



TECHNICAL NOTE: BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN (BNG) ASSESSMENT

SITE NAME & ADDRESS	8 Stoneygate Lane, Knowle Green, Preston, PR3 2ZS
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL	Proposed stables and manège
PLANNING REFERENCE	Not known
DATE	20 February 2025
AUTHOR	Ryan Knight BSc (Hons) MCIEEM - Principal Ecologist

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

Knight Sky Ecology Ltd was commissioned to provide a Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool (hereafter referred to as ‘the metric tool’) for the proposed development on land off Stoneygate Lane, Knowle Green. This technical note has been produced to accompany the metric tool and provide an overview of the results.

In England, the primary legislation for the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain (BNG) is principally set out under Schedule 7A (Biodiversity Gain in England) 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 BNG, 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 (**23 July 2024**) have been accessed from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides>

The metric tool along with the pre and post development habitat maps have been based on the red line planning boundary and proposed plans provided by the agent. All land within this boundary is referred to as ‘the site’.



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:

- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zones - to determine whether the proposal poses a risk to the notified features of any SSSI located within the wider area.
- Priority habitats (as listed within Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006) within a 500m radius. This also included certain priority habitats referred to as 'irreplaceable'.

Mapping information for locally designated sites and Lancashire Ecological Network was obtained from the Nature Recovery Interactive Map accessed via:

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/d429aa6435b849838af1d2cef68de43b>

FIELD SURVEY

A site walkover was undertaken on 28th January 2025 by Ryan Knight MCIEEM (Full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management).

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

The site visit was undertaken outside the standard habitat survey season. However, the site habitats were relatively basic (modified grassland only) and no significant limitations to the assessment were encountered.

RESULTS

BASELINE

Habitat Degradation

No habitat degradation was encountered.

Statutory Designated Sites

The proposed development is not located within 2km of any statutory sites and the development type does not trigger the need for an assessment of risks to any statutory sites located over this distance.

Non-Statutory Designated Sites

The nearest locally designated site (Biological Heritage Site) is Davies Gate Wood located 450m south-east.

Priority & Irreplaceable Habitats

There are no priority habitats including those listed as 'irreplaceable' within the site. As listed above, the nearest priority habitat is a deciduous woodland located 450m south-east.

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 in Appendix A. Figure 1 in Appendix B provides an overview of the habitat baseline as existing in January 2025.



The site area measures 2128.9m² and comprises an existing field access track and a section of an agriculturally improved pasture field (UKHab category: g4 modified grassland). The grassland contained a typical mix of common productive grasses dominated by perennial rye grass. The grassland was very species-poor, containing creeping buttercup and broadleaved dock only. A triangular shaped area of the field (set aside for Biodiversity Net Gain) was slightly more diverse as this was on a steep gradient and could not be access by farm machinery. This land contained frequent soft rush and occasional tufted hair grass; however, it was still species poor. It should be noted that this parcel of land is to be retained.

The combined biodiversity value of the existing habitats is **0.43 habitat units**. A large proportion of the grassland habitat would be lost as a result of the proposal.

Hedgerows

There are no hedgerows within the site boundary.

Watercourses

There are no watercourses on the site or within 10m.

Protected Species

No potential constraints to the development with regards to protected species were encountered. There was a pond located 90m north-east of the site (Photo 5). However, upon further inspection, this pond was largely dry. Given that the pond was inspected in January, it is highly unlikely to hold water within the spring and summer and therefore considered unsuitable for use by breeding amphibians including great crested newt.

ENHANCEMENTS

No enhancements are proposed.

CREATION

Habitats

Figure 2 in Appendix B provides a UK Habitat Classification map of the site as proposed. It has been based on the proposed layout provided from the agent. The proposals include the construction of the stables and manège.

The most feasible solution to achieve mandatory net gain within the site would be to plant broadleaved, native trees. These cannot be hedgerows or lines of trees. A minimum of 28 trees are required to be planted. An area of the field has been set aside for this tree planting (Figures 1 & 2).

The combined value of the existing and created habitats post-development would be **0.47 habitat units**.

SUMMARY

The development proposals will result in:

- A net gain of biodiversity value for habitats comprising **0.05 habitat units (10.63%)**.

The development will therefore meet the biodiversity net gain condition for habitats as the 10% net gain would be achieved provided that the landscaping works (i.e., tree planting) are carried out in



accordance with the specifications within this document. The time to target condition of the trees is 27 years.

In accordance with the habitat conditions and value in January 2025, all habitats to be affected are or low distinctiveness only (i.e., modified grassland). No designated sites, irreplaceable habitats, priority habitats or habitats of high distinctness will be affected. The mitigation hierarchy has been accounted for in the design stage of the project.

The information within this document and the metric tool demonstrates that the mandatory BNG condition is more than capable of being discharged successfully at the site.

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.

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.

A habitat management plan (proportionate to the very small scale of habitat enhancements) is recommended. The habitat created within the site would not represent significant net gain and once established, trees do not require long term monitoring.

APPENDIX A: PHOTOS

Photo 1.

Existing access to site entrance.





Photo 2.

View east over site.



Photo 3.

View south over site.





Photo 4.

View of a section of grassland set aside for tree planting.



Photo 5.

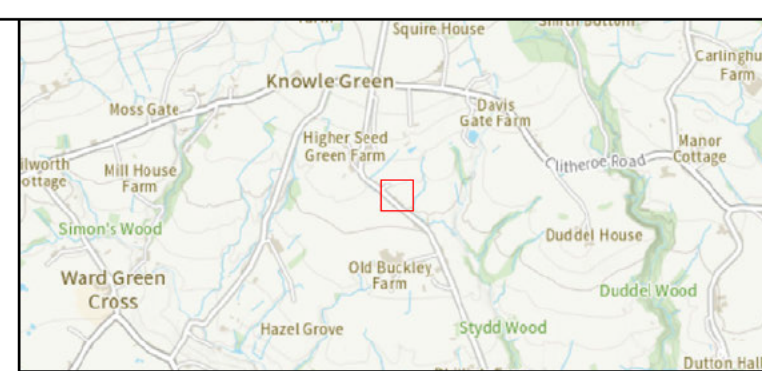
Pond located 90m to the north-east of the site.





APPENDIX B: FIGURES (NEXT PAGE)



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



Survey Information

	Site boundary (2,128.9m ²)
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UKHab Habitat Survey

	g4 - Modified grassland (2,037.6m ²)
	u1b6 - Other developed land (91.3m ²)

PROJECT TITLE
LAND OFF STONEYGATE LANE, KNOWLE GREEN, PRESTON

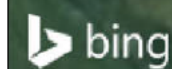
DRAWING TITLE
Figure 1: UK Habitat Classification Map (Baseline)

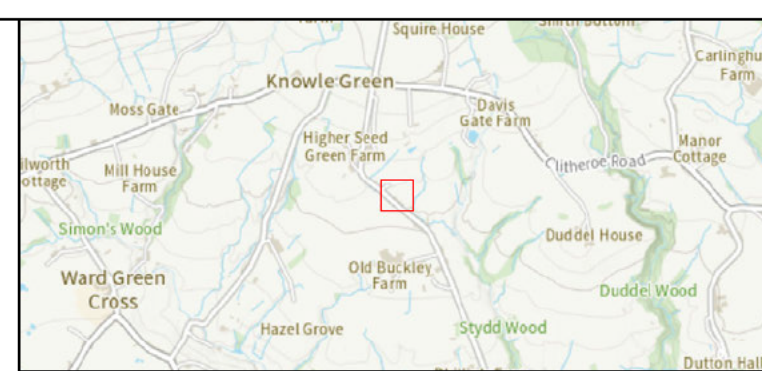
VER	DATE	REMARKS	Drawn	Checked
2.0	13/02/25	UKHab	MP	RK

DRAWING NUMBER:
 KSEcology/StoneygateLane/UKHab

SCALE	1:525	PLOT SIZE	A3	DATUM	OSGB	PROJECTION	BNG
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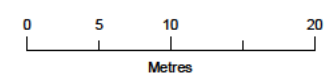
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Survey Information

	Site boundary (2,128.9m ²)
UKHab Habitat Survey	
	g4 - Modified grassland (612.6m ²)
	u1b6 - Other developed land (1,516.4m ²)
	32 - Scattered tree, newly planted



PROJECT TITLE
LAND OFF STONEYGATE LANE, KNOWLE GREEN, PRESTON

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

VER	DATE	REMARKS	Drawn	Checked
2.1	13/02/25	Post-Development	MP	RK

DRAWING NUMBER:
 KSEcology/StoneygateLane/Post-Development

SCALE	1:525	PLOT SIZE	A3	DATUM	OSGB	PROJECTION	BNG
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