

## Transforming Landscapes for a New Underground Pipeline: Countreside/Hortech/Scottish Gas Case Study

### Abstract:

This case study highlights the successful completion of grounds clearance works carried out by Countreside and their team of three men on behalf of Hortech Ltd, with Scottish Gas as the client. The project aimed to create space for the installation of a new underground gas pipeline. The scope of work included tree clearance, whole tree chipping, sectional felling, the use of specialised equipment such as Green Climbers with mulching and flail heads, and a forestry-spec'd excavator fitted with a tree shear and grab for clearing shrubs and low-lying vegetation. This case study outlines the challenges faced, the equipment utilised, the teamwork involved, and the transformative impact on the site.

### Introduction:

Hortech Ltd, acting on behalf of Scottish Gas, commissioned a grounds clearance project to facilitate the installation of a new underground gas pipeline. Countreside and their skilled team of three men were entrusted with the critical task of transforming the site through comprehensive vegetation clearance works. The project spanned two weeks and aimed to create a safe and unobstructed path for the pipeline.

### Project Planning and Preparations:

Before commencing the works, Countreside conducted an extensive site assessment to understand the terrain, identify potential obstacles, and plan the most efficient clearing strategies. A detailed method statement and risk assessment were prepared, considering factors like environmental regulations, safety protocols, and minimising disruption to local wildlife.

### Grounds Clearance Techniques and Equipment Used:

- a. **Tree Clearance:** The team systematically cleared trees in the project area, identifying hazardous or obstructive trees that needed immediate removal. The team used a forestry-spec'd excavator equipped with a tree shear and grab for precision cutting to avoid damage to nearby structures.
- b. **Whole Tree Chipping:** Felled trees were chipped entirely using a whole tree chipper. This process ensured the optimal use of the timber and reduced waste, making it an environmentally friendly choice for the disposal of tree debris.
- c. **Sectional Felling:** In areas with limited space or proximity to structures, the team employed sectional felling techniques using chainsaws. The trees were safely dismantled in sections, ensuring controlled removal.
- d. **MDB Green Climber with Mulching and Flail Heads:** Countreside utilised specialised equipment, such as MDB LV600+ Green Climber equipped with a mulching and separate

flail head. This versatile machine allowed efficient clearance of shrubs, self-sets and low-lying vegetation up to 6" in diameter whilst mulching it on-site, reducing the need for manual handling. Utilising the machines enabled the teams to reach vegetation of banks up to 60 degrees in slope which would have been otherwise inaccessible. The use of Green Climbers also resulted in a reduction to work force fatigue, increased safety and reduced associated risks.

#### **Challenges Faced:**

- a. Environmental Compliance: The project site might have been home to protected flora and fauna. Countreeside collaborated closely with local ecologists to ensure compliance with all regulations and minimise the project's impact on local biodiversity.
- b. Project Timeline: Completing the extensive grounds clearance within a limited timeframe presented a significant challenge. Efficient planning and coordination were crucial to meet the two-week deadline.

#### **Teamwork and Project Execution:**

The successful completion of the grounds clearance project was a result of effective teamwork. Countreeside' team displayed exceptional skill and proficiency in utilising the diverse range of equipment. Regular communication and collaboration ensured a smooth workflow and adherence to safety guidelines.

#### **Results and Impact:**

At the end of the two-week project, the site underwent a remarkable transformation. The grounds were now clear of trees, shrubs, and low-lying vegetation, providing ample space for the installation of the new underground pipeline. The use of environmentally friendly practices, such as whole tree chipping and on-site mulching, minimized the project's ecological footprint.

#### **Conclusion:**

The grounds clearance works carried out by Countreeside and their team showcased their expertise and commitment to delivering outstanding results. Through meticulous planning, the utilisation of specialised equipment, and efficient teamwork, the project was completed within the allocated timeframe. The transformed landscape now sets the stage for the installation of the underground gas pipeline, serving as a testament to the positive impact of skilful vegetation clearance in large-scale projects.

























