



**The Tree File  
Ltd**  
Ashgrove House  
26 Foxrock Court  
Dublin 18  
D18 R2K1  
086-3819011  
thetreefile@eircom.net  
thetreefile@gmail.com

**Kevin Fitzpatrick | Landscape Architecture**  
4 Main Street  
Raheny  
Dublin  
D05 NY56

August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021

## **Tree and Hedge Management Plan**

**Site within the townland of Ballymakailly, West of Newcastle Road (R120), Lucan,  
Co. Dublin for EdgeConneX Ireland Limited**

### **Brief**

The Tree File Ltd. has been requested to address “Condition 3(A)ii”, of the grant of permission Reg Ref SD21A/0042. This document intends to provide the basis for a Tree and Hedge Management Plan.

### **Woodland Management Plan Mission Statement**

To provide and maintain a sustainable, safe, and useable tree and hedge amenity within the context of the proposed development.

### **The Aims of the Plan**

The intention of the management plan is to be to provide guidance and a strategy by which the site's existing and future tree population and hedges can be managed, maintained, and improved to accommodate the needs, desires, and requirements of all stakeholders.

### **Specific Aims and Objectives**

To provide a sustainable tree and hedge population by the management of existing at the installation of new plants.

To maximise the amenity value of the site with specific regard to tree and hedge aspects.

To address biodiversity and ecological issues by way of careful selection of species and location of plants.

To address existing age profile anomalies by managing combined tree management, improvement and replacement planting to create a more diverse age profile over time and

assist with sustainability.

To regularly review and monitor tree population regarding site safety and other factors including biotic and abiotic factors.

### **Proposed Outcome**

The provision of safe and sustainable tree groups and hedges by the adoption of a proactive management system, intended to minimise risks and management cost over time.

### **What is the Vegetation Scenario Currently?**

The site area comprises an earlier agricultural scenario. The vegetation associated with the site is limited, to field demarcation hedges and a small number of typically small trees.

The greater proportion of the site is open comprising fields and paddocks. In many instances, such fields and paddocks divided from one another by Thorn based hedges. In many instances, the thorns are combined with additional species, typically including Blackthorn, Bramble, Ivy, Elder, together with multiple sapling trees typically including Sycamore, ash and which Elm. The hedge is a typically of small format suggesting intervention and management over time.

The site's tree population is limited, with the clear majority of trees being located outside of and to the north of the site's northern boundary. The small number of trees encountered within the site tend to be of typically small stature, poor quality and offering little if any sustainability.

### **What Will the Vegetation Scenario Be?**

- It will primarily constitute a visual amenity and social use amenity to the proposed development.
- It will provide ecological benefits by way of shelter, food etc. that will in turn attract invertebrates as well as mammals and birds.
- It may provide shadow, shade, privacy, and sound dampening between various elements of the development.

The woodland will not be considered of silvicultural or commercial value and as such, silvicultural management techniques and systems would be of minimal merit.

Management techniques will be orientated towards the maximising of safe tree longevity, the provision of amenity, shelter, and ecological values.

### **Basis of Management Systems**

Whilst all management systems should preferably take on a proactive approach, reactive necessities cannot be avoided.

The fundamental basis of any management plan applied will rely on the results of constant

and regular review, the information and guidance from which will direct, moderate, and focus any management scheme. Considering that the context between trees and rates of occupation and use will change, then tree and site safety will be of utmost importance.

In respect of this and considering the information provided by the earlier tree survey, it must be appreciated that the existing tree population comprises varying tree conditions and states of decline or deterioration. At the same time, it is also appreciated that the trees associated with the site are located to the north, with most specimens being outside of the site boundary. Within the site area, most of the vegetation being retained is hedging.

The preliminary site tree survey carried out as part of the planning process in relation to this development has already highlighted substantial number of issues in respect of individual trees and tree groups. Many specimens are noted to be defective or of poor quality and as such may prove to be of limited longevity or suitable only for limited retention on safety grounds. As such, it must be appreciated from the outset that the existing site tree population is partially flawed and cannot be retained in its entirety over time. For this reason, it is understood that more trees will be lost over time, over and above those associated with site development. This appreciation illustrates the need for replacement planting because of both natural and planned tree removal.

Additionally, and appreciating that the site supports a significant number of Ash and Emergent, sapling Wych Elm, then pathological issues must be considered. Dutch Elm Disease is noted on the site and therefore, the remaining (typically young) Elms are likely to be affected with time. Similarly, the spread of "Ash Decline" raises similar concerns, with authorities such as Teagasc and "The Woodland Trust" suggesting that 80% of the Ash population may be lost over the coming decades.

This should not be regarded as counterproductive as the extent and nature of site development is such as to limit space availability for new planting that in turn is critical to population turnover, replacement planting, the provision of age and species diversity and hence the promotion of sustainability over time.

### **Future Monitoring**

Considering the nature of material as will exist on the site (typically young and of small stature) then it is reasonable to assume than management issues should be limited. Nonetheless, issues may develop and arise, requiring that a monitoring system is in place so that such issues can be identified.

In its simplest form, such a system would entail a walk-through review, undertaken on a regular basis.

Facilitate such a review, it would be advisable to development a zoning system that identifies areas of increased occupation and use near trees or hedging. Such areas might reasonably be considered as offering a higher degree of risk and therefore could reasonably be regarded as being in need of more regular review.

Nonetheless, review should be undertaken at least annually, accommodating seasonal differences (in leaf and out of leaf) so that a full and realistic appraisal can be maintained.

Such reviews would be looking for physical and pathological issues. Such issues could include management problems associated with tree ties and stakes, pathological issues associated with tree disease, decline and death as well as numerous other problems.

### **Tree Planting Works**

Note is made of the extensive planting works indicated in the landscape plans lodged with the application.

The planting and management of these trees will be under the auspices of the landscape development plan. It is assumed that the young, and typically small trees will require little management in their formative years, however this must be subject to review and inspection.

Impromptu storm damage, growth and suppression and damage from tree supports can result in damage and would require timely attention. Such issues would be watched for in respect of new plantings.

Where possible, planting works should avoid age monocultures. Age diversity will improve sustainability over time.

### **Proposed Management Plan Framework**

Set out below is the basis of a strategic tree and hedge management plan, separated into its short, medium, and longer-term elements.

In its current format, it provides a basis for management, though equally, it provides for the simple adoption of medium and longer-term goals as may be desired by stakeholders, including site managers, residents, and by inclusion in its development, South Dublin County Council.

In respect of this and with the intention of satiating the needs and desires of all parties, this plan should be reviewed regularly, and any additions or amendment should be raised and considered for adoption and inclusion as deemed appropriate.

**Immediate Plan** – Works to be completed during and immediately post development.

- Undertake works advised within development planning tree survey and planting specification.
- Develop a zoning strategy to advise in respect of areas of highest risk and highest degree of scrutiny.
- Review retained trees in respect of effects of tree felling, shelter loss and exposure and produce a secondary works programs to address same.
- Undertake agreed planting works in accordance with development permissions.

- Produce and adopt a monitoring, inspection, and review plan

**Short Term Plan** – Annual - To be initiated and adopted from site development –

- Review and update the tree conditions (survey) to identify ongoing conditions and need for specific action.
- Review planted material for establishment failure and need for replacement.
- Amend “Short Term Plan” inclusions to include works recommended by above reviews

**Medium Term Plan** – 5 Year basis

- Review age profile
- Review patterns of tree loss
- Assess need and extent of planting works in respect of short-term tree management and longer-term population management desires and objectives.

**Long Term Plan** – 15 Year basis

- Review management plan to date
- Assess for need to amend adjust plan
- Assess for need/benefits of proactive tree removal to provide for planting space or for allocation of new planting areas/zones

If you have any queries regarding the above, please do not hesitate to contact me directly on 086 3819011

Yours Sincerely  
The Tree File Ltd



Andy Worsnop Tech. Arbor A, NCH Arb  
PTI (LANTRA)

