

Biodiversity Net Gain

The consultant has assumed the habitat degradation to include loss of three large trees in good condition. The number of trees lost, based on aerial photographs appears reasonable and the assumption that they were large trees in good condition likely in excess of what was actually lost as large trees are ones over 60cm dbh. Guidance states however where habitat degradation occurs you take the precautionary approach, therefore unless evidence can be provided that the trees lost were smaller and or were not in good condition, I accept the baseline habitats for the area based units but would suggest if the applicant has any evidence that the trees lost were under 60cm dbh or not in good condition they provide it.

The metric does not however include the hedge that was removed prior to the application. Based on streetview the hedge was privet, ie ornamental. I therefore recommend the lost ornamental hedge is added to the baseline.

The metric as expected indicates a significant loss for the scale of the development. Off-site units will need to be purchased for area based and hedgerow units. As none of the on-site habitats will be significant no HMMP is required.

In order to discharge the statutory condition, if permission is provided, they will need to supply:

- The biodiversity gain plan utilising the defra metric,
- Provide evidence of the purchase of the required number off-site units, registered with defra and
- Provide the final version of the statutory metric to cross-reference with the gain plan.