

Landscape Strategy and Landscape Consultation Guide:
Consultation Version
Report by Planning Policy Officer

Summary: A guide has been produced to help applicants to understand and address the landscape impacts of their proposals as well as provide guidance on landscaping proposals. It is intended that the guides are consulted on for 6 weeks.

Recommendation: Members' views on the draft guides are sought as well as agreement that a six week consultation on the guides should be undertaken.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Broads is a nationally designated landscape and development should seek to protect and enhance the landscape of the Broads. The purpose of this draft guide is to help applicants understand and address landscape impacts of their schemes and design and deliver high quality landscaping schemes.

2. About the guides and work completed to date

- 2.1 The Broads Authority's landscape consultant has produced the draft Landscape and Landscaping Guide with support from the communications and planning team. The guide seeks to provide information, images and further links to help would-be applicants understand and address the landscape impacts of their development proposals. There is also guidance and processes set out in relation to landscaping schemes.

3. The Way Forward

- 3.1 The Landscape and Landscaping guide presented to members is the draft content of the guide. Prior to consultation the guide will be formatted into a similar style to the other guides that have been adopted.
- 3.2 In order to give the guide more weight in determining planning applications and potentially at any subsequent appeals, it is recommended that the guide is subject to 6 weeks consultation with the public in a similar approach to that of the Local Plan. The guide will then be presented to a future Full Authority meeting for adoption.
- 3.3 It is not considered that the guides affect Navigation and as such it is not intended to present them to Navigation Committee prior to the consultation. Officers will present them to Navigation Committee during the consultation.

- 3.4 After the consultation, responses will be assessed. The final guide and responses may come back to Planning Committee before going to a future Full Authority to be adopted.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 It is recommended that following any comments on the guides from Members, they are subject to 6 weeks of consultation.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 It is intended that the guide will be hosted on the Broads Authority website and produced in paper format only on request.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The draft guides addresses landscape impact and landscaping schemes.
- 6.2 To give the guide more weight in the planning system, it is recommended that it is consulted on and then adopted by Full Authority.
- 6.3 Having up to date guides like this (and the already adopted Riverbank Stabilisation, Mooring Guides, Biodiversity Enhancements and Waterside Chalet/Bungalow guides) will provide developers and landowners with useful guidance on what is deemed useful and acceptable in the Broads.

Background papers: None

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Appendices: Appendix A: Draft Landscape and Landscaping Guide



**A guide to producing a landscaping strategy and delivering landscaping schemes.
March 2017**

1. Purpose of the document

This document aims to encourage greater awareness of the importance of landscape and landscaping in development, and to ensure early consideration is given to landscape matters so that development will have a stronger sense of place and character and will help to achieve a higher quality environment.

Throughout this guidance the term 'landscape' is used for a zone or area whose visual features and character are the result of the action of natural and or cultural factors. 'Landscaping' is the process of making a scheme more attractive and can include the addition of plants, changes to the existing terrain and the construction of structures.

2. Introduction

This document provides information for planning applicants to enable cost effective and efficient implementation of national planning and adopted Broads Local Plan policies relating to landscape and development. It achieves this through the provision of guidance on landscape and landscaping design principles and sets out best practice in relation to the incorporation of landscaping within development proposals.

The required supporting information to be submitted with applications, in particular drawings and documents is outlined in the Broads Authority validation requirement checklists (contact us for more information). This includes further information for each type of document in line with the type, scale and size of proposal.

Applicants should be aware that adherence to the local plan policies is a material consideration in the assessment of all planning applications and should therefore consider the content of the relevant policies (see the Core Strategy and Development Management Policy documents).

This guide provides detail about what you need to do to address landscape and landscaping as part of your application. If you are not sure what you are required to submit with your application please contact us: planning@broads-authority.gov.uk or call 01603 610734.

3. The importance of landscape in the Broads

The Norfolk and Suffolk Broads is protected wetland and third largest inland waterway, with the status of a national park. In this nationally protected landscape, the landscape impact of all developments must be considered at the design stage and most development proposals need to be accompanied by landscaping proposals. Landscaping is part of the design response to mitigate or enhance a proposal. Some types and forms of hard surfaces and structures or soft landscaping (planting) can have biodiversity, amenity and recreation benefits and are more appropriate in the Broads Executive Area than others. What is suitable on a site needs to reflect the location and setting. The landscaping design proposals should also reflect the key positive characteristics of the locality and its setting. A well designed development, with appropriate landscaping, can minimise impact on and even benefit a wider landscape area.

Protection of landscape character and high quality design is a key thread running through the Broads Local Plan.

4. Landscape character

The Broads area has been divided into 31 Local Character Areas, each with a unique set of characteristics, which combine to give them their own distinct sense of place.

The Landscape Character Assessment¹ is a study of the Broads developed to aid decision-making that could affect its condition or visual quality.

The associated Landscape Sensitivity Study² assesses the impact of wind turbines and solar panels to provide criteria to planning applicants and inform policy. Its baseline is the Landscape Character Assessment and it should be read in conjunction with this.

5. Trees

In some schemes, an assessment of the trees on site and how development proposals will affect these trees is an important element of work (an Arboriculture Impact Assessment or tree survey). The landscaping strategy or scheme needs to take account of any tree surveys, AIA, etc. also submitted with an application.

6. The structure of this guidance

The guidance is in two parts.

Part A provides advice on producing a **landscaping strategy** to accompany planning applications. The landscaping strategy can be a high level document that sets out broad principles for landscaping the scheme, for example, the layout of the external areas, including areas of hard landscaping, such as surfacing, soft landscaping, such as planting, and boundary treatments such as fences, walls, gates and hedges, etc. This is a pragmatic approach that aims to save time, effort and costs to applicants by not asking for a fully detailed scheme upfront but asking them to tell us what their overall approach to landscaping is as part of an application. If an application is successful, the finer details which are covered in Part B can be made a condition of planning permission (which is a requirement set on some planning permissions).

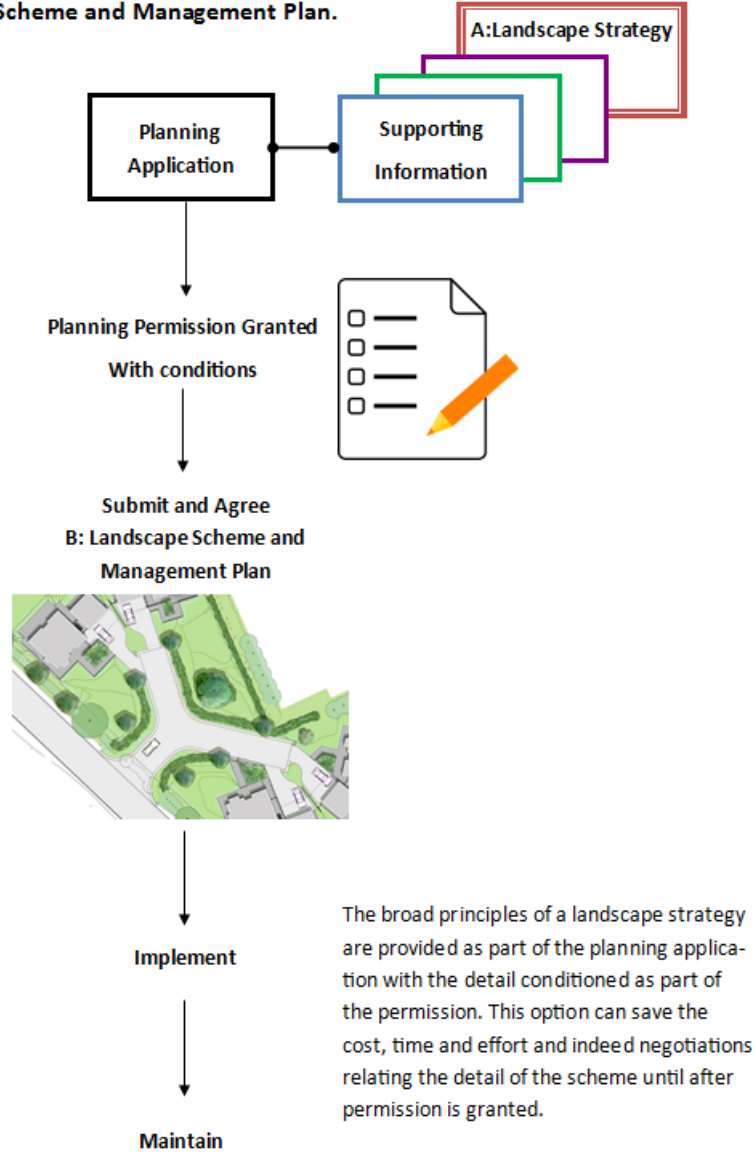
Part B provides advice on producing additional information on the detail of the landscaping strategy, including types of planting, surfacing and boundary treatments – **the landscape scheme and management plan**. Such additional information is usually required as a condition of a planning permission if it has not been provided upfront as a part of a comprehensive scheme. A scheme addressing Parts A and B can be submitted upfront with a planning application but applicants may prefer to concentrate on Part A first.

The following diagram shows two potential routes for providing this information.

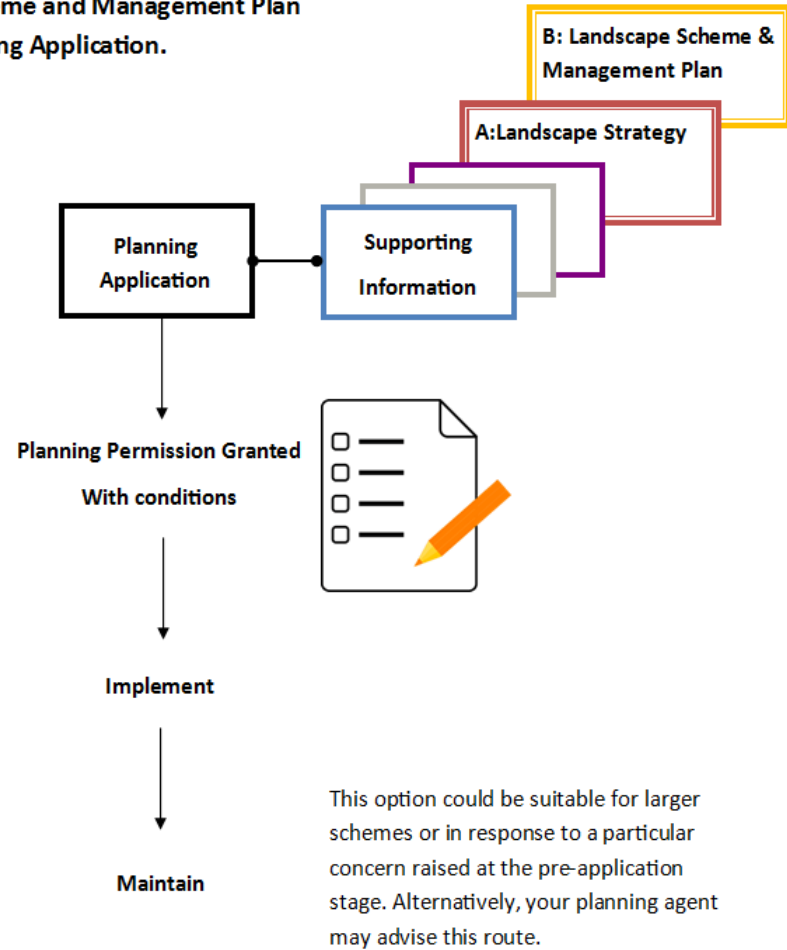
¹ Broads Landscape Character Assessment <http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/news-and-publications/publications-and-reports/planning-publications-and-reports/landscape-character-assessments>

² Landscape Sensitivity Study <http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/news-and-publications/publications-and-reports/planning-publications-and-reports/landscape-sensitivity-studies>

Option 1: Submit a Landscape Strategy, with the planning application and if permission is granted, condition and Landscape Scheme and Management Plan.



Option 2: Submit a Landscape Strategy, Landscape Scheme and Management Plan with the Planning Application.



7. Further information and advice

If you need assistance in the first instance please contact the planning department who will help you to determine what information may be required as part of the application.

It may be necessary or you may find it helpful to employ a landscape consultant to help you prepare the information required to support your planning application. The [Landscape Institute](https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/) can provide you with a list of registered landscape practices in the area.

Other sources of information

Landscape Visual Impact Assessment:

<https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical/glvia3-panel/> (purchase only)

Broads Landscape Character Assessment:

<http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/news-and-publications/publications-and-reports/planning-publications-and-reports/landscape-character-assessments>

Broads Landscape Sensitivity Study:

<http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/news-and-publications/publications-and-reports/planning-publications-and-reports/landscape-sensitivity-studies>

Broads Development Management Development Plan Document:

http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0008/414368/Development-management-policies.pdf

Broads Core Strategy:

<http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/planning/planning-policies/development/current-documents/core-strategy-development-plan>

Broads Authority Biodiversity Enhancements Guide:

http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0011/823583/Biodiversity-guide_18_11_2016.pdf

Broads Authority Riverbank Stabilisation Guide:

<http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/planning/Planning-permission/design-guides/river-bank-stabilisation>

Broads Authority Moorings Guide:

<http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/planning/Planning-permission/design-guides/mooring-design-guide>

The Landscape Institute:

<https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/about/>

National Planning Practice Guidance on design:

<http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/design/how-should-buildings-and-the-spaces-between-them-be-considered/>

Guidelines for landscape and visual impact assessment published by routledge on behalf of the landscape institute & institute of environmental management, 2013.

<https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical/glvia3-panel/>

PART A

GUIDANCE ON THE PRODUCTION OF A LANDSCAPING STRATEGY

A1 Part A introduction

For certain types of development, the production of the details for the landscaping proposals (may be required by a planning condition, which is a requirement set on some planning permissions).

For those planning applications for which landscaping proposals are an important consideration, the applicant may be required to submit a **landscaping strategy** alongside the planning application, prior to more detailed landscaping proposals. By adopting this two stage approach the planning authority can assess and comment on the general approach that the applicant is taking in relation to landscaping to ensure this is appropriate, before the detailed design is drawn up.

The principles set out below are intended as a series of prompts for applicants. They are intended to be objective and provide guidance on basic design issues that will be relevant to most sites. However, the landscaping strategy will need to be specific to each site and therefore it is not intended that the information provided in this document is prescriptive. These principles also illustrate aspects considered by the Broads Authority's officers when considering an application.

A2 Landscape site assessment and analysis

This is the first step in producing the landscaping strategy. The aim is to assess and fully understand the site characteristics, the landscape character and the impact the proposals will have on the landscape. Please note landscape assessments should include the survey and analysis of both built and natural features and elements.

National guidance can be found at [National Planning Practice Guidance relating to design](#).

The Broads Authority Landscape Character Assessment will be an important source of information for this stage of the process.

The production of the assessment and analysis will be proportionate to the scale of the development proposals and could be included in the design and access statement, if this is required), a habitat management plan that includes landscape features or a standalone document. The level of information relating to landscape assessment and proposals submitted will also be dictated by the nature and type of the application.

Larger developments which are likely to have a significant impact may require a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. This would look at how changes in the landscape could alter the nature and extent of visual effects and qualities relating to locations and proposals and how it affects specific individuals or groups of people. Guidance on the preparation of these assessments is given in the 3rd edition of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment³.

The following principles should be considered to develop an understanding of the site and how it fits into the wider landscape to inform the landscaping strategy. This process will also help identify features that should be retained and areas for enhancement.

³ Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment published by Routledge on behalf of the Landscape Institute & Institute of Environmental Management, 2013. <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical/glvia3-panel/>

A3 Integrating development into surroundings

All sites form part of a wider landscape. Any change has the potential to positively or negatively impact the surroundings. New developments should seek to enhance the local character and positively link to their surroundings.

Consideration and analysis of a site's context and setting will help identify the important factors beyond the site that have an influence on it and it will also help establish associated design opportunities and constraints for the site. To understand the relationship between the site and its surroundings, desktop studies of local environment and local plan context should be supported by on-site analysis of the local landscape character.

Some questions to help you are listed below:

- i) Where is the site? What is it currently used for?
- ii) How is the site accessed? Are there any routes through the site?
- iii) How does it sit within the wider landscape?
- iv) What is the landscape character of the area? Highlight any locally distinctive features of the built environment and natural environment. See the Broads Landscape Character Assessment.
- v) How enclosed or open is the site? What is the level of screening?
- vi) Where can you see the site from? What can you see from the site and where can you see to?
- vii) What do the policies of the Broads Local Plan seek to achieve with regards the landscape and landscaping on this site and for the proposed type of development?

A4 Making good use of the site and existing features

When undertaking a site analysis, characteristics and features within the site that could influence design need to be taken account of. Existing features which provide a positive contribution to the character of an area should be identified, assessed and incorporated into designs where possible. These features could include wooded areas, mature trees and hedgerows, watercourses, and other ecologically valuable features.

Developments should make efficient use of land and topography, and retain or enhance existing features of value. Developments should be designed to take advantage of the site itself and its location.

Analysis of site topography will also highlight constraints or opportunities for a development especially in relation to the treatment of site boundaries.

Some questions to help you are listed below:

- viii) What are the characteristics of the site? Such as the type, location, spread of existing trees, areas of woodland, shelter belts, hedgerows, ground cover, meadows, fen, water, vegetation to be retained, links through the site, public or civic spaces including the river system?
- ix) Are there any particular natural features on and surrounding the site? What are these? Do these provide habitat? Could they be improved?
- x) What are levels like within the site? Do they vary? How do they relate to the surrounding area?
- xi) Is the site covered by any habitat designations (e.g. SSSI)? Are there any trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order? Is the site in a Conservation Area? Are there any listed or locally

listed buildings on or around the site? Is there known to be any archaeological interest on or around the site?

xii) How are the boundaries of the site formed?

A5 Environment and Green Infrastructure⁴

Good planning of landscaping offers the opportunity to achieve multiple benefits through landscaping designs that incorporate the principles of sustainability. Wherever possible, landscaped spaces will need to increase biodiversity and wildlife enhancement and provide accessible routes and networks to facilitate connections (for people, plants and animals) to surrounding areas. Developments should also aim to make space for trees. Wherever possible, sites should link their boundaries to surrounding landscapes through green infrastructure.

By definition, green infrastructure can provide a variety of functions and benefits including biodiversity enhancement, water management, connectivity, health and wellbeing in addition to providing an attractive landscape.

Existing vegetation on sites can often provide important, established habitats. Developments should seek to retain native landscape features and consider opportunities to extend similar or provide new types of habitats in key locations to ensure that ecology is an integral part of the site proposals and wider ecological network. Consideration should be given to the selection of boundary treatments such as mixed species hedges that have potential to improve biodiversity rather than prohibit wildlife. Sites that have boundaries with rivers or other water courses also present opportunities for habitat enhancement. For further information see our guide on Biodiversity Enhancements.

A6 Landscaping Strategy

If a strategy is required it needs to provide comprehensive detail of the landscaping scheme, including information about all external areas in sufficient detail to demonstrate the quality of landscaping design and address key issues relating to the landscape in which the scheme is set.

If a design and access statement is required, the information could be included within this. It could however be in the form of a standalone document

Such a strategy should include the following sections:

- a) The findings of landscape site assessment and analysis;
- b) The landscape features (natural and built) which are likely to be affected as a result of the development;
- c) Links to take account of any arboricultural assessment;
- d) The principles of the approach to the landscaping design of the areas external to the buildings;
- e) The layout of external areas and an outline of the landscaping strategy which should include both the soft (planting) and (hard) paving/ built external elements and show at least indicatively the treatment of different areas through hatching and simple notation. This should be submitted in plan and if relevant cross sectional format;
- f) Any basic details of proposed phasing should also be included if known;
- g) Indicatively highlight any significant level changes or areas of cut and fill, for example bunding, mounds, dyke construction; and
- h) A strategy relating to the landscaping management and maintenance.

⁴ You can find more information about Green Infrastructure here:

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/35033> but a simple definition is a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

PART B

GUIDANCE ON THE PRODUCTION OF DETAILED DESIGN PROPOSALS FOR LANDSCAPING SCHEMES

B1 Part B Introduction

The detail of the landscaping proposals may need to be submitted to the Broads Authority in order to discharge a landscape/landscaping condition on a planning application that has received approval.

In order to be able to discharge conditions, the precise detail of the **landscaping scheme** is needed, including planting details, types of trees, boundary treatments, hard surfacing and external construction materials.

Examples of information that could be included or may be required are set out below. The types of information about the detailed landscape design proposals should be proportionate to the size and nature of the development.

B2 Detailed Landscaping Proposals

The Broads Authority may require the following.

If trees are present on or around the site, a tree survey and arboricultural impact assessment together with details of how existing trees will be protected will be needed.

For planting proposals we need to know which areas of the site will be planted and what with. You will need to think about how the ground will be prepared for planting and how it will be maintained in the longer term to ensure a successful scheme. You should also think about when the planting will take place relative to the progress of any building works. The level of information required will be proportionate to the scale of the landscaping scheme and development, but may include the following.

For soft landscaping:

- i) Detailed planting plans showing the location, species and numbers of proposed new trees, hedging, shrubs and other planting on the site;
- ii) planting schedules, noting the species planting sizes (at time of planting) and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate;
- iii) written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment) (see specification section below); and
- iv) an implementation programme clearly indicating a timescale for the completion of all landscaping works

For hard landscaping:

- v) Detailed plans showing existing and proposed levels, contours and profiles and cross sections through changes in level (including water edge);
- vi) Existing or proposed services, land drainage (including SUDS) and boundary treatments.
- vii) Types of materials for surfaced areas, including manufacturer, product type and colour, layout (hard surfacing bond where applicable), build up;
- viii) Drainage details for hard surfaced areas⁵;
- ix) Information on any root protection measures proposed;

⁵ National Policy seeks to ensure that surface water run-off is discharged as high up the following hierarchy (as set out in the NPPG) as possible: into the ground (infiltration); to a surface water body; to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system; to a combined sewer.

- x) Proposed and existing functional services above and below ground (e.g. power and communication cables, pipelines, indicating manholes, supports etc.);
- xi) Details about new boundary treatments at the site, including the material and colour finish of any walls, fences or railings;
- xii) Details of car parking layouts and cycle parking provision;
- xiii) Details of any furniture, play equipment, refuse or other storage units, signs etc; and
- xiv) Details of existing and proposed external lighting including supply runs⁶.

B3 Specifications/details

Specifications/details are essential in ensuring the appropriateness, quality and success of a scheme. Written specifications can be incorporated into a drawing where information is concise and brief; where there is more extensive information this should be a stand-alone document, or can be combined with the Landscaping Management Plan.

Specifications should include the following information as applicable to the scheme:

- Ground/soil preparation
- Quality of Topsoil
- Methods of planting
- Weed control/mulching
- Quality of plant stock
- Grass seeding/turf
- Protection of existing trees, shrubs and hedges
- Remedial work to existing trees, shrubs and hedges
- Basic information on maintenance of the scheme
- Defects liability period
- Relevant British Standards

B4 Landscaping Management Plan

Maintenance and management required for both hard (surfacing and built external features) and soft (planting) landscaped areas to sustain attractive and successful landscape settings. And this needs to be an integral part of the landscaping scheme/strategy. Consideration should be given at a design stage to who will take over the landscaping management responsibility for the site.

An initial defects liability period⁷ and short term maintenance plan⁸ will be required on all developments to ensure the establishment of planting. This should be referenced on the Detailed Landscaping Proposals plan. For more comprehensive schemes where a written document forms the Landscaping Management Plan these should include the following information as applicable:

- a) General details
 - i) Statement of overall design vision to explain the long term vision of the developed landscape
 - ii) Identification of sub-areas specific to the characteristics/ properties of each area
 - iii) Highlight any specific or specialised areas/habitats

⁶ Please note that there are areas of very dark skies in the Broads and the New Local Plan will seek to address light pollution. You can go here for more information: http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/757402/Broads-Authority-Dark-Skies-Study-March-20161.pdf

⁷ an initial 12 months defects period to be applied to all landscape elements of developments – so if any feature fails, they will be replaced promptly by the developer.

⁸ a 5 year management plan to ensure the establishment of schemes

- iv) Suggested actions required in the maintenance/management of the areas identified (see list below)
 - v) Frequency and timing of maintenance actions
 - vi) Monitoring, a timed/programmed method for reviewing the quality/success of planned operations
 - vii) Plan review process to include a way in which the community can be involved
- b) Specific maintenance/management actions
- i) Planting establishment period (should cover native and ornamental shrubs, hedges and mass planting, grass, trees), what operations should be carried out within that time and how regular, replacement of failures and how long the liability period is.
 - ii) Maintenance of hard landscaped areas (could include-cleaning, repainting, relaying, sweeping, re-levelling, litter removal, removal of temporary items)
 - iii) Special design features (water features, public art, lighting, play facilities, specialist equipment)