

Follow up response from GMEU

The small metric has been utilised.

Contributing to and Enhancing the Natural Environment & Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Section 180 of the NPPF 2023 states that the planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. 10% BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021).

With regards biodiversity net gain, I have no issues with the baseline calculation for the site.

With regards the habitat creation scheme however, I would not that the proposed trees and shrubbery would count as part of the vegetated garden habitat. (which has not been included within the habitat creation scheme). The individual trees and mixed scrub do not unfortunately count towards the post-development value under the BNG guidelines, which previously I would have accepted. The total area of vegetated garden should therefore be calculated and entered in to the habitat creation table to provide the final deficit.

This will however be similar to that calculated. ie less than 1 biodiversity unit.

Off-site compensation will be required purchased from an off-site habitat bank or through statutory credits. Currently defra is struggling to register sites, therefore they may be technical difficulties with the developer purchasing the off site units in the short term. The unit shortfall may also generate viability issues for the developer dependent on the unit cost requested by the off-site provider. The small number of units required are not however a reason to refuse the development as ultimately such a small unit loss should be capable of being provided off-site and therefore the statutory biodiversity condition could be discharged.

Ecologist

Planning

Investment, Development and Housing

Place