

Biodiversity net gain. Good practice principles for development

Case studies

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13 Residential development at Exeter Road, Teignmouth, Devon

Details

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13.1 PROJECT SUMMARY

A 9.5 hectare site on the edge of Teignmouth coastal market town in Devon was allocated in the emerging local plan for residential development. Planning permission was granted a year before adoption.

The policy driver for BNG came from National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (CLG, 2012), the [emerging] local plan and other published guidance (Miller and Jennings, 2014). Permission was granted for up to 255 dwellings with all matters reserved except for access.

Development proposals would result in the loss of grassland habitats, with areas of mainly semi-improved and marshy grassland retained and enhanced as public open space. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and play facilities included within areas of primarily improved grassland and the majority of woodland and hedgerows were retained with some strengthened for dormice and bats.



Figure 13.1 Land west of higher Exeter road, Teignmouth, Devon identified for delivering biodiversity net gain

Assessment using Defra metrics identified residual net loss after onsite measures were taken into account. The LPA and third sector partners did not have any offsite compensation schemes at this time. A requirement for a scheme of works was included in the S106 agreement. This was to provide a financial contribution for the LPA to deliver it on their behalf. The size of the contribution was based on

the agreed impact of the development and a calculation of the cost of compensating for a cirl bunting (*Emberiza cirlus*) (a priority bird species of principle importance under S41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 [NERC Act 2006]) territory. The LPA deploy such funds into a local compensation scheme for cirl bunting, whereby the RSPB is committed to enhance and maintain habitats to benefit this priority species of principle importance under S41 of the NERC Act 2006. Land has been purchased nearby to establish a habitat bank that can deliver suitable grassland and hedgerow credits, as part of a cirl bunting nature reserve (see [Case study 14](#)).

13.2 ISSUES

The developer wanted biodiversity liability to be expressed financially in the S106 agreement. However, as there was no scheme available at the time, costs were based on a different compensation scheme.

13.3 OUTCOMES

- S106 agreement secured BNG through a financial contribution for LPA delivery.
- Partnership between the LPA and RSPB to deliver compensation as part of a new strategic cirl bunting reserve.
- Assessment using Defra metric encouraged design changes to reduce residual net loss on site.
- Partnership with third sector parties to deliver ongoing BNG.
- Compensation scheme sourced locally that contributes to strategic BNG objectives.
- It is useful to have developed generic costings for offsets delivered by the LPA for inclusion in the S106 agreement (NERC Act 2006).