

## Westfield Park Farm Planting Proposals

Mr & Mrs G Bell of Westfield Farm are proposing to diversify and provide a caravan site with hard standing for up to 50 caravans along with power, sewage hook ups and shower / toilet facilities. This is in a field south west of the farm house which is open countryside with views to the south over the Howardian Hills, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, eight kilometres away. It is only overlooked by one property to the north at Normanby. To prevent the caravan site being a blot on the local rural landscape the following proposals are for screening and softening of the outlines.

All the planting would be done with native species of trees and shrubs with preference given to ones that provide food and habitat for the local wildlife. The new access road will be screened with a few semi-mature trees as will the northern boundary but the rest will be saplings and appropriate sized transplants. At present there are no trees in the field with the north and south boundaries of typical predominantly Hawthorne flail cut hedges and a few mature Ash and Sycamore. The future management of these hedges would be to cease cutting the top and inside to allow the hedges to grow to their natural height and shape. The outsides may have to be cut to keep up with current agricultural policy. There will be another 12 trees added to the northern hedge whereas the southern one will be enriched with Crab Apple and Field Maple.

Around the caravan bays a mixture of shrubs and trees will be planted in a random fashion to give a visual backdrop to the vans but not that close they will interfere with the facilities. On the island in the fishing lake will be planted both shrubs and water loving trees to screen the vans from both sides. Again these do not want to be too dense as this could cause future manage problems.

### Species Choice

#### Trees

- Scots Pine, *Pinus sylvestris*. A tall growing two needled evergreen with blue/green foliage on an orange stem.
- Aspen, *Populus tremula*. A water loving tree with large blue/green leaves and white undersides that flutter in the breeze giving it its' Latin name tremula. Not very tall growing.
- Goat Willow, *Salix caprea*. Another water loving tree that doesn't grow too tall up to 10metres and has a large elliptical leaf and a March catkin, one of the earliest sources of pollen for the bees.
- Silver Birch *Betula pendula*. A nice soft tree form with white bark that will grow quickly almost anywhere.
- Alder, *Ulnus glutinosa*. Another water loving tree that could be planted in the water margins or any wet hollows in the field as it will act as a pump and help to keep the ground dry.

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- Pedunculate Oak *Quercus robur*. A very large, slow growing tree that could be planted in the north hedge or along the access road. Amongst the caravans very few would be needed.
- Whitebeam, *Sorbus aria*. A good form tree with white underside to its leaves. Produces large amounts of red berries as fruit food for birds.
- Wild Cherry, *Prunus avium*. Can grow into a majestic tree with its reddish bark and soft fruit that are a favourite with lots of wild life.
- Sycamore, *Acer pseudoplatanus*. A palmate leaved tree that will grow quickly almost anywhere. Produces good timber and can be used as a nurse being taken out when it becomes overcrowded as fire wood.
- Small-leaved Lime, *Tilia cordata*. This grows into a very robust tree that is a haven for nesting birds. Not to be planted were it will be over caravans or cars as the aphids during the summer will drip honey dew on to the paintwork which will mark the paint. It should therefore be planted in the hedge or along the drive.

#### Shrubs

- Juniper, *Juniperus communis*. A low growing evergreen that produces a dark blue berry. Good for birds nesting and food as well as flavouring for gin.
- Common Osier, *Salix viminalis*. Can be cut and re-grows for basket weaving and wattle. It has a very long spear shaped leaf that flutters in the breeze. Again it likes wet ground around ponds.
- Hazel, *Corylus avellana*. This again can be cut for spars for thatching or wattle. It produces a large nut in the autumn which is eaten by a lot of small mammals and large birds.
- Rowan, *Sorbus aucuparia*. Will grow up to 7 meters fairly quickly and can produce masses of red or orange berries depending on the variety. Again a good food source for the wildlife.
- Crab Apple, *Malus sylvestris*. Often ends up more as a multi-stemmed bush than a tree producing good nesting areas as well as the sour apples in the autumn
- Bird Cherry, *Prunus padus*. This low growing tree is often multi-stemmed and if damaged the wood rots quickly producing nesting holes as well as fruit that only the birds will eat.
- Holly, *Ilex aquifolium*. Another evergreen producing red berries and good nesting sites. Makes very good screening for storage areas.
- Field Maple, *Acer campestre*. A slow growing often multi-stemmed tall growing shrub that produces masses of seed and is red / yellow in autumn.

## **Planting Layout**

### Access Road

The drive way should be planted with Oak and Cherry to screen the house and breakup the drive line. Possibly 10 of each would be adequate.

### Northern Fence line

Propose planting 12 trees in uneven groups to enhance the fence line and break up the outline as viewed from Normanby. I would plant 6 Oak 3 Lime and 3 Cherry to give different shapes and forms. Inside the hedge I would leave a walkway that can be kept cut for both dog walkers and to give access to the hedge for cutting.

### Northern Caravan Bays

There is approximately 1ha of land between the bays and the hedge excluding the track. This would need 1600 trees to fill it at 2.5 meter spacing. I propose using both trees and shrubs in groups leaving gaps through to the boundary to break up the outline. With the track being for dog walking and jogging I would leave several ways through from the van bays and this would reduce the number of trees by 30% to about 1100.

30% should be trees including Scots Pine, White Beam, Sycamore, Silver Birch and Wild Cherry inter-planted with Hazel, Crab Apple, Rowan, Holly and Juniper. This would be about 90 each of the trees and 240 each of the Hazel, Crab Apple and Rowan with 15 each of Holly and Juniper

### Pond Island

This will be 200meters long and up to 20meters wide. To screen the view across from the site bays I would plant this with Aspen, Alder, Goat Willow and Birch. These all have different height and form where as underneath I would plant low growing shrubs of Bird Cherry, Rowan and Common Osier to give ground cover. These should be planted randomly between 2 and 3 metres apart with 30% trees 70% shrubs. This would be 120 trees, 30 of each and 240 shrubs. Again it would be planted between 2 and 3 metres apart in random groups.

### Southern Bays

This is a lot narrower area and would still need a track for access. It would be about 0.35ha and would take another 560 trees / shrubs. This would form a solid belt and would be overbearing and so again about 30% would be left as open space planting 400 trees/shrubs. The trees would

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be Scots Pine, Whitebeam, Oak and Wild Cherry with the shrubs of Hazel, Rowan, Bird Cherry and Holly about 40 each of the trees and 75 shrubs with 15 Holly.

#### Southern Hedge

This is already a substantial hedge that should only be cut on the outside for field boundary maintenance. It could be enriched with 6 Crab Apple and 6 Field Maple.

#### **Planting**

The trees should be no older than 2+1's bare rooted stock with the Willows, Birch and Alders one year olds. The shrubs should be whips or container grown for the Holly and Juniper and again small healthy plants. The larger a plant is when it is transplanted the slower it will start to grow, it will be inclined to die-back or die and will be more likely to deform. Smaller plants will catch up with semi standards in about 4 years. The increase in cost and general appearance is not worthwhile. All the trees should be in 1.2 metre tubes for mammal protection and increased establishment speed. The shrubs should either be in 0.6metre tubes or mesh guards. Some species need air circulation to prevent fungal infection.

#### **Plants Needed**

Scots Pine	130
Aspen	30
Goat Willow	30
Silver Birch	120
Alder	30
Pedunculate Oak	50
Whitebeam	130
Wild Cherry	130
Sycamore	120
Small-leaved Lime	3
Juniper	15
Common Osier	80
Hazel	315

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Rowan	395
Crab Apple	240
Bird Cherry	155
Holly	30
Field Maple	6

There are possibly too many Rowan and Crab Apple, some should be replaced by Field Maple and Common Osier depending on the wetness in areas after the pond and bays have been constructed as it is a very low lying heavy land and the water table could be affected by the landscaping.

Produced by Colin Olsson January 2014

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