

Mr Matthew Farmer
Senior Planning Enforcement Officer
Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council
The Guildhall
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Shrewsbury
SY3 8HQ

Direct Line: 01588 674085
Email: Joy.tetsill@shropshire-cc.gov.uk
Your Ref: MF/03/0348/ENF
Our Ref:

Date: 12th November 2007

Dear Mr Farmer

Re: Enforcement notice for unauthorised change of use of agricultural land to residential curtilage, The Grange, Church Preen

Thank you for your memo on the above. The Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership supports Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council's requirement seeking the removal of the laurel hedge between points A-B on the map attached to your memo. The rural context of this site within the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty means that agriculture is the appropriate land use. A laurel hedge is not consistent with this use. Hedges on agricultural land within the AONB typically comprise a mix of species such as hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), field maple (*Acer campestre*) and guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*).

The management of the land should also be consistent with an agricultural use. This should involve either cutting or grazing the land if it is to remain as grassland. A typical hay meadow management regime in the Shropshire Hills AONB involves (weather depending);

1. Letting the grass grow until late June to early July.
2. Cutting to produce hay in late June/early July
3. Grazing from the middle of August to the middle of October.
4. 'Shutting' the meadow up to allow the grass to grow (i.e. all stock is excluded) until it is cut again the following year.

The sward height in a hay meadow regime prior to cutting may be anything up to 1 metre and after cutting and grazing may be less than 5cm. The hay is often used as animal feed for the farmer's own stock in winter (in which case it is stored on the land holding in a barn or other such structure), or it may be sold.

Management of agricultural grassland by grazing for a site of this size in the Shropshire Hills AONB would typically involve 8- 10 sheep between April and September each year. Grazing would not require a grass cutting compound as shown on the photographs attached to your memo.

I trust this reply is satisfactory. I can be contacted as above (Mon –Weds) if you require any further assistance.

Yours sincerely

Joy Tetsill
Planning and Policy Officer