

OPEN SPACE STATEMENT

RE PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT CONSISTING OF THE ERECTION OF 16 NEW DWELLINGS WITH ASSOCIATED ACCESS, PARKING AND OPEN SPACE.

LAND TO THE REAR OF 15-27 HORNDEAN ROAD, EMSWORTH, HAMPSHIRE, PO10 7PT

Introduction

The statement has been prepared to support the development of the Public Open Space to the above site. It outlines the existing designation of the site and the proposed mitigation and enhancement works that are proposed as part of the proposed residential development.

For clarification the site is subject to an extant Planning Permission Ref.APP/19/00768 for the development of 16 new dwellings. Planning proposals are for the delivery of small scale residential development (16 units), alongside associated access and landscaping and to include a biodiversity area measuring 0.41ha to be used as Public Open Space.

Existing Site

The application site includes for a subset of a wider non-statutory designated site known as Land West of Emsworth Recreation Ground Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). Emsworth SINC is designated on account of its grassland habitat. The SINC is specifically under criteria 2B for supporting “Semi-improved grasslands which retain a significant element of unimproved grassland”. This SINC designation was informed through the completion of habitat survey work undertaken in July 2011, at which time the survey identified the presence of a sward which was “rather rough but still rich in herbs” and with 4 grassland indicator species noted.

Survey work undertaken, indicates that the value of this SINC (insofar as it lies within the application site) has declined since surveys were undertaken in support of the site citation. The grassland within the site now comprises relatively species-poor semi improved grassland, with a sward dominated by coarser grasses. Whilst a modest range of herbs were recorded, the herb assemblage was dominated by only a small number of widespread species.

In light of the survey work and noting the decline in ecological value of the site in the interim period since surveys were undertaken, the SINC designation for the site is no longer considered to be appropriate (at least insofar as it relates to the application site).

It is relevant to note that the landowner has since requested that the land within the application site be de-classified as SINC. This formal request has been made to Hampshire's SINC panel (this comprising several organisations who are jointly responsible for advising on SINC designation and de-classification). Whilst it is understood that the SINC panel will consider this request in due course, the primary requirement from a planning perspective is to deliver the residential development and enhance the Public Open Space.

In line with the above, it is clear that appropriate avoidance, mitigation and/or enhancement measures should be identified to reflect the true landscape value of the land in question, as identified through the proposed landscaping plans. The area of the proposed Public Open Space is characterised by rough grassland with existing dense trees and hedges to the boundaries. The main grass areas are wetter elements of species as this area is susceptible to flooding.

The area is a small area of wet and scrubby woodland to the north, tending towards a linear belt of Bramble to the south. Goat Willow *Salix caprea*, is dominant in the north, with immature Pedunculate Oak, Hawthorn, Holly and Tutsan *Hypericum androsaemum* also present. Honeysuckle and Ivy were noted trailing through the hedge, with the latter also dominating much of the field layer alongside Lords and Ladies, Cleavers and Alexanders. Hard Shield Fern *Polystichum aculeatum*, Hart's-tongue Fern *Asplenium scolopendrium* and Male Fern *Dryopteris filix-mas* were associated with the stream immediately beyond the site's western boundary. Further south is dominated by Bramble with Blackthorn and Pedunculate Oak also rarely present.

Proposed Open Space

The proposals for the application site seek to retain and enhance a significant area of grassland within the site, with this primarily to be delivered as an area of informal open space in the south-west of the application site.

The application site predominantly comprises an area of relatively species-poor semi-improved grassland. Other habitats present within the application site include for boundary hedgerows and trees, alongside areas of scrub and ruderal which are either species-poor in nature (Bramble monoculture) or comprising a mix of non-native species and amenity escapes.

The development proposals will fully retain the mature Oak trees at the boundaries of the site, albeit losses to underlying hedge/scrub are proposed to facilitate access and built form.

Where losses are proposed, these will be more than mitigated through the provision of significant new native hedge planting elsewhere within the site. Such new hedge provision will include for new hedge planting along the boundaries of the proposed informal open space, as well as in the northern spur of the site (along the access road),

ensuring a net gain in native hedge within the site post-development. New areas of hedge will be planted as species-rich native features, including for species of local prominence.

Moreover, it is proposed for both newly created hedge, as well as retained hedge/trees (where this lies within public realm) to be subject to a sensitive management regime in the long-term. This management regime will seek to attain approximate hedge heights of 3m, with an 'A' shaped hedge structure. At this stage, it is proposed for 50% of the native hedge to be cut each year, ensuring some areas remain undisturbed for nesting birds.

It is further proposed for adjacent grassland margins (to a width of approx. 2m) to be subject to a reduced management regime, with perhaps a cut undertaken only once every 2-3 years. This reduced cutting regime will ensure further structural variety within the site, providing refugia opportunities to a range of faunal species.

In regards grassland, and as set out in the 'Designated Sites' section above, quantitative losses to the sward will be more than mitigated through the retention and enhancement of an area of informal open space in the south-west of the site. The instigation of a long-term sensitive management regime for this habitat, to be funded by the development proposals, will provide a mechanism to reverse the increasing dominance of rough grassland and the loss of herbaceous diversity. The above management regime would ensure significant qualitative gains to the grassland, allowing for long-term biodiversity enhancements to this habitat within the site in the longer-term. The creation and management of meadow grassland elsewhere within the site will deliver additional areas of high quality grassland, further off-setting losses to the existing, rough sward.

This area of informal open space includes for the wetter grassland elements recorded in surveys in 2018 and 2019, supporting populations of sedge and with both Pepper Saxifrage and Meadow Barley present in the sward. In order to instigate longer-term enhancements to this area of grassland (reversing the trend of recent years in which coarser grasses appear to be increasingly outcompeting herbs), it is proposed for a long-term, biodiversity led management plan to be instigated for retained areas of grassland. This management plan, which would be funded by the development proposals, would include for the completion of a rotational hay-cut regime of retained areas of grassland.

It is proposed for this hay-cut regime to comprise a late summer hay cut (late July – August subject to on-site conditions). This cut would reduce the sward height to no less than 10cm (noting the presence of reptiles), with arisings left on site for 5 days to allow seeds to disperse, prior to removal from site. The removal of arisings each year will provide a mechanism to gradually reduce soil nutrients and thereby enhance opportunities for a greater range of herbs and fine grasses to establish. It is recommended that 20% of the grassland remains uncut each year, ensuring longer grassland elements for reptiles.

To further expediate diversification in this area, the sowing of Yellow Rattle may be undertaken. Yellow Rattle is a 'hemi-parasite' of grasses and suppresses their growth. Herbaceous species benefit as a result of the reduced competition.

It is further proposed for other areas of grassland to be created within the site, such as adjacent to the proposed access road in the north of the site. These areas would be sown with a native wildflower mixture (such as Emorsgate Seed's Standard Meadow Mixture – EM2) and would be subject to the above appropriate management regime for the larger area of open space. This would deliver additional areas of species-rich grassland within the site post-development.

It is considered that the retention and enhancement and creation of areas of meadow grassland within the site will realise significant qualitative gains for the site in the longer term, more than mitigating for the loss of a grassland sward which is relatively herb poor and becoming increasingly 'rough' in nature. Indeed, long-term management provides a mechanism whereby retained areas of grassland can be restored to SINC quality post-development, contrasting to the likely outcome of a no-development situation (where rough grassland species will become increasingly prevalent).

Programme and Timing of Works

The works to the Public Open Space will be carried out over the course of the main development works to construct the houses. The area of land required for the Public Open Space will be temporarily fenced off from the construction site with heras fencing to secure the area. There will be no access to this area during construction and the existing grasslands and boundary trees and hedges will be retained.

Initially on commencement of works to the main site the area for the Public Open Space will not be used for any construction activity. The area of land will remain in its current state until the end of October 2021 when the planting season starts. At this stage in October initial cutting back of any hedges and the cutting of the grassland shall take place. Also, at this time the new planting of hedges and trees shall be done as shown on the landscape plan 08.

Construction work on the main development site will be continuous from July 2021 and will run through to July 2022. Generally planting of the main residential site and the common areas as detailed on the landscape drawings 05, 06 and 07 will take place in March 2022 and in combination with the Public Open Space and will be complete by July 2022 for the hand over of the site and occupation.

Conclusion

There will be quantitative losses to areas of rough grassland, as well as minor losses to linear wooded habitat along the site boundary. All existing grass, hedges and trees

will be retained to the area of the Public Open Space and protected during construction of the development site.

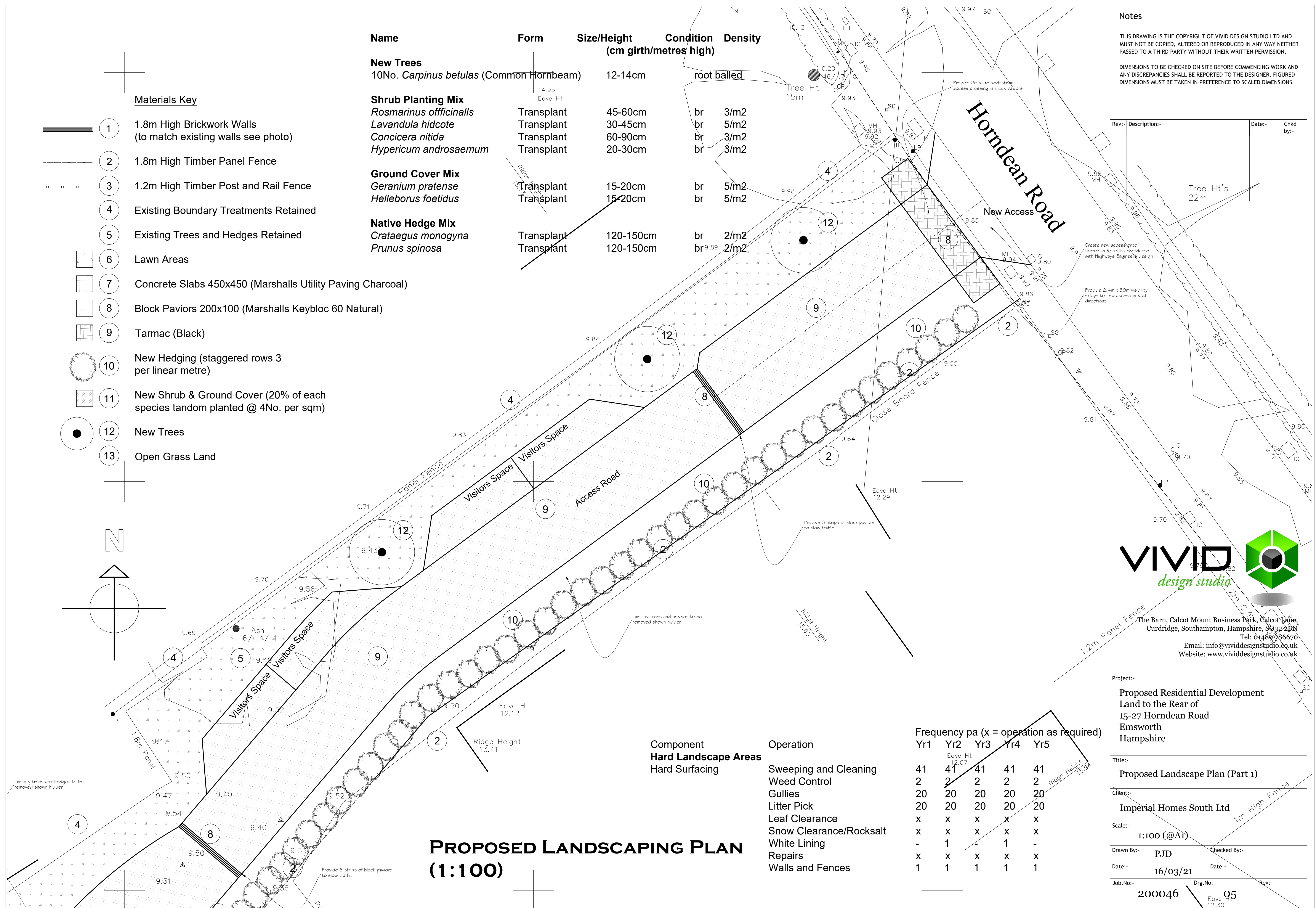
In order to mitigate these impacts, and indeed to deliver enhancements post-development, the development proposals seek to retain a significant area of grassland and instigate a long-term biodiversity led management regime of this habitat, ensuring qualitative enhancements going forward. Moreover, the adoption of a suitable landscaping scheme for the wider site, in line with the recommendations set out above, would ensure that the biodiversity value of other habitats present within the site can be retained and indeed enhanced as part of the proposed development.

Ownership and Management

The overall site will be owned by Vivid Homes Ltd and this includes the main residential site and the proposed Open Space. Individual units will be sold off and Vivid Homes Ltd will retained ownership of the communal areas of the main development and the Open Space.

The overall management and maintenance of the communal areas and the Open Space will be carried out by Vivid Homes Ltd as part of the management company overseeing all aspects of maintenance. All aspects of this Open Space statement will be carried out by Vivid Homes Ltd in accordance with the details described above.

VIVID HOMES LTD
Peninsular House
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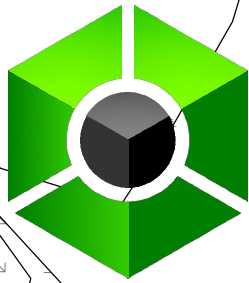
PROPOSED LANDSCAPING PLAN
(1:100)

Notes

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DIMENSIONS TO BE CHECKED ON SITE BEFORE COMMENCING WORK AND ANY DISCREPANCIES SHALL BE REPORTED TO THE DESIGNER. FIGURED DIMENSIONS MUST BE TAKEN IN PREFERENCE TO SCALED DIMENSIONS.

Rev:-	Description:-	Date:-	Chkd by:-



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Project: 2
Proposed Residential Development
Land to the Rear of
15-27 Horndean Road
Emsayden
Hampshire

Title:-
Proposed Landscape Plan (Part 2)

Client:-
Imperial Homes South Ltd

Scale:-
1:100 (at A1)

Drawn By:-
CP5

Date:-
16/03/21

Job No:-
200046

Checked By:-
CP6

Date:-
16/03/21

Drw No:-
06

Rev:-
06

Garden

