Landscape Plan for DC/25/0487 – Canopy Camouflage Strategy

1. Background and Context

The proposed plan addresses the visual impact of a canopy recently installed in an area previously obscured by a mature hedgerow. Historically, this hedgerow provided significant natural screening. However, during the removal of temporary classroom structures formerly located on this site, the hedgerow was significantly trimmed back, resulting in increased visibility into the area now occupied by the canopy.

2. Camouflage and Screening Strategy

The primary aim of this landscape plan is to reinstate natural screening using the existing hedgerow and to assess the effectiveness of this measure over time.

Step 1: Allow Natural Regrowth

- Existing hedgerow species will be allowed to regrow without interference to a height that exceeds the height of the canopy.

- Based on local growth patterns, it is estimated this regrowth will take approximately **six months**.

Step 2: Maintenance and Shaping

- Once the hedge reaches a height above the canopy, it will be carefully shaped and trimmed to ensure it offers a natural but effective screen.

- Trimming will be carried out in a way that maintains the fullness and health of the hedge, avoiding gaps in coverage.

Step 3: Review and Reassessment

- After six months, the site will be reviewed to assess the effectiveness of the regrown hedge in providing adequate visual camouflage.

- If the hedge is found to be insufficient, further steps will be considered, such as:

    - **Supplementary planting** using native species to increase height and density.

    - **Introducing species diversity** to improve both coverage and local biodiversity, enhancing the ecological value of the screening solution.

3. Biodiversity Enhancement

As part of the reassessment phase, the opportunity will be taken to explore ways to improve biodiversity within the hedgerow. This may include:

- Adding **pollinator-friendly native plants** (e.g., hawthorn, blackthorn, dog rose).
- Introducing **understory shrubs** or ground flora to improve habitat complexity.
- Avoiding the use of pesticides or herbicides during the regrowth phase to encourage natural ecological recovery.

Summary
This landscape plan provides a natural, sustainable approach to screening the canopy, acknowledging the historical context of the site and proposing a phased plan with built-in flexibility to adapt if the regrowth is not sufficient. Enhancing biodiversity is a key consideration, both for visual impact and ecological benefit.