

Shinfield Northern Pitches Landscape Management Plan

Prepared on behalf of University of Reading

August 2023

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ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL

Figure 1: 24262-RG-L-550

APPENDICES

Appendix A.1: Landscape Maintenance Programme

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Landscape Management Plan (LMP) has been prepared by Barton Willmore in support of the Reserve Matters Application in relation to the sports pitches and associated open space at High Copse, Shinfield.
- 1.2 This document sets out the recommended management and maintenance requirements for the landscape features of the public open space area as shown on Barton Willmore drawing 24262-RG-L-508-14 following completion of the construction works. It demonstrates the commitment to a comprehensive and sensitive approach to the management of retained existing features as well as the successful establishment of the proposed planting and general maintenance of the site in a clean, tidy usable and safe condition.

Scope, Vision and Objectives

- 1.3 The LMP provides an approach to the overall management of the landscape features of the public open space area as well as more detailed objectives.
- 1.4 The delivery of the LMP can be expressed by a clear and simple vision, which has been set out below:
- To ensure the long-term management and enhancement of the landscape components of the site and to maximise the landscape and recreational amenity of the public open space.
 - New landscape features introduced in order to strengthen the existing landscape, enhance and maintain nature conservation significance, assimilate the site into its setting and provide sports and recreation facilities for community use. These components will be enhanced and protected with a programme of long term care.
- 1.5 To realise this vision, the key overarching objectives of the LMP are set out below:
- i) The adoption of a coherent and integrated approach to the management and maintenance of the landscape of the open space;
 - ii) Enhancing the character of the landscape in the vicinity of the site and reinforce local landscape character through the provision and management of a robust landscape infrastructure complementing the existing site vegetation;
 - iii) Maintain a high quality, attractive and functional landscape setting for the adjacent development;

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- iv) The management of proposed landscape planting to ensure their successful establishment and biodiversity benefits in the long term; and
 - v) These objectives will be realised through a sensitive management approach, which protects, manages and enhances the site for the benefit of landscape quality, character, biodiversity and recreation.

Management Type Definition

- 1.6 Critical to the management process is the identification and delineation of Management Types. These are landscape features with defined characteristics and qualities for which there are related user expectations, and which require distinct management guidance.
- 1.7 The landscape features of the proposed development on the Site have been divided into three main management types that display specific characteristics which require individual management strategies. To achieve the overarching objectives for the LMP, management objectives have been identified for each Management Type.

Methodology

- 1.8 Section 2.0 describes the landscape components of the Site. Section 3.0 details specific management aims, objectives and prescriptions for the Landscape Management Types in the Proposed Development. Section 4.0 outlines the recommended framework for the implementation, monitoring and review of the LMP, and long term management responsibilities.

2.0 LANDSCAPE INVENTORY

Site Context

- 2.1 The land sits within the administrative boundary of Wokingham Borough Council (WBC), to the south-western edge of the settlement of Shinfield. The sports pitches and associated pavilion are bordered to the north by the sustainable transport link, the west by Hyde End Lane to the south by fields, and the residential development to the east.
- 2.2 The open space covers an area of approximately 5.2 hectares currently consisting of agricultural land (rough grassland and arable land).
- 2.3 To the southern boundary of the open space is an existing tree group, largely retained within the proposals. These trees are not protected by TPO status.
- 2.4 There are number of solitary trees within the demise of the sports pitches that will need to be removed to facilitate the pitch construction.

3.0 MANAGEMENT TYPE AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND PRESCRIPTIONS

Overview

- 3.1 As part of establishing an effective Landscape Management Plan, a series of interlinked landscape management types have been identified based on the approved landscape proposals.
- 3.2 Aims and objectives outlined within this section define what is to be achieved for the identified landscape management types across the site. These in turn inform detailed prescriptions which enable the anticipated outcomes to be achieved in the different Management Types. A Landscape Maintenance Programme is included at Appendix 1.
- 3.3 Landscape features to be managed and maintained have been divided into three types. These are as follows:
- 1) Amenity Grassland;**
 - 2) Sports Pitches;**
 - 3) Hard Surfacing;**
 - 4) Boundary Treatments.**
- 3.4 As a general note, in the interests of wildlife, hand weeding (including mechanical methods) should take precedence and herbicides should not be used unless essential to ensure the complete removal of noxious weeds or other very significant weed growth. If essential, herbicide application is to only be carried out by a suitably trained person, in periods of low winds, and with careful directional application to ensure no spray/drift onto tree/shrub species. Only suitable herbicide products under current regulations will be used. Where work is near water/swales it must comply with the DEFRA 1995 'Guidelines for the use of herbicides on weeds in or near water courses and lakes'. All precautions recommended by the manufacturer must be observed and containers removed from site immediately they have been emptied or are no longer required.
- 3.5 Litter should be removed from all hard and soft areas at each maintenance visit to site, ensuring litter collection and removal at a minimum of fortnightly intervals. Litter to be removed from site to an approved tip.

TYPE 1: AMENITY GRASSLAND

- 3.6 Management Aim: To create attractive multi-functional green spaces for a range of informal recreation uses and attractive visual appearance.
- 3.7 Management Objectives: The overall management aim can be broken down into the following objectives:
- i) Maintain areas in a manner appropriate for use with an even, short, dense, vigorous sward free from disease, weeds and pests. Sward should cover at least 95% of the relevant area and contain a maximum of 10% herb species; and
 - ii) Ensure safe pedestrian use of amenity grass areas.

Maintenance Operations

Ongoing Maintenance

- 3.8 Carry out the following maintenance operations:
- There will often be a flush of annual weeds from the soil in the first growing season. This annual weed growth is easily controlled by repeated mowing.
 - Mow newly sown flowering lawns regularly (twice monthly maintenance visits during the growing season March-October) throughout the first year of establishment. Cut to a height of 40-60mm, removing cuttings if dense. This will gradually develop a good sward structure, help maintain balance between faster growing grasses and slower developing wild flowers, and control annual weeds.
 - Allow for the mowing regime to be adjusted and relax the management regime where appropriate, e.g under trees groups and adjacent to hedges, to twice annual cuts in autumn and early spring.
 - Do not cut grass areas with bulb planting until natural senescence of the foliage has begun;
 - Trim all edges to form neat, tidy edges to planted borders;
 - Monitor grass erosion and regularly reinstate damaged or worn areas. Any major divots/grooves are to be filled with topsoil and re-seeded at the earliest opportunity;
 - Carry out appropriate hand/mechanical/spot weed killing methods to prevent more than 10% of the grass sward comprising coarse ruderal or pernicious weeds; and

TYPE 2: SPORTS PITCHES

- 3.9 Management Aim: To maintain a grass surface suitable for sports use - A written specification outlining cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment, including adherence to current Sport England design guidance for the proposed playing pitches will be required.
- 3.10 The sports pitch specification will be appropriately secured at a later stage via details provided by a specialist sports pitch contractor (such as Whitehorse Contractors, or equal and approved), complying with current Sports England design guidance.
- 3.11 Management Objectives: The overall management aim can be broken down into the following objectives:
- i) Maintain areas in a manner appropriate for use with a short, dense, vigorous sward free from disease, weeds and pests;
 - ii) Ensure safe use of sports grass areas;
 - iii) Maintain pitches to Sport England/ECB "Recommended Guidelines for the Construction, Preparation and Maintenance of Cricket Pitches and Outfields at All of Levels of the Game".
 - iv) A written specification outlining cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment, including adherence to current Sport England design guidance for the proposed playing pitches will be provided by the specialist contractor.

Maintenance Operations

Ongoing Maintenance

- 3.12 Carry out the following maintenance operations:
- Pitches are to be maintained in accordance with Sport England/ECB "Recommended Guidelines for the Construction, Preparation and Maintenance of Cricket Pitches and Outfields at All of Levels of the Game". Maintenance operations should follow the guidance provided by the installing pitch specialist and be regularly reviewed by a competent person in sports pitch management to maintain the pitch in a condition suitable for use.
- 3.13 Outline maintenance requirements:
- Cut grass (remove arisings);

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- Monitor grass erosion and regularly reinstate damaged or worn areas to maintain coverage and evenness. Any major divots/grooves are to be filled with topsoil and re-seeded at the earliest opportunity;
 - Water in periods of dry weather to maintain healthy growth;
 - Assess condition of pitches regularly and implement appropriate spiking/topdressing/ other techniques as required to maintain an acceptable playing surface;
 - Maintain and undertake remedial works to drainage system as required;
 - Limited use of fertilisers are permitted to maintain a healthy robust sward. Best practice guidance for application to be followed;
 - Keep sports grass areas free from significant build-up of fallen leaves throughout the autumn and winter period.

TYPE 3: HARD SURFACING

3.14 Management Aim: To provide clean, safe, attractive and functional areas for pedestrian, cycle and vehicle movement as appropriate.

3.15 Management Objectives: The overall management aim can be broken down into the following objectives:

- Ensure hard surfaces remain clear, well defined, safe and suitable for public access; and
- Maintain a high visual amenity of surfacing;
- Maintenance Operations;
- Ongoing Maintenance
- Carry out 2 No. routine maintenance visits per year, with additional visits if required, comprising the following operations:
- Keep surfaces weed and moss free by hoeing, pulling or (only where necessary) approved herbicide application;
- Cut back undergrowth, overgrowing or overhanging shrubs, hedges and minor tree branches to maintain an unobstructed route for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles as appropriate;
- Control moss and algae as necessary to maintain a clear route across all areas to avoid the risk of slipping in wet conditions;
- Sweep hard surfaced at regular interval (at least 4 times per annum) to avoid build-up of grit and other debris;

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- Keep hard surfaces free from significant build-up of fallen leaves throughout the autumn and winter period;
 - Undertake inspections of the hard landscape areas on a six monthly basis and repair any damaged areas. If any areas are reported as dangerous to users, repair immediately;
 - Drainage systems associated with hard surfaces to be inspected annually and maintenance work undertaken as necessary; and
 - Removal all litter at each visit.

TYPE 4: BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

3.16 Management Aim: To maintain fencing and street furniture suitable for its intended purpose and not to detract from the adjacent landscape areas.

3.17 Management Objectives: The overall management aim can be broken down into the following objectives:

- To maintain fencing, barriers and any associated gates, site furniture and signage in good condition and free from excessive dirt/graffiti; and
- To maintain their intended function.
- Maintenance Operations
- Ongoing Maintenance: Carry out 6 No. routine maintenance visits per year, with additional visits if required, comprising the following operations:
- Inspect fencing for damage/dirt/graffiti. Repair/replace/repaint/re-stain/clean as necessary.
- Inspect site furniture for damage to ensure safe for public use, performing its original function, and not visually detracting from area. Repair/replace/repaint/re-stain/clean as necessary;
- Remove any excess dirt or graffiti;
- Removal all litter at each visit.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITIES, MONITORING AND REVIEW

Implementation and Management Structure

- 4.1 This LMP incorporates objectives and prescriptions for the approach to be adopted in the maintenance and management of the landscape features which are to be incorporated into the landscape structure and public open space of the site.
- 4.2 The aim is to promote a sensitive management approach, which protects and improves the landscape and visual amenity value of the site and is compatible with the proposed development.
- 4.3 All maintenance of the public open space will be undertaken by a suitably qualified landscape management contractor on behalf of The University of Reading, or any future adopting party. Periodically maintenance works will be monitored by a suitably qualified person to ensure that the landscape management operations are being completed in accordance with this document.

Long Term Monitoring and Review

- 4.4 The LMP is a dynamic document that should be reviewed regularly by a suitably qualified person and developed or amended as circumstances change and the site evolves.
- 4.5 A LMP review should be carried out after five years of the commencement of the maintenance and aftercare scheme.

5.0 ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL

Figure 1: 35440-RG-L-550H-Northern Pitches GA-00

6.0 APPENDICES

Appendix A.1: Landscape Maintenance Programme

THE MANOR, SHINFIELD PUBLIC OPEN SPACE													
NO	ACTIVITY	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
1	TYPE 1- AMENITY GRASS AREAS												
1.1	Cut grass and trim edges												
1.2	Relaxed mowing regime to edges/verges/trees etc												
1.3	Reinstate damaged or worn areas												
1.4	Water newly planted areas to maintain healthy growth												
1.5	Carry out operations to prevent more than 10% weed cover												
1.6	Maintain weed free area around newly planted trees												
1.7	Remove litter at each vitist												
2	TYPE 2 - SPORTS PITCHES												
2.1	Cut grass to maintain sward height to EBC standards												
2.2	Reinstate damaged or worn areas												
2.3	Water newly planted areas to maintain healthy growth												
2.4	Remedial works to maintain acceptable playing surface												
2.5	Maintain and repair drainage system												
2.6	Keep area free from significant build-up of fallen leaves												
2.7	Remove litter at each vitist												
3	TYPE 10 - HARD SURFACING												
3.1	Keep surfaces weed and moss free free												
3.2	Cut back vegetation to maintain unobstructed routes												
3.3	Inspect 6 monthly and repair damaged areas												
3.4	Undertake seasonal maintenance such as leaf/snow clearance/de-icing as necessary for public safety												
3.5	Inspect drainage systems annually and repair as necessary												
3.6	Remove litter at each vitist												
4	TYPE 4 - BOUNDARY TREATMENTS AND STREET FURNITURE												
4.1	Inspect for damage. Repair/replace as necessary.												
4.2	Remove excess dirt/graffiti												
4.3	Remove litter at each vitist												

KEY: Shaded boxes= Window in which operations should take place