



Strategic Environment Cabinet  
Committee

Monday, 27 September 2021

**List of documents attached**

6. Presentation - Overview of Biodiversity Net Gain Metric 3.0 (Pages 3 - 18)

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# **Biodiversity Net Gain**

## **Metric 3.0**

**27 September 2021**

# 25 Year Environment Plan



A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to  
Improve the Environment



Adopted in 2018

Overarching goals are:

- cleaner air and water;
- plants and animals which are thriving; and
- a cleaner, greener country for us all.



Local authorities have a duty under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) to show regard for conserving biodiversity in all their actions. This duty is being strengthened through the forthcoming Environment Bill

# Emerging Environment Bill



- Would strengthen the duty to set a legally-binding target to halt species decline by 2030.
- Introduce Statutory guidance for local planning authorities to explain how they should take into account new Local Nature Recovery Strategies
- Introduces a ten per cent biodiversity net gain requirement for all new developments. On sites where these biodiversity gains are secured, they would have to be managed for at least 30 years

# NPPF and Net Gain



Chapter 15 of the NPPF states:

- Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: - minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures (para 174 (d)) ;
- To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should: - 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 (para 179 (b)).



Chapter 15 of the NPPF states (cont):

- When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles: - 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 (Para180 (d)).





## **Local Plan Core Strategy**

CS12 (Green Infrastructure) seeks to ensure that there is no net loss of biodiversity as a result of development.

## **Emerging Local Plan**

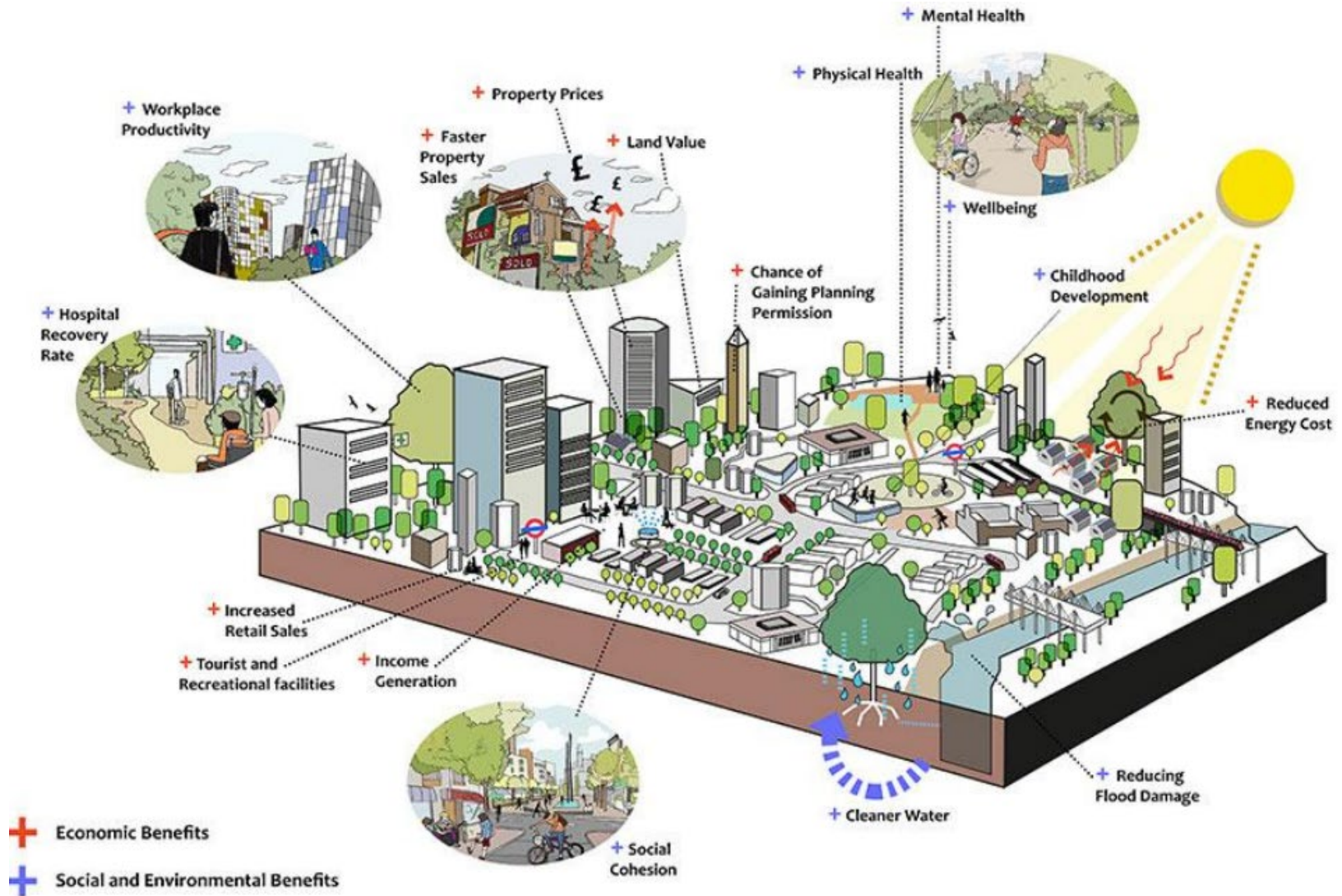
GI6 (Biodiversity) in the emerging Development Management Policies Document seeks measureable biodiversity net gain which take account of the mitigation hierarchy.

# What is biodiversity net gain?

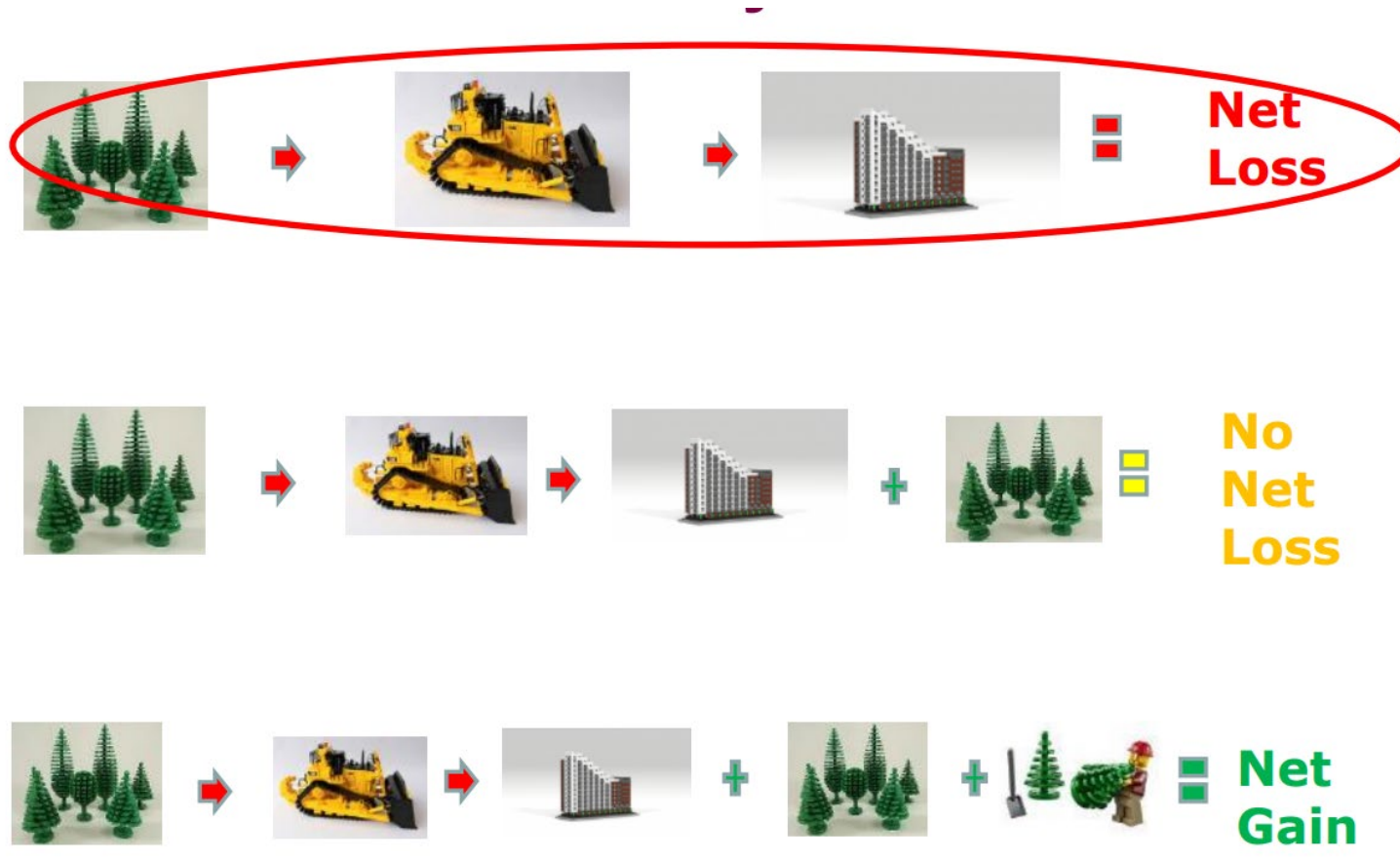


- Development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before
- To achieve net gain, a development must have a higher biodiversity unit score after completion than the baseline score before development
- Net Gain = More Nature

# Wider Benefits



# Net Gain vs Net Loss



# Mitigation Hierarchy



Enhancement: Most projects have opportunities to enhance poor biodiversity resources or create new benefits for wildlife and these should be explored alongside the application of the other hierarchy principles.



## **On-site**

Developer delivers biodiversity enhancements on their own site through well designed built environment and landscaping

## **Off-Site**

Developers looks off-site to deliver required gains. Off-site locations should align with strategic conservation objectives and form part of the wider nature recovery network. Delivery could be through land owner, tenant, organisations.



- Principle 1. Apply the Mitigation Hierarchy •
- Principle 2. Avoid losing biodiversity that cannot be offset by gains elsewhere
- Principle 3. Be inclusive and equitable
- Principle 4. Address risks
- Principle 5. Make a measurable Net Gain contribution
- Principle 6. Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity
- Principle 7. Be additional
- Principle 8. Create a Net Gain legacy
- Principle 9. Optimise sustainability
- Principle 10. Be transparent

# Metric 3.0 – Natural England & Defra (July 2021)



The BNG metric is the main tool to measure biodiversity loss and gains resulting from development or changes in land management. **It is used to:**

- **assess the biodiversity unit value of an area of land**
- **demonstrate biodiversity net gains or losses in a consistent way**
- **measure and account for direct impacts on biodiversity**
- **compare proposals for a site – such as creating or enhancing habitat on-site or off-site**

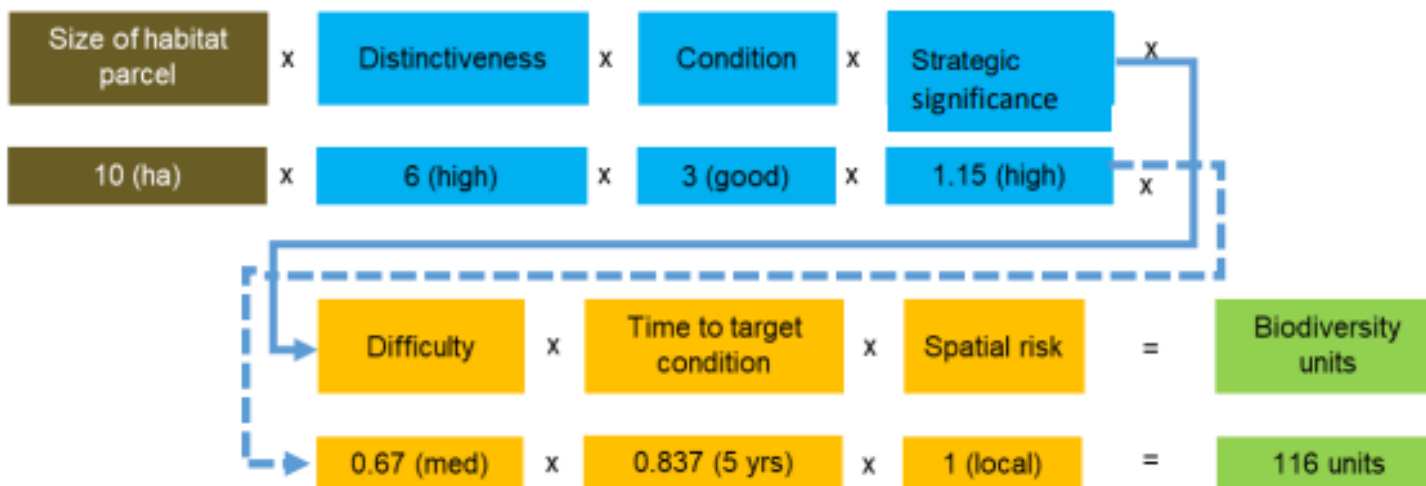




### PRE-intervention biodiversity calculation (the baseline)



### POST-intervention biodiversity calculation (for newly created or enhanced habitats)





## Calculation of gains or losses

The net effect of an intervention (or a series of interventions) on biodiversity is calculated as follows:

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{POST units} \\ 116 \text{ units} \end{array} - \begin{array}{r} \text{PRE units} \\ 69 \text{ units} \end{array} = \begin{array}{r} \text{Net change} \\ +47 \text{ units} \end{array}$$

 Habitat parcel	 Risk factor
 Measure of biodiversity quality	 Value in biodiversity units