

Landscape Management Plan

White Cross Farm

H21-0361-14 FULL

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

White Cross Farm
Background to the Plan
Purpose of the Plan

2.0 LAND MANAGEMENT

Landscaping
Details of the existing flora
Hedge planting

3.0 *Biodiversity*

4.0 Summary

APPENDIX A – Landscaping Plan

SCHEDULE OF TABLES

Table 1 – Hedge Type – Species Composition

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The proposed 50kWp solar array OS Grid centre point coordinates for the site are: 542029,318227.

The site is well screened, by the farm buildings to the east of the approved development. The views from site would be from Hunts Gate. Access to the site is from Hunts Gate.

Background to the Management Plan

1.1 This Landscape and Management Plan has been produced in order to secure the implementation and long-term maintenance of appropriate landscaping and features, suitable for the discharge of planning condition 4.

1.2 Condition 4:

Before the commencement of the development hereby permitted, the approval of the Local Planning Authority is required to a scheme of landscaping and tree planting for the site indicating, inter alia, the number, species, heights on planting and positions of all the trees, together with details of post-planting maintenance. Such scheme as is approved by the Local Planning Authority shall be carried out in its entirety within a period of 12 months beginning with the date on which development is commenced. All trees, shrubs and bushes shall be maintained by the owner or owners of the land on which they are situated for the period of five years beginning with the date of completion of the scheme and during that period all losses shall be made good as and when necessary.

Note: The landscaping scheme should include hedge planting along the northern boundary of the site.

Reason: To ensure that the development is adequately landscaped, in the interests of its visual amenity and that of the area in which it is set.

This Condition is imposed in accordance with Policy SG18 of the South Holland Local Plan 2006.

Purpose of the Plan

1.3 The purpose of this plan is to set out landscaping, Planting and Management proposals and to describe the management which will be carried out to maintain these assets for the lifetime of the development. This is based on:

- National Planning Guidance;
- An understanding of the existing biodiversity assets;
- Experience of successfully implementing landscaping and biodiversity enhancement schemes at solar farm sites throughout the UK; and
- Input from South Holland District Council setting out their landscaping aspirations for the site.

2.0 LAND MANAGEMENT

Landscaping

Details of the existing flora, soil levels and excavations.

2.1 All existing flora (shown in Appendix A) is planned to be retained.

- 2.2 Areas of scrub will not be altered, in order to maintain a high level of screening. Existing hedging will be allowed to grow to 3m in height and will be maintained at approx. 3m thereafter.

- 2.3 It is not proposed to alter any soil levels.

Hedge planting

- 2.4 In accordance with the Landscaping Plan (appendix A) the denoted area are identified for species rich hedge planting, as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Hedge Type – Species Composition

Species	Percentage
Common Hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>)	80%
Blackthorn (<i>Prunus spinosa</i>)	10%
Field Maple (<i>Acer campestre</i>)	10%
Proposed native hedgerow planting in double staggered rows, c500mm apart and up to 5 plants per metre. The species to be taken from the above list.	

- 2.5 Hedge planting and establishment will follow the guidance of the supplier. Hedge planting will take place within the next available planting season, starting in November. Shrub guards will be used, if required, in order to protect against damage from rabbits and other animals.

- 2.6 In the first spring after planting, heavy trimming and pruning will take place, which will be followed by light trimming thereafter, likely every second or third year. Any dead or dying shrubs will be replaced with the same species in the next available planting season, or as soon as practicable, as required throughout the lifetime of the development.

- 2.7 Hedging will be checked as part of general site maintenance, at least three times per year, to ensure any shrub guards or ties are not causing damage and are allowing shrubs to grow freely. Any protective or supporting structures will be removed as soon as possible, to avoid them becoming dependent upon support.

- 2.8 A metre wide strip each side of hedging will be maintained weed free for a period of around three years following planting to reduce competition for moisture and nutrients.

- 2.9 planted hedging will be protected by fencing in accordance with BS5837:2012 in having established the agreed positions with South Staffordshire District Council.

3.0 Biodiversity

Hedge planting

- 3.1 A well-managed hedge provides effective screening as well as providing an important source of food, shelter and connectivity between habitats for a wide range of species. They produce seeds and berries which are eaten by birds and mammals, as well as attracting a diverse range of invertebrates. In turn, this also provides a potential food source for local birds and bats. Hedgerows offer nesting opportunities and shelter for

birds, amphibians and small mammals, such as voles and hedgehogs, as well as connectivity and commuting corridors throughout the wider landscape.

- 3.2 Hedgerows have been selected to be species-rich, native, for their wildlife value and for their suitability within the local landscape.
- 3.3 Hawthorn is identified by the Woodland Trust as being the second most advantageous plant for wildlife, beaten only by English Oak. Hawthorn is quick growing, attracts insect pollinators, provides nesting opportunities for birds and is a source of berries, providing a winter food source for birds.
- 3.4 The second most frequent species in Hedge Type A is Blackthorn, which is an early flowering species that attracts both insect pollinators and night flying moths. Its berries provide a valuable source of food for birds and its thick dense thicket is a suitable bird nesting habitat.
- 3.5 Overall the proposal will deliver over 75m of new hedging, of a range of species, significantly adding to the biodiversity value of the site.

4.0 SUMMARY

- 4.1 The Landscaping and Biodiversity Management Plan proposes the planting of a total of c30m of hedge planting of a diverse range of species, both to provide the screening requested by the LPA and to enhance landscaping and by virtue biodiversity at the site.
- 4.2 The additional hedge planting adds value to the existing landscape and provides an important source of food, shelter and connectivity between habitats for a wide range of species and significantly adds to the biodiversity value of the site.
- 4.3 The Landscaping and Biodiversity Management Plan, once implemented, will add significant value to the area, both in terms of landscape character and in biodiversity value and suitably addresses all points to allow for the discharge of planning conditions 4.