



**Land South of 104
Berkeley Avenue
Reading
RG1 6HY**

**Biodiversity Statement and
Biodiversity Gain Plan**

Luscinia Ecology
On behalf of
Gareth Bertram



Document Properties

Reference	Revision	Date	Author	Reviewer
LUS24124 BS&BGP	Draft	15/08/2024	M. Granato	L. Roberts
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Contents

Chapter 1: Biodiversity Statement	1
Chapter 2: Summary	3
Chapter 3: Introduction	4
Chapter 4: Method	8
Chapter 5: Baseline and Proposed Development	15
Chapter 6: Results and Discussion	17
Appendix A: Delivery of Good Practice Principles	i
Appendix B: Condition Assessment Sheet	iii

Chapter 1: Biodiversity Statement

Do you believe that, if the development is granted permission, the general Biodiversity Gain Condition (as set out in Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) would apply?	Yes
Please provide the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitats on the date of the calculation.	Habitat: 0.65
Please provide the date the onsite pre-development biodiversity value was calculated.	30/01/2020
If an earlier date, to the date of the planning application, has been used, please provide details why this date has been used.	Clearance of the site had been undertaken. Therefore standard retrospective BNG date used.
Which version of the biodiversity metric was used?	The Statutory Biodiversity Metric
When was the version of the biodiversity metric used published?	12/02/24
Please provide the reference or supporting document/plan names for the: 'Biodiversity metric calculation', 'Onsite irreplaceable habitat (if any)', and 'Onsite habitats existing on the date of the application for planning permission (if applicable)'.	LUS24124 BS&BGP
Does the pre-development biodiversity value and date used above factor in the loss of any onsite habitat because of activities carried out before the submission of this application? (i.e., has degradation occurred?)	Yes
Please provide the pre-development value of the onsite habitat before these activities were carried out.	Habitat:0.65
Please provide the date the pre-development biodiversity value was calculated.	30/01/2020
Does the development site have irreplaceable habitats (corresponding to the description in column 1 of [Schedule to the biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations (2023)] which are: i. on land to which the application relates; and ii. existed on the date of the application for planning permission, (or an earlier agreed date)	No

Chapter 2: Summary

- 2.1 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric has been completed in relation to Land south of 104 Berkeley Avenue, Reading, RG1 6HY.
- 2.2 Current Biodiversity Net Gain policy requirements relating to development in the Reading Borough Council area require a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain outcome.
- 2.3 This assessment has been based upon a site visit and has been completed by an ecologist experienced in the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment process. Full methods and assessments are included within this report. The completed Statutory Biodiversity Metric excel file will be submitted alongside this report.
- 2.4 Following the Mitigation Hierarchy and the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy, the Proposed Development will not remove any irreplaceable habitats, or habitats of very high, high, or medium distinctiveness.
- 2.5 Habitats created within the Site comprise vegetated garden. This will be seed ed with a species-rich lawn mix and a native hedgerow will be planted along the northern boundary of the garden.
- 2.6 Despite the above, the Proposed Development will not achieve a Biodiversity Net Gain within the Site. The headline results demonstrate a Biodiversity Net Loss of -0.03 habitat units (-4.65%) with the Trading Rules not met (**Figure 7**).
- 2.7 Therefore, the Proposed Development will not meet current policy requirements in relation to Biodiversity Net Gain. Given it is not possible to achieve 10% net gain within the Site, the applicant has committed to offsite biodiversity enhancements in order to achieve 0.10 habitat units (10% net gain). An appropriate site and suitable enhancements should be secured by way of planning condition.
- 2.8 Japanese knotweed *Reynoutria japonica*; an invasive non-native species (INNS) as listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) is present immediately adjacent to the Site boundary, within the applicant's wider ownership. Therefore, this will require treatment prior to commencement of works within the Site, to avoid unintentional spread via movement of contaminated waste material.
- 2.9 This assessment has been undertaken using illustrative design. The measures within this report should be secured by conditions for a Habitat Maintenance and Monitoring Plan and a Soft Landscape Plan.
- 2.10 Based on the results from the survey, context of the Site, and overall low ecological importance of the Site, this report is valid for a period of 18 months (i.e., the 29/01/2026).

Chapter 3: Introduction

Planning Context

3.1 This report sets out a Biodiversity Statement and Biodiversity Gain Plan in relation to Land south of 104 Berkeley Avenue, Reading, RG1 6HY (referred to as ‘the Site’ throughout this report). This report is supported by a site visit undertaken on 17/07/2024.

3.2 The Environment Act 2021 sets out a mandatory requirement for all planning permissions in England (with a few exemptions) to deliver a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

3.3 In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹ proposals should seek to demonstrate BNG. The NPPF states plans should:

‘...promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.’

3.4 There are no current local policies, in Reading Borough Council, however Reading Borough Council Validation Requirements for Planning Applications state:

“Development will need to follow the Mitigation Hierarchy which is a cornerstone of environmental policy and is referred to in paragraph 180 of the NPPF and Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) EN12: Biodiversity and Green Network”

3.5 In accordance with Environment Act and NPPF the Proposed Development has a targeted BNG outcome of at least 10%.

3.6 The pre-development biodiversity value of the on-Site habitat on the date of application is included within this report. The biodiversity value of the on-Site habitat is lower on the date of the application (degradation has occurred). A plan showing onsite habitat existing on the date of application and onsite habitat existing based on historic aerial imagery from January 2020 are presented within this report.

Site Description

3.7 The Site comprises former garden with a line of non-native trees along the southern boundary. An existing two story residential dwelling is present to the northeast. The Site is accessed via the existing entrance that extends off the minor spur road that serves only 104 and 106 Berkley Avenue to the Southwest. The Site is approximately 0.10 ha in size and located at National Grid Reference: SU 70168 72578. The Site is immediately surrounded by existing areas of residential development, (**Figure 1**). The

¹ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2023). *National Planning Policy Framework*. MHCLG, London

wider landscape includes commercial and residential development within the town of Reading.



Figure 1. Aerial image – Site boundary in red line²

Proposed Development

- 3.8 A planning application for the construction of a detached two story dwelling with parking and amenity space will be submitted soon (referred to as the 'Proposed Development' throughout this report). The Proposed Development is accessed via the existing entrance that extends off the minor spur road that serves only 104 and 106 Berkeley Avenue to the Southwest. The Proposed Development will result in the removal of the habitats within the Site and placement with buildings, hardstanding, open space, and gardens. **Figure 2** shows the Proposed Development.

² Image used under licence (©2024 Google): Accessed: 02/04/2024.



Figure 2. The Proposed Development

Purpose of this report

3.9 The purpose of this report is to provide sufficient information for the Local Planning Authority to fully assess the ecological impacts of the Proposed Development, via the BNG Assessment process.

3.10 The key objectives of this Biodiversity Statement and Biodiversity Gain Plan are to:

- Determine the BNG percentage required to be delivered by the Proposed Development.
- Outline the BNG Assessment method, including any limitations, assumptions, clarifications, and/or deviations.
- Follow the Mitigation Hierarchy and the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy, and outline if irreplaceable habitats will be lost.
- Undertake the BNG Assessment:
 - Determine the BNG on-site baseline using the data search, ecological reporting, BNG Condition Assessments, and The Statutory Biodiversity Metric.
 - Determine the BNG on-site post development outcome, using the details within **Figure 2**.
 - Compare the on-site baseline with the on-site post development outcome to determine the
- Outline the agreed management activities, including the identification of the On-site Significant Enhancements.

- Outline the agreed monitoring and adaptive management requirements.
- Determine if a require percentage increase in BNG has been achieved, or the measures required to achieve the BNG.

Chapter 4: Method

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 4.1 Calculations have been carried out with regard to Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development guidance³ and in line with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric guideline⁴. **Appendix A** sets out how each of the BNG Good Practice Principles⁵ have been applied. In this way, this report meets **Principle 3** of The Statutory Biodiversity Metric.
- 4.2 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric is the established method for calculating BNG and provides a quantitative approach to losses and gains resulting from development or land management changes. Whilst The Statutory Biodiversity Metric is the default system of calculating BNG, it should not be considered a complete tool in assessing BNG and therefore professional judgement has been used where appropriate (this includes consideration of Environmental Net Gain (ENG)). Where professional judgement has been used, this is outlined in the text, and additional references have been provided. This is in line with **Principles 4 and 6** of The Statutory Biodiversity Metric:

“Principle 4: This biodiversity metric is not a complex or comprehensive ecological model and is not a substitute for expert ecological advice.”

...

Principle 6: This biodiversity metric is designed to inform decisions in conjunction with locally relevant evidence, expert input, or guidance.”

Site Visit

- 4.3 The Site was surveyed using the UK Habitat Classification Survey⁶ method on 17/07/2024. The method classified the Site into areas of similar botanical community types with a representative sample of those species present at the time of the survey being described. The vegetation present was clearly visible and allowed an accurate assessment to be made. During the Site survey, The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment sheets⁷ were used to gather the necessary ecological information to determine the condition of the habitats present within the Site.
- 4.4 A UK Habitat Classification Plan was produced (**Figure 3**), which formed the On-Site Baseline Map. The site visit data and the UK Habitat Classification Plan, were

³ Baker J., Hoskins R., and Butterworth T. (2019). *Biodiversity Net Gain. Good practice principles for development: A practical guide*. Ciria, London.

⁴ Defra (2024). *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric: User Guide: Date February 2024*. Department for Environment food and rural affairs, London.

⁵ Baker J., Hoskins R., and Butterworth T. (2016). *Biodiversity Net Gain. Good practice principles for development*. Ciria, London.

⁶ UKHab Ltd (2023). *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0*. UKHab Ltd, Stockport.

⁷ Defra (2024). *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric: Technical Annex 1: Condition Assessment Sheets and Methodology: Date February 2024*. Department for Environment food and rural affairs, London.

compared to historic aerial imagery from January 2020 (**Figure 4**), and an On-Site Baseline Map, was produced (**Figure 5**).



Figure 3. UK Habitat Classification Plan



Figure 4. Historical Aerial Imagery



Figure 5. On-site Baseline Map

- 4.5 Based on the results of the surveys used to inform this assessment, the context of the Site, and the high likelihood that the habitats within the Site will not change significantly over time, this report is valid for a period of 18 months (i.e., the 29/01/2026). This is reasoned in line with good practice guidelines⁸.

Baseline Calculation

Terrestrial

- 4.6 To calculate the baseline area and linear units for the Site the following data and assessments were undertaken:
- The UK Habitat Classification habitats were converted, where necessary into the relevant habitats within The Statutory Biodiversity Metric.
 - The UK Habitat Classification 25m² rule was applied⁹.
 - The habitats were then assigned a pre-set distinctiveness grade¹⁰.
 - The area (hectares) of each habitat parcel and length of linear habitats (km) within the Site was calculated from the On-site Baseline Map (**Figure 5**).
 - Scattered trees were calculated using the Tree Helper Tool, following the size guidelines within The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide and using either data

⁸ CIEEM (2019). Advice Note: *On the Lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys*. Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester

⁹ Habitats occupying less than 25m² were absorbed and considered within the adjacent habitat(s).

¹⁰ Indicative of the inherent 'value' of the habitat.

collected directly by the ecologist or via information within the Proposed Development's Tree Schedule, with the use of a Tree Schedule taking precedence.

- Where applicable, habitats were subject to a 'condition assessment'¹¹.
 - Habitats were subject to a strategic significance assessment¹².
- 4.7 The baseline habitats (as detailed above) were entered into The Statutory Biodiversity Metric to calculate baseline biodiversity units for the Site.

Proposed Development Assessment

- 4.8 Using the Proposed Development shown **Figure 2**, an On-site Post Intervention Map (**Figure 6**) was produced.

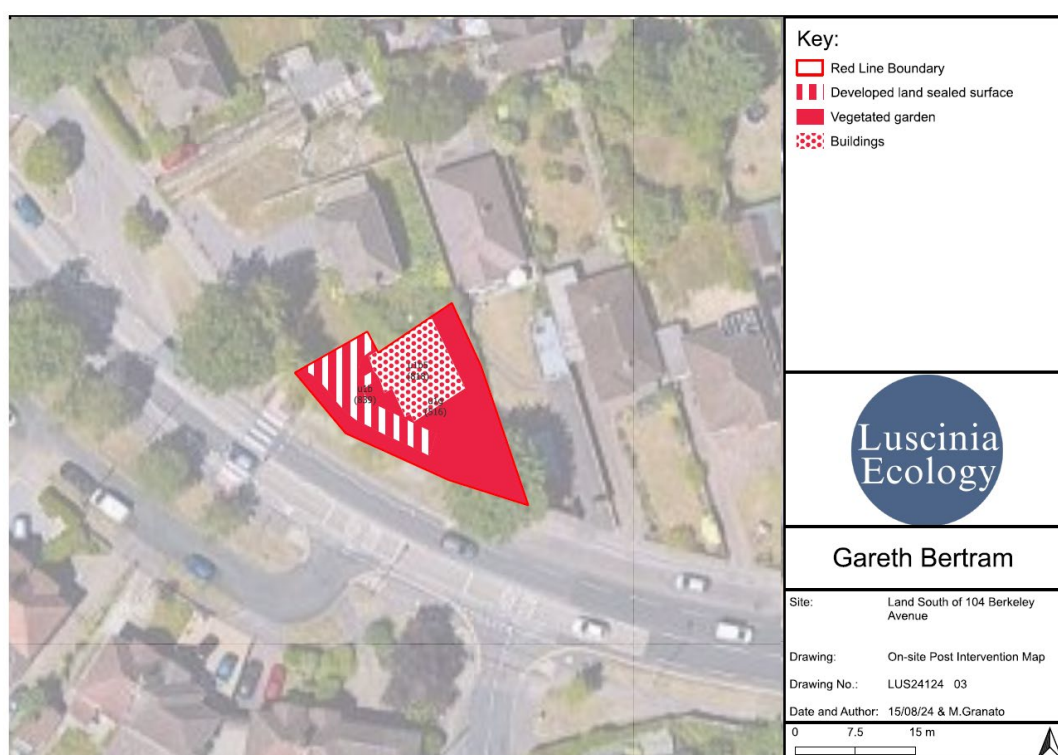


Figure 6. On-site Post Intervention Map

- 4.9 In relation to created and enhanced habitats, all habitat interventions within this report are considered to be realistic and deliverable within the project time frame (in line with **Principle 7** of The Statutory Biodiversity Metric), along with the expected or agreed management resources and availability of funding.

Terrestrial

- 4.10 The same process using the On-site Post Intervention Map (**Figure 6**), along with the following additional methods:

¹¹ The 'condition' of the habitat is a measure of habitat quality and measures the 'working-order' of the habitat against the optimal state of the habitat type.

¹² Strategic significant is based upon the location of a habitat within the local landscape and whether the location has been formally identified in plans which identify local priorities for targeting biodiversity.

- The loss of baseline habitats was calculated by overlaying the footprint of the proposals onto the On-Site Baseline Map.
- The On-site Post Intervention Map was reviewed to identify habitats retained, enhanced, and/or created. The proposed habitats were subject to condition and strategic significance assessments.
- Where a new habitat or existing habitat has been created or enhanced, additional consideration has been given towards the time taken for habitats to establish and reach target condition (temporal multiplier), and the difficulty of habitat re-creation (difficulty multiplier). The 'Habitat creation in advance' and 'Delay in starting habitat creation' functions were set to 0 years. No advanced habitat creation is proposed, and there will be no 'delay between habitat loss and the start of habitat creation and enhancement works'.

Strategic Significance

- 4.11 The Site is not located within a strategically significant ecological area. The strategic significance of the habitats within the Site was assessed as 'Area/compensation not in local strategy/no local strategy'.

Data Summary and Discussion

- 4.12 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric presents a detailed summaries of the resultant biodiversity unit change, separated by habitat type.
- 4.13 A biodiversity unit change has been provided habitat units, hedgerow units, and watercourse units. However, caution has been applied when interpreting these numbers. It is important to note that BNG should assess habitats in isolation and any unit losses or gains considered in detail. This assessment includes consideration of the effect of the proposals on each habitat group, and like-for-like replacement within broad habitat groups.
- 4.14 The discussion also considers the wider context of the outline planning application, surrounding landscape, wider ecological functions not captured by the BNG assessment process, and socio-economic values of the development, as well as considering how the Proposed Development contributes towards nature conservation priorities at the local, regional, and national levels. This approach is guided by Principles 6 and 9 of BNG Good Practice Principles⁵, along with **Principles 8 and 9** of The Statutory Biodiversity Metric:

"Principle 8 Created and enhanced habitats should be, where practical and reasonable, local to any impact and deliver strategically important outcomes for nature conservation.

...

Principle 9 This biodiversity metric does not enforce a minimum habitat size ratio for compensation of losses. Proposals should aim to:

- *maintain habitat extent - supporting more, bigger, better, and more joined up ecological networks*

- *ensure that proposed or retained habitat parcels are of sufficient size for ecological function*

4.15 Our digital data and mapping files are available upon request.

Limitations, Assumptions, and Clarifications

4.16 The Site was cleared prior to the visit, the degradation of the site will be taken into account and a the baseline date 30.01.2020 will be used to survey the Site. This limitation has been accounted for within the condition assessments of the habitats within the Site.

Contributor Information

4.17 The Site visit, BNG Condition Assessments, BNG Assessment, and BNG report were completed by Lorna Roberts and Mel Granato. **Table 1** outlines the relevant experience of the assessment contributor/s.

Contributor	Experience
Lorna Roberts BSc (Hons) MSc ACIEEM	Lorna is Associate Director at Luscinia Ecology. A passionate ecologist with over 13 years' experience, Lorna brings a range of ecological expertise and a pragmatic approach to client relationships and project management. Lorna's experience within the planning system ranges from initial identification of ecological constraints and opportunities, through to design and master planning, management of large-scale ecological impact assessments, stakeholder consultation, and design and implementation of post-planning management and monitoring strategies. Lorna is an accomplished field surveyor, experienced in a wide range of habitat/botanical and protected species surveys, and holds Natural England survey licences for bats and great crested newts. Lorna is particularly experienced in Habitats Regulations Assessment and has a proven track record of successful project delivery in the presence of often complex ecological constraints.
Mel Granato BSc (Hons) MSc	Mel is an Assistant Ecologist with Luscinia Ecology, Graduated in 2023 in Conservation Ecology. Mel has two publications, one of which can be found in the Journal of Insects (Granato <i>et al.</i>, 2024), with the second publication currently in review. Mel has practical experience and theoretical knowledge with bat, reptile, great crested newt, breeding bird surveys, technical report writing, UK Hab classification systems, biodiversity net gain metrics and QGIS. Mel has submitted her Qualifying Member application of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management. (CIEEM). Mel is actively working towards gaining a level 2 bat licence and level 1 great crested newt licence.

Table 1. Contributor experience

Chapter 5: Baseline and Proposed Development

Irreplaceable habitats

5.1 No irreplaceable habitats will be removed as a result of the Proposed Development.

Baseline Assessment

5.2 The habitats present within the Site are set out below:

- **Urban:** Vegetated garden. This comprised the entire area within the Site boundary. This does not require a condition assessment. This area also includes mature trees in moderate condition. These will be retained.
- **Developed land;** sealed surface does not require condition assessment.

5.3 Japanese knotweed *Reynoutria japonica*; an invasive non-native species (INNS) as listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) is present immediately adjacent to the Site boundary, within the applicant's wider ownership.

Proposed Development Assessment

5.4 The below is based on the On-site Post Intervention Map shown in **Figure 6**. Assessment of the proposals is split into three sections, as detailed below:

- Retained/Lost habitats, which identifies habitats retained and protected during the implementation of the proposals and those to be removed.
- Enhanced Habitats, which assesses habitats which will be created as part of the proposals, and outlines measures as to how these habitats will reach target condition.
- Created Habitats, which assesses habitats which will be created as part of the proposals, and outlines measures as to how these habitats will reach target condition.

Habitats Retained/Lost

5.5 Mature trees within the Site will be retained. All other habitats on the Site will be removed.

Habitats Enhanced

5.6 There will be no enhancements.

Habitats Created

5.7 The Proposed Development will provide the following:

- **Urban:** Vegetated garden
- **Urban:** Developed land sealed surface

5.8 The 'Developed land; sealed surface' and 'Vegetated garden' are not considered to be On-site significant Enhancements.

Urban: Developed land; sealed surface

5.9 This habitat is not discussed further as it is of negligible importance and does not require a condition assessment.

Urban: Vegetated garden

5.10 The vegetated garden will be laid to lawn. This will be seeded with a species rich flowering lawn mix, such as [EL1 Flowering Lawn Mixture - Emorsgate Seeds \(wildseed.co.uk\)](https://www.wildseed.co.uk/EL1-Flowering-Lawn-Mixture-Emorsgate-Seeds) – or similar.

5.11 A native hedgerow will be included along the northern boundary of the Site. This will include a range of native species such as (but not limited to):

- hazel *Corylus avellana*
- hornbeam *Carpinus betulus*
- Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* / *Crataegus laevigata*
- Dog rose *Rosa canina* / field rose *Rosa arvensis* / sweetbriar *Rosa rubiginosa*
- Privet *Ligustrum vulgare*
- Holly *Ilex aquifolium*

5.12 This habitat is not discussed further as it does not require a condition assessment.

5.13 As discussed above, Japanese knotweed *Reynoutria japonica* is present immediately adjacent to the Site boundary, within the applicant's wider ownership. This should be treated prior to works commencing within the Site to avoid unintentional spread into the Site.

Chapter 6: Results and Discussion

- 6.1 Decision making during the development of the proposals has been informed and influenced by the Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development guidance⁵ to ensure these obligations for achieving BNG have been met. In addition, throughout the construction of the Proposed Development, these principles will be adhered to.
- 6.2 Following the avoidance tier of the mitigation hierarchy, the Proposed Development will not remove any irreplaceable habitats, or habitats of very high, high, or medium distinctiveness. The headline results demonstrate a Biodiversity Net Loss of -0.03 habitat units (-4.68%) with the Trading Rules not met (**Figure 7**).

FINAL RESULTS		
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	<i>Habitat units</i>	-0.03
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.00
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	<i>Habitat units</i>	-4.68%
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.00%
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?	No - Check Trading Summaries ▲	

Figure 7. Headline results of The Statutory Biodiversity Metric

- 6.3 The Proposed Development will not meet current and future policy requirements in relation to Biodiversity Net Gain. Given the Site will comprise a vegetated garden, it is not possible to achieve 10% net gain within the Site. Therefore, the applicant will need to commit to offsite enhancements to achieve 10% net gain (**Figure 8**). A suitable site and appropriate enhancements to achieve 10% net gain should be secured by way of a suitably worded planning condition.

Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit
<i>Habitat units</i>	10.00%	0.65	0.71	0.10
<i>Hedgerow units</i>	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00
<i>Watercourse units</i>	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00

Figure 8. Habitat Units Required to achieve 10% Net Gain

- 6.4 This assessment has been undertaken using illustrative design. The measures within this report should be secured by conditions for a Habitat Maintenance and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) and a Soft Landscape Plan.

Appendix A: Delivery of Good Practice Principles

BNG Principle	Application
Principle 1. Apply the Mitigation Hierarchy <i>Do everything possible to first avoid and then minimise impacts on biodiversity. Only as a last resort, and in agreement with external decision-makers where possible, compensate for losses that cannot be avoided. If compensating for losses within the development footprint is not possible or does not generate the most benefits for nature conservation, then offset biodiversity losses by gains elsewhere.</i>	The Proposed Development is located on a residential development. The Mitigation Hierarchy and the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy have been applied throughout the planning and design process. The features of ecological importance within the Site will be retained and enhanced as part of the Proposed Development.
Principle 2. Avoid losing biodiversity that cannot be offset by gains elsewhere <i>Avoid impacts on irreplaceable biodiversity – these impacts cannot be offset to achieve No Net Loss or Net Gain.</i>	There will be no loss of irreplaceable habitats and the habitats lost are replaceable or were unnatural/modified in nature.
Principle 3. Be inclusive and equitable <i>Engage stakeholders early, and involve them in designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the approach to Net Gain. Achieve Net Gain in partnership with stakeholders where possible and share the benefits fairly among stakeholders.</i>	Engagement with stakeholders, including local residents and the Local Planning Authority will be undertaken as part of the planning application.
Principle 4. Address risks <i>Mitigate difficulty, uncertainty and other risks to achieving Net Gain. Apply well-accepted ways to add contingency when calculating biodiversity losses and gains in order to account for any remaining risks, as well as to compensate for the time between the losses occurring and the gains being fully realised.</i>	Any limitations from the habitat survey and previous survey work have been considered and the precautionary principle applied during the baseline and proposed assessment where required. The Proposed Development assessment primarily uses basic habitats which require limited management to achieve the proposed outcomes. There is a clear statement in relation to the outcome of the Trading Rules. All other risks are dealt with via the Ecological Impact Assessment process and/or planning conditions, where considered required.
Principle 5. Make a measurable Net Gain <i>Achieve a measurable, overall gain for biodiversity and the services ecosystems provide while directly contributing towards nature conservation priorities.</i>	The Statutory Biodiversity Metric has been used. Use of the ‘Environmental Benefits from Nature Tool’ to consider ecosystem services is not yet part of policy and voluntary use was not considered proportionate to the nature and scope of this Proposed Development.
Principle 6. Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity <i>Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity by using robust, credible evidence and local knowledge to make clearly-justified choices when:</i> <i>Delivering compensation that is ecologically equivalent in type, amount and condition, and that accounts for the location and timing of biodiversity losses.</i> <i>Compensating for losses of one type of biodiversity by providing a different type that delivers greater benefits for nature conservation</i> <i>Achieving Net Gain locally to the development while also contributing towards nature conservation priorities at local, regional and national levels.</i> <i>Enhancing existing or creating new habitat.</i> <i>Enhancing ecological connectivity by creating more bigger, better and joined areas for biodiversity.</i>	The loss of ecologically important habitats has been avoided. The BNG assessment process has ensured that the ecological compensation provided is ecologically equivalent in type, amount, and condition. The local environment and local wildlife priorities have been considered through the Ecological Impact Assessment process, namely via the provision of enhancement which target NERC/BAP species.
Principle 7. Be additional <i>Achieve nature conservation outcomes that demonstrably exceed existing obligations (i.e. do not deliver something that would occur anyway).</i>	The additionality principle has not been contravened.

Ensure Net Gain generates long-term benefits by: • Engaging stakeholders and jointly agreeing practical solutions that secure Net Gain in perpetuity. • Planning for adaptive management and securing dedicated funding for long-term management. • Designing Net Gain for biodiversity to be resilient to external factors, especially climate change. • Mitigating risks from other land uses. • Avoiding displacing harmful activities from one location to another. • Supporting local-level management of Net Gain activities.	Engagement with stakeholders, including local residents and the Local Planning Authority will be undertaken as part of the planning application.
Principle 9. Optimise Sustainability <i>Prioritise Biodiversity Net Gain and, where possible, optimise the wider environmental benefits for a sustainable society and economy.</i>	Use of the 'Environmental Benefits from Nature Tool' to consider ecosystem services is not yet part of policy and voluntary use was not considered proportionate to the nature and scope of this Proposed Development.
Principle 10. Be transparent <i>Communicate all Net Gain activities in a transparent and timely manner, sharing the learning with all stakeholders.</i>	The surveys and data that underpin this assessment have been made clear, including any limitations and assumptions. The methods used in this assessment are clearly set out in the method and follows guidelines. The assessment outcomes have been explained in full. This includes the inclusion of notes within the excel file to explain reasoning and full explanations for how existing and proposed habitat conditions will be achieved. Next steps, and the measures required to ensure this Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment outcome will be achieved, have been clearly set out within the Summary and Discussion. This includes a statement that outlines the recommended next steps. All requirements within this report have been discussed and agreed with the Applicant.

Appendix B: Condition Assessment Sheet

UKHabs Classification:		Individual trees – Urban trees				
Condition Sheet:		Individual trees Habitat Type				
Survey Date and Surveyor:		17/07/2024 – Lorna Roberts				
Parcel						
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species)	No – Non-native: Leyland cypress and Red oak				
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion)	Yes				
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature)	Yes				
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity) and there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height	Yes				
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy, or loose bark	No – no ecological niches present				
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath	Yes				
Criteria Assessment Outcome						
Passes 5 or 6 criteria		Good	Moderate			
Passes 3 or 4 criteria		Moderate				
Passes 2 or fewer criteria		Poor				