

Caths Farm Shop, Trelewis

Soft Landscape Strategy

for proposed housing development

by

Gill Mackley CMLI

Mackley Davies Associates Ltd

1.0 EXSITING LANDSCAPE:

Proposals are for a development of 5 residential units on a brownfield site currently used as a farm shop and car park.

The site is bounded to the north-west by Gelligaer Road with housing opposite, to the the south-west by new residential development currently under constuction, to the south-east and north-east onto open pasture field with site boundary hedges.

Hedges enclose the site on three sides. The existing access from Gelligaer Road (B5254) will be relocated further along the road, the new access point will require removal of a category C tree, one of a single avenue of limes planted in the highway verge around 15 years ago. The hedgerows provide useful screening and wildlife habitat, short sections will require removal to accommodate the new access 9.6linm of H1 (hawthorn dominated on low hedge bank to 1.5m) and Rain Garden 02 14.5linm of H2 (cypress maintained to 2m). Hedge and tree locations are shown on Soft Landscape Strategy Plan 23/946/03. Refer to the Tree Survey by Mackley Davies for more detail and site photos below from March 2023.



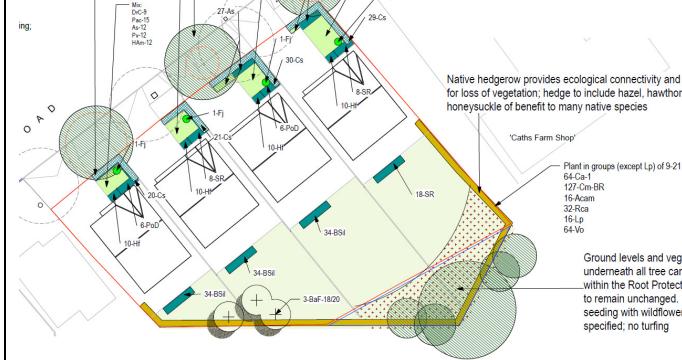
View from Gelligaer roadabout will be little changed



North-west boundary showing H1 (hawthorn) to 1.5m neatly trimmed on a low hedge bank and limes in a wide mown grass verge



North-west boundary from Gelligaer Road

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|  <p><i>South-east boundary showing H3 (outgrown scrappy goat willow hedge) and high mound behind, both off-site</i></p> |  <p><i>T6 oak</i></p> |
|  <p><i>North-east boundary showing H2 (trimmed cypress hedge) and scrappy remnant hedge to field boundary</i></p> |  <p><i>Adjacent site approved landscape plan for context</i></p> |

Due to intervening trees and hedges, the site is not visible even in winter from a nearby public footpath to the east (part of the Rhymney Valley Ridgeway Walk) which follows the Nant Caeach and runs along the boundary with Llancaiaich Fawr Manor.

Views from Gelliagor Road are likely to be improved by the proposal. The highway verge trees and deep verge with hedging provides good screening. The existing car park, shop and other hedge boundaries are not attractive and residential development offers the potential for enhancement, including the introduction of above ground SUDs planting, tree planting, and new native hedges, with the detention basin located close to the site frontage providing public views onto the open space and an attractive outlook for the neighbouring development.

A suitable native hedge buffer onto adjacent open pasture is required as the site will continue to have a gateway role into the settlement lying close to the roundabout.

The aim is to conserve and enhance the site and wider landscape setting, to provide screening or softening of new buildings, parking and bin stores, improve the biodiversity and amenity resource, and provide any replacement planting.

At this Outline planning stage the following landscape character types and approximate quantities are proposed as shown on Soft Landscape Strategy Plan 23/946/03. This will provide the framework for a detailed soft landscape plan, plant schedule, outline planting and maintenance specification which will be submitted as part of a Reserved Matters application.

- 6no trees
- 115 linear meters native hedges
- 19 linear meters ornamental hedges
- 57sqm SUDs turf to detention basin
- 62sqm rain garden planting
- 60sqm species rich grass to detention basin (excluding private gardens)

2.0 PROPOSED SOFT LANDSCAPE

Indicative native trees and hedge mixes are based on species found at or near the site, with ornamental varieties proposed where space will be too limited to accommodate a mature canopy. Ornamental hedges will provide year round interest and rain garden planting will meet Drainage Standards for Amenity and Biodiversity and support pollinators.

Trees – 14-16cmg size

Sorbus aucuparia (rowan)

Sorbus aria (whitebeam)

Betula alba Fascination (birch)

Prunus sp (ornamental cherry) eg *Prunus Umineko* [Japanese cherry snow goose]

Crataegus sp (ornamental hawthorn) eg *Crataegus x lavelleei* [Lavallees hawthorn]

Mixed native hedges – site frontage hedge to be hawthorn dominant to match existing

Hawthorn [*Crataegus monogyna*] 50%

Hazel [*Corylus avellana*] 18%

Hazel [*Corylus avellana*] 18%

Privet [*Ligustrum vulgare*] 10%

Dogwood [*Cornus sanguineum*] 10%

Holly [*Ilex aquifolium*] 10%

Old mans beard [*Clematis vitalba*] 3%

Underseeded with Emorsgate EH1 Hedgerow Mix

New native mixed hedges (apart from the site frontage) will generally be maintained to around 1.5-1.8m, with the aim of providing a food and shelter resource ideally by cutting in February on a three year rotation for face and top. The site frontage hedge will be cut annually.

Mixed ornamental hedges

Viburnum tinus Eve Price

Choisya dewitteneana White Dazzler

Escallonia Apple Blossom

Ceanothus Italian Skies

Fronted by low ornamental ground cover where required:

Skimmia Japonica Rubella

Prunus Otto Luyken

Euonymus fortunei Silver Queen

Bulbs and primrose - planted around the detention basin in informal drifts and allowed to spread
 dwarf daffodils
 snowdrop
 native bluebell
 primrose

Rain Gardens

Rain Garden 1 and 2 Planting - sun mix

Small shrubs, perennials and grasses for dry zone with occasional short lived inundation. High percentage of SE Semi-evergreen or E Evergreen to provide year round cover and interest. Planted in drifts of 1-2sqm.

Hedges

Cornus midwinter fire

Cornus sanguinea

Taller species to middle or rear of planting bed

Miscanthus sinensis Zebrinus [Zebra grass]

Calamagrostis x acutiflora Karl Foerster [feather reed grass, provides winter structure, cut back in spring]
 SE to 90cm high

Stipa tenuissima to 60cm

Miscanthus sinensis Yakushima Dwarf 80cm

Euonymus fortunei Emerald and Gold E

Small to mid-height species to middle or front of planting bed

Sisyrinchium striatum [pale yellow eyed grass] SE

Hakonechloa macra All Gold [Japanese forest grass] SE

Carex buchananii [Buchanan's Sedge] E

Hebe Red Edge [evergreen low shrub] E

Libertia grandiflora [New Zealand satin flower] E

Salvia nemorosa Caradonna [sage] E

Geranium endressii SE

Hebe White Gem E

Achillea Novaachardus E

Rain Garden 3, 4, 5 Planting - shade mix

Small shrubs, perennials and grasses for dry zone with occasional short lived inundation. High percentage of SE Semi-evergreen or E Evergreen to provide year round cover and interest. Planted in drifts of 1-2sqm.

Partial shade

Hakonechloa macra All Gold [Japanese forest grass] SE

Carex buchananii [Buchanan's Sedge] E

Calamagrostis x acutiflora Karl Foerster [feather reed grass, provides winter structure, cut back in spring]
 SE

Hebe Red Edge [low shrub] E

Salvia nemorosa Caradonna [sage] E

Geranium endressii SE

Hebe White Gem E

Partial or full shade

Euonymus fortunei Emerald and Gold E

Osmunda regalis [royal fern] native

Dryopteris dilatata SE

Epimedium versicolor Sulphureum E

Brunnera macrophylla Jack Frost

Liriope muscari var eg white variegated E

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|--------------------------|
| Harts Tongue fern E |
| Luzula sylvatica Aurea E |
| Blechnum spicant E |

Seed and turf mixes

- SUDs detention basin turf to be WFT-SUD-37 SUDs turf by Wildflower Turf Ltd or equivalent.
- Grass seed mix to be Germinal WFG20 Eco Species Rich Lawn (or equivalent if there are supply issues), close mown within residential gardens, more scope for relaxed mowing regime around detention basin.
- New native mixed hedges to be undersown with Emorsgate EH1 Hedgerow Mix under (or equivalent if there are supply issues).

3.0 OUTLINE SPECIFICATION FOR SOFT LANDSCAPE WORKS

Refer to Soft Landscape Plan reference: 23/946/03.

1.0 Work to be carried out in accordance with the following standards:

- British Standards:
 - BS 3882:2015 Specification for topsoil
 - BS 8601:2013 Specification for subsoil and requirements for use
 - BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction
 - BS 8545:2014 Trees from nursery to independence in the landscape
 - BS 4428:1989 Code of practice for general landscape operations (excluding hard surfaces)
- National Plant Specification
- National Landscape Specification (NBS) latest revision
- Landscape Architects detailed specification (to be issued at tender stage)

2.0 Protection of site trees and hedges:

Before work commences, ensure protection of any hedges and trees to be retained in accordance with BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction in line with Tree Protection Plan by Mackley Davies.

3.0 Soils:

Existing site soils are to be stripped and store for re-use or retained in-situ. A **topsoil/subsoil analysis report will be obtained** from an agreed soil science consultancy with interpretive commentary on the suitability of the site won topsoil/subsoil for the proposed landscape design and end users in addition to any measures required at planting or during the three year plant establishment period to aid growth for example addition of organic matter.

The following hierarchy to be followed to reduce soil handling:

1. If soils are suitable and in the right location, protect during the construction period in-situ by adequate fencing
2. Otherwise, move to the prepared receptor site
3. Otherwise, strip, store, and re-use for backfill once the receptor site is ready

All in accordance with:

- BS 3882:2015 Specification for topsoil
- BS 8601:2013 Specification for subsoil and requirements for use

The soil profile for SUDs areas will be determined by the drainage engineer.

4.0 Plant Supply:

Nursery Stock to BS 3936 Part 1 'Nursery stock specification for trees and shrubs' and BS 8545:2014 Trees from nursery to independence in the landscape.

5.0 Plant Handling:

Handling of plants to HTA National Plant Specification and the Committee for Plant Handling and Establishment Part 3 'Recommendations for Plant Handling from Delivery to Successful Establishment' and BS 8545:2014 Trees from nursery to independence in the landscape.

6.0 Tree guards/shrub shelters:

Trees planted into grass to be provided with mower guards.

Tree staking will use three untreated wooden stakes driven well into the ground vertically, equally spaced around the root system, with biodegradable fabric ties and pads, set low on the stem (max 1/3rd tree height).

7.0 Mulch specification:

An amenity grade of mulch to 50mm for all planting beds increasing to 75mm around trees.

Rain Gardens to have a gravel or crushed stone mulch or refer to specification by drainage engineer.

4.0 MAINTENANCE, MONITORING AND DEFECT REPLACEMENTS

Planting will be undertaken during the first planting season following completion of the site works.

Infrastructure areas will be implemented and funded by an Infrastructure Management Company. For on plot areas, responsibility will lie with individual owners. **For newly planted areas** maintenance will be undertaken at regular intervals during the growing season April to September.

The soft landscape works will be implemented by a BALI registered landscape contractor appointed by the applicant. Post Practical Completion, the first 12 months management is to be included with the landscape contract to ensure the soft landscape elements are implemented in accordance with the approved planting plan and that trees, shrubs, ground cover, lawns, successfully establish. All plant failures within the first year will be replaced by the contractor on a like for like basis.

Soft landscape maintenance and management following the end of the 12 month defects period, will continue in line with the approved planting plan for a minimum period of 5 years in accordance with planning conditions.

An annual walkover will enable monitoring of plant establishment success. Plants that fail to thrive during the **5 year establishment phase** will be replaced in the next suitable planting season [November to March inclusive].