

## Biodiversity Impact Assessment Calculation – Additional Note

Site Name	Land adjacent to A41, Bicester - Ref: 17/02534/OUT
Project Number	358
Client	Trium
Work Undertaken	Biodiversity Impact Assessment Calculations
Date of Update	20/12/2018
Author	J Pedder

### Method

Prime Environment have undertaken a Biodiversity Impact Assessment (BIA) as requested by Cherwell District Council (CDC). This has involved the creation of a GIS plan of the site's habitats and recorded parameters for entry into a Biodiversity Offsetting Matrix. The matrix used was the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Biodiversity Offsetting Biodiversity Impact Assessment Calculator v18.

Various scenarios have been run to further understand the options available from the 'do nothing' approach, to a scheme involving a variety of on and off-site habitat creation. During the detailed design of the scheme, an appropriate Landscaping and Ecology plan will be produced which details habitat creation within the site and includes an updated Biodiversity Impact Assessment demonstrating that the plan will provide a net gain. The BIA has demonstrated that there are several ways in which the scheme is able to achieve a net gain. This is possible by creating habitats within the applicant's land either within the Red Line Area or Blue Line Area, without resorting to third party land.

CDC subsequently requested that we demonstrate that a higher net gain is demonstrated to show a 'buffer' in case improvement measures failed. We provided a fifth additional BIA scenario; this time aiming for higher quality habitats (whereas previous scenarios assumed new habitats would be of moderate value having taken a precautionary approach).

CDC have further questions regarding the BIA:

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*It seems we are generally happy with the re-worked biodiversity metric. However, there are habitat types and quantities set out that need to be demonstrated as realistically feasible on an illustrative site plan to show that it can be achieved. i.e. 1.64ha of standing water is now suggested within the blue edged area to create a wetland habitat together with skylark foraging plots. Can these be represented on a plan that shows how this would work? Where standing water is included within the metric, is this assuming a pond (i.e. a permanently wet feature) or would it be attenuation basins/swales that are normally dry? If so, how does this relate back to the surface water drainage strategy for the site – are 'wet' features expected due to depth of basins and the water table etc? This can have significant effects on the accuracy of the metric.*

*Matthew Parry Principal Planning Officer – Major Projects Planning Team*

It was not intended that the final BIA suggested in particular that the final scheme would include 1.64 ha of wetland, but that the principal is established that this scheme can deliver net biodiversity gain. Wetland can be swapped for similar scoring habitats (e.g. orchard, woodland etc) in a final landscape design. It is not proposed to fix a landscape design at this outline stage.

This document presents another example BIA to demonstrate that net biodiversity gain can be achieved by the scheme, and highlights the possible location of skylark plots. Each habitat area on Figure 1 is labelled with its size in hectares.

This illustration includes a small pond within the blue line area (as this is specified in the EIA). An additional pond and three areas of wet grassland are shown in the blue line area, with patches of scrub and species-rich neutral grassland. The two ponds would be designed to hold water through winter and into mid-summer in years with typical rainfall. As the scheme is outline only and the landscaping and location of built features is not fixed at this stage, a surface water drainage strategy cannot yet be produced. There are a number of options for creating the appropriate hydrology to support these habitats, including excavating down to the water table, diverting water from the adjacent stream, channelling surface rain water from the field or including the habitats as part of a SUDs system. This scenario results in a net gain of 4.78 points.

Appendix 1 – Figure 1



**Bicester Office Park  
Biodiversity Impact  
Assessment - Illustration of  
potential wildlife landscaping.**

**Legend**

- ◆ Skylark Plots
- SI grass - proposed
- ▭ Red Line Area
- ▨ mixed wood - retained
- scattered scrub - proposed
- marshy grassland - proposed
- wetland
- ▨ hedge - proposed
- ▭ Blue Line Area



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## Appendix 2 – BIA Scenario

### Summary

	Notes	Building and Hardstanding	Habitat Score	Linear Habitat Score	Total
Scenario 5	Balanced: Sensitive development within the Red Line Area with amenity grassland and a planted pond. New native species hedge delineating the Red and Blue line areas. Habitat creation in the Blue Line Area includes wildflower meadow grassland, scattered scrub, a pond and patches of marshy grassland.	9.4 ha	+6.17	-1.39	<b>+4.78</b>