
LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN

LONGFORD PARK ROAD, BODICOTE

ON BEHALF OF

MERCIAN GROUP

REFERENCE: ZLA_1231

DATE: November 2022

V1

Report Data	
Report Title	Landscape Management Plan
Report Reference	ZLA_1231
Client	Mercian Group
Development Site	Longford Park Road, Bodicote
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Rev	Report	Author	Date Issued
V1	Landscape Management Plan	Stephanie Turner	10 November 2022

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CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION..... 1
 Background..... 1

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION 3

3.0 KEY OBJECTIVES 4

4.0 EXISTING TREES AND HEDGES 5
 Existing Hedgerow 5

5.0 PROPOSED TREE PLANTING..... 7

6.0 PROPOSED SHRUB PLANTING..... 9

7.0 PROPOSED HEDGE PLANTING 10

8.0 MAINTENANCE OF GRASS (OPEN SPACE AND WILDFLOWER GRASSLAND) 11
 Open Space..... 11
 Wildflower Grassland..... 11

9.0 CREATION AND MAINTENANCE OF WET GRASSLAND SWALE (SOFT SUDS) 12
 Wet Grassland 12

10.0 MAINTENANCE OF HARD STANDING 13

11.0 MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES..... 14
 Proposed trees..... 14
 Proposed shrubs 14
 Native planting..... 14
 Grass 14

12.0 CONDITION MONITORING AND RECORD KEEPING 15

APPENDIX A: Detailed Soft Landscape (ZLA_1231-L-200)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Background

- 1.1 The following Landscape Management + Maintenance Plan has been drawn up by Zebra Landscape Architects Ltd on behalf of Mercian Group. It sets out the necessary prescriptions for the landscape management of the existing and new planting associated with the residential care home development off Longford Park Road, Bodicote, Oxfordshire.
- 1.2 The management plan covers the landscaping associated with the residential units and areas of open space within the ownership boundary of the development.
- 1.3 Maintenance prescriptions have been formulated to maximise the landscape amenity of the site, maintain healthy plant growth, keep planting beds free from weeds/litter and ensure plant stock remains free from disease. This document is to be read in conjunction with the Soft Landscape Specification in the drawing prepared by Zebra Landscape Architects Ltd ZLA-1231-L-200.
- 1.4 The following areas of maintenance are:
- Existing trees and hedgerows
 - Proposed tree, hedge and shrub planting
 - Grass areas (open space amenity, wildflower and wet grassland)
 - SuDS (swale)
 - Hard surfaces
- 1.5 It is anticipated that following initial development of the site, the first twelve months maintenance will be the responsibility of the landscape contractor, as appointed by the developer, and this period will run concurrently with the rectification period. Thereafter, an appropriate maintenance contractor should be employed.
- 1.6 It is proposed that the Management Plan will be reviewed annually allowing for minor variations in maintenance or timing of work. The Management Plan will be revised every 5 years to take on more major changes, such as exclusion of operations.
- 1.7 The annual review will take account of the following items:
- Pedestrian routes and desire lines
 - Litter
 - Usability of open space
 - Success of tree and shrub planting; wildflower meadow and wetland grassland
 - Condition of existing trees and hedges
 - Condition and success of ecological habitats

- 1.8 It is anticipated that following the review, any problems or changes that are impacting on the landscape will be accommodated with the agreement to the Local Authority.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 Situated within a residential area northeast of Bodicote, south east of Banbury. The application site is approximately 0.97ha in area and is comprised of pasture grazing land enclosed by trees and native hedgerows.

- 2.2 A public right of way is aligned with the northern perimeter (Canal Lane), whilst to the east the site meets Longford Park Road and is adjacent to Longford Park Primary School. The rear gardens of residential dwellings meet with the southern and western boundaries. Access to the site is from Longford Park Road.

3.0 KEY OBJECTIVES

3.1 The establishment and future success of the landscape is largely dependent on the standard and frequency of the subsequent maintenance and management it receives.

3.2 Key objectives for management and maintenance include:

- To facilitate an efficient and sustainable landscape management and maintenance regime through the lifetime of the development;
- To provide a safe, high quality external environment for all site users;
- To ensure that the landscape develops in a manner commensurate with the original design intent and in line with ecological recommendations;
- To accommodate appropriate public use of the site including Open Space;
- To ensure successful establishment and continued growth through to maturity of the trees and other planting as identified on the landscape proposals;
- To secure the long-term future for the new trees and shrubs with emphasis upon achieving visual amenity;
- To manage the landscape in a manner which ensures the safety of site users, such as maintaining visibility splays, maintain good surveillance, removal of dead, dying or diseased trees and plants;
- To maintain boundary habitats and create connective wildlife corridors;
- To provide a diverse collection of native/insect attracting flora and fauna to enhance foraging opportunities for bats and other wildlife;
- To ensure the continued health and welfare of existing trees and hedgerows across the site.

4.0 EXISTING TREES AND HEDGES

- 4.1 Existing trees will be subject to regular inspection and the contractor should be satisfied that tree preservation orders have not been notified for the site during the maintenance period; if TPOs are applicable the contractor must comply with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Trees) Regulations (Amendment) 2008.
- 4.2 Any specified tree surgery works will be carried out in accordance with BS 3998:2010 'Tree Works Recommendations', Health and Safety legislation and relevant best practice. Prior to commencement of any works the contractor must provide valid proof of required Public Liability Insurance and a full working method statement and risk assessment.
- 4.3 Prior to any works to trees and hedgerows, they should be inspected for nesting birds and bats by an approved Ecologist and if possible, works should be undertaken outside the bird nesting season. The main nesting season is between March – August (inclusive).
- 4.4 A visual inspection will be carried out of individual trees and woodland edges within 10m of public paths at every visit. Any damaged, diseased or dangerous timber shall be reported, and a schedule of appropriate operations agreed.

Existing Hedgerow

- 4.5 The existing native hedgerow to the northern boundary alongside Canal Lane and alongside Longford Park Road to the east shall be maintained at a uniform height of no more than 2m.
- 4.6 The basic principles for appropriate hedgerow trimming are as follows (Natural England, 2008, RSPB, 2008);
 - a) All cutting regimes will be carried out on a two- or three-year rotation. This ensures that thick nesting cover is available annually for birds and also to boost the berry crop that often develops on second year growth;
 - b) Trimming will be undertaken during the months of January or February to prevent disturbance to nesting birds during the months of March to August. Cutting at this time of the year also allows the berry crop to be used by over-wintering birds which is a vital part of their diet when food is scarce;
 - c) Any gaps in the boundary hedgerows will be planted up with appropriate native species, to ensure a corridor is maintained and encourage dispersal of wildlife around the site, post-development. All new hedgerow planting will take place over the winter period (October – March);
 - d) Newly planted specimens within the hedgerow gaps will be protected from animal damage by the use of rabbit-proof fencing, netting or individual tree guards;
 - e) Specimens that fail in the first three years will be replaced to prevent gaps forming;

- f) Weeds will be controlled to prevent competition with the hedgerow plants. Weed control will be undertaken via mulch (applied immediately after planting) or cutting/pulling. The use of herbicides is not recommended.

4.7 The main objective for management is to maintain a varied age, condition and size of hedgerow in order to support a variety of wildlife.

Maintenance Operation	Visits	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Removal of litter	12												
Inspection for deadwood/ structural defects	1												
Trunks to be kept clear of sucker growth to a height of 4m	1												
Selective/formative pruning of existing boundary hedgerows	1												

5.0 PROPOSED TREE PLANTING

5.1 To ensure their survival and optimal development, new trees will be subject to intensive establishment maintenance.

- g) Base of each tree be kept free from weeds, including a 1m diameter ring of mulch;
- h) Watering to ensure moisture levels are maintained appropriate for optimum growth during establishment period only. Newly planted trees should be watered a minimum of 13 times in the first year after planting, though more if the weather requires. The trees should be watered a minimum of 7 times in years 2 and 3, and then as required in the following years.
- i) Application of a slow release fertiliser around the base of each tree to ensure soil fertility is maintained.
- j) Remove any vandalised, unhealthy or dead specimens as soon as possible and replace with trees of the same size to those adjacent, during next available planting season.
- k) Inspection, adjustment and maintenance of anchors, stakes and ties; spiral guards and remove of items that have been attached to trees.
- l) Re-firming of trees after strong winds, frost heave or other disturbances.
- m) Pruning to remove dead, dying or diseased wood; remove suckers and formatively prune if necessary, to achieve natural shape, healthy growth and to favour a single leader, (except for multi-stem trees, where several leaders will be favoured).
- n) Supply and apply selective herbicide to manufacturers recommendations;
- o) Top up of mulch to ring around base of tree.

Maintenance Operation	Visits	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Weed control	12												
Watering as required	13												
Slow release fertiliser	1												
Replacement of vandalised, unhealthy or dead trees	1												
Inspection of anchors, stake and ties; spiral guards, pests and diseases,	-	As required											
Re-firming of trees	-	As required											
Supply and apply selective herbicide	1												
Selective/formative pruning	1												

Maintenance Operation	Visits	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Top up mulch	1												

6.0 PROPOSED SHRUB PLANTING

6.1 To ensure successful establishment of shrub (amenity and structure) planting areas, the following maintenance operations will need to be adhered to:

- a) Control and removal of weeds;
- b) Watering to ensure moisture levels are maintained appropriate for optimum growth during establishment period only.
- c) Application of a slow release fertiliser to ensure soil fertility is maintained.
- d) Remove any vandalised, unhealthy or dead specimens as soon as possible and replace with the same size to those adjacent, during next available planting season.
- e) Removal of litter.
- f) Pruning of species to ensure correct form to promote flowering/berry production/retention where appropriate and pruning of shrubs for floral, foliage and stem colour to remove weak, damaged or diseased branches.
- g) Inspection for pests and diseases with remedial action taken swiftly.
- h) Thinning of beds to monitored and remove as required, in stages, to retain character.
- i) Supply and apply selective herbicide to manufacturers recommendations;
- j) Top up of mulch to planting areas.

Maintenance Operation	Visits	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Weed control	12												
Watering as required	-												
Slow release fertiliser	1												
Replacement of vandalised, unhealthy or dead trees	1												
Removal of litter	-												
Selective/formative pruning	1												
Supply and apply selective herbicide	1												
Inspection for pest and diseases	-	As required											
Top up mulch	1												

7.0 PROPOSED HEDGE PLANTING

7.1 To ensure successful establishment of newly planted hedges so that they can be suitably maintained for ornamental and amenity value.

- a) Control and removal of weeds from hedge trenches;
- b) Watering to ensure moisture levels are maintained appropriate for optimum growth during establishment period only.
- c) Application of a slow release fertiliser to ensure soil fertility is maintained.
- d) Remove any vandalised, unhealthy or dead specimens as soon as possible and replace with the same size to those adjacent, during next available planting season.
- e) Removal of litter.
- f) Pruning and re-shape hedge species to promote good growth and compact form, removing any dead and dying wood. Restock as necessary to fill gaps.
- g) Inspection for pests and diseases with remedial action taken swiftly.
- h) Allow new hedges to attain a planned height of 2m (native hedgerow) and 1.2m (evergreen hedgerow), by trimming lateral growth once annually in mid-late summer.
- i) Supply and apply selective herbicide to manufacturers recommendations;
- j) Top up of mulch to planting areas.

Maintenance Operation	Visits	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Weed control	12												
Watering as required	-												
Slow release fertiliser	1												
Replacement of vandalised, unhealthy or dead trees	1												
Removal of litter	-												
Selective/formative pruning	1												
Supply and apply selective herbicide	1												
Inspection for pest and diseases	-	As required											
Top up mulch	1												

8.0 MAINTENANCE OF GRASS (OPEN SPACE AND WILDFLOWER GRASSLAND)

Open Space

- 8.1 To ensure communal short mown amenity grass areas are suitably managed to maintain an attractive lawn and safe environment for users.
- a) Allow turf sward or seeded areas to establish to a minimum height of 35mm before first cut. Once established, maintain to a height of 25-33mm by cutting fortnightly or as necessary. Arisings to be collected and removed from site.
 - b) Following initial seeding/turfing provide appropriate signage to discourage footfall for a minimum of 6 weeks or until suitably established.
 - c) Remove all litter including fallen leaves prior to mowing, strim around obstructions and do not use mowers or strimmer within 100mm of tree stems.
 - d) All amenity areas should receive an application of a propriety granular slow-release fertiliser, twice yearly, in the spring and autumn.
 - e) A selective herbicide should be used to suppress any emerging perennial weeds.
 - f) Bare areas and areas of dead grass should be rectified by over-seeding or turf re-installation.
 - g) Edges adjacent to footpaths/kerbs should be left neat after each visit.
 - h) Bulb planting is to be avoided until the flowers have completely faded back. Grass can be returned to normal height through several cuts until the desired height is achieved.

Wildflower Grassland

- 8.2 To ensure communal long and/or flowering grass areas are suitably managed to maintain and encourage diverse flora for biodiversity and ecological enhancement.
- a) Prior to cutting all areas shall be cleared of litter and debris.
 - b) To maintain diversity, all meadow and wildflower grass areas, including areas around/underneath hedgerows will be cut annually to a height of 150mm in late summer/early autumn subject to weather conditions. In Great Crested Newt Receptor areas, the grass should be cut in November.
 - c) All cuttings shall be left in situ for 24 hours to allow seed dispersal and then all arisings removed from site.
 - d) Areas should be monitored to assess the growth of any invasive species and spot treated with an approved herbicide if required.
 - e) Worn or damaged areas are to be repaired by over seeding into a prepared seed bed at the next maintenance visit, dependant on seasonal limitations and subject to suitable weather and ground conditions in accordance with best practice.
 - f) Monitor and remove some of the common nettle, to prevent encroachment into these areas.

9.0 CREATION AND MAINTENANCE OF WET GRASSLAND SWALE (SOFT SUDS)

Wet Grassland

- a) It is important that the wetland meadow is kept moist during prolonged dry periods during establishment.
- b) Prior to cutting all areas shall be cleared of litter and debris.
- c) To maintain diversity the area should be cut to a height of 150mm in November in years 1 -3, to prevent trees and other species self-seeding; any invasive species, including common nettle, should be removed or spot treated with an approved herbicide.
- d) All cuttings shall be left in situ for 24 hours to allow seed dispersal and then all arisings removed from site.
- e) Worn or damaged areas are to be repaired by over seeding into a prepared seed bed at the next maintenance visit, dependant on seasonal limitations and subject to suitable weather and ground conditions in accordance with best practice.

10.0 MAINTENANCE OF HARD STANDING

- 10.1 To ensure that hard surfaces are maintained in a safe, debris-free state to facilitate all-year-round use of the site.
- 10.2 As required, ensure all hard surfaces are maintained free from debris, litter and fallen leaves, through regular sweeping. Remove any arisings from site.
- 10.3 Undertake regular inspections to ensure areas of hard standing are sound and free from cracks and trip hazards; any degradation or puddling must be noted and made good at the following maintenance visit. Significant damage creating a hazard to pedestrians must be highlighted appropriately and repairs undertaken within an agreed timeframe.

11.0 MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

Years 1-5

Proposed trees

- 11.1 Specimen trees will be allowed to develop without thinning out due to generous spacing. Apart from formative crown pruning after the first three years, some subsequent light trimming may be necessary. The ornamental trees within the development will require little maintenance/management.
- 11.2 An updated arboricultural survey should be commissioned in Year 5 to maintain species diversity, safety and screening capacity of the semi-natural broadleaved woodland to the south of the site.

Proposed shrubs

- 11.3 Specimen/feature shrubs will be planted to give initial impact to the scheme. If overcrowding occurs, then adjacent shrubs are to be thinned out. They may require light formative pruning to maintain their shape.
- 11.4 Shrubs will become established between 2-3 years after planting, when some of the more successful species may have to be thinned out. These plants will have joined canopies and be successfully suppressing weed growth. To maintain colourful stems or bushy form, annual pruning will need to be carried out. Ornamental shrubs may need to be replaced as they become over mature and cannot be rejuvenated by pruning or coppicing; in cases of severe weather, some species may require earlier replacement.

Native planting

- 11.5 Hazel, Hawthorn and Dogwood in mix areas and native hedgerows will be maintained and managed through annual formative pruning for the first few years.
- 11.6 Native planting to be reviewed throughout the first three years, remove 30% of nurse species where they appear to be aggressive or hindering the development of climax species by selecting unhealthy, diseased or damaged specimens. Replace any dead trees.

Grass

- 11.7 Annually review the natural succession of the wildflower grassland, open grassland and wet grassland areas to ensure no invasive or pernicious weeds have appeared in the area.

12.0 CONDITION MONITORING AND RECORD KEEPING

- 12.1 Annual ecological monitoring of the site will be undertaken by an experienced ecologist for a period of 5 years and a short report will be produced for the client and LPA with habitat condition assessment, species lists and recommendations for active management as required.

- 12.2 Records of wildlife should be sent to the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre.

