



Bellamy Court, Abbey Hey

5 year Landscape Management Plan

Prepared for and on behalf of Southway Housing Trust

By

DEP Landscape Architecture Limited

October 2020

DEP Landscape Architecture Ltd.
2 Commercial Street,
Manchester, M15 4RQ

T: 0161 241 9878
E: Info@dep.co.uk
W: www.dep.co.uk

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1.0 Introduction

DEP Landscape Architecture Ltd have been appointed by Southway Housing Trust to produce a 5 year landscape management plan to accompany a detailed planning application for the development of land off Abbey Hey Lane, Abbey Hey. The development comprises 106No. independent apartments for the over 55's with associated hard and soft landscaping and car parking.

This report has been written to support the proposed planning application to ensure that the landscaping is established as the design intended and to provide a point of reference for the site manager(s) and appointed landscape contractor(s).

Objectives

The overall objective of this report is to promote a successful landscape to enhance the environment around the development for the benefit of wildlife, local landscape character and visual amenity. This management plan will look to ensure that the landscaping is implemented, established and maintained as the design intended and will provide 5 year maintenance objectives for all landscaped elements within the scheme as a whole.

The persons or companies responsible for maintaining the landscape will also be responsible for carrying out a review of the landscape management plan after 5 years, to ascertain any changes on site and to provide any updated maintenance regimes to cover year 6 onwards as the landscape matures. It would be appropriate to review the plan every 3-5 years to ensure that the management objectives and maintenance regimes responds to any changes on site and within the environment.

The main objectives for the maintenance of the landscape include the following:

- Maintain and manage the existing retained trees around the development to ensure that the site continues to contribute to and fit into the local landscape and preserves existing wildlife habitats, as well as for health and safety reasons.
- Establish new hedgerows and trees around the site to reinforce the landscape character and improve and establish wildlife corridors around the site for local wildlife
- Establish shrub and tree mixes around the site to provide screening to the development and improve species and structural diversity across the site and its amenity value for residents.
- Sympathetically define and dress the service areas and frontage of the development, enhance the visual amenity of the local area and provide well maintained, secure communal landscapes for the enjoyment of the residents.
- Maintain fences and planting around the site to provide secure boundaries and a safe environment to live.

2.0 Drawing References

This document assumes that the landscaping has been implemented in line with the following drawings: -

3380.02 Landscape Plan

3380.03 Planting Plan

This report presumes that all of the landscape infrastructure and soft works have been implemented in line with the planning approved drawings and any defects have been picked up and made good in the 12 months defects liability period.

3.0 Health and Safety

The following potential hazards have been identified within the proposed development site which may have implications for maintenance operations:

- Contractors or any persons working on the site should make themselves aware of the location of underground services, defining the exact locations with the Statutory Authorities prior to commencing works below the surface.
- Working in areas that are publically accessible, adjacent to residential buildings.
- Working and using machinery, including working in a secure environment where the safety of the residents requires particular attention - no tools to be left lying around, gates to be secured at all times and the security and safety of potentially vulnerable residents to be ensured at all times
- The use of chemicals hazardous to humans and animals.
- Lifting heavy objects and working with heavy machinery.
- Works on established trees and hedges including the use of chainsaws/machinery/hedge cutters, climbing heights, falling branches.

Methods for reducing the potential risks are well established and common practice of competent contractors. The contractor or any appointed persons are expected to carry out a risk assessment to identify the hazards associated with any maintenance operations and make an assessment of the risks involved and methods for reducing risks.

3.0.1 Site Operations

The maintenance contractor or any persons should carry out all maintenance operations with regard to the safety and welfare of themselves, general public, private and public property, domestic and native (and protected) flora and fauna and Statutory Services.

3.0.2 Disposal of materials from site

Unless specified it is presumed that where possible leaves, grass and general arisings will be chipped or composted on site otherwise they should be removed and deposited at a licensed tip in the appropriate green waste section.

3.0.3 Responsibilities

It is presumed that the main road and paths around the site including street lighting and turning heads will be adopted by the Local Authority. All areas within the site, including the car park and access will be in private ownership and the responsibility of the landowner(s) for the scheme. Appointed landscape contractor(s) are expected to use this document to ensure that there is continuity to the maintenance of the landscape as a whole.

4.0 Landscape Maintenance of Soft Works

4.1 Existing Trees

Objectives

Promote the longevity of the existing trees so they continue to contribute to the local landscape character, provide habitat connectivity and integrate / screen the development within the surrounding area.

Inspections

The existing trees should be inspected annually by a suitably qualified arboricultural consultant to ensure they do not pose a health and safety risk.

Trees - Maintenance operations

Routine pruning should only be carried out on the trees which are close to publicly accessible areas (i.e. could fall or drop branches on public highways, footpaths and buildings). General pruning works should include the following operations;-

- The removal of dead, diseased, damaged or dying branches only where they pose a risk to the safety of people or property. Dead wood is an important habitat for wildlife within a healthy ecosystem and should not be removed unnecessarily.
- Branches or vegetation growing onto or impeding the maintenance of fencing, buildings, surrounding footpaths, street lamps and any other location where it presents a hazard or obstruction should be removed.
- Removal of self-seeded or sucker vegetation where they are competing against a more desirable specimen or impeding access around the site.

General - Maintenance operations

- Seek the advice of an ecologist before carrying out any drastic works which would significantly reduce the tree cover as this could impact on the wildlife.
- Any works to be carried out outside of the bird nest season (1st March to 31st August).
- Report and / or treat any incidence of pests and diseases where they pose a risk to the users of the site, or other trees within the vicinity (i.e. Ash Dieback, Sudden Oak Death, Oak Processionary Moth etc.). If any specialist pruning such as crown thinning and reduction is required this work must be undertaken by an approved arboriculturalist. Any pruning or surgery to existing trees must maintain the natural shape of the tree, and if trees are to be felled this operation should be done in a safe manner complying with all current regulations.
- All works are to be carried out by suitably qualified arboriculturist to the best arboricultural standards, considering all safety implications (working within areas accessible by the public) and working in accordance with BS 3998 2010 and in accordance with good practice for the protection of bats or nesting birds which could potentially be using the site.

- Woody material should be chipped and spread around the base of the tree or hedge (no deeper than 10cm), wood stacked as logs piles (hibernacula) in discrete places around the site or larger material removed from site.

4.2 Proposed Trees

Objectives

Promote the establishment of healthy trees which will be allowed to grow to maturity and provide species diversity and screening within and around the development.

Inspections

Inspect the trees annually when they are in full leaf to ensure that the trees are thriving and record any defects which may require remedial works.

Maintenance operations

- Newly planted trees take some time to establish and until this occurs they are subject to competition from weeds. To reduce competition, around the trunk of each tree an area should be maintained weed free.
- For trees within grassed areas maintain a 1sq.m circle around the tree to reduce competition from grasses for nutrients and water. This could either be maintained using a mulch or by spraying out the area with a non-residual approved weed killer. Do not strim around the base of trees as this will damage the bark and cause disease or defects on the tree.
- If the trees show signs of poor growth or reduced vigour an application of an appropriate fertiliser can be carried out. If the trees do not respond to a treatment of fertiliser, further investigations should be carried out. If appropriate remediate any problems. Should the remediation works not resolve the problem a replacement tree may need to be planted (along with a change of the tree species if considered appropriate to ensure success).
- During establishment larger trees will require regular watering particularly during prolonged dry periods during the summer months. Water the trees until the ground is fully saturated, create an impression around the base of the tree to allow the water to collect and soak into the soil immediately around the trunk.
- Where used tree ties should be inspected and adjusted accordingly (do not allow the ties to restrict the growth of the tree). Damaged ties or stakes should be replaced. When the trees are established and can support themselves the ties should be carefully removed and the stakes cut down to ground level. This operation is likely to be required after 3 to 5 years dependant on establishment rates, stability and growing conditions.
- Pruning of young trees should not generally be required unless they have dead or diseased branches. In such cases the tree branch should be pruned back (using a sharp clean knife) to an outward facing bud whilst maintaining the natural shape of the tree.

4.3 Ornamental Hedge

Objectives

The ornamental hedges define the site boundaries to provide visual and physical security around the site, as well as define the formal areas of landscape within the garden. They should look neat and tidy and have dense, healthy vegetative growth.

Inspections

Inspect the hedges annually and record gaps which need filling with additional plants or trimming to encourage growth to fill gaps.

Maintenance Operations

- Remove any litter which has collected under the hedge.
- Maintain the area underneath the hedge weed free, lightly dig over the surface using a hoe, look to uproot and remove all weeds. For the more prolific or deep-rooted weeds spot treat with an approved weed killer and remove.
- Do not trim the top of the hedge until they have achieved the desired height. Lightly trim the sides of the hedges annually in June or cut back any individual leggy branches using secateurs to promote dense bushy growth. Allow the plants to grow into each other to create a dense continuous hedge.
- Ensure that the bark mulch is maintained at a minimum depth of 75mm and is spread evenly under the base of the hedge. After the plants have established (2-3 years) and the canopies have met then the mulch will no longer be required and should be allowed to naturally break down into the soil.
- During the establishment of the hedge during the first growing season ensure they are kept well watered particularly during prolonged dry periods. Ensure that the soil is fully saturated and the bark mulch is in place to help retain the moisture in the soil and reduce competition from weeds.
- If plants are showing signs of poor growth, disease or die back which is affecting the overall appearance of the hedge then identify the problem and carry out the appropriate treatment.
- Once the hedges have reached the desired height they should be lightly trimmed twice annually and the arising removed from site. Except for the Box hedge aim for a flat topped "A" shape to ensure sunlight reaches the top and bottom equally:-
 1. Box hedge should be maintained at 500mm high,
 2. Choisya ternata hedge should be maintained at 1200-1500mm high
 3. Pyracantha and Crataegus hedges should be maintained at 1500-1800mm high.

4.4 Ornamental Planting and Shrub Beds

Objectives

The shrub beds look to have total vegetation cover with no gaps. The plants should be maintained to promote healthy growth and ensure they achieve species potential in terms of texture, form and flower, to provide visual interest and a pleasant setting for the new development.

Inspections

Inspect the shrub beds annually and record gaps which need filling with additional plants, pruning or splitting of plants to encourage new growth to fill gaps.

Maintenance Operations

- Remove any litter which has collected in the shrub beds.
- Shrubs which are causing an obstruction by growing over paths, obscuring sight lines or lighting should be pruned back using secateurs. Ensure that the natural shape of the plant is maintained. Unless specifically identified in this report allow each plant species to reach their natural height to allow structural diversity in the beds. Please refer to the individual notes over leaf for the different maintenance required for shrubs, grasses and herbaceous plants.
- Cut back or remove any dead, diseased or dying plants to encourage new growth. Allow the surrounding vegetation to fill the gap or replant any significant gaps in line with the original planting plan or following advice from someone horticulturally trained.
- Lightly dig over the surface of the shrub beds using a hoe, look to uproot and remove all weeds from the beds. For the more prolific or deep-rooted weeds spot treat with an approved weed killer and remove once it has died back.
- In the newly established beds look to ensure that the bark mulch is maintained at a minimum depth of 75mm and is spread evenly around the whole of the shrub bed. After the plants have established (2-3 years) and the canopies have met then the mulch will no longer be required and should be allowed to naturally break down into the soil.
- During the establishment in the first growing season ensure that the shrub beds are kept well watered particularly during prolonged dry periods. Ensure that the soil is fully saturated and the bark mulch is in place to help retain the moisture in the soil and reduce competition from weeds.
- If plants are showing signs of poor growth, disease or die back which is affecting the overall appearance of the shrub bed then identify the problem and carry out the appropriate treatment.
- Any weeds discovered within the shrub beds (such as Japanese Knotweed or Himalayan Balsam) which are classified as injurious or invasive (please refer to Natural England Guidelines) should be reported to the Site Manager. Appropriate action should be taken to prevent further spread of these weeds.
- Routine annual pruning of new shrubs should generally not be required within the first 3 years, although some of the herbaceous plants and grasses should be maintained in accordance with the list below to encourage new growth and a longer flowering period:

Herbaceous Plants

- Allow the seed heads to remain on these plants throughout the autumn and early winter as they provide winter interest and insect habitats. Any stems which start to rot, become detached or look scruffy can be cut from the plant and removed if in a visible location.
- In early spring when the threat of frost has gone all the old dead vegetation should be removed using secateurs to allow new growth to push through.

Grasses

- Seed heads should be allowed to remain on the plants throughout the autumn and winter for visual interest, however any stems which become snapped or detached should be removed.
- In early spring mid-March to April when the threat of frost has gone cut back the grasses to 20cm removing all of the old vegetation and seed heads to allow new growth to come through, avoid cutting new growth.
- For the evergreen grasses only remove the dead growth and seed heads in early spring, mid-March to April, this can be done by pulling out the dead growth gently by hand or carefully using secateurs.

Cornus

- Cornus should be allowed to establish without being cut for the first 2-3 years. The stem colour in the winter is the characteristic feature of this shrub, therefore do not cut the stems until early spring before the leaves begin to appear.
- Every 2-3 years once the shrubs have established reduce the height of the stems to 300mm above ground level to encourage strong stem colour and vigour.

Specimen Shrubs

- Large specimen shrubs in the planting beds should be allowed to establish as individual specimens with a herbaceous layer underneath.
- Buxus topiary should be clipped into shape in late spring using hedge shears. Remove the arising's from the shrub bed.

Climbers

- These should be trained up against posts or structures they have been planted against. Tie in any loose tendrils to cover the frame and encourage them to support themselves where possible.
- Cut off any straggly tendrils which are growing out from the frame or onto adjacent buildings or structures.
- Ensure climbers don't become strangulated or woody, thin out as required to encourage new healthy growth.

Seasonal bedding by residents

Whilst this planting is to be developed with residents and so cannot yet be accounted for in this management plan, some over-arching principles should be adhered to:

- Remove any litter which has collected in the planting beds.
- Remove any dead, diseased or dying plants. Allow the surrounding vegetation to fill the gap or replant any significant gaps in line with the original planting plan or following advice from someone horticulturally trained.
- Look to ensure that the bark mulch is maintained at a minimum depth of 75mm and is spread evenly around the whole of the planting bed.
- Ensure that the planting beds are kept well watered particularly during prolonged dry periods. Ensure that the soil is fully saturated and the bark mulch is in place to help retain the moisture in the soil and reduce competition from weeds.
- If plants are showing signs of poor growth, disease or die back which is affecting the overall appearance of the shrub bed then identify the problem and carry out the appropriate treatment.
- Any weeds discovered within the planting beds (such as Japanese Knotweed or Himalayan Balsam) which are classified as injurious or invasive (please refer to Natural England Guidelines) should be reported to the Site Manager. Appropriate action should be taken to prevent further spread of these weeds.
- Consult with trained horticulturalist to ensure plants selected are non-toxic and non-invasive.

4.5 Grass

Objectives

Grass provides openness to the development and areas for recreational activities within the more formalised garden areas. Well maintained grassed areas around the site will also look to provide a transitional zone between the development and the wider landscaped areas. It is therefore important that the grass is well maintained and not patchy or overgrown.

Inspections

The Landscape Contractor should inspect the grassed areas during general maintenance operations and carry out remedial works within the scope of the maintenance operations as listed below.

Maintenance Operations

- Newly turfed or seeded areas should be kept well watered particularly during prolonged dry periods in the summer months.
- Carry out a litter pick before each cut.
- The sward should be cut to maintain the grass between 25mm and 50mm height. The grass should be cut using a hand push mower or if weather and ground conditions allow use a small ride on mower for the larger areas.
- The grass should look to be cut min 12 times a year and maybe required up to once a week in the formalised garden areas in the summer months.
- Grass cuttings should be collected and composted on site.
- The edges should be strimmed or cut at the same time as the main cut along paths, kerb edges and soft landscaped areas to create a neat finish. Avoid using the strimmer's around the base of trees and close to shrubs.
- Once a year in the spring reform the lawn edges along paths, shrub beds and trees to create a neat edge removing any turf which has encroached onto hard standing areas and reforming a straight edge to the soft landscaped areas.
- A fertiliser application should to be applied as required, either as a spring feed for shoot growth or as an autumn feed for root growth using the appropriate feed application to compensate for any signs of poor growth or excessive wear.
- An application of selective herbicide should be made in the spring to prevent any weed species from having a detrimental effect to the appearance of the sward and to prevent any infestation becoming severe.
- In the autumn and winter collect and remove leaves which have gathered on the grass. Leaves should be composted on site.
- Other maintenance applications which will be required from time to time include: topdressing, over seeding, scarifying, spiking etc. to alleviate common problems such as thatch, compaction, poor drainage, malnourishment etc. These items should be identified and addressed in the annual check.

5.0 Landscape Maintenance of Hard Works

5.1 Roads, Paths and Patios

Objectives

All areas hard surface areas are to be maintained in a safe and clean condition free from any defects or debris which could potentially cause a trip hazard or affect the drainage of the site. It is particularly important that the areas which provide access into and around the buildings are maintained clear and the surface is level and free from trip or slip hazards.

Inspections

A formal visual inspection is to be carried out at 6 monthly intervals or following reports from the public or residents that surfaces require repairing. A report of the inspections and rectified works should always be logged.

Maintenance operations

- Ensure that all surfaces are to be kept free of weeds, litter, mud, arisings, deleterious material, algae and hazardous obstructions.
- Once a week carry out a litter pick and sweep all pedestrianised hard surfaced areas to ensure that they look presentable and maintained free from trip hazards and detritus material such as soil, leaf litter etc. This is especially important given the older age and possible mobility-limitations of the residents.
- In the autumn and winter months these works will include leaf blowing and collecting which may be required up to twice a week in the peak period to ensure that surfaces are not slippery.
- Once a month sweep all car parking areas and remove any build-up of soil, silt or leaf litter which has collected around drains or kerb edges.
- Once a month for all hard surfaced areas spray any prolific weeds growing between paving joints or kerbs with an approved herbicide, once dead the weeds should be removed.
- Build-up of algae or moss should be removed using a pressure washer or an appropriate herbicide in line with manufacturer's instructions. These works should be carried out once annually (or more frequently should they present a slip hazard). Any gaps in the joints as a result of cleaning should be filled with either sand or mortar as per the original specification.
- Surfaces should be uniform in appearance, a level surface and constructed from a homogenous material, free from ruts, grooves, cracks, hollows, pot-holes and loose paving. If faults or potential hazards are identified they should be reported and all surfaces and foundations are to be repaired to the original specification.
- If any fault presents a risk or trip hazard the area should be cornered off until the repair has been completed.

5.2 Fences and Railings

Objectives

Gates, fences and railings are to be maintained in a safe and clean condition and gates which are designed to control access in good working order.

Inspections

A formal visual inspection is to be carried out at 6 monthly intervals or following reports from the public or residents that a fault or damage has occurred. A report of the inspections and rectified works should always be logged.

Maintenance Operations

- Gates, fences and railings are to be kept free of litter, deleterious material and hazardous protuberances and should be in good working order. Surfaces are to be maintained uniform in appearance and coated in a homogenous paint or stain in accordance with the original specification.
- For timber gates which have originally been stained or oiled these should have the original treatment reapplied annually in the spring to rejuvenate the appearance of the wood.
- For metal gates and railings repaint in line with the original specification if paint begins to flake or look unsightly, ensure that any rust is removed and the surface prepared and primed before paint is applied.
- For pressure treated timber (timber post and rail fences and gates) treatment or than repair works should not be required and the timber should be allowed to weather naturally.
- Gates, railings and fences are to be repaired within 2 weeks of a reported fault, unless the potential hazard is severe (i.e. has the potential to compromise safety of the residents) in which case the area surrounding the fault should be cordoned off and the boundary temporarily made secure. The fault should be repaired at the earliest available opportunity.

5.3 Site Furniture - Timber Benches, Furniture, Raised Planters, Bird Tables, Pergola, Rotary Clothes Dryers and Sculptural Features

Objectives

All timber structures should be maintained in a safe and clean condition. Surfaces should be smooth to the touch (avoiding potential for splinters), fixings secure and flush with the finished surface, and the wood should be sound avoiding the potential for failure due to rot.

Inspections

A visual inspection is to be carried out at 6 monthly intervals or following reports that a fault / damage has occurred. A report of the inspection should be logged.

Maintenance Operations

- Where required wipe down benches and furniture once a week with soapy water to remove bird droppings.
- Any timber structures that have been stained or painted or oiled should have the original wood stain or paint or oil reapplied annually in the spring to rejuvenate the appearance of the wood.
- All timber products should be maintained smooth to the touch and free from nicks or sharp edges to avoid the potential for splinters.
- If damaged or rotten timber structures should be repaired or replaced within 1 month of a reported fault. If the product is repairable then the section of wood should be replaced with a piece of timber of the original specification. Where the fault may cause a risk to health and safety the item should be cornered off until the fault is repaired.
- Rotary clothes dryers to be cleaned to manufacturer's specification to avoid rust or damage. Fixing holes for dryers to be inspected and if necessary cleared out every 6 months and clearly marked to avoid becoming a trip hazard when not in use.
- Sculpture to be developed with local school / community should have separate maintenance information when more is known about its construction and materials, however in general it should be kept clear of bird droppings, anchored securely with the anchorage inspected every month / after heavy winds to ensure it is not at risk of falling. If any fault presents a risk or trip hazard, the Landscape Contractor should corner off the area until the repair has been completed.

5.4 Artificial Grass

Objectives

Artificial grass areas are to be maintained in a safe and clean condition free from any defects or debris which could potentially cause a trip hazard or affect the drainage of the site. It is particularly important that the areas which provide access into and around the buildings are maintained clear and the surface is level and free from trip or slip hazards.

Inspections

A formal visual inspection is to be carried out at 6 monthly intervals or following reports from the public or residents that surfaces require repairing. A report of the inspections and rectified works should always be logged.

Maintenance operations

- Brush the grass once a month (fortnightly during summer months and high use times) with a soft bristle brush to prevent compaction of the blades.
- During the weekly site operations sweep and collect any fallen leaves or debris.
- Reapply a top dressing of kiln dried sand annually or as required and brush down into the thatch.
- Fix down any sections which have become loose as per the original specification.

5.5 Lighting

These works refer to all lighting within the car park, around the building and within the garden but do not include the street light columns within the highway which will be the responsibility of the Local Authority.

Objectives

Lighting around the site will help to create a safer environment, aid navigation and highlight entrances to buildings. It is therefore important that they are maintained in a clean state and in good working order.

Inspections

A formal visual inspection is to be carried out at 6 monthly intervals or following reports from the public or residents that lights are damaged or not working. A report of the inspections and rectified works should always be logged.

Maintenance Operations

- All of the light fixtures around the site should be wiped clean with a cloth once a fortnight to clear away cobwebs and any detritus material which could reduce the effectiveness of the light.
- Annually wash down lighting bollards with soapy water to remove any soil or asisings and wipe clean the light fixtures with a damp cloth.
- Any lights which are damaged or not working should be repaired or the bulb replaced at the earliest available opportunity to ensure security across the site is not compromised.
- All lighting posts, bollards and fittings are to be maintained uniform in appearance and should be coated in a homogenous paint or powder coated finish. If faults or potential hazards are identified in relation to the lighting, fixtures or fittings they should be repaired by a qualified electrician in accordance with the original specification.

5.6 Gritting and Snow Clearance

Objectives

The entrances and footpaths around the site are to be kept open and safe to use during the winter months 7 days a week when temperatures fall below freezing and during periods of snowfall.

Inspections

The Site Manager should carry out a visual check and any areas which are obstructed or dangerous will be reported back to the Landscape Contractor for immediate action.

Maintenance Operations

- In the winter months if the temperature is forecast to fall below zero degrees Celsius the contractor must attend the site in the early hours. Rock salt should be manually spread and snow cleared from pedestrian paths and entrances to buildings to avoid slip hazards.
- In all instances if snow has fallen clear hard surfaced areas before spreading the rock salt. The rock salt should be evenly spread across the site and spillages onto shrub beds should be avoided.
- Any snow which has been cleared should be safely stacked in low piles around the site, avoid creating any trip hazards.
- If the garden is considered unsafe for the elderly residents during heavy snow fall and / or hard frost then the site manager should be notified and the gardens temporarily closed to the residents.