



ECOLOGY TECHNICAL NOTE

SITE NAME & ADDRESS	Written Stone Farm, Written Stone Lane, Longridge, Preston, PR3 2ZN
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL	Planning permission for proposed conversion of barn 1 to two-storey, four-bedroom dwelling; demolition of outbuilding 1 and construction of new double garage; construction of new roof and conversion of outbuilding 2 to form single-storey incidental domestic hobby space; creation of new vehicular access, garden and landscaping; new sewage treatment plant and diversion of public footpath.
PLANNING REFERENCE	3/2024/0622
ECOLOGY ASSESSMENT TYPE	BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN
DATE & REVISION No.	4 December 2024 – Revision 03
AUTHOR	Ryan Knight BSc (Hons) MCIEEM - Principal Ecologist

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

Knight Sky Ecology was commissioned to provide a (Small Sites) Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool (hereafter referred to as the metric tool) for the proposed development of the 'large barn' at Written Stone Farm. Following several design amendments to the project including the removal of proposed new access, a revised metric tool was required to reflect the changes.

This technical note has been produced to accompany the revised metric tool and provide an overview of the results.

In England, biodiversity net gain is required under a statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This legislation was inserted into the 1990 Act by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021, and was amended by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023.

Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain, subject to some exceptions, every planning permission is subject to a condition that the biodiversity gain objective is met ("the biodiversity gain condition"). This objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the on-site habitat. This increase can be achieved through on-site biodiversity gains, registered off-site biodiversity gains or through statutory biodiversity credits.

METHODS

The latest version of the metric tool and User Guide (24/07/2024) have been accessed from:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides>



Desk Study

The Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) mapping tool (Available from: <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>) was used to search for ecological information contained within the following datasets:

- Statutory designated sites for nature conservation within a 500m radius.
- Priority habitats (as listed within Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006) within a 500m radius.

A site walkover was originally undertaken on 12th April 2024 by Ryan Knight MCIEEM (Full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management). A further site walkover was undertaken on 22nd July 2024. Ryan has extensive experience in survey and site assessment for habitats and protected species and holds a Level 2 Natural England Class Licence for bats (ref. 2015-12611-CLS-CLS) and a Level 1 licence for great crested newts (ref. 2015-16727-CLS-CLS).

All habitats within the site were described and mapped using UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Version 2 definitions (UKHab Ltd, 2023).

RESULTS

BASELINE

Designated Sites

The proposed development is not located within 500m of any statutory designated sites. In addition, there are no such sites within 2km.

Priority Habitats (including Ancient Woodland)

Excluding hedgerows, there are no priority habitats on site. The nearest priority habitat is a deciduous woodland located 300 east. The development type does not pose any risk of impacts to such priority habitats.

Lancashire Ecological Network

The site is not within the Lancashire Ecological Network.

Habitats

Photos which provide a general overview of the site and supporting data for the metric tool are provided below. Figure 1 at the foot of this document provides an overview of the habitat baseline as existing in April 2024.

The site area measures 5219.8m² and includes the existing access road, hardstanding areas, the barn and outbuildings and, sections of two agriculturally improved pasture field (UKHab Classification – g4 modified grassland).

A small, self-seeded ash and an elder tree are located on the boundary directly adjacent to the barn. The combined biodiversity value of the existing habitats is **0.8491 habitat units**. The only habitat of measurable value that would be lost as a result of development is grassland (due to conversion to gardens and creation of a species rich grassland).



Hedgerows

There is a species rich hedgerow on the existing boundary of Written Stone Lane. The biodiversity value of this hedgerow is **0.7144 hedgerow units**.

A very small section of this hedgerow (approximately 2m or less) would need to be removed for the Public Rights of Way access.

Watercourses

No watercourses were identified within the site or within 10m of the boundary.

ENHANCEMENTS

No habitats are proposed to be enhanced.

CREATION

Habitats

Figure 2 located at the foot of this document provides a UK Habitat Classification map of the site as proposed. It has been based on the DWG (CAD) file provided from the agent.

The habitats to be created are: vegetated gardens to the front and rear of the barn; and, two areas of wildflower meadow (UKHab g3c other neutral grassland). This grassland has been assumed to achieve a 'moderate' condition.

Trees

To achieve an increase in biodiversity value over the mandatory 10% threshold and to satisfy the trading rules, tree planting is required. Based on the site plans provided from the agent, the development would result in the planting of 8 native trees (as per Figure 2).

The combined value of the retained and created habitats post-development would be **0.9384 units**.

Hedgerows

Hedgerow planting would include a native species rich, native hedgerow along the south-west boundary (assumed 'moderate' condition).

The combined value of the retained and created habitats post-development would be **0.8129 hedgerow units**.

SUMMARY

The development proposals will result in:

- a net gain of biodiversity value comprising **0.0894 habitat units (10.53 %)**; and,
- a net gain of biodiversity value comprising **0.00985 hedgerow units (13.78%)**

Table 1.1 provides the headline results from the metric tool.



Table 1.1. Headline Results

Baseline Units	<i>Habitat units</i>	0.8491	
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.7144	
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	Zero Units Baseline	
Post-development Units	<i>Habitat units</i>	0.9384	
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.8129	
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.0000	
Total net unit change	<i>Habitat units</i>	0.0894	✓
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.0985	✓
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.0000	
Total net % change	<i>Habitat units</i>	10.53%	✓
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	13.78%	✓
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	% target not appropriate	

The development will therefore meet the biodiversity net gain condition as the 10% net gain for habitats and hedgerows will be exceeded provided that the landscaping works are carried out in accordance with the specifications within this document.

The time to target condition of the habitats (namely, the species rich grassland) is 5 years. The time to target condition of the hedgerow is 5 years and the trees 27 years.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Post-consent Requirements & Recommendations

The statutory framework for biodiversity net gain requires a Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP) to be submitted and approved by the planning authority to discharge the biodiversity gain condition prior to the commencement of development. The BGP should detail the measures undertaken to achieve the required 10% net gain as stated in the metric tool.

Local planning authorities have and are integrating their own approaches to detailing planning conditions.

Further Commitments

The post-development habitat plan has been based on the layout plan designed by the agent with the addition of habitats which can be most feasibly be achieved within the site. This habitat plan is required to be supplemented with the design of a planting schedule and planting establishment and



management measures which are typically completed by a specialist landscape contractor prior to the commencement of the works. Ecological consultancies do not typically design landscaping plans.

Any seeds, plants or trees used within the landscaping scheme should be sourced from a reputable stockist and be of local provenance. Only UK based stock is advised to be purchased. Only UK native species should be used with regards to trees and grassland seed mixes. The developer may wish to plant more trees than required to allow for failures.



PHOTOS

Photo 1.

Grassland to the rear (north) of the barn.



Photo 2.

Hardstanding area adjacent to the barn.





Photo 3.

View
southwards
over land
proposed for
wildflower
meadow.



Photo 4.

Species rich
hedgerow.





Photo 5.
View north-
west over land
proposed for
wildflower
meadow.

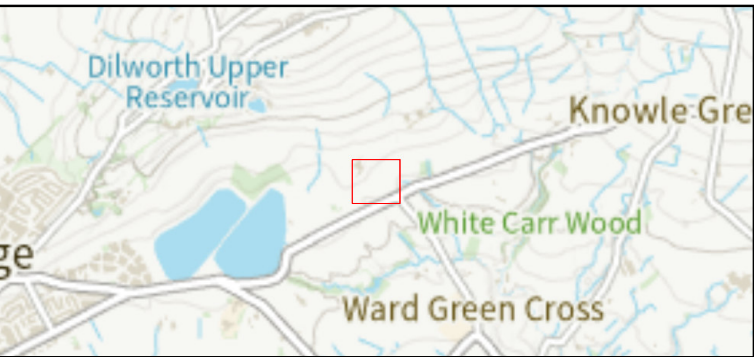


Photo 6.
View of barn
and field area.

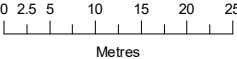


FIGURES (NEXT PAGE)

- **FIGURE 1. UK HABITAT CLASSIFICATION MAP (BASELINE)**
- **FIGURE 2. UK HABITAT CLASSIFICATION MAP (POST-DEVELOPMENT)**



Survey Information	
<div><div></div></div>	Site boundary (4,181.3m ²)
UKHab Habitat Survey	
<div></div>	g4 - Modified grassland (1,935.5m ²)
<div></div>	u1b - Developed land; sealed surface (1,077.8m ²)
<div></div>	u1b5 - Buildings (490.1m ²)
<div></div>	800 - Road (677.9m ²)
<div></div>	h2a5 - Species-rich native hedgerow (89.3m)
<div></div>	32 - Scattered tree (2)



PROJECT TITLE

WRITTEN STONE FARM, LONGRIDGE

DRAWING TITLE

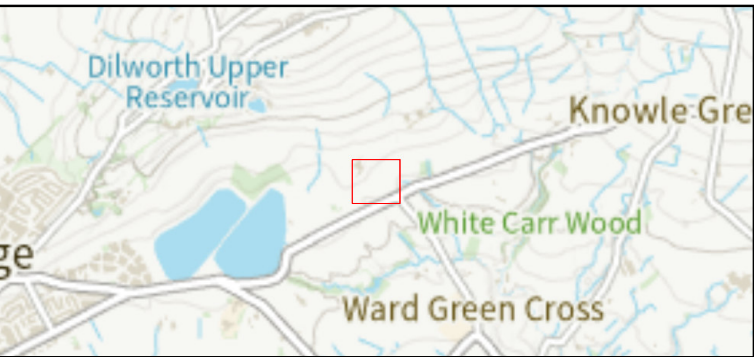
Figure 1: UK Habitat Classification Map (Baseline)

VER	DATE	REMARKS	Drawn	Checked
3.0	03/12/24	UKHab	MP	RK

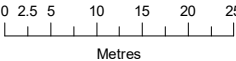
DRAWING NUMBER:							
KSEcology/WrittenStoneFarm/UKHab							
SCALE	1:825	PLOT SIZE	A3	DATUM	OSGB	PROJECTION	BNG

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Survey Information	
<div><div></div></div>	Site boundary (4,181.3m ²)
UKHab Habitat Survey	
<div></div>	g3c - Other neutral grassland (757.1m ²)
<div></div>	g4 - Modified grassland (513.6m ²)
<div></div>	u1b - Developed land; sealed surface (559.7m ²)
<div></div>	u1b5 - Buildings (489.6m ²)
<div></div>	800 - Road (677.9m ²)
<div></div>	828 - Vegetated garden (656.1m ²)
<div></div>	829 - Unvegetated garden (527.3m ²)
<div></div>	h2a5 - Species-rich native hedgerow (105.9m)
<div></div>	612 - Fence (23.8m)
<div></div>	32 - Scattered tree (8)



PROJECT TITLE

WRITTEN STONE FARM, LONGRIDGE

DRAWING TITLE

Figure 2: UK Habitat Classification Map (Post-Development)

VER	DATE	REMARKS	Drawn	Checked
3.1	04/12/24	Post-Development	MP	RK

DRAWING NUMBER:

KSEcology/WrittenStoneFarm/Post-Development

SCALE	1:825	PLOT SIZE	A3	DATUM	OSGB	PROJECTION	BNG
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