

OUTLINE SPECIFICATION FOR SOFTWORKS

Church Street Play Area refurbishment Hyndburn Borough Council

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SPECIFICATION FOR PLANTING/LANDSCAPE WORKS

C O N T E N T S

1. CLEARANCE, PREPARATION AND TOPSOILING
2. PREPARATION OF SEED BED AND LAYING OF TURF

1 CLEARANCE, PREPARATION, AND TOPSOILING

1.1 Clearance of planting areas

All planting areas are to be cleared of debris, rubble etc and excavated as necessary to achieve a topsoil depth of 400mm. Where making up of formation levels is required, subsoil may be used. Base of planting areas to be broken up to 150mm below formation level.

1.2 Underground Structures in Landscape Areas

The Contractor shall remove walls, roads, foundations, disused services, drains, manholes and the like in areas to be landscaped to a minimum depth below finished levels of:

Shrub planting : 550 mm
Turving and seeding : 350 mm

1.3 Formation Level

Formation level shall be the surface of the ground obtained after completion of the earthworks before landscape topsoiling is carried out.

Any excess depth excavated below formation level is to be backfilled with acceptable material and compacted as directed by the Contract administrator and no claim will be entertained in respect of the excavation or for backfilling and compacting.

1.4 Season

All work shall be carried out at an appropriate season and in weather conditions suitable for the operations.

Responsibility for planting out with the normal planting season rests entirely with the Contractor who will be required to make good any failures as later described.

1.5 Unsuitable Weather

Excavation, filling, cultivation and other works shall be suspended in wet weather or when site conditions are unsuitable and the Contractor shall allow in his prices and programme for such eventualities.

"Suitable weather conditions" for planting shall mean open weather (ie. mild, dull and moist even in winter). Planting operations shall be suspended in

periods of droughts, when soil is frost-bound or water-logged and in periods of persistent drying cold winds.

1.6 Notice of Intentions

The Contractor shall give 48 hours notice to the Contract administrator of his intention to commence any of the operations detailed in this Specification.

1.7 Rubbish

All rubbish is to be immediately cleared and carted away as it accumulates during the progress of the Contract. At completion the site is to be left in a clean and tidy condition. All materials condemned by the Contract administrator are to be removed immediately at the Contractor's own expense.

1.8 Subsoil and topsoil placement

Subsoil to (where required to make up formation levels) and topsoil shall be placed in layers not exceeding 300mm depth. Each layer of subsoil should be compacted to a consolidated depth of not more than 300mm. Allowance should be made in final formation levels of filled areas for spreading topsoil to the thickness indicated on the drawings. All surfaces of filled and leveled areas shall be left smooth i.e. free from ruts, lumps, acute depressions and water collecting hollows to the grades required.

The Contractor shall allow for re-trimming surfaces of slopes or level areas to make good any subsidence which may have occurred and to ensure that such subsidence does not cause ponding.

1.9 Weed Control

Weed Control Generally –

- ❑ All pesticides to be used must have been approved for the use specified by Ministry of Agriculture (MAFF) for use in amenity horticulture, in accordance with the Control of Pesticides Regulations, 1986. The Chemicals shall not be toxic to humans, birds and animals and shall not be used within 1 m of a boundary where animals can reach over when grazing. All to be agreed with Contract administrator prior to use.
- ❑ From 1 January 1989 recognised Certificates of Competence are required by contractors using pesticides approved for use in horticulture, unless they are working under the direct supervision of a certificate holder. The Contractor will be required to provide written evidence to the Contract administrator as to which members of his staff are certified competent to apply pesticides.
- ❑ The Contractor will provide a written logbook of the full details of all pesticide applications carried out on the site for retention by the Contract

administrator at the end of the contract period.

1.10 Notice to public

It is the Contractor's responsibility to ensure that the owners or users of properties which adjoin areas to be sprayed are informed of spraying operations. Signs posted where the operatives are spraying will be adequate for this purpose.

1.11 Herbicides

- ❑ All herbicides are to be applied in strict accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, as stated on the product label. Contractor's employees must take notice of the precautions stated on the product label. The Contractor shall provide and make available for inspection containers for measuring quantities of herbicides;
- ❑ Spray equipment shall be fitted with a pressure regulating device and an approved spray nozzle. Pressure settings and types of nozzle must be correct for the herbicide in use, as stated on the product label. Guards shall be fitted to spray equipment where appropriate to prevent drift on plants;
- ❑ Equipment shall be free of leaks and shall be cleaned thoroughly before and after use;
- ❑ The Contractor must ensure that all chemicals are locked up in a separate storage compartment in the vehicle, or within a lockable container in "pick-ups". The storage locker must be of a construction which will contain the entire contents of the locker should damage or spillage occur. This locker must therefore have a sealed lid. The locker must also bear a standard black and yellow hazard-warning marker and be clearly labeled "Pesticides". The storage and transport of pesticides, in dilute or concentrate form, will not be permitted in or on the Contractor's vehicles outside such a container.

1.12 Imported Topsoil

All topsoil supplied for use on site shall be of a good quality and free of stones over 25mm diameter and weeds, to comply with BS: 3883 'Premium grade'. The topsoil shall be from an approved source. Any topsoil used on site without the approval of the Contract administrator shall be deemed to have been used at the Contractor's own risk and he will be required to make good at his own expense all defects arising from this section, including the removal of such material from the site.

Particular note will be taken of soil texture, pH reaction and stone content:

- ❑ Texture: Topsoil should be friable with a high proportion of loamy material. Too much sand or too much clay should be avoided. Soils that are too light or too heavy will not be accepted.

- ❑ Soil Reaction: Soil should have an average pH value of between 5.5 and 7.5. Soils more acid or more alkali should be avoided. A combination of poor texture and high or low pH will result in soil being rejected.
- ❑ Stone Content: Soil should be substantially stone free, as large quantities of stone require extensive stone picking. A percentage of stones by dry weight of higher than 5 will not be acceptable. Similarly, large quantities of undecomposed vegetable material will render the soil unacceptable. This includes large clods of turf or weeds. Soil that has been covered with rough grass and weeds for a long period should be prepared with an approved weedkiller if possible before seeding has taken place.

The topsoil shall be spread and leveled to an even grade to avoid dishing or other depressions where water may collect. The use of a heavy roller to reduce irregularities will not be permitted. Plant, which, in the opinion of the Contract administrator, will excessively compact the subsoil or topsoil, will not be approved. A "bar level" will not be permitted.

1.13 Contamination

Unless specified otherwise:

- ❑ The Contractor shall not use topsoil contaminated with subsoil, rubbish or other materials that are:
 - Corrosive, explosive or flammable
 - Hazardous to human or animal life
 - Detrimental to healthy plant growth
- ❑ In areas to receive topsoil, the Contractor shall not use subsoil contaminated with the above materials.
- ❑ The Contractor shall inform the Contract administrator if any evidence or symptoms of soil contamination are discovered on the site or in topsoil to be imported.

1.14 Stockpiling

The Contractor shall include in his prices for temporary stockpiling of excavated processed topsoil in temporary soil heaps in locations to be agreed. Stockpiles shall be kept weed, compaction and contamination free. The stockpile should be treated with a suitable herbicide at appropriate times to prevent seeding of weeds. No other material should be placed on the stockpiles and no construction plant shall be allowed to pass over them. Stockpile of topsoil shall not exceed 2 m in height.

1.15 Chemical Analysis

The Contractor shall allow in his prices for testing topsoil for pH value and NPK levels from time to time as the Contract administrator may require. Authenticated test certificates shall be passed to the Contract administrator for

record purposes. The Contractor shall allow in his programme of works for carrying out such tests. Any delays arising due to the failure of material to meet this specification shall be held to be the Contractor's responsibility.

1.16 Noxious Weeds

The Contractor shall, on occupying the site, be responsible for removing all noxious and notifiable weeds by cutting down, grubbing up the roots and removing from site, and for keeping the site free from these weeds. Weeds identified as Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan balsam and Giant Hogweed should be reported to the contract administrator and not disturbed.

1.17 Handling Topsoil

When moving topsoil within the site, or when stripping topsoil and importing to site, the Contractor shall:-

If aggressive weeds are present, obtain instructions from the Contract administrator before moving topsoil.

Select and use plant to minimize disturbance, trafficking and compaction.

Avoid contamination by subsoil, stone, hardcore, rubbish or material from demolition work.

Keep different grades of topsoil separate from each other when handling and stockpiling.

Inform the Contract administrator where the depth of topsoil is difficult to determine.

Minimise multiple handling of topsoil. Use topsoil immediately after stripping wherever possible.

Handle topsoil in the driest condition reasonably possible. Do not handle topsoil during or after heavy rainfall or when it is wetter than the plastic limit as defined by BS : 3882, Annex N2.

1.18 Spreading of Topsoil

Topsoil will be spread evenly on prepared formation level and when the ground is in a suitable dry condition in layers not exceeding 150mm and gently firm each layer before spreading the next.

Finished depths of topsoil after settlement shall be:

- ❑ Shrub areas 400mm minimum (unless otherwise specified)

Care should be taken to avoid compaction of topsoil and to preserve a friable texture of separate visible crumbs whenever possible.

1.19 Cultivation

Compacted topsoil shall be broken up to full depth.

Top 100mm of all topsoil shall be reduced to a tilth suitable for blade grading (10mm down particles).

Undesirable material shall be brought to the surface including stones larger than 50mm in any dimension, roots, tufts of grass and foreign matter, and removed.

1.20 Final Grading

When topsoil is reasonably dry and workable grade to smooth, flowing contours, with falls for adequate drainage, removing all minor hollows and ridges.

1.21 Edges

Unless otherwise stated, finished levels of topsoil, after settlement, to be:

- ❑ 30mm above adjoining paving or kerbs
- ❑ Not less than 150mm below dpc of adjoining buildings
- ❑ Unchanged within the root spread of existing trees
- ❑ Married in with adjoining soil areas

2 PREPARATION OF SEED BED AND LAYING OF TURF

2.1 Subsoil Cultivations

Shall be carried out by ripping or by other approved means to a depth of 450mm at 500mm centres in the direction of the contours. Any stones over 50mm diameter or other waste material brought to the surface by such operations shall be gathered and removed off site. Subsoil grading shall be completed to the satisfaction of the Contract administrator before topsoil is carried out.

2.2 Topsoiling

The Contractor shall supply and spread topsoil as specified to give a depth of 100mm after settlement and firming over grass areas. The topsoil shall be spread and leveled to an even grade to avoid dishing or other depressions where water may collect. The use of a heavy roller to reduce irregularities will not be permitted. The finished level of topsoil shall be 2mm above all adjacent paved areas and manholes.

Unless otherwise stated finished levels of grass areas will be 30mm above adjoining paving or kerb levels, 150mm below damp course of adjoining buildings and not more than 75mm above previous soil level adjoining existing trees and shrubs. Levels will be arranged to give gentle falls for drainage and any ponding developing after completion of the grading must be made good.

2.3 Blade Grading

Blade grade with suitable equipment to give an even surface and smooth flowing contours free from humps, depressions and ruts.

2.4 Turf/Seed Bed Cultivation

Produce by chain harrowing or similar, a tilth suitable for grass seeding. The seedbed shall be fine, smooth, and evenly firmed but not over-consolidated.

2.5 Removal of Surplus Vegetable Matter

During the above operations, all stones or other hard material greater than 50mm in any dimension and all surplus vegetable matter shall be removed.

2.6 Pre-seeding Fertilizer

The Contractor shall supply and evenly spread, according to manufacturer's instructions, a pre-seeding fertilizer. The mixture, approved by the contract administrator shall comprise 15:10:10: NPK at a rate of 35gm/m² unless otherwise directed by the contract administrator; this operation to be carried out at least one week prior to sowing grass seed.

2.7 Turf Specification

Good quality meadow turf free from weeds and of minimum thickness of soil of 32mm and a width of 300mm shall be provided to samples approved by the contract administrator and shall be delivered to the site within 36 hours of lifting.

Turf shall be free from matted or dead grass, perennial weeds, pests and diseases and shall conform to BS : 3969.

The Contractor shall allow the contract administrator to inspect the turf either on site of origin or by delivery and laying a sample of five square metres on site.

2.9 Grass seed specification

A general purpose amenity grass seed mixture is to be used consisting of 40% perennial ryegrass and 60% creeping red fescue or similar and approved and applied at a rate of 35g/m².

2.10 Turf/Seed Bed Preparation

Beds for grass turfing shall be alternately rolled and raked or chain harrowed to fine tilth and evenly firmed but not over consolidated, having a suitable texture throughout the full topsoil depth. All surplus vegetable matter, rubbish and surface stones having one dimension greater than 38mm shall be removed off site to a tip provided by the Contractor.

Fertilizers shall be applied about five days before planting and seeding, and shall immediately be worked into the top 100mm depth of soil. The fertilizer shall be either ICI 'Garden Plus' or Fisons 'PS5'.

Unless otherwise stated finished levels of grass areas will be 30mm above adjoining paving or kerb levels, 150mm below damp course of adjoining existing trees and shrubs. Levels will be arranged to give gentle falls for drainage and any ponding developing after completion of the grading must be made good.

2.11 Turf Laying

Turf shall be laid in rows commencing at the near side of the area, so that the work proceeds over the turf already laid using adequate timber planks to support workmen and barrows. Turves shall be laid to bond with a maximum lap with no straight joints, they shall be closely butted and evenly beaten with approved wooden beaters which shall be kept clean and scraped. The turf shall not be rolled at any time during or immediately after laying. Any irregularities shall be adjusted by lifting and raking out or infilling with fine soil. Edges of turfed areas shall be laid with whole turves. The finished level of the turf shall conform to levels shown on drawings and shall not be less than 30mm above adjoining kerbs, mowing strips or paving after beating and settlement. Turf edges shall be cleanly trimmed to an even line and shall finish 150mm short of buildings, walls, raised kerbs, etc, and not more than 75mm above previous soil level adjoining existing trees unless otherwise directed by the contract administrator.

Turf must not be laid during frosty or exceptionally dry weather or on waterlogged ground. If a dry spell follows the laying operation, the Contractor must water the turf regularly to prevent shrinking. On completion the whole turfed area shall be dressed with finely sifted soil well worked into the joints to fill them to surface level, if separately instructed.

2.12 Protection

Newly grassed areas shall be protected at all vulnerable points to prevent damage by pedestrians, and such protection shall be maintained until the grass is established.

2.13 Post-Emergent Weedkiller

At an appropriate time if applicable before practical completion, approved by the Contract administrator the Contractor shall supply and apply in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, an approved post-emergent weedkiller to all seeded areas.

2.14 Maintenance before Practical Completion

The rates for turfing should include the following:-

- ❑ When first growth is apparent it should be trimmed to a height of 25mm with an approved mower and subsequently cut when necessary during the contract period.
- ❑ After the second such mowing the joints should be filled with sifted soil or

compost.

- ❑ Treat pernicious weeds with selective weedkiller.
- ❑ Watering as necessary.

2.15 Watering

Damage or failure due to neglect of watering shall be the responsibility of the Landscape Contractor.