GRAY'S ECOLOGY

Symphony – Position statement for outstanding issues for Biodiversity

Version control

Version	Prepared by	Status	Date
3.0	Graham Megson, MSc Ecology	Final	11/01/2021
			

Barnsley MBC Planning application: 2020/1032

Documents submitted with this note

210111, Symphony site, EcIA Ecology report_v5
210111, Biodiversity Metric 2.0 Calculation Tool – Symphony v9
210111, Land Trust project areas, UK Habitats survey report, v2
210111, Symphony Nature Reserve, UK Habitat survey report, v1
210111, Gray's Ecology, position statement on outstanding issues for biodiversity, v3

On site habitats

- Wildscapes has agreed the classification and areas of on-site habitats and these are used in the latest Biodiversity Metric (v9).
- Wildscapes has recommended that Symphony provide further details of the pond to be created within their site and a management plan to the LPA to give confidence that the pond will be managed as a functional ecological unit for 30 years.
- NB: a pond creation plan has been drawn by the Project Architect (to be submitted separately). Details have been added to the EcIA v5 and the Symphony Nature Reserve habitat assessment report.
- To answer TM's query: The pond is a habitat uplift from bare ground (classified as Urban), as it is located on an area of largely bare 'made' ground (map + photograph in the Ecological Impact Assessment). This delivers 0.19 habitat units in the Biodiversity Metric.
- At the agent/planning meeting on 08/01/2021, a Symphony Nature Reserve (SNR) was proposed, to be located south of the Marketing Suite building. This nature reserve will include the new pond (mentioned above).
- A Management Plan should be prepared for the SNR.

Symphony Nature Reserve

This covers a fenced area of 1.55 ha and includes a scrape to encourage breeding ground-nesting birds and the creation of a pond. Employees will be discouraged from accessing this area. A detailed UK Habitats assessment has been undertaken to populate the Biodiversity Metric v9.

The Land Trust habitat compensation projects

- As per the LPA's request, a detailed habitat assessment has been undertaken of the two sites (nine compartments) which make up the habitat off-site compensation package proposed by the Land Trust.
- To answer TM (Wildscapes) query: A meeting between Gray's Ecology and the Land Trust regional manager took place on 06/01/2021 on site to discuss the projects and inform this report. The Land Trust has highlighted management objectives for each compartment and maps have been provided. NB: This is new information and explains why the area measurements have increased and the habitats have been amended.

Biodiversity Metric v9

- The Biodiversity Metric v9 shows a positive biodiversity change of 1.8% (Table 1).

Table 1.

On-site baseline	*Habitat units*	68.13
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	River units	0.00
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation, enhancement & succession)	*Habitat units*	1.35
	Hedgerow units	0.72
	River units	0.00
Off-site baseline	*Habitat units*	59.80
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	River units	0.00
Off-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation, enhancement & succession)	*Habitat units*	127.81
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	River units	0.00
Total net unit change (including all on-site & off-site habitat retention/creation)	*Habitat units*	1.23
	Hedgerow units	0.72
	River units	0.00
Total net % change (including all on-site & off-site habitat creation + retained habitats)	*Habitat units*	1.80%
	Hedgerow units	Check Data
	River units	0.00%

Breeding ground-nesting birds

- The Ecological Impact Assessment predicts a loss of 20 pairs of breeding ground nesting birds.
- The SNR is expected to support one pair of breeding ground nesting birds (one pair lapwing).
- The Land trust sites are expected to support nine pairs of breeding ground nesting birds (two pairs of lapwing and two pairs of skylark on New Park Springs and two pairs of lapwing, one pair of redshank and two pairs of skylark on Cudworth Common).
- As the establishment of one pair of breeding ground-nesting birds on the Symphony Nature Reserve and nine pairs on Land Trust sites is not guaranteed and there is still

a deficit of ten pairs, the applicant will also make a financial contribution to a DVGHP organisation.
- Symphony will undertake five years of breeding ground nesting bird monitoring on the SNR.
- A brief outline of a Breeding bird Monitoring plan is provided in Appendix 1.

No Net Loss/ Biodiversity Net Gain

- The Biodiversity Metric v9 demonstrates +1.8% biodiversity changes as measured in habitat units.
- Evidence provided demonstrates compensate for the loss of ground-nesting birds.
- A position of No Net Loss has been reached.

Dearne Valley Green Heart Partnership organisations contacted

In answer to HA's query:

- Several DVGHP partners have been contacted by the applicant throughout the process for feedback on the application. All key partners have been contacted on behalf of the applicant to request projects. All of the off-site compensation projects submitted to the applicant have been taken forward.
- Both the planning agent (ELG Ltd) and the ecological consultant (Gray's Ecology) have contacted various organisation officials via email and telephone. For example: Gray's Ecology emailed the following (emails can be provided):
- Yorkshire Wildlife Trust – 09/12/2020
- RSPB – 17/09/2019; 08/10/2019; 09/12/2020
- Garganey Trust – 22/12/2019; 09/12/2020
- The Land Trust – 08/10/2019; 09/12/2020
- The Conservation Volunteers – 15/09/2019; 08/10/2019; 09/12/2020
- Barnsley MBC (owners of Carlton Marsh) - 09/12/2020
- Barnsley Bird Study Group – 06/10/2019; 14/02/2020

Appendix 1.

Breeding bird monitoring plan

The scheme, to be funded by the applicant, should be in the form of an annual ground-nesting bird breeding survey of the Symphony Nature reserve - in order to evidence the expected increase in pairs. This would start in the first spring after the fencing and habitat management works had been completed and would be repeated for five years. Breeding bird surveys should be done by competent bird surveyors (not necessarily professional) and the Barnsley Bird Monitoring Group, a nature conservation organisation, or an ecology consultancy could be commissioned.