

DECEMBER 14, 2018

NYMNP

18/12/2018



## DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

CHANGE OF USE OF LAND TO GLAMPING SITE AT LOW RIGG FARM, STAINSACRE

FOR: MR E GASKARTH AND MISS V BELLAMY

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## Table of revisions

Rev/version no.	Date	Amendment details	Revision prepared by

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Cheryl Ward Planning has been instructed by the applicant to submit a planning application in relation to the area outlined in red on the attached location plan at land at Low Rigg Farm, Stainsacre, Whitby, YO22 4LP.
- 1.2 The client has instructed a farm diversification scheme which envisages 6 no. units of holiday accommodation on land associated with Low Rigg Farm, which will operate alongside the existing farm enterprise.
- 1.3 The accompanying plans identify the site and its relationship to the main house from where the development is to be managed (Low Rigg Farm) and its relationship to an adjoining caravan park (Rigg Farm Caravan Park).
- 1.4 The application seeks full planning permission for use of the land and siting of the structures which comprises an alternative type of camping accommodation and is justified in the preceding sections.
- 1.5 This Statement is prepared by Cheryl Ward Planning who holds an MSc in Town Planning and is a Chartered Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute practising within the RTPI's Code of Conduct.

## 2. Purpose of Statement

- 2.1 The statement is to be read and fully considered as a supporting document in conjunction with the accompanying planning application. Its aim is to assist those assessing the application to understand the design and access rationale. In summary, it provides a structured way of describing the development proposal.

## 3. Planning History

- 3.1 A search of the Authority's online records has revealed that there is no planning history associated with the application site.

## 4. Pre-Application Advice

- 4.1 On behalf of the applicant, Cheryl Ward Planning has entered in continued pre-application discussions with the Local Planning Authority where it was concluded:

Letter dated 29 August 2018

“with regard to the scale of the development and the design of the structures, I note you refer to a small glamping business of up to 6 sympathetically designed non-permanent glamping pods with composting toilets, and showers in wooden sheds and off grid kitchen units providing simple cooking and washing options. Due to the small number and non-permanent nature of the structures it is considered that a development of this scale could be compatible in this location without having undue impact on the surrounding landscape”.

“If however the yurts were limited to the fields abutting the woodland, depending on the topography of the land this may be sufficient to help screen the yurts in the wider landscape”.

Letter dated 26 October 2018

“I note your comments that the proposed glamping site would operate alongside and support the existing farming business at Low Rigg Farm by bringing in additional income. I also note your comments that the proposal would be small-scale, amounting to a maximum of 6 no. units in total and that the landscape topography would be used to help screen the units. However I would reiterate my colleague’s comments that the units should be located alongside the woodland to the west of the site and to move them away from the field adjacent to the road where they would potentially be more visible”.



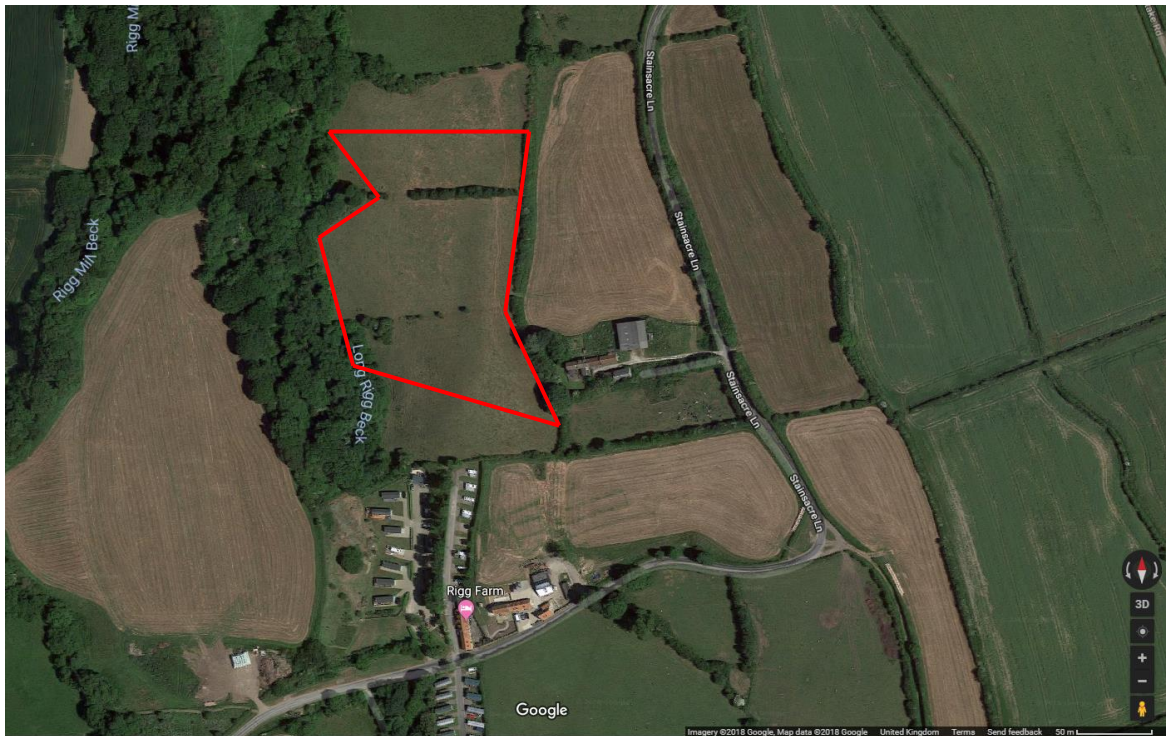


Fig 1. Identifies the woodland (left) and fields alongside which the development will take place close to Low Rigg Farm (Source: Google imagery – for illustrative purposes only)

## 5. The Site

### Site context and surroundings

- 5.1 The site is located due south of Whitby (1.93 miles) and 11.68 miles north west of Scarborough. Closer to the site, Stainsacre village lies 1.2 miles north of the application site, Hawsker is 0.77 miles to the south west and Sneatonthorpe lies 800 metres to the west.
- 5.2 The site lies within easy reach of the east coast and the NYM Moors between which the site is positioned. The A171 Whitby to Scarborough road lies to the east and to the west the A169 Whitby to Pickering road. A smaller road networks are inter dispersed in between the priority routes.
- 5.3 The site lies to the west of Stainsacre Lane and comprises a 22-acre small holding with grazing land for cattle. Grass is taken from the land for making hay/silage. The land directly opposite the site entrance on the east side of Stainsacre Lane is part of the agricultural holding. To the west, the land butts up to the woodland and Long Rigg Beck.
- 5.4 All in all, the site benefits from good access links, by motor vehicle, cycle or by foot. Accessing the site for the purposes of the proposal does not pose a constraint to the development or other road users.

### Local Landscape and Topography

- 5.5 A Landscape Character Assessment of the North York Moors was published in 2003 (White, Young, Green) which identified nine landscape character areas. The local landscape surrounding the application site is described as 'coast and coastal hinterland' which is defined as a rolling coastal landscape drained by a series of steeply incised and winding beckes.
- 5.6 The Authority's Landscape Character Type states that in such locations 'settlements are clustered and recent, modern development bears little relation to historic cores. Busy main roads in elevation open locations have a significant impact'.
- 5.7 The topography at Low Rigg Farm can be described as a rolling landscape with a mixture of rough pastures separated by native hedgerows interspersed with trees. Long distance views down to Whitby Abbey and the coast can be seen from the centre of the application site.
- 5.8 The special features of the local landscape have been used to inform the design and layout of the scheme, described in more detail later in the Statement.
- 5.9 In planning terms, the site is deemed to fall in the 'open countryside' which is defined as areas with no development, sporadic development or isolated buildings.
- 5.10 The application site extends to 19,087.35 sq. metres.

### Geographic Information

- 5.11 A thorough check of Magic Map has revealed there is no presence within the site edged in red or within close proximity to any known ecological (habitat and/or species), archaeological, landscape or building designation that would have a bearing on the application.

### Flood Risk

- 5.12 The Governments long term flood risk information database shows the application site at extremely low risk from flooding from sea, surface water and reservoirs. A flood risk assessment is not deemed to be necessary in this instance.



Images



Fig 2. – Site entrance



Fig 3. – Woodland alcove



Fig 4. – Looking north west over the site and woodland alcoves



Photos continued ...



Fig 5. – Looking east back towards Low Rigg Farm and buildings



Fig 6. – Looking south towards Rigg Farm Caravan Park



Fig 7. – Looking west down an existing mature hedgerow

## 6. The Proposal

- 6.1 The proposal seeks to make use of the land to establish a small glamping site for 3 no. Bell tents and 3 no. Safari tents to be known as 'Coast and Camplight'.
- 6.2 The site plan (C & C1) shows the development in relation to Low Rigg Farm and the exact position of the units which are sensitively located into the landscape.
- 6.3 The site is physically and functionally linked to Low Rigg Farm, an existing farm business which comprises a small farm holding with a modest income stream.
- 6.4 The development will contribute to the farms income and will offer a distinct new tourism and recreational product in and around the coastal area around Whitby.
- 6.5 A more detailed specification of the Bell tent and Safari tent are included in the accompanying documentation. It provides the dimensions and construction specification for the base on which the tents will sit together with small scale ancillary kitchen and bathroom structures and composting toilet.
- 6.6 These are required to be located close to the accommodation rather than in the farm yard where there are currently no empty buildings.



### Background

- 6.7 Low Rigg Farm is a 22-acre smallholding/farm and has been owned by the Gaskarth family for almost 50 years. The family would very much like to remain at the farm and make an income from the glamping site offering a small number of luxury, non permanent yurts for a unique overnight experience.
- 6.8 The glamping business would essentially operate alongside the agricultural activities which take place and help to support and sustain an existing farming enterprise rather than wholly replace this use.
- 6.9 The farming sector continues to face a period of uncertainty and instability and many farms in the area are diversifying their farm business to supplement income and in turn make ends meet. The farms current size and quality of land means it cannot compete with other large productive agricultural arable and livestock units.
- 6.10 Some, of the immediate neighbours have converted outbuildings into holiday cottage accommodation.
- 6.11 Rigg Farm Caravan site, adjoins Low Rigg Farm and provides year-round static and touring caravan accommodation.
- 6.12 Just a couple of miles away from Low Rigg Farm, the largest diversification scheme the area has seen, the introduction of Sirius Minerals Polyhalite Mine (WoodSmith Mine) which runs underneath Low Rigg Farm.
- 6.13 After a great deal of research and discussion, the family have concluded that a glamping proposal would be the least intrusive, both in terms of operation and construction, the most secure financially, and the most complimentary to the neighbouring businesses and surrounding economies of Whitby and Robin Hoods Bay.
- 6.14 The family can deliver the project and are fully committed to bringing a unique tourism product to the farm and this part of the National Park and they hope to see Low Rigg Farm prosper once again.

### Site Management

- 6.15 The site would be managed by Mr Edward Gaskarth and Miss Verity Bellamy who would continue to live and manage the glamping site from Low Rigg Farm along with Mr & Mrs Gaskarth senior.
- 6.16 The applicants know the site well and will themselves operate and manage the site, take future bookings and control the level of activity and parking etc.
- 6.17 There is no requirement for additional accommodation from which to manage the site.

## Nearby Buildings and Uses



**Fig 8. – highlights the close proximity to neighbouring caravans (middle right) and buildings/holiday cottages on the skyline (centre)**

### Business Plan and Development Phasing

- 6.18 In year one, only 1 no. safari tent and 2 no. bell tents would be stationed in the lower part of the field alongside the woodland to the west of the site.
- 6.19 Gradually, as an income is made the bell tents will be replaced with 2 no. further safari tents giving 3 no. in total on the edge of the woodland.
- 6.20 A further bell tent would be introduced behind the substantial hedge on the east side of the field, making 3 no. bell tents and an overall total of six units.

### Community

- 6.21 The applicants are from the local area and are very keen that any new proposal benefits the local community, in the following ways:
- Job creation
  - Use of local business for any consumables and services

- Promote local businesses and initiatives – both physically on site, and on the website for future visitors
- Offer free or discounted use of the site to local community groups – particularly the Guides and Scouts

### Landscaping

6.22 A tree planting and biodiversity enhancement programme accompanies the application and together with the site plan shows:

- Existing and proposed landscape features
- Where new planting will take place
- Planting species, number and densities
- Planning gain to reinstate hedgerows that have been lost
- Restoration of natural ecosystems
- Supporting bee species

### Lighting

6.23 The site is not required to be lit by electricity rather as part of the unique experience of the dark night skies it is proposed that the way will be lit with solar or lantern lights.

### Access

6.24 The aim is to provide parking for up to 6 no. cars which is to be situated close to the farm yard entrance (identified on the attached plan) close to the existing farm buildings. No changes are required to the surface of the parking area. Parked cars would not be visible from Stainsacre Lane due to mature and established hedge screening.

6.25 The level of activity is not anticipated to cause pressure on the existing road network. Furthermore, the proposed scheme would be compatible with existing farming activities, farm movements and the coming and going of existing site users.

6.26 Visitors will be encouraged to park and leave their vehicles and walk to the glamping site via the route shown on the site plan. No new footpaths or surface materials are proposed they would simply walk over the grass fields. The existing access arrangements are appropriate for the proposed use.

## 7. Planning Policy Context

### Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

- 7.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 came into force in September 2004. It carries forward the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, giving statutory force to a led system of development control.
- 7.2 Under section 70(0) of the 1990 Act and section 38 (6) of the 2004 Act, the determination of planning applications must be in accordance with the approved Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The determination of planning proposals must be in accordance with the approved Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### National Planning Policy (NPPF) (2012)

- 7.3 National planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was published in July 2018 and is a contributing material consideration. It provides a framework within which regional and local policy is set. The publication of the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) in March 2014 gives further guidance.
- 7.4 Paragraph 7 of the recently published NPPF states that ‘at a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’.
- 7.5 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF states that ‘achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways’ (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):
- a) an economic objective
  - b) a social objective
  - c) an environmental objective
- 7.6 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay or where there are no development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
  - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.



- 7.7 Paragraph 38 of the NPPF advises that ‘local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way .... to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area’.
- 7.8 Paragraph 83 of the NPPF states that ‘planning policies and decisions should enable:
- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
  - b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
  - c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and
  - d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship’.
- 7.9 Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that ‘in determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings’.
- 7.10 In addition to the above, paragraph 172 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.

#### North York Moors National Park Authority – Core Strategy and Development Policies (2008)

- 7.11 The Core Strategy and Development Policies document sets out the policies which guide where new development will take place in the National Park and to determine planning applications.
- 7.12 The Core Strategy and Development Policies was adopted in November 2008 and is nearing its term for providing up to date planning policy. The Strategy works in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), referenced above.
- 7.13 An overall summary of National and local planning policies considered relevant to the case are summarised in the table below:

DOCUMENT	POLICIES AND DENOTATION
National Planning Policy	
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2018)	Paragraphs 2, 7, 8, 10, 11, 38, 39, 83, 84, 170, 171, 172, 174, 175
Local Development Plan in force	
NYM Local Development Framework (2008)	Core Policy A – Delivering National Park Purposes and Sustainable Development Core Policy H – Rural Economy Development Policy 3 – Design Development Policy 13 – Rural Diversification Development Policy 14 – Tourism and Recreation Development Policy 16 – Chalet and Camping Sites
Supplementary Planning Documents	Design Guide, Part 1 – General Principles

### Emerging NYM National Park Local Plan

- 7.14 The National Park Authority is preparing a new Local Plan for shaping the future of the North York Moors. This will be the document used to help decide planning applications in the near future.
- 7.15 The Authority has recently published a ‘Preferred Options’ version of the forthcoming Plan.
- 7.16 Emerging **Policy UE1** (Camping and Glamping) is the most relevant. It will be seeking to introduce development of small scale camping accommodation (tents, pods, yurts, teepees, shepherd huts etc) for holiday purposes where:
- It is in the Open Countryside and is linked to an existing tourism or recreation business or facility or is part of an existing building or group of buildings which includes an existing residential unit which can be used to manage the accommodation.
  - The site is screened by existing topography, buildings or adequate well-established vegetation which is within the applicant’s control and where arrangements for its long-term maintenance can be demonstrated, in order to provide a setting for the proposed development whilst respecting the sensitivity of the local landscape character type identified in the Landscape Character Assessment;
  - The net floor space of each unit is less than 25sq.m. and will not be connected to a foul drainage system;
  - It does not lead to the loss of or damage to an ecological asset;
  - Accommodation has a low environmental impact through limited physical connection with the ground by ensuring that any hard-standing and site works are minimal to complement the natural topography and landscape character of the area; avoiding extensive alteration to ground levels and fencing;

- It does not lead to unacceptable harm in terms of noise and activity on the immediate neighbourhood;
- It is not sited within a residential curtilage.

7.17 The policy refers to 'small scale' developments and advises that scale may vary according to the type of accommodation and the sensitivity of its location, however, small scale is intended to mean that the development (when considered cumulatively with any existing development) conserves the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park.

7.18 As a guide, sites comprising of no more than twelve units (including any existing units) are likely to be considered small in scale.

## 8. Planning Assessment

- 8.1 In essence, the application seeks to diversify a farming activity to ensure the continued viability of Low Rigg Farm. In doing so, based on the above guidelines the small scale development would not generate an increase in level of activity which would risk undermining National Park purposes.
- 8.2 The type of accommodation has been chosen fundamentally for its low level impact on the landscape and can be integrated into the local landscape in a way that does not result in an unacceptable or adverse impact on its character and appearance.
- 8.3 The applicants have a strong understanding of remoteness and this is used as a golden thread throughout the development. It is the peace and tranquillity of the area which they wish to pass on to future visitors.
- 8.4 Glamping attracts a different type of tourist than standard camping; particularly those seeking to enjoy the peace and tranquillity of the National Park and the feeling of camping and being outdoors but without having to forgo everyday luxuries, such as comfortable beds, toilets, showers and cooking facilities.
- 8.5 Glamping is growing in popularity, with a recent article in the Telegraph stating that '*as internet search data reveals more people are Googling the term than at any point in history*'. There are currently very limited options for this type of accommodation in the Whitby and North York Moors area, so could potentially attract a different group to the area.
- 8.6 Conserving and enhancing the North York Moors dark night skies is of paramount importance to the applicant. They wish visitors to experience the darkness at night. In turn, this will maintain wildlife including species such as bats, moths and nightjar and therefore contribute to biodiversity.
- 8.7 Promoting the dark night skies through good management of the site will assist in minimising light spill in the remote fields surrounding the site.
- 8.8 The density of the development and impact on neighbouring facilities and existing occupants of the application site and the nearby locality would not be affected by the proposal.

## 9. Conclusion

- 9.1 The NYM Management Plan and planning policies acknowledge the integral and valuable contribution that Tourism makes to the local economy and is supportive of the site being used more actively for small scale tourist accommodation. This is considered necessary to support a prosperous rural economy.
- 9.2 Supporting sustainable rural tourism development which respects the character of the countryside is key contributory factor of the NPPF (para. 83).
- 9.3 With the site management secured it is considered that the three dimensions of sustainable development are met:
- Economic role – the development contributes to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy.
  - Social role – the development is supportive of a strong, vibrant and healthy community and provides a facility that is accessible to users without harm to the existing infrastructure or amenity.
  - Environmental role – the development contributes to protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment by retaining existing landscape features and provides new landscaping thereby improving biodiversity.
- 9.4 The development maintains a low activity ratio with minimal intervention such as lighting thereby contributing to a low carbon economy.
- 9.5 It is concluded that the site is in a highly sustainable location and will form a base from which to access other local facilities such as the coast, coastal resorts, Whitby, Scarborough, Guisborough, the Moors, Dalby Forest, the NYM Railway and local footpath and cycle routes (amongst others).
- 9.6 Supporting the sustainable growth and modest expansion of the site usage will allow this small rural business to prosper in the long term.
- 9.7 The above planning assessment concludes that the development is of an appropriate scale and is of a nature that can be accommodated on the site without harm to the character of the locality, the wider landscape and the road network.
- 9.8 Taking account of the above, the development is considered to accord with the policies of the Development Plan in force and it is requested that planning permission should be granted without further delay.

# Cheryl Ward Planning

Offering a high quality, technical and locally focused Planning and Development Consultancy service. With a pragmatic and conscientious approach to all projects our core aim is to achieve the best possible outcome for our clients.

1Accompanied by an in-depth knowledge of the local area and a deep-rooted understanding of local authority planning requirements the business is well equipped to deal with all-encompassing planning matters specialising in planning applications (all types) – town and rural i.e. residential, rural and equine planning projects whether it be traditional or contemporary in design.

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- Planning Supporting Statements
- Discharge planning conditions
- Check and send service – Cheryl Ward Planning can check forms, plans and other documents etc to make sure your application will be validated by the Council. Finally, we will submit your application via the Planning Portal on your behalf.
- Planning Enquiries
- Planning Applications (all types)
- Design and Access Statements
- Variations/amendments to planning approvals
- Prepare and submit planning appeals

NYM Moors, Yorkshire Dales, Whitby, Scarborough, Ryedale, Hambleton, Redcar and Cleveland, Selby, Wolds, North Lincolnshire, North East

5 Valley View, Ampleforth, York, YO62 4DQ

## Tree planting and biodiversity enhancement

*'Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago.'* Warren Buffet

Low Rigg Farm is bounded to the west by natural woodland surrounding Long Rigg Beck, mainly consisting of oak, but also with alder, ash, horse chestnut, holly, field maple and small leaf lime (a possible indicator of ancient woodland) among other plants and trees. It is bounded to the east by substantial hedgerows interspersed by trees, in some places 3-4 metres tall.

Although the hedgerows which run north to south alongside the road and between fields are substantial, those which run east to west between fields have been lost or diminished in some places during the time as a farm.

We are keen to replace hedgerows that have been lost and to enhance the current woodlands with additional planting. This has numerous benefits both for us and our customers in terms of the experience of being at the farm, and to make the area more beautiful, but also for restoring the natural ecosystem, increasing biodiversity and providing a haven for wildlife.

We know that 35 UK bee species are under the threat of extinction and all species of bees are under threat. As part of our plan to support bees we aim to plant a significant number of plant and tree species which support pollinators. We already provide space for local bee keepers to keep bee hives free of charge, and we aim to expand this project.

Returning trees to land also has great potential for carbon reduction, for flood prevention and for cleaning the air as well as making Low Rigg Farm a beautiful place to visit. We very much like the idea of 'rewilding' the farm, increasing the proportion of land covered by plants, trees and woodland.

We have been in contact with the Woodland Trust for advice on planting, and will source all our planting from them. All plants will be native UK tree species and saplings sourced from the Woodland Trust are UK sourced and grown to minimise the risk of importing and spreading tree pests and diseases.

We will plant a minimum of 420 plants/trees with a combination of the following in a naturalistic arrangement in the areas shown on the block plan:

Pollinator plants/trees:

- Hawthorn (60), blackthorn (30), goat willow (30), crab apple (30), rowan (60), hazel (45), dog rose (15).

Other native UK trees to complement existing woodland:

- Oak (75), wild cherry (45), downy birch (30)

Where hedgerows have been lost entirely we will plant two staggered rows of smaller hedgerow stock at roughly 30-50cm or 6 plants per metre, with hawthorn being the predominant species. This will be interspersed with the larger trees at irregular intervals to prevent a formal pattern



developing. As the hedgerow gets closer to the existing woodland we will increase the density of the trees to ensure a naturalistic flow from woodland to hedgerow.

In some areas (indicated on plan) hedgerow already exists, but is patchy and we aim to increase the density of the planting. The existing hedgerow is predominantly blackthorn with trees including crab apple interspersed. We will plant smaller hedgerow stock in a second row to supplement the existing hedgerow and intersperse with larger trees at irregular intervals.

A survey of existing trees and hedgerows at Low Rigg Farm included the following (not exclusively):

Alder, ash, blackthorn, crab apple, elder, guelder rose, hawthorn, hazel, holly, small leaf lime, field maple, oak, horse chestnut, field elm, sycamore, bullace, common buckthorn, crack willow, goat willow, grey willow, osier willow, wild cherry, dog rose, ivy, gorse and bramble.