

Sandfields, Aberavon

Landscape Masterplan Concept

The redevelopment of Sandfields offers a rare opportunity to reimagine and reinvent the landscape around these homes, to provide an attractive, welcoming and safe environment for the community and to enhance the micro-habitat opportunities available to a range of local wildlife species. The project will also allow for the integration of an innovative Sustainable Drainage System comprising permeable paving, rain gardens, and bio-basins.

The strategy for the landscape is founded upon the principle of reflecting the specific site circumstances and microclimate conditions to create a series of habitats which are appropriate to the local area, attractive to native local wildlife and which therefore offer an attractive and varied recreational environment for the residents of the scheme and the local community. Natural play opportunities will be incorporated throughout.

Micro-habitats

The orientation of the existing scheme blocks and the addition of the new extension units around these, creates a series of distinct microclimate areas, with open, exposed sunny areas to the south, shaded areas to the north and transitional semi-shaded areas in the retained corridors between. The whole site sits in a coastal location, just 300m from the high tide line and, as such, coastal habitats are the natural condition of the landscape here with dunes to the north and south of Aberavon and woodland increasing as the topography rises inland.

The landscape scheme for the site will provide semi-natural habitats reflecting the open dune environment, shady inland woodlands and the transitional landscape between the two. Plants will be selected from a palette of native and wildlife-friendly species which emulate the natural aesthetic while maximising the biodiversity benefits.

Truly Sustainable

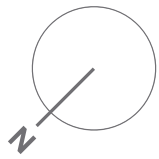
The landscape scheme will seek to be 'sustainable' in all senses of the word. The redevelopment will aim to minimise spoil arising from site, using arisings in creative ways to provide landform for visual interest and new plant matter will be of local provenance wherever possible. Planting will be designed to the conditions of the site and with an eye on long term maintenance requirements, selecting plants which can cope with the receiving environment and will need limited support to establish and flourish, securing their presence on site for the future with the minimum management input. Fruit bearing tree and shrub species will be incorporated into the planting palette to encourage involvement in local food production and foraging. All timber used within the scheme will be from sustainable sources, including that within street furniture and the use of concrete products and construction detailing in the landscape will be minimised.

Space for All

As well as the variety created through the planting approach and natural conditions, the landscape scheme will provide spaces and routes which are accessible to all and offer a variety of scales and characters of space from small, intimate, shaded spaces to open, hard landscaped sunny courtyards - providing spaces for both individual contemplation and larger community gatherings. There will be no attempt to segregate users on the basis of age or physical ability, instead spaces will primarily be designed with small children in mind – in so doing the landscape will be safe, accessible, fun and enticing, aspects which appeal to all, not just the young. Play provision will be integrated throughout the soft landscape areas, taking the form of 'natural play' features such as boulders, logs and tunnels, all carefully designed into the undulating landforms to create a joyful landscape for young people.

Aspirational

Combined with the innovative, contemporary architecture, the Sandfields landscape masterplan will create a holistic development proposal which, when completed, will set a new benchmark for developments of this type in Wales. People will aspire to live here and those who do will be proud of where they live and enjoy utilising the landscape of the site. This will build a robust, resilient and positive community and set a precedent for similar schemes to come forward in the future.



Planting Palette	
Tree Planting	<i>Sorbus aria</i> 'Lutescens' <i>Pinus pinea</i> <i>Corylus avellane</i> <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> <i>Betula pendula</i> <i>Malus sylvestris</i> <i>Acer campestre</i> <i>Prunus avium</i> <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> <i>Carpinus betulus</i> <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>
Shrub/ Grass Swathe Planting	<i>Stipa gigantea</i> <i>Lagerus ovatus</i> <i>Pennisetum vilosum</i> <i>Festuca glauca</i> <i>Silene uniflora</i> <i>Cytisus scoparius</i> <i>Polystichum setiferum</i> <i>Matteuccia struthiopteris</i> <i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> <i>Echinops sphaerocapulus</i> <i>Vinca major</i> <i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i> <i>Alchemilla mollis</i> <i>Viola riviniana</i> <i>Meconopsis cambrica</i> <i>Polygonatum multiflorum</i> <i>Geranium sanguineum</i> <i>Verbena bonariensis</i>
Rain Gardens	<i>Carex pendula</i> <i>Luzula nivea</i> <i>Geranium rozanne</i> <i>Asplenium scolopendrium</i> <i>Spirea japonica</i> 'Gold mound' <i>Aluga reptans</i> <i>Campanula glomerata</i> <i>Phormium</i> sp. <i>Miscanthus sinensis</i>
Block Pavers	SuDS Basins - Wet tolerant meadow mixture <i>Cornus sanguinea</i> 'Midwinter Fire' <i>Carex pendula</i>
Mown Informal Footpaths	Hedgerow/Formal Shrub Beds <i>Lavandula angustifolia</i> 'Hidcote' <i>Cytisus scoparius</i> <i>Hebe</i> 'great orme' <i>Ilex crenata</i> 'convexa' <i>Lonicera nitida</i> 'Baggesen's Gold' <i>Berberis x interposita</i> <i>Escallonia rubra</i>
Natural Play Features	Proposed Trees
Natural Play Tunnel	Hedgerow Planting
Benches/ Seating Blocks	POS Swathe Planting
Gas Meter	Rain Gardens
Air Source Heat Pumps	Amenity Grass
Sheffield Cycle Stands	Attenuation Basins
Green Roof Bike/Bin Storage Units	Landform Hills



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