

Date: 06 November 2020  
Our ref: 329155  
Your ref: n/a



Derbyshire Dales District Council

**BY EMAIL ONLY**

Customer Services  
Hornbeam House  
Crewe Business Park  
Electra Way  
Crewe  
Cheshire  
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Sir/Madam

**Planning consultation: Ashbourne Neighbourhood Plan - Reg 16 - Derbyshire Dales District Council**

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 22 September 2020 which was received by Natural England on 22 September 2020.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Natural England recognise that the Ashbourne Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any housing or commercial sites or targets. However there are a number of strategic sites within or in close proximity that have been allocated in the Derbyshire Dales District Council Local Plan (2017)

**Strategic Sites**

Natural England support the requirement to produce a masterplan for both the Airfield Housing site and both employment sites. This which will help to deliver a cohesive green infrastructure strategy, this will provide benefits on a local level and landscape scale.

**Airfield Site Masterplan 6.11**

**Green and Blue Infrastructure**

Green and blue infrastructure refers to the living network of green spaces, water and other environmental features in both urban and rural areas. It is often used in an urban context to provide multiple benefits including space for recreation, access to nature, flood storage and urban cooling to support climate change mitigation, food production, wildlife habitats and health & well-being improvements provided by trees, rights of way, parks, gardens, road verges, allotments, cemeteries, woodlands, rivers and wetlands.

Green and blue infrastructure is also relevant in a rural context, where it might additionally refer to the use of farmland, woodland, wetlands or other natural features to provide services such as flood protection, carbon storage or water purification.

A strategic approach for green infrastructure is required to ensure its protection and enhancement. Green and blue infrastructure should be incorporated into strategic sites and be supported by appropriate detailed policies and proposals to ensure effective provision and delivery. Evidence of a strategic approach can be underpinned by Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy. We encourage the provision of specific green and blue infrastructure to be included in the plan or alternatively integrated into relevant other policies, for example biodiversity, green space, flood risk, climate change, reflecting the multifunctional benefits of green infrastructure.

## **Biodiversity Net Gain**

Biodiversity net gain is a demonstrable gain in biodiversity assets as a result of a development project that may or may not cause biodiversity loss, but where the final output is an overall net gain. Net gain outcomes can be achieved both on and/or off the development site and should be embedded into the development process at the earliest stages.

The government is intending that it will mandate net gains for biodiversity on new developments in England to deliver an overall increase in biodiversity. Natural England therefore suggests that your authority may want to advise the applicant to follow the net gain approach and take the opportunity within this proposal to be an exemplar development which can demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity.

The Biodiversity metric 2.0 (beta test version) is now available and includes a user guide, calculation tool and detailed technical supplement which can all be downloaded from:

<http://nepubprod.appspot.com/publication/5850908674228224>

The advantage of using a recognised metric to deliver net gain is that it provides a clear, transparent and evidence-based approach to assessing a project's biodiversity impacts that can assist with "de-risking" a development through the planning process and contribute to wider place-making.

## **Policy DES1 - Design**

Natural England welcome the inclusion of a design guide to inform what should be included in a design and access statement. Natural England suggest that additional measures are included as some of the 10 characteristics of a well designed place as set out by the MHCLG Design Guide are not covered in sufficient detail. For example the requirement to follow the energy hierarchy is not included so all 10 characteristics should be given appropriate consideration.

## **Employment Sites EMP1 and EMP2**

Natural England welcome the requirement to deliver a holistic approach through a masterplan for EMP1. Natural England would like to highlight that large scale commercial development has the potential to provide considerable environmental gains through green and blue infrastructure, SuDS provision and delivering Biodiversity net gain.

Natural England would like to highlight the approach taken by Nottingham City Council to commercial development in their Biodiversity Net Gain SPD<sup>1</sup>. In section 7. Ecological Enhancement Requirements for commercial or industrial developments they stipulate that green or brown roofs, or biodiverse green walls designed into the structure, ideally occupying 25% of the building. In addition to green/brown roofs or green walls they also require an assessment of the potential to provide nesting opportunities for peregrine falcon and kestrels.

Yours sincerely

Caolan Gaffney  
Planning Lead Adviser

---

1

file:///C:/Users/m991287/AppData/Local/Packages/Microsoft.MicrosoftEdge\_8wekyb3d8bbwe/TempState/Downloads/#Biodiversity%20SPD%20(1).pdf