Greenlink Forestry Ltd

Ashgrove Farm, Higher Ashgrove, Ashmore, Wiltshire SP5 5AW

LANDSCAPE IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE PROPOSED REMOVAL OF MODERN BARN AND INSTALLATION OF 6 GUEST CABINS AND 3 STAFF CABINS

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Greenlink Forestry Ltd has been instructed by Ashcombe Estates, to produce a Landscape Implementation and Management Plan for the proposed removal of modern barn and installation of 6 guest cabins and 3 staff cabins within the landscaped farmyard at Ashgrove Farm, Higher Ashgrove, Ashmore, Wiltshire SP5 5AW.

1. INTRODUCTION

This document provides the landscape works implementation and management proposals for the proposed planting associated with the proposed removal of modern barn and installation of 6 guest cabins and 3 staff cabins within the landscaped farmyard at Ashgrove Farm, Higher Ashgrove. The aim is to enhance the site and setting of the development, while providing biodiversity and habitat enhancement through a comprehensive landscape scheme.

A comprehensive scheme of new woodland planting provided in this document will supplement the existing landscape structure across the site, as well as creating boundary definition of the main development area.

Preliminaries

Planting and soft landscaping will be undertaken in the autumn and during the first planting season following approval of the landscape proposals.

Replacement of any plants shall take place as many times as is necessary up until the 10th year from planting in order to maintain a complete cover of plants and to maintain the scheme as designed by the Landscape Architect, and within the correct season for the type of tree, shrub and grassland mix.

Prepare soil thoroughly to ensure there is no soil compaction after removal of barn, hardstanding, etc

If soil is to be imported, planting proposals assume a premium grade lime-rich topsoil from a local chalk or limestone area and laid over the local subsoil to a minimum depth of 450mm for tree and shrub areas and 100mm for wildflower areas. Biochar/compost to be incorporated within planting pits to help with tree growth and establishment.

2. EXISITNG VEGETATION

Trees

The existing trees on and around the site, specifically those retained alongside existing tracks and the proposed extended car park will need to be regularly inspected and may from time to time require some remedial work. **Please note that all observation were taken from ground level only.**

EXISTING TREES/HEDGES– PRE-COMMENCEMENT MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS

- To accommodate the proposed extended car park, an area of approx. 42m x 16m of existing shrubs, will need to be removed (photo 1). The exiting 5 trees 1 x beech, 3 x Norway maple, 1 x birch approx. 3.5m-4m H, c10-12cm sg will be retained and transplanted into the new planting area immediately west of the extended car park.



Photo 1. Area to be cleared of shrubs and 5 trees retained and transplanted into the new planting

- In case it's decided to open up the view south from the new car park, then approx 21m of existing Leyland hedging planted in 2017 approx. 3m H x 1.8m W (photo 2), and an additional 5m of existing mixed native hedging approx 1.6m H x 1m W will need to be removed as well. The remainder 20m of Leyland and mixed native hedging to be retained.



Photo 2. Young Leyland hedging south of proposed extended car park

To be retained and/or incorporated into the new planting

- Line of mature Leyland cypress screen situated between existing car park and storage barn, approx. 8.5m H, 26m L x 4.6m W, planted in single line.



Photo 3. Leyland cypress screen behind storage barn

- Line of mature Leyland cypress screening existing barn from the west, approx. 47m L x 4.6m W, planted in single line. Has 2 self-sown beech and 1 elder, similar in height to Leyland screen.



Photo 4. Leyland cypress screen behind barn to be demolished.

- Mature horse chestnut in yard on grassland (photo 5), surrounded by tracks and hardstanding. Approx. 18m H x 15m W crown. Due to substantial fork at the base of the crown (approx. 4m H) it needs to be monitored in the future for trunk health and stability.



Photo 5. Mature horse chestnut in yard

- Soil bund south of barn to be demolished (photo 6) approx. 32m L x 8m W x 2m H – was planted in early 2023 at the suggestion of the AONB officer with 6 x 6-8cm sg; and 10 x10-12cm sg native trees and 80 mixed native shrubs 60-90cm/100-125cm, to be kept as it already provides good screening for the new development.



Photo 6. New planting on soil bund south of barn to be demolished.

- Sallow on soil bund south of barn to be demolished (photo 7), approx. 4.5m H x 5.5m W. Also, any existing shrubs and young trees dotted around the grassland to be retained.



Photo 7. Sallow south of barn to be demolished and any existing young trees and shrubs to be retained.

- Line of small leaved lime x 9, extra heavy standards, approx. 7m H x 4.5m W. Planted in 2017 along fence line east of existing paddock (photo 8).



Photo 8. Line of small leaved lime to be retained.

- Mixed native hedge running along west boundary and forming part of the roadside hedges, approx. 4m H. Leave a 3m track next to the deer fence for maintenance and for access (photo 9).



Photo 9. Mature mixed native hedging west of deer fence

- Approx 72m of young Leyland hedge, approx 3m H x 1.8m W, and a mixed native hedge approx 1.6m H x 1m W, both planted in 2017 south of existing paddock (photo 10).



Photo 10. Young Leyland hedge and mixed native hedge to be retained.

- Line of small leaved lime x 12, extra heavy standards, approx. 7m H x 4.5m W. Planted in 2017 along main access drive (photo 11).



Photo 11. Small leaved lime along driveway to be retained.

As stated, all existing tree and shrub cover around existing staff accommodation to be retained and incorporated in the new development.

- Beech hedge south of existing staff accommodation, approx. 17m L x 3.5m H x 3m-4m W (photo 12)



Photo 12. Beech hedge south of existing staff accommodation

- Tree line east of existing staff accommodation, comprising a mix of Sumac, Macrocarpa, Buddleja, Lonicera and elder, between 1.5m and 6m H x 45m L x 6m W (photo 13)



Photo 13. Tree line to the east of existing staff accommodation

- Tree line north of existing staff accommodation, approx. 27m L x 4m-5.5mH x 4-6m W. Consisting of 8 hornbeam and 1 elder, planted south of soil bund (photo 14).



Photo 14. Tree line to the north of existing staff accommodation

- Line of Macrocarpa west of existing staff accommodation, approx. 41m L x 11m H x 10m W, containing elder regen 4m H (photo 15)



Photo 15. Line of Macrocarpa west of existing staff accommodation

- Private garden trees east of Phillips Cottages. Approx. 51m L x 12.5m H x 10.5m W.
- Clump of elder outside eastern wall of Brewery Store, approx. 3m H to be retained. Bramble patch north of Brewery Store to be managed prior to calcareous meadow enrichment. (photo 16)



Photo 16. Elder and bramble east of Brewery store

- Mature single ash tree NE of Farmhouse, approx 12m H x 11m W, showing less that 10% signs of ash dieback. To be monitored during and after landscaping and construction works (photo 17).



Photo 17. Mature ash

- Multi stemmed birch NE of Farmhouse, approx. 6m H x 2m W. Also, 4 x Italian alder; 2 x crab apple, 6-8cm sg x 2m H, and 1 x Italian alder in the vicinity of Farmhouse, approx. 3.5m H (photo 18)



Photo 18. Trees NE of Farmhouse

- Trees on bank west of Farmhouse – 58 x 6-8cm sg, mix of birch, lime, crab apple, field maple, whitebeam, Italian alder. 25 x Corsican pine 100-125cm; 25 holly, 100-125cm; 200 mixed native shrubs 60-90cm. All to be retained and maintained (photo 19)



Photo 19. Exiting trees on bank west of Farmhouse.

- Young screen planation to the south of proposed development, covering an area of approx. 3.2ha. Mainly broadleaved trees with the occasional conifers, planted in 1.5m tubes (photo 20). In addition, there is a similar planting to the north of Philips Cottages.



Photo 20. Young screen plantation to the south of the proposed development

Retained existing trees will be inspected before development begins on site, and any work carried out as necessary prior to development. After construction has been completed the trees will be inspected on an annual basis and any necessary work carried out.

TREE AND HEDGE PROTECTION

In order to avoid detrimental impact on the roots of the retained trees and hedges, construction exclusion zones are to be maintained by protective fencing throughout the demolition and construction phases of the project. The protective fencing will be erected prior to any works being undertaken on the site.

3. TREE PLANTING AND MANAGEMENT

GROUND PREPARATION

- Planting of bare-rooted stock is to be carried out between November and March; however, pot-grown plants can be planted throughout the year.
- Planting shall take place during frost free conditions and when the site is not waterlogged.
- If the ground is dry the plants will be watered to ground capacity on planting.
- All invasive and pernicious weeds will be removed from the site before works commence. Clearance will be restricted to glyphosate weed killers and hand weeding.
- All planting areas will be free from weeds and waste materials. The ground will be ripped to remove all residual compaction prior to adding any new topsoil.
- All plants are to be thoroughly soaked immediately prior to planting. Root dip will be applied before planting to bare rooted stock.
- Tree pits will be dug square to encourage root growth into the adjacent medium, and will be 200mm wider and 200mm deeper than the root spread. Planting compost and biochar or slow-release fertiliser will be added to each tree pit.

PLANTING SPECIFICATIONS

Trees

A spread of light standards to be planted across the new planting areas, comprising field maple (*Acer campestre),* small leaved lime (*Tilia cordata)*, crab apple (*Malus sylvestris)*, wild pear (*Pyrus pyraster)*, beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), whitebeam *(Sorbus aria)*, Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris)*, Corsican pine (*Pinus nigra*), Italian alder (*Alnus cordata)*, silver birch (*Betula pendula)*.

40% 6-8cm sg, RB/potted

40% 8-10cm sg, RB/potted

10% 10-12cm sg, RB/potted

10% 12-14cm sg, RB/potted (heavy standards), i.e. copper beech (*Fagus sylvatica purpurea),* small leaved lime (*Tilia cordata*), horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*)

- Light standards trees to be single staked and spiralled on a grid with 6m centres.
- Heavy standards to be planted using underground guying, randomly spaced over site.

Shrubs

Planted across the site to create different heights and layers, consisting of hazel (*Corylus avellana),* hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna),* holly (*Ilex aquifolium),* privet *(Ligustrum vulgare),* dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea),* dogrose (*Rosa canina),* wayfaring (*Viburnum lantana*), spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica)*

60% 60-90cm, bare rooted

40% 100-125cm, RB/potted

- 60-90cm shrubs to be single staked with bamboo cane and guarded using spiral guards. The shrubs are to be planted on a grid at 2m centres in scattered groups.
- 100-125cm shrubs to be planted singly randomly across the site, or in groups of 3/5 at random spacing within groups.

MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS

- The planting will be checked at regular intervals and any damaged stakes, canes and ties replaced. Plants will be firmed up following planting and, if necessary, until established. Any plants which die, become diseased or damaged will be replaced.
- Until the plants are established, they will be watered to ground capacity during dry periods. Weeding around planted areas will be carried out by hand or by the spot application of glyphosate, taking care not to spray the tree and shrub stems, until the plants are well established.
- Guards and stakes will be removed once the plants are well established.

Tree Pruning

- Limited formative pruning will be necessary to ensure that healthy and balanced crowns develop.
- Mature and established trees will be inspected on an annual basis and any necessary work performed.

Shrub Pruning

- Pruning will be required to ensure the growth of strong shrub planting and will be carried out once the plants are well established, normally from the second year onwards, but dependent on growth rates.
- Cutting should take place in February to maximise retention of any berries for bird foraging.

4. GRASSLAND PLANTING AND MANAGEMENT

Existing vegetation

Restored chalk grassland pasture area to the south of the proposal was cut at the time of the visit in July, but some of the existing sp were visible in the uncut margin around the field and also in the cut sward. Sp such as, ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata),* red clover (*Trifolium pratense),* common bird's foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus),* rough hawkbit (*Leontodon hispidus),* lady's bedstraw (*Gallium verum),* agrimony *(Agrimonia eupatoria),* white clover (*Trifolium repens),* dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale)* and grasses such as Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus),* cock's foot (*Dactylis glomerata),* false oat (*Arrhenatherum elatius),* creeping bent ((*Agrostis stolonifera)* and red fescue (*Festuca rubra)* were present.

In areas with existing grassland east of the proposed cabins the sward already contains some wildflowers, such as oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata)*, wild marjoram (*Origanum vulgare),* rough hawkbit (*Leontodon hispidus),* yarrow (*Achillea millefolium)*, common bird's foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus),* black medick (*Medicago lupulina)*, white clover (*Trifolium repens),* dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale),* selfheal (*Prunella vulgaris),* wild carrot (*Daucus carota),* and grasses such as Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus),* cock's foot (*Dactylis glomerata),* false oat (*Arrhenatherum elatius),* creeping bent ((*Agrostis stolonifera)* and red fescue (*Festuca rubra)*.

Proposed calcareous meadow

- In front of cabins 9, 10 and 11 all care will be taken to ensure there is no soil compaction before a workable seedbed with a medium tilth is to be created. This may require using a small quantity of lime-rich topsoil no more than 100mm max depth. It may be necessary to return to site even after seeding in order to remove any invasive species such as docks, thistles, or brambles. These will be either removed manually or individually chemically treated. Cultivation work will be carried out when the soil moisture level is reasonably low, allowing the soil to crumble.
- The seed must be surface sown and can be applied by machine or broadcast by hand. To get an even distribution and avoid running out, divide the seed into two or

more parts and sow in overlapping sections. Do not incorporate or cover the seed but firm in with a roll, or by treading, to give good soil/seed contact.

Restored chalk grassland pasture and areas of proposed calcareous meadow

- **If over-seeding into existing grassland** reduce nutrient levels first, by taking repeated cuts and removing cuttings. Control any unwanted weeds such as docks, nettle, thistle prior to sowing and after if necessary.
- Create 50-75% bare ground in late summer/early autumn by additionally scarifying the field using a pedestrian rotovator in steeper areas or a disc and/or chain harrow for accessible areas.
- Ensure seed mix contains yellow rattle, which is a semi-parasitic annual plant that reduces the growth of vigorous grasses allowing wildflowers to establish.
- Take an extra cut in late autumn (Oct-Nov) if necessary to reduce competition for germinating seed from clump forming grasses such as cock's foot and Yorkshire fog. Ideal grassland height 2-5cm (important for enabling yellow rattle to germinate)

Sowing specifications (example seed mix – British Flora BFS7, Calcareous grassland)

Wildflowers:
5% *Achillea millefolium* – (Yarrow)
7% Centaurea nigra – (Black Knapweed)
7% Centaurea scabiosa – (Greater Knapweed)
1% *Clinopodium vulgare* – (Wild Basil)
6% *Daucus carota* – (Wild Carrot)
2% Filipendula vulgaris – (Dropwort)
8% *Galium verum* – (Lady's Bedstraw)
9% *Knautia arvensis* – (Field Scabious)
2% *Leontodon hispidus* – (Rough Hawkbit)
6% *Leucanthemum vulgare* – (Oxeye Daisy)
6% Lotus corniculatus – (Common Birdsfoot Trefoil)
1% *Origamum vulgare* – (Wild Marjoram)
6% *Plantago media* – (Hoary Plantain)
1% *Primula veris* – (Cowslip)
8% *Prunella vulgaris* – (Selfheal)
6% *Ranunculus acris* – (Meadow Buttercup)
7% *Ranunculus bulbosus* – (Bulbous Buttercup)
1% *Reseda lutea* – (Wild Mignonette)
5% *Rhinanthus minor* – (Yellow rattle)
3% *Scabiosa columbaria* – (Small Scabious)
5% *Sanguisorba minor* – (Salad Burnet)
Grasses:
4% *Agrostis capillaris* – (Common Bent)
3% *Briza maxima* – (Quaking Grass)
5% Bromus erectus – (Upright Brome)
28% *Cynosurus cristatus* – (Crested Dogstail)
30% *Festuca ovina* – (Sheep's Fescue)
20% *Festuca rubra* – (Red Fescue)
2% *Koeleria macrantha* – (Crested Hair-Grass)
4% *Phleum bertolonii* – (Small Timothy)
4% Trisetum flavescens – (Yellow Oat Grass)

SOWING

- Calcareous meadow - Seed should be sown from late summer to mid-autumn at a rate of 3-5g/m2, 80% grass:20% wildflowers ratio.
- After sowing, it is recommended that the area is lightly raked/rolled and watered.
- If over-seeding into existing grassland seed should be sown from late summer to mid-autumn at a rate of 3-5g/m2, 100% wildflowers ratio.
- Roll field straight after the seed has been spread to ensure contact with bare soil for germination. Ensure no soil and seeds get stuck to the roller.

MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS

- First Year Management:- After sowing, avoid cutting in the spring and early summer if the mixture is autumn sown. Allow sown annuals to flower, then in mid-summer the vegetation will be cut and removed before they die back, set seed, and collapse; this cut will reveal the younger meadow mixture and give it the space it needs to develop. With the exception of yellow rattle, most of the sown species are perennial and will be slow to germinate, grow and flower, particularly against the competition from established grasses.
- After first year management:- Established grassland can be managed in a number of ways which will determine its character. The best results are usually obtained by traditional meadow management based around a main summer hay cut in combination with autumn, and possibly spring mowing. Meadow grassland is not cut from spring through to late July/August to give sown species an opportunity to flower. After flowering in July or August, take a 'hay cut' and cut back to around 5cm. Leave the hay to dry and shed seed, then remove it from the site. Mow or graze the re-growth through to late autumn/winter and again in spring (if needed).
- Restored chalk grassland pasture - If hay crop usually taken in July, then at least 1 year in 5 a late crop should be taken: end of Aug/September.

TABLE 1 - WOODY PLANTS LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT – 10 YEAR SCHEDULE

Month/ Year	Trees	Shrubs and Hedge Plants
Year 1 November - March	Plant new trees to specification.	Plant new shrubs to specification
April - July	Hand weed. Check stakes and guards on a regular basis. Check for damage. Irrigate as necessary during dry periods.	Herbicide weed control. Check for vermin damage. Irrigate as necessary bigger shrubs
August - October	As above.	As above and lightly trim top growth to encourage low growth. Irrigate as necessary bigger shrubs.
Year 2 November - March	Check all trees and guards and stakes. Replace failures.	Check all plants and replace failures. Check guards, canes.
April - July	As Year 1. Irrigate as necessary during dry periods.	As Year 1. Irrigate as necessary bigger shrubs
August to October	As April to July.	As Year 1.
Year 3 November - March	As Year 2. Replace failures. Prune deciduous trees.	As Year 2. Prune back broken shoots, twigs etc
April - October	Remove spiral guards and stakes on vigorous plants. Irrigate as necessary during dry periods	As Years 1 and 2. Irrigate as necessary bigger shrubs
Years 4 to 5 November - March	Replace failures. Remove spiral guards and stakes. Prune deciduous trees. Apply residual weed control if needed	As Years 1 and 2. Remove guards and canes/stakes depending on establishment of new planting. Apply residual weed control if needed.
April to October	Remove remaining guards and stakes. Quinquennial review.	Remove guards and trim to shape. Gap up as necessary to achieve 100% stocking rate. Quinquennial review.
Years 5 to 10	Assess establishment, replace failures and maintain as per year 1 to 5. Remove remaining guards.	Assess establishment, replace failures and maintain as per year 1 to 5. Remove remaining guards.

TABLE 2 – WILDFLOWER SEED MIX LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT – 10 YEAR SCHEDULE

Month/ Year	**Calcareous meadow**	**Restored chalk grassland pasture**
Year 1 November - March	Prepare soil	Reduce nutrients by taking a late cut in early Nov or March. Remove cuttings
April - July	Weed control.	Weed control. Take/remove repeated cuttings
August - October	Sow seed and rake/roll. Protect seed from birds	Prep ground. Sow seed and roll. Protect seed from birds.
Year 2 November - March	Protect seed from birds	Take late cut in Nov if needed, remove cuttings.
April - July	Irrigate in dry conditions. Weed by hand and remove clippings.	Weed by hand and remove clippings.
August to October	Lightly cut to 2.5cm high when sown annuals have flowered. Remove clippings. Water in very dry conditions. Sow fresh seed in any bare patches	Take a 'hay cut' after flowering in July or August and cut back to 5cm. Allow hay to dry and shed seed then remove. Sow fresh seed in any bare patches
Year 3 November - March	N/A	Take late cut in Nov or early March if needed, remove cuttings
April - October	Take a cut after flowering in July or August and cut back to 5cm. Allow cuttings to dry and shed seed then remove. Sow fresh seed in any bare patches	Take a 'hay cut' after flowering in July or August and cut back to 5cm. Allow hay to dry and shed seed then remove. Sow fresh seed in any bare patches
October -February	Mow any re-growth through to late autumn/winter and again in spring if necessary.	Mow or graze any re-growth through to late autumn/winter and again in spring if necessary.
Years 4 and 5 November - March	N/A	N/A
April to October	As year 3	As year 3
October-February	As year 3. Quinquennial review.	As year 3. Quinquennial review.
Years 5 to 10	Assess establishment. Manage as per year 3 if suitable.	Assess establishment. Manage as per year 3 if suitable. If hay crop usually taken in July, then at least 1 year in 5 a late crop should be taken: end of Aug/Sept