

AtkinsRéalis



LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN (NEW EXTENSION)

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

February 2025

RYG-ATR-XX-XX-T-L-430001

YSGOL RHYD Y GRUG

Notice

This document and its contents have been prepared and are intended solely as information for Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and use in relation to the Landscape Management of the new extension at Ysgol Rhyd Grug.

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This document has 19 pages including the cover.

Document history

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1. Introduction

Atkinsréalis has been appointed by the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council to prepare a Landscape Management Plan (LMP) for the Ysgol Rhyd Y Grug Project, (the Scheme) once completed. An aerial view of the Site is shown below in Figure 1.1 and an overview of the Scheme envelope is shown in Figure 1.2 and comprises areas of landscape works associated with the existing and new extension buildings.

The purpose of this LMP is to set out the aims, objectives, and maintenance proposals strictly for a minimum 5-year management period of the landscaping proposals in the interests of visual amenity, wildlife, and the nature conservation for the Scheme. This document is not intended to be ‘frozen’ by prescribing maintenance procedures for the entire lifespan of the project. Consequently, it is important that a landscape management plan such as this, is encouraged to evolve and develop in parallel with the landscape / habitats it oversees. This LMP should be treated as a ‘living’ document to change and adapt as required as the site’s conditions change over time. The landscape management / maintenance team / contractor should review and implement this through collaboration with the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council.

This LMP should be read in conjunction with the drawings and documents which are relevant to the Scheme areas. Finalised versions / Record Copies will be available upon completion of the Scheme implementation.



Figure 1-1 – Existing Site Aerial



Figure 1-2 – Extract of the ‘Scheme’ Proposed Landscape Plan submitted for Planning Approval

1.1 Background

Ysgol Gymraeg Rhyd y Grug is a Welsh Medium Primary School for pupils aged 3 - 11 years old, located in a picturesque setting adjacent to the River Taff, in Aberfan, Merthyr Vale. The site is located within the village of Aberfan, 4 miles to the south of Merthyr Tydfil and approximately 20 miles to the north of Cardiff. It sits within the Merthyr Vale valley, bounded to the west by the A470, and to the east by the River Taff.



Part of this LMP considered maintenance of SUDs features which have been proposed within the Scheme. Welsh legislation requires new developments to adopt sustainable drainage measures to manage on-site surface water. Surface water drainage systems must be designed and built in accordance with statutory standards for sustainable drainage published by Welsh Ministers. Therefore, planned works involved on the Scheme will need to comply with this. Forming a working relationship and open dialogue with the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough SuDs approval body (SAB) will be important in the development of the final landscape design.

2. Aims and Objectives

2.1 Overarching themes

This LMP sets out actions to ensure the continued successful establishment of all new landscape elements alongside the enhancement of the quality of habitats within the Site boundary.

The overarching aims and objectives of the landscape scheme are listed below:

- To present an attractive and safe environment for the pupils, staff and visitors to this school development.
- To apply good horticultural practice to promote healthy growth and establishment of all planting.
- Ensure consistent control of invasive weeds.
- Provide protection against pests and disease.
- To maintain measures which seek to enrich and improve habitats throughout the Site, such as SuDS, and ecological enhancement features.

2.2 Maintenance Principles

The following list sets out the maintenance principles by planting type and the management intent toward realisation of the broad objectives:

Individual Trees

All trees should be managed to maintain visual links and avoid conflict with pedestrian and vehicular users in such a manner as to retain a form typical of the respective species. This should be achieved by a continued regime of pruning and crown lifting/shaping, remove all arisings from site. All individual trees are to be closely monitored and watered during dry weather and particularly drought conditions.

Ornamental Planting

Planting blocks should be managed to achieve a total cover of the ground. Plants should be trimmed as necessary to avoid conflict with footpath users and in a manner that retains the characteristic form of the species.

Swale Planting

Swale planting shall be design such that, following establishment of target plant species, routine maintenance will be required to keep it presentable, clear, and safe. Swale planting species may be allowed to evolve, in which case localised corrective works may be required.

Amenity Grassland Areas

All lawns and grassed areas should be managed to maintain a clear and well-kept visual appearance to the school grounds spaces. Grass edges are to be consistently trimmed to avoid ingress onto pathways and hardstanding areas and to maintain a clean consistent delineation between hard and soft interfaces.



Wildflower Areas

These areas are to be maintained to provide a distinctive visual contrast to the formal garden areas, encourage habitat generation and promote a healthy vigorous sward, free from disease, fungal growth, discolouration, scorch or wilt. The establishment of self-sown undesirable species should be prevented by hand-pulling or annual cutting.

Hard Landscape Areas & Site Furniture

Areas of hard landscape, including footpaths, play areas and access roads should be kept clean of rubbish, debris, and vegetation, and should be routinely checked for the evenness of the surfaces and the condition of the paving materials. Permeable surfacing forming part of the SUDs system should be routinely cleaned / mechanically swept to ensure their drainage function is maintained. Any drainage channels and gullies are to be periodically checked and cleared of leaf litter, dirt, silt and litter and other debris.

Site furniture, including fencing, should be kept clean and routinely checked for damage and the condition of any structural materials to ensure its safety and functionality.

2.3 Responding to Climate Change

As part of the ongoing LMP review process, provision should be made by the contractor company to adopt the current best practice in view of emerging climate change trends. This will ensure that vegetation is resilient to the effects of changing weather patterns and that maintenance and management activities are adapted to reduce carbon emissions where reasonably feasible to do so i.e. the use of rechargeable battery powered trimmers / brushcutters, mowers, etc.

Where a specified plant species is not thriving due to climatic changes, advice from a Landscape Architect / horticulturist may assist to source appropriate alternative plant species which could be used to fulfil the same function without detrimental effect to the existing plant communities.



3. Responsibilities

3.1 Landscape Maintenance During Construction

Areas of existing vegetation and proposed landscape works falling within the Scheme envelope during the construction period may require ongoing maintenance and management works.

This work will be the responsibility of the Main Contractor to undertake these works in liaison with a suitably appointed qualified BALI registered Landscape Contractor.

3.2 Landscape Establishment & Aftercare following Practical Completion

Following Practical Completion of the Scheme's landscape works, the responsibility for undertaking the maintenance works will remain with the Main Contractor. The landscape maintenance sub-contractor will report directly to the client and their appointed Project Landscape Architect who will advise on any deviation from this management and maintenance plan. This arrangement will continue until completion of the 5 Year Landscape Establishment and Aftercare period.

The landscape specification will require the Landscape Contractor to replace all dead, dying or otherwise defective seeding and planting that fail to establish within the defined rectification periods. The defects rectification period for seeding and planting will run concurrently with the Landscape Establishment & Aftercare period.

Before end of this period, the contractor is to submit printed instructions recommending on-going maintenance procedures to Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council. The contractor's recorded schedule of maintenance including problems experienced during the rectification period should also be shared to the council upon handover of responsibility.

3.3 Long-term Landscape Maintenance and Management Period

After the Establishment / Rectification periods (stated above), all responsibility for management of the landscape and habitat creation areas beyond the first 5 years will return to the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council appointed grounds management and maintenance team.



4. Tasks and Procedures

4.1 Management requirements Descriptions

Table 4.1 summarises the task requirements to be undertaken for the first five years of postconstruction and beyond. After this period, the broad maintenance goals should be reviewed, and the detailed practices revised and adjusted as required to meet these goals.

This information shall not be treated as the definitive maintenance schedule; it should be treated as a starting point only. It shall be reviewed periodically on a continuous basis following site visits throughout the life of the development. Climate change conditions shall be reviewed to ensure that the most productive maintenance methods are developed over time to respond to changes in conditions affecting the site and its establishment.

All ornamental grasses and herbaceous perennial planting should be managed in a manner that ultimately achieves a multi-layered structure. This will be achieved by a regime of selective thinning, pruning and coppicing, which will not be commenced until an assessment has been carried out after the first five years of maintenance.

Table 4-1 – Management requirements

Component	Task	Description	Frequency
General Operations			
	Litter	Clear litter to ensure a clean and well-presented appearance is maintained.	At each scheduled maintenance visit
	Leaf Litter	Leaf blowing and removal throughout the autumn and winter to prevent leaf accumulation on hard surfaces, planted and grassed areas. Do not allow leaves to accumulate which may result in staining to hardstanding and shrouding to planting and grassed areas.	Monthly (During September to March)
	Weed Control	Use physical weed control techniques such as hoeing to control weeds within planting beds and borders and swale. Ensure mulch materials are maintained to the appropriate depth to limit weed establishment. All hardstanding areas to be swept and cleaned. Weed killer treatment with a non-residual herbicide must be agreed with client in advance of use.	Monthly
	Watering	Watering which is required to be carried out during establishment / following remedial works. Site supply to be confirmed and through agreement with client where an appropriate source is available and viable.	Monthly (During growing season)
	Replacements of Failures	Undertake replacements during agreed establishment period. Replant in the following planting season.	Annually



	Furniture and Fencing	Inspect for damage (and repair as required) site furniture and all Fencing. Temporary Soft Landscape Establishment Protective Fencing to all newly planted and sown areas to be remove at the end of agreed establishment period. Any items removed are to be taken offsite and recycled/ reused.	Monthly
	SuDs Features	Ensure SUDs features are cleaned at regular intervals to maintain desired appearance, free from debris, litter and fallen leaves. Ensure maintenance is carried out to any drainage equipment, ensuring all filters, pipes, and the sump is in full working order according to manufacturer's requirements.	Monthly during March to October
Planting Maintenance Operations			
	Retained Existing Trees	Existing trees retained shall be monitored to ensure risk to buildings and site users are mitigated, with regular inspection to identify any damaged or diseased trees or branches. Tree survey to be carried out by qualified arboriculturalist in accordance with good arboricultural practice to assess the health and management of proposed and existing tree stock.	Annually
Individual Trees	Formative Pruning / Crown-lifting	Pruning to be in accordance with good horticultural and arboricultural practice, generally, to BS 7370-4. Trees planting will need to be pruned to maintain forms typical of respective species and ensure public safety, and to prevent risk of damage from falling trees, etc to buildings and structures. All cuttings to be removed from site to an approved recycling facility.	Annually
Individual Trees	Tree Protection	Check and adjust the stability of tree stakes. Re-firm trees by adjusting tree ties and ensuring soil is re-firmed around base. All stakes to be reviewed in the fifth-year post construction.	Annually



Ornamental Grasses / Herbaceous Perennials / Shrubs	Formative Pruning / Tidy	Shrubs, herbaceous perennials, and ornamental grasses are to be pruned in a manner to encourage natural shape, form and healthy growth, in accordance with good horticultural and arboricultural practice, generally, to BS 7370-4. Shrubs and perennials to be clipped back to ensure no overhanging on footpaths. Planting beds to be kept weed free through mechanical/ hand tool means. Clear litter (including leaves) where applicable. Cultivate soil within planting beds annually during dormant periods. Mulch to be reapplied in the Spring/Autumn season. All cuttings to be removed from site or retained in designated composting areas.	Monthly (In accordance with good horticultural practice – Timing to be outside of peak school traffic hours)
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Grass Maintenance Operations

Amenity Lawn Areas	Cutting	Ensure sward is maintained to create an optimum, even, functional surface, with a healthy, dense, weed free grass with the application of a 'Weed and Feed' Spring/ Autumn fertiliser, and moss treatment, to the areas of the site to be agreed by the location manager. Lawn areas (except areas planted with spring bulbs) are to be cut, when grass is reasonably dry: - Mow every 10 days during February – April - Mow weekly during May – August - Mow every 10 days during September & October Cut grass to 25mm at a maximum when rapidly growing. Do not allow grass to exceed 50mm length. Ensure lawns are maintained free from moss, thatch, weeds, worm and mole casts. Reform neatly defined edges to all lawns using a hand edging tool, at least 2 times per year. Remove all arisings from site or retain on site in designated composting areas.	As needed, (During February to October)
Amenity Lawn Areas	Spring Bulbs	Bulbs are to remain in situ until they have surpassed their flowering period. Cut back all above ground vegetative growth (by hand or mowing) when withered/dead vegetation to allow bulbs to from energy stores for subsequent years growth. Remove cuttings/ arisings off site or retain in designated composting areas.	Annually



Wildflower (Habitat and Swale Areas)	Cutting	Before each cut remove litter and debris. First growing season cut to take place in March / Early April to a height of 75mm. Remove arising of this initial cut. (Skip the spring cut if wildflowers are showing). Subsequent 'hay cutting' to take place once most plants have seeded (between August / September / October) to a height of 100mm. Try varying cutting time from year to year or cut part of the meadow in August and the rest in later month. After a few years, grass might start growing less vigorously and may be able to reduce to one annual cut only in late summer. Ensure all edges are trimmed. Some areas can be left uncut over the winter – these are great for hibernating insects and mammals, and provide seed for birds. Retain arisings from 'hay cut' in situ for 2 weeks to allow seed heads to disperse before removing from site or retain in designated composting area.	Annually
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4.2 Landscape Management Plan Review

A review of this LMP and Maintenance Schedule, by the contractor and school, is recommended to take place each year within the 5 (five) year maintenance period to ensure the Scheme; both hard and soft, are maintained in a good condition for the longevity of the lifetime of the development.



APPENDICES

A

Appendix A: Landscape Proposals



0 10 100
Millimetres



1 Coloured Asphalt to Nursery Play (Optional pattern to be determined)



2 New timber panel feature fence with suitable rain garden / swale planting



3 New ornamental planting with possible featured rain chain from building canopy



4 Existing vegetation at front entrance to existing building to be reconfigured and enhanced with additional planting



5 Existing vegetation to be removed to allow for new entrance way. Black asphalt surfacing to be extended



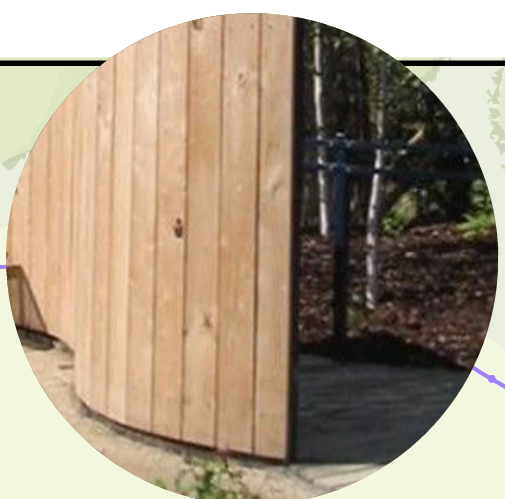
6 New 1.5m high timber picket panel beaded round top fence to secure LRB external classroom



7 New Steel / Timber Panel feature Fence to secure front entrance and restrict access at different times of the day



8 New Tree Planting



9 1.8m high Closeboarded Timber Fence



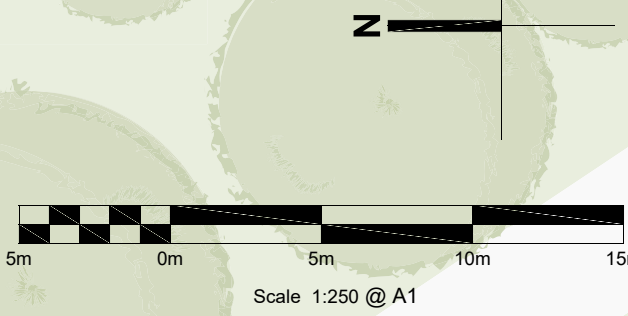
10 New Hedgehog Houses installed in wild areas to the north of the school



11 New Rain Water Harvesting



GENERAL ARRANGEMENT KEY			
	Site Boundary		Existing Fencing (Various Types & Height)
	Existing Trees to be retained		2.1m Closeboarded Timber Fence (with matching gates)
	Existing Trees to be removed		1.8/1.5m Closeboarded Timber Fence (with matching gates)
	New Tree planting		1.5m Timber Picket Round Top Fence (with matching gates)
	New Ornamental planting		1.1m Steel / Timber Panel Fence (with matching gates)
	New Wildflower Meadow		1.1m Timber Post and Rail fence (with matching gates)
	New Bio-retention / Rain Garden SUDs Swale Feature		Existing Pedestrian Asphalt [Black] to be Retained / Repaired
	Reinstated Amenity grass		Resurfacing with Impermeable Pedestrian Grade Asphalt [Black]
	New Bulb Planting		New Pedestrian Grade Asphalt (Permeable Surfacing) [Black]
			New Pedestrian Grade Asphalt (Permeable Surfacing) [Coloured]
			New Concrete Plinth
	New Door Barrier - Stainless steel (TBC)		New Bollards - Stainless Steel (Indicative location TBC)
	New Cycle Stands - Stainless steel (TBC)		New Rainwater Storage Planter (Indicative location TBC)
	New Hedgehog house (Indicative location TBC)		New Bat boxes (Indicative location TBC)
	New Canopy		New Canopy Feature Rain Chain (Indicative location TBC)
	Relocated Existing Play Storage Shed (Indicative location TBC)		Existing Wall retained



Drawing Status FOR INFORMATION			Sustainability S2	Project Title YSGOL RHYD Y GRUG				
AtkinsRéalis			2 Capital Quarter Tyndall Street Cardiff CF10 4BZ Tel: +44 (0)1454 662000 Fax: +44 (0)1454 663333 www.atkinsglobal.com		Drawing Title COLOUR PLAN GENERAL ARRANGEMENT			
Client MERTHYR TYDFIL COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL			1:250	Designed MM	Drawn MM	Checked JM	Authorised WR	
Rev.			Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
P01			10.09.24	FOR INFORMATION	MM	JM	WR	
Description			By	Chkd	App'd	Drawing Number RYF-ATR-XX-XX-I-L-400001		
						Revision P01		

Appendix B: Suggested Wildflower Species Mixes

	Wet Wildflower Mix (to swale banks) (Suggested Supplier: EM8 Meadow Mixture for Wetlands)	Dry Wildflower (to habitat areas) Mix (Suggested Supplier: EM2 Standard General Purpose Meadow Mixture)	Amenity Lawn Mix (Suggested Supplier: EG22 Strong Lawn Grass Mixture)
	<u>Wildflowers 20%</u> 0.70% <i>Achillea Millefolium</i> – Yarrow 0.60% <i>Agrimonia eupatoria</i> – Agrimony 0.10% <i>Angelica sylvestris</i> – Wild Angelica 0.20% <i>Betonica officinalis</i> – Betony 3.20% <i>Centaurea nigra</i> – Common Knapweed 1.40% <i>Filipendula ularia</i> – Meadowsweet 0.40% <i>Galium album</i> – Hedge Bedstraw 2.00% <i>Galium verum</i> – Lady’s Bedstraw 0.80% <i>Lathyrus pratensis</i> – Meadow Vetchling 0.60% <i>Leontodon hispidus</i> – Rough Hawkbit 1.20% <i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i> – Oxeye Daisy 0.60% <i>Lotus corniculatus</i> – Birdsfoot Trefoil 0.10% <i>Lotus pedunculatus</i> – Greater Birdsfoot Trefoil 1.00% <i>Medicago lupulina</i> – Black Medick 2.00% <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> – Ribwort Plantain 0.40% <i>Primula veris</i> – Cowslip 0.80% <i>Prunella vulgaris</i> – Selfheal 1.20% <i>Ranunculus acris</i> – Meadow Buttercup 0.80% <i>Rhinanthus minor</i> – Yellow Rattle 0.60% <i>Rumex acetosa</i> – Common Sorrel 0.30% <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i> – Great Burnet 0.50% <i>Silene flos-cuculi</i> – Ragged Robin 0.20% <i>Taraxacum officinale</i> – Dandelion 0.30% <i>Vicia cracca</i> – Tufted Vetch <u>Grasses 80%</u> 4.00% <i>Agrostis capillaris</i> – Common Bent (w) 4.00% <i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i> – Sweet Vernal-grass (w) 0.80% <i>Carex divulsa subsp. divulsa</i> – Grey Sedge (w) 33.60% <i>Cynosurus cristatus</i> – Crested Dogstail 1.60% <i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i> – Tufted Hair-grass (w) 20.00% <i>Festuca rubra</i> – Red Fescue 3.20% <i>Hordeum secalinum</i> – Meadow Barley (w) 5.60% <i>Phleum bertolonii</i> – Smaller Cat’s-tail (w) 5.60% <i>Poa trivialis</i> – Rough-stalked Meadow-grass 1.60% <i>Schedonorus arundinaceus</i> – Tall Fescue	<u>Wildflowers – 15%</u> 0.75% <i>Achillea millefolium</i> – Yarrow 2.25% <i>Centurea nigra</i> – Common Knapweed 1.20% <i>Daucus carota</i> – Wild Carrot 0.30% <i>Galium verum</i> – Lady’s Bedstraw 0.60% <i>Knautia arvensis</i> – Field Scabious 1.95% <i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i> – Oxeye Daisy 0.75% <i>Malva moschata</i> – Musk Mallow 2.25% <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> – Ribwort Plantain 1.50% <i>Poterium sanguisorba ssp sanguisorba</i> – Salad Burnet 0.45% <i>Primula veris</i> – Cowslip 1.50% <i>Ranunculus acris</i> – Meadow Buttercup 0.75% <i>Rhinanthus minor</i> – Yellow Rattle 0.75% <i>Silene vulgaris</i> – Bladder Campion <u>Grasses – 85%</u> 8.50% <i>Agrostis capillaris</i> – Common Bent 29.75% <i>Cynosurus cristatus</i> – Crested Dogstail 25.50% <i>Festuca rubra</i> – Red Fescue 4.25% <i>Phleum bertolonii</i> – Smaller Cat’s-tail 17.00% <i>Poa pratensis</i> – Smooth-stalked Meadow-grass	<u>Grasses 100%</u> 5.0 <i>Agrostis capillaris</i> – Common Bent 50.0 <i>Festuca rubra</i> – Red Fescue 25.0 <i>Lolium perenne</i> – Perennial Ryegrass 20.0 <i>Poa pratensis</i> – Smooth-stalked Meadow-grass



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