



# Landscape Management Plan

Blue Hills  
Farm  
Birkenshaw

Prepared by Greenbelt Group  
Ltd.

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## Contents

1. Introduction
2. Litter, Debris and Fly tipping
3. Grass Areas
4. Shrubs
5. Hedges
6. Trees
7. Play Areas
8. Fencing
9. Pathways & PROW
10. Appendix

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Purpose of a management Plan

This Management Plan demonstrates a commitment to the long-term landscape of the housing development at Blue Hills Farm, Birkenshaw and assists in developing detailed specifications for future maintenance. The Landscape Management Plan will ensure that the open space is an attractive mixed-use environment and should be read with the approved landscape design plans.4035.20.105L prepared by Acanthus WSM Architects.

The Plan will summarise the broad management objectives and specifications for public open space within the site and will outline the key responsibilities of the parties involved in the management.

### 1.2 Objectives

The objectives of a management plan are to:

- Establish and maintain the long-term design objectives of the open space areas
- Ensure the health of the planted vegetation and built environment for the safety and enjoyment of stakeholders of all ages.
- Increase habitat and biodiversity value and promote ecological benefits.

### 1.3 Management Responsibilities

Greenbelt Group will be the appointed management company concerned with the site's management and will ensure that the Management Plan is being successfully implemented, meeting its agreed objectives and responding to changes in the broader context, legislation etc. Greenbelt Group will collate observations on an annual basis. The Management Plan will be subject to review by the Management Company on a 5-year basis.

Greenbelt will implement its Environmental Policy (Appendix) as the minimum standard required from employees, agents and contractors who will work on the site to protect the environment and add value to the open space on the development.

## **1.4 General Provisions**

The standards of service set out in the landscape management specification 1.0 to 10.0 are deemed the minimum acceptable standards. Greenbelt requires its contractor to carry out all operations necessary to maintain these standards at each visit.

Remedial operations shall be strictly limited to those directly instructed by Greenbelt.

Nursery stock that has died, stolen, or vandalised within the first five years following the initial establishment will be replaced during the next planting season. The replacement plants will be the same species or a similar species approved by the planning authority. All nursery stock will comply with British Standard BS 3936-1 1992.

Most on-site management operations are awarded to local contractors through a maintenance contract which sets out how the work will be carried out and to an agreed standard. Except where otherwise specified, all materials and workmanship will be in accordance with the appropriate British Standards current at the time. BS 4428 1989 Code of Practice for General Landscape Operations (excluding hard surfaces) applies to general landscape operations.

## **1.5 Contracted Labour**

Greenbelt will endeavour to source locally based landscape contractors subject to the following:

- The contractor must comply with all statutory requirements concerning the employment of labour whether those provisions affect the execution of the service or otherwise;
- All operatives will at all times be employees of the contractor or be sub-contracted to the principal contractor;
- The contractor will provide all skilled and qualified labour necessary for the expeditious carrying out of the services;
- The contractor will ensure that the standards of maintenance are brought to the attention of each operative in relation to the provision of the services;
- At all times, a competent person authorised by the contractor will be present on-site to receive instructions from Greenbelt;
- The contractor will comply with Greenbelt Group's Code of Conduct and Site Behaviour (Appendix);
- The contractor will comply with all statutory requirements concerning health, safety and welfare.
- The contractor is responsible for ensuring that all the work equipment supplied for use in connection with the open space complies with all relevant statutory requirements.

## 2. Litter, Debris and Fly Tipping

On no less than 23 occasions each year, the whole site will be walked, and litter collected and removed to offsite tipping or recycling facility. In addition, debris and fly-tipping will be removed by Greenbelt; this may occur separately from the routine maintenance visit.

Litter- means paper, bottles, cans and sweet wrappers and other small paper, glass or plastic-based products.

Debris- means stones, bricks, twigs and any storm-damaged material.

Fly-tipping- means any material purposely dumped without authority on any part of the site, including but not limited to household rubbish, household appliances, furniture or garden waste.

## 3. Grass Areas

All grassland will be maintained to allow good establishment of newly planted areas and kept to a high standard to create safe and attractive space for formal and informal recreation.

Weeds and pernicious species will be controlled, edges of grassland neatened and, where appropriate and designed, grassland maintained to increase biodiversity.

All mowing and cutting operatives will exercise care when operating machinery close to trees or shrubs. Where trees are vulnerable to damage, a 600mm diameter circle at the base of the tree will be maintained free of vegetation by applying a contact herbicide at the beginning of the grass cutting season.

### 3.1 Amenity Grass

Short amenity grass shall be cut to the frequency sufficient to ensure that the height does not exceed 65mm and that it is cut to a height of 25mm.

- All arisings on roads, pathways and areas of hard standing shall be removed before leaving the site.
- All growth at and around obstacles, fence lines, shrub beds shall be cut simultaneously as the mowing operation.
- Long amenity grass provides essential habitat for invertebrates and flora. Depending on the value of the habitat to the local ecology, this grass type is cut up to seven times per year, usually between March and October.

### 3.2 Long Grass

Long grass is intended to be long as it provides habitat for various species, including invertebrates, small mammals and birds. Therefore, the maintenance regime will aim to facilitate the maximum benefits of the grass and the right growing conditions.

- Long grass will be cut twice yearly, and arisings either removed or spread evenly to return nutrients to the soil.
- Long grass will be inspected throughout the year for litter and debris.
- If needed, a spring weed and feed will take place.

### **3.4 Meadow Grass**

Meadow grassland will be maintained to provide visual interest, habitat and increased biodiversity. It is a vital habitat for copious wildlife, providing habitat and food source and visual appeal and enjoyment for humans throughout the seasons.

First-year management:

During the first year, the focus will be on establishing the meadow grassland and controlling weeds. First-year management may include increased cuts and complete removal of arisings to stop any nutrient flow back into the soil, creating preferable conditions for weeds over perennials. For mainly persistent weeds, spot treat with an appropriate herbicide or manually pull out.

Future management:

- Wildflower meadow grassland will be cut up to twice per year as appropriate, and arisings either removed or spread evenly to return nutrients to the soil. Cuts will be done mid-summer and then late summer/autumn to optimise flowering annuals unless specified otherwise.
- Weeds may be kept in check with the cutting regime, any problem weeds affecting the overall planting scheme will be removed with either hand weeding or appropriate herbicide.

## **4. Shrubs**

To create attractive, healthy shrub mixes, beds should be kept weed-free, neat and tidy.

- Where there is no bark covering, mulch beds will be forked at a frequency to ensure adequate aeration of the soil.
- Where there is bark mulch covering, they will be topped up to a depth of 20mm, to maintain a 50 -75mm deep.
- Weeds will be removed by hand or herbicide.
- Formative pruning will be carried out for each species at the appropriate time of the year and to best encourage the growth of species.

- Perimeter growth will be pruned as and when required.
- To ensure a distinct edge, all amenity grass edges to shrub planting shall be re-formed and maintained, using a half moon edging iron or similar. Soil edges shall be banked up to approx. Forty-five degrees and residual edgings shall be removed off-site.

## 5. Hedges

All hedges will be cut with suitable machinery and all arisings collected and removed. All hedgerows will only be cut at specified times not to disturb nesting wildlife.

### 5.1 Agricultural Hedges

Agricultural hedges will be cut outside of bird nesting season (March-August) and preferably in Jan/February to fruit has been eaten by birds.

- Cutting will be neat and in an A shape to encourage dense and viable branching.
- Weed control along the base of hedges.
- Watering and fertilising as necessary.
- Top up mulch layer to the required depth of 75mm.
- Pruning by hand where necessary.
- All litter removed
- Remove any guards between years 3-5 of planting

### 5.2 Ornamental Hedges

Ornamental hedges will be cut outside of bird nesting season (March-August). Hedges will be cut appropriately and as designed.

- Weed control along the base of hedges.
- Watering and fertilising as necessary.
- Top up mulch layer to the required depth of 75mm.
- Pruning by hand where necessary.
- All litter removed
- Hedgerows will be cut neatly and to a specified shape. Establishing hedges will be pruned correctly to encourage rapid growth.
- Remove any guards between years 3-5 of planting

## 6. Trees

All trees will be managed to facilitate the optimal health and growth of all trees. To protect and enhance the planting schemes and biodiversity and ensure that existing and mature trees are healthy and safe. Pruning regimes may vary depending on species.

### **6.1 Amenity Trees**

- An annual health and safety audit will be undertaken.
- The base of all trees will have weeds removed. Maintain a 500mm diameter grass and the weed-free area around the bottom of each plant until the canopy closes.
- Pruning, staking and ties will be checked, replaced and moved where needed to ensure support of trees in early growth (0-20 years).
- Bark will be topped up at the base of the tree to 20mm.
- Needed pruning to encourage healthy and full growth. Pruning will not be undertaken in later winter/early spring due to the sap flow period.

### **6.2 Mature Amenity Trees**

The trees will be inspected annually as part of a health and safety audit by a qualified arborist. The trees will be assessed in relation to their age, species, size, condition and location. If abnormal features are identified that indicate ill health or a potentially mechanical weakness, a programme of work will be prepared. If there is a legislative requirement to undertake the work, an application will be made to the planning authority.

Only specialist contractors will be contracted to undertake the work once approval is granted. All work will be conducted in accordance with British Standard Tree Work BS 3998:1989 by operatives with proven experience and who are appropriately equipped with the appropriate skills and equipment.

Where trees are removed, Greenbelt will replace the tree with a suitable replacement native species at a location agreed with the planning authority.

Woodlands as a whole will be assessed routinely for the best course of action to create biodiverse, successful and varied woodlands. Management plans may be altered to best suit the development of the woodland; This may include removing trees, clearing vegetation, coppicing, or what Greenbelt assesses the correct course of action based on best woodland management practices.

## **7. Play Areas**

Play areas will be inspected by Greenbelt throughout the year by a qualified safety inspector to ensure all play equipment is clean, safe and in working condition. Any issues found will be corrected as soon as possible by Greenbelt.

- Litter will be removed, and any bins in the play area emptied routinely throughout the year.
- All hard surfaces will be kept clean and tidy, and all fittings, benches are kept in a clean and working condition.
- All fixed play equipment and infrastructure must be visually inspected daily as per the recommendations of BSEN1176-1177 to ensure compliance with European safety standards for fixed play equipment and surfacing. All defects must be immediately reported to the authorised officer and isolated if necessary to ensure public safety. The contractor will provide a record, in a form approved by the authorised officer of all visual inspections and submit these weekly. Minor defects are to be rectified by the contractor, while major defects which require special attention or spare parts will be notified to the authorised officer who will decide whether the contractor or a specialist play contractor should undertake the repair.
- All equipment shall be washed or treated with an appropriate solvent, if necessary, to be kept free of all graffiti, bird droppings, other fouling, sap etc., ensuring that at all times they are fit for use and of acceptable appearance.
- All surfaces shall be washed and maintained free of weeds, moss and algae.

## 8. Fencing

- All fencing will have a 1m wide clear strip that is maintained at points throughout the year.
- Fencing will be inspected to ensure function and appearance.
- Painting and maintenance will be undertaken when necessary.

## 9. Pathways & PROW

Pathways & PROW will be inspected throughout the year to ensure and safe and in good condition.

Moss and weed treatment will take place once per year to ensure pathways & PROW are kept clear.

Maintenance will be undertaken when necessary.

## 10. Appendix

### **Environmental Policy**

Greenbelt's environmental policy aims to raise the standards of environmental management while protecting your environment. We will:

## **1. Add value to the Open Space environment**

- Maintenance specifications will be agreed upon before Greenbelt Group Limited (GGL) take on any site
- Regular inspections will be carried out to ensure compliance with the approved Landscape Management Specification, legal requirements, and best practice guidance. A procedure for remedying non-compliance is in place
- We will work with local contractors and build partnerships through training
- We will work with a developer's landscape design team and strive for greater use of native species
- Our staff will hold appropriate qualifications, be experienced, and undergo continuous training

## **2. Where possible, exceed legal compliance**

- The GGL Health & Safety policy contains statements on personal protective equipment and when this is to be worn
- GGL carries full insurance and has public liability cover for £10M
- Only approved contractors and whose employees have valid Certificates of Competence for appropriate machinery and equipment will be used. GGL will demand sight of these before work commencing, and will check compliance
- GGL will use only contractors who are appropriately licensed for the work they undertake and use licensed facilities for disposing of waste material
- Contractors' machinery and equipment is to be well-maintained. GGL will carry out spot checks
- GGL has a waste minimisation programme in place
- Play areas are independently inspected every two weeks, with complete reports prepared every quarter. We will immediately carry out minor repairs that are needed or make any equipment safe
- Work on-site will be carried out within agreed hours of operation to minimise intrusion on people's lives
- Training will be provided to staff to keep up to date with changing legislation and practices

## **3. Support and promote sustainable land management**

- Only approved chemicals will be sanctioned for use as herbicides (weed killers), fungicides, and plant food; and excessive use of chemicals is discouraged
- Weather conditions etc. will be taken into consideration when spraying
- Best horticulture and arboriculture practices will be employed
- GGL actively supports the principle of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and aims to be a leading champion of these schemes
- Grass cuttings are left on-site (except in high amenity grassed areas) as the cuttings provide helpful mulch and a source of Nitrogen, which reduces the need to use fertiliser. The costs of maintenance are also considerably reduced by leaving the cuttings on-site
- Continuous cover with forestry is practised. GGL does not clear-fell; where felling is required, this is kept to the death/damage of individual trees. Regeneration is encouraged to assist the ecology of the woodland

- Contractors are encouraged to mulch, chip, compost or recycle material; but it is recognised that this may not be practical in all circumstances
- GGL will take action against fly-tipping, litter, hazardous waste, dog fouling, burning rubbish and bonfires, graffiti, anti-social behaviour, pollution. This will include liaising closely with the local authority, police, dog wardens, litter wardens, community groups, etc.

#### **4. Encourage biodiversity on our sites**

- Be aware of, and support, the Local Biodiversity Action Plan
- Assess the impact products and practices have on the environment, e.g.
- Cut a 1-metre strip on either side of footpaths and 1 metre back from kerbs (enhances habitat, improves visual appearance, reduces maintenance costs)
- Meadow grass cut once per year (allows wildflowers to grow and seed)
- Leave 10% of amenity grass uncut (enhances habitat)
- Encourage local biodiversity action groups
- Liaise with local wildlife groups
- Use an ISO 14000 company to carry out insect and rodent control

#### **5. Value clients, customers and the wider community**

- Provide a high standard of service
- Be open and transparent, including liaising with and meeting residents' groups, third parties, etc
- GGL promotes Customer Care, with training provided to (appropriate) staff
- A Freephone number and an email address are provided to enable accessibility
- A website is available and updated regularly to provide information
- A Home Owners' Pack is produced for each new household and is updated periodically. This gives considerable information on GGL and maintenance issues
- Information leaflets are produced on a variety of subjects
- Meet and discuss developers' needs

To find out more, please contact us on 0800 028 1749 or [www.greenbelt.co.uk](http://www.greenbelt.co.uk).

#### **Code of conduct-Site behaviour**

As the UK experts in creating and managing residential and commercial landscapes, Greenbelt is determined to be at the forefront of best practices and is committed to exceeding customers' expectations in the quality of our work and services.

To do this, the standards of workmanship and the behaviour of anyone representing our company have to be exemplary.

This **Code of Conduct** sets baseline requirements in practice and behaviour for contractors and their staff to achieve the highest standards of service.

## **Customers**

Customers have a right to expect a high quality of work, so

- All contractors' staff must be familiar with site maintenance schedules
- Staff must have access to and be familiar with current site plans
- All contractual and site-specific obligations must be met
- Maintenance work must not be rushed; schedules are not time-based

Contractor's employees must be polite, considerate and knowledgeable about their tasks.

If unable to answer a query, employees should

- Direct customers to the site supervisor or team leader *or*
- Offer a Supervisor or Contractor card with Greenbelt's Customer Free phone number 0800 028 1749

Supervisors and team leaders should be available to talk to or walk the site with customers who have concerns or complaints

## **Behaviour on Site**

### **Tools for the job**

All hand or vehicle-mounted tools must be fit for purpose

All tools and equipment needed for routine maintenance must be available on all site visits so that all required maintenance can be done during that visit

Vehicle or machinery engines must be turned off when not in use

### **Dressing for work**

Safety and protective clothing, appropriate for weather and site conditions, must be worn at all times

No football/ team colours of any kind to be worn

### **Supervising work**

A Supervisor and Team Leader must be available and visible on-site

A senior member of staff must supervise young employees and trainees at all times

### **Taking a break**

Employees are entitled to scheduled breaks during site maintenance visits.

However, unless on a scheduled break, all members of maintenance teams should be actively engaged on-site at all times.

### **Leaving a site**

Contractors should always look over the site before packing away tools and ensure all maintenance operations are completed to specification. Check that

- *Nothing* has been missed
- The site looks better after the visit
- Supervisor or Contractor cards have been completed and delivered correctly if required

### **Site Layout and location of managed areas**

Refer to 3721 Open Space Management Plan prepared by Greenbelt Group.