Land at Sonning Golf Club, Duffield Road, Sonning-on-Thames, Reading, Berkshire RG4 6GJ

Landscape & Ecological Management Plan

August 2026

***on behalf of* Sonning Golf Club Limited**

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1 Introduction

1.1 Site Description & Context

The land at Sonning Golf Club, referred to as the 'site' for the purpose of this report, is located to the north of Duffield Road, to the east of the village of Sonning-on-Thames in Berkshire RG4 6GJ. The approximate Ordnance Survey grid reference for the site is SU 7649 7482.

The site comprises modified grassland, other woodland; broadleaved, gorse scrub, developed land; sealed surface, artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface, bare ground, hedgerows and individual trees.

The site is located to the east of the village of Sonning-on-Thames. To the north of the site are residential dwellings and Rams Rugby Club. To the east and south is Sonning Golf Club. To the west of the site is a field with approved planning for a 13-unit development. The wider landscape surrounding the village is residential with arable farmland to the north and Caversham Lakes to the west.

1.1.1 Ecological Value of the Site

The current ecological value of the site is considered to be low in the context of the local area, with the site dominated by modified grassland of the golf course. The most ecologically interesting elements of the site are the woodland and scrub.

1.2 Background

A pre-application ecological appraisal was undertaken by Windrush Ecology Ltd in 2026 (Windrush Ecology Ltd, 2026).

The key findings of the report are summarised below:

- The site comprises modified grassland, other woodland; broadleaved, gorse scrub, developed land; sealed surface, artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface, bare ground, hedgerows and individual trees.

- The bare ground, developed land; sealed surface (buildings and other developed land) and artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface are considered to have negligible ecological value. The modified grassland, gorse scrub, non-native and ornamental hedgerow and individual trees are considered to have ecological value at the site level only.

- The native hedgerow along the southern boundary of the site has been assessed as meeting the criteria for 'Hedgerows'. This is a habitat of 'principal importance' under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

- The woodland to the south of the site has been assessed as meeting the criteria for 'Other woodland; broadleaved. This is also a habitat of 'principal importance' under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

- The hedgerows and adjacent woodland, have the potential to provide nesting habitat for breeding birds.

- There are no foreseeable impacts on Local Wildlife Sites or other sites of nature conservation importance.

- With the loss of the southern hedgerow there are impacts on habitats of high ecological value or of 'principal importance' to biodiversity.

1.3 Purpose of Report

Planning consent (reference 223458) has been granted for the carrying out of the development referred to above strictly in accordance with the description, plans and specification contained in the application, subject to conditions.

This report has been produced to support the discharge of Condition 22 of this planning consent.

Condition 22 of the consent states that:

'Prior to the first use of the development hereby approved, a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The content of the LEMP shall include the following:

a) Description and evaluation of features to be managed.
b) Ecological trends and constraints on the site that might influence management.
c) Aims and objectives of management – to include maintenance of habitats required for achieving biodiversity net gain for a minimum period of 30 years.
d) Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives.
e) Prescriptions for management actions
f) Preparation of a work schedule (including work plan capable of being rolled forward over a five-year period).
g) Details of the body or organization responsible for implementation of the plan.
h) Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures.

The LEMP shall include details of the legal and funding mechanism by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the developer with the management bodies responsible for its delivery. The plan shall also set out (where the results from monitoring show that conservation aims and objectives of the LEMP are not being met) how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved scheme. The approved plan will be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

1.4 Development Description

Planning consent has been granted for the outline planning permission for the proposed erection of up to 50 no. dwellings with public open space and revised access of Duffield Road.

2 Description & Evaluation of Features

2.1 Extent of Management Areas

This LEMP covers the habitats within the landholding of Sonning Golf Club. The area covered by the LEMP is shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Plan to show the location of the habitats to be managed as part of the LEMP.

2.2 Existing Habitats

Existing habitats covered by the LEMP include modified grassland, other woodland; broadleaved, gorse scrub, developed land; sealed surface, artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface, bare ground, hedgerows and individual trees. The native hedgerow along the southern boundary and the other woodland; broadleaved are considered to be habitats of 'principal importance' under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

2.3 New Habitats

The proposals will see the erection of up to 50 no. dwellings with public open space and revised access off Duffield Road onto the modified grassland. The proposals will also create habitats that will be ecologically meaningful with the setting, being appropriate for the context and provide wildlife with an enhancement to the existing situation. In addition, managing existing ecological features, namely the other woodland; broadleaved and gorse scrub, to maximise their ecological potential.

Habitats that will be subject to ongoing management activities are listed below:

- Existing modified grassland
- Existing gorse scrub
- Existing other woodland; broadleaved
- Existing trees
- Wildflower grassland (other neutral grassland)
- Newly planted trees

2.4 New Faunal Features

Further to the habitat enhancements the following species enhancements will be erected on the buildings within the site.

2.4.1 Birds

One Vivara Pro WoodStone House Sparrow Nest Box, or similar, will be erected onto each dwelling within the site. For more details, please see the Biodiversity Enhancement Scheme (Windrush Ecology Ltd, 2026).

2.4.2 Bats

One Vivara Pro Build-in WoodStone® Bat Box, or similar, will be erected onto each dwelling within the site. For more details, please see the Biodiversity Enhancement Scheme (Windrush Ecology Ltd, 2026).

2.4.3 Hedgehogs

Any garden fences (that could act as a barrier to hedgehog movement) are made permeable for hedgehogs. This can be achieved by cutting or leaving a 13cm-by-13cm hole within the fence or wall; this is sufficient for any hedgehog to pass through and is too small for nearly all pets. In order to allow free access to the new gardens, at least one suitable hole should be provided within each row of fence panelling.

3 Ecological Trends & Constraints On-site

3.1 Habitat Trends & Constraints

The habitats within the LEMP area are dominated by modified grassland, other woodland; broadleaved, gorse scrub, bare ground, individual trees and native hedgerow and non-native and ornamental hedgerow.

The modified grassland comprises common and widespread herbaceous species typical of modified grassland. This habitat is ubiquitous throughout England. As a result, the modified grassland is considered to be of ecological value within the context of the site only and does not constitute a significant ecological constrain to the creation of wildflower grassland in this area. The wildflower grassland once established will be taken under a traditional management regime.

There is also an opportunity to enhance the hedgerow resource at the site via the planting of new hedgerows. The native hedgerow to the south of the site is species-poor, and it appears to have been recently planted. As a result, the southern hedgerow is considered to be of ecological value within the context of the site only and does not constitute a significant ecological constrains to the development.

The other woodland; broadleaved forms small copses to the east and west of the site. The woodland to the west forms part of a network of woodlands and hedgerows/line of trees. The woodland is considered to meet the criteria of a woodland habitat of ‘principal importance’ as listed within Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. The woodland is considered to be of moderate ecological value. The woodland will be retained within the scheme and its value has been factored into the management regime.

In summary, the habitats that will be directly managed are not considered to represent a significant ecological constraint and are not likely to be subject to any ecological trends that will materially influence the habitat management in perpetuity of the scheme.

3.2 Faunal Trends & Constraints

3.2.1 Birds

The hedgerows and woodland within the site provide foraging and nesting opportunities for a range of common bird species including species. The hedgerows and woodland will be retained, and they will be taken under appropriate management and therefore the presence of nesting birds is not considered to pose a significant ecological constraint.

3.2.2 Bats

The hedgerow, woodland and scrub offer potential foraging opportunities for bats. These features are to be retained and protected under the approved development scheme. As such, it is considered that bats will not form a constraint to management activities.

3.2.3 Hedgehogs

The hedgerows, woodland and scrub offer potential foraging opportunities for hedgehogs. These features are to be retained and protected under the approved development scheme. As such, it is considered that hedgehogs will not form a constraint to management activities.

4 Proposals for Ecological Enhancements

4.1 Ecological Enhancements for Habitats

4.1.1 Proposed Hedgerow

To the south-east of the site within the area of other neutral grassland a new hedgerow will be planted in double staggered rows with 5 plants per m. This hedgerow will comprise of a native species: hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna,* blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, hazel *Corylus avellana*, holly *Ilex aquifolium*, field maple *Acer campestre*, spindle *Euonymus europaeus*, guelder-rose *Viburnum opulus* and dog rose *Rosa canina*.

4.1.2 Proposed Hedges

Within some areas of communal open space or introduced shrub verges hedges will be planted in single rows with 4 plants per m. These should comprise native species including hawthorn, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, hazel *Corylus avellana*, holly *Ilex aquifolium*, field maple, dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*, spindle *Euonymus europaeus*, wild privet *Ligustrum vulgare* and dog rose *Rosa canina*.

4.1.3 Proposed Mixed Scrub

Within the areas of other neutral grassland to the north and south-east of the site mixed scrub will be planted with native species including hawthorn, hazel, spindle, blackthorn and common broom *Cytisus scoparius*. The scrub will be planted with 3 species per m².

4.1.4 Existing Woodland

The existing 'Other Woodland; Broadleaved' will be retained. There is no existing formal management of this woodland, and no formal management is proposed. Generally, the key to successful conservation of woodlands is the diversity of the habitat. By maintaining or creating a range of habitats suitable for key wildlife groups it will attract a wider diversity.

A list of management actions that can be taken to enhance habitat diversity within the woodland on site include:

- Leave dead wood and where safe to do so, dying trees. Deadwood/log piles could be created throughout the woodland.
- Leave young tree and shrub species for long-term retention to replace aging trees. Including the planting oak trees which can succeed mature specimen of trees already present.

- Create/maintain areas of thick ground cover, such as areas of bramble scrub and coppice hazel for small mammals and invertebrates.

4.1.5 Proposed Other Neutral Grassland

An area of modified grassland will be enhanced to a wildflower grassland (other neutral grassland). It is recommended that a Emorsgate EM1 Basic General Purpose Meadow Mixture will be used to establish the grassland. The meadow mixture contains species that are characteristic of traditional meadows across a wide range of soil types.

The same seed mix will be used for the Sustainable Drainage System areas.

4.1.6 Proposed Trees

Trees will be planted throughout the site and within the public open spaces including within existing scrub. Tree species will include

Table 1. Native tree species to be planted.

Common Name	Botanical Name
June berry	*Amelanchier x lamarckii*
Silver birch	*Betula pendula*
Hazel	*Corylus avellana*
Common beech	*Fagus sylvatica*
Honey locust	*Gleditsia triacanthos 'sunburst'*
Sweet gum	*Liquidambar styraciflua 'worplesdon'*
Scots pine	*Pinus sylvestris*
Wild cherry	*Prunus avium*
Bird cherry	*Prunus padus*
Tibetan cherry	*Prunus serrula tibetica*
English oak	*Quercus robur*
Rowan	*Sorbus acuparia*
Common whitebeam	*Sorbus aria*
Small-leaved lime	*Tilia cordata*
Rancho small-leaved lime	*Tilia cordata 'rancho'*

4.2 Ecological Enhancements for Species

For further information on the ecological enhancements for species (birds, bats and hedgehogs) please refer to the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy (Windrush Ecology, 2026).

4.2.1 Birds

All nesting opportunities within the woodland and hedgerows will be retained. Any woody vegetation management should ideally commence between September and February to avoid the bird breeding season (March – August).

If vegetation management is required between March and September, an assessment of any risks to breeding birds will be made to ensure compliance with the legal protection afforded to nesting birds under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, (as amended). This is likely to require a survey for nesting birds immediately prior to the vegetation management (usually recommended within 24 hours).

The following nesting opportunities will be incorporated into the external walls of the proposed dwellings:

- One Vivara Pro WoodStone House Sparrow Nest Box, or similar (Figure 2).

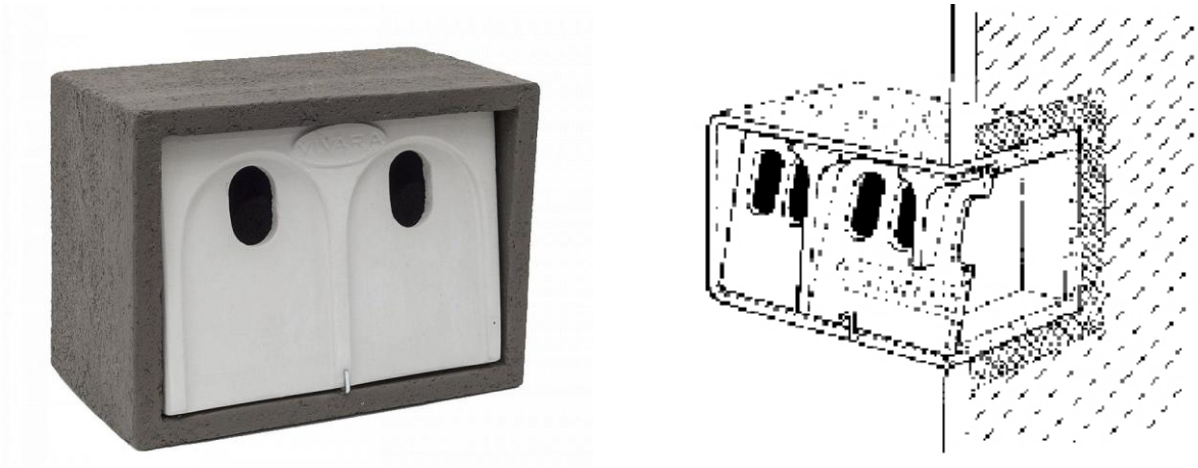

Figure 2. Vivara Pro WoodStone House Sparrow Nest Box, showing how the box can be integrated into a wall. Source: www.nhbs.com.

4.2.2 Bats

All foraging opportunities created by the woodland and hedgerows will be retained. The following roosting opportunities will be incorporated into the external walls of the proposed dwellings:

- One Vivara Pro Build-in Woodstone Bat Tube or similar (Figure 3).

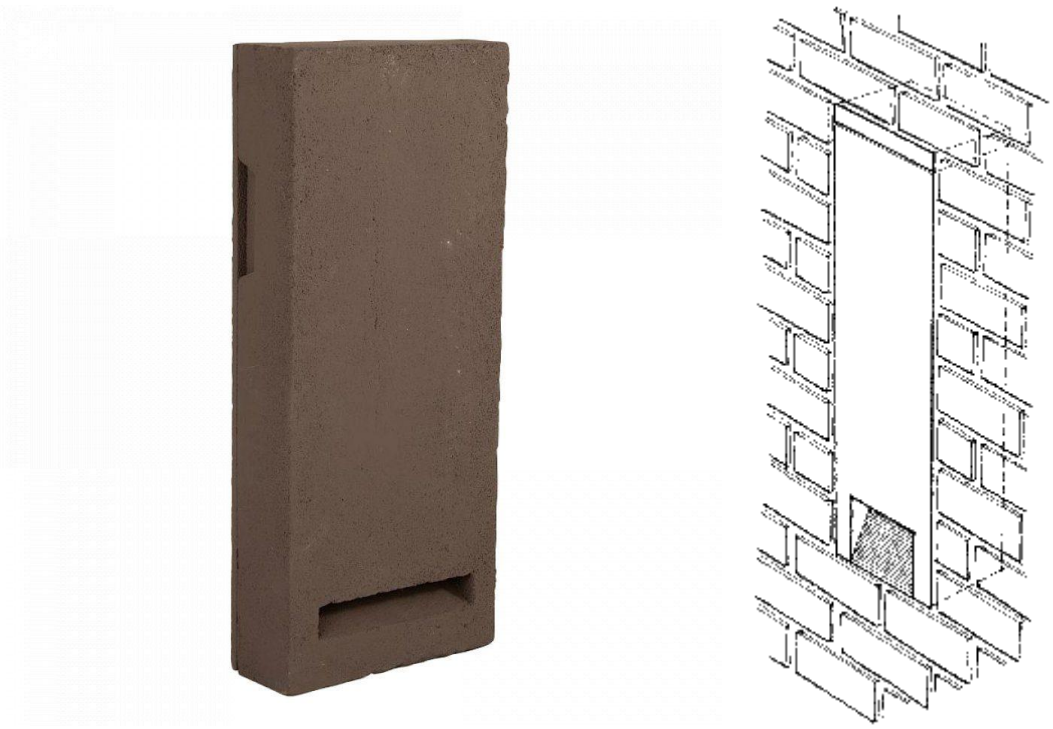

Figure 3. Vivara Pro Build-in Woodstone Bat Tube, showing how the tube can be integrated into a wall. Source: www.nhbs.com.

4.2.3 Hedgehogs

Garden fences or walls erected within the development (that could act as a barrier to hedgehog movement) will be made permeable for hedgehogs. This can be achieved by cutting or leaving a 13cm-by-13cm hole within the fence or wall; this is sufficient for any hedgehog to pass through, and this is too small for nearly all pets (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. An example of a hole cut within a fence, creating a 'hedgehog highway'.

5 Aims & Objectives of Management

This LEMP has been prepared to cover the first five years following the commencement of the development at Sonning Golf Club. The focus of the management plan is the areas of open space within the site. Actions will include the on-going management of existing woodland and gorse scrub, creation and management of a native hedgerow and mixed scrub, tree planting, and the establishment of a wildflower grassland areas.

The LEMP will guide long-term conservation action within the site to promote and enhance the ecology of the site and of protected/notable species and the surrounding area.

To achieve these aims, the key overarching objectives of the plan are as follows:

- Retain and enhance existing features of greatest ecological and landscape value within the site (i.e. hedgerows and woodland);
- Introduce and establish new habitats to benefit biodiversity and landscape amenity within the site and provide a stepping stone of habitat within the wider context;
- Contribute to local and national objectives i.e. create and improve the condition of local priority habitats: and
- Introduce long-term management to achieve ongoing biodiversity and landscape benefits and ensure opportunities for wildlife are retained and enhanced under the completed development.

6 Management Prescriptions for Achieving Aims & Objectives

6.1 Wildflower Grassland (Other Neutral Grassland)

6.1.1 Aims & Objectives

Management of the wildflower grasslands areas will aim to maintain the botanic diversity of the grassland once it has been established and promote the diversity of herbaceous species, which in turn will maintain the biodiversity value of the grassland, particularly for insect species and other invertebrates. In addition, the cutting regime will ensure that a tall sward is maintained for the larger part of the year and that grass and herb species can flower and set-seed. The objectives will be to:

- Maintain a botanically rich grassland through a specified cutting regime
- Allow flowering of herbaceous plants, and setting of seed
- Prevent scrub encroachment
- Repair/re-seed any areas that do not take

6.1.2 Establishment

EM1 Basic General-Purpose Meadow Mixture, Chiltern Seeds Special General Purpose WildFlower Mixture will be used to establish the new areas of grassland. The meadow mixture contains species that are characteristic of traditional meadows across a wide range of soil types.

6.1.2.1 Ground Preparation

To prepare a seed bed first weeds will be removed using repeated cultivation. The ground will next be ploughed or dug to bury the surface vegetation, then harrow or rake to produce a medium tilth, and roll, or tread, to produce a firm surface.

6.1.2.2 Sowing

Seed will be sown in the autumn or spring. 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 no incorporate or cover the seed, but firm in with a roll, or by treading, to give good soil/seed contact.

Suggested Sowing Rates:

- $4g/m^2$

The area of wildflower planting is approximately $6032m^2$ and therefore 24.1kg of EM1 Basic General-Purpose Meadow Mixture will be required for the area.

6.1.3 First Year Management

Most of the sown meadow species are perennial and are slow to establish. Soon after sowing there will be a flush of annual weeds, arising from the soil seed bank. These weeds can look unsightly, but they will offer shelter to the sown seedlings, are beneficial for insects, and they will die before the year is out. These annual weeds should be cut in early August and all arisings removed from the site. This will reveal the young meadow, which will then be kept short by mowing through to the end of March of the following year, with the digging out of any residual perennial weeds such as docks *Rumex* species.

6.1.4 Ongoing Management

In the second year, once established, the grassland will be cut once a year. In line with traditional hay meadow cutting management regime, it is recommended that the annual grass cut should take place in September, which will avoid the bird nesting season and sustain cover for insects and small mammals for as long as possible. If suitable the cut grass could be collected/baled and sold locally. The cutting can be carried out by using various pieces of equipment including handheld strimmer, rotary sit-on mowers or tractor mounted mowers.

Removal and disposal of the cuttings should be carried out immediately after any cutting has taken place. This prevents the thick cut material from killing the underlying vegetation by overshadowing it and reduces the amount of nutrients from entering the soil encouraging the more vigorous grass species from developing.

Weed control should also be implemented when required, to involve hand pulling (particularly for woody species) and digging for docks and thistles.

6.2 Hedgerows

6.2.1 Aims & Objectives

The aim of management will be to create a strong healthy native hedgerow resource in order to provide habitat for target species such as breeding birds and invertebrates.

6.2.2 Establishment

Planting of new hedgerow and hedges will be carried out between November and March. Autumn planting is preferable as it usually results in better establishment although there is an increased danger of damage by rabbits and hares during the winter months. No planting should be done in very wet, frosty or snowy conditions.

Planting of whips will occur in a cultivated strip, approximately 0.6m wide by 0.25m deep. This ensures that the roots of each plant are placed into the optimum cultivated conditions for good root development. The plants should be set in at the same depth as they were in the nursery and the soil must be firmed well in around the roots.

Native species of local provenance should be used where possible to create the new hedgerows.

6.2.3 Aftercare

The new hedgerows will be inspected regularly. Once it they have been established, when the shrubs have taken sufficiently and are 'outgrowing' their tree guards, any remaining tree stakes and tree guards can be removed (usually between 3 and 5 years). If rabbits and hares are a problem to establishment, rabbit proof fencing may be needed. The timing of the removal of any protective fencing is likely to be when the posts start to rot.

Once established the hedgerows will be allowed to develop into a dense bushy structure with foliage down to ground level maintained by an appropriate management regime (as described below).

Effective weed control is important as weeds will compete with hedgerow plants for light, nutrients and moisture. There are a range of weed control strategies. One or a combination of the strategies listed below will be used:

- Hand weed and scuffle the soil in the cultivated strip as often as needed.
- Composted bark chipping mulch – the mulch may need topped up as required.
- Place a strip of landscape fabric/black polythene mulch along both sides of the newly planted hedge, the mulch held down by stones/gravel

Watering should be undertaken as required in order to prevent drought to the newly establishing shrubs.

6.2.4 On-going Management

Hedgerows to be trimmed on a three-year rotation to create bushier hedgerows and to allow flower and berry production in the intervening years. Hedgerows to be cut on one side at a time, to maintain their function as an ecological corridor. Protect and develop any hedgerow trees where this is beneficial. Hedgerows will generally be cut in January/early February so that wildlife can take advantage of the nuts and berries produced in the autumn and to minimise the risk of disturbing active bird nests. Hedgerows which form field boundaries will be topped at a height of 2-3m above ground.

6.3 Trees

6.3.1 Aims & Objectives

Plant and manage new trees to increase the biodiversity value of the site, integrate the site into the surroundings and to contribute to the green infrastructure of the local area. To develop and establish

new habitats for mammals and birds as shelter, nesting, or foraging habitat and to provide visual enhancements and to establish a rural character for the site.

6.3.2 Establishment

Trees will be planted in a number of locations within the site, these locations are shown on the habitat management plan in Appendix 1. Tree planting will occur within the following areas:

- The following species will be planted within the existing gorse scrub and newly planted mixed scrub: silver birch, wild cherry, English oak, bird cherry, common beech, rowan, Scots pine and small- leaved lime.
- The following species will be planted within the wildflower grassland areas: hazel, bird cherry, silver birch, common beech, Scots pine, small-leaved lime, honey locust, wild cherry and English oak.

The specimens will be well grown, healthy and with a compact contained rootball. Specimens of local provenance should be used where possible when sourcing the trees.

Planting is best carried between October and April. A hole will be dug for each tree, no deeper than 0.5m and just wide enough to accommodate the roots without bending them, with any large stones removed to aid drainage and root penetration.

A stake will be driven vertically into the bottom of the hole before planting so tree roots can be arranged around it and should extend 0.3m above ground level, allowing for the tree stem to be 0.1m -0.15m away from it. Some topsoil will be placed on top of the roots to bed them in.

Once placed in the hole, the root collar should be level with the top of the hole and the soil should be gently firmed in as it is added to remove air pockets and firmly anchor the roots. The hole should be overfilled by 0.03-0.06m to allow for soil compression and settling. The tree should be attached to the stake with a suitably flexible tie.

Guards, which are not fastened to the tree, will be installed around each tree so as to prevent damage by grazing wildlife such as rabbits.

6.3.3 Initial Management

New tree planting will be subject to weed control to promote its growth through the application of mulch in early summer (April) or the use of mulch mats around the base to ensure rapid establishment. A 0.6m diameter circle around each tree will be kept weed-free by hand weeding and through the use of mulching. Mulch should be well/previously composted or applied in the autumn and re-mulched annually up to a regular depth of 50mm.

Watering will be carried out as required in order to prevent drought to the new trees, taking into account published meteorological data on rainfall for any given period. In addition to this, during the first 2 years after planting, all orchard trees will be watered regularly during the growing season and especially following any dry periods of 7 days. The ground should be thoroughly wetted to ensure water reaches the roots with each tree receiving between 10 litres for a small tree and 50 litres for a large tree.

Other new tree growth will be monitored every six months during the first year following planting and annually thereafter, with weed control, watering, replacement of tree guards and replanting of failed specimens undertaken as required.

In spring, all tree ties and stakes will be checked and adjusted if too loose, too tight or if chaffing is occurring. Trees will be checked for any sign of wind rock/throw. Any stakes which are not properly installed, are loose or misaligned resulting in trees being supported at wonky angles will be rectified and any broken stakes will be replaced.

The trees will be established, in accordance with good horticultural practice for healthy growth.

In addition, Natural England Technical Information Note TIN016 'Traditional Orchards': formative pruning of young trees can be referred to for additional guidance for the orchard trees.

6.3.4 Management Years 1-5

Tree planting will be checked annually, and any dead, dying or diseased specimens removed and replaced. Appropriate surgery and works to ensure prolonged life will be carried out and any dead, diseased, damaged wood, and/or branches that are crossing over within the crown, will be cut out in winter. Any plants loosened by frost or wind will be firmed up and any damaged branches will be removed using a sharp pruning knife.

A 0.6m weed free ring will be maintained around the tree planting in order to eradicate weeds which may affect successful establishment. All stakes and ties will be checked annually and repaired / replaced as required. Stakes to be removed once trees have been firmly rooted in, after approximately 3-4 years.

6.3.5 Ongoing Management – Newly Planted & Existing

The newly planted and existing trees will be managed on an 'as needed' basis which may include thinning out or pruning of tree species to enhance habitat structure or reduce shading, coppicing on rotation and removal of non-native species.

Trees containing crevice features will be retained as they support important insect communities and may be used by hole-nesting birds and roosting bats.

Some management including crown thinning of dead wood (although some of the dead branches should be retained where possible) may be required in the future to increase the longevity of these trees. A qualified arboriculturist should be consulted to assess the current health status of the trees and to advise on appropriate management in the form of tree surgery and an ecologist consulted if any crevice features will be affected.

Where possible, deadwood on the orchard trees and standing deadwood should be retained as habitat. If not possible to keep on the living tree, deadwood can be stacked in a corner of the orchard (with any diseased limbs removed), in addition to windfall fruit during the winter, which should also be retained if possible.

To ensure compliance with the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) all works involving tree coppicing, pollarding and tree limb removal must be undertaken outside the bird breeding season, which is generally considered to be from March to August.

6.4 Mixed Scrub

6.4.1 Aims & Objectives

The aims of the establishment and management of the mixed scrub will be to:

- Provide an additional layer for structural diversity and a stepping-stone habitat.
- Create a visually pleasing aesthetic

6.4.2 Establishment

Native species of local provenance should be used where possible when planting the mixed scrub.

Table 2. Native species for shrub planting.

Common Name	Botanical Name
Hawthorn	*Crataegus monogyna*
Blackthorn	*Prunus spinosa*
Spindle	*Euonymus europaeus*
Hazel	*Coryls avellana*
Common broom	*Cytisus scoparius*

Shrubs will ideally be planted in the autumn, September to November.

Bare root shrubs will be notch planted to accommodate for the full depth of roots. Container grown shrubs will be planted into pits 15cm wider than roots when fully spread and 30cm deep. This will ensure that the roots of each plant are placed into the optimum cultivated conditions for good root development. The plants will be set in at the same depth as they were in the nursery and the soil must be firmed well in around the roots.

Adequate irrigation is the key to the survival and success of newly planted shrubs. The health of the new plantings will be maintained by:

- Watering of new shrubs will be undertaken between the months of April and September (inclusive), and according to need;
- All new plantings will receive watering for at least the first 2 growing seasons;
- Ensure sufficient water is applied to maintain healthy growth; taking into account published meteorological data on rainfall for any given period.
- New shrub planting will be subject to weed control to promote its growth through the application of mulch in early summer (April) or the use of mulch mats around the base to ensure rapid establishment.

6.4.3 On-going Management

In spring, spiral guards will be checked and secured and any defective guards replaced. Once established (approximately years 3-4), supporting sundries can be removed.

The shrubs will be established in accordance with good horticultural practice for healthy growth. The shrubs will be inspected annually and appropriate pruning and works to ensure good shape and prolonged life will be carried out. Any dead, diseased, damaged wood will be cut out in winter.

Ground around the base of the shrub will be kept weed-free. Mulch will be applied around base of shrubs at planting and specimen shrubs will be re-mulched yearly for the first four years.

Any dead, dying, dangerous or windblown specimens will be replaced with the same species. Shrubs will be replaced with originally specified species/cultivar unless there are sound arboricultural reasons not to do so.

7 Preparation of Work Schedule

The above management operations have been incorporated into a work schedule (see Appendix 4). The schedule covers the establishment and ongoing management from the start of construction.

8 Organisation Responsible for Implementation of the Plan

The landowner (Sonning Golf Club Limited) will be responsible for the creation, establishment and initial management of the habitats within the LEMP area. After this initial phase the on-going habitat management responsibilities will be taken over by an external management company.

The aims and objectives of the Landscape and Ecology Management Plan will be communicated to the landowner via the delivery of this report.

9 Ongoing Monitoring & Remedial Measures

Habitats will be monitored every two years through an ecological walkover survey undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist. The surveys will be undertaken in the spring-summer (May-July). The following objectives will be addressed through the surveys:

- Monitoring of grassland habitats (wildflower grassland) for botanical diversity and the establishment of undesired 'weedy' species, to direct management regime and weed control.
- Monitoring of the grassland habitat (wildflower grassland) for their botanical diversity and openness, including the recording of dominant and invasive species.
- Monitoring of hedgerow habitats for the establishment of undesired 'weedy' species, do direct management regime and weed control.
- Monitoring of trees and replace trees when needed.
- Monitoring of woodland habitats for the establishment of undesired 'weedy' species, to direct management regime and weed control, including control of any scrub that may develop within the understorey.

The Landscape and Ecology Management Plan will be updated and amended where required in accordance with the findings of the walkover.

10 Appendix 1. Habitat Management Plan

TBC

11 Appendix 2. Faunal Enhancements

Please refer to the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy (Windrush Ecology, 2026).

12 Appendix 3. Landscape Management Plans

Please refer to the Planting Pack (Greenhalgh, 2026).

13 Appendix 4. Annual Work Schedule (5-year)

	Management Activity	Years				
		1	2	3	4	5
Grassland Establishment & Management						
1	Ground preparation & seeding.	Mar – May Or Sept – Oct				
2	Watering during the first few weeds of establishment and as required during dry spells.	Apr – Sept	Apr – Sept	Apr – Sept		
3	Re-seed any substantial failed areas (as required).	Mar – May Or Sept – Oct	Mar – May Or Sept – Oct			
4	Monitor presence of invasive weeds and control if required through hand weeding.	All months	All months	All months	All months	All months
5	Grassland mowing	Early Aug cut Then keep short until Mar the following year	Jan – Mar Then leave uncut until Sept	x 1 (Sept)	x 1 (Sept)	x 1 (Sept)
Hedgerow Establishment & Management						
1	Planting of hedgerow shrubs.	Nov – Mar				
2	Watering	Apr – Sept	Apr – Sept	Apr – Sept	Apr – Sept	Apr – Sept
3	Inspect for any failed planting and replace as necessary.	All months	All months	All months	All months	All months

4	Remove tree guards and stakes once trees are established as required.			As required	As required	As required
5	Undertake weed control within 0.6m strop of hedgerow base, using mulch and water are required.	All months	All months	All months		
6	Hedge trimming (sides only).		Jan – Feb	Jan – Feb	Jan – Feb	Jan – Feb
Trees and Shrub Establishment & Management						
1	Undertake weed control within 0.6m diameter of tree bases, using mulch applications/ mats or hand weeding. Mulch application in April.	Apr – Sept				
2	Monitor condition of trees and shelters. Undertake watering as required.	All months				
3	Watering	Apr – Sept	Apr – Sept	Apr – Sept	Apr – Sept	Apr – Sept
4	Remove tree shelters once trees are established as required.			As required	As required	As required
5	Thinning/ pruning and rotation coppicing as required.		Nov – Feb	Nov – Feb	Nov – Feb	Nov – Feb
Faunal Enhancements						
1	Erection of bird boxes.	X				
2	Check for fallen or damaged bird boxes. Replace as necessary.		X		X	
3	Erection of bat boxes.	X				

4	Check for fallen or damaged bird boxes. Replace as necessary.		X		X	
5	Installation of hedgehog highways.	X				
6	Check for blockages of hedgehog highways. Clear as necessary.		X		X	