

NATIVE PLANTS SPECIFICATION

Ground Floor Planters

42 The Larches, Uxbridge UB10 0DL | London Borough of Hillingdon
Planning Condition Discharge Document | February 2026

1. Purpose and Scope

This specification forms part of the submission to discharge a landscape planning condition 5 attached to the above-referenced residential development in the London Borough of Hillingdon. It sets out the requirements for the selection, supply, installation, and long-term management of native planting within ground-level courtyard planters.

The specification must be read alongside the approved Landscape Layout Drawing and the Planting Strategy. In the event of discrepancy, this specification takes precedence for planter works.

2. Policy Context

The planting strategy responds to the following local and national policy objectives:

- London Plan Policy G6 (Biodiversity and Access to Nature) — requiring net gain in urban biodiversity.
- Hillingdon Local Plan Policy EM6 (Biodiversity) — requiring enhancement of green infrastructure within new developments.
- NPPF (2023) — promoting biodiversity net gain and well-designed green spaces.
- BS 8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape — Recommendations, applied by analogy to herbaceous stock.

All species specified are native to the UK and appropriate to the Greater London region (BSBI Zone 16–17). Cultivars and hybrids of native species are excluded unless explicitly noted.

3. Planter Construction Requirements

3.1 Dimensions and Volume

Planters shall have a minimum internal volume of 300 litres per individual planting unit. Minimum internal depth shall be 450 mm for perennial and grass planting and 600 mm where structural or statement planting is indicated on the approved drawings.

Where planters are grouped in a continuous run, they shall be designed to function as a unified growing environment with drainage continuity between units.

3.2 Drainage

All planters shall incorporate:

- A minimum 100 mm drainage layer of washed angular aggregate (10–20 mm) at the base.
- A geotextile separation layer (150 g/m² non-woven) between drainage aggregate and growing medium.
- Drainage holes at a minimum rate of 4 x 25 mm diameter openings per 0.25 m² base area, fitted with mesh guards to prevent substrate loss.

- Where planters are on hardstanding or podium deck, a connected drainage outlet connected to the surface water drainage system.

3.3 Growing Medium

The growing medium shall be a purpose-mixed substrate comprising:

- 60–70% loam topsoil to BS 3882:2015 Grade 1.
- 20–25% horticultural grit or sharp sand for drainage and aeration.
- 10–15% composted green waste or bark-based compost (peat-free, in compliance with the Horticulture Code of Practice 2021 peat phase-out).

Target substrate properties: pH 6.0–7.0; organic matter content 4–8%; bulk density 900–1,100 kg/m³. A pre-planting soil analysis report shall be submitted to the LPA within 4 weeks of installation.

4. Plant Material Specification

4.1 Provenance and Supply

All plant material shall be:

- Of confirmed native British provenance, sourced from suppliers registered with the Flora Locale Supplier Scheme or equivalent verified provenance scheme.
- Nursery-grown or sustainably propagated stock. Wild collection is not permitted.
- Free from pests, pathogens, and invasive weed contamination.
- Delivered with valid Phytosanitary Certification where required under the Phytosanitary Conditions Notice 2021 (retained EU obligations).

The contractor shall submit a Plant Sourcing Schedule to the Landscape Architect for approval a minimum of eight weeks prior to the proposed planting date.

4.2 Plant Size and Form

Unless otherwise noted on the approved planting plan, plants shall be supplied to the following minimum standards:

- Perennials and grasses: 1 litre pot, 2-year container-grown, minimum 3 shoots.
- Annuals and biennials: plug plants or 9 cm pot, well-rooted.
- Bulbs: supplied as dry bulbs of a minimum commercial size grade appropriate to species; top-quality Grade 1 where applicable.

All plants shall be inspected on delivery and rejected if showing signs of dehydration, root-bound conditions, disease, or physical damage. A photographic record of delivered stock shall be retained and provided to the Landscape Architect upon request.

4.3 Planting Design Principles

The planting design shall achieve the following objectives:

- A minimum of 80% native species cover across all planters on completion of the first growing season.
- Year-round seasonal interest incorporating spring bulbs, summer perennial colour, and structural grass and seed-head interest through autumn and winter.
- Pollinator support — a minimum of 3 nectar-rich species providing continuous flowering from April to October.

- Visual integration with the surrounding courtyard environment with a naturalistic, meadow-inspired aesthetic avoiding formal or monoculture planting.

5. Native Plant Schedule

The species listed below are to be used within the planters..

Botanical Name	Common Name	Form	H (m)	Season of Interest	Suitability Notes
<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>	Tufted Hair-grass	Grass	0.6–1.0	Year-round	Semi-shade tolerant; seed heads winter interest
<i>Sesleria autumnalis</i>	Autumn Moor-grass	Grass	0.3–0.5	Spr–Aut	Low maintenance; good for shaded courtyards
<i>Stipa tenuissima</i>	Feather Grass	Grass	0.5–0.7	Sum–Aut	Light movement; drought-tolerant once established
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Common Yarrow	Perennial	0.3–0.6	Jun–Sep	Attracts hoverflies; good drainage required
<i>Agrostemma githago</i>	Corncockle	Annual	0.5–0.9	May–Jul	Self-seeds; open sunny planters
<i>Centaurea scabiosa</i>	Greater Knapweed	Perennial	0.5–0.9	Jul–Sep	Excellent for bees; drought tolerant
<i>Geranium pratense</i>	Meadow Crane's-bill	Perennial	0.4–0.8	Jun–Aug	Shade-tolerant; good courtyard species
<i>Knautia arvensis</i>	Field Scabious	Perennial	0.3–0.7	Jul–Sep	Butterfly nectar plant; well-drained substrate
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	Ox-eye Daisy	Perennial	0.3–0.7	May–Aug	Long-flowering; suits lean substrate
<i>Ajuga reptans</i>	Bugle	Perennial	0.1–0.2	Apr–Jun	Shade-tolerant ground cover; moist substrate
<i>Fragaria vesca</i>	Wild Strawberry	Perennial	0.1–0.3	Apr–Jun	Informal edging; part shade
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	Self-heal	Perennial	0.1–0.3	Jun–Sep	Tolerates mowing; low-growing filler
<i>Allium ursinum</i>	Wild Garlic	Bulb	0.2–0.4	Apr–May	Shaded moist planters; naturalising
<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>	English Bluebell	Bulb	0.2–0.4	Apr–May	Native species only; must be UK provenance

Note: English Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) must be sourced from UK-provenance bulb stock only. Spanish bluebell (*H. hispanica*) and hybrids are not permitted.

6. Installation Requirements

6.1 Planting Season

Preferred planting windows are:

- Perennials and grasses: September to November (autumn) or March to May (spring), avoiding periods of frost, waterlogged ground, or prolonged drought.
- Spring bulbs: September to November, planted at a depth of 3× the bulb diameter.
- Annual seed: March to May direct sowing or as plug plants from April onwards.

6.2 Planting Method

The following method shall be applied:

- Growing medium shall be lightly firmed and levelled to 25 mm below the finished surface of the planter surround prior to planting.
- Planting holes to be a minimum 1.5× the root ball diameter and of sufficient depth so that the crown sits at the intended finished ground level.
- Back-fill with the specified growing medium, firm gently, and water thoroughly upon completion.
- A 50 mm mulch layer of composted bark (peat-free) shall be applied across all planted areas, keeping a 50 mm clearance around plant stems and crowns.
- Irrigation to be applied immediately post-planting and at a minimum weekly frequency during the first 8-week establishment period unless rainfall exceeds 25 mm per week.

7. Establishment and Maintenance Regime

7.1 Establishment Period

A minimum three-year establishment and maintenance period shall commence from the date of Practical Completion of the planting works. During this period the contractor or management company shall carry out the following minimum works:

Year 1 — Establishment

- Irrigation: weekly during April–September in the absence of meaningful rainfall (>10 mm).
- Weeding: hand-removal of unwanted species at 4-weekly intervals during the growing season (March–October). No herbicide use is permitted within the planters.
- Failures: plants failing to establish shall be replaced like-for-like using the same species and provenance standard within the same planting season or the immediately following planting season.
- Grass and perennial cutting: a single cut of grasses and spent perennial growth in late February/early March to 150 mm above crown level, retaining seed heads and structure through autumn and winter.

Years 2 and 3 — Consolidation

- Continued weed management at 6–8 weekly intervals during the growing season.
- Annual late-winter cut as described above.
- Substrate top-dressing: a 20 mm application of peat-free horticultural compost worked into the surface annually in autumn.
- Monitoring for signs of disease, pest pressure, or substrate compaction, with remedial action reported to the Landscape Architect.

7.2 Long-term Management

Following expiry of the establishment period, the management of the planters shall be incorporated into the long-term Estate Management Plan for the development.

8. Document Control

Document Title	Version	Date	Status
Native Plants Specification for Planters	1.0	February 2026	For Planning Submission

This document has been prepared for the purpose of discharging a planning landscape condition 7 only. It should be read in conjunction with all other approved drawings and documents forming the consented landscape scheme.