HalpinRobbins

Ecology & Environmental Services

Landscape and Ecological Management Plan

Wembdon Parklands, Bridgewater, TA6 3UN



Project No.: **01.302.001.02**

Date: **01 July 2026**

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REVISION AND AMENDMENT REGISTER

Issue/ Revision	Date	Comments	Prepared by	Authorised by
V1.1	22/6/2025	Minor grammar adjustments	G Labram	S Lashly
V1	29/5/2025	N/A	G Labram	S Lashly

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HalpinRobbins Ltd was appointed by Wembdon Parish Council to prepare a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) for Wembdon Parklands (hereafter referred to as the site), Wembdon, Bridgwater, TA6 3UN, specifically for the improvement, maintenance and use of the site as an improved Public Open Space and Badger Foraging Land.

The site is subject to a conservation covenant. This LEMP document is support by a prior assessment of the site conducted by HalpinRobbins to establish if works undertaken to date had reduced or undermined the suitability of the site to support badgers.

HalpinRobbins Ltd was appointed to prepare a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) specific to the site which includes a management plan for a period of 10 years that supports the site's use for foraging badger, wider wildlife and as a community park area.

The habitats detailed in this LEMP are to be managed and maintained in perpetuity by the Parish Council/Landowner (as appropriate). This LEMP document outlines the management practices and is to be used by any third-party Landscape Contractors and/or volunteer groups as required.

This document sets out the ownership, roles and responsibilities of the site. The contents of this document are intended for the Parish Council, to be shared with relevant contractors, stakeholders or volunteer groups as required in charge of managing the site in line with the conservation covenant.

The Parish Council is ultimately responsible for ensuring the LEMP is adhered to by any subcontractors or volunteer groups.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope and Requirements

HalpinRobbins Ltd was appointed by Wembdon Parish Council to prepare a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) for Wembdon Parklands (hereafter referred to as the site), Wembdon, Bridgwater, TA6 3UN, specifically for the improvement, maintenance and use of the site as an improved Public Open Space and Badger Foraging Land.

This LEMP has been prepared for the future management of the site for an initial period of period of 10 years in association with current best practise mitigation and enhancement for badgers. Practises that support other wildlife relevant to the site are also included and should be considered highly recommended.

The site is adjacent to A39 Homberg Way, Bridgwater, situated to the west of Wembdon Village Hall, also known as The Green. A map of the relevant areas associated with this LEMP is provided in **Figure 1.**

1.2 Obligations and Background

Planning approval (Ref: 01/51/02/015) to the west of the site was granted in 2003 for the erection of 76 residential dwellings, garages and associated works. A covenant was prepared between Beazer Homes Limited and Sedgemoor District Council on 22 October 2003 for the area now known as 'Wembdon Parklands' to be a dedicated Badger Foraging Area.

A Proposed Landscaping of Badger Foraging Area East of Greenacre for Beazer Homes Ltd (Dwg No. 01) was produced to plant trees within the site and erect a fence bordering the site to the south/west. The covenant states the site '*to be used for an open space and badger foraging area only'.*

In 2015, Beazer Homes Ltd agreed to transfer ownership of the land to Wembdon Parish Council without charge, the Land Transfer Agreement added further conditions regarding usage of the land;

> *'to maintain the Property as a public open space and/or children's play area or community facility for the recreational and amenity use of the residents of the Parish of Wembdon and other neighbouring or nearby areas of benefit and their visitors and invitees'.*
>
> *'to keep grass on the Property properly mown and free of weeds'.*
>
> *'to grant to the Transferor or to any of the Services Authorities or Service Companies such easements in under or over the property as any of them from time to time require (and such form as they may require) in connection with the services usually provided by or maintained by them'.*

The appointment was to prepare a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) and to detail the immediate and long-term objectives and commitments to manage the planting and habitats on the Site to ensure the protection of biodiversity and ecological function in association with the covenant.

1.3 Relationship to other plans and documents

HalpinRobbins Limited have previously provided an Ecological Impact Assessment for Wembdon Parklands to ascertain if works carried out by Wembdon Parish Council to pathways and planting have impacted the badger *Meles meles* population. Report Reference: 01.302.001.01_Wembdon Parklands_Badgers.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF MANAGEMENT

2.1 Aims

This Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) is a long-term strategy plan, detailing how the site known as Wembdon Parklands will be managed, maintained, and improved as Public Open Space and Badger Foraging Land. The objective of this LEMP is to clearly lay out the roles and responsibilities of the Parish Council, contractors, and service providers to ensures the Parklands remain safe, functional, and attractive.

HalpinRobbins Ltd was appointed to prepare a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) specific to the site which includes a management plan for a period of 10 years that supports the site's use for foraging badger, wider wildlife and as a community park area. The plan can be reviewed annually to ensure it remains suitable and relevant to the operating budget and evolving targets of the Parish Council while retaining its core objective.

The methods outlined are based on ecologists' assessment of the site and considered appropriate for the site under the current and anticipated environmental conditions.

This plan is not intended as a fully prescriptive or definitive 'maintenance' schedule but identifies key 'management and maintenance' requirements. This is to ensure that the management of the habitats is flexible and allows for changes over time. This ensures the continued establishment and satisfactory management and maintenance in the long-term.

2.2 Objectives

The general objectives for landscape and ecological management are to:

- apply best practice to all horticultural and ecological operations.
- ensure the establishment and future sustained growth of all plants, trees and mixed scrub.
- ensure good horticultural practice in the long-term health and vitality of all trees and hedges to promote healthy and vigorous growth.
- ensure the consistent control of invasive species.
- ensure the replacement of defective plant material.
- review opportunities for enhancing planted areas, in line with the original design aspirations.

3 MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Definitions and Roles

For the purpose of this document the following terms and responsibilities are defined as follows:

The Parish Council/Landowner

- Nominated responsible officers within the Parish Council/Landowners are responsible for the site. If this changes, this document should be updated to reflect new ownership, nominated responsible officers, and responsibilities. The Parish council/ Landowner will be responsible for the long-term upkeep and ongoing maintenance of the areas specified within this LEMP and liable for any failures in the planting and for the replacement planting. The Landowner may appoint suitable 3rd party Landscape Contractors or volunteer groups to undertake elements of the work.

As of this iteration of the LEMP, the nominated responsible officers are: -

- The Clerk, Sam Warren; clerk@wembdonparish.gov.uk
- Cllr Lorna Edwards; l.edwards@wembdonparish.gov.uk
- Cllr Dianne Claydon: d.claydon@wembdonparish.gov.uk

The nominated Cllrs and Clerk will report directly to the Parish Council.

***The Landscape Contractor* (as appointed)**

- A sub-contractor will be responsible for the implementation and management of the areas specified within this LEMP to the approved drawings and will be instructed directly by the Parish Council /Landowner. The contractors will ensure that management complies with best practice standards and all relevant health and safety procedures, protection of the environment, avoidance of pollution and protection of protected/notable species and associated habitats.

As of this iteration (v1.1) of the LEMP, the Landscape Contractors is currently responsible for maintaining trees, hedges, verges and grass cutting, weed control, path clearing, bin emptying and disposal etc. The detailed scope of work for the Parklands see attached Appendix 2.

Wembdon PACT volunteers

- Currently a small group of six volunteers including two parish councillors, who give up their spare time to help maintain the Parklands. The team is very adaptable to work in all areas, maintaining border features, planting, barking, watering, habitat maintenance and improvements.

The contents of this document are intended for the **Parish Council/Landowner**, to be **shared with relevant contractors and volunteer groups** in charge of managing the site and its biodiversity post-construction. The Parish Council /Landowner must keep a record of the designated Landscape Contractors for the duration of the existence of the site (see Management Record Sheet).

The obligations laid out in this LEMP will be valid for a minimum of 10 years, but reviewed annually, informed by ongoing management and regular monitoring.

4 BACKGROUND

4.1 Location

The site is situated in a built-up area with A38 and main drain to the east and residential housing beyond, residential housing to the west and south and public sport amenity grounds and open space to the north. The site is approximately 1.2 hectares (ha) in size and is centred upon Ordnance Survey (O.S) Grid Reference ST 28866 37523

4.2 Environmental setting

The site is located within Wembdon, Bridgwater, and surrounded on the east, south and west by housing developments and a main road. To the north are further areas of amenity parkland, including sporting pitches.

4.3 Existing Ecological Features

The prior walkover on site, identified the park had several habitats, comprised of "natural" and curated spaces for the benefit of wildlife and amenity value for people.

Key habitats included ditches (wet and dry), grassland, ornamental planting, orchard trees and scrub parcels. The site is also managed to maintain several specific curated spaces, as listed below:

1. The Sensory Borders

The objective to stimulate the senses for those people with disabilities. Planting therefore is mixed and attractive to different insects acting as a corridor. They attract birds, bees, butterflies, beetles, small mammals and amphibians.

2. The Prairie Orchard

Prairie planting boosts biodiversity, using structural grasses and combining them with perennial flowering plants, it creates vital habitats offering pollen for pollinators, shelter for insects overwintering in hollow stems, and seed heads. Attracting diverse wildlife like bees, butterflies, small mammals, amphibians and badgers who will eat seed heads. The orchard is intentionally planted with a variety of fruit trees benefitting badger foraging.

3. Insect Hotels

Hibernation and refuge for pollinators, spiders, woodlice beetles, and attracts insects like ladybirds and lacewings whose larvae eat pests such as aphids. Provides shelter for small animals including, field mice, slow worms, frogs and toads, boosting biodiversity and strengthening the food chain.

4. The Stumpery

Where logs, stumps, branches, and root balls create a natural wildlife habitat with nooks and crannies of decaying wood providing shelter and hunting grounds for a wide range of creatures, including birds, insects, ground beetles, slugs, newts, frogs, toads, providing food for small mammals like hedgehogs and larger mammals like foraging badgers. As the wood naturally breaks down, it supports the growth of moss, algae, lichen, and fungi, which are essential for nutrient enriched soil and biodiversity.

5. The Walled Oak

The walled oak is planted with a blanket of sedum, to help reduce the carbon emissions from the main A39. Sedum is very effective in helping to purify the air by absorbing carbon dioxide and filtering airborne particles such as smog, and metals. These succulent plants absorb rainwater, slowing down water run-off and reducing the burden on local sewer and drainage systems, which helps to prevent flooding.

6. Willow Arch Tunnel

The arch willow tunnel is a "living" structure, created by sticking flexible willow rods into the ground and weaving sides to make a covered passageway. This structure is both educational and fun, it serves as a functional shelter from the sun for animals and humans.

4.4 Protected species

In addition, prior ad-hoc survey and reporting highlighted numerous protected species on site which require additional mitigation considerations. Protected species known to be using the site include:

- Badgers
- Slow Worms
- Breeding birds (species list currently unknown)
- Bats (species list currently unknown)

4.5 Operational restrictions

Weather and ground conditions on-site will necessitate flexible management. Scrub management is simple in principle, but in practice, it will often not be so straightforward. The Landscape Contractors will need to take an adaptive approach.

Any management operations carried out need to consider the type, and size of vehicle required to successfully carry out each management instruction as well as continuing to take into consideration the ground conditions to avoid soil compaction.

The timing of management and monitoring instructions within the site are restricted to the ecological seasons and faunal protection i.e. scrub management is timed to when tree/shrub species are dormant and avoiding the bird nesting season.

5 HABITAT AND SPECIES GOALS

5.1 General

The site will be managed to protect and enhance biodiversity in general, with specific considerations to badger. Management aims with regards to protected species on site are detailed below.

5.2 Badger habitats

Badgers require available foraging with a mix of the following habitats:

- Mixed scrub
- Woodland
- Open grassland (unmanaged or seasonally managed only)
- Orchard (mix of fruit and nut tree)
- Grassland bramble mosaic (unmanaged or seasonally managed only)

It is recommended that approximately 50% of the land (as a minimum) is comprised of these habitats above to ensure that the park maintains its obligations for badgers. Further details on managing these habitats are detailed below in Section 6.

In addition, planting of hedges and reducing lighting along the pathways leading to the retained sett will improve the access and reduce mortality risk for badgers as they commute between locations.

Badgers are typically nocturnal, therefore nocturnal lighting in the park should be reduced, or minimised where possible to retain dark foraging places. See lighting notes in Section 5.4 regarding bats.

5.3 Reptiles (including Slow Worm)

Reptiles require available foraging with a mix of the following habitats:

- Mixed scrub
- Open grassland (unmanaged or seasonally managed only)
- Grassland bramble mosaic (unmanaged or seasonally managed only)
- South facing “basking” areas

Provision of these will provide good habitat for reptiles. Further details on managing these habitats are detailed below in Section 6. Additional suitability can be created through the piling of vegetation debris piles or log/brash piles.

Log/Brash piles (such as the Stumpery) can be added to in volume and number. These are more informal habitat piles, from lighter debris and can be topped up by annual maintenance works from pruning and grass cutting. The value of brash and log piles lies in:

- creating cover;
- provide additional structure to existing habitat; and
- enhancing prey availability.

Log/brush piles should be approximately 3m x 1.5m and at least 0.5m high. A mixture of sizes of brush and logs will be used to create a variety of crevices and niches for reptiles to access. The log/brush piles will be placed within the grassland and woodland to add additional structure onsite. The material from scrub clearance and grass cutting could be used.

5.4 Bats

Bats require available foraging with a mix of the following habitats:

- Mixed scrub
- Woodland / trees
- Connective vegetation links e.g.) hedgerows or unmanaged grass strips
- Open grassland (unmanaged or seasonally managed only)
- Grassland bramble mosaic (unmanaged or seasonally managed only)
- Orchard (mix of fruit and nut tree)
- Water bodies e.g.) ponds, ditches

Provision of these will provide good habitat for a wide range of bat species. Further details on managing these habitats are detailed below in Section 6. Additional suitability can be created through the provision of bat boxes.

Bat boxes need to be placed on a building or tree on a south, west or east-facing aspect at a minimum height of 3.5 meters to reduce the likelihood of predation or vandalism.

Sensitive lighting is recommended for bats- lighting should follow the most recent Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) guidance (Guidance Note GN08/23.) Including the use of lighting only where necessary, utilising highly directional warm white LED lighting, an example being down spots at 2.5m high using warm white (2700 K) 8W LED lamps, 550 lumens, 35-degree beam angle. Security and spotlighting should be individually activated by PIR sensors on a 3-minute cut-off to further reduce their impacts. These lighting guides also benefit all other nocturnal species, including badgers and hedgehogs.

5.5 Breeding Birds

Breeding birds require available foraging with a mix of the following habitats:

- Mixed scrub
- Woodland / trees (a mix of fruiting and nut trees)
- Connective vegetation links e.g.) hedgerows
- Water bodies e.g.) ponds, ditches
- Grassland bramble mosaic (unmanaged or seasonally managed only)

Provision of these will provide good habitat for a wide range of bird species. Additional suitability can be created through the provision of bird boxes and by protecting scrub and lower-level vegetation from disturbance from dogs and people.

Non-integrated bird boxes such as Vivara Pro WoodStone Open Nest Box (or similar) are suitable for a variety of species including wrens *Troglodytes troglodytes*, robins *Erithacus rubecula,* wagtails *Motacilla sp*. and song thrushes *Turdus philomelos.* The boxes are best placed between 1.5m to 3m amongst dense, mature vegetation.

5.6 Hedgehog

Hedgehogs are likely present on site. Access for hedgehogs via "hedgehog highways" could be advertised and uptake encouraged through the provision of 13cm x 13cm hole at the base of the fencing or by using a Hedgehog Gravel Board. Holes made into existing residential gardens must obtain relevant adjoining Landowners' permission first. These simple features allow hedgehogs to travel between gardens and increase habitat connectivity. To ensure these are not blocked, small signs can be painted or erected above the hole.

Hedgehog nest boxes could be placed in retained areas of vegetation to provide additional features for hedgehogs. These will be durable such as the Woodstone hedgehog nest by Wildcare (or similar as available). The hedgehog boxes will be placed in areas of dense retained scrub to avoid disturbance.

6 SITE-SPECIFIC HABITAT MANAGEMENT METHODS

6.1 Mixed Scrub Creation

Should additional areas of mixed scrub planting be required, follow the below methods:

- Species should comprise a mix of at least 6 native species, including hawthorn *Crataegus monogna,* dog rose *Rosa caninia,* blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, hazel *Corylus avellana,* field maple *Acer campestre* and dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*;
- Planting new or replacement scrub should take place in late autumn/winter (November – March);
- Dig hole slightly deeper than root ball, water the hole and allow to soak before placing plant in the hole;
- Species should be selected at random, and individual whips (90-120cm height) of bare root stock, planted in staggered rows (with 40cm between each row) with 6-8 plants per metre. Denser and scattered areas will allow for a good mosaic to establish.
- Use original soil to backfill the hole, ensuring there are no air pockets. Use of 0.5-1ltr of compost increases chances of sapling survival significantly. Water thoroughly after backfilling;
- Spiral guards and canes will be used to protect against deer and rabbit grazing, checked twice a year, replaced as required throughout the establishment period and will be removed once an individual plant has established successfully (c.5 years);
- Some areas of bramble are acceptable within mixed scrub however during establishment, bramble growth should be checked to prevent smothering of the planted scrub.
- Watering will be carried out during the growing period if dry weather conditions are sustained for greater than two-week periods and if ground conditions have dried because of this period.

6.1.1 Scrub Management

Year 1

- Whips or feathered trees should not be pruned until established.
- Stakes checked and adjusted.
- Any tree that dies shall be replaced with a tree of the same species and stock size.
- Watering will be carried out during the growing period if dry weather conditions are sustained for greater than two-week periods and if ground conditions have dried because of this period.

Year 2 Onwards

- Stakes removed once established.
- The scrub will be managed ensure it remains in a transitional form with no vegetation exceeding 5m in height.
- Managed in winter.
  Coppicing may be undertaken of certain species to encourage multiple stem growth and dense, thick growth.

6.2 Individual native tree or Orchard creation

New Native Tree Planting will follow the following methods:

- Trees stock will be stocked and planted in accordance with BS 3936 and BS 4428;
- The trees will be a mix of oak Quercus robur and ash Fraxinus excelsior, with at least two of each.
- Trees will be planted in late Autumn or early Spring
- Each tree will be planted in a shallow hole, depth to suit root ball; width 2-3 times wider than root ball. Use of 0.5-1ltr of compost increases chances of sapling survival significantly;
- Trunk flare will be just above ground level and the hole will be backfilled with soil;
- A total of two stakes will be placed either side of the trees, without piercing the root ball, in line with the prevailing winds;
- Stakes will be buried to a depth of 60cm in the soil beyond the planting hole;
- Above ground portions of stakes will be no more than 2/3 of the way up the trunk;
- Straps will be attached at the end of each stake and attached to the tree's trunk at the same level above ground.
- Stakes, checked twice a year, replaced as required throughout the establishment period and will be removed once an individual plant has established successfully;
- Watering will be carried out during the growing period if dry weather conditions are sustained for greater than two-week periods and if ground conditions have dried because of this period.

6.2.1 Tree Management

Trees, including orchard trees will be managed in the following way;

- Stakes removed once established.
- Annual inspection for disease or damage, replace if severely damaged/diseased.

Pruning of Young Trees

- Ensure that the type and timing of pruning operations suit the plant species.

- Prune during the late winter/ early spring sap flow period.
- Crown prune by removing dead branches and reducing selected side branches by one-third to preserve a well-balanced head and ensure the development of a single strong leader. Whips or feathered trees should not be pruned until established.
- Remove duplicated branches and potentially weak or tight forks. In each case cut back to live wood.

Pruning of Established Trees

- Ensure that the type and timing of pruning operations suit the plant species. Pollarding is suitable for poplar and ash, but less favoured by oak. Trees should be subject to pollarding at minimum height of 2.5m.
- Pruning of mature and/or well-established trees should be avoided unless necessary from a structural or health and safety concern.
- Crown lifting can be carried out by shortening or removing lower branches. Living branches must be retained on at least two-thirds of the total tree height after crown lifting.
- If crown reduction is required, reduce the crown by pruning out entire branches at their points of origin from the trunk or another branch at least three times the diameter of the branch to be removed. Make the cuts outside the branch collar to ensure the wound will heal. Do not 'top' mature or established trees.
- Prune during the late winter/ early spring sap flow period.

Arboricultural work shall not be carried out during the bird nesting season, i.e. 1st March – 31st August or dormouse active season 1st April to 30th November.

6.3 Grassland (unmanaged or seasonally managed)

Areas of grassland are present on site, and provide significant areas of wildlife and amenity value. To maintain and enhance the wildlife value of the grassland, the following management aims should be considered:

- Sward height should be varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.
- Cover of bare or damaged ground is under 5% (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities).
- Cover of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble Rubus fruticosus agg. is less than 5%.
- Remove invasive non-native plants.

- There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m^2 present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat.

6.3.1 Grassland creation/management

Increasing diversity can be done through the use of "over-sowing" seed mixtures appropriate for the soil and local area. Over-sowing should be undertaken in August/September to encourage root growth before winter and a more successful uptake in spring. The seed mix is recommended to contain Yellow Rattle *Rhinanthus minor.*

Most of the sown meadow species are perennial and are slow to establish. Cut the area regularly at a high level (100mm) to keep vigorous grasses at bay and avoid cutting in spring and early summer, removing all arisings immediately. Continue to cut to 100mm and remove arisings until the end of March the following year, whereby the second and subsequent years of management can be undertaken. Dig out any residual perennial weeds such as docks, nettles and thistles and avoid the use of general herbicides and artificial fertilisers.

6.3.2 Second and Subsequent Years

In areas of the site that have not been over-sown or newly created, management of general grassland areas should follow these directions.

The area will not be cut from spring through to late July/August to allow the sown species to flower. A mechanical cut will be required during the summer (late July to September), depending on the weather, after the wildflowers have flowered and set seed. The arisings will need to be left in situ for seven days before being collected. It is acknowledged that this space is used by the public, and arisings may need to be collected sooner. A minimum 48-hour period is required to facilitate seed droppings and ensure a more sustainable seed bank in the soil.

Additional mowing may be required in the ~30cm surrounding footpaths around the site to retain access, and site visual appeal- to be undertaken as required.

Additional over-sowing may be needed to replace failed grass areas, and areas to be patched should be noted during the annual late summer cut.

In the second and subsequent years, sowings can be managed in several ways which, in association with soil fertility, will determine the character of the grassland. The best results are usually obtained by traditional meadow management based around the main summer hay cut in combination with autumn and possibly spring mowing/strimming.

Watering: During the first 3 years following initial seeding or following re-seeding operations, water wildflower grass areas during periods of extreme drought (4 or more weeks without substantial rainfall) to a maximum of 15 occasions. To aid the natural establishment of grass

areas, only water where unavoidable, where the grass is going brown and appears to be suffering from severe drought stress. When watering, water to field capacity in the morning or in the evening to reduce water evaporation, when the water is more likely to reach the roots. The Landscape Contractor shall be entirely responsible for varying the frequency of these visits according to climatic conditions and for contacting the Parish Council and agreeing on the timing of any additional watering visits if required and where restrictions are placed on the use of water, sources and costs of obtaining second class water.

It must be acknowledged that increased amenity use and the associated number of dogs and cats are likely to be present on this land. Areas for wildlife and public access should be demarcated and fenced off appropriately. Dog waste bins should be provided throughout the area and signs regarding the wildflowers and avoiding additional nutrients should be present to educate the public.

6.4 Hedgerows

As well as screening, hedgerows will provide an important wildlife habitat and corridor through the site. Should additional hedges be planted, planting should follow instructions provided in Section 6.1 (mixed scrub creation).

Where sections of existing or created hedgerows become thin or fail, gap up hedgerows with an appropriate mix of species to an approximate density of 6 plants/linear metre, planted in a double staggered row during the planting season (November through to mid-March inclusive). Gap up areas of less dense growth with additional plants as required to achieve a continuous hedge line taking due allowance for natural growth and regeneration of cut material. All plants should match those that the infill section will relate to but should include native hedgerow species using stock of local provenance including hazel *Corylus avellana*, oak *Quercus robur*, willow *Salix* sp., spindle *Euonymus europaeus*, field maple *Acer campestre*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, elder *Sambucus nigra* and/or ash *Fraxinus excelsior*.

During the establishment of new hedges or significant areas of new planting to "gap up" existing hedges, it is prudent to fence off areas to restrict dogs and people from trampling the new plants. The use of temporary "dead hedges" may be suitable in these areas to continue connectivity for wildlife and prevent trampling.

6.4.1 Hedgerow Management

The aim of the management of these hedges should be to provide continuous connectivity of dense, fruiting and flowering plants, and to provide nesting and forging opportunities for birds, bats and invertebrates.

To achieve this, the management objectives should include:

- Gaps to make up less than 10% of length.
- Height to be >1.5m average along length.
- 90% of the hedgerow or undisturbed ground is free of damage caused by human activities.
- Ensure the satisfactory establishment and growth of new planting typical of the respective species.
- Promote conditions so that it is healthy and safe; and
- Ensure continuity of the design approach and amenity value of tree planting

During the first year of establishment, created hedges or new plants should be watered during dry periods (any period without substantial rainfall for 14 days or more). Apply at a frequency of up to 2 times per week from April to the end of September (to a maximum of 20 visits in any one calendar year) as required during any continuous hot weather lasting more than 7 days. The Landscape Management shall be entirely responsible for varying the frequency of these visits according to climatic conditions and for contacting the Landowner and agreeing on the timing of any additional watering visits if required and where restrictions are placed on the use of water, sources and costs of obtaining second class water.

The hedgerow management should aim to create hedgerows approximately 3m high and at least 2m wide, cut in a tapered 'A' shape to increase light reaching the hedgerow base, thereby encouraging a dense growth form and managed on a three-year cycle (one side, top, other side), ensuring two-thirds of each hedgerow remains uncut. This will increase the availability of fruit and seeds whilst providing increased structural shelter for wildlife. Hedgerow management will be timed to late winter (January-February) to avoid the bird nesting season and ensure fruits are available to birds and other fauna. Recommended cutting machinery for hedging operations will be by use of a handheld mechanical hedge trimmer. All cut faces should be left neat and clean with no jagged ends or tears.

Long-term management of hedges may include laying native hedges to ensure their continued lifespan. Hedges managed in this way can live for over 100 years and significantly increase the value of the hedge for wildlife. Appropriate advice from local skilled hedge layers should be sought.

Deadwood will be left in situ, unless there is risk to health and safety. In which case, deadwood will be removed but retained within the site.

Management objectives will prevent the spread of competitive/ invasive weed species and avoid the use of general herbicides and artificial fertilisers. Management objectives should be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that they are being achieved.

6.5 Ditches and Water Features

Ditches on site facilitate the removal of excess water from the road nearby. The Parish Council is responsible for the essential maintenance of ditches on its land. A process of removing silt, vegetation, and debris from drainage channels to prevent waterlogging and flooding. A mix of dry and wet ditches is present on the Parklands. The dry ditches are left to nature, but where water collects near escape channels dithes occasionally needs to be cleared. This was last carried out in October 2025.

Where possible to do so, ditches should be allowed to drain slowly, preventing significant floodwater reaching downstream at the same time. Slowing the flow of water through the provision of leaky dams or enlarging the ditch (provided this does not impair the ability of the road to be clear of water) may provide benefits for the wider local areas. Limiting the frequency of dredging will avoid adverse effects on wildlife. Ditch work is best carried out in early winter (November–December) and should happen every five-plus years. Buffer habitat adjacent to the wet areas should be cut on rotation every three years to a height of 150mm, timed to avoid when reptiles and amphibians are less likely to be present. Arisings will need to be removed to reduce nutrient input into the soil.

Ponds and bioswales could be added to the site to improve water management and provision of natural water available for wildlife on site. These features comprise of shallow depressions in the soil that can be permanently or seasonally flooded – and planted with marginal vegetation such as yellow flag Iris *Iris pseudocorus*, purple loosetrife *Lythrum salicaria*, bistort *Persicaria bistorta* and meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria.* This habitat would provide continued cover for invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, birds and small mammals. Arisings will need to be removed to reduce nutrient input into the soil or aquatic areas.

6.6 Additional Specific Improvement Plans:

Specific management and improvements have been agreed for the immediate future (2026-2027), to be implemented prior to the next document review. This section of should be refreshed as part of annual reviews for the park and updated accordingly to assist with planning and resource provision. Space has been provided for due dates and notes to be filled in by the Landowner and/or Landscape Contractors.

Table 1; Task list for Wembdon Parklands 2026-2027

Task	Date due by	Date conducted + Notes
Eg) plant 5x fruit trees in orchard	Eg) March 2027	25th February 2027 – 5x trees in, one additional dead tree noted and removed. To be replaced.
Increase foraging opportunities for badgers and other foraging animals.		
Plant 3-4 more fruit and nut trees in the Prairie Orchard, pear, crab apple, and hazelnut.		
Install a water supply to the Parklands as it is necessary to water young and newly planted trees and plants especially during the long hot periods in the summer.		
The Stumpery needs more logs, branches, stumps, and root balls [no willow or diseased wood].		
30 young trees were planted in 2019, but several have died, these will be replaced by native trees.		
Planting in feature borders will be specific for managing the habitats and intended purpose and ensuring biodiversity.		
Clean out and replace missing bird boxes. In the UK bird boxes need to be cleaned out annually after the breeding season (late autumn/winter) to remove parasites, old nests, and droppings that can harm the next brood, ensuring no birds are nesting and follow legal guidelines for removing abandoned eggs, using boiling water for disinfection.		
Repair the Wooden Dragonfly's wing.		

Plant Elderberry bushes around the Parklands to provide food for birds and badgers.		
New tasks to be entered below ….		

7 MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1 Management Responsibilities

These strategies should be read in conjunction with the proposed landscape scheme to enable the appropriate ongoing management and maintenance of planted areas.

All landscape maintenance operations, where they do not conflict with ecology operations, should be in accordance with BS 4428:1989 'Code of practice for general landscape operations' (excluding hard surfaces). Ongoing landscape maintenance operations are to be in accordance with sound ecological principles, and where relevant to be in accordance with BS 7370-4:1993 'Grounds Maintenance Recommendations for maintenance of soft landscape' (other than amenity turf).

Generally, the Landscape Contractor is responsible for the following:

- **Watering:** Watering as required to ensure healthy growth, particularly in Years 1 and 2 after planting. All planting areas are to be visited weekly in periods of dry weather and sufficient water to be applied to maintain planting areas in moist conditions but without risk of waterlogging, to eliminate drought-related stress. Water management should aim to be sustainable, and water use reduced over the initial 10 year period through considered planting, water retaining landscaping and climate "future proofing" design.
- **Ditch clearing:** to be undertaken as needed
- **Dead and diseased plants:** Responsibility of the designated Landscape Contractor.
- **Weed control generally:** Injurious weed control will only be carried out if it is not detrimental to proposed planting. Weeds should be dug out using hand tools. Native plants considered to be "weeds" should be presumed to be retained, unless causing direct negative impact.
- **Mulch**: Mulching is optional within curated spaces but is not necessary for established "natural" zones. Mulching can be done using chipped vegetation in areas of new planting to retain moisture during establishment.
- **Weather damage:** Excessive snow to be removed from plants to avoid damage. Gritting to hard surfaces to be non-toxic, biodegradable and eco-friendly. Salt based grits can damage soil and vegetation growth.
- **Non-native Invasive Plant Control:** Remove schedule 9 species when found.

8 FIGURES

On following pages.

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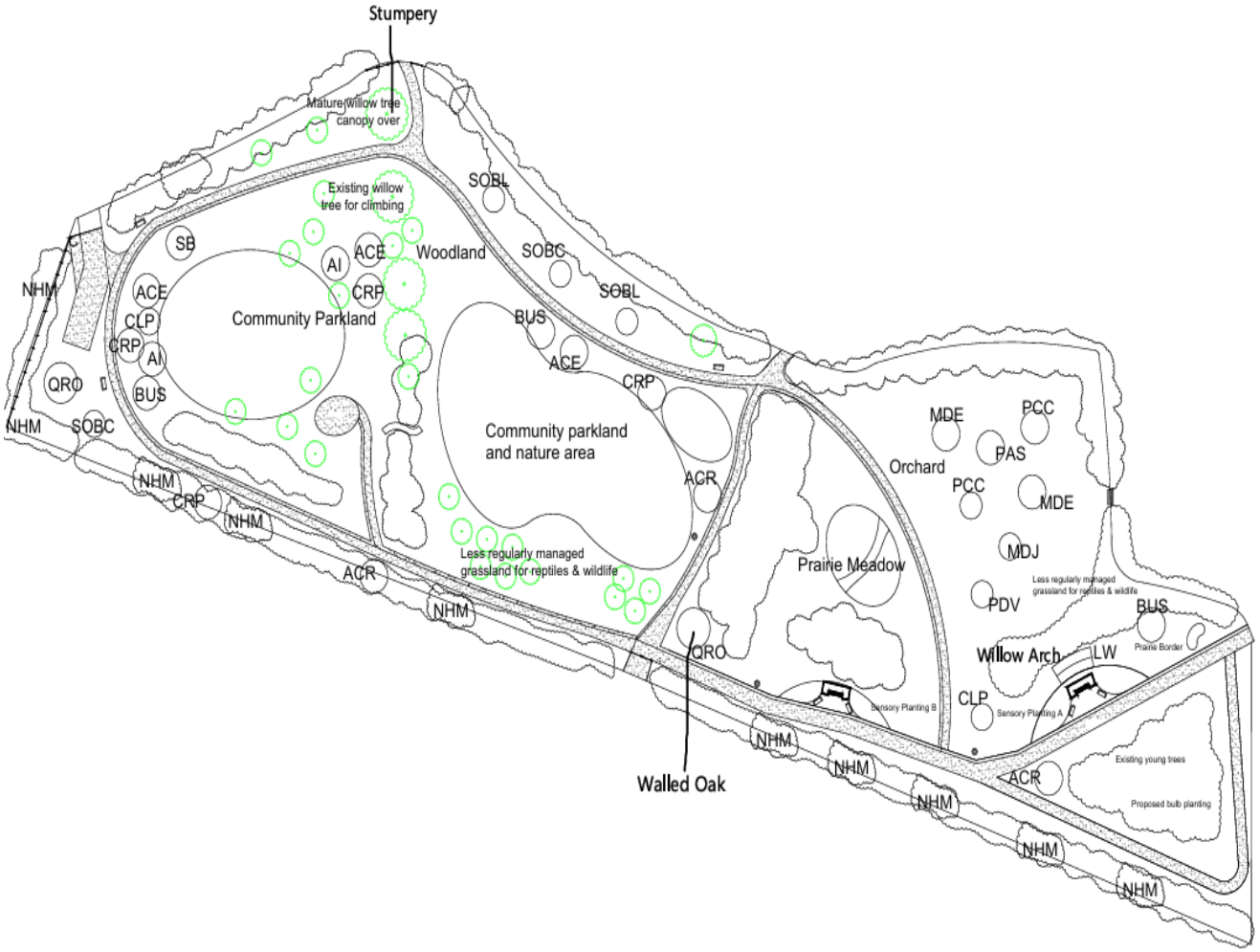
Key:

Site Boundary

Figure 1.
Site Location Plan
Wembdon Parklands
LEMP

Project No.:	01.302.001.02
Date:	27/05/2026



	PROPOSED TREE & HEDGE PLANTING
	Variety
2 no	ACE - Acer campestre 'Elsrijk'
3 no	ACR - Acer rubrum
2 no	AL - Alnus incana
3 no	BUS - Betula utilis 'Silver Shadow
4 no	CRP - Carpinus betulus
2 no	CLP - Crataegus laevigata 'Paul's Scarlet'
2 no	MDE - Malus domestica 'Ellisons Orange'
1 no	MDJ - Malus domestica 'James Grieve'
1 no	MRR - Malus robusta 'Red Sentinel'
1 no	PAS - Prunus avium 'Sunburst'
1 no	PDV - Prunus domestica 'Victoria'
1 no	PCC - Pyrus communis 'Concorde'
1 no	QRO Quercus robur
1 no	QRU - Quercus rubra
1 no	SB - Salix babylonica
2 no	SOBC - Sorbus aucuparia 'Cardinal Royal'
2 no	SOBL - Sorbus 'Leonard Messel'
127m	NHM - Native Hedge Mix
160 no	LW - Living Willow rods

CLIENT	Wembdon Parklands & Community Together
SITE	Wembdon Bridgwater Somerset
PROJECT	Soft Landscaping Proposals
DRAWING	Tree & Hedge Planting Plan
DRAWING No	WPSL/THP002
SCALE	1/500
DATE	19th March 2019

ALL DIMENSIONS MUST BE CHECKED ON SITE AND NOT SCALED FROM THIS DRAWING
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APPENDIX A - SUB-CONTRACTOR RECORD SHEET

Start Date	Company Name	Company Address	Company Telephone	End Date	Handover
THIS MUST BE KEPT UP TO DATE BY THE LANDOWNER					

APPENDIX B - MANAGEMENT PRACTICES RECORD SHEET

Management Instruction	Action	Description	Date Action Taken	Other Relevant Information
THIS MUST BE KEPT UP TO DATE BY THE LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR				