

Landscape Management Plan

Merthyr Family Centre

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Plans:

LB446_D01a: Detailed Soft Landscape Plans



Section 1: Introduction

Purpose

- 1.1. This Landscape Management Plan (LMP) has been prepared by Laird Bailey Landscape Architects (LBLE) on behalf of cwf Architects for the development at Merthyr Family Centre, Thomastown House, Queen's Rd, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 0HE (hereafter referred to as the 'site'). The site is centred on OS grid reference SO054067.
- 1.2. The purpose of the LMP is to provide details of measures to ensure the successful establishment and ongoing maintenance of the soft landscape elements of the development proposals for a period of up to 25 years and beyond.
- 1.3. This LMP should be read in conjunction with drawings LB446_D01a Detailed Soft Landscape Plans (Sheets 1-2).

Scope of the Landscape Management Plan

- 1.4. This Landscape Management Plan is set out as follows:
 - Section 2 sets out relevant standards and legislation;
 - Section 3 describes the site, and provides an overview of the site and existing landscape features;
 - Section 4 describes the proposed soft landscaping typologies;
 - Section 5 sets out the long-term design objectives;
 - Section 6 sets out the management regimes and responsibilities; and
 - Section 7 sets out the maintenance operations for all the soft landscape areas.



Section 2: Technical and Environmental Considerations

- 2.1. The contractor shall familiarise themselves and their operatives with all British Standards and regulations, as referred to in this document, and any subsequent revisions thereof. All chemical weed control must be carried out by suitably trained staff in accordance with the manufacturers recommendations and the legislation set out below.
- 2.2. The Contractor must only use chemicals specifically approved for the purpose for which it is intended as dictated by the Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986 and the conditions of approval for the chemicals and any relevant code of practice issued by DEFRA. The Contractor will consider in every instance whether the use of chemicals is strictly necessary before application.

Relevant Standards and Legislation	
ISO 7851	Classification scheme for fertilizers and soil conditioners
BS4428	Code of practice for general landscape operations
BS 8545: 2014	Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations
BS 5837	Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations
3882:2015	Topsoil
The Food and Environment Protection Act (1985)	
The Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986 (COPR) (as amended 1997)	
The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (2002)	
The Environment Protection Act (1990)	



Section 3: Site Overview of Existing Landscape

Site Context

- 3.1. The site is located off Queen's Rd, Merthyr Tydfil. The development proposals are for:

'Change of use from family centre into 2 children's home, 1 short break home for disabled children and their families, 1 therapy/continuing care home and one therapy/office area. External alterations proposed including ground and first floor extensions refurbishment of and existing'.

- 3.2. The site comprises approximately 1 acre of land with a two-storey building at the centre. Served by vehicle accessed at the north-east corner of the site, there is car parking area to the front of the existing building which is to be retained. Landscape features include amenity grass, scrub and scattered trees. The scrub is contained to the south and western boundary with scattered trees found across the site.

- 3.3. The character of the site is urban with built development surrounding the site on all sides.



Section 4: Proposed Soft Landscaping

- 4.1. This LMP is to be read in conjunction with details of proposed soft landscaping (see LBLA Drawing No. LB398_D01a - Soft Landscape Proposals (Sheets 1-2)).
- 4.2. Soft landscaping within the site is designed to:
- Create an attractive and appropriate setting for residents and visitors of the site, providing all year-round interest and colour;
 - Create a strong soft landscape framework with planting to the perimeter of the site including native trees and hedgerows selected to maximise biodiversity, green infrastructure links and visual interest;
 - Create a safe space for children; and
 - Promote flowers, berries and general 'form' offering the maximum benefit of amenity/habitat for birds, small mammals, and insects.
- 4.3. Proposed soft landscaping elements and planting consists of the following.

Trees

- 4.4. A selection of native trees, planted at appropriate sizes will feature within both publicly accessible areas and within private rear gardens.

Native Hedgerow Planting

- 4.5. Bare root stock is to be planted in single and a double staggered row to establish natural hedgerows. All whips are to be fitted with a rabbit guard and staked.

Shrubs/Perennials

- 4.6. Native specimen shrubs and perennials have been proposed within the site as amenity features enhancing the building, street scene and rear garden amenity areas.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Planting (SUDS) – Bioretention Strip

- 4.7. A bioretention strip is to be implemented within the car parking area of the site. This area is to consist of a single strip. The bioretention feature will be dry throughout the year but for periods of heavy rainfall. The proposed bioretention feature will be planted with *Cornus sanguinea*, tolerant of both dry and saturated soils.

Wildflower Meadow Mix

- 4.8. Wildflower areas will be implemented to the peripheries of the development forming a successional buffer to existing scrub and new hedgerow planting. Seed mixes will consist of a



range of native non-invasive grass and long-lasting wildflowers, offering maximum benefits to bees, butterflies, birds, and small mammals.

Proposed Bulb Planting

- 4.9. A native seasonal bulb mix has been proposed to amenity areas to the front of the building.

Amenity Grassland

- 4.10. Amenity grass areas will be retained and overseeded with a flowering lawn mixture around the buildings.



Section 5: Long-term Design Objectives

- 6.1 This landscape management plan has been produced to ensure that the new and existing planting on site will be managed effectively, ensuring landscape features establish and thrive in perpetuity whilst maintaining a safe environment for children.

Existing Trees and Scrub

- 6.2 Management of existing trees and scrub offers to secure the current landscape elements that have potential for enhancement without compromising other important aims of the development.
- 6.3 Specific objectives include:
- Maintaining long-term health of existing trees and scrub to contribute to buffering the development from neighbouring land and infrastructure;
 - To extend the life of mature trees through sound arbouricultural management;
 - Managing scrub to stop encroachment into the site; and
 - Creating a healthy tree and shrub understorey to knit into the proposed soft landscaping proposals, offering a series of mature/interconnected wildlife corridors.
- 6.4 Any tree works such as the removal of hazardous branches or the felling of mature trees will be completed outside of the active period for breeding birds (generally understood as March to August inclusive but some bird species may nest all year round). Should any management be required within the breeding bird period, checks for nesting birds by a suitably trained ecologist will take place prior to any works commencing to ensure that no breeding birds are present. Should a nest be present then a suitable buffer would be installed until the nest is confirmed as being inactive.
- 6.5 Checks for the presence of roosting bats should be completed prior to management taking place regardless of the time of year. This shall be undertaken by a qualified/experienced bat ecologist. Potential bat roosting features can include woodpecker holes, rot holes, any cracks or splits in the tree bark, cankers, gaps between overlapping stems or branches, partially detached ivy (with stem diameters in excess of 50mm), and man-made holes. If any of the potential bat roosting features are identified, evidence of roosting bats is identified or a bat is found, then works would temporarily stop and a licenced ecologist/Natural England consulted.

Proposed Tree Planting

- 6.6 The long-term design and management objectives of proposed tree planting is to ensure that trees establish well and continue to thrive and contribute to an attractive and habitable environment. Trees shall be managed to develop a healthy and even form. Stems should only be removed to retain the natural appearance of the individual plant species or to remove



broken or badly damaged branches and dead wood. Tree surgery such as crown lifting should be carried out as required by a suitably qualified individual to prevent restriction to site users.

- 6.7 Watering operations will be carried out as specified in this management plan and in conjunction with drawing LB446_D01a (Sheet 2) to ensure healthy establishment and longevity.
- 6.8 Irrigation timing and frequency will take into account the prevailing weather conditions, soil moisture release, response of the tree species to water deficits or prolonged soil saturation. The holding capacity of the soil and amount of water available to the tree to be assessed at each visit. Frequency of watering is more important than the volume and should be undertaken as required. Monitoring is recommended when 5 consecutive days at 25 degrees is recorded during the growing season. Water should only be added if the probe / tensiometer values indicate that it would be appropriate to do so.
- 6.9 All proposed trees to be in compliance with BS8545: 2014 Trees: from Nursery to independence in the landscape – Recommendations. Staked trees will be inspected at each maintenance visit, and any trees which have died or are excessively damaged will be removed from site, complete with the stake, and replaced according to the original planting specification.
- 6.10 Mulched areas around trees will be maintained to an acceptable standard (75mm in 1m circumference around stem).

Proposed Native Hedgerow Planting

- 6.11 Mixed native hedgerows along the fence line boundary are to be planted as bare root stock in a double staggered row to establish a natural hedgerow. Mixed native hedgerow planting will be managed to achieve a minimum height of 2m above ground level. Ornamental single species hedgerow will be planted in a single row and managed to achieve a maximum height of 1.2m
- 6.12 The ground around the hedgerow transplants will be bark mulched to conserve moisture and reduce weed growth. Careful trimming and pruning will be required in the early years to ensure the development of a well-clothed hedge. Trimming should aim to form an 'A' profile.

Inspect monthly and maintain shrubs/hedging in a weed free condition through combined techniques by hand, cultivation and mulching. Prune or clip to promote bushy, healthy growth and required shape when necessary. Trimming back of growth overhanging adjacent footpaths or windows when required. Remove/replace individual specimens as required.

Existing and Proposed Amenity Planting

- 6.13 The long-term design objective of the amenity planting is to ensure the plants thrive to create attractive foliage for amenity value, contribution to drainage features and habitat for wildlife. Planting will be managed to achieve a maximum height commensurate with their location and surrounding features. Pruning should be undertaken to promote flowering and fruiting in



accordance with the species and age of the plant. Species and cultivars are to be pruned particularly to maximise flowering and berrying for amenity and wildlife.

- 6.14 As such, any management will take place at the end of the winter months to avoid the active period for most wildlife, providing the plants with time to produce flowers, seeds and berries. Should any management be required within the breeding bird season (March to August inclusive), checks for nesting birds will take place prior to any works commencing by a suitably qualified ecologist. Should a nest be present then a suitable buffer would be installed until the nest is confirmed as being inactive. Any vegetation management will have consideration for the potential presence of breeding birds as per the management considerations stated above.

Bioretention Strip

- 6.15 The bioretention strip shall be managed for aesthetics as well as to ensure optimum health in order to function in reducing the speed of water infiltration.
- 6.16 It is intended that planting will be managed annually by shaping and pruning in line with the other ornamental hedgerow on site. The bio-retention hedgerow will be maintained to no higher than 1.2m.

Proposed Bulb Planting

- 6.17 A native seasonal bulb mix has been proposed to amenity areas to the front of the building.
- 6.18 Before the bulbs are laid out, the soil should be thoroughly loosened to a depth of 10-15cm. Lay out or scatter the bulbs evenly over the location being planted (at 20 per meter square and in species groups of between 20 and 30 in each group) and then cover with a layer of soil (10 to 15cm thick).
- 6.19 Grass in which flower bulbs have been planted should not be mowed until 6 to 8 weeks after the flowering period. Do not cut before flowering. Interval between end of flowering and start of grass cutting, every 6 weeks thereafter.

Wildflower Meadow Mix

- 6.20 Areas of wildflower will be managed for their floral diversity and to benefit wildlife.
- 6.21 The existing grassland will be overseeded with yellow rattle and other wild meadow seeds in order to increase species diversity. These habitats will be cut twice per year, excluding the first year which is described in the paragraph below, using hand tools once in March/April and again no earlier than 15th July in order to mimic hay meadow management.
- 6.22 In the first-year, meadow will be mown once every 8 weeks to a height of 40-60mm with the cuttings removed if dense. If the seed is sown in the autumn and overseeded with yellow rattle, spring and summer cuttings should be avoided in the first year. Species such as dock should be removed by hand.



Amenity Grass Mix

- 6.23 Management aims to provide a safe and open playing space for children meeting their amenity requirements while being managed for the benefit of wildlife.
- 6.24 The wild flower and grass species in the flowering lawn mix are perennial; they will be slow to germinate and grow and will not usually flower in their first growing season. There will often be a flush of annual weeds from the soil in the first growing season. This annual weed growth is easily controlled by repeated mowing. Mow newly sown flowering lawns regularly (every 7 -10 days during growing season) throughout the first year of establishment. Cut to a height of 40-60mm, removing cuttings if dense. This will gradually develop a good sward structure, help maintain balance between faster growing grasses and slower developing wild flowers, and control annual weeds. Dig out any residual perennial weeds such as docks by hand.
- 6.25 Once established mow regularly as a lawn but not too short (25-40mm). To permit flowering, mowing should be relaxed from late June. Cut again when the sward gets untidy (after 4-8 weeks). Cuttings should be collected and removed from site.



Section 6: Management Regimes and Responsibilities

- 7.1. The landscaping works will receive post installation maintenance for a one-year Defects Liability Period (DLP). All defects resulting from plant loss, disease, or failure will be replaced on a like for like basis. A visit every month, or more frequently should watering be required, is recommended during the DLP. Subsequently a minimum of 12 maintenance visits per annum is recommended with this LMP covering a period of 5 years. Following the Defects and Liability Period all plants shall be replaced by the site owner up to a period of 5 years post DLP.
- 7.2. Maintenance and management activities are set out below (which covers a minimum period of 5 years) to ensure the soft landscaping is managed effectively beyond the time limits of the implementation and establishment works. The responsibility for this management and maintenance is to be agreed. LBLA's recommendation is for the landscape contractor that undertakes the planting works to be engaged to carry out the one-year establishment maintenance.
- 7.3. Management and maintenance operations will be monitored and reviewed annually on an on-going basis and modified where required; if the operations and frequencies set out do not deliver the required results or meet the specific aims and objectives.
- 7.4. As a minimum, maintenance visits should be undertaken to inspect and monitor as well as to carry out routine operations, including weeding and litter picking, with other specific operations being undertaken as scheduled below.
- 7.5. The appointed Contractor must provide details of all necessary insurances and certification to carry-out the works specified in this management plan. It is the responsibility of the appointing authority to ensure that all submitted insurances and certificates are up to date and provide the appropriate level of cover for the specified works.
- 7.6. Defects in the landscape are to be identified early and addressed promptly.



Section 7: Soft Landscape Maintenance Work Schedule

Component	Task	Time of Year	Frequency
<i>Visits every month throughout the one-year defects and liability period, more frequently if required due to prologued dry weather conditions and the need for watering.</i> <i>Subsequently management and maintenance operations will be monitored and reviewed annually for the first five years and then every five years by the appointed management company. If operations and frequencies set out do not deliver the required results or meet the specific aims and objectives, these should be modified accordingly.</i>			
Trees and Peripheral Scrub	Inspect, prune and repair wounds in accordance with good horticultural and arboricultural practice.	Oct-Feb	As required (annually).
	Check tree ties regularly for rubbing and adjust if necessary. Constriction of the stem by ties happens very quickly, so fast-growing trees need frequent checking. After bad weather, check for abrasion and snapped stakes or ties. Re-firm tree by adjusting tree ties and ensuring soil is re-firmed around the base.	All year round and especially after strong winds, frost heave and other disturbances.	As required (annually).
	Hand weed mulched areas around trees.	Mar-Sep	Every visit.
	Control weeds by hand or mechanical tools only.	Mar/Oct	Only if required.
	Replace any failed specimens.	Oct-Mar	As required during the one-year DLP and 5 years post DLP (next available planting season).
	Remove debris/litter	Throughout	Every visit.
	Top up bark mulch around bases of trees to full depth of 75mm.	Mar/Apr	As required during the DLP.
	Newly planted trees will be watered throughout May-August months after any period of four weeks without significant rain to thoroughly wet the top 150mm of soil around the tree roots.	Throughout	As required – or at least once after a period of four weeks without significant rainfall (see monitoring in proposed tree section).



Component	Task	Time of Year	Frequency
	Trimming and selective thinning of the canopy. Trim back growth overhanging adjacent footpaths when required.	Oct-Mar	Annually if required.
	In year 2, remove staking if tree has established well.	Any	As required.
	Cut back and prune peripheral scrub to stop encroachment	Oct-Feb	Annually if required
Native Hedgerow	Re-shaping	Hard prune Oct-Feb	Annually if required
	Hand weed	Throughout	Every visit
	Apply fertiliser: Slow release, applied as per manufacturer's recommendations.	March / April	Annually
	Remove debris/litter	Throughout	Every visit
	In years 2 and onwards remove shrub shelters and rabbit spirals if specimens have established well and are no longer required.	Throughout	As required
	Replace any failed specimens	Oct-March	As required (next available planting season)
	Top up bark mulch hedge base to full depth of 75mm.	April	Annually
	Watering of newly established hedgerows. Watering is required in the first two years after planting, which will be the responsibility of the developer before handover to the management company.	Throughout	As required after a period of four weeks without significant rainfall
Bulb Planting	Do not cut before flowering finishes and leave interval of 6 weeks between end of flowering and start of grass cutting.	April-Oct	Once (when flowering finishes)



Component	Task	Time of Year	Frequency
Amenity Shrubs and Perennial Planting	Trimming, pruning and reshaping to encourage healthy bushy growth, flowering and fruiting. Trim back growth overhanging adjacent footpaths when required.	Oct-Mar	Annually if required.
	Hand weed.	Throughout	Every visit.
	Control weeds to by hand or mechanically.	Apr-Sep	Only if required.
	Remove debris/litter.	Throughout	Every visit.
	Replace any failed specimens.	Oct to March	Within the DLP, as required (next available planting season).
	Top up bark mulch around bases of shrubs to full depth of 75mm.	Throughout	As required.
	Watering of newly established shrubs.	Throughout	As required to ensure successful establishment and longevity.
Meadow Grassland	Cutting – First Year Mow every 8 weeks to a height of 40-60mm with cuttings removed. Cutting – Second Year Cut twice per year to 40-60mm. Once in March/April and again no earlier than 15th July. Leave cutting for up to 7 days to allow for dropping of seed and then remove.	August	Once per year. Leave hay cuttings to drop seed for minimum of 3 days (up to 7) before removing.
	Clearance of debris/ rubbish	Throughout	The basin is to be regularly checked for rubbish or other detritus material. Any rubbish to be cleared by hand and removed from site.



Component	Task	Time of Year	Frequency
	Weed control.	Mar-Sep	Invasive weeds to be removed by hand or mechanically.
	Re-seeding (if required).	Sep	Any bare patches of ground where seed has failed to germinate should be re-seeded as per the original specification.
Amenity Grass Mix	Mowing and removal of arisings. In the first-year mow lawns to 40mm in the growing season. Remove cuttings from site. Once established mow regularly to 25mm through the growing season. From July mow every 4 weeks to permit flowering. Remove cuttings from site.	Mar-Oct	First year – Mow every 10 days through the growing season. Second year – Mow every 2 weeks until July and then mow every 4 weeks through the growing season.
	Clearance of debris/rubbish.	Throughout	Area to be regularly checked for rubbish or other detritus material. Any rubbish to be cleared by hand and removed from site.
	Weed control.	Mar-Sep	Invasive weeds to be removed by hand or mechanically.



Plans:

LB466_D01a: Detailed Soft Landscape Plans (Sheets 1-2)

