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Biodiversity Net Gain Plan in support of the development proposals at A L Engineering, Hall Ln, Yaxley, Eye IP23 8BY

On behalf of: A L Engineering

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Introduction

This biodiversity net gain statement follows the approval of the full planning application at A L Engineering, Hall Ln, Yaxley, Eye IP23 8BY.

Development proposals:

The application consists of a new commercial building with a footprint of 40ft x 60ft with a rolling shutter and a personnel door. The proposed building will be used between 8 am and 5 pm Monday to Friday. This workshop would be used alongside an existing building in line with the lawful use of the site application site.

Does Biodiversity Net Gain Apply to this application?

Due to this application consisting of a development that is not covered in The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024, an uplift of 10% in biodiversity is required. The means through which the proposed development achieves this is discussed below.

The statement should be read in conjunction with the following documentation:

- Planning statement
- Pre-development landscape plan
- Post-development landscape plan
- Completed small site metric

Methodology

The Biodiversity Metric 4.0 [alter if new metric released] was used to calculate whether the site will achieve a 10%

biodiversity net gain. This was completed following the guidance within the Defra Biodiversity Metric 4.0 technical supplement and user guide.

The information used within the Defra Biodiversity Metric 4.0 calculator comprised:

- Broad Habitat;
- Habitat Type (used to determine Distinctiveness);
- Area (sq.m) OR Length (m);
- Condition (N/A, Poor, Moderate, Good); and
- Strategic Significance

The Metric then provided a calculation of the biodiversity units for each habitat parcel which when summed gives the total biodiversity units of the site as a whole.

The metric is divided into three sections: area-based habitats, hedgerow/treeline linear habitats, and watercourse linear features. The overall biodiversity score of the project is taken as the lowest-scoring change of these different habitat groups.

A site survey was carried out on the 5th of April to identify the habitats present on site and measure the area covered by those habitats. The UKHab V2 classification system was used in conjunction with DEFRA Metric 4.0.

Predevelopment biodiversity on site

Habitat areas present

The baseline habitat areas on site consisted of;

- Artificial unvegetated and unsealed surfaces covering an area of 6732.57m² and providing a biodiversity value of 0.
- An area of developed sealed surface in the form of the existing workshop on site, covering an area of 609.43m² and providing a biodiversity value of 0.

Hedgerows and Tree lines present

The baseline hedgerows and tree lines on site consist of;

- A line of trees associated with a ditch at 132.99m long along the northern boundary providing a biodiversity value of 0.5320 units.
- A length of native hedgerow at 39.83m long along the western boundary, providing a value of 0.1539 biodiversity units.

Watercourse presence

The baseline watercourse habitats on site consist of a sole ditch on the northern boundary, 97.83m long and providing 0.7826 biodiversity units.

Condition of habitat assessment

All habitats within the small site metric are fixed at baseline for input, as explained in the small sites metric user guide.

Are there any sites of significance, priority habitats or irreplaceable habitats?

Using DEFRA's Priority Habitat inventory¹, an area of deciduous woodland was identified approximately 62 meters to the north of the site. DEFRA's Priority Habitat inventory does not indicate the presence of any priority habitats within the application site's boundary. The site does not fall into or sit near any area identified as strategically significant within the Mid-Suffolk plan.

¹ Please see <https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/39403df11c8044d998772db5b54ad86c/explore?location=52.014257%2C1.217567%2C12.00>

Summary of pre-development biodiversity

Baseline Units	Habitat units	Zero Units Baseline
	Hedgerow units	0.6913
	Watercourse units	0.7826

The baseline biodiversity values for the application site.



Post-Development Biodiversity proposals

Habitat area creation

The proposal does not affect a habitat area of value and consists of the creation of an area of 216m² of developed sealed surface on an area that is currently made up of an artificial, un-vegetated and unsealed surface (hardcore).

Habitat area enhancement

As per the rules set out within the metric, habitat areas offering zero biodiversity value cannot be enhanced in both condition and distinctiveness. Therefore there are no plans to enhance any area of habitat within the application site. Additionally, the metric highlights that due to there being a baseline of zero biodiversity units, a target of 10% uplift in area habitat is not appropriate for the site.

Habitat units	% target not appropriate
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Headline results box for net change within the metric, indicating that a 10% uplift is not appropriate for habitat areas

Hedgerows and Tree lines creation

No new tree lines or hedgerows are to be created.

Hedgerows and Tree lines enhancement

It is proposed that the 132.99m line of trees along the northern boundary and the 39.83m Hedgerow on the western boundary will be enhanced.

This will be achieved along the treeline via the planting of saplings of native species in areas where there are gaps within the tree line to reduce several gaps present to less than 5m. Ecological niches such as deadwood and loose bark will be retained to better enhance biodiversity for vertebrates and invertebrates. This enhancement of the tree line to a good condition will provide a net increase of 0.1863 biodiversity units.

The hedgerow will be enhanced by reducing horizontal and vertical gaps with the introduction of additional native species (see post-development site plan) and ensuring the surrounding soil and hedgerow are undisturbed. By enhancing this hedgerow, 0.0742 biodiversity units are created. The combined enhancement of treeline and hedgerow results in an uplift of 37.68%.



Watercourse Creation

Due to the site's predominantly developed nature, there are no appropriate areas for the creation of new watercourses. Additionally, the mandatory 10% uplift can be achieved via the enhancement of the existing watercourse.

Watercourse Enhancement

The ditch present along the northern boundary will be enhanced along its 97.83m length. This will involve the removal of any filamentous algae and or duckweed (signs of eutrophication) and the removal of non-native plant species along the banks and in the ditch itself. There will also be marginal aquatic vegetation introduced along the full length of the ditch. This will result in a net change of 0.3393 biodiversity units, resulting in an uplift in watercourse biodiversity of 43.36%.

Summary of post-development biodiversity proposals

Headline Results		
Headline	BNG Targets Met ✓	
Trading Rules	Trading Rules Satisfied ✓	
Next steps	Check for input errors/rule breaks present in the metric !	
Baseline Units	Habitat units	Zero Units Baseline
	Hedgerow units	0.6913
	Watercourse units	0.7826
Post-development Units	Habitat units	0.0000
	Hedgerow units	0.9517
	Watercourse units	1.1220
Total net unit change	Habitat units	0.0000
	Hedgerow units	0.2604 ✓
	Watercourse units	0.3393 ✓
Total net % change	Habitat units	% target not appropriate
	Hedgerow units	37.68% ✓
	Watercourse units	43.36% ✓
Habitats units required to meet target	0.0000	
Hedgerow units required to meet target	0.0000	
Watercourse units required to meet target	0.0000	

The headline results sheet of the DEFRA Small Sites Metric 4.0 showing pre and post development biodiversity values

Demonstration of trading rules satisfaction

1e . Trading Summary

Distinctiveness and Habitat Type		Trading Rules Satisfied ✓				
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1f . Habitat trading assessment

Broad habitat type	Distinctiveness	Habitat type	Baseline units	Onsite provision	Net change	Trading satisfied?
Hedgerows and Lines of trees	Medium	Species-rich native hedgerow	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	Yes ✓
		Native hedgerow - associated with bank or ditch	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	
		Native hedgerow with trees	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	
		Ecologically valuable line of trees	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	
		Ecologically valuable line of trees - associated with bank or ditch	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	
		Sum	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	
	Low	Native hedgerow	0.1593	0.2335	0.0742	Yes ✓
		Line of trees	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	
		Line of trees - associated with bank or ditch	0.5320	0.7182	0.1863	
		Sum	0.6913	0.9517	0.2604	
Very low	Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	Yes ✓	
Surplus medium distinctiveness units to offset low and very low distinctiveness units				0.0000		
Cumulative surplus of units after offsetting low distinctiveness units				0.2604		
Cumulative surplus of units after offsetting very low distinctiveness units				0.2604		

The trading rules for hedgerows and tree lines satisfied with the enhancement of the existing treeline

1e . Trading Summary

Distinctiveness and Habitat Type		Trading Rules Satisfied ✓				
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1f . Habitat trading assessment

Broad habitat type	Distinctiveness	Habitat Type	Baseline units	Onsite provision	Net change	Trading satisfied?
Watercourses	Medium distinctiveness	Canals	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	Yes ✓
		Ditches	0.7826	1.1220	0.3393	
		Sum	0.7826	1.1220	0.3393	
	Low distinctiveness	Culvert	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	Yes ✓
Surplus medium distinctiveness units to offset low distinctiveness units				0.3393		
Surplus watercourse biodiversity units				0.3393		

The trading rules for watercourses satisfied with the enhancement of the existing ditch

Conclusion

Based on the proposed BNG enhancements suggested within this statement following the completion of the Biodiversity Net Gain small sites metric, it is concluded that the applicant will be able to deliver an overall BNG uplift of 37.68% in hedgerows and 43.36% in watercourses. This meets the requirement of the statutory biodiversity net gain.