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UPPER FARM, PARK LANE, CHERHILL, CALNE, WILTS. SN11 8XW

ADDENDUM TO:

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL
FOR
ERECTION OF HIGH WELFARE COW HOUSING AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS (TO BE CONSTRUCTED IN 3 SEPARATE PHASES)

Prepared by:

WHLandscape

On behalf of:

DW Pickford & Son Ltd

Project Reference: 24.1789

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APPOINTMENT

WH Landscape Consultancy Ltd (WHLandscape) was been appointed by DW Pickford & Son Ltd. to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) for the proposed construction, in three phases, of an extension of an agricultural building on land at Upper Farm, Park Lane, Cherhill, Calne, Wiltshire SN11 8XW. This document serves as an addendum to this in response to a request for further information made by Wiltshire Council.

WHLandscape has an established track record of assessing development proposals. The practice has considerable experience in the field of landscape and visual assessment and uses tried and tested techniques developed and recognised by the Landscape Institute, Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, and Natural England. This addendum has been written by: Robin Lines BA (Hons) Dip LA PIEMA ALI Checked by: Will Harley BSc (Hons) CMLI

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document serves as a brief addendum to a landscape and visual appraisal (LVA) prepared by this practice in support of an application for the proposed construction, in three phases, of high welfare cow housing agricultural buildings on land abutting the western side of an existing farm complex at Upper Farm ('the site'). For details of predicted landscape and visual impacts, as well as general descriptions of the site's receiving landscape, please refer to the main LVA document.

1.2 The proposals are submitted in three phases as three separate planning applications, but are dealt with here as a single development. The proposals are for the construction of three adjoind 16.05 metre (m) wide by 32.41m long (520.18m²) steel portal-framed agricultural buildings. To the immediate south of these proposed buildings is a, extant permission (PL/2023/02411) for a similar building which was granted prior approval in April 2023. At the time of writing this has not yet been constructed.

1.3 The purpose of this addendum is to address issues raised during the consultation period by Wiltshire Council relevant to landscape: currently there is a 'holding objection' whilst clarification is sought for the proposals' likely effects on dark skies, and the external finishes of the building. A request has also been made to supplement the landscape enhancement/mitigation strategy with additional tree planting, and a revised drawing is therefore appended to this document.

1.4 In summary, the Landscape Officer has requested that the following is provided:

- A statement providing information on the scheme's impact on dark skies (see Section 2, below);
- A statement on how the scheme will comply with National Landscape Colour Guidance (North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Guidance on the selection and use of colour in development, 2020) (see Section 3, below); and,
- A plan showing additional Common Oak trees (12-14cm girth) planted at 15-20m centres within the line of the proposed native hedgerow on the western flank of the proposals, adjacent to the PRoW (the plan is appended to this document).

2. DARK SKIES

2.1 The application site lies on the northern edge of the parish of Cherhill. Guidance Note GN01/21 The Reduction of Obtrusive Light, issued by the Institution of Lighting Professionals, describes 'environmental zones' for exterior lighting control that are recommended for use by local authorities in the development plan policies on protecting dark skies. Environmental Zone 'E1' is described as ***'Relatively uninhabited rural areas, National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, IDA buffer zones etc'***, and this description would be appropriate in the context of the site and its environs (see the North Wessex Downs AONB's light control zones as set out in Dark Skies of the North Wessex Downs: A Guide To Good External Lighting, 2021), and therefore the lighting strategy specified for this scheme should respond to this.

2.2 Animal welfare and comfort are key priorities in the design of the proposed farm buildings. In particular, ventilation and natural light are essential for the dairy cattle's mental and physical wellbeing leading to more productive livestock. Therefore, the buildings are designed with open sides – the industry standard for dairy cattle sheds (and the design used for the adjoined building to the south that was granted permission under Prior Approval). Whilst this will present no issues during daylight hours, the open sides have the potential to result in some light spill after dusk when the cattle are still being tended to, and artificial light will also be required on the perimeter of the building.

2.3 The technical specification of external lighting will include luminaires provided with cowls in order to eradicate upward glare. External lights will be angled downwards in order to mitigate for light spill/light intrusion (the main beam angle of all luminaires will be no greater than 70°), and will use narrower beam floodlights.

2.4 Furthermore, the applicant has agreed that farming operations will be the subject of a lighting curfew whereby the lights will be switched off no later than 10:30pm each evening, and will remain off until morning operations resume.

2.5 The external lighting specification considers two Commission Internationale De L'Eclairage (CIE) documents which provide industry standard guidance to the mitigation of obtrusive light from exterior lighting installations:

- CIE 150: 2017 Guide on the Limitation of the Effects of Obtrusive Light from Outdoor Lighting Installations
- CIE 126: 1997 Guidelines for Minimizing Sky Glow

2.6 General guidance regarding dark skies is also provided by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. This states that Local Planning Authorities should consider the following questions when assessing light pollution:

- ***Will a new development, or a proposed change to an existing site, be likely to materially alter light levels in the environment around the site and/or have the potential to adversely affect the use or enjoyment of nearby buildings or open spaces?***
- ***Will the impact of new lighting conflict with the needs of specialist facilities requiring low levels of surrounding light (such as observatories, airports and general aviation facilities)? Impacts on other activities that rely on low levels of light such as astronomy may also be a consideration, but will need to be considered in terms of both their severity and alongside the wider benefits of the development.***
- ***Is the development in or near a protected area of dark sky or an intrinsically dark landscape where new lighting would be conspicuously out of keeping with local nocturnal light levels, making it desirable to minimise or avoid new lighting?***
- ***Would new lighting have any safety impacts, for example in creating a hazard for road users?***
- ***Is a proposal likely to have a significant impact on a protected site or species? This could be a particular concern where forms of artificial light with a potentially high impact on wildlife and ecosystems (e.g. white or ultraviolet light) are being proposed close to protected sites, sensitive wildlife receptors or areas, including where the light is likely to shine on water where bats feed.***
- ***Does the proposed development include smooth, reflective building materials, including large horizontal expanses of glass, particularly near water bodies? (As it may change natural light, creating polarised light pollution that can affect wildlife behaviour.)***

2.7 In this instance, with the exception of bullet point 3, the answer to each of these questions is "no", and the provision of lighting within an agricultural development adjacent that serves as an extension of an existing farm complex of the same nature will not be a source of annoyance to people, will not be in conflict with the requirements of specialist facilities, will not be harmful to wildlife, and will not undermine people's residential amenity of enjoyment of the countryside or the night sky.

2.8 In relation to bullet 3, the proposed lighting with the proposed development would not be out of keeping with existing nocturnal light levels where the is already an agricultural complex (and an approved new building which has not yet been built). Additionally, existing landscape structure, and planned/proposed new tree and hedgerow planting will largely contain any notable light spill in any case.

3. EXTERNAL FINISHES

3.1 The external materials of the proposals will be seen in the context of the agricultural complex which they form part of. The materials will not appear incongruous in this setting, and are naturally muted. The proposals will be publicly visible from only a small geographic area (please see the LVA report). From distant, elevated views from the downland to the south the proposals will be largely obscured by the existing and approved buildings within the farm complex. Where there will be some visibility of the proposals (mainly from VP 9a) there will be a high degree of visual blending with the existing and approved farm buildings. Therefore, the effect on the visual amenity and visual character of the study area will be quite limited in the context of the existing farm, with the receiving landscape being one where agricultural built form is already an established visual component.

3.2 Whilst the cattle sheds will be open-sided, pre-stressed concrete panels, in a natural finish and texture, have been specified for their lower sections, with rails just above these to maintain an enclosure for the cattle. The northern (gable) end of the buildings will be partially clad with timber space boards, pre-stressed concrete panels, and metal sheeted gates. The roof of the buildings will be finished in grey fibre cement roof sheets.

3.3 These external finishes are a continuation of the materials used for the approved farm building (extant permission PL/2023/02411, granted prior approval in April 2023) which the proposals will adjoin.

3.4 The North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Guidance on the selection and use of colour in development (2020) provides a resource for developers in specifying external finishes, principally for residential and commercial developments, but also for agricultural and industrial buildings, infrastructure and utilities.

3.5 The study makes reference to the use of cladding for agricultural buildings (and the best colour for this, based upon colour palettes developed for each landscape character type). However, as these are open-sided buildings, this is not applicable in this instance.

3.6 The study also includes recommends roofing materials for agricultural buildings, including Eternit fibre cement corrugated roof sheets in grey, and this has been used for the proposals.

3.7 The introduction to the study states that traditional materials include timber. Paragraph 2.2 of the study states ***'Natural materials like timber will also fade and this needs to be anticipated before specification. While there is often a reluctance to stain newly constructed timber cladding it should be recognised that the same cladding will look quite different after about six seasons. There are some UV inhibitors that can be applied to timber to prolong their natural colours.'*** However, it is also acknowledged that timber on north-facing elevations will be in the shade and will potentially remain wetter for longer and therefore darker in appearance. Therefore, although a UV inhibitor has not been specified at this stage for the timber space boards on the northern elevation, it is a moot point whether this would be needed.

4. LANDSCAPE ENHANCEMENTS

4.1 Although the proposals will not rely on landscape mitigation to be acceptably absorbed visually, a length of native hedgerow has been specified in order to soften the western flank of the proposals when viewed from a short section of the adjacent footpath. The Landscape Officer has recommended that additional native trees (12-14cm girth) is planted at 15-20m centres within the line of the proposed native hedgerow in order to enhance the field boundary. A revised plan showing this additional tree planting is appended to this document.

5. SUMMARY

5.1 This document has been produced to provide the Officer with the additional information required in order remove the 'holding objection'.

5.2 The effects upon dark skies will largely be subsumed into farm operations within the existing farm complex, and the additional lighting required will be kept to a minimum, will be angled down to avoid light spill and light intrusion, and will use cowls to avoid glare and sky glow. The lighting will also be the subject of a curfew whereby it will be turned off (at the latest) by 10:30pm.

5.3 Within Environmental Zone E1 the effects on dark skies are considered acceptable in this instance, and the applicant has taken into account relevant dark sky policy.

5.4 The external materials specified for the three phases of new development continue the treatment used for the exterior of the extant planning permission to the immediate south, which the proposals will adjoin. The roof material and colour will conform with colour guidance within the North Wessex

Downs National Landscape, although there is no scope to include coloured cladding due to the need for open sides to the building. Natural finishes will be used for steel, concrete and timber materials used elsewhere in the buildings' construction. If required, as UV inhibitor can be added to the timber space boards.

5.5 A schedule for additional tree planting has been added to the landscape enhancement and mitigation strategy (appended).

WHL-1789-06 REV 'B': LANDSCAPE MITIGATION STRATEGY

PLANTING SPECIFICATION

Quality control
All landscape works to be carried out in accordance with the relevant current British Standards (including current revisions of 4428, 3936 & 5837); National Planting Specifications Guidelines; Horticultural Trades Association standards (including 'Handling and establishing landscape plants' part 1, 2 & 3); CPSE 'Plant Handling' Standards & COSHH Regulations. All soft landscape works to be carried out by trained and competent operatives under appropriate supervision and only after a suitable pre-commencement site meeting of all relevant parties. Setting out, materials and plant stock supplies to be approved by a competent client representative. There will be no plant substitutions or scheme revisions allowed without written approval of the client or client representative. Workmanship and maintenance operations to be subject to monitoring inspections and approval also by a competent client representative.

General care & tidiness
During the implementation works and maintenance thereafter, all soft landscape operations to be carried out with care to respect the site and environs, its occupiers, passers-by and other contractors' operations. In particular, all waste material to be removed from site following completion of the day's work and/or the particular element of work. Precautions also to be taken to avoid the fouling of other site structures and adjacent surfaces (including roadways, paths and parking areas) with spillage of soil or other material.

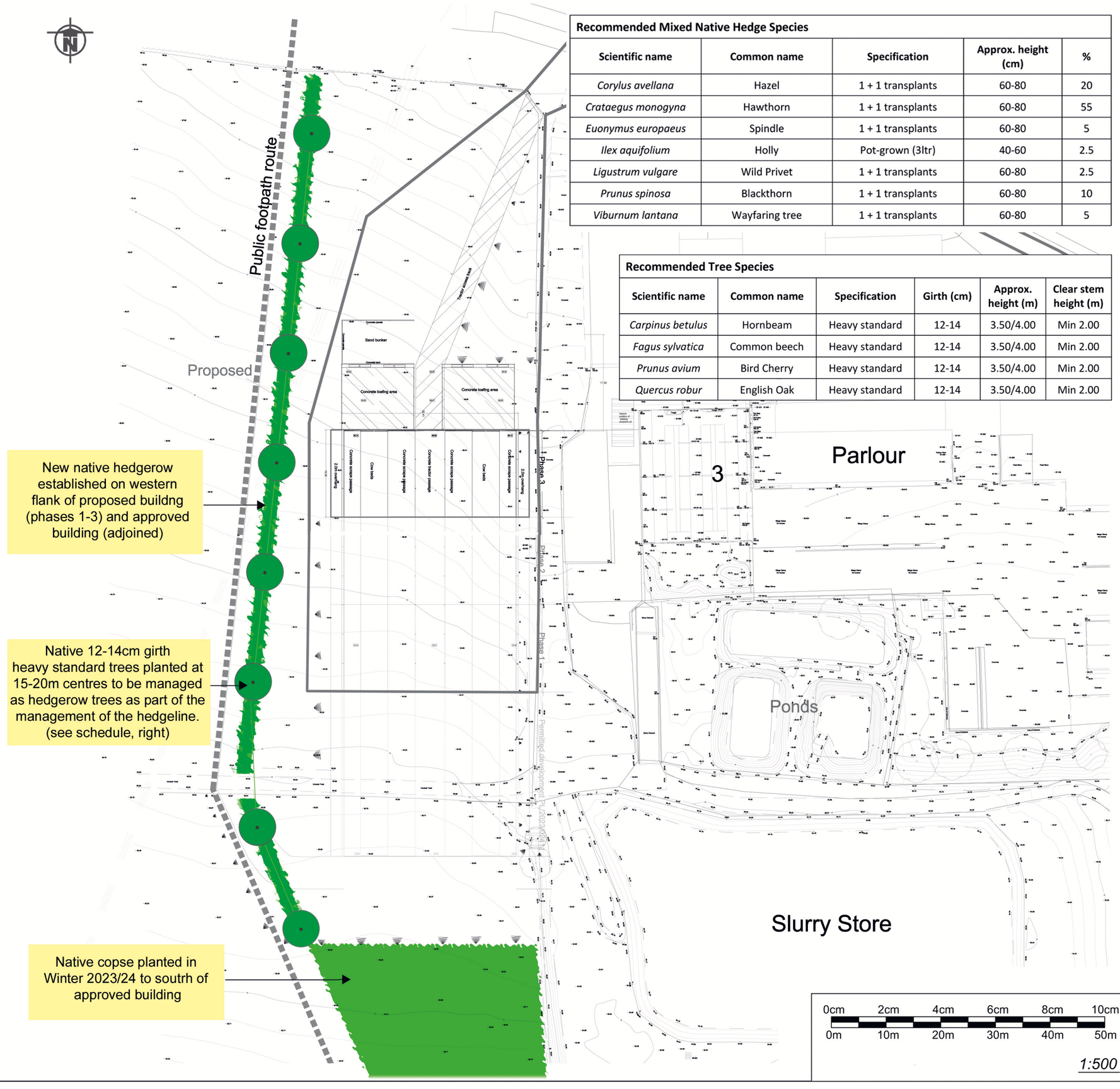
PLANTING

Plants and plant handling
All plant material to be of good quality stock, size in accordance with the specification, and in a healthy condition; free from pest, disease and weed growth in accordance with BS3936 and HTA National Plant Specification. British native species to be of British origin, of local seed stock/provenance wherever possible, and from sustainable seed sources. Plants to be handled in accordance with BS4428 and the HTA code for Plant Handling and Establishment of Landscape Plants to ensure that transit, storage, handling on site and planting operations preserve and promote the condition of the stock.

Planting generally
Each plant to be thoroughly watered with a minimum of 5l of water immediately after planting and prior to application of mulch. All bare-root planting to be carried out only during the winter planting season between mid-November and the end of February. No planting to be undertaken when the ground is frozen.

Mulch
On completion of planting operations, all planting areas, including hedge strips and tree pits to be spread with well-composted wood chip mulch to an even thickness of 100mm. Tree pit mulch areas to be circles no less than 1m in diameter.

Rabbit protection
All tree, hedge and copse plants to be protected with 600mm high guards. These will be 170-200mm diameter for shrub species and 80-110mm diameter for trees. All to be installed and secured in accordance with manufacturer's instructions immediately after planting.



Recommended Mixed Native Hedge Species

Scientific name	Common name	Specification	Approx. height (cm)	%
Corylus avellana	Hazel	1 + 1 transplants	60-80	20
Crataegus monogyna	Hawthorn	1 + 1 transplants	60-80	55
Euonymus europaeus	Spindle	1 + 1 transplants	60-80	5
Ilex aquifolium	Holly	Pot-grown (3ltr)	40-60	2.5
Ligustrum vulgare	Wild Privet	1 + 1 transplants	60-80	2.5
Prunus spinosa	Blackthorn	1 + 1 transplants	60-80	10
Viburnum lantana	Wayfaring tree	1 + 1 transplants	60-80	5

Recommended Tree Species

Scientific name	Common name	Specification	Girth (cm)	Approx. height (m)	Clear stem height (m)
Carpinus betulus	Hornbeam	Heavy standard	12-14	3.50/4.00	Min 2.00
Fagus sylvatica	Common beech	Heavy standard	12-14	3.50/4.00	Min 2.00
Prunus avium	Bird Cherry	Heavy standard	12-14	3.50/4.00	Min 2.00
Quercus robur	English Oak	Heavy standard	12-14	3.50/4.00	Min 2.00

0cm 2cm 4cm 6cm 8cm 10cm
0m 10m 20m 30m 40m 50m
1:500

KEY:

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