

Portus + Whitton

landscape architects

Land at Park Farm, Alvescot
LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN

12 April 2021

Client:

Emma Kirkby Design

Landscape Architect:

Portus + Whitton
58 Ashcroft Road
Cirencester
Gloucestershire
GL7 1QX

tel. 01285 644335
email: office@portusandwhitton.co.uk

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report aims to guide future management of the site of both the existing vegetation and the proposed landscape scheme.

1.2 SCOPE OF REPORT

The focus of the report is on the management of both the site's existing trees and hedges, together with the establishment and maintenance of the proposed tree, hedge, shrub and ground cover planting related to the redevelopment of the site for residential purposes. It sets out a basic framework for management.

1.3 EXISTING SITE

The site occupies approximately 0.75 hectares of land and lies within the parish of Alvescot in the district of West Oxfordshire, approximately 8km south of Burford. The site is located within an existing stable yard off Lower End road to the south of Alvescot village. The area currently consists of several agricultural sheds and barns, a hard surfaced yard, an enclosed grazing paddock and an exercise arena. An overgrown native hedgerow runs along the north boundary, separating it from a track running west, outside the boundary. Neighbouring properties and their gardens lie to the east boundary and to the south and west are fields. The field to the west is owned by the developer. The site is entered via a lane called The Green.

Existing Trees

There are few existing trees within and bordering the site. Two small self-sown Ash trees to the southern boundary will be retained.

Existing Hedgerows

A poorly maintained, mature existing hedgerow (up to 5m high) borders the north boundary, comprising mainly of Hawthorn, Elder, Elm, Ash and Blackthorn.

1.4 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

The new development comprises 5 new houses leading off an access road. Two of the plots will have private gated drives. Each house will have a small garden to the front, comprising lawn and shrub planting, and larger lawned gardens to the rear of the properties. Rear gardens to plots 1-3 will include an area of wildflower meadow beneath fruit orchards. All dwellings will have paved access paths leading to patio areas at the rear.

At the north east part of the site a shared open space with crushed aggregate pathways and seating is provided for use by the residents. Each property has a designated garage or off-street parking space. Property gardens are divided with a post and rail stock proof fence and on Plots 1 and 2, a Beech hedge is provided to the north side of the fence. A mixed native hedge with specimen trees is proposed along the south and west boundary to serve as a buffer to private land beyond. Plots 4 and 5 have close board timber fencing to the south and east boundary and dividing the gardens. The front gardens are enclosed with 1m high Cotswold stone walls and timber vehicular and pedestrian gates. The shared open space is enclosed with estate railings and matching metal gates.

An informal grouping of semi-mature native trees is proposed within the open and native standard trees line the access road. Outside the development boundary to the west a native copse provides shelter and screening to the rear gardens of plots 1-3.

Landscape Proposals

The landscape proposals are designed to improve the setting of the proposed buildings and to enhance and maintain the screening effect. They include:

- Management of the existing mature hedgerow to the north and access created to ensure long-term maintenance.
- Native tree planting along the 'streetscape'.
- Native-species planting of linear hedges to the garden boundaries.
- Ornamental low-maintenance planting to front gardens and patio area.
- Native-species hedging with trees along the south and west boundaries to provide a buffer to neighbouring properties.
- Areas seeded as wildflower meadow to be managed for enhanced biodiversity.
- Orchards within larger gardens for enhanced biodiversity.
- A native mixed species copse to the west boundary to provide screening.
- Semi-mature native tree group to the POS for added amenity value.

Strategic Landscape Management Aims & Objectives

- To assist in the integration of the proposed development into its rural landscape setting and promote and enhance the site's visual amenity.
- To develop and maintain an attractive, appropriate, safe and well cared-for environment for the use and enjoyment of residents.
- To conserve and develop site biodiversity.
- To ensure the long-term sustainability of the existing native hedgerows.
- To replace with appropriate species all trees and plants which die, become over-mature, diseased or unsafe.
- To use plant materials of British provenance and, where practical, from local sources.
- To avoid the use of chemicals, pesticides and herbicides other than those approved by The Soil Association.

2. YEAR 1 - DETAILS OF MAINTENANCE

Maintenance of the landscape works for 12 months following Practical Completion will be performed by the main landscape contractor that planted the scheme. Appropriate maintenance will be carried out by visiting the site throughout the year with a minimum of **15** visits programmed to suit season, to undertake the following operations:-

2.1 Trees and Planting Areas

- Weed clearance: All planting areas will be kept weed-free by herbicide application as necessary to achieve a total weed free surface using a spray guard in late spring and repeated in mid and late summer. Where it is impractical for any reason to use herbicides, planted areas shall be kept weed free by hand weeding.
- Litter clearance: All litter will be removed from planting beds.
- Checking trees: All tree ties and the stake will be checked and adjusted if too loose, too tight or if chaffing is occurring. Any broken stakes will be replaced.
- Formative pruning: Any damaged, dead or diseased shoots/branches will be pruned back to healthy wood. Plants will be pruned in accordance with good horticultural practice to maintain healthy well-shaped specimens. Any frost-heaved or wind-rocked plants will be firmed in.
- Mulching: At the end of the first year the whole surface of the ornamental planting beds and hedgerows will be re-mulched to a depth of 50 mm with a 1m diameter circle of mulch around the base of trees.
- Watering: All trees, shrubs, and new hedgerows will be watered during the growing season following any dry periods of 7 days. Planting areas will be brought up to field capacity at each visit and each tree is to receive between 10 litres for a small tree and 50 litres for a large tree.

2.2 Amenity Turf / Grass (excluding wildflower areas)

- Mowing: The height of growth will not exceed 75mm at any time. It will be cut as and when necessary to a height of 35 mm with all arisings being removed. The minimum number of mowings per growing season will be 15.
- Fertilizer: A 5:10:10 autumn fertilizer at 50g/m² or equivalent will be applied in September.
- Litter: Before each cut, all litter and debris will be cleared off and removed from site.
- Edging: At the time of each cut, all grass edges will be trimmed - round the base of existing trees, around planting beds, manholes, street furniture etc and remove arisings. A 1m diameter circle free of grass and weeds will be maintained around all new trees. All adjoining hard surfaces will be kept clear of cuttings and remove. Edges will be formed with a suitable edging tool to clean straight lines or smooth curves. Draw back soil from edges to permit use of edging shears and remove all arisings.
- Weeding: The sward will be kept free of broadleaved weeds by applying a suitable selective herbicide for ornamental lawns.

- Watering: Sufficient water will be applied to maintain healthy growth. When watering is required, it will be performed using a fine rose or sprinkler until the full depth of topsoil is saturated. 5 waterings will be allowed for.

2.3 Wildflower Areas

Wildflower mixtures are composed mainly of perennial species which take at least a full year to establish. The new sowings on bare soil may be dominated by a flush of annual weeds arising from the soil seed bank and by grass growth.

- Litter: Before each cut, all litter and debris will be cleared off and removed from site.
- Mowing: In the first year the wildflower areas will be cut to a height of 50mm in mid-summer (July) following flowering. Additional cuts will be carried out every two months through to November. All arisings will be removed. A 1m wide verge to the periphery of the POS to be mown as per the Amenity grass regime to provide a short verge.
- Watering: Sufficient water will be applied to maintain healthy growth. When watering is required, it will be performed using a fine rose or sprinkler until the full depth of topsoil is saturated. 5 waterings will be allowed for.

2.4 Existing Hedgerows

- Trim hedgerows on a 2 or 3 year rotation, cutting no more than 1/2 of hedgerows each year. This will reduce maintenance and labour costs, create bushier hedgerows for wildlife and allow flower and berry production in the intervening years. Hedgerows will only be cut on one side at a time thus maintaining their functions as an ecological corridor.
- Cutting will also protect and develop any hedgerow trees where this is considered to be beneficial.
- Hedgerows will generally be cut in January/early February so that wildlife can take advantage of the nuts and berries produced in the autumn and to minimise the risk of disturbing active bird nests.
- A clear 1m maintenance access strip between the north garden boundary of plot 1 and the hedgerow beyond, will be maintained with a minimum of 4no visits per year to strim/cut back any regrowth of vegetation.

2.5 New Native Hedgerow with specimen trees

- Checking trees: All tree ties and the stake will be checked and adjusted if too loose, too tight or if chaffing is occurring. Any broken stakes will be replaced.
- Formative pruning: Any damaged, dead or diseased shoots/branches will be pruned back to healthy wood. Plants will be pruned in accordance with good horticultural practice to maintain healthy well-shaped specimens. Any frost-heaved or wind-rocked plants will be firmed in. Trim hedge to shape in the first winter after planting.

- Weed clearance: A 0.6m diameter circle around each tree will be kept weed-free by herbicide application or hand weeding in late spring, mid-summer and late summer. New hedgerows will be kept weed-free by herbicide application or hand weeding in late spring, mid-summer and late summer.
- Mulching: At the end of the first year, trees and hedgerow plants will be re-mulched to a depth of 50 mm with a circle of mulch around the base of each new specimen tree.
- Watering: All trees and hedgerow plants will be watered during the growing season following any dry periods of 7 days. Planting areas will be brought up to field capacity at each visit. Each specimen tree is to receive between 10 litres for a small tree and 50 litres for a large tree.
- Plant Failures: Any dead or defective plants that appear within the first 12 months will be removed and replaced.

2.6 Garden Hedges

- Formative pruning: Any damaged, dead or diseased shoots/branches will be pruned back to healthy wood. Any frost-heaved or wind-rocked plants will be firmed in. Trim hedge to shape in the first winter after planting.
- Weed clearance: New hedgerows will be kept weed-free by herbicide application or hand weeding in late spring, mid-summer and late summer.
- Mulching: At the end of the first year hedgerows will be re-mulched to a depth of 50 mm.
- Watering: New hedgerows will be watered during the growing season following any dry periods of 7 days. Planting areas will be brought up to field capacity at each visit.
- Plant Failures: Any dead or defective plants that appear within the first 12 months will be removed and replaced.

2.7 Native Copse

- Checking tree & shrub guards: In spring, mesh / spiral guards and tree shelters will be checked and secured and any defective guards replaced.
- Formative pruning: Any dead, diseased, damaged wood will be cut out in winter.
- Weed clearance: A 0.6m diameter circles will be sprayed around trees and shrubs to keep them weed-free. Any remaining coarse weed growth will be strimmed.
- Plant Failures: Any dead or defective plants that appear within the first 12 months will be removed and replaced.

3. YEARS 2 TO 5 - GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR ESTABLISHED PLANTING

This section provides an overall long-term Management Plan for trees, hedgerows, wildflower areas, and amenity landscape.

3.1 New Specimen Trees

- Regular inspection of new trees will be undertaken and appropriate surgery performed to ensure good health and prolonged life.
- Any dying, dangerous or windblown specimens will be replaced with the same species.
- Any dead dying material and branches that are severely crossing over within the crown will be cut back and basal shoots / suckers removed.
- Bone-meal or slow-release fertiliser will be applied around base of trees each spring and specimen trees in grass will be re-mulched.
- All tree ties and the stake will be checked and adjusted if too loose, too tight or if chaffing is occurring. Trees will be checked for any sign of wind rock/throw. Any broken stakes will be replaced. In years 5-6, stakes and ties will be removed if the trees are firmly rooted.
- Where appropriate tree crowns will be lifted to 3m.
- Any trees that have either failed or that show strong indication of poor future growth will be replaced. Appropriate local authority approvals/consents before removing trees. Trees will be replaced with originally specified species/cultivar unless there are sound arboricultural reasons not to do so.

3.2 Amenity landscape and gardens

- General maintenance will include monthly visits during the growing season to weed, prune and fertilise planted areas and trees, and weekly visits to mow amenity areas. Any waste organic matter will be recycled as compost.
- Garden Hedges: In the spring, hedges will be top-dressed with balanced slow-release fertiliser. In the late summer, Beech hedges can be trimmed - for first two years lightly on the sides, leaving leaders un-pruned; thereafter cutting back side growth to required shape and pruning back main stem to encourage bushy growth.
- Ornamental Planting Beds: In the spring, all beds will be mulched with mushroom compost or well-rotted farmyard manure and fed with slow-release fertiliser. Any shrubs requiring hard pruning will be cut back to live growth near the base. Dead and frosted foliage and stems will be pruned and removed, as will annual weeds by hoeing or pulling. In the summer and autumn, spent flower heads and old foliage will be cut back. However, self-seeding plants will be allowed to set seed before removing top-growth. Annual weeds will be removed by pulling or hoeing and persistent perennial weeds will be spot treated with trans-located herbicide. In the autumn, shrubs, perennials and groundcover plants will be transplanted or divided where necessary. Formative pruning or renovation of deciduous shrubs will take place in early winter.

- Amenity grass: The height of growth will not exceed 75mm at any time. It will be cut as and when necessary to a height of 35 mm with all arisings being removed. The minimum number of mowings per growing season will be 15.

3.3 Wildflower Areas

- In the second year from sowing, wildflower areas will be left uncut to flower. The first cut will be carried out in mid-summer following flowering. In subsequent years, more quickly establishing pioneer perennials will grow vigorously, but the meadow will become more diverse as slower establishing species appear. Growth will become less vigorous as nutrients become fixed in root systems and herbage.
- A summer cut will be carried out in July. The year's growth will be cut back by heavy duty strimmer to a height of 40-75mm. All arisings will be removed.
- Dependant on the rate of growth following the summer cut, 1 or 2 autumn cuts will then be carried out through to November.

3.4 Existing Hedgerows & Hedgerow Trees

- Trim hedgerows on a 2 or 3 year rotation, cutting no more than 1/2 of hedgerows each year. This will reduce maintenance and labour costs, create bushier hedgerows for wildlife and allow flower and berry production in the intervening years. Hedgerows will only be cut on one side at a time thus maintaining their functions as an ecological corridor.
- Cutting will also protect and develop any hedgerow trees where this is considered to be beneficial.
- Hedgerows will generally be cut in January/early February so that wildlife can take advantage of the nuts and berries produced in the autumn and to minimise the risk of disturbing active bird nests.
- A clear 1m maintenance access strip between the north garden boundary of plot 1 and the hedgerow beyond, will be maintained with a minimum of 4no visits per year to trim/cut back any regrowth of vegetation.
- If any existing hedgerow trees are suspected as being dead and/or dangerous they will be inspected by a qualified Arboriculturalist.

3.5 New Native Hedgerow Planting with Specimen Trees

- A strip 0.3-0.5m wide will be sprayed with a translocated herbicide to keep the base of the hedge clear from grass and weed species.
- In spring, mesh / spiral guards and tree shelters will be checked and secured and any defective guards replaced. In years 3-4 mesh / spiral guards and tree shelters will be removed.

- Any dead or dying material will be cut back and any plants that have failed or show strong indication of poor growth in the future will be replaced.
- Trimming of hedgerows will take place annually in January/early February to minimise the risk of damaging active birds' nests. Whilst establishing, the top growth will be cut back by 50% to encourage bushy side growth. Once established hedgerows will be topped at a height of 1.8m above ground, with trimmed vertical sides to obtain a width of 1m.

3.6 Copse: Native Tree & Shrub Planting

- In spring, mesh / spiral guards and tree shelters will be checked and secured and any defective guards replaced. In years 3-4 mesh / spiral guards and tree shelters will be removed.
- 0.6m diameter circles will be sprayed around trees and shrubs to keep them weed-free. Any remaining coarse weed growth will be strimmed.
- Any dead, diseased, damaged wood will be cut out in winter.

3.7 Defects

- Any dead or dying material will be cut back and any plants that have failed or show strong indication of poor growth in the future will be replaced with the same species.

4. MONITORING, REVIEW & RESPONSIBILITIES

Implementation

- 4.1 Park Lane Developments (Oxfordshire) Limited will manage the site and coordinate the implementation of this Management Plan. A landscape contractor will be appointed to implement the scheme and maintain the communal areas for the first year. Subsequently a separate Contractor will be appointed to undertake the ongoing landscape maintenance, including the communal areas and the maintenance of the woodland copse.

Management Plan Review

- 4.2 This management plan will be reviewed every 5 years or more frequently if deemed necessary.

5. MAINTENANCE WORK SCHEDULES

TABLE 1: NEW PLANTING ESTABLISHMENT PERIOD (YEAR 1)

Task	Season	Area	Action	Frequency (per year)
1	Spring through Autumn	All planted areas	<u>Weed clearance:</u> All planted areas are to be kept weed-free by hand weeding and/or herbicide treatment	3 (minimum)
2	Spring through Autumn	Trees	<u>Checking:</u> All tree ties and the stake are to be checked and adjusted if too loose, too tight or if chaffing is occurring. Any broken stakes are to be replaced.	1
3	In accordance with good horticultural practice	Trees & Shrubs	<u>Formative pruning:</u> Any damaged shoots/branches are to be pruned back to healthy wood. Plants are to be pruned in accordance with good horticultural practice to maintain healthy well-shaped specimens.	In accordance with good horticultural practice
4	Spring through Autumn	All planted areas	<u>Watering:</u> All trees, shrubs and ornamental planting beds (for grass areas see below) are to be watered during the growing season following any dry periods of 7 days. Planting areas are to be brought up to field capacity at each visit and the tree is to receive 10-50 litres.	As required
5	Spring through Autumn	Grass Areas	<u>Litter:</u> Before each cut clear off all litter and debris, and remove from site. <u>Mowing:</u> The height of growth must not exceed 65mm at any time. Cut as and when necessary to a height of 35 mm, and remove all arisings. <u>Edging:</u> At the time of each cut trim all grass edges, round the base of existing trees, around planting beds, manholes, street furniture etc and remove arisings. Maintain a 1000mm diameter circle free of grass and weeds around all new trees. Sweep all adjoining hard surfaces clear of cuttings and remove. At the end of the Defects Period form edges with a suitable edging tool to clean straight lines or smooth curves. Draw back soil from edges to permit use of edging shears and remove all arisings. <u>Weeding:</u> Keep the sward free of broadleaved weeds by applying a suitable selective herbicide for ornamental lawns.	15-20
6	Spring through Autumn	Lawns	<u>Watering:</u> Ensure that sufficient water is applied to maintain healthy growth. Suggest to Landscape Architect when watering may be required and when instructed carry out using a fine rose or sprinkler until the full depth of topsoil is saturated.	5 minimum (and as required)
7	August-October	Ornamental Planting	<u>Pruning & deadheading:</u> Prune / deadhead summer flowering perennials and shrubs.	2
8	September	Lawns	<u>Fertiliser:</u> Apply a 5:10:10 Autumn fertilizer at 50g/m2. or equivalent in September.	1
9	Summer through Autumn	Wildflower Areas	<u>Litter:</u> Before each cut clear off all litter and debris, and remove from site. <u>Mowing:</u> Cut to a height of 50 mm, and remove all arisings. This will control the annual growth of annual weeds arising from the soil seed bank and by grass growth. Regular mowing in the first year will minimise competition for the newly sown meadow species and weed seed production.	3 or 4 times in first year
10	Autumn	All planted areas	<u>Mulching:</u> top up mulch to 50mm depth on ornamental planting beds, hedgerows and around specimen trees	1
11	Winter	New native hedgerows	<u>Hedge trimming:</u> Trim to shape in the first winter after planting. Top growth will be cut back by 50% to encourage bushy side growth. Any damaged shoots/branches are to be pruned back to healthy wood.	1
12	Winter	Beech hedges	<u>Hedge trimming:</u> Trim top growth in the first winter after planting by up to 30% to encourage bushy side growth. Any damaged shoots/branches are to be pruned back to healthy wood.	1
13	Year round	All planted areas	<u>Litter clearance:</u> All litter is to be removed from planting beds	15
14	Year round	All planted areas	<u>Defects:</u> Replace all dead/dying trees and dead shrubs, perennials, grass, wildflower within 12 months.	In accordance with good horticultural practice

TABLE 2 : ANNUAL MAINTENANCE OF NEWLY PLANTED MATERIAL (YEARS 2 -5)

Task	Season	Area	Action	Frequency (per year)
1	Autumn / Winter (or after severe weather)	Specimen trees	<u>Formative Pruning:</u> Cut back any dead dying material and branches that are severely crossing over within the crown and remove basal shoots / suckers	1
2	Winter	Native tree & shrub planting	<u>Formative pruning:</u> Prune to remove any dead, diseased, or damaged wood.	1
3	January/February	Native hedgerows	<u>Hedge trimming:</u> Trim native hedges before bird nesting season.	1
4	March-May	Specimen trees	<u>Fertiliser:</u> Apply bone-meal and then mulch to tree bases in grass areas, check stakes and ties and replace if necessary. Remove ties in Years 5-6	1
5	Spring	All areas	<u>Checking:</u> Check and secure mesh / spiral guards and tree shelters and replace any defective guards. In years 3-4 mesh / spiral guards and tree shelters will be removed.	1
6	Spring	All planted areas	<u>Mulch:</u> Maintain 50mm of bark chip mulch over planting beds, ensuring ground-cover plants are not covered. Top up mukch to 50mm depth on hedgerows and around specimen trees	1
7	Spring	Ornamental Planting	<u>Pruning & deadheading:</u> Prune / deadhead winter flowering perennials and shrubs.	1
8	Spring-Autumn	Ornamental Planting	<u>Weed clearance:</u> Hoe or hand-weed	10
9	Spring through Autumn	Native planting & hedgerows	<u>Weed clearance:</u> All planted areas are to be kept weed-free by hand weeding and/or herbicide treatment	3 (minimum)
10	Spring-Autumn	Lawns	<u>Mowing:</u> The height of growth should not exceed 65mm. Cut as and when necessary to a height of 35 mm, and remove all arisings. <u>Edging:</u> At the time of each cut trim all grass edges, round the base of existing trees, around planting beds, manholes, street furniture etc and remove arisings. Maintain a 1000mm diameter circle free of grass and weeds around all new trees. Sweep all adjoining hard surfaces clear of cuttings and remove. <u>Weeding:</u> Keep the sward free of broadleaved weeds by applying a suitable selective herbicide for ornamental lawns.	15 -20
11	July-November	Wildflower Areas	<u>Mowing:</u> Main summer cut in July with growth is to be cut back to a height of 40-75mm. The cut grass is to be dried on site and turned regularly to assist in drying and dispersal of seeds prior to being removed from site. Additional cuts (after the main cut) to be carried on through to Autumn - ideally twice from the time the Hay is removed to the end of November.	2 or 3
12	August	Beech hedges	<u>Hedge trimming:</u> Trim hedges to desired height and shape with slight taper so that hedge is wider at the base.	1
13	September/October	Lawns	<u>Fertiliser:</u> Apply autumn lawn feed, apply selective herbicide, apply mosskiller.	1
14	August-October	Ornamental Planting	<u>Pruning & deadheading:</u> Prune / deadhead summer flowering perennials and shrubs.	2
15	October-December	All areas	<u>Leaf litter:</u> Collect fallen leaves.	12
16	Year round	All areas	<u>Litter clearance:</u> All litter is to be removed from soft landscape areas	15
17	Year round	All Areas	<u>Plant Failures:</u> Replace dead trees, shrubs and grass/turf in next suitable growing season in accordance with good horticultural practice.	As required

TABLE 3 - ANNUAL MAINTENANCE OF EXISTING LANDSCAPE AREAS (YEARS 1 to 5)

Task	Season	Area	Action	Frequency (per year)
1	January/February	Existing native hedgerows	<u>Hedgerow Trimming:</u> Trim hedgerows on a 3 year rotation, no more than 1/2 of hedgerows each year. Trimming to take place during January/early February to minimise the risk of damaging active birds' nests. As part of the 3 year cycle, any gaps within the hedgerows will be filled by laying of adjacent sections and/or with additional planting.	Annual
2	Winter	Existing Trees	<u>Inspection & Remedial Work:</u> Bi-annual inspection of mature trees by a trained Arboriculturalist. Safety check, then prune "un-safe" dead, decaying or damaged trees as required.	Bi-Annual (or more as safety requires)