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Re: Brent House, Leigh Park, Havant PO9 4BP, Phase One Planting Brief

Please see PDF of my initial design for the soft landscaping spaces around Brent House, these are my accompanying notes, there is also a more detailed plant list and plant mood board.

Please also note that the plants included are sized and based on 5 years growth, i.e. how they will appear in 5 years' time. I'll describe each area starting from the NE side of the plan:

1) NE Border with adjacent property, hedging alongside the car park

I've chosen Portugese laurel as the hedging plant, comfortably maintained at 1-4m this is a very attractive evergreen hedge option chosen as it will be in regular view at the front entrance and parking area. With glossy leaves, maroon coloured stems in always looks good and is very robust. It is easily maintained at the height required to keep privacy and creates a solid boundary.

2) SE corner, long bed South side of car park

The plant selection, as across the other areas is chosen for its tropical feel, these are plants suited to warmer climates but perfectly capable to flourish here and well suited to the far south of England. These are tough, robust plants that need little maintenance, a little pruning / shaping once a year and a good feed in the spring. I've planted a combination of shrubs at the East side of the border to act as a barrier and create a more pleasant view at the top of the plot, to obscure the road/entrance. The colours contrast, with spring white flowering viburnum contrasting with the red of the Photinia below it, inter planted with yucca and Nandina for contrasting leaf colour and shape. Running alongside the path on the South side of the bed is a run of Cornus Sibirica or midnight fire, these flower in the summer on fresh green leaves but are best known for the striking red / orange red stems throughout the winter, giving some needed cheer and brightness, these act to keep pedestrians on the path and provide year round interest.

I've added a lower hedge on the North side too, again to provide a border to the soft landscaped area, this is Photinia, red leaved and tidy, but could equally be lower lavender to reduce cost and flow with other lavender edging. Finally the west corner has zebra grass, tall 1.5m grasses planted in a circular pattern to provide a real summer tropical feel, each blade has yellow green stripes



through it and moves gentle in the breeze to provide interest and a great statement next to a popular area.

3) Triangle area on west side of the parking area, at the front of Brent House

This area will be dominated by three tropical large leaf plants, which make for a strong vibrant planting combination, the pink tall grasses in the centre surrounded by long strappy, leafed Phormium and pointed yucca. Again as in all beds, easily maintained shrubs, that are strong and cope with anything, the contrasting colours of yellows, pinks, bronze will give interest in this high footfall area. I've edged this area with a low lavender hedge, up to 30cm, these are known to be tough and low maintenance but with a lovely scent and help keep the bark chip ground cover in place.

4) Adjoining the above alongside the SE corner of BH

Long rectangular bed, with sharp tough Pyracanthas orange glow below any window to create a barrier to access, this evergreen shrub grows anywhere and has beautiful winter, orange berries. Combining with this and to maintain a consistent plant list, I've added the yucca, viburnum, pieris and small rounded pittosporum. These are all evergreen, have interest at different times of year, winter, spring and summer with great contrasting colours. I've edged this area with a low lavender hedge, up to 30cm, these are known to be tough and low maintenance but with a lovely scent and help keep the bark chip ground cover in place.

5) Dropping to the opposite (West) side of BH, this is the large area either side of the previous entrance.

It is hedged with a Thuja conifer, a more shapely and more readily maintained specimen than leylandi, it keeps its conical shape well and grows a little slower but is more elegant and a fantastic privacy hedging option, grown and maintain at 1.5m upwards. It is tough like most conifers and can deal with harsh conditions. A great screen for the road and pedestrians behind.

The planting is mirrored both sides of the central path, the tropical plant pallet is repeated in a different combination, with the pink tall grasses as a core focus from the back door, branching out to the large strappy Phormium, red Pieris, Pittosporum, then out to the taller zebra grasses and finally yucca. These will work well together to provide an all year round colour contrast to the conifer hedge behind and receive good views from the windows on the West side.

Framing the back door are the beautiful viburnum, with their white spring flowers, alongside and underneath each window is again the Pyracantha, described above to put off entrance via the widow. With lavender running low along the path sides to give lovely scent and maintain the ground cover.



6) North side narrow alley under windows

A challenging planting area where I've selected tough plants that are thick and cope with less sun. Yes is fantastic, seasonal berries, an elegant hedging plant that grows strongly and needs little maintenance. A large variety of pittosporum runs along BH and this planting combination allows access for ground staff but also obscures the play area from the west side of BH.

Overall I've attempted to keep a warm tropical theme but with little need for maintenance and evergreen throughout to ensure constant interest. Many of the plants offer a season of interest that differs from each other so the interest rolls throughout the year.

Each planted area, except the two hedging beds would have the grass removed and need new soil, fertilisers and mulch before planting and I'd expect to lay a 'Mypex' equivalent weed protection membrane covered in ornamental bark chippings to further relieve maintenance and provide an attractive ground cover throughout.