Botley West Solar Farm

Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose and scope

1.1.1 This document provides the outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (oLEMP) for the Project, prepared on behalf of SolarFive Ltd (the Applicant) for the proposal to construct the Botley West Solar Farm (referred to within this report as 'the Project').

1.1.2 This revision of the oLEMP provides an update to the Landscape Management Zoning Plan in response to the proposed changes as set out in the Applicant's Change Request Report [**EN010147/APP/16.2**]. This revision of the oLEMP provides further detail and should be read in conjunction with the design proposals, set out on the Landscape, Ecology and Amenities Plan **[CR2-043]**.

1.1.3 The obligations within this document are secured through a requirement in the Draft DCO **[EN010147/APP/3.1]** as updated at this Deadline 3 in that prior to commencement of any part of the authorised development, a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) must be submitted to and approved by the relevant Local Authority, either West Oxfordshire (WODC), Cherwell (CDC) or Vale of White Horse Districts (VWHDC), in consultation with Natural England and other relevant stakeholders. The LEMPs must be substantially in accordance with this oLEMP. Including details shown on the Landscape, Ecology and Amenities Plan **[CR2-043]**.

1.1.4 It is anticipated that LEMPs will be prepared for collective or individual elements of the Project to align with the delivery programme. This oLEMP sets the overarching vision for the Project and the principles to be consistent across the LEMPs to deliver coherent landscape and ecological features and management across the Project.

1.1.5 Each LEMP will include the following for the relevant area (being the area subject to the detailed LEMP):

- The landscape and ecology works for that area in compliance with the objectives and principles of the relevant area as described in this oLEMP;
- Proposed fences, walls and barriers;
- Retained and proposed green infrastructure, including planting species, quantities, and their proposed locations;
- An explanation of how the LEMP contributes to the achievement of biodiversity net gain across the authorised development (see sections 8 and 9 for further detail), calculated using The Statutory Biodiversity Metric (or the current version of the metric if this has been superseded when the plan is submitted for approval); and
- The required monitoring and management arrangements, and the associated timetable and duration.

1.1.6 Landscape and ecology elements, and their management, are intrinsically linked. As such, this report includes input from both landscape and ecology professionals to ensure the management meets the required aims and

objectives intended following the related survey work, and the design and habitat provision intentions. Expectedly there is some overlap and repetition within the guidance provided.

1.1.7 This report details the biodiversity and landscape aims and objectives for the habitats of the Site during the operation of the solar farm. It sets out the proposed management actions / specifications which are designed to achieve these objectives. The report also details the monitoring programme and targets which will assess the outcomes of initial habitat creation and ongoing management. It also provides a typical maintenance schedule within Appendix C.

1.1.8 This report outlines the various soft landscape zones and elements which form part of the existing landscape, and which will be augmented and, in places, enhanced as part of the Project, and details necessary actions required for their ongoing maintenance and management. The full extent of the Project is described in ES Chapter 6 Project Description **[APP-043]**.

1.1.9 This document provides details of:

- The environmental objectives which will be followed in the delivery of the detailed landscape and ecology management plan (see Section 2);
- The Landscape Elements (Section 3);
- The overarching landscape strategy describing the existing landscape features of each ‘zone’ of the Project site and the objectives for the detailed design of the landscape and ecology management plan relevant to each ‘zone (see Section 4);
- Landscape proposals and principles which are specific to each zone and particular development features (section 5)
- the overarching ecological strategy for the site, including how impacts to ecology will be managed during implementation and maintenance phases (section 6)
- Ecology mitigation measures (section 7).
- Biodiversity Net Gain (section 8);
- Biodiversity Objectives and Targets (section 9)
- Outline habitat management principles that will be implemented post practical completion of all soft landscape areas to ensure the effective long-term management of the scheme (section 10).
- The long-term monitoring of habitats and their biodiversity value will specifically assess the extent to which the management actions are achieving the defined objectives (section 11);
- Outline monitoring programme to be undertaken in Years 1, 2, 4, 6 and 10, followed by once every 5 years for the lifetime of the Project (section 12);
- the principles of workmanship which will deliver the works described in the detailed LEMPs (section 13);
- the approach to responsibilities for delivering the works (section 14);

- a description of the maintenance principles that will be implemented post practical completion of all soft landscape areas to ensure the effective long-term management of the scheme (section 15);
- Management review and actions (section 16).

1.1.10 This outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan has been produced with reference to a number of plans and documents, which are described within the relevant sections, including:

- Landscape, Ecology and Amenities Plan (ES Volume 2, Figure 7.3.3, Sheets 1 to 3) **[CR2-043]**
- Landscape Management Zoning Plan, which illustrates the 5 distinctive character zones of the Project and how they will be manged (Figure 7.6.3.1); and
- Indicative location of proposed greenways (Figure 7.6.3.3 of this document).

1.1.11 Monitoring will inform future management decisions, confirming where the specific target habitat conditions are being achieved and identifying if there are shortfalls to be addressed through remedial actions or modifications to management. This process of habitat management for biodiversity, supported by monitoring, is a long-term commitment that will continue over the lifetime of the operational solar farm.

1.1.12 The Illustrative Masterplan is provided as part of the wider Project submission (ES Volume 2, Figures 2.1a - 2.4d **[AS-020]**) . A Typical Planting Schedule is included within this report at Appendix B.

1.1.13 Activities and mitigation measures which will take place during the pre-commencement and construction period of the Project are defined within the outline Code of Construction Practice (oCoCP) **[APP-232 & APP-233]** as updated at this Deadline 3

1.2 Site Description

1.2.1 The Site is approximately 1,418 ha in size, located in the County of Oxfordshire, within parts of WODC, CDC and VWHDC.

1.2.2 The Project extends from an area of land in the north, situated between the A4260 and the Dorn River Valley near Tackley and Wootton (Northern Site Area), through a central section, situated broadly between Bladon and Cassington (Central Site Area), and connecting to a section further south near to Farmoor Reservoir and north of Cumnor (Southern Site Area), where the Project will connect to the National Grid transmission network. The majority if the site comprises arable land. The fields for the most part are bounded by hedgerows, mature and semi-mature trees, scrub and woodland.

1.2.3 Within the wider landscape, one internationally designated site, the Oxford Meadows Special Conservation Area (SAC) occurs approx. 1 km East of the Site. Eleven nationally designated sites, all of which are Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), occur within 2 km of the Site. Fifty-nine locally designated sites within 2 km of the Site, including one Berks, Bucks and

Oxon Wildlife Trust Reserve (BBOWT), nine Conservation Target Areas (CTA), five District Wildlife Sites (DWS), two Local Geological Sites (LGS), thirty-seven Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), Four Proposed District Wildlife Sites (PDWS) and one Proposed Local Wildlife Site (PLWS). A further SAC (Cothill Fen) lies 3.65 km south east of the Project site.

1.2.4 The wider landscape comprises farmland, woods, river corridors the city of Oxford and villages.

1.3 Responsibilities for Management

1.3.1 All maintenance and management of soft landscape areas within the Site will be undertaken by a suitably-qualified landscape management contractor and/or other specialist contractors (as required) on behalf of the Applicant and working closely with the landowner, following the end of the 12-month defects period and satisfactory completion of any landscape defects or necessary reinstatement works.

1.3.2 Periodically the landscape and ecology maintenance and monitoring works shall be inspected by suitably qualified and experienced persons to ensure that the landscape management operations are being completed in accordance with the relevant detailed LEMP.

2 LANDSCAPE DESIGN OBJECTIVES AND MANAGEMENT AIMS

2.1 Landscape Design Objectives

2.1.1 The landscape design was developed and informed through the co-ordination with the other related environmental disciplines including the Landscape and Visual Resources ES Chapter, ecology, flood risk, heritage and arboriculture teams to ensure a responsive and multi-functional design was created.

2.1.2 The overall design objectives of the landscape proposals are as follows;

- Landscape Integration and Local Character:
  - To respond to the setting, scale and character of the site and to provide screening to the Site from within the local area and from elevated areas to the west.
  - Provide an appropriate setting for the proposals, responding to adjacent pastoral/arable land uses where appropriate, ensuring that the landscape proposals include native species planting appropriate to the local area.
  - Enhancing and protecting the existing landscape fabric.
- Landscape Amenity:
  - Maintain and enhance, where possible, the local residents and visitors experience within this landscape, including the retention and enhancement of public access along waymarked footpaths and the introduction of interpretation boards.
- Biodiversity:
  - To protect, manage, enhance and monitor the nature conservation value of the site, creating a biodiversity rich environment – in line with all biodiversity objectives listed in Section 10 below.
  - Provision of designated Biodiversity Enhancement Areas, which are areas designed for native habitats and species and have low human intervention.

2.2 Management Aims

2.2.1 The management of the site shall seek to balance the Site's operational objectives / needs within the existing vegetation and context of the locality. It will lead to the retention, enhancement and management of the existing hedgerows and trees; particularly strengthening and maintaining hedgerow boundaries. The management aims will ensure longevity of new tree and hedge planting, and the establishment of grasslands, woodlands and most notably a landscape-scale corridor along River Evenlode.

2.2.2 To ensure the longevity of the landscape scheme to provide the biodiversity enhancements proposed and the required screening to the Site, the recommendations contained within this report will be implemented post practical completion of all soft landscape elements within the Site.

3 LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS

3.1.1 For the purposes of this oLEMP, the landscape elements have been grouped into hard and soft landscape elements, these have been identified below and the various elements shall be managed in accordance with best practice guidance and specific works outlined in Appendix C (Typical Maintenance Schedule). Due to the intrinsic nature of landscape and ecology, there is an overlap with the biodiversity features listed in the following section. The oLEMP should be read in conjunction with the Landscape, Ecology and Amenities Plan **[CR2-043]** accompanying the DCO application (Volume 2, Figures 7.3.3, Sheets 1 to 3), which shows the existing and proposed landscape elements.

3.2 Soft Landscape Elements

3.2.1 The existing vegetation along the site's perimeters and within it have been identified as being important landscape elements in the existing landscape character and will be retained and enhanced with new and appropriate planting where vegetation is presently sparse. This will avoid direct landscape effects and reduce visibility of the Project. Landscape elements listed below have been incorporated into the detailed soft landscape scheme. Mixes of tree and shrub species that could be included in the planting areas are given in the Typical Planting Schedule included in Appendix B along with recommended planting densities and mature heights. Planting areas are shown on the Landscape, Ecology and Amenities Plan **[CR2-043]**.

- Existing hedgerow and trees (individual and groups);
- Appropriate seeded vegetation below and between tables of the Solar PV modules;
- Existing woodlands;
- Existing scrub
- Proposed meadow grassland;
- Proposed conservation grazing areas;
- Proposed new and reinforced hedgerows, which will be managed to a height of approximately 3m during operation, managed annually, accepting that hedgerows may be managed to a lower height (the locations and heights of which to be agreed in consultation with the Oxfordshire Host Authorities) in order to support important and / or more open views, provided such maintenance falls within the scope of the environmental assessment;
- Vegetation removal will be kept to a minimum as far as practicable, as shown on the hedgerow removal plans [EN010147/APP/2.10].
- Proposed tree and shrub planting; and
- Proposed woodland (including wet woodland).

3.3 Hard Landscape Elements

3.3.1 The various hard landscape elements are listed below, for further detail regarding the maintenance of these areas refer to Appendix C (Typical Maintenance Schedule).

- Existing fencing;
- Existing pathways;
- Existing field access points;
- Existing footbridges;
- Proposed fencing (including stock fencing, as necessary);
- Proposed cycle paths;
- Proposed maintenance roads;
- Proposed vehicular access points;
- Proposed vehicular access to construction site compounds;
- Proposed pathways;
- Proposed bunds; and
- Proposed educational area.

4 LANDSCAPE AND ECOLOGY ZONE OBJECTIVES

4.1.1 For the purposes of design, function, landscape treatment and management the existing land within the Project site has been divided into five broad geographic "zones", albeit that they all share similar landscape typologies. These landscape zones are shown on the Landscape Management Zoning Plan (Figure 7.6.3.1).

4.1.2 This section describes the current landscape typologies and features of each zone together with the proposed landscape and ecology features and objectives. The objectives for each zone have informed and been informed by the Landscape, Ecology and Amenities Plan, Drawing Number **[CR2-043]**, as part of an ongoing iterative design process.

4.2 Zone 1: Northern Estate Farmlands

Current Landscape Typology

4.2.1 Typical open farmed landscape on the valley sides of the Dorn. Large scale open fields, with more enclosed areas of woodland towards the valley floor. Vegetation cover on valley sides of field boundary hedgerows and scattered trees. Area bisected by public right of way (PRoW) north to south extension of Dornford Lane. The PRoW is an enclosed route with a mature tree and hedgerow planting to either side.

Objectives

4.2.2 This zone will incorporate a planting palette which will combine with the existing and retained landscape features characteristic of the area, including lengths of hedgerow, scattered trees and small areas of woodland. By maintaining the existing and retained landscape features as part of the landscape strategy for the Project, it will help to better incorporate the Project into the existing landscape structure and mitigate the potential effects.

4.2.3 The landscape and ecology objectives for the zone are:

- Integration of the Projects' built form into the existing landscape structure;
- Retaining existing landscape features; and
- Provide new and reinforcement planting along existing retaining PRoW corridors east to west within the zone.

4.3 Zone 2: Evenlode Corridor

Current Landscape Typology

4.3.1 Riparian corridor of the River Evenlode, including wet grassland, marginals, small woodland / scrub blocks and native hedgerows. Area is bordered by field boundary hedgerows and scattered trees which interface with the wider agricultural landscape on the valley sides. Generally open landscape with views in all directions to valley landscape.

Objectives

4.3.2 Combine existing and retained landscape features to maintain links to wider agricultural landscape. Enhance and manage floodplain meadow grass habitat for the benefit of ecological features. Retain and enhance existing PRoW corridor through riparian landscape to enhance east to west link for the benefit of the community. By maintaining the existing and retained landscape features as part of the landscape strategy for the Project, it will help to better incorporate the Project into the existing landscape structure and mitigate the potential effects.

4.3.3 Pasture farmland and hedged field boundaries to be retained and enhanced with additional lengths of hedgerows, scattered trees and small woodland blocks to retain, so far as possible, the characteristic landscape structure and maintain the transitional landscape from agriculture to riparian grassland habitat.

4.3.4 The landscape and ecology objectives for the zone include:

- Enhancement of floodplain ecology through habitat creation;
- Enhancement of footpath links;
- Native woodland, scattered trees and hedgerows;
- Wet Woodland;
- Creation and management of meadow grassland;
- Softening of site boundaries and transition to countryside; and
- Visual screening.

4.4 Zone 3: Valley Farmland

Current Landscape Typology

4.4.1 A similar landscape to that of Zone 1. Large scale farmed landscape with open views across Evenlode Valley. Linear and larger blocks of woodland are evident along PRoW routes and roads. With a more enclosed landscape to the lower parts of the valley sides and to the northern parts towards Bladon. Largely intact hedgerow field boundaries and scattered trees.

Objectives

4.4.2 Combine existing and retained hedgerow and tree boundaries, to retain links to existing woodland blocks and retain the overall landscape structure of the area. By maintaining the existing and retained landscape features as part of the landscape strategy for the Project, it will help to better incorporate the Project into the existing landscape structure and mitigate the potential effects.

4.4.3 The landscape and ecology objectives for the zone are:

- Integration of the Project's built form into the existing landscape structure;
- Retaining existing landscape features;

- Provide new and reinforcement planting along existing retaining PRoW corridors throughout the zone;
- Maintain links with riparian landscape within Zone 3, including provision and retention of enhanced PRoW routes for the benefit of the local community;
- Retain and mange important hedgerows linking important landscape and ecology habitats including larger woodland blocks to the north; and
- New planting, including woodland blocks, to visually break up the mass of the Project seen in views across the valley.

4.5 Zone 4: Wooded Estate Farmland

Current Landscape Typology

4.5.1 Smaller scale enclosed landscape, with large blocks of woodland to the south. Small to medium size agricultural fields bounded by largely intact hedgerows and trees. Visually enclosed with limited views to wider landscape. Association with built development inkling Bladon and busy main road (A44) to the east with more open larger agricultural fields adjacent to the road.

Objectives

4.5.2 Combine existing and retained hedgerow and tree boundaries, to retain links to existing woodland blocks and retain the overall landscape structure of the area. Landscape buffer to Bladon, minimum 25 m with new hedgerow and tree planting to reinforce boundary and assist with visual screening. By maintaining the existing and retained landscape features as part of the landscape strategy for the Project, it will help to better incorporate the Project into the existing landscape structure and mitigate the potential effects.

4.5.3 The landscape and ecology objectives for the zone are:

- Integration of the Projects' built form into the existing landscape structure;
- Retaining and maintenance of existing landscape features;
- Provide new and reinforcement planting along existing retaining PRoW corridors throughout the zone;
- Retain and manage important hedgerows linking important landscape and ecology habitats including larger woodland blocks to the north;
- New planting, including woodland blocks, to visually break up the mass of the Project seen in views across the valley; and
- Proposed improvements to an existing PRoW to create a 'greenway' (within the Order Limits) provided to link Bladon with A44, east to west connection. New landscape including hedgerow and tree planting to either side of PRoW corridor with minimum offsets of 5 m to the Project.

4.6 Zone 5: Southern Area

Current Landscape Typology

4.6.1 Enclosed landscape of small agricultural fields. Mature field boundary hedgerows with scattered trees. Larger blocks of woodland to the south. Zone is on sloping ground allowing extensive panoramic views to the northern treed ridgeline which includes Wytham Woods.

Objectives

4.6.2 Combine existing and retained landscape features to maintain intrinsic landscape structure of the area. New hedgerow planting to edges of development area to reduce visual effects from local public rights of way. New area of woodland planting to aid visual screening of larger built elements and enhance connectivity to existing green infrastructure. By maintaining the existing and retained landscape features as part of the landscape strategy for the Project, it will help to better incorporate the Project into the existing landscape structure and mitigate the potential effects.

4.6.3 The landscape and ecology objectives for the zone are:

- Integration of the Projects' built form into the existing landscape structure;
- Retaining and maintenance of existing landscape features;
- Provide new and reinforcement planting along and in proximity to existing retaining PRoW corridors to reduce visual impact of the development;
- Retain and manage existing hedgerows; and
- New planting, including woodland blocks, to visually break up the mass of the Project seen in views across Farmoor Reservoir and other areas to the north of the zone.

5 LANDSCAPE ZONE PROPOSALS

5.1.1 Existing soft landscape elements and structure, which are the defining elements of each zone, and the proposed landscape elements along with their overall management objectives, to ensure the landscape inherent character and structure is retained so far as possible, are summarised below.

5.1.2 The purpose of the oLEMP is to demonstrate how the landscape proposals shown on the Landscape, Ecology and Amenities Plan (Volume 2, Figure 7.3.3, Sheets 1 to 3 **[CR2-043]**) incorporates the existing retained vegetation, including hedgerows, woodland, trees and other habitats considering the following:

- To ensure green infrastructure assets are retained wherever possible and adverse impacts on the important features and locally distinctive patterns of the existing landscape are minimised. Improving the connectivity to woodlands and hedgerows;
- To minimise adverse impacts on the character of surrounding landscape;
- To ensure that visually significant vegetation is retained to minimise adverse effects on visual receptors, protect important views and protect the natural beauty and setting of National Landscapes (AONBs);
- Proposed woodland (including wet woodland), tree, scrub, wetland and grassland planting;
- Management of, or implementation of, proposed mitigation to enhance existing green infrastructure including hedgerows, woodland, trees, scrub and wetland;
- To enhance the character, visual quality and biodiversity of the Project and surrounding landscape;
- To enhance the screening capacity of visually significant vegetation;
- The landscape planting will include a variety of native trees and shrubs and wildflower grasslands;
- New woodland will be planted throughout the Project area to visually break up the overall mass of the Project;
- Any retained trees, scrub and hedgerows which are features of ecological value will be reviewed to see if they could be incorporated within the design, where feasible to do so;
- Changing arable land to pasture that would see an improvement in landscape character terms; and
- New hedgerows and provision of greenways, restoration/enhancement of field pattern character and benefit to public access, where they link from and to, settlements.

5.1.3 The proposed landscape elements within the Project site and more sensitive management regime, detailed within this oLEMP, will help ensure that the Project delivers coherent landscape enhancements at a local scale, commensurate with the scale of the development. Helping to better integrate

the Project into the wider landscape by enhancing and retaining elements of the local landscape character.

5.2 Zone 1: Northern Estate Farmland

5.2.1 Landscape proposals for this zone (refer to Landscape, Ecology and Amenities Plan (Volume 2, Figures 7.3.3, Sheets 1 to 3, 2.1a - 2.4d **[AS-020**), and Landscape, Ecology and Amenities Plan **[CR2-043]**) include:

- Maintain existing linear field boundary native species hedgerows, individual trees and woodland blocks;
- Native species woodland planting to provide buffers to existing development and transport corridors, link existing areas of woodland and other habitats and provide visual screening to the Project and help to break up the overall mas of the Project;
- Native species hedgerow planting and individual trees to supplement exiting hedgerows and to provide visual screening to the Project. Particularly from public rights of way (PRoW) and residential properties. Such as PRoW 416/5/20 west to east, with individual tree planting to the south of this PRoW and a minimum 5m width for the PRoW route;
- Improvements to an existing PRoW 416/24/10, near Hordley House, to the Samson's Lane (PRoW 413/5/10 and 379/19/20) to create a cycle path. Including minimum 5m corridor for shared surface, with native species hedgerow and tree planting to the north and south to visually screen views to solar panels. Interpretation boards would also be placed on this greenway. Refer to Landscape, Ecology and Amenities Plan **[CR2-043]**, Figure 7.6.3.2 A-M and Figure 7.6.3.3 (within the oLEMP);
- Appropriate buffer for the retention of veteran trees;
- Meadow grassland and enhancement area to the fringes of the Project;
- 5 x 5 m Skylark plots throughout the Project area;
- Areas left clear of solar panels to protect areas of archaeological interest; and
- Opaque screening to fence line along a part of the southern, northern and eastern edge of the B4027 and field 1.19 to mitigate effects of Glint and Glare for road users and residential properties. Refer to Appendix 4.4 Solar Photovoltaic Glint and Glare Study V2.

5.3 Zone 2: Evenlode Corridor

5.3.1 Landscape proposals for this zone (refer to Landscape, Ecology and Amenities Plan (Volume 2, Figures 7.3.3, Sheets 1 to 3 **[CR2-043]**), include:

- Maintain existing linear field boundary native species hedgerows, individual trees and woodland blocks;
- Maintain existing river corridor habitats, including aquatic and marginal vegetation;

- Meadow grassland management of grazing pasture to improve species diversity with the aim of recreating floodplain meadow;
- Native species woodland planting to provide buffers to existing development and transport corridors, link existing areas of woodland and other habitats and provide visual screening to the Project and help to break up the overall mass of the Project;
- Areas of native species wet woodland planting;
- The design will consider the creation of new habitats comprising species-rich grassland managed through hay cuts and coppicing of woodland strips and marginal and aquatic planting within the river corridor; and
- Maintain existing public rights of way across Evenlode corridor linking east to west, including bridge access over the Evenlode, for the benefit of the local community;
- Native species hedgerow and tree planting mitigation to be implemented along the northernmost boundary of properties off Lower Road. This is to reduce / minimise identified impacts from the residential property.

5.4 Zone 3: Valley Farmland

5.4.1 Landscape proposals for this zone (refer to the Landscape, Ecology and Amenities Plan (Volume 2, Figure 7.3.3, Sheet 1 to 3 **[CR2-043]**), include:

- Maintain existing linear field boundary native species hedgerows, individual trees and woodland blocks;
- Native species woodland planting to provide buffers to existing development and transport corridors, link existing areas of woodland and other habitats and provide visual screening to the Project and help to break up the overall mass of the Project;
- Native species hedgerow planting and individual trees to supplement exiting hedgerows and to provide visual screening to the Project. Particularly from public rights of way (PRoW) and residential properties;
- Appropriate buffer for the retention of veteran trees;
- Appropriate buffer, 15m minimum, from Ancient Woodland such as Bladon Heath;
- Meadow grassland and enhancement area to the fringes of the Project;
- 5 x 5 m Skylark plots throughout the Project area;
- Areas left clear of solar panels to protect areas of archaeological interest; and,
- Native species hedgerow and small groups of native species tree mitigation, to be implemented along the easternmost boundary of properties along Lower Road. This is to reduce / minimise identified impacts from the residential property.

5.5 Zone 4: Wooded Estate Farmland

5.5.1 Landscape proposals for this zone (refer to Landscape, Ecology and Amenities Plan (Volume 2, Figure 7.3.3, Sheets 1 to 3 **[CR2-043]**), include:

- Maintain existing linear field boundary native species hedgerows, individual trees and woodland blocks;
- Native species woodland planting to provide buffers to existing development and transport corridors, link existing areas of woodland and other habitats and provide visual screening to the Project and help to break up the overall mass of the Project;
- Native species hedgerow planting and individual trees to supplement exiting hedgerows and to provide visual screening to the Project. Particularly from public rights of way (PRoW) and residential properties. Such as PRoW 132/4/10 west to east, with individual tree planting to the south of this PRoW and a minimum 5m width for the PRoW route;
- Grassland and woodland management of existing and proposed habitats to improve species diversity;
- Cycle path linking Bladon to A44 transport corridor. Including minimum 5m corridor for shared surface, with native species hedgerow and tree planting to the north and south to visually screen views to solar panels. Interpretation boards would also be placed on this greenway. Refer to Landscape, Ecology and Amenities Plan **[CR2-043]**, Figure 7.6.3.2 A-M and Figure 7.6.3.3 (within the oLEMP).
- Appropriate buffer for the retention of veteran trees;
- Appropriate buffer, 15m minimum, from Ancient Woodland such as Bladon Heath;
- Meadow grassland and enhancement area to the fringes of the Project;
- 5 x 5m Skylark plots throughout the Project area;
- Areas left clear of solar panels to protect areas of archaeological interest; and
- Opaque screening to fence line along a part of the southern, northern and eastern edge of the B4027 and field 1.19 to mitigate effects of Glint and Glare for residential properties. Refer to Appendix 4.4 Solar Photovoltaic Glint and Glare Study V2.

5.6 Zone 5: Southern Area

5.6.1 Landscape proposals for this zone (refer to Illustrative Landscape, Ecology and Amenities Plan (Volume 2, Figure 7.3.3, Sheets 1 to 3 **[CR2-043]**), include:

- Maintain existing linear field boundary native species hedgerows, individual trees and woodland blocks;
- Grassland and woodland management of existing and proposed habitats to improve species diversity;

- New lengths of hedgerow planting to provide visual screening from public rights of way, including 184/15/30 and 184/22/20;
- 5 x 5 m Skylark plots throughout the Project area;
- New woodland strip adjacent to existing track (PRoW 184/30/40) to supplement existing vegetation and provide visual screening to project and NGET substations located in fields to the south. Refer to Landscape, Ecology and Amenities Plan **[CR2-043]**, Figure 7.6.3.2 A-M and Figure 7.6.3.3 (within the oLEMP); and,
- Advanced planting of vegetation to the south of PRoW 184/22/20, within field 3.11, at the access to Denman's Farm. Providing visual screening along the section of the PRoW closest to the solar panels.

6 PUBLIC HEALTH ELEMENTS

6.1.1 Providing and maintaining new permissive paths, new cycle paths and the parts of the footpaths and bridleways that run through the arrays, within the Order Limits, to a specification to be agreed via the detailed LEMP that provides a greenway (with width, hedges, trees and trail/signage). The greenway specification is illustratively shown in the cross-sections of Figures 7.6.3.2 A-M with their locations shown on Figure 7.6.3.3 Indicative Locations of Proposed Greenways (within this oLEMP). Routes to include signs and information boards, including in formats that respond to visual impairments, with appropriate maintenance, as required. New routes to where reasonably practicable include access that supports people of all ages, including those with mobility and/or sensory needs.

6.1.2 Make retained and new routes through the arrays appealing to people to encourage their use by providing information boards (with details of new routes); wildflowers and hedgerows (for visual screening); children's fun trails and education boards (e.g., on wildlife, heritage and solar energy).

6.1.3 To use landscaping, in combination with layout and design, to minimise visibility of electrical infrastructure (other than arrays and substations) close to PRoWs, in order to reduce perceptions of risk.

7 ECOLOGY STRATEGY

7.1 Ecology Baseline

7.1.1 A range of surveys were undertaken to inform the DCO application. Details and results can be found in ES Chapter 9: Ecology and Nature Conservation and associated Appendices.

Habitats

7.1.2 The majority of the Site comprises intensively-managed arable fields with few field margins. Most field margins that do occur are located in the Northern Site Area, some of which have been planted to support pollinators and some of which have developed a calcareous character.

7.1.3 Small areas of woodland occur around the Site although the Project has been designed to ensure that the majority of woodland does not fall within the Order Limits.

7.1.4 The two key ecology habitat features that occur within the site are the hedgerow network (comprising some 70km of both species rich and species poor native hedgerow) and the River Evenlode Corridor. Currently, this corridor comprises almost exclusively further intensively-managed arable fields within the active floodplain of the river.

7.1.5 Outside of the Site but very close to it are a number of blocks of ancient woodland and other water courses including the River Glyme and River Cherwell. The River Thames and associated floodplain meadows are also close to the Site. The various river systems both within and around the Site form a contiguous habitat corridor through the landscape.

Species

7.1.6 The surveys identified a range of protected/notable species present including:

- Grass snake, slow worm and common lizard were recorded in low numbers both within and immediately adjacent to the site.
- Of the 61 bird species recorded as breeding or possibly breeding within the survey area, 33 species meet at least one criteria relating to special statutory protection or conservation importance.
- A variety of bat species were recorded across the survey area, including the Bechstein's and barbastelle bat species.
- Signs of badger activity were recorded during badger surveys. Due to the sensitive nature of badger data, the full findings of the surveys are reported in a confidential appendix of the ES (Appendix 9.8) which is available upon request to those with a legitimate need for the information.
- Great crested newts (GCN) have been recorded in ponds near to the Site.
- Invertebrate interest was limited by the agricultural nature of the landscape.

- Dormice have been recorded in the hedgerow network within the Central Site Area and are assumed to be present elsewhere within the Site, given the low density this species occurs at in hedgerow networks.

Legislation

7.1.7 A summary of relevant wildlife legislation is provided below. These will all be fully complied with.

- Bats - All bat species are legally protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).
- Birds - All breeding birds, their eggs, nests and young are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- Great Crested Newts - Great crested newt is legally protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).
- Dormouse – Dormouse is legally protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).
- Grass Snake - Grass snake is partially protected under Schedule 5 of the WCA 1981.
- Badger - Protection of Badgers Act 1992.

7.2 Ecology Strategy

7.2.1 The overall ecology strategy for the Project aims to facilitate the creation of a coherent and resilient ecological network that seeks to increase the biodiversity of the Project site in a controlled manner such that it integrates with and supports the existing wider ecology of the surrounding landscape. It also aims to support the broader aims of the landscape proposals with respect to integration and amenity.

7.2.2 The strategy aims to use the Project to improve wider connectivity, linking the woodlands present adjacent and near the Site with the local water courses and further afield with the wider landscape. It also aims to enhance the overall biodiversity status of the land the Project sits within through the change from intensive arable management to a more sensitive ecology-focused regime, including the removal of agricultural chemical inputs. It is informed by the aims of the Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network (ONRN) which was considered at the very earliest stages of the Project design to ensure it accounts for a wider county-level ecology network.

7.2.3 Central to the delivery of the strategy is the presence of the River Evenlode Corridor running broadly north-south through the Central Project Area. This is a landscape-scale feature providing continuous habitat to facilitate the movement of species along it and providing ecological linkage both through the Project site and with the surrounding habitat, facilitating wildlife dispersion to the wider landscape. This corridor is identified in the ONRN as being one

of the main opportunities in this area. As such, it's incorporation into the ecology strategy for the Project at an initial concept stage was considered crucial to the delivery of a coherent, landscape-scale enhancement.

7.2.4 The River Evenlode Corridor will be restored to a mosaic of Floodplain Meadow to comprise a matrix of (primarily MG4) grasslands, wet woodland and wetland features to provide enhanced habitat for a range of species including bats, birds and invertebrates. The area will be restored through a comprehensive restoration plan, based on the principles set out in this oLEMP, to be included within a LEMP specific to that area. The LEMP for the Evenlode Corridor will be overseen by a steering group that would include Berkshire Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT), relevant planning authorities and local interest groups, along with the Applicant and land manager. It would include details of establishment (including the source of any green hey that might be used), management and any grazing strategy to be adopted, for example, type and location of cattle management, grazing infrastructure etc.

7.2.5 Floodplain meadow is a priority habitat with many Local Wildlife Sites in the surrounding landscape designated for its presence, along the River Thames, in particular. The creation of such habitat will require knowledge of a range of variables including ground and surface water regimes, soil chemistry, water quality, and topography. These and other factors will require detailed consideration in the design, creation and ongoing management of the new habitats and will be described in the LEMP for the Corridor.

7.2.6 The ultimate goal of the Corridor will be to manage it in such a manner that it contributes significantly to the increase in floodplain habitat within Oxfordshire and, in time, be of at least Local Wildlife Site quality.

7.2.7 The connectivity between the Site and surrounding woodlands will be enhanced through the provision of over 26.5km of new hedgerow, which will be maintained at the height of approximately 3m (see paragraph 3.2.1). Many of these will be associated with new greenways where a double hedge line will be planted either side of an existing Public Right of Way (PRoW). In particular, these will provide links in the Northern Site Area between Tackley Wood and the Blenheim Estate, the Central Site Area between the Blenheim Estate and Bladon and Burleigh Woods and the various woodlands in the Southern Site Area including the SSSI at Wytham. In many cases, such greenways will be created across existing arable fields where such linear features do not currently occur further enhancing the connectivity. A further circa 30km of existing hedgerow will be reinforced around the Site with additional planting to strengthen existing corridors.

7.2.8 In addition to the River Evenlode Corridor, a range of different buffers are proposed depending on the feature in question, as detailed below.

7.2.9 Areas of former arable land around the Site that are to be protected to preserve the underground archaeology will be managed as meadow grassland to provide wildlife nodes within the Site. These will be managed to provide a continuity of habitat for breeding and wintering birds but also enhanced habitat for GCN, reptiles, invertebrates and bats. They will provide

more open habitats within the solar site and stepping stone habitats, linked through the enhanced hedgerow corridor.

7.2.10 In addition to the strategic enhancements, the grassland management within and around the solar arrays will be subject to a new conservation grazing regime. These areas will be seeded to a modified grassland habitat type, once established these areas will be grazed (primarily by sheep). The grazing regime will be at a low stocking rate with the primary aim of ensuring the management of more vigorous grass species such that they do not dominate swards. A pause in the grazing over much of the site will allow grasses and wildflower to set seed.

7.2.11 Recognising the proximity of Oxford Airport to the Central Site Area, landscape design within 1.5km will be designed in general accordance with the principles set out in CAA CAP 772 Wildlife Hazard Management at Aerodromes. This will include ensuring that there are no water features present, no additional scrub/tree planting along hedgerows and grassland areas outside of the panel arrays managed according to a long grass policy, maintaining a sward height of circa 220-300mm. In addition, once operational, the Applicant will ensure on-going dialogue with the airport with respect to the management of wildlife risk across the Project site as a whole, in line with CAST Renewable energy developments: solar photovoltaic developments CAST Aerodrome Safeguarding Guidance Note.

7.2.12 The combination of improved connectivity and more sensitive management regime will help ensure that the Project delivers coherent ecology enhancement at a landscape scale, commensurate with the scale of the development.

8 ECOLOGY MITIGATION MEASURES

8.1.1 This section outlines the ecological mitigation required to ensure that protected and/or notable species and habitats are not harmed during management and maintenance activities. These measures are designed to complement those that are expected to be required through the relevant licence regimes.

8.1.2 Measures specifically required for the construction period are set out in the outline Code of Construction Practice **[EN010147/APP/7.6.1]**.

8.2 Habitats

8.2.1 The ecology onsite will provide a mosaic of habitats comprising grassland of various types and woodland/scrub to provide a matrix of habitats suitable for a variety of species. Woodland and hedgerows will also be maintained or managed where applicable.

8.2.2 Habitat creation will include:

- Circa 100ha of new Floodplain mosaic habitats along the River Evenlode Corridor to be dominated by MG4 grasslands and other wetland grass communities and wet woodland habitats appropriate to hydrology/soil conditions;
- At least 26.5km of new species rich hedgerow, which will be maintained at the height of approximately 3m (see paragraph 3.2.1);
- At least 26km of existing hedgerow to be reinforced through additional planting;
- Circa 5ha of new native woodland creation;
- 36ha of wildflower grasslands to be managed for wintering and breeding birds within areas retained to protect buried archaeology;
- Tussocky grasslands alongside hedgerows. Hedgerow buffers will be at least 5m;
- Flood attenuation features to north of Cassington to be managed as wetland habitats;
- Additional mixed scrub habitats alongside hedgerows to enhance them for nightingale; and
- A range of grasslands within the solar arrays to be managed for conservation value (including temporary satellite compounds, if not required for solar installations).

8.2.3 The creation of these new habitats will provide nesting sites for breeding birds (where appropriate) and maintain and enhance connectivity for foraging and commuting bats. It will also support a variety of invertebrates, reptiles and amphibians found on site.

8.2.4 Hedgerows and their buffers will be managed to provide a diverse structure, ensuring a variety of ecotones (grassland, tussock grassland, scrub, hedgerow, individual mature trees).

8.2.5 Waterbodies are important for the ecology on site. In addition to various scrapes to be created around the site, the creation of a new water body to the north of Cassington will serve primarily as flood attenuation but will also provide additional aquatic habitat for a range of species.

8.2.6 All development will have a minimum 10 m buffer from the banks of ordinary existing watercourses.

8.2.7 All land used for temporary satellite compounds during construction will be managed as grassland if not required for solar installations.

8.2.8 All deer fencing to be erected around solar arrays will be designed to be permeable to smaller mammals such as badger and fox to ensure permeability of the Project site for these species will be retained.

8.3 Great Crested Newt

8.3.1 A Natural England mitigation licence or District Level License for GCN will be obtained for the Site.

8.3.2 If a mitigation license is pursued, many of the measures detailed in the licence will be implemented prior to the start of any site works that have the potential to affect habitats in which GCN could be present. The method statement attached to the licence will include precautionary species protection measures which will be implemented during construction and supports designed to protect individuals and maintain the favourable conservation status of GCN in the locality. Work carried out under a Natural England EPS mitigation license for GCN will be supervised by the ecologist named on the licence or their accredited agent.

8.3.3 The change to conservation grazing and improved habitat corridors along hedgerows will substantially benefit GCN present on and around the Site.

8.3.4 Once the new habitats had been created, the installation of refugia and hibernacula will be undertaken to enhance the suitability of these new habitats for use by GCN.

8.3.5 In addition, the provision of water features within Tier A buffers (see below) will provide further water-based habitat for GCN within the Project site. Further details on these features are set out at section 11.4 below.

8.3.6 Monitoring of GCN will be undertaken in habitat creation and enhancement areas.

8.4 Badgers

8.4.1 All badger setts will be retained, where possible, with a 30 m buffer of undisturbed habitat. Retained badger setts must not be isolated from other areas of suitable habitat by fencing and construction activity, as advised by a suitably qualified ecologist.

8.4.2 Any impacts of the Project on Badgers such as disturbance or any such closure would be completed under appropriate licence from Natural England and would include suitable mitigation, such as the provision of artificial setts, should that be necessary.

8.5 Bats

8.5.1 The Project will incorporate appropriate buffers either side of any important bat flight line, as identified by radio tracking and other studies of the Project Site. Such buffers will not include any solar infrastructure and are to ensure that bats can use the landscape unhindered by any interaction between their echo location and solar panels. The width of the buffers will be measured from the edge of the feature to the nearest solar infrastructure (usually perimeter fencing). Three tiers of buffers will be incorporated:

8.5.2 Tier A buffers will be 25m on either side of the feature and will be established in the following locations:

- Around ancient woodlands in the centre of the site (Pinsley, Burleigh and Bladon Heath);
- Main hedgerow flightlines leading out of these woodlands;
- The Cotswold Railway Line;
- The green lane in the Northern Site Area with links to both the river Dorn and Tackley Wood;
- Along Stratford Road towards Samson's Platt;
- The River Evenlode;
- Sewage Treatment Works north of Cassington; and
- Watercourse coming from Bladon Heath south towards the railway

8.5.3 Given the importance of the Tier A buffers to bat ecology within the landscape, the location of these will be fixed at this stage to ensure their location is secured by virtue of their inclusion within this oLEMP.

8.5.4 Tier B buffers will be 10m either side of the feature and are included to provide linkages through the Project site with the Tier A buffers and the wider landscape. Their final location will be determined during detailed design but will follow the following principles:

- Alongside hedgerows linking key flightlines (i.e. Tier A buffers) to key foraging resources;
- Alongside hedgerows linking key flightlines to other flightlines; and
- Alongside hedgerows with mature trees.

8.5.5 In addition, all watercourses will have 10m buffers and would be included in Tier B with respect to buffer size.

8.5.6 Tier C buffers would be 5m either side of a feature and would cover the remaining hedgerows on the Project site.

8.5.7 All buffers will be managed to ensure a diverse range of habitats with as many ecotones as possible. This will include a range of grasslands, scrub and mature trees along the length of a hedgerow. In addition, scrapes or other water features will be created within the Tier A buffers in appropriate locations, depending on local hydrology, archaeology, agricultural land classification and other environmental constraints.

8.5.8 Any trees subject to removal during management will be surveyed by a suitably experienced ecologist to confirm whether potential roost features are present. Should potential roost features be present, further aerial inspection will be undertaken, for example by a qualified tree climber who also holds a Natural England bat survey licence to confirm whether these are in use by bats.

8.5.9 In the event that bats, or signs of bats are found indicating a roost, tree felling would be postponed and no works affecting the trees, or which could indirectly affect the roost would be carried out until a Natural England bat mitigation licence has been obtained.

8.5.10 A programme of new bat boxes will be incorporated at the start of construction across the Project site. Locations will be detailed in a LEMP and will include a variety of box types.

8.6 Dormouse

8.6.1 Hedgerow and woodland management will take place during winter when dormice are not active (i.e. from November until February). This will also help avoid impacts to nesting birds.

8.6.2 In order to protect any dormouse that could be hibernating within tall grasslands directly adjacent to hedgerows, all flailing of hedgerows adjacent to tall grasslands will be undertaken utilising a long reach tractor flail from a minimum of 2 m from the edge of hedgerow bases.

8.6.3 In the very unlikely event that a dormouse is encountered during habitat works, it would be carefully captured by a licensed ecologist and placed in suitable habitat away from the works.

8.7 Breeding birds

8.7.1 All hedgerows, trees, ponds and woodland to have minimum of 5m buffer. All buffers to be protected with appropriate fencing, to be set up before construction commences.

8.7.2 To avoid disturbance to nesting birds, any vegetation removal which is required will be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season (March to August inclusive) where practicable. Where this is not practicable, the relevant areas will be inspected by a suitably experienced ecologist 48 hours prior to removal, to check for the presence of nesting birds. If an active nest is present, the nest and a minimum 5m buffer will need to be retained until the young birds have fledged.

8.7.3 Cutting of meadow and tussock grasses will be carried out in early autumn to prevent disturbance of ground nesting birds and all cut material disposed of off-site. This will help ensure that species such as skylark are able to nest successfully in these areas. Leaving the grassland undisturbed throughout the nesting season will ensure that species that raise multiple broods such as skylark , can do so.

8.7.4 Areas of dense scrub will be planted along hedgerows to support nightingale. In addition, on woodland edges, dense scrub and shrubs will be allowed to develop to offer feeding and nesting habitat for this species.

8.7.5 A scheme of installation of new bird boxes will be implemented at the start of construction across the Project Site. Locations will be detailed in a LEMP but will include a variety of box types, some for woodland species and some for more urban settings.

8.8 Reptiles

8.8.1 Field margins and other vegetation on site will be cut in stages, under the precautionary principle and overseen by a suitably qualified ecologist. Cutting of meadow and tussock grasses will be carried out in early autumn to prevent disturbance of reptiles and all material disposed of off- site.

8.8.2 The change to conservation grazing and improved habitat corridors along hedgerows will substantially benefit reptiles present on and around the Site.

8.8.3 Once the new habitats had been created, the installation of refugia and hibernacula will be undertaken to enhance the suitability of these new habitats for use by reptiles.

8.9 Invertebrates

8.9.1 The removal of agricultural pesticide use and revision to a more biodiverse landscape will greatly benefit the invertebrate population both within the Site and the surrounding area.

9 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

9.1.1 The approach to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) that has been adopted by the Project is set out in ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.13: Biodiversity Net Gain Statement **[EN010147/APP/6.5]**.

9.1.2 The conclusions of that Statement with respect to the total BNG to be delivered by the Project rely on the landscape designs and other measures set out within this oLEMP.

9.1.3 The Environment Act 2021 requires that development deliver 10% BNG, including those consented under the Planning Act 2008, although this will not be binding on such projects until May 2026. As such, the regime is not currently binding on the Project.

9.1.4 Notwithstanding this, each LEMP submitted to the relevant authority for approval pursuant to DCO Requirement 6 will include an explanation of how the plan contributes to the achievement of BNG. It is anticipated that the Project will achieve a BNG of at least 70% for habitat units across the authorised development, calculated using the Statutory (version 4.0) Biodiversity Metric and as set out the Biodiversity Net Gain Statement. This will form the BNG Target score for habitats the Project for the purposes of judging future management.

9.1.5 It is further anticipated that the Project will deliver at least 50% of hedgerow net gain as a result of circa 26.5km of new hedgerow planting to be completed. This will form the BNG Target score for hedgerows.

9.1.6 In addition, it is anticipated that the Project will deliver at least 20% of watercourse net gain as a result of removing agricultural encroachment, where relevant, from all of the watercourses on the Project site and the implementation of a 10m buffer corridor either side of these watercourses.

9.1.7 Note that, although the total build programme for the Project is circa two years, works within any given field will be significantly shorter (<1 year). On this basis, habitat creation will be <1 year after impact and, as such, no temporal multiplier has been applied (either advance or delay in planting).

9.1.8 Further, the commitments set out to the delivery of BNG relate to the delivery of units within the areas of permanent impact, i.e. the installation areas and landscaped areas. Temporary impacts within the cable corridor will be <1year in duration, with all impacts associated cable laying capable of being restored within 2 years of those impacts.

10 BIODIVERSITY OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

10.1 Biodiversity Aims

10.1.1 The key aims for biodiversity are defined as:

- Meet biodiversity net gain (BNG) targets;
- Create and maintain areas of grassland supporting a mixture of grasses and wildflower species;
- Create a landscape-scale corridor along River Evenlode providing foraging and breeding habitat for a range of protected and notable species;
- Create and enhance habitats to provide nesting habitat and foraging resources for birds;
- Create and maintain additional habitat for amphibians and invertebrates;
- Protect mature tree resources and allow deadwood features (invertebrates, bats and nesting birds);
- Promote habitat connectivity across the site;
- Provide for a number of specific ecological enhancements;
- Maintain areas of grassland suitable for ground-nesting birds;
- Maintain winter food source for farmland birds;
- Increase connectivity across the landscape;
- Maintain the accessibility of habitats across the solar farm for fauna species including badgers through the design of deer fencing;
- Identify any negative habitat trends and effectively address through management and/or remedial actions; and
- Ensure that all management actions comply with all wildlife legislation.

10.2 Biodiversity Objectives

River Evenlode Corridor

- Establish and maintain grassland diversity in the corridor, to be dominated by MG4 grasslands but with other types of wet grassland in addition. For example, this could include swamp and mire communities in areas too wet for MG4 (e.g. MG27, MG9 and S7);
- Establish and maintain varied sward height as continuous habitat throughout the corridor;
- Establish and maintain a variety of scrapes and other wetland habitats to ensure a diversity of structure, taking advantage of existing channels and features;
- Establish and maintain specific enhancements including log piles, hibernacula, insect hotels and bird and bat boxes;

- Ensure habitats provide food, cover and prey for fauna species;
- Avoid all unnecessary tree management works maintaining a balance between health and safety, arboricultural value and biodiversity value (deadwood, flaking bark, cavities);
- Establish and maintain connectivity across the corridor, linking other areas of existing and proposed connective features, in the form of hedgerows and woodlands; and
- Enhance areas adjacent to waterbodies through infill planting, thereby creating intact adjacent habitats.

Wildflower Meadow Grasslands

- Maintain higher wildflower diversity in the grassland;
- Either via grazing or cut, ensure sward height is circa 20-60cm (i.e. optimum height for ground nesting birds such as skylark) in March and that fields are left undisturbed through until the end of the bird breeding season in August;
- Maintain varied sward height tussocky grassland as continuous habitat corridors on the field perimeters;
- Establish and maintain species-specific enhancements including log piles, hibernacula and insect hotels;
- Include wintering seed mixes to provide foraging resources for wintering birds; and
- Ensure that meadow grassland provides food, cover and prey for fauna species.

Solar Array Grasslands

- Maintain moderate botanical diversity in the grassland through conservation grazing;
- Maintain varied sward height tussocky grassland as continuous habitat corridors on the field perimeters outside of array area fencing;
- Maintain the health and structure of wildflower grassland below and between solar panel arrays; and
- Establish and maintain species-specific enhancements including skylark plots in between panels.

Native Shrub and Trees

- Maintain dense, closed structure of scrub;
- Establish and maintain trees and scrub comprising a mixture of native species;
- Promote flowering/ fruiting of shrubs and trees through low intensive management;

- Avoid all unnecessary tree management works maintaining a balance between health and safety, arboricultural value and biodiversity value (deadwood, flaking bark, cavities); and
- Establish and maintain species-specific enhancements including bird and bat boxes.

Woodlands

- Increase native species diversity of existing woodlands;
- Establish and maintain well-structured and diverse woodland comprising a mixture of native species;
- Promote flowering/ fruiting of shrubs and trees through low intensive management;
- Avoid all unnecessary tree management works maintaining a balance between health and safety, arboricultural value and biodiversity value (deadwood, flaking bark, cavities); and
- Establish and maintain specific enhancements including log piles, hibernacula, insect hotels and bird and bat boxes.

Hedgerows

- Increase the diversity of native woody species in species-poor hedgerows;
- Increase the diversity of hedgerow ground flora;
- Establish and maintain new native species-rich hedgerows at the height of approximately 3m (see paragraph 3.2.1);
- Establish and maintain new hedgerows with a dense structure;
- Promote flowering/ fruiting of shrubs and trees through sensitive management; and
- Avoid all unnecessary tree management works maintaining a balance between health and safety, arboricultural value and biodiversity value (deadwood, flaking bark, cavities).

11 OUTLINE HABITAT MANAGEMENT

11.1 Grassland

New Grassland Establishment (Year 1)

11.1.1 Newly-sown grassland will be either cut monthly using cut-and-collect machinery or subject to light grazing throughout the first year of establishment to a height of 40-60mm. Any residual perennial weeds such as docks, thistles, and common nettle will be subject to appropriate treatment (such as dug out or spot treated). Broadcast herbicides will not be used.

11.1.2 As the sown wildflowers and grass species are perennial they will be slow to germinate and grow and will not usually flower in their first growing season. There will often be a flush of annual weeds from the soil in the first growing season which may grow up and obscure the meadow seedlings beneath. The management actions will control annual weed growth, prevent significant spread and help maintain balance between faster growing grasses and slower developing wildflowers.

11.1.3 If practical, the MG4 grassland of the River Evenlode Corridor will be created using a green hey cut collected from nearby examples of MG4 and associated NVC communities, subject to agreement of the owners and managers of doner sites and following the approaches outlined in technical guidance and consultation with local experts. Doner site/s are to be determined and will be selected in consultation with site managers to match the existing and target soil and drainage conditions. Supplementary planting of rare and distinctive species, grown from local plant material will be considered.

Grassland Management (Year 2 onwards)

11.1.4 In all subsequent years, the grassland will be managed as described in Table 11-1.

11.1.5 The soil fertility of the arable field will increase the growth of a few species and over time would be likely to adversely affect the populations of wildflower species. Consequently, weed growth will be managed at a higher rate during the first five years to control the growth of the most dominant grasses.

Table 11.1 Grassland Management Specifications

Grassland types	Management Specification	Timing
River Evenlode Corridor	The grassland within the corridor will be managed by low-intensity cattle grazing, if possible. The stocking density will be agreed at the outset of the management by the management team and an ecologist. Changes to the stocking density will be made only following review of the grassland condition and after agreement with an ecologist. Any scrapes created will be cut on a three-year basis and inspected for silt build up. If necessary, additional excavation will take place to remove material.	September - March

Grassland types	Management Specification	Timing
Tussocky grassland field margins outside of solar array fence line	Removal of weeds through appropriate means (such as weed wipe or spot treatment) as required throughout the year. No mowing between May and the end of August to promote the development of a tussocky structure and flower growth. This will also facilitate seed availability for foraging birds/amphibians, especially over winter, and invertebrate resources for both bats and birds (for example skylark and other birds that feed invertebrate prey to newly-hatched young). Cut once every 2-3 years in September to a height of 50mm using cut-and-collect machinery.	September - March
Grassland within solar array fence line	Removal of weeds as required throughout the year. Conservation grazing with sheep at stocking rate no greater than six sheep per hectare. Stocking rate can be increased following agreement with Project ecologist and Local Authority if vegetation growth is rapid in some years.	Year-round March-April and Aug-Nov (until too wet to graze)
Meadow grassland in areas for breeding/wintering birds	Low-intensity grazing with sheep or cattle or hay/silage cut. If grazed, spring (i.e. March-April) stocking rates will be reduced to one cow or three sheep per hectare of grazable land to avoid trampling any early nests but with enough animals to ensure sward height in March is between 20 and 60cm to facilitate nest building for skylark and other ground-nesting birds. August to November stocking rates will be set to ensure sward height is low over winter. Top-up cut may be necessary. Allowing the grass to grow undisturbed through the bird breeding season will allow for potentially multiple broods for species such as skylark who can have up to four broods a season in optimal conditions. Grasses to be allowed to set seed to ensure wintering foraging opportunities for birds, including skylark and other seed-eating species.	Year-round March-April and Aug-Nov (until too wet to graze) if grazed, September, if cut

11.2 Woodlands

11.2.1 Areas of woodland will be created throughout the Site.

11.2.2 To maximise the chances of the successful establishment of new planting, any bare root stock would have their whole root system dipped in mycorrhizal fungi slurry following approved concentrations. Where rabbit or deer grazing results in the loss of planted stock, protection measures would be employed such as guards or fencing. All dead, dying or diseased plants recorded during the first five years will be replaced in the following winter planting season with stock of similar specification to the original. Formative pruning would be adopted in the first five years to promote dense growth follow methods in accordance with BS:3998.

11.2.3 Woodlands will be subject to annual inspections. They will be allowed to develop a diverse structure through periodic thinning.

11.2.4 The rate of establishment of self-seeded and planted shrubs; and the structure they develop will inform management decisions following on from the initial aftercare period. Where practical, long term management decisions will promote the extent of dense scrub cover for nesting birds. Options would include the coppicing of selected shrub species including hazel.

11.3 Hedgerows

New Hedgerows

11.3.1 New native species hedgerows will be planted in the Biodiversity Areas (as shown on the Illustrative Masterplan (Volume 2, Figures 2.1a - 2.4d **[APP-020]**)) and in the Site area, providing additional links between blocks of off-site woodland.

11.3.2 A mixture of native species will be used.

11.3.3 The majority of hedgerows will be protected from stock damage through the security fencing installed around the arrays. However, where this is not the case, stock-proof fencing will be installed to ensure no damage from grazing animals.

11.3.4 During the aftercare period both sides of the whole of the new hedgerow will cut after the first growing season at the end of Year 1 and again at the end of Year 3 to encourage dense growth and maintain an even shape. Where gaps occur, infill with native stock appropriate to planted hedge.

11.3.5 From Year 5 onwards the sides of the hedgerow will be trimmed back on a 3-5 year rotation in late Autumn (i.e. with a fifth to a third of all hedgerow cut each year). The hedgerow will be maintained at a height of approximately 3m (see paragraph 3.2.1), as a broadly ‘A’ shaped structure to continue to encourage dense growth to ground level and avoiding creating a wide flat top.

11.3.6 Trees within hedgerows will be allowed to continue to mature and will be protected during hedgerow cutting. Minimal management of larger trees is required and deadwood features will be allowed to develop where safe and practical. Where limb removal is required, the wood will be retained within the site to provide habitat for invertebrates.

11.3.7 Cavities in trees may provide potential roost features for bats and will be left undisturbed. If works affecting tree cavities are planned, an inspection will be undertaken by an ecologist prior to the works to ensure no roosts will be affected.

11.3.8 All hedgerow adjacent to tall grasslands will be cut utilising a long reach tractor flail from a minimum of 2 m from the edge of hedgerow bases to protect any dormouse that could be hibernating within tall grasslands directly adjacent to hedgerows.

11.3.9 Works will be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season (March-August inclusive) or after confirmation by an ecologist that no active nests are present in the affected habitat.

Retained Hedgerows

11.3.10 Gappy and species-poor hedgerows will be supplemented by species infill planting. A mixture of native species will be used.

11.3.11 The hedgerows will be trimmed back on a 3-5 year rotation in late autumn (i.e. with a third-fifth of the hedgerow cut each year) to a broadly 'A' shape structure.

11.3.12 Some trees within hedgerows will not be cut and will be allowed to mature in size to create vertical diversity of structure within the hedgerow.

11.3.13 All hedgerow adjacent to tall grasslands will be cut utilising a long reach tractor flail from a minimum of 2 m from the edge of hedgerow bases to protect any dormouse that could be hibernating within tall grasslands directly adjacent to hedgerows.

11.3.14 Existing hedgerows around the larger areas of grassland that will be used by skylark will be maintained at their current height as far as is practicable to minimise any loss of openness of these areas.

11.3.15 Works will be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season (March-August inclusive) or after confirmation by an ecologist that no active nests are present in the affected habitat.

11.4 Scrapes

11.4.1 Scrapes will be created in appropriate locations within the Tier A buffers, depending on local hydrology and agricultural land classification. Each scrape will be created using appropriate plant and will be 1-2m deep and up to 100m^2 in area. One such feature will be created every 500m on each side of the corridor, depending on local conditions.

11.4.2 Scrapes will be located outside of root protection areas with their exact location to be determined during detailed design following the principles set out here.

11.4.3 They will not be created as part of any corridor within 1.5km of Oxford Airport to ensure they do not increase bird strike risk in this area.

11.4.4 Arisings from scrapes will be used to create bare earth mounds which will be allowed to vegetate naturally.

11.4.5 Scrapes will be allowed to fill with water and vegetate naturally with the aim of creating features that can increase invertebrate abundance (and hence foraging for anything that feeds on them) while also providing a water source for other wildlife.

11.5 Great Crested Newts

11.5.1 Hibernacula for GCN will be created within 500 m of ponds within and surrounding the Site. The hibernacula will be created in accordance with the designs in Appendix A Figure 1.

11.5.2 Furthermore, log piles will be placed throughout wildflower meadows grasslands to create sheltering opportunities for GCN. Other amphibians and reptiles will similarly benefit from the creation of hibernacula and log piles within the site.

11.6 Breeding Birds

11.6.1 Bird boxes will be placed within retained trees throughout the project site. A range of box bird types will be utilised in order to provide nesting habitat for a range of bird species. Where possible, the selection of box types will take into consideration species identified during the breeding bird surveys.

11.6.2 Bird boxes will be placed in trees at varying heights above 2 m and as advised by the project ecologist depending on the target species.

11.6.3 Bird boxes will be of sturdy construction, built to last into the future. Example bird boxes have been provided in Appendix A Figure 2.

11.7 Skylark plots

11.7.1 Skylark plots are to be created within the solar arrays in general accordance with Countryside Stewardship management practices as set out in AB4: Skylark Plots (Natural England, 2024). The plots provide Skylarks with suitable access to additional foraging habitats throughout their breeding season.

11.7.2 The provision of Skylark plots at a ratio of two plots provided for each potential lost territory is an accepted and widely used mitigation strategy for developments that will result in the loss of Skylark territories. Skylark plots also benefit other farmland bird species.

11.7.3 A Skylark plot is a 5 m x 5 m area of grassland field that will be created by leaving an unsown plot within the solar arrays.

11.7.4 The final locations of plots will be determined during detailed design. However, they will be preferentially located towards the edges (within 100m) of array areas where those areas border fields outside the Project site to enable skylark breeding out with the Project site to access them easily (skylark tend to forage 100-150m from nest sites).

11.7.5 The plots can be managed with the same treatments as the remainder of the field. There is no need to keep the plots weed-free but spot-treating with herbicide in April will help skylarks to access foraging areas.

11.7.6 No mechanical weeding will take place.

11.7.7 Skylark plots will be created across the Project site as a whole at a density of two plots / ha.

11.7.8 The plots will be maintained on an annual basis for the duration of the operational life of the Project.

11.8 Bats

11.8.1 Bat boxes will be placed on retained trees throughout the Site to the site to provide additional roosting habitat. The boxes will be placed at varying heights above 3 m, positioned with a southeastern and southwestern orientation.

11.8.2 Where not enough suitable retained trees remain, bat boxes will be pole mounted.

11.8.3 The boxes will be fixed securely that they will not be subject to extreme movements from the wind. The boxes will be positioned in discrete locations to minimise the likelihood of predation (including from domestic pets) and interference from people. They will also be located away from bright lighting and near to vegetation cover.

11.8.4 Bat boxes will be of sturdy construction, built to last into the future. Example bat boxes have been provided in Appendix A Figure 3.

11.9 Invertebrates

11.9.1 Insect hotels are to be included in wildflower meadow grasslands across the site to provide insects sheltering habitat.

11.9.2 Examples of insect hotels are provided in Appendix A Figure 4.

12 MONITORING PROCEDURE

12.1.1 The long-term monitoring of habitats and their biodiversity value will specifically assess the extent to which the management actions are achieving the defined objectives.

12.1.2 All monitoring described below will be reported to the relevant planning authority and will include details of any necessary remedial measures or modifications to individual LEMPs.

12.1.3 Each of the grassland areas in the operational site will be subject to condition assessment monitoring.

12.2 Grassland Monitoring

12.2.1 Monitoring data for grasslands will be collected using presence/absence point counts (1 m x 1 m) for positive and negative indicator species. DAFOR recording will be carried out for the different grassland habitat types.

12.2.2 A minimum of five quadrats will be undertaken for each habitat parcel. Each quadrat will assess the percentage cover of grasses, herbs, bryophytes and bare ground. In tall grassland where the grasses form a canopy the cover of herb species will be assessed below the canopy.

12.2.3 The relevant Statutory Metric Condition Assessment Sheet (Natural England, 2023) will be filled out per habitat parcel within the site, where appropriate utilising quadrat data. The habitat condition score will subsequently be calculated and compared with the BNG Target.

12.2.4 The monitoring data will be supported by set photo points to provide a visual record of each of the grassland areas, their structure and cover.

12.3 Ditches

12.3.1 A ditch Statutory Metric Condition Assessment Sheet (Natural England, 2023) will be filled out per parcel of ditch within the site. The habitat condition score will subsequently be calculated and compared with the BNG Target.

12.3.2 The monitoring data will be supported by set photo points to provide a visual record of each of the ditches, their structure and cover.

12.4 Other Broadleaved Woodland

12.4.1 A woodland Statutory Metric Condition Assessment Sheet (Natural England, 2023) will be filled out per parcel of Woodland within the site. The habitat condition score will subsequently be calculated and compared with the BNG Target.

12.4.2 The monitoring data will be supported by set photo points to provide a visual record of each of the woodlands, their structure and cover.

12.5 Scattered Trees

12.5.1 An individual trees Statutory Metric Condition Assessment Sheet (Natural England, 2023) will be filled out per parcel of scattered trees within the site. The habitat condition score will subsequently be calculated and compared with the BNG Target.

12.5.2 Native trees and shrubs planted within the Biodiversity Area will be monitored to assess the establishment and growth of the different planted species. Any failures will be recorded along with negative factors requiring remedial measures.

12.5.3 The monitoring data will be supported by set photo points to provide a visual record of each of the woodlands, their structure and cover.

12.6 Hedgerows

12.6.1 A hedgerow Statutory Metric Condition Assessment Sheet (Natural England, 2023) will be filled out for each hedgerow within the site. The habitat condition score will subsequently be calculated and compared with the BNG Target.

12.6.2 The new and retained hedgerows will be monitored to assess their condition and the establishment of newly planted areas. Any failed areas of planting will be recorded along with negative factors requiring remedial measures such as excessive grazing/browsing pressure.

12.6.3 The monitoring data will be supported by set photo points to provide a visual record of each of the woodlands, their structure and cover.

12.7 Ponds

12.7.1 A pond Statutory Metric Condition Assessment Sheet (Natural England, 2023) will be filled out for each pond within the site. The habitat condition score will subsequently be calculated and compared with the BNG Target.

12.7.2 Each of the new pond within the Biodiversity Area will be monitored to assess the condition of the habitat and its value for wildlife. A visual inspection will be undertaken from the pond margin.

12.7.3 The monitoring data will be supported by set photo points to provide a visual record of each of the woodlands, their structure and cover.

12.8 Great Crested Newt

12.8.1 The monitoring programme will assess GCN populations in habitat creation and enhancement areas.

12.8.2 The retention and enhancement of terrestrial habitats suitable for GCN should result in the continued use of breeding ponds near the Site by great crested newt and may furthermore increase the habitat extent and connectivity throughout the site.

12.8.3 Surveys will be undertaken between mid-March – June through eDNA and population size class assessment surveys.

12.8.4 Monitoring will be undertaken in Years 1, 2, 4, 6 and 10, after which it will continue at five-year intervals until decommissioning of the Site.

12.8.5 The suitability of each pond will be assessed using Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessment.

12.8.6 The findings of the monitoring will be presented in a letter or short report supported by plans and photographs indicating locations of all GCN populations.

12.8.7 The monitoring will confirm the continued presence or likely absence of GCN populations in the operational site and nearby pond and the suitability of the ponds to support GCN.

12.8.8 Hibernacula will be inspected yearly to ensure they are in an appropriate condition.

12.9 Badger

12.9.1 Monitoring for Badgers will form part of the monitoring of the site, the extent of which will be informed by the DCO and protected species licensing mitigation.

12.10 Dormice

12.10.1 Monitoring for Dormice will form part of the monitoring of the site, the extent of which will be informed by the DCO and protected species licensing mitigation. However, will involve monitoring of dormouse as a result of Project hedgerow works, undertaken between April – November.

12.11 Wintering and Breeding Birds

12.11.1 Monitoring for wintering and breeding birds will form part of the monitoring of the site.

12.11.2 Wintering and breeding bird survey methodologies will be conducted in accordance with best practice guidelines, each with three visits undertaken. Wintering bird surveys will be undertaken between Mid-October – mid-March. Breeding bird surveys will be undertaken between March – August.

12.11.3 Bird boxes and skylark plots will be check annually in autumn/winter, to ensure boxes and plots are in a serviceable condition.

12.12 Bats

12.12.1 Static monitoring of key flight lines within the Project site will be undertaken in Spring, Summer and Autumn. Full details of which will be set out in Bat Technical Note.

12.12.2 Additional monitoring will be undertaken on the Bechstein's colonies present within the Central Site Area woodlands. This is because acoustic data alone will not separate *Myotis* species adequately. Therefore, simultaneous colony counts of the Bechstein's colonies will be carried out to ascertain whether the landscape changes have affected their use of resources. These colony

counts will be undertaken pre-maternity and post-maternity in year 1 and year 6 following construction.

12.12.3 Bat boxes will be check annually in autumn/winter by a suitably-licensed ecologist, to ensure boxes are in a serviceable condition.

12.13 Invertebrates

12.13.1 Insect hotels will be checked annually, to ensure hives are in a serviceable condition.

12.14 Control of invasive species

12.14.1 No invasive species are currently present on Site. However, any invasive, exotic species of plants identified during monitoring will be removed. Three non-native invasive bank species associated with watercourses will require particular attention. These are:

- Japanese knotweed *Fallopia japonica.*
- Giant hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum.*
- Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera.*

12.14.2 Other species that could occur include *Cotoneaster spp*. and *Robinia spp.*

12.14.3 All these species are listed in Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) making it an offence to ‘plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild’.

12.14.4 Where monitoring reveals a significant infestation of the non-native invasive plants named above, consideration should be given to herbicide control. Only herbicides containing the active ingredient glyphosate are currently approved for use in or near water.

12.14.5 Agreement must be obtained from the Environment Agency to use herbicides in or near water. Spraying needs to be carried out at the optimal time for the problem species.

12.14.6 When seeking agreement from the Environment Agency a range of information will need to be supplied including details of the site, the problem species, any nature conservation sites, downstream users and fish presence, along with details of the herbicide to be used and how it will be applied.

12.14.7 Anyone who uses herbicides in or near water must have the necessary skills, knowledge and qualifications. They must hold a relevant National Proficiency Test Certificate (NPTC) certificate of competence, which must be supplied with the application. The NPTC certificate must be for applying herbicides in or near water.

13 MONITORING PROGRAMME

13.1.1 All monitoring (except where noted) will be undertaken in Years 1, 2, 4, 6 and 10, followed by once every 5 years for the lifetime of the Project. The proposed monitoring programme is set out in Table 13.1, commitment numbers are in accordance with Table 9.8.1 of ES Chapter 9 **[EN010147/APP/6.3]**.

Table 13.1: Programme of Habitat and Species Monitoring

Commitment Number	Feature	Measures adopted	How measures will be secured
9.12	Habitats: Grasslands, Ditches, Woodlands, Scattered Trees, Hedgerows and Ponds.	Statutory Metric Condition Assessment and photo points. May to September.	Requirement in DCO.
9.13	Great Crested Newt	Monitoring of GCN populations in on site waterbodies and GCN habitat creation and enhancement areas. Hibernacula Inspections. Mid-March – June.	Requirement in DCO. Monitoring as part of protected species licence.
9.14	Badger	Monitoring of badger populations if any setts require closure. Winter.	Requirement in DCO. Monitoring as part of protected species licence (if required).
9.15	Dormouse	Monitoring of dormouse as a result of hedgerow works. April – November.	Requirement in DCO. Monitoring as part of protected species licence.
9.12	Breeding Birds	Three monitoring visits of breeding bird populations. Bird box inspections. March – August.	Requirement in DCO.
9.12	Wintering Birds	Three monitoring visits of wintering bird populations. Mid-October – mid-March.	Requirement in DCO.
9.12	Bats	Static monitoring of key flight lines, full details to be set out in Bat Technical Note. Spring, Summer and Autumn.	Requirement in DCO. Monitoring as part of protected species licence (if required).
9.12	Invertebrates	Insect hotels inspections. Any month.	Requirement in DCO.

14 WORKMANSHIP

14.1.1 Where, and to the extent that, materials and workmanship are not fully specified in this oLEMP they are to be suitable for the purposes of the stated objectives and in accordance with good horticultural practice or the current British Standard with reference to:

- BS 3998: Recommendations for tree work.
- BS 4428: Code of practice for general landscape operations.
- BS 7370: Grounds maintenance, referencing specifically Parts 1 to 5 of this standard as follows:
- Part 1: Recommendations for establishing and managing grounds maintenance organisations and for design considerations related to maintenance.
- Part 2: Maintenance of hard areas.
- Part 3: Maintenance of amenity and functional turf (other than sports turf).
- Part 4: Maintenance of soft landscape (other than amenity turf).
- Part 5: Maintenance of Water and Wetland Areas.

15 RESPONSIBILITIES FOR MANAGEMENT AND TIMESCALES

15.1.1 Following the end of the establishment period and satisfactory completion of any landscape defects or necessary reinstatement works all maintenance and management of soft landscape areas which form part of the Project within the Project site will be undertaken by a suitably qualified landscape management contractor on behalf of the Applicant.

15.1.2 Ongoing management and maintenance of the site will incorporate landscape proposals within the Project to provide a comprehensive approach going forward.

15.1.3 Areas for management include;

- Zone 1: Northern Estate Farmland
- Zone 2: Evenlode Corridor
- Zone 3: Valley Farmland
- Zone 4: Wooded Estate Farmland
- Zone 5: Southern Zone

15.1.4 The landscape maintenance works will be periodically reviewed by a suitably qualified and experienced person to ensure that the landscape management operations are being completed in accordance with the approved relevant LEMP. During the first two years of establishment, the works will be inspected three times (during the growing season) and thereafter the works will be inspected annually. Inspection reports will be made available to the local authority.

15.1.5 The management and maintenance strategies set out in the oLEMP to be carried into the detailed LEMPs for each part of the authorised development will be undertaken for the lifetime of the Project.

16 SCHEDULE OF MAINTENANCE

16.1.1 The following section sets out the key maintenance operations for each new habitat type.

16.2 Native Woodland and Buffer Planting

16.2.1 Key maintenance operations will include:

- Formative pruning as necessary to establish a dense screen / buffer.
- Selective pruning of native woodland planting and buffer planting as required where shrubs / trees start to encroach on footpaths/cycleways, highways, water courses and bodies and buildings, maintaining a full planted screen at all times along boundaries, where appropriate.
- Remedial pruning/tree surgery as necessary in accordance with BS:3998 or to remove growth obstructing paths, carriageways, lighting and signs.

16.3 Individual and Hedgerow Trees

16.3.1 Where an individual tree subject to a TPO must be removed to facilitate part of the scheme and the local authority requires replacement, a new tree of equivalent species and ultimate size will be agreed with the LPA. Planted in the same place or as near as reasonably practicable to the position of the removed tree, subject to operational requirements. Replacement planting for individual trees will utilise Standard tree stock (8-10cm girth) and will be planted in the next planting season following removal. The final species and planting location will be agreed in advance with the LPA.

16.3.2 Key maintenance operations will include:

- Checking, adjusting and replacing tree support systems and guarding as necessary during establishment period.
- Removing redundant tree support systems once trees are fully established.
- Formative pruning as necessary to establish a well-balanced and healthy crown appropriate to the species and purpose, along with the removal of any dead, dying or diseased limbs.
- Remedial pruning/tree surgery as necessary in accordance with BS:3998 or to remove growth obstructing paths, carriageways, lighting and signs.
- Replacing any dead, dying or diseased plants in the following planting season with stock of similar specification to the original for the initial five-year establishment period.

16.4 Meadow Grass

16.4.1 Key maintenance operations will include:

- Reseeding and repairing all areas which fail to establish or become damaged in the following planting season as required.

- Management to be via conservation grazing. However, if necessary, areas will be mechanically cut once annually (early autumn - once the wildflowers have flowered and seeded) to a sward height of 100 mm.
- Removal of all arisings from site. Composting on site from arisings will be permissible, where appropriate.
- Spot weed-killing to control coarse ruderal or pernicious weed species as necessary.
- Reseeding/rejuvenating areas of poor establishment and thinning sward as required.

16.5 General

Plant nutrients

16.5.1 Plant nutrients / fertiliser will not be used across the Project site other than in the Education Area, if required.

Watering

16.5.2 Watering will only be carried out to maintain the health and continued vigour of the trees and shrubs until fully established. Water usage will be controlled and monitored at all times to avoid waste.

16.5.3 Areas which become prone to waterlogging, where this is not ecologically desirable, will be alleviated suitably, and/or drainage added as required.

Pesticides Generally

16.5.4 Pesticides will not be used except in very exceptional circumstances.

16.5.5 Should they be necessary, all pesticides will be selected from the current list of approved chemicals and applied in strict accordance with the Control of Pesticide Regulations 1986 (as amended 1997) and other related Acts and Regulations.

16.5.6 The approval of the Environment Agency will be required when applying a pesticide to or within 3 metres of any watercourse.

16.5.7 Appropriate action will only be taken if a severe infestation occurs. If a problem persists over a number of years, consider changing the plant species concerned to one less vulnerable to infestation.

Existing Mature Trees

16.5.8 To ensure all mature trees are in a safe and healthy condition all existing mature trees will be inspected annually by a qualified and experienced arboriculturist. All survey results will be recorded and passed to the site operator. Additional inspections will be tasked after storms / periods of bad weather.

16.5.9 Complete pruning / dead wooding recommended by the above survey will be carried out. All such works will accord with BS3998:2010. This includes ensuring that nesting birds or roosting bats were not disturbed.

Litter Control

16.5.10 Collection and removing of litter from all hard and soft areas will be undertaken at regular intervals.

16.5.11 After each litter control visit all hard and soft landscaped area will be completely litter free.

Monitoring and Inspection

16.5.12 Routine monitoring will be provided to ensure that maintenance tasks are being undertaken as programmed and to review their effectiveness and make adjustments as necessary.

16.5.13 Appropriate action will be taken to deal with damage and debris arising from storms, flood events, heavy snowfall and / or interference.

16.5.14 Personnel completing inspections will be suitably qualified and experienced in monitoring landscape works (such as a Member of the Landscape Institute).

16.5.15 Ecological monitoring will take place to review the condition of habitats and the Evenlode corridor (including a river condition assessment). This will ensure that the assumptions with respect to biodiversity net gain were being achieved. Such monitoring will comprise UK Habitats Condition Assessments of the newly created habitats within the Project site at yearly intervals.

16.5.16 Further monitoring will be required by licences for specific species including GCN, badgers and dormice. Monitoring for bats will also be undertaken.

16.5.17 This monitoring will be undertaken using fixed point photography. If significant negative change occurs, appropriate mitigation will be implemented.

Ecological Stewardship

16.5.18 It is an offence to disturb nesting wild birds and roosting bats including their nests/roosts under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

16.5.19 Clearance, pruning and trimming operations during the bird nesting period, generally March to August inclusive will be avoided where practicable. If operations have to take place during this time, then a qualified Ecologist will check in advance that there are no birds nesting in the planned area of operation.

16.5.20 Cutting of meadow / rank grasses, should this be required, will be carried out in early autumn to prevent disturbance to reptile or ground nesting birds.

16.5.21 Disturbance and clearance/thinning of vegetation within water bodies and wetland areas will be completed in the winter months and any material removed left by the bank side for a week to allow insects and mammals to return to the pond or swale before removal.

16.5.22 Opportunities for further enhancement following routine maintenance and management will be encouraged, such as creating brash and/or log piles to offer refuge to wildlife.

16.5.23 Reference to the site's specific ecological considerations will be taken into account before carrying out any routine maintenance and management operations, consulting a suitability qualified ecologist in case of doubt.

Biosecurity

16.5.24 The threat of pests and diseases that affect plant species is widely recognised, and all landscape practitioners have a responsibility to detect, monitor and control pests and diseases at every stage of a plant's life from growing, specifying, handling, managing and destroying plants.

16.5.25 Wherever practicable all planting will be specified to be of local provenance and from reputable sources, with supporting paperwork provided and retained at each stage to demonstrate an auditable supply chain.

16.5.26 Reference will be made regularly to updates from DEFRA and the Forestry Commission with any recommendations or warnings strictly adhered to, to prevent further spread of disease including reporting known outbreaks as appropriate.

16.5.27 Good plant husbandry will be implemented on site to prevent further spread of diseases, particularly where symptoms or confirmed outbreaks of disease has occurred.

17 MANAGEMENT REVIEWS AND ACTIONS

17.1.1 The review will consider the extent to which the objectives, aims and BNG targets have been achieved through the ongoing implementation of management actions over the lifetime of the Site.

17.1.2 The effectiveness of the prescriptions, methods and timing of works will be assessed based on the status of habitats.

17.1.3 The assessments will consider trends in habitat change, drawing upon the results of previous years and the known the pre-development habitat conditions with the implementation period.

17.1.4 The monitoring results will be compiled in monitoring reports. The report will highlight positive and negative outcomes for biodiversity, nature conservation, species and BNG targets. The monitoring reports will highlight any unforeseen changes to factors influencing management decisions and actions and the continued relevance of each of the management prescriptions.

17.1.5 Any shortfalls in achieving the management objectives will be highlighted such as adverse habitat changes and trends or habitat establishment failures or damage. The monitoring reports would include additional management actions in the work schedules to address unexpected changes such as the colonisation of invasive non-native plants, actions to repair the adverse effects of prolonged drought or where a current management specification is not effective.

17.1.6 Examples of remedial measures that may become appropriate are listed in Table 11.1 below. The need for the implementation of any of these would be triggered by monitoring. This Management Plan will be a working document with flexibility allowing the management prescriptions to be tailored to achieving the biodiversity, aims, objectives and targets.

Table 17.1: Example of Modifications to Management and Remedial Measures

Feature	Example of Management Modifications and Remedial Measures
Habitats	
Grasslands	Supplemental grassland and wildflower seeding Removal of shrub species, bracken and/or non-native invasives Changes in frequency and timing of grass cutting Changes to levels of grazing stock or timing of grazing Removal of areas of coarse grass and nutrient rich topsoil and reseed native grass mix into prepared subsoil
Ditches	Supplemental planting of emergent, submerged and floating-leaved plants Removal of filamentous algae and or duckweed, invasive, overhanging trees/shrubs and Water Framework Directive UKTAG GB High Impact Species List (UKTAG, 2021)
Woodland	Supplemental planting of ground, mid and over-storey species Management of wild, domestic and feral herbivore damage Removal of invasive plant species Creation of open space within woodland
Hedgerows	Selective cutting back of dominant species to promote diversity

Feature	Example of Management Modifications and Remedial Measures
	Adapting cutting regime/method to promote dense growth to ground level and maintained the height of approximately 3m (see paragraph 3.2.1); Supplementary planting to infill gaps and replace losses
Ponds	Removal of any fish if introduced into ponds Removal of any non-native species if introduced into ponds Removal of bulrush, common reed, duckweed or algae Placement of barley hay bale to reduce algae Removal of sediment / leaf litter
New shrub and tree planting	Supplement planting to infill gaps and replace losses Adapting cutting regime/method to promote dense growth to ground level
Species	
Great Crested Newt	Repairs to hibernacula.
Breeding birds	Repairs/ resitting of nest boxes and skylark plots.
Bats	Repairs/ resitting of bat boxes.
Invertebrates	Repairs to insect hotels.

17.1.7 The management prescriptions and timing will be reviewed after each monitoring visit. The review will focus on the structure, features and nature conservation value of habitats, to ensure that they remain an important resource for wildlife within the Site and make a contribution to nature conservation value in the local area.

17.1.8 The review will inform if changes are required to the future management prescriptions, actions and/or timing. Additional management actions could be added to the work schedule to address unexpected changes or where additional remedial measures not listed in this plan become a requirement.

17.1.9 Maintaining flexibility will be essential in ensuring that the management prescriptions can be tailored as necessary to achieve the desired outcomes. Many of the management prescriptions during the first five years post construction will be undertaken as required based on the checks and monitoring to assess the habitats condition specified in the plan.

REFERENCES

Froglife (2001). Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook.

Natural England (2023). The Statutory Biodiversity Metric -Technical Annex 1: Condition Assessment Sheets and Methodology.

Natural England (2024). Countryside Stewardship management practices as set out in AB4: Skylark Plots.

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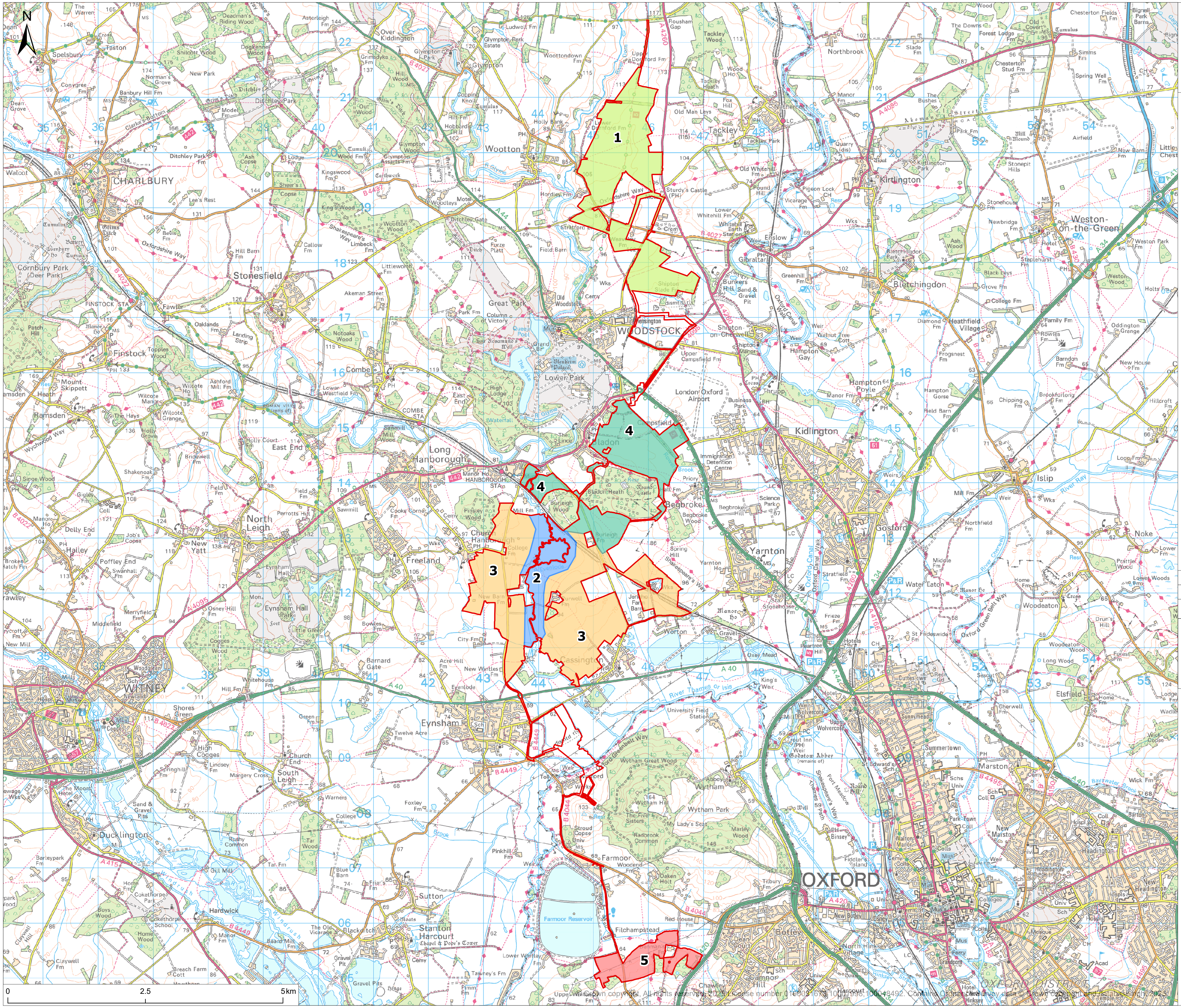
UKTAG (2021). Water Framework Directive. Classification of aquatic alien species according to their level of impact.

DRAWINGS



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Legend

- Order Limits

Landscape Zones

- Zone 1: Northern Estate Farmland
- Zone 2: Evenlode Corridor
- Zone 3: Valley Farmland
- Zone 4: Wooded Estate Farmlands
- Zone 5: Southern Zone

Rev	Description	By	CB	Date

PHOTOVOLT DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

A TETRA TECH COMPANY

Client PVDP

Project Botley West Solar Farm

Title Landscape Management Zoning Plan

Status	Drawn By	PM/Checked By
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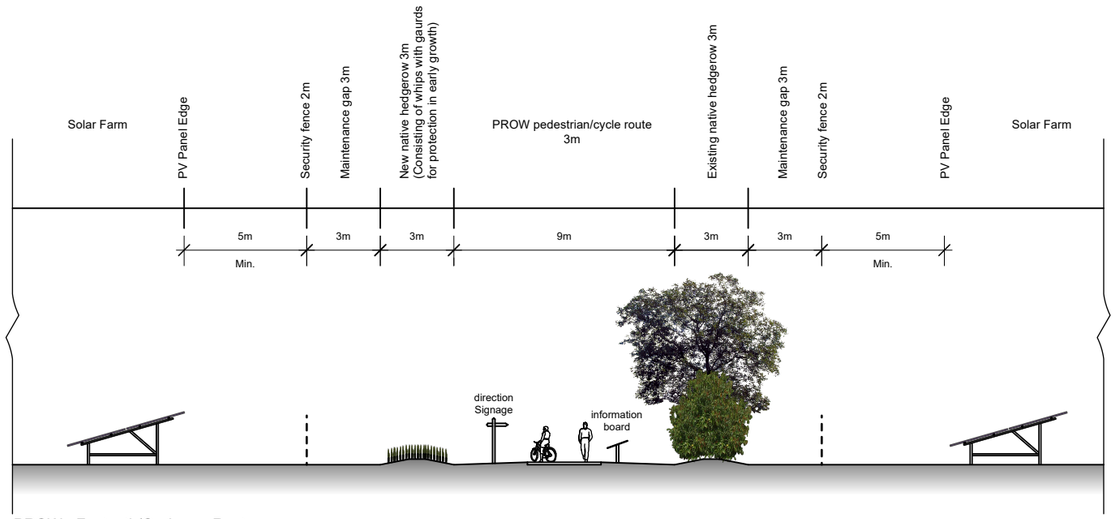
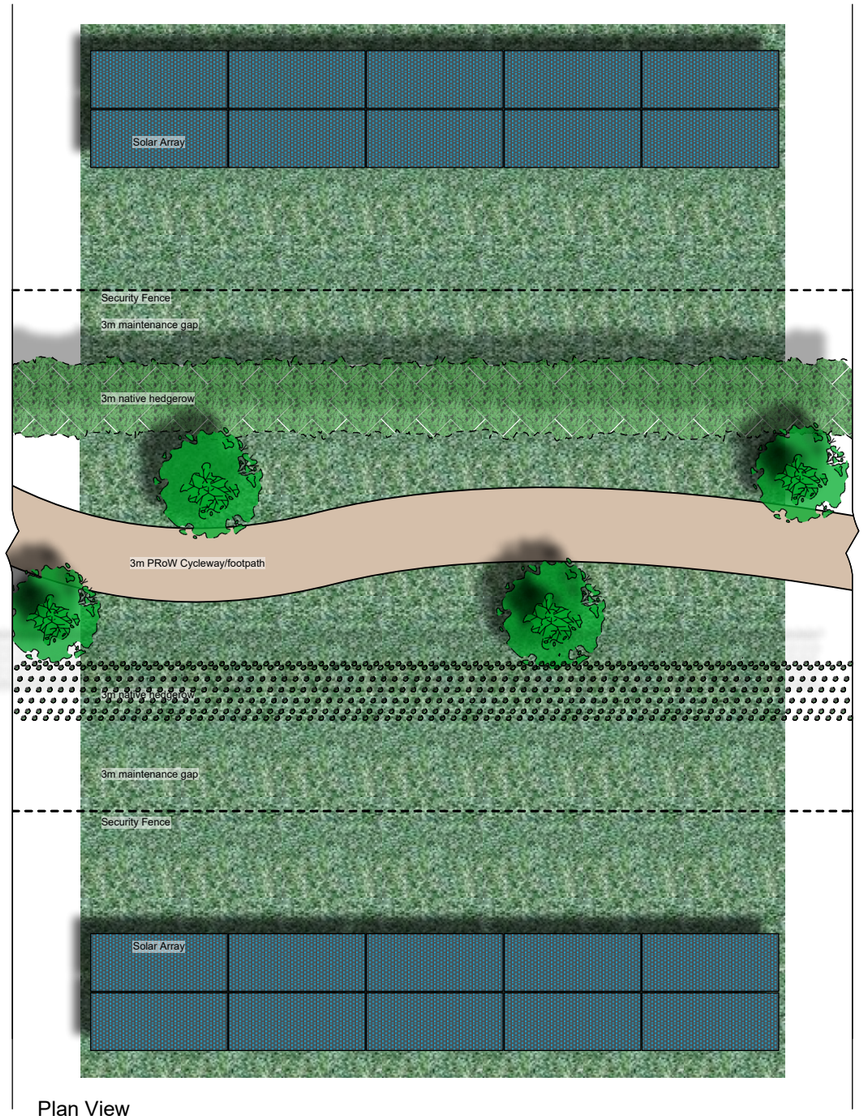


PROW - Footpath/Cycleway Route

PRoW footpath/cycleway, meanderingm route to add interest to rather than linear corridor. Route may benefit from directional signage, points of interest (wildlife boards for example) and other enroute activities.



Plan View

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Rev	Description	By	CB	Date

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Client PVDP

Project Botley West Solar Farm

Title Indicative greenway plans - Footpath/Cycleway Year 1

Status	Drawn By	PM/Checked by
FINAL	AJC	JA
Job Ref	**Scale @ A3**	**Date Created**
EN010147/APP/7.6.3	1:250	Nov 2024
Figure Number		**Rev**
7.6.3.2A		-

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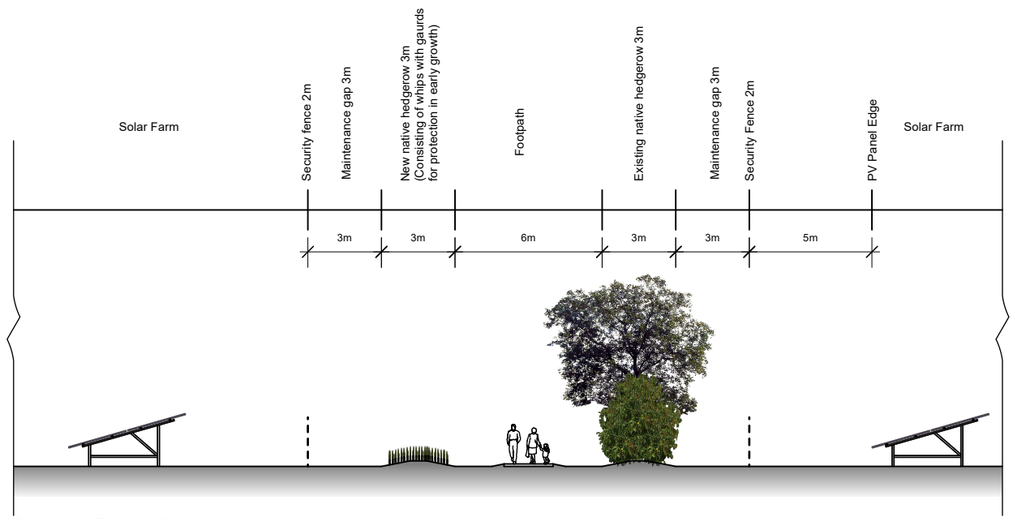
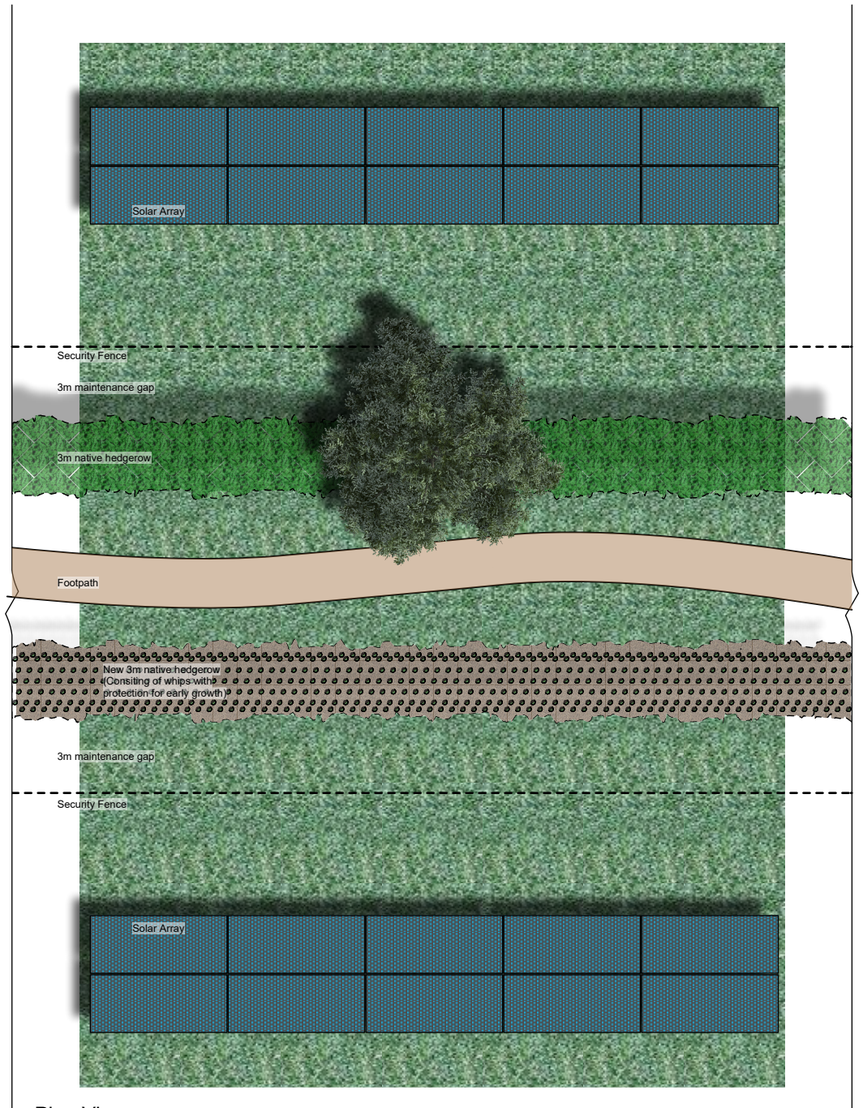


Permissive Footpath Route

Footpath - Route may benefit from directional signage, points of interest (wildlife boards for example) and other enroute activities.



Plan View

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Client PVDP

Project Botley West Solar Farm

Title Indicative greenway plans - Footpath (1) Year 1

Status	Drawn By	PM/Checked by
FINAL	AJC	JA
Job Ref	**Scale @ A3**	**Date Created**
EN010147/APP/7.6.3	1:250	Nov 2024
Figure Number		**Rev**
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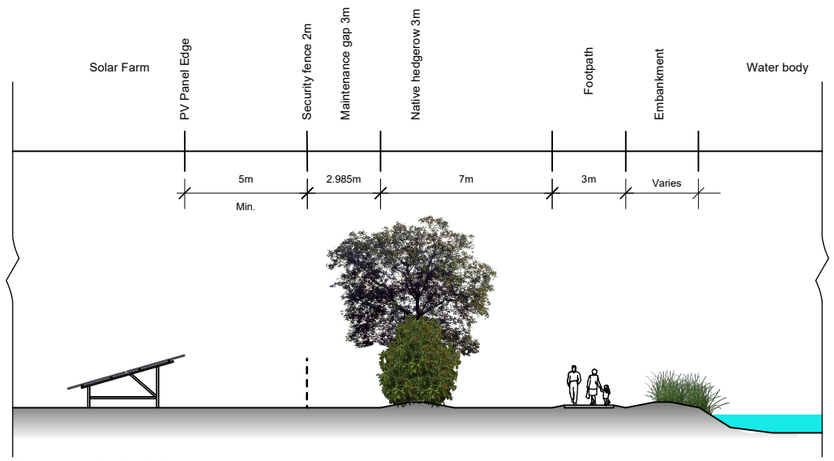
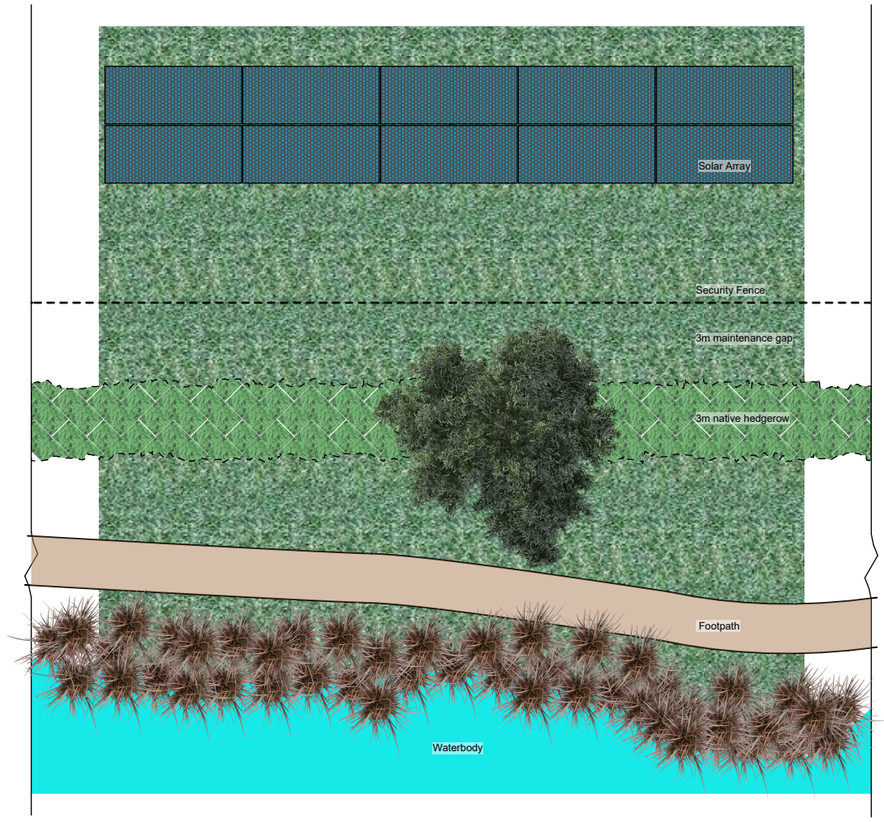


Permissive Footpath Route

Footpath alongside waterbody. Route may benefit from directional signage, points of interest (wildlife boards for example) and other enroute activities.



Plan View

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Client PVDP

Project Botley West Solar Farm

Title Indicative greenway plans - Footpath (2) Year 1

Status	Drawn By	PM/Checked by
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Figure Number **7.6.3.2C**

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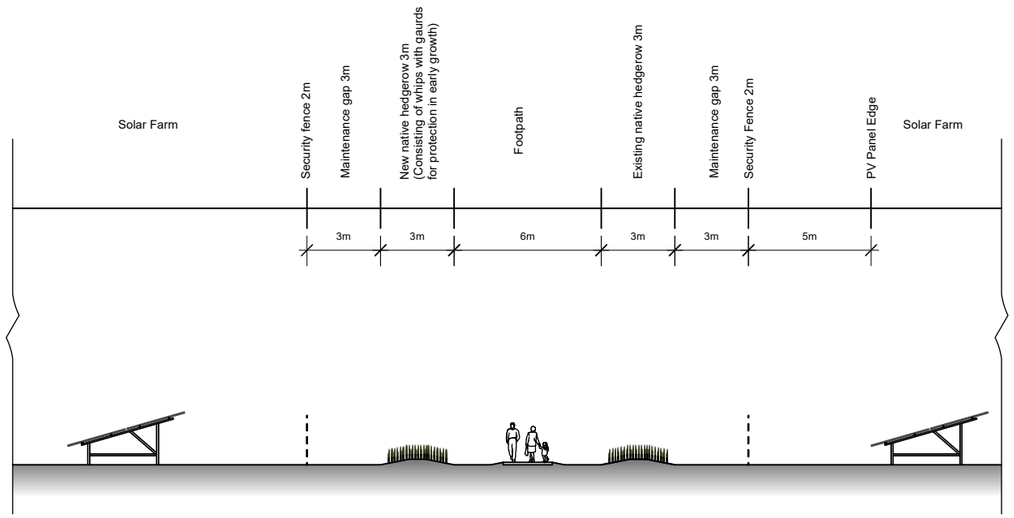
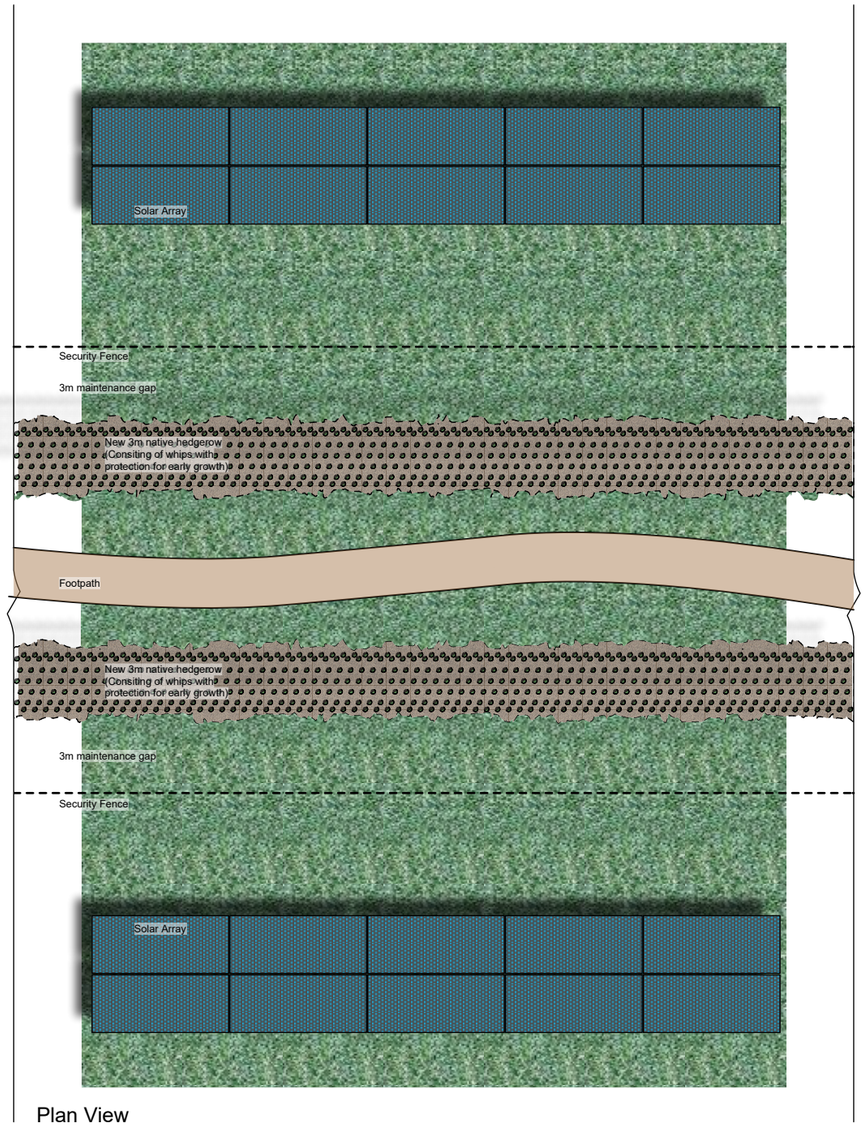


Permissive Footpath Route

Footpath - Route may benefit from directional signage, points of interest (wildlife boards for example) and other enroute activities.



Plan View

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Client PVDP

Project Botley West Solar Farm

Title Indicative greenway plans - Footpath (3) Year 1

Status	Drawn By	PM/Checked by
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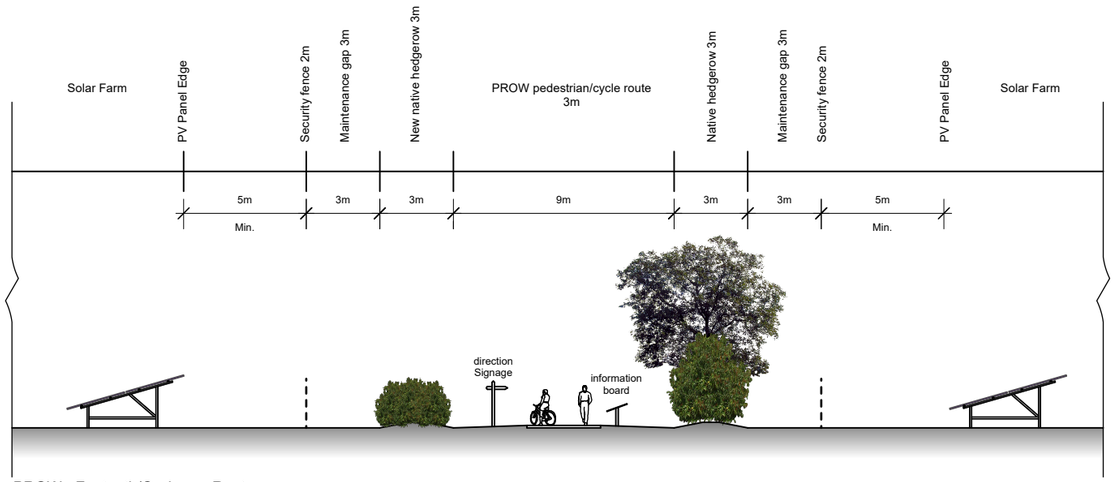

PROW - Footpath/Cycleway Route

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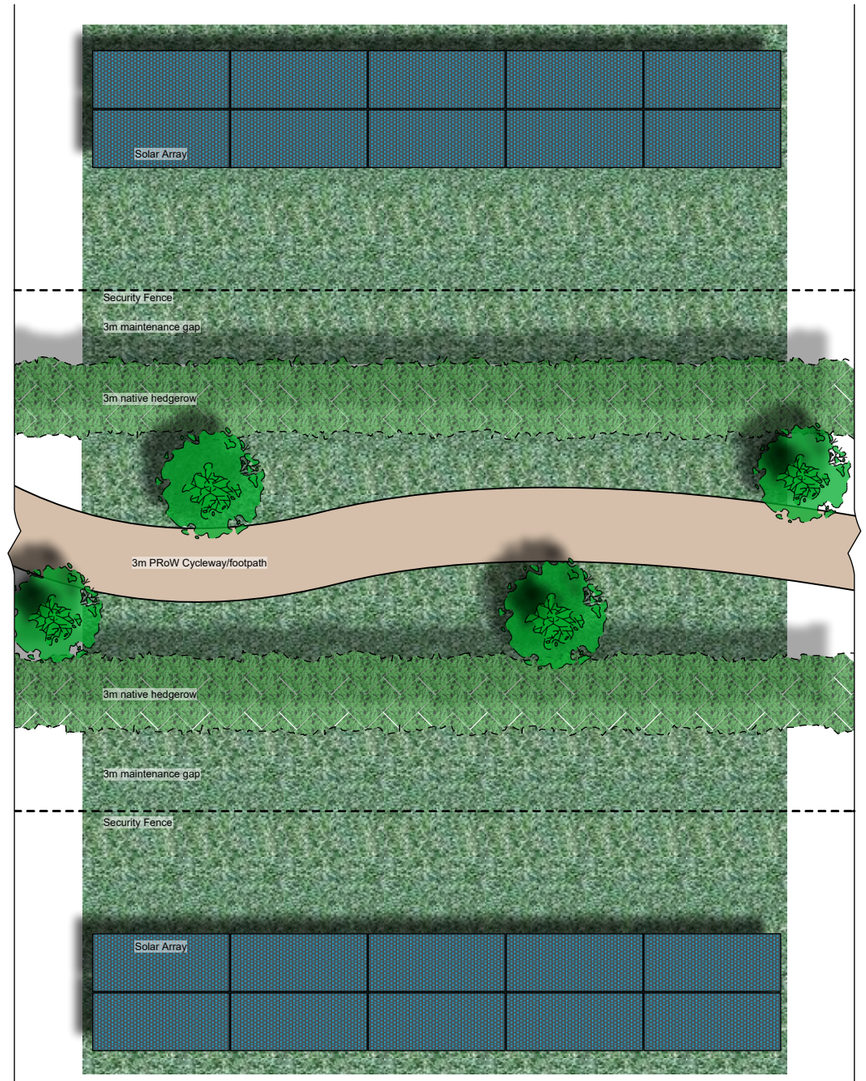

Plan View

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Project Botley West Solar Farm

Title Indivative greenway plans - Footpath/Cycleway Year 5

Status	Drawn By	PM/Checked by
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Figure Number **7.6.3.2E**

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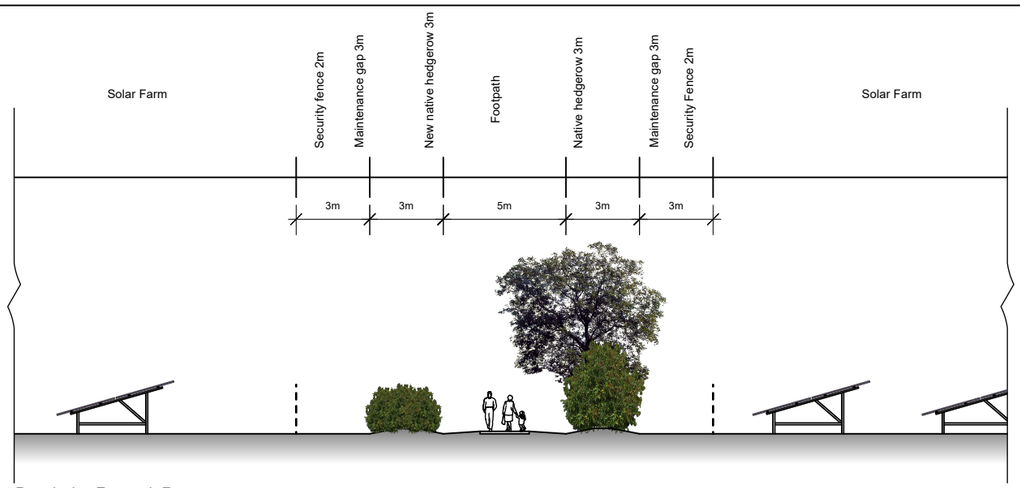
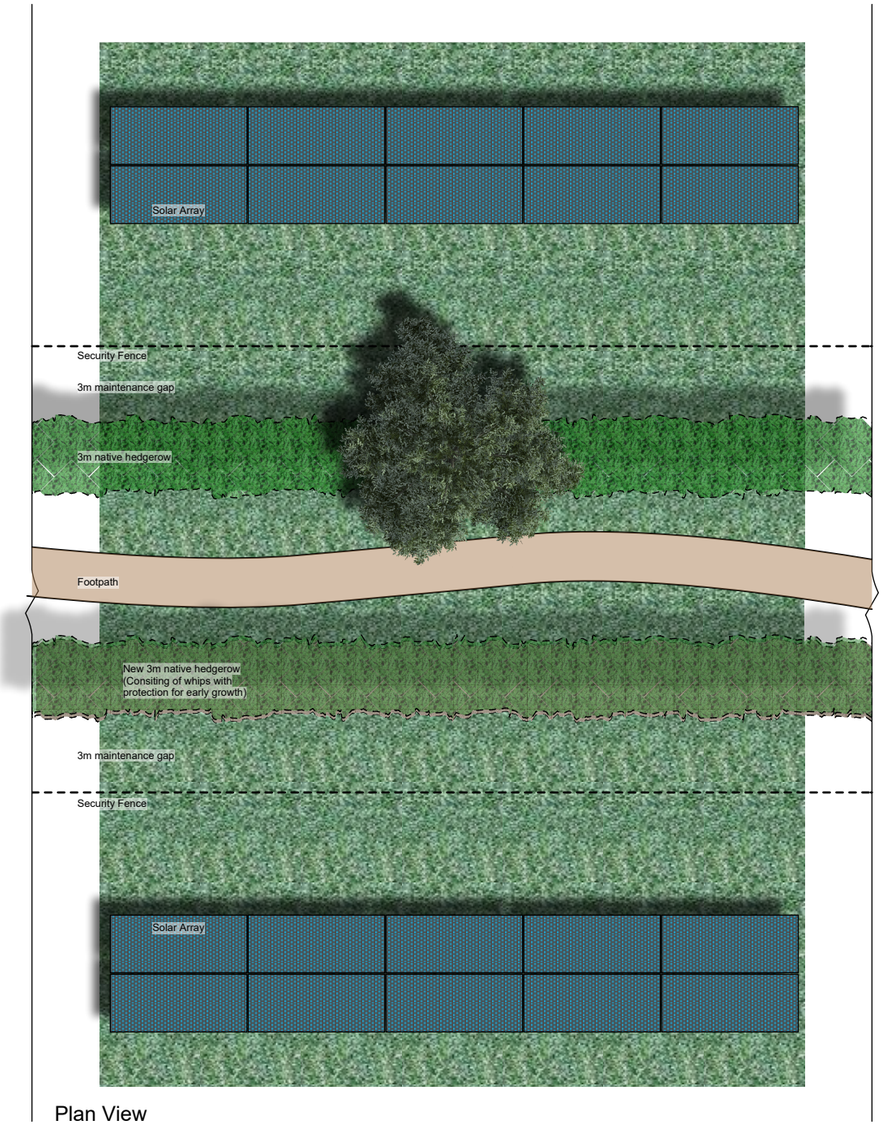


Permissive Footpath Route

Footpath - Route may benefit from directional signage, points of interest (wildlife boards for example) and other enroute activities.



Plan View

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Client PVDP

Project Botley West Solar Farm

Title Indicative greenway plans - Footpath (1) Year 5

Status	Drawn By	PM/Checked by
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Figure Number **7.6.3.2F**

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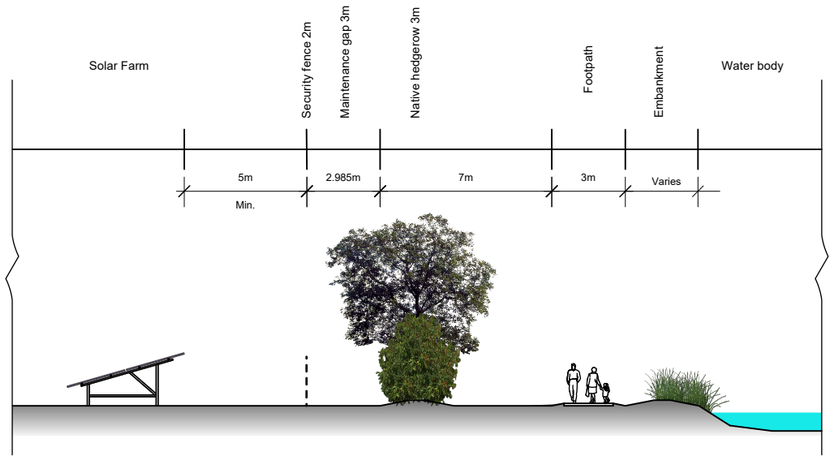
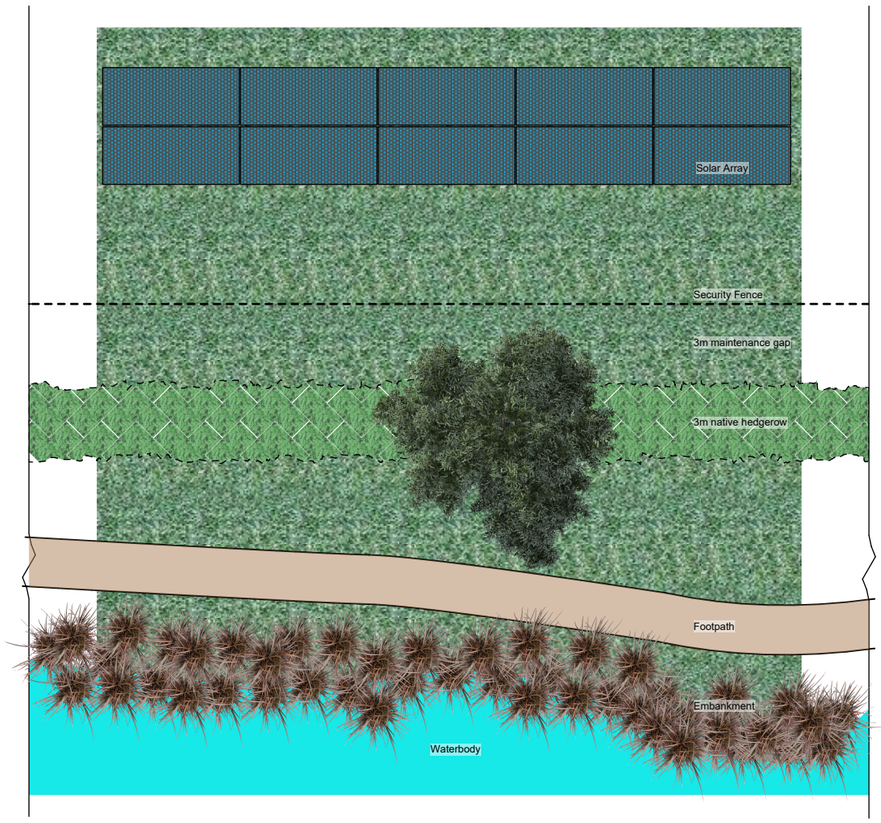


Permissive Footpath Route

Permissive footpath alongside waterbody. Route may benefit from directional signage, points of interest (wildlife boards for example) and other enroute activities.



Plan View

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Client PVDP

Project Botley West Solar Farm

Title Indicative greenway plans - Footpath (2) Year 5

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Figure Number **7.6.3.2G**

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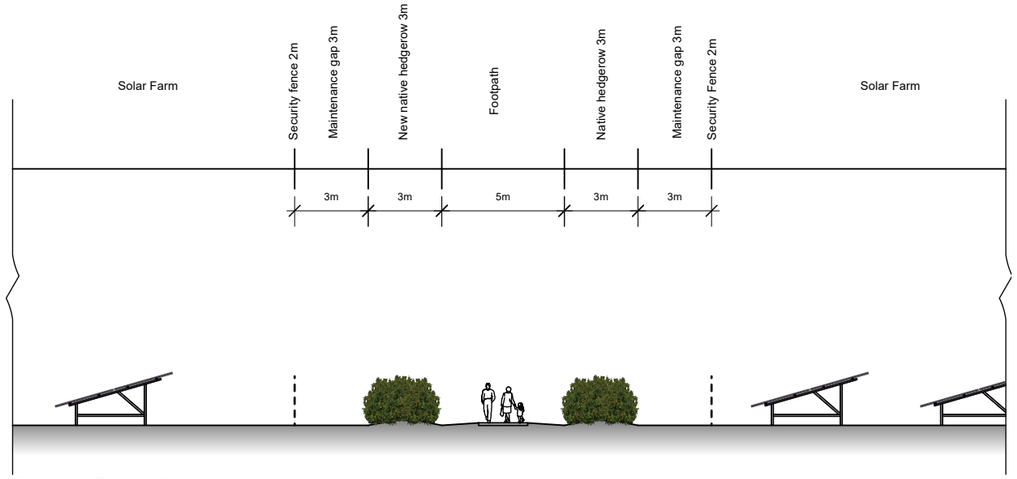

Permissive Footpath Route

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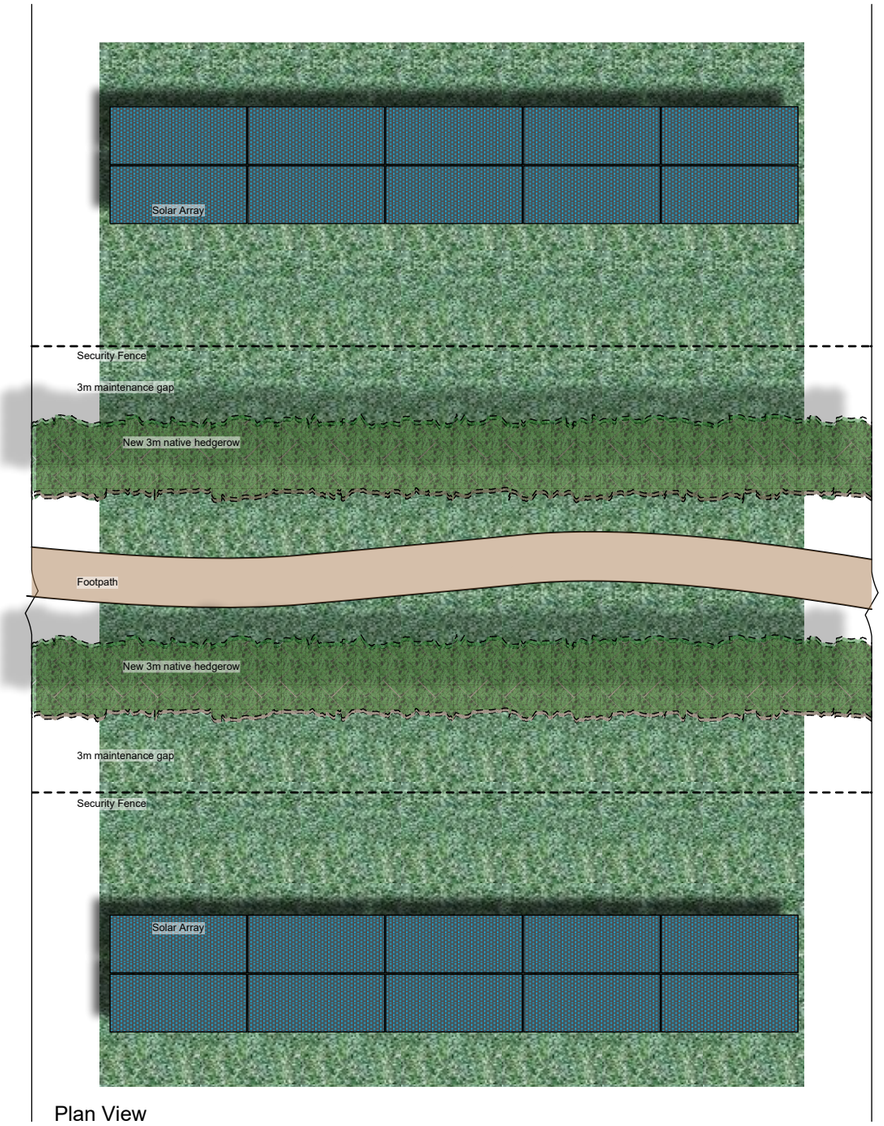

Plan View

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Project Botley West Solar Farm

Title Indicative greenway plans - Footpath (3) Year 5

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Figure Number **7.6.3.2H**

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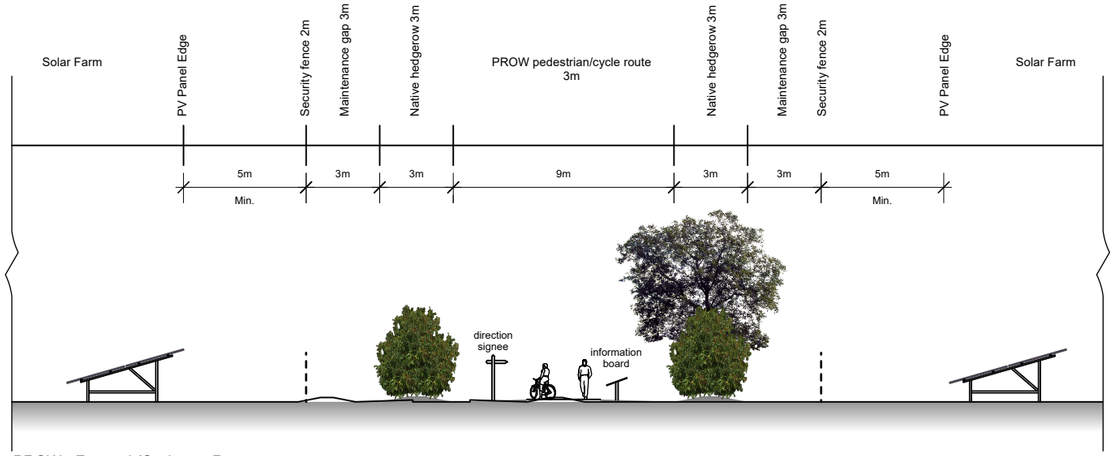
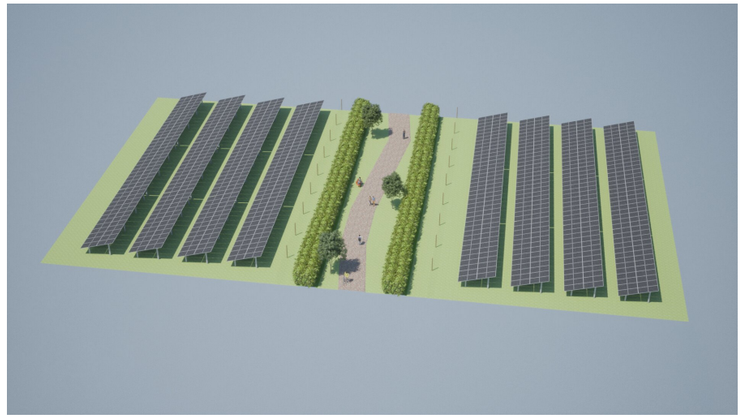
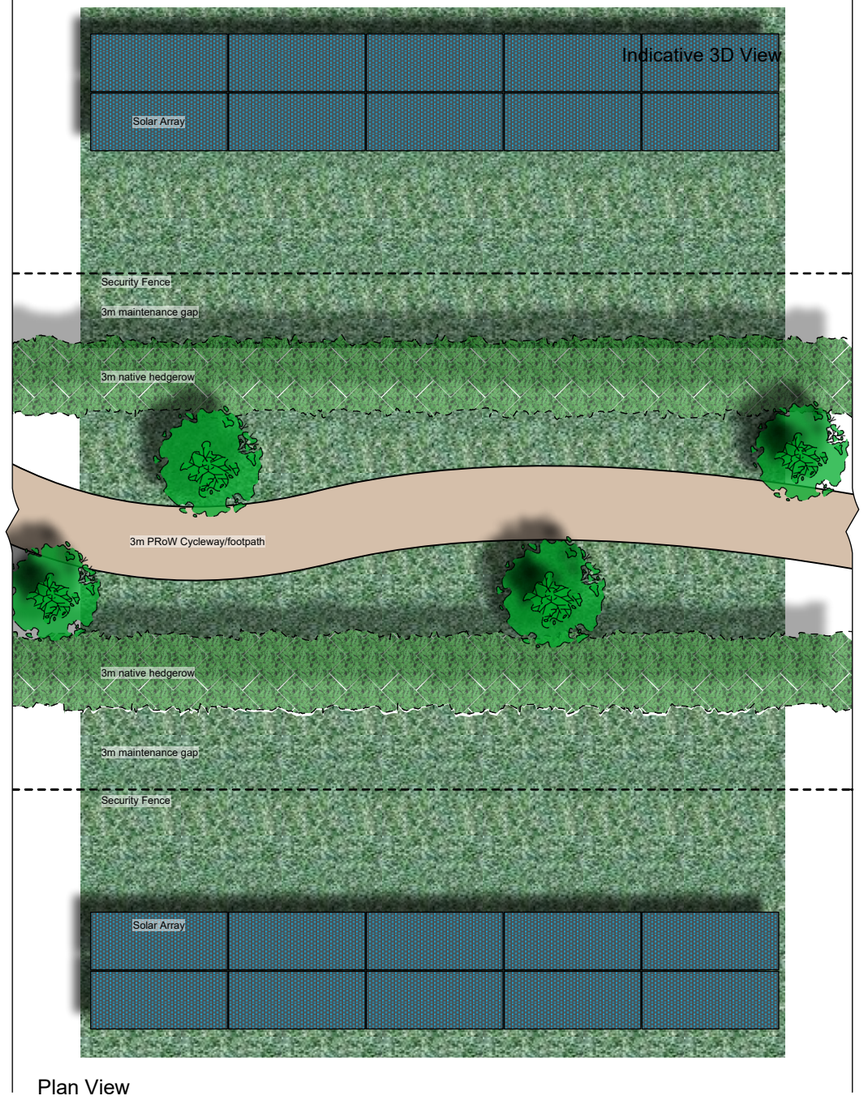


PROW - Footpath/Cycleway Route





Plan View

PRoW footpath/cycleway, meanderingm route to add interest to rather than linear corridor. Route may benefit from directional signage, points of interest (wildlife boards for example) and other enroute activities.

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Project Botley West Solar Farm

Title Indicative greenway plans - Footpath/Cycleway Year 15

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Figure Number **7.6.3.2 I**

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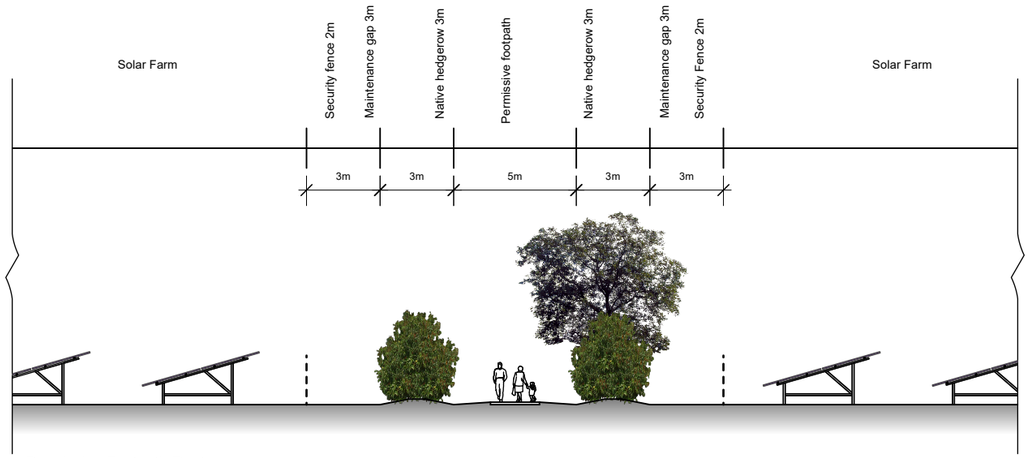
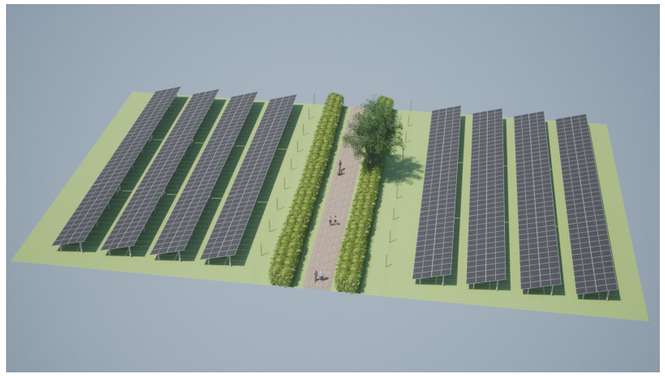
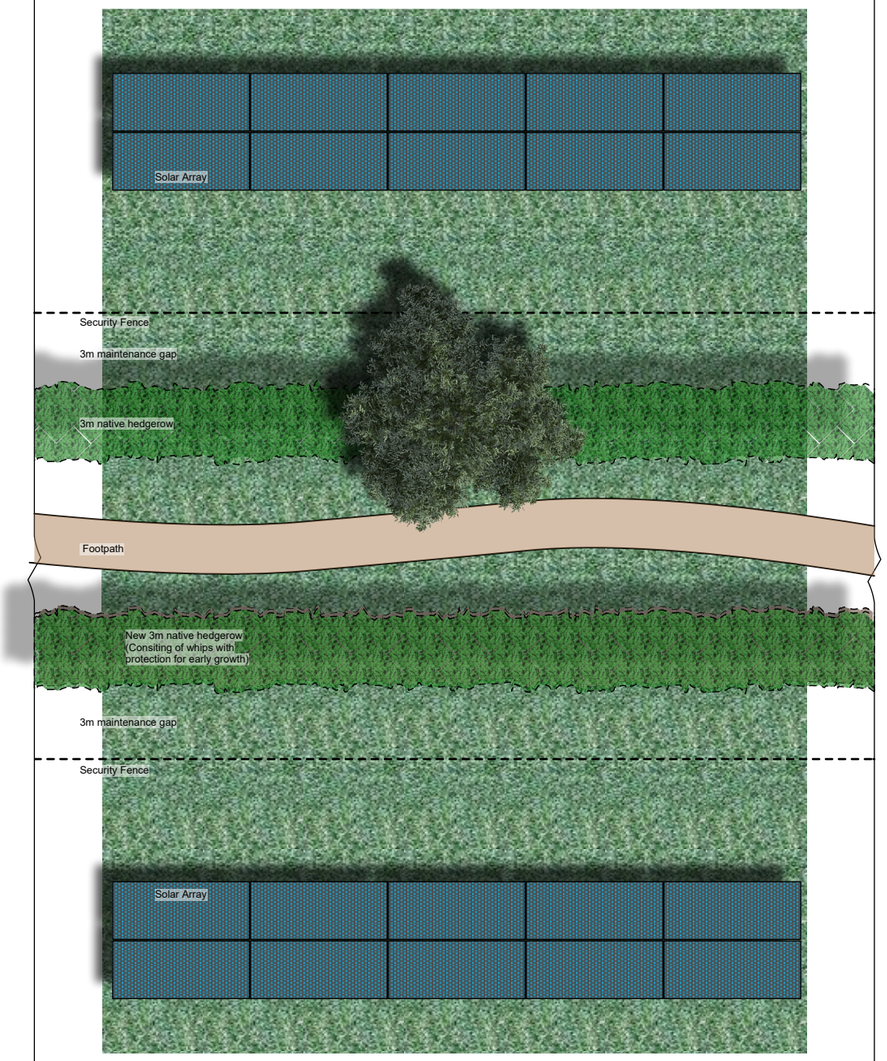


Permissive Footpath Route



Indicative 3D View

Permissive footpath - Route may benefit from directional signage, points of interest (wildlife boards for example) and other enroute activities.



Plan View

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Project Botley West Solar Farm

Title Indicative greenway plans - Footpath (1) Year 15

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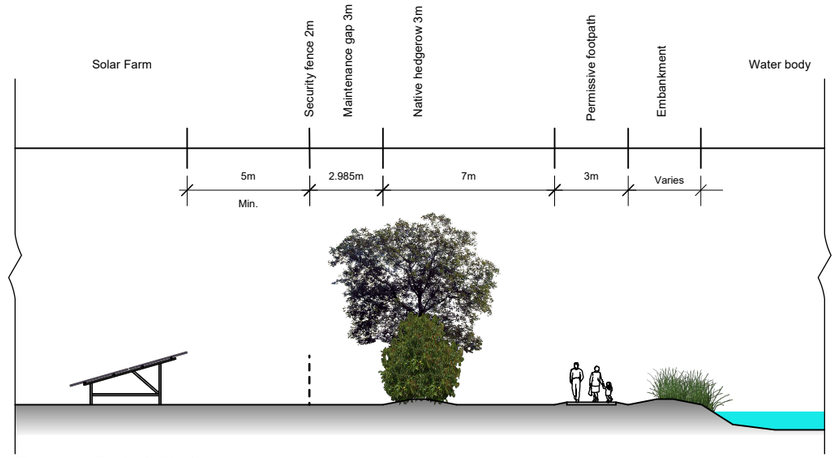
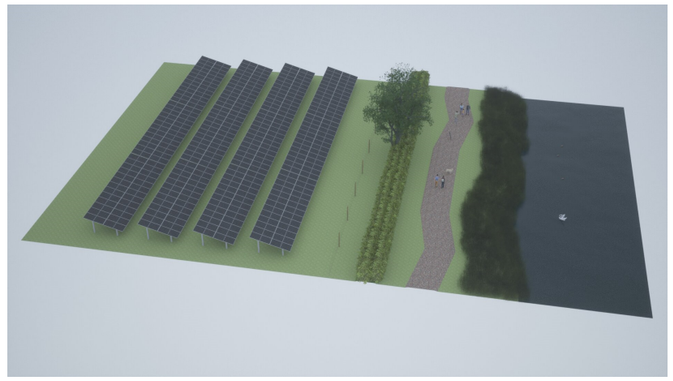
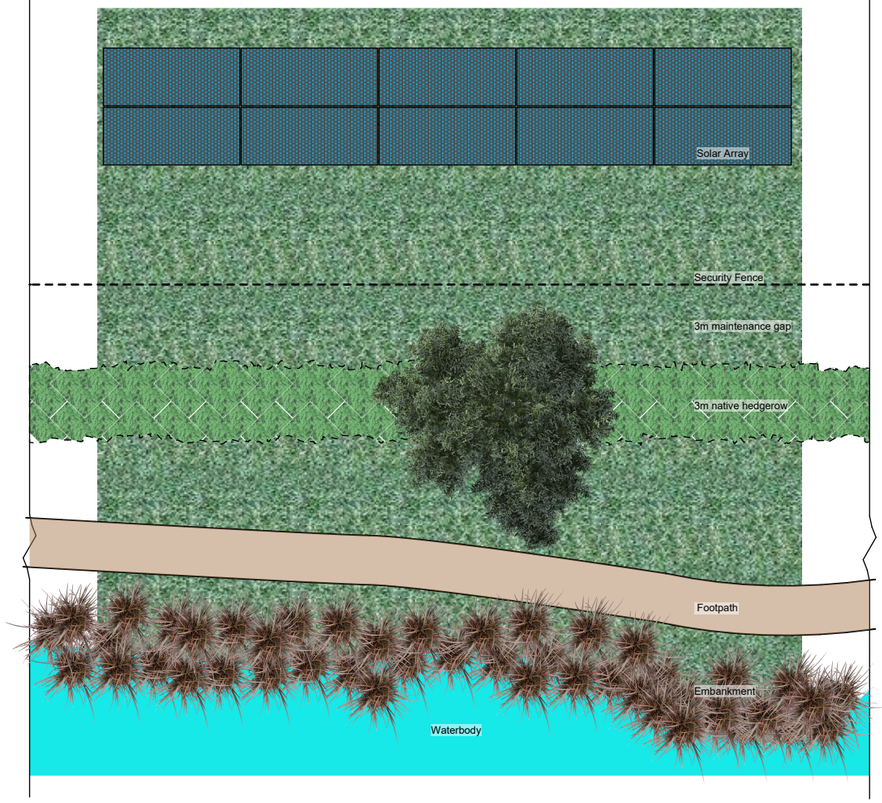


Permissive Footpath Route



Indicative 3D View

Footpath alongside waterbody. Route may benefit from directional signage, points of interest (wildlife boards for example) and other enroute activities.



Plan View

Notes

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Rev	Description	By	CB	Date

PHOTOVOLT DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

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A TETRA TECH COMPANY

Client PVDP

Project Botley West Solar Farm

Title Indicative greenway plans - Footpath (2) Year 15

Status	Drawn By	PM/Checked by
FINAL	AJC	JA
Job Ref	**Scale @ A3**	**Date Created**
EN010147/APP/7.6.3	1:250	Nov 2024

Figure Number **7.6.3.2K**

Rev -

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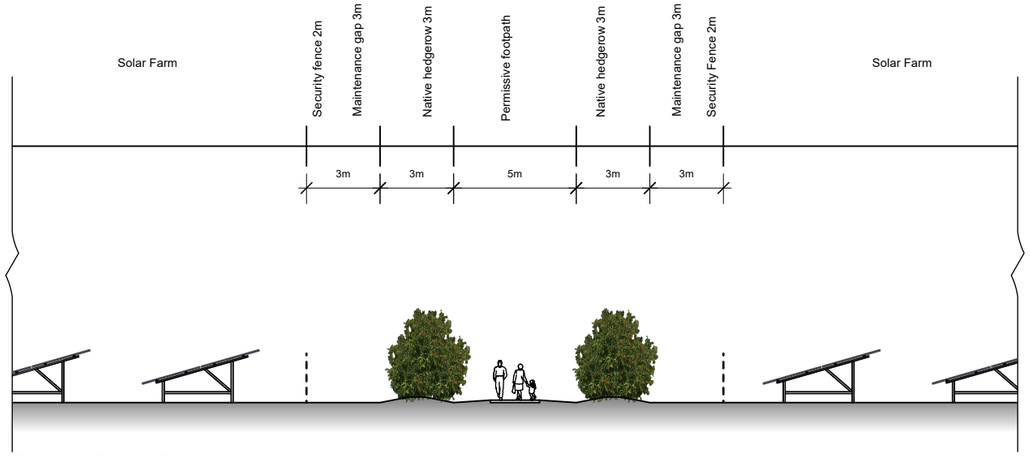
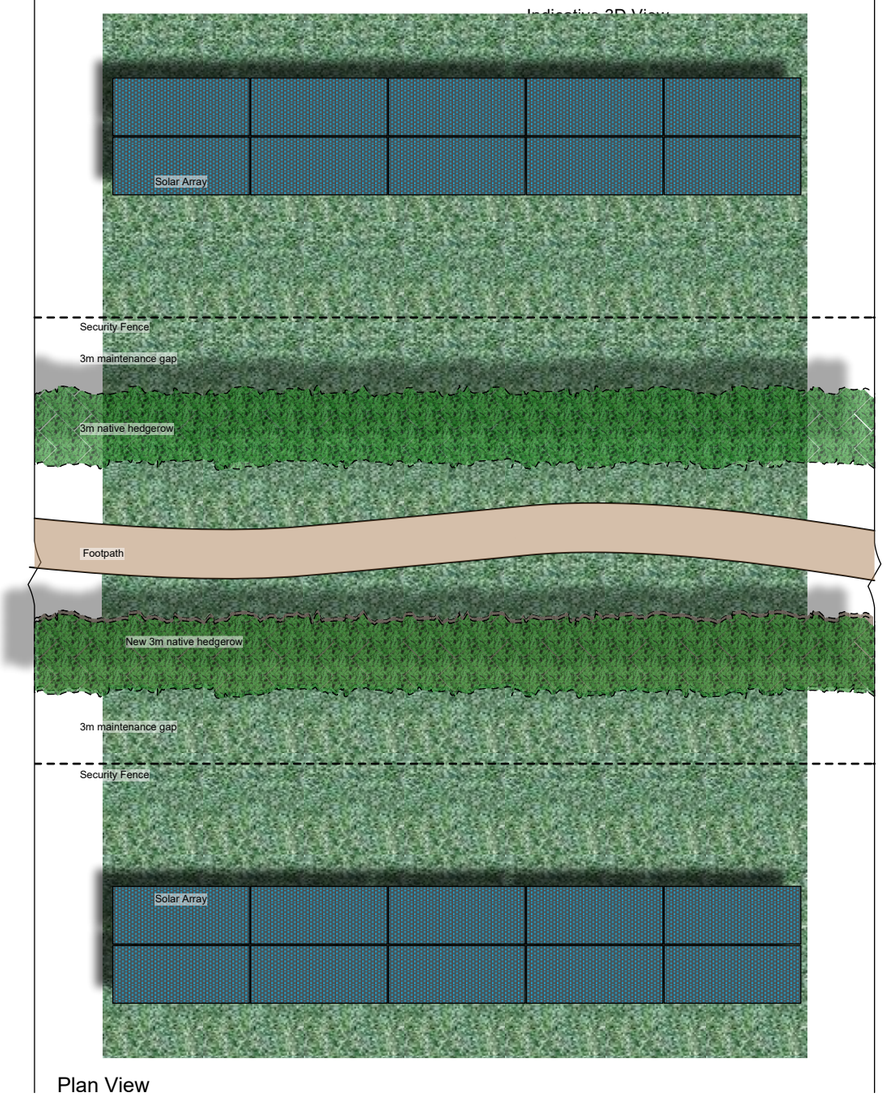


Permissive Footpath Route

Permissive footpath - Route may benefit from directional signage, points of interest (wildlife boards for example) and other enroute activities.



Plan View

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PHOTOVOLT DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

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Client PVDP

Project Botley West Solar Farm

Title Indicative greenway plans - Footpath (2) Year 15

Status	Drawn By	PM/Checked by
FINAL	AJC	JA

Job Ref	Scale @ A3	Date Created
EN010147/APP/7.6.3	1:250	Nov 2024

Figure Number **7.6.3.2 L**

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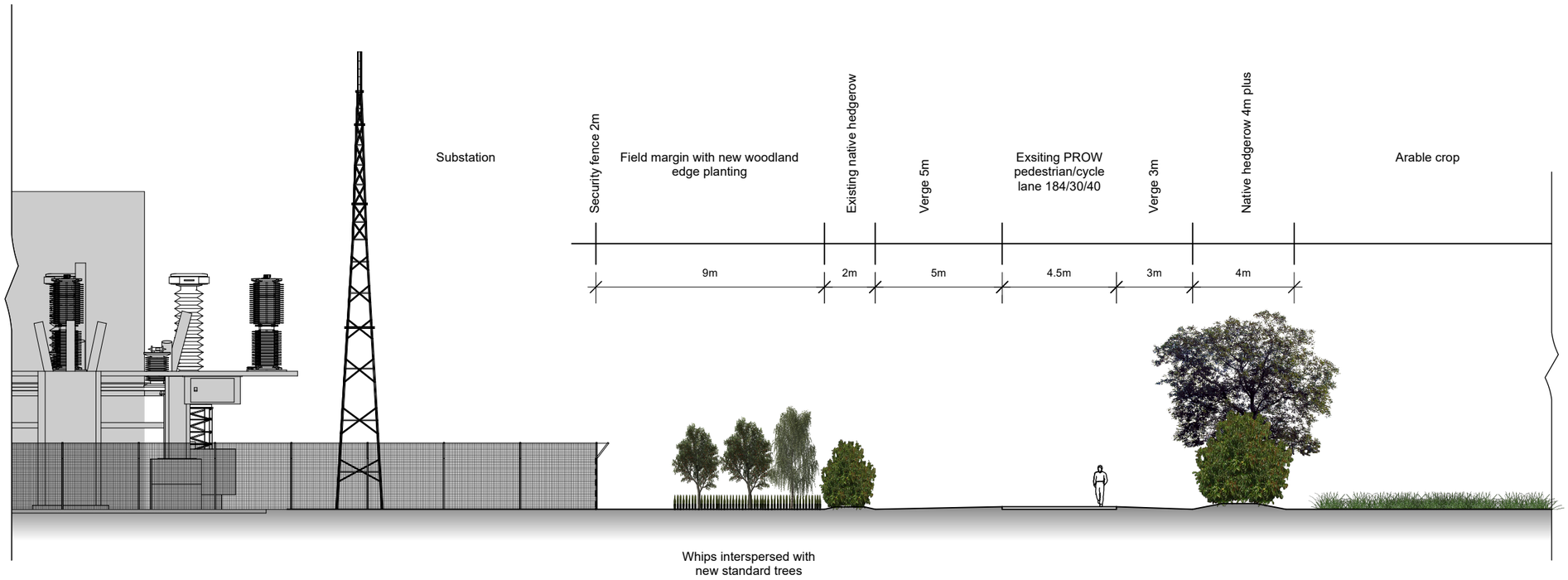

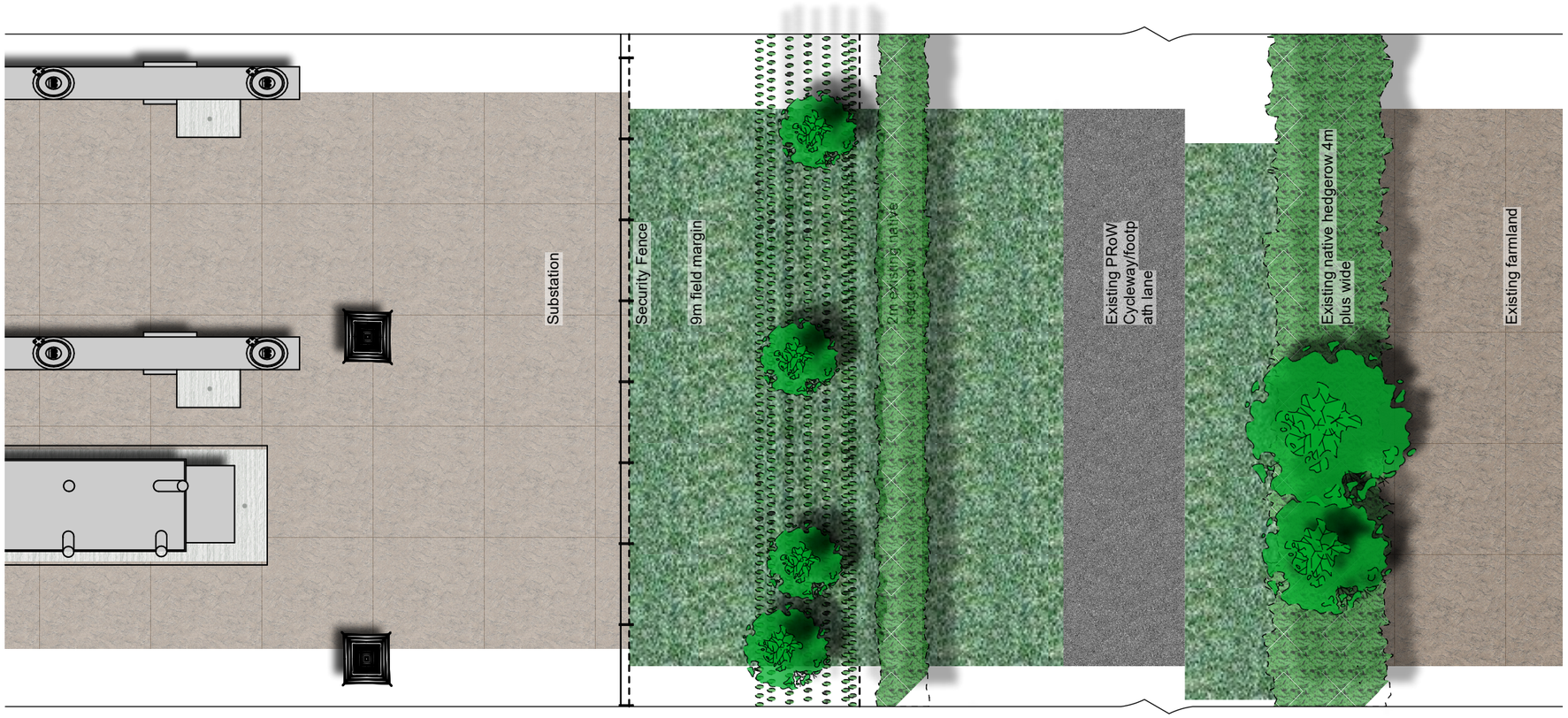

Plan View

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PHOTOVOLT DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

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Client PVDP

Project Botley West Solar Farm

Title Indicative greenway plans - PRoW Local to Substation Year 1

Status	Drawn By	PM/Checked by
FINAL	AJC	JA
Job Ref	**Scale @ A3**	**Date Created**
EN010147/APP/7.6.3	1:250	Nov 2024
Figure Number		**Rev**
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Plan View

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Client PVDP

Project Botley West Solar Farm

Title Indicative greenway plans - PRoW Local to Substation Year 5

Status	Drawn By	PM/Checked by
FINAL	AJC	JA
Job Ref	**Scale @ A3**	**Date Created**
EN010147/APP/7.6.3	1:250	Nov 2024
Figure Number		**Rev**
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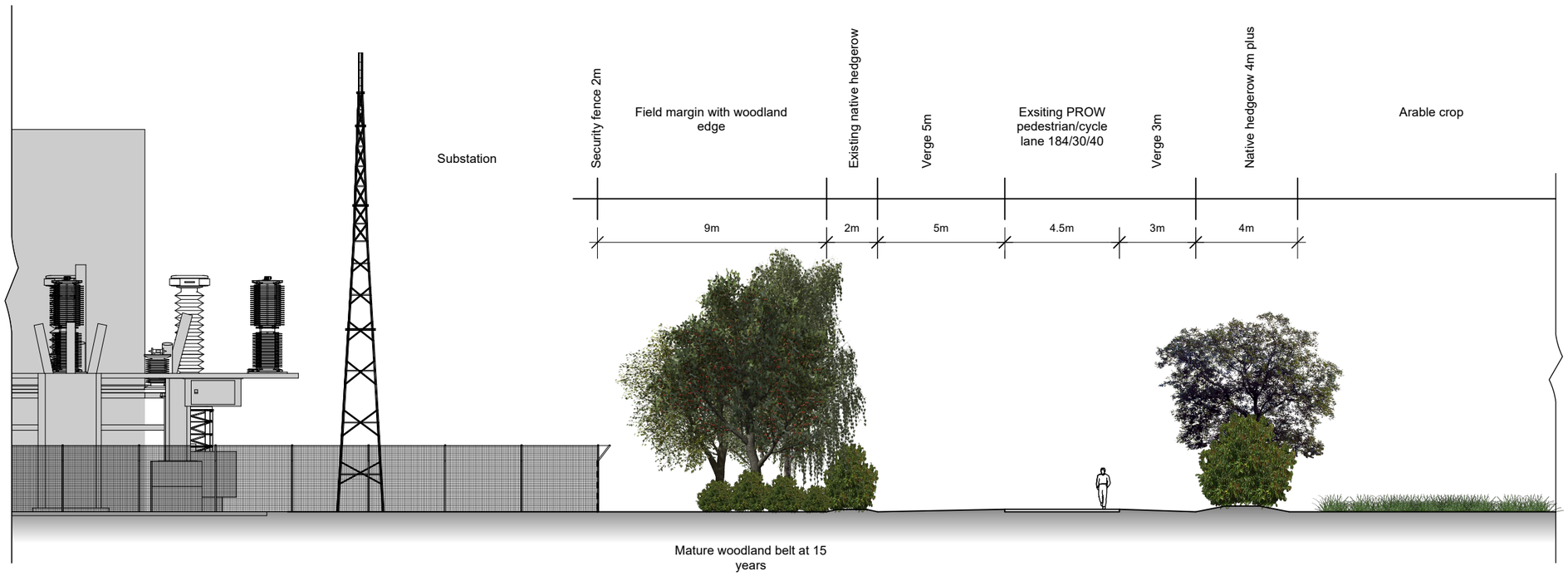

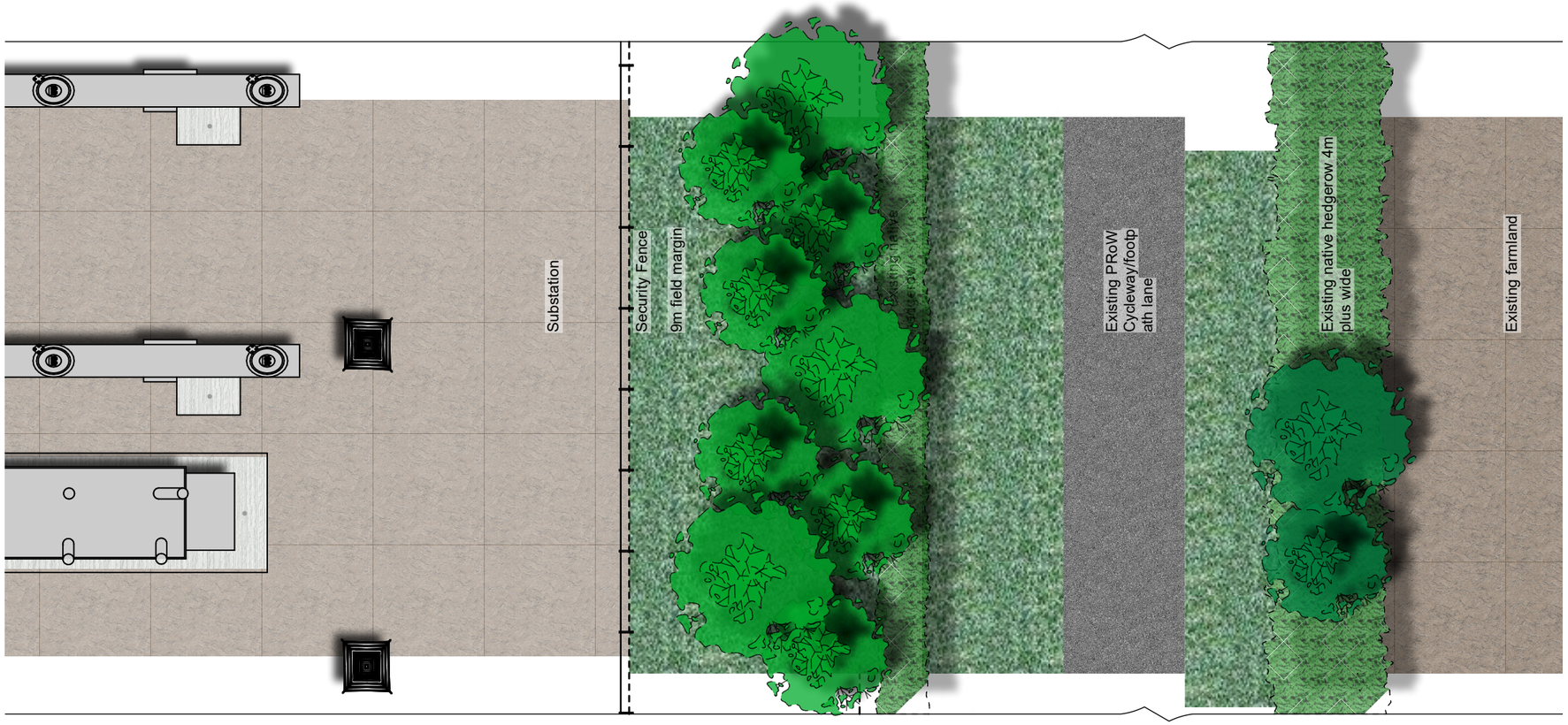

Plan View

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Client PVDP

Project Botley West Solar Farm

Title Indicative greenway plans - PRoW Local to Substation Year 15

Status	Drawn By	PM/Checked by
FINAL	AJC	JA
Job Ref	**Scale @ A3**	**Date Created**
EN010147/APP/7.6.3	1:250	Nov 2024
Figure Number		**Rev**
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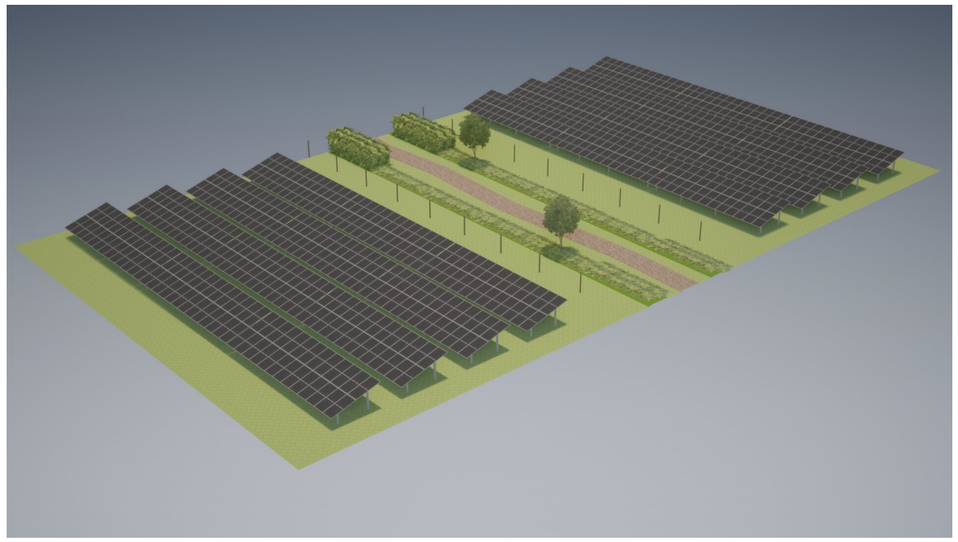
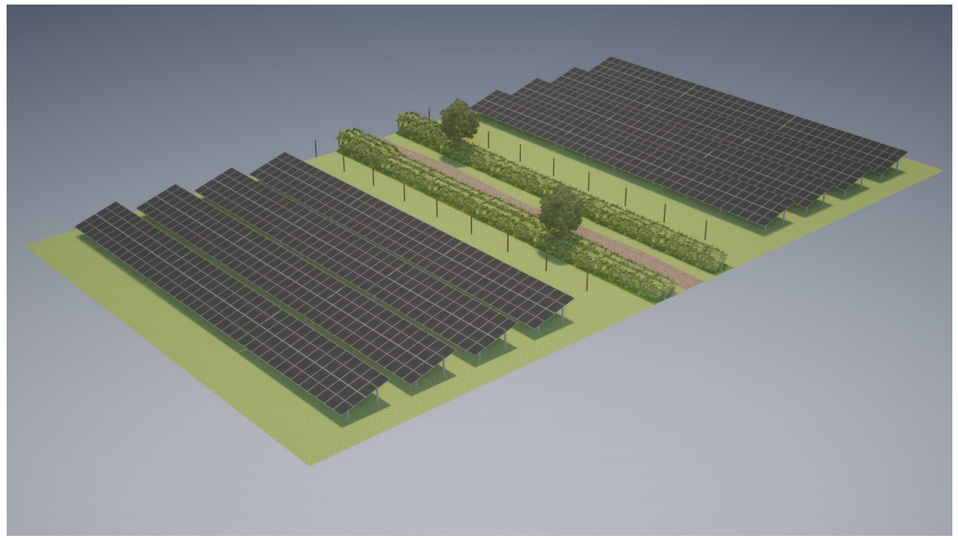


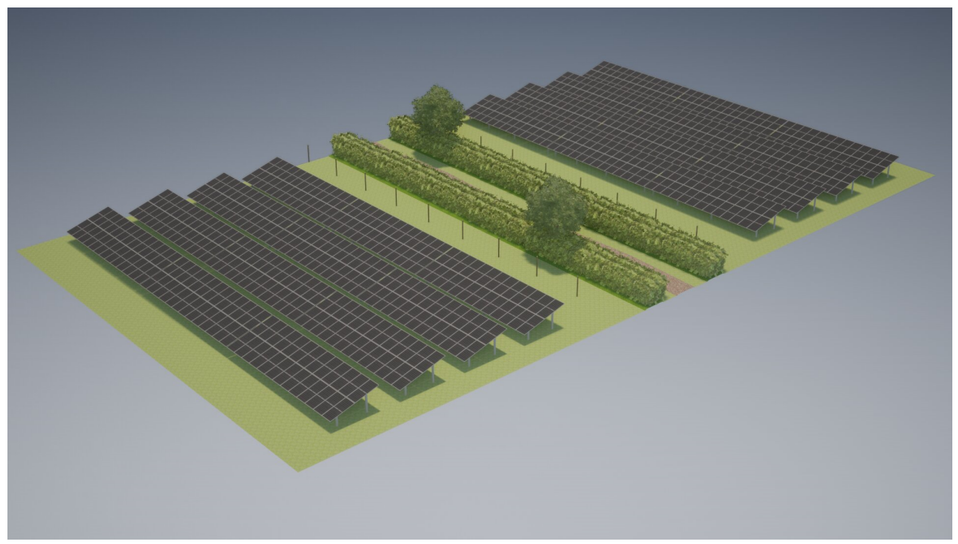
Indicative 3D View - Year 1

New native hedge planted as individual whips



Indicative 3D View - Year 5

New native hedge partially established by year 5 and providing screening between 'greenways' and solar PV arrays within fields.



Indicative 3D View - Year 15

At year 15 native hedge established and maintained to ensure good health and density.

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Client PVDP

Project Botley West Solar Farm

Title Indicative greenway plan - Hedgerow Infill Plan

Status	Drawn By	PM/Checked by
FINAL	AJC	JA
Job Ref	**Scale @ A3**	**Date Created**
EN010147/APP/7.6.3	N/A	Nov 2024
Figure Number		**Rev**
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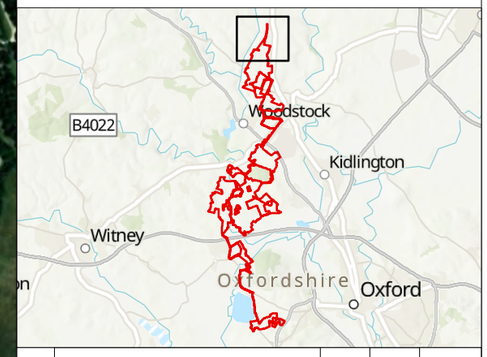
Legend

- Order Limits
- Greenway

Public Rights of Way

- Footpath
- Bridleway
- National Cycle Network



Rev	Description	By	CB	Date

PHOTOVOLT DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

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Client	PVDP
Project	Botley West Solar Farm
Title	Indicative location of proposed greenways

Status	Drawn By	PM/Checked By
FINAL	SHB	CL
Project Number	**Scale @ A3**	**Date Created**
NP12426	1:9,000	OCT 2025
Figure Number		**Rev**
7.6.3.3		**7**

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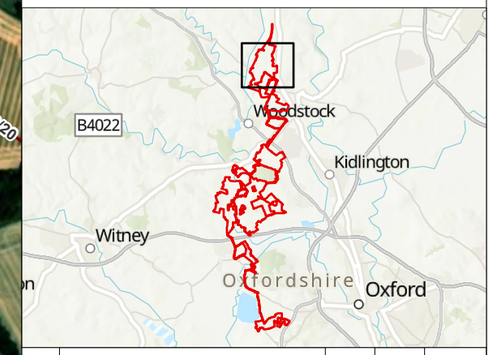
Legend

- Order Limits
- Greenway

Public Rights of Way

- Footpath
- Bridleway
- National Cycle Network
- Proposed Cycling Path



Rev	Description	By	CB	Date

PHOTOVOLT DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

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Client	PVDP
Project	Botley West Solar Farm
Title	Indicative location of proposed greenways

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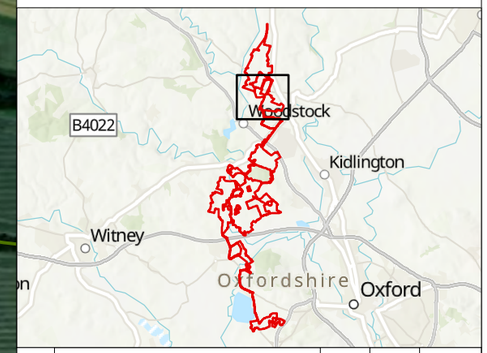
- Greenway

Public Rights of Way

- Footpath
- Bridleway
- National Cycle Network
- Proposed Cycling Path



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Client: PVDP

Project: Botley West Solar Farm

Title: Indicative location of proposed greenways

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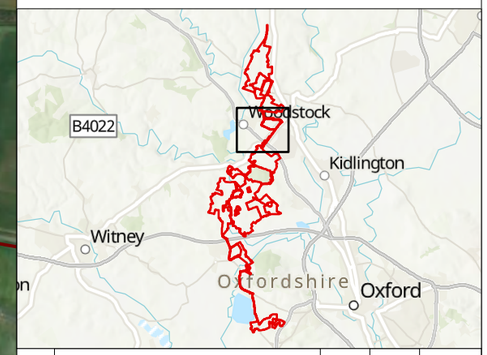
Legend

- Order Limits
- Greenway

Public Rights of Way

- Footpath
- Bridleway
- Shakespeare's way
- National Cycle Network
- Permissive Path



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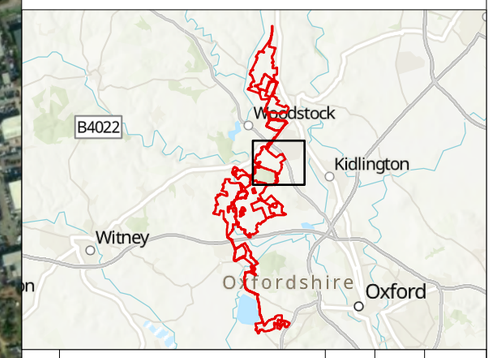
Legend

- Order Limits
- Greenway

Public Rights of Way
- Footpath
- Bridleway
- Restricted byway
- Shakespeare's way
- National Cycle Network
- Proposed Cycling Path
- Permissive Path

Existing PRoWs to be Diverted
- Footpath

Temporary Diversions
- Footpath



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Legend

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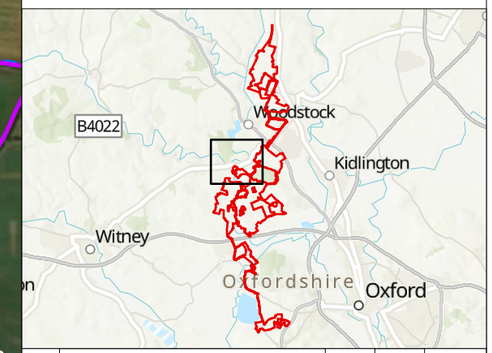
- Greenway

Public Rights of Way
- Footpath
- Bridleway
- Shakespeare's way
- National Cycle Network
- Proposed Cycling Path
- Permissive Path

Existing PRoWs to be Diverted
- Footpath

Temporary Diversions
- Footpath



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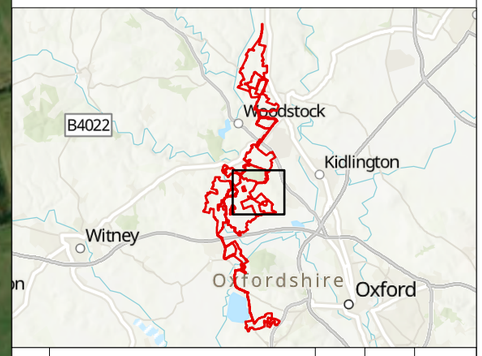
- Shakespeare's way
- National Cycle Network
- Permissive Path



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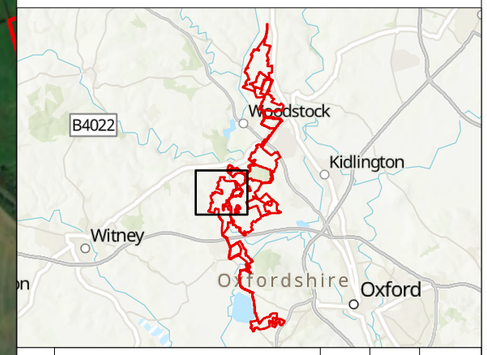
Legend

- Order Limits
- Greenway

Public Rights of Way

- Footpath
- Proposed Cycling Path
- Proposed Permissive Path



Rev	Description	By	CB	Date

PHOTOVOLT DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

rps A TETRA TECH COMPANY

Client	PVDP
Project	Botley West Solar Farm
Title	Indicative location of proposed greenways

Status	Drawn By	PM/Checked By
FINAL	SHB	CL
Project Number	**Scale @ A3**	**Date Created**
NP12426	1:9,000	OCT 2025
Figure Number		**Rev**
7.6.3.3		**7**

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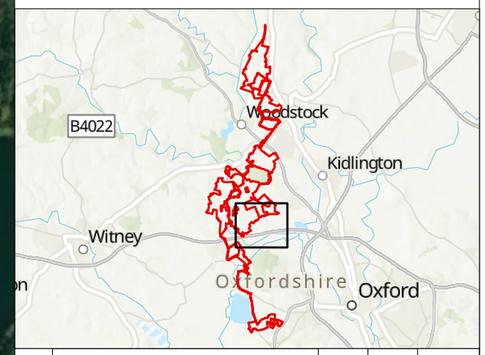
Legend

- Order Limits
- Greenway

Public Rights of Way

- Footpath
- Bridleway
- Restricted byway
- Shakespeare's way
- Proposed Permissive Path



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PHOTOVOLT DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

rps A TETRA TECH COMPANY

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Project: Botley West Solar Farm

Title: Indicative location of proposed greenways

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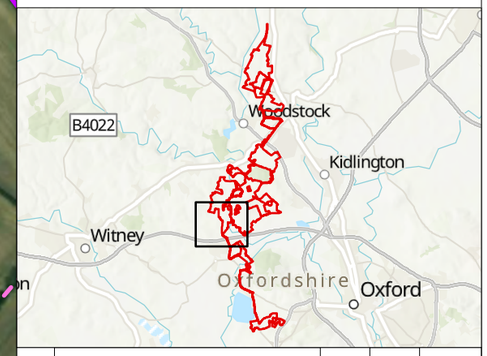
Legend

- Order Limits
- Greenway

Public Rights of Way

- Footpath
- Bridleway
- Proposed Cycling Path
- Proposed Permissive Path



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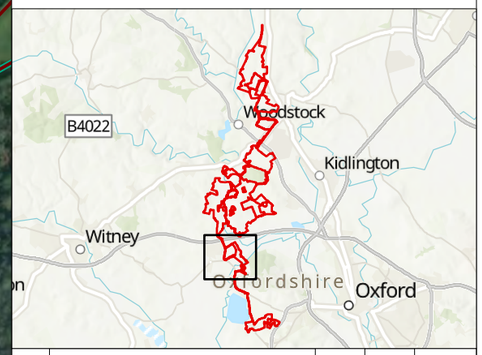
Legend

- Order Limits

Public Rights of Way
- Footpath
- Bridleway
- Oxford Greenbelt Way

Existing PRoWs to be Diverted
- Bridleway
- Footpath

Temporary Diversions
- Footpath
- Bridleway



Rev	Description	By	CB	Date

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Project: Botley West Solar Farm

Title: Indicative location of proposed greenways

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FINAL	SHB	CL
Project Number	**Scale @ A3**	**Date Created**
NP12426	1:9,000	OCT 2025

Figure Number: **7.6.3.3**

Rev: **7**

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- Order Limits

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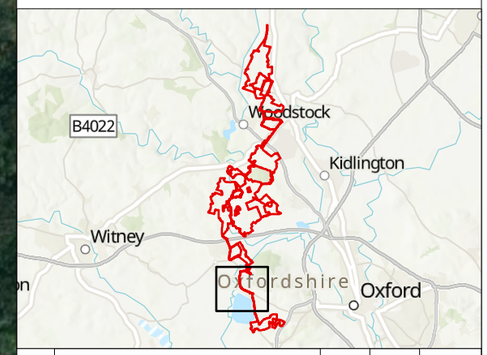
- Footpath
- Bridleway
- Oxford Greenbelt Way



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- Greenway

Public Rights of Way

- Footpath
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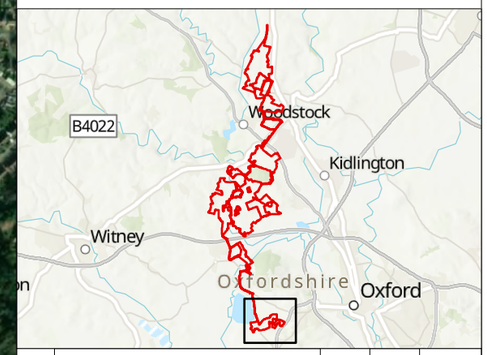
- Oxford Greenbelt Way



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PHOTOVOLT DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

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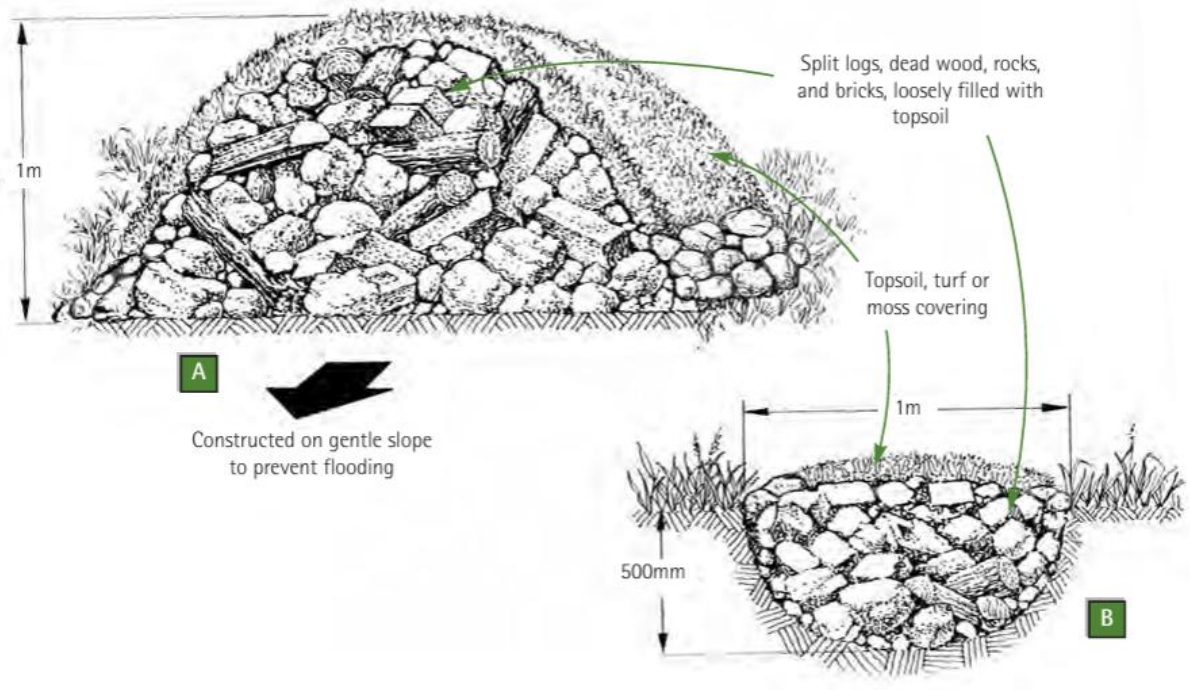
APPENDICES

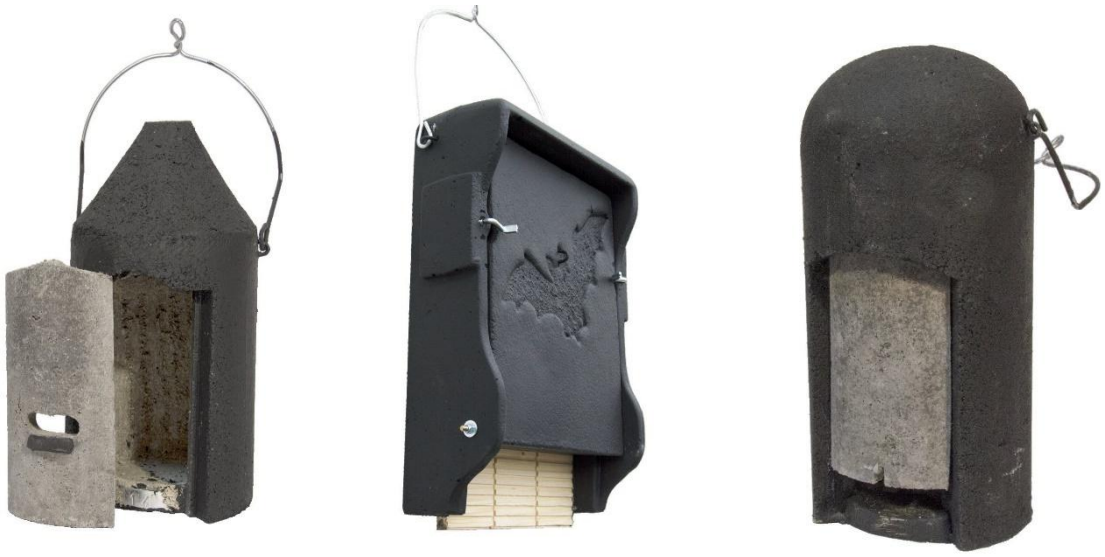
Appendix A

Species Specific Enhancements Specifications



Appendix A Figure 1 Hibernacula Design (Froglife, 2001).

Appendix A Figure 2 Example bird boxes (Schwegler).



Appendix A Figure 3 Example bat boxes (Schwegler).

Appendix A Figure 4 Example insect hotels (Scwegler & National Trust).

Appendix B

Typical Planting Schedule

Typical Planting Palette

Client: PVDP
Project: Botley West Solar Park
Dwg Ref: Figures 2.1 to 2.3 (Illustrative Masterplan)
Doc Ref: JSL4317_550

Status: For Comment
Date: Nov. 2024
Revision: A

Abbr	Botanical name	Common name	Girth / size	Stock	Density / %	Approximate height after 25 years
A. Trees						
i. Specimen Native Tree Planting						
	Acer campestre	Field Maple	10-12cm/12-14cm	C / SR / RB	As shown	10m
	Alnus glutinosa	Alder	10-12cm/12-14cm	C / SR / RB	As shown	10m
	Betula pendula	Silver Birch	10-12cm/12-14cm	C / SR / RB	As shown	10m
	Carpinus betulus	Hornbeam	10-12cm/12-14cm	C / SR / RB	As shown	10m
	Fagus sylvatica	Common Beech	10-12cm/12-14cm	C / SR / RB	As shown	10m
	Quercus robur	Pendunculate Oak	10-12cm/12-14cm	C / SR / RB	As shown	12m
	Prunus avium	Wild Cherry	10-12cm/12-14cm	C / SR / RB	As shown	12m
	Salix caprea	Goat Willow	10-12cm/12-14cm	C / SR / RB	As shown	10m
B.Hedge Planting						Once grown to be maintained at a height of 3m
i. Native Hedgerow Mix (with spaced Standard Trees) (2m wide)						
	Acer campestre	Field Maple	60-80cm	B	10%	
	Cornus sanguinea	Dogwood	60-80cm	B	5%	
	Corylus avellana	Hazel	60-80cm	B	10%	
	Crataegus monogyna	Hawthorn	60-80cm	B	40%	
	Prunus spinosa	Blackthorn	60-80cm	B	20%	
	Rosa canina	Dog Rose	60-80cm	B	5%	
	Salix caprea	Goat Willow	60-80cm	B	5%	
	Viburnum opulus	Guelder Rose	60-80cm	B	5%	
	Planted at 7.00p/m in three staggered rows, native specimen trees (as above) planted a 10 m intervals				100%	
C. Woodland						
i. Structural Woodland and Shrub Mix						
	Acer campestre	Field Maple	80-100cm	B	20%	Structual
	Corylus avellana	Hazel, Cobnut	80-100cm	B	10%	Woodland
	Crataegus monogyna	Hawthorn	80-100cm	B	10%	Mix between
	Fagus sylvatica	Common Beech	80-100cm	B	10%	6-12m
	Malus sylvestris	Crab Apple	80-100cm	B	20%	
	Ilex aquifolium	Holly	80-100cm	C	5%	
	Quercus robur	English Oak	80-100cm	C	20%	
	Pinus syvelstris	Scots Pine	80-100cm	C	5%	
	Planted at 1.5m centres, in single species clusters of 3 - 10No.				100%	
ii. Wet Woodland and Scrub Mix						
	Alnus Glutinosa	Alder	60-80cm	B	20%	
	Betula pubescens	Downy Birch	60-80cm	B	10%	
	Salix caprea	Goat Willow	60-80cm	B	20%	
	Salix fragilis	Crack Willow	60-80cm	B	10%	
	Salix viminalis	Common Osier	60-80cm	B	20%	
	Viburnum opulus	Guelder Rose	60-80cm	C	20%	
	Planted at 1.5m centres, in single species clusters of 3 - 10No.				100%	

E. Grass and Meadow areas

i. Amenity Grass

Mown Amenity Grass	Mix A22 by BSH (or similar and approved)	S

ii. Meadow

Grazing Grassland	EG26/27 Old Fashioned Grazing Mixture by Emorsgate (or similar and approved)	S
Field Margin Meadow	EH1 Hedgerow Mixture by Emorsgate (or similar and approved)	S
Tussock Grassland	EM10 Tussock Mixture by Emorsgate (or similar and approved)	S
Woodland Meadow	EG9 Grass Mixture for Hedgerows and Woodland by Emorsgate (or similar and appro	S
Wildflower Meadow	EM2 Standard General Purpose Meadow Mixtureby Emorsgate (or similar and approv	S
Wetland Meadow	EM8 Meadow Mixture for Wetlands by Emorsgate (or similar and approved)	S
Wildbird seed crop	KEAUT1 Enhanced Autumn Sown Wild Bird Seed Mix by Kings Crops (or similar and a	S

Stock Abbreviations:

C = Container grown	S = Seeded
SR = Spring ringed	T = Turfed
RB = Root balled	Cl = Cell grown
B = Bagged	Bl = Bulb

BIOSECURITY STATEMENT

RPS GROUP ARE COMMITTED TO THE PROTECTION OF THE UK ENVIRONMENT AND RECOGNISE THE IMPORTANCE OF RISKS POSED BY IMPORTED PESTS AND DISEASES

- All trees and shrubs are to be sourced responsibly, in the first instance, from UK Nurseries / suppliers, where they have been propagated and/or grown on for a minimum of 5 years in the UK (2 years for shrubs);

- In light of this, all suppliers shall be approved, shall share our values and must have a sound Biosecurity Policy / Management Systems in place to demonstrate the traceability of their stock, and an awareness of the prevalence of all current biosecurity threats, both domestically and abroad;

- The contractor is responsible for ensuring that they operate in strict accordance with the latest guidelines set out by DEFRA, including regularly checking for updates in relation to the latest plant health controls / diseases; i.e. (https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/)

- Inspections will be carried out at selected nurseries and plant health certification / passports will be sought to identify traceability of tree and shrub stock as required.

Typical Tree and Shrub Palette

Client: BP Lightsource **Status: Planning**
Project: Plas Power Solar Park **Date: Sept 2023**
Dwg Ref: JSL3436_100 **Revision: -**
Doc Ref: JSL3436_550

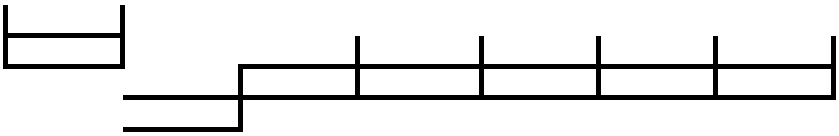
Abbr	Botanical	Common	Girth / size	Stock	Density / %

A. Trees

i. Heavy Standard Tree

	Acer camp	Field Mapl	12-14cm	C / SR / RB	

B.Hedge Planting



i. Native Hedgerow Mix (2m wide)

Acr cm	*Acer camp*	Field Mapl	60-80cm	B	10%
Crns sn	*Cornus sar*	Dogwood	60-80cm	B	5%
Crtg mn	*Corylus av*	Hazel	60-80cm	B	10%
Cryls av	*crataegus*	Hawthorn	60-80cm	B	40%
Prns sp	*Prunus spi*	Blackthorn	60-80cm	B	20%
Rs cn	*Rosa canir*	Dog Rose	60-80cm	B	5%
Slx cp	*Salix capre*	Goat Willo	60-80cm	B	5%
Vb op	*Viburnum c*	Guelder R	60-80cm	B	5%
	Planted at 7.00/m in three staggered rows				100%

ii. Extra-Wide Native Hedgerow Mix (4m Wide)

Acr cm	*Acer camp*	Field Mapl	60-80cm	B	10%
Crns sn	*Cornus sar*	Dogwood	60-80cm	B	5%
Crtg mn	*Corylus av*	Hazel	60-80cm	B	10%
Cryls av	*crataegus*	Hawthorn	60-80cm	B	40%
Prns sp	*Prunus spi*	Blackthorn	60-80cm	B	20%
Rs cn	*Rosa canir*	Dog Rose	60-80cm	B	5%
Slx cp	*Salix capre*	Goat Willo	60-80cm	B	5%
Vb op	*Viburnum c*	Guelder R	60-80cm	B	5%
	Planted at 10.00/m in four staggered rows				100%

C. Woodland and Groundcover Mix Planting

i. Native Woodland Mix

Acr cm	*Acer camp*	Field Mapl	60-80cm	B	10%
Cryls av	*Corylus av*	Hazel, Col	80-100cm	B	30%

Crtg mn	*Crataegus*	Hawthorn	80-100cm	B	10%
Mls sy	*Malus sylv*	Crab Appl	80-100cm	B	20%
Qr ro	*Quercus ro*	English Oa	80-100cm	C	30%
	Native mix planted at 1.5m centres, in single spe				100%

D. Grass and Meadow areas

i. Meadow

Ecological Meadow B	EH1 Hedgerow Mixture by Emors	S	4g/m2
Tussock Meadow Mix	EM10 Tussock Mixture by Emors	S	4g/m2
Grassland Mixture	EG9 Grass Mixture for Hedgerow	S	5g/m2

Stock Abbreviations:

C = Container grown	S = Seeded
SR = Spring ringed	T = Turfed
RB = Root balled	Cl = Cell grown
B = Bagged	Bl = Bulb

BIOSECURITY STATEMENT

RPS GROUP ARE COMMITTED TO THE PROTECTION OF THE UK ENVIRONMENT AND RECOGNISE

Appendix C

Typical Maintenance Schedule

APPENDIX C – TYPICAL MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

	MAINTENANCE ITEM	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Planting: General	Periodic removal of litter, leaf litter, rubbish and debris from all planted areas (including grassed areas) within education area. Periodic removal of litter from main public rights of way routes. Dispose of arisings from all specified operations off site.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Planting: General	Periodic watering of all planted areas, within education area, sufficient to maintain healthy growth, irrespective of season or weather conditions*, until restrained from doing so by statutory legislation. Specimen trees to be irrigated by means of dedicated irrigation tubes where provided. (*Do not water when ground is frozen / likely to freeze).			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
Planting: General	Within the education area, maintain a weed free environment. Periodic removal of unwanted weed growth within planted areas manually or by treatment with glyphosate-based herbicide to maintain weed free environment as required. Remove all weed growth from site. Carryout out periodic inspections / visits to education area as required. Adjacent paths and surfaces to be swept clean as the work proceeds, and the site left tidy.			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
Planting: General	Within education area, re-firm all plants affected by frost heave / wind rock / vandalism by treading around the base. Re-stake trees if necessary. Collars at the base of tree stems created by tree movement to be broken up by fork, avoiding damage to roots, backfilled with topsoil as necessary, and re-firmed.			•						•			
Planting: General	Within education area, check all existing trees and hedging with regard to public safety. Report any trees that appear to pose a risk to public safety and conduct remedial work as necessary in accordance with good arboricultural practice.			•							•		

APPENDIX C – TYPICAL MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

MAINTENANCE ITEM		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Planting: General	Within education area and along main PRoW corridors where planting is considered to be unsafe, prune trees / shrubs only to remove vandalised, dead / dangerous branches or to promote healthy growth / natural shape. Remove all cuttings from site. Except where specified otherwise, prune trees and shrubs as recommended by BS:7370 Part 4 clause 3.6.3 to 3.6.5. Confirm which trees are covered by Tree Preservation Orders and seek appropriate permission prior to conducting any arboricultural work. Relevant trees to be checked for safety by a suitably trained arboricultural specialist. Pruning shall be conducted by skilled labour only. Do not apply growth retardants, fungicide or sealant unless instructed otherwise. Herbaceous plants to be trimmed according to their growth habit.			•						•			
Planting: General	Within education area, periodically check / replace / adjust tree stakes, ties and rabbit / strimmer guards as required. Remove redundant tapes, tags, ties, labels and other encumbrances.	•		•		•		•		•		•	
Planting: General	Within education area, ensure 50mm of 50-75mm grade bark mulch is maintained to all planted areas and to base of individual trees set into grass.												•
Planting: General	Within education area, apply Enmag CRF granular fertilizer, or similar, at ~140g per individual tree pits and approx. 70g / sqm to planted areas (quantities to be confirmed by manufacturer).			•									
Planting: General	Replace any diseased, damaged or dead plants with plant stock of the same size / species (unless otherwise directed by the Landscape Architect or LPA). A schedule of all dead plant material removed is to be kept by the Maintenance Operator.										•		
Planting: General	Generally, make good all ridges, ruts, depressions and dead areas.			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
Planting: General	Treat pernicious weeds (e.g. Japanese Knotweed), with an appropriate herbicide immediately after identification on site, and continue treating as necessary to achieve complete eradication.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

APPENDIX C – TYPICAL MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

MAINTENANCE ITEM		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Existing Wildlife Corridors	Where possible and where it is safe to do so, standing dead wood to be retained to provide opportunities for wildlife. Where dead wood must be thinned, this should be retained within habitat areas and stacked into piles to provide wildlife habitats. Additional wood resulting from pruning or other tree works to be similarly retained within discrete piles where possible. Surplus / additional pruning's / clippings to be removed. Selective thinning of trees and shrubs to be undertaken as required (outside of spring / summer to avoid detrimental effects on nesting birds), to ensure successful development of an open canopy and understorey vegetation. Where gaps are present, supplementary planting of native species to match those already present should be undertaken and managed accordingly. Use of herbicides, pesticides and fertilisers to be avoided.										•		
Hedgerows	To ensure that the hedgerows retain dense growth and value to wildlife, clipping should be minimised where possible with the hedgerow stock on Site cut on a 3-5 year rotation. No more than one side of the hedgerow should be trimmed in any one year, with the remainder left un-trimmed to allow continuity of cover and opportunities for wildlife. All hedgerow adjacent to tall grasslands will be cut utilising a long reach tractor flail from a minimum of 2 m from the edge of hedgerow bases to protect any dormouse that could be hibernating within tall grasslands directly adjacent to hedgerows. Trimming should take place during in late Autumn to maximise food and cover availability for wildlife and also to avoid detrimental effects on breeding birds. Where gaps are present, supplementary planting of native species to match those already present should be undertaken and managed accordingly. Use of herbicides or pesticides to be avoided. Once grown hedgerows should be managed to a height of approximately 3m during operation, managed annually, accepting that hedgerows may be managed to a lower height (the locations and heights of which to be agreed in consultation with the Oxfordshire Host Authorities) in order to support important and / or more open views, provided such maintenance falls within the scope of the environmental assessment.	•											

APPENDIX C – TYPICAL MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

MAINTENANCE ITEM		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Structural Woodland and Shrub Mix	Monitor initial establishment of planting to ensure trees and shrubs remain upright, stable and in good condition. Where necessary, cut back or spot treat excessive bramble or other invasive / ruderal weeds to allow planted species to establish, taking care not to damage new planting. Use of herbicides or other pesticides to be avoided where possible.									•			
Grassland: General	Mowing within education area: Remove litter, rubbish and debris from grassed areas before any mowing. Do not allow mowing machinery closer than 500mm to any plant stems. Avoid damage to stems by nylon filament rotary cutters or other mechanical tools. Complete operations close to stems, corners and edges using handheld strimmer with special care taken not to cause whipping / damage to the base of tree trunks.			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
Grassland: General	All grassed areas within education area to be watered periodically so as to maintain healthy growth / establishment.			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
Grassland: General	Within the education area, re-seed any gaps / hollows in lawns / meadows with a seed mix selected to match existing grass in quality and appearance.			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
Grassland: General	Within the education area, weed material within sward to be eradicated manually or spot treated with suitable herbicide.				•					•			
Hard Surfacing	Within education area, clear soil, mulch, litter or other debris from hard surfaced areas and remove from site.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Hard Surfacing	Hard surfaces within education area to be treated with glyphosate-based non-residual herbicide (Roundup or equal approved), in full accordance with manufacturer's recommendations & COSHH regulations.			•				•					
Fencing	Report any damage; provide temporary barriers to secure fence line where damage poses a risk to public safety.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

APPENDIX C – TYPICAL MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

MAINTENANCE ITEM		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Hard Landscape Elements (as set out in Section 3.3 of the oLEMP)	Visually inspect for vandalism / damage, make safe and report any damage to the relevant party.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
General	Within education area, collect fallen leaf litter and remove from site (do not blow away). Carryout periodic visits.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
General	Report any remaining element that through failure, fatigue or vandalism poses a risk to public safety.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•