

REF: 2015S40/0047

From:

Sent: 07 January 2015 22:57

To: Nature Conservation

Subject: Section 40 Review

To whom it may concern:

I would firstly like to take this opportunity to thank you for opening this to the public to voice their opinion.

I strongly feel there should be a change in dates for the closed period for hedge-cutting and burning. I feel that the current period (March 1st to August 31st) is too long. I have been a farmer all my life and living in rural Ireland, I am very familiar with the way nature works.

I would never deny wildlife the chance to thrive and they have always have had full ruin of my land, even going back to my ancestors time.

However, Section 40 doesn't allow a balance between wildlife and nature. With the current period, hedges are now over grown by June and posing a serious danger to road users. The summer time brings more vehicle to our roads with more tourists travelling around our beautiful countryside but unfortunately can't take in the scenery as they can't see over a hedge, not to mention see around a turn on the road. I wonder has it been considered that maybe over grown hedges are the cause of the majority of car accidents on our roads, even the more serious ones leading to fatalities.

My local council claim to have no funds to pay hedge cutters during the summer months which is no good as their is no one that can then see after our safety.

Over the past few years, my neighbours and I have had to privately pay for our hedges to be cut in September, which I find is almost pointless as the vegetation is already dying from the hedges and we're essentially just cutting branches.

In my lifetime, I have never known a bird to nest by the roadside. Birds are a far more intelligent species than humans and they know better than nest near danger. They will also have flown their nest by June, July the latest, depending on the weather that year. Also, you would rarely find vegetation suitable for wildlife growing by the roadside. Passing traffic would inhabit it's growth and again, intelligence kicks in to warn wildlife not to venture there.

A Coillte forest neighbours my land also, as do they do with many people's land, however I have never seen them to cut their trees which come down onto the roadside. These trees are a danger to road users also as they are often hit by a car due to their low foliage causing poor visibility. On an environmental note, their pines are hazardous to the wildlife as they block waterways, they don't decay into the soil and can get caught in small animals throats. I would personally consider them the greatest hazard to wildlife rather than the bushes at the side of the road.

I finish by bringing you back to my point that the current closed period to be seriously reviewed. Please take the time to think your review of Section 40 thoroughly and possible get out and review nature with a more common sense approach.

Many thanks for taking the time to read my opinion and I hope you do that it into consideration.

Yours Sincerely,