

**Written Specification for
Soft Landscaping
(Planning Condition Discharge)**

6 Eco Lodge Accommodation

Hawksbourne Woods

Rusper Road

Horsham

RH12 4QS

This updated specification has been revised to align with the amended Landscape Strategy, Softscape Plan and Hardscape Plan drawings prepared by Simon Orchard Garden Design (Drawings 161-103, 161-104 and 161-105).

Prepared by Mr Frederick Goodall & Edward Peet

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Submission Context

This Soft Landscaping Written Specification is submitted to discharge the following pre-commencement planning condition attached to the planning permission for the proposed eco lodge development at Hawksbourne Woods, Rusper Road, Horsham:

“No development above ground level shall take place until a scheme of soft landscaping for the site drawn to a scale of not less than 1:200 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The soft landscaping details shall include planting plans (to include details of hedgerow, ditches and minimum 2-3m wide infrequently cut grassland areas to provide connecting corridors as requirement as identified within the submitted LVIA by Petrow Harley Limited, Feb 2024); written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities; tree pit details.

The approved scheme of soft landscaping works shall be implemented not later than the first planting season following commencement of the development (or within such extended period as may first be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority). Any planting removed, dying or becoming seriously damaged or diseased within five years of planting shall be replaced within the first available planting season thereafter with planting of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent for any variation.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory development that is sympathetic to the landscape and townscape character and built form of the surroundings, and in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).”

This document forms part of the approved soft landscaping scheme for the proposed development and shall be read in conjunction with the submitted soft landscaping drawings, planting plans and schedules, arboricultural protection measures, biodiversity enhancement proposals, Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (David Archer Associates, November 2023) and Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Petrow Harley Limited, February 2024).

The objectives of the soft landscaping are to:

- Integrate the development sensitively within the existing woodland landscape
- Protect retained trees and Root Protection Areas
- Deliver biodiversity enhancement in accordance with the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (David Archer Associates, November 2023) and LVIA (Petrow Harley Limited, February 2024)
- Provide a robust, low-maintenance planting scheme appropriate to shaded clay woodland conditions

All works shall be undertaken in accordance with recognised best practice and relevant British Standards including BS 3882, BS3998:2010, BS4428, BS 5837:2012 and BS 8545, where applicable.

The planting proposals form part of the landscape and visual mitigation strategy identified within the LVIA (Petrow Harley, Feb 2024). Implementation of the approved planting and habitat creation measures is necessary to achieve the neutral residual landscape effects identified in the LVIA.

Planting schedules accompanying this specification detail species, sizes, densities, and quantities as shown on the approved drawings.

Existing Site Conditions

The site comprises established woodland with mature retained trees, partial shade, and heavy clay soil with potential seasonal wetness. Existing woodland ground conditions, including natural leaf litter and soil structure, shall be retained wherever practicable.

Imported topsoil shall only be used where necessary to achieve successful planting establishment shown on the approved drawings. Imported topsoil shall comply with BS 3882 and shall be placed and cultivated to avoid compaction.

General Planting Principles

Planting shall:

- Utilise native or woodland-edge species tolerant of shaded clay woodland conditions
- Be arranged informally to reflect natural woodland structure.
- Avoid disturbance within Root Protection Areas except where approved under arboricultural supervision
- Maintain ecological connectivity through the provision of native buffer planting and 2–3 metre wide infrequently cut ecological corridors
- Provide native buffer planting comprising species consistent with those indicated on the approved softscape drawings, including *Corylus avellana*, *Acer campestre*, *Viburnum opulus*, *Rosa canina* and *Cornus sanguinea*, or other similar native species
- Amenity planting adjacent to lodges shall remain woodland-led in appearance and avoid suburban or highly ornamental character

Hedgerows and the minimum 2-3m wide infrequently cut grassland corridor areas shall be provided in the locations shown on the approved soft landscaping drawings and planting plans.

Soil Preparation and Cultivation

Prior to planting:

- Ground shall be cleared of debris, competitive weeds, and construction compaction where necessary
- Cultivation shall only occur where compatible with retained tree protection constraints.
- Existing topsoil shall be reused wherever suitable
- Peat-free compost or soil improver shall be incorporated locally within pits and beds where clay conditions restrict drainage or rooting

No deep cultivation shall occur within Root Protection Areas unless agreed through arboricultural supervision.

No chemical fertilisers, pesticides or herbicides, including glyphosate-based products, shall be used anywhere on site unless required for treatment of Schedule 9 invasive species.

No soil cultivation, level changes, or ground disturbance shall occur within Root Protection Areas except where expressly permitted under the approved Arboricultural Method Statement and undertaken under arboricultural supervision.

Tree and Shrub Planting Operations

Tree Pit Preparation

Tree pits shall be no deeper than the root system and shall be at least one and a half times as wide as the rootball. Backfill shall replicate the existing soil profile by using soil excavated from the planting pits, with imported soils only used where necessary. No fertiliser shall be used.

Staking and Protection

- Tree staking shall only be used where necessary for stability and shall follow best practice guidance.
- Guards or protective measures shall be installed where browsing or accidental damage may occur within the woodland environment.

Hedging and Shrub Planting

- Hedging and shrubs shall be planted at the sizes, densities, and positions shown on the approved planting schedule.
- Planting shall form naturalistic groupings consistent with woodland edge character.
- A minimum 75 mm depth of chipped bark mulch shall be applied and maintained clear of stems.

Any planting undertaken within or adjacent to Root Protection Areas shall comply with the excavation and root protection requirements set out within the approved Arboricultural Method Statement.

Where planting is required within or adjacent to Root Protection Areas, new plants shall be supplied in containers not exceeding 3L pot size. All planting within Root Protection Areas shall be notch planted and locally adjusted to avoid tree roots. Shrub planting shall be undertaken by hand using hand tools only to minimise root damage. If significant roots are encountered, these shall be left undamaged and planting positions adjusted accordingly. Bulbs, where proposed, shall be planted manually using dibbers or bulb planters, relocating positions where necessary to avoid tree roots.

Any trees removed or lost as part of the development shall be replaced with native species of local provenance in accordance with the recommendations of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (November, 2023), unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Grassland and Ecological Corridor Establishment

Grassland and ecological corridor areas shall be established and managed in accordance with the following principles:

- Comprise infrequently cut native grassland areas only, remaining separate from native buffer shrub planting.
- Be established using suitable native wildflower and grassland seed mixes appropriate to local soil and shade conditions.
- Receive minimal establishment cutting only, followed by long-term infrequent mowing to support biodiversity.

Fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides shall not be applied anywhere on site, unless required for treatment of Schedule 9 invasive species.

Habitat enhancement within unmanaged margins shall include the retention and placement of locally sourced deadwood and log piles where appropriate to support invertebrates, small mammals, amphibians, and reptiles, in accordance with the recommendations of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (November 2023). Detailed long-term management of these features will be set out within the Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan.

Where drainage ditches or swales are required, their details and locations will be provided within the approved surface water drainage and hard landscaping drawings and do not form part of this soft landscaping specification.

Additional biodiversity enhancement measures including log piles, bird boxes and bat boxes shall be installed in accordance with the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and shown on the approved drawings.

Amenity Planting Adjacent to Lodges

- Shade-tolerant turf and mixed woodland-edge planting shall be limited to lodge-adjacent amenity spaces and shall be designed to retain a naturalistic woodland-edge character.
- Mixed woodland-edge planting shall use native and woodland-edge species appropriate to shaded clay woodland conditions. Species shall be selected to avoid suburban or highly ornamental character.
- Turf shall be laid to manufacturer's guidance on properly prepared ground.
- Shrubs and perennials shall follow approved sizes and planting densities.
- Borders shall be finished with bark mulch to aid moisture retention and weed suppression.

Green Roof Planting

Sedum and wildflower green roof systems shall be installed in accordance with manufacturer specifications and structural load allowances.

Green roofs shall contribute to:

- Biodiversity enhancement
- Rainwater attenuation
- Visual integration within the woodland setting

Green roof maintenance shall be carried out in accordance with the manufacturer's guidance, including watering during establishment, removal of invasive weeds by hand and replacement of any failed sedum or wildflower modules as required.

Timing and Phasing of Works

Soft landscaping shall be implemented no later than the first planting season following the commencement of development.

Planting shall occur during the first suitable planting season, with autumn preferred, but spring or summer planting permitted where irrigation and weather conditions allow. Any outstanding areas shall be completed during the next available planting season.

Phased implementation may occur where different areas become available at different times.

Prior to commencement of landscaping works within areas affected by retained trees, a meeting shall be held between the site manager, landscape contractor, and supervising arboriculturist to agree the sequence of operations in accordance with the approved Arboricultural Method Statement.

Protection During Establishment

Protective fencing has been installed in accordance with BS 5837 and the approved Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan. The fencing shall be retained, maintained, and remain in position for the full duration of construction and landscaping works unless otherwise agreed in writing with the supervising arboriculturist and the Local Planning Authority.

No storage of materials, trafficking, excavation, or other construction activity shall occur within planting areas or Root Protection Areas (RPAs) of retained trees.

Within RPAs, existing ground levels shall not be substantially altered, and no plant or vehicles shall enter the protected areas. Any excavation required for landscape structures within RPAs shall be undertaken by hand and under direct arboricultural supervision. Where roots are encountered, excavation shall be relocated where practicable. Only roots less than 25 mm diameter may be cut cleanly by hand where unavoidable, and any exposed roots shall be recovered within 24 hours.

No drainage or irrigation pipework shall be installed within RPAs of retained trees.

All operations shall comply fully with the approved Arboricultural Method Statement, and newly planted areas shall be protected from accidental damage until successful establishment.

Watering and Establishment Maintenance

During the first growing season:

- Plants shall receive hand watering as necessary to secure establishment.
- Weed control shall be undertaken by hand weeding, careful digging, selective cutting or other non-chemical methods.
- Mulch levels shall be maintained

Any planting that dies, is removed, or becomes seriously damaged or diseased within five years shall be replaced during the next available planting season with plants of similar size and species unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Tree stakes, ties and guards shall be inspected regularly and removed upon successful establishment or after four years, whichever is sooner.

Planted areas shall be inspected at least monthly during the first growing season and after significant periods of drought, frost, or heavy rainfall, with remedial works undertaken as necessary (watering, re firming, adjusting ties, replacing failed plants, topping up mulch).

Planting Schedule Summary

Plant	Name	Stock	Form	Girth / Height	Density
Tree	Quercus robur (Pedunculate oak)	Rootball	Standard	10-12 cm girth	As shown on plan
Tree	Betula pendula (Silver birch)	Rootball	Standard	10-12 cm girth	As shown on plan
Tree	Sorbus aucuparia (Rowan)	Rootball	Standard	10-12 cm girth	As shown on plan
Native buffer shrubs	Corylus avellana, Acer campestre, Viburnum opulus, Rosa canina, Cornus sanguinea (mixed)	Container grown shrubs	Shrub mix	5-25L Pots	Minimum 1/m ²
Native hedgerow/privacy hedging	Ligustrum vulgare, Carpinus betulus, Ilex aquifolium, Crataegus monogyna, Corylus avellana	Rootball or potted	Transplants	80-100cm height	5 per linear metre
Wildflower grassland	Native woodland edge seed mix	Seed	Grassland	Supplier spec	Broadcast
Amenity turf	Shade tolerant turf	Turf roll	Lawn	Standard	Laid solid

Woodland-edge shrub/perennial planting	Native and woodland-edge species suitable for shaded clay woodland conditions, to include species such as Dryopteris filix-mas, Polystichum setiferum, Deschampsia cespitosa, Luzula sylvatica, Digitalis purpurea and Anemone nemorosa.	Container grown	Mixed planting	2L – 5L pots	3-7/m ²
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Quantities are derived from the approved soft landscaping drawings and have been prepared in consultation with the project landscape designer.

Compliance

This written specification, together with the approved drawings, planting schedules and tree pit details, forms the complete soft landscaping scheme for the purposes of discharging the planning condition.

This specification shall be read in conjunction with the amended Landscape Strategy, Softscape Plan, Hardscape Plan, Arboricultural Method Statement, Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and LVIA.

- Policy 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015)
- The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (November 2023)
- The LVIA (February 2024)
- Relevant British Standards governing landscape works and plant establishment
- BS 5837:2012
- Landscape Strategy
- Softscape Plan
- Hardscape Plan

