



BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT

**EDISFORD BRIDGE RIVERSIDE PARK,
CLITHEROE, RIBBLE VALLEY**

FEBRUARY 2026

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Edisford Bridge Riverside Park, Clitheroe, Ribble Valley

A report for

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PENNINE Ecological were commissioned to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment for a site at Edisford Bridge Riverside Park, Clitheroe, Ribble Valley, BB7 3LA. The assessment is required to support an application for the creation of a new play area within the riverside park.

The assessment includes the use of Natural England's/Defra's Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool (version 1.0.4 published in July 2025) to determine whether the proposals would result in a biodiversity net gain or loss. The assessment was completed using standard methodologies and there was no deviation from the recognised guidance.

The baseline habitats recorded on site are of very low and low distinctiveness and have a baseline habitat value of 0.69. The total number of habitat units lost (before mitigation) is 0.15.

The proposed habitats include developed land (soft play area) and a small area of wildflower planting.

The current proposals would result a -21.54% habitat net loss. The habitat trading rules have also not been satisfied.

	Habitat Units	Habitat Units % Change
On-site Baseline	0.69	-
On-site Post-intervention	0.54	-
On-site Net Change	- 0.15	- 21.54 %
Trading Rules Satisfied	No	

In order for the proposal to achieve 10% net gain, 0.22 habitat units are required.

The remaining net gains would be achieved through purchasing off-site habitat units from a habitat bank. A habitat bank has been identified within the same Local Planning Authority.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

PENNINE Ecological were commissioned to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment for a site at Edisford Bridge Riverside Park, Clitheroe, Ribble Valley, BB7 3LA (hereafter referred to as ‘the proposal site’). Appendix A, Figure 1 provides the proposal site’s red line application boundary and the results of the UKHabs survey.

The BNG assessment has been undertaken to support an application for the creation of a new play area within the riverside park.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT AND BNG BACKGROUND

As of 12th February 2024 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) became mandatory (unless exempt) under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). Developers must deliver a BNG of 10% unless otherwise agreed with the relevant Local Authority.

A BNG assessment of the proposal site is required due to the anticipated loss of medium distinctiveness habitats. The BNG assessment has been undertaken to determine whether or not the proposal demonstrates an overall net gain or loss of biodiversity, in line with the current National Planning Policy Framework, 2021.

Through site selection and layout, applicants should avoid or reduce any negative impact on biodiversity. They must deliver at least 10% BNG (unless agreed otherwise with the Local Authority), as measured by the statutory biodiversity metric. There are three ways an applicant can achieve BNG.

1. They can create biodiversity on-site (within the red line boundary of a proposal site).
2. If the applicant cannot achieve all of their BNG on-site, they can deliver through a mixture of on-site and off-site. Applicants can either make off-site biodiversity gains on their own land outside the proposal site, or buy off-site biodiversity units on the market.
3. If the applicant cannot achieve on or off-site BNG, they must buy statutory biodiversity credits from the government. This should be a last resort. The government will use the revenue to invest in habitat creation in England.

1.3 SITE LOCATION

The site is located in the west of Clitheroe, adjacent to the River Ribble. The site is within the Edisford Bridge Riverside Park, Clitheroe, Ribble Vally, BB7 3LA. The central grid reference is SD 72678 41355.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 UK HABITAT CLASSIFICATION BASELINE SURVEY

For a BNG assessment to be completed, a UK Habitat Classification (UKHabs) Survey (UKHab Ltd, 2023) has to be undertaken of the proposal site's baseline habitats. The UKHabs survey was undertaken in February 2026 by Luke Pilling. This BNG assessment has also been undertaken by Luke Pilling (refer to Section 2.3).

2.2 BIODIVERSITY METRIC CALCULATOR TOOL

All habitats recorded within the footprint of the proposal site during the field survey were included in the Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool (version 1.0.4 published in July 2025). The statutory biodiversity metric is a way of measuring biodiversity value for the purposes of BNG.

This metric calculation has been undertaken following the standard methodology (DEFRA, 2025) and in accordance with CIEEM good practice guidelines (CIEEM, 2019).

2.2.1 Strategic Significance

The Lancashire County Council Local Habitat Map¹ was reviewed to determine the strategic significance of habitats within the site. The strategic significance for each habitat parcel on site was determined using the guidance table below.

¹ <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/92a5cd8951b84c65b9cd842f5ffc2333>

Table 7 Strategic significance categories applied to post-development interventions where a LNRS has been published.

Category	Score	Description
High (Formally identified in local strategy)	1.15	<p>This category can only be applied to post development interventions when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the location of the habitat parcel has been mapped in the Local Habitat Map⁴ as an area where a potential measure has been proposed to help deliver the priorities of that LNRS; and the proposed intervention is consistent⁵ with the mapped potential measure in the LNRS for the habitat parcel <p>You should record that you have applied the published LNRS in your gain plan.</p>
Medium (Location ecologically desirable but not in local strategy)	1.10	This category cannot be applied.
Low (Area / compensation not in local strategy)	1	<p>Where the definitions for high strategic significance are not met.</p> <p>Even if your project is in an area mapped with a potential measure, if the proposed intervention is not consistent with a potential measure proposed by the LNRS for that location, you should record strategic significance as low.</p>

2.3 SURVEYOR EXPERIENCE

The surveyor and BNG assessor is Luke Pilling. Luke is a Qualifying member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and has over two years' experience in ecological survey and evaluation. Key skills relating to this site include:

- Two years of UKHabs survey and BNG assessments.
- Breeding bird inspections and breeding bird checks.
- Competent in preliminary bat roost assessments. Undertaken two seasons of bat emergence and transect surveys.

- One season of terrestrial mammal surveys, supported by highly experienced ecologists.

The survey findings and report have been reviewed by Patrick Leatham. Patrick is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM) and has over 13 years' experience in ecological survey and evaluation. Key skills relevant to this assessment include the following.

- Over 13 years completing Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey / UKHabs Survey on both small planning applications and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs).
- Over three years' experience completing a wide range of BNG assessments.

2.4 LIMITATIONS

The survey was conducted on 9th February 2026 which is a sub optimal time for vegetation surveys.

However, the habitats within the survey area are heavily modified, common and easily identifiable. Appropriate species data and habitat characteristics could be identified to allow a comprehensive condition assessment for each habitat present.

All parts of the site were accessible and there are considered to be no constraints to the survey.

3. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT RESULTS

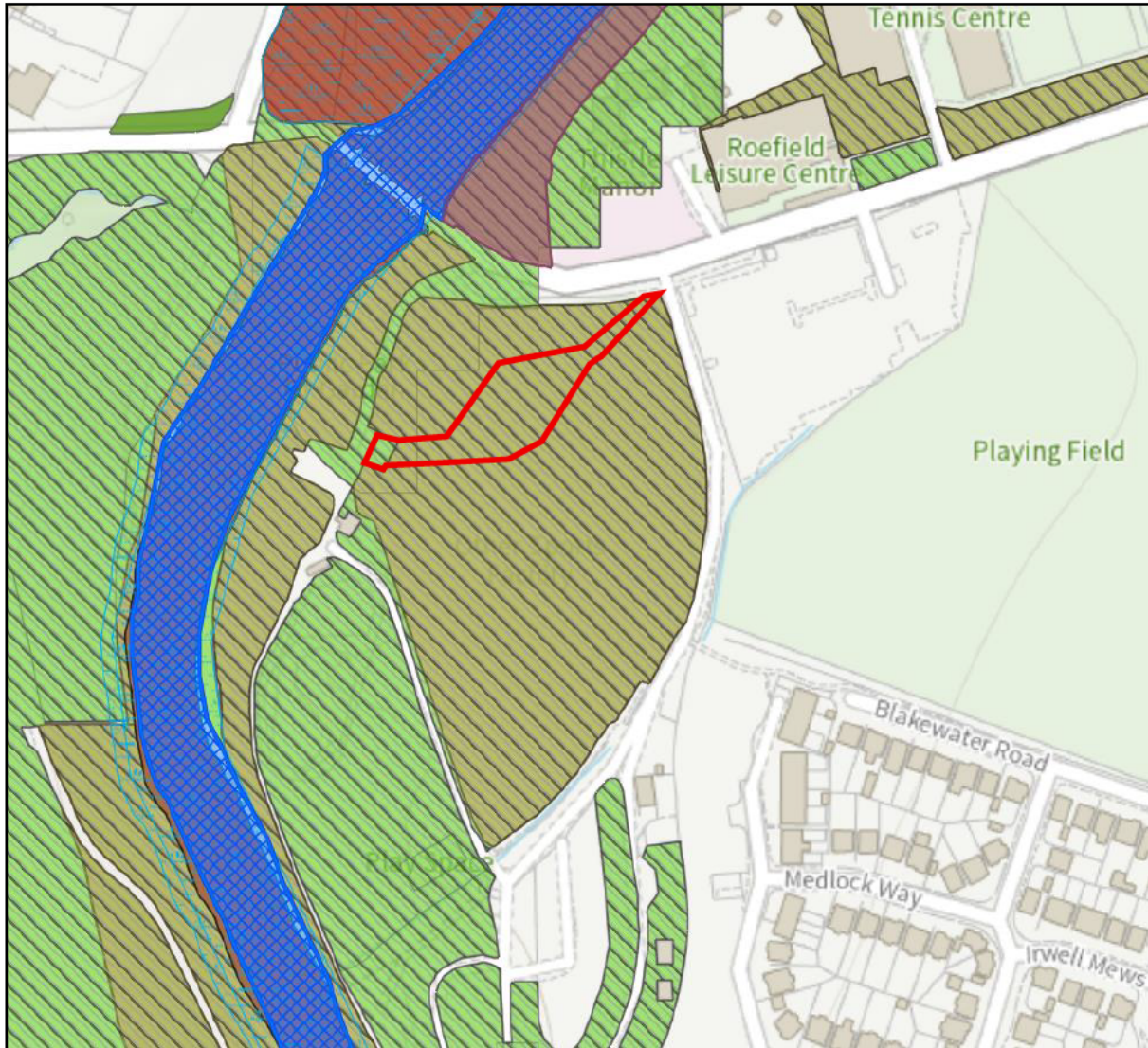
3.1 ON-SITE HABITAT BASELINE RESULTS

The habitats recorded on-site were of the following distinctiveness’;

- Low – Modified grassland.
- Very Low – Developed land; sealed surfaces.

3.1.1 Strategic Significance

As there is a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) established for Lancashire County the baseline strategic significance is low (area / compensation not in local strategy).



The site falls within an identified opportunity, however, the interventions are not consistent with potential measure proposed by the LNRS. Therefore, the habitat creation strategic significance is also low.

3.1.2 Habitat Baseline Results Summary

In total, the baseline habitats surveyed have a total habitat value of 0.69 habitat units.

A summary of the baseline habitat information is shown in Table 3.1 below.

*Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment
Edisford Bridge Riverside Park, Clitheroe*

Table 3-1: Summary of the Baseline Habitats and Habitat Value

Broad Habitat	Habitat Type	Habitat Area (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic Significance	Total Habitat Units (Ecological Baseline)	Units Retained	Units Enhanced	Units Lost (before mitigation)
Urban	Developed land; sealed surfaces	0.0189	V. Low	N/a	Low	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Grassland	Modified grassland	0.3427	Low	Poor	Low	0.69	0.53	0.00	0.15
TOTAL		0.36ha				0.69	0.53	0.00	0.15

3.2 ON-SITE HABITAT CREATED RESULTS

The habitats to be created on-site (Table 3.2) are of the following distinctiveness:

- Medium – Other neutral grassland
- Very low – Developed land; sealed surface

The total number of habitat units delivered is 0.01.

The habitats and their respective areas, distinctiveness, condition etc. are included in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3-2: Summary of the On-Site Habitat Creation and Habitat Value

Broad Habitat	Habitat	Habitat Area (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Habitat Units Delivered
Urban	Developed land; sealed surface	0.0259	V.Low	N/a	0.00
Grassland	Other neutral grassland	0.0015	Medium	Poor	0.01
TOTAL		0.04ha			0.01

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 CONCLUSION

The following section summarises the Biodiversity Net Gain assessment results.

Baseline habitats of low and very low distinctiveness were assessed as being present within the proposal site in February 2026.

The current proposals would result in a - 21.54% habitat net loss. The habitat trading rules have also not been satisfied (see Tables 4.1 and 4.2 below).

Table 4.1: Summary of the Biodiversity Net Gain Results

	Habitat Units	Habitat Units % Change
On-site Baseline	0.69	-
On-site Post-intervention	0.54	-
On-site Net Change	- 0.15	- 21.54 %
Trading Rules Satisfied	No	

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment
Edisford Bridge Riverside Park, Clitheroe

Table 4.2: Extract of BNG Headline Results

On-site baseline	Area habitat units	0.69			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
On-site post-intervention <small>(including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	Area habitat units	0.54			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
On-site net change <small>(units & percentage)</small>	Area habitat units	-0.15	-21.54%	On-site net gain is less than target set ▲	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%		
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%		
Off-site baseline	Area habitat units	0.00			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
Off-site post-intervention <small>(including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	Area habitat units	0.00			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
Off site net change <small>(units & percentage)</small>	Area habitat units	0.00	0.00%		
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%		
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%		
Combined net unit change <small>(including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	Area habitat units	-0.15			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
Spatial risk multiplier (SRM) deductions	Area habitat units	0.00			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
FINAL RESULTS					
Total net unit change <small>(including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	Area habitat units	-0.15			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
Total net % change <small>(including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	Area habitat units	-21.54%		Total net gain achieved is less than target set ▲	
	Hedgerow units	0.00%			
	Watercourse units	0.00%			
Trading rules satisfied?	No - Check Trading Summaries ▲				
Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit	
Area habitat units	10.00%	0.69	0.75	0.22	
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	No additional hedgerow units required to meet target ✓
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	No additional watercourse units required to meet target ✓

5. BNG PROPOSALS

In order for the proposal to achieve 10% net gain, 0.22 habitat units are required.

The remaining net gains would be achieved through purchasing off-site habitat units from a habitat bank. Locations of available habitat banks are provided below.

5.1 POTENTIAL OFF-SITE LOCATIONS

A review of <https://www.futurehomes.org.uk/biodiversityunitfindermap> has been undertaken to identify potential nearby receptor sites.

Note – Future homes has not verified the accuracy of any of this information. The locations in the map are approximate only. Therefore, this information should be used as a guide only, to assist in finding a habitat bank.

Note - if the habitat bank is located outside of the Local Planning Authority (LPA) or National Character Area (NCA) of the proposal site, then a spatial risk multiplier² is applied to the habitat unit deficit.

(i) Habitat Bank Option 1 (Available)

Organisation: Carter Jonas.

Site ID: A378

Address: Portfield Road, Whalley, Clitheroe, BB7 9DL, UK

Local Planning Authority (LPA): Ribble Valley Borough Council

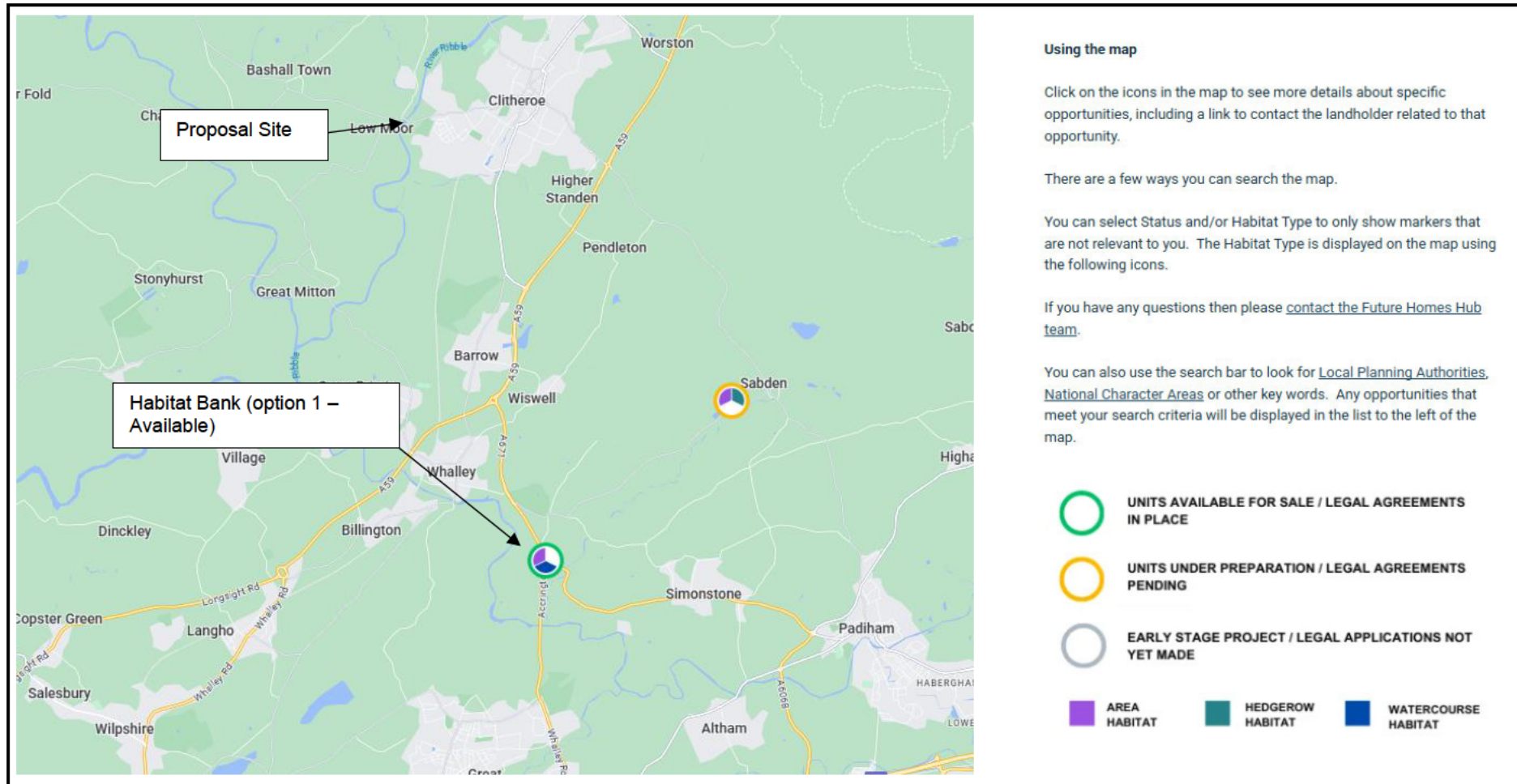
National Character Area (NCA): North West England; 35 Lancashire Valleys

This habitat bank is within the same LPA as the proposal site.

² Refer to Page 35 of the Statutory Metric User Guide for details on Spatial Risk Multipliers - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/669e45fba3c2a28abb50d426/The_Statutory_Biodiversity_Metric_-_User_Guide_23.07.24_.pdf

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment
Land at 45 - 47 Whalley Road, Clitheroe

Figure 5.1: Screenshot taken from Future Homes interactive map



REFERENCES

CIEEM (2019). Biodiversity net gain. Good practice principles for development; a practical guide. CIRIA publications

Natural England (2025). The Statutory Biodiversity Metric - User Guide. Last updated: July 2025

Edisford Bridge Riverside Park, Clitheroe -
Statutory_Biodiversity_Metric_Condition_Assessments_-_July_2025

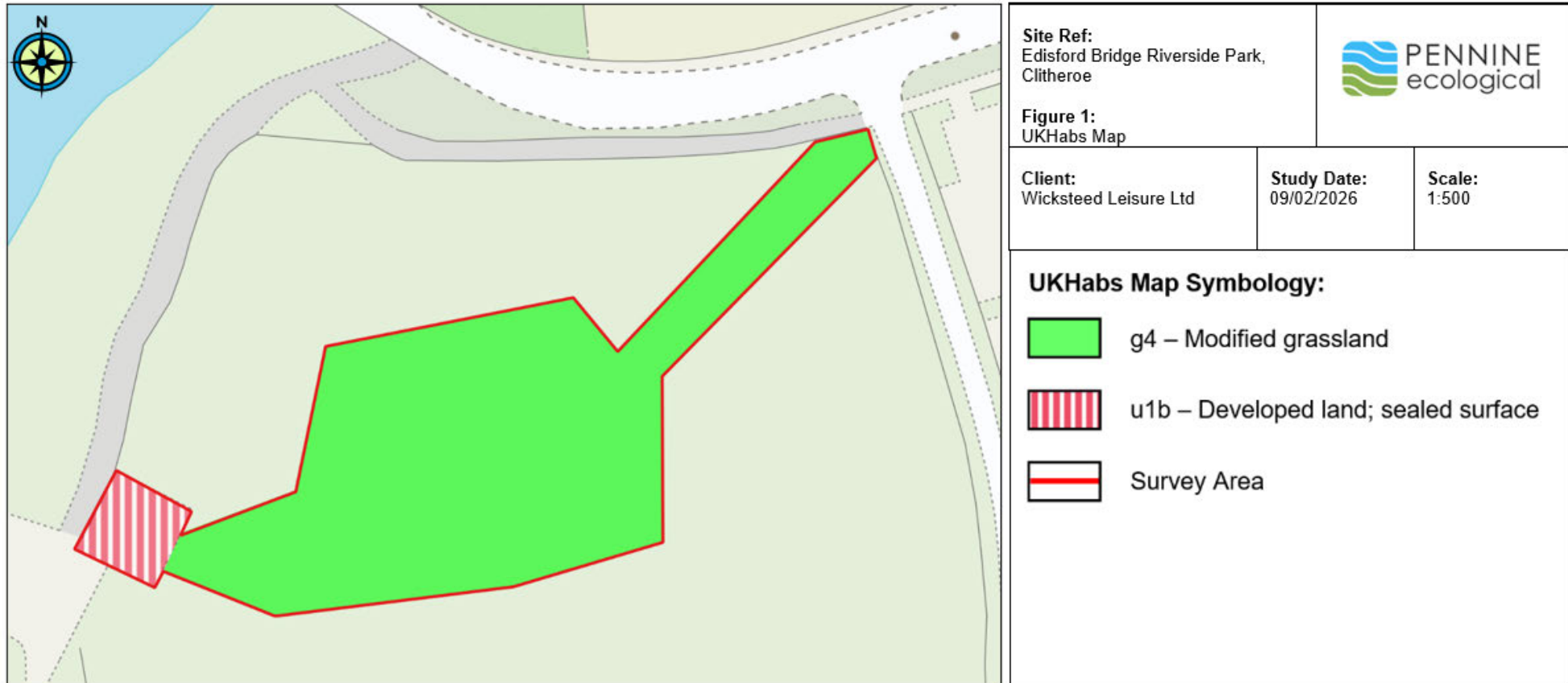
UKHabs Ltd (2023). UK Habitat Classification Version 2.01 (at <https://www.ukhab.org>)

Online Resources

Lancashire County Council (LCC) Local Nature Recovery Strategy – Local Habitat Map -
<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/92a5cd8951b84c65b9cd842f5ffc2333/page/Habitat-Map>

Appendix A - Figures

Figure 1: Baseline Habitats Map



Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment
Edisford Bridge Riverside Park, Clitheroe

Figure 2: Location Plan (Wicksteed: Edisford Bridge Riverside Park– PPP No. 16/95852)

