

# Woolley Colliery Road, Barnsley



## Hedgerow Regulations Assessment

23/01/2023

Report Ref. ER-6218-07

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<b>Report duration</b>	In accordance with CIEEM (2019), unless otherwise stated the findings of this report remain valid for a period of 18 months. After this period advice should be sought on the scope of any updating work required.

## Introduction

1. Following recent consultation with Barnsley Council's Highways department, it has been identified that a section of hedgerow measuring c.85m long will require removal in order to facilitate the construction of a new footpath link off site to the south, along Woolley Colliery Road.
2. In response, it was recommended that a Hedgerow Assessment be undertaken on the affected hedge, in order to assess the value of this hedgerow and clarify whether it is afforded protection under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997.

**Figure 1** Extent of Hedgerow Assessment



## Methodology

3. Survey was carried out in January 2023 and followed the methodology set out in the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 and the Hedgerow Survey Handbook (DEFRA, 2007). This involved walking the Site and mapping hedgerows as defined in Box 1.
4. The full length of each hedgerow was then walked and data relevant to the assessment was collected, such as the number of woody species, ground flora, dimensions, public right of way and associated features.
5. The woody species count was obtained following the guidelines set out in the Hedgerows Regulations, as summarised below:
  - hedgerows less than or equal to 30m - all of the woody species are counted;
  - hedgerows between 30m - 100m - a count is taken from the central 30m;
  - hedgerows between 100 - 200m - a count is taken from the central stretch of 30 metres within each half of the hedgerow and the counts divided by two.
  - hedgerows exceeding 200 metres - a count is taken from the central stretch of 30 metres within each third of the hedgerow and the counts divided by three.

**Box 1 Hedgerow Definition (Hedgerow Regs)**

The Hedgerow Regulations apply to any hedgerow growing in, or adjacent to, any common land, protected land, or land used for agriculture, forestry or the breeding or keeping of horses, ponies or donkeys, that have:

- a continuous length of, or exceeding, 20 metres; or
- a continuous length of less than 20 metres and, at each end, meets another hedgerow (whether by intersection or junction).

The Regulations do not apply to any hedgerow within the curtilage of, or marking a boundary of the curtilage of, a dwelling-house.

The end of a hedgerow is defined as the point at which it meets another hedgerow, whether by intersection or junction (termed as the node point). Any gap not exceeding 20 metres is treated as part of the hedgerow.

**Box 2 Important Hedgerow (Hedgerow Regs)**

A hedgerow is defined as important under the Hedgerow Regulations if it has existed for 30 years or more and satisfies at least one of the criteria listed below:

1. The hedgerow marks the boundary of a historic parish or township existing before 1850;
2. The hedgerow contains or is within an archaeological feature which is on the Sites and Monuments Record, or a pre-1600 manor or estate;
3. The hedgerow is a part of, or associated with, a field system predating the Enclosure Acts;
4. The hedgerow is adjacent to a public right of way (not counting an adopted highway) and at least 4 woody species as defined in Schedule 3 of the regulations plus at least two Associated Features
5. The hedgerows contains any species listed under Schedule 1 Part I, Schedule 5 or Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981; categorised as a declining breeder (category 3) in "Red Data Birds in Britain"; or categorised as "endangered", "extinct", "rare" or "vulnerable" in Britain.
6. The hedgerow meets one or more of the following criteria:
  - at least 7 woody species;
  - at least 6 woody species and at least 3 associated features;
  - at least 6 woody species, including one of the following - black-poplar tree (*Populus nigra ssp betulifolia*), large-leaved lime (*Tilia platyphyllos*), small-leaved lime (*Tilia cordata*), wild service-tree (*Sorbus torminalis*);
  - at least 5 woody species and at least 4 associated features;

Where the hedgerow in question is situated wholly or partly in the county of the City of Kingston upon Hull, Cumbria, Darlington, Durham, East Riding of Yorkshire, Hartlepool, Lancashire, Middlesbrough, North East Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire, Northumberland, North Yorkshire, Redcar and Cleveland, Stockton-on-Tees, Tyne and Wear, West Yorkshire or York, the number of required woody species mentioned above should be reduced by one.

**Box 3 Associated Features**

1. A bank or wall which supports the hedgerow along at least one half of its length;
2. Gaps which in aggregate do not exceed 10% of the length of the hedgerow;
3. Has at least one standard tree per 50m of hedgerow. A standard tree is defined as having a diameter of at least 20cm (when single stemmed) or has at least two stems of at least 15cm (when multi-stemmed) when measured at a point 1.3 metres from natural ground level;
4. At least 3 woodland species within one metre, in any direction, of the outermost edges of the hedgerow;
5. A ditch along at least one half of the length of the hedgerow;
6. Connections scoring 4 points or more, where connection to a hedgerow counts as one point and a broad-leaved woodland or pond counts as two points;
7. A parallel hedge within 15 metres of the hedgerow;

**Box 4 Hedgerow Definition (UK BAP/ Section 41, NERC Act 2006)**

A hedgerow is defined as any boundary line of trees or shrubs over 20m long and less than 5m wide, and where any gaps between the trees or shrub species are less than 20m wide (Bickmore, 2002). Any bank, wall, ditch or tree within 2m of the centre of the hedgerow is considered to be part of the hedgerow habitat, as is the herbaceous vegetation within 2m of the centre of the hedgerow.

All hedgerows consisting predominantly (i.e. 80% or more cover) of at least one woody UK native species are covered by this priority habitat, where each UK country can define the list of woody species native to their respective country. Climbers such as honeysuckle and bramble are recognised as integral to many hedgerows, however they require other woody plants to be present to form a distinct woody boundary feature, as such they are not included in the definition of woody species. The definition is limited to boundary lines of trees or shrubs, and excludes banks or walls without woody shrubs on top of them.

Based on an analysis of Countryside Survey data, using the threshold of at least 80% cover of any UK native woody species, it is estimated that 84% of countryside hedgerows in GB would be included.

## Result

### Overview of hedgerow

6. The survey encompassed a single section of hawthorn hedgerow, measuring circa. 85m long, situated along Woolley Colliery Road. This looks to have been planted within the last 5-10 years, with planting lines and weed suppression membrane still evident. Since being planted, the hedgerow has not been managed, allowing it to grow up to 3-3.5m tall by 3m wide.
7. The hedgerow has been planted exclusively with hawthorn and has naturally accrued bramble and small amounts of dog rose through self-seeding. The ground layer comprises of rank neutral grassland, with false oat grass, cock's-foot, cleavers, nettle and bramble being the main constituents.
8. The hedgerow is planted on a slope, with low ground to the south along the road, and high ground to the north, within the adjacent field. There are no banks or ditches associated with the hedgerow, and no standard trees.

### Hedgerow Regulations Assessment

9. The hedgerow has been mapped and labelled on Figure 3 overleaf and a summary of the data collected for the Hedgerow Regulations Assessment is presented in Table 1 overleaf.
10. The hedgerow is not defined as 'Important' under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997, due to a lack of diversity and associated features.

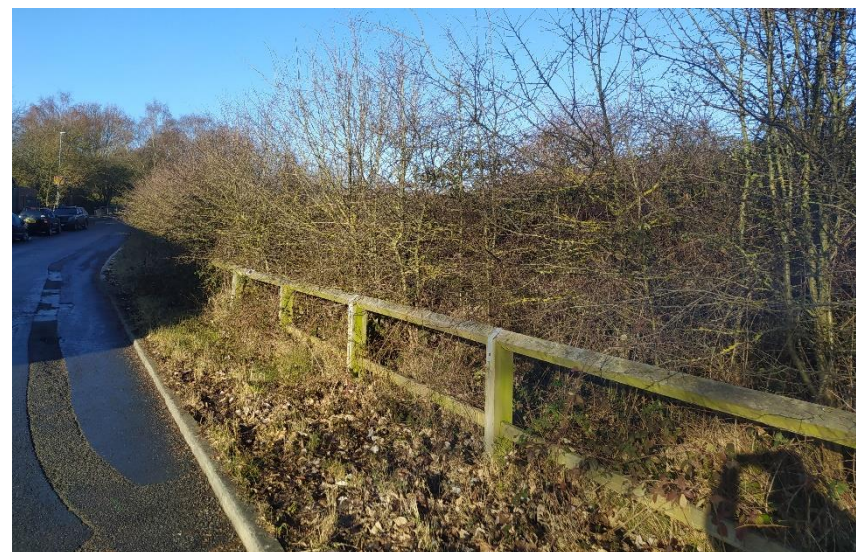
### Section 41, NERC Act 2006 Assessment

11. Based on Box 4, the hedgerows would qualify as being '*habitat of principle importance*' under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006, however given its age and lack of diversity, it is considered to be of limited ecological value.
12. The hedgerow provides some small-scale connectivity east-west along the roadside.

### Other vegetation

13. Outside the hedgerow, but within the survey area, is a single mature hawthorn bush. This is mapped on the figure overleaf as 'Hawthorn scrub'. Although providing better structure, this feature is also considered to be of low ecological value.

**Figure 2** Hedgerow subject to assessment



**Figure 3** Hedgerow surveyed as part of this assessment.



**Table 1** Summary of the hedgerow survey

Hedge	Dimensions			Woody sp. Count	Associated Features							PRoW	Important under Hedgerow Regs	Section 41 NERC Act
	Length (m)	Height (m)	Width (m)		Bank/Wall (≥50%)	Gaps (≤10%)	Tree / 50m	Ground flora (≥3)	Ditch (≥50%)	Connections (≥4)	Parallel hedge			
1	85	3-3.5	3	1	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes

## Conclusion & Recommendations

14. A single section of hawthorn hedgerow will need to be removed in order to facilitate the construction of a new roadside footpath, which is required to satisfy highways comments.
15. The hedgerow has been assessed against the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 and fails to meet the criteria for 'Important' status. This is a result of low diversity and lack of associated features.
16. Although not qualifying as Important, the hedgerow will meet the criteria for Habitat of Principle Importance under the NERC Act 2006 and Priority Habitat under the local BAP. However, given the low threshold for inclusion, it is estimated that at least 84% of countryside hedgerows in Britain would be meet these criteria.
17. Overall, the hedgerow is assessed as being species-poor and relatively young, and thus is considered to be of low ecological value.

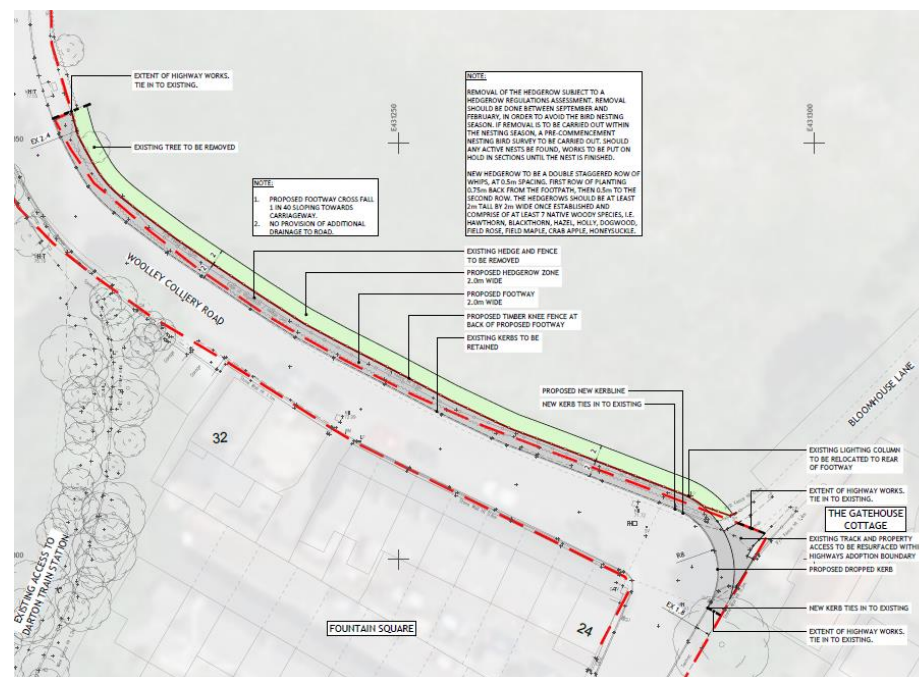
### Compensation

18. Proposals to remove the hedgerow provides an opportunity to re-plant a greater length of species-rich native hedgerow in its place, which would ultimately develop into a feature of greater ecological value.
19. The replacement hedgerow should be planted as a double staggered row of whips, at 0.5m spacing. A mix of at least 7 native woody species should be used, i.e. hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, holly, dogwood, field rose, field maple, crab apple and honeysuckle. This should then be managed so as to attain a height of at least 2m tall and a width of at least 2m, once established.

### Nesting Birds

20. To prevent the proposed works impacting on nesting birds, any clearance of vegetation will need to be undertaken outside of the breeding bird season which is 1st March - 31st August inclusive.
21. Any clearance required during the breeding bird season should be preceded by a nesting bird survey to ensure that the law is not contravened through the destruction of nests and that any active nests are identified and adequately protected during the construction phase of the development.

**Figure 3** Proposals include replanting a greater amount of species-rich hedgerow



## References

Hedgerows Regulations 1997 < [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1997/1160/regulation/1 /made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1997/1160/regulation/1/made)> view on 22.10.13.

Defra (2007). Hedgerow Survey Handbook - A standard procedure for local surveyed in the UK (2nd edition).