

**United Environmental Services Ltd**

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**BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN - BIODIVERSITY STATEMENT**

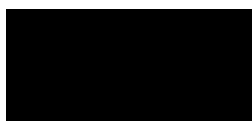
**At**

**Blackmoss Farm – Phase 1**

Elmridge Lane  
Chipping  
Preston  
Lancashire  
PR3 2NY

**NGR: SD 60129 40476**

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Written by: Tom Kenwright, UES Senior Ecologist  
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UES reference: UES03941/11





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# **1 INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Author and qualifications**

This report is compiled and written by Tom Kenwright BSc MSc ACIEEM, UES Senior Ecologist. Tom holds a level 5 Botanical Society of Britain & Ireland (BSBI) Field Identification Skills Certificate (FISC), which certifies him as competent to undertake phase 1 habitat surveys and national vegetation classification (NVC) surveys.

This report has been verified by Toby Hart BSc MCIEEM PIEMA, UES Managing Director. Toby holds a level 6 BSBI FISC. Level 6 is only awarded in exceptional circumstances where the surveyor is a very competent professional field botanist and is of national status.

## **1.2 Proposed development**

The proposed development is for the conversion of existing pigsty and barn buildings into residential dwellings.

## **1.3 Survey objectives**

This biodiversity statement has been produced for the proposed development hereby referred to as Phase 1, at Blackmoss Farm, Chipping, Preston. UES was commissioned in 2024 to prepare the Biodiversity Statement as part of a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment of the proposed development. This was completed in order to:

- Establish the baseline value of the site by calculating the number of habitat, hedgerow and watercourse units at the site of the proposed development.
- If detailed or indicative plans are available, establish the post development value of the development by calculating the number of habitat, hedgerow and watercourse units which will be created, retained and / or enhanced as part of the proposals.
- Provide guidance on habitat retention, creation and enhancement measures to inform proposed site layout and landscaping proposals and to maximize potential gains in biodiversity.
- Provide details of how offsite compensation will be used when a 10% biodiversity net gain cannot be achieved on site.



## 2 PLANNING POLICY

Paragraphs 180(d), 185(b) and 186(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) set out requirements for the delivery of BNG. In England, BNG is mandatory under a statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021).

Under the statutory framework, subject to some exceptions, every grant of planning permission is granted subject to the 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 onsite habitats.

Mandatory BNG only applies for planning permission applications made on or after 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024. Permissions granted for applications made before this date are not subject to BNG. A temporary exclusion applies for non-major developments whereby mandatory BNG only applies for planning permission applications made on or after 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024.

The Environment Act 2021 sets out the following key components to mandatory BNG:

- Minimum 10% gain required calculated using DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric & approval of net gain plan
- Habitat secured for at least 30 years via obligations / conservation covenant
- Habitat can be delivered on-site, off-site or via statutory biodiversity credits
- There is a national register for net gain delivery sites
- The mitigation hierarchy still applies of avoidance, mitigation and compensation for biodiversity loss
- Also applies to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs)
- Does not apply to marine development
- Does not change existing legal environmental and wildlife protections

### 3 METHODOLOGY

The BNG assessment has been undertaken using the DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric. The metric was used to calculate baseline habitat, hedgerow and watercourse units. An extended Phase 1 Habitat survey was undertaken as part of a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the site, undertaken by UES on the 7<sup>th</sup> August 2024. Surveyors present included:

- Mark Halliwell MBiol, UES Senior Ecologist. Mark holds a level 4 BSBI FISC, which certifies him as competent to undertake phase 1 habitat surveys, UKHab and NVC surveys.
- Ysobella Cox BSc MBiol, UES Graduate Ecologist. Ysobella holds a level 3 BSBI FISC, which certifies her as competent to undertake phase 1 habitat surveys.

Habitats recorded within the proposed development site were mapped on a phase 1 habitat plan, provided at Appendix 1. Full details of each habitat recorded onsite are provided within the PEA report (reference UES03941/12), which has been submitted as part of this planning application.

The Statutory Biodiversity Metric utilises habitats classified under the UK Habitats Classification methodology (UKHAB). As such the 'Phase 1 Translation Tool' within the metric, in addition to surveyor knowledge and experience, was used to translate phase 1 habitats into UKHAB codes provided within the metric.



## **4 RESULTS**

### **4.1 Baseline assessment**

The proposed development site has an area of approximately 0.05ha and comprises two separate parcels. The first is an existing pigsty and adjacent area of improved grassland used to keep pigs. The second is an existing barn building, surrounding areas of surrounding hardstanding and a small stand of non-native introduced shrubbery. No other habitats are present on site.

The baseline value of the site has been calculated as 0.04 habitat units, 0 hedgerow units and 0 watercourse units using DEFRA's Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

The DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric used to calculate the baseline value of the site has been submitted with this report and provides full details of the calculations.

### **4.2 Post-development assessment**

Detailed landscaping plans are not available at this stage, however indicative landscape plans are available, upon which the post development value of the site has been calculated (see Barnes Walker Landscape Layout reference M3758-PP-01-V2).

As the improved grassland and introduced shrubbery on site are due to be retained and unaffected by the proposals, there will no change in onsite habitat units as a result of proposed development. Hedgerow and watercourse units will remain unchanged.

The DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric used to calculate the post-development value of the site has been submitted with this report and provides full details of the calculations.



## **5 EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Biodiversity net gain requirements**

The baseline value of the site has been calculated as 0.04 habitat units and 0 hedgerow and watercourse units.

In order to achieve a 10% net gain in biodiversity, the post development value would need to be 0.044 habitat units. No gain in hedgerow or watercourse units is required due to the baseline values of 0.

In addition to providing the 10% net gain in habitat units required to adhere to national planning policy, the metric's trading rules must also be met to provide an acceptable net gain. This is a function of the metric that has been designed to ensure habitats are compensated for sufficiently.

To adhere to the metric's trading rules, losses must be replaced by habitat, hedgerow and watercourse units of the same broad habitat type and distinctiveness, or by units from any habitat with a higher distinctiveness regardless of the broad habitat type. Based on the details provided to UES at this stage, no specific habitat creation is required to meet the trading rules.

As such, a further 0.004 habitat units of any distinctiveness or broad habitat type are required to provide the required 10% net gain.

### **5.2 Recommendations**

Where possible, onsite habitat creation and enhancement will be prioritised to maximise net gain within the proposed development site. However, given the small scale of the proposed development site, it may not be possible to provide the necessary gains in habitat units onsite. As such, any deficit in units will be provided through offsite compensation. The surrounding farm lies within the developer's ownership the small number of additional habitat units could easily be achieved through offsite habitat creation or enhancement measures within the wider farm.

All compensatory offsite habitat units secured will need to be registered on the Biodiversity Gain Site Register.

The information contained within this Biodiversity Statement is considered to be sufficient to allow the local planning authority to grant planning permission, with regards to statutory biodiversity net gain requirements. Following approval of planning permission, the biodiversity gain condition will be applied to the permission, which must be discharged prior to the commencement of works.

A Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP) must be prepared to discharge this condition. The BGP must include baseline and post-development Statutory Metric calculations based on the finalised site layout and landscaping proposals. It must also contain full details of secured offsite compensation (where necessary) and a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP), detailing the proposed establishment, management and monitoring of all offsite compensation and any significant enhancements onsite.



All retained, creation or enhanced habitats that constitute offsite compensation or onsite significant enhancements will need to be managed and monitored for a period of at least 30 years. This can be secured through a section 106 agreement or a conservation covenant.

Following submission of the Biodiversity Gain Plan, the local planning authority will have up to eight weeks to discharge the biodiversity gain condition.





## 6 CONCLUSION

The proposed development site has an area of approximately 0.05ha and comprises two separate land parcels. The first is an existing pigsty and area of improved grassland used to keep pigs. The second is an existing barn building, surrounding hardstanding and a small stand on non-native introduced shrubbery. No other habitats are present on site.

The baseline value of the site has been calculated as 0.04 habitat units. In order to achieve a 10% net gain in biodiversity, the post development value would need to be 0.004 habitat units. No gain in hedgerow or watercourse units is required due to the baseline values of 0.

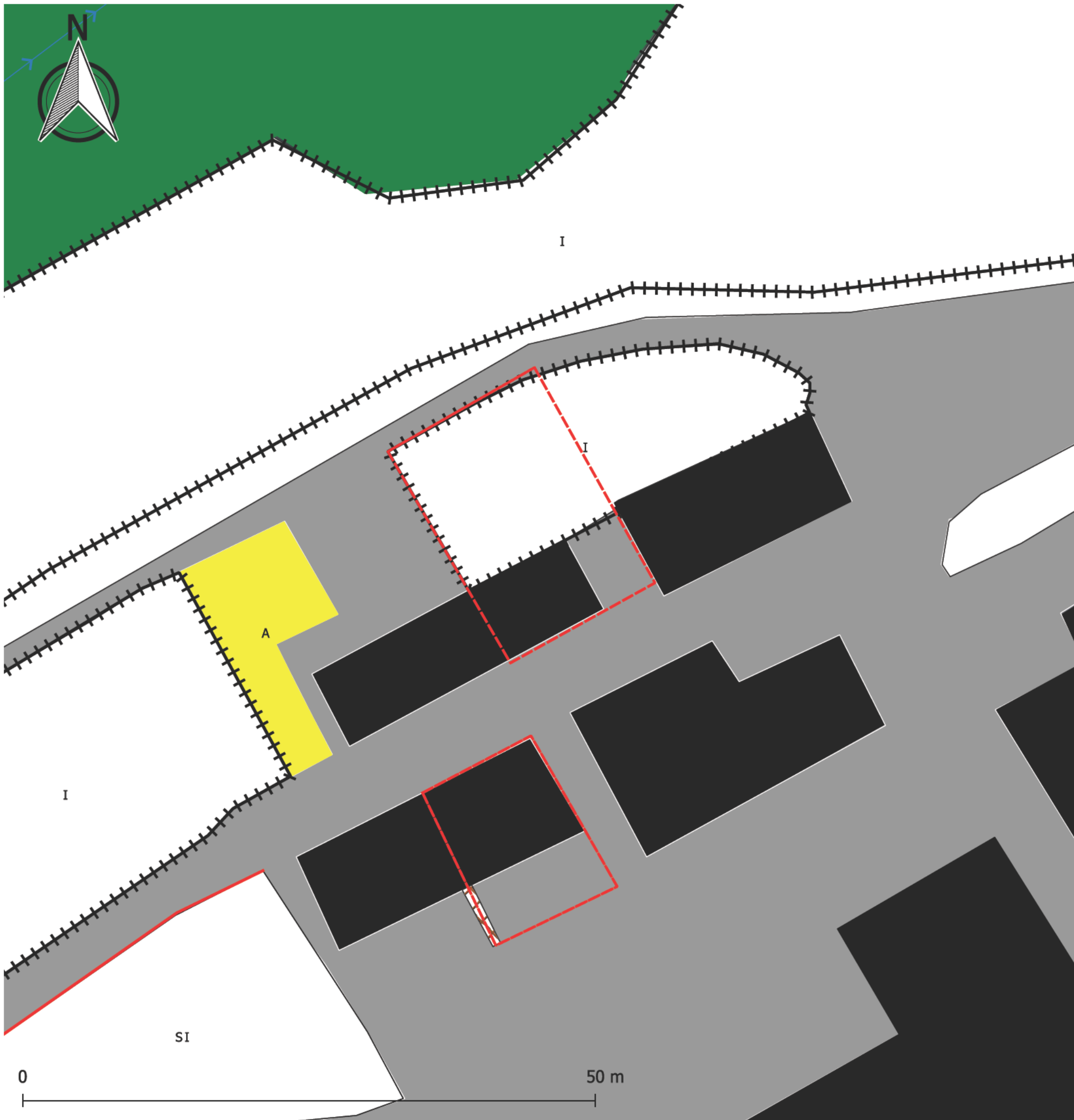
No specific type of habitat creation is required to satisfy the trading rules within the metric as no habitat loss is proposed as part of the development.

Where possible, onsite habitat creation and enhancement will be prioritised to maximise net gain within the proposed development site. Given the small scale of the development, sufficient onsite habitat creation and / or enhancement may not be feasible whilst facilitating the proposed development. As such, any deficit in units will be provided through offsite compensation within adjacent land in the developer's ownership.



## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix 1 – Phase 1 habitat plan**



## Phase 1 Habitat Plan

**Site: Blackmoss Farm – Phase 1**  
**NGR: SD 60129 40476**  
**Author: Tom Kenwright**  
**Date: 08/10/2024**



### KEY:

- A1.1.1 - Broadleaved woodland - semi-natural
- I B4 - Improved grassland
- A J1.2 - Amenity grassland
- J1.4 - Introduced shrub
- J2.4 - Fence
- J2.5 - Wall
- J3.6 - Buildings
- J5 - Hardstanding
- Development boundary

THIS PLAN IS BASED UPON OpenStreetMap® AND IS OPEN DATA, LICENSED UNDER THE OPEN DATA COMMONS OPEN DATABASE LICENCE (ODbL) BY THE OpenStreetMap FOUNDATION.

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## **Appendix 2 – Photographs**





Photograph 1 – Looking north towards the pigsty building that is to be converted to a residential dwelling as part of the proposals.



Photograph 2 – Looking east across the area of improved grassland to the north of the pigsty building. The grassland is heavily poached by pigs.



Photograph 3 – Looking north towards the barn building that will be converted to a residential dwelling as part of the proposals and the small area of introduced shrubbery.