



Aspect Ecology Ltd
Hardwick Business Park,
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16th March 2021

(Via email)

Dear [REDACTED]

Environment Bank Query – Prospective Offset Sites Colchester, Essex

Environment Bank is a leading provider of Biodiversity Net Gain delivery through Habitat Banking and bespoke offsetting. Environment Bank works with a national network of landowners and existing biodiversity offset schemes to assist both developers and local authorities in upholding their biodiversity net gain obligations whilst underpinning the fulfilment of sustainable development through the planning system.

Environment Bank (EB) was contacted by Aspect Ecology in February 2021 to identify a prospective offsite compensation site to offset up to 26 biodiversity units (BU) from a proposed development in Colchester Borough District in Essex.

According to our registry, Environment Bank currently has one potential landowner¹ in Colchester District, a summary of the details for which are included in Table 1 below. At this stage, Environment Bank are awaiting further details regarding this site and so are unable to provide an initial estimate of biodiversity units available. However, we estimate that a grassland creation scheme on modified grassland would generate between 2.5 – 3.5 BU/ha and so we anticipate that a site of between 7.4 and 10.4 ha would be needed to meet the outstanding requirement.

¹ This letter is correct as of 16th March 2021. The site detailed is not currently reserved and may be pursued by other development interests and/or may withdraw their interest from an offset scheme where alternative funding options become available.

Table 1 – Summary of Sites in Colchester District, Essex

Site Ref	LPA	Grid ref	National Character Area	Site Area ¹	Estimate Units Available ²
Colch03	Colchester	TI91	Northern Thames Basin	174 ha	Unknown
Key ¹ Site area is based on overall site boundary and may include areas that are not suitable for a biodiversity offset scheme. ² Full triage data regarding the site has not yet been received and so are unable to determine the full extent or outline landcover associated with the site and thus provide an estimate of the number of biodiversity that could be available.					

Environment Bank are currently working with land agents and other partners to identify and bring forward landowners to support the development of habitat banks in Essex. As such, it is possible that additional sites to the those listed in Table 1 above may become available in 2021.

If you are interested in exploring the option above or any additional sites that we identify in the future, a Biodiversity Offset Feasibility Study will need to be carried out to assess the current status of the site and define a project that could meet your outstanding compensation needs. The feasibility study would include a field survey, a Biodiversity Metric (using Biodiversity Metric 2.0) assessment and a project discussion with the landowner to define the value of the project and provide an outline of the costs associated with delivery. Environment Bank would be happy to provide a quote for carrying out a Feasibility Study if/when required.

Your sincerely

Richard Wheat

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Environment Bank

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