

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regs 2017

Field Report Enforcement case

Date of Visit: 12/10/22

Location

IACS field refs: N/A

Block of land at:

Owned / farmed by:

CRN N/A

Investigating Ecologist:

Background reason for investigation:

Referral from Caerphilly County council, originally from member of the public stating landowner wished to plough area of semi- natural land.

Additional information collated prior to the visit: Informant also stated Marsh Frit on site

Description of the work undertaken on-site (please refer to attached map) The site has willow scrub removed from some of the site.

Description and environmental significance of the sites.

The area is obviously not been grazed heavily by stock for some time. Willow scrub and brambles are encroaching from the boundaries, and the willow is well established in areas. The grassland is mainly at the bottom of the parcel. There is a mixture of Cockfoots tusks, *Festuca rubra*, large swathes of *Centurea nigra*, Succisa dominates the ground level under the knapweed, There are patches of tussocky sedges, and areas of heavy rush dominance, mainly compact rush and soft rush. Other species include bramble (periphery), Tormentil, Birdfoot trefoil, common sorrel, Yorkshire Fog. The site was walked and the likelihood of Marsh Frit being on the site. No Molinia was seen, however the tussocks of cocksfoot could provide hibernation sites for the butterfly if present. There is a heavy mat of fallen vegetation in places, which could affect next year's growth. The landowners had not carried out any actions which have breached the Regs, and wished to know the best way forward for management without infringing any rules in the future, and were happy to work with any species, including the Marsh Frit if it is present. They have no intention of reseeding the grassland.

Conclusions:

1. No project has been initiated which breaches the Regs.
2. Whilst not obvious sign of Marsh Frit activity was seen at the site, the elements required by the species are all there, so the advice is to manage the site with Marsh Frit in mind.
3. Advise the landowners to contact NRW regarding the scrub removal, even though we believe they are well under the threshold for a felling licence.
4. General advice on EIA Agri given, will be reiterated in the letter.
5. General advice on managing the site re. Marsh Frit, and bramble removal.
6. Case closed.