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ARCHITECTURAL TECHNICIAN AND ECOLOGY

**PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
LAND AT HEATH ROAD
BREACHWOOD GREEN
HERTFORDSHIRE
SG4 8P**

**LANDSCAPE AND ECOLOGY MANAGEMENT
PLAN (LEMP) (PUBLIC OPEN SPACE)**

(7th May 2026)

REPORT REF: 2654 - PHA



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1. INTRODUCTION

Paul Hicking Associates has produced this Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) for Blakeney Homes (Breachwood Green) Limited., in accordance with the Deed of Variation s106 agreement of the planning approval 24/02624/RM.

The planning approval has been granted for the construction of 10 new dwelling with associate hard and soft landscaping and public open space.

This LEMP outlines the rational for the creation and implementation of new and existing habitats within the public open space on behalf of Blakeney Homes (Breachwood Green) Limited. **(BH)** (*Owner*), who will maintain and manage the habitats identified within this LEMP post-development.



Fig. 1. - Aerial site photograph.

1.1 DOCUMENT PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide a single point of reference (LEMP), for all ecological mitigation, compensation enhancement measures and management proposed as part of the permitted and proposed development. These measures include:

- Avoidance and mitigation measures implemented during the construction phase of development to minimise the adverse effects upon biodiversity resources;
- Compensation measures, including the creation of new habitats to replace those lost to development;
- Implementation of enhancement features that are permanent for the lifetime of the development;
- Management prescriptions for those habitats retained or created through the development to ensure they maximise their biodiversity value;
- Implementation timetable and responsibilities for all proposed measures;
- Monitoring requirements.

This version of the LEMP have been prepared and developed in accordance with B.S. 42020:2013 Section 11.1, to a level commensurate with the current stage of project development and implementation. It establishes the mitigation strategy, design and management principles necessary to ensure effective delivery of the ecological vision for the site.

The LEMP are intended to be the vehicle for delivery of biodiversity planning obligations under current development plans at the site and to provide a reporting and review mechanism of the habitat management prescribed. The LEMP have been produced so that it can be easily amended and adapted to meet changes in management prescriptions and funding and where possible the introduction of additional management prescriptions where required e.g., climate change.

This HMMP is intended to be used for a minimum period of 30 years with interim review every 5 years.

1.2 EXISTING PLANS AND DOCUMENTS.

A number of existing site-specific plans and documents have been used to prepare this report.

For instance:

- ELMAW Consulting Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (ELMAW);
- BHD Architects Drawings (BHD);
- CAT Landscape Consultancy Landscape Design Drawings (CAT);
- Paul Hicking Associates (Ecology) – Walkover site visit 2026 (PHA)

In addition to site-specific information, the Hertfordshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) and the UK BAP have also been referred to for local and national biodiversity targets.

1.3 STATEMENT OF MANAGEMENT AIMS.

The implementation of this Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan will aim to increase the diversity and quality of habitats within the proposed development and ultimately the quality variety of fauna that can be supported to that which currently exists. Wherever possible, the site will be managed within a sustainable horticultural and silvicultural system to ensure that the habitats created are able to maintain their value for biodiversity.

The principle aims of this plan are to:

- maintain and enhance the overall biodiversity value of the post-development site;
- take opportunities to create habitats of ecological and local landscape value;
- strengthen the ecological connectivity with habitats outside the development boundary with new habitats of higher value to those that currently exist;
- monitor and report the success of the plan using measurable targets;
- regularly review the plan to ensure it is appropriately targeted;

Management objectives have been set for each ecological feature, i.e. species or habitat, with targets set which are to be reviewed annually.

Management objectives will be SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-specific.

1.4 ECOLOGICAL VALUE.

Pre-development the site contained semi-natural habitats of former allotments of poor condition containing native hedgerow and native hedgerow with trees of good condition, line of trees and scattered urban trees of moderate condition. The aim of the development is to achieve post development semi-natural habitats of overall moderate to good condition. This is achievable through the implementation of the habitats and management prescriptions and enhancements as outlined within this LEMP to achieve a realistic site-wide value of moderate condition and maintain hedgerow habitats of good condition.

1.5 ECOLOGICAL TRENDS WHICH MAY INFLUENCE MANAGEMENT.

The aim of the development is for the establishment and management of the public open space habitats of moderate condition. This is seen as an achievable and desired condition for healthy habitats within the site however, some habitats may be able to be improved to achieve the climax value of good condition. This is generally seen to be achievable where habitats are able to either, in the case of trees, reach full maturity or for terrestrial grassland habitats an increase in species richness and diversity above a normal base-line. This is only achievable where the implementation of management goes beyond the standard methods and funding normally available and more care and attention is required to ensure that habitats are able to increase in species richness and maturity. This

may also only be achievable where the influence of activities and use of the site are able to be separated from direct impact upon habitats. The following is suggested and are methods which may not necessarily require additional funding but are to be focused on when undertaking management objectives;

- i. Manage new native hedgerows and native hedgerow with trees to maintain species richness and density and ensure that these do not fall into decline and ensure that they are not subject to direct impact from site use.
- ii. Manage trees to increase their diameter and structure above 45-60cm and/or full maturity. Ensure canopy structure is well maintained, remove and reduce deadwood and ensure trees do not fall into decline. Maintain areas around the tree to allow them to expand to full size. Ensure that they do not become damaged through site use.
- iii. Monitor the effects of climate change and the impact of extreme hot weather and flood conditions to ensure that these do not impact on the health and condition of the habitat structure.

1.6 OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE WIDER ECOLOGICAL NETWORK.

The existing and proposed habitats are enclosed by existing residential development to the north and south and main road to the east with have good connectivity to a wider ecological network via the arable and pasture to the west. It is therefore important to ensure that all post-development habitats remain healthy, free from dominant and invasive species as prescribed as they provide a safe corridor for commuting, foraging and hibernation for a wide range of species of birds, bats, reptiles, amphibians, mammals and invertebrates.



1.7 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN.

On-site habitats - the DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric 3.0 (July 2021) calculation version was used to assess the impact of the development and indicates a net biodiversity gain against the proposed development. The assessment indicated a potential net gain in habitat units against those currently present within the site boundary of +0.22 habitats units (11.69%) above the required measurable minimum 10% net gain. This LEMP uses the strategy for the creation of new habitats and management of existing habitats within the public open space in-line with achieving the proposed on-site net gain.

It is therefore essential that all on-site habitats are well maintained to ensure that their level of contribution towards a measurable net gain is maintained across all on-site habitats.

1.8 CLIMATE CHANGE.

The Met Office currently states that the effect of climate change across the UK is expected to see winters to be 30% wetter and summers between 1 and 6°C warmer and 60% dryer, depending on the region. This is expected to create more frequent and intense weather extremes. The grassland habitats can be an indicator of the impact of change as these will display signs of bare earth or decline and change in species composition towards more dominant draught or wet tolerant species during periods of draught or excess water and therefore reducing species composition. Management will be required to respond to changes with the potential requirement for additional watering or the introduction of additional drainage to improve permeability. The introduction of additional draught or wet tolerant species mixes may be required.

1.9 CLIMATE MATCH.

It is important that the sourcing of plants and trees for planting within the site are to be sourced from nurseries with climatic suitability in line with predicted climate change. The Met Office Hadley Centre climate matching tool has been used for the location of the development site with a predicted climate difference baseline score of 0.499 for the period of 2021-2030 and 0.763 for the period of 2031-2050. These are to be used when selecting plants from nursery stock and are grown within the same predicted climate change conditions so that they are able to resist and adapt to climate change within the site.

1.10 RETAINED HABITATS.

Existing retained habitats will be managed and maintained in accordance with the prescribed methods for newly planted habitats to ensure continuity of management and integration between new and existing habitats.

2. HABITATS AND FEATURES TO BE MANAGED.

BHD Architects and CAT Landscape drawings propose the creation of the following post development habitats;

2.1 NATIVE HEDGEROW.

A new 20m long hedgerow will be planted to enclose part of the public open space. The hedgerow can reach moderate condition if at least 1m of undisturbed ground is maintained each side of the hedgerow in this case pond and understorey habitats

The following species and to comprise of the following species mix;

- Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*)

New hedgerow will be planted in at a density of 3-5 plants per meter in a single row (30-50cm) apart or 5-7 plants per meter in a staggered double row (20-30cm apart).

2.2 URBAN TREES AND LINE OF TREES.

New trees will be planted to increase the density of tree planting within the public open space. All existing urban trees and line of trees within the area of the public open space will be retained and incorporated within all management proposals. Moderate condition is considered achievable and manageable to create an area of deciduous woodland and should be managed in such a way over time which allows the encouragement for the development of self-set saplings and young trees to grow. The understorey will be enhanced towards a traditional woodland understorey with a shade tolerant mixed planting from seed stock sown onto prepared ground around the base of the trees. An Emorsgate seed mix EW1 mix is recommended at this location. The encroachment to bramble scrub is to be controlled and kept to a minimum of 10% of the habitat to avoid this species becoming dominant. If all of these can be adhered to, it is expected that the habitat could achieve moderate condition. Existing trees and line of trees will be managed to maintain their health, density and structure. The following native trees species of local provenance are recommended to be planted to create the new woodland and are in-line with the species currently present;

New trees

- Field Maple (*Acer campestre*)
- Silver birch (*Betula pendula*)

All new plants are to be protected using tree guards when first planted. Guards to be removed once tree has become established. Trees are to be well-watered to allow them to become established.

PROTECTED SPECIES – some existing trees contain features with the potential to support roosting bats as identified within the PEA ecology assessment. If pruning work is required then these trees are to be fully inspected by a licenced bat ecologist using a ladder or tree-climbing method to determine the presence or absence of roosting bats. The trees work will then be undertaken in accordance with the findings of the survey in accordance with any licensing obtained and agreed with Natural England and in accordance with all legislation for roosting bats.

2.3 WILDLIFE POND.

Clay puddling may be used to recreate the pond but this will depend upon the existing ground conditions. If the existing soils contain at least 60% clay, then less clay is need to be imported. Clay puddling is to be laid to a depth of a minimum of 150mm with a smooth surface profiled with the back of a spade. If ground conditions are deemed unsuitable for the use of clay puddling, then a sheet liner can be used. Some bare/muddy edges are also to be created as these generate the basic building material for nest construction for Swallow and House Martin.

3. SCHEDULE OF WORKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (PRIOR TO HANDOVER).

3.1 **Blakeney Estates** (Breachwood Green) Ltd. (*Owner*) will be responsible for the supervision and implementation of all new landscape works for the introduction and implementation of the habitats and features outlined within section 2.0 above.

3.2 The schedule below is to be used to record the completion of each new habitat and the installation of habitat features:

Table 1: Schedule of Works.

Habitat	Location	Work Required	Implemented by	Timing	Date Completed
Urban trees and line of trees	See Landscaping plan.	Plant from container grown stock or cell grown saplings and protect as necessary. Water regularly at first planting to encourage establishment.	Blakeney Estates	Nov-Jan	
Native Hedgerow	See Landscaping plan.	Plants supplied by Woodland trust from cell grown saplings.	Blakeney Estates	Nov-Jan	
Wildlife Pond	See Landscaping plan.	Established permanent pond	Blakeney Estates	Sept-Oct Or Mar-Apr	

4. HABITAT SPECIFIC MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS.

4.1 General – Management aims to be holistic to encompass the site as a whole rather than focus on specific individual habitats with minimum intervention. Management is to include the requirements of good practice arboriculture and horticulture which is free from chemicals and pesticides and is to include any works recommended by the Landscaping plan and any relating management plan but should not compromise any principle for the provision of good quality species rich habitats. The site is to be kept clear of litter and debris.

4.2 Hedgerows– Management is to focus on the health of the hedgerow. Hedgerows provide a multitude of function including shelter, source of food and density for the construction of a nest for breeding birds.

Management responsibility – All Hedgerows to be managed by **Blakeney Homes** (Breachwood Green) Limited.

4.3 Urban trees and line of trees – Management is to focus on the successful establishment of new trees and health and care of existing trees. Trees are considered high in biodiversity value as they provide shelter and are colonised by wide range of invertebrate species communities along with providing features within the landscape.

Management responsibility – All Hedgerows to be managed by **Blakeney Homes** (Breachwood Green) Limited.

- 4.4 Wildlife Pond – Management is to focus on maintain good water quality and habitat to sustain a good range of macrophytes. The new pond also provides the potential to extend the range of breeding habitat for amphibians.

Management responsibility – Wildlife Pond to be managed by **Blakeney Homes** (Breachwood Green) Limited.

4.5 FUNDING AND RESOURCES.

The public open space habitats will be owned and maintained by **Blakeney Homes** (Breachwood Green) Limited., who will provide the funding and resources for maintenance of the habitats outlined within this LEMP. Tables 2 to 4 prescribe the level of the annual work required and are to be used to set the level of annual funding required to ensure that all habitats achieve the target level of ecological value required and also provide the trigger points for any additional funding required for the replacement and re-instatement of habitats and features which fail or require replacement.

4.6 HABITAT MONITORING AND RECORDING.

The level of reporting and monitoring will be provided by **Blakeney Homes** (Breachwood Green) Limited.

The habitats created and managed for their enhancement will be recorded and reported to the Local Planning Authority for the first 5 years and then every 5th year post-completion prior to the 1st September using the DEFRA BNG Habitat Monitoring Report template and is to include as a minimum the following information;

- A photographic study of the condition of all habitats within the site;
- A full list of species. In addition, the species list is to include all common and protected species of birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates including population numbers recorded as this may provide evidence to indicate change over time;
- An updated metric to reflect current and predicted habitat condition and delivery of unit value per habitat type.

4.7 Table 2 – Management Prescriptions.

Feature	Management/Monitoring	Timing	Frequency
General	Provide staff and resident information pack. Encourage staff and residents to record wildlife. Keep site clear of litter and debris.	All year	As required
Urban trees and line of trees	Replace any dead trees.	Nov-Mar	Annually
	Remove tree guards once trees are well established.	Oct-Feb	Years 3 to 5 as required
	Prune to promote good growth and structure. Remove any dead wood and use debris to form habitat piles.	Oct-Feb	Annually
	Monitor for signs of poor health and formation of dead wood fungal growth.	Oct-Feb	Every 2 years
Hedgerows	Replace dead plants and gap-up where required.	Nov-Jan	Annually
	All hedgerows will require pruning to stimulate fresh, busy growth for the first 3-5 years until they become dense and established.	Jan-Feb No works during bird breeding season	Annually
Wildlife Pond	Cut bank edges to maintain grassland to encourage diverse range of plant species and cut back overhanging branches to allow light and reduce leaf-fall.	May, Aug, Nov	Annually
	Clear pond of any debris and leaf litter.	Oct-Jan	Annually

4.8 Table 3 - Work requiring a Five-year review for the lifetime of the development.

Feature	Management/Monitoring	Action	Timing	Frequency
Hedgerows	Review hedge condition to establish presence of poor growth or gaps.	Gap-up with replanting	Nov-Feb	Every Five years
Urban trees and line of trees	Replacement of dead plants.	Replant. If extensive seek advice on soil and ground conditions.	Nov-Mar	Every Five years

4.9 Table 4 – Annual Programme of Work.

Feature	Management/Monitoring	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
General	Walk site and remove litter.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
	Ensure site remains free from invasive non-native species.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Feature	Management/Monitoring	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Urban trees and line of trees	Light maintenance pruning to remove deadwood, disease or rubbing branches.	√	√									√	√
	Placing necessary removed deadwood into habitat piles.	√	√									√	√
	Inspecting trees for signs of winter damage and early disease. Carry out only essential corrective pruning. Avoid disturbance to early-flowering ground flora. Check guards and boundaries for protection. Remove tree guards when established.												
	Monitor tree health and wildlife activity. Avoid pruning except where necessary for safety. Observe canopy condition and leaf health												

Feature	Management/Monitoring	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Urban trees and line of trees	Review tree structure, crown density and signs of decline. Schedule winter pruning based on identified issues. Identify trees entering natural decline for phased replacement.									√	√	√	
	Implement selective thinning or coppicing as needed to support natural regeneration. Maintain a mix of young trees, saplings and seedlings. Maintain standing and fallen deadwood across at least 25% of the woodland to support biodiversity.	√									√	√	√
Hedgerows	Replace dead plants and gap-up where required.	√	√									√	√
	Trim hedgerow sections on a rotational basis to maintain structural diversity and prevent overgrowth. Avoid cutting all sections simultaneously to ensure habitat availability (maximum of 1/3 to be cut each year).	√	√								√	√	√
	Coppice, Lay and gap-up if required.	√	√								√	√	√
	Replacement of dead plants.	√	√	√				√		√		√	√

Feature	Management/Monitoring	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Wildlife pond	Cut bank edges to maintain grassland to encourage diverse range of plant species and cut back overhanging branches to allow light and reduce leaf-fall.					√			√			√	
	Clear pond of any debris and leaf-fall.	√									√	√	√

N.B. All species recorded within the development site to be submitted to county biological records centre and the relevant local groups and organisations. Paul Hicking Associates will provide a tool-box talk to residents to encourage them to provide us with records for submission to the local records office.

4.10 Table 5 – Habitat Monitoring Timetable.

Habitat	Year														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Hedgerows	Report	Report	Report	Report	Report					Report					Report
Trees	Report	Report	Report	Report	Report					Report					Report
Pond	Report	Report	Report	Report	Report					Report					Report
Habitat	Year														
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Hedgerows					Report					Report					Report
Trees					Report					Report					Report
Pond					Report					Report					Report

Preliminary condition survey	
Progression check	
Assessment if habitat has met condition (Report)	
Monitoring if target condition is retained	

Reporting – A report in accordance with section 4.6 is to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority at every 5th year interval. Years 1-5 reporting required to record if habitat has become established.

4.11 Habitat mapping – On-site baseline habitat creation – public open space.



4.12 Pond profiling detail



