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**Landscape and Habitat Management Plan**

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Blindwells

Planning

**Hargreaves Ltd**

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5301 - Blindwells



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## **1.0 ENVIRONMENTAL AIMS OF THE SCHEME**

### **Introduction**

**1.1** This document has been produced as a guide for the implementation, maintenance and management of landscape and habitat proposals for phase two of the proposed development at Blindwells, East Lothian.

**1.2** This manual details the requirements for the enhancement of the proposed landscape features including trees, hedging, meadow and grass seeding. The document does not include recommendations for the management of areas outside the application boundary. This document should be read in conjunction with the following drawings/reports:

- 5301- OOB- 02- 00- DR- L- 0015 (Woodland Management Plan)
- 5301-OOB-02-00-DR-L-0002\_P01 - 5301-OOB-02-00-DR-L-0008\_P01 (Soft Landscape Proposals Sheets 1-6)

### **Design Objective**

**1.3** The design objective for the landscape proposals is to create an attractive and biodiverse landscape for users and visitors to the development. The scheme is designed to:

- Incorporate a green infrastructure network; and
- Create diverse habitats for a range of species through the planting of suitable tree and seed mixes.

### **Design Strategy**

**1.4** The landscape strategy seeks to:

- Improve the biodiversity of the site;

- Retain suitable vegetation on the southern boundaries and reinforce with appropriate planting in order to minimise impacts on potential visual receptors and to soften boundaries;
- Provide visual interest through the use of meadow grasslands and specimen trees.

**1.5** The Landscape and Habitat Management Plan highlights specific maintenance requirements of vegetation/ habitat types within the proposals to be carried out within a 10 year period.

**About This Manual**

**1.6** This manual describes the requirements for the first year after Practical Completion and subsequently outlines the following nine year maintenance requirements which are the responsibility of the Client.

**1.7** The Client is required to undertake all the operations as specified therein unless otherwise described in the Manual.

## **2.0 REQUIREMENTS FOR PERIOD OF MAINTENANCE**

### **Introduction**

- 2.1** The Client is committed to the maintenance and aftercare following Practical Completion for a period of one year plus nine additional years, which together constitutes the ten year (120 month) Period of Maintenance. Landscape management following the initial 10 year period is also the responsibility of the Client or the Clients appointed Management Company.
- 2.2** The Client and appointed Contractor(s) will be responsible for construction works including the softworks. Following completion, the Client will be responsible for the maintenance and aftercare of a period, the maintenance and after care will revert to any future Management Company/ Companies appointed by the Client.

### **Maintenance Frequency**

- 2.3** Regular visits by the Landscape Contractor to the site should be made as often as is necessary, but no less than monthly, to fulfil the required standard of maintenance.

### **Replacement Planting**

- 2.4** Defective (dead, damaged or missing) or inadequately established plants will be replaced annually at an appropriate time.
- 2.5** Replacement planting will be undertaken strictly in accordance with either the relevant clauses of the Contract Specification for the initial planting work or the recommendations of the Landscape Architect. Replacement plants should be of equivalent age to surviving adjacent plants where obtainable, but must be of at least the same size, age, and quality as the original stock, including the agreed tree and plant protection as set out within the contract recommendation.

**Establishment Criteria**

- 2.6 Plants identified in the replacement assessment as being dead, dying, unhealthy, or having insufficient growth will be deemed to be those which have failed to establish satisfactorily.
- 2.7 Insufficient growth is defined as not exhibiting visible signs of increased height and spread at the end of each growing season which would be typical for the species in the general climatic conditions of the locality.

**Watering**

- 2.8 Watering is necessary to ensure the establishment and continued thriving of all planting.

**Nuisance**

- 2.9 Growth and establishment of weed species listed in the Weeds Act 1959 and Schedule 9 Part 2 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 shall be prevented so far as is practicable.
- 2.10 Pernicious weeds in all parts of the site are to be controlled before the dispersal of seeds by cutting and/ or spot treatment with selective herbicide and removed from site.
- 2.11 Litter and other debris shall be collected, removed and disposed of by the Contractor from the site on a monthly basis.

**Weed Control**

- 2.12 During the initial 10 year maintenance period, a general herbicide spray over all planting areas (except bee orchid areas) is to be applied to maintain a 500mm diameter of bare ground around each tree. This will reduce competition between weeds and plant stock. Wherever densities are low enough to avoid risk of damage, selective non-persistent herbicides may be used for this purpose.



### **Chemical Weed Control**

- 2.13** Safe and responsible use of herbicides and pesticides is paramount. Relevant legislation and manufacturer's instructions must be strictly adhered to. Those responsible should ensure awareness of all of the obligations imposed by these provisions.
  
- 2.14** All chemicals must be officially recognised for amenity, horticulture or forestry use and be non-toxic to humans, birds, and animals when applied as recommended.
  
- 2.15** Herbicides shall be used as seldom as necessary and in the smallest recommended quantities for the control objective. Rotational use is preferred to prevent accumulation of particular chemicals and reduce the risk of weed resistance. Application of liquid herbicides should be by controlled droplet applicator; guards to prevent drift must be fitted to spraying equipment where used. Liquid herbicide application must not take place in wet or windy weather conditions.

### **Grassed Areas**

- 2.16** Grassland maintenance aims to establish healthy and complete plant cover which will minimise soil erosion and crusting and control pernicious weed competition.
  
- 2.17** Any trees damaged by grass cutting operations will be regarded as defective and required to be replaced as per the terms of the maintenance contract.
  
- 2.18** Any significant failed or damaged areas of seeding including surface accumulation of stones, slope instability, and localised subsidence or compaction will require remedial work to re-grade, re-cultivate and re-seed. Additional topsoil and subsoil filling (as required) to make up levels will be imported if considered necessary.

### **Amenity Grass – Seed Mix**

- 2.19** Post establishment the amenity grassland will be subject to a routine mowing regime, with the sward being cut back on a regular basis (twice monthly from March through till September) to a height of 25mm-50mm with the arisings

being removed. All edges of grass to be kept neat by use of hand/ mechanical edge strimmer.

**Amenity Grass – Meadow Seeding**

- 2.20** Post establishment the areas of meadow seeding will be subject to a routine mowing regime, with the meadow mix being cut back on a regular basis (three times per year) to a height of 50mm-70mm. Grass paths through areas of meadow seeding should be mown regularly through the growing season for differentiation.

**Pruning Work - Generally**

- 2.21** Pruning of damaged, dead, or diseased wood is required, as is the necessity to identify opportunities for pruning which would be beneficial to growth form, plant health, cosmetic or safety reasons. Any work will be subject to being undertaken outside the recognised breeding and nesting bird's season.

**Pruning Work – Trees**

- 2.22** Pruning of damaged, dead, or diseased wood as required ensuring beneficial form of growth and plant health, or for cosmetic or safety reasons. Pruning should maintain an even shape.

**Pruning Work – Hedgerows**

- 2.23** During establishment period plants to be watered if deemed necessary. Hedge cutting will be required to maintain a neat formal shape and should be carried out in late Winter in order to avoid the bird nesting period and retain berries as a food source for birds.

**Seeding and planting to SUDS**

- 2.24** The SUDS basins will have a naturally fluctuating water level, which may almost disappear during prolonged dry weather apart from a small area of permanent water at the base. The basins will have meadow grassland on the higher slope,

merging into landscape and embankment mix on the lower slope and aquatic / marginal planting to the floor. A natural transition between the meadow and landscape and embankment mix should be allowed to form. Once established, these areas will only require limited maintenance and the floor of the basin may be left uncut to avoid damage and to allow permanent vegetation to remain throughout the year.

## 2.25 Planted Areas Maintenance Schedule – Tree Planting

Maintenance Period (Initial Maintenance Period 1 year)	Operation	Frequency (must be undertaken for each individual season indicated)	Timing
Year 1	Application of Herbicide	x 2	Spring & Summer
	Firming	x 1	Summer & Autumn
	Application of Fertiliser	As necessary	Spring
	Pruning	x 1	Sept/Oct in years 2 and 7
	Scavenging/Litter clearance	x 1	Monthly throughout the year
	Replacement planting (if necessary)	x 1	Winter
	Watering	x 7	Spring, Summer
	Check tree ties & stakes	x 1	Spring
	Pest and disease control	x 1	May
Year 2	Application of Herbicide	x 2	Spring & Summer
	Firming	x 1	Summer & Autumn
	Application of Fertiliser	As necessary	Spring
	Pruning	x 1	Sept/Oct in years 2 and 7
	Scavenging/Litter clearance	x 1	Monthly throughout the year
	Replacement planting (if necessary)	x 1	Winter
	Watering (during hot/ dry weather)	Up to 4x	Spring, Summer
	Check tree ties & stakes	x 1	Spring

	Pest and disease control	x 1	May
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Maintenance Period (Initial Maintenance Period 1 year)	Operation	Frequency (must be undertaken for each individual season indicated)	Timing
Year 3	Application of Herbicide	x 2	Spring & Summer
	Firming	x 1	Summer & Autumn
	Pruning	x 1	Sept/Oct in years 2 and 7
	Scavenging/Litter clearance	x 1	Monthly throughout the year
	Replacement planting (if necessary)	As necessary	Winter
	Watering (during hot/ dry weather)	Up to 4x	Spring, Summer
	Check & remove tree ties & stakes as required	x 1	Spring
	Pest and disease control	x 1	May
Year 4	Application of Herbicide	x 2	Spring & Summer
	Firming	x 1	Summer & Autumn
	Application of Fertiliser	As necessary	Spring
	Pruning	x 1	Sept/Oct in years 2 and 7
	Scavenging/Litter clearance	x 1	Monthly throughout the year
	Replacement planting (if necessary)	x 1	Winter
	Non-persistent Herbicide	As necessary	Winter
	Watering (during hot/ dry weather)	Up to 4x	Spring, Summer
	Check & remove tree ties & stakes as required	x 1	Spring
	Pest and disease control	x 1	May

Maintenance Period (Initial Maintenance Period 1 year)	Operation	Frequency (must be undertaken for each individual season indicated)	Timing
Year 5	Application of Herbicide	x 2	Spring & Summer
	Firming	As necessary	Summer & Autumn
	Application of Fertiliser	As necessary	Spring
	Pruning	x 1	Sept/Oct in years 2 and 7
	Scavenging/Litter clearance	x 1	Monthly throughout the year
	Replacement planting (if necessary)	x 1	Winter
	Non-persistent Herbicide	As necessary	Winter
	Watering (during hot/ dry weather)	Up to 4x	Spring, Summer
	Check & remove tree ties & stakes as required	x 1	Spring
	Pest and disease control	x 1	May
Year 6	Application of Herbicide	x 2	Spring & Summer
	Firming	As necessary	Summer & Autumn
	Application of Fertiliser	As necessary	Spring
	Pruning	x 1	Sept/Oct in years 2 and 7
	Scavenging/Litter clearance	x 1	Monthly throughout the year
	Replacement planting (if necessary)	x 1	Winter
	Non-persistent Herbicide	As necessary	Winter
	Watering (during hot/ dry weather)	Up to 4x	Spring, Summer
	Check & remove tree ties & stakes as required	x 1	Spring
	Pest and disease control	x 1	May

Maintenance Period (Initial Maintenance Period 1 year)	Operation	Frequency (must be undertaken for each individual season indicated)	Timing
Year 7	Application of Herbicide	x 2	Spring & Summer
	Firming	As necessary	Summer & Autumn
	Application of Fertiliser	As necessary	Spring
	Pruning	x 1	Sept/Oct in years 2 and 7
	Scavenging/Litter clearance	x 1	Monthly throughout the year
	Replacement planting (if necessary)	x 1	Winter
	Non-persistent Herbicide	As necessary	Winter
	Watering (during hot/ dry weather)	Up to 4x	Spring, Summer
	Check & remove tree ties & stakes as required	x 1	Spring
	Pest and disease control	x 1	May
Year 8	Application of Herbicide	x 2	Spring & Summer
	Firming	As necessary	Summer & Autumn
	Application of Fertiliser	As necessary	Spring
	Pruning	x 1	Sept/Oct in years 2 and 7
	Scavenging/Litter clearance	x 1	Monthly throughout the year
	Replacement planting (if necessary)	x 1	Winter
	Non-persistent Herbicide	As necessary	Winter
	Watering (during hot/ dry weather)	Up to 4x	Spring, Summer
	Check & remove tree ties & stakes as required	x 1	Spring
	Pest and disease control	x 1	May

<b>Maintenance Period (Initial Maintenance Period 1 year)</b>	<b>Operation</b>	<b>Frequency (must be undertaken for each individual season indicated)</b>	<b>Timing</b>
Year 9	Application of Herbicide	x 2	Spring & Summer
	Firming	As necessary	Summer & Autumn
	Application of Fertiliser	As necessary	Spring
	Pruning	x 1	Sept/Oct in years 2 and 7
	Scavenging/Litter clearance	x 1	Monthly throughout the year
	Replacement planting (if necessary)	x 1	Winter
	Non-persistent Herbicide	As necessary	Winter
	Watering (during hot/ dry weather)	Up to 4x	Spring, Summer
	Check & remove tree ties & stakes as required	x 1	Spring
	Pest and disease control	x 1	May
Year 10	Application of Herbicide	x 2	Spring & Summer
	Firming	As necessary	Summer & Autumn
	Application of Fertiliser	As necessary	Spring
	Pruning	x 1	Sept/Oct in years 2 and 7
	Scavenging/Litter clearance	x 1	Monthly throughout the year
	Replacement planting (if necessary)	x 1	Winter
	Non-persistent Herbicide	As necessary	Winter
	Watering (during hot/ dry weather)	Up to 4x	Spring, Summer
	Check & remove tree ties & stakes as required	x 1	Spring
	Pest and disease control	x 1	May



## 2.26 Planted Areas Maintenance Schedule – Amenity Grass

Maintenance Period				
Year 1 - 10	First cut	Post establishment-arisings to be removed	cut to 25-50mm	Twice a month March through September
	Second and every cut thereafter	Arisings to be removed	cut to 25-50mm	Through Spring & Summer
	Monitoring and re-seeding		As required	Throughout the year
	Scavenging/Litter clearance	Monthly	Through the year	Monthly through the year

## 2.27 Planted Areas Maintenance Schedule – Meadow Seeding

Initial Maintenance Period (1 year)				
Year 1	First cut	Post establishment-arisings to be removed	cut to 50-70mm	Early Spring
	Second cut	After seed drop – arisings to be collected	cut to 50-70mm	End of summer
	Third cut	Tidy up – arisings to be collected	cut to 50-70mm	Autumn
Additional Maintenance Period (9 years)				
Year 2-10	First cut	To remove excess grass	cut to 50-70mm	Early spring
	Second cut	after seed drop	cut to 50-70mm	End of summer
	Third cut	Tidy up	cut to 50-70mm	Autumn

## 2.28 Planted Areas Maintenance Schedule – Seeding to SuDS

Initial Maintenance Period (1 year)				
Year 1	First cut	Post establishment- cut the sward to remove annual weeds	cut to 50mm	Early Spring (unless autumn-sown, in which case avoid cutting until late summer)
	Second cut	After seed drop – arisings to be collected	cut to 50mm	End of summer
	Third cut	Tidy up – arisings to be collected	cut to 50mm	Autumn
Additional Maintenance Period (9 years)				
Years 2-10	First cut	To remove excess grass	cut to 50mm	Early spring
	Second cut	After seed drop	cut to 50mm	End of summer
	Third cut	Tidy up	cut to 50mm	Autumn
	Litter clearance	Remove litter and debris and check inlet and outlet pipes		As necessary
	Annual inspection	Inspect basins and remove any trees or shrub seedlings by herbicide treatment		As necessary

## 3.0 Requirement for Long-Term Management

- A principal aim of long-term management is to consolidate and encourage the habitat types established during a 10 year Period of Maintenance, with a view to achieving a sustainable development which makes a positive contribution to biological diversity of the site and surrounding area. After the initial 10 years the Client Management Company will carry out the long term management of the site.
- Management strategies appropriate to each habitat type are required. It is likely that these will need to be reviewed periodically by the Client and the

Management Company to assess the extent to which design objectives are being met and to recommend any remedial action.

- It is recognised that the period of long-term management is a care period and is managed to a regulated program which will be subject to review and amended accordingly.
- Long-term management proposals can only be provisional and are intended to be subject to re-assessment. The primary purpose of this part of the Management Plan is therefore to define the various habitats expected to develop within the site and to give a broad indication of the nature of management likely to be required to achieve design objectives by the fifteenth year after Substantial Completion. Management objectives in this document will change for some habitats as they become established.

### **Habitat Creation**

- 3.1** The landscape scheme aims to create habitats of local ecological value and where possible increase biodiversity by improving the range of native species and structural diversity appropriate to the location. This will be achieved with the establishment of a new green infrastructure within the scheme such as grass and meadow planting mixes which will contribute to the long-term enhancement of the proposed development.

### **Management of Amenity Grass Areas**

- 3.2** Grass areas are intended to be more regularly maintained by mechanical cutting/mowing.

Management:

- Cutting as frequently as necessary to appropriate maximum growth height of 100mm.

### **Management of Meadow Mix Areas**

- 3.3** Meadow areas are intended to be maintained by mechanical cutting (topping) as appropriate to meet the less intensively managed regime to increase biodiversity.

Management:

- Cut and remove hay once a year.
- Cutting must not take place before 5 July.
- Aftermath to be grazed to achieve a height of 80mm by the end of the grazing season.

**Management of Specimen Trees**

- 3.4** Pruning of damaged, dead or diseased wood as required ensuring beneficial form of growth and plant health or for cosmetic or safety reasons. Pruning work will take place where necessary.