

**Whitcher Wildlife Ltd.
Ecological Consultants.**



BLACKERGREEN LANE, SILKSTONE

OS REF: SE 28400 04302.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN REPORT.

Ref No: 250809.

Date: 1st October 2025.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	Page Number
1. INTRODUCTION.	3
2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY.	4
3. SURVEY RESULTS.	5
4. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN.	9
5. RECOMMENDATIONS.	11
6. REFERENCES.	12
Appendix I. ANNOTATED MAP OF THE SURVEY AREA PRE-DEVELOPMENT.	13
Appendix II. ANNOTATED MAP OF THE SURVEY AREA POST-DEVELOPMENT.	14
Appendix III. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PLAN.	15

1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. There are plans to create a new horse training area at Lakeside View, Blackergreen Lane, Silkstone. The development plans have been included within the appendices of this report.

1.2. The client requested that a Biodiversity Net Gain report be prepared for the site.

1.3. Whitcher Wildlife Ltd was therefore commissioned to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment of the site to satisfy the above request. This has been undertaken using the Statutory Metric.

1.4. The site survey was carried out on 8th August 2025. This report outlines the findings of that survey and makes appropriate recommendations.

1.5. This report will be accompanied by a Statutory Metric and Condition Assessment sheets.

2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY.

2.1. All surveys were carried out in line with the Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management (CIEEM) survey standards and advice.

2.2. A baseline survey was carried out of the site to establish the baseline biodiversity value of the area. Prior to visiting the site, the survey area was cross referenced to maps and aerial photographs to give a general idea of the habitats and potential issues within the area and to identify potential access and walking routes.

2.3. The survey area was walked where access was agreed. All habitats within and immediately around the survey area were documented and the dominant species within that habitat listed in line with the UK Habitat Classification methodology to identify the primary habitat types throughout the survey area. All primary habitats are accompanied by secondary codes which are used to add further specific details where necessary. Each primary habitat and unique set off secondary codes will be shown individually in the appended annotated map.

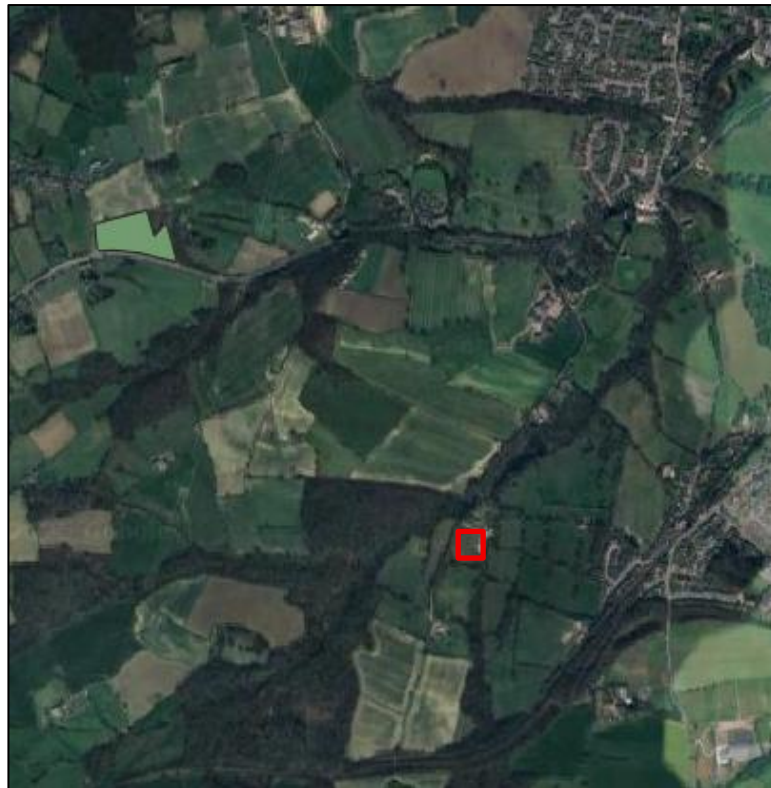
2.4. The initial site survey was carried out by Sam White BSc(Hons) ACIEEM. Sam has had experience in a professional capacity as an Ecologist focusing primarily on survey work for protected species and Phase 1 Habitat surveys. Sam has a BSc in Environmental Conservation from Sheffield Hallam University and Graduated in 2015. Sam joined Whitcher Wildlife Ltd in May 2018 as an Ecological Consultant. Sam holds a survey licence for Great Crested Newts *Triturus cristatus*, a Level 2 Class Licence for Bats and class licence for barn owls *Tyto alba*. Sam holds a Field Identification Skills Certificate (FISC) Level 3, is an Associate Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management and is accredited to undertake River Condition Assessment.

3. SURVEY RESULTS.

3.1. Data Search Results.

3.1.1. A desktop data search was undertaken for publicly available records of designated sites using the MAGIC Maps website.

3.1.2. The data search found that there is a single statutory designated site within 2km of the survey area. Pye Flatt Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies approximately 1.1km to the northwest of the survey area.



3.1.3. Locally designated sites are not publicly available and therefore, it is not known if there are any such sites within 2km of the survey area.

3.2. The Survey Area.

3.2.1. The survey area is to the south of the village of Silkstone, and the immediate surrounding landscape comprises arable land, woodland pockets and residential houses. The aerial map below shows the location of the survey area, indicated by the red boundary.



3.2.2. The site lies within a larger grazed grassland field, adjacent to an existing farm yard. The approximate boundary of the survey area is shown on the below aerial image marked in red.



3.2.3. The photograph below shows a general view of the survey area.



3.3. Limitations.

The survey was undertaken during a suboptimal time for grassland flora, although given the habitats present, this is not considered a constraint to the survey results.

3.4. Description of Habitats.

3.4.1. Appendix I of this report contains annotated maps marked up with the varying habitats found within the survey area. The habitats on and adjacent to the site were: -

- g4 – Modified grassland.
- u1e – Built linear feature

3.4.2. g4 – *Modified grassland.*

Secondary codes: 103 horse grazed, 847 introduced shrubs.

The entirety of the vegetation within the survey area comprised modified grassland. The grassland had a short, uniform sward with some areas of bare ground from over-grazing. The species present within the survey area included perennial ryegrass *Lolium perenne*, white clover *Trifolium repens*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus reptans*, annual meadowgrass *Poa annua*, dandelion *Taraxacum officinale*, fescue *Festuca* sp, and common bent *Agrostis capillaris*. There were also a small number of planted

ornamental shrubs, including Leyland cypress *Cupressus x leylandii* and lemon cypress *Cupressus macrocarpa*. This habitat has been assessed as having poor condition, failing the essential criteria for moderate or good condition.



3.4.2. u1e – Built linear feature.

Secondary codes: 612 fence.

A timber fence formed the boundary of the field and will be removed to facilitate the proposed development.

4. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN.

4.1. Baseline biodiversity calculations have been carried out using the Statutory Metric tool, the current metric at the time of writing this report.

4.2. *Habitat Units.*

The baseline area habitat calculations include all habitats that lie within the red line boundary of the survey area. The scores for each habitat and a total are shown below. The introduced shrubs are not considered their own habitat given the minimal number present within the grassland, an accurate area would not be possible to calculate.

Habitat Type	Extent (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition Assessment	Biodiversity units
Modified Grassland	0.1556	Low	Poor	0.31

4.3. *Linear Units.*

There are no linear units within the survey area, with the fence not being recognised within the statutory metric.

4.4. *Watercourse Units.*

The survey area does not encroach within 10m of the riparian zone of any watercourses, as such, there is no need for any watercourse units to be included within the baseline calculation.

4.5. *Post Development Habitat Creation.*

4.5.1. A reasonable estimation has been made below regarding the post development habitat units. Two calculations have been provided for if the small area of grassland created would be managed to poor or good condition. In both cases, the development would lead to a loss in biodiversity units.

Poor Condition

Habitat Type	Extent (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition Assessment	Biodiversity units
Modified Grassland	0.0466	Low	Poor	0.09
Artificial Unvegetated, Unsealed Surface	0.1090	V. Low	N/A	0

Good Condition

Habitat Type	Extent (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition Assessment	Biodiversity units
Modified Grassland	0.0466	Low	Good	0.22
Artificial Unvegetated, Unsealed Surface	0.1090	V. Low	N/A	0

4.5.2. If the grassland is maintained at poor condition, there would be a loss of approximately 71.1% (0.22 units), where as if the grassland was managed to good condition, this would lead to a loss of only 29.99% (0.09 units).

4.5.3. If the grassland was instead planted as ‘Other Neutral Grassland’ at moderate condition, this would achieve no net loss, with a 0.25% gain. If this was then managed to good condition, this would then achieve a 25.83% gain in biodiversity units.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.1. It is recommended that the new area of grassland is targeted as ‘Other Neutral Grassland’ at good condition, to maximise the biodiversity value within the development. However if long-term management of this habitat would prove problematic, some offsetting would be required outside of the red line boundary. This ideally would be within the same land ownership and LPA boundary.

5.2. Information on what species will be planted in the landscaped areas will need to be provided; it is recommended that locally native species are planted where possible.

5.3. Any habitats that are retained, enhanced or created for the purpose of the biodiversity net gain for the site, will have to be secured by planning condition or S106 agreement, which will require a thirty-year management and maintenance plan.

Prepared by:	
Sam White BSc(Hons) ACIEEM	Date: 1 st October 2025.

Checked by:	
Ruth Georgiou BSc MCIEEM	Date: 2 nd October 2025.

6. REFERENCES.

Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (2024) *Biodiversity Net Gain*. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides> (Accessed: 15/04/2024)

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Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2016). *UK Biodiversity Action Plan Habitat Descriptions, Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Plan*. 2016 ed. JNCC, Peterborough.

Natural England (2014) *Protected species and development: advice for local planning authorities*. (updated 2021) Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/protected-species-how-to-review-planning-applications> (Accessed: 05/03/2024).

UKHab Ltd (2023) *UK Habitat classification Version 2.0* Available at <https://www.ukhab.org>.

Appendix I. ANNOTATED MAP OF THE SURVEY AREA – PRE DEVELOPMENT.



Site: Blackegreen Lane

Reference: 250809

Date: 02.10.2025

Produced by: Sam



Appendix II. ANNOTATED MAP OF THE SURVEY AREA – POST DEVELOPMENT.



Site: Blackegreen Lane - Post

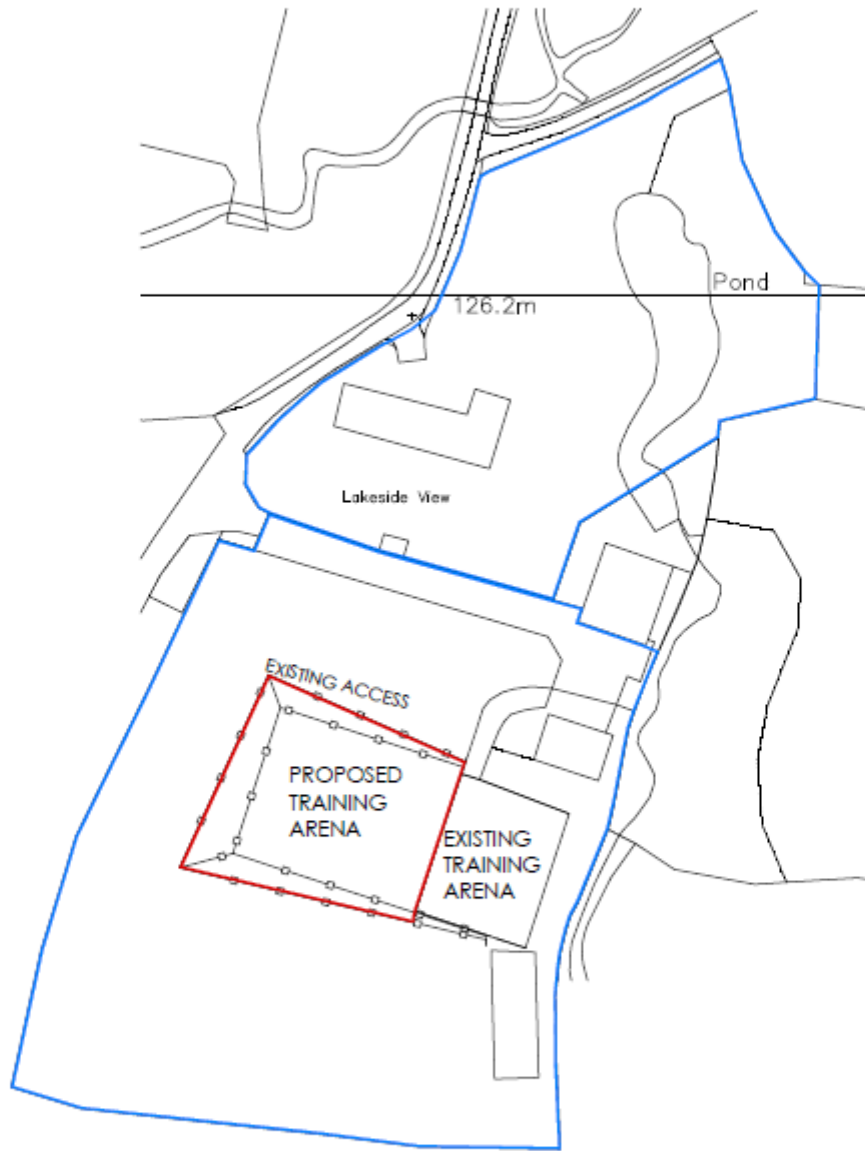
Date: 02.10.2025

Reference: 250809

Produced by: Sam



Appendix III. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PLAN.



DEVELOPMENT AT
LAKESIDE VIEW
SILKSTONE
BARNSELY
SCALE 1:1250