

# ALDI Store Neath Abbey Road, Neath (Planning Application Reference P2019/5304)

## 12740\_R02b\_Scheme of Biodiversity Enhancement Measures

### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This scheme of biodiversity enhancement measures has been prepared by Tyler Grange on behalf of ALDI Stores Ltd in respect of a proposed new store off Neath Abbey Road, Neath, herein referred to as the 'site'.
- 1.2 A detailed planning application for the demolition of an existing building and construction of a new ALDI store with associated infrastructure and landscaping at the site was submitted to Neath Port Talbot Council (planning ref: P2019/5304). Comments have subsequently been received by the Biodiversity Implementation Officer dated 27<sup>th</sup> January 2020 which have recommended that further information is required as follows:

*"Details of biodiversity enhancement measures in line with Planning Policy Wales 10 and section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016."*

- 1.3 This scheme therefore sets out measures which will be implemented at the site to provide ecological and biodiversity benefit. As the site was previously predominantly built form the application was supported by a Bat Survey and Assessment (Tyler Grange, 2019).
- 1.4 In March 2021 the site proposals, including the soft landscaping plans, were updated in response to a need to provide additional drainage features to mitigate for adverse impacts from runoff. The re-designed proposals now include a number of new detention basins which have been designed in accordance with the Statutory standards for sustainable drainage systems produced by the Welsh Government (2018)<sup>1</sup> and approved by the SuDS Approval Body (SAB).
- 1.5 This scheme of Biodiversity Enhancement Measures has therefore been updated in March 2021 to reflect these changes to the proposals.
- 1.6 Measures to create new areas of biodiversity importance within the scheme include the provision of wildflower grassland, wetland wildflower seeding in detention basins, native hedgerow creation and ornamental shrub and tree planting. Furthermore, specific management prescriptions will be implemented to enhance the ecological importance of the newly created habitats and to maximise opportunities for wildlife.

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<sup>1</sup> Statutory standards for sustainable drainage systems – designing, constructing, operating and maintaining surface water drainage systems – Welsh Government (2018)

## 2.0 Existing Baseline

### Habitats

- 2.1 The site is dominated by hardstanding, close-mown grassland and a single, small building. Along the western boundary of the site are a line of cypress trees and birch. Outside of the site, there are industrial buildings to the south and west, with residential housing to the east.



**Figure 1: Aerial photograph.**

### Protected Species

- 2.2 The site offers limited potential for protected and notable species. The conclusions of the bat report were that no evidence or potential for bats was identified within the current building on site. It was concluded that demolition would not affect bats and due to the sub-optimal nature of the habitats and surroundings for bats, along with the ambient light levels at night, no enhancements (e.g. bat boxes) were recommended.

## 3.0 Enhancement Strategy

- 3.1 The proposed development has been designed to include opportunities for wildlife and retain and protect the mature trees, which are the only important feature present. The enhancement measures which have been incorporated into the soft landscaping of the site include ornamental shrub and tree planting, native hedgerow creation and new native wildflower meadow and wetland wildflower meadow in detention basins. In addition, the proposed ornamental planting would provide food sources for a variety of invertebrates and birds.

- 3.2 The creation of habitats at the site will mitigate for the loss of amenity grassland, providing a habitat which is more botanically diverse than existing and increasing biodiversity (see **Tables 3.1, 3.2** and **Appendix 1** for species mixes). These habitats will be managed to provide a habitat with a diverse structure that will benefit a range of species including invertebrates and birds.

| <b>Emorsgate EH1 – Hedgerow mix for shaded areas</b> |                                                              |                             |
|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>%</b>                                             | <b>Latin name</b>                                            | <b>Common name</b>          |
| 0.5                                                  | <i>Achillea millefolium</i>                                  | Yarrow                      |
| 1.2                                                  | <i>Agrimonia eupatoria</i>                                   | Agrimony                    |
| 2.5                                                  | <i>Alliaria petiolata</i>                                    | Garlic Mustard              |
| 1                                                    | <i>Betonica officinalis</i> - ( <i>Stachys officinalis</i> ) | Betony                      |
| 2                                                    | <i>Centaurea nigra</i>                                       | Common Knapweed             |
| 0.4                                                  | <i>Clinopodium vulgare</i>                                   | Wild Basil                  |
| 0.6                                                  | <i>Digitalis purpurea</i>                                    | Foxglove                    |
| 1                                                    | <i>Galium album</i> - ( <i>Galium mollugo</i> )              | Hedge Bedstraw              |
| 1.5                                                  | <i>Geum urbanum</i>                                          | Wood Avenis                 |
| 1                                                    | <i>Hypericum perforatum</i>                                  | Perforate St John's Wort    |
| 0.5                                                  | <i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>                                  | Oxeye Daisy                 |
| 1                                                    | <i>Plantago lanceolata</i>                                   | Ribwort Plantain            |
| 1                                                    | <i>Primula veris</i>                                         | Cowslip                     |
| 1                                                    | <i>Prunella vulgaris</i>                                     | Selfheal                    |
| 2                                                    | <i>Silene dioica</i>                                         | Red Campion                 |
| 2                                                    | <i>Torilis japonica</i>                                      | Upright Hedge-parsley       |
| 0.4                                                  | <i>Vicia cracca</i>                                          | Tufted Vetch                |
| 0.4                                                  | <i>Vicia sativa ssp. segetalis</i>                           | Common Vetch                |
| 20                                                   |                                                              |                             |
| <b>Grasses</b>                                       |                                                              |                             |
| <b>%</b>                                             | <b>Latin name</b>                                            | <b>Common name</b>          |
| 10                                                   | <i>Agrostis capillaris</i>                                   | Common Bent                 |
| 2                                                    | <i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>                                 | Sweet Vernal-grass (w)      |
| 7                                                    | <i>Brachypodium sylvaticum</i>                               | False Brome (w)             |
| 20                                                   | <i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>                                   | Crested Dogstail            |
| 1                                                    | <i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>                                 | Tufted Hair-grass (w)       |
| 28                                                   | <i>Festuca rubra</i>                                         | Slender-creeping Red-fescue |
| 12                                                   | <i>Poa nemoralis</i>                                         | Wood Meadow-grass           |
| 80                                                   |                                                              |                             |

**Table 3.1. Emorsgate EH1 – ‘Hedgerow Meadow Mixture’.**

| <b>Swale Seed Mix – Wildflower mix for detention basins</b> |                                 |                           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>%</b>                                                    | <b>Latin name</b>               | <b>Common name</b>        |
| 0.5                                                         | <i>Achillea ptarmica</i>        | Sneezewort                |
| 1.0                                                         | <i>Alisma plantago-aquatica</i> | Water-Plantain            |
| 2.0                                                         | <i>Angelica sylvestris</i>      | Wild Angelica             |
| 1.0                                                         | <i>Cardamine pratensis</i>      | Cuckoo Flower             |
| 1.0                                                         | <i>Dipsacus Fullonum</i>        | Teasel                    |
| 1.0                                                         | <i>Eupatorium cannabinum</i>    | Hemp Agrimony             |
| 2.5                                                         | <i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>      | Meadowsweet               |
| 1.0                                                         | <i>Mentha aquatica</i>          | Water Mint                |
| 1.0                                                         | <i>Myosotis scorpiodes</i>      | Water Forget-Me-Not       |
| 2.5                                                         | <i>Iris pseudacorus</i>         | Yellow Iris               |
| 1.5                                                         | <i>Lotus pedunculatus</i>       | Greater Birdsfoot Trefoil |
| 1.0                                                         | <i>Lychnis Flos-cuculi</i>      | Ragged Robin              |
| 1.7                                                         | <i>Lycopus europaeus</i>        | Gypsywort                 |
| 1.0                                                         | <i>Lythrum salicaria</i>        | Purple Loosestrife        |
| 0.3                                                         | <i>Pulicaria dysentrica</i>     | Fleabane                  |

|                |                                 |                             |
|----------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1.0            | <i>Succisa pratensis</i>        | Devil's Bit Scabious        |
| 20             |                                 |                             |
| <b>Grasses</b> |                                 |                             |
| 8.0            | <i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>     | Creeping Bent               |
| 4.0            | <i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>     | Meadow Foxtail              |
| 2.0            | <i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>    | Sweet Vernal Grass          |
| 1.0            | <i>Briza media</i>              | Quaking Grass               |
| 40             | <i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>      | Crested Dogtail             |
| 1.0            | <i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>    | Tufted Hair-Grass           |
| 24             | <i>Festuca rubra ssp juncea</i> | Slender Creeping Red Fescue |
| 80%            |                                 |                             |

**Table 3.2. NPTCBC SAB preferred mix specification (see Appendix 1)**

- 3.3 The new native hedgerow planting will be managed to create dense vegetation to benefit wildlife, such as invertebrates and nesting birds (see **Appendix 1** for species mix). This habitat is being created along the southern and western boundary of the site and links to the other areas of landscape planting also being created, including wildflower grassland.
- 3.4 New tree planting, including species of known wildlife benefit, will be provided along the boundaries of the site and within the central areas of the car park creating a net gain in trees, increasing species diversity, and therefore providing enhanced opportunities for wildlife, such as invertebrates and birds (see **Appendix 1** for species mix).
- 3.5 In addition to the above, areas of amenity planting (ornamental shrub), some of which will include species which produce berries providing additional food sources for birds, will also take place across the site (see **Appendix 1**). This new planting will further assist with increasing biodiversity and providing additional benefits for wildlife including invertebrates.
- 3.6 Newly created and retained habitats will be managed to maximise the biodiversity value of the habitats and opportunities for wildlife. Further detail is provided in the work schedule provided in Section 4 and include:
- Trees and scrub managed annually as necessary and outside of the breeding bird season to prevent encroachment of this habitat; and
  - Wildflower grassland managed as per the requirements set out on the landscape specifications in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.7 In addition to the habitat enhancement measures detailed above, to provide a further enhancement for birds, four nesting boxes including four woodstone Alicante boxes (Vivara Pro) or similar suitable for robins, blackbirds, wrens and similar garden species. These would be installed on retained trees along the western boundary of the site.

#### **4.0 Work Schedule**

- 4.1 The prescribed management actions, including implementation timetable and responsibilities, are summarised in table form over the page and should be read in conjunction with the detailed Landscape Maintenance and Management Plan for the site produced by Cambium (see **Appendix 2**).

| Ecology Management Prescriptions and Timetable |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                        |                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Prescription                                   | Rationale for Habitat Creation/ Management                                                                                                                                                                                       | Management Tasks                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Timing                                                                                                                                 | Responsibility                                                     |
| <b>New tree and hedgerow planting</b>          | Trees and hedgerow to be planted, increasing biodiversity, as well as nesting and foraging habitat creating a further ecological enhancement.                                                                                    | New trees and hedgerow to be planted, including native species and those species of known value to wildlife (as illustrated in Appendix 1).                                                                                                                                                   | Prior to the occupation of the store where practicable or in the next planting season following occupation.                            | Landscape Contractor                                               |
|                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | All new trees within the site will be monitored for 12 months with any trees that die, become seriously damaged or diseased to be replaced.                                                                                                                                                   | Allow for the use of container grown stock during the period 1 April to 31 October, and field grown stock from 1 November to 31 March. |                                                                    |
|                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Management of new trees will be undertaken as required with trees allowed to grow naturally to maximise their landscape screening (see Appendix 2).                                                                                                                                           | If necessary, between March and August, checks for nesting birds by an ecologist required.                                             |                                                                    |
| <b>Wildflower grassland creation</b>           | Creation of native hedgerow meadow and wetland wildflower in detention basins will increase biodiversity, compensate for the loss of grassland and increase foraging opportunities for wildlife such as birds and invertebrates. | <u>Topsoil stripping / deposition.</u><br><br>Imported subsoil to be certified in accordance with BS8601:2013. Storage, handling and placement of topsoil should comply with BS8601:2013 and BS3882:2015. Subsoil and topsoil to be loose filled in layers of 300mm and lightly consolidated. | Prior to the occupation of the store where practicable or in the next planting season following occupation.                            | Landscape Contractor to sow seed – thereafter Landscape Contractor |

|                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                         |                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                          | <u>Sowing</u><br>Sow the Emorsgate EH1 – Hedgerow and swales seed mixtures (see <b>Appendix 1</b> ).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Autumn or spring but can be sown at other times of the year if there is sufficient warmth and moisture. |                                                                                                    |
|                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                          | <u>Cutting (First Year)</u><br>Wildflower meadow cut to 50mm<br>Swale grassland cut to 100mm (see Appendix 2 for details)                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | See Appendix 2 for timings                                                                              |                                                                                                    |
|                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                          | <u>Maintenance thereafter:</u><br>Cut as required to remove excess grass. Leave the hay to dry for 1-7 days then remove (see Appendix 2 for details).                                                                                                                                                                                                  | March and October (See Appendix 2 for timings)                                                          |                                                                                                    |
| <b>Provision of bird nesting opportunities.</b> | To provide additional nesting opportunities and to create an ecological enhancement post-development and to attract species not currently identified as nesting on site. | Four bird nesting boxes will be installed on retained trees along the western boundary of the site within suitable habitat.                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | During construction phase.                                                                              | Developer, advised as necessary by Ecologist.                                                      |
| <b>Monitor new planting</b>                     | To ensure the success of the new planting and associated ecological benefits.                                                                                            | All new planting within the site will be monitored for a 12 month period following completion of the development and any trees or plants that die, become seriously damaged or diseased will be removed and replaced in the next planting season with other trees or plants of a similar size and species as those originally planted (see Appendix 2) | See Appendix 2 for timings                                                                              | Landscape Contractor to undertake works – advised as necessary by Ecologist and Arboriculturalist. |

## 5.0 Summary and Conclusions

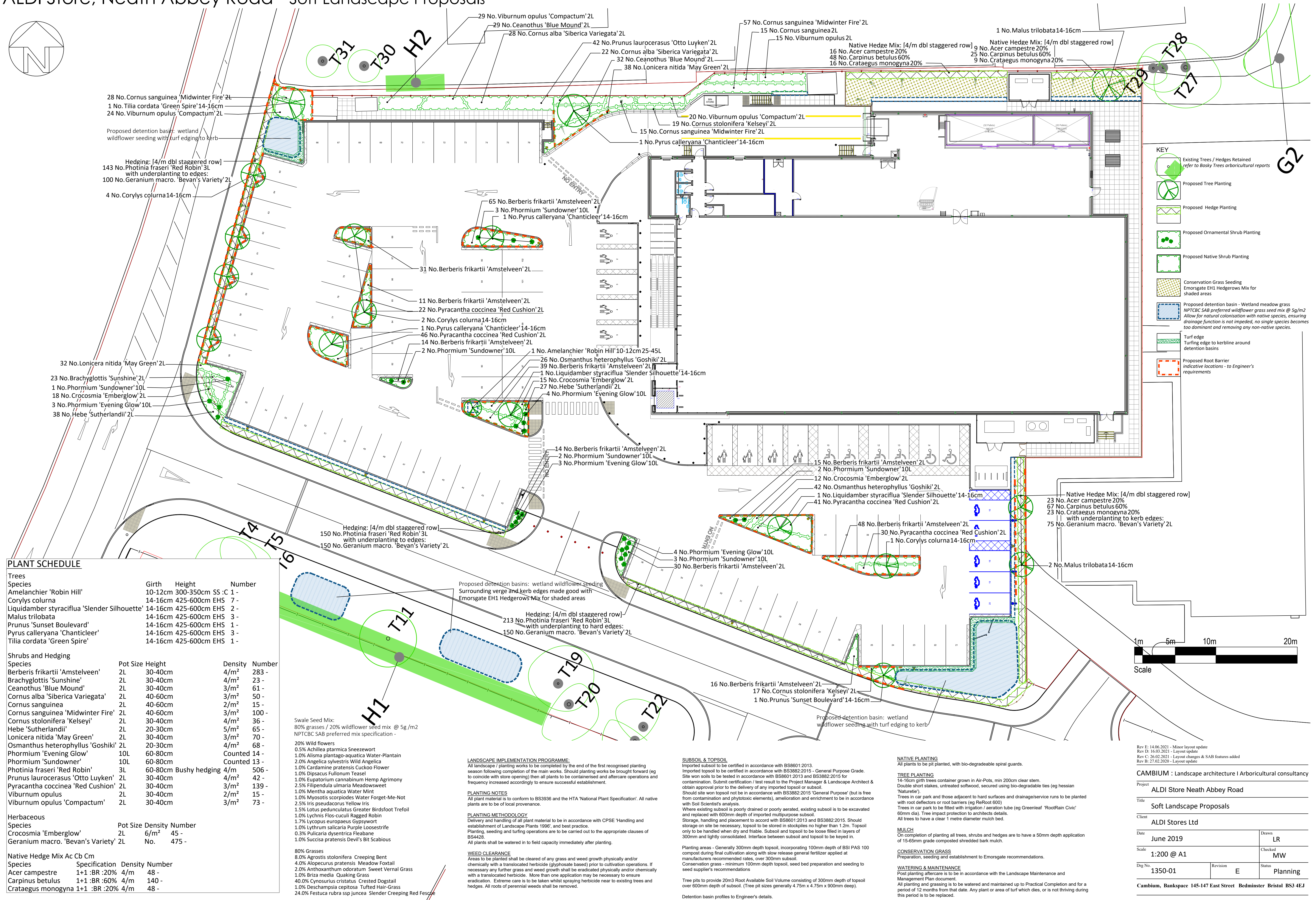
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- 5.1 The implementation of the new habitat creation, habitat enhancement and management prescriptions detailed above would provide new features which would deliver a biodiversity enhancement post-development. Overall these measures will provide additional habitats and foraging opportunities for wildlife, increase biodiversity and opportunities for a range of protected and priority species. As such, the above strategy would be in conformity with Planning Policy Wales Edition 10 and section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and could be controlled by a condition to the planning approval.

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## **Appendix 1: Soft Landscape Proposals Plan**





## **Appendix 2: Landscape Maintenance and Management Plan**

**ALDI Store,  
Neath Abbey Road**

**ACCESS ROAD SAB  
LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE & MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**March 2021 (Rev 0)**

**CAMBIUM**

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## **Refer to planting plan: 1350-02 Soft Landscape Proposals**

### **1.1. The Establishment Period**

A one year aftercare maintenance period should be built into the implementation contract to cover intensive post-installation maintenance requirements for the whole of the landscape works. During this period the contractor should be responsible for all horticultural maintenance operations, including seeding which has failed to flourish. At the end of the initial one year aftercare period any defects in soft landscape materials due to materials or workmanship should be rectified before responsibility is handed over to ALDI Neath Abbey Road.

### **1.3. Facilities**

The landscape maintenance contractor shall liaise with ALDI Neath Abbey Road and the Principal Contractor directly regarding access, working hours, permissions for parking, storage, use of water and any other resources.

### **1.4. Maintenance Objectives for Soft Landscape - Generally**

- apply good horticultural and ecological practice to all operations.
- promote healthy growth and establishment of all conservation grass seeding areas.
- ensure consistent control of invasive weeds.
- provide protection against pests and diseases.
- promote wildlife value and species diversity.

### **1.5. Programming and Monitoring of Maintenance and Management Operations**

The following is an indicative annual schedule of maintenance visits applicable for the first five years of establishment. This provides a reasonable frequency of the more common operations, and a good indication of the required level of intensity of management required. The landscape contractor is required to construct a schedule of operations specifying operations and frequency using his own experience and horticultural knowledge.

The effectiveness of the management operations is to be closely and continually monitored and reviewed annually against this Specification and Landscape Maintenance Plan, with any resulting changes incorporated into the subsequent years' programme.

### Conservation Grass Verge

| Maintenance Operation         | FREQUENCY |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | Subsequent Years | Special comments       |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------------|------------------------|
|                               | Jan       | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |                  |                        |
| Year 1: Cut height to 5cm     |           |     | 1   |     |     |     |     | 1   |     | 1   |     |     |                  | Arisings to be removed |
| Year 2-5: Cut height to 7.5cm |           |     | 1   |     |     |     |     |     |     | 1   |     |     | Continue         | Arisings to be removed |

### Conservation Grass Detention Basins

| Maintenance Operation                                                                                     | FREQUENCY |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | Subsequent Years | Special comments                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                           | Jan       | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |                  |                                                            |
| Year 1: Cut height to 10cm                                                                                |           |     |     |     |     |     | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   |     |     |                  | Arisings to be removed                                     |
| Year 2-5: Cut height to 10cm                                                                              |           |     | 1   |     |     |     |     |     |     | 1   |     |     | Continue         | Cut in two sections, 14 days apart. Arisings to be removed |
| Check for invasive species and remove                                                                     |           |     | 1   |     | 1   |     |     | 1   |     | 1   |     |     | Continue         | Arisings to be removed                                     |
| Allow for natural colonisation by native marsh and wetland species, cut in sections, annually as required |           |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | 1   |     |     |                  | Arisings to be deposited in agreed location                |