



TECHNICAL NOTE:

- **ECOLOGY WALKOVER**
- **BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN STRATEGY**

SITE NAME & ADDRESS	Gregsons Farm, Newsholme, Clitheroe BB7 4JF
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL	New agricultural building
PLANNING REFERENCE	Not yet registered
DATE	13 May 2026

1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

Knight Sky Ecology Ltd was commissioned to provide ecological consultancy services to support the proposed development of a new agricultural building at Gregsons Farm. The commission comprised an ecology walkover (including desk study and site-based assessment) and a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment which was supported by 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)

This technical note has been produced to accompany the above listed information and provide an overview of the BNG assessment results along with a baseline of all relevant ecological information for the site.

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.

Since the advent of mandatory net gain, every development proposal which is not exempt from BNG requires a certain level of ecological information to feed into the Biodiversity Metric and ensure compliance with both national and local policy frameworks. In response to the unprecedented demand for ecological services driven by BNG, Knight Sky Ecology has developed an appropriately scaled assessment approach tailored to minor development proposals. The level of ecological information presented in this document is considered proportionate to the scale of the project, the development history of the site, existing site conditions and the limited complexity of potential impacts that may arise as a result of the construction of the development.



2. METHODS

The ecology data including the Biodiversity Metric along with the pre and post development habitat maps have been based on the red line planning boundary provided by the agent. All land within the red line boundary is referred to as 'the site'.

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>

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:

- Statutory designated sites for nature conservation (e.g. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)) including SSSI Impact Risk Zones - to assess for likely impacts on SSSI.
- Priority habitats (as listed within Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006) within a 250m radius.

Geospatial datasets for Biological Heritage Sites and the Lancashire Ecological Network were accessed from [here](#). The Lancashire Local Nature Recovery Strategy map was accessed from [Lancashire LNRS](#).

Basic initial information about the site and surrounding area was also obtained from Google Earth and Ordnance Survey maps in order to provide further context to the site survey findings.

SITE SURVEY

General Walkover and Habitat Survey

A site walkover survey was undertaken on 23 April 2026 by Ryan Knight MCIEEM (Full Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management).

The purpose of the visit was to collect sufficient baseline ecological information to characterise the habitats present within the site and to identify any habitats or features of potential ecological significance. All habitats were described and mapped using UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Version 2 definitions (UKHab Ltd, 2023).

The survey also included a search for incidental evidence of protected or notable species, alongside an assessment of the site's potential to support such species based on habitat suitability and field observations.

No constraints to the assessment were encountered.



3. RESULTS

BASELINE CONDITIONS

Nationally / Internationally Designated Sites

There are no SSSI within 2km and the Impact Risk Zones for SSSI (SSSI) indicate that the proposed development is unlikely to have a harmful effect on any terrestrial SSSI in the wider area.

Locally Designated Sites

The nearest Biological Heritage Site (BHS) comprises *River Ribble from London Road Bridge Preston, in West, to County Boundary, in East*. This BHS is located 425m west of the site. It has several qualifying interest features.

Priority & Irreplaceable Habitats

There are no priority or irreplaceable habitats (including hedgerows) in the site. There are no priority habitats within a 250m radius of the site on the MAGIC database.

Lancashire Ecological Network & Lancashire Nature Recovery Strategy

The site is not within Lancashire Ecological Network and is not within land targeted by the LNRS.

Habitat Degradation

No habitat degradation was encountered.

Habitats

Photos which provide a general overview of the site and supporting data for the Biodiversity Metric are provided in Appendix A. Figure 1 in Appendix B provides an overview of the habitat baseline.

u1b6 – Other developed land

The red line boundary for the site includes a cattle track along field boundary line.

g4 – Modified grassland (Proposed Building Location)

The proposed building is to be located on the northern boundary of an agriculturally improved pasture field. The sward comprised a rye-grass-clover ley with very few other forb species present. White clover was abundant to frequent throughout the sward. Other species recorded included rare broadleaved dock and dandelion.

g4 – Modified grassland (BNG Planting Area)

The landowner has set aside a 0.1 ha field parcel, located approximately 250 m east of the proposed building, for the purposes of delivering Biodiversity Net Gain. Although this parcel supported a slightly more diverse sward, it remained dominated by common productive grasses with a limited forb component.

The species recorded and their relative frequency were as follows:

- Perennial rye grass and Italian rye grass – dominant
- Cocks-foot – rare
- White clover – abundant
- Dandelion – frequent
- Greater plantain – occasional
- Creeping buttercup – rare
- Creeping thistle – occasional



- Lesser celandine – rare

The combined biodiversity value of the existing habitats within the site equates to **0.38 habitat units**.

Hedgerows

There were no hedgerows within the site boundary.

Watercourses

There were no rivers within 10m of the site boundary or ditches within 5m.

PROTECTED AND NOTABLE SPECIES OF FAUNA

Nesting Birds

The site visit coincided with the nesting bird season (March to August inclusive). No open ground nesting birds were observed in any field during the site visit. There were no trees or hedgerows within the site boundary.

Other

The application site does not contain any features of high value for bats in terms of foraging and connectivity. No ponds with potential suitability to support breeding amphibians including great crested newt were identified within a 250m radius of the proposed building location. There was a pond 115m south of the BNG planting area. The site presents unsuitable terrain for badger setts. Based on the data obtained, no other ecological constraints are likely to be encountered. This is due to the likely absence of certain species from the site or it has been assessed that the works will not significantly affect the distribution or abundance of any such species or result in actions that may be in breach of the relevant legislation.

HABITAT ENHANCEMENTS AND / OR CREATION

Habitats

Figure 2 in Appendix B provides a UK Habitat Classification map of the site as proposed. The development layout includes the new building only.

During the project design stage, Knight Sky Ecology advised that the application was required to provide some set aside land within the development plans for BNG purposes. The loss of the grassland will be offset via the planting of native, broadleaved trees in a land parcel measuring 0.1 ha. These trees have been assigned to achieve a moderate condition. Whilst a low strategic significance has been assigned, the trees will provide a valuable feature in the intensively managed landscape.

The biodiversity metric has accounted for the planting of 18 native trees within the land parcel. The combined value of the created habitats post-development would be **0.42 habitat units**.

4. EVALUATION AND SUMMARY

GENERAL

No potential ecological constraints were identified in relation to statutory or non-statutory designated sites and protected habitats and species. The proposed development is therefore not anticipated to result in any significant ecological impacts. No further assessment or mitigation measures are required.



BNG

The development proposals will result in a net gain of biodiversity value for habitats comprising **0.05 habitat units (12.54%)**.

The development will therefore meet the biodiversity net gain condition for habitats as the 10% net gain would be achieved. The time to target condition of the trees is 27 years.

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

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

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 the Biodiversity Metric.

HABITAT MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING PLAN

A Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) is recommended to set out the proposed tree species, planting specifications, and the establishment and long-term management measures required to ensure successful delivery of the habitat creation. The HMMP should detail the maintenance regime for the first five years, followed by the long-term safeguarding measures necessary to secure the habitat for the statutory 30-year period.

SPECIES ENHANCEMENTS

Enhancements

The development presents a good opportunity to increase roosting provision for bats and nesting opportunities for birds via the installation of boxes on the new building. Table 5.1 provides the recommended box models.

Table 5.1. Bat & bird box models

No.	Design	Example	Positioning	Description
Bat Box x 1	Greenwoods – two crevice bat box.	BAT BOXES TWO CREVICE BAT BOX 	Suitable for attaching to external walls and should be sited as high up on the wall as possible, at a height of at least 3m from the ground. Avoid siting around external lights and windows. Ideally positioned under roof eaves – any aspect is fine	Designed for small groups of crevice dwelling bat species, such as common and soprano pipistrelles. Available from https://www.greenwoodsecohabitats.co.uk/shop



Bird Box x 1	Vivara Pro WoodStone® House Sparrow Nest Box (double chamber)		The best place to put a bird box is 2–4 metres high on a wall facing between north and east to avoid direct sunlight and the wettest winds. Ensure it is tilted slightly forward to keep rain out, has a clear flight path, and is out of reach of cats.	This house sparrow nest box is manufactured from woodstone® - a mix of concrete and FSC wood fibres. This material protects against damage from predators such as cats, woodpeckers and squirrels. It is available with one or two breeding chambers, which can be particularly suitable for house sparrows as they prefer to nest in colonies. Available from https://www.nhbs.com
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APPENDIX A: PHOTOS

Photo 1.
View southwest
towards proposed
building location.



Photo 2.
View north-east
towards
proposed building
location.





Photo 3.
Modified
grassland within
building footprint.



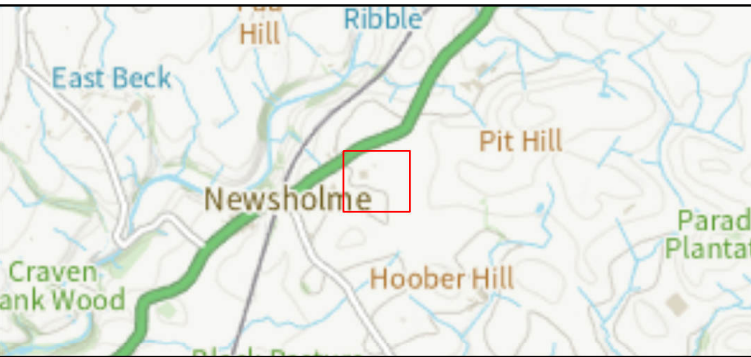
Photo 4.
Modified
grassland within
proposed tree
planting area.





APPENDIX B: FIGURES (NEXT PAGE)

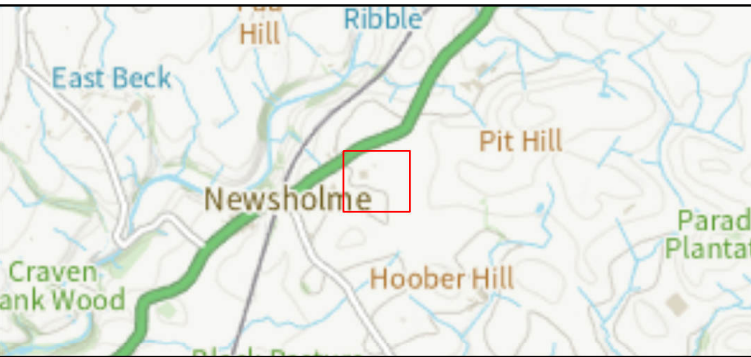
- **FIGURE 1. UK HABITAT CLASSIFICATION MAP (BASELINE)**
FIGURE 2. UK HABITAT CLASSIFICATION MAP (POST-DEVELOPMENT)



Survey Information	
	Site boundary (2,010.2m ²)
UKHab Habitat Survey	
	g4 - Modified grassland (1,886.4m ²)
	u1b6 - Other developed land (123.8m ²)



PROJECT TITLE							
GREGSONS FARM, NEWSHOLME							
DRAWING TITLE							
Figure 1: UK Habitat Classification Map (Baseline)							
VER	DATE	REMARKS	Drawn	Checked			
1.0	13/05/26	UKHab	MP	RK			
DRAWING NUMBER:							
KSEcology/GregsonsFarm/UKHab							
SCALE	1:1,200	PLOT SIZE	A3	DATUM	OSGB	PROJECTION	BNG
Source: Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright 2026, All rights reserved. Licence Number 100049837.					 KNIGHT SKY ECOLOGY		



Survey Information	
	Site boundary (2,010.2m ²)
UKHab Habitat Survey	
	g4 - Modified grassland (1,002.4m ²)
	u1b5 - Building (1,007.8m ²)
	32 - Scattered tree, newly planted



PROJECT TITLE				
GREGSONS FARM, NEWSHOLME				
DRAWING TITLE				
Figure 2: UK Habitat Classification Map (Post-Development)				
VER	DATE	REMARKS	Drawn	Checked
1.0	13/05/26	Post-Development	MP	RK
DRAWING NUMBER:				
KSEcology/GregsonsFarm/Post-Development				
SCALE	1:1,200	PLOT SIZE	A3	DATUM
		OSGB	PROJECTION	BNG
Source: Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright 2026. All rights reserved. Licence Number 100049837.			KNIGHT SKY ECOLOGY	