

The Drummond Estate and Inverock Limited

ENDERBY RELIEF ROAD

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT

December 2020

FPCR Environment and Design Ltd

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment has been undertaken using the Natural England Biodiversity 2.0 Metric, and is based upon the ecological baseline information provided within Environmental Statement, the Parameters Plan and a suite of habitats recommended for creation in order to deliver a net gain in biodiversity.

Background

- 1.2 BNG is an approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before. Where a development has an impact on biodiversity it encourages developers to provide an increase in appropriate natural habitat and ecological features over and above that being affected in such a way it is hoped that the current loss of biodiversity through development will be halted and ecological networks can be restored.
- 1.3 The revised NPPF states that "planning policies and decisions should ...identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity" and an increasing number of LPAs are now requiring BNG through the planning process.
- 1.4 Defra has also recently consulted on making biodiversity net gain a mandatory element of the English planning system and this looks set to become law as part of the Environment Bill that is set to receive royal assent later this year. This will require that all new development achieves a net gain in biodiversity.
- 1.5 This approach will necessitate the completion of an assessment to assess the extent of biodiversity loss or gain through the use of a metric, such as the Biodiversity 2.0 metric. Where any loss is identified compensation, or an offset, may be provided either in the form of additional habitat creation or through a payment to secure this elsewhere. While the current metric is still in testing and a final metric isn't likely to be released until December 2020, it is widely accepted by LPAs throughout England to quantify the extent, or otherwise, of BNG.

Process

- 1.6 The BNG assessment process is a prescriptive process attempting to minimise the sometimes ad hoc nature of assessing impacts on biodiversity. By definition, the process seeks a 'net' gain, as opposed to delivering compensation for each individual habitat type or species. Nevertheless, the process does seek to ensure that effective controls are in place to ensure effective compensation for the most threatened or important habitats.
- 1.7 In summary the process is as follows:
 - 1. The first stage is to determine the existing, pre-development, biodiversity value in 'units'. This is a combination of the distinctiveness of habitats and their condition.
 - 2. Next the development proposals are assessed to quantify the effect, or loss of biodiversity units. Most development will show a deficit at this stage.
 - 3. Where a deficit is shown, additional biodiversity units can be created on-site, through the conversion of low biodiversity habitats i.e. those with 'low' distinctiveness in 'poor' condition, such as an arable field intensively managed to maximise yield to higher distinctiveness habitats in moderate or good condition, such and species rich grassland, scrub, woodland or wetland habitats. Where habitats are difficult to create or take time to develop, the metric incorporates



'risk' and 'temporal' multipliers, whereby additional habitat must be created to compensate for the potential risk or delay in delivering the proposed habitat.

1.8 In the event that a deficit still remains offsite compensation may be required.

2.0 THE ASSESSMENT

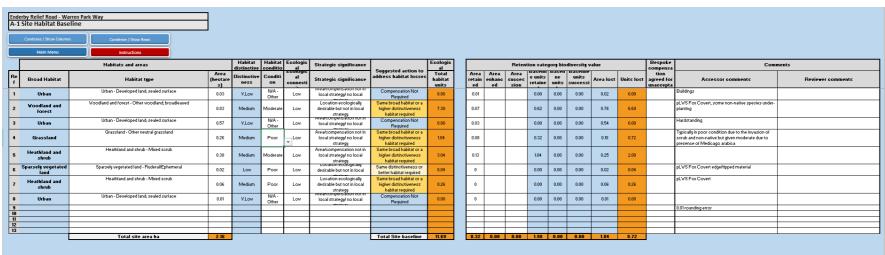
2.1 The offsetting assessment has been undertaken to demonstrate the broad principles of how the proposed development could achieve net gains in terms of biodiversity units. As the proposals for development are only sought in terms of outline planning approval, the locations and types of habitats shown as being created are only indicative at this stage. It is considered that once detailed schemes of design/layout and comprehensive landscaping are prepared (at reserved matters stage) for the development parcel and green infrastructure, the offsetting exercise could be updated to take into account of a developer's specific proposals.

Existing Habitat Baseline - Biodiversity Units

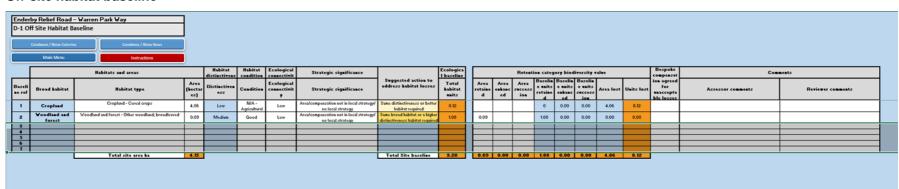
- 2.2 The site ecological baseline has been reviewed and where possible, a condition assessment has been informed using the Natural England guidance published to support the Metric.
- 2.3 The existing biodiversity units for each habitat have been calculated, which together total 11.69 Biodiversity Units on site and 9.20 off-site habitat units.
- 2.4 Habitats which will not be impacted through the course of the development (through removal) are not considered further in the offsetting calculations.
- 2.5 Habitat types and their respective condition are indicated in Figure 1 and 2 and a summary of the assessment is provided below:



Site habitat baseline summary



Off-site habitat baseline



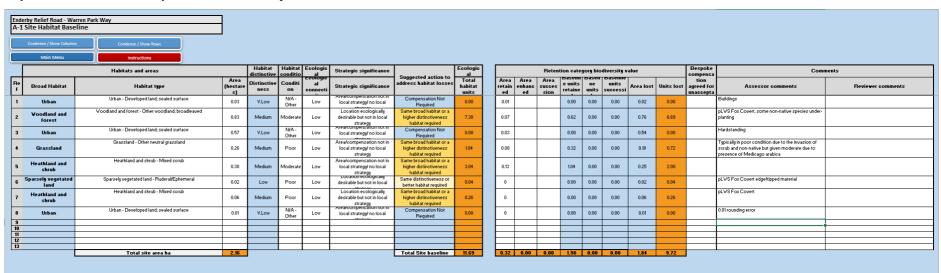


Impacts and On-site and Off-site Compensation

- 2.6 Figure 3 presents the locations of habitats that are identified to be lost to built development or retained and created and Figure 4 and 5 indicate the range of habitat created within the site and the desired condition after the 30yr aftercare period.
- 2.7 While it is highly probable that with effective management a higher condition score could be achieved a precautionary approach has been followed and conservative condition assessments applied.
- 2.8 A summary of Biodiversity units delivered through on- and off-site habitat creation is provided below:

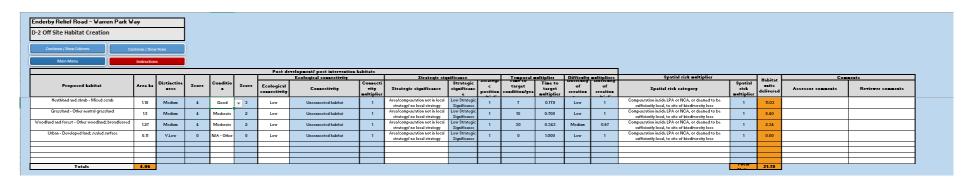


Impacts and on-site compensation summary





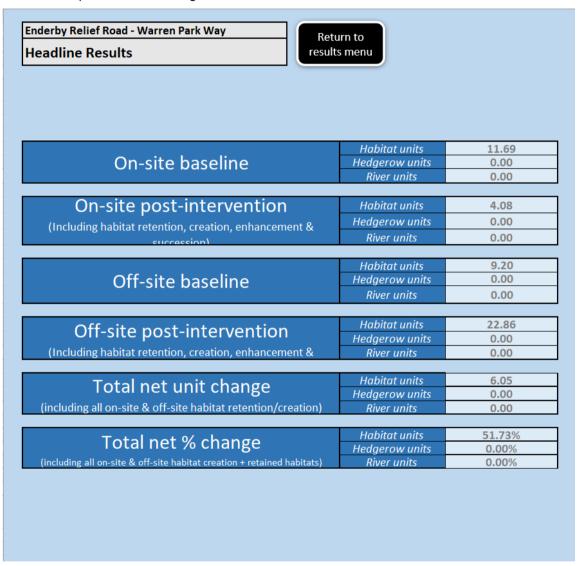
Off-site Compensation



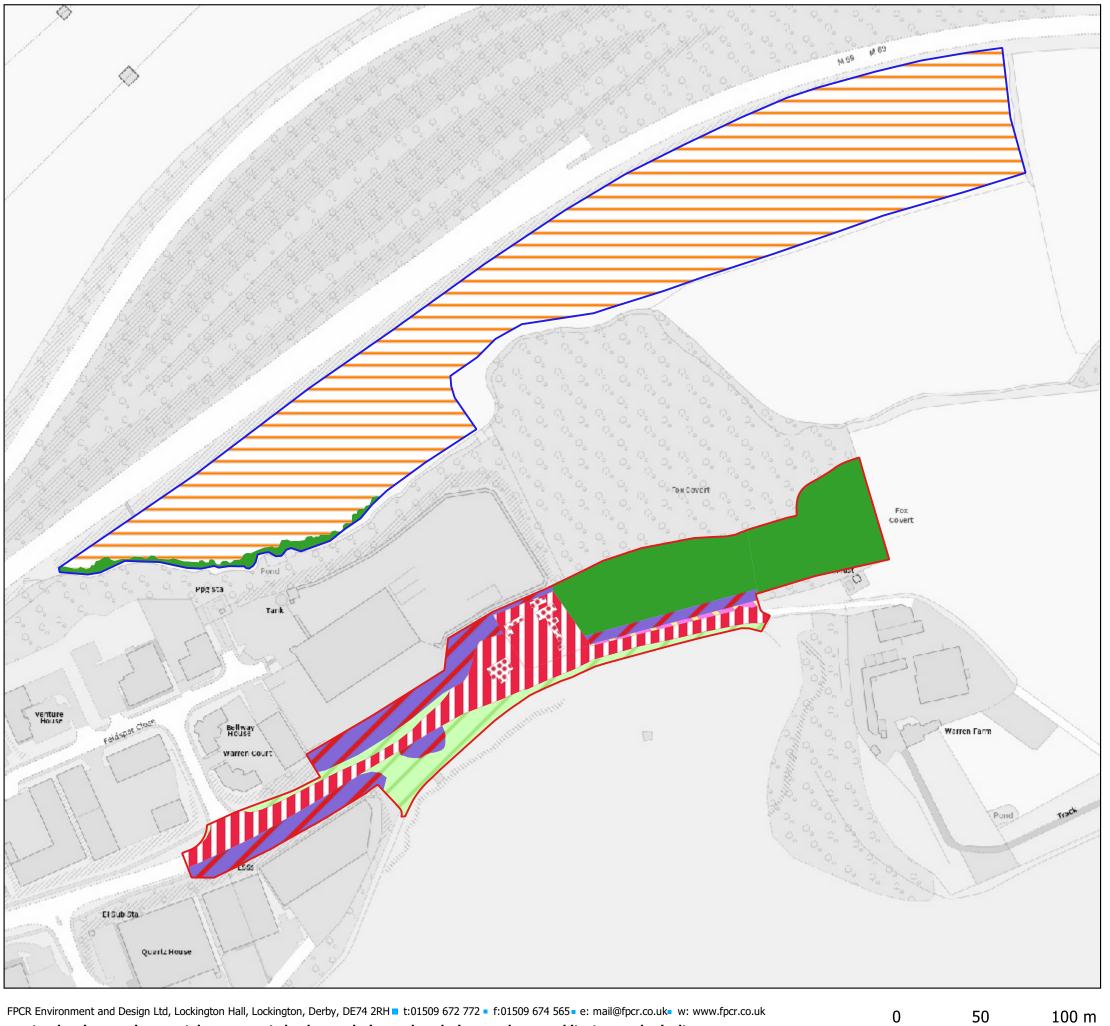


3.0 CONCLUSION

- 3.1 Biodiversity offsetting has been used to demonstrate that the site has the capability to provide BNG using the Biodiversity 2.0 Metric.
- 3.2 The Biodiversity 2.0 Metric headline results are provided below. This indicates that with the offsite compensation, the proposals lead to a 51.73% increase in biodiversity units and significantly above the aspirational 10% net gain within the Environment Bill.



- 3.3 While the assessment has been completed on a precautionary basis, it is highly likely that, with effective management, the proposals could deliver habitats of enhanced condition, leading to even bigger increases in Biodiversity Net Gain
- 3.4 To ensure that the benefits of the proposed habitat creation are maximised, a Biodiversity Habitat Creation and Management Plan, will be produced, detailing habitat creation operations and the long-term management of the site. This, it is envisaged, would be secured by condition.



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Key

Site Boundary

Off-site Site Boundary

Neutral grassland

Broad-leaved woodland

Dense scrub

Tall ruderal

Cereal crops

Hardstanding

Buildings

scale 1:2250

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Relief Road at Enderby, Leicestershire

Baseline Habitats Plan

issue 9/12/2020 Figure number

masterplanning environmental assessment landscape design urban design ecology architecture arboriculture



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Key

Site Boundary

Off-site Site Boundary

Habitat Distinctiveness

M

Medium

L

V.Lov

Habitat Condition

Good

•

Moderate

Poor

N/.

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Relief Road at Enderby, Leicestershire

Baseline Habitats Distinctiveness and Condition Plan

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scale 1:2250 drawing / figure number **Figure 2**



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Key

Site Boundary

Off-site Site Boundary

Lost

Retained



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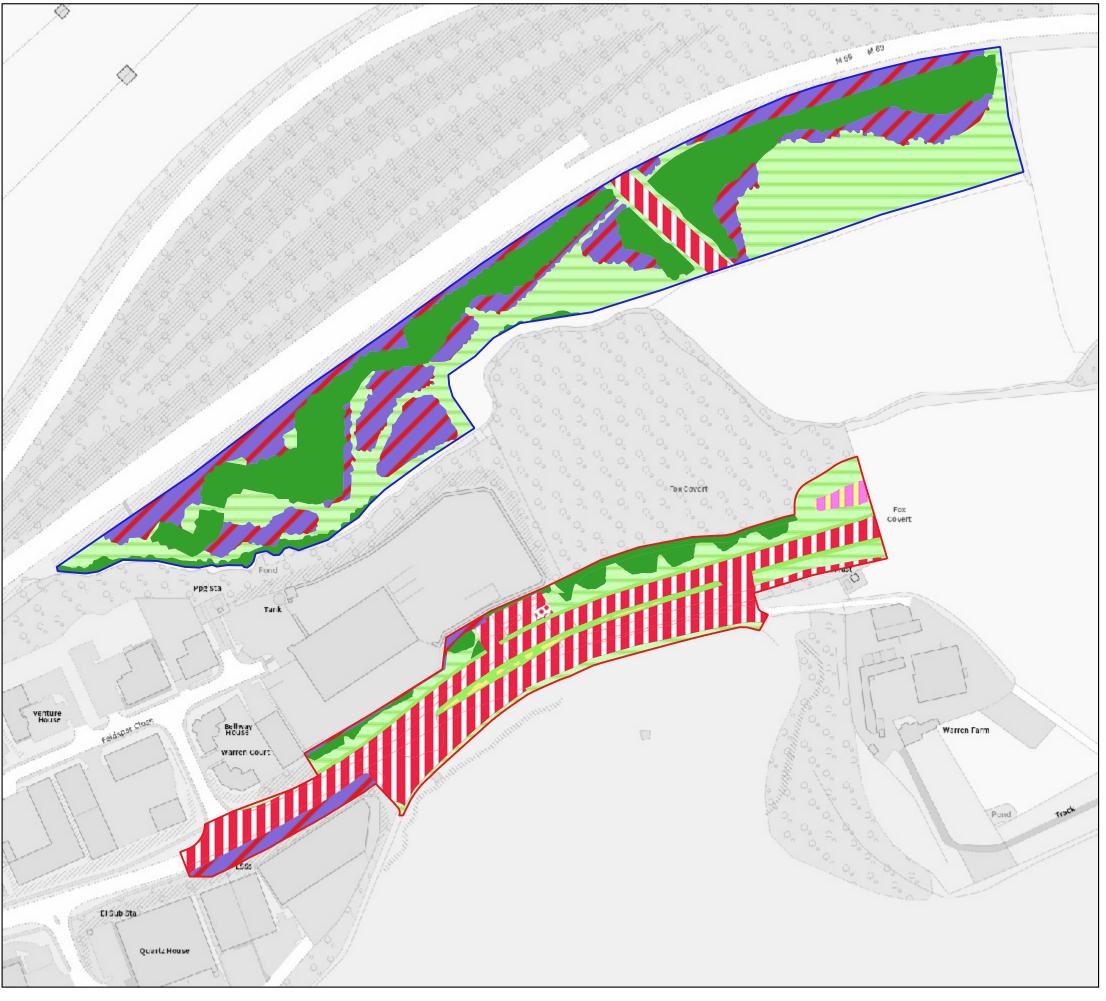
Relief Road at Enderby, Leicestershire

> Habitats Lost, Retained and Enhanced Post-Development



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Figure 3

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Key

Site Boundary

Off-site Site Boundary

Attenuation Pond

Amenity grassland

Introduced scrub

Other neutral grassland

Broad-leaved woodland

Mixed scrub

Hardstanding

Buildings

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Relief Road at Enderby, Leicestershire

Habitats Creation Plan

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Habitat Condition

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Poor

N/A

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Proposed Habitats Distinctiveness and Condition

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Figure 5