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## Soft landscaping & Planting Specification

**Site – Oak Hill Farm, Coaxes Farm Road, Billericay, Essex**

**Client – Mr and Mrs Keeling**

**Contact – Mr and Mrs Keeling**

**Date – 07-12-2023**

**To be read in conjunction with – Landscape proposals drawing number KE/OHF/01**

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## **Site Preparation**

### **1 De-compaction and grading of sub soil**

- 1.1 Prior to the spreading of any topsoil, the sub soil is to be graded to smooth flowing contours.
- 1.2 Areas of compaction are to be treated as follows:
  - 1.2.1 Compaction zones within the root protection area of existing trees are to be carried out with a compressed air lance, should it be required.
  - 1.2.2 For areas of open ground 5m or wider, a tractor mounted sub-soiler may be used, where access permits. A sub soiling tine to a depth of 450mm and at 600mm centres should be used.  
Where the beds are less than 5m, the area is to be de-compacted by hand breaking up the sub soil to a depth of 450mm with a fork.
  - 1.2.3 Decompaction within the root zone of a protected tree shall be by hand or with a compressed air lance to avoid root damage.

### **2 Top soiling**

- 2.1 Topsoil to conform to *BS3882, 1994*. Topsoil is to be free from rocks over 50mm in diameter, pernicious weeds, wire, roots and bricks.  
On planted areas topsoil to be a minimum of 300 mm deep. Tree pits to be minimum 1000 x 100- x 750mm. All levels to be flush with any adjacent kerbs or hard surfaces after settlement, and not less than 150mm below the damp proof course of adjacent buildings.  
Top soil should not be handled after heavy rainfall or when it is wetter than the plastic limit defined by BS3882, annex N2  
Over areas that have received de-compaction treatment topsoil is to be spread with a low ground pressure tracked machine.  
Top soiling would not be required within the crown spreads of the protected trees, where existing ground levels are to be retained.

### **3 Setting Out**

- 3.1 Planting shall be laid out in line with drawing number KE/OHF/01 and measured from existing fixed points.  
The supervisor is to check that all beds conform to the plan, prior to cultivation. Failure to do so may result in rejection of the work by the client, making good will be at the contractor's own cost.

## **4 Cultivation**

- 4.1 Planted areas are to be cultivated to a minimum depth of 300mm, in line with *BS4428:1989 Code of practice for general landscape operations*. This is to be carried out by hand where beds are less than 5m wide. A tractor mounted rotavator with low ground pressure may be used on beds 5m or wider where access permits. The beds are to be levelled or graded to an evenly running fall and finish flush with adjacent hard surfaces. All weeds, grass and rubbish exposed during cultivation are to be removed from site.
- 4.2 Turfed or seeded areas are to be cultivated to a minimum depth of 100mm, by hand or with a mechanical rotavator for areas 5m wide or less. A tractor mounted rotavator with low ground pressure may be used on beds 5m or wider where access permits. Finished levels are to be 25mm higher than surrounding hard surfaces.
- 4.3 Cultivation within the root area of protected trees will be carried out by hand to minimise damage to roots.

## **5 Standard Trees**

5.1 All trees to be of the size specified, true to type and free of pests and diseases. The trees are to be planted in the locations shown on drawing number KE/OHF/01. The plants are to conform *BS 3936:1980 Nursery stock specification for trees and shrubs*. Planting to be in line with *BS4043:1989 Recommendations for transplanting root balled trees*. All trees are to be container grown during the months of March – November, or root balled during the months of December to February. Trees are to be planted in hand dug pits a minimum of 750mm x 750mm x 750mm or 300mm larger than the spread of the roots.

An area of 1m x 1m x 500mm deep will be excavated and filled with good quality topsoil in the location of each tree pit, to reduce the potential for compaction around proposed tree planting.

The sides of the pit are to be broken up using a fork. The base of the pit will be broken up if drainage issues are known to exist in line with BS8545.

The tree is to be planted to the depth of the root-collar and the pit back filled, with the soil firmed in layers of 150mm. All trees are to receive an application of slow-release fertiliser to manufacturer's specifications.

All trees are to be single staked and tied, with a biodegradable tie, to a height of no more than a third of the tree. Stakes are to be peeled timber that has been pressure treated.

See diagram below

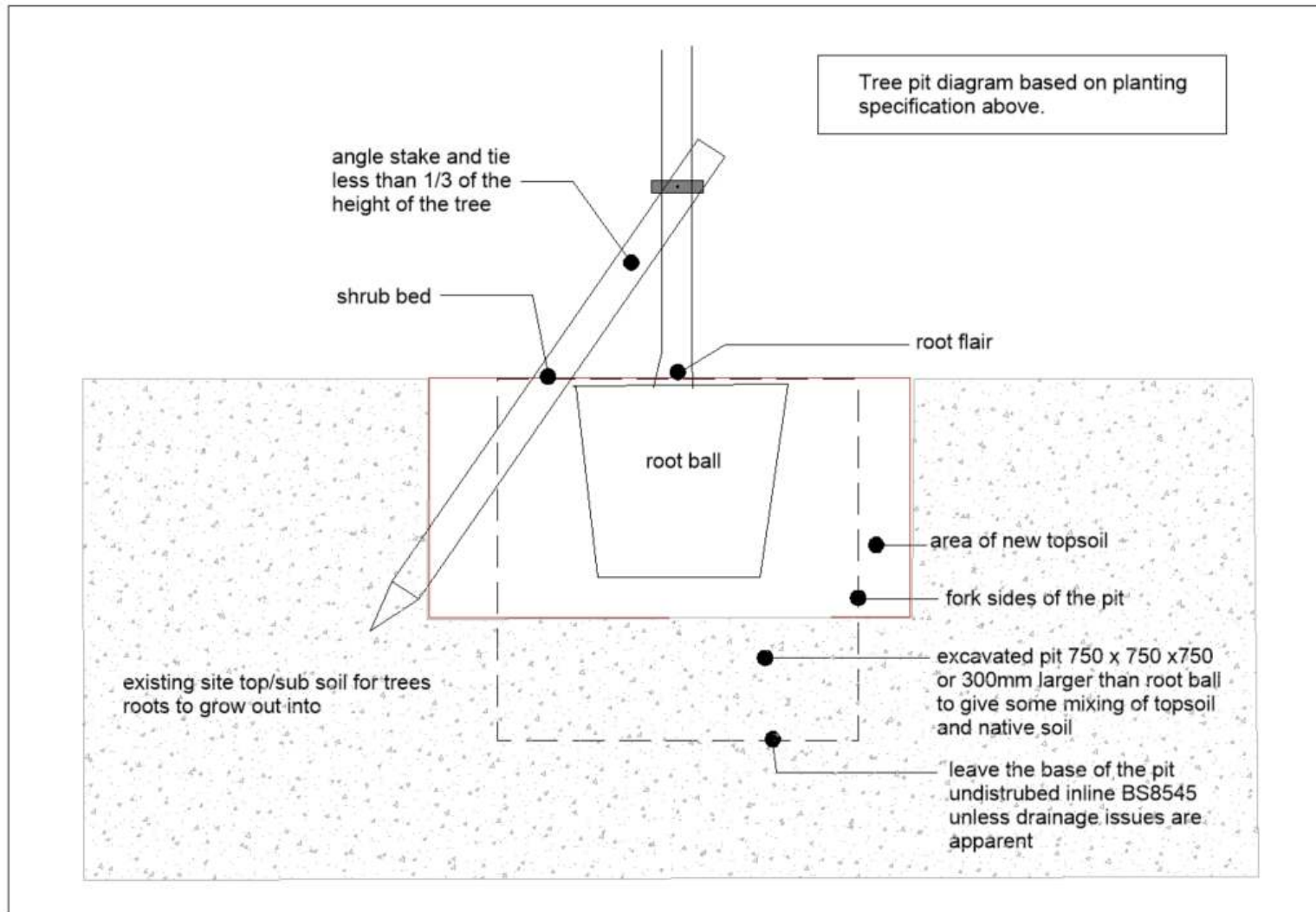


fig 1 - Tree pit diagram

## **6 Container shrubs**

- 6.1 All plants to be true to the type and to be container grown to the size specified on drawing number KE/OHF/01. No substitutions are to be accepted unless previously agreed.  
Any plants that are rejected are to be replaced by the contractor at his own cost.  
All shrubs and herbaceous material are to be in line with *BS 3936:1980 Nursery stock specification for trees and shrubs*, planting operations to be in line with *BS4428:1989 Code of practice for landscape operations*.
- 6.2 Immediately before planting the pots or root balls are to be well watered.  
Holes are to be hand excavated to a sufficient size to take the entire container or root ball. The plant is to be planted to the depth of the root-collar.  
The soil is to be back filled and then firmed around the plant.  
The surface of the bed is to be left cultivated and free from weeds, debris and stones.  
Any broken or unhealthy growth to be pruned from the plant after planting.  
All plants are to be watered in thoroughly to field capacity of the soil, directly after planting.  
Planted areas are to receive an application of slow-release fertiliser, to manufacture's specifications.

## **7 Native hedge planting**

- 7.1 Bare root planting is to be carried out during the first available planting season of November to March, after completion of the residential areas.
- 7.2 All plants to be true to the type and to be bare root or container grown to the size specified on drawing numbers KE/OHF/01. No substitutions are to be accepted unless previously agreed with the landscape architect. Plants are to be of local provenance where possible.
- 7.3 Plants will be spaced at 1m centres for woodland area. Hedges to be planted in a double staggered row 450mm apart at 5 per liner meter. Trees to be planted singularly with shrubs planted in groups of 3-5 plants per species.  
Any plants that are rejected are to be replaced by the contractor at his own cost. For all bare root material, the roots are to be kept covered at all times to stop desiccation.  
Holes are to be hand excavated to a sufficient size to take the entire container or root system. The plant is to be planted to the depth of the root-collar.  
The soil is to be back filled and then firmed around the plant. Slow-release fertiliser to manufacture's recommendations is to be mixed with the back filled topsoil. The surface of the bed is to be left cultivated and free from weeds, debris and stones

## **8 Mulching**

- 8.1 All shrub beds to be mulch to a depth of 100mm with bark mulch. An area of 1m square to be mulched around the base of each tree. Hedges to be mulched to a width of 1m along the full length of the hedge.



## **Grass Areas**

### **8 Turfing**

8.1 Areas are to be cultivated in line with section 4 of this specification.

Turf is to be cultivated in origin, weed and disease free in line with *BS3969: 1998 Recommendations for turf for general purposes*. Laying of the turf to be in line with *BS4428:1989 Code of practice for landscape operations*.

The area is to be raked to level, in line with the existing contours and prepared to a fine tilth. Slow-release fertiliser is to be applied prior to laying the turves.

Turves are to be laid from boards on to the prepared ground, with the edges butted together firmly. The joints are to be staggered, in a stretcher bond between rows. The turf is to be compacted with a turf thumper once laid.

It is then to be watered in thoroughly to field capacity until the turf has rooted.

## **Maintenance for the establishment period of 5 years**

### **9 Tree planting**

- 9.1 All trees are to be watered once a fortnight during the growing season of April to September, this may need to be adjusted to more regularly during extreme climatic conditions, such as drought. At least 20 litres of water per visit per tree.  
Tree stakes and securing systems are to be checked once a month throughout the year.  
All trees are to be formatively pruned annually if required during the winter months.  
Dead or dying trees are to be replaced during the planting season of November to March and are to be of the same size and species as the original specification for the first 3 years  
Tree stakes and ties are to be removed after 2 years.

### **10 Shrub and hedge planting**

- 10.1 Planted areas are to be hand weeded fortnightly during the growing season of March to October. All weeds are to be removed by hand and any bark mulch disturbed replaced.  
Planting beds are to be watered fortnightly during March to October if climatic conditions are dry. The ground is to be watered to field capacity.  
Shrub beds are to be formatively pruned during the appropriate time of year for the species. Hedges will be trimmed twice a year to 1.2m high.  
An annual application of slow release fertiliser applied to manufactures recommendations is to be applied in May.  
Bark Mulch is to be topped up annually to ensure specified coverage is maintained.  
Remove all litter fortnightly  
Dead or dying shrubs are to be replaced during the planting season of November to March and are to be of the same size and species as the original specification for the first 5 years.

### **11 Turfed Areas**

- 11.1 Areas of newly laid turf are to be watered as required during establishment, dependant on climatic conditions. Ground is to be watered to field capacity.

Grass areas are to be mown fortnightly throughout the growing season. After mowing all adjacent hard surfaces are to be swept clean of cuttings.

Grass edges abutting planting beds are to be edged on each occasion with edging shears and with a half-moon edging tool twice during the growing season in May and September.

A spring and autumn application of fertiliser is to be applied to all grass areas. Remove all litter fortnightly.