



14th May 2025

To whom it may concern

Re: Habitat Condition Assessment at Clerk Laithe Lodge, Newton in Bowland, Clitheroe, BB7 3DY.

Ecology Services Limited was commissioned by Real Care Support Ltd. in February 2025 to carry out a habitat condition assessment at Clerk Laithe Lodge, Newton in Bowland, Clitheroe, BB7 3DY (National Grid Reference (NGR) SD 6985 5091) to inform a baseline Biodiversity Net Gain calculation for the site.

The site contains habitats comprising modified and other neutral grassland, vegetated and unvegetated garden, individual urban trees and hedgerows alongside areas of bare ground, developed land and artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface.

The project involves an application to change the use of two barns from a bed and breakfast and a single dwelling to a children's care home with a very minor single storey extension to the rear of one of the barns as well as car parks in the north and south of site.

Habitats within the site were mapped and classified according to the UK Habitat Classification V2.01 (2023). The UKHab is the preferred classification for use with the Natural England Biodiversity Metric.

The Habitat Condition Assessment was undertaken on 17th February 2025 by Ms L. Redgrave MA (Oxon.) MSc CEcol CEnv MCIEEM (Field Identification Skills Certificate (FISC) Level 5) using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment sheets. It is acknowledged that the assessment was undertaken at a sub-optimal time of year and a precautionary approach has been taken to the assessment.

The results of the Habitat Condition Assessment are provided in the accompanying Excel spreadsheet Statutory_Biodiversity_Metric_Condition_Assessments Clerk Laithe Lodge. It is considered unlikely that any of the modified grassland areas would pass criterion A (6-8 species per square metre), therefore all areas have been assessed as poor quality for the Biodiversity Metric calculation submitted with the planning application. Given the sub-optimal time of year of the assessment, however, if all areas passed criterion A, Areas 2, 3, 4, 7 and 10 would be good condition and Areas 2A, 5 and 6, moderate condition. This scenario has also been run in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation and a range of baseline and post-development biodiversity units provided in the draft Biodiversity Gain Plan. This has given a range of biodiversity net gain between 3.15% (deficit of 0.07 habitat units) and 18.73%. It is considered extremely unlikely that all of the grassland would pass criterion A, therefore it is considered that the minimum mandatory 10% net gain will be achievable on site. Further condition assessment of the grassland will be undertaken at an appropriate time of year to confirm habitat condition and prior to discharge of the biodiversity gain condition to confirm the biodiversity net gain to be delivered. In the unlikely event that a minimum 10% net gain is not achievable within the site, there is potential for delivery of off-site enhancements or appropriate off-site habitat units could be purchased.

While the Statutory Biodiversity Metric is flagging a change in broad habitat for vegetated garden, the area of vegetated garden to be enhanced to other neutral grassland is an area of modified grassland (a component of vegetated garden), therefore effectively not changing broad habitat type.

If you require any further information or have any questions please do not hesitate to get in touch.

This report has been produced by Principal Consultant Ecologist Louise Redgrave on behalf of Ecology Services Ltd.