
Client Name	Planning and Development Unit, Newark and Sherwood District Council
Site Name	Solar Farm Halloughton
Project Reference	Land North of Halloughton Southwell 20/01242/FULM
Date	5 th January 2022
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Note on Biodiversity Net Gain Calculation

Introduction

Via East Midlands have been commissioned to undertake an independent review of the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) metric calculation provided by the Appellant in the Halloughton Solar Farm Public Inquiry.

The specific queries to be addressed are to:

- Review of the metric 3 calculation used and accuracy of calculations and inputs
- Detail of any inaccuracy if applicable
- Advice as to change between original 2.00 and 3.00 metric

A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Note was prepared by Avian Ecology Ltd. (AEL) on behalf of JBM Solar in relation to the Biodiversity Net Gain assessment undertaken for the proposed solar development (20/01242/FULM).

The BNG assessment was originally undertaken using Natural England's Biodiversity Metric 2.0 and then revised using the Metric 3.0. A Biodiversity Note was prepared by Avian Ecology 8th December 2021 to accompany the Metric 3.0 calculation

The Metric 2.0 calculations resulted in +36.78% net gain in habitat units, and the Metric 3.0 calculations resulted in a +91.74% in habitat units.

A review of these calculations has been undertaken by Via East Midlands.

Review Outcomes

The habitat baseline, creation and enhancement areas were checked to ensure accuracy across the BNG calculations. It was considered that the majority of the areas were accurate. However, the baseline area, and total loss of other neutral grassland (noted as semi-improved grassland on the phase 1 habitat plan) was inaccurate. The Metric 3.0 figure determined that 0.98ha is the baseline for other neutral grassland, and the development would also result in the loss of 0.98ha. The review determines that the baseline area is approximately 7.2ha for other neutral grassland, with the total loss also being 7.2ha. The Metric 3.0 calculations result in +72.88% net gain when calculated using a baseline figure / loss of 7.2ha. It is recommended that this is checked with Avian Ecology Ltd. to ensure this area has not been included elsewhere within the metric calculations.

No other inaccuracies were noted during the review process

Further Information

The percentage gain for this site is high due to baseline habitats being of poor / very poor condition. These habitats are being lost and higher value habitats are being created as part of the development proposals.

The change between the Metric 2.0 figure and Metric 3.0 figure is primarily due to the post-development habitat having a higher condition score in the Metric 3.0 than that detailed within the Metric 2.0. Further, more detailed technical supplements were provided with the release of the Metric 3.0 which resulted in the condition of the post-development habitat being upgraded from fairly poor to moderate. Therefore, resulting in the increased net gain percentage.

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