commencement of works, to discuss working methods and modifications resulting from weather and site conditions. The exact location of the receptor trench should be agreed and marked out in advance and fertiliser, water retention granules, watering equipment and topsoil (as detailed below) should be purchased and on site.

### 3.4 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 at the direction of the ECoW.

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)

### 3.5 Receptor Trench Construction

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, however, this may need to be increased at the request of the ECoW, to accommodate larger sections of root. The trench will vary in depth but on average will require excavating to a depth of 1m.

The base of the trench should be scarified and slow release Fertiliser 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.

### 3.6 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. This work must be supervised by the ECoW.

### 3.7 Making Good

The ECoW must check 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.

### **3.8 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.

### **3.9 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. These should be planted at the direction of the ECoW.

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 fertiliser (20:4:10) as directed. Hedgerow planting should be undertaken during the dormant season (Nov- March) in suitable weather conditions.

## **4.0 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 ten-year period.