

Best Practice Approach Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Design Considerations for Major Development

Ground Forming

Some adjustments to levels may be required and must take into consideration to be in keeping with both onsite and local landscape in and around Dordon. Where a change in levels requires physical retaining, use of crib and gabion walls will provide a greater opportunity for biodiverse enhancements to be incorporated.

Landscape integration and development edge

Designs must provide a spatial buffer using soft landscape that blends seamlessly into the local and surrounding landscape. It must buffer and enhance existing habitats with sympathetic use of species appropriate to the locale and soil conditions. Landscape screening must not compromise the characteristic views of the surrounding countryside and landscape.

Boundaries

Hard boundary features detract from the local character and should be avoided where possible. Native hedges create a soft edge to developments and can help screen harder boundary features where they have had to be used.

Structure and residential landscaping

The design of structural planting needs to be given adequate space. The selection of species must compliment and integrate the development with the surrounding landscape. Advance planting where possible, assists earlier integration and mitigation of the development with the surroundings. Planting of trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants and sowing of wildflower mixes must comprise native species typical of the region and locally distinctive to the environs of Dordon.

Residential landscaping of streets, plot frontage and formal amenity areas within the development, may use ornamental trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants to help enhance and create distinctive and aesthetic characteristics but must be of high value to pollinators and not be invasive. Climbers and wall shrubs can also help screen and soften buildings and hard boundary features.

Verge and roundabout landscaping

The landscaping of verges and roundabouts must be multifunctional, climate resilient and meet biodiversity requirements. They should incorporate source control SuDS features, e.g.: filter strips and or kerbside bio-retention/rain garden beds in conjunction with, where appropriate, a conveyance feature e.g.: swale or rill.

Where grass is the required finish, use appropriate flower rich mixes to suit soil conditions, even when maintenance will require frequent mowing. Where turfing is necessary, this too should be a flower rich market brand suitable to soil conditions.

Where tree and shrub planting are proposed, this will be informed by native species mixes or where an ornamental approach is required within the development layout; it must be in keeping with the local character and comprise nectar rich varieties of non-invasive species

Lighting

Lighting should be used sparingly to reduce visual impact on night sky and minimise disruption to bats and nocturnal invertebrates by creating 'dark sky' linear and boundary vegetation areas for wildlife.

Use of security lighting can also impact and new residents should be advised of the issues and on appropriate systems to install.

Management and maintenance

All developments must have a long-term landscape and ecological management plan. This should aim to ensure the scheme matures to meet the public amenity and ecological aspirations of the design and remains an important feature of the development.

Ownership of the plan needs to be agreed and where that is likely to fall on the community then an endowment agreement needs to be established that provides for management in perpetuity.