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Landscape and Ecological Management Plan prepared for: Geoff Long

For the Site of: Land West of Lower Road, SG4 8NS

Version:	Written by:	Checked by:	Final:
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Final	Martin O'Connor 10/08/2026	Sarah Kennard 13/08/2026	Martin O'Connor 13/08/2026

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Information is believed to be accurate at the time of the report; recommendations are made without bias based on good practice guidelines within the industry. However, species presence and ecological parameters can change over time.

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Landscape and Ecological Management Plan

Land west of Lower Road, SG4 8NS

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background to the Scheme

Planning permission (22/02871/FP) has been granted for the erection of six dwellings comprising of two pairs of semidetached dwellings (2 x 2-bed and 2 x 3-bed) and two detached 3-bed dwellings with detached double garages (plots 3 and 4) including parking, landscaping and creation of vehicular access off Lower Road.

1.2 Site Context

The site is located at Grid Reference TL 15469 22191.

The site consists of a typical abandoned pasture where due to lack of management at the rear, a habitat of rank grassland has developed over time. As the coarser grasses have gradually spread to the whole of the plot the more selective herb species have declined and generally disappeared. The front area has been mowed for dog training; it has therefore become a close sward of meadow grasses and little else (Coyne Environmental, 2022).

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Figure 1: Site context

1.3 Purpose of this Management Plan

This report has been undertaken in order to satisfy the following condition:

Condition 9:

Prior to commencement of the development (including ground works, vegetation clearance), a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) shall be prepared, detailing how biodiversity will be incorporated within the development scheme to achieve net gain. The plan shall refer to the two ecological reports dated November 2022 and prepared by Kenneth Coyne and include details of native species tree and hedgerow planting, wildflower seed mixes, and the location of any habitat boxes / structures for protected species to be installed. The plan shall be Creating a cleaner, greener, healthier Hertfordshire submitted to the LPA for written approval and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan unless otherwise agreed in writing with the LPA.

Reason: To demonstrate the expectations of NPPF and the Environment Act in enhancing the site and achieving overall net gains for biodiversity have been met in accordance with national and local policies.

2.0 Aims and Objectives of the Management Plan

2.1 Scope of the Management Plan

2.1.1 Management Period

The management period of this plan is five years, at which time it will be checked and renewed for up to 30 years.

2.1.2 Management Responsibilities

The implementation of this management plan will be the responsibility of the landowner. Any transference of responsibility of this plan should be undertaken with the appropriate appointment of a competent organisation capable of delivering the detailed measures within this document.

The organisation of implementing this plan will be undertaken by a management company with the necessary certificates of competence to implement landscape management operation on site. The management organisation will ensure that site management complies with best practice standards and all relevant health and safety procedures, protection of the environment, avoidance of pollution and protection of protected species and habitats.

2.1.3 Document Review

In order to ensure that the plan continues to remain appropriate, applicable and effective, a review will be undertaken by both the landowner, and the controlling authority, to ensure that all information contained within the document remains relevant. This review will be undertaken once every 5 years. Should it be determined that the conservation aims of the management plan are not being met, remedial action will then be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved scheme.

2.1.4 Controlling Authority

The controlling authority is North Herts Council, who should be consulted on any matters relating to the approved proposals for the scheme.

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2.1.5 Health and Safety

The site will be managed to comply with all relevant health and safety legislation, approved codes of practice (ACOP's) and Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance. As the managing organisation will be the main company involved in onsite works, the managing organisation will fulfil the landowner's role and the work managers role. This places an obligation on the managing company to ensure that any contractor understands and fulfils their health and safety role and any work undertaken on the site will follow the guidelines of the HSE.

2.1.6 Biodiversity

The management plan covers habitat boxes and other measures installed within the red line boundary shown in Figure 1.

The biodiversity receptors are therefore as follows:

- Bat boxes
- Bird boxes

2.1.7 Landscape

Please refer to the landscape plan. With respect to geographical coverage, the management plan covers the red line boundary shown in Figure 1.

With regards to the focus of the management prescriptions, the scope is defined by the retained and proposed habitat that forms the proposals.

The landscape receptors are therefore as follows:

- Wildflower Meadows
- Native Trees
- Native Hedging

2.2 Aims and Objectives

The overarching aim of this Management Plan is:

To set out management and enhancement prescriptions to promote the landscape and ecological biodiversity value of the site.

2.2.1 Biodiversity

In respect of biodiversity, the supporting aims are;

1. to promote the use of the site by bats; and,
2. to promote the use of the site by target bird species.

2.2.2 Landscape

In respect of landscape, the supporting aims reflect those outlined above. With particular reference to:

3. The planting of wildflower grassland areas;
4. The planting of native hedgerow
5. The planting of trees;

In addition, the following aims guide the basis for specific management operations;

6. Conserve and enhance the ecological and landscape value of the site through safeguarding and enhancing the ecological and physical integrity of the site.

7. Creation of species habitats for UK wildlife which include UK protected species, through providing appropriate planting and management of habitat friendly maintenance methods and applications which do not cause harm or injury to flora or fauna.
8. To provide a safe and secure site which establishes and maintains health and safety procedures for management and maintenance of the site complying with all statutory legislation and best practice.
9. Maintains a flexible management approach which responds to the changing needs of the landscape and ecology of the site.

3.0 Information Gathering

3.1 Information Sources

Sources of information considered in the production of this management plan are set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1 - Desk study sources of information.

Source	Date	Information obtained
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Supplementary Ecological Appraisal (Coyne Environmental)	Nov 2022	Current habitat types, quality, and structure. Other information relevant to the presence of protected and notable species.
Google Earth	August 2026	Contextual information for the site and surroundings
National and Local Landscape Character Assessments	August 2026	Contextual information for the site and surroundings

3.2 Results

3.2.1 Site Baseline - Biodiversity

The site consists of a typical abandoned pasture where due to lack of management at the rear, a habitat of rank grassland has developed over time. As the coarser grasses have gradually spread to the whole of the plot the more selective herb species have declined and generally disappeared. The front area has been mowed for dog training; it has therefore become a close sward of meadow grasses and little else (Coyne Environmental, 2022).

3.2.1 Site Baseline - Landscape

The site falls within National Character Area 110 - Chilterns.

The National Character Area profile describes the Chilterns as:

Chilterns is one of several NCAs within a Chalk outcrop stretching from East Anglia to Dorset and the South Downs. To the north-east, the Chiltern escarpment lowers into the East Anglian Chalk. In the south-west, the escarpments of the Chilterns and Berkshire and Marlborough Downs face each other across the Goring Gap. From the north-west facing escarpment, the dip slope descends south-east into the London Basin. Here, the Chalk is overlain by younger bedrock.

The Chilterns scarp is prominent and offers panoramic views of the adjacent vales. Aylesbury Vale is especially visible from vantage points such as Ivinghoe Beacon. Across the vales there is inter-visibility with other elevated NCAs such as Midvale Ridge and Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge.

From the northern scarp, the rivers Flit and Ouzel (also known as Lovat) flow into the Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands. Here they form part of the Anglian catchment. Along the remainder of the scarp, watercourses flow into the Upper Thames Clay Vales to feed the Thames catchment. The Thames flows through the Chiltern ridge at the Goring Gap to enter the London Basin.

Within the London Basin, the Chilterns' natural groundwater and surface water flows are linked to those of the wider basin. The landscape also forms the larger of the two principal aquifers in the basin (the other being the North Downs). Infiltration in the Chilterns supports groundwater levels and quality in London's confined aquifer. It also moderates the base flow in the Thames.

The Chilterns are linked into a modern transport network of motorways and railways radiating from nearby London. Outside London, major roads around Reading, Maidenhead, Slough and Aylesbury also link to the Chilterns. Long-distance historic routes now function as key recreation corridors: the Grand Union Canal, the Thames and the Ridgeway.

4.0 Management Prescriptions

4.1 Landscape and Biodiversity

The management prescriptions are summarised in Table 2 below. These are fully described in the text below.

Table 2. Summary of management prescriptions, receptors and aims of the management plan

Management Prescription Reference	Relevant Receptors	Relevant Aims
A	Bats	1
B	Birds	2
C	Wildflower	3
D	Hedgerow	4
E	Tree Planting	5

A - Installation of bat boxes

Bats are protected throughout Europe, and while the site represents potential foraging habitat, there are no notable roosting locations. Therefore, the value of the site may be enhanced by providing artificial roosting sites. A minimum of one Chillon Woodstone bat box (Figure 3) or similar box will be hung onto each building at a minimum of 3m from ground level and face south/southwesterly. These boxes are known to be used by crevice and void dwelling species.

Once installed, the bat boxes need not be monitored, but will be checked annually to ensure that they have not been damaged, vandalised, or become unstable. Any such problems will be corrected by a licensed bat worker, and replacement within the management period will be undertaken, as necessary.



Figure 3: Chillon Woodstone Bat Box.

B - Installation of bird boxes

Bird boxes provide excellent, safe opportunities for species which may be present in the area. They are frequently used and therefore provide significant benefits to the bird assemblage. Bird boxes for a variety different species will be installed. Swift boxes will be externally mounted onto the buildings with two recommended. These are considered 'universal' due to providing cavities for urban species such as house sparrow, swifts, sparrows, house martins and blue tits. Due to the lack of trees within the site for free hanging bird boxes, swift boxes are considered more appropriate to be mounted onto the building. These will be fitted in clusters of two on gable ends and near the roofline where birds would naturally look for a potential nest site. The boxes will be placed under the eaves and at least 4.5m above the ground and situated on a wall facing north or east to avoid direct sunlight with a clear flight path which is unobstructed by buildings or trees.



Figure 4: Example of Swift Box

All boxes installed on site will be checked annually by the homeowner, building contractor or ecologist. This is to ensure all boxes are in good condition, clear of debris and clear of any disused nests.

C - Creation of Wildflower Grassland

Areas of public land on site, including verges and slightly larger open areas will be used for wildflower grassland.

This will be planted with a species-rich grassland mix that can tolerate regular mowing, such as EL1 Flowering Lawn Mixture (Emorsgate Seeds).

Below provides the recommended habitat management for this seed mix.

Ground Preparation

To prepare a seed bed first remove weeds using repeated cultivation. Then plough or dig to bury the surface vegetation, harrow or rake to produce a medium tilth, and roll or tread to produce a level firm surface.

Sowing

Seed is best sown in the autumn or spring but can be sown at other times of the year if there is sufficient warmth and moisture. 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 not incorporate or cover the seed, but firm in with a roll, or by treading, to give good soil/seed contact.

First Year Management

The wildflower and grass species in this mix are perennial; they will be slow to germinate and grow and will not usually flower in their first growing season. 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 (every 7 -10 days during growing season) 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 wildflowers, and control annual weeds. Dig out any residual perennial weeds such as docks.

Management Once Established

Mow regularly as a lawn but not too short (25-40mm). To permit flowering, mowing can be relaxed from late June. Cut again when the sward gets untidy (after 4-8 weeks). Mowing may be suspended earlier in the year to allow cowslips to flower. Heavy quantities of cuttings should be collected and removed from the site.

D - The planting of new native hedgerow

New lengths of hedgerow are proposed around the residential garden boundaries, to be planted with a diversity of native hedgerow species.

Suitable hedgerow species include:

- Hawthorn (*Crateagus monogyna*)
- Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)
- Wild Privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*)
- Field Maple (*Acer campestre*)
- Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)
- Guelder Rose (*Viburnum opulus*)
- Wayfaring Tree (*Viburnum lantana*)
- Dog Rose (*Rosa canina*)
- Spindle (*Euonymus europaea*)
- Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*).

Where possible, no cutting will take place during peak bird nesting season, which runs from March to September. Where possible, shrubs and hedgerows will not be cut back annually, as flower buds often form on second-year growth. Trimming hedges on a two-

year or three-year rotation, targeting different sections each year, will make sure there are always flowers for pollinators in spring and berries for birds in autumn. Hedges cut every three years can produce two and a half times as many blossoms as those cut annually. Rotational cutting can also save time and money that would be invested in annual cutting.

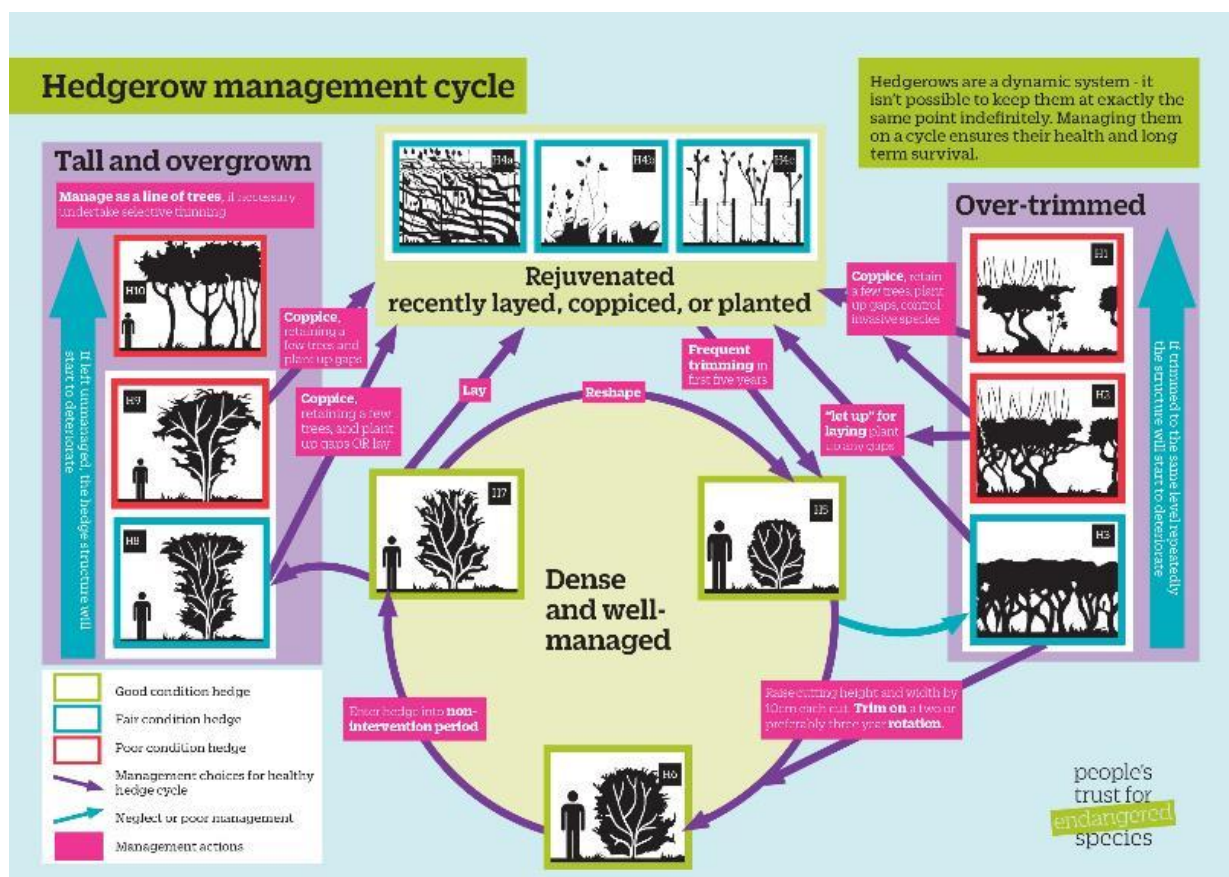


Figure 2: Hedgerow management cycle (<https://hedgerowsurvey.ptes.org/>).

E - The planting of new trees

New individual trees will be planted across the site including along the access and allocated parking areas and to the front of the dwellings. Trees will be planted with tree guards to protect them from damage and browsing.

Clear the planting area of weeds, grass and debris to reduce competition for nutrients and water. Dig a hole 2-3 times the width of the root-ball and slightly shallower than the root ball's height. Ensure the root collar (where the roots meet the trunk) is level

with the surrounding soil. Handle the root ball gently to prevent root damage. Remove any non-biodegradable wrapping material but keep burlap intact if biodegradable.

Mix excavated soil with organic matter (e.g., compost). Backfill gently, firming the soil to eliminate air pockets while avoiding compaction.

Create a shallow, raised ring of soil around the base to hold water. Apply a 5-10 cm (2 4 inch) layer of mulch (e.g., wood chips or bark) around the base but avoid direct contact with the trunk. Remove damaged or diseased branches during planting.

Stake the tree to provide support against wind until the roots establish (1-2 years).

Position stakes at an angle and tie them loosely to allow some tree movement, encouraging root anchoring. Use soft ties or tree straps to prevent bark damage. Check and adjust stakes periodically; remove after the first or second growing season once the tree is stable. Install a tree guard to prevent damage from wildlife, such as deer or rabbits.

Water regularly during the first 1-2 growing seasons, especially in dry periods.

Prune in late winter or early spring while the tree is dormant. Focus on shaping and removing dead, diseased, or crossing branches. Pruning should be limited to any branch clipping required to promote balanced and upright growth. Cut back to healthy wood or the point of origin. Cut off suckers at the base of the trunk and water sprouts along branches or the trunk.

Retain the central leader and remove competing leaders or vertical branches. Space out branches to create a balanced structure. Thin out crowded areas to improve light penetration and air circulation. Cut back excessively long branches to a bud or side branch to maintain proportional growth. Always cut just outside the branch collar (the

swollen area where the branch meets the trunk or another branch). Avoid leaving stubs or making flush cuts.

The below provides recommended species for planting:

- Field Maple *Acer campestre*
- Hawthorn (suitable for coppicing) *Crataegus monogyna*
- Hazel (suitable for coppicing) *Corylus avellana*
- Hornbeam *Carpinus betulus*
- Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*
- Silver birch *Betula pendula*.

5.0 Implementation

5.1 Schedule and Management Responsibilities

5.1.1 Landscape and Biodiversity

The schedule for activities is as set out in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Schedule and responsible parties for biodiversity management prescriptions

Management Prescription reference	Contributing activities (as described in Section 4.1)	Timings	Responsible parties
A	Install bat boxes	At completion of build	Building contractor.
	Monitor boxes once a year.	December/January Annually	Homeowner/ecologist
B	Installation of bird boxes	At completion of build	Building contractor
	Monitoring (and correction / replacement as necessary)	Between June and August	Homeowner/ building contractor/ ecologist
C	Sow new grassland seed mix	Autumn or spring	Landscape contractor.
	Mow grassland - first year	Regularly (every 7-10 days during growing season)	Owner or landscape contractor.
	Mow grassland - subsequent years	Mow regularly to between 25-40mm. Relax mowing regime from late June for 4-8 weeks.	Owner or landscape contractor.
D	Plant new hedgerow	Between October to the end of March	Landscape contractor.
	Manage hedgerow	Avoid breeding bird season (March - September). Trim sections on a 2-3 year rotation.	Owner or landscape contractor.
	Replace failures	As needed	Owner or landscape contractor.
E	Plant new trees	Between October to the end of March	Landscape contractor.

6.0 References

Coyne Environmental Ecological report, Nov, 2022.

Google Earth, (2026), Image from site location

Gardener's World (2020), <https://www.gardenersworld.com/> Accessed at time of the report

National and Local Landscape Character Assessments - NCA110 - Chilterns

The Great British Hedgerow Survey (2019), People's Trust for Endangered Species, online <https://hedgerowsurvey.ptes.org/> Accessed at time of the report

Appendix I Proposed Plans



Proposed site plan