



Crow Ecology
Creating a Nest for your Project & Nature

BNG Assessment Supporting document V1

Site: Proposed Cycle path, Holyrood Drive, Scunthorpe DN15 8NN

Client: Keystone Architecture on behalf of their client

Date of surveys: 1st April 2025

Prepared by Chris Crow BSc (Hons),
ACIEEM.

NE Bat License No: 2015-11015-CLS-CLS
NE Great Crested Newt License No: 2015-18094-CLS-CLS
NE Barn Owl License No: CL29/00149

Crow Ecology
66 Belgrave Drive,
Hull,
HU4 6DN.
Tel – 07813 900097
Email – info@crowecology.co.uk
Web- www.crowecology.co.uk

Validity of survey data and report. The findings of this report are valid for 24 months from the date of survey.
If work has not commenced within this period, an updated survey by a suitably qualified ecologist will be required.

Contents

1. BNG Summary	1
2. Baseline Habitats	2
2.1 – Urban – Developed land; sealed surface	2
2.2 – Grassland – Modified grassland	2
2.3 – Individual trees – Urban tree	3
2.4 – Heathland and shrub – Willow scrub	3
2.5 - Urban – Introduced shrub	3
2.6 – Heathland and scrub – Willow scrub	3
3. Proposed Habitats	4
4. BNG Assessment Result	5
5. Conclusion	7
5.1 - Responsibilities for the Creation of Habitats	8
6. Appendices	10
Appendix 1 - Legislation & Planning policies	10
<i>The Environment Act 2021 – Schedule 14 - Biodiversity gain as condition of planning permission</i>	10
<i>The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006)</i>	14
<i>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (July 2021)</i>	14
<i>Local Planning Policy</i>	16

1. BNG Summary

Crow Ecology was commissioned by Keystone Architecture on behalf of their client to form a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment. The assessment uses DEFRA's Statutory Biodiversity Metric to calculate Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) if possible, on-site. If it is not possible to achieve BNG on-site, BNG can be calculated using an area of off-site land or alternative resources will need to be discussed with the LPA.

Please refer to: *Statutory BNG – Proposed Cycle path, Holyrood Drive, Scunthorpe DN15 8NN V1* – Crow Ecology whilst using this document.

None of the habitats present, are irreplaceable habitats.

BNG could not be achieved on-site. No habitats that generated a positive BNG score were within the proposed plan.

The On-site net change for Habitat units is -0.08 (-100.00%). The Trading rules for Medium and Low distinctiveness habitats where not satisfied.

BNG can only be achieved with off-site gains. The unit shortfall is: A1 = 0.17 units. The client will achieve BNG, once approved and subsequently conditioned, through the purchase of Natural England Statutory Biodiversity credits.

Natural England statutory credits are a one-off payment. The client would show 'proof of purchase' of the Natural England Statutory Biodiversity credits once BNG has been conditioned.

The property owner/developer of this planning application, or a designated 3rd party would be responsible for every element of the BNG.



2. Baseline Habitats

2.1 – Urban – Developed land; sealed surface



Plate 2.1 – The road, which will connect to the cycle track.

2.2 – Grassland – Modified grassland



Plate 2.2 – (L) Grassland within the site, where the cycle path will meet the road, (R) Grassland further North. The grassland is species-rich for a modified grassland with 6/m² (n = 4). Holistically, species present within the grasslands are: False oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius* Red fescue *Festuca rubra*, Perennial ryegrass *Lolium perenne*, Common couch *Elymus repens*. Forb species include: Yarrow *Achillea millefolium*, Creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale*, Ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, Daisy *Bellis perennis*, Common whitlowgrass *Draba verna*, Prickly lettuce *Lactuca serriola*, Common Stork's-bill *Erodium cicutarium*, Miner's lettuce *Claytonia perfoliate* and Moss sp. *Bryophyta* Sp.

2.3 – Individual trees – Urban tree



Plate 2.3 – Willow scrub followed by introduced shrubs and In the background of the picture, small Goat willow *Salix caprea* tree (this tree will be removed blue circle).

2.4 – Heathland and shrub – Willow scrub

Please see plate 2.3.

2.5 - Urban – Introduced shrub

Please see plate 2.3.

2.6 – Heathland and scrub – Willow scrub



Plate 2.4 – Willow scrub.

3. Proposed Habitats

The following habitats will be created:

- Urban - Developed land; sealed surface – Cycle path – Totalling 0.0116ha

The habitat: Urban - Developed land; sealed surface will not be discussed as this habitat provide Very Low ecological value and provides no score.



4. BNG Assessment Result

BNG could not be achieved on-site. The BNG score is as follows:

Proposed Cycle path, Holyrood Drive, Scunthorpe				
Headline Results				
Return to results menu				
Scroll down for final results				
On-site baseline	Habitat units	0.08		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
On-site post-intervention <small>(Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	Habitat units	0.00		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
On-site net change <small>(units & percentage)</small>	Habitat units	-0.08	-100.00%	On-site net gain is less than target of 0.08
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%	
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%	
Off-site baseline	Habitat units	0.00		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Off-site post-intervention <small>(Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	Habitat units	0.00		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Off-site net change <small>(units & percentage)</small>	Habitat units	0.00	0.00%	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%	
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%	
Combined net unit change <small>(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	Habitat units	-0.08		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Spatial risk multiplier (SRM) deductions	Habitat units	0.00		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
FINAL RESULTS				
Total net unit change <small>(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	Habitat units	-0.08		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
Total net % change <small>(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	Habitat units	-100.00%		Total net gain achieved is less than target of 0.08
	Hedgerow units	0.00%		
	Watercourse units	0.00%		
Trading rules satisfied?	No - Check Trading Summaries ▲			
Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit
Habitat units	10.00%	0.08	0.09	0.09
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00
No additional hedgerow units required to meet target ✓				
No additional watercourse units required to meet target ✓				

The On-site net change for Habitat units is -0.08 (-100.00%). The Trading rules for Medium and Low distinctiveness habitats were not satisfied. To achieve BNG, the site would need a +0.09 habitat unit uplift. The current layout, the size of the project site and most notably the loss of medium distinctiveness habitats means it will be unachievable to achieve BNG on-site.

The Unit shortfall for Tier A1 is 0.17. Please see below.



Unit Shortfall by Tier/Module	
Tier	Unit Shortfall
A1	0.17 ▲
A2	0.00
A3	0.00
A4	0.00
A5	0.00
H	0.00
W	0.00

*The spatial risk multiplier has been applied to all unit shortfall values.

5. Conclusion

BNG could not be achieved on-site.

BNG could not be achieved on-site due to medium-low distinctiveness habitats; Modified grassland, Individual trees; being replaced with very low distinctiveness habitats; Developed land; sealed surface. BNG is -100.00% (-0.08 habitat units).

BNG can only be achieved with off-site gains. The unit shortfall is A1 = 0.17 units.

The client/developer will have to either provide some land off-site, purchase Biodiversity credits or apply for Natural England (NE) Statutory Biodiversity credits.

If Off-site land is chosen:

Following an S106 agreement and the off-site land registered, Landscaping improvements must be carried out within the timescales set in the final approved Biodiversity Gain Plan and the Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) that will be approved by the LPA. The results of the monitoring must be submitted to the LPA for written approval in years 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 20 and 30; biodiversity reconciliation assessments should be provided at each monitoring stage.

If NE Statutory credits are chosen:

Natural England statutory credits are a one-off payment.

The client would show 'proof of purchase' of the Natural England Statutory Biodiversity credits once BNG has been conditioned. To achieve BNG with Natural England Statutory Biodiversity credits the estimated cost would be (at the time of this document) £7,140 ex VAT. Please see below

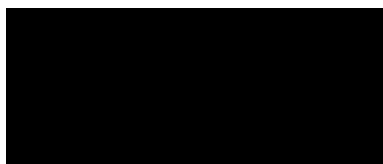
**Estimated cost of
statutory biodiversity
credits**
£7,140 (excluding VAT)

Tier	Credits	Estimated cost
A1	0.17	£7,140
A2	0.00	£0
A3	0.00	£0
A4	0.00	£0
A5	0.00	£0
H	0.00	£0
W	0.00	£0
Total estimated cost		£7,140

5.1 - Responsibilities for the Creation of Habitats

The property owner/developer of this planning application, or a designated 3rd party would be responsible for every element of the BNG. If the property owner/developer hires a third-party landscape/maintenance company, the name of the contractor responsible for this maintenance will be required.

This document provides necessary information to accompanying the statutory BNG metric.



Chris Crow, BSc (Hons) ACIEEM. June 2025 for and on behalf of Crow Ecology, 66 Belgrave Drive, Hull,
HU4 6DN. Tel – 07813 900097.
Email – info@crowecology.co.uk
Report printed on recycled paper

6. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Legislation & Planning policies

The Environment Act 2021 – Schedule 14 - Biodiversity gain as condition of planning permission

PART 1 Biodiversity gain condition

1 In the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, after section 90 insert—
“Biodiversity gain

90A Biodiversity gain in England
Schedule 7A (biodiversity gain in England) has effect.”

Section 90A

“SCHEDULE 7A Biodiversity gain in England PART 1 Overview and interpretation

Overview

1(1) This Schedule makes provision for grants of planning permission in England to be subject to a condition to secure that the biodiversity gain objective is met.

(2) Paragraphs 2 to 12 have effect for the purposes of this Schedule.

Biodiversity gain objective

2(1) The biodiversity gain objective is met in relation to development for which planning permission is granted if the biodiversity value attributable to the development exceeds the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat by at least the relevant percentage.

(2) The biodiversity value attributable to the development is the total of—

(a) the post-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat,

(b) the biodiversity value, in relation to the development, of any registered offsite biodiversity gain allocated to the development, and

(c) the biodiversity value of any biodiversity credits purchased for the development.

(3) The relevant percentage is 10%.

(4) The Secretary of State may by regulations amend this paragraph so as to change the relevant percentage.

Biodiversity value and the biodiversity metric

3 References to the biodiversity value of any habitat or habitat enhancement are to its value as calculated in accordance with the biodiversity metric.

4(1) The biodiversity metric is a document for measuring, for the purposes of this Schedule, the biodiversity value or relative biodiversity value of habitat or habitat enhancement.

(2) The biodiversity metric is to be produced and published by the Secretary of State.

(3) The Secretary of State may from time to time revise and republish the biodiversity metric.

(4) Before publishing or republishing the biodiversity metric the Secretary of State must consult such persons as the Secretary of State considers appropriate.

(5) The Secretary of State may by regulations make transitional provision in relation to the revision and republication of the biodiversity metric.

(6) The Secretary of State must lay the biodiversity metric, and any revised biodiversity metric, before Parliament.

Pre-development biodiversity value

5(1) In relation to any development for which planning permission is granted, the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat is the biodiversity value of the onsite habitat on the relevant date.

(2) The relevant date is—

(a) in a case in which planning permission is granted on application, the date of the application, and

(b) in any other case, the date on which the planning permission is granted.

(3) But the person submitting the biodiversity gain plan for approval and the planning authority may agree that the relevant date is to be a date earlier than that specified in sub-paragraph (2)(a) or (b) (but not a date which is before the day on which this Schedule comes into force in relation to the development).

(4) This paragraph is subject to paragraphs 6 and 7.

6 If—

(a) a person carries on activities on land on or after 30 January 2020 otherwise than in accordance with—

(i) planning permission, or

(ii) any other permission of a kind specified by the Secretary of State by regulations, and

(b) as a result of the activities the biodiversity value of the onsite habitat referred to in paragraph 5(1) is lower on the relevant date than it would otherwise have been,

the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat is to be taken to be its biodiversity value immediately before the carrying on of the activities.

7 Where planning permission is granted in respect of land which is registered in the biodiversity gain site register under section 100 of the Environment Act 2021, the pre-development biodiversity value of the land is the total of—

(a) the biodiversity value of the onsite habitat on the relevant date, and

(b) to the extent that it is not included within that value, the biodiversity value of the habitat enhancement which is, on that date, recorded in the register as habitat enhancement to be achieved on the land.

Post-development biodiversity value

8(1) In relation to any development for which planning permission is granted, the post-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat is the projected value of the onsite habitat as at the time the development is completed.

(2) That value is to be calculated by taking the pre-development biodiversity value and—

(a) if at the time the development is completed the development will, taken as a whole, have increased the biodiversity value of the onsite habitat, adding the amount of that increase, or

(b) if at the time the development is completed the development will, taken as a whole, have decreased the biodiversity value of the onsite habitat, subtracting the amount of that decrease.

This is subject to paragraph 9.

9(1) This paragraph applies in relation to any development for which planning permission is granted where—

(a) the person submitting the biodiversity gain plan for approval proposes to carry out works in the course of the development that increase the biodiversity value of the onsite habitat, and

(b) the planning authority considers that the increase is significant in relation to the pre-development biodiversity value.

(2) The increase in biodiversity value referred to in sub-paragraph (1) is to be taken into account in calculating the post-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat only if the planning authority is satisfied that the condition in sub-paragraph (3) is met.

(3) The condition is that any habitat enhancement resulting from the works referred to in sub-paragraph (1)(a) will, by virtue of—

(a) a condition subject to which the planning permission is granted,

(b) a planning obligation, or

(c) a conservation covenant,

be maintained for at least 30 years after the development is completed.

(4) The Secretary of State may by regulations amend sub-paragraph (3) so as to substitute for the period for the time being specified there a different period of at least 30 years.

Registered offsite biodiversity gains

10(1) “Registered offsite biodiversity gain” means any habitat enhancement, where—

(a) the enhancement is required to be carried out under a conservation covenant or planning obligation, and

(b) the enhancement is recorded in the biodiversity gain site register (as to which, see section 100 of the Environment Act 2021).

(2) References to the allocation of registered offsite biodiversity gain are to its allocation in accordance with the terms of the conservation covenant or planning obligation referred to in sub-paragraph (1)(a).

(3) The biodiversity value of registered offsite biodiversity gain is measured, under the biodiversity metric, in relation to development to which it is allocated.

Biodiversity credits

11 “Biodiversity credits” means credits under section 101 of the Environment Act 2021.

General

12(1) In relation to development for which planning permission is granted—

“onsite habitat” means habitat on the land to which the planning permission relates;

“planning authority” means the local planning authority, except that—

(a)

in a case where the planning permission is granted by Mayoral development order under section 61DB, “planning authority” means such of the Mayor of London or the local planning authority as may be specified in the order;

(b)

in a case where the planning permission is granted by the Secretary of State under section 62A, 76A or 77, “planning authority” means such of the Secretary of State or the local planning authority as the Secretary of State may determine;

(c)

in a case where the planning permission is granted on an appeal under section 78, “planning authority” means such of the person determining the appeal or the local planning authority as that person may direct.

(2) “Habitat enhancement” means enhancement of the biodiversity of habitat.

(3) References to the grant of planning permission include the deemed grant of planning permission.

PART 2 Condition of planning permission relating to biodiversity gain

General condition of planning permission

13(1) Every planning permission granted for the development of land in England shall be deemed to have been granted subject to the condition in sub-paragraph (2).

(2) The condition is that the development may not be begun unless—

(a) a biodiversity gain plan has been submitted to the planning authority (see paragraph 14), and

(b) the planning authority has approved the plan (see paragraph 15).

Biodiversity gain plan

14(1) For the purposes of paragraph 13(2)(a), a biodiversity gain plan is a plan which—

(a) relates to development for which planning permission is granted, and

(b) specifies the matters referred to in sub-paragraph (2).

(2) The matters are—

(a) information about the steps taken or to be taken to minimise the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the onsite habitat and any other habitat,

(b) the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat,

(c) the post-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat,

(d) any registered offsite biodiversity gain allocated to the development and the biodiversity value of that gain in relation to the development,

(e) any biodiversity credits purchased for the development, and

(f) such other matters as the Secretary of State may by regulations specify.

(3) The Secretary of State may by regulations make provision about—

(a) any other matters to be included in a biodiversity gain plan;

(b) the form of a biodiversity gain plan;

(c) the procedure to be followed in relation to the submission of a biodiversity gain plan (including the time by which a plan must be submitted);

(d) persons who may or must submit a biodiversity gain plan.

Approval of biodiversity gain plan

15(1) For the purposes of paragraph 13(2)(b) a planning authority to which a biodiversity gain plan is submitted must approve the plan if, and only if, it is satisfied as to the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2).

(2) The matters are—

(a) that the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat is as specified in the plan,

(b) that the post-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat is at least the value specified in the plan,

(c) that, in a case where any registered offsite biodiversity gain is specified in the plan as allocated to the development—

- (i) the registered offsite biodiversity gain is so allocated (and, if the allocation is conditional, that any conditions attaching to the allocation have been met or will be met by the time the development begins), and
- (ii) the registered offsite biodiversity gain has the biodiversity value specified in the plan in relation to the development,
- (d) that any biodiversity credits specified in the plan as purchased for the development have been so purchased,
- (e) that the biodiversity gain objective is met, and
- (f) any other matters specified in the plan under paragraph 14(2)(f).

Regulations about determinations

16 The Secretary of State may make regulations as to—

- (a) the procedure which a planning authority is to follow in determining whether to approve a biodiversity gain plan (including the time by which a determination must be made);
- (b) factors which may or must be taken into account in making such a determination;
- (c) appeals relating to such a determination.

Exceptions

17 Paragraph 13 does not apply in relation to—

- (a) development for which planning permission is granted—
 - (i) by a development order, or
 - (ii) under section 293A (urgent Crown development), or
- (b) development of such other description as the Secretary of State may by regulations specify.

Modifications for irreplaceable habitat

18(1) The Secretary of State may by regulations make provision modifying or excluding the application of this Part of this Schedule in relation to any development for which planning permission is granted where the onsite habitat is “irreplaceable habitat” as defined in the regulations.

(2) Regulations under this paragraph must make provision requiring, in relation to any such development, the making of arrangements for the purpose of minimising the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the onsite habitat.

(3) Regulations under this paragraph may confer powers and duties, including powers and duties in relation to the giving of guidance, on Natural England.

Modifications for particular kinds of planning permission

19(1) The Secretary of State may by regulations make provision modifying the application of this Part of this Schedule in relation to—

- (a) the grant of outline planning permission, where the reservation of matters for subsequent approval has the effect of requiring or permitting development to proceed in phases, or
- (b) the grant of any kind of planning permission, where the grant is subject to conditions (whether requiring the subsequent approval of any matters or otherwise) having that effect.

(2) Regulations under this paragraph may include provision for a grant of planning permission referred to in sub-paragraph (1)(a) or (b) to be subject to conditions relating to meeting the biodiversity gain objective referred to in paragraph 2.

20(1) The Secretary of State may by regulations make provision modifying or excluding the application of this Part of this Schedule in relation to development for which—

- (a) planning permission is granted under section 73A (planning permission for development already carried out), or
- (b) planning permission is granted by an order under section 102 (orders requiring discontinuance of use etc).

(2) Regulations under this paragraph may in particular include provision—

- (a) for paragraph 13 not to apply in relation to the grant of planning permission referred to in sub-paragraph (1)(a) or (b);
- (b) for the grant of any such planning permission to be subject to other conditions relating to meeting the biodiversity gain objective.

(3) The conditions referred to in sub-paragraph (2)(b) may include conditions requiring—

- (a) habitat enhancement on the land to which the planning permission relates;
- (b) the allocation of registered offsite biodiversity gain to any development for which the planning permission is granted;
- (c) the purchase of biodiversity credits for any such development.

Further application of this Part

21 The Secretary of State may by regulations make provision to apply this Part of this Schedule in relation to development for which planning permission is granted under section 141 or 177(1), with such modifications or exclusions as may be specified in the regulations.”

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006)

‘An Act to make provision about bodies concerned with the natural environment and rural communities; to make provision in connection with wildlife, sites of special scientific interest, National Parks and the Broads; to amend the law relating to rights of way; to make provision as to the Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council; to provide for flexible administrative arrangements in connection with functions relating to the environment and rural affairs and certain other functions; and for connected purposes’.

In regards to the planning process sections 40 and 41 are of particular importance:

‘Section 40 (1) Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.’

Section 41 lists habitats and species of primary importance to the conservation of biodiversity therefore making these habitats and species a consideration in the planning process.’

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (July 2021)

This policy states under section 15 ‘Conserving and enhancing the natural environment’ that;

174.

Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
- c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
- d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
- e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
- f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

175. Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.

176. Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.

177. When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest.

Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

- a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;
- b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
- c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

178. Within areas defined as Heritage Coast (and that do not already fall within one of the designated areas mentioned in paragraph 176), planning policies and decisions should be consistent with the special character of the area and the importance of its conservation. Major development within a Heritage Coast is unlikely to be appropriate, unless it is compatible with its special character.

Habitats and biodiversity

179. To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

- a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and
- b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

180. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
- b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

181. The following should be given the same protection as habitats sites:

- a) potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation;
- b) listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and
- c) sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.

182. The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.

Local Planning Policy

The 'North Lincolnshire Local Development Framework – Core Strategy, 2011' outlines the council's planning policy targets. CS17 is the main policy regarding biodiversity:

CS17: BIODIVERSITY

The council will promote effective stewardship of North Lincolnshire's wildlife through:

1. Safeguarding national and international protected sites for nature conservation from inappropriate development.
2. Appropriate consideration being given to European and nationally important habitats and species.
3. Maintaining and promoting a North Lincolnshire network of local wildlife sites and corridors, links and stepping stones between areas of natural green space.
4. Ensuring development retains, protects and enhances features of biological and geological interest and provides for the appropriate management of these features.
5. Ensuring development seeks to produce a net gain in biodiversity by designing in wildlife, and ensuring any unavoidable impacts are appropriately mitigated for.
6. Supporting wildlife enhancements that contribute to the habitat restoration targets set out in the North Lincolnshire's Nature Map and in national, regional and local biodiversity action plans.
7. Improving access to and education/interpretation of biodiversity sites for tourism and the local population, providing their ecological integrity is not harmed.