Web: www.knightskyecology.co.uk
Email: info@knightskyecology.co.uk

TECHNICAL NOTE: BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN (BNG) STRATEGY

SITE NAME & ADDRESS	The Old Village School, Main Street, Pendleton, BB7 1PT
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL	Proposed extension to garden
PLANNING REFERENCE	Not yet registered
DATE	12 February 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

Knight Sky Ecology Ltd was commissioned to provide a BNG strategy for a proposed garden extension at The Old Village School, Pendleton. The BNG strategy includes the submission of the following documents:

- The Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool (hereafter referred to as 'the Biodiversity Metric')
- Habitat condition assessment
- UK Habitat Classification map – Baseline (Figure 1)
- UK Habitat Classification map – Post-development (Figure 2)

In England, the primary legislation for the statutory framework for 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.

This document has been produced to provide an overview of the BNG assessment and to provide a clear approach to how the BNG condition would be met. The scope of information within this document is considered proportionate to the very small scale and location of the development and types of habitats affected.

2. METHODS

The latest version of the Biodiversity Metric and User Guide (3 July 2025) have been accessed from:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides

Habitat Assessment

A site walkover was undertaken on 10th February 2026 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 assessment was undertaken during the winter period. However, the habitats present within the site were very limited and easily identifiable, and the timing of the survey was therefore not considered to constrain the accuracy or reliability of the assessment.

3. BASELINE VALUES

Habitat Degradation

No habitat degradation was identified.

Habitats

Photos are provided in Appendix A for context and supporting information for the assessment and Figure 1 in Appendix B provides an overview of the habitat baseline.

g4 Modified grassland
The proposed development site includes a very small area (approximately 50 m²) of an agriculturally improved grassland field. The sward comprised a typical mix of palatable, productive grasses characteristic of improved pasture, dominated by perennial rye-grass. As the site lies along the field boundary and adjacent to an outgrown hedgerow, a range of taller forbs and ruderal species were also present, including common nettle, broad-leaved dock, willowherb spp., dandelion and creeping buttercup. Small patches of bare ground and localised ivy cover were also recorded. Overall, the grassland is considered to be in poor condition.

The biodiversity value of the habitats within the site is **0.01 units.** The development will result in the loss of the grassland.

Hedgerow
The proposed development area also includes a native hedgerow comprising a small row of hawthorn trees, which likely formed part of a longer historic field boundary prior to the construction of the adjacent agricultural sheds several years ago. The hedgerow has not been actively managed and is currently in poor condition. Its biodiversity value has been calculated at **0.02 units.** The development will require the removal of this hedgerow.

4. POST DEVELOPMENT VALUES (HABITAT CREATION)

The proposed development includes the extension of the existing garden. The extended area will comprise a flagged or shale-gravel surface with raised planters. Following development, the area will support only a negligible level of biodiversity value.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Biodiversity Metric has calculated that the development proposals will result in a net loss of 0.01 habitat units (-84.25%) and a net loss of 0.02 hedgerow units.

The development will therefore not meet the biodiversity net gain condition on-site as the 10% net gain would not be achieved. A total of 0.01 habitat units and 0.02 hedgerow units are required to achieve a 10% net gain. These are relatively very small values.

It would not be possible to achieve BNG within the site. The area will form part of a private residential garden, and as such it cannot be secured or managed for the minimum 30-year period required by the BNG regulations. The challenges of delivering net gain on very small development sites are well recognised, and forthcoming changes to national policy and legislation are expected to exempt such minor residential developments from the mandatory BNG requirements. Until this time, the BNG condition must still be met.

Off-site Net Gain

The development would deliver BNG off-site via the purchasing of biodiversity units. This is a very simple process which works as follows:

- The existing Biodiversity Metric (showing a deficit for habitat units) is forwarded to a habitat bank.
- The habitat bank provides a broken-down quote for supplying the required biodiversity units.
- In line with the requirements of Section 100 Environment Act 2021, habitat banks are governed under a standalone Conservation Covenants with a Responsible Body, as designated by Defra/Natural England. Each habitat bank is fully funded for its lifetime, including lease and management payments, habitat creation works, reporting, and monitoring.
- The quote represents the full cost of the units over the required 30-year period, and the habitat bank would take on the liability for all of the maintenance and management. There are no additional charges (e.g. no legal, agency costs) and there are no ongoing recurring payments. The purchase price would be a one-off payment and would provide the applicant with a “clean break”.
- The biodiversity units are fully purchased following planning permission. There is an option to reserve the units via a deposit prior to planning consent. The reservation fee is not refundable if planning permission is refused.
- Once purchased, the applicant would receive a reference number and proof of purchase. This proof of purchase and the number of units would be inputted into the Biodiversity Gain Plan. The Biodiversity Gain Plan and amended Biodiversity Metric must be submitted prior to commencement (as stated in a mandatory planning condition).

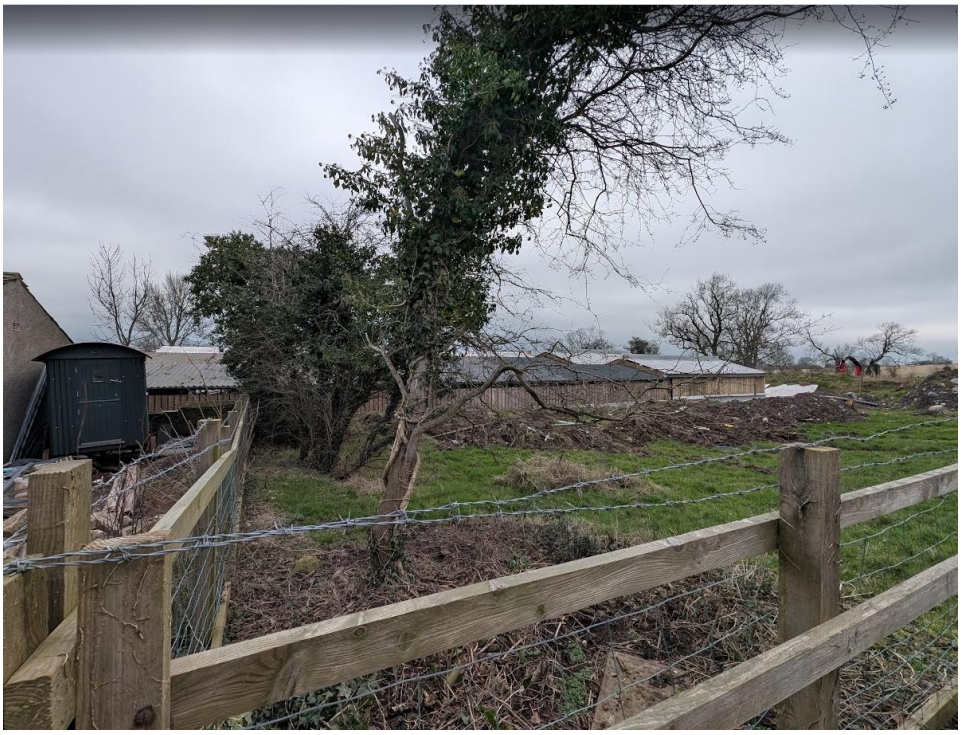
Please note that Knight Sky Ecology are aware that some habitat banks apply a minimum transaction fee, which can be substantially higher than the actual cost required to deliver the net gain associated with a small development. It is therefore recommended that a habitat bank is sought which does not impose a minimum spend.

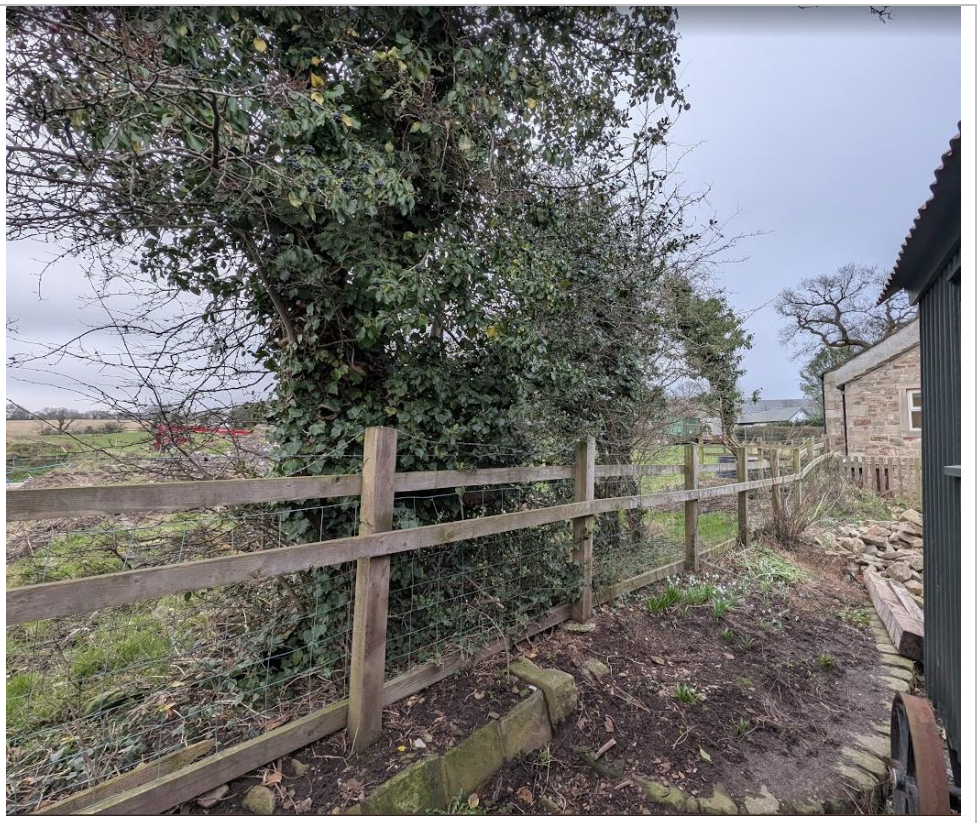
The information within this document demonstrates that the mandatory BNG condition is capable of being discharged successfully at the site.

Biodiversity Gain Plan

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 this document.

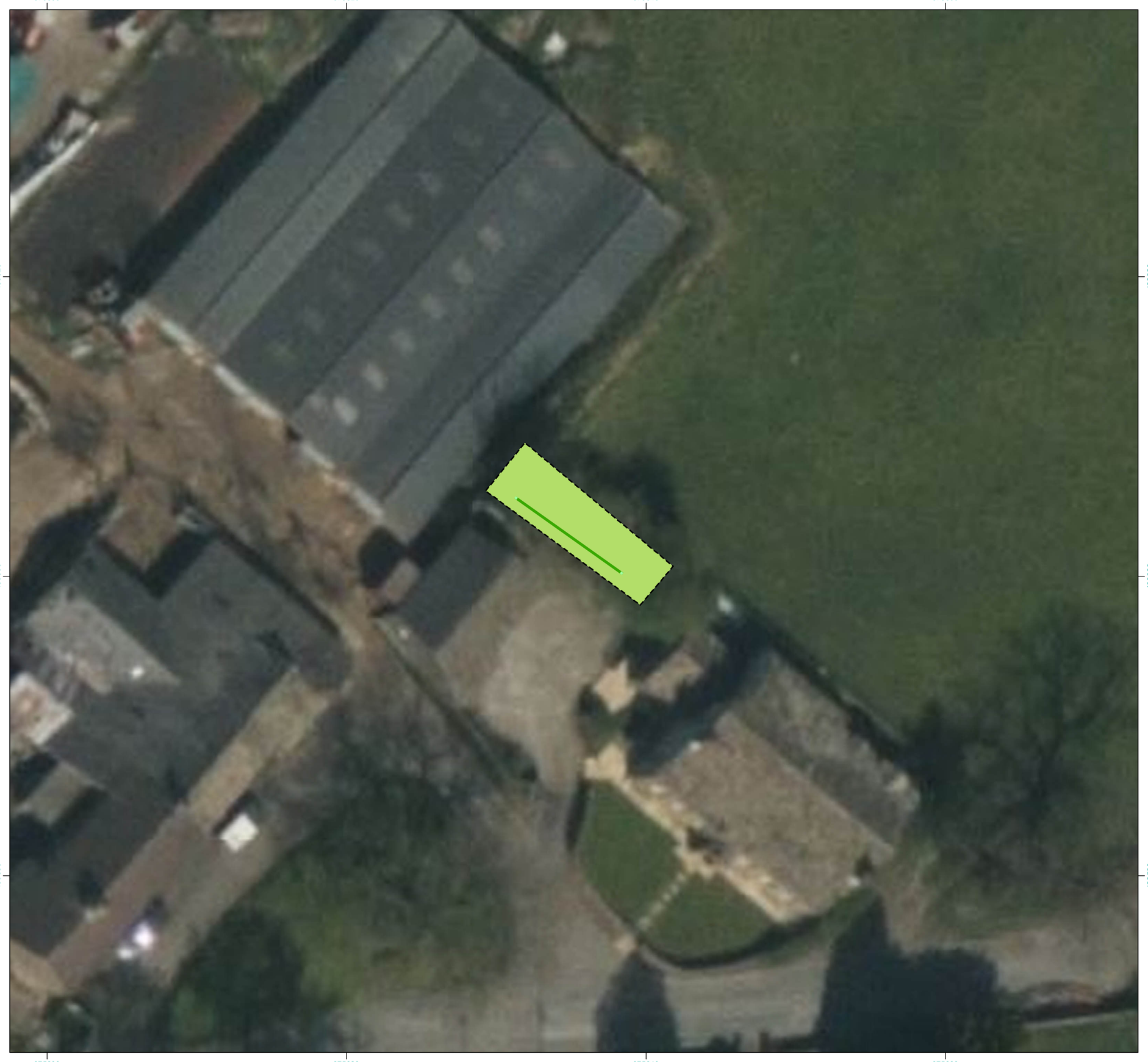
APPENDIX A: PHOTOS

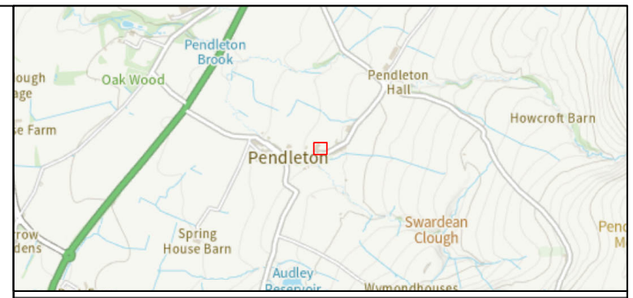
Photos 1a & 1b. Area of field proposed for garden extension.	

APPENDIX B: FIGURES (NEXT PAGE)

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





Survey Information	
	Site boundary (48.4m^2)

UKHab Habitat Survey	
	g4 - Modified grassland (48.4m^2)
	h2a - Native hedgerow (8.8m)

0 5 10 20

Metres

PROJECT TITLE

THE OLD VILLAGE SCHOOL , PENDLETON

DRAWING TITLE

Figure 1: UK Habitat Classification Map (Baseline)

VER	DATE	REMARKS	Drawn	Checked
1.0	11/02/26	UKHab	MP	RK

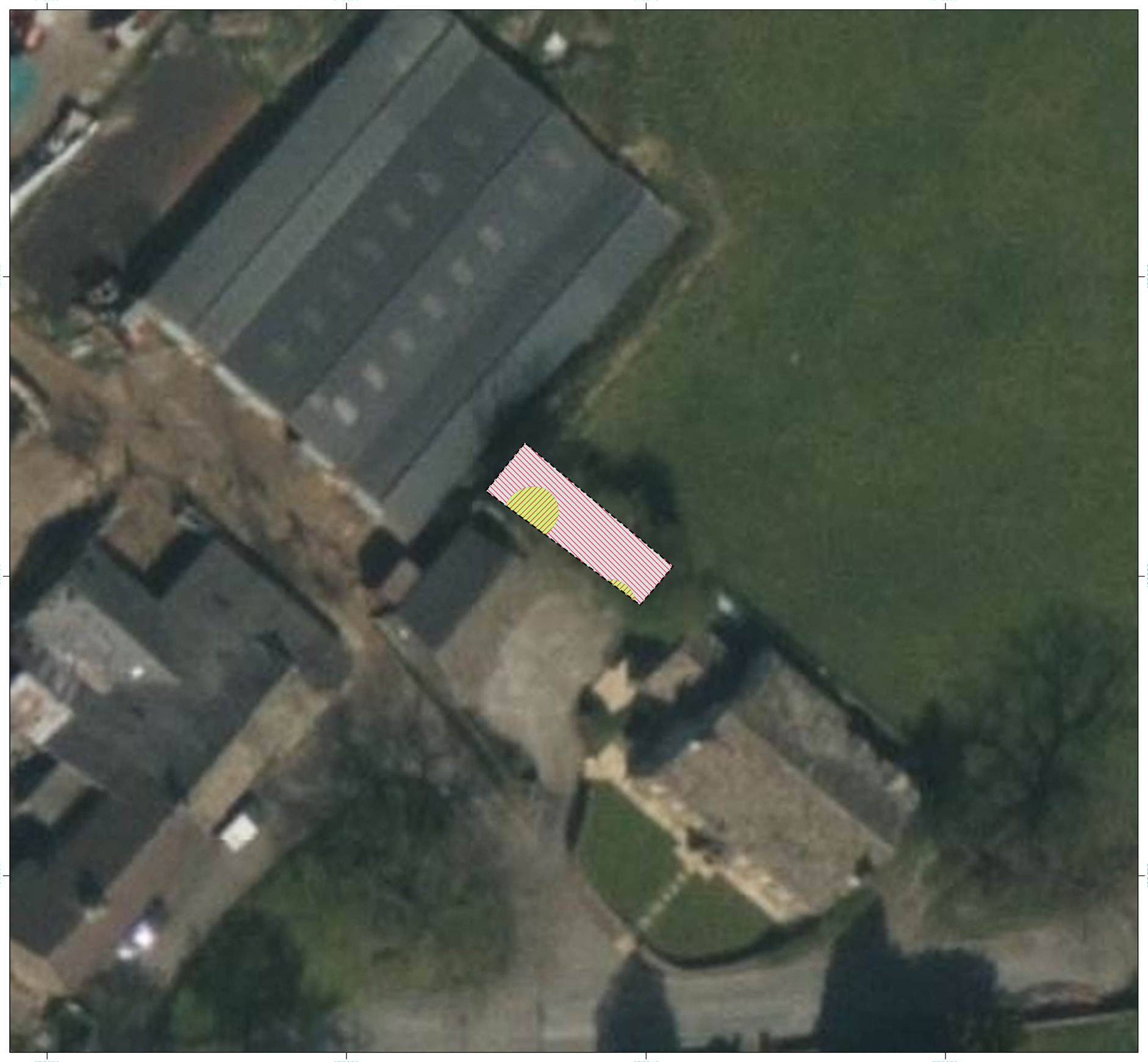
DRAWING NUMBER:

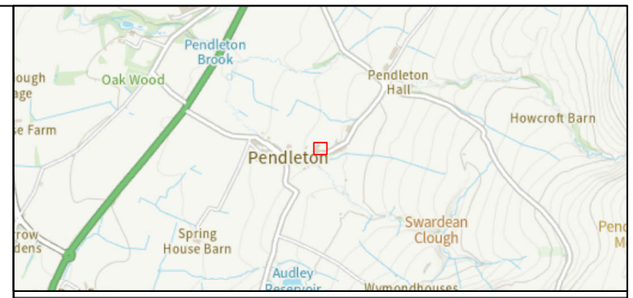
KSEcology/OldVillageSchool/UKHab

SCALE	PLOT SIZE	DATUM	PROJECTION
1:250	A3	OSGB	BNG

N

KNIGHT SKY ECOLOGY





Survey Information	
	Site boundary (48.4m^2)

UKHab Habitat Survey	
	828 - Vegetated garden (7.9m^2)
	829 - Unvegetated garden (40.5m^2)

0 5 10 20

Metres

PROJECT TITLE

THE OLD VILLAGE SCHOOL , PENDLETON

DRAWING TITLE

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

VER	DATE	REMARKS	Drawn	Checked
1.0	11/02/26	Post-Development	MP	RK

DRAWING NUMBER:

KSEcology/OldVillageSchool/Post-Development

SCALE	PLOT SIZE	DATUM	PROJECTION
1:250	A3	OSGB	BNG

N

KNIGHT SKY ECOLOGY