

Springs Farm

Hedge Works Q&A

10th November 2017

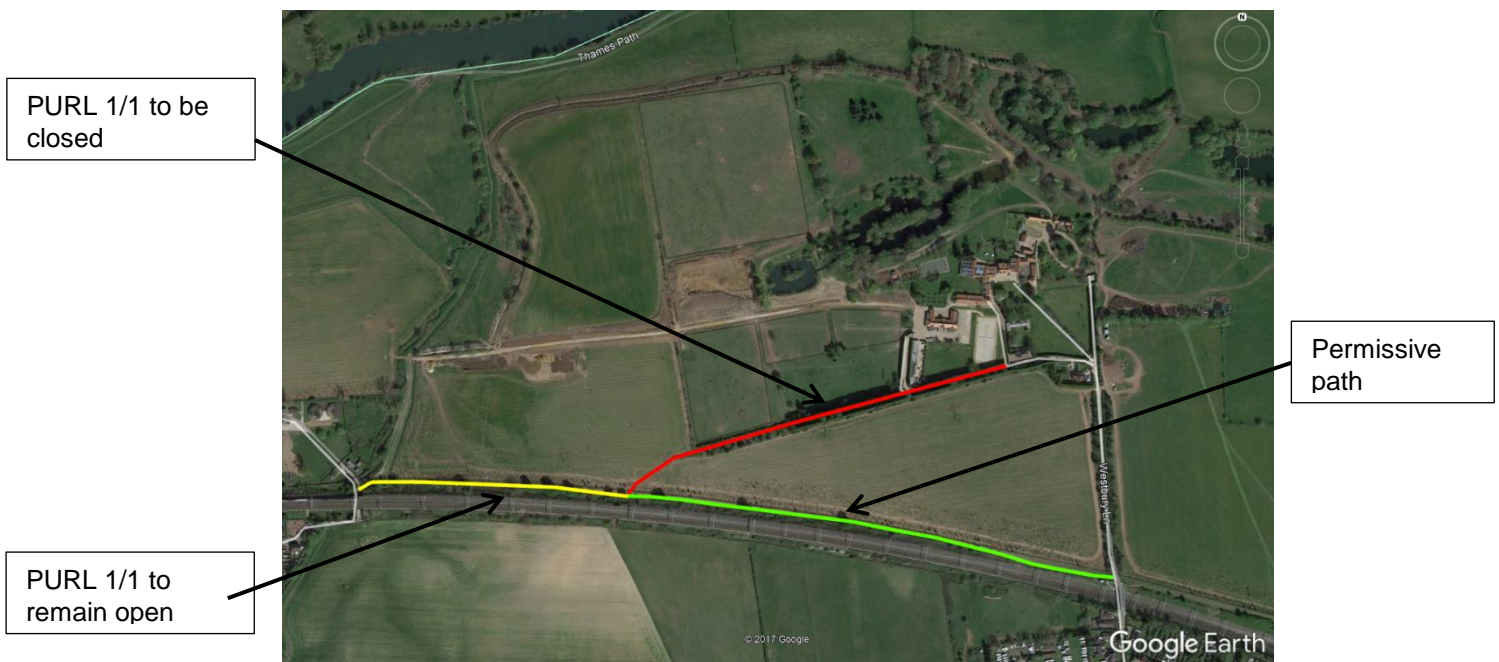
What is proposed?

An application has been submitted to West Berkshire Council to temporarily close a public right of way in the vicinity of Springs Farm. This is to allow for the removal of existing and substantial 'walls' of leylandii and security fencing which border this path, which will require extensive works. If approved by the Council, we expect the closure to take effect from Monday 20th November 2017.

Which path and which parts of the path are proposed to be closed?

The path to be temporarily closed is identified on the West Berkshire Definitive Map as PURL 1/1. This runs between the end of Westbury Lane and towards the railway, which it then runs alongside until it meets footpath PURL 7/4. The works will not require the closure of the entire length of PURL 1/1 and the proposal is only to close the section from Westbury Lane up to the junction between PURL 1/1 and the existing permissive path running alongside the railway.

The following image illustrates the section of the PURL 1/1 footpath to be closed (in red) and the section which will remain open (yellow). It also illustrates the existing permissive path (green), which will provide a convenient alternative route during the closure.



What works will be undertaken?

The existing leylandii hedges are substantial in size and scale, having been planted some decades ago by the previous owner of Springs Farm. These hedges are typically three runs deep (i.e. there are multiple rows of plants) and are entwined with two rows of robust concrete and steel security fencing. All of this means that the removal works required will be extensive and complex and require the path to be closed so that they can be undertaken safely and securely. These works are to be undertaken in consultation with the land owner's ecologist.

What will replace the existing hedges, will there be new fences as you've erected elsewhere?

The hedges and security fencing will be replaced with native plants and shrubs, far smaller in scale than the current hedges and complementary to the new planting which has taken place across the rest of the Springs Farm estate.

Why is this work being undertaken now?

It is preferable for this type of landscaping work to be undertaken over the winter months to avoid the nesting season. It is also the time when the footpath is used less.

Why does the whole path have to be closed, couldn't you do this in sections or maintain some access? Will the works really take that long?

Following discussions with the Council, it was determined that the best approach would be to seek a formal order for a closure of six months due to the overall scale of the works. Any more limited periods of closure would not have allowed long enough for the works to take place. The closure of the entire stretch between Westbury Lane and where it reaches the railway is needed to ensure the works can be undertaken safely and securely, and in a timely manner.

Will the footpath reopen at the end of the six months?

Yes. The temporary closure would last for six months, at which point the path would be re-opened.

Who can I speak to if I have any questions?

Please contact Matthew Evans at GL Hearn via one of the following options:

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