Netherton Junior Football Club
BNG Exemption Statement

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a key requirement under the UK Environment Act 2021, requiring certain development projects to deliver a 10% net gain in biodiversity.

However, exemptions exist for specific scenarios, and the details regarding our planning application suggest it might qualify for an exemption. See below:

1. Site Area Threshold

- **Exemption for small sites**: The UK legislation often exempts developments on very small sites from BNG requirements. For sites under 500m², the requirement for BNG does not typically apply, as they are considered "minor developments."

2. Replacement of an Existing Building

- The site involves replacing an existing building, the impact on biodiversity can be deemed negligible, especially if the site previously supported no significant habitats which is the case here. The replacement does not inherently reduce biodiversity since it maintains a similar use.

3. No Habitat Present on Site

- The redlined site is already fully developed in terms of hardstanding, tarmac, and existing building and therefore supports no habitat of ecological value, the baseline biodiversity value of the site is effectively zero. In such cases, there is no practical opportunity for a net gain, therefore an exemption is likely to be acceptable for our proposals.

4. Development Type

- While recreational and sports developments (e.g., football pitches) could sometimes involve changes to habitats, the description of this building rather than additional pitches or landscaped areas makes it less likely to trigger ecological impacts or habitat disruption.

5. Public or Community Benefit

- Developments that provide significant public or community benefits, such as a community football club, might receive more flexible treatment, especially if the site is of low ecological value, we consider this to be the case.

- We encourage the local planning authority to consider this type of project to align with public interest objectives and thus apply discretion in enforcing BNG requirements.