

Policy BG/BG: Biodiversity and Geodiversity (P168)

We acknowledge the importance of delivering bio-diversity net gain as an integral part of future development. Notwithstanding this, no sound basis has been provided for the requirement for a 20% net gain in biodiversity proposed under this policy.

The Government considers a 10% net gain sufficient to mitigate the impact of new development and it should be recognised that the Environment Act does not set this as a minimum. No basis is presented therefore as to why Greater Cambridge should adopt a different approach to the other areas of the Country.

The result of requiring a 20% net gain will likely be to make some schemes unviable. Equally it will potentially reduce the number of units coming forward on sites requiring identification and delivery of further sites for development which is counter intuitive to the original objective.

Recommendation: It is strongly recommended that the policy is amended to require a 10% net gain in bio-diversity, as per the approach established through the Environment Act.