



BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN STATEMENT

Land at 38 Finchampstead Road, Wokingham

On behalf of: Klara Homes Limited

Client:	Klara Homes Limited			
Project:	Land at 38 Finchampstead Road, Wokingham			
Reference:	LLD3283-ECO-REP-003-00-BNG			
Revision:	Date:	Author	Proof	Approved
00	09/08/2024	James Tann BSc (Hons)	Will Mills ACIEEM MSci (Hons)	Will Mills ACIEEM MSci (Hons)

Disclaimer:

The information provided within this report has been prepared and provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's (CIEEM) Code of Professional Conduct. We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions.

This report is intended for the sole use of the Client and their agents in accordance with the agreement under which our services were performed. Unauthorised communication, reproduction, or usage of this report by any party other than the aforementioned, is prohibited. No liability is accepted by Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology for any use of this report, other than for the purposes for which it was originally prepared and provided. This report does not constitute legal advice. No warranty, express or implied, is made as to the advice in this report or any other service provided by us.

Validity:

This report is valid for 18 months from the date of the final survey visit. If works have not commenced by this date, an updated site visit should be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist to assess any changes in the habitats present on site, to inform whether surveys should be updated.



LIZARD

Landscape Design and Ecology

The Old Bank, 34 South Street, Tarring, Worthing, West Sussex, BN14 7LH
T. 01903 216033 E. office@lizardlandscape.co.uk W. lizardlandscapeecology.com

Contents

	Page No.
1.0 Introduction	01
2.0 Methodology	02
3.0 Existing Baseline Assessment	04
4.0 Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment	05
5.0 Conclusion	07
6.0 References	08

FIGURES

Figure No.01 – Baseline Habitat Plan

Figure No.02 – Proposed Habitat Plan

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Condition Assessment for Existing Habitats



1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology has been commissioned to provide a Biodiversity Net Gain Statement for works at the Land at 38 Finchampstead Road, Wokingham (located around central grid reference: *SU 80978 68178* – hereafter referred to as ‘the site’).
- 1.2 A baseline habitat assessment in accordance with the UK Habitats Classification Manual (UKHabs Ltd., 2023) was undertaken on the 23rd of July 2024 by James Tann BSc (Hons). This habitat assessment concluded the site was an urban environment consisting of a sealed surface car park and vacant or derelict land with a condition score of poor.
- 1.3 The Biodiversity Net Gain calculations contained in this report were undertaken using The Defra Statutory Biodiversity Metric V1.0.3, to provide a quantitative analysis of the existing and proposed biodiversity value of the site regarding recently mandated policy within the Environment Act, 2021. As the development is for a single dwelling it qualifies for exemptions and will therefore be subject to the Small Sites Metric.

Site Information

- 1.4 The red line covers c. 141 square metres (m²) to the Southwest of Ascot House, Finchampstead Road, Wokingham. The site is a regular-shaped plot currently used as outside storage. The bounds consist of residential properties and off-street parking to the Northern and Eastern borders, Finchampstead Road lies to the West and NHS Berkshire ambulance headquarters to its South side. A small plot of recreational green and vegetation extends off-site to the north, and a garden or green space with a tree line border on its Southern boundary.
- 1.5 No site clearance was evident, and the baseline information gathered is considered a true presentation of the on-site habitats.

Surrounding Landscape

- 1.6 The site is located on the South side of Wokingham, a town on the outskirts of Reading. The urban area of this town extends out for a minimum of 1.5 kilometres (km) to the North, East and West. The land to the South habitat is defined by farm pasture interspersed with wooded areas, hedgerows, and a small hamlet.

Proposals

- 1.7 It is understood that the proposals are for the construction of a single dwelling with associated access, parking, and garden space.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

- 2.1.1 The existing baseline value of the site was assessed during the site visit, where all areas and linear habitats on site were mapped.
- 2.1.2 The distinctiveness of habitats was assessed using the *UK Habitat Classification system* (UKHabs Ltd., 2023) and the condition of habitats was assessed in accordance with *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric - Technical Annex 1: Condition Assessment Sheets and Methodology* (DEFRA, 2024).
- 2.1.3 The habitats, their condition and strategic importance were input into the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool V1.0.3 (DEFRA, 2024). The area of habitats which would be retained or enhanced based on the current proposals was also added to the calculator. This allowed the existing baseline value and loss of biodiversity units to be established.
- 2.1.4 The following drawings and reports were used when calculating the baseline and proposed habitat creation on site, which should be viewed alongside this report:
- Baseline Site Habitat Plan (LLD3283-ECO-FIG-001)
 - Proposed Site Habitat Plan (LLD3283-ECO-FIG-002)

- 2.1.5 The proposed habitat areas and linear habitat lengths were calculated, and target conditions were determined based on the existing and proposed management regimes of the site, in consideration with what realistically could be expected to be achieved. Once input into The Biodiversity Metric Calculation, the overall change in value of the site could then be determined.

2.2 Evaluation and Assessment

- 2.2.1 This report has been written with due regard to best practice guidance for ecological report writing (CIEEM, 2017) and the Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development (CIEEM, 2019).

2.3 Survey Constraints / Considerations

- 2.3.1 Due to imprecisions associated with mapping the extent of existing and proposed habitats using aerial imagery and mapping based on a desktop study, the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment cannot conclusively ensure that the extent of habitats is precisely quantified, although due care and attention have been given to ensure that the accuracy of the assessment is not misleading and is appropriate for the objectives proposed.
- 2.3.2 The Biodiversity Net Gain calculation does not consider the provision of wildlife boxes, such as bat, bird and insect boxes, or log piles.
- 2.3.3 The experience of the author of this report should also be noted as potential unfamiliarity with the systems of biodiversity net gain may constrain the findings of the study, however, this project was conducted with the aid of a Consultant Ecologist with considerable experience in BNG so mitigate any such constraints.

3.0 EXISTING BASELINE ASSESSMENT

3.1 Habitats

Site Habitat Baseline

- 3.1.1 The site consists of an enclosed area of Vacant or Derelict Land with an additional section of Developed Land on a Sealed Surface to the East. The former was abundant in species of Plantain and Ragwort with Nettle and Bramble also frequently dispersed. The Sealed Surface area was a residential car park which contained no species of note.
- 3.1.2 Within the Southwest corner of the site two young trees were discovered these were Ash and Sycamore, it is understood that the area containing these trees is to be redeveloped into a residential garden which will require the removal of these species.
- 3.1.3 The condition of the existing habitats on site was assessed using the habitat condition sheets specific to each habitat, which can be found in Appendix A.
- 3.1.4 The Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment concluded that the existing baseline biodiversity value of the site was 0.02 Habitat Units, consisting of:
- 0.0106ha of poor condition vacant or derelict land providing 0.02 habitat units;
 - 0.0035ha of developed land; sealed surface providing 0.00 habitat units (condition assessment N/A).

3.2 Hedges

Site Hedge Baseline

- 3.2.1 No hedges were found to be present or proposed within the redline boundary of the site.

3.3 Watercourses

Site Watercourse Baseline

- 3.3.1 No water courses were present within the site or 10m of its boundary.

4.0 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT

3.3 Strategic Significance

4.1.1 Due to the lack of LNRS within Berkshire, strategic significance has been assessed as per the User Guide. The site is not within any ecological designation, such as a *Biodiversity Opportunity Area* or *Nature Improvement Area*. No existing or proposed habitats have been identified as Berkshire Priority Habitats and as such all habitats on site are of low strategic importance.

4.1.2 As no hedgerows or watercourses exist within the redline boundary for this plan, no further action was deemed necessary in assessing the significance of these habitats in relation to the project.

4.2 Baseline Inputs

A-1 Site Habitat Baseline

4.2.1 The existing habitat variables identified in section 3 of this report were inputted into the metric which calculated the ecological baseline. Total Habitat Units on site were 0.02. A full condition assessment for each existing habitat type is detailed in Appendix A.

4.2.2 The plan intends to retain no existing habitat in its current condition and create new habitats in place of the lost ones.

4.3 Proposed Habitats

A-2 Site Habitat Creation

4.3.1 Proposals are to result in the creation of new habitat on-site including:

- 0.0067ha of developed land; sealed surface;
- 0.0024ha of vegetated garden;
- 0.0015ha of artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface.

4.3.2 Condition assessment of the proposed developed land; sealed surface, Unvegetated garden and vegetated garden is not applicable.

- 4.3.3 The proposed on-site habitats sit within residential curtilage and therefore require no management plan. The management of the required off-site habitats, and their future monitoring requirements, should be detailed within a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan or similar to ensure they achieve the target condition.

4.4 Proposed Habitat Enhancements

- 4.4.1 The plan outlines no enhancements to existing habitat within the scope of the current proposal. The loss of biodiversity on site shall be compensated for through the purchase of off-site credits through a private provider.

4.5 Trading Summary

- 4.5.1 For all trading rules to be satisfied, the current proposal needs to replace a total of 0.04 area units of urban habitat with a low or higher distinctiveness habitat.

4.6 Overall Results

- 4.7.1 Once all retention, enhancement and habitat creation measures are considered, the scheme shall result in -0.02 habitat units, resulting in a net deficit of -0.04 units and a loss of -78.15% **Biodiversity Net Gain in Habitat Units** across the site if the current plan is followed.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The metric calculations have identified that the proposals will result in a **Net Loss of 78.15%** of habitat units on site.
- 5.2 The current scheme fails to comply with the trading rules as outlined in the User Guide due to the lack of available land on site for habitat enhancements or creation.
- 5.3 Given the scope of the proposals, it is required that the project either provide enhancements off-site or purchase off-site units to satisfy the trading rules, offset the current net loss and meet the mandatory +10% target for Biodiversity Net Gain.

6.0 REFERENCES

CIEEM. (2017). *Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

CIEEM. (2019). *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development*. Winchester

Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (2023). *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool*. Published by the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs on 29th November 2023. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool Available online:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides>

(assessed 05.01.24)

Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (2023). *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric - Technical Annex 1: Condition Assessment Sheets and Methodology*.

J Taylor Ecology Consulting (2019) *Land Adjacent to Paddock Grange, Homestead Road, Medstead: Ecological Appraisal* (Ref: 2019/5223/A)

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

Appendix A – Condition Assessment for Existing Habitats

Existing Urban Habitat in Poor Condition:

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
Core Criteria - must be assessed for all urban habitat types:			
A	Vegetation structure is varied, providing opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live, eat and breed. A single structural habitat component or vegetation type does not account for more than 80% of the total habitat area.	No	The site is compacted gravel with patches of vegetation
B	The habitat parcel contains different plant species that are beneficial for wildlife, for example flowering species providing nectar sources for a range of invertebrates at different times of year.	No	The site contained some plant species of benefit but not enough quantity or diversity to be significant
C	Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ¹) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) ² cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area ³ . Note - to achieve Good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).	Yes	The assessment found no invasive non-native species present in the area, likewise with species that could be of detriment
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for Open mosaic habitat on previously developed land only:			
D	The parcel shows spatial variation and forms a mosaic of bare substrate PLUS: - At least four early successional communities (a) to (i); Communities: (a) annuals; (b) mosses/liverworts; (c) lichens; (d) ruderals; (e) inundation species; (f) open grassland; (g) flower-rich grassland; (h) heathland, (i) pools.	n/a	n/a
Additional Criteria - must be assessed for Bioswale and SuDS habitat types only:			
E1	Plant species are mostly native. If non-native species are present, they should not be detrimental to the habitat or native wildlife ⁴ .	n/a	n/a
E2	The vegetation is comprised of plant species suited to wetland or riparian situations.	n/a	n/a
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for Intensive green roofs only:			
F	The roof has a minimum of 50% native and non-native wildflowers. 70% of the roof area is soil and vegetation (including water features).	n/a	n/a
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for Biodiverse green roofs only:			
G	The roof has a varied depth of 80 – 150 mm; at least 50% is at 150 mm and is planted and seeded with wildflowers and sedums or is pre-prepared with sedums and wildflowers. Note – to achieve Good condition some additional habitat, such as sand piles, stones, logs etc. are present.	n/a	n/a
Essential criteria relevant for habitat type achieved (Yes or No)			n/a
Number of criteria passed			1
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ×/✓
Results for habitats requiring assessment of 3 core criteria only (all listed urban habitats except Open mosaic habitat on previously developed land, Bioswale, SuDS and Green roofs):			
• Passes all 3 core criteria; AND • Meets the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.		Good (3)	×
• Passes 2 of 3 core criteria; OR • Passes 3 of 3 core criteria but does not meet the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.		Moderate (2)	×
• Passes 0 or 1 of 3 core criteria.		Poor (1)	✓