# The High Weald National Landscape

## an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

High Weald National Landscape





# Planning Technical Advice Note:

# Soft Landscaping & Planting Plans in Development Proposals

Guidance for planners and developers on soft landscaping proposals in the protected landscape

*November 2025*

# Soft Landscaping in Development Proposals – Technical Advice Note

*Published by the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee under the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000, on behalf of:*

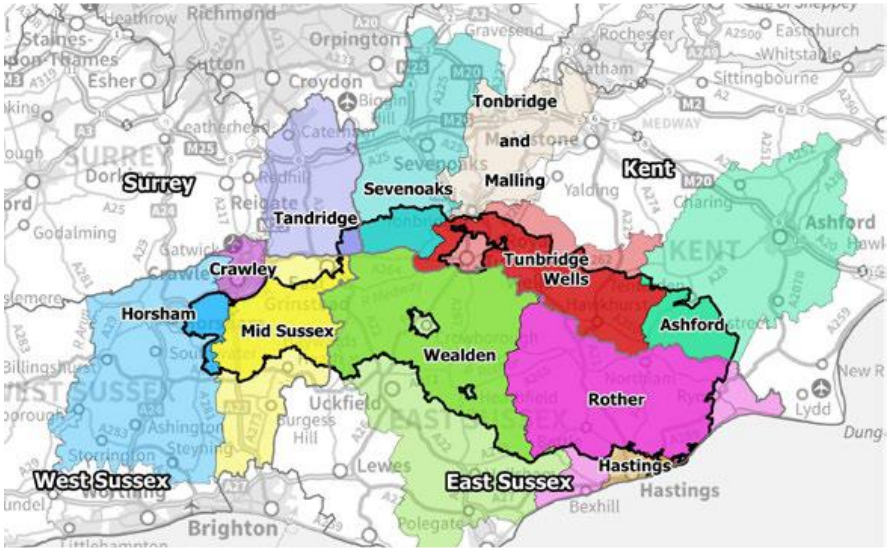
- East Sussex County Council
- Kent County Council
- Surrey County Council
- West Sussex County Council
- Ashford Borough Council
- Crawley Borough Council
- Hastings Borough Council
- Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
- Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
- Horsham District Council
- Mid Sussex District Council
- Rother District Council
- Sevenoaks District Council
- Tandridge District Council
- Wealden District Council

***From November 22nd 2023, all AONBs are to be known as National Landscapes. The High Weald National Landscape remains designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and is referred to as such in legislation. The statutory purpose "to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the designated landscape" remains unchanged.***

**The High Weald National Landscape Partnership** was established in 1991, consisting of 15 local authorities, Defra, Natural England and organisations representing farming, woodland, access and community interests. The Partnership is responsible for publishing and monitoring the **statutory AONB Management Plan**.

The Partnership is supported by a small, dedicated staff team, the **High Weald National Landscape Unit,** which develops understanding of the High Weald's character components - their history, development, distribution, special qualities, deterioration, damage and loss - to provide an evidence base for the AONB Management Plan and related policy and guidance.

This guidance is based on that understanding, and aims to help everybody conserve and enhance **one of England's finest landscapes.**

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High Weald National Landscape Partnership

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# Introduction

The High Weald National Landscape (AONB) is a special place. Designated in 1983, and benefitting from strong legislative and policy protection to conserve and enhance its natural beauty, it is an exceptionally beautiful medieval landscape covering over 500 square miles across the counties of East and West Sussex, Kent and Surrey.

Its scattered settlements, ancient routeways, abundant ancient woodland, extensive open heaths, and small, irregular shaped fields, all draped over rolling hills of clay and sandstone, together create a unique landscape distinct from other parts of Britain. The area's natural beauty arises from a long history of human interaction with the natural environment; its main features were established by the fourteenth century, and it is considered one of the best surviving coherent medieval landscapes in north-west Europe. Further detail on the special character of the High Weald is set out in the High Weald AONB Management Plan.

The High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024-2029 Statement of Significance defines what makes the High Weald special, and identifies the qualities that justify its designation as a nationally important landscape. The High Weald's natural beauty is described by eight character components around which the Management Plan is structured.

The Management Plan is supported by the High Weald Housing Design Guide which seeks to achieve higher quality and 'landscape-led' design that reflects intrinsic High Weald character. It seeks design which steers away from generic or suburban layout and design approaches, and instead is embedded with a true sense of place, without stifling innovation and creativity. **The strategic and detailed approach to soft landscaping in a housing scheme is an intrinsic and key part of achieving such design quality.**

This guidance aims to provide developers and planners with the necessary information to design and assess soft landscaping schemes which are appropriate to the High Weald landscape. It applies to consideration of proposals both at the time of determination of the application itself, and at detailed condition discharge stage, and should be used as such.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the **High Weald Housing Design Guide**, within the over-arching context of landscape-led design set out in Design Theme 1: *Responding to Site & Landscape Context.*

It expands the advice of the Design Guide, in particular Design Theme 3: *Layout & Structuring the Site,* Design Theme 4: *Using Buildings to Define Streets & Spaces,* and Design Theme 10: *Reinforcing Local Planting Character and Habitats*, to cover:

- **General Principles**
- **National Planning Policy Context**
- **Strategic Soft Landscaping Principles – prior to determination of application**
- **Appropriate planting strategies and species for a variety of location types within and around new developments**
- **Lists of native plants typical of the High Weald**

N.B. This guidance focusses solely on matters of soft landscaping proposals, and does not consider any other impacts of proposed development on the natural beauty of the High Weald National Landscape.

# General Principles

**The High Weald Housing Design Guide explains that soft landscaping is an intrinsic part of design quality and place-making, and a key element in a landscape-led approach to housing developments within the High Weald National Landscape.**

This echoes national planning policy's recognition that nature is a critical component of well-designed places.

**High Weald settlements are characteristically very 'green' and verdant places, with substantial soft landscaping; grass verges, lush hedgerows and full tree canopies, breaking up the built form in all but the tightest-knit built core of villages and towns.**

Public open space and public realm in new housing developments needs to contribute to local distinctiveness and sense of place. Newly created open spaces should complement and be connected to existing green infrastructure. As well as providing visual amenity, a well-designed planting scheme can provide multiple benefits such as maintaining and reinforcing local and distinctive landscape character, supporting and increasing biodiversity by providing habitats and pollen/nectar sources, improving water quality, preventing soil erosion, and providing shade and 'urban cooling'.

Research has shown that natural features can add significant value to developments through the social, economic and environmental benefits they bring. [1]Exposure to nature and natural environments confers many benefits to human health and wellbeing. The benefit of accessing nature has advantages for every age, socio-economic status, gender and ethnicity, and there is growing evidence that the higher the level of biodiversity, the greater the health and wellbeing benefits.

**Any soft-landscaping scheme in the High Weald should aim to maintain local landscape character and its features through layout and design, plant species choices, and management techniques.**

[1] CABE (2005) *Does money grow on trees?*

**The High Weald Partnership recommend the following key principles for a successful soft landscaping strategy:**

- **Consider green infrastructure as an intrinsic part of the design and place-making 'vision' for the scheme at the earliest stages of the design process, to help embed High Weald character;**
- **Structural soft landscaping should be a positive and meaningful design aspect of the proposal, not an attempt to mitigate the impacts of the proposal on the natural beauty of the HWNL;**
- **Retain existing on-site and site adjacent landscape features (trees, hedgerows, ponds) and structure the layout around these;**
- **Minimise fragmentation of retained and new habitat, ensuring connectivity within the site and with the surrounding landscape**
- **Ensure sufficient space is made available within all aspects of the layout for green infrastructure and planting, including street trees and hedgerows, and verges, and avoid 'left-over' areas;**
- **Avoid in-fill areas of ubiquitous, 'estate' style planting of massed ground-cover ornamental shrubs to the front and sides of plots, verges or amenity areas;**
- **Instead, choose locally prevalent planting typologies (such as grass verges with wildflowers, hedges underplanted with bulbs) and native species found in the High Weald that will tolerate and thrive in the local soil conditions, and that are recommended for climate resilience;**
- **Create a multi-layered planting strategy across the site;**
- **Avoid invasive and non-native species and avoid imported topsoil.**

# Section 1: Planners' Checklist, Planning Policy Context, Strategic Principles

# Planners' Checklist

To help assess the quality of the soft-landscaping proposals on the landscape and settlement character of the AONB, the following checklist is recommended (the content is expanded on later in the PAN). Liaison with the Council's tree officer on street tree species selection, stock sizes and growth habits is recommended.

## Scheme layout

- ☐ Has **sufficient space been made available within the layout** at the earliest stage of the design process, to incorporate an appropriate and meaningful structural soft landscape including:
  - street tree planting,
  - grassy areas including verges,
  - front and side boundary hedges to plots
  - opportunities for cooling of hard landscaping areas
- ☐ Have **sufficient buffer zones been provided** to protect and support adjacent existing woodland and water courses etc.?
- ☐ Have **existing landscape features within the site been retained** and used for positive placemaking in the layout and design strategy?
- ☐ Has **amenity green space** been included in a meaningful way within the development?
- ☐ Have street trees been given sufficient **root room and space to grow** to maturity?

## Species Choice

- ☐ Does the proposal specify **locally prevalent native species found in the High Weald** that will provide food and perching spots for wildlife, and considered climate resilience? (see lists per planting typologies pages 14-24 and in Appendix 1)
- ☐ Has the species choice been based on a **thorough understanding of the site's soil conditions**? Does it include species that grow locally and that will tolerate and thrive in the local soil conditions?
- ☐ Has the species list **avoided invasive and non-native plants**? (see lists per planting typologies pages 14-24)

## Soft landscaping design

- ☐ Has the proposal created a **multi-layered planting strategy across the site** to allow for a range of vegetation heights and habitats; trees, hedgerow boundaries, underplanting with native wildflowers and bulbs, grassland verges, and open grassy spaces?
- ☐ Has the proposal **avoided areas of ubiquitous, 'estate' planting of ground cover ornamental shrubs** in the public realm? (these species rarely blend with their rural setting and have limited wildlife value).
- ☐ Have opportunities for **green curtilage boundaries** (hedgerows to plot frontages) been maximised?
- ☐ Are areas of soft landscaping sufficiently connected to allow species to move across the site?

## Management & Maintenance

- ☐ Does the Construction Management Plan explain how areas proposed for soft landscaping will be protected from soil damage during construction?
- ☐ Can the planting scheme be **realistically and appropriately maintained** through the proposed maintenance regime (LEMP)?
- ☐ Does the management regime demonstrate an awareness of urban forestry best practice?
- ☐ Can the on-site soft landscaping be **retained** for a meaningful number of years through conditions?
- ☐ Are post development monitoring /compliance mechanisms in place?

# Soft Landscaping – Planning Policy Context

## NPPF

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2025 makes reference to soft landscaping as part of design quality in Chapter 12: Achieving well-designed places, which includes:

***"Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:… are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;"*** (para 135b)

and

***"Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible."*** (para 136)

## BNG

Biodiversity net gain (BNG) aims to ensure that habitats for wildlife are left in a measurably better state than they were before the development. BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). The delivery of 10% BNG is a statutory requirement of most types of planning application.

This PAN is not aimed specifically at BNG matters, however, within the High Weald AONB, it is important that all soft-landscaping proposals are informed by a robust understanding of the habitat typologies and systems within the landscape, so that they are designed to provide a genuine positive contribution to local biodiversity and habitats. The pursuance of 'biodiversity units' with the BNG metric should not inadvertently harm existing on-site or site-adjacent habitats through the introduction of inappropriate planting, or a reduction in connectivity to wider habitat networks.

It is extremely important that on-site BNG proposals, including 'units' obtained through street tree planting, front garden hedges, and amenity areas, are not subsequently diluted post-permission, through amendments at condition or delivery stage.

## National Design Guide

This National Design Guide, published in 2019, sets out to promote higher standards in urban design, and outlines priorities for well-designed places in the form of 10 characteristics - one of which is 'Nature' - and a series of statements that provide a series of tests for assessing whether a place is well designed or not.

Its sets out that:

***"Nature contributes to the quality of a place, and to people's quality of life, and it is a critical component of well-designed places. Natural features are integrated into well-designed development. They include natural and designed landscapes, high quality public open spaces, street trees, and other trees, grass, planting and water."*** (para 90)

and that

***"Well-designed places:***

- ***integrate existing, and incorporate new natural features into a multifunctional network that supports quality of place, biodiversity and water management, and addresses climate change mitigation and resilience;***
- ***prioritise nature so that diverse ecosystems can flourish to ensure a healthy natural environment that supports and enhances biodiversity;***
- ***provide attractive open spaces in locations that are easy to access, with activities for all to enjoy, such as play, food production, recreation and sport, so as to encourage physical activity and promote health, well-being and social inclusion."*** (para 91)

# Soft Landscaping – Planning Policy Context

### Local Plans

Local Plan policies and Neighbourhood Plans adopted by Local Planning Authorities may include strategic policies regarding soft landscaping in new development, in particular the retention and enhancement of existing landscape features in schemes, often in both the '*green infrastructure / biodiversity*' and '*design quality*' sections of local plans, and these may be supported by other guidance.

### Ecological Assessments

Consideration must be given to the impact of the proposal on on-site and site-adjacent habitats and the wildlife species that inhabit them. This is usually determined by an Ecological Assessment undertaken by a competent and qualified ecologist.

Natural England provide 'standing advice' to be taken into account when making planning decisions that affect ancient woodland, ancient trees or veteran trees. This advises on the need to assess both the direct and indirect effects of development on ancient woodland and veteran trees, and that negative effects should be avoided. Direct and indirect impacts can include the loss or deterioration of ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees by a number of means.

The High Weald Management Plan sets out that appropriate buffer zones to woodland should be provided in development proposals; a minimum 15m zones when justified by survey, otherwise 25m. This is to avoid root damage (known as the root protection area) and to protect the woodland from the detrimental direct and indirect impacts of development, including activity and light spill.

### Planning Conditions

Planning Conditions can be a useful tool in controlling the detail of soft landscaping plans. However, **conditions are not a substitute for fully considering strategic soft landscaping proposals as part of the determination of the application itself** (since this may be intrinsically linked to the layout approach, and the impact on the landscape character of the AONB) – see pages 10 and 11 of this PAN for more information.

Sufficient information must be submitted upfront with the application prior to determination, to enable proper consideration of the strategic soft landscaping proposal on the AONB character as part of the whole application appraisal.

Due to the intrinsic role of soft landscaping in creating place-appropriate development within the High Weald AONB, planning conditions should be used to ensure the retention (and replacement where necessary) of soft landscaping features secured as part of the planning permission for at least 15 years after completion.

Similarly, consideration should be given to imposing a specific Article 4 Direction on new developments to remove permitted development rights for changes to front boundaries, where soft landscaping has been an important part of the proposed streetscene.

**Post -development monitoring of soft landscaping** is critical to ensure that approved schemes have been put in place, are properly maintained, and are retained in the scheme. When necessary, enforcement of non-compliance with soft landscaping conditions is important to maintain positive qualities of a development.

**LEMPs / management/ maintenance & enforcement**

LEMPs (Landscape & Ecology Management Plans) should be secured within S106 agreements (where applicable), and should:

- use the same base map as is used for the BNG proposals/calculations,
- include clear management prescriptions and timelines for plant establishment, protection, ongoing maintenance and longer-term interventions such as coppice rotations, hedgerow cutting and mowing of grassy areas, and show a clear understanding of machinery needs for appropriate management operations and removal of materials arising, such as clippings and mown grass etc,
- Demonstrate best practice urban forestry management: How to protect and manage the urban forest - GOV.UK,
- identify risks and mitigations if plant substitutions are made or management specifications not met.

# Strategic Soft Landscaping Principles (scheme layout)– prior to determination of application

**Strategic soft landscaping principles, including response to existing site features and the incorporation of new green infrastructure, need to be considered at the earliest stages of the design process of the scheme layout. They should underpin the place-making 'vision' for the scheme, and be an integral part of design choices about location of built development, open space, and the layout of the street network, including street widths.**

Integrating trees and green spaces early in the design and planning process rather than 'retrofitting' to an already designed scheme can also help minimise costs and maximise the benefits they provide.

**Careful consideration of soft landscaping proposals at early design stages can also help avoid conflicts later in the development process**, such as with location of services, or highways visibility. For example, to ensure that tree-planting proposals are compatible with street layout and geometry of junctions/crossovers. Early liaison with local highways authorities can help in this process.

Three sections of the **High Weald Housing Design Guide;** Design Theme 1: *Responding to Site & Landscape Context,* Design Theme 3*: Layout & Structuring the Site,* and Design Theme 4*: Using Buildings to Define Streets & Spaces,* set out specific advice relating to strategic soft landscaping principles **that need to be considered prior to determination of applications**, these are summarised right.

Meanwhile a further section of the Design Guide; Design Theme 10 *Reinforcing Local Planting Character & Habitats*, advises on detailed planting matters, setting out that plant species within new housing schemes in the High Weald are critical to support the rich biodiversity and landscape character of the local area. Because native species have adapted to live in particular ecosystems, they play a crucial role in their local environment. They are better able to support local wildlife such as birds, bees and butterflies, as they have evolved side by side for centuries. It is vital that new housing developments play a role in supporting the rich diversity of wildlife supported by the diverse habitat mosaic of the High Weald.

**Design Theme 1: *Responding to Site & Landscape Context*** describes how existing site features such as hedgerows, trees and woodland, field ponds and gill streams, offer great opportunities to help embed a genuine local sense of place in the scheme and to create positive green spaces within the scheme. Also, that maintaining the network of woods, hedgerows and fields is critical to the identity of the High Weald, and that opportunities should be taken to retain and improve the species diversity of grassland on the site.

**Design Theme 3: *Layout & Structuring the Site*** describes how High Weald settlements are characteristically very 'green' and verdant places, with substantial soft landscaping; grass verges, lush hedgerows and full tree canopies, breaking up the built form in all but the tightest-knit built core of villages and towns.

**Sufficient space must be incorporated at the earliest stages of site layout and plot disposition to accommodate such green infrastructure, including street width, verge and pavement dimensions, parking areas, and distances between and around dwellings.**

This should include sufficient space to allow large scale trees to grow, to enable the development to maintain this important characteristic impression of green-ness in new housing developments.

**Street Character**

'Soft' edges to streets, such as banks, verges or swales, are typical of the High Weald, and have both visual and ecological value – these should be incorporated into development schemes to 'green' the development and reflect local character.

**Design Theme 4: *Using Buildings to Define Streets & Spaces*** sets out, under 'avoiding left-over spaces', that whilst ditches and roadside verges are characteristic of the High Weald and recommended, it should be noted that lots of small 'left-over' or ambiguous spaces around plots within housing schemes are neither characteristic of High Weald settlement streetscape, nor good urban design practice. The design guide explains that they are ill-defined as neither private curtilage nor meaningful public realm and difficult to manage.

**Such small 'left-over' spaces, (e.g. photo, below) should be avoided in street layouts, plot shape and disposition and building placement.** These spaces often end up mass in-fill planted with incongruous, ornamental 'ground cover' shrubs.

By following local streetscape characteristics of well-defined streets with strong built frontage, private curtilage enclosure, and well-located open green spaces, then a good layout should be able to avoid these incongruous 'left-over' areas.

**Future Pressures**

In assessing layout proposals, consideration must be given to minimising potential future pressures for tree removal by future occupiers, i.e. ensuring that garden sizes and orientation take account of existing tree canopies that might cause overshadowing. Plots should not be subject to excessive shade from retained trees which could lead to future pressure for them to be removed or cut back.

**'Screening Planting'**

While new planting, trees and hedgerows, can help to embed a development into the landscape in long views, and sit appropriately within the wider landscape context, nevertheless ***Design Theme 1: Responding to Site & Landscape Context*** of the High Weald Housing Design Guide sets out that:

> ***'new development should be good enough to be seen, not justified on the basis that existing or proposed planting will screen it from view'***

and that

> ***'structural landscaping should not be used to screen or disguise inappropriately-sited or poorly-designed development, but instead to add to the quality and local character and place-making of a scheme, helping it relate more meaningfully to its High Weald context.'***

Where 'screening planting' is proposed, it should

- be meaningful in size and shape to fulfil the screening function, such as the creation of a new shaw or woodland block;
- use native planting strategies similar to those set out for 'buffer planting' in this guide, in species and composition;
- avoid changing areas of open landscape character, including important grassland, and medieval field patterns;
- avoid establishing trees on sites with existing wildlife interest, particularly species-rich grassland, a rare and threatened habitat, or on archaeological sites (for example wood banks);
- be located and designed in keeping with the High Weald landscape character and historic field patterns and avoid obscuring important landscape views;

Any boundary trees that a scheme relies on for landscape 'mitigation' must sit within the site, i.e. be in the control of the applicant and within the scope of any conditions regarding retention/management attached to any grant of planning permission.

## Interrogating the drawings

There are two main types of soft landscaping drawings submitted as part of planning applications; those that relate to **Landscape Strategy** (sometimes labelled 'Landscape Masterplan drawing') and those that relate to the **detailed planting proposals** (sometimes labelled 'planting plans').

The former is submitted with the main application (Full or Reserved Matters) and is important in **assessing the amount and location of space that has been provided in the proposed layout for soft landscaping such as buffer zones (where relevant), amenity greenspace, street trees, verges and boundary treatments around plots, including front boundary hedges where proposed.**

The latter may be submitted with the main application, though will often be submitted post-permission pursuant to conditions, and will set out exactly what plants are proposed for different areas, along with a plant species key, usually setting out both Latin and common names.

**It is important to fully interrogate these drawings and their keys, pre-determination of the application as well as at condition discharge stage**, in order to understand the three-dimensional reality of what is proposed, and the type of streetscene or place that it would create. The subsequent sections of this PAN will help with regard to those specific planting typologies and locations.

A full '**Boundary Treatment Plan**' can also be very useful at pre-determination stage to show how *all* the plot frontages are proposed to be enclosed, be it with green hedges, or other means such as picket fences, estate railing, or post-and-rail fencing. This again will help assess the type of streetscene or place that would be created.

Liaison with the local authority tree officer and urban design officer is strongly encouraged as part of the interrogation of the drawings, to assess the wider soft landscaping strategy, how realistic the space provided for soft landscaping actually is, and the detail of street tree species selection, stock sizes and growth habits.

**Detailed soft landscaping plans:**

Check these for the following '**red flags**': (the subsequent sections of this PAN will help you consider these)

- **Are there no front boundary hedgerows, and instead inappropriate infill with 'ground-cover ornamentals' ?** (sometimes labelled 'amenity planting', with an associated planting specification)
- **Is an inappropriate plant species proposed for a front boundary hedgerow?**
- **Is there 'lazy' use of tree stamps on the drawing?** Tree stamps are a convenient CAD tool, but do not represent size and spread of trees at maturity. As such they may not give an accurate representation of an achievable proposal.
- **Is there insufficient space for specified tree species to realistically grow successfully?** (consider mature canopy of that species, for example *Sorbus aucuparia* (Rowan) may have a spread between 4-8 m at maturity, while the spread of *Quercus Robur* (English Oak) can reach over 12 m).
- **Is the area set for understorey planting too narrow to be meaningful?**

Also:

- **Check plant specification abbreviations** – the drawings will include a schedule that explains these abbreviations, and the Latin and common names. Check the exact Latin names against 'suitable species' lists in this guidance.
- Check – are locations of street trees suitable in terms of visibility and highway safety, and do not conflict with any street-lighting proposals (liaise with the local highways authority) to ensure a meaningful and deliverable scheme is being proposed.

# Section 2: Planting Typologies

# Planting Typologies – Tree Planting & Buffer Zones (adjacent to existing woodland)

## Woodland Buffer Zone

A buffer is a landscape feature, located usually along a woodland edge to protect a sensitive area such as existing woodland from the impact of disturbance both during and after construction, and increase its resilience to edge impacts.

Natural England guidance[2] sets out that a buffer zone should:

- **contribute to wider ecological networks**
- **be part of the green infrastructure of the area**

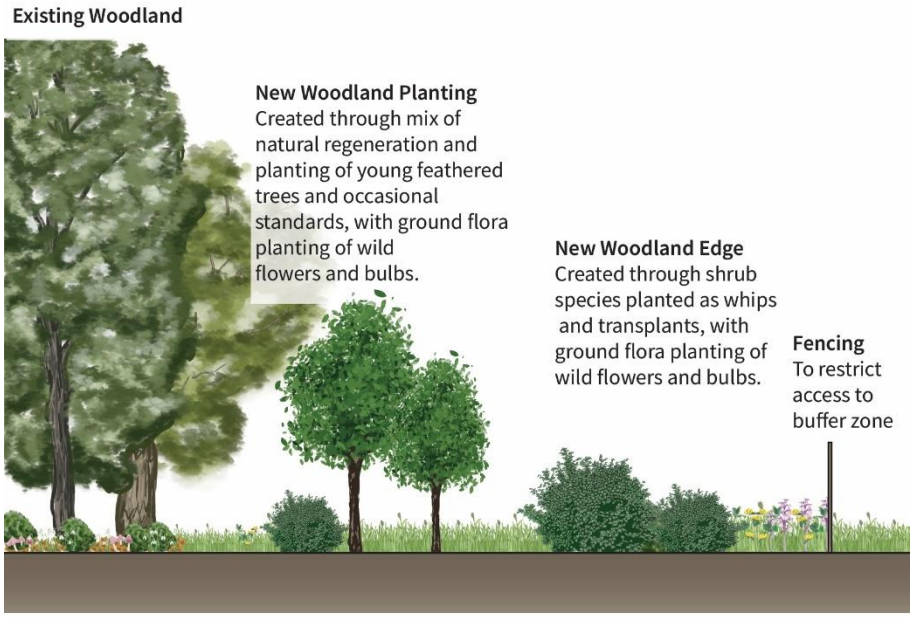
The guidance also sets out development proposals, including gardens, should not be located within buffer zones. Access to buffer zones should only be allowed if the habitat is not harmed by trampling.

Buffer zones should be of meaningful width, considered in relation to the site context, covering at least the Root Protection Area to woodland trees. The buffer zone should usually be 25m, to take account of ancient and veteran trees (or a minimum of 15m where justified by survey) to accommodate a mature canopy and multi-layered planting.

A buffer zone should consist of mixed semi-natural habitats, and proposals should include creating or establishing habitat with local and appropriate native species. This could be achieved through a mixture of approaches; natural regeneration should be encouraged, allowing native species to move in gradually, supplemented as necessary with active planting to maximise structural and species diversity.

Plant choices should be informed by surveys of local hedges and woods to ascertain which native species are found in the local area – planting compatible species will help extend the habitat, and support the existing flora and fauna.

**The trees in the table on the next page can also be used for specimen or informal tree planting in other soft landscaping areas within a development, such as within amenity grassy areas.**




Above: Typical good example buffer zone 'planting' in the HWNL

[2] Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

# Planting Typologies – Tree Planting & Buffer Zones (adjacent to existing woodland)

**Tree Planting and Buffer Zone Planting Specification (to supplement natural regeneration in buffer zones)**

**Successful buffer zones are multi-layered,** with trees and native shrubs to ensure screening below the canopy. If planting into bare ground appropriate ground flora planting of wildflowers and bulbs should be added. Biodegradable tubes should be used to protect newly planted trees from browsing animals, and in open areas strimmer guards should be used. In amenity tree planting, 'clumps' of one single species should be avoided, in favour of a more natural dispersal of species.

**Suitable size of plants:**

Should include variety in the species, height and age of trees and shrubs; young feathered trees, standards (8-10 cm girth).

**Suitable Species:** select mixtures from the core list below, and observe and replicate existing native species adjacent to buffer zone (also refer to species list in Appendix 1).

**'General woodlands':**

Trees:

- ***Acer campestre*** **Field maple**
- ***Carpinus betulus*** **Hornbeam**
- ***Quercus robur*** **English oak**
- ***Sorbus torminalis*** **Wild service tree** (use sparsely in planting mix)
- ***Tilia cordata*** **Small-leaved lime**
- ***Castanea sativa*** **Sweet chestnut**
- ***Ilex aquifolium*** **Holly**
- ***Prunus avium*** **Wild Cherry**
- ***Betula pendula*** **Silver birch** (on dry acidic soils)
- ***Fagus sylvatica*** **Beech** (on well-drained soils)
- ***Quercus petrea*** **Sessile Oak** (on sandier soils)

Shrubs / Understorey planting

- ***Corylus avellana*** **Hazel**
- ***Crataegus monogyna*** **Hawthorn**
- ***Euonymus europaeus*** **Spindle** (use sparsely in planting mix)
- ***Prunus spinosa*** **Blackthorn** (use sparsely in planting mix)
- ***Viburnum opulus*** **Guelder rose**

Ground Flora planting:

- ***Mercurialis perennis*** **Dogs mercury**
- ***Hyacinthoides non-scripta*** **Bluebell**
- ***Anemone nemorosa*** **Wood anemone**

**'Wet woodland'** (e.g. damp soils, carr woodland):

- Trees:***Alnus glutinosa*** **Alder**
- ***Salix alba*** **White willow**
- ***Salix cinerea*** **Grey willow**
- ***Betula pubescens*** **Downy birch**

Shrubs / Understorey planting

- ***Corylus avellana*** **Hazel**
- ***Rhamnus Frangula*** **Alder buckthorn**
- ***Cornus Sanguinea*** **Dogwood**

Ground Flora planting:

- ***Allium ursinum*** **Wild garlic**
- ***Caltha palustris*** **Marsh marigold**

**Key plants to avoid** – these are non-native or invasive species that are out of place in the High Weald AONB:

- **Rhodedendron** *Rhodedendron ponticum* – a highly invasive shrub, its rapid dense growth out-competes native plants and significantly reduces biodiversity.
- **Common/cherry Laurel** *Prunus laurocerasus 'rotundifolia'* - a fast growing non-native evergreen shrub which shades out native ground flora.
- **Bramble** *Rubus fruticosus spp.*, though native, this can be an invasive plant which would be likely to eventually smother other plants.

# Planting Typologies – Native Hedgerows

## Native Hedgerows

Native hedgerows are a key component of the High Weald's landscape and their restoration and creation helps maintain the historic pattern of field boundaries. Their colour and shape are typical of rural landscapes, and they have many wildlife benefits. Many High Weald hedgerows also contain some shrubs allowed to grow into hedgerow trees.

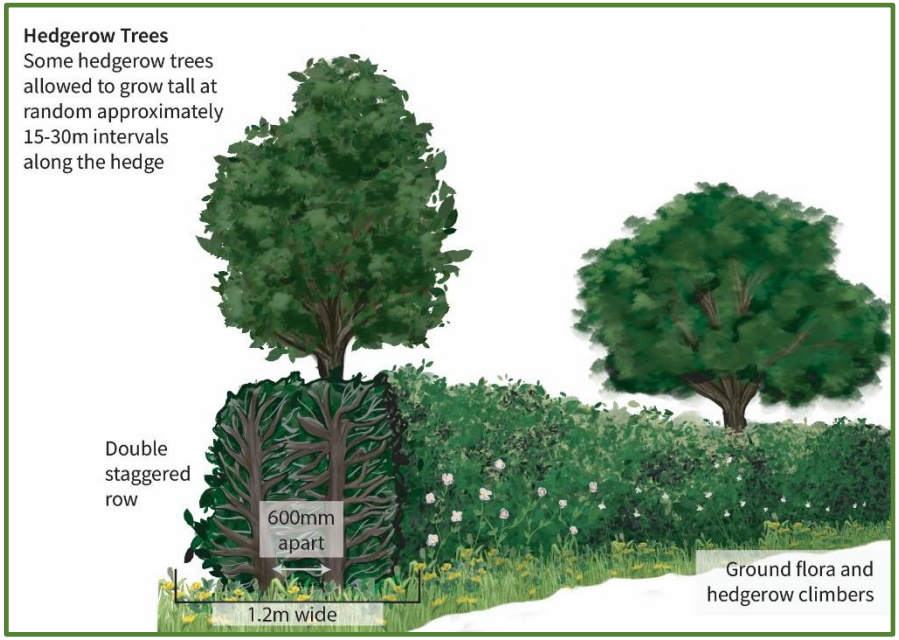
Hawthorn, hazel, beech, hornbeam, holly and yew are native species found in the High Weald that are easily managed as hedges, and can benefit wildlife year-round.

Native hedges can form an important part of the soft landscaping proposals in new housing developments in a number of specific locations:

- Site boundaries - along historic field boundaries or existing hedge lines to maintain landscape character.
- Hedge reinstatement – including complementing or filling gaps in the existing hedgerow network. Historic mapping can be useful.
- Interfaces with woodland.

Above: Typical native hedgerow planting in the HWNL giving seasonal benefits; hawthorn, hazel and holly.

Above: Typical native hedgerow ground flora planting in the HWNL; violets, wood anemone, primrose.




Above: Typical example of native hedgerow planting in the HWNL

# Planting Typologies – Native Hedgerows

**Hedge Planting Specification – Native Hedges in the High Weald**

**What to look out for:**

- Plants as a mixture of bare-rooted whips 60-90 cm tall or transplants 45-60 cm tall.
- A double-staggered row of plants at a spacing of 20-30 cm, and planting width between rows 600 mm (not single row).
- Use of biodegradable protection and mulches.

**Suitable Species:**

Commonly, High Weald hedges have a high proportion of hawthorn, but a wide variety of species can and should be used, ideally five or more different native species, including:

| | |
|---|---|
| ***Acer campestre*** | **Field maple** |
| ***Carpinus betulus*** | **Hornbeam** |
| ***Corylus avellana*** | **Hazel** |
| ***Crataegus monogyna*** | **Hawthorn** |
| ***Euonymus europaeus*** | **Spindle** |
| ***Ilex aquifolium*** | **Holly** |
| ***Prunus spinosa*** | **Blackthorn** |
| ***Sambucus nigra*** | **Elder** |

Tall trees are a feature of many hedges in the High Weald. Appropriate management should be included in the LEMP to allow some hedgerow trees (mix of field maple, hornbeam and hawthorn from the above list, and add English oak) to grow tall at 15-30 m intervals along the hedge.

Also include hedgerow climbers such as wild dog rose *(Rosa canina)*, native honeysuckle *(Lonicera periclymenum)*, and travellers joy *(Clematis vitalba)*.

The mix of species should be specified as a percentage, for example:
**Hawthorn 30%, Blackthorn 20%, Maple 15%, Hazel 15%, Hornbeam 10%, Holly 5%, Dog rose 5%**
Or
**Hawthorn 40%, Blackthorn 10%, Maple 15%, Hazel 15%, Hornbeam 15%, Spindle 5%**

**Key plants to avoid** – these are non-native species that are out of place on rural roads and lanes, and within new housing developments in the AONB:

- **Common/cherry Laurel** *Prunus laurocerasus 'rotundifolia'*
- **Leylandii** *Cupressocyparis leylandii*

# Planting Typologies – Decorative Hedges / plot boundaries

## Decorative Hedges / Plot Boundaries

In this context, the term 'decorative hedges' is used to describe those hedges that form the front/side boundaries to properties, lining the street.

Hedges as front boundary enclosures are typical of villages and a key characteristic of street scenes in the High Weald. The High Weald Housing Design Guide describes that where there is private front curtilage, however small, within the High Weald it is typically enclosed, either by hedgerows, low walls, wooden picket fences or occasionally metal railings. The Guide also explains that the hedgerows often add to the 'green-ness' of the place, (for example creating green-lined lanes/streets within development to reinforce rural character) as well as being good urban design practice in terms of clearly defining public and private space. Hedged boundaries in the streetscene can also help remove air pollutants.

The Guide sets out that new developments should follow this local characteristic; undefined and unenclosed front curtilages will not be appropriate within the High Weald. Meanwhile, low-level ornamental planting to front plot boundaries would fail to provide sufficient vertical boundary enclosure in the streetscene.

Scheme layouts should provide for sufficient space for meaningful establishment of front/side plot boundary hedges, usually 1 m depth.

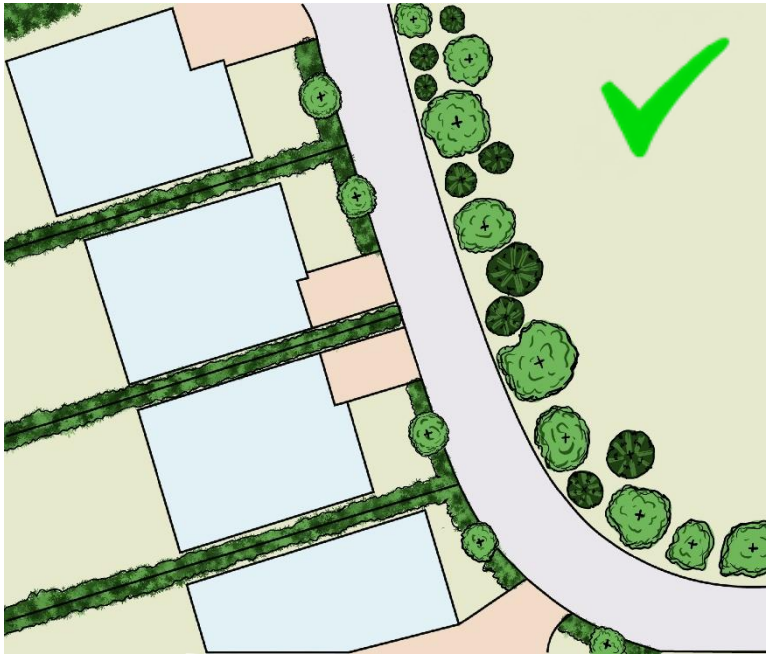
Above: Lack of front boundary enclosure in a new housing development – uncharacteristic of street scenes in High Weald settlements.

Above: Front boundary hedge – immediately after construction (left) and after six years (right) hedge has established to create a successful green 'lane' character to the street.

Above: Front boundary hedge – immediately after construction (left) and after six years (right) hedge (including in-hedge tree) has established to successfully define private front curtilage.

# Planting Typologies – Decorative Hedges / plot boundaries

Above: Newly planted front boundary hedge combined with post-and-rail fence.



Above: Example of sufficient space provided in a layout for decorative hedge planting to plot frontage and in between front curtilage of dwellings, to reinforce 'green' character of street/lane. Including some in-hedge trees.

**Hedge Planting Specification – plot frontage / boundary hedgerows**

**What to look out for**

- Use of transplants 45-60 cm tall, whips 60-90 cm tall, or locally sourced 3 L pots
- Single row, planting at 300 mm intervals.
- Protection (usually with a sacrificial wire fence) for a period of at least 2 years to allow the plants to establish and minimise risk of homeowners removing them.

**Suitable Species**

Species that will be capable of reaching a height to make a meaningful boundary enclosure in the streetscene (usually 0.9 m – 1.2 m high). Can be one species only in the hedge. Avoid species with thorns adjacent to pavements.

- ***Carpinus betulus*** **Hornbeam**
- ***Fagus sylvatica*** **Beech**
- ***Corylus avellana*** **Hazel**
- ***Ligustrum vulgare*** **Wild privet** (native to UK but not typical of High Weald – may be suitable in more suburban developments)

**Key plants to avoid**:

Non-native species that are out of place within new housing developments in the HWNL (suburban in character, and fail to reinforce rural character):

- ***Prunus laurocerasus*** **'rotundifolia'** **Common/cherry laurel**
- ***Prunus Lusitanica*** **Portuguese laurel**
- ***Cupressocyparis leylandii*** **Leylandii**
- ***Photinia fraseri*** **spp.** **Photinia 'Red robin'**
- ***Ligustrum ovalifolium*** **Californian / Korean privet**
- ***Osmanthus burkwoodii*** **Osmanthus**

Additionally, avoid ornamental shrubs that are low growing and will not make a meaningful boundary enclosure in the streetscene, such as ***Lavendula*** **spp,** ***Skimmia*** **spp,** ***Potentilla*** **spp,** ***Symphoricarpos***, ***Chaenomeles***, ***Cotoneaster***.

# Planting Typologies – Street Trees

## Street Trees

Street trees in new developments include those planted within grass verges lining roadways /pavements, and in other public areas such as parking courts. They have an important role in 'greening' the place, and can also be an important food source (e.g. nectar early in the year) and provide perching for birds, supporting biodiversity in the streetscene. The shade street trees provide can help cool street scenes increasing resilience as the climate warms.

Paragraph 136 of the NPPF makes specific reference to the importance of including tree-lined streets in new developments, along with appropriate measures being in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly planted trees. Within the High Weald NL, they should be included where they would suit the scale and character of the development and reflect the character of the main settlement.

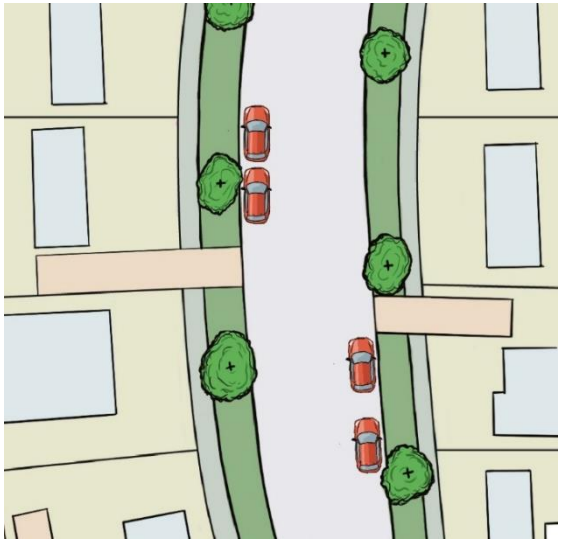
Strategic soft landscaping plans submitted prior to determination of the application should indicate locations of street trees, to show that sufficient space, in quantum and character, is made available for street tree planting. LPAs should ensure they seek specific advice from the local highways authority on the soft landscaping masterplan as to the suitability of proposed locations of such trees in terms of visibility and highway safety etc. This ensures a meaningful and deliverable scheme is being proposed. Care should also be taken in the layout design to avoid conflicts with lighting columns.

LPAs should also make sure the developer is aware of the importance of the street trees once they are agreed, and that the services routing must be designed around that layout, such that subsequent reductions in street trees as a result of services routing will not be supported.

Street tree species need to be robust and suitable for the location, considering habit and spread in relation to the available space. In particular, the layout must ensure sufficient room for trees to develop and grow to maturity and sufficient space for root ball expansion. However, this should not excuse insufficient space being made available for the realistic inclusion of tree-planting in the layout of the scheme and the width of pavements, verges and parking areas.

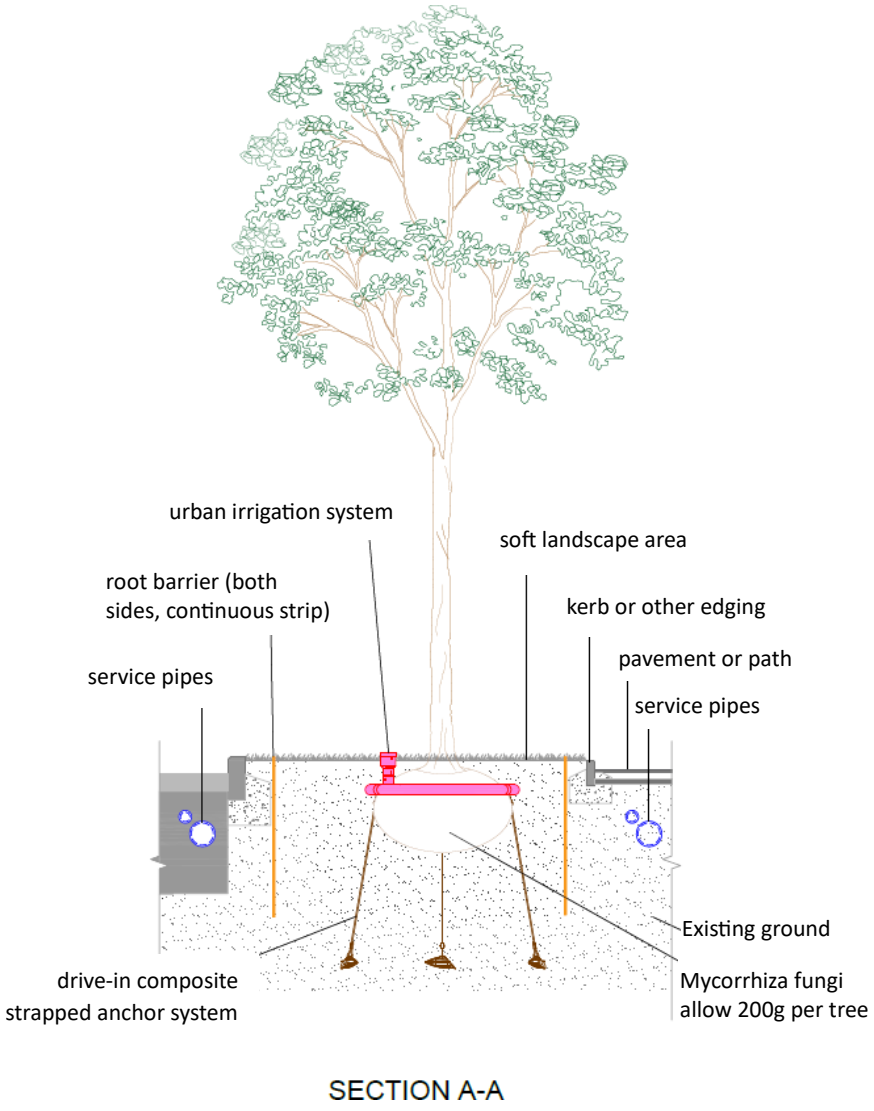
Above: street trees too sparse to create a meaningful contribution to streetscene, also planted in a visually 'sterile' verge setting, interrupted with multiple crossings, lacking High Weald characteristics.

Left – above, street trees in new developments, and below, in historic High Weald settlement,



right: example sufficient space is provided in layout for inclusion of street-trees within meaningful grass verge. Note absence of multiple cross-over points.

# Planting Typologies – Street Trees




SECTION A-A

Above; example section of tree pit detail in grass verge, road carriageway on left, pavement on right, showing sufficient space for roots to grow, and to accommodate service pipes, with inclusion of root barrier system, irrigation system and strapped ground anchor system.

**Planting Specification – Street Trees in the High Weald**

**What to look out for:**

- Sufficient space in the layout for the tree canopy to reach maturity.
- Trees should be heavy standards or semi mature specimens (min 18-20 cm girth) with clear stem at least 2 m tall (for highway visibility).
- Ensure there is enough space for roots to develop, i.e. for lateral root spread, and ideally integrate with SUDs, and avoid conflict with underground services. When planting in smaller grassed areas, and where soil access is limited, bespoke structural spoil cell systems such as crate systems can be used under adjacent hardstanding.
- Request tree pit detail showing how the root systems will access sufficient water and space to grow (see example image, left).
- Appropriate protection for the tree while it establishes, and a description of maintenance requirements and replacement scenario in the LEMP.

**Native Species which may be suitable:**

- ***Acer campestre spp*** **Field maple**
- ***Sorbus torminalis*** **Wild service tree**
- ***Sorbus aria*** **Whitebeam**
- ***Sorbus aucuparia*** **Rowan**
- ***Malus sylvestris*** **Crab apple**
- ***Tilia cordata*** **Small leaved lime**
- ***Prunus Avium*** **Wild cherry**

Some cultivars of native species have been bred for upright and compact form, and can be useful as street trees, including *Acer campestre* 'Streetwise' or 'Elsrijk', and *Tilia cordata* 'Greenspire'.

Additionally, some decorative tree species sit comfortably within the rural character of High Weald settlements, and can provide visual amenity and valuable sources of pollen in late winter and early spring to benefit biodiversity, including:

- ***Prunus serrulate spp*** **Flowering cherry (non-native)**
- ***Prunus subhirtella*** **Winter flowering cherry (non-native)**
- ***Pyrus calleryana Chanticleer*** **Ornamental pear (non-native)**
- Cultivars of ***Malus*** **(non-fruiting crab apple)**

**Key species to avoid** – these are non-native species, often considered as specimen trees, that are out of character within new housing developments in the HWNL and on rural roads and lanes: ***Eucalyptus*** **spp, Liquidamber, *Ginkgo*, *Laburnum*,** ornamental conifers such as ***leylandii***, cultivars of **cypress** and **western red cedars.**

# Planting Typologies – Amenity Greenspace

## Amenity Greenspace Planting

'Amenity' planting in the public realm in new housing developments can contribute to maintaining the High Weald's distinctiveness and rural sense of place, as well as achieving other benefits such as nature recovery and flood management and providing nectar and pollen sources for wildlife.

Carefully considered planting of native species, in a manner typical of High Weald settlements, can significantly improve the wildlife value of the public realm. It can offer a more locally distinctive alternative to non-native and ornamental plants, which can detract from the area's rural sense of place, inappropriately 'suburbanise' the character of the locality, and can have limited wildlife value.

Some pollinator species emerge early in the year, others later, and therefore it's important that soft-landscaping schemes offer a continuous source of nectar and pollen from flowering plants (including tree blossom) for as long a season as possible.

New amenity greenspace planting should include a combination of:

- areas of amenity grassland that include sown wildflower areas,
- amenity grassland planted with 'in-field' trees,
- Roadside verges (of meaningful width)

N.B. This section of the PAN focusses on amenity grassland only, and not other types of grassland offered under BNG.

## 'Ornamental Shrub' Planting

**Areas of ubiquitous, massed 'estate' planting of ornamental ground-cover shrubs are not appropriate in developments within the High Weald, where they would appear uncharacteristic and incongruous.**

Unfortunately, these are often proposed by landscapers to infill odd areas of ground, or to demark the front gardens of plots. In this type of use, *en masse*, and by virtue of their habit, they create poor quality soft public realm – these are the plants that are often used on supermarket car parks for example. Meanwhile, by virtue of their habit, they fail to provide the meaningful frontage enclosure to plots that is characteristic of the High Weald streetscene.

Whilst any of the species below might be fine in an individual sense in a domestic garden, **infill areas with groups of the following plants in particular are to be avoided in the public realm in housing developments in the High Weald:**

***Berberis, Chaenomeles, Cotoneaster, Elaeagnus, Escallonia, Euonymous, Mahonia, Photinia* 'Red Robin'*, Pyracantha, Skimmia, Symphoricarpos***

In the High Weald, planting should instead seek to promote a more native, naturalistic, simpler approach to structural landscaping.

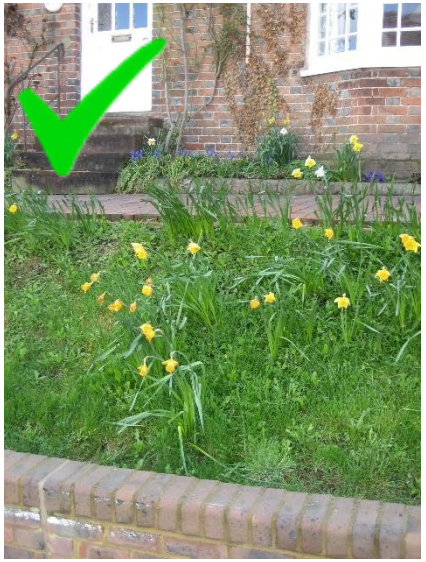
Above: Right:-inappropriate infill planting with ground cover ornamentals - uncharacteristic in High Weald settlements.

## Amenity Grassland with Wildflowers

New areas of wildflower amenity grassland can be a valuable part of a soft-landscaping strategy in new developments in the AONB, providing habitat and pollen/nectar sources, as well as an attractive soft public realm feature that reflects landscape and settlement character of the High Weald and that can be enjoyed by residents. A contribution can be made by leaving longer grass around the margins of amenity grassland and other open space.

Meanwhile spring bulbs in grassland can provide visual delight and useful early pollen sources for bees.

It is critical that the seed/plant species type is suitable for the soils of the particular site, usually clay in the High Weald, but it can vary, with some sandy soils, so should aways be informed by soil testing, while a long-term management regime must be put in place.



Above: Right – successful wildflower and bulb planting in amenity grassland.

**'Wildlife-friendly' Amenity Grassland Planting Specification**

The grassland composition will be dependent on the soil type/characteristics. Importantly the mix should include around 8 grasses and 10-15 wildflowers to provide a range of flowering times. By seed weight this will generally be 70% grass 30% flowers.

**Suitable Species**

Please refer to the list at Appendix 1 of this PAN, '**Native wildflower and grass species typical of the High Weald'** and check proposed seed mix against this list.

Also include native origin spring bulbs, including ***Narcissus pseudonarcissus 'lobularis'*** British wild daffodil, ***Galanthus nivalis*** native snowdrop, ***Fritillaria meleagris*** snake's head fritillary and ***Crocus tommasinianus*** (though not native, they are heavily naturalised).

**Key species to avoid** –

Avoid generic mixes that are non-native to High Weald clay soils, especially those for coastal locations or chalk soils.

# Planting Typologies – Amenity Greenspace

## Verge Planting

Grass verges extending alongside roads and paths are a strong characteristic of High Weald settlements and should be incorporated into new housing developments in appropriate street-types.

Planting in new verges should be simple and naturalistic, primarily grassland species with a layered approach. **Ornamental 'ground cover' shrubs filling a verge area are uncharacteristic of the High Weald NL and should be avoided.**

Flowering 'weeds' can help insects and produce nectar and pollen over a long season, and should not be underestimated for their contribution to wildlife as a pollen and nectar source, especially dandelion very early in the year.

Above, and Left: Existing characteristic verge design and planting in settlements in the High Weald.

Left: Ornamental verge planting inappropriate in the High Weald.

### Grass Verge Planting Specification

**Suitable Species**

Generally best to use a grass with wildflower mix (70:30 grass to flowering species) rather than adding in plug plants, though plugs planted in grass may be appropriate for some species/situations.

Select as appropriate depending on soil and light conditions.

- ***Cardamine pratensis*** **Cuckoo flower**
- ***Primula vulgaris*** **Wild primrose**
- ***Ranunculus ficaria*** **Lesser celandine**
- ***Leucanthemum vulgare*** **Ox-eye daisy**
- ***Dactylorhiza fuchsii*** **Common spotted orchid**
- **Flowering 'weeds', including dandelion, red dead-nettle, red Clover, bird's-foot-trefoil**
- *Rhinanthus minor* **Yellow rattle (semi-parasitic keeps grasses in check)**

Include spring bulbs, such as ***Narcissus pseudonarcissus 'lobularis'*** (British Wild Daffodil), ***Galanthus nivalis*** (native snowdrop) and ***Crocus tommasinianus*** (though not native, they are heavily naturalised)

**Key species to avoid:**

- Ornamental ground cover species set out in page 22.
- Seed mixes which include a lot of chalk specialists not suited to the generally neutral clay soils of the High Weald

# Planting Typologies – Ponds

## Planting In and Around New Ponds

The Weald has one of the highest concentrations of ponds in the south-east of England. Ponds are a key characteristic of the landscape, and are important to the High Weald's biodiversity, supporting many species that are uncommon or rare. Birds, mammals, amphibians, and insects all use ponds for food, shelter or to complete their lifecycles.

New or improved ponds proposed within housing developments should have a mixture of deep areas and shallow, sloping areas around edges with berms to create varied aquatic habitats.

Existing water courses should not be dammed to create on-line ponds as this can seriously affect the natural function of the stream and lead to flooding.

Around the pond, specific areas of tree/scrub planting should be located to create a mixture of shaded and open areas of water. Buffer planting around the pond helps prevent silt and chemicals entering the water, and provides shelter and feeding habitats for many different creatures, including dragonflies, frogs and newts.

Planting up a pond is not always necessary; native plants and animals will find their way to a new pond quite naturally. Where planting is proposed, it is important to source plants suited to the different pond zones i.e. margins, shallow areas and deep areas - each zone is important to different wildlife.

Non-native or invasive aquatic plant species should not be introduced; they can compete aggressively with native species and can spread quickly affecting other aquatic and wetland habitats.

<u>Attenuation Ponds</u>

Housing schemes may also propose attenuation ponds or swales as part of Sustainable Drainage schemes (SUDs). Attenuation ponds are not designed for permanent water storage, but rather as temporary reservoirs to manage and control excess rainwater runoff and help prevent flooding. Subject to appropriate management, such water features can provide a key opportunity to create seasonal aquatic and marginal habitats to support a range of wildlife.

**Ponds Planting Specification**

Planning proposals should include the different vegetation zones relating to the different depths of the pond, and plants proposed for these different habitats.

**Suitable Species**

A mixture of plants; for marginal, shallow and deep zones, and oxygenators, will make the pond appealing to a range of wildlife. Planting should be specified as plug plants rather than seed, to avoid potential run-off and loss of seed.

Take care to follow closely the scientific name, as many inappropriate invasive species have similar common names.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ***Caltha palustris*** | **Marsh marigold** | (marginal) |
| ***Mentha aquatica*** | **Watermint** | (marginal) |
| ***Iris pseudacorus*** | **Yellow flag iris** | (marginal) |
| ***Alisma plantago-aquatica*** | **Water plantain** | (marginal/shallow planting) |
| ***Ranunculus aquatilis*** | **Water crowfoot** | |
| ***Potamogeton natans*** | **Broad-leaved pondweed** | ***(deep planting)*** |
| ***Potamogeton crispus*** | **Curled pondweed** | (submerged aquatic) |
| ***Ceratophyllum demersum*** | **Hornweed** | (submerged aquatic) |
| ***Lemna trisulca*** | **Ivy-leaved duckweed** | (submerged aquatic) |
| ***Myriophyllum spicatum*** | **Water milfoil** | (submerged aquatic) |

For SuDS attenuation ponds, which may not permanently hold water, the above marginal plants may be suitable for planned planting at the edges, otherwise it is recommended to allow plants to colonise naturally.

**Key plants to avoid**:

Freshwater systems including ponds are very susceptible to non-native invasive aquatic and marginal plants. Because of the severity of the threat there is a growing list of plants associated with freshwater now banned from sale in England (Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, schedule 9), while it is an offence to plant others in the wild, under the same Act.

# Supporting Information

## Further Reading / References

National Planning Policy Framework (publishing.service.gov.uk)

National_design_guide.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

residential-developments-and-trees.pdf Woodland Trust 2019

ProfitablePlaces Landscape Institute 2014

Landscape_and_urban_design_for_bats_and_biodiversity.pdf Bat Conservation Trust, 2012

Why Plant UK Sourced and Grown Trees? - Woodland Trust

Woodland Creation Guide Woodland Trust, 2022

Hedgerows in the High Weald Landscape HWNL Partnership, see also Hedges - High Weald

Hedgerow-Learning-Guide-3-Hedge-planting-and-growing.pdf The Tree Council 2022, also see Hedgelink - Working together for the UK's hedgerows

Invasive non-native plants / RHS Gardening

The Plant Health Alliance promote and enhance plant health and biosecurity measures in the UK. View their Directory of Certified Businesses here: Directory - Plant Healthy which lists members of the Plant Healthy Certification Scheme.

## Glossary

**Ancient Woodland** Any area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland mainly made up of trees and shrubs native to the site, and plantations on ancient woodland sites.

**Biosecurity** The measures taken to stop potentially harmful organisms being introduced or spreading to animals and plants. Pests and diseases that originate in other countries can be incredibly dangerous for species in a different country that has not evolved or adapted to deal with it.

**Gill woodland** Wooded deep clefts or ravines, forming the course of a stream.

**Landscape-led design** Using landscape as a framework to both understand the site – its context, character, qualities and functioning – and to formulate a design response in terms of site capacity, layout and design.

**LEMP** Landscape & Ecology Management Plan sets out the detail of how habitats will be managed and maintained in the long term.

**Public realm** All external spaces that are publicly accessible, such as streets, lanes and paths, verges, village greens and squares, and the features within them, such as signage, lighting and street furniture.

**Shaw** A narrow strip of woodland.

**Tree stock categories:** **Transplants** are young trees that have been moved from one place to another (e.g. grown at a tree nursery then moved to be planted in their final growing position)

**Whip** refers to a very young tree that has not yet got any branches.

**Feathered** is slightly bigger than a whip with well-developed side branches

A **standard** is a larger tree, typically over two metres in height, and with a head of branches. (usually min 8-10 cm girth)

A **heavy standard** is simply a larger standard, typically above three metres in height. (usually min 12-14 cm girth)

A **semi-mature** tree is over four metres tall (usually min 18-20 cm girth) (girth is the circumference of the stem taken 1.5 m up from the soil level).

# Supporting Information – Appendix 1: Native plants typical of the High Weald

## Appendix 1: Native plants typical of the High Weald

**Native trees and shrubs typical of the High Weald**

| Scientific name | Common name | Description |
|---|---|---|
| *Acer campestre* | Field maple | A deciduous, medium-sized tree with good butter yellow autumn colour. Delicate leaves, winged fruits that hang in clusters and finely fissured bark. A good hedgerow species and colourful amenity tree. Good fuel wood. |
| *Alnus glutinosa* | Alder | A medium-sized deciduous tree that thrives in damp, cool areas such as wet woodlands where its roots help to prevent soil erosion. Good for hostile conditions. |
| *Betula pendula* | Silver birch | A medium-sized deciduous tree that supports a wide range of insects – its thin canopy allows the understory and other plants to thrive. Good for hostile conditions. Bark makes it an attractive amenity tree if space permits. Grows and spreads naturally very easily so not normally recommended in a woodland planting scheme. |
| *Betula pubescens* | Downy birch | A medium-sized tree that grows well on poorly drained soils. Grows and spreads naturally very easily so not normally recommended in a woodland planting scheme. |
| *Carpinus betulus* | Hornbeam | A large deciduous tree with a fluted trunk suitable for wet clay soils and shady conditions. Dense, serrated leaves; clusters of papery seeds in autumn. Native only to the southern half of Britain and common in the High Weald. Good fuel wood. A good hedging plant. |
| *Castanea sativa* | Sweet chestnut | Introduced by the Romans, this species is commonly found throughout the High Weald and has often been planted in blocks that are coppiced for small-diameter timber. The flowers provide an important source of nectar and pollen to bees and other insects. |
| *Corylus avellana* | Hazel | Hazel is a small understorey tree, which often has multiple stems – the yellow male catkins open in Spring. Provides weaving materials and pea sticks. Good fuel wood. |
| *Cornus Sanguinea* | Dogwood | A small shrub with strikingly red twigs and clusters of black berries. |
| *Crataegus monogyna* | Hawthorn | Spiny; has white flowers in March-April, red berries in autumn which are good for birds and making preserves. Good nectar source. |
| *Cytisus scoparius* | Common broom | A native deciduous shrub, which, like common gorse, likes free-draining soils and is found naturally on the area's sandier soils. It has bright yellow flowers from April - June and smells of vanilla. |
| *Euonymus europaeus* | Spindle | Leafy shrub with lovely pink and orange berries. |
| *Fagus sylvatica* | Beech | Grows on dry, free draining soils, for example on the High Weald's sandy ridges. Grows into stately tree if untrimmed; retains dense orange-brown leaves all winter. Good fuel wood, but susceptible to squirrel damage during establishment phase. A good hedging plant. |
| *Ilex aquifolium* | Holly | A glossy, dense evergreen with spiky leaves and red berries in autumn and winter. Good nectar source. Often left to grow as a tree in hedges. A good hedging plant. |
| *Lonicera periclymenun* | Honeysuckle | A scented, climbing plant that twines itself around shrubs and trees and is good for a range of wildlife. |
| *Malus sylvestris* | Crab apple | Produces fruit for preserves. Domesticated fruit trees such as bullace and meribels are a good choice for amenity schemes. |
| *Populus nigra* | Black poplar | Uncommon, favouring wet areas and stream sides. |
| *Prunus avium* | Wild cherry | A large deciduous tree whose early spring flowers provide a valuable source of nectar and pollen for bees. |
| *Prunus spinosa* | Blackthorn | Spiny; has white flowers in May; sloes in October. |
| *Quercus petrea* | Sessile oak | Preferring drier sandy soils to English Oak. Good fuel wood. |
| *Quercus Robur* | English oak | Oak trees support more life than any other native tree and are ubiquitous to the High Weald. Good fuel wood. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Rhamnus Frangula* | Alder buckthorn | A small native tree with fleshy fruits that are a good winter food source for birds and small mammals. Grows best in wet, marshy ground and is shade tolerant. |
| *Rosa canina* | Wild dog rose | Thorny, rambling rose with delicate leaves; pink-white flowers in June; red hips in autumn and winter. |
| *Salix caprea* | Goat willow | Locally common and associated with rivers, ponds and streams. Easily grows naturally without planting. |
| *Salix cinerea* | Grey willow | Locally common. Easily grows naturally without planting. |
| *Salix fragilis* | Crack willow | Less common than white willow and generally confined to the waterside. Easily grows naturally without planting. |
| *Sambucus nigra* | Elder | White scented flowers in June; glossy black berries in autumn. |
| *Sorbus aria* | Whitebeam | Suitable as an amenity tree for parks or gardens. The flowers are pollinated by insects and berries favoured by birds. |
| *Sorbus aucuparia* | Rowan | Common in the north and west of the UK where it often grows in high altitude locations. Not typical in the High Weald but suitable as an amenity tree in parks and gardens as it is small with berries that are a rich source of autumn food for birds, especially fieldfare and waxwing. |
| *Sorbus torminalis* | Wild service tree | Widespread but at very low density. |
| *Taxus baccata* | Yew | Our only native conifer with dense evergreen needles and red berries; long-lived. Poisonous to livestock so planting locations need to be carefully selected. A good evergreen hedging plant that is easy to manage. |
| *Tilia cordata* | Small leaved lime | Good nectar source. Produces edible young spring leaves for salads. |
| *Ulex europaeus* | Common gorse | A large, evergreen shrub covered in needle-like leaves and distinctive, coconut perfumed yellow flowers during the spring and summer. Likes well-drained soils and is normally found naturally on the area's sandier soils. |
| *Viburnum opulus* | Guelder rose | Found in very low numbers. Colourful. Autumn food for birds (particularly attractive to waxwings). Good nectar source. |

### Ground-flora species typical of the High Weald that are often associated with woods and hedges.

*We do not recommend planting of these in the area's ancient woods, grasslands, or ponds. They are however suitable for naturalising in amenity areas, particularly as part of a multi-layer planting, and at the base of new hedgerows.*

| Scientific name | Common name | Description |
|---|---|---|
| *Allium ursinum* | Wild Garlic | A native perennial. The leaves are broad and flat. The white, star-shaped flowers are held in a spherical head from April to June. The plant has a distinctive garlic smell when crushed. Prefers damp shady areas. |
| *Anemone nemorosa* | Wood anemone | A native perennial that prefers shady, damp conditions. It has ferny foliage and delicate white flowers from March to May. Like bluebells the plants need to be left undisturbed to come back year after year. |
| *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* | British Bluebell | Prefers shady or partly shaded sites and will naturalise in grass and under trees. The plants need to be left undisturbed to come back year after year. Deep blue, fragrant flowers from late April to May. |
| *Narcissus pseudonarcissus 'lobularis'* | British Wild Daffodil | The wild species was once common but is now rare in High Weald woodlands. It is smaller and more delicate than daffodil cultivars. Blooms February to March. |
| *Primula vulgaris* | Primrose, Wild | Native perennial with yellow flowers from February to May. Prefers a shady site. . |
| *Ranunculus ficaria* | Lesser Celandine | A small perennial with yellow star-like flowers from March to May. Best planted where it can be left undisturbed. |

## Native wildflower and grass species typical of the High Weald

*The grassland composition will be dependent on the soil type/characteristics. Most importantly a mix should include around 8 grasses and 10-15 wildflowers to provide a range of flowering times. The * denotes key species in ancient High Weald grassland.*

| Scientific Name | Common Name | | Scientific Name | Common Name |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Achillea ptarmica** | Sneezewort | | *Lamium purpureum* | Dead Nettle, Red |
| *Agrimonia eupatoria* | Agrimony | | *Leontodon hispidus* | Hawkbit, Rough |
| *Agrostis canina* | Bent, Velvet | | *Leucanthemum vulgare* | Ox-eye Daisy |
| *Agrostis capillaris* | Bent, Common | | *Linum catharticum** | Flax, Fairy |
| *Ajuga reptans* | Bugle | | *Listeria ovata** | Twayblade, Common |
| *Alopecurus pratensis* | Foxtail, Meadow | | *Lotus corniculatus* | Bird's-foot-trefoil, Common |
| *Anacamotis morio** | Orchid green-winged | | *Lotus pedunculatus* | Bird's-foot-trefoil, Greater |
| *Anthoxanthum odoratum** | Sweet Vernal-grass | | *Luzula campestris* | Wood-rush, Field |
| *Briza media** | Quaking Grass | | *Ophioglossum vulgatum** | Adder's-tongue Fern |
| *Carex flacca* | Sedge - Glaucous | | *Pimpinella saxifrage** | Burnet Saxifrage |
| *Carex hirta* | Sedge - Hairy | | *Poa trivialis* | Meadow-grass, Rough |
| *Carex ovalis* | Sedge - Oval | | *Potentilla erecta* | Tormentil |
| *Centaurium erythraea* | Centaury, Common | | *Prunella vulgaris* | Selfheal |
| *Centaurea nigra* | Knapweed, Black | | *Ranunculus acris* | Buttercup, Meadow |
| *Conopodium majus** | Pignut | | *Rumex acetosa* | Sorrel, Common |
| *Crepis capilaris* | Hawk's-beard, Smooth | | *Silaum silaus** | Pepper Saxifrage |
| *Cynosurus cristatus* | Crested Dog's-tail | | *Stachys officinalis** | Betony |
| *Dactylorhiza fuchsii** | Orchid, Common Spotted | | *Stellaria graminea* | Stitchwort, Lesser |
| *Euphrasia nemorosa* | Eyebright, Common | | *Succisa pratensis* | Devil's- bit Scabious |
| *Festuca rubra* | Fescue, Red | | *Tragopogon pratensis* | Goat's- beard |
| *Genista tinctoria** | Dyers Greenweed | | *Trifolium pratense* | Clover, Red |
| *Hypochaeris radicata* | Cat's-ear, Common | | *Veronica chamaedrys* | Speedwell, Germander |
| *Lathyrus nissolia** | Vetchling, Grass | | *Vicia sativa* | Vetch, Common |
| *Lathyrus pratensis* | Vetchling, Meadow | | *Vicia cracca* | Vetch, Tufted |
| | | | | |

**Published by the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee on behalf of:**