

Landscape and Ecology Management Plan

Burford Grange, Ickleford

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Ecology | Green Space | Community | GIS

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Report Produced for CALA Homes

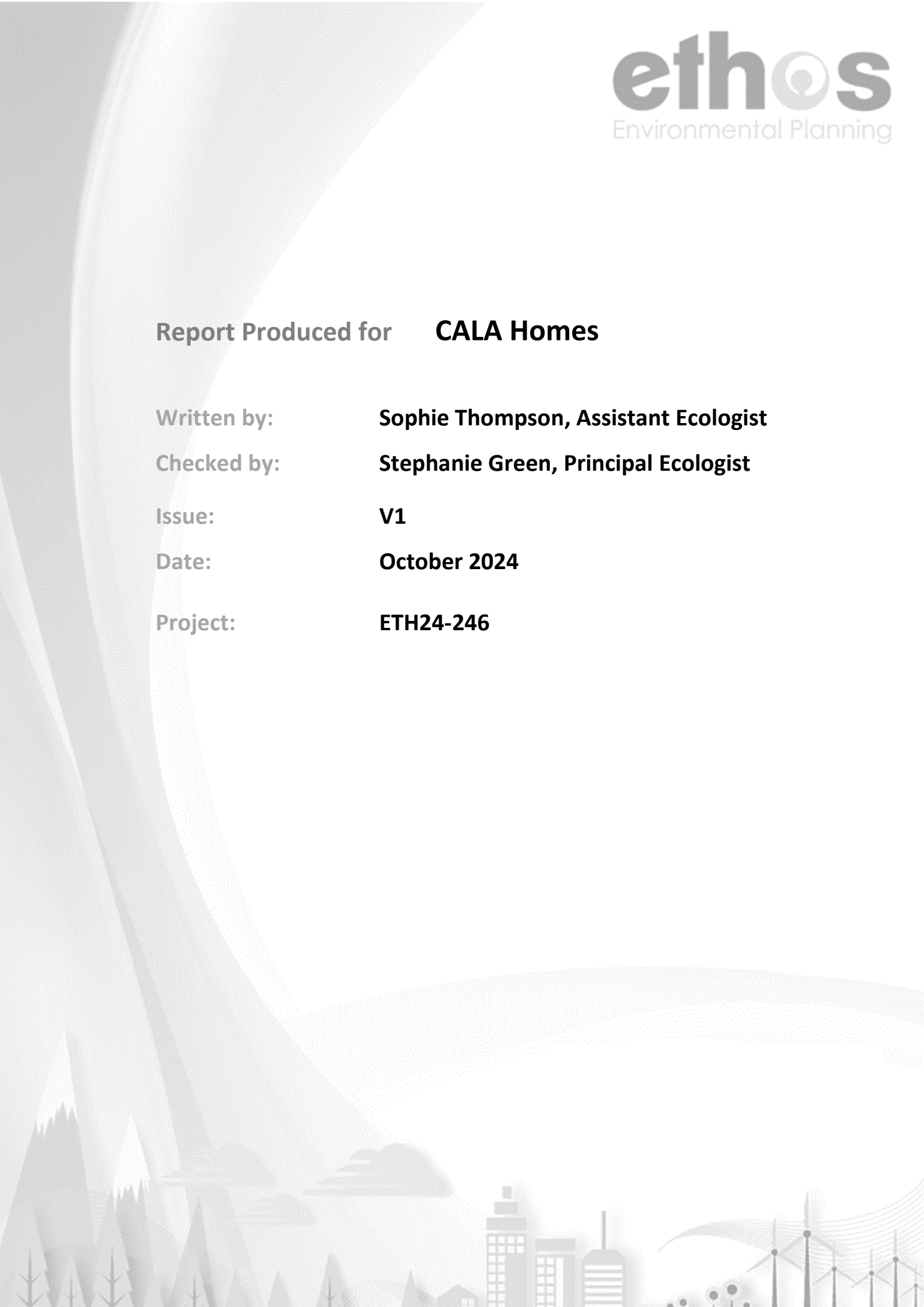
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SUMMARY

- The site is located at Burford Grange, Ickleford (Central Grid Reference TL 17682 31088) and is subject to plans for the development of 48 residential dwellings with public open space, soft landscaping and access roads.
- This Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) has been produced by Ethos Environmental Planning to discharge Condition 26 of the granted Full planning permission for the site at Burford Grange, Ickleford (Planning Reference 19/01106/FP).
- The objectives of the LEMP are set out.
- Habitat management options for the site are set out in order to achieve the objectives of the LEMP. Ecological management constraints to management actions are also detailed.
- Details of ecological provisions to be installed as part of the development are included.
- A five-year work schedule capable of being rolled out over a 30-year period is set out.
- Information on potential remedial measures and responsibilities for implementing the LEMP have been provided.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 Ethos Environmental Planning (Ethos) have produced this Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) for the site at Burford Grange, Ickleford (Central Grid Reference TL 17682 31088), hereafter referred to as 'the site' and shown in Figure 1.
- 1.1.2 This LEMP has been produced to condition 26 of the granted Full planning permission (Planning Reference 19/01106/FP), which is as follows:

Condition 26

- 1.1.3 *Prior to the occupation of the development a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan.*
- 1.1.4 This LEMP has therefore been produced to allow the discharge of Condition 26 and should be read in accordance with the Soft Landscape Proposals (ACD Environmental, 2022).

1.2 LEMP Objectives

- 1.2.1 Objectives of the LEMP are as follows:
- To protect and enhance biodiversity and landscape elements of the site, for the first five years following completion of development, capable of being rolled out over a 30-year period.
 - To provide prescriptions for ongoing management to meet the stated objectives and shown as applicable on plans and drawings for individual areas.
 - To fulfil the legal requirements in relation to the protection and enhancement of the ecological features of the site.
 - To provide prescriptions for management actions including a 30-year timetable of works.
 - Providing a list of persons responsible for undertaking specific duties.

1.3 Site Location and Description

- 1.3.1 The site is located at Burford Grange, Ickleford (Central Grid Reference TL 17682 31088) and contains an area of modified grassland to the west and amenity grassland to the east, with native hedgerows on all but the north-western boundary. The total site area is 2.4 hectares and is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Site location



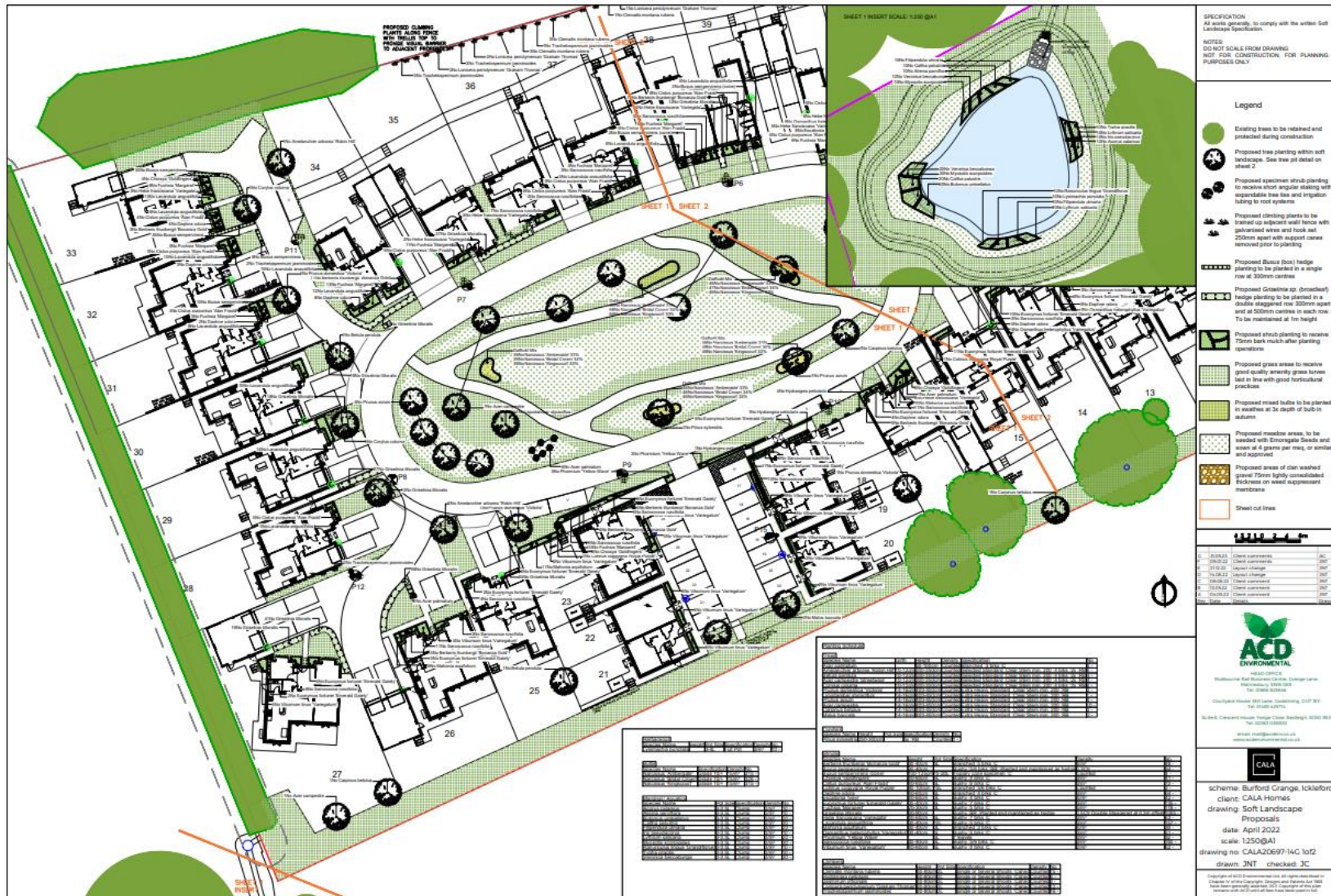
1.4 Development Proposals

1.4.1 The development proposals comprise the construction of forty-eight residential dwellings with associated access and green space, as shown in Figure 2. The layout of the development has been developed to minimise impacts on the important ecological features on site, and provide enhancements for protected species as follows:

- Retention of the majority of existing hedgerows on site and infill planting with suitable native species;
- Creation of new native hedge along northern boundary to improve ecological connectivity in the local area;
- Residential back gardens located adjacent to hedgerows and sown with a suitable species-rich grassland mix to create ecological corridors for wildlife around the site;
- Creation of an attenuation pond in the southern section of the site to increase the value of the site for species such as invertebrates and in turn, foraging bats and birds;
- Tree and shrub planting within the street scene;
- Installation of integrated and standalone ecological provisions for a range of faunal species; and

- Creation of open space in the centre of the site, including tree planting and meadow grassland to create habitat for biodiversity.

Figure 2 Landscape proposals (ACD Environmental, 2022)





2 BASELINE ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

2.1 This LEMP has drawn on information in the Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) (Ethos, 2021^a) and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (Ethos, 2021^b). A summary of key issues from the EclA relevant to this report are summarised below:

- The site consisted of an area of modified grassland in the west and central sections, bordered by native hedgerows on all but the northwestern and central northern boundary. The grassland and hedgerow were assessed to be in moderate condition.
- There was an area of mixed scrub along the hedgerow to the west and northwest section of the site, also assessed to be in moderate condition.
- The site was assessed to contain potential for common invertebrates, hedgehog, brown hare, polecat, foraging and commuting badger, nesting birds and commuting and foraging bats.



Figure 3 UK Habitat Classification Survey (Ethos, 2021)

3 HABITAT MANAGEMENT AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND CONSTRAINTS

3.1 Aims and Objectives of the Management

3.1.1 The overall aim of habitat management is to provide a range of ecologically valuable habitats that also provide high aesthetic value for residents.

3.1.2 Objectives for the management of habitats are as follows:

- Manage the existing and created hedgerow network to improve habitat connectivity across the local landscape and benefit a variety of protected and notable species;
- To provide areas of open space of value to wildlife such as nesting birds, foraging bats, hedgehog and invertebrates, whilst also providing valuable greenspace for residents; and
- To provide aquatic habitat of value to biodiversity including invertebrates, amphibians and foraging bats and birds, whilst also supporting the requirement for drainage.

3.2 Management Constraints

3.2.1 Management cannot be undertaken that would result in offences under protective legislation. As such, management would ensure conformity with the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended), the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

3.2.2 The following provides a list of the key faunal groups that have been identified at the site through ecological surveys undertaken to date (Ethos, 2021^a), along with consideration for how management prescriptions for the habitats at the site should take account of the presence of these species:

- Birds – Maintain suitable foraging and nesting habitat for birds, namely the existing hedgerows and mature trees on site as well as the created attenuation basin and planted trees. Management of scrub and trees must be timed to avoid the bird nesting season (March-August inclusive).
- Bats – Suitable foraging and commuting habitat is being retained, predominately along hedgerows and trees. Tree management will be undertaken sensitively to avoid impacting potential bat roosting habitat, such as cracks and crevices in trees.
- Reptiles – New areas of open space will be managed to include areas of infrequently managed tussocky grassland of value to reptiles. Management to scrub and hedgerow bases will be undertaken outside of the hibernation season to avoid impacts on reptiles.
- Amphibians - Pond works to be timed to avoid the amphibian breeding season (March – October).

4 APPROPRIATE MANAGEMENT OPTIONS FOR ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES

- 4.1.1 The following section contains information relating to habitat management on site, in order to achieve the management objectives. Habitat creation will be undertaken as set out on the landscape plans.

4.2 Hedgerows

- 4.2.1 Areas proposed for hedgerow planting and enhancement are shown on the landscape plans.

- 4.2.2 Tree planting will be undertaken along the enhanced hedgerows and will be managed as follows:

- The trees will be identified and marked to avoid cutting when managing the hedgerows;
- The trees will be weeded and mulched in the early spring for the first three years to aid establishment; and
- Dead trees will be removed and re-planted as necessary.

- 4.2.3 Management of hedgerows will be as follows:

- The hedgerows will be maintained with high basal density. This will be achieved by allowing bramble and other scrub species to grow at the base of the hedgerows. 'Neat' hedgerows will be avoided. This will provide foraging and nesting habitat for birds, hedgehogs and invertebrates;
- Hedgerows will be cut on rotation once every three years on alternate sides (left/top/right) to ensure high fruit production; and
- If the weather conditions allow, the hedgerow will be cut between January and February to avoid impacts on wildlife and to ensure high fruit production. This will benefit species such as birds, which rely on a consistent food source throughout the autumn months.

- 4.2.4 Management of created hedgerows will include:

- Frequent trimming in the first five years to form a dense woody structure; and
- Dead trees will be removed and replanted.

4.3 Amenity Grassland

- 4.3.1 Areas of amenity grassland will be created within the street scene and within the area of open space in the centre of the site, which is identified for amenity usage. The amenity grassland will be sown with a suitable turf mix as shown on the landscape plans and managed as follows:

- The grassland will be cut as required to ensure the grassland remains short and suitable for amenity usage. This will encourage local residents to utilise these areas rather than the longer tussocky meadow grassland areas (Section 4.4 below); and
- Arisings will be removed and composted on site.

4.4 Species-rich Meadow Grassland

4.4.1 Areas of species-rich meadow grassland will be created within areas of informal open space and around the edges of the sustainable drainage feature by sowing Emorsgate Seeds EM10 Tussock meadow mix. The grassland will be sown in spring or autumn within areas shown on the landscape plan. The grassland will be managed as follows:

- The grassland will be mown regularly during the first year of establishment;
- Once established, the tussocky grassland requires minimal maintenance and will be cut once every 2-3 years after the main flowering period (July – August);
- Areas of grassland around the SUDS feature will not be cut until after the amphibian breeding season (i.e. in November) to avoid impacts on breeding amphibians; and,
- Any arisings will be baled and removed or composted within a designated area on site. Arisings will not be composted within proximity to the SUDS feature to prevent nutrient runoff.

4.5 Sustainable Drainage Feature – Aquatic Habitats

4.5.1 Aquatic species will be planted around the edges of the SUDS feature as shown on the landscape plan. The management of the pond will be as follows:

- Timing of management actions to avoid the amphibian breeding season (which is March – October);
- Removal of fly tipping or other damaging actions on an annual basis as part of the management actions;
- Removal of any invasive species if present; and
- Monitoring will identify if any species is becoming dominant and choking up the ponds, with remedial measures identified.

Table 1 Ecological provisions

Provision	Number	Description	Installation
	48	Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box 'C' The Enclosed Bat Box 'C' from Ibstock is designed for the pipistrelle bat. The inside of the box is designed to create several roosting zones. The bottom entrance means that no maintenance is required as droppings will simply fall out the bottom. This Ibstock Bat Box C is available in two sizes and three colours. Choose from smooth red, smooth blue or smooth cream brick. The box has an attractive bat motive on the front and is both durable and fully frost resistant.	Installed at least 4m high on south, south-west or south-east aspect of the building. Ideally not positioned above windows, doors or outside seating areas.
 S brick: bird nesting brick - Action for Swifts	39	Species: universal for cavity nesters (excluding starling size) Species customisation upon request 1 brick and cavity size Completely customisable. Laser-cut PVC foamboard nest chamber and brick slip front. Lightweight and made to order. Also available for rendered walls. Easy retrofit.	The bird box must be sited at least five metres high avoiding a south or south-west facing wall. The bricks should be installed in clusters of three where practical and away from vegetation which might obstruct the entrance.
 Habibat Starling Nest Brick	10	Species: Starling 215 x 215 x 120 mm - Weight 3kg Concrete plus facing product, made to order with choice of finishes e.g. wood, stone etc..	The bird box must be sited at least five metres high avoiding a south or south-west facing wall. The bricks should be away from other bird boxes and vegetation which might obstruct the entrance.
	12	- Block – 215 x 215 x 102.5 mm at 7kg - Brick – 215 x 105 x 65mm at 2.9kg Bee Blocks can be used either as an integrated part of a building or free standing.	The Bee Block/Brick must be positioned in a warm sunny spot, preferably on a south – south-east -facing wall, with no vegetation in front of the holes. Ideally they should be positioned at a height

Provision	Number	Description	Installation
Green&Blue brick And/or  Green&Blue block		Solitary bees are non-aggressive and as such are suitable for gardens with pets and children.	of at least 1 metre from the ground. Garages are good. It is highly recommended that bee-friendly plants are located nearby so that the bees using the bricks have food, otherwise it is unlikely that the bricks will be used. Lavender, honeysuckle and buddleia are all pollinator-friendly plants.
Or See Jackson, and Stockport fencing for ready made products   	As required	Creating a hole in a garden wall or fence will allow your local hedgehogs to pass through from garden to garden safely. A hole measuring 13cm by 13cm is the right size for a hedgehog to pass through but too small for most pets. Once you have made your hole in the fence or wall, you can fix the Eco Hedgehog Hole Plate to the fence, ensuring that the hole does not get blocked or stretched.	To be installed in any permanent fencing around or within the site. Ideally close to other fences of linear features. This will result in all gardens with multiple entry/exit points.

6 WORK SCHEDULE

6.1 This section sets out the work schedule for management of habitats for the first five years, as detailed in Table 2.

Table 2 Work schedule for managing habitats on site

Habitat	Management Tasks	Timing
Pond	- Remove rubbish/ fly tipping. - If any aquatic species become dominant, consider additional management to allow other species to develop. - Remove invasive species if present.	As required
Amenity grassland in areas of public open space	- 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).	As required
Existing trees and hedgerows	- Retained trees inspected, deadwood removed as required and retained on site as log piles if suitable and possible. - Existing hedgerows infill planted and managed as per 'hedgerow management' below.	Between September and February to avoid impacts on nesting birds
New trees and shrubs	Management of trees and shrubs as set out within the Soft Landscape Proposals (ACD Environmental 2022).	Tree and shrub pruning required undertaken between September and February to avoid impacts on breeding birds.
Hedgerow management	- Frequently trimmed for first five years, then rotational management to allow high fruit production. - If required, hedgerows will be allowed to grow up for rejuvenation before laying or coppicing to repeat the cycle.	No management to hedgerow bases (e.g. grubbing out of roots or clearing around the ground level) between November and February. Management of remainder of hedgerow to be undertaken between September and February to avoid impacts on breeding birds.

7 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 7.1 CALA Homes will be responsible for establishing the habitats and protected species provision detailed within this LEMP, as detailed in the previous sections. Following habitat creation, the site will then be managed by a dedicated management company established by the Client, who will be responsible for implementing the annual work plan.
- 7.2 All work will be carried out by experienced and qualified operatives holding the necessary training certificates to undertake the prescribed works. All works shall be carried out in accordance with good horticultural practice, using materials, plant and machinery appropriate to the task, undertaken in such a manner that avoids damage to the site and its surroundings. Any plant material that dies as a result of Contractors neglect will be replaced at their cost.
- 7.3 CALA Homes will be responsible for monitoring the site, appointing appropriate professionals (ecology, arboriculture) and producing the five-year monitoring report. Updates to the LEMP following the first five years of monitoring will be the responsibility of CALA Homes.

8 MONITORING AND REMEDIAL MEASURES

- 8.1 The key aim of monitoring is to assess the success of the management prescriptions against the management objectives. The Management Company will take responsibility for monitoring and will liaise with the Client to report on the successes and any changes proposed to management; this will comprise a five-year review of management to be provided as a monitoring report and updates made to the LEMP if required.
- 8.2 If the results of post-creation monitoring highlighted the need for management changes, the LEMP would be amended accordingly. A formal review of the LEMP would take place after five years following the completion of GI creation. The revised LEMP would contain management prescriptions for a further five to ten years. Monitoring will be undertaken for at least 30 years, with the potential to be rolled over in perpetuity.
- 8.3 This section sets out how monitoring will be implemented. Table 4 provides a list of monitoring actions with appropriate methods and reporting, with Table 5 containing information relating to risks and remedial measures which would be identified through monitoring.

Table 3 Monitoring plan

Item/Ref	Aim of management	Monitoring methods and timing
Grassland within public open space	To create grassland of value for biodiversity and public usage, including areas of infrequently managed tussocky grassland suitable for reptiles, foraging bats, birds and invertebrates.	Monitoring survey in years 1, 3 and 5 following development, to be undertaken during the peak flowering period June - July.
2) Marginal and aquatic vegetation	To create valuable habitat for biodiversity including aquatic vegetation for amphibians, whilst also supporting the drainage feature.	Monitoring survey in years 1, 3 and 5 following development, to be undertaken during the botanical flowering period May – August.
3) Hedgerow and tree boundaries	To create valuable habitat for biodiversity such as birds and enhance ecological connectivity around the site boundaries.	Monitoring survey in years 1, 3 and 5.
4) Ecological provisions	To create additional nesting and roosting habitat for bats and birds.	Compliance check in years 1, 3 and 5 following development, to assess that provisions are still present and installed correctly.

Table 4 Risks and remedial measures

Habitats Type Ref	Risk	Trigger for action	Remedial Measures
Meadow grassland	Damage to grassland in open space as a result of public usage. Bare patches of grass developing or grassland not reaching the species diversity required.	Monitoring visit	Re-seed grassland, create additional paths where desire lines are present
New tree planting	Trees failed, died or vandalised. Trees damaged from management actions.	Monitoring visit	Replanting

Habitats Type Ref	Risk	Trigger for action	Remedial Measures
Pond	Presence of invasive species, dominance of aquatic species which results in reducing the open water present.	Monitoring visit	Remove invasive species, de-silt or remove dominant vegetation coverage. Works would be timed to avoid the amphibian breeding season.
Hedgerows	Hedgerow structure deteriorating through lack of management. Gaps appearing due to disturbance, such as people or animals walking through.	Monitoring visit	Hedgerows may require additional gapping up and If hedgerows are growing out at the base they may need to be coppiced or laid to rejuvenate the hedgerow.
Ecological provisions	Damaged, removed, installed incorrectly	Monitoring visit	Replace damaged, removed boxes. Integral boxes cannot be interfered with and therefore do not require monitoring or remedial measures.

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