



# Biodiversity Net Gain Report V.3

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**Edisford Bridge Pump Track**

**Clitheroe, Lancs**

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elsie Josland', with a stylized, cursive script.

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## **Declaration and Disclaimers**

This report has been prepared in accordance with **BS 8683:2021** (Process for designing and implementing Biodiversity Net Gain) and **BS 42020:2013** (Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development) and utilizes the **Statutory Biodiversity Metric v.4**. It has been produced to the standards set out in the **Landscape Institute Code of Professional Conduct** and follows relevant best practice guidance. All information and data are, to the best of Elsie Josland Landscape Design's knowledge, accurate and based on bona fide professional judgement at the time of writing. The contents are valid for 12 months from the date of issue. This report has been prepared for the sole use of the client under the terms of the commissioning agreement, and no part may be reproduced without the express written permission of both Elsie Josland Landscape Design and the client.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Project Background

Elsie Josland Landscape Design was commissioned to prepare a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment for land within Edisford Bridge Picnic area, Edisford Bridge, Clitheroe BB7 3LJ. This final report presents baseline condition, on-site habitat creation and enhancement, and the resultant BNG outcome to inform planning and delivery.

### 1.2 Site Description & Context

Edisford Bridge Picnic Area is located at National Grid Reference (E) 372676, (N) 441310, Clitheroe, Lancashire, within the administrative boundary of Ribble Valley Borough Council. The site lies on the western edge of Clitheroe adjacent to the River Ribble, within a predominantly rural landscape characterised by pastoral farmland, riparian corridors, recreational open space, and riverside walking routes. The site forms part of the wider Ribble Valley green infrastructure network, with strong ecological and recreational connectivity provided by the River Ribble corridor and associated footpath network, including sections of the Ribble Way. The area is a well-used recreational destination comprising picnic areas, riverside access, informal open space, and recreational facilities associated with Edisford Bridge. A review of DEFRA's Magic Map confirms that there are no statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designations within the site itself; however, Priority Habitat Inventory mapping identifies areas of Deciduous Woodland and riparian habitats associated with the River Ribble corridor in the surrounding landscape (see Appendix B). The river corridor and adjacent woodland habitats form part of an important ecological network supporting habitat connectivity through the wider Ribble Valley landscape. The SSSI site of Hodder River lies approximately 3.6 km to the southwest (see Appendix C).

### 1.3 Summary of Proposed Development

Ribble Valley Borough Council are seeking planning permission for the development of a new pump track on land adjacent to the Edisford Bridge Picnic Area. The proposals comprise the construction of a new recreational cycling facility together with associated landscape works within a defined development area of approximately 877 m<sup>2</sup> located within existing amenity grassland.

The proposals form part of the Council's wider aspirations to enhance recreational opportunities, promote physical activity, and improve community facilities within the borough's open spaces and visitor destinations. The development will provide a dedicated cycling facility at Edisford Bridge, expanding the range of informal recreational opportunities available for local residents and visitors to the area.

## 2. Methods

### 2.1 Objectives

To quantify baseline biodiversity value and the post-intervention outcome for on-site habitats using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric v.4, and to describe the measures for habitat creation and enhancement.

This report was produced following current best practice guidance, including that set out in BS 8683:2021 Process for designing and implementing Biodiversity Net Gain (British Standards 2021).

### 2.2 Legislation and Policy

The project is prepared with regard to the Environment Act 2021 (mandatory 10% BNG), the National Planning Policy Framework (2023), and relevant wildlife legislation. References are listed at the end of this report.

### 2.3 Survey and Assessment Approach

A site walkover and condition assessment was undertaken on 1 April 2026 in accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric protocol. Habitats were mapped to the level required by the metric and condition criteria were scored using Defra's Condition Assessment sheets. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculator (v1.0.4) was then used to quantify baseline and post-intervention units.

1. The site walkover and condition assessments were undertaken by Chartered Landscape Architect Elsie Josland BA (Hons) MA, MA, Dip EGS, CMLI. Elsie is a Chartered Landscape Architect with over 25 years' experience of landscape design and has specialisms in site assessment and designing for biodiversity. As part of her master's degree in Landscape Architecture, Elsie was trained in ecological assessment and surveying methods, including Phase One Habitat Surveys, and she has undertaken the Natural England Biodiversity Metric Training (Intermediate Level) 4.0, as well as various UK Hab and Species Recovery Trust training courses. She is currently working towards the Field Identification Skills Certificate Level 4 and is a member of the Botanical Society for Britain and Ireland.

The survey area was subject to a walkover by the attending surveyor, where the on-site habitats were identified and assessed in accordance with the UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0 (UKHab Ltd 2023). Flora species lists were compiled for each habitat and assigned positions on the DAFOR (Dominant, Abundant, Frequent, Occasional, or Rare) scale as laid out in Walker *et al.* (2010). The Statutory Biodiversity metric (Defra 2024) was employed to input the results of the Site survey and the proposed new on-site habitats, thereby generating the value difference between the pre-project and post-project habitats—relative Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). The Statutory Biodiversity Metric requires the following site condition data points to generate the BNG associated with the Site and proposed works: -

**Habitat Type:** both the broad habitat, e.g. woodland, and the specific habitat type, e.g. lowland mixed deciduous woodland, as outlined in UKHab Ltd. (2023).

**Area:** an aerial measurement of total land cover area (in hectares) for each habitat parcel. Recording of habitat extents, both pre- and post-works, was conducted using the onsite survey results, readily

available online mapping and aerial imagery, and verified land use records. The minimal mapping unit (MMU) was taken at 0.01 ha.

**Condition:** a measure within Defra's BNG guidance and assessment tools that quantified the relative 'condition' of a habitat parcel based on various physical, composition, and landscape variables dependent on the habitat type, e.g. number of vascular plant species present per square metre. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment sheets (Defra 2023) were used to assign condition scores to each of the habitat parcels identified in the onsite survey.

**Strategic Significance:** a category ascribed to the geographical location of the Site in regard to its position in the context of Local Planning Authority areas and National Character Area profiles.

## 2.4 Limitations

The survey of the Site was conducted in April 2026, within the optimal botanical assessment period and habitat survey season (April-September inclusive), although slightly earlier than the peak botanical recording period for some herbaceous species. Habitat mapping is subject to seasonal variations, where ecotones — transitional zones between biological communities — may drift or be relocated at different periods of the year. This can be a natural shift owing to abiotic factors, or a consequence of management, either within the habitat itself or within adjacent communities.

**NOTE:** Following completion of the baseline survey, a 5 m section of the existing hedgerow was removed to facilitate construction access. As this section was present at the time of survey, the baseline habitat map and condition assessment accurately reflect the original hedgerow. The removed section will be reinstated as part of the proposed development with a species-rich native hedgerow mix, providing an enhancement over the baseline.

### 3. Baseline Conditions

This section outlines all habitats recorded within the Site on 1 April 2026. A plan depicting the onsite habitats, their extent and location, and relevant target notes are shown in Appendix B; photographs of the Site are shown in Appendix D.

The site comprises a mix of modified grassland, with scattered trees within the wider site area.

#### **Modified grassland (g4) (Secondary codes: 108, Frequently mown 516 – active management)**

Species-poor, regularly managed grassland dominated by perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*) and other common grasses, often subject to nutrient enrichment. Low botanical diversity with occasional common forbs.

#### **Native species-poor hedgerow (h2b) (Secondary codes: 516 – Active management)**

A species-poor native hedgerow comprising beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) only. The hedge is regularly maintained by cutting, forming a continuous linear boundary with a dense woody structure. There is no associated hedgerow ground flora, and the hedge base is dominated by nutrient-enrichment indicator species, principally nettles (*Urtica* spp.).

| Unit Type          | Baseline Units | Notes                 |
|--------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Area habitat units | 0.18           | From Headline Results |
| Hedgerow units     | 0.02           | From Headline Results |
| Watercourse units  | 0.0000         | None on site          |

Baseline Biodiversity Metric Results

### 4. Feasibility of Biodiversity Net Gain & Ecological Considerations

#### **4.1 Irreplacable Habitat and Other Important Ecological Features Evaluation**

No irreplaceable habitats are present on site

## 5. Proposed Habitats – Creation & Enhancement

This section outlines all UKHab habitats proposed to be present on the Site post development; as shown in the indicative Site plan (Appendix B).

### 5.1 On-site Habitat Creation

#### Grasslands

Habitat creation proposals for the pump track focus on the establishment of a mosaic of grassland habitats associated with the track berms and drainage swales. The outer berms of the track will be established as Other Neutral Grassland (g3c), targeted to achieve Moderate Condition, whilst the inner swale areas will comprise Modified Grassland targeted to achieve Poor Condition. Together these habitats will soften the appearance of the development, provide habitat and pollinator resource, and contribute toward the wider Biodiversity Net Gain strategy for the site.

The proposed Other Neutral Grassland seeding has been selected to reflect a robust and species-diverse neutral grassland suitable for recreational landscapes and previously enriched soils. The habitat will comprise a mixture of grasses and broadleaved herb species characteristic of UKHab g3c habitat types, helping to increase floral diversity and seasonal interest within the site. The more sheltered and lower-disturbance conditions within parts of the swale network are also anticipated to support improved vegetation establishment over time

| Habitat                 | UKHab code | Area (ha) | Target condition | Notes |
|-------------------------|------------|-----------|------------------|-------|
| Modified grassland      | g4         | 0.0434    | Poor             |       |
| Other neutral grassland | g3c        | 0.0171    | Moderate         |       |

#### Hedgerows

As part of the proposed development, the removed section will be reinstated with a species-rich native hedgerow mix reflecting the composition of adjoining sections of the existing hedgerow. The proposed mix will comprise hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) (40%), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) (15%), field maple (*Acer campestre*) (15%), hazel (*Corylus avellana*) (10%), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) (5%), guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*) (5%), dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*) (5%) and dog rose (*Rosa canina*) (5%). This will reinstate the continuity of the hedgerow whilst enhancing its species diversity and ecological value, contributing towards the Biodiversity Net Gain objectives for the site. The species-rich hedgerow mix has been selected to reflect the composition of adjoining sections of the existing boundary hedgerow.

## 6. Headline Results

The assessment demonstrates that the proposals will deliver:

- A **+13.02% net gain in area habitat units**, exceeding the statutory 10% requirement.
- A **+83.68% net gain in hedgerow units**, exceeding the statutory 10% requirement.

These results confirm compliance with the requirements for both area habitats and hedgerows, with gains well above the statutory minimum. The full **Headline Results** from the statutory metric are shown in Figure 5.1.

| Unit Type          | Total net unit change | Total net % change | Post-intervention total |
|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Area habitat units | 0.02                  | 13.02%             | 0.20                    |
| Hedgerow units     | 0.02                  | 83.68%             | 0.04                    |
| Watercourse units  | 0.00                  | 0.00%              | 0.00                    |

Figure 5.1 – Headline Results from Statutory Biodiversity Metric

|                                                                                                          |                    |        |        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------|--------|
| On-site baseline                                                                                         | Area habitat units | 0.18   |        |
|                                                                                                          | Hedgerow units     | 0.02   |        |
|                                                                                                          | Watercourse units  | 0.00   |        |
| On-site post-intervention<br>(Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)                       | Area habitat units | 0.20   |        |
|                                                                                                          | Hedgerow units     | 0.04   |        |
|                                                                                                          | Watercourse units  | 0.00   |        |
| On-site net change<br>(units & percentage)                                                               | Area habitat units | 0.02   | 13.02% |
|                                                                                                          | Hedgerow units     | 0.02   | 83.68% |
|                                                                                                          | 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<br>(Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)                      | Area habitat units | 0.00   |        |
|                                                                                                          | Hedgerow units     | 0.00   |        |
|                                                                                                          | Watercourse units  | 0.00   |        |
| Off-site net change<br>(units & percentage)                                                              | Area habitat units | 0.00   | 0.00%  |
|                                                                                                          | Hedgerow units     | 0.00   | 0.00%  |
|                                                                                                          | Watercourse units  | 0.00   | 0.00%  |
| Combined net unit change<br>(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement) | Area habitat units | 0.02   |        |
|                                                                                                          | Hedgerow units     | 0.02   |        |
|                                                                                                          | 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<br>(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)    | Area habitat units | 0.02   |        |
|                                                                                                          | Hedgerow units     | 0.02   |        |
|                                                                                                          | Watercourse units  | 0.00   |        |
| Total net % change<br>(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)       | Area habitat units | 13.02% |        |
|                                                                                                          | Hedgerow units     | 83.68% |        |
|                                                                                                          | Watercourse units  | 0.00%  |        |
| Trading rules satisfied?                                                                                 | Yes ✓              |        |        |

## 7. Trading Rules & Compliance

Trading rules are satisfied for on-site habitats (per Metric Headline Results).

## 8. Conclusion

The Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment for the **Edisford Bridge Pump Track** demonstrates that the proposed habitat creation and enhancement measures will deliver measurable biodiversity enhancements across the site. The statutory metric calculations show an increase in area habitat units from **0.18 to 0.20 units**, representing a **13.02% net gain**, together with an increase in hedgerow units from **0.02 to 0.04 units**, representing an **83.68% net gain**. These results confirm that the scheme exceeds the statutory **10% Biodiversity Net Gain requirement** for both area habitats and hedgerows. Successful delivery will be contingent upon the implementation of the proposed habitat creation and enhancement measures and long-term management in accordance with the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP).

## References

- Defra (2024) Statutory Biodiversity Metric v.4; UKHab Ltd (2023) UK Habitat Classification v2.0; CIEEM (2019) Advice Note on Lifespan of Ecological Reports; BS 8683:2021; BS 42020; NPPF (2023).
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- Stance, C.A. (2019) *New Flora of the British Isles* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Ipswich, C&M Floristics.
- UKHab Ltd (2023) *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0*. Available at: [ukhab.org](http://ukhab.org).
- Walker, K., Pearman, B.E., McIntosh, J. & Lockton, A. (2010) *BSBI Recording the British and Irish flora 2010-2020. Annex 1: Guidance on sampling approaches*. Cumbria, Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland.

## **Appendix A: Planning Policy & Legislation**

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### **Environment Act 2021**

Schedule 14 of The Environment Act 2021 makes it mandatory for all new developments (with some limited exceptions) to achieve a biodiversity net gain (BNG) of at least 10% by the time the development is completed compared to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat.

The outputs and statutory instruments of this legislation may be amended in the future by the Secretary of State

### **Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (as amended).**

Section 40 of Part 3 of this act compels public bodies (local authorities, police, fire and health authorities, and utility companies) with exercisable functions within England to consider actions to be taken to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England—in particular to have regard to the United Nations Environmental Programme Convention on Biological Diversity of 1992, any relevant local nature recovery strategies, and any relevant species conservation strategy or protected site strategy (prepared by Natural England).

Section 41 of Part 3 of this Act ensures the publishing of a list containing species and habitat types that are of principle importance for the purpose of conserving or enhancing biodiversity in England

Appendix B: DEFRA Magic Map

Priority Habitat Map

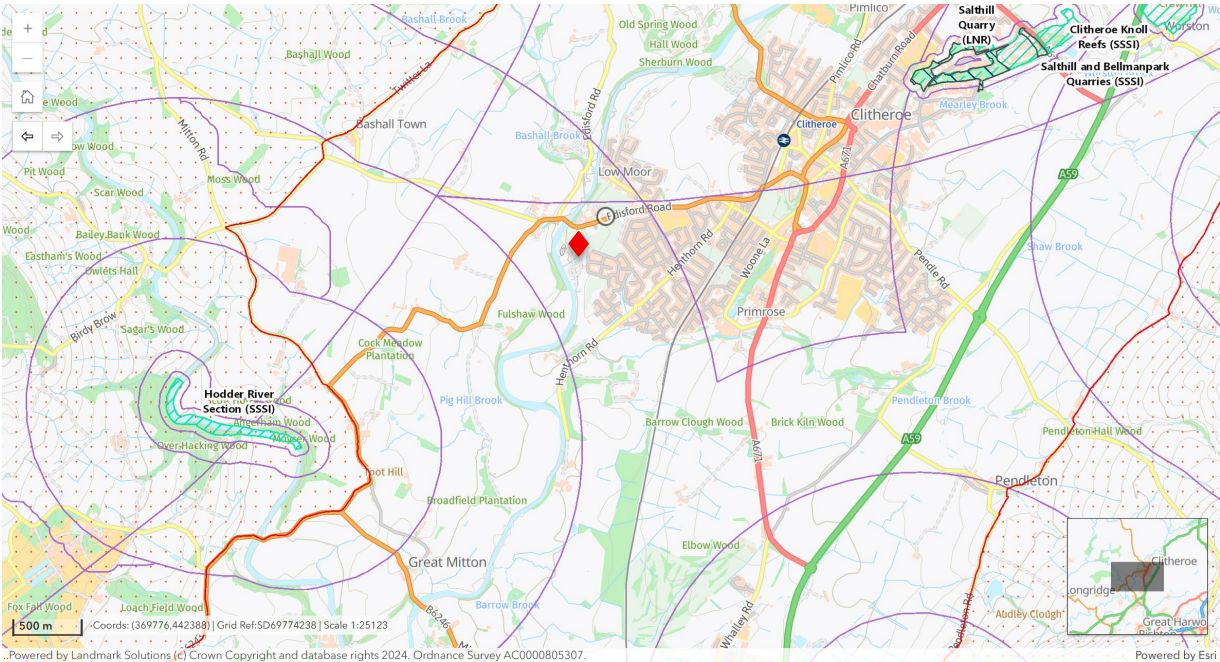


Legend

- Priority Habitat Inventory - Deciduous Woodland (England)

# Appendix C: DEFRA Magic Map

## Statutory Land-based Designations



### Legend

- National Trails (England)
- England Coast Path Route
- England Coast Path Coastal Margin
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (England)
- Limestone Pavement Orders (England)
- Local Nature Reserves (England)
- National Nature Reserves (England)
- National Nature Reserves (Scotland)
- National Nature Reserves (Wales)
- National Parks (England)
- Ramsar Sites (England)
- Proposed Ramsar Sites (England)
- Ramsar Sites (Scotland)
- Ramsar Sites (Wales)
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest Units (England)
  - Favourable Condition
  - Unfavourable Recovering
  - Unfavourable no change
  - Unfavourable Declining
  - Part Destroyed
  - Destroyed
  - Not Assessed
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (England)
  - SSSI Impact Risk Zones - to assess planning applications for likely impacts on SSSIs/SACs/SPAs & Ramsar sites (England)
- Special Areas of Conservation (England)
  - Possible Special Areas of Conservation (England)
- Special Protection Areas (England)

Appendix D: Baseline Habitat Plans

Baseline Habitat Plan



## Proposed Habitat Plan



## Appendix F: Photographs



Photograph 1: Existing site of modified grassland



Photograph 2: Existing site of modified grassland looking west



Photograph 3: Existing site of modified grassland looking north west



Photograph 4: Existing site of modified grassland looking east



Photograph 5: Existing site of modified grassland looking west



Photograph 6: Existing site of modified grassland looking south

## Appendix F: Photographs continued



Photograph 7: Removed section of hedgerow



Photograph 8: Hedgerow looking north



Photograph 9: hedgerow looking east



Photograph 10: Hedgerow looking north



