

**BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN
ASSESSMENT SUMMARY**

**PROPOSED EXTENSION
VOYAGE CARE,
LONGMORE ROAD,
READING**

DECEMBER 2025

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

A Biodiversity Net Gain assessment has been undertaken to provide information on proposed biodiversity mitigation and enhancement measures that can be put in place for the development proposals at Voyage Care, Longmore Road, Reading for a proposed single storey extension.

1.2 Planning Policy

The Environment Act 2021 (as amended) provides legislation relating to biodiversity net gain for development. The updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) states (paragraph 174) that:

“Planning Policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by... minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.”

1.3 Methodology

The statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool has been used to determine a quantifiable number of biodiversity units produced during the operational stage of a project. The post-construction/operational value is compared to the baseline biodiversity (pre-construction) value to determine if the proposals will result in a net gain or net loss in biodiversity.

The assessment has been undertaken by Aluco Ecology Ltd, with a site visit on 13 October 2025 to classify habitats according to the UKHab criteria (UKHab Ltd, 2023). The matrix assessment is provided as an excel accompanying this document.

The statutory matrix (version 03/07/2025) has been used for the assessment.

2.0 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN RESULTS

2.1 Headline Results

The Matrix has provided the following headline results:

Voyage Care		Return to results menu		
Headline Results				
Scroll down for final results 				
On-site baseline		Area habitat units	0.29	
		Hedgerow units	0.00	
		Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)		Area habitat units	0.33	
		Hedgerow units	0.01	
		Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site net change (units & percentage)		Area habitat units	0.04	
		Hedgerow units	0.00	
		Watercourse units	0.00 	
Off-site baseline		Area habitat units	0.00	
		Hedgerow units	0.00	
		Watercourse units	0.00	
Off-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)		Area habitat units	0.00	
		Hedgerow units	0.00	
		Watercourse units	0.00	
Off-site net change (units & percentage)		Area habitat units	0.00 	
		Hedgerow units	0.00 	
		Watercourse units	0.00 	
Combined net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)		Area habitat units	0.04	
		Hedgerow units	0.00	
		Watercourse units	0.00	
Spatial risk multiplier (SRM) deductions		Area habitat units	0.00	
		Hedgerow units	0.00	
		Watercourse units	0.00	
FINAL RESULTS				
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)		Area habitat units	0.04	
		Hedgerow units	0.00	
		Watercourse units	0.00	
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)		Area habitat units	12.31%	
		Hedgerow units	120.63%	
		Watercourse units	0.00%	
Trading rules satisfied?		Yes 		
Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit
Area habitat units	10.00%	0.29	0.32	0.00
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00

No additional area habitat units required to meet target ✓
 No additional hedgerow units required to meet target ✓
 No additional watercourse units required to meet target ✓

2.2 Habitat Degradation

When assessing the baseline condition of the site, regard was had to potential habitat degradation from actions that may have occurred to habitats after January 2020. In this case, a description of any potential degradation, and consideration of impacts on baseline habitats is considered in the condition assessment of baseline habitats in the metric and discussed below.

A non-native ornamental hedge was removed from the front of the site at some time between 2019 and March 2020. This would have been subject to existing legal use of the site by the care home and was before 25 August 2023, so is not considered a degradation in terms of BNG. The hedge has since been replanted with a similar Cherry Laurel hedge, so the baseline assessment reflects a similar baseline to 2019/2020 in any event.

2.3 Irreplaceable Habitats

Baseline assessment of the site has considered whether there are irreplaceable habitats on site. No irreplaceable habitats have been recorded on site.

2.4 Baseline Metric Assessment

The following baseline habitats are present on site (see **Appendix 1**). Condition assessments are reproduced at **Appendix 3**:

- Vegetated Garden. – The majority of the site comprises formal mown lawns and flower beds. The majority of this habitat is retained, with a small loss for the extension.
- Introduced shrub – The edges of the site contain a mixed introduced shrub border with some native species. The non-natives make up around 80% of the border so it is assessed as introduced formal shrubs in a garden setting. All of this habitat is retained. The introduced shrubs within the lawn setting are included in vegetated garden habitat above.
- Pond (non-priority) – A small garden pond is present in the rear garden. It has a concrete pre-formed base and is heavily shaded by shrubs and with no aquatic vegetation other than Duckweed. It is assessed as poor condition passing 4 criteria.
- Non-native/ornamental hedgerow – A recently planted Cherry Laurel hedge is present around the front edge of the site. This is retained.
- Urban trees – The front of the site contains a line of 6 small trees, and a further small tree in the front lawn. These are predominantly non-native. Urban lines of trees are assessed as individual trees according to the BNG guidelines. All trees are assessed as poor condition passing 2 criteria. These trees are retained.

2.5 Retained, Created & Enhanced Habitats

The following measures are incorporated into the scheme design to help ensure that the project provides biodiversity gain. These are detailed in the proposed habitats plan for the site (see **Appendix 2** below), which represents the created habitats post intervention plan for the biodiversity net gain assessment:

- Developed land, sealed surface – New extension and hardstanding.
- Vegetated Garden – with the exception of the footprint of the new extension, the habitat will be retained in situ.
- Introduced shrub, small Urban trees, Non-native hedgerow, Pond. All these habitats are to be retained in situ.
- 4 small trees are proposed on site. These are assessed as poor condition as a precaution.
- 5m of hedgerow is proposed, and this has been assessed as the lowest quality hedge, but a native species section could be provided.

2.6 Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The Berkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) has been reviewed for any proposed biodiversity enhancement areas and habitats on site or nearby in relation to the strategic significance multiplier. The site is not included in any layer of the LNRS.

2.7 Management

Significant habitat creation should be detailed in a habitat creation and ongoing management plan during the lifetime of the BNG assessment. The provision of a management statement for such proposed habitats can be subject to a suitably worded condition as part of a planning permission.

3.0 SUMMARY

A Biodiversity Net Gain assessment using the statutory Biodiversity Metric has provided a >10% gain within the red line boundary. This includes provision of 4 small trees and 5m of hedgerow.

4.0 REFERENCES

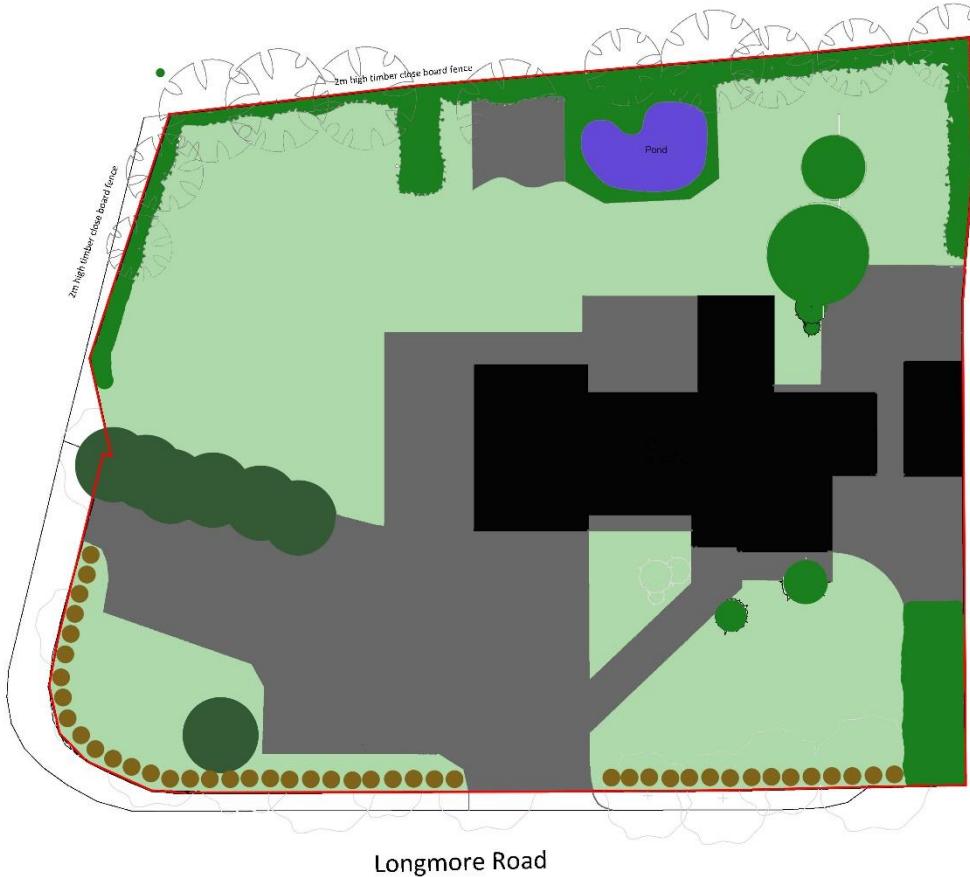
Berkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy: The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (2025) Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Berkshire. Available at: <https://rbwmtogether.rbwm.gov.uk/berkshire-local-nature-recovery-strategy>

UKHab Ltd (2023) The UK Habitat Classification User Manual Version 2 at <http://www.ukhab.org/>

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APPENDIX 1: EXISTING HABITATS ON SITE (base plan Make Consulting, 2025)



Key

- Vegetated garden
- Introduced shrub
- Developed land -buildings
- Developed land – hardstanding
- Urban tree
- Pond (non-priority)
- Non-native hedge

Site	Date	Type	Comments	Page						
Longmore Road	05/05/2025	Site Plan	Site Plan As Existing	1 of 1						
make CONSULTING <small>together we make a better place</small> <small>make Consulting Limited, 100 Longmore Road, Longmore Park, Nottingham NG15 3ED</small> <small>tel: 0115 781 0208 email: make.consulting@outlook.com</small>										
VOYAGE CARE Site Plan LONGMORE ROAD existing site Planning Issue Planning Ref. No. PLANNING ISSUE										
drawn by	date	check by	scale							
SR	05/05/2025	HR	1:100							
Site Plan As Existing										
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>2213-1204</td> <td>A1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>drawn by:</td> <td>checked by:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1204-MAKE-ZZ-XX-DR-A-1000</td> <td>Rev 01</td> </tr> </table>					2213-1204	A1	drawn by:	checked by:	1204-MAKE-ZZ-XX-DR-A-1000	Rev 01
2213-1204	A1									
drawn by:	checked by:									
1204-MAKE-ZZ-XX-DR-A-1000	Rev 01									
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Habitats on Site Summary:

The vegetated habitats described below are based on site visit for the BNG assessment (13 October 2025). Representative photos of habitats are provided below (**Photos 1-5**).

Methodology

Habitats were assessed with regard to the UK Habitat Classification UKHab Ltd (2023) The UK Habitat Classification User Manual Version 2 at <http://www.ukhab.org/>. Vegetation types were identified visually and using guidelines for survey, having reference to the published UKHab definitions and methods. Mapping was carried out onto printed copies of Google Earth aerial photography and by making use of numbered target notes. Digital photographs were taken to assist with recording and mapping, and show representative habitats.

Survey can be undertaken year-round, however, during the winter months likely value of vegetation and habitats can be harder to determine, and some habitats are harder to survey accurately. On this basis experience and knowledge of the surveyor is used to determine habitats present and their value, and a degree of precaution is used in evaluation and recommendations.

Vegetated Garden

The site comprises an area of regularly managed mown lawn and flower bed garden. The lawn is a typical suburban lawn managed as an amenity grassland for use of the residents. It comprises Rye-grass *Lolium perenne*, Yorkshire Fog *Holcus lanatus*, Common Bent *Agrostis capillaris*. Herbs include White Clover *Trifolium repens*, Selfheal *Prunella vulgaris*, Creeping Buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, Daisy *Bellis perennis*, Ground Ivy *Glechoma hederacea*, and a small amount of Sorrel *Rumex acetosa* and Cat's ear *Hypochaeris radicata* to the western end of the rear garden. Species diversity is generally low and herb density also relatively low. There are a number of formal shrubs and woody shrubs scattered within the lawns, including a Tamarisk *Tamarix* sp. bush that is to the edge of the proposed extension and will be removed to facilitate the development. These include a small Apple tree and 3 small conifers. The lawns are a managed amenity grassland and are relatively species poor with low species diversity averaging about 6.5 species per m².

Introduced shrub

The rear garden and a small section of the boundary of the front garden contains mature introduced woody shrubs comprising locally dominant Garden Privet *Ligustrum ovalifolium*, frequent Lawson's Cypress *Cupressus × leylandii*, Cherry *Prunus* sp., Lilac *Syringa vulgaris*, and a couple of native bushes of Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*. Some Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. is also present. This habitat is being retained in situ.

Pond (non-priority)

A very small artificial concrete lined pond with no marginal aquatic vegetation and only macrophyte noted was Duckweed *Lemna* sp. It is less than 1m deep and heavily shaded. This habitat is being retained in situ.

Urban tree

A line of four small Pine *Pinus* sp. trees and two small Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* trees are present at the edge of the drive. They are relatively young and not yet mature, and are subject to occasional pruning at the edge of the drive. A further ornamental small Copper Beech *Fagus sylvatica* forma *purpurea* is present on the lawn of the front garden. This is also not mature. All trees are proposed to be retained in situ.

Non-native hedge

A recently planted non-native hedge dominated by Cherry Laurel *Prunus laurocerasus* is present along the front garden boundary, forming the line of a former non-native hedge removed around 2019-2020. The hedge will be retained in situ



Photo 1: Vegetated Garden (rear garden) with Introduced shrubs to the left



Photo 2: Pond with Bramble and water surface dominated by Duckweed



Photo 3: Small Trees

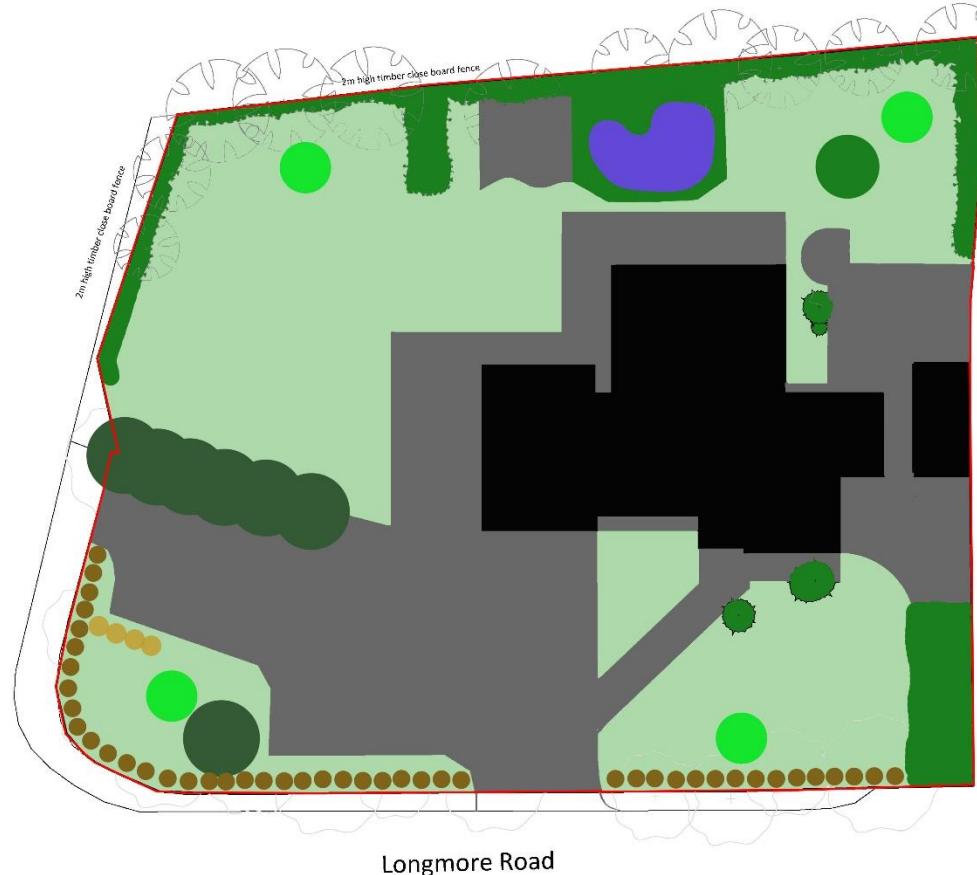


Pond 4: Non-native Hedge – recently planted



Photo 5: Tamarisk shrub to be removed in garden

APPENDIX 2: PROPOSED HABITATS ON SITE (base plan Make Consulting, 2025)



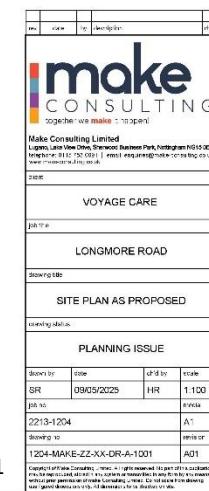
Longmore Road

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N

Key

- Vegetated garden
- Introduced shrub
- Developed land -buildings
- Developed land – hardstanding
- Urban tree
- Pond (non-priority)
- Non-native hedge
- Urban tree (proposed)
- Non-native hedge (proposed)



APPENDIX 3: CONDITION ASSESSMENT SHEETS

Condition Sheet: INDIVIDUAL TREES Habitat Type			
Condition Assessment Criteria		Car park group	Copper Beech
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	n	n
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).	y	y
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .	n	n
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.	n	n
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	n	n
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	n	y
		Number of criteria passed	2
Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ✕/✓	
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)		
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)	y	y

Condition Sheet: POND Habitat Type			
Habitat Type			
Lakes - Ponds (priority habitat)			
Habitat Description			
Condition Assessment Criteria			Criterion passed (Yes or No)
Core Criteria - applicable to all ponds (woodland¹ and non-woodland):			
A	The pond is of good water quality, with clear water (low turbidity) indicating no obvious signs of pollution. Turbidity is acceptable if the pond is grazed by livestock.	n	
B	There is semi-natural habitat (moderate distinctiveness or above) completely surrounding the pond, for at least 10 m from the pond edge for its entire perimeter.	n	
C	Less than 10% of the water surface is covered with duckweed <i>Lemna</i> spp. or filamentous algae.	n	
D	The pond is not artificially connected to other waterbodies, such as agricultural ditches or artificial pipework.	y	
E	Pond water levels can fluctuate naturally throughout the year. No obvious artificial dams ² , pumps or pipework.	y	
F	There is an absence of listed non-native plant and animal species ³ .	y	
G	The pond is not artificially stocked with fish. If the pond naturally contains fish, it is a native fish assemblage at low densities.	y	
Additional Criteria - must be assessed for all non-woodland ponds:			
H	Emergent, submerged or floating plants (excluding duckweed) ⁴ cover at least 50% of the pond area which is less than 3 m deep.	n	
I	The pond surface is no more than 50% shaded by adjacent trees and scrub.	n	
		Number of criteria passed	
Condition Assessment R	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ✕/✓	
Results for woodland ponds which require assessment of 7 core criteria			
Passes 7 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Moderate (2)		
Passes 4 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)		
Results for non-woodland ponds which require assessment of 9 criteria			
Passes 9 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 6 to 8 criteria	Moderate (2)		
Passes 5 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)	y	
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score			