
Re: 06.12.24 Burnbrae Farm Woodland Creation proposals

From Symington Community Council <symingtoncc@hotmail.com>

Date Thu 12/12/2024 15:15

To Andy Greathead <AGreathead@savills.com>

Cc Andy <Andy@walkerhineswoodlandservices.co.uk>; Liz Kelly <liz.kelly@btinternet.com>; Debs <whitedj@btinternet.com>

 1 attachment (195 KB)

Notes for 4Dec meeting with WHWS.pdf;

Hello Andy,

Thanks for providing us with your summary of last week's meeting, which we also thought to be constructive. We look forward to hearing how our proposals are received by Mactaggart & Mickel.

Using your numbering, I'd like to provide a few points of clarification and reiteration (I have attached a digital copy of my notes to help):

1. Picking up on your assertion of us being 'generally supportive'; to be clear, removal of CPT.1, CPT.3 and CPT.4 shelter belts does not, in and of itself, result in our support. The prime argument of my 20/11/24 email (which accompanied the Community Council's formal response to the woodland proposal), and an extent of our discussion last week, pertained to concerns by some members of the community, including members of the Community Council, that the woodland proposal is a pretext for housing developments. For some of these people, the premise of their support for the woodland is our call for changes that will bring improvements to habitat and biodiversity, and community involvement, **greater than that contained in the proposal originally presented** at September's Community Council meeting. Stands of (predominantly) Scots pine, spruce and cedar will not be aesthetically pleasing and have minimal value as habitat. As I stated in my 20/11/24 email, *'whilst approval for our response and agreement for us to discuss the proposal with you has been gained, it comes with caution and an expectation that you will give all of the requests contained in our response serious consideration in order that we can show these claims to be real'*. Though you referred in the meeting Mactaggart & Mickel's intention to 'sympathetically' develop the non-woodland areas in the future, this had not previously been stated to us and, consequently, the CPT.1, CPT.3 and CPT.4 shelter belts had felt disingenuous at best.
2. The path past Townend that joins with Kerrix Road is a South Ayrshire Core Path. Other local paths are part of the Local Paths Network but don't really help connect to the proposed woodland.
3. The attached notes refer to the different prospective benefits of continuous cover management. Whilst recognising much of our ultimate aims will be achieved by appropriate management intervention over the longer term (thinning, underplanting, etc.), we would still like the design to consider what can be done at the planting stage. I have been speaking with Peter Livingstone of Eadha Enterprises, which is a local (Lochwinnoch) organisation that specialises in Aspen. Their article and report about Aspen-Spruce mixed silviculture is an example of the sort of direction we would like to go in: <https://www.eadha.co.uk/what-we->

[do/specialist-tree-nursery/cell-grown-trees/aspens/aspens-woodlands/aspens-spruce-mixed-silviculture/](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/doing-specialist-tree-nursery/cell-grown-trees/aspens/aspens-woodlands/aspens-spruce-mixed-silviculture/)

4. No further comment

5. No further comment

6. Whilst the community involvement items you mention are indeed what we discussed, it seems appropriate for the community's relationship with the woodland to develop as the woodland matures. So, whilst recognising the importance of engaging with you in respect to the woodland's design and your application for the Forestry Scotland grant, from the community's point of view we want to have an ongoing dialogue with respect to both community involvement and habitat and biodiversity. Who the community engages with in the ensuing years about the woodland's management is important to us.

Regards,
Dave

David Houfe
Symington Community Council Vice-chair & Secretary

From: Andy Greathead <AGreathead@savills.com>
Sent: 06 December 2024 12:35
To: symingtoncc@hotmail.com <symingtoncc@hotmail.com>
Cc: Andy <Andy@walkerhineswoodlandservices.co.uk>
Subject: 06.12.24 Burnbrae Farm Woodland Creation proposals

David, Liz, Deborah

Many thanks for meeting with Andy Hines and myself on Wednesday. It was a really useful meeting and we took away the following points (plan attached):

1. While generally supportive as the woodland creation proposals enhance the current natural habitat and have the potential to provide a much needed off road walking route out of the village, Symington Community Council do not support woodland creation at the south east extension of compartment 1 and compartments 3 and 4 and see these as a precursor to future housing development.
2. Symington Community Council are keen to see pathways that join Symington village to the network of paths through the woodland creation area avoiding walking along the public road. These could potentially link to the existing core path network.
3. In the longer term, Symington Community Council are keen to see the maturing woodland managed under continuous cover forestry as opposed to a restructuring system of felling and replanting productive areas as they mature.
4. Symington Community Council would be keen to be involved in management of some of the internal hedges but assume that external roadside hedges will continue to be cut back by a contractor.
5. Symington Community Council would welcome the improvement of pathways including some surfaced sections for wheelchair users which could be grant funded under a Woodlands In and Around Towns (WIAT) scheme administered by Scottish Forestry.
6. Symington Community Council would welcome community involvement in the woodland creation area in the form of walks, benches and interpretive signage providing information on the biodiversity and species within the woodland.

We discussed our draft woodland creation operational plan to be submitted to Scottish Forestry as part of the Forestry Grant Scheme application which includes:

Additional Features Beyond Grant Aid Support

The landowner is keen to cooperate and support the local community and after consultation with the Community Council the following items have been agreed. These features are not part of the grant aid funding, however, they show the genuine desire to work with the local community in order to create a woodland that is valued and well-used by local people.

- Establishing small plots of wild flowers, which will be tended by local people and allowed to spread into the adjacent woodland edges
- Installing bird and bat boxes, with opportunities for these to be made by local school children, Scouts group or community groups
- Incorporating a wider range of flowering trees and shrubs to support the local drive to create habitats suitable for pollinators

Thanks again for your interest and we will be able to provide an update in advance of the next Community Council on 21 January 2025.

Regards

Andy

Andy Greathead (MIC For)
Director
Rural



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