

# Biodiversity Net Gain in Greater Manchester

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# What is Biodiversity Net Gain?

- Biodiversity net gain (BNG) is a way of creating and improving natural habitats. BNG makes sure development has a measurably positive impact ('net gain') on biodiversity, compared to what was there beforehand.
- Places for Every One includes a commitment for a net gain of no less than 10%.
- In England, BNG is mandatory from 12 February 2024 (major development and small sites from 2 April 2024) via [Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 \(as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021\)](#).
- Developers must deliver a BNG of 10%. This means development will result in more or better quality natural habitat than there was before the development took place.
- GMCA guidance updated February 2024: [Biodiversity Net Gain - Greater Manchester Combined Authority \(greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk\)](#)



# Nature Recovery and BNG

- Biodiversity Net Gain will be an important way of delivering the GM LNRS on the ground.
- But it will only be effective if all involved work together – in ensuring smooth implementation and in maximising offsite BNG.
- We are working towards a consistent approach across Greater Manchester in both of these areas to achieve this.



# Implementation of BNG

- Preparing over several years for mandatory BNG to be introduced.
- Significant work to ensure planning teams and GM Ecology Unit ready to handle applications with BNG.
- GM guidance refresh [published](#).
- Further support commissioned from WSP.
- GMEU to shortly recruit to increase capacity.

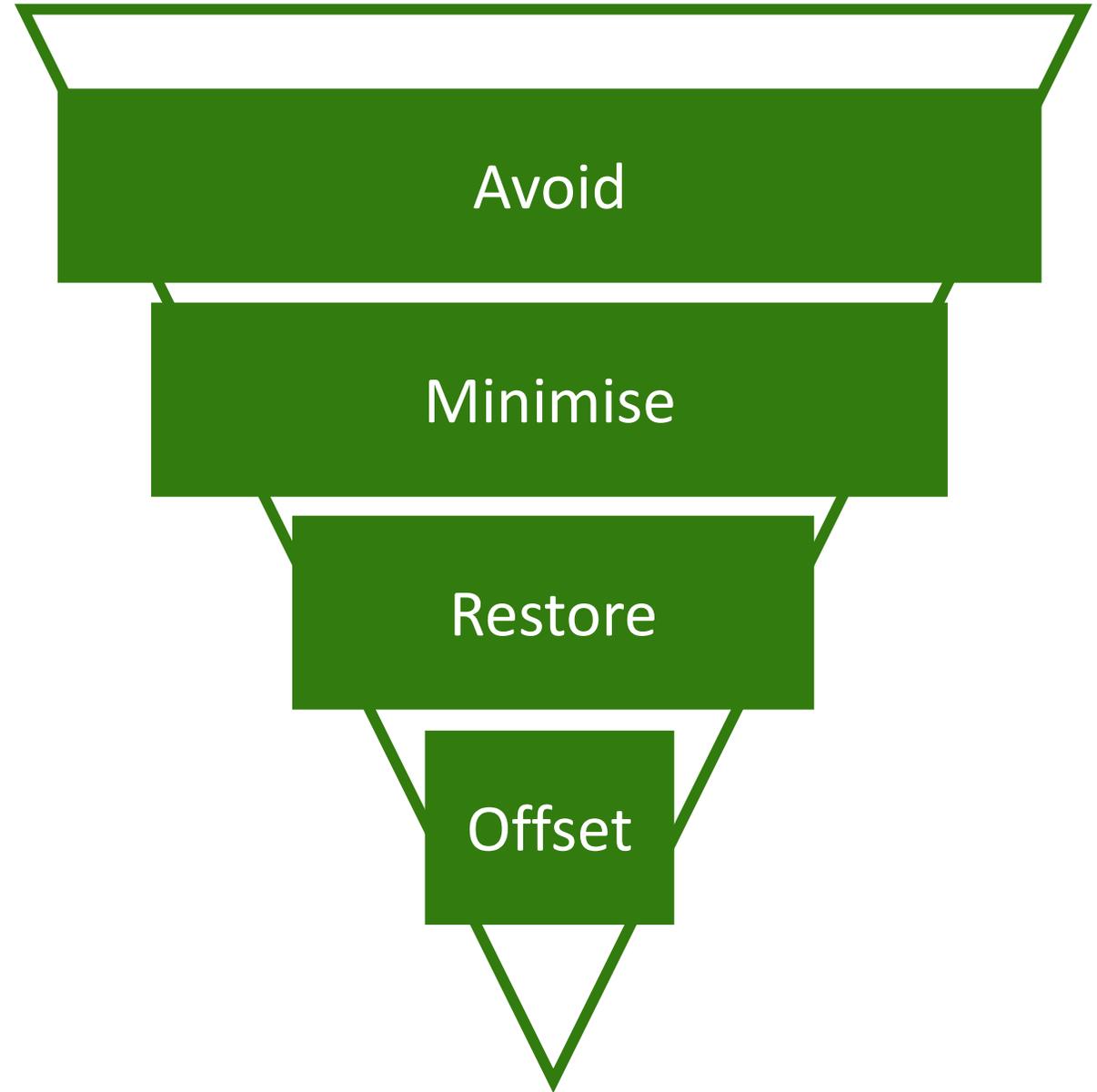
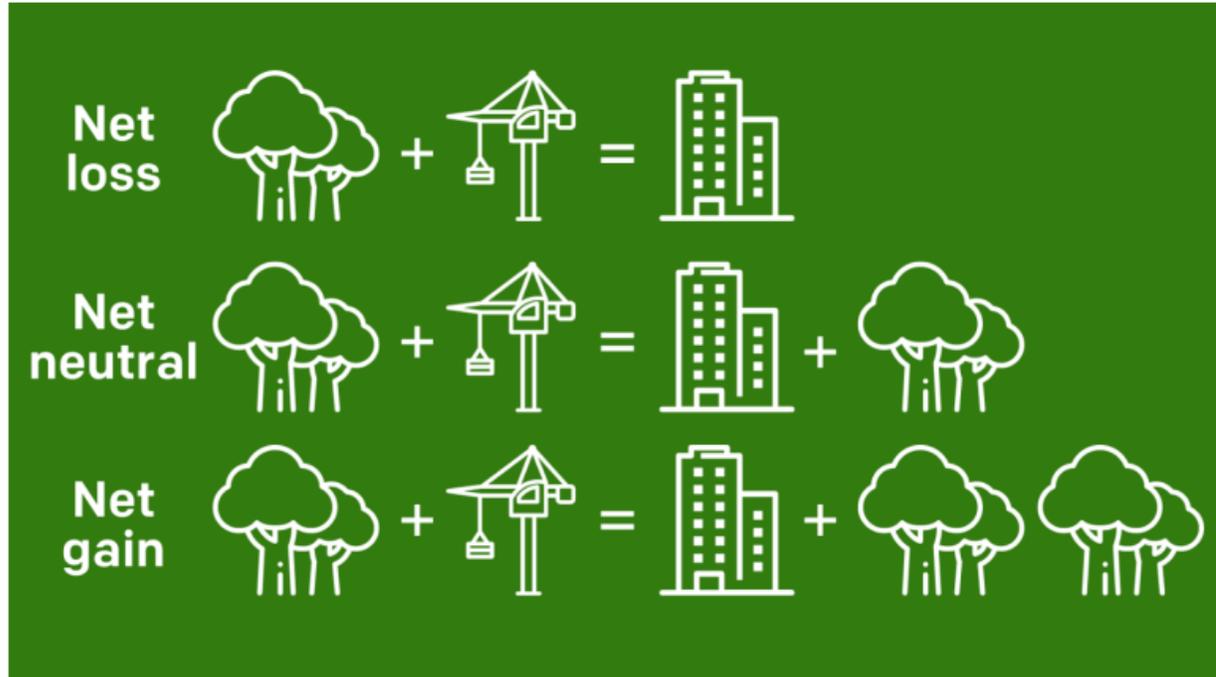
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**Greater Manchester Combined Authority**

**Biodiversity Net Gain  
Guidance for Planners &  
Applicants**

**February 2024**

# Offsite BNG



# Offsite BNG in Greater Manchester

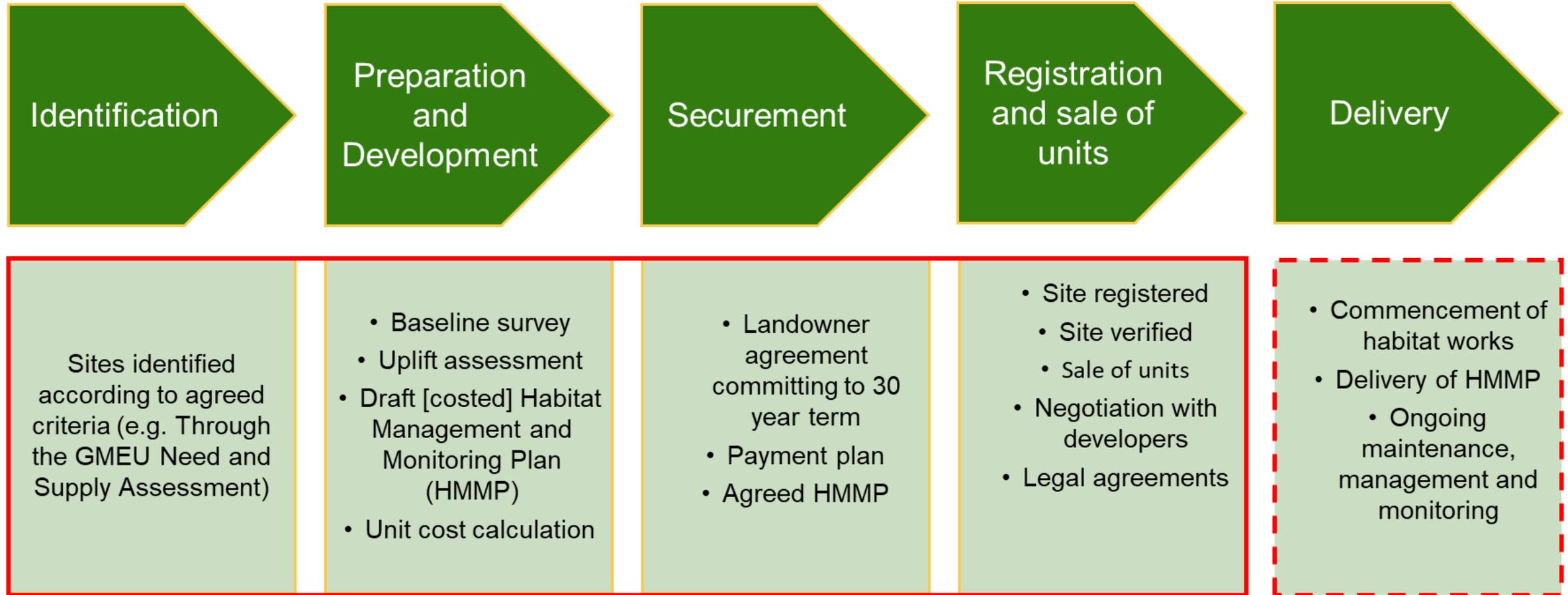
- Significant opportunity – c.**4500** offsite **units** required from **development** in GM over next 15 years, or £9m per year (based on £30,000 estimate for unit cost)
- Want to see a range of offsetting options come forward in GM that supports:
  - A range of **sizes** of offset sites.
  - Prioritise **areas** identified in the **Local Nature Recovery Strategy**
  - Provide **local benefits** (as close to biodiversity losses as possible).
  - Provide **wider benefits** for people and the environment.
  - Maintain **integrity** of BNG – through strong oversight, delivery, monitoring and reporting.

# The opportunity from offsite BNG

- Given the infancy of the market, we are looking to bring forward **local authority owned sites** – that we know can tick these boxes.
- Appraisal of local authority owned sites identified c. 4500 offsite units that could be brought to market (c. **£135m over 15 years** or £9m a year).
- Sites that are **priorities** for nature recovery, can provide other **benefits** (e.g. access to nature for people) and that have the **assurance** associated with the local authority.



# The process for bringing sites forward



# Challenges

- All Districts want to bring their land forward but need to make decisions to do so....
- Taking an informed decision – whether this can be done in-house or whether to partner with a third-party.
  - **In-house** – capacity and capability to carry out these roles, particularly commercial aspects and business planning.
  - **Third-party** – procurement process, contracting, risk and liability sharing.



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# Next steps

1. Decisions taken by Districts as to which option to pursue – in-house or third party.
2. If pursuing a third party, supporting Oldham's procurement exercise and making sure they can utilise this exercise for their own selection process.