

From: Freedom of Information Requests

Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 9:08 AM

To:

Subject: FOI Response

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request dated 2024 for information about planning applications involving mandatory biodiversity net gain. Please find below City of Doncaster Council's responses to the questions you have raised.

1. How many planning applications have been received between the 12th February 2024 and but prior to 2nd April 2024?

RESPONSE: 172

2. Of these applications, how many remain invalid?

RESPONSE: 14

3. Of the invalid applications, how many are due to the introduction of biodiversity net gain provisions as part of the validation process?

RESPONSE: 2

4. Of the validated planning applications, how many triggered the requirement to provide mandatory biodiversity net gain?

RESPONSE: This information is exempt from disclosure under Section 21 of the Freedom of information Act. Section 21 exempts information from the right of access if that information is reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means. In this case the information is available on our website here: [View planning applications - City of Doncaster Council](#). Planning application forms include a section as to whether the proposal is exempt from BNG or not.

5. How many planning applications have been received since 2nd April 2024?

RESPONSE: 350

6. Of these, how many remain invalid?

RESPONSE: 52

7. Of those valid applications, how many have met the following exemption criteria for biodiversity net gain:

- i. Householder development
- ii. Self-build and/or custom build development
- iii. Application for biodiversity gain site
- iv. HS2 related application
- v. De minimis – a development which does not impact a priority habitat and impacts less than: 25metres² of on-site habitat or 5metres of on-site linear habitats (e.g. hedgerows).

Please include the number of applications which stated each reason.

8. Of the applications where BNG is required, how many have been determined?

Please include the numbers of applications:

- i. Where planning permission has been approved.
- ii. Where planning permission has been refused.

RESPONSE: This information is exempt from disclosure under Section 21 of the Freedom of information Act. Section 21 exempts information from the right of access if that information is

reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means. In this case the information is available on our website here: [View planning applications - City of Doncaster Council](#). Planning application forms include a section as to whether the proposal is exempt from BNG or not.

9. In your opinion how much has BNG impacted on the validation of planning applications? (On a scale from 1-10, 1-Low, 10-High).

RESPONSE: The Freedom of Information Act provides a right of access, subject to certain exemptions, to recorded information held by public authorities. It does not require public authorities to express opinions or comment upon matters therefore as this question requires the expression of an opinion/comments, this information is not held.

10. Does your authority have any provisions in place to aid agents / applicants with application validation processes?

RESPONSE: Yes – please see [How do I apply for planning permission? - City of Doncaster Council](#).

11. Does your authority have any processes in place to help with the delivery of BNG? E.g. land bank sites.

RESPONSE: This is an area under development. The Council is progressing its own habitat bank and applied to DEFRA to be a Responsible Body for the purposes of Conservation Covenants. Guidance has also been provided. Please see [Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain \(BNG\) - City of Doncaster Council](#).

12. Has your authority hired a 'specialist' in order to aid with the determination of BNG relevant applications?

RESPONSE: No, being delivered via in-house Ecologists.

I hope that this information is useful to you.

The City of Doncaster Council estimates that it has cost £98 to respond to this request for information.

Reviewing any decisions made:

If you are not happy with this reply you can ask us to review our response. To do this write to us within 40 working days of receiving your response at the address below or email FOIAppeals@doncaster.gov.uk

If you do not agree with the review decision you can apply to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision about our compliance or otherwise with the Freedom of Information legislation. Contact details for the ICO are: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. www.ico.org.uk Telephone 0303 123 1113.

Ellen Dook

Information Governance Officer

Corporate Resources

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