

Brophy Timber Services Ltd

To whom it may concern,

Please find my submission below in relation to the Agricultural Appeals (Amendment) Bill. 12 years ago, after serving my time as an apprentice Fitter and working for almost 9 years in the private sector, I made the decision to set up my business in the forestry sector. This decision did not come out of the blue as my Father and his Father before that had also worked in this sector. I have live all my live in a rural townsland of Drim, Mountrath Co Laois right on the foothills of the beautiful Slieve Bloom Mountains. As a young boy of 8 or 9 years of age I would of spent a lot of time working with my Father in the forests felling and extracting timber for the Sawmill industry. Brophy Timber Services Ltd our company has grown steadily over the last 12 years, and now we are proud to directly employ over 20 full time employees. At Brophy Timber Services we have strived to be the best all round forestry Company serving all clients from the local farm forestry owners to the State owned Forestry Companies and Sawmills. We live in a beautiful country and Brophy Timber Services through Sustainable forest management are trying every day to both keep it that way and maybe improve some areas as we work. The forest industry is a tough industry and is not at all being helped or improved by these serial appeals.

At Brophy Timber Services Ltd we feel that along with an improvement in the Legislation there should be a look at maybe abolishing the need for Felling licences for thinnings altogether. It is understandable that licences are needed for Clearfelling as this has larger impact on the appearance of the locality. A suggestion would be a notification of thinning works so the DAFM can carry out audits and inspections to ensure the work is being carried out to a correct standard.

At Brophy Timber Services we love to work on the land and therefore have a vested interest in looking after our environment every day.

We as a company are facing the tough task of laying a large portion of our staff in the next month or so if common sense does not prevail. These are rural jobs which are vital. We have invested our lives in Forestry, Its high time the people at the head of our sector made this a little easier instead of harder for us. Decisions need to be made. I have a Son and Daughter who I want to work in a thriving and environmentally sustainable forestry sector in the future if they so chose.

Please sort this problem now.

Here are just few simple facts:

The current licencing process is inadequate. Huge delays are being caused by the Forestry Appeals committee (FAC).

The FAC cannot cope with the workload.

Forestry activities have ceased due to the backlog damaging the Industry.

It is vital that changes are made to the process to ensure the FAC is fit for purpose.

I support the proposed changes in the Agricultural Appeals (Amendment) Bill.

It is very simple; People's livelihoods are at stake here.

Kind regards,
Brophy Timber Services Ltd