

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the above consultation. The Natural Environment Team has the following comments to make:

- Section 2.6: It may be helpful to clarify that applicants will be required to submit ecological information to demonstrate that their proposal meets the requirement as set out in the Environment Act 2021 to achieve a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity.
- Section 6.22: Regarding the requirement for the Biodiversity Survey and Report to contain a Phase 1 habitat survey, it is important to note that in the near future, the UK Habitat Classification is set to replace the Phase 1 Habitat Survey method as the standard survey method used as part of Preliminary Ecological Appraisals. The UK Habitat Classification is the preferred survey method used to inform the Defra Metric for biodiversity net gain calculations; it is therefore advised that reference is made to both Phase 1 and the UK Habs Classification.
- MP7.2: It is advised that the last sentence is revised to clarify that "...developments must provide a minimum 10% measurable biodiversity net gain...".
- Policy MP7: It is advised that the policy clarifies that the restoration proposal must demonstrate "the scheme provides for a minimum 10% measurable biodiversity net gain".
- Policy MP8: An aftercare strategy of ten years is advised (rather than five years), to ensure habitats have satisfactorily established. It may also be helpful to clarify that biodiversity net gain plans and their associated management and monitoring plans will require a minimum thirty year maintenance period where Biodiversity Units are to be delivered onsite.