



BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT

**LOWER STANDEN HEY FARM,
CLITHEROE, LANCASHIRE**

MARCH 2026



Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

**Lower Standen Hey Farm,
Clitheroe, Lancashire**

A report for

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PENNINE Ecological were commissioned to undertake an ecological assessment of the land at Lower Standen Hey Farm, Whalley Road, Clitheroe, BB7 1PP. The assessment is required to support an application for the construction of a new livestock building and the planting of nine individual trees.

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 low to very low distinctiveness and have a baseline habitat value of 0.10. The total number of habitat units lost (before mitigation) is 0.08.

The proposed habitats include a livestock building (developed land) and nine individual trees.

The current proposals would result in a + 18.62 % habitat net loss. The habitat trading rules have been satisfied (see Tables 4.1 below).

Table 0.1: Summary of the Biodiversity Net Gain Results

	Habitat Units	Habitat Units % Change
On-site Baseline	0.10	-
On-site Post-intervention	0.12	-
On-site Net Change	+ 0.02	+ 18.62 %
Trading Rules Satisfied	Yes	

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

PENNINE Ecological were commissioned to undertake an ecological assessment of the land at Lower Standen Hey Farm, Whalley Road, Clitheroe, BB7 1PP (hereafter referred to as 'the site'). Appendix A, Figure 1 provides the site's red line application boundary and the results of the UKHabs survey.

The Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment has been undertaken to support an application for the construction of a new livestock building adjacent to an existing livestock building.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT AND BNG BACKGROUND

As of 12th February 2024 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.

The BNG assessment is required at this site 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 at Lower Standen Hey Farm, Whalley Road, Clitheroe, BB7 1PP. The Ordnance Survey central grid reference for the site is SD 73641 39723.

Figure 1.1: Site Location and red line boundary



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 site's baseline habitats. The UKHabs surveys, and habitat condition assessments were undertaken by Patrick Leatham in March 2026. This BNG assessment has been undertaken by Luke Pilling (refer to Section 2.3).

2.2 BIODIVERSITY METRIC CALCULATOR TOOL

All habitats recorded within the footprint of the 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 Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Lancashire County Council has been published¹. As the LNRS has been published, all baseline habitats have a strategic significance of low. The strategic significance for each proposed habitat parcel on site was determined using the guidance table below (DEFRA, 2025).

¹ <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/8515e56d91a64fb3bae39e58ded10fb5>

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 of the site was 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. The report has also been reviewed by Patrick. Key skills include the following.

Key skills include the following;

- Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and National Vegetation Classification Survey.
- Highly proficient field botanist, including some difficult plant groups.

This BNG assessment has been undertaken by Luke Pilling who is a Qualifying Member of CIEEM. Luke's key skills include;

- Experience of writing technical reports including Preliminary Ecological Appraisals and Biodiversity Net Gain reports.
- Experienced bat surveyor of three years undertaking Preliminary Roost Assessments and dusk emergence surveys.
- Experience in Ecological Clerk of Works.
- Experienced in a wide range of ecological surveys including great crested newts, reptiles, badger, and riparian mammals.

The report has been reviewed by Patrick Leatham.

2.4 LIMITATIONS

The survey was undertaken on 4th March 2026 which is a sub-optimal time for habitat surveys.

However, given the nature of the sites habitats (currently a silage storage area and a small area of sheep-grazed, modified grassland), this is not considered a significant constraint. All the habitats within the survey area have been defined / classified accurately and sufficiently condition assessed. All parts of the site were accessible.

There are considered to be no survey constraints, and an appropriate assessment of the habitats associated with this site has been completed.

3. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The following section details the baseline habitats, along with habitats to be created, enhanced and retained within the proposal site (where applicable).

3.1 BASELINE SUMMARY

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

- Low – Modified grassland.
- Very low – Artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface.

The strategic significance applied to all habitats at baseline is low (area not in local strategy).

In total, the baseline habitats surveyed have a total habitat value of 0.10 habitat units.

A summary of the baseline habitat information is shown in Section 3.3 (Table 3.1) below.

3.2 HABITAT DEGRADATION

Habitat degradation is defined as a habitat which has been cleared, destroyed, or degraded on a site since 30th January 2020 and is not in accordance with a planning permission.

Upon surveying the site in March 2026, it was identified that the proposed area of development was subject to degradation from frequent disturbance caused by farming machinery and storage of silage. Through the use of aerial imagery, it can be seen that the area was once modified grassland as seen in July 2022. In October 2024 the modified grassland has been cleared and storage of materials in-situ.

Figure 3.1 shows a google earth image from July 2022 and October 2024 of the degraded area within the redline boundary area. No Google street view is available for the site.

Figure 3.1: Aerial imagery of the site in July 2022 and October 2024



In order to account for the degradation, the statutory biodiversity metric was carried out using the 'pre-degradation' habitat type (modified grassland) with the habitat conditions completed through the use of historical maps (aerial imagery).

3.3 HABITAT BASELINE RESULTS

Table 3.1: Summary of the Baseline Habitats and Habitat Value

Broad Habitat	Habitat Type	Habitat Area (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Total Habitat Units (Ecological Baseline)	Area Retained - units	Area Enhanced - units	Units Lost (before mitigation)
Grassland	Modified grassland	0.0418	Low	Poor	0.08	0.00	0.00	0.08
Grassland	Modified grassland	0.0366	Low	Poor	0.07	0.07	0.00	0.00
Urban	Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface	0.2417	V.Low	N/A - Other	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL		0.32ha			0.16	0.07	0.00	0.08

3.4 HABITAT CREATED RESULTS

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

- Medium; Individual trees.
- Very low; Developed land; sealed surface.

The total number of habitat units delivered is 0.10.

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	0.0418	V.Low	N/A	0.00
Individual trees	Urban tree	0.0366	Medium	Poor	0.10
TOTAL		0.0418ha* (+0.28ha retained) = 0.32ha			0.10 (+0.7 units retained) = 0.18**

*Tree area not included within habitat area as tree area is calculated on canopy biomass rather than footprint

** Units rounded up within metric calculation tool.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 CONCLUSION AND BNG ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The following section summarises the Biodiversity Net Gain assessment results.

Baseline habitats of very low to low distinctiveness were assessed as being present within the site in March 2026.

The proposal design has ensured the mitigation hierarchy has been followed. Consultation with Pennine ecological has been ongoing throughout the design stage to minimise impacts to biodiversity.

- Avoiding impacts on notable habitats: There are no notable habitats on site. Habitats impacted by the proposals are of very limited botanical value.
- Minimise impacts on site: The proposal is a small development, situated adjacent to existing farm infrastructure on very damaged and low value habitat. The siting of this building is considered optimal to minimise the impact on habitats.
- Restoring habitats on site: There are no habitats on site to restore. The proposals include the planting of nine new trees within another area of grassland within the land ownership.

The current proposals would generate a 12.07 % habitat net gain. The habitat trading rules have 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	0.16	-
On-site Post-intervention	0.18	-
On-site Net Change	+ 0.02	+ 12.07 %
Trading Rules Satisfied	Yes	

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Table 4.2: Extract of BNG Headline Results

On-site baseline	Area habitat units	0.16			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
On-site post-intervention <small>(Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)</small>	Area habitat units	0.18			
	Hedgerow units	0.00			
	Watercourse units	0.00			
On-site net change <small>(units & percentage)</small>	Area habitat units	0.02	12.07%		
	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	0.02			
	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	0.02			
	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	12.07%			
	Hedgerow units	0.00%			
	Watercourse units	0.00%			
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓				
Summary Table					
Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit	
Area habitat units	10.00%	0.16	0.17	0.00	No additional area habitat units required to meet target ✓
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

This report and supporting documentation provides the LPA with sufficient evidence that this proposal can achieve the required 10% net gain in line with local and national policies.

In order to secure the long term management of the proposed habitats, a Habitat Management and Maintenance Plan (HMMP), along with supporting figures will need to be provided. The document will provide the details of the habitat proposals, planting specifications and future monitoring and management requirements. A Biodiversity Gain Plan will also need to be provided once the HMMP has been completed.

It is recommended that the HMMP and Biodiversity Gain Plan are requested as a planning condition to any granted application.

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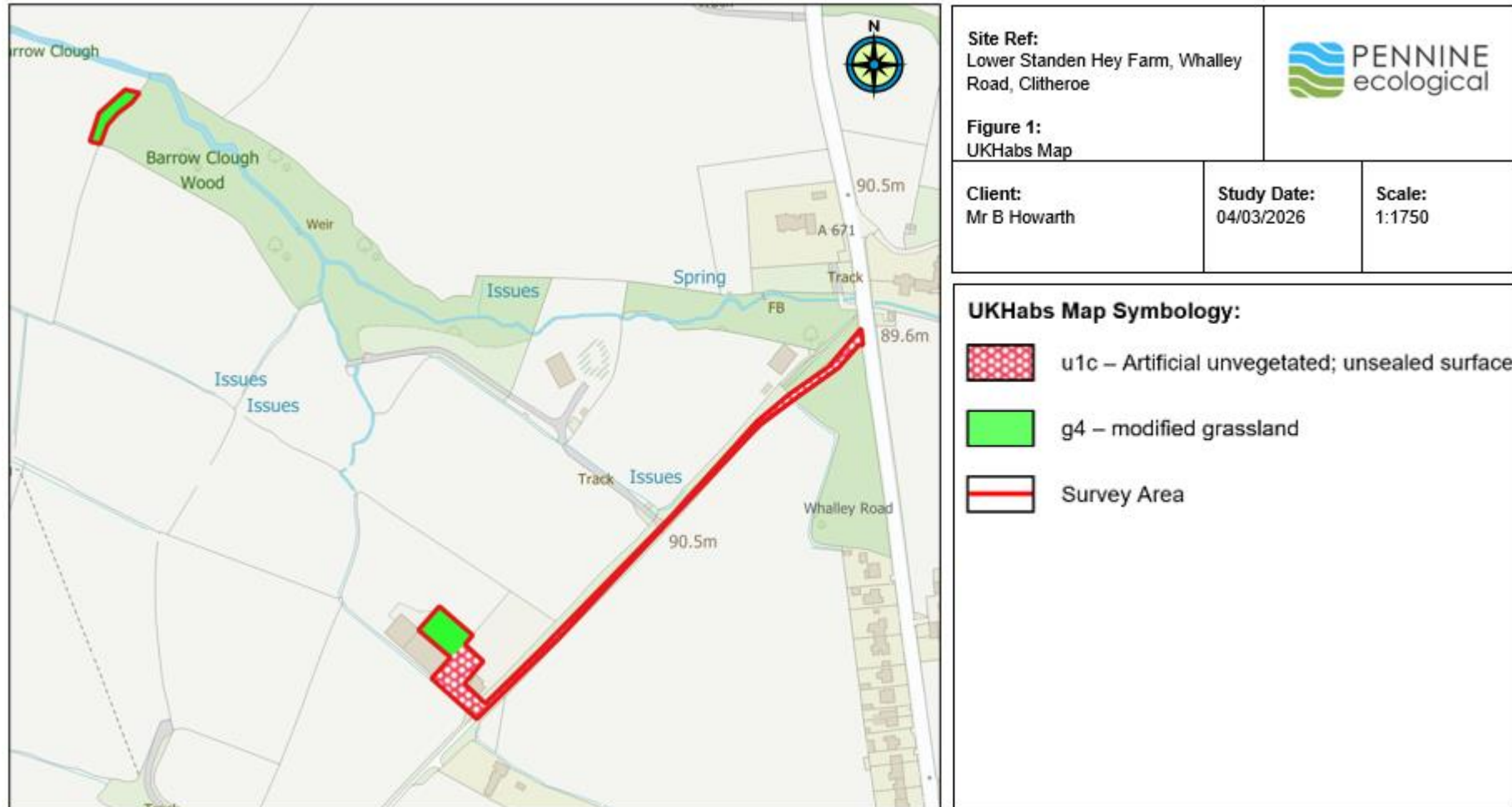
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Appendix A - Figures

Figure 1: Baseline Habitats Map



Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Lower Standen Hey Farm, Clitheroe

Figure 2: Proposed Site Plan (Gary Hoerty Associates – How/391/3750/05)



Appendix B: Photographs



Photograph 1: Overview of the location of the new building. Formerly sheep grazed pasture.



Photograph 3: Overview of the location of the new building. Formerly sheep grazed pasture.



Photograph 2: Overview of the location of the new building. Formerly sheep grazed pasture.



Photograph 2: Overview of the sheep grazed pasture adjacent to the proposed building.