

THAME GREEN LIVING – regenerating Thame’s green spaces

A proposal for Howland Road

The site – This proposal refers to open land either side of Howland Road by the entrance to the mixed commercial site (Lucy Electric and others.) There are two areas: a) the large indented area on the town side of Howland Road (bounded by a wall) in the ownership of Thame Town Council; and b) the common area opposite it (bounded by a knee-high open fence) beside the access to the commercial estate, owned by the commercial site freeholder. *Note: traffic safety sight lines will need to be kept clear.*



The objective – As per recommendations of the Thame Green Living Plan 2020-30 the aim is:

- ✚ provide a more attractive landscape at a key point in Thame;
- ✚ help our beleaguered natural world (on which we all depend) to connect and revive;
- ✚ absorb pollution from traffic so help create cleaner air for all.

How will this be achieved?

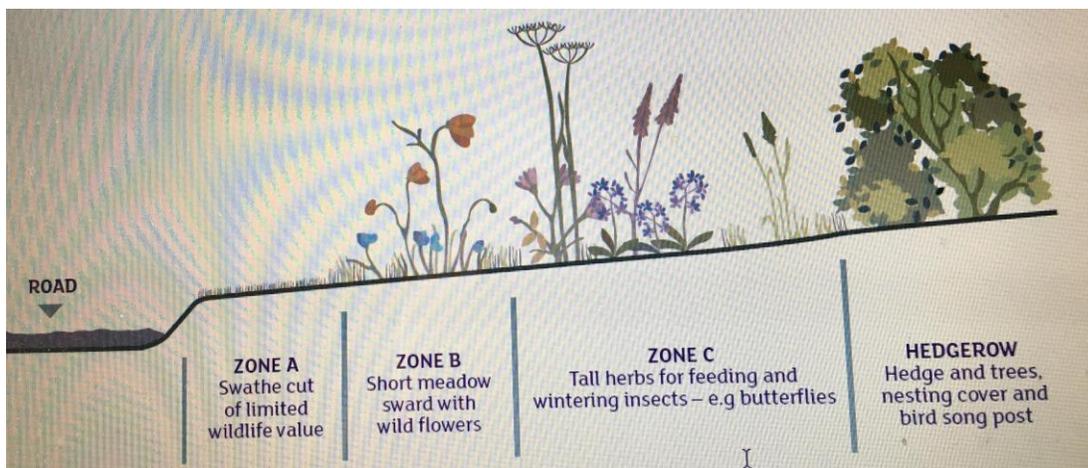
On the town side site there can be three zones running in from the road – see below¹:

Zone A: Regularly cut for visibility and pedestrians.

Zone B: Limited cut to encourage wild flower growth.

Zone C: Planted to encourage essential insects and pollinators (bees etc.)

In this case the hedgerow section shown below is probably unnecessary.



¹ Source: Plantlife’s “Managing grassland road verges”, p.17

On the commercial side with less space the planting will necessarily be more limited but again designed to provide wildflowers, some herbs etc., specimen trees and perhaps low hedging.

When and how will this be done?

When - November (ideally) up to March, but avoiding planting into waterlogged or frozen ground. Discussion with immediate neighbours and careful preparation will be required.

By whom: The aim is to form a 'Friends of Howland Road' (or similar) group who will be at the centre of planting and essential subsequent maintenance of this site. Ideally this will be a mix mainly of commercial but also some local community volunteers.

Zone A: The town council will continue to cut a verge for visibility and a walking route.

Zone B: Cut (risings collected) by TTC early spring + autumn to stimulate wildflower growth.

Zone C: To include some smaller trees. Will need surrounding vegetation to be suppressed for first few years; limited regular maintenance but ideally a late summer scything with rotating uncut areas to provide continuing cover for insects and small mammals. Suggested tree species include rowan, holly, birch, crab apple, wild cherry and field maple.

Commercial site – A low hedge inside the low fence –plus some specimen trees.

What might it cost? – *Initial estimates only – actual cost will depend on type, size and quantity*

Labour - Much of the work and equipment can be done by volunteers and other groups.

Trees - Suggested allow c £35 per tree inc. support.

Plants – Varied. Bare, rooted plants cheaper – roots protected when planting (see notes.)

Commercial site - est. cost of low level mixed native hedging (if practicable) – say £355 inc. VAT for 250 plants (at 3–7 plants per metre = say max. 50 metres of hedging²) plus say 6 specimen trees.

Estimated tree and plant costs – allow, say, c £1200 – 1500 overall. Town side 12x 35 = trees £410 plus herbs/ shrubs/ seeds etc. say £200 = £610 overall. Commercial side – trees £200 plus hedge £350 = £550 overall

Proposed that all costs be covered by Lucy Electric and through service charge to occupiers of adjacent commercial units. Discussions with Lucy and Managing Agents ongoing.



Thame Green Living (CoB, ChB) – 14 July 21

<https://www.thamegreenliving.org.uk>

² <https://www.hedgesdirect.co.uk/acatalog/Mixed-Native-Hedging-Hawthorn-Based.html>. More instant/ bigger impact 40L 100/120cm high 1 metre trough £119.99 inc. VAT (mainly hawthorn with randomised mix of other native species.)