Biodiversity Net Gain Exemption Statement

Proposed Solar Installation
Stonyhurst College
Clitheroe
Lancashire
BB7 9PZ

Provided for:

Stonyhurst College
Clitheroe
Lancashire
BB7 9PZ

19th June 2025

www.ecologyservice.co.uk
T 07752 397 624 E info@ecologyservice.co.uk
Registered in England and Wales no. 5329675

BNG exemption and statement

Section 4 of The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024, also known as the "de minimis exemption", states the following: The biodiversity gain planning condition does not apply in relation to planning permission for development which:

(Condition 1) does not impact an onsite priority habitat, and

(Condition 2) impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has a biodiversity value greater than zero; and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat.

The de minimis exemption is claimed for the proposed solar installation at Stonyhurst College:

- The proposed development at Stonyhurst College does not impact on any priority habitat (condition 1)
- The proposed development at Stonyhurst College impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has a biodiversity value greater than zero (condition 2)
- The proposed development at Stonyhurst College impacts less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (condition 2)

BNG exemption statement:

The proposed development site does not contain any priority habitats listed under the Government's List of priority habitats and species in England ('Section 41 habitats and species')

The proposed works will take place on hard standing and building roofs

Consequently, the area to be developed can best be classified as habitats under the UK Habitat Classification as follows:

*u1d Developed land; sealed surface (** Note that there are a very small number of individual plants established on top of chimney stacks associated Building 4 – but the extent and character does not fit within any of the UKHab classifications and is well below the 25square metres threshold)*

The habitat within the proposed development area (roof tops of four buildings) has a biodiversity value which does not exceed zero. Consequently, the proposed development would impact less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has a biodiversity value no greater than zero, thereby meeting Condition 2 of Section 4 of The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024.

The proposed development is therefore exempt from biodiversity net gain requirements and planning conditions under the de minimis rule of Section 4 of The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024.

Supporting information

1 Biodiversity Net Gain

1.1 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is an approach to development that attempts to leave biodiversity in a better state than before development. Where a development will have an impact on biodiversity, BNG requires developers to provide an increase in appropriate natural habitat and ecological features over and above that being affected.

1.2 In England, biodiversity net gain is required under a statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021). This is referred to as Biodiversity Net Gain in Planning Practice Guidance to distinguish it from other or more general biodiversity gains.

1.3 Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain, every grant of planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to a general biodiversity gain condition to secure the biodiversity gain objective. This objective is to deliver at least a 10% increase in relation to the pre-development biodiversity value of the development granted permission. This increase can be achieved through on-site biodiversity gains, registered offsite biodiversity gains or statutory biodiversity credits.

1.4 Certain types of development for which planning permission is required are exempt from biodiversity net gain requirements and planning conditions. These are outlined in The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024, and include:

Developments below the threshold

A development that does not impact a priority habitat and impacts less than:

- 25 square metres (5m by 5m) of on-site habitat
- 5 metres of on-site linear habitats such as hedgerows

A development 'impacts' a habitat if it decreases the biodiversity value (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/understanding-biodiversity-net-gain#measuringbiodiversity-).

Householder applications

These are applications made by householders as defined within article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/595/article/2).

Householder applications include, for example, small projects like home extensions, conservatories or loft conversions.

Self-build and custom build applications

All the following conditions must be met to qualify for an exemption as a self-build or custom build.

The development must:

- Consist of no more than 9 dwellings
- Be on a site that has an area no larger than 0.5 hectares
- Consist exclusively of dwellings that are self-build or custom housebuilding as defined in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/17/section/1)

2 Personnel

An ecology survey and a BNG assessment were carried out by Pat Waring and Janette Gazzard from Ecology Services UK Ltd.

Pat is a Chartered Environmentalist and a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology.

Pat has been working as an ecological consultant for over 27 years, including over 20 years as Director of Ecology Services UK Limited. This work includes provision of expert advice and guidance to bodies such as Statutory Nature Conservation Organisations and Local Planning Authorities, as well as the delivery of professional ecological training courses at a national level.

Pat has recognised and extensive experience and knowledge of ecological survey, design and undertaking of monitoring and condition assessment, and also impact assessment techniques; this includes surveys and assessment methods in respect of Biodiversity Net Gain.

Janette is a full member of Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Management.

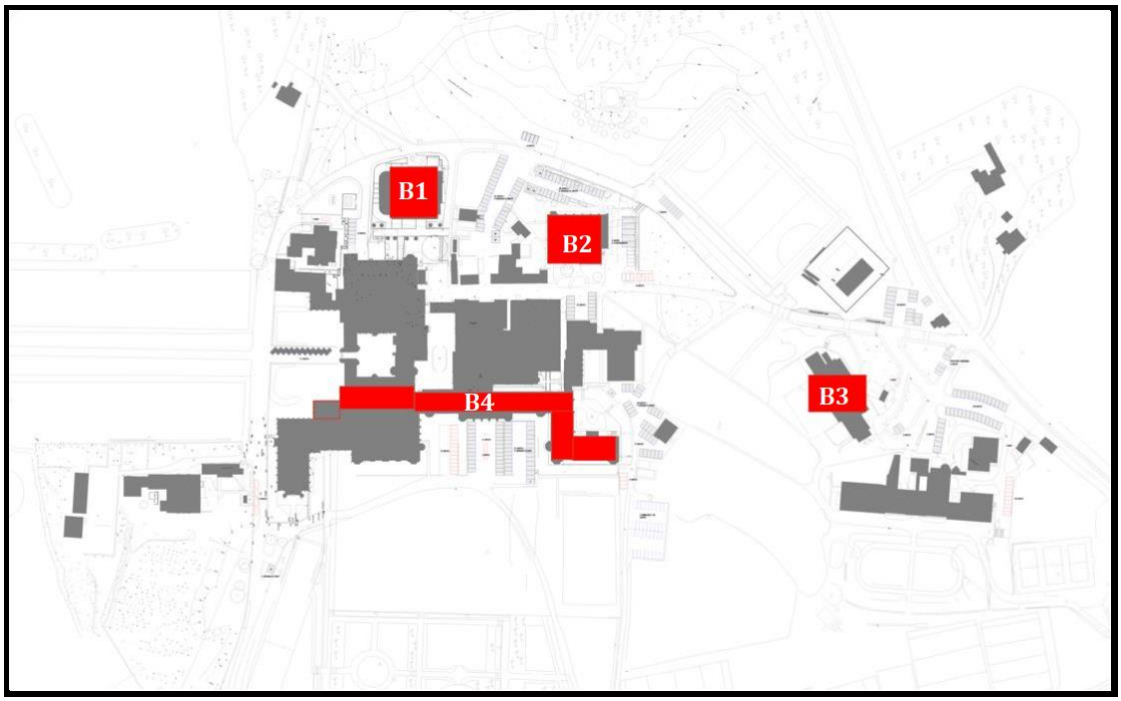
Janette has over 21 years' experience working in ecology and nature conservation, including roles as a Senior Ecologist for a large multidisciplinary company and as a lead adviser for Natural England throughout the North West of England. She has a range of demonstrable skills including habitat surveys, design and undertaking of monitoring and condition assessment, and also impact assessment techniques; this includes surveys and assessment methods in respect of Biodiversity Net Gain.

Pat and Janette have undertaken professional training in the following areas:

- UK Habitat classification
- Designing for Biodiversity Net Gain
- Statutory Biodiversity Metric for Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain in England
- Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain: The Policy
- Biodiversity Net Gain for watercourses
- CIEEM Statutory Biodiversity Metric

3 Methods and results

Information provided to Ecology Services Uk Ltd includes proposed development site areas, shown as four red blocks (B1-B4) on the site plan below.



Plan of proposed solar installation at Stonyhurst College

An ecology survey and a BNG assessment were carried out on 30th May 2025, to inform a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment of a proposed development site at Stonyhurst College.

A single habitat type was present on the proposed development areas at the time of the ecology survey:

u1d Developed land; sealed surface

The proposed development site did not support any irreplaceable habitats at the time of the survey.

There were no habitats of high distinctiveness present on the proposed development site at the time of the survey.

There is no evidence of loss (or degradation) of any onsite habitats, resulting from activities carried out before the date the pre-development biodiversity value of onsite habitats was calculated.

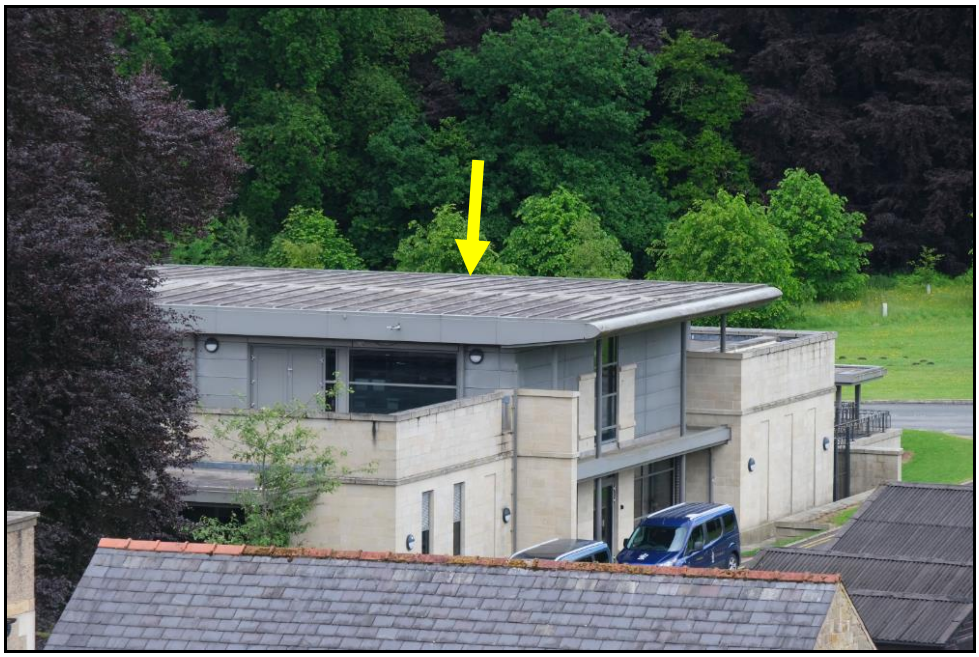


Image 1 – View of Building 1, New Refectory comprises a flat metal sheet roof on steel roof supports with lower-level, flat roof sections on the north and south elevations covered with a sealed membrane, May 2025.

Image 2 – View of Building 2, The Main Sports Centre comprises a shallow pitched metal sheet roof with stone parapet gables and steel roof supports, May 2025

Image 3 – View of* Building *3, St Marys Hall Sports Hall comprises a shallow pitched metal sheet roof on steel roof supports and roof lights, May 2025.

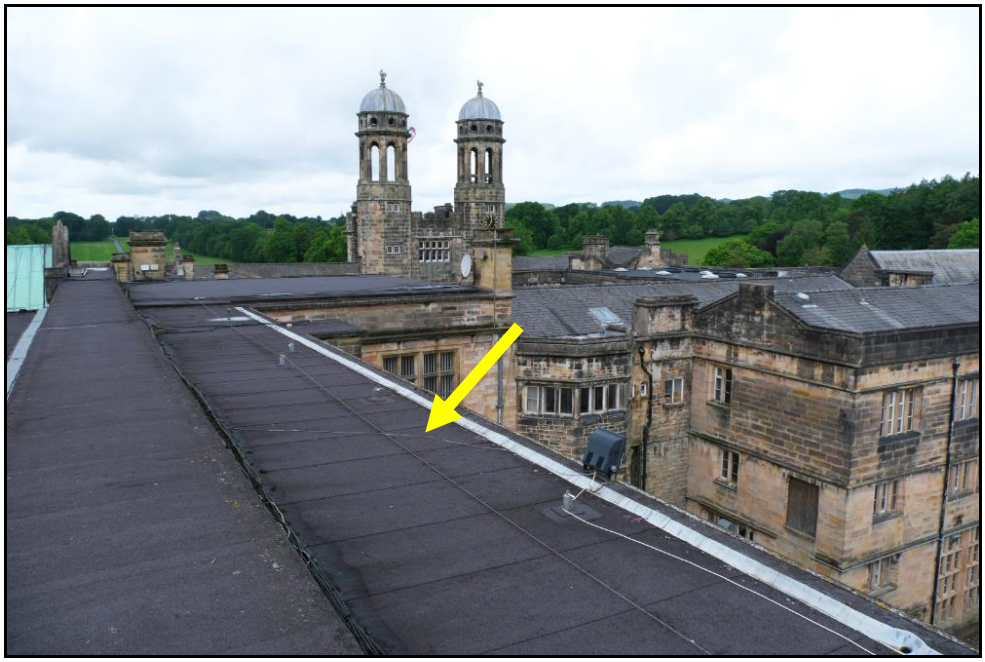


***Image 4– View of Building 4, South Fronts (including West Wing)* comprises a flat roof covered with a bitumastic membrane roof liner and lead flashing trim along the base. There are a series of stone chimneys, air conditioning units and heavy-duty cable trays present on the roof top and a *very small* amount of individual self-seeded plants on some of the chimney stacks.**