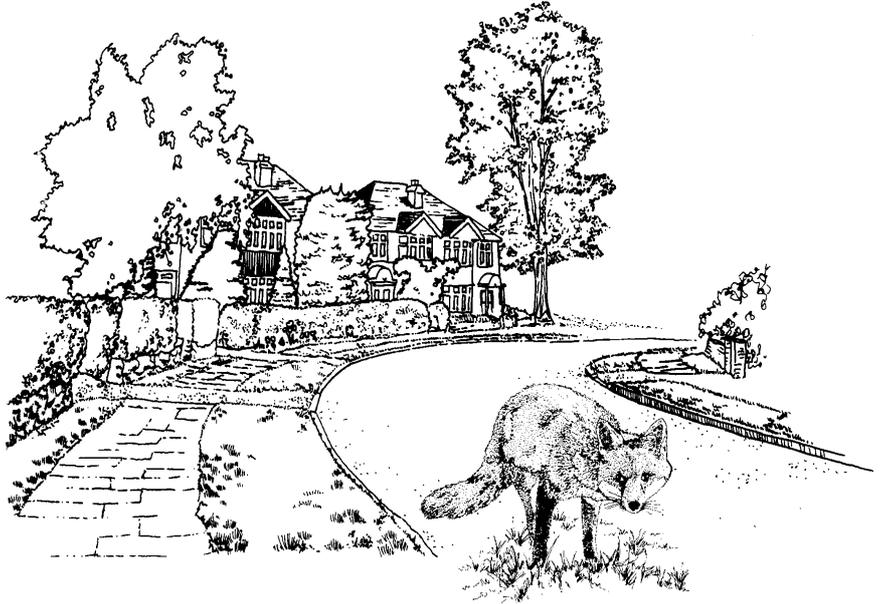


MERTON UNITARY  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN



# SPG

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SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE NOTE

## Planting Landscaping and Nature Conservation Provision for Development Schemes

OCTOBER 2001

**MERTON UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN  
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE NOTE**

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**Planting, Landscaping and Nature Conservation  
Provision for Development Schemes**

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OCTOBER 2001

## What this note is about

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The Council's Unitary Development Plan (UDP) is the statutory planning framework for the future of the whole Borough. The UDP contains the Council's statutory planning policies related to development proposals formulated on the basis of Government guidance and legislation.

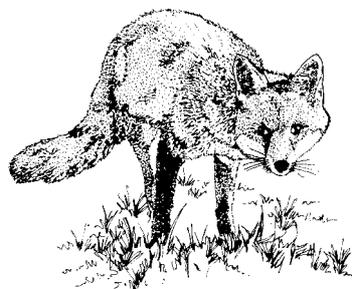
To help you in applying for planning permission and to provide a background to both the UDP and other Council policies, the Planning and Public Protection Division has produced a number of Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes. These set out details of how the Council is addressing the concerns of Government Guidance, whilst reflecting local circumstances. Government Planning Guidance contained in PPG12 encourages the preparation of Supplementary Planning Guidance. Its status is not statutory, but cross refers to the UDP where relevant. It will be used by the Council as a "material planning consideration" when making decisions on planning applications.

This Note identifies the Council's requirements relating to planting, landscaping and nature conservation provision in relation to development proposals within the Borough of Merton.

Many subjects within this Note overlap and therefore it should be considered and applied comprehensively as an integral part of any proposed development, as a practical tool in helping those in submitting planning applications. This guidance is updated more frequently than the plan itself, and you are encouraged to discuss your proposals with planning staff before you make a formal planning application. It should also be noted that this is guidance only, and your application will always be considered on its merits.

# Supplementary Planning Guidance

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## Planting, Landscaping and Nature Conservation Provision for Development Schemes

October 2001

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[www.merton.gov.uk](http://www.merton.gov.uk)

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# 1. Introduction

This Guidance has been prepared in order to advise prospective developers and property owners who are considering some form of development of their land, about good practice for planting, landscaping and nature conservation provision in conjunction with the development of land. It should be read in conjunction with other Supplementary Planning Guidance, such as that relating to New Residential Development, and Designing Out Crime.

This SPG Note was placed on deposit during the first deposit stage of the UDP preparation in September 1999, and has been amended in the light of representations made during that deposit period.

It includes advice on the approach that should be adopted to nature conservation and planting and landscape proposals, site appraisal, retention of valuable features, design concept, detailed design considerations, as well as the establishment of vegetation, plants and plant care.

Landscape natural habitats and trees have the effect of softening a hard urban environment, and they add colour and sustain wildlife in our streets and gardens, as well as enhancing open spaces. They provide shade from the hot summer sun, and shelter from the wind. They can also help to maintain privacy and provide oxygen whilst absorbing carbon dioxide.

Good planting enhances development schemes, making them more attractive to potential purchasers and occupiers. It is clear that good landscape provision can enhance property values. Therefore achieving a high standard of natural habitats, planting and landscape treatment makes good economic sense both for developers and property owners.

It is estimated that a quarter of London's land area consists of private gardens and the landscaped surrounds of other built development, and that 75%

of London's trees are located on private land, so it is clearly essential that private development sites contribute to future natural habitats and landscape needs.

Tree coverage in Merton is generally quite good, though whilst certain areas such as North and West Wimbledon and parts of Morden are very well provided for, other parts of the Borough, such as Colliers Wood, North Mitcham and South Wimbledon have relatively few trees.

Wherever possible developers and property owners should seek the advice of a qualified specialist in landscape architecture, arboriculture or nature conservation. Details are provided at the end of this document.

# 2. The Unitary Development Plan

The Merton Unitary Development Plan (UDP) sets out the Council's planning policies in respect of development. Included in that are policies relating to nature conservation, landscaping, and the protection of trees etc. These policies are used when assessments are made of development and other proposals which have any impact on protected species, natural habitat, trees and other landscape features, and they are referred to in this Guidance. The main policies are summarised below:

## POLICIES RELATING TO SPECIAL AREAS

- NE.1 Metropolitan Open Land**
- NE.4 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation**
- NE.2 Green Chains**
- NE.5 Green Corridors**
- NE.5A Management of Land**
- L.3 Watercourse Environments**
- L.4 River Wandle**

In all of these special areas, most of which are shown on the UDP Proposals Map, the Council will look for either protection or enhancement of the quality of the natural environment, in conjunction with any development scheme. In such areas special consideration needs to be given to the part that planting and landscape can play.

The Handbook, Nature Conservation in Merton, published by the London Ecology Unit, provides detailed descriptions of the ecology of the most important sites in the Borough from a nature conservation point of view. Proposals may impact on the nature conservation value of a recognised site, even if they relate to land outside the boundary of the protected site. The open character of Metropolitan Open Land and Green Chains will be protected. The importance of securing appropriate management of land, in the interests of protecting its nature conservation value, is emphasised.

## **POLICY RELATING TO SPECIES PROTECTION**

### **NE.9 Species Protection**

The protection of species is dependent on the protection of habitat on which those species depend. Special consideration will need to be given to the protection of such habitats which are important for unprotected species, or species found to be uncommon, or under threat in the London or the Merton Biodiversity Action Plans.

## **POLICIES RELATING TO RETENTION OF EXISTING TREES**

### **NE.12 Protection of Trees**

### **NE.13 Trees Hedges and Landscape Features**

These two policies set out the Council's policy for existing trees and landscape. Existing landscape features such as hedges and woodland should be retained as far as possible, and new habitats created where appropriate either through direct creation or by allowing natural regeneration. The Council have powers to protect trees which are of amenity value and are of high quality. This is done by making Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). All TPOs are entered onto a Register, given a unique reference number, and shown on maps held by the Council. The Council also offers technical advice on the care and maintenance of trees.

Where a development scheme offers the potential for landscape treatment, then applications need to either set out a fully detailed landscape scheme or, if the proposals are at the outline stage, to demonstrate the potential for providing a satisfactory landscape

scheme. Landscape proposals must not be treated as an afterthought to the design and layout of a scheme, but should be considered as an integral item at the initial design stage. The policy makes it clear that all existing trees and hedges which are considered to have amenity value should be retained. It also requires that all trees and landscape features which are retained, should be protected during building works to the standard required by the Council.

Any planning application which has implications for, or has the potential for landscaping and trees, will be expected to include a plan which shows all existing trees and the accurate extent of tree canopies. The plan will need to identify all trees which are to be retained and to show any trees which are proposed to be felled or pruned. Any proposals for landscape changes should also be shown. Trees which are to remain should be protected during building work to the standard provided by BS 5837:1991. Where underground works are required, the plans should indicate the location of such work, so that the possible damage to root systems can be assessed.

## **POLICIES RELATING TO NEW PLANTING**

### **NE.10 Habitat Creation and Enhancement**

### **NE.14 Environmental Improvements BE.48 Street Furniture and Materials**

New landscape and nature conservation features will be sought if development proposals adversely affect existing features. Similar enhancement work will be sought in parks, open spaces and the streets of the Borough.

### **NE.8 Nature Conservation in Backland Areas**

### **BE.24 Gardens and Incidental Open Spaces**

Where development is proposed in rear gardens and other incidental pieces of open land, the Council will wish to take into account implications for the ecology and natural habitat of the area. It may therefore require a developer to provide a statement setting out those implications. Loss of the greater part of front garden space to off street car parking space, or loss of trees of amenity value would be resisted.

### **BE.33 Safety and Security**

New developments are expected to be designed in such a way as to maximise personal safety and security. This requirement has implications for the design of landscaping schemes. Reference should be made to the Supplementary Planning Guidance Note on Designing Out Crime.

**BE.35 BE.36 BE.37  
Wimbledon, Mitcham and Morden  
Town Centres  
BE.38 Town Centre Improvements**

Opportunities arising from development schemes, for improving both hard and soft landscape within town centres and important local shopping parades will need to be taken. These should be designed in such a way as to reinforce the unique character of the centre.

**BE.49 Telecommunications Equipment  
HS.3 Flat Conversions**

Schemes for the development of telecommunications equipment will be expected to consider the potential for screening of that equipment by trees and landscaping. Where a building is to be converted to flats, a suitable landscape scheme should, if the potential exists, be provided in the front and rear gardens.

**L.5 Public Parks & Open Spaces  
L.7 Public Open Space Policy  
BE.13 Historic Parks and Gardens**

Where development is envisaged within any of the Borough's parks, the Council will wish to ensure that the ecological value and the landscape character is retained. Wimbledon Park, Morden Hall Park, South Park Gardens and Cannizaro Park are all designated as Historic Parks and Gardens. In these areas the Council will ensure that their historic landscapes are protected.

### 3. Site Appraisal

When a site is first being considered for development, the existing protected species, natural habitats, landscape and landscape features need to be assessed. These may significantly affect the development potential of the site.

It is first necessary to establish whether the site is included in, or adjacent to, a Conservation Area, or whether there are existing Tree Preservation Orders, covenants or existing permissions, covering trees on it, or on adjacent land. The boundaries of Conservation Areas are shown on the UDP Proposals Map, and the Council hold details of all buildings within these areas. The TPO Register should be consulted.

If the site lies within a Conservation Area, then six weeks notice must be given to the Council before any works (felling or pruning) are carried out to trees on the site. During that time the Council will consider whether to make a Tree Preservation Order.

If a TPO exists, then consent must be sought from the Council for any works which are to be carried out to the tree. TPOs may identify specific trees individually, or they may cover groups of trees together, without individual details of each tree within the group. Whether they are individual or group TPOs, the implications of the TPO is the same.

The second part of the site appraisal will be to ascertain if there are any special designations affecting either the site itself, or adjacent land. These designations could include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), rivers or watercourses, Green Chains, and Green Corridors. These designations are shown on the UDP Proposals Map.

While the best of our designed and natural heritage is found in designated sites, the appraisal should not assume that there will be no such values elsewhere. Specific policies in the UDP set out the implications for land subject to each of the above designations, and also for land adjacent to them. In general the Council will seek

to protect the existing nature conservation value of these areas, and if possible to secure enhancement to that value.

The next part of the site appraisal will be to carry out a detailed site survey, which would accurately locate and clearly identify all trees on, or near to, the site. These should be identified in terms of their species, their girth, and an accurate measurement of the spread of their canopy. Spot height levels should be taken at the base of each tree to be retained to ensure that development proposals will be compatible with retention. The condition of each tree may also be noted, including its estimated age, its general condition and any defects to its shape resulting from poor management or poor pruning practice.

The appraisal of the site should also take into account any other natural features of the site. These might for example include natural topography, hedges, shrubs wild flowers and the presence of and habitat of protected species of plants and animals such as bats, badgers and great crested newts.

This part of the appraisal should also consider the views within the site, and views of the site from outside its boundaries. Certain parts of the site may for example provide a focal point for an important view, or may terminate a view along the length of a street.

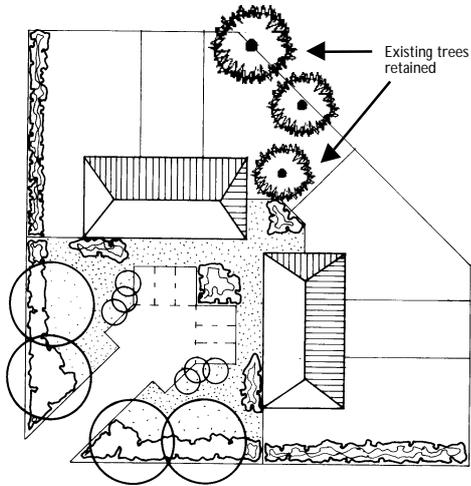
Major features such as mature forest type trees may provide a landmark feature which can be seen from distant places. The topography of the area may mean that the site provides a skyline feature which can also be appreciated over a wide area. A site may have public access through it or along one side of it, this will have implications for the way in which the general public perceive the site.

Landscape schemes must also be sensitive to existing wildlife, soil & topographic values, as inappropriate landscaping treatment can be harmful to these.

## 4. The Design Process

Following a full assessment of the existing natural and landscape qualities of the site, proposals for the development of the site, including proposals for landscape work need to be considered.

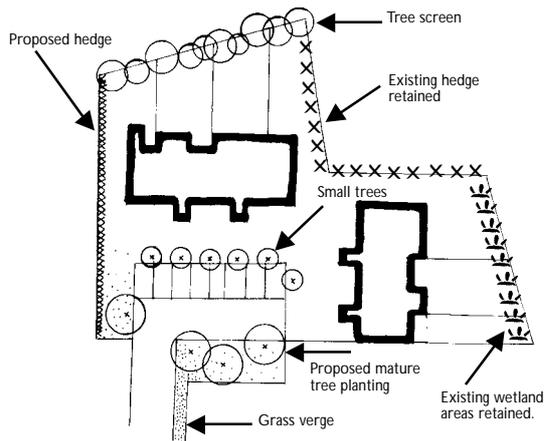
It is fundamental to the design process that proposals for new buildings, and proposals for landscape treatment should be considered in parallel. All too often in the past landscape has been treated as an after thought, and new planting proposed on incidental spaces which can not be used for anything else.



*Consider landscape proposals in parallel with the layout of the development*

The Council, when it considers proposals for the development of a site, will wish to see evidence that the design of the landscape has been treated as an integral part of the design of the development as a whole. If a detailed planning application is to be submitted, then this evidence can take the form of a fully worked up landscape proposal. If an application is to be submitted in outline only, then a sketch plan should be submitted showing the broad concept of the landscape proposal. This plan could be submitted as an illustrative drawing.

In designing landscape proposals it is helpful to consider the intended function that the landscape is intended to fulfil. These functions can include enclosure of spaces or views, screen planting, achieving a formal composition, nature conservation, and specimen planting.



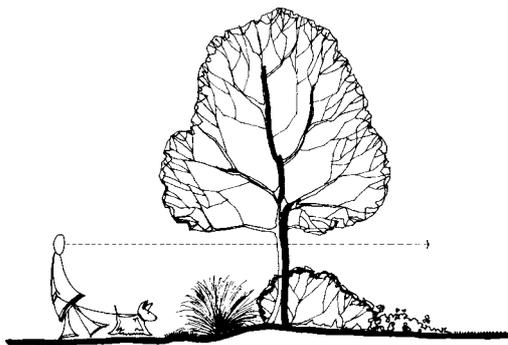
Sketch plan showing broad landscape concept

As an overall consideration it is essential that the design of landscape should bear in mind security. These aspects are considered in more detail below.

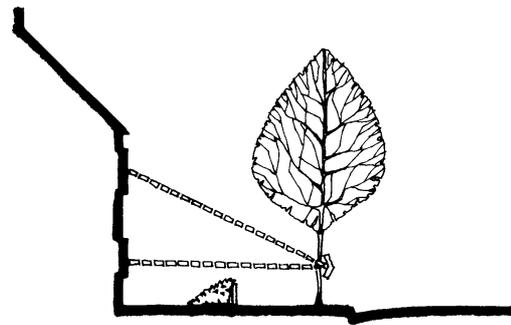
## 5. Planting for Safety and Security

It is essential that the landscape treatment for a site does not create an environment in which crime may flourish, or where people have a perception of danger. This means that planting needs to be considered in the context of existing or proposed lighting, and that pedestrians have clear visibility along routes which they will use.

These requirements need not rule out all planting adjacent to pedestrian routes, but they would point to a combination of low level planting (say below 600mm) and tree planting. Such a combination can



Planting to leave clear eye level visibility



Informal surveillance of the street

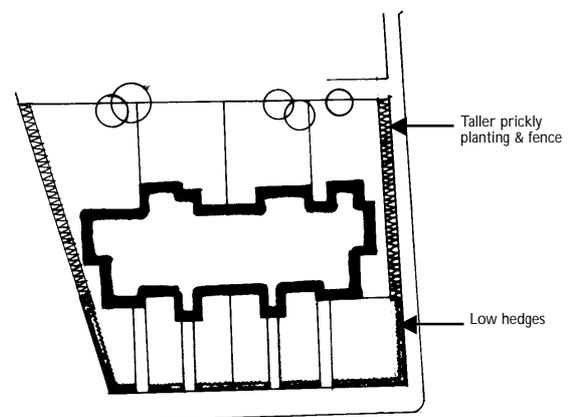
allow relatively unobstructed eye level visibility. The position relative to lighting, of any tall shrubs or trees needs to be carefully assessed, to ensure that pedestrian routes, or land adjacent to routes is not cast into dark shadow at night.

Planting proposals should also not unduly restrict the informal surveillance from overlooking windows of areas to which the general public has access. Planting should also not be sited so as to obscure views of front entrances from the public street.

Selection of certain varieties of thorny plants can be useful in deterring intrusion into private areas. The use of climbing plants to clothe a wall may be useful in deterring graffiti artists.

Planting can be useful as a contribution to the delineation of public areas (eg streets and footpaths) from semi private ones (eg front gardens), and from private areas (eg rear gardens).

Judicious selection of plants can fulfil the requirements of security and nature conservation.

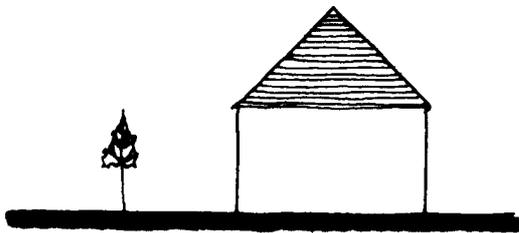


Use of planting to define public, semi private and private areas

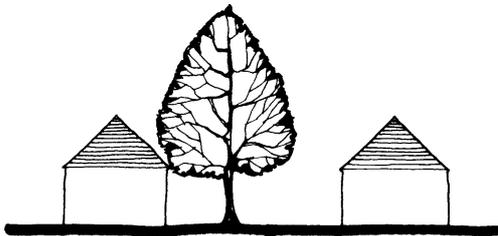
## 6. Scale

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It is important to ensure that the scale of planting is appropriate to the space available for it. This factor will for example help to determine the species of trees which may be used. While forest type trees do have a place within urban areas, they are unlikely to be satisfactory within small spaces which are tightly enclosed by buildings. There is however a wide variety of smaller and medium sized tree species as well as other plants which can be used in such situations. It is important to consider the eventual size of a fully mature tree.



*Planting appropriate to the scale of the surroundings ?*



Almost no space is too small to be considered for some form of landscape treatment, and the smallest of spaces can benefit from a suitable landscape scheme.

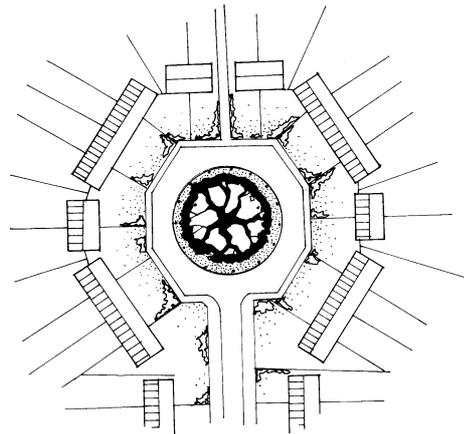
Where larger spaces are available, then these can be seen as opportunities to plant on a larger scale using larger tree species. Planting of taller tree species will offer benefit not only to the immediate locality, but may also introduce a landscape element to more distant views, for example breaking up and softening roofscape views.

## 7. Specimen Planting and Formality

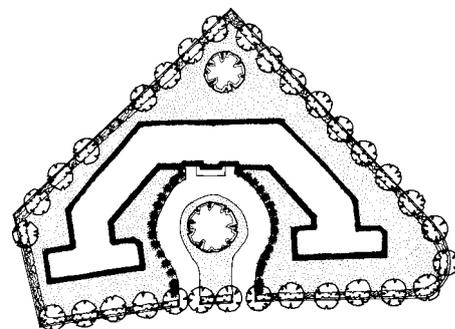
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Some development schemes may suggest that the landscape emphasis should be on one major feature. This might for example take the form of one tree of a size appropriate to the space available. This approach can be used to provide a focal point which can help to define a space.

The building layout or the architecture of a building or group of buildings may suggest that a formal planting scheme is appropriate. Such schemes will tend to emphasize the symmetry and balance of the development. Formal planting can be used to lend emphasis to the entrance to a building, or can be used in a street to create a formal avenue.



*Specimen planting*

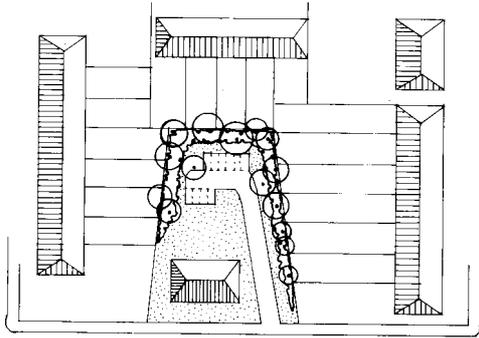


*Formal planting*

## 8. Screening

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Planting is often used as a method of providing screening between one site or one building and another. This may help to overcome problems of overlooking and privacy, or it may reduce the visual impact of one site or building on its neighbours. Clearly with the use of deciduous plants the screening effect will be more effective in the summer than in the winter.

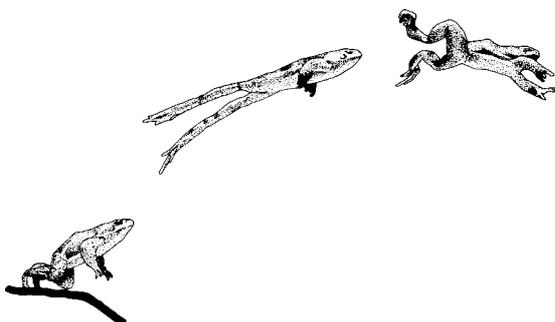


*Screen planting*

Planting can also be used to visually break up large areas. This can be beneficial in for example car parks, or areas of playing fields.

It may also be worth considering planting to form a screen against noise and fumes. Trees and shrubs do not have a significant benefit in terms of filtering out either noise or fumes, however they can be beneficial to the people's perception of separation from a noisy neighbour or from a source of fumes.

Planting can be used to soften the lines of buildings. To do this it is not necessary to entirely obscure the building in question, but it is usually sufficient to break up the lines of the building with intermittent planting. This is commonly done for example in front gardens, to soften the lines of a house, as seen from the public street.

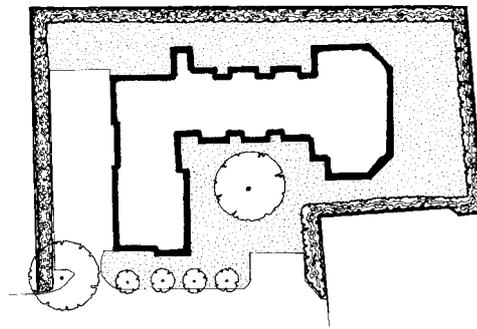


## 9. Enclosure

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One example of enclosure planting is the use of hedging around a garden area. Planting may also be used on a larger scale to close a view, or to complete the enclosure of a space, which is partly enclosed by buildings.

To be successful, it is desirable that the planting which is to be used to complete the enclosure, should be of comparable height and scale to other elements which contribute to the enclosure.



*Enclosure planting*

## 10. Nature Conservation

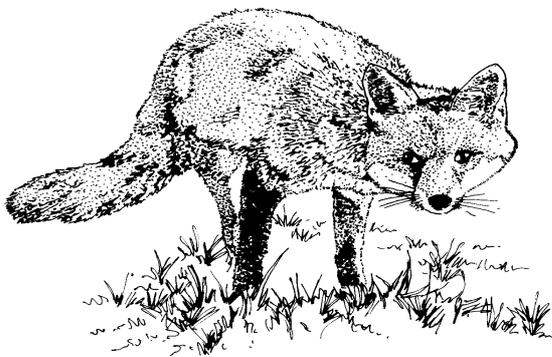
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Landscaping can be used to increase the diversity of wildlife in an area but must not harm the existing nature conservation value. Plant species can be chosen for the food or shelter that they provide for Merton's animals and birds. Some native animals have close relationships with native species of plants, but many non native plants can also provide valuable food and shelter. There are some rare British species of plant that should not be introduced into Merton from elsewhere, as this would introduce alien genetic material. It is better to use the more common species in such schemes, as these are generally hardier, less demanding of specialist conditions, and are thus more likely to survive.



An area will be more attractive to wildlife if it holds a range of structured elements, much like the traditional "cottage garden". This means not only trees, but shrubs, climbers and ground cover. If some of the grass can be cut only once, or a few times a year, this will provide shelter for animals and allows flowers to show.



Water features with at least one natural edge can attract dragonflies, frogs, toads and newts. If this is intended then they are best not stocked with fish, as fish eat the tadpoles.

Before undertaking planting check to make sure that the existing vegetation is without value. Where this is grassland, it will pay to cease mowing to allow any flowers to appear. For woody vegetation, remember that dead wood provides valuable habitat, and should be removed only where it presents a hazard. Ivy growing up walls or trees and bramble on the ground

both provide particularly valuable habitat. Work these existing values into any new design.

Woody planting for nature conservation is best in small close-spaced groups of small plants ('whips'). Where there is space, these can imitate woodland.

Trees can be chosen from the native species of London's woodlands: pedunculate and sessile oaks, rowan, yew, beech, holly, goat willow, common willow, silver birch, ash, field maple, wild cherry and hornbeam. Native woodland shrubs, such as hazel, blackthorn and hawthorn should be planted with the trees.

Where there is less room, a hedgerow can be planted with shrubs and smaller-growing trees. Hedges have value as linear features acting as green corridors, which allow for the movement of plant and animal species, which offer habitat, and which can link isolated sites. In these more sunny situations additional shrubs can include elder, bramble, gorse and dog rose, and climbers can include honeysuckle and travellers' joy. Woody material should be planted outside the growing season and must be well-mulched to prevent weed competition and to retain moisture in the early



years. After the last mulch is applied, the woodland edge or hedgerow can be seeded with woodland wildflowers such as red campion, foxglove, lesser celandine, cow parsley, hogweed, hedge mustard, red-veined dock and aquilegia. As the trees grow tall enough, provide boxes for birds and bats rather than waiting many years for natural holes to form.

For more specialised natural planting, such as wildflower mixes and ponds, there are good reference books available, or you should employ a specialist in natural landscaping.

The list of tree species appended indicates species which can be beneficial to nature conservation.

The use of native species in planting schemes has the effect of speeding up the process of natural succession of plant species. This process ensures that when a site is left to evolve naturally, it will generally develop first a grassland cover, then scrub vegetation, and finally woodland.

A development site may offer special ecological qualities, for example wetland areas. It may provide shelter for a species of plant or creature which is uncommon to the area. In such cases proposals need to be tailored to preserving or enhancing the habitat to allow the specific species to flourish and spread.

## 11. Derelict Land

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Landscape schemes for derelict land present special problems and opportunities. Possible contamination may need to be investigated, and a suitable decontamination scheme, appropriate to the intended end use may need to be implemented.

Derelict land is, over a period of time, usually able to regenerate naturally, and often where this has occurred, a special type of ecology evolves. This can offer unusual conditions which can provide a habitat for uncommon plants and animals. Where a landscape proposal is being considered in such situations, it is often better to try to work in parallel with the forces of natural regeneration, rather than to impose an alien proposal.

## 12. Relating Landscape to the Development

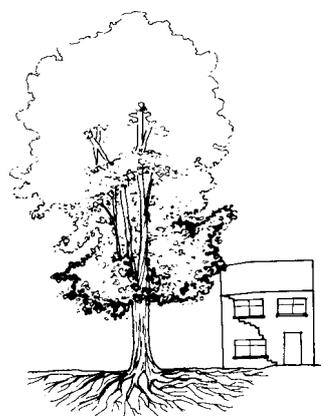
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It is vital to ensure that any proposed buildings are sited at a sufficient distance from existing trees to allow the latter to survive and to flourish. Similarly any new tree planting which is proposed should be located so as to provide adequate space between it and proposed or existing buildings.

If existing or proposed trees are too close to existing or proposed buildings, then several problems can occur. This can result in a need for the subsequent removal or pruning of trees.

The excavation required for the construction of foundations can cause root damage, which can affect the health of a mature tree.

Much of the Borough is founded on clay, and this can pose particular problems of shrinkage affecting foundations of buildings where there are trees in the vicinity. The design of foundations for new buildings

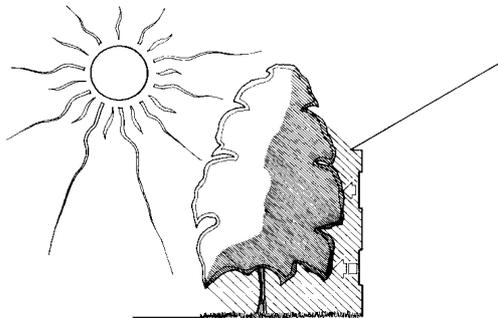


*Tree too close to building*

should therefore take into account the soil conditions and the presence of tree root systems of existing trees and potential future root systems of tree planting that is proposed.

Where it is proposed to construct new development close to existing trees, this can often give rise to a subsequent demand for the reduction or removal of the tree in the interests of improving the sunlight or daylight to, or outlook from, windows in the building.

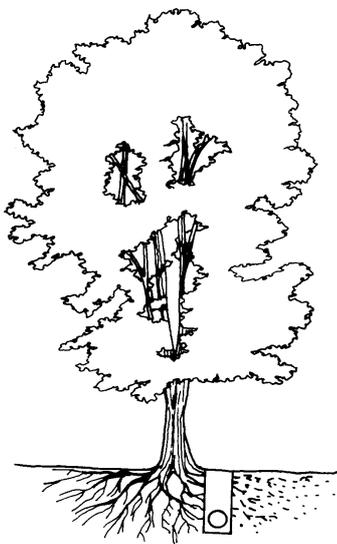
When considering the space to be provided between the proposed buildings and existing trees, sufficient space should be left between proposed windows and existing trees to ensure that there is no likelihood of a future demand for the tree to be pruned or felled.



*Restricted light and outlook*

If the problem of large trees being close to a building already exists, this does not necessarily mean that the tree must be removed. It may be possible to remove only the lower branches, so that the main part of the canopy is above the height of the house.

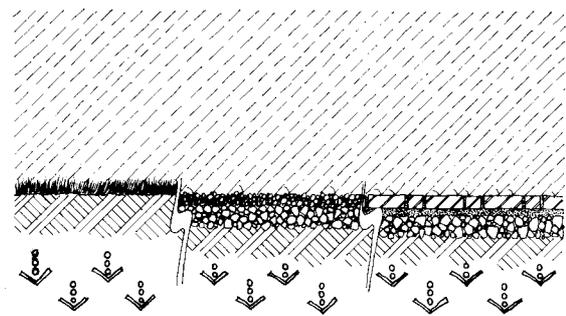
The location of proposed underground services can affect tree root systems, and as a result can result in the death of mature trees. Where this is likely to be an issue, the Council may ask to see the details of the proposals for such services, and may require modifications to the proposed works, in order to ensure that such damage is kept to a minimum.



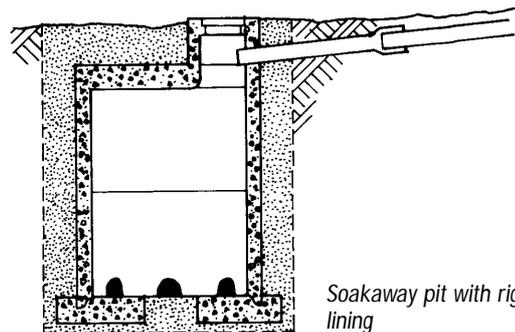
*Location of underground services*

### 13. Surface Water Drainage

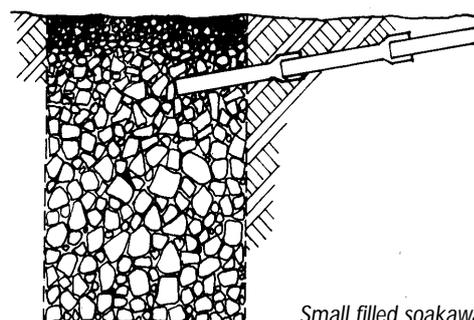
Where development occurs it often results in an increase in the extent of hard impermeable surfaces. These greatly increase the speed in which rainwater reaches the rivers. On a cumulative basis this adversely affects the speed and seriousness of river flooding. This problem can be tackled by creating artificial rainwater storage facilities within the development site, which are designed to release water slowly into the river systems. An additional or alternative solution in which as much as possible of the site is landscaped using permeable surfaces, thus allowing rainwater to seep naturally into the ground. This approach can avoid an expensive engineering solution.



*Permeable surfaces*



*Soakaway pit with rigid lining*



*Small filled soakaway*

The Council consults with the Environment Agency about applications which may present significant implications for flooding, and is guided by their comments. The Environment Agency can provide information on best practice for dealing with surface water.

## 14. The Planning Application

Fully detailed landscape proposals should be submitted with the application and these should clearly and accurately show all existing trees on the site. The plans should indicate the species and the extent of the canopy of each tree. The position of buildings to be retained and any proposed new buildings should also be indicated on that plan. In general a plan at a scale of 1:200 or larger will be sufficient for this purpose. The plan should make it clear which of the existing trees are to remain, and which if any are to be removed or pruned. Spot levels should be indicated at the base of each tree.

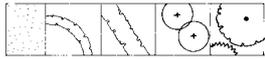
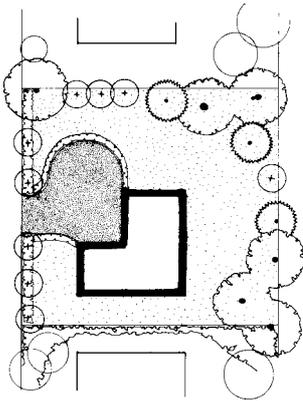
Outline applications should include an illustrative plan which sets out the landscape concept for the site. This should include the positions of existing trees and other important planting, and should indicate the intention to either keep, remove or prune. Annotations on the drawing can be used to set out the principles that new landscape proposals will follow.

## 15. Planning Conditions

The Council normally attaches landscape or nature conservation conditions to relevant development. The principal standard tree and landscape conditions are summarised below.

- H1 Landscaping or nature conservation scheme**
- H2 Trees/landscaping scheme**
- H3 New tree planting**

When imposing these three conditions, the Council will be looking to protect or enhance the local environment. The implementation of an approved landscape scheme can improve the presentation of a



Landscape Key

*Proposals for Landscaping a site*

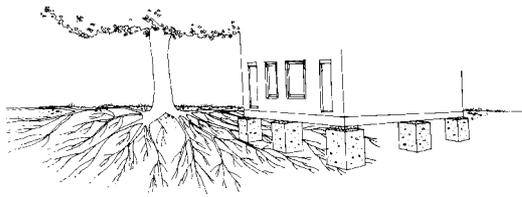
development, as well as help to harmonise the new scheme with the immediate locality. These conditions may also seek to ensure that replacements are provided for any trees/shrubs which are found to be dead or defective within a fixed length of time.

- H4 Tree surgery**
- H5 Trees or valuable habitat elements to be retained by condition**
- H6 Trees to be retained (as per approved drawings)**
- H7 Replacement trees**
- H8 Tree protection**

These planning conditions seek to ensure that specific elements of the landscape, for example trees, which have previously been identified through the planning application stages as being worthy of retention, are retained for the foreseeable future, and for future generations. As part of the process involved in retaining trees, the Council will look to ensure that they are correctly protected during the course of the development.

### **H9 Design of foundations**

In instances where planning permission is granted for construction to occur closer than the preferred distance from a tree which is to be retained, the Council will expect to see that steps are taken to use a foundation type which will keep root damage to a minimum.



*Pier-and-beam underpinning*

Deeper foundations are likely to be required in situations where trees are to be retained close to a proposed building.

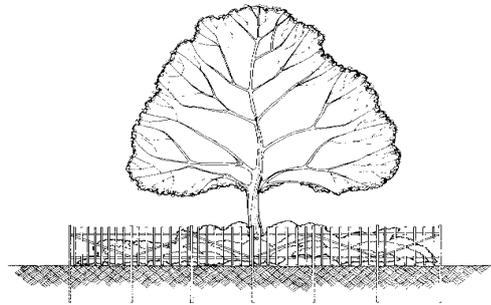
In addition to the above standard conditions, the Council may sometimes seek to apply further conditions, tailored to a specific site or proposal.

## 16. Site Protection

During all stages of site work, retained trees and other vegetation are at their most vulnerable. Care should be taken to avoid the following instances whereby unnecessary damage can occur:

- Movements of vehicles which affect the canopy of trees and other plants. The canopy of existing protected planting may be harmed by the movement of high sided vehicles. Limb breakages and bark abrasions are common, and can be easily avoided. With foresight, branches can be protected or pruned, and the trunk wrapped in hessian or similar protective material.
- Damage to root systems. The majority of the root systems can be found in the top 600 mm of the soil. In order to live and grow, roots need oxygen from the soil. Any compaction of the ground can cause significant and sometimes irreversible damage. A single passage by heavy equipment or the storage of heavy materials can cause significant damage. This can result in not only the death of the tree, but also in a soil which will not readily sustain new planting without the application of considerable expense and labour.

- Serious damage can occur to the roots of woody vegetation, and to lower growing plants, when lowering or raising soil levels, storing materials on the soil, or by excessive mulching. This can be direct damage, or asphyxiation, by the imposition of a barrier between natural soil and the atmosphere.
- Low growing vegetation and the roots of woody species can be killed by a variety of substances that exclude air from the soil, or are directly toxic: natural gas (methane), petrol, diesel, sewage effluent, or excessive mulching.



*Protection of trees during construction*

For these principal reasons the Council will use planning conditions to protect the retained vegetation, and require the use of sturdy fencing which will enclose the existing vegetation at pre set distances. Such fencing will protect the immediate natural vegetation and ground levels from any disturbance, and help to ensure that as much of the existing mature landscape will survive the development and continue to contribute to the area. Fines of up £20,000 for wilful damage to trees can be imposed.

Additional information can be obtained from the British Standard 5837:1991 guide for "Trees in Relation to Construction".

## 17. Site Preparation for Planting

The implementation of the landscape or nature conservation condition is normally reserved for the conclusion of the site works. However this need not always be the case. Planting can be carried out during site operations providing the new planting is protected against any likely source of damage.

For any new planting to succeed, the greatest care should be taken to protect the soil. The particles which make up soil provide the basis for localised habitat which suits fauna and flora alike. Soil is a complex living entity, and any interference will damage a delicate resource. Its protection thus may serve nature conservation purposes, as well as assisting with the establishment of new vegetation.

The best approach is to protect existing ground conditions which in turn will provide the best growing conditions for any new planting. Care and protection of the existing soil is the key to planting success.

Should problems occur, the developer should, to begin with, remove all traces of site spoil. If necessary, top soil of "general purpose grade" (BS 3882:1994 or subsoil as appropriate) should be imported to infill any gaps, and/or restore ground levels. Any compacted soil should be broken up, ideally to a level which has not been affected by compaction. This will ensure that the processes involved in natural drainage can continue without hindrance. For difficult sites the service of a Soil/Landscape Scientist will help to redress any problems.

For large development schemes, it is advisable to use the services of a landscape architect, horticultural expert, or ecological expert. A professional can prepare drawings which illustrate the use of plants which will suit the given site conditions. As each site is different, the approach will likewise differ, and certain features, such as the need for screening, emphasising features, or hiding eyesores can be identified and accommodated. Further attention can be paid to the type of plants to be used. Plants can be selected for their various attributes, such as whether they are deciduous or evergreen, their leaf colour or texture,

their flowers and fruit, and their value as wildlife habitat. The suitability of the individual tree or plant for the space allowed, will need to be carefully considered.

Planting and seeding can be undertaken out of season only provided the level of care is modified. For example, planting during the late spring or summer needs to be accompanied by plenty of water to counterbalance the effects of heat and loss of moisture.

At the conclusion of planting, a thick layer of mulch is recommended for trees and shrubs. Mulch can provide four specific benefits to a planting scheme:

- the reduction or elimination of unwanted weeds,
- helping to keep the moisture locked in the soil, thereby reducing the need for frequent watering,
- promoting healthy growth, and
- as a designed component of a landscape

## 18. Benefits Derived from Good Landscape

A development which achieves a high standard of landscape is likely to prove popular with potential buyers or occupiers. Investing in good quality landscape can therefore be worthwhile from an economic point of view as well as from aesthetic and ecological points of view.

At the planning application stage, if it is seen that a development is to be complemented by good quality landscape or natural habitat, then this may help to overcome criticisms and objections which might otherwise be levelled at the development itself.

## 19. Further Advice

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General tree enquiries (Merton Council)  
020 8545 3238

Tree and Landscape officer (Merton Council)  
020 8545 3815

Landscape Institute  
020 7738 0166

Arboricultural Association  
01794 368717

Arboricultural Advisory and Information Service  
01420 23000

British Trust for Conservation Volunteers  
020 7278 4293

The British Standards Institution  
020 8996 7000

British Association of Landscape Industries  
01535 606139

Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management  
01491 873558

Institution of Structural Engineers  
020 7235 4535

National House Building Council  
01494 434477

Institution of Civil Engineers  
020 7222 7722

Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management  
01962 868626

**[www.merton.gov.uk](http://www.merton.gov.uk)**

## 20. Selective List of Tree Species

- (D) deciduous
- (E) evergreen
- (N) native species
- (N\*) some are native species

### A - LARGE TREES (20 METRES EVENTUAL HEIGHT)

LATIN NAME Aesculus hippocastanum (D)  
COMMON NAME Horse chestnut  
CHARACTERISTICS bold foliage, flowers,  
autumn colour, large spaces

LATIN NAME Ailanthus altissima (D)  
COMMON NAME Tree of Heaven  
CHARACTERISTICS fast growing, distinctive  
foliage, light shade

LATIN NAME Castanea sativa (D)  
COMMON NAME Sweet chestnut  
CHARACTERISTICS distinctive bark and foliage,  
open branching

LATIN NAME Cedrus species (E)  
COMMON NAME Cedar  
CHARACTERISTICS specimen trees, large spaces

LATIN NAME Fagus sylvatica (D)(N)  
COMMON NAME Beech  
CHARACTERISTICS stately form, autumn colour,  
large species or hedge, good  
for wildlife.

LATIN NAME Fraxinus excelsior (D)(N)  
COMMON NAME Ash  
CHARACTERISTICS fast growing, light crown and  
bark, exposed damp sites,  
not good on acid soils, good  
for wildlife.

LATIN NAME Gingo bilboa (D)  
COMMON NAME Maidenhair tree  
CHARACTERISTICS early fossil tree, fan-like  
leaves

LATIN NAME Juglans regia (D)  
COMMON NAME Common walnut  
CHARACTERISTICS slow growing, large pinnate  
leaves, edible fruits

LATIN NAME Larix decidua (N)  
COMMON NAME European larch  
CHARACTERISTICS vigorous, dense rosettes,  
short shoots, yellow  
autumn colour

LATIN NAME Liquidambar styraciflua (D)  
COMMON NAME Sweet gum  
CHARACTERISTICS star shaped foliage, striking  
autumn colour

LATIN NAME Liriodendron tulipifera (D)  
COMMON NAME Tulip tree  
CHARACTERISTICS tulip shaped flowers,  
specimen tree

LATIN NAME Metasequoia  
glyptostroboides (D)  
COMMON NAME Dawn redwood  
CHARACTERISTICS vigorous, bright green linear  
leaves, autumn colour

LATIN NAME Pinus sylvestris (E)(N)  
COMMON NAME Scots pine  
CHARACTERISTICS native conifer, orange red  
bark, open branching

LATIN NAME Platanus x hispanica (D)  
COMMON NAME London plane  
CHARACTERISTICS vigorous, specimen tree,  
tolerant of atmospheric  
pollution

LATIN NAME Quercus robur (D)(N\*)  
COMMON NAME Oak  
CHARACTERISTICS imposing spreading crown,  
large spaces.

LATIN NAME Robinia pseudoacacia (D)  
COMMON NAME False acacia  
CHARACTERISTICS fast growing, graceful form,  
light foliage.

LATIN NAME Tilia species (D)(N\*)  
COMMON NAME Lime  
CHARACTERISTICS graceful form, avenues,  
some are aphid resistant

**B - MEDIUM TREES  
(10-20 METRES EVENTUAL HEIGHT)**

LATIN NAME	<i>Acer campestre</i> (D)(N)
COMMON NAME	Field maple
CHARACTERISTICS	winged fruits, autumn colour, groups, hedges
LATIN NAME	<i>Alnus species</i> (D)(N*)
COMMON NAME	Alder
CHARACTERISTICS	waterside, fast growing, very tolerant of wet sites, good for wildlife.
LATIN NAME	<i>Betula species</i> (D)(N*)
COMMON NAME	Birch
CHARACTERISTICS	light crown and bark, may be closely planted in groups, good for wildlife.
LATIN NAME	<i>Carpinus betulus</i> (D)(N)
COMMON NAME	Hornbeam
CHARACTERISTICS	graceful branching, narrow and columnar forms, hedge, good for wildlife.
LATIN NAME	<i>Catalpa bignonioides</i> (D)
COMMON NAME	Indian bean tree
CHARACTERISTICS	spreading form, large leaves and flowers, late in leaf
LATIN NAME	<i>Davidii involucreta</i> (D)
COMMON NAME	Dove tree
CHARACTERISTICS	heart shaped leaves, handkerchief-like bracts
LATIN NAME	<i>Fraxinus ornus</i> (D)
COMMON NAME	Manna ash
CHARACTERISTICS	rounded appearance, fragrant flowers
LATIN NAME	<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i> (D)
COMMON NAME	Honey locust
CHARACTERISTICS	graceful, light foliage, "Sunburst" yellow leaves, smaller
LATIN NAME	<i>Populus tremula</i> (D) (N)
COMMON NAME	Aspen
CHARACTERISTICS	leaves attractive in wind, open crown, autumn colour

LATIN NAME	<i>Prunus avium</i> "plena" (D)(N)
COMMON NAME	Wild cherry
CHARACTERISTICS	ornamental cherry qualities, plus good shape.
LATIN NAME	<i>Salix alba</i> "sericea" (D)(N)
COMMON NAME	silver willow
CHARACTERISTICS	waterside, fast, distinctive form, silver foliage
LATIN NAME	<i>Sorbus aria</i> (D)(N)
COMMON NAME	Whitebeam
CHARACTERISTICS	rounded form, silvery leaves, flowers, groups
LATIN NAME	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i> (D)(N)
COMMON NAME	Rowan
CHARACTERISTICS	berries and flowers, autumn colour

**C - SMALL TREES  
(UP TO 10 METRES EVENTUAL HEIGHT)**

LATIN NAME	<i>Acer davidii</i> (D)
COMMON NAME	Ornamental maples
CHARACTERISTICS	striped or peeling bark, striking autumn colour
LATIN NAME	<i>Amelanchier lamarkii</i> (D)
COMMON NAME	June berry
CHARACTERISTICS	abundant flowers, rich autumn colour
LATIN NAME	<i>Arbutus species</i> (E)
COMMON NAME	Strawberry tree
CHARACTERISTICS	clusters of white flowers, strawberry-like fruits
LATIN NAME	<i>Buxus sempervirens</i> (E)(N)
COMMON NAME	Box
CHARACTERISTICS	slow growing, dense small leaf
LATIN NAME	<i>Cornus controversa</i> (D)
COMMON NAME	Dogwood
CHARACTERISTICS	layered branches, cream flowers in May
LATIN NAME	<i>Cotoneaster x watereri</i> (E)
COMMON NAME	Cotoneaster
CHARACTERISTICS	vigorous, profuse red/orange-red berries

LATIN NAME Crataegus monogyna (D)(N)  
 COMMON NAME Hawthorn  
 CHARACTERISTICS fragrant flowers, fruit, hedge, screen, autumn colour, good for wildlife.

LATIN NAME Prunus pardus (D)(N)  
 COMMON NAME Bird cherry  
 CHARACTERISTICS similar features to wild cherry, but smaller

LATIN NAME Eucalyptus niphophila (E)  
 COMMON NAME Snow gum  
 CHARACTERISTICS distinctive grey bark and leaves, graceful form

LATIN NAME Pyrus species (D)  
 COMMON NAME Pear  
 CHARACTERISTICS flowers, some have silver leaf, fruit

LATIN NAME Ilex aquifolium (E)(N)  
 COMMON NAME Holly  
 CHARACTERISTICS dense foliage to ground, berries, hedge, screen, good for wildlife.

LATIN NAME Rhus typhina (D)  
 COMMON NAME Stag's horn sumach  
 CHARACTERISTICS leaf shape, dramatic autumn colour, very small tree

LATIN NAME Magnolia grandiflora (E)  
 COMMON NAME Evergreen magnolia  
 CHARACTERISTICS fragrant flowers, sheltered specimen (eg by wall)

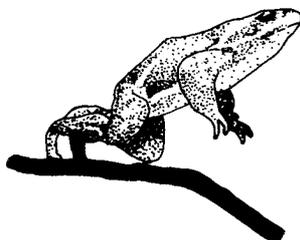
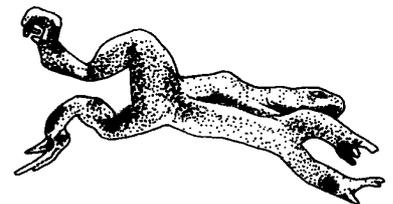
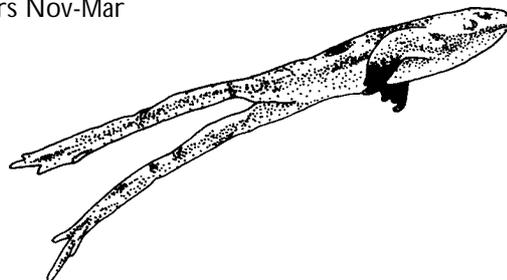
LATIN NAME Salix caprea (D)(N)  
 COMMON NAME Goat willow  
 CHARACTERISTICS large catkins in spring (silver female, gold male), good for wildlife.

LATIN NAME Morus nigra (D)  
 COMMON NAME Black mulberry  
 CHARACTERISTICS architectural tree, edible black fruits

LATIN NAME Taxus baccata (E)(N)  
 COMMON NAME Yew  
 CHARACTERISTICS dark green leaf, fruit with red cup

LATIN NAME Picea pungens "koster" (E)  
 COMMON NAME Blue spruce  
 CHARACTERISTICS colour and foliage contrast (blue/grey), specimen

LATIN NAME Prunus/Malus species (D)(N)  
 COMMON NAME Cherry/Crab apple  
 CHARACTERISTICS Subhirtella "autumnalis" flowers Nov-Mar



## 21. Appendix

### CONSIDERATION OF REPRESENTATIONS MADE ON THE SPG, FOLLOWING CONSULTATIONS.

This Supplementary Planning Guidance document was placed on deposit as one of the Draft Unitary Development Plan documents at the 1st Deposit stage of the UDP Review Process. This took place in Sept/October/November 1999.

As a result of the consultations, ten representations were lodged on this SPG document, some of these included more than one comment, other representations repeated similar comments.

#### **Representation**

The SPG should distinguish between "material" planning considerations, and other "non material" issues.

#### **Council Response**

It is considered that all aspects covered in the SPG may potentially be material planning considerations, so no differentiation between material and non material issues is warranted.

#### **Representation**

The UDP policies referred to should relate to the Revised UDP, not to the Adopted 1996 UDP.

#### **Council Response**

The SPG has been amended so as to relate to the Revised UDP policies.

#### **Representation**

Diagrammatic information should be included to illustrate dimensional requirements set out in British Standard 5837 or 1991.

#### **Council Response**

With regard to the dimensional information in the BS document is considered to be too complex to include within the SPG.

#### **Representation**

There is a need to strengthen section 4 of the SPG to make it clear that any landscape design will impact on the natural environment, and specialist ecological advice should be obtained.

#### **Council Response**

The reference to the need for specialist ecological advice is already made at the end of section 1 of the SPG, there is no need to re-state this.

#### **Representation**

Replace the word "prickly" with the word "thorny" in section 5, para 5, (planting for safety and security).

#### **Council Response**

The SPG had been amended in accordance with this comment.

#### **Representation**

Under the heading "policies relating to retention of existing trees", replace the words "existing landscape features such as hedges and woodland should be retained, provided this would cause no harm to nature conservation" with the words "Existing landscape features such as hedges and woodland should be retained as far as is possible, and new habitats created where appropriate either through direct creation or by allowing natural regeneration".

#### **Council Response**

The SPG had been amended in accordance with this comment.

#### **Representation**

In the section on "Selective List of Tree Species", indicate those trees which are native species, suitable for use in natural planting schemes.

#### **Council Response**

The SPG has been amended in accordance with this comment.

#### **Representation**

Under the heading "Nature Conservation", the reference to some rare British species of plants not being suitable for introduction into Merton, should be deleted. Instead there should be reference to the desirability of sticking to the more common species, as these are generally hardier, less demanding of specialist conditions, and more likely to survive.

#### **Council Response**

The first paragraph in section 10 of the SPG has been amended in accordance with the representations, in respect of use of more common species, however the reference to rare British species of plants has, on the advice of the London Ecology Unit, been retained.

**Representation**

The reference to dogwood and spindle under the heading of Nature Conservation, is not appropriate, as these are chalk loving plants.

Instead the reference to hedgerows in the following paragraph should be expanded, as they are important nature conservation features.

**Council Response**

The SPG has been amended in accordance with the representations on dogwood/spindle and hedgerows.

**Representation**

There is little point in introducing bat boxes (section on Nature Conservation), unless bats already frequent the site.

**Council Response**

In respect of bat boxes, after consultation with the London Ecology Unit, it is considered that the reference should be retained.

**Representation**

Under the heading "The Unitary Development Plan", include a reference to the importance of the River Wandle corridor, including restoration or enhancement of a natural profile to the banks, following consultations with Environment Agency and the London Ecology Unit or its successors.

**Council Response**

The SPG is a Borough wide document, and a special reference to the River Wandle is not warranted. General UDP policies and the general provisions of this SPG will allow considerations of bank side habitats to be taken fully into consideration when development schemes are proposed.

If you require a translation of this document,  
please contact:

এই ডকুমেন্টটির একটি অনুবাদ যদি আপনি পেতে  
চান তা'হলে অনুগ্রহ করে যোগাযোগ করুন:

如果閣下對這份文件需要翻譯  
請聯絡：

જો તમને આ દસ્તાવેજનું ભાષાંતર જોઈતું હોય તો,  
મહેરબાની કરી સંપર્ક સાધો:

यदि आपको इस दस्तावेज़ के अनुवाद की आवश्यकता है तो,  
कृपया सम्पर्क करें:

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦੇ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ,  
ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ:

இத்தகவல் பத்திரத்தின் மொழிபெயர்ப்புப்  
பிரதி உங்களுக்குத் தேவையாயின்  
தயவுசெய்து தொடர்பு கொள்ளவும்:

اگر آپ کو اس دستاویز کے ترجمہ کی ضرورت ہے، تو برائے مہربانی  
رابطہ قائم کریں:

**020 8545 3060**

(9am - 5pm)

For information on **Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes & Planning Briefs**, for people who are visually impaired, please telephone **020 8545 3060**. Information can be provided in large print. For enquiries from members of the public with hearing impairments, a minicom facility is available on **020 8545 3245**.



Plans & Projects,  
Environmental Services,  
London Borough of Merton,  
Merton Civic Centre,  
London Road, Morden,  
Surrey SM4 5DX.

[www.merton.gov.uk](http://www.merton.gov.uk)