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PLANTING SPECIFICATION

These implementation and maintenance guidelines are for planning purposes only to indicate the level of workmanship to be specified and do not constitute a detailed specification.

1. GENERAL

- 1.1. All landscape operatives will be appropriately trained, certified and qualified to undertake the tasks required. When required, the relevant certificates will be made available for inspection. All work is to be carried out in accordance with the relevant British Standards, Codes of Practice and Legislation.
- 1.2. All plants shall conform to BS 3936 and be in accordance with the National Plant Specification. Supplying nurseries shall be registered under the HTA Nursery Certification Scheme. All plants shall be packed and transported in accordance with the Code of Practice for Plant Handling as produced by CPSE.
- 1.3. Prior to planting soil percolation tests will be undertaken to ensure the soil is free draining and that planting will not become waterlogged. If soil is not free-draining the landscape architect should be informed and advice should be sought from a soil scientist, following which remediation/drainage solutions undertaken to ensure planting will thrive.
- 1.4. Planting shall not be carried out when the ground is waterlogged, frost bound or during periods of cold drying winds. All bareroot planting stock will be kept covered until actually planted in order to minimise water-loss and prevent the roots from drying out. Tree handling, storage and planting shall be in accordance with BS 8545 Chapters 9 to10 and Annexes C to F.
- 1.5. The landscape contractor shall maintain all areas of new planting for a period of 12 months following practical completion. All stock deemed to be dead, dying or diseased within the defects period shall be replaced by the contractor at his own cost.
- 1.6. A minimum intervention approach will be used in terms of weed control. In areas of transplant tree/shrub or ornamental shrub planting this is to be achieved by using mulch mats and hand-weeding. Weed killer and other chemicals will be used as little as possible on site. Spot removal of weeds will be carried out by hand removal as necessary.
- 1.7. If the water supply is likely to be restricted, e.g. due to emergency drought legislation, do not carry out seeding/turfing until instructed. If seeding/turfing has been carried out and the water supply is restricted, obtain instructions on watering.

2. TREE PLANTING

Ground Preparation and Tree Pit Excavation

- 2.1. Where necessary remove existing weeds by hand. Chemical removal using a glyphosate based herbicide will be avoided unless large areas need clearing – following which allow a suitable period to elapse, as recommended by the manufacturer, for the herbicide to take effect.
- 2.2. Tree pits of at least 75mm diameter greater than the root system and no deeper than the rootball / container depth are to be excavated and the sides well scarified to prevent smearing. All extraneous matter such as plastic, wood, metal and stones greater than 50mm in any dimension shall be removed from site.
- 2.3. During excavation of the pit, the soil dug should be placed to one side separating topsoil and subsoil as far as is practical.
- 2.4. Drainage: prior to tree planting a review of the soil type should be undertaken to ensure that the tree pit base will allow water to percolate, and the pit will not become waterlogged. If free vertical drainage will not occur through the base of the tree pit, then a drainage system must be put in place, such as connection to a land drain or additional excavation to reach the gravel seam. Professional advice should be sought from a soil scientist and, if required, a drainage engineer.

Tree Planting

- 2.5. Trees shall be planted as per the planting arrangement as set out on the planting plan and plant schedule.
- 2.6. The typical rooting depth for trees is 900mm. The first 300mm shall be made up of topsoil; it shall be ensured that a suitable subsoil provides the remainder of the minimum rooting depth.
- 2.7. The root system of the tree should be wetted prior to planting. The tree should be planted at the correct depth taking into account the position of the root flare and the finished level – the rootball or root stem transition should be level with the existing host soil or surface. The base of the rootball should typically sit on subsoil, for larger rootballs the subsoil will sit around the lower portion of the rootball.
- 2.8. Tree pits should be backfilled with the excavated topsoil, if the original topsoil is not available or deemed unsuitable, a multi-purpose topsoil should be used. Any subsoil excavated should be discarded and the subsoil depth (beyond 300mm deep) backfilled with a high sand content subsoil. Backfill should be added gradually, in layers of 150mm to 230mm depth, ensuring the tree is held upright At each stage the fill should be firmed in to eliminate all air pockets under and around the root system, but with care being taken not to excessively compact the soil. The final layer should not be consolidated.
- 2.9. General-purpose slow release fertiliser (at the rate of 75gm/m2) and Tree Planting and Mulching Compost at the rate of (20litres/m2) are to be incorporated into the top 150mm of topsoil during final cultivations.
- 2.10. Standard trees are to be single staked with 75mm dia stakes. All extra heavy standard size trees are to be double staked with 75mm dia stakes. Stakes should be driven at least 300mm into undisturbed ground before planting the tree, taking care to avoid underground services and cables etc. and should typically be one third the height of the tree stem above ground.
- 2.11. Staked trees shall be secured to stakes with suitable proprietary rubber tree ties and spacers.
- 2.12. Immediately after planting, but before applying the below bark mulch, all trees should be saturated to field capacity.
- 2.13. Ornamental composted bark mulch will be spread to a depth of 75mm across a 0.8m dia circle around individual trees, ensuring that the root flare and base of the stem, along with any ground cover plants, are not buried.

3. NATIVE HEDGE PLANTING

Ground Preparation

- 3.1. Where necessary existing weeds will be treated with a glyphosate-based herbicide and a suitable period allowed to elapse, as recommended by the manufacturer, for the herbicide to take effect.
- 3.2. All extraneous matter such as plastic, wood, metal and stones greater than 50mm diameter will be removed from site to a registered waste disposal facility.

Planting

- 3.3. The planting arrangement shall be as set out in the plant schedule on the relevant planting plan.
- 3.4. Bare-root hedge plants shall be notch planted in a double staggered row at the rate of 5 plants per linear metre (using L- shaped notches) using spades of a design suitable for this purpose. The notches must be vertical and deep enough for the roots to hang freely, with the transplant being planted so that the root collar is exactly level with the ground surface. The notch must then be closed, and the soil will be well firmed round the roots in line with the guidelines as set out in BS 4428 (1989).
- 3.5. Container-grown hedge plants will be planted into a pit dug 1.5x the diameter of the root mass, with the bottom and sides of the planting pit broken up to aid root expansion. The plants will be planted so that the root collar is exactly level with the ground surface.
- 3.6. All bare-root hedge planting stock will be protected from rabbit damage using approved proprietary 600mm plastic-free shrub guards (e.g. Greentech Bio-Earth Biodegradable Plastic-Free Shelter), supported with 0.9m 12/14lb canes as advised by the manufacturer.
- 3.7. All container-grown shrubs will be protected from rabbit damage using approved proprietary 600mm plastic-free shrub guards (e.g. Greentech Bio-Earth Biodegradable Plastic-Free Shelter), supported with 0.9m x 32 mm x 32mm softwood stakes as advised by the manufacturer.

Maintenance during first growing season

- 3.8. All dead, dying or diseased hedge plants will be replaced with plants of similar size and species. If the failure of the plant is due to disease and the disease is considered likely to re-occur, then an alternative species may be used as replacement if agreed with the LPA.
- 3.9. The planting area will be kept weed free throughout the maintenance period using approved herbicides in April, June and August

4. EXISITING GRASSLAND OVER SOWN WITH WILDFLOWER MEADOW

Preparation

- 4.1. Areas of existing grassland to be over sown with wildflower meadow seed to be cultivated to achieve 40–60% bare ground to allow seeds to make contact with bare soil. Harrowing or raking can be used depending on the size of the area to be sown. Cultivation should result in a seed bed that is level and aerated. Stones over 75mm diameter and weed debris should be removed.

Seeding

- 4.2. Seeds shall be sown in September/October during calm weather and not when the ground is frost bound or waterlogged. This is to encourage those seeds which require stratification the appropriate conditions. However, if required, sowing may take place in the spring rather than leave the prepared soil to develop weeds.
- 4.3. To achieve an even sowing, bulk with an inert carrier, such as sand. Seed shall be sown in two equal sowings in transverse directions at e.g. 2g/m². After sowing the contractor shall roll in the seed to guarantee intimate contact with the soil, ensuring not to rake or cover the seed with soil.

Initial Cut

- 4.4. During first 12 months sward to be regularly cut to a heigh between 25 and 50mm during the first season after sowing to minimise competition and weed seed production. Cutting should be frequent enough to disperse the cuttings, or if less frequent remove the cuttings.

5. GENERAL MAINTENANCE

- 5.1. The Landscape contractor shall maintain all areas of new planting for a period of 12 months following practical completion. All stock deemed to be dead, dying or diseased within the defects period shall be replaced by the contractor at his own cost. The site is to be visited monthly throughout the year to undertake the Following operations:
 - Weed clearance: All planting areas to be kept weed free by hand weeding or herbicide treatment.
 - Litter clearance: All litter is to be removed from planting beds.
 - Watering: All planted areas are to be watered for the first two years from May to September following any dry periods of 7 days.

Trees

- 5.2. All trees are to be watered weekly from May to the end of September unless unnecessary due to heavy rain; to receive 20 gallons of water. All tree ties and stakes are to be checked and adjusted if too loose, too tight or if chaffing is occurring. Any broken stakes are to be replaced. Any damaged shoots/branches are to be pruned back to healthy wood. Plants are to be pruned in accordance with good horticultural practice to maintain healthy, well-shaped specimens. Stakes may be removed from Year 2 if plant is fully established and if shelter is suppressing further growth.

Hedges

- 5.3. Hedge lines shall be kept mulched until established. At the end of the Defects Liability Period / First Year's Maintenance the CA will prepare a list of all plants which are dead, dying or diseased and are to be replaced during the following planting season at the contractor's expense.