Green Hill Solar Farm

EN010170

Outline Ecological Protection and Mitigation Strategy

Revision E

REDACTED

Prepared by: Clarkson and Woods Ltd.

Date: April 2026

Document Reference: EX7/GH7.5_E

APFP Regulation 5(2)(q)

Schedule of Changes

Revision	Date	Section Reference	Description of Changes
A	Examination Deadline 1 – November 2025	Throughout	Updates to document references as required for submission at Deadline 1.
		Method Statement 6	Amendments to Method Statement 6 to include avoidance period and other mitigation measures relating to spawning fish.
B	Examination Deadline 4 – January 2026	Cover	Updated to Revision B as required for submission at Deadline 4.
		Throughout	Updates to document references as required for submission at Deadline 4.
		Method Statement 2	Amendments to Method Statement 2 to confirm approach to works within protective ecological buffer zones.
C	Examination Deadline 5 – February 2026	Cover	Updated to Revision C as required for submission at Deadline 5.
		Throughout	Updates to document references as required for submission at Deadline 5.
		Method Statement 6	Minor amendments to clarify that the measures therein relate to the installation of internal cable routes within the Sites, as well as works within the Cable Route Corridor.
		Method Statement 10	Minor amendments to align with Method Statement 13.
		Method Statement 12	Correction of Method Statement number (previously two Method Statements were listed as Method Statement 11).
		Method Statement 13	New Method Statement prepared consolidating detail around mitigation of Functionally Linked Land, in response to RIES, as required for Deadline 5.
D	Examination Deadline 6 – March 2026	Cover	Updated to Revision D as required for submission at Deadline 6.
		Throughout	Updates to document references as required for submission at Deadline 6.
		Method Statement 2	Clarification around provision of buffers; in particular, in relation to ancient woodland.
E	Examination Deadline 7 – April 2026	Cover	Updated to Revision E as required for submission at Deadline 7.
		Throughout	Updates to document references as required for submission at Deadline 7.

Revision	Date	Section Reference	Description of Changes
		Method Statement 5	Provision of specific methodology for Great Crested Newts
		Appendices A-E	NatureSpace Preliminary District Licence Report and supporting documents

Contents

Issue Sheet

Report Prepared for: Green Hill Solar Farm

Examination Deadline 7

Outline Ecological Protection and Mitigation Strategy (OEPMS) Revision E

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Original	23/05/2025	HF	MH
A	07/11/2025	CP	MH
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C	26/02/2026	MH	CP
D	24/03/2026	CP	MH
E	08/04/2026	CP	MH

1 Introduction

1.1.1 This Outline Ecological Protection and Mitigation Strategy (OEPMS) sets out the ecological protection measures for undertaking construction works associated with the proposed Green Hill Solar Farm, hereafter referred to as the Scheme, with the extent of the project being referred to as the Order Limits.

1.1.2 This Plan specifically deals with the protection of habitats and species during the construction phase, to include the construction of the Photovoltaic (PV) Modules (and associated access tracks and substations), Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and installation of cabling within the Cable Route Corridor. Information relating to the management of other environmental issues such as traffic movements, compound locations, site welfare, working hours, services and noise has been provided separately within the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (OCEMP) **[EX7/GH7.1_D]** which should be read alongside this document.

1.1.3 As this is an Outline EPMS, a final version, which will be more detailed but substantially in accordance with the measures and principles set out within this document, will be submitted to and approved by the relevant planning authorities pursuant to a Requirement in the Development Consent Order (DCO) prior to the construction of the Scheme.

1.1.4 This Outline EPMS has been informed by extensive baseline ecological surveys carried out to support the Scheme and seeks to address the needs for ecological protection and mitigation within the construction phase as identified by the impact assessment of Chapter 9: Ecology and Biodiversity of the Environmental Statement **[REP6-013]**.

1.1.5 The purpose of this Outline EPMS is to:

- Plainly identify known risks to protected and notable species, and to preserve the integrity and/or the function of habitats within the construction phase.
- Enable the implementation of the mitigation outlined in Chapter 9 **[REP6-013]** of the Environmental Statement.
- Identify ecologically sensitive areas and indicate where protective buffers/fencing is required.
- Clearly set out when and where ecological supervision will be required.
- Identify roles and responsibilities for undertaking this protective/mitigation work during the construction phase.

1.1.6 This Outline EPMS follows the guidelines set out within the Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development (British Standard, 42020:2013).

1.1.7 A separate Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (OLEMP) **[REP6-047]** has also been prepared for the Scheme, which covers the continued protection, management and enhancement of the ecological receptors, as well as habitat creation prescriptions.

1.2 Responsible Personnel & Lines of Communication

1.2.1 Since this document is an Outline document, roles and responsibilities are not final at this stage. As a Requirement in the DCO it will be the Applicant's responsibility to ensure that this document is complied with by the Principal Contractor.

1.3 Site Manager(s)

1.3.1 The Applicant will be responsible for ensuring that a Site Manager is appointed to each of the PV, BESS and Cable Installation teams and that this document has been provided to them. It will be the responsibility of the Site Manager(s) to ensure adequate communication of the applicable prescriptions set out within this Outline EPMS to construction staff and ensure sufficient liaison and forward planning with the Ecological Clerk(s) of Works (EcoCoWs).

1.4 Ecological Clerk of Works

1.4.1 An Ecological Clerk of Works (EcoCoW) will be appointed to each of the PV, BESS and Cable Installation teams and will comprise a suitably qualified ecologist with at least five years' relevant experience. The EcoCoW(s) will assist and advise the Applicant and the Site Manager(s) in their adherence to the requirements of the final EPMS.

1.4.2 Typically, a permanent on-site presence is not required. Instead, an appropriately qualified ecologist will attend at pre-arranged and timetabled work stages as set out in this document, as well as being available via an 'on-call' basis throughout the construction phase. This will rely on adequate regular and ad-hoc communication between the Site Manager(s) and the EcoCoW(s). This will enable any rearranged or changed timetables to be accommodated, as well as a prompt response for dealing with any potential habitat or protected species protection and legal compliance issues that could arise during the course of construction.

1.4.3 The EcoCoW will be contacted as early as possible in the unlikely event that any activities on site contravene the measures prescribed in the EPMS, for instance, should there be any unforeseen, but essential requirement to enter any of the Biodiversity Protection Zones. The EcoCoW will be consulted prior any such action being carried out unless in emergency situations.

1.5 Contact Details

Table 1 Contact Details

Personnel/ Contact	Company	Primary Contact	Address	Contact Details
Main Contractor	TBC	TBC	TBC	Email: TBC Telephone: TBC
EcoCoW	Clarkson & Woods Ltd	Chris Poole Mike Hockey	[redacted]	Emails: [redacted] Telephone: [redacted]
Wildlife Rescue Centre	Animals in Need	TBC	Wildlife Unit, Pine Tree Farm, London Road, Little Irchester, Northampton-shire NN8 2EH	Telephone: 01933 278080
Pollution Incident Contact	Environment Agency	TBC	TBC	Telephone: 0800 807060

1.6 Designated Sites

1.6.1 The following designated sites occur within, or in close proximity (within 500m) to, the Order Limits (as discussed in Chapter 9: Ecology and Biodiversity **[REP6-013]** of the Environmental Statement) and are of principal concern within this document. Refer to Method Statements 1-3 and 11:

- Earls Barton Meadow Local Wildlife Site (LWS) – Within Cable Route Corridor.
- Bozeat Verge Protected Wildflower Verge (PWV), Easton Maudit PWV and Grendon Verge PWV – Adjacent to Green Hill F.
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within 500m of Order Limits:
  - Badsaddle, Withmale Park and Bush Walk Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
  - Bozeat Meadow SSSI
  - Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SSSI
- County Wildlife Sites (CWSs) and Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) within 500m of Order Limits:

- Nun Wood CWS
- Bozeat Cemetery LWS
- Bozeat Verge LWS
- Bozeat Wood LWS
- Broughton Green Lane LWS
- Cold Oak Copse LWS
- Earl's Barton Carr LWS
- Earl's Barton Lock Lake LWS
- Ecton Gravel Pits LWS
- Grendon Lakes LWS
- Grendon Lakes North LWS
- Grendon Quarter Pond LWS
- Hardwick Wood LWS
- Highcroft Farm Meadow LWS
- Horn Wood LWS
- Long Furlong and Old Pastures LWS
- Sywell Reservoir and Country Park LWS
- Threeshires Wood LWS
- Walgrave East Meadow LWS
- Wilby Meadows Stream LWS

1.7 Habitats

1.7.1 The following habitats occur within the Order Limits and are of principal concern within this document. All Method Statements refer to the protection of these habitats.

- Woodland;
- Hedgerows and Trees;
- Grassland;
- Ditches and Watercourses (including River Nene and its tributaries); and
- Ponds.

1.8 Species and Species Groups

1.8.1 The following species occur, or may occur, within the Order Limits and are of principal concern within this document:

- Badger – See Method Statement 8;
- Bats – See Method Statements 4, 5 and 6;

- Otter - See Method Statements 3, 5 and 6;
- Water Vole - See Method Statements 3, 5 and 6;
- Polecat - See Method Statements 3, 5 and 6;
- Hedgehog - See Method Statements 3, 5 and 6;
- Harvest Mouse - See Method Statements 3, 5 and 6;
- Brown Hare - See Method Statements 3, 5 and 6;
- Reptiles - See Method Statements 3, 5 and 6;
- Amphibians - See Method Statements 3, 5 and 6;
- Breeding Birds (Including Ground Nesting Birds of Open Habitats) - See Method Statements 5, 6, 9 and 11;
- Overwintering Birds - See Method Statements 5, 6, 10 and 13;
- Invertebrates - See Method Statements 3, 5 and 6;
- Freshwater fish - See Method Statements 3, 5, 6 and 7; and
- Invasive Species - See Method Statements 3, 5 and 6.

2 Method Statement 1: Toolbox Talks

2.1 Objectives

2.1.1 Toolbox Talks are important for communicating the location and nature of the legally protected and sensitive ecological features that are present within the Sites to all site staff and visitors. Toolbox Talks also set out the responsibilities of all site staff in avoiding and minimising harm to protected species and habitats, and will outline the relevant ecological legislation.

2.2 Toolbox Talks

2.2.1 Prior to the commencement of works at any of the Sites, or cable route installation, a toolbox talk will be provided by the EcoCoW to the Site Manager(s) and contractors. The toolbox talk will include details of the EPMS and will highlight the whereabouts and sensitivity of the various ecological features present within each Site. The talk will establish the role of the EcoCoW and site personnel during works, and what to do if protected species/ecological constraints are found during works.

2.2.2 In the event a change in Site Management personnel occurs during construction or a pause in works of a period of more than 30 consecutive days occurs, a toolbox talk will need to be provided again by the appointed EcoCoW. The Site Manager(s) should inform the EcoCoW of any forthcoming management changes or breaks in the construction programme. The Site Manager(s) will be responsible for relaying information within the toolbox talks to all subsequent site staff during their initial site inductions.

2.2.3 The EcoCoW will provide the Site Manager(s) with materials and mapping which can be used to illustrate the whereabouts and nature of ecological features within site inductions.

2.2.4 The various Method Statements in this document contain further information to be included within toolbox talks specific to certain species or operations.

3 Method Statement 2: Installation of Biodiversity Protection (Buffer) Fencing

3.1 Objectives

3.1.1 The majority of the Scheme's valuable ecological features are contained within field boundaries. As such, it is essential that Biodiversity Protection Fencing (BPF) is installed at the onset of the construction phase to ensure damage and degradation to these features does not occur.

3.1.2 Installation of BPF contributes to the protection of all designated sites, important habitats and protected species listed in Sections 1.6-1.8 of this document.

3.2 Toolbox Talk

3.2.1 Prior to the commencement of works at any of the Sites, or cable route installation, a toolbox talk will be provided by the EcoCoW to the Site Manager and contractors. The toolbox talk will include details of the EPMS and the requirements for BPF contained below, highlighting ecological features within each Site. The talk will establish the role of the EcoCoW and site personnel during works, and what to do if protected species/ecological constraints is found during works.

3.2.2 In the event a change in Site Management personnel occurs during construction or a pause in works of a period of more than 30 consecutive days occurs, the toolbox talk will need to be provided again by the appointed EcoCoW. The Site Manager will be responsible for relaying information within the toolbox talk to all subsequent site staff during their initial site inductions.

3.3 PV and BESS Sites

3.3.1 The design of the Scheme is such that buffer zones of between 8 and 30m from each of the field boundaries have been incorporated into the layout of the PV modules, access tracks, inverters, substations and battery energy storage infrastructure. The buffer widths correspond to the ecological value of each boundary and/or its sensitivity to potential impacts. Therefore, construction-phase biodiversity protection fencing should be installed in line with these buffer extents.

3.3.2 Indicative locations and widths of buffer zones within the Green Hill PV and BESS Sites are illustrated in Appendix 9.12: Schedule of Protective Ecological Buffers of Chapter 9 of the Environmental Statement **[APP-095]**. These figures served to inform the Scheme's design at an early stage of the project, however these buffer zones are not comprehensive, and do not account for specific works which will necessarily entail incursion into the buffer zones at discrete locations (for example, to create field accesses through hedgerows). The buffer zones will be finalised following detailed design post-consent and detailed in the final Ecological Protection and Mitigation Strategy.

3.3.3 BPF will be installed as a priority during the mobilisation and preparation tasks in the construction phase. This will either comprise temporary 'Heras'-style fencing or, in the case of the 'external' or perimeter scheme boundaries, the operational security fence would serve the dual purposes of construction-phase protection and ongoing security. Consequently, practically all field boundaries will require

the installation of construction phase BPF. Security fencing will comprise 2m tall deer-proof fencing installed on wooden posts.

3.3.4 BPF will also be used to protect all individual in-field mature trees as set out in Appendix 19.21, Preliminary Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Outline Arboricultural Method Statement **[REP6-015]**. Tree protection fencing will be installed in accordance with British Standard 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction.

3.3.5 The location of all BPF will be agreed and confirmed between the EcoCoW and Site Manager(s) prior to commencement of installation to ensure clarity on all buffer zone widths, access and fencing specification requirements. This will minimise the chance of any ad-hoc call-outs of the EcoCoW being required during the installation.

3.3.6 All installed BPF will be inspected by an EcoCoW during and/or on completion of installation to ensure it complies with the correct specification and is installed in the correct locations.

3.3.7 The fencing will be subject to regular checks by the EcoCoW as per Method Statement 11; however, it will be the responsibility of the Site Manager(s) to ensure the fence is appropriately maintained throughout the construction phase.

3.3.8 During construction, no site personnel or machinery shall enter the Buffer Zones by crossing the BPF and no equipment will be stored therein. The only exceptions will be where access for essential/unavoidable operations have been agreed in advance with the EcoCoW or Arboricultural Clerk of Works (ACoW) – Section 3.5 below refers.

3.3.9 For reference, the BPF will be installed within the Green Hill PV and BESS Sites according to the following criteria which were used to determine buffer zone widths:

- 8m minimum from ditches, and any trees with ‘low’ suitability for roosting bats.
- 9m from ditches where within Milton Keynes City Council and West Northamptonshire area.
- 10m minimum from ditches with signs of otter or water vole, or trees with ‘moderate’ suitability for roosting bats.
- 15m minimum from all hedgerows, minor watercourses (small streams), ‘outlying’ badger setts and from any tree with ‘high’ suitability for roosting bats.
- 20m minimum from woodland, ponds and moderate watercourses (depending on ecological value).
- 30m minimum from ancient woodland, major watercourses (e.g. rivers) and ‘main’, subsidiary’ or ‘annexe’ badger setts.
- Other, bespoke buffers around bat roosts and the nesting sites of Schedule 1 birds will be implemented on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the specific species’ requirements.

3.4 Cable Installation

3.4.1 The cable installation work involves the open cutting of a trench to receive cable ducts and jointing bays through which cables are pulled into place. In order to facilitate this, a temporary haul route will be implemented alongside the cable route, together with intermittent site compounds and set-down areas and the opening of temporary accesses from nearby roadways. Where certain physical obstacles are present, or features of high ecological, heritage or landscape importance are present, Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) will be utilised to avoid damage. A schedule of crossings has been produced **[REP6-041]** to show which features will be crossed through open cut techniques or HDD. Where open cut trenching is involved, gaps though boundaries/habitats will measure up to 10m wide in order to accommodate a haul route and trench.

3.4.2 In terms of Biodiversity Protection Fencing, it is necessary to minimise habitat impacts as far as possible, so that only the minimum length of habitat is removed at boundary crossings due to receive open cut trenches. To this end, fencing will be installed comprising two short lengths of Heras-style fencing (each approximately 2-4 panels, depending on the presence/width of boundary habitats as directed by the EcoCoW) installed at right angles on either side of the boundary feature to stop any encroachment beyond the 10m gap width (see Figure **1** below).

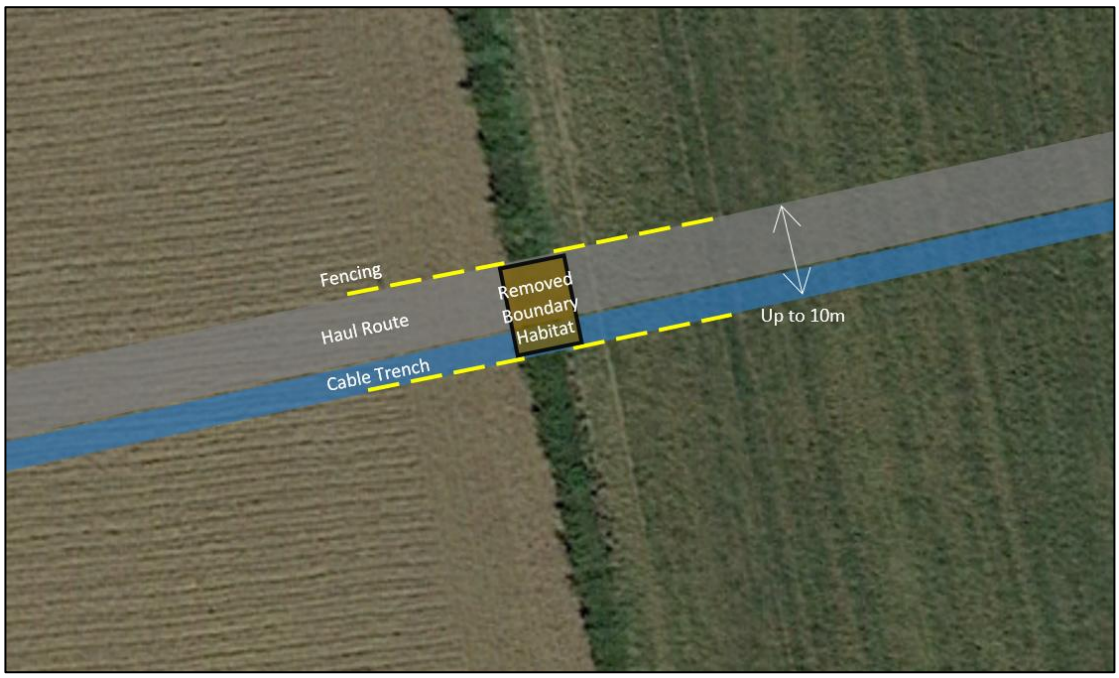

Figure 1. Indicative Layout of Protection Fencing at Boundary Habitat Crossings

3.4.3 Wherever practicable, works within the ecological buffer zones identified in paragraph 3.3.9 will also be avoided on the Cable Route Corridor. Where environmental or engineering constraints necessitate works within these buffers, such works must be agreed in advance with, and undertaken under the supervision of, the Ecological Clerk of Works (EcoCoW) and/or the Arboricultural Clerk of Works (ACoW) as appropriate. Given the temporary nature of the cable trenching work, it may not always be necessary to install BPF around particular

features on the Cable Route Corridor, however this may be appropriate where cable route working areas are in very close proximity to the protective buffers, or where particularly sensitive features are present (such as badger setts, or ancient woodland). In other cases, the use of hazard tape, mesh barrier fencing or similar to demarcate the feature may be appropriate.

3.4.4 With regards to ancient woodland parcels adjacent to the Cable Route Corridor, a minimum 15m protective buffer will be applied and implemented for all works in the Cable Route Corridor, as per the **Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Outline Arboricultural Method Statement [REP6-015]**. These 15m ancient woodland buffers will be demarcated through the installation of BPF for the full duration of works within the field/fields adjacent to the ancient woodland. No infrastructure works will take place within this 15m buffer (no installation of built infrastructure, including cabling), no site personnel or plant (machinery) shall enter the buffer zones, and no equipment will be stored therein.

3.4.5 The location of all BPF on the cable route will be agreed and confirmed between the EcoCoW and Site Manager(s) prior to commencement of installation to ensure clarity on all fencing specification requirements.

3.4.6 All installed BPF will be inspected by an EcoCoW during and/or on completion of installation to ensure it complies with the correct specification and is installed in the correct locations. It will be the responsibility of the Site Manager(s) to ensure the fence is appropriately maintained throughout the construction phase.

3.5 Non-Standard Works within Biodiversity Protection Areas

Ancient Woodland 15m Buffer

3.5.1 In order to ensure the protection of the ancient woodlands and safeguard them from damage during construction, a core 15m buffer will be applied to ancient woodlands. No infrastructure works will take place within this 15m buffer (no installation of built infrastructure, including cabling), no site personnel or plant (machinery) shall enter the buffer and no equipment will be stored therein. The only works which may take place within the 15m buffer zone are limited to unavoidable, non-intrusive works, such as upgrades to two existing tracks through the use of a ‘no-dig’ solution and provision of permissive under Work No. 10. Manual works associated with landscaping and biodiversity mitigation and enhancement measures including seeding are also permitted under Work No. 6 and 9. Such works will be undertaken under supervision of the project ACoW and EcoCoW.

Ancient Woodland 15 to 30m Buffer

3.5.2 Limited and unavoidable works may be required within the 15 to 30m buffer zone from ancient woodland on the Green Hill PV Sites. This includes works that cannot be practicably carried out elsewhere (e.g. laying of cables associated with Work No.1d (specifically between fields FF32 and FF33), grassland seeding under Work No. 6, habitat creation as part of Work No. 9, and permissive paths connecting to existing public rights of way within the buffer areas (Work No. 10)). Where environmental or engineering constraints necessitate works within these buffers, such works must be agreed in advance with, and undertaken under the supervision of, the Ecological Clerk of Works (EcoCoW) and/or the Arboricultural Clerk of Works (ACoW) as appropriate.

Detailed Design and Conflict Resolution Procedure

3.5.3 Following the completion of the detailed design of the Scheme post-consent, the approach to works within ecological buffer zones will be agreed with the relevant local planning authority. The detailed Ecological Protection and Mitigation Strategy (as secured by Requirement 8: Ecological Protection and Mitigation Strategy of the **draft Development Consent Order (Revision F) [EX7/GH3.1_F])** will identify the specific areas where works are required within the protective ecological buffers, as well as the construction methodologies to be used and any relevant ecological mitigation measures deemed to be required.

3.5.4 In the event that the EcoCoW/ACoW withholds authorisation for "unavoidable" works within the protective ecological or arboricultural buffer zones, the following tiered procedure will be implemented:

- **Stage 1: Engineering Re-evaluation:** The Principal Contractor's engineering team must formally demonstrate that all alternative options (e.g., different machinery, directional drilling, or adjusted site layouts) have been exhausted.
- **Stage 2: Mitigation/ Compensation:** If the constraint is deemed truly immovable, the contractor must propose additional, site-specific mitigation measures that go beyond the standard OEPMS requirements to reduce the impact to a level acceptable to the EcoCoW.
- **Stage 3: Decision Escalation:** If a stalemate remains, the matter is escalated to the **Project Environmental Manager** and the **Lead Design Engineer**. They will review the conflict against the DCO (Development Consent Order) requirements and National Policy Statements.

4 Method Statement 3: Pollution Prevention Measures

4.1 Objectives

4.1.1 The majority of the Scheme's valuable ecological features are contained within field boundaries, particularly hedgerows, ditches and watercourses. Other habitats are also located within the Sites, including ponds, woodland, unmanaged grassland and scrub. Additionally, one Local Wildlife Site (Earls Barton Meadow LWS) is located within the Cable Route Corridor, comprising sensitive grassland habitats. Other Designated Sites in proximity to the Scheme are listed in Section 1.6. Species groups at particular risk from pollution events are freshwater fish, terrestrial and aquatic invertebrates, amphibians, small mammals, otters and water voles.

4.1.2 Potential pollution events include the release of chemicals (including oils, fuels and cleaning agents), sediments (including mud, soil and silt) and dust (especially during dry weather). These pollutants can be released either in their own right or though excessive surface water runoff (e.g. during periods of prolonged rain, flooding or disruption of water courses/pipework).

4.1.3 The installation of BPF as set out in Method Statement 2 (MS2) is considered to significantly reduce the likelihood of pollution events occurring through implementing a suitably wide offset between construction activities and sensitive habitats. However, the following additional pollution prevention measures will be adopted to aid further risk reduction.

4.1.4 All measures apply to the PV, BESS and cable installation elements of the Scheme.

4.1.5 This Method Statement should be read in conjunction with the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (OCEMP) **[EX7/GH7.1_D]** produced for the Scheme which details general (i.e. not ecology-specific) pollution protection measures.

4.2 Toolbox Talk

4.2.1 Prior to the commencement of works at any of the PV/BESS Sites, or cable route installation, a toolbox talk will be provided by the EcoCoW to the Site Manager and contractors. The toolbox talk will include details of the EPMS, the sensitivity of ecological features to impacts from pollution, and the requirements for prevention measures contained below. Highly sensitive ecological habitats will be discussed and the need for any proportionate risk reduction measures. The talk will establish the role of the EcoCoW and site personnel during works, and what to do if protected species/ecological constraints are found during works.

4.2.2 In the event a change in Site Management personnel occurs during construction or a pause in works of a period of more than 30 consecutive days occurs, the toolbox talk will need to be provided again by the appointed EcoCoW. The Site Manager will be responsible for relaying information within the toolbox talk to all subsequent site staff during their initial site inductions.

4.3 Working During Prolonged Wet Weather

4.3.1 Work during periods of prolonged wet weather shall be avoided wherever possible to avoid churning of soils and the release of mud and sediments and/or

excessive surface water runoff. The EcoCoW should be consulted should heavy rain on at least three consecutive days be forecast or occur in order to determine whether works should pause or be relocated to less sensitive areas, depending on construction progress and the location/proximity of particular sensitive ecological features.

4.3.2 Table 3.4: Hydrology, Flood Risk and Drainage of the OCEMP **[REP6-043]** contains several measures which specifically deal with the mitigation of potential contamination of watercourses by surface runoff.

4.4 Working During Prolonged Dry Weather

4.4.1 Working during extended dry periods risks dust deposition onto retained sensitive ecological features, including those beyond the Order Limits. As such, the Site Manager(s) should consider the use of sprayed water to dampen earthworks and/or access routes as required in order to control this risk. The EcoCoW should also be consulted in order to advise on any particular ecological features which should be avoided entirely during such times, for example ponds, Local Wildlife Sites and major watercourses in proximity to the working areas.

4.5 Minimisation of Water and Sediment Runoff

4.5.1 Table 3.4: Hydrology, Flood Risk and Drainage of the OCEMP **[REP6-043]** contains several measures which specifically deal with the mitigation of potential water runoff and the prevention of potential discharge of contaminants into local watercourses.

4.6 Minimisation of Risk of Groundwater Contamination Following Fire

4.6.1 Section 3.9: Firewater Consideration of ES Appendix 10.11 – Annex J – Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy - BESS **[REP5-031]** contains several measures adopted into the design of the BESS and its fire suppression system which specifically deal with the automatic attenuation, containment, testing and subsequent disposal of fire suppressant water. The issue of diffuse pollution resulting from fire is also dealt with in Section 10.9 and 10.10 of ES Chapter 10 - Hydrology, Flood Risk and Drainage **[REP6-007]**.

4.7 Use and Storage of Chemicals, Fuels and Oils

4.7.1 Table 3.4: Hydrology, Flood Risk and Drainage of the OCEMP **[REP6-043]** contains several measures which specifically deal with the avoidance of potential water runoff. These measures specifically deal with the minimisation of risk of chemical and contaminant release through their safe usage and storage, and use of spill kits etc. Additionally, as a rule, all refuelling and washing or plant/vehicles, and storage of all potential contaminants should occur at least 20m from all Biodiversity Protection Fencing.

4.8 Compliance with Guidance for Pollution Prevention

4.8.1 The Site Manager(s) will ensure construction complies with Pollution Prevention for Businesses as prepared by Defra and the Environment Agency.

5 Method Statement 4: Construction Phase Lighting

5.1 Objectives

5.1.1 Artificial lighting has the potential to adversely impact wildlife, including freshwater fish, aquatic and terrestrial invertebrates, small mammals and bats, and is not restricted to nocturnal species.

5.2 Ecologically Sensitive Lighting Strategy

5.2.1 Artificial lighting at night may potentially be utilised during construction across the Scheme where night-time working is unavoidable. It is understood that night-time working will not be employed apart from specific activities including delivery of abnormal loads and Horizontal Directional Drilling.

5.2.2 Artificial working-area lighting in these exceptional operations should be minimised as far as possible between sunset and sunrise between the months of March and October inclusive during the construction phase of all elements of the Scheme. This aims to limit the potential for adverse impacts on the above species groups (especially bats) during the times of the year when they are most active and therefore sensitive.

5.2.3 Between the months of November and February inclusive, where lighting is considered essential, construction temporary site lighting in the form of mobile lighting towers will be positioned to ensure that light is directed onto the area of works only with as minimal light spillage onto the hedgerows/woodland as possible. The use of LED lighting and cowls, hoods and other similar screens will be adopted. Any working-area lighting requirements will be discussed and reviewed with the EcoCoW.

5.2.4 Any unavoidable artificial lighting during the hours of darkness required within the period March to October inclusive will only be permitted following consultation with the EcoCoW in order to determine the severity of potential impacts and appropriate mitigation steps, including agreed hours of operation and numbers/specification of luminaires.

5.2.5 Security lighting may be installed on temporary site compounds and permanent structures following consultation with the EcoCoW to establish appropriate locations. Security lighting will be limited to the minimum number of luminaires required which will be defined by the EcoCoW and based on the sensitivity of the habitats potentially affected and baseline lux levels. Security luminaires will be motion-sensitive and set on a short (<2 minute) timer and oriented to reduce upward light spill as far as possible (i.e. horizontally oriented) in order to reduce the potential impact on light sensitive species such as bats.

6 Method Statement 5: Permanent Habitat Removal (PV and BESS Sites) - including Avoidance of Impacts on Protected Species

6.1 Objectives

6.1.1 Habitat removal will be necessary in a limited number of locations, for example to permit construction/operational access and the installation of the Cable Route.

6.1.2 Many habitats within the Order Limits support protected species or are important in their own right. Consequently, their removal - whether temporary or permanent - will require precautionary measures to mitigate the impacts of their loss and/or the potential for unlawful or detrimental impacts on the species they support.

6.1.3 Habitats which are of particular value include: hedgerows, ditches (dry or wet), woodland, individual trees, scrub, grassland, streams, rivers and ponds.

6.2 General Precautionary Approach to Habitat Removal Works

6.2.1 The Site Manager(s) shall be responsible for liaising with the EcoCoW in order to agree locations and timings of advance inspections and clearance attendance, including all species-specific measures set out below, as necessary.

6.2.2 Habitat clearance, for example (but not limited to) the small sections of hedgerow required for new construction accesses and cable installation within the Cable Route Corridor, will be undertaken during the months of March to October inclusive. This will avoid the principal hibernation season for species groups such as reptiles and amphibians and so avoid unlawful harm to these species. Should this not be possible, further precautions will be necessary, such as the possibility of taking any hibernating animals discovered during clearance into care over the winter, or translocation to suitable nearby receptor habitat or specially created hibernacula.

6.2.3 Wherever the above habitats listed in bold are to be affected, an EcoCoW should be present and have undertaken an inspection in advance to ensure legal compliance and avoid undue harm to species potentially present.

6.2.4 Habitat clearance will be conducted under an EcoCoW-led ecological watching brief in order to ensure species such as nesting birds, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals are not harmed. Depending upon the nature and density of the vegetation, this inspection may include a combination of a fingertip inspection of vegetation and early morning surveillance of habitat for evidence of bird nesting behaviour. Further species-specific information is given in the sections below. The vegetation may also need to be cleared a small amount at a time to allow the EcoCoW to search the area thoroughly.

6.2.5 Habitat removal at wet ditches should observe good practice guidance on the use of temporary dams and sediment traps. The input of a hydrological engineer is advisable in order to minimise drainage disruption and localised flooding. All permanently breached ditches should remain interconnected via the use of culverts or clear-span crossings.

6.3 Tree and Building Inspections for Roosting Bats and Nesting Birds

6.3.1 No works involving the removal of buildings are anticipated, however some unavoidable losses of trees will occur. In the event that construction works require trees or buildings to be impacted, altered or removed, these should be thoroughly inspected by a suitably qualified (and licensed, in the case of bats) ecologist in advance. This includes where new or existing access tracks are to be used by heavy plant during construction within approximately 10m of retained buildings, since significant noise and vibration disturbance could be caused to strictly protected species such as bats and nesting barn owls.

6.3.2 Depending on the nature of proposals and the potential for roosting bats to be present, further surveys may be recommended. In the event that a bat roost is discovered, a licence from Natural England may be required in order to proceed lawfully and ensure compensation for roost losses is carried out.

6.3.3 In the event that active bird nests are recorded, works may need to temporarily cease or be delayed until nesting is completed. Losses of nesting opportunities should be compensated as advised by the EcoCoW.

6.4 Nesting Bird Surveys

6.4.1 Clearance of hedgerow, ditch, scrub, trees, woodland and tussocky grassland is not to be undertaken between the months of March and August inclusive due to the risk of unlawful impacts on nesting birds. However, where emergency work to suitable habitat is absolutely unavoidable, a nesting bird check will be required. This will consist of one or more visual inspections of the habitat to be affected by an appropriate number of suitably experienced ecologists to look for signs of nesting behaviour or nests themselves. Such inspections will likely need to be carried out in the early morning prior to construction activities commencing on site for the day.

6.4.2 Where any active bird nests are found, a buffer zone of at least 10m (actual distance dependent upon species and nest location, as advised by the EcoCoW) will be created around the nest, the buffer maintained and not disturbed until the nest is no longer in use. Depending upon the location, protective fencing may be appropriate. The ecologist will be able to advise on the anticipated date of fledging based upon the status of the nest and the species involved. Regular inspections of the nest site by an EcoCoW around the anticipated date of fledging will be necessary to ensure works can continue once the birds have fledged.

6.4.3 This advice applies to species nesting in woody vegetation which includes the majority of British birds. However, specific advice on precautions for ground nesting birds which may be present within arable or pasture habitats where the majority of the PV arrays, BESS and Cable Corridor are situated is contained in Method Statement 9, and precautions for large flocks of overwintering birds in Method Statement 10.

6.5 Badgers

6.5.1 See Method Statement 8 for specific measures relating to Badgers.

6.6 Otters and Water Voles

6.6.1 Particular attention will be paid to any habitat removal works affecting or within 30m of a watercourse for the potential presence of otters and water voles.

6.6.2 All applicable habitat removal works will be preceded by an inspection of habitat at least 50m upstream and 50m downstream of the clearance extent to look for signs of these species and their sheltering sites. The inspection will be carried out one month in advance of works commencing by a suitably qualified ecologist.

6.6.3 In the event that burrows, holts or likely sheltering sites are found, the EcoCoW will discuss this with the Site Manager(s) and efforts to alter the location of the clearance to avoid direct impacts will be made in the first instance.

6.6.4 Should impacts upon holts, burrows or sheltering sites be unavoidable, it will be necessary to delay commencement until a licence from Natural England is obtained. Licences will be contingent on seasonal timing restrictions, sensitive working methods and habitat compensation.

6.6.5 Culverted or overbridged ditches and watercourses should be designed to permit the continued passage of water voles and otters. The advice of the EcoCoW should be sought in this instance.

6.7 Non-native Invasive Species

6.7.1 No non-native invasive species have been recorded within the Order Limits to date during baseline ecological surveys. However, it is possible that plant species such as Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam may occur locally, especially within ditches and watercourses.

6.7.2 The EcoCoW will actively look for non-native invasive species during all supervision and survey work and report their presence to the Site Manager(s) as appropriate.

6.7.3 The potential presence of non-native invasive species will form part of the Ecological Toolbox Talk and will help site staff to identify some of these species so that early reporting and any remediation can take place.

6.7.4 As it is an offence to release into the wild or cause to grow any non-native invasive species, works will be altered to avoid them in the first instance, if discovered. If this is not possible, remediation and eradication work carried out by a specialist company/consultant would be required as all parts of such plants are considered contaminated waste under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Until this occurs, the area will be clearly marked out and delineated with protective fencing, so as to not contribute to its spread locally.

6.7.5 Contractors will be briefed on the presence and identification of non-native species, including Himalayan Balsam/Japanese Knotweed, during the toolbox talk (see Method Statement 1).

6.7.6 The Environment Agency has produced a Code of Practice for the Management, Destruction and Disposal of Japanese Knotweed (May 2001), which gives guidance to developers.

6.8 Reptiles and Amphibians (excluding Great Crested Newts)

6.8.1 Habitat clearance areas will also be thoroughly inspected by hand before and during works for widespread reptile and amphibians species such as toads and slow worms in order to remove any animals as the clearance works progress. Any amphibians, reptiles or other animals will be hand released in suitable nearby retained habitat as determined by the EcoCoW.

6.8.2 The locations to be used for the creation of reptile hibernacula (see Section 4.10 of the OLEMP **[REP6-047]**) will be chosen for their proximity to and connectivity with nearby habitat suitable for reptiles, including tussocky grassland (including that which is proposed within the maintenance scheme – see the OLEMP), scrub and hedgerows.

6.8.3 In order to avoid inadvertent mortality of reptiles during this process, the creation works will not take place within the winter months (November to February inclusive) or during temperatures below 8°C and all areas of the habitat mentioned above will be hand searched and removed with hand tools only once reasonable likelihood or absence of reptiles has been established. All such habitat creation work should be carried out by individuals with experience of identifying reptiles and their habitat.

6.9 Great Crested Newts

6.9.1 The District Licence route for great crested newts (administered by NatureSpace) has been pursued for this Scheme. The District Licence will be in place prior to commencement of works, and will cover the entirety of the Order Limits, in accordance with the approved Impact Plans.

6.9.2 For the purposes of the DCO application, NatureSpace have provided a preliminary report (**Appendix A**) to confirm that the Scheme has been assessed and is eligible to be covered under the District Licence. The final District Licensing assessment and report will be prepared and issued by NatureSpace following detailed design of the Scheme, post-consent.

6.9.3 The relevant District Licensing documents provided by NatureSpace in support of the DCO application are provided in Appendices A-E of this document.

6.9.4 In order for the Scheme to be compliant with the obligations of the District Licence, the following measures will be implemented:

- No development or site clearance associated with the Scheme will take place except in strict accordance with the following:
  - The terms and conditions of the Council's Organisational Licence (WML-OR151 and WML-OR152, or any subsequent 'Further Licence'; and
  - The specific proposals detailed on the 'Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for Great Crested Newt District Licensing (Version 4)', dated 2nd March 2026, or any later iteration.
- No development will take place until a certificate from the Delivery Partner (as set out in the District Licence WML-OR151 and WML-OR152, or any subsequent 'Further Licence'), confirming that all necessary measures regarding great crested newt compensation have been appropriately dealt

with, has been submitted to the planning authority. This Certificate will be submitted with the detailed Ecological Protection and Mitigation Strategy, prepared post-consent. The development will proceed under the District Licence.

- No development in the red zone will take place except in accordance with Part 1 of the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Principles, as set out in the District Licence (WML-OR151 and WML-OR152, or any subsequent 'Further Licence') and in addition in compliance with the following:
  - Works which will affect likely newt hibernacula may only be undertaken during the active period (as defined in the District Licence) for amphibians;
  - Capture methods must be used at suitable habitat features prior to the commencement of the development (i.e. hand/destructive/night searches), which may include the use of temporary amphibian fencing, to prevent newts moving onto a development site from adjacent suitable habitat, installed for the period of the development (and removed upon completion of the development); and
  - Amphibian fencing and pitfall trapping must be undertaken at suitable habitats and features, prior to commencement of the development.
- The specific mitigation measures required within any red zones for great crested newts will be detailed in a Method Statement in the Ecological Protection and Mitigation Strategy, to be prepared post-consent and following detailed design of the Scheme.

6.10 Small Mammals - Including Polecat, Hedgehog, Brown Hare and Harvest Mouse

6.10.1 As it is an offence to cause harm to wild mammals, the EcoCoW will carry out a fingertip search of all habitat to be removed before and during the clearance operation as appropriate. Any burrows discovered will either be avoided if at all possible through alteration of the location of works, or if unavoidable, be destructively searched by hand and in a methodical manner in order to ensure no animals are trapped underground or harmed. Any animals discovered during works will be relocated by hand, where collection is possible, to a suitable undisturbed location to be determined by the EcoCoW. Any injured animals should be taken to the nearest wildlife rescue service as given at the front of this document.

7 Method Statement 6: Temporary Habitat Removal and Reinstatement (Cable Route Corridor and Internal Cable Routes) - including Avoidance of Impacts on Protected Species

7.1 Objectives

7.1.1 The installation of export cables within the Sites and the Cable Route Corridor will involve the temporary removal and reinstatement of habitats such as grassland, hedgerows and ditches. These habitats are of value in themselves, but also have the potential to support protected species such as nesting birds, reptiles, amphibians and water voles.

7.1.2 All precautions contained within Method Statement 5 should be followed in carrying out habitat removal works in relation to the internal cable routes and the Cable Route Corridor. Further steps set out below will be followed to ensure adequate habitat reinstatement. It is anticipated that the working width during cable route construction will measure approximately 30m in width, comprising a haul route and the cable trench itself, with additional soil storage, intermittent jointing bays and set down areas/compounds. Habitat removal is anticipated to occur in all these locations, however temporary trackway matting or other temporary removable surfaces would aid the minimisation of habitat losses.

7.1.3 All habitat reinstatement works will be designed with input and site-specific knowledge from the EcoCoW and monitored for success by them thereafter.

7.2 Grassland

7.2.1 Grassland occupies a small proportion of the habitats within the Sites and Cable Route Corridor. Wherever possible, turf should be stripped and set aside during initial trench cutting for eventual replacement, where cable installation works are anticipated to be of a short enough duration for the turf to be successfully replaced.

7.2.2 Where this is not a viable option, backfilled trenches and disturbed ground will be prepared (topsoil application, rolled and harrowed as necessary) and grassland will be re-seeded over it. An appropriate seed mix will be used which will be in keeping with, or of greater diversity than, the habitat type and species assemblage as recorded during baseline habitat surveys.

7.2.3 All such habitat creation work should be carried out by suitably qualified or experienced landscaping contractors or ecologists.

7.3 Hedgerows

7.3.1 Hedgerow sections to be cleared should be translocated wherever possible. This will involve the removal of hedgerow plants to include their rootballs, to be set aside until they can be replanted in the original location. Translocation is likely only to be successful when undertaken during the autumn and winter months when plants are most dormant, and when duration of trenching at a particular location is short enough to allow plants to survive being removed for this period. The decision of whether conditions allow for the translocation of hedgerow will be made by the EcoCoW.

7.3.2 Where translocation is not possible, hedgerows will be replanted using whips of the same species as was removed, with the addition of a proportion of other

locally appropriate species to increase diversity. Planting should be undertaken in the first planting season (autumn or winter) following removal to ensure a high degree of success and be planted with tree guards to protect against herbivore browsing.

7.3.3 All such habitat creation work should be carried out by suitably qualified or experienced landscaping contractors or ecologists.

7.4 Rivers and Streams

7.4.1 Where open-cut trenching is used at cable route watercourse crossing points, standard best practice measures will be adopted, including the avoidance of works within key spawning seasons for salmonids and other spawning fish as well as migration periods for European eel (avoiding works between October – June 15th inclusive) where this is possible. Habitat suitability assessments may also be completed to establish whether suitable habitat for spawning/migrating fish is present at each watercourse crossing point, and this data would be used to inform whether the above avoidance periods are likely to be required for each affected watercourse.

7.4.2 Additional measures may include the capture and translocation of fish from the working area to suitable habitats upstream or downstream, prior to the dewatering of the channel, as well as EcoCoW supervision of the work. Any lighting required at watercourse crossing points will also be installed to avoid light spill into the watercourse itself wherever possible, to avoid potential impacts to migrating and spawning fish which may be present.

7.4.3 The cable installation methodology to be used at each of the relevant watercourse crossing points, as well as any required mitigation measures relating to spawning/migrating fish and other protected or notable species, would be discussed and agreed with the Environment Agency/Local Planning Authority post-consent, prior to work commencing.

7.4.4 Post-construction monitoring (as detailed in Method Statement 11) will also be conducted to ensure that the affected aquatic and terrestrial habitats are suitably reinstated and that any remedial measures required are identified.

7.5 Ditches

7.5.1 Minor agricultural field drains and ditches will be subject to open cut trenching unless otherwise identified as being of particular ecological importance as to require Horizontal Directional Drilling techniques. The majority of these ditches are only seasonally wet and are of relatively lower ecological value. Wherever possible, and where the duration of works at a particular location allows, any aquatic or marginal plants should be collected for later replanting to minimise the recovery of the habitat after completion of works.

7.5.2 All ditch impacting works should follow good practice guidance on the use of sediment/silt traps and temporary dams to minimise the risk of drainage disruption, sediment release and local flooding.

7.5.3 All such habitat creation work should be carried out by suitably qualified or experienced landscaping contractors or ecologists.

7.6 Arable

7.6.1 Arable fields occupy the vast majority of land within the Sites and Cable Route Corridor and are of little ecological value, therefore no specific reinstatement protocol is required.

8 Method Statement 7: Precautionary Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) Methodology

8.1 Objectives

8.1.1 The use of trenchless techniques such as Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) during cable installation will avoid direct habitat damage and degradation. However, there still remains the risk of damage through improper siting of entry/exit pits and the potential for excessive vibration to cause disturbance to species such as freshwater fish or release of sediments which could harm watercourses and aquatic invertebrates among other species.

8.2 Precautionary Approach to HDD Works

8.2.1 The Site Manager will be responsible for liaising with the EcoCoW to agree timings and locations of HDD operations to ensure attendance at each event.

8.2.2 The EcoCoW will advise on the most appropriate locations for entry and exit pits as well as associated access and set down areas in order to avoid impacts on retained habitats of ecological value such as arable field margins, hedgerows and diverse grassland. The EcoCoW may undertake hand searches of habitat to be removed as necessary.

8.2.3 Where HDD is used under the River Nene and significant tributaries (the Crossing Schedule **[REP6-041]** refers), the EcoCoW will discuss the risk of causing excessive vibration and the release of sediments with the operatives and engineers overseeing HDD works to ensure an adequate depth is used. A depth of no less than 5m is to be used in this location. Here, the EcoCoW will monitor the water column for sediment release during all stages of HDD work. Drilling may need to temporarily cease until depths and working methods can be adequately readjusted. Advice from the Environment Agency or a specialist hydrological engineer may be required in order to help contain sediments during works, including the use of silt traps.

8.2.4 Entry and exit pits should be covered overnight to avoid trapping species such as badgers and other small mammals (see Method Statement 8).

9 Method Statement 8: Specific Measures for Avoidance of Impacts on Badgers

9.1 Objectives

9.1.1 Multiple badger setts have been identified within and adjacent to the Order Limits. Badgers are also likely to use the land within the Order Limits for foraging and dispersal in various locations. Badgers are legally protected from disturbance and harm, as well as interference with their setts. Measures given here will ensure that development works proceed lawfully.

9.2 Pre-commencement Survey

9.2.1 As badgers can excavate new setts in a relatively short time, an update survey for badger setts of land within the Order Limits prior to construction commencing will be necessary. This will specifically focus on all habitats potentially suitable for sett excavation by badgers on within the Order Limits, in particular hedgerows, field margins, scrub, tussocky grassland and woodland or groups of trees. The survey will pay close attention to locations of these habitats which are the subject of habitat loss or land use change under the works plans. The locations of new hedgerow gaps for construction access or cable trenching will be particularly key, but also locations where landscaping, access tracks, fencing, and other infrastructure will be installed within a 30m radius of suitable habitats.

9.2.2 The survey will be carried out by an appropriately experienced ecologist (EcoCoW) who is an associate or full member of CIEEM with prior experience of surveying for badgers.

9.2.3 The survey will be carried out no more than 1 month prior to the commencement of construction activities within a particular Site or section of Cable Route Corridor. The Site Manager(s) will liaise with the EcoCoW to ensure that this survey is completed in good time ahead of works in a particular location.

9.2.4 The survey will look for evidence of badger activity within the Site, including setts, paths, hairs, footprints or faeces and record the location of and type of all setts at the Site, as well as their activity status. Where necessary, should any new setts be identified the BPF as detailed in Method Statement 2 will be adapted to incorporate a revised buffer zone around the identified entrances. Typically, ‘outlying’ setts require a minimum 15m buffer, while ‘subsidiary’, ‘annexe’ and ‘main’ setts require a minimum 30m buffer.

9.2.5 The results of the survey/s will be communicated to the Site Manager(s) with any necessary recommendations for revised buffers or precautionary working methods and supervision.

9.3 Toolbox Talk

9.3.1 Prior to the commencement of works at any of the PV/BESS Sites, or cable route installation, a toolbox talk will be provided by the EcoCoW to the Site Manager and contractors. The toolbox talk will include details on the potential for encountering badger setts and other mammal burrows during works to suitable habitats, along with information on their legal obligations and what to do if a sett or burrow is discovered. The talk will establish the role of the EcoCoW and site personnel during works.

9.3.2 In the event a change in Site Management personnel occurs during construction or a pause in works of a period of more than 30 consecutive days occurs, the toolbox talk will need to be provided again by the appointed EcoCoW. The Site Manager will be responsible for relaying information within the toolbox talk to all subsequent site staff during their initial site inductions.

9.4 Licensed Sett Closure

9.4.1 Any newly-discovered sett should ideally be avoided by construction works if at all possible, under the advice of the EcoCoW.

9.4.2 In the event that an active sett is to be unavoidably impacted by construction activities, a licence from Natural England would likely be necessary to temporarily or permanently close the sett. Works to badger setts can only be undertaken between July and November inclusive due to the possibility of dependent young being underground at other times of year. Outside of this licence period no works affecting the sett would be permitted and a buffer zone free of potentially disturbing activities (i.e. noise, damage or vibration), as informed by the EcoCoW, would be required. Work in other parts of the Site, however, can continue as advised by the EcoCoW. It can take up to six weeks for a licence application to be determined by Natural England, depending on the licence type being applied for.

9.5 Precautionary Approach to Excavations Left Overnight

9.5.1 It is likely that badgers (and other mammals) will move around within the Order Limits during the construction phase considering the open habitats present. Therefore, any pits or trenches dug during the construction phase (particularly during the cable installation works and use of HDD entry/exit pits) must have a means of escape placed in them overnight for trapped badgers (and other animals) to use, or be covered overnight if possible. Examples include rough sawn planks or earth ramps. Similarly, all open ducting and pipework left within any pits or trenches must be temporarily capped off overnight. The use of these measures will be periodically checked by the EcoCoW and will be the responsibility of the Site Manager(s) to implement otherwise unlawful harm to badgers and wild mammals may result.

10 Method Statement 9: Avoidance of Impacts on Ground Nesting Birds of Open Habitats

10.1 Objectives

10.1.1 Skylark, yellow wagtail, grey partridge and quail are all species of ground nesting birds that have been recorded within the Order Limits and which occupy open habitats such as arable and pasture grassland. As development operations will occupy large areas of these habitats, precautions will be necessary to avoid unlawful impacts on the birds and their nests.

10.2 Nesting Bird Checks

10.2.1 Between the months of March and August inclusive, when undertaking construction works within arable or pasture fields, nesting bird checks should be carried out to ensure no nests are at risk of harm and that development works do not commit unlawful acts. As the species concerned are dependent on long, unbroken sightlines of between 75m and 200m for predator avoidance, they are unlikely to be present within close proximity to existing development activities. Therefore, nesting bird checks are most important when development activities progress into previously undeveloped fields during the nesting season. In order to minimise disruption to development activities, close communication on the development programme between the Site Manager(s) and the EcoCoW is essential. Habitat degradation, such as mowing vegetation to a short sward height, and dissuasion techniques, such as kite deterrents, may be employed in advance of the nesting season (and maintained up until the onset of development activities) in order to reduce the requirement for nesting bird checks.

10.2.2 In the event a nest is discovered, its location shall be mapped and shared with the Site Manager(s) and the location will be avoided, and a buffer radius of at least 50m observed, to be advised by the EcoCoW (depending on species). The nest location will be revisited around the time of predicted fledging (derived from the status of the nest upon discovery) to confirm fledging and inactivity, enabling development activities to resume.

11 Method Statement 10: Avoidance of Impacts on Overwintering Birds

11.1 Objectives

11.1.1 Flocks of overwintering birds such as fieldfare, redwing, finches, golden plover. lapwing and other wildfowl have been recorded within the Order Limits during the winter months. Due to the numbers of birds within such flocks, as well as the functional linkage between certain areas of the Scheme and the nearby Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area for which golden plover and lapwing are a principal concern, unnecessary disturbance to them and displacement can be energetically costly and have an adverse impact on the local population. Precautions are given below to minimise this risk.

11.2 Precautionary Approach to Works

11.2.1 During the winter months of November to February inclusive, any significant commencement or re-commencement of development works within fields will be immediately preceded (in the morning) by an inspection for the presence of flocks of overwintering birds. The inspections should be carried out by the EcoCoW.

11.2.2 Where notable flocks are identified within the field, works will be delayed until the flocks have dispersed of their own accord. Monitoring of the fields will be conducted by the EcoCoW to confirm that any flocks present have moved on, and that construction works can commence.

11.2.3 The aim will be to ensure that flocks of overwintering birds are not subject to displacement and disturbance stresses at this vulnerable time of year. As these flocks move about within the landscape on a daily basis, it should be possible to postpone mobilisation into undeveloped fields which are occupied by them by approximately one day to avoid impacts.

11.2.4 The Site Manager(s) will be responsible for liaising with the EcoCoW in advance of mobilisation into previously undeveloped fields during the winter months in order to avoid disturbance of overwintering flocks of birds.

12 Method Statement 11: Avoidance of Impacts on Osprey

12.1 Objectives

12.1.1 An osprey *Pandion haliaetus* nesting platform is located in [redacted]. This provides a safe, long-term nesting location for this species, which is of conservation concern.

12.1.2 Osprey receives special protection under Schedule 1 and Schedule ZA1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation, it is an offence to disturb osprey while they're nesting, building a nest, in or near a nest that contains their young; or to disturb their dependent young. It is also an offence to remove or interfere with their nest, which is used year-on-year.

12.1.3 Whilst [redacted] is retained without any development, during construction, there is a risk of disturbance to osprey from construction and landscaping personnel and plant accessing the Site and entering this field. Precautions are given below to minimise the risk of disturbance.

12.2 Precautionary Approach to Works

12.2.1 During the months of March to October inclusive, no construction or landscaping personnel shall enter [redacted]. Temporary Biodiversity Protection Fencing shall exclude personnel, installed as per Method Statement 2.

12.2.2 In the event that access is required for any unforeseen reasons, then this shall be dependent on the absence of ospreys, or confirmation that the works in question do not pose a risk of disturbance. This shall be confirmed through an inspection by the EcoCoW, with a watching brief also provided during works as deemed necessary by the EcoCoW.

12.2.3 The Site Manager(s) will be responsible for liaising with the EcoCoW in advance of access into [redacted] during the months of March-October inclusive.

13 Method Statement 12: Construction-Phase Monitoring

13.1 Objectives

13.1.1 To ensure satisfactory achievement of all Method Statements and compliance with all relevant DCO Requirements, ecological legislation and policy, periodic monitoring of construction activities and protective measures will be undertaken.

13.2 Monitoring

13.2.1 Regular (weekly) inspections of the Site(s) and immediate surroundings will be undertaken by the Site Environmental Manager to monitor the integrity of the BPF fencing as well as for any signs of silt deposition, dust deposition, flooding, runoff and litter arising from the Site which could impact off-site habitats. This inspection will be recorded within a logbook to be made available to the Local Planning Authority upon request. Remedial action which may be required as soon as an issue is identified may include temporarily ceasing work, arranging litter picking, additional site hoarding, increased water spraying, and increased waste collection.

13.2.2 At least every month during the construction phase, the EcoCoW will inspect the Site to ensure the compliance with the EPMS. This will include checking the following:

- Correct installation of BPF;
- Safeguarding of retained habitats;
- Hedgerow and watercourse condition;
- Potential requirement for nesting bird monitoring for legal compliance;
- Adherence to lighting restrictions; and
- Status of badger activity within the Site.

13.2.3 Following these inspections, the EcoCoW will discuss monitoring outcomes with the Site Manager(s) and provide a written proforma of findings identifying any remedial actions and timescales for actions to be implemented.

13.2.4 The EcoCoW will also be available on an “on call” basis during the construction period.

13.3 Reporting

13.3.1 A quarterly report will be issued by the EcoCoW to the Local Planning Authority. The report will include a detailed log of monitoring activities by the Site Environmental Manager and EcoCoW. It will detail any breaches of the EPMS and the remedial steps taken.

14 Method Statement 13: Mitigation for Loss of Functionally Linked Land and Disturbance to SPA Species

14.1 Objectives

14.1.1 To avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site, measures will be implemented to ensure that mobile species associated with this site (i.e. golden plover and lapwing) have alternative foraging areas available throughout construction and are not subject to undue disturbance which could impact their survival over winter.

14.2 Provision of Functionally Linked Land (FLL) Mitigation Fields

14.2.1 From the outset of construction, fields designated for FLL mitigation (see **Table 2** and **Figures 7.21.2, 7.2.13, 7.21.4** and **7.21.5**) will be managed to ensure their suitability for golden plover and lapwing.

14.2.2 If these fields have not been brought under the control of the Applicant prior to construction and have not already been converted to their proposed land management type, they will be managed as per their current land management type to ensure they remain suitable for foraging, until habitat conversion works can take place.

14.2.3 Where habitat conversion works have not taken place pre-construction, they will take place in the next available window following commencement of construction. For grassland seeding, these works are seasonally constrained to late summer/autumn (late July-October), or spring (March-May). Where an existing crop is present, conversion works may be delayed until the next window after harvest, to avoid an abortive crop planting.

14.2.4 Detail on the creation and long-term management of these habitats is provided within the OLEMP **[REP6-047]**.

Table 2: Details of FLL Mitigation Fields

Field Reference	Size (ha)	Current Land Management	Proposed Land Management
BF1	14.54	Grassland	Conservation grassland
EF25	8.29	Arable, cereal crops	Conservation grassland
CF2	8.29	Arable, cereal crops	Conservation grassland
DF4	10.56	Arable, cereal crops	Arable, spring-sown cereals
EF26	8.07	Arable, cereal crops	Conservation grassland
EF29	10.54	Grassland, grazed	Conservation grassland
EF30	10.45	Arable, cereal crops	Conservation grassland
FF7	18.35	Arable, cereal crops	Conservation grassland with wader scrapes
FF13	7.53	Arable, cereal crops	Conservation grassland
Total Area	**96.62**		

14.3 Avoidance of Significant Disturbance

14.3.1 As per Method Statement 10 in this document, during the winter months of November to February inclusive, any significant commencement or re-commencement of development works within fields will be immediately preceded (in the morning) by an inspection for the presence of flocks of overwintering birds, including golden plover and lapwing. The inspections should be carried out by the EcoCoW.

14.3.2 Where notable flocks are present within the field (flocks of >4 golden plover or >27 lapwing), works will be delayed until the flocks have dispersed of their own accord. Monitoring of the fields will be conducted by the EcoCoW to confirm that any flocks present have moved on, and that construction works can commence.

14.3.3 The aim will be to ensure that flocks of overwintering birds are not subject to displacement and disturbance stresses at this vulnerable time of year. As these flocks move about within the landscape on a daily basis, it should be possible to postpone mobilisation into undeveloped fields which are occupied by them by approximately one day to avoid impacts.

14.3.4 The Site Manager(s) will be responsible for liaising with the EcoCoW in advance of mobilisation into previously undeveloped fields during the winter months, in order to avoid disturbance of overwintering flocks of birds.

14.4 Monitoring

14.4.1 The EcoCoW will monitor the Site, as per Method Statement 12. During these inspections, the EcoCoW will also appraise the suitability of the FLL mitigation fields and whether they have been subject to habitat conversion works.

14.4.2 Following monitoring, the EcoCoW will discuss monitoring outcomes with the Site Manager(s) and provide a written proforma of findings identifying any remedial actions and timescales for actions to be implemented.

14.4.3 The EcoCoW will also be available on an “on call” basis during the construction period.

Appendix A – NatureSpace Great Crested Newt District Licensing Scheme - Preliminary District Licence Report

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

NatureSpace Great Crested Newt District Licensing Scheme

Preliminary District Licence Report

Green Hill Solar Farm

(Version 2)

202403007

7th April 2026

Notes for planning officers

This is not the final Report for submission – this Report is provided to the applicant to explain the financial contribution required to join the scheme and does not contain the final requirement wordings.

Green Hill Solar Farm Limited will submit an Outline Ecological Protection and Mitigation Strategy (OEPMS) to include the District Licence binding requirement wordings to comply with great crested newt mitigation and compensation requirements for this protected species. It is expected that a Requirement of a Development Consent Order would require that this OEPMS would be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authorities.

North Northamptonshire Council, West Northamptonshire and Milton Keynes City Council should each issue a formal authorisation to work under the District Licence (within their jurisdiction) when:

If/when the Development Consent Order has been granted:

- The OEPMS amendment has been approved, so that it contains the District Licence condition wordings
- The NatureSpace Certificate has been presented to the Councils by Green Hill Solar Farm Limited

Report version

Version	Date	Description
1	02/03/2026	Initial full site assessment for the Green Hill Solar Farm scheme, to be amended to align with finalised plans following DCO approval.
2	07/04/2026	Amended assessment following review of development Impact Plan (Version 5). Assessment to be amended to align with finalised plans following DCO approval.

Contents

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Executive Summary

NatureSpace Partnership has been commissioned by Clarkson & Woods Ltd. and Green Hill Solar Farm Limited to undertake a preliminary great crested newt (GCN) District Licence assessment of the proposed Green Hill Solar Farm scheme. This covers the entire DCO boundary, partially in North Northamptonshire Council, West Northamptonshire Council and Milton Keynes City Council. This Report gives projected costs for accessing the relevant GCN District Licence at an early stage, when site plans have yet to be completely finalised.

Should a District Licence authorisation be sought, then a further and final assessment of the finalised site plan will be necessary to obtain a full NatureSpace Report, for submission in support of a DCO. The necessary conditions listed below (which provide the link between the consented development and the planning system) should be included in the relevant Environmental Management Plan(s), for approval by the LPAs following the issue of a Notification of Decision Letter. In this case it is expected that the relevant plan will be an Ecological Protection and Mitigation Strategy (OEPMS), and this report is produced in anticipation of a DCO Requirement which states a need for this document to be approved by the Local Planning Authorities (LPAs). The approving LPAs will then be able to authorise the works under the District Licence in-line with their approval of the OEPMS.

Report scope

This report details the results of the latest District Licence impact assessment undertaken by NatureSpace Partnership on 2nd April 2026. The assessment followed the agreed processes and protocols as set out in the District (organisational) Licence granted to North Northamptonshire Council (WML-OR151), West Northamptonshire (WML-OR151) and Milton Keynes City Council (WML-OR152) and this report summarises how the Green Hill Solar Farm (2025/3341/DCO) can be dealt with under the Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire District Licences for great crested newts.

Route for entry to the District Licence scheme

This report follows a preliminary analysis conducted in May 2024. Protected species and mitigation measures are cited within the Development Consent Order application (draft Schedule 2: Requirements, Part 1: Requirements, 10. Protected species).

This Report provides an initial costing and impact assessment information to enable entry to the scheme. It is anticipated that construction plans may be amended when works are due to commence, and an updated assessment will be needed at this time. This is not the final Report for submission – this Report is provided to the applicant to enable the financial contribution required to join the scheme and does not contain the final requirement wordings, which will need to be included in an OEPMS

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if/when the DCO is granted. Following payment of the required financial contribution, NatureSpace will issue certification of scheme entry, and a further issue of this Report will be provided for submission to the LPA for approval, alongside the OEPMS.

Preliminary second-stage fee estimate: £529,738 (+VAT)

The second-stage fee estimate has been calculated in proportion with the habitat impacts. In the absence of a final detailed plan, a range of assumptions detailed in this report have underpinned the assessment. The ultimate second-stage fee would be calculated and fixed upon assessment of the finalised masterplan.

Draft licensing requirements

Three requirements (equivalent to planning 'conditions') will apply to access the District Licensing option when (if) DCO is approved by the Notification of Decision Letter. These should be added to the OEPMS for submission to and approval by the LPAs, in order to enable a route for the LPAs to authorise the development (or vary the conditions in future, if necessary).

- **Draft requirement 1** links the development consent and permitted impacts to the relevant District Licence (this requirement must be included in the OEPMS)
- **Draft requirement 2** requires the developer to submit a NatureSpace certificate (obtained upon second-stage payment) to the Council before the development can be authorised under the District Licence (i.e. the certificate is presented to the planning authority as part of and prior to the OEPMS approval process)
- **Draft requirement 3** would specify the on-site mitigation measures:
    - For the two small red zone areas within the site boundary, it would impose some on-site mitigation measures which would include best practice working methods, restrictions on timing to avoid sensitive periods (relating to hibernation features) and use of capture methods at suitable habitat features prior to development (see page 6 and Annex 1)

Timing requirements To enable authorisation under the District Licence, sufficient compensatory habitat must be delivered off-site through the scheme in advance of any impacts. In large-scale projects, this can require a lead time between payment and authorisation if sufficient ponds are not in-place at the time of the second stage payment. As the project progresses, liaison with NatureSpace is advised to determine whether a lead-in time is necessary, and if so to explore payment plan options to reduce or eliminate any delays to authorisation.

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Background information

Great crested newts are a European protected species (EPS) and are protected in the UK under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and, to a certain extent, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Where works would harm this species or its habitats, a licence is required in order to make those activities lawful. Natural England is the licensing authority and has granted great crested newt 'District Licences' to certain Councils in England. This enables those Councils ('Licensees') to issue authorisations to developers for specific parcels of development land, without further application (by the developer) to Natural England. This report details whether and how the proposed development can be dealt with under the relevant District Licence and contains technical details relating to planning and licensing requirements.

Developments which utilise the District Licensing Scheme contribute proportionately (depending on the impacts of each development proposal) to the conservation strategy. This funds the creation, management, and monitoring of local compensation sites. NatureSpace and the Newt Conservation Partnership take on all responsibilities for compensation delivery, 25 years of management and monitoring, and annual reporting to Natural England.

Project reference: 202403007

Developer name/organisation: Green Hill Solar Farm Limited

Development Consent Order name: 2025/3341/DCO - Green Hill Solar Farm (PINS reference: EN010170)

Site location: Multiple site parcels – see grid references below

Site grid reference: SP 8033 7344 (Site A); SP 8201 7270 (Site A2); SP 7930 6842 (Site B); SP 8351 6837 (Site C); SP 8430 6797 (Site D); SP 8504 6715 (Site E); SP 8482 6570 (Site E2); SP 8691 6125 (BESS); SP 8939 6011 (Site F1); SP 8898 5938 (Site F2); SP 8936 5757 (Site F3); SP 9049 5530 (Site G)

Development impact map reference (upon which this initial assessment is based): "Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact plan for great crested newt District Licensing (Version 5)", dated 1st April 2026 (see Annex 1)

Consultant ecologist name & organisation: Chris Pool, Clarkson & Woods Ltd.

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Date of habitat survey information (upon which this assessment is based): July 2024. Survey information to underpin a licensing assessment should be less than two years old. If more than two years has passed since the survey (e.g., by July 2026), then it may be necessary to undertake a walkover survey to confirm the assessment remains valid before an Authorisation can be issued (consult NatureSpace) to permit the start of works.

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District Licence summary

1. Confirmation the proposal can be dealt with under the District Licence: Yes

2. Impact Risk Zone Split: Red 4%, Amber 26%, Green 47%, White 23%

3. National Character Area: Northamptonshire Uplands; Northamptonshire Vales; Yardley-Whittlewood Ridge; Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands

4. Is any in-situ great crested newt compensation required: No

5. Are there any working restrictions relating to great crested newts: Yes - the following requirements apply in the red zone areas of the site (see Annex 1 for map):

   - Best practice working and use of reasonable avoidance measures (see 'Great Crested Newt Mitigation Principles' required under condition 17 of the District Licence)
   - Removal or disturbance of newt hibernacula must only take place during the active season (generally mid-February to mid-October, dependant on the season and weather conditions)
   - Capture of newts using hand/destructive/night searches at suitable habitat features prior to ground clearance
   - Amphibian fencing and pitfall trapping to clear newts from the site prior to works (in this case this will apply to all suitable habitats within 250 metres of ponds)

6. Required planning conditions (if consent is granted): See next page

7. Impact metric score: -34.69.

8. Financial 'second-stage' contribution required to contribute to delivery of strategic great crested newt conservation, proportionate to the impacts of the proposal: £529,738 (+VAT)

This report confirms that, subject to the requirements listed above (sections 4 - 8), the development proposal can be covered under the District Licence (WML-OR151 and WML-OR152, or a 'Further Licence') provided that the outlined requirement wordings are added to a OEPMS which is subsequently approved by the Secretary of State. North Northamptonshire Council, West Northamptonshire Council and Milton Keynes City Council would each need to separately authorise works within their respective jurisdictions.

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Draft requirements/conditions and informatives

This section sets out drafts of the requirements which will apply if a Development Consent Order is granted approval by the Secretary of State. Usually, under the District Licences, conditions are applied by planning authorities to planning approvals which link the permission and the specific impacts to the use of the relevant District Licence. For a Development Consent Order, these conditions/requirements are added into the OEPMS to be approved by the LPA, subsequent to approval of the DCO in a Notification of Decision Letter.

These draft requirement/condition wordings will not be finalised until the production of the final OEPMS, if/when the DCO is granted.

A full District Licence report will need to be submitted in support of the DCO application to demonstrate how the requirements of the Habitats Regulations are being dealt with in regard to great crested newts. In accordance with the District Licence, the following draft requirements and informatives would then need to be included in the OEPMS, for approval by North Northamptonshire Council, West Northamptonshire Council and Milton Keynes City Council, in order for the Councils to be able to then authorise these works under their District Licences. Without these requirements in-place, it would not be possible for the works to be authorised under the District Licence.

Draft requirements:

Draft Requirement 1. No development hereby permitted shall take place except in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Council's Organisational Licences (WML-OR151 and WML-OR152, or a 'Further Licence') and with the proposals detailed on plan "Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact plan for great crested newt District Licensing (Version 5)", dated 1st April 2026 (and with "NatureSpace pond impacts avoidance measures for 'unimpacted' waterbodies" (November 2025)).

Reason: In order to ensure that adverse impacts on great crested newts are adequately mitigated and to ensure that site works are delivered in full compliance with the Organisational Licences (WML-OR151 and WML-OR152, or a 'Further Licence'), section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Circular 06/2005 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

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Draft Requirement 2. No development hereby permitted shall take place unless and until a certificate from the Delivery Partner (as set out in the District Licences WML-OR151 and WML-OR152, or a 'Further Licence'), confirming that all necessary measures regarding great crested newt compensation have been appropriately dealt with, has been submitted to and approved by the planning authority and the authority has provided authorisation for the development to proceed under the district newt licence.

The delivery partner certificate must be submitted to this planning authority for approval prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved.

Reason: In order to adequately compensate for negative impacts to great crested newts, and in line with section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Circular 06/2005 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Draft Requirement 3. No development hereby permitted in the red zone shall take place except in accordance with Part 1 of the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Principles, as set out in the District Licences (WML-OR151 and WML-OR152, or a 'Further Licence') and in addition in compliance with the following:

- Works which will affect likely newt hibernacula may only be undertaken during the active period for amphibians.
- Capture methods must be used at suitable habitat features prior to the commencement of the development (i.e., hand/destructive/night searches), which may include the use of temporary amphibian fencing, to prevent newts moving onto a development site from adjacent suitable habitat, installed for the period of the development (and removed upon completion of the development).
- Amphibian fencing and pitfall trapping must be undertaken at suitable habitats and features, prior to commencement of the development.

Reason: In order to ensure that adverse impacts on great crested newts are adequately mitigated and to ensure that site works are delivered in full compliance with the Organisational Licences (WML-OR151 and WML-OR152, or a 'Further Licence'), section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Circular 06/2005 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

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Informatives:

It is recommended that the NatureSpace Best Practice Principles are considered and implemented where possible and appropriate.

It is recommended that the NatureSpace certificate is submitted to this planning authority at least 6 months prior to the intended commencement of any works on site.

It is essential to note that any works or activities whatsoever undertaken on site (including ground investigations, site preparatory works or ground clearance) prior to receipt of the written authorisation from the planning authority which permits the development to proceed under the District Licences (WML-OR151 and WML-OR152, or a 'Further Licence') are not licensed under the great crested newt District Licence. Any such works or activities have no legal protection under the great crested newt District Licence and if offences against great crested newts are thereby committed then criminal investigation and prosecution by the police may follow.

It is essential to note that any ground investigations, site preparatory works and ground / vegetation clearance works / activities (where not constituting development under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) in a red zone site authorised under the District Licence but which fail to respect controls equivalent to those detailed in the planning condition above which refers to the NatureSpace great crested newt mitigation principles would give rise to separate criminal liability under the District Licence, requiring authorised developers to comply with the District Licence and (in certain cases) with the GCN Mitigation Principles (for which Natural England is the enforcing authority); and may also give rise to criminal liability under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and/or the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (for which the Police would be the enforcing authority).

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Activities and operations under a District Licence

The District Licence contains a 'Protocol for activities and operations affecting great crested newts within the licensed area' (see Annex B of the licence) – which contains a list of activities, operations, and licensable acts. The full list does not apply in every authorisation under the District Licence. This report details the activities, methods and acts which would be permitted for the proposed development, based on the impacts as assessed.

Permitted activities and operations under the District Licence (subject to receiving planning consent and written authorisation from the planning authority)**:**

A3—Pond creation, enhancement, and management

A4—Terrestrial habitat creation, enhancement, reinstatement, and management

A5—Capture, exclusion, and relocation of great crested newts from terrestrial habitat. Permitted methods:

- by hand,
- hand searches of suitable features,
- destructive searches,
- pitfall traps and refuges,
- night/torch searching,
- exclusion fencing (including exclusion by, upright and one-way temporary amphibian fencing)
- drift fencing

Note this includes fence installation and removal. Note also that the above activities may only be carried out by someone with an appropriate great crested newt licence. Further details are contained in the NatureSpace Great Crested Newt Mitigation Principles/Best Practice principles.

A6—Relocating great crested newts at imminent risk of harm on Development Land. Permitted methods:

- by hand,
- hand searches,
- destructive searches

A7—Site clearance—including removal of vegetation, hard-standing, buildings and landscaping

A8—Removal of rubble and log piles and other potential hibernacula

A11—Construction activities

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Note that in this case, the activities and operations referenced A3 and A4 are not required under the licence, but will be included in the authorisation, to legally permit those activities should you have need for them (e.g., for aquatic or terrestrial habitat creation)

Licensable acts which would be made lawful by an authorisation for the proposed development under the District Licence:

Capture; Possess; Transport; Disturb; Killing & injuring; Damage & destroy resting places.

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Protocol Conditions

Annex B of the District Licence is a 'Protocol for activities and operations affecting great crested newts within the licensed area' and includes a number of additional 'Protocol conditions'. The full list does not apply in every authorisation under the District Licence. This report details the 'Protocol conditions' which would apply to this site, based on the impacts as assessed.

Protocol conditions (which would apply upon authorisation)**:**

P1 Before any works commence on a site in the Red Zone all those persons involved with the licensable works are to be briefed by someone suitably experienced by way of a 'tool box talk' on:

a. how to identify great crested newts
b. what to do should great crested newts be found, including good working practices and
c. what is and is not permitted under the licence.

P2 Certain activities permitted by this licence require ecological expertise. Activities subject to this condition can only be carried out by an ecologist with an appropriate great crested newt Survey Licence or under the direct supervision of such a person.

P3 Where licence or protocol conditions refer to publications, licence users are expected to refer to the most up to date iteration available. Natural England can direct users to the relevant iterations.

P4 The biosecurity guidelines in Amphibian Disease Precautions: A guide for UK fieldworkers, Advice Note 4 (available from www.arguk.org) must be observed by all licence users.

P5 Great crested newts must not be relocated outside the Licensed Area, over a distance greater than 1 kilometre or beyond a significant physical barrier to dispersal without the permission of Natural England.

Note: the 'Licensed Area' refers to the district covered by the Planning Authority's District Licence. See the NatureSpace Great Crested Newt Mitigation Principles for full detail about protocols for translocation of newts under the District Licence.

P6 Any animal listed in Schedule 9 Part 1 (but not Part 1A or 1B) of the 1981 Act which is a species which is not ordinarily resident in England in a wild state, that is caught in a trap set under this licence must not be released or allowed to escape back into the wild; it must be humanely despatched, unless a specific licence to release that species has been obtained, or alternative advice has been provided by Natural England.

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P8 Persons capturing newts under this licence are expected to follow the advice on welfare considerations for capture programmes in the 'Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines' available from Natural England.

P11 Great crested newts are not to be translocated to Compensation Land or other locations within the Licensed Area unless the terrestrial and/or aquatic habitats are suitable for great crested newts. The suitability of the site is to be confirmed by a suitably qualified person (e.g., an ecologist with a great crested newt survey licence).

P12 Any licensable activities in the red zone must be carried out in accordance with the approved Great Crested Newt Mitigation Principles.

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Aquatic impacts

In this section, the aquatic impacts of the proposed development are summarised. Impacts on aquatic habitat may be direct or indirect. Waterbodies on the development site and up to 500 metres away are considered, depending on the presence of barriers to newt movement.

Total number of great crested newt-accessible waterbodies within 500m: 200

Number unimpacted: 198

Number damaged: 0

Number lost: 2 (indirectly lost)

Number degraded: 0

Pond details:

Waterbody ref	HSI score*	Peak count (if available)	Pond area (m^2)	Distance from development site (m)	Pond impact	Duration
P001	0.5	n/a	212	265	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P002	0.5	n/a	58	360	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P003	0.7	n/a	89	105	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P004	0.5	n/a	819	390	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P005	0.7	n/a	59	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P006	0.5	n/a	161	475	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P007	0.7	n/a	51	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P008	0.5	n/a	134	365	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P009	0.7	n/a	60	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P010	0.7	n/a	162	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P011	0.7	n/a	162	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P012	0.5	n/a	294	385	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P013	0.7	n/a	345	130	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P014	0.7	n/a	190	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P015	0.7	n/a	8	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P016	0.7	n/a	231	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P017	0.7	n/a	46	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent

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Waterbody ref	HSI score*	Peak count (if available)	Pond area (m^2)	Distance from development site (m)	Pond impact	Duration
P018	0.7	n/a	87	5	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P019	0.7	n/a	39	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P020	0.7	n/a	927	15	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P021	0.7	n/a	83	40	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P022	0.5	n/a	240	465	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P023	0.7	n/a	190	75	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P024	0.7	n/a	2245	50	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P025	0.7	n/a	1376	95	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P026	0.7	n/a	253	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P027	0.5	n/a	1039	380	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P028	0.5	n/a	277	450	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P029	0.7	n/a	45	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P030	0.5	n/a	166	485	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P031	0.5	n/a	384	355	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P032	0.5	n/a	91	455	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P033	0.7	n/a	92	15	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P034	0.5	n/a	98	485	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P035	0.7	n/a	175	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P036	0.7	n/a	301	50	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P037	0.7	n/a	398	110	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P038	0.7	n/a	714	10	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P039	0.7	n/a	905	25	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P040	0.7	n/a	2933	225	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P041	0.7	n/a	167	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P042	0.7	n/a	208	75	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P043	0.7	n/a	310	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P044	0.5	n/a	3623	435	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P045	0.5	n/a	515	400	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P046	0.7	n/a	115	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P047	0.7	n/a	868	125	Impacts prohibited	Permanent

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Waterbody ref	HSI score*	Peak count (if available)	Pond area (m^2)	Distance from development site (m)	Pond impact	Duration
P048	0.5	n/a	1941	365	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P049	0.7	n/a	1493	180	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P050	0.7	n/a	102	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P051	0.7	n/a	939	35	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P052	0.5	n/a	205	485	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P053	0.7	n/a	45	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P054	0.7	n/a	381	225	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P055	0.5	n/a	131	270	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P056	0.7	n/a	155	145	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P057	0.7	n/a	241	5	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P059	0.5	n/a	355	325	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P060	0.5	n/a	1044	370	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P061	0.5	n/a	67	455	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P063	0.5	n/a	170	485	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P064	0.7	n/a	733	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P065	0.7	n/a	144	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P066	0.7	n/a	219	165	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P067	0.7	n/a	330	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P068	0.7	n/a	43	170	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P069	0.7	n/a	130	5	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P070	0.7	n/a	41	200	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P071	0.7	n/a	53	110	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P072	0.7	n/a	361	185	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P073	0.7	n/a	357	210	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P074	0.7	n/a	380	235	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P075	0.7	n/a	25	5	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P076	0.7	n/a	82	235	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P077	0.7	n/a	27	60	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P078	0.5	n/a	39	310	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P079	0.7	n/a	80	65	Impacts prohibited	Permanent

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Waterbody ref	HSI score*	Peak count (if available)	Pond area (m^2)	Distance from development site (m)	Pond impact	Duration
P080	0.7	n/a	57	90	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P082	0.5	n/a	38	260	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P083	0.7	n/a	128	10	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P084	0.7	n/a	93	25	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P085	0.7	n/a	147	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P086	0.7	n/a	166	120	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P087	0.7	n/a	85	110	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P088	0.5	n/a	573	380	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P089	0.7	n/a	1086	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P090	0.7	n/a	68	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P091	0.7	n/a	601	120	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P092	0.7	n/a	616	95	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P093	0.7	n/a	491	55	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P094	0.7	n/a	307	0	Indirectly lost**	Permanent
P095	0.7	n/a	75	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P096	0.5	n/a	354	440	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P097	0.7	n/a	250	75	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P098	0.7	n/a	1048	25	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P099	0.7	n/a	1194	205	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P100	0.7	n/a	84	145	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P101	0.5	n/a	260	310	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P102	0.5	n/a	1031	290	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P104	0.5	n/a	3028	435	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P105	0.5	n/a	168	405	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P106	0.5	n/a	232	410	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P107	0.7	n/a	9449	215	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P108	0.7	n/a	6897	115	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P109	0.7	n/a	10885	50	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P110	0.7	n/a	5948	225	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P112	0.7	n/a	1638	220	Impacts prohibited	Permanent

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Waterbody ref	HSI score*	Peak count (if available)	Pond area (m^2)	Distance from development site (m)	Pond impact	Duration
P113	0.7	n/a	14900	130	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P114	0.7	n/a	326	165	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P115	0.7	n/a	66	110	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P118	0.5	n/a	793	340	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P119	0.5	n/a	7268	400	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P121	0.5	n/a	273	445	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P123	0.7	n/a	772	180	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P124	0.5	n/a	10011	455	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P125	0.7	n/a	645	10	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P126	0.5	n/a	11219	340	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P128	0.7	n/a	8231	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P129	0.5	n/a	2744	280	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P130	0.7	n/a	4901	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P133	0.7	n/a	8630	145	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P134	0.7	n/a	12861	75	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P135	0.7	n/a	933	180	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P136	0.7	n/a	115	35	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P137	0.7	n/a	117	190	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P138	0.5	n/a	153	340	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P139	0.7	n/a	70	200	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P140	0.7	n/a	186	215	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P141	0.7	n/a	168	220	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P143	0.7	n/a	7974	135	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P144	0.7	n/a	166	175	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P145	0.7	n/a	4631	50	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P146	0.7	n/a	58	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P147	0.5	n/a	257	330	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P148	0.7	n/a	882	15	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P149	0.7	n/a	778	10	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P150	0.7	n/a	257	5	Impacts prohibited	Permanent

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Waterbody ref	HSI score*	Peak count (if available)	Pond area (m^2)	Distance from development site (m)	Pond impact	Duration
P151	0.7	n/a	262	25	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P152	0.7	n/a	703	5	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P153	0.5	n/a	113	395	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P154	0.7	n/a	789	190	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P155	0.7	n/a	416	40	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P156	0.7	n/a	86	5	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P157	0.7	n/a	268	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P158	0.7	n/a	77	5	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P159	0.7	n/a	380	10	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P160	0.7	n/a	130	0	Indirectly lost**	Permanent
P161	0.7	n/a	323	230	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P162	0.5	n/a	385	295	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P164	0.5	n/a	149	350	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P165	0.5	n/a	115	360	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P166	0.7	n/a	675	115	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P167	0.5	n/a	317	305	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P169	0.7	n/a	324	175	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P171	0.7	n/a	93	180	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P172	0.7	n/a	36	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P173	0.7	n/a	220	160	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P174	0.7	n/a	122	245	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P176	0.7	n/a	153	60	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P177	0.5	n/a	75	290	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P178	0.5	n/a	324	450	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P180	0.5	n/a	230	425	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P182	0.7	n/a	81	55	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P183	0.7	n/a	5904	10	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P184	0.7	n/a	320	50	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P185	0.7	n/a	153	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P186	0.7	n/a	144	110	Impacts prohibited	Permanent

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Waterbody ref	HSI score*	Peak count (if available)	Pond area (m^2)	Distance from development site (m)	Pond impact	Duration
P187	0.5	n/a	33	340	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P188	0.7	n/a	283	155	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P189	0.5	n/a	71	500	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P190	0.7	n/a	47	35	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P191	0.7	n/a	198	85	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P192	0.7	n/a	63	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P193	0.7	n/a	37	5	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P194	0.5	n/a	54	375	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P195	0.7	n/a	246	35	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P196	0.7	n/a	27	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P197	0.5	n/a	35	305	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P198	0.7	n/a	217	100	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P199	0.7	n/a	32	120	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P200	0.7	n/a	34	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P201	0.7	n/a	41	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P202	0.5	n/a	64	480	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P203	0.7	n/a	267	170	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P204	0.5	n/a	182	365	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P205	0.7	n/a	347	5	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P206	0.7	n/a	77	100	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P208	0.5	n/a	341	260	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P209	0.5	n/a	59	410	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P210	0.7	n/a	50	230	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P211	0.7	n/a	47	50	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P212	0.7	n/a	547	10	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P213	0.5	n/a	36	285	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P214	0.7	n/a	99	220	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P215	0.5	n/a	112	300	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P216	0.7	n/a	452	40	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P217	0.7	n/a	47	0	Impacts prohibited	Permanent

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Waterbody ref	HSI score*	Peak count (if available)	Pond area (m^2)	Distance from development site (m)	Pond impact	Duration
P218	0.7	n/a	125	190	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P222	0.7	n/a	344	20	Impacts prohibited	Permanent
P223	0.7	n/a	1994	35	Impacts prohibited	Permanent

* If HSI score is not available, a score of 0.7 is assumed for waterbodies within 250m of the development site and a HSI score of 0.5 for waterbodies 250-500m from the development site.

**An 'indirectly lost' classification arises when development works result in a waterbody becoming functionally isolated from other waterbodies (either during construction phase or following completion of works. In this case, P094 and P160 are permanently indirectly lost to the local great crested newt population due to the long-term severance of connectivity through the landscape.

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Terrestrial impacts

This part of the report summarises the terrestrial impacts. Impacts on linear terrestrial habitats are assessed and summarised separately from general terrestrial habitat impacts. Impacts on terrestrial habitats may be direct or indirect.

Hibernation features present on site? Yes

Terrestrial impact details:

Habitat type	Area (ha) affected	Impacts permitted / prohibited?	Impact duration
Arable	224.699	Permitted	Permanent
Arable	82.931	Prohibited*	Permanent
Arable - non-cereal crops	42.514	Permitted	Permanent
Arable - non-cereal crops	16.636	Prohibited*	Permanent
Arable - temporary grass-clover ley	35.256	Permitted	Permanent
Arable - temporary grass-clover ley	5.685	Prohibited*	Permanent
Arable - winter stubble	11.120	Permitted	Permanent
Arable - winter stubble	12.060	Prohibited*	Permanent
Arable field margins	4.576	Permitted	Permanent
Arable field margins	14.050	Prohibited*	Permanent
Artificial unvegetated surface	0.421	Permitted	Permanent
Artificial unvegetated surface	0.273	Prohibited*	Permanent
Inland rock and scree	0.989	Permitted	Permanent
Modified grassland	15.855	Permitted	Permanent
Modified grassland	23.192	Prohibited*	Permanent
Other neutral grassland	5.830	Permitted	Permanent
Other neutral grassland	14.794	Prohibited*	Permanent
Ruderal/ephemeral	0.290	Permitted	Permanent
Ruderal/ephemeral	2.462	Prohibited*	Permanent
Scrub	0.482	Permitted	Permanent
Scrub	1.706	Prohibited*	Permanent
Woodland	0.284	Permitted	Permanent
Woodland	4.989	Prohibited*	Permanent
TOTAL:	**521.092 ha**		

*Areas where impacts are prohibited are within the planning red line boundary, but are considered unimpacted by the works proposal and are not included within the licence cover area.

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Total terrestrial habitat with permitted impact:	Total area (ha)	Good/moderate terrestrial Area (ha)
Within 50m of a pond:	15.649	3.051
50-250m from a pond:	330.578	45.188
TOTAL:	**341.895 ha**	**47.706 ha**

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Landscape-Level Assessment

Connectivity assessment: Highly connected to waterbodies and priority habitats for migration and dispersal with low levels of fragmentation and no permeability barriers

Range assessment: Low impact to wider landscape great crested newt distribution/range

Contribution to Strategic Opportunity Area: Site is located within a Strategic Opportunity Area and is of high importance

Prospects assessment: Poor

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Other relevant information:

At the time of this report, the exact location of the cable route is yet to be determined and so the site boundary includes a maximum width (approximately 50m) to allow for this uncertainty. However, the expected width required for construction is 30m. To provide flexibility in using the District Licence scheme, the 50m wide corridor will be covered under the licence but the actual area of permitted impacts cannot exceed 30m in width. This will be subject to compliance checks once works commence.

Because significant exclusion zones are proposed around on-site ponds and hedgerows, the majority are considered unimpacted by the development proposals, particularly within existing arable fields where hedgerows provide the main dispersal route. However, there are two ponds ('P094' and 'P160') that will be 'indirectly lost' as a result of the development due to them being functionally isolated within a field proposed for solar panel installation.

Ponds 'P148' and 'P149' are very close to an access track where increased traffic during the construction phase may lead to dust or runoff entering the ponds, reducing water quality. To ensure that 'P148' and 'P149' are not impacted by the development, the measures outlined in the document "Waterbody impact avoidance measures for 'unimpacted' waterbodies" (NatureSpace, 2025) must be complied with.

An obligation will be applied to the parts of the site that are within the red zone to adhere to the GCN Mitigation Principles to reduce risk of harm to great crested newts. The required sub-clauses of condition 3 are to be executed at the discretion of the site ecologist who should determine which habitats are suitable for great crested newt and therefore where the mitigation requirements apply.

The requirement that removal or disturbance of newt hibernacula must only take place during the active season (generally mid-February to mid-October, dependant on the season and weather conditions) has been triggered. This applies to likely great crested newt hibernacula that would need to be identified by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist before they undertake a 'tool box talk' and advise on-site personnel accordingly.

The requirement for capture methods to be used at suitable habitat features has been triggered in this case because the proposals involve removal of scrub, woodland and hedgerow. It is the responsibility of the ecologist acting as an accredited agent under a District Licence authorisation to use their professional discretion to identify any suitable habitats where mitigation requirements will apply, during their site walkover before works begin. It is advisable that detailed records are kept of any decision-making regarding the implementation of mitigation measures during site works.

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The requirement for amphibian fencing, pitfall trapping and the use of capture methods at suitable habitats and features has been triggered in this case due to the damage to terrestrial habitats close to great crested newt waterbodies. It is the responsibility of the ecologist acting as an accredited agent under a District Licence authorisation to use their professional discretion to identify any suitable habitats where mitigation requirements will apply, and which methods are most appropriate for those habitats.

It is recommended that current management practices persist on-site during the timeframe between this Report issue and Authorisation under the District Licence. This is to ensure the site does not become more suitable for great crested newts in the interim period.

Planning appeals

In the event that the proposed development is refused, and a subsequent appeal made to the Planning Inspectorate, the District Licence documents will need to be reconfirmed by NatureSpace and then submitted to PINs as part of the appeal documentation. The applicant should contact NatureSpace in the event of an appeal to expedite this. Failure to do so could mean that the development would not be able to receive authorisation under the District Licence if approved at appeal.

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District Licence – Conditions of use

Once authorised, a developer becomes an 'Authorised Developer' under the Council's District Licence, which includes certain conditions of use (in addition to any planning conditions). When working under a District Licence, Authorised Developers are advised to retain ecological support from an appropriate ecological consultant, and it is recommended that that the NatureSpace 'Best Practice Principles' are adhered to.

There are some specific licence conditions for Authorised Developers to note:

- Authorised Developers authorise (in writing) their employees, officers, or contractors to act under the District Licence as Accredited Agents or Assistants.
- Authorised Developers must ensure that all persons working under the District Licence have the appropriate knowledge, training, and experience to undertake licensed activities in accordance with the terms and conditions of the licence and best practice. For example, where capture of newts is required, this operation must be undertaken by, or supervised by, someone with the appropriate experience and training (and licence to handle newts).
- All persons working under the licence must comply with the terms and conditions of the licence.
- In the red zone, Authorised Developers must comply with the approved Great Crested Newt Mitigation Principles (the separate 'Best Practice Principles' are a recommendation for all developments operating under a District Licence and the 'Great Crested Newt Mitigation Principles' are a mandatory requirement in the red zone).
- Authorised Developers may (on application to the Planning Authority) request a transfer of an authorisation to another developer.
- Authorised Developers must keep certain records and provide these to the Planning Authority or to NatureSpace in a timely manner. Records must be kept of:
    - All persons, companies and organisations authorised to act under the licence and in what capacity
    - Details of licensed activities: dates work commenced and was completed; aquatic and terrestrial impacts; any in-situ compensations; details of any great crested newts captured/moved, etc.
    - Any changes to development land (including management changes)
    - Any surveying/monitoring information
    - Any incidents or reports of activities in breach of the licence or the great crested newt planning conditions (including details of action taken, such as disciplinary and remedial actions)

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- Any other material plans or records relating to the use of the District Licence.

- Authorised Developers must permit an officer of Natural England reasonable access to monitor work being undertaken under the authority of the District Licence.
- Natural England must be informed of any breaches to the District Licence within 48 hours of any person becoming aware of a breach. The Licensee will take any necessary steps to address any breaches or poor practice.
- A failure to comply with the terms and conditions of the District Licence by an Authorised Developer, their Accredited Agents or Assistants will, by default, render the authorisation for the development site null and void.

Important:

This report is not an authorisation to work under a District Licence.

Authorisations are only issued by the Licensee, in writing and only for developments that are in receipt of a valid planning permission, and which have paid any necessary compensatory payments to the Compensation Scheme.

Enquiries:

For any enquiries relating to this report please contact NatureSpace Partnership:

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Tel: 01865 688307

Website: [redacted]

For any enquiries relating to District Licensing, please contact either NatureSpace Partnership, your planning authority or Natural England - gcndll@naturalengland.org.uk

Annex 1: Development Impact Map & Impact Risk Zone Map

List of figures:

- **1) Development impact map reference (upon which this initial assessment is based):** "Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact plan for great crested newt District Licensing (Version 5)", dated 1st April 2026
- **2) Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zone map:** "Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Risk Zone map for great crested newt District Licensing (Version 1)", dated 2nd March 2026

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Appendix B – NatureSpace - Best Practice Principles (March 2021)

Best Practice Principles

This advice note sets out best practice principles recommended for use on any development site authorised under one of the district licences issued under the NatureSpace District Licensing Scheme and are in respect of great crested newts only. There may be other ecological considerations which should also be taken into account when planning works.

All works must be carried out in accordance with ANNEX B of the licence (Protocol for activities and operations affecting great crested newts within the Licensed Area). Individual authorisations will specify which sections of the ANNEX B Protocol apply to a specific development site.

Further guidance can be found in the most up-to-date version of the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines (English Nature, 2001), the great crested newt mitigation licence method statement template (Natural England 2017), the Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook (Langton et al, 2001) and the Amphibian Habitat Management Handbook (Baker et al, 2011).

Any captured newts also become protected under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and the requirements under this legislation must also be complied with.

Any capture/relocation of great crested newts must be carried out by or under supervision of a licenced great crested newt ecologist.

BEST PRACTICE MEASURES RECOMMENDED UNDER THE DISTRICT LICENCES

1. Before any works commence:
    - **advice should be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist:**
        (i) on the requirements of the licence and any recommendations to apply at the development site any of the measures listed at 3. Below; or
        (ii) any other measures (leaving aside those listed at 2. below which should be followed at every development site) to reduce the risks of harm to great crested newts.

        When providing this advice, the qualified ecologist should consider what is reasonable and proportionate, taking into account the relevant impact risk zone of the development site, the suitability of habitats at the development site, the proximity of the development site to ponds and the nature of the development works)[1];

[1] In NatureSpace's view, obtaining and following such ecological advice and following the reasonable avoidance measures listed in paragraph 2, is likely to assist in avoiding liability for offences which protect GCN under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

- A site induction **tool box talk** should be arranged for site personnel, to be provided by a suitably experienced newt ecologist to include great crested newt identification and what to do if newts are found, the legislative protection and the reasonable avoidance measures to be adopted on site.

2. **The following reasonable avoidance measures** should be employed at every development site to reduce the risks to great crested newts during works (both development works, and any habitat creation/enhancement works):
   a) In advance of works, vegetation should be managed to reduce suitability for newts, to discourage newts from areas which will be soon stripped:
      i. Cut scrub and tall grass no lower than 150mm; carefully remove arisings and leave habitat undisturbed for 48 hours
      ii. To be followed by directional vegetation clearance (avoiding wet weather during the active period) and soil stripping – the direction of working to be determined by the location of good newt habitat to be retained (starting furthest away from the favourable habitat and working towards it, to encourage newts to disperse towards safe areas)
   b) Vegetation management should be undertaken at the appropriate time of the year and in appropriate weather conditions, to avoid killing/injuring newts
   c) Working areas should avoid any retained habitat
   d) Measures should be implemented to avoid indirect impacts on retained or off-site habitats, such as run-off or accidental encroachment from working vehicles, material or operatives
   e) Machinery, materials etc should be stored on areas of hardstanding or raised off the ground on pallets where possible
   f) Waste materials should be removed off site immediately or stored in skips where possible
   g) Excavations should be backfilled, covered overnight, or ramps placed in to allow any animals to escape
   h) Excavations and working areas should be managed so as not to create temporary waterbodies which may attract newts onto site
   i) Access roads should use existing roads and tracks and keep habitat disturbance to a minimum, avoiding any areas of sensitive or potentially valuable habitat

3. **The following further avoidance measures (licensed activities)** should be carried out under the district licence (by or under the supervision of a suitably experienced and licensed great crested newt ecologist) where (as above) advised by a suitably qualified ecologist:
   a) Hand searches, destructive searches and/or night searches may be undertaken ahead of site works, to reduce the risk of newts being on the site during works (see further below regarding these methods).

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b) If it is suspected or known that great crested newts are using a pond, any works to the pond should take place during the autumn/winter (normally mid-September to early February). This can include, where necessary, pond drain down during using a fine mesh filter, and followed by hand/destructive searches of the pond bed and immediate surroundings to capture any animals present.

   If it is essential that a known great crested newt pond is drained down in the spring or summer, it may be recommended that a trapping exercise at the pond should be undertaken before drain-down. This should be in accordance with the requirements in section 8.3.2.3 of the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines (except that a minimum 60 days of (bottle) trapping is acceptable (rather than 90 days) when undertaken in conjunction with the use of netting and a high density of traps, to supplement the trapping). If the pond holds insufficient water for bottle trapping, or has a hard substrate with little vegetation, the use of netting alone instead of bottle trapping is acceptable.

c) Where suitable habitat will remain on site or adjacent to a development site, temporary amphibian fencing (TAF) may be installed, to assist with reasonable avoidance measures and prevent newts moving onto the development site during works. This must be removed promptly at the end of the construction works.

Newt capture

Captured newts are subject to the protection of the Animal Welfare Act 2006, which means that it is an offence to cause any unnecessary suffering to an animal under the control of man.

Newt capture may only take place during the active season, which is generally February to October. The season is dependent upon weather (very cold late springs can delay the active season, and early or late onset of frosts in the autumn will bring forward or delay the hibernation season). Attempts to capture newts should avoid cold conditions (<6°C air temperature) and extended periods of very dry weather (particularly during June – mid-August).

Any captured newts should be kept in suitable lidded, ventilated containers and released as soon as possible after capture. Newts should be released in sheltered areas in sufficient good quality habitat and close to a suitable refuge, with landowner permission if required. Release sites should ideally be as close as possible to the site of capture but within a maximum 1km of the site from which they were captured, with no barriers to newt movement. If there is no suitable release site within 1km, NatureSpace Partnership can advise on any alternatives which may be available under the district licence.

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Under the district licence, records must be kept of any movement of newts, with dates, sites of capture and release, sex and ages of all captured and released newts. Any injury or mortality must also be recorded. All records must be submitted to NatureSpace or the local planning authority.

Hand searches

This refers to the careful searching, by hand, of potential refuges and suitable habitat features, and under the licence, this does allow for the removal of checked features. Hand searching may be done throughout the active season, providing weather conditions are suitable (e.g. not during very hot dry weather). Hand searches are ineffective on large expanses of habitat and are suited to searching of distinct habitat features, such as log piles. The time it takes to complete hand searches is dependent upon the extent and complexity of the features to be searched. Hand searching often requires less than 1 day where only small, simple features are present. Where there are large and complex features across the works area it may require 1-5 days.

Night searches

This refers to searches by torchlight of suitable habitat where newts will be visible above ground. Night searches are best carried out during dispersal periods (March-June for adults and August-September particularly for juveniles) and during suitable weather conditions conducive to newt movements – i.e. warm, wet nights. Night searching along drift fences can be particularly effective. The method is only effective in habitats that allow the surveyor to easily see newts as they disperse, and so areas with long vegetation or complex topography are not suitable. Typically night searching is carried out for at least 25 days.

Destructive searches

This is the careful dismantling of features (such as hedgerows, rubbles piles), with ongoing supervision to check for animals as works progress. Destructive searching may be done throughout the active season, providing weather conditions are suitable (e.g. not during very hot dry weather) and is usually combined with hand searches (and is similarly not suitable for large expanses of habitat). The time it takes to complete destructive searches is dependent upon the extent and complexity of the features to be searched and dismantled. In typical cases, destructive searches can be completed within 1-5 days.

Amphibian fencing

Where suitable habitat will remain on site or off site, temporary amphibian fencing (TAF) may be installed at the ecologist's discretion, under the district licence, to assist with reasonable avoidance measures and prevent newts moving onto the development site during works. Temporary amphibian fencing includes exclusion fencing and one-way fencing. Amphibian fencing design, installation and maintenance requirements are outlined in section 8.4.2.1 of the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines. Fencing may be installed year-round (unless in hibernation habitat, in which case fencing

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must not be installed during the hibernation season, unless this may be done without disturbing potential hibernation features). Temporary amphibian fencing must be removed promptly upon completion of the development works, at the appropriate time of year to avoid disturbing hibernating animals.

Refugia

Reptile capture programmes using fencing and/or artificial refugia may also capture newts. If a site is covered by a district licence, great crested newts may also be moved if found during the course of a reptile translocation programme. Also see notes above on newt capture.

Relocating great crested newts at imminent risk of harm

Great crested newts should only be handled by a suitably experienced and licensed newt ecologist, and any capture exercise must be undertaken by or under the direct supervision of, a suitably licensed ecologist. However, if a great crested newt is at imminent risk of harm, a non-licensed person may 'rescue' and release the newt. See notes above on newt capture, regarding how to move newts and record keeping.

Biosecurity

The biosecurity guidelines in Amphibian Disease Precautions: A guide for UK fieldworkers, Advice Note 4 (available from [redacted] must be observed by all licence users.

Experience requirements

The supervising ecologist should as a minimum hold a great crested newt survey licence, as this demonstrates the licence holder has experience in handling newts and has appropriate understanding of welfare and biosecurity issues. Supervising ecologists should also have appropriate knowledge and relevant previous licence experience for the techniques and methods being used under the district licence.

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Appendix C – NatureSpace GCN Mitigation Principles (November 2021)

Part 1

This Part 1 of these GCN Mitigation Principles applies to **development** (as defined under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) in the red zone where a site is authorised under one of the district licences issued under the NatureSpace District Licensing Scheme.

The best practice measures and the capture requirements described below in Sections 1 and 2 of this document are mandatory for all developments in the red zone.

The additional specific mitigation requirements detailed in Section 3 of this document will not apply to every development site in the red zone – the planning conditions will identify which, if any, specific mitigation principles will be required for each development parcel. These principles set out the minimum requirements necessary to comply with the licence.

Section 4 provides advice on experience requirements for supervising ecologists.

In addition to the above, all works must be carried out in accordance with ANNEX B of the licence (Protocol for activities and operations affecting great crested newts within the Licensed Area) as well as the most up-to-date version of the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines (English Nature, 2001), the great crested newt mitigation licence method statement template (Natural England 2017), the Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook (Langton et al, 2001) and the Amphibian Habitat Management Handbook (Baker et al, 2011), unless otherwise stated.

Any newts which are captured also become protected under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and the requirements under this legislation must also be complied with.

There may be other ecological considerations which should also be taken into account when planning works at a development site in the red zone.

Best practice measures

The following measures are a requirement for all activities authorised under the district licence in the red zone:

- **Advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist** on the requirements of the licence and any ecology-related planning conditions

- All capture, exclusion or relocation of great crested newts must be carried out by or under **supervision of a great crested newt ecologist** with the appropriate experience and knowledge of the techniques being used and who holds an appropriate great crested newt licence (see Experience Requirements in section 4 at the end of this document)

- Before any works commence, there must be a site induction **tool box talk** by a suitably experienced newt ecologist (see Section 4) to include great crested newt identification and what to do if newts are found, the legislative protection, any licence and planning requirements and any specific on-site reasonable avoidance measures or other requirements (including any seasonal timing constraints for vegetation clearance, searches for newts and on-site works)

- In advance of any works, **vegetation management** must be undertaken to reduce the suitability for newts, to discourage newts from areas which will be soon stripped:

    - Cut scrub and tall grass no lower than 150mm; carefully remove arisings and leave habitat undisturbed for 48 hours
    - To be followed by directional vegetation clearance (avoiding wet weather during the active period) and soil stripping – the direction of working to be determined by the location of good newt habitat to be retained (starting furthest away from the favourable habitat and working towards it, to encourage newts to disperse towards safe areas)

- With the exception of destructive searches and at the end of a pitfall trapping exercise, where capture of newts is required by planning condition under the district licence, capture exercises must be carried out before vegetation management. With regard to pitfall trapping, if, after a 25-day pitfall trapping period, newts are still being captured and the required 'very low capture' has not been achieved (see section 3.2.3.4 of this document), vegetation management can be undertaken to assist with capture, in accordance with the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines (section 8.4.2.2)

- Vegetation management must be undertaken at the appropriate time of the year and in appropriate weather conditions, to avoid killing/injuring newts

- Working areas must avoid any retained habitat

- Measures must be implemented to avoid indirect impacts on retained or off-site habitats such as run-off or accidental encroachment from working vehicles, material or operatives

- Machinery, materials etc must be stored on areas of hardstanding or raised off the ground on pallets (unless the area has been cleared and temporary amphibian fencing prevents access by newts)

- Waste materials must be removed off site immediately or stored in skips (unless the area has been cleared and temporary amphibian fencing prevents access by newts)

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- Excavations must be backfilled, covered overnight, or ramps placed in to allow any animals to escape

- Excavations and working areas must be managed so as not to create temporary waterbodies which may attract newts onto site

- Access roads must use existing roads and tracks and keep habitat disturbance to a minimum, avoiding any areas of sensitive or potentially valuable habitat

Capture of newts

Captured newts are subject to the protection of the Animal Welfare Act 2006, which means that it is an offence to cause any unnecessary suffering to an animal under the control of man.

Newt capture must only take place during the active season, which is generally February to October. The season is dependent upon weather (very cold late springs can delay the active season, and early or late onset of frosts in the autumn will bring forward or delay the hibernation season). Attempts to capture newts must avoid cold conditions (<6°C air temperature) and extended periods of very dry weather (particularly during June – mid-August).

Any captured newts must be kept in suitable lidded, ventilated containers and released as soon as possible after capture as close to the site of capture as possible. Newts must always be released in sheltered areas in sufficient good quality habitat and close to a suitable refuge. Terrestrial newts must be placed into suitable high quality terrestrial habitat, whereas newts captured at a pond must be released into high quality aquatic habitat, based on the Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) score (minimum HSI 0.7). The minimum habitat requirement for captured newts to be placed into is 0.5ha of suitable terrestrial habitat and 4 suitable and accessible ponds (unless there are already fewer than 4 ponds present, and the development will not damage or destroy any ponds with HSI >0.5). Release sites must ideally be as close as possible to the site of capture and must be within a maximum 1km of the site from which they were captured, with no barriers to newt movement (in exceptional cases translocation over longer distances may be acceptable - see section 3.2.4 below). An assessment by NatureSpace Partnership of the habitats to be lost and retained will inform this process. Landowner permission must be obtained prior to capture and relocation of any newts and sites with statutory conservation designations must not be used as release sites (unless specific written permission has been obtained from Natural England for a specific translocation exercise).

Whether or not the planning conditions require newt capture, where suitable habitat will remain on site or off site, temporary amphibian fencing (TAF) may be installed at the ecologist's discretion, under the district licence, to assist with reasonable avoidance measures and prevent newts re-occupying or moving onto the development site during works. Temporary amphibian fencing includes exclusion fencing and one-way fencing.

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Under the district licence, records must be kept of any movement of newts, with dates, sites of capture and release, sex and ages of all captured and released newts. Any injury or mortality must also be recorded. All records must be submitted to NatureSpace or the local planning authority.

Specific mitigation requirements

The following measures are required by specific planning conditions (and are therefore mandatory) for certain developments in the red zone (they are not mandatory for all developments in the red zone).

3.1 Aquatic habitats

Restrictions will apply when ponds will be damaged or lost as part of development works, as these works lead to significant risks to great crested newts.

3.1.1 Planning condition 3a

This planning condition specifies that works to existing ponds onsite may only be undertaken during autumn/winter. This planning condition will apply to any ponds on site which are suitable for newts, (based on the HSI score and suitability of terrestrial habitat) and which will be damaged or destroyed during development. The metric assessment and resulting report provided by NatureSpace will specify which ponds this condition applies to.

This planning condition requires that any and all works to the specified ponds must be carried out during the autumn and winter. This is normally mid-September to early February. A pond which has ceased to hold water during the spring/summer would not be regarded as covered by this planning condition. If a pond will be lost, the pond must be drained down during the autumn/winter, using a fine mesh filter, followed by hand and destructive searches of the pond bed and immediate surroundings to capture any animals present.

If it is essential that a suitable great crested newt pond is drained down in the spring or summer, an intensive trapping exercise at the pond (in accordance with the requirements in section 8.3.2.3 of the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines – except that a minimum 60 days of (bottle) trapping is acceptable (rather than 90 days) when undertaken in conjunction with the use of netting and a high density of traps, to supplement the trapping) will be necessary. If the pond holds insufficient water for bottle trapping, or has a hard substrate with little vegetation, the use of netting alone instead of bottle trapping will be acceptable.

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3.2 Terrestrial habitats

Timing restrictions and capture exercises will be requirements on a development site where the risks to newts are the greatest, and, in regard to the capture of newts, where capture operations are most likely to be effective. For example, relevant planning conditions will require capture where:

- Suitable terrestrial habitat will be damaged or lost within 50 metres of a breeding/occupied pond (≥ 0.001ha / 10sq m)
- Suitable terrestrial habitat will be damaged or lost within 100 metres of a breeding/occupied pond (>0.02ha / 200sq m)
- High quality connected terrestrial habitat up to 250m from a breeding/occupied pond
- Particular habitat features providing good connecting/connected habitat

3.2.1 Timing restrictions in terrestrial habitats

On development sites which contain suitable overwintering habitat (or 'hibernacula') for great crested newts, the period within which damage or destruction of that habitat can be undertaken will be restricted by planning condition 3b. The timing restriction imposed by this planning condition means that works which will affect likely newt hibernacula must only be undertaken during the active period for amphibians. Amphibians are generally active during February to October, although this is weather dependent (see above, under 'Capture operations').

3.2.2 Types of capture permitted

Planning conditions 3c and 3d relate to capture requirements under the district licences. Where either of these conditions are required under a planning permission, all capture must adhere to the standards outlined in the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines (unless otherwise stated in this guidance). A written record must be kept of capture effort and results, weather conditions (including rainfall) and minimum overnight temperatures.

Planning condition 3c requires the use of capture methods at suitable habitat features prior to ground clearance or removal of suitable habitat features. A suitably experienced and licensed ecologist must advise on the most appropriate method(s) for the site, depending on the types of habitats and features present. This must include at least one of following methods: hand searches, destructive searches and or night searches. The following section explains the minimum standards required for each of these methods:

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3.2.3.1 Hand searches

This refers to the careful searching, by hand, of potential refuges and suitable habitat features, and under the licence, this does allow for the removal of checked features. Hand searching can be done throughout the active season, providing weather conditions are suitable (e.g. not during very hot dry weather). Hand searches are ineffective on large expanses of habitat and are suited to searching of distinct habitat features, such as log piles. The time it takes to complete hand searches is dependent upon the extent and complexity of the features to be searched. Hand searching often requires less than 1 day where only small, simple features are present. Where there are large and complex features across the works area it may require 1-5 days.

3.2.3.2 Night searches

This refers to searches by torchlight of suitable habitat where newts will be visible above ground. Night searches are best carried out during dispersal periods (March-June for adults and August-September particularly for juveniles) and during suitable weather conditions conducive to newt movements – i.e. warm, wet nights. Night searching along drift fences can be particularly effective and so is often most effective and efficient in conjunction with a pitfall trapping exercise – this can be a useful way to clear a site more quickly. The method is only effective in habitats that allow the surveyor to easily see newts as they disperse, and so areas with long vegetation or complex topography are not suitable. The minimum effort for night searching is 25 nights.

3.2.3.3 Destructive searches

This is the careful dismantling of features (such as hedgerows, rubbles piles), with ongoing supervision to check for animals as works progress. Destructive searching can be done throughout the active season, providing weather conditions are suitable (e.g. not during very hot dry weather) and is usually combined with hand searches (and is similarly not suitable for large expanses of habitat). The time it takes to complete destructive searches is dependent upon the extent and complexity of the features to be searched and dismantled. In typical cases, destructive searches can be completed within 1-5 days.

3.2.3.4 Fencing and pitfall trapping

Planning condition 3d requires the use of amphibian fencing and pitfall trapping at suitable habitats and features, prior to commencement of works. A suitably experienced and licensed ecologist must advise on the most appropriate fencing and trapping design for the site, depending on the types of habitats and features present. As a minimum fencing and pitfall trapping will be required on sites where suitable terrestrial habitat in good or moderate condition will be damaged or lost within 50

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metres of a pond (≥ 0.001ha / 10sq m) and or where >0.02ha / 200sq m suitable terrestrial habitat (in good or moderate condition) will be damaged or lost within 50-100m of an occupied or breeding pond. The following section explains the minimum standards required for fencing and pitfall trapping under the district licence:

- **Amphibian fencing**

Amphibian fencing design, installation and maintenance must follow best practice and must be focussed in and around suitable areas of habitat to be cleared – e.g. the use of lengths of drift fencing within 100m of great crested newt ponds. Fencing requirements are outlined in section 8.4.2.1 of the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines. Fencing may be installed year-round (unless in hibernation habitat, in which case fencing must not be installed during the hibernation season, unless this may be done without disturbing potential hibernation features). Temporary amphibian fencing must be removed promptly upon completion of the development works, at the appropriate time of year to avoid disturbing hibernating animals.

- **Pitfall trapping**

Where pitfall trapping is required (by planning condition 3d), it must be undertaken in line with the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines – section 8.4.2.2. With regard to effort, the minimum requirements under the NatureSpace District Licensing Scheme will be 25 days trapping, in suitable conditions for newt movements. There must be at least 5 days at the end of the capture period (which can be the last 5 of the 25 days) over which no more than 9 great crested newts are captured (and no more than 4 great crested newts in any one day). If 10 or more great crested newts are captured in the last 5 days, then capture must continue until a five day zero or very low capture period (as above, with <9 great crested newts over 5 days and no more than 4 great crested newts in any one day) is achieved. Sites can be compartmentalised so that compartments can be released for works separately upon achieving the required capture period.

To offset the reduction in effort compared to standard recommendations, there must be an increase in trapping intensity – increased numbers of traps, additional fence lines where appropriate, and other methods (hand, night searches, artificial refugia, carpet tiles etc.) deployed where they would assist with capture. In order to maximise capture efficiency, trapping must occur during periods of expected high dispersal. This will depend on the time of year, location and weather, though would typically be March to June and August to September.

3.2.4 Translocation

Where capture of newts is required, and newts cannot be relocated to suitable habitat outside of the working area, or in habitat adjacent to, or within 1km (provided there are no barriers to newt movement) of the development site, this approach also includes the facility for off-site translocation

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of great crested newts from development sites to conservation sites. This will only be appropriate where there are conservation benefits for doing so (e.g. to establish a new population, or where large numbers of newts are expected to be present at the development site and the retained or adjacent habitats are not considered suitable to support the population). NatureSpace and the Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust will provide site specific advice in any such cases. Captured newts must only be moved to suitable habitat and where there is sufficient suitable viable habitat to support the population. The minimum would be 0.5ha and 4 ponds that are suitable for and accessible (i.e. within 500m of the receptor site with no barriers to newt movement) to the translocated newts.

Any translocations, including receptor site selection, will conform to best practice for conservation science, including in regard to disease, and the Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust will provide specific advice for any such proposals. The 'triggers' for translocation off site (and which will require expert advice from ARC on individual proposals, and, if >1km from the capture site, consultation with Natural England) are:

- Evidence suggests there are large numbers of great crested newts on the development site and that there is insufficient habitat to be retained or in the vicinity of the development site in order to sustain a population of equivalent size and viability ("large" would typically mean a population that would qualify as a SSSI interest feature); or
- Habitat in the vicinity of the development site is insufficient in quality and/or quantity to support a viable great crested newt population in the long term, and there is no practical remedy for this (either on-site or within 1km); or
- A compensation site requires an introduction of newts from an existing (close-by) population, and sourcing founders from a development site would be consistent with improving Conservation Status of the species in the District.

Where off-site translocation is deemed necessary (following the above triggers), the actual detailed proposals will be site specific – including details on capture methodology (which will aim to capture newts of all life stages) at the donor site and habitat creation/management measures and monitoring (pre-and post-translocation) at the receptor site. NatureSpace Partnership will set out any Developer responsibilities/requirements.

NatureSpace and the Newt Conservation Partnership will design translocations to ensure there is no negative impact on the range metric. In general, any translocations will be within the maximum dispersal range of the existing population (around 2km), taking into account any barriers to movement. If a situation arises where translocation would be to a site outside of the dispersal range, then disease screening requirements would apply, and, in all cases, there will be consultation with Natural England where off-site translocation is triggered, and the receptor site is >1km away. Details of the receptor site will be provided, including distance from the donor site, extent, types and quality of habitats available, existing great crested newt status, landowner permission, conservation designation, etc.

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Experience requirements

Supervising ecologists must have appropriate experience, knowledge and relevant licence(s) for the techniques and methods being used. The minimum requirement is that the ecologist holds a great crested newt survey licence, as this demonstrates the licence holder has experience in handling newts and has appropriate understanding of welfare and biosecurity issues. However, if the district licence requires pitfall or bottle trapping at a development site, the supervising ecologist must either:

- Be the named ecologist on a great crested newt mitigation licence (or have held one within the last three years); or
- Be a registered consultant on the Great Crested Newt Low Impact Class Licence; or
- Hold a level 2 great crested newt survey licence.

In line with standard mitigation licences, the supervising ecologist named may appoint other persons in writing to enable them to handle great crested newts for the specific task of relocating animals from pitfall traps and/or artificial refugia (e.g. carpet tiles) either to the opposite side of the exclusion fencing or to the receptor site, as appropriate. Those appointed persons will be classed as 'assistants'. Assistants must have received appropriate training, including the handling and welfare of the species, but are not required to hold individual great crested newt licences and may work unsupervised. Persons appointed as assistants by the supervising ecologist will be required to produce on demand their written authorisation to a police constable or an officer of Natural England.

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Part 2

This Part 2 of these GCN Mitigation Principles applies to any **non-development works or activities** in the red zone where a site is authorised under the NatureSpace District Licensing Scheme (such as ground / vegetation clearance, site investigations and ground investigations).

The best practice measures and the capture requirements described below in Sections 5 and 6 of this document are mandatory for all works or activities in the red zone.

The additional specific mitigation requirements detailed in Section 7 of this document will not apply to every site in the red zone – they will only apply under this Part 2 (i.e. to non-development works or activities) where, and to the extent that, any equivalent planning condition 3a-3e has (pursuant to the planning metric) been imposed on the planning permission requiring delivery of specific mitigation requirements in relation to the development. These principles set out the minimum requirements necessary to comply with the licence.

Section 8 provides advice on experience requirements for supervising ecologists.

In addition to the above, all works must be carried out in accordance with ANNEX B of the licence (Protocol for activities and operations affecting great crested newts within the Licensed Area) as well as the most up-to-date version of the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines (English Nature, 2001), the great crested newt mitigation licence method statement template (Natural England 2017), the Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook (Langton et al, 2001) and the Amphibian Habitat Management Handbook (Baker et al, 2011), unless otherwise stated.

Any newts which are captured also become protected under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and the requirements under this legislation must also be complied with.

There may be other ecological considerations which should also be taken into account when planning works at a site in the red zone.

Best practice measures

The following measures are a requirement for all activities authorised under the district licence in the red zone:

- **Advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist** on the requirements of the licence

- All capture, exclusion or relocation of great crested newts must be carried out by or under **supervision of a great crested newt ecologist** with the appropriate experience and knowledge of the techniques being used and who holds an appropriate great crested newt licence (see Experience Requirements in section 8 at the end of this document)

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- Before any works commence, there must be a site induction **tool box talk** by a suitably experienced newt ecologist (see Section 8) to include great crested newt identification and what to do if newts are found, the legislative protection, any licence and planning requirements and any specific on-site reasonable avoidance measures or other requirements (including any seasonal timing constraints for vegetation clearance, searches for newts and on-site works)

- In advance of any works, **vegetation management** must be undertaken to reduce the suitability for newts, to discourage newts from areas which will be soon stripped:
  - Cut scrub and tall grass no lower than 150mm; carefully remove arisings and leave habitat undisturbed for 48 hours
  - To be followed by directional vegetation clearance (avoiding wet weather during the active period) and soil stripping – the direction of working to be determined by the location of good newt habitat to be retained (starting furthest away from the favourable habitat and working towards it, to encourage newts to disperse towards safe areas)

- With the exception of destructive searches and at the end of a pitfall trapping exercise, where capture of newts is required by planning condition under the district licence, capture exercises must be carried out before vegetation management. With regard to pitfall trapping, if, after a 25-day pitfall trapping period, newts are still being captured and the required 'very low capture' has not been achieved (see section 7.2.3.4 of this document), vegetation management can be undertaken to assist with capture, in accordance with the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines (section 8.4.2.2)

- Vegetation management must be undertaken at the appropriate time of the year and in appropriate weather conditions, to avoid killing/injuring newts

- Working areas must avoid any retained habitat

- Measures must be implemented to avoid indirect impacts on retained or off-site habitats such as run-off or accidental encroachment from working vehicles, material or operatives

- Machinery, materials etc must be stored on areas of hardstanding or raised off the ground on pallets (unless the area has been cleared and temporary amphibian fencing prevents access by newts)

- Waste materials must be removed off site immediately or stored in skips (unless the area has been cleared and temporary amphibian fencing prevents access by newts)

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- Excavations must be backfilled, covered overnight, or ramps placed in to allow any animals to escape

- Excavations and working areas must be managed so as not to create temporary waterbodies which may attract newts onto site

- Access roads must use existing roads and tracks and keep habitat disturbance to a minimum, avoiding any areas of sensitive or potentially valuable habitat

Capture of newts

Captured newts are subject to the protection of the Animal Welfare Act 2006, which means that it is an offence to cause any unnecessary suffering to an animal under the control of man.

Newt capture must only take place during the active season, which is generally February to October. The season is dependent upon weather (very cold late springs can delay the active season, and early or late onset of frosts in the autumn will bring forward or delay the hibernation season). Attempts to capture newts must avoid cold conditions (<6°C air temperature) and extended periods of very dry weather (particularly during June – mid-August).

Any captured newts must be kept in suitable lidded, ventilated containers and released as soon as possible after capture as close to the site of capture as possible. Newts must always be released in sheltered areas in sufficient good quality habitat and close to a suitable refuge. Terrestrial newts must be placed into suitable high quality terrestrial habitat, whereas newts captured at a pond must be released into high quality aquatic habitat, based on the Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) score (minimum HSI 0.7). The minimum habitat requirement for captured newts to be placed into is 0.5ha of suitable terrestrial habitat and 4 suitable and accessible ponds (unless there are already fewer than 4 ponds present, and the development will not damage or destroy any ponds with HSI >0.5). Release sites must ideally be as close as possible to the site of capture and must be within a maximum 1km of the site from which they were captured, with no barriers to newt movement (in exceptional cases translocation over longer distances may be acceptable - see section 7.2.4 below). An assessment by NatureSpace Partnership of the habitats to be lost and retained will inform this process. Landowner permission must be obtained prior to capture and relocation of any newts and sites with statutory conservation designations must not be used as release sites (unless specific written permission has been obtained from Natural England for a specific translocation exercise).

Whether or not the planning conditions require newt capture, where suitable habitat will remain on site or off site, temporary amphibian fencing (TAF) may be installed at the ecologist's discretion, under the district licence, to assist with reasonable avoidance measures and prevent newts re-occupying or moving onto the development site during works. Temporary amphibian fencing includes exclusion fencing and one-way fencing.

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Under the district licence, records must be kept of any movement of newts, with dates, sites of capture and release, sex and ages of all captured and released newts. Any injury or mortality must also be recorded. All records must be submitted to NatureSpace or the local planning authority.

Specific mitigation requirements

The following measures apply to non-development activities / works where, and to the extent that, any equivalent planning condition 3a-3e has (pursuant to the planning metric) been imposed on the planning permission requiring delivery of specific mitigation requirements in relation to the development.

7.1 Aquatic habitats

Restrictions will apply when ponds will be damaged or lost as part of works, as these works lead to significant risks to great crested newts.

7.1.1 Works to existing ponds

Works to existing ponds onsite may only be undertaken during autumn/winter (this applies to any ponds on site which are suitable for newts, (based on the HSI score and suitability of terrestrial habitat) and which will be damaged or destroyed)..

This is normally mid-September to early February. A pond which has ceased to hold water during the spring/summer would not be regarded as covered by this requirement. If a pond will be lost, the pond must be drained down during the autumn/winter, using a fine mesh filter, followed by hand and destructive searches of the pond bed and immediate surroundings to capture any animals present.

If it is essential that a suitable great crested newt pond is drained down in the spring or summer, an intensive trapping exercise at the pond (in accordance with the requirements in section 8.3.2.3 of the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines – except that a minimum 60 days of (bottle) trapping is acceptable (rather than 90 days) when undertaken in conjunction with the use of netting and a high density of traps, to supplement the trapping) will be necessary. If the pond holds insufficient water for bottle trapping, or has a hard substrate with little vegetation, the use of netting alone instead of bottle trapping will be acceptable.

7.2 Terrestrial habitats

Timing restrictions and capture exercises will be requirements where the risks to newts are the greatest, and, in regard to the capture of newts, where capture operations are most likely to be effective. For example, capture will be required where:

- Suitable terrestrial habitat will be damaged or lost within 50 metres of a breeding/occupied pond (≥ 0.001ha / 10sq m)

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- Suitable terrestrial habitat will be damaged or lost within 100 metres of a breeding/occupied pond (>0.02ha / 200sq m)
- High quality connected terrestrial habitat up to 250m from a breeding/occupied pond
- Particular habitat features providing good connecting/connected habitat

7.2.1 Timing restrictions in terrestrial habitats

On sites which contain suitable overwintering habitat (or 'hibernacula') for great crested newts, the period will be restricted within which damage or destruction of that habitat can be undertaken. The timing restriction means that works which will affect likely newt hibernacula must only be undertaken during the active period for amphibians. Amphibians are generally active during February to October, although this is weather dependent (see above, under 'Capture operations').

7.2.2 Types of capture permitted

Where capture is required, all capture must adhere to the standards outlined in the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines (unless otherwise stated in this guidance). A written record must be kept of capture effort and results, weather conditions (including rainfall) and minimum overnight temperatures.

Capture methods at suitable habitat features must be used prior to ground clearance or removal of suitable habitat features. A suitably experienced and licensed ecologist must advise on the most appropriate method(s) for the site, depending on the types of habitats and features present. This must include at least one of following methods: hand searches, destructive searches and or night searches. The following section explains the minimum standards required for each of these methods:

7.2.3.1 Hand searches

This refers to the careful searching, by hand, of potential refuges and suitable habitat features, and under the licence, this does allow for the removal of checked features. Hand searching can be done throughout the active season, providing weather conditions are suitable (e.g. not during very hot dry weather). Hand searches are ineffective on large expanses of habitat and are suited to searching of distinct habitat features, such as log piles. The time it takes to complete hand searches is dependent upon the extent and complexity of the features to be searched. Hand searching often requires less than 1 day where only small, simple features are present. Where there are large and complex features across the works area it may require 1-5 days.

7.2.3.2 Night searches

This refers to searches by torchlight of suitable habitat where newts will be visible above ground. Night searches are best carried out during dispersal periods (March-June for adults and August-September particularly for juveniles) and during suitable weather conditions conducive to newt movements – i.e. warm, wet nights. Night searching along drift fences can be particularly effective and so is often most effective and efficient in conjunction with a pitfall trapping exercise – this can be a useful way to clear

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a site more quickly. The method is only effective in habitats that allow the surveyor to easily see newts as they disperse, and so areas with long vegetation or complex topography are not suitable. The minimum effort for night searching is 25 nights.

7.2.3.3 Destructive searches

This is the careful dismantling of features (such as hedgerows, rubbles piles), with ongoing supervision to check for animals as works progress. Destructive searching can be done throughout the active season, providing weather conditions are suitable (e.g. not during very hot dry weather) and is usually combined with hand searches (and is similarly not suitable for large expanses of habitat). The time it takes to complete destructive searches is dependent upon the extent and complexity of the features to be searched and dismantled. In typical cases, destructive searches can be completed within 1-5 days.

7.2.3.4 Fencing and pitfall trapping

Where the use of amphibian fencing and pitfall trapping is required at suitable habitats and features, prior to commencement of works, a suitably experienced and licensed ecologist must advise on the most appropriate fencing and trapping design for the site, depending on the types of habitats and features present. As a minimum fencing and pitfall trapping will be required on sites where suitable terrestrial habitat in good or moderate condition will be damaged or lost within 50 metres of a pond (≥ 0.001ha / 10sq m) and or where >0.02ha / 200sq m suitable terrestrial habitat (in good or moderate condition) will be damaged or lost within 50-100m of an occupied or breeding pond. The following section explains the minimum standards required for fencing and pitfall trapping under the district licence:

- **Amphibian fencing**

Amphibian fencing design, installation and maintenance must follow best practice and must be focussed in and around suitable areas of habitat to be cleared – e.g. the use of lengths of drift fencing within 100m of great crested newt ponds. Fencing requirements are outlined in section 8.4.2.1 of the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines. Fencing may be installed year-round (unless in hibernation habitat, in which case fencing must not be installed during the hibernation season, unless this may be done without disturbing potential hibernation features). Temporary amphibian fencing must be removed promptly upon completion of the development works, at the appropriate time of year to avoid disturbing hibernating animals.

- **Pitfall trapping**

Where pitfall trapping is required, it must be undertaken in line with the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines – section 8.4.2.2. With regard to effort, the minimum requirements under the NatureSpace District Licensing Scheme will be 25 days trapping, in suitable conditions for newt movements. There must be at least 5 days at the end of the capture period (which can be the last 5 of the 25 days) over which no more than 9 great crested newts are captured (and no more than 4 great

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crested newts in any one day). If 10 or more great crested newts are captured in the last 5 days, then capture must continue until a five day zero or very low capture period (as above, with <9 great crested newts over 5 days and no more than 4 great crested newts in any one day) is achieved. Sites can be compartmentalised so that compartments can be released for works separately upon achieving the required capture period.

To offset the reduction in effort compared to standard recommendations, there must be an increase in trapping intensity – increased numbers of traps, additional fence lines where appropriate, and other methods (hand, night searches, artificial refugia, carpet tiles etc.) deployed where they would assist with capture. In order to maximise capture efficiency, trapping must occur during periods of expected high dispersal. This will depend on the time of year, location and weather, though would typically be March to June and August to September.

7.2.4 Translocation

Where capture of newts is required, and newts cannot be relocated to suitable habitat outside of the working area, or in habitat adjacent to, or within 1km (provided there are no barriers to newt movement) of the development site, this approach also includes the facility for off-site translocation of great crested newts from development sites to conservation sites. This will only be appropriate where there are conservation benefits for doing so (e.g. to establish a new population, or where large numbers of newts are expected to be present at the development site and the retained or adjacent habitats are not considered suitable to support the population). NatureSpace and the Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust will provide site specific advice in any such cases. Captured newts must only be moved to suitable habitat and where there is sufficient suitable viable habitat to support the population. The minimum would be 0.5ha and 4 ponds that are suitable for and accessible (i.e. within 500m of the receptor site with no barriers to newt movement) to the translocated newts.

Any translocations, including receptor site selection, will conform to best practice for conservation science, including in regard to disease, and the Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust will provide specific advice for any such proposals. The 'triggers' for translocation off site (and which will require expert advice from ARC on individual proposals, and, if >1km from the capture site, consultation with Natural England) are:

- Evidence suggests there are large numbers of great crested newts on the development site and that there is insufficient habitat to be retained or in the vicinity of the development site in order to sustain a population of equivalent size and viability ("large" would typically mean a population that would qualify as a SSSI interest feature); or
- Habitat in the vicinity of the development site is insufficient in quality and/or quantity to support a viable great crested newt population in the long term, and there is no practical remedy for this (either on-site or within 1km); or

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- A compensation site requires an introduction of newts from an existing (close-by) population, and sourcing founders from a development site would be consistent with improving Conservation Status of the species in the District.

Where off-site translocation is deemed necessary (following the above triggers), the actual detailed proposals will be site specific – including details on capture methodology (which will aim to capture newts of all life stages) at the donor site and habitat creation/management measures and monitoring (pre-and post-translocation) at the receptor site. NatureSpace Partnership will set out any Developer responsibilities/requirements.

NatureSpace and the Newt Conservation Partnership will design translocations to ensure there is no negative impact on the range metric. In general, any translocations will be within the maximum dispersal range of the existing population (around 2km), taking into account any barriers to movement. If a situation arises where translocation would be to a site outside of the dispersal range, then disease screening requirements would apply, and, in all cases, there will be consultation with Natural England where off-site translocation is triggered, and the receptor site is >1km away. Details of the receptor site will be provided, including distance from the donor site, extent, types and quality of habitats available, existing great crested newt status, landowner permission, conservation designation, etc.

Experience requirements

Supervising ecologists must have appropriate experience, knowledge and relevant licence(s) for the techniques and methods being used. The minimum requirement is that the ecologist holds a great crested newt survey licence, as this demonstrates the licence holder has experience in handling newts and has appropriate understanding of welfare and biosecurity issues. However, if the district licence requires pitfall or bottle trapping at a development site, the supervising ecologist must either:

- Be the named ecologist on a great crested newt mitigation licence (or have held one within the last three years); or
- Be a registered consultant on the Great Crested Newt Low Impact Class Licence; or
- Hold a level 2 great crested newt survey licence.

In line with standard mitigation licences, the supervising ecologist named may appoint other persons in writing to enable them to handle great crested newts for the specific task of relocating animals from pitfall traps and/or artificial refugia (e.g. carpet tiles) either to the opposite side of the exclusion fencing or to the receptor site, as appropriate. Those appointed persons will be classed as 'assistants'. Assistants must have received appropriate training, including the handling and welfare of the species, but are not required to hold individual great crested newt licences and may work unsupervised. Persons appointed as assistants by the supervising ecologist will be required to produce on demand their written authorisation to a police constable or an officer of Natural England.

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Appendix D – NatureSpace Pond Impact Avoidance Measures

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

Waterbody impact avoidance measures for 'unimpacted' waterbodies

1. Introduction

This document relates to assessments of impact under the NatureSpace District Licensing Scheme for great crested newts. Specifically, this document focusses on avoidance of impacts to ponds and compliance with this document may be required as a condition of a planning permission.

2. Development impacts to waterbodies

An impact assessment may identify potential impacts to a pond (or other waterbody suitable for great crested newts) which are either direct or indirect, during site preparation, during the construction phase, post-development or otherwise as a result of temporary or permanent land-use change. Examples of indirect impacts to a pond can include the introduction of novel pressures such as an increase in pollution, lighting, or disturbance, which result in degradation of a pond's suitability for great crested newts.

This document outlines measures which must be followed to ensure that a development proposal avoids direct and indirect impacts to aquatic habitats, in line with the 'mitigation hierarchy'. The measures detailed here are intended to avoid impacts that occur through the most widely recognised impact pathways. Each project will be individually assessed by NatureSpace to ensure that potential impacts are fully considered and any additional measures to avoid these will be implemented on a case-by-case basis, and detailed in the NatureSpace Report/project Impact Plan.

To ensure that a pond will remain unimpacted during works that have otherwise been authorised under a great crested newt District Licence, compliance with this document can be secured through a condition attached to a planning permission. Section 4 of this document details the requirements.

3. District Licence pond definition

The District Licences include the following definition of a pond:

- any natural or man-made freshwater waterbody, including a ditch which holds standing or sustained slow-flowing water or a lake, with a surface area of between 25 m^2 and 2,000 m^2 (inclusive); or
- any natural or man-made freshwater waterbody, including a ditch with standing or slow-flowing water, with a surface area of less than 25 sq. metres but only where there is evidence of suitability of that waterbody for great crested newt or evidence of occupation of that waterbody by great crested newt; or
- any natural or man-made freshwater waterbody, including a ditch with standing or slow-flowing water and a lake, with a surface area of between 2,001 m^2 and 20,000 m^2 unless there is evidence of absence of occupation of that waterbody by great crested newt obtained in accordance with standard survey guidelines.

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4. Standard measures for avoiding impacts to ponds

Through the NatureSpace great crested newt District Licensing Scheme, impacts to great crested newt habitat (ponds and terrestrial habitat) are assessed and proportionately compensated for at the time of scheme entry.

Where ponds are assessed as 'unimpacted' by development proposals, the following standard avoidance measures (as detailed in sections 4.1-4.12) must be adhered to during site work and post-development. This is to prevent any impacts occurring to ponds marked as 'unimpacted' (or otherwise marked as 'impacts prohibited') on a NatureSpace District Licence Impact Plan[1]. Unimpacted habitats will be shown on the relevant project Impact Plan, and such areas are excluded from coverage under the authorisation to work under the District Licence. **Prior to planning determination, it is critical to ensure that any and all working areas, including areas for storage and access, are included within the Impact Plan's area of impact**.

These standard pond impact avoidance measures should be read alongside the NatureSpace Best Practice Principles which are recommended for works on all sites. For all works in red zones[2] compliance with the NatureSpace Great Crested Newt Mitigation Principles is mandatory under the District Licence.

4.1 Distance between works and the pond

In any cases where works are undertaken in close proximity to a pond, it is only possible to consider a pond as 'unimpacted' in certain special circumstances where compliance with sections 4.2-4.12 is secured and it is possible to demonstrate that such measures would avoid any impacts to the pond.

Any buffer zone in which works are excluded will be shown as an area where impacts are prohibited on the District Licence Impact Plan which will be conditioned as part of the planning permission. Such areas are excluded from coverage under the authorisation to work under the District Licence.

4.2 Physical impacts to ponds

Damaging and destructive works to a pond must be avoided and the pond must not be physically altered (except when required for positive conservation management – see below). Damage or alteration to the physical structure of a pond, or the construction of any structure within a pond or on its banks (including overhanging structures), are prohibited.

[1] NatureSpace has discretion to consider a pond 'unimpacted' in special cases where one or more of the standard avoidance measures may not be met, but we determine that there will be no material increase in pressure to that pond. Equally, NatureSpace has discretion to consider a pond 'impacted' where all standard avoidance measures are met, but we determine that a pond may be impacted.

[2] Mitigation requirements apply to all works in the red zone unless the development has been classified under the NatureSpace charging strategy as a 'Householder' or 'Low Impact Minor' development.

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Certain conservation activities which involve works to or within a pond may be undertaken as part of an approved plan to enhance the pond's condition for great crested newts. Such activities must be designed solely for conservation management purposes to improve the pond's suitability for great crested newts and must be supervised by, and follow advice from, a suitably qualified ecologist in great crested newt ecology. Conservation works must be undertaken during autumn/winter, avoiding the active period for great crested newts, and can often be undertaken without the need for a licence. A suitably experienced and licensed great crested newt ecologist should advise how to avoid damaging impacts, best practice measures and whether these works would require coverage of a great crested newt licence. For cases where the works would require coverage of a great crested newt licence (in order to permit activities that would otherwise constitute an offence), it would not be possible for the waterbody in question to be treated as 'unimpacted' in the District Licence impact assessment. Instead, it may be possible to consider enhancement of waterbodies in the District Licensing assessment, providing any such measures are supported by a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan which includes management and monitoring for a minimum period of 25 years.

4.3 Pollution and drainage

There must be no novel discharge of foul water or potentially polluted surface water entering a pond as a result of the development, or during development works. Common pollutant sources (among other potential sources) that must not be allowed to enter a pond or its immediate surroundings include fuel or oil from vehicles, unsealed storage or dispersal of agricultural materials (such as chemicals, manure or fertiliser), domestic water drainage, suspended solids, runoff from roads and driveways (e.g., salt), or pollution by any other chemicals.

Drainage plans which secure the above design elements must be implemented fully in the development proposal, including long term maintenance of any such mitigation.

4.4 Dust, debris, and litter

The proposed development must not result in any novel sources of dust, debris or litter which may enter or otherwise affect a pond.

Any dust created during construction or demolition works should be prevented from entering or affecting a pond. Methods to prevent dust affecting ponds need to be implemented and may involve erection of a screening or usage of suitable dust suppression devices. Any measures designed to avoid dust must include proposals to prevent any load carried in surface runoff from entering the pond.

Any demolition works near to a pond must be undertaken using a soft approach, where possible, or otherwise measures must be implemented to avoid any dust and debris entering, damaging or otherwise affecting a pond.

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4.5 Lighting

A pond must not be impacted by any increase in lighting either during or post development. There must be no new or increased lighting directed towards the pond or the surrounding vegetation.

4.6 Disturbance from people and/or animals

A pond must not be subject to any additional disturbance from vehicles, people or domestic animals/livestock, during or post development. For example, the following must be avoided:

- additional access or proximate footfall
- additional proximate vehicular traffic
- additional access by pets or farm animals (unless the latter is agreed under a conservation management plan for great crested newts)
- encouragement of ducks or other waterfowl
- introduction of invasive species of plant or animal
- introduction of fish

4.7 Impacts to connectivity

There must be no reduction in connectivity with the wider landscape or surrounding ponds as part of the development.

Reduction in connectivity could include removal or fragmentation of suitable connective habitat (or reduction in suitability of that habitat to support great crested newts) and/or the introduction of novel barriers to movement.

4.8 Impacts to terrestrial habitat immediately surrounding the pond

There must be no significant loss, or reduction in quality, of the terrestrial habitat immediately surrounding the pond as a result of the development.

Any impacts to the terrestrial habitat immediately surrounding the pond must not result in an increased risk of mortality to great crested newts.

Terrestrial habitat impacts permitted or otherwise prohibited under the District Licence will be delimited on the relevant project Impact Plan, which will be conditioned as part of the planning permission.

4.9 Shading by development

The proposed development must not result in increased shading of a pond which would result in a reduction of the pond's suitability for great crested newts.

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4.10 Mortality on roads

There must be no significant increase in the length/width or traffic usage of roads which are proximate to a pond, as this would be likely to result in increased mortality rates on any great crested newt population utilizing the pond.

4.11 Change of use

Development proposals must not subject a pond to a change of use. For example, a pond on agricultural land which is proposed for residential development cannot be considered unimpacted.

4.12 Water table impacts

There should be no adverse changes to the water table that would substantially alter the hydroperiod of a pond such that the pond becomes less suitable for great crested newts. This could include development resulting in a lower water table, causing ponds to dry earlier and more frequently, or conversely, a higher water table, whereby ponds may become more permanent.

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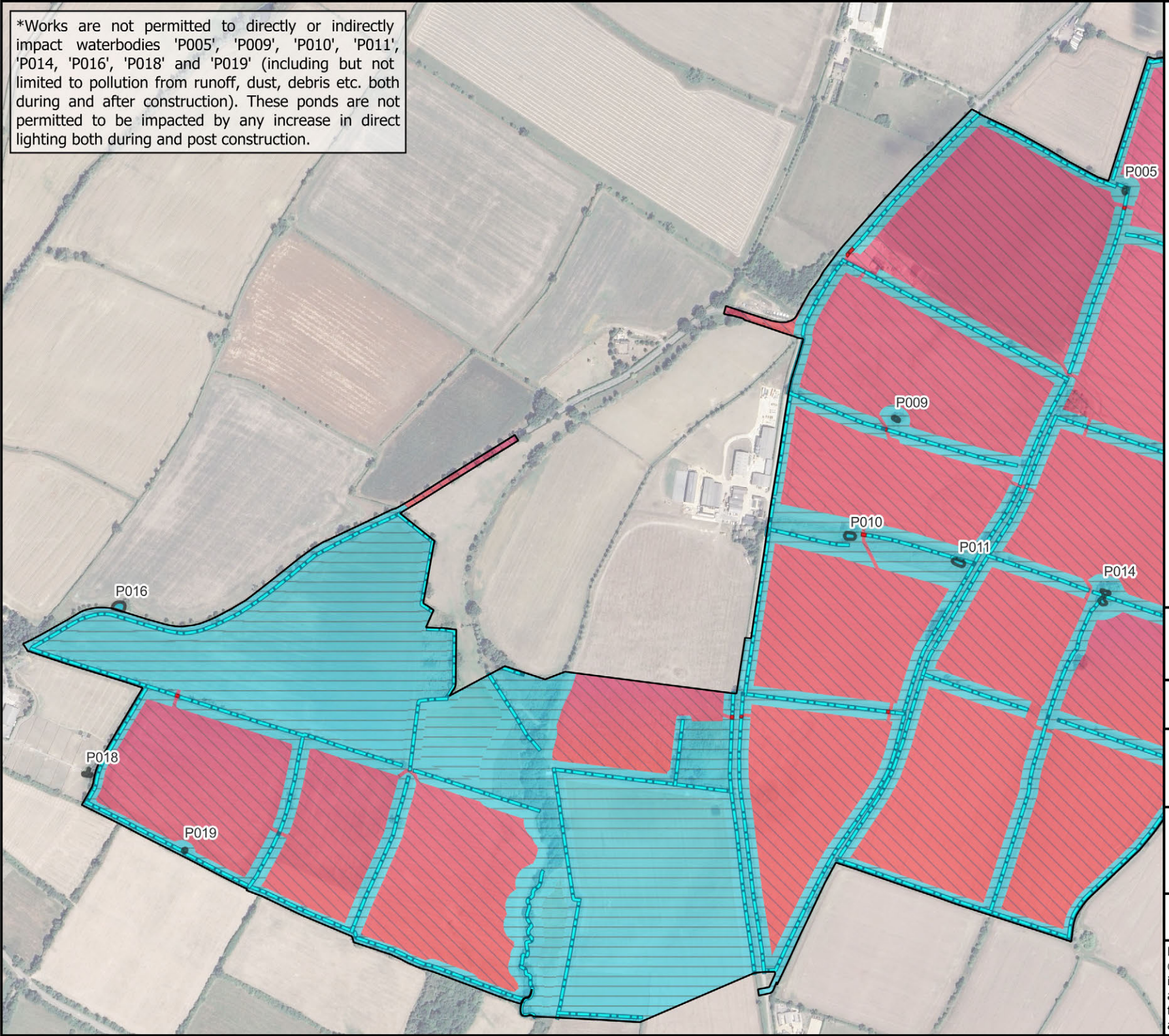
Appendix E – NatureSpace Impact Map



LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Waterbody impacts:

- Impacts prohibited*

0 100 200 m

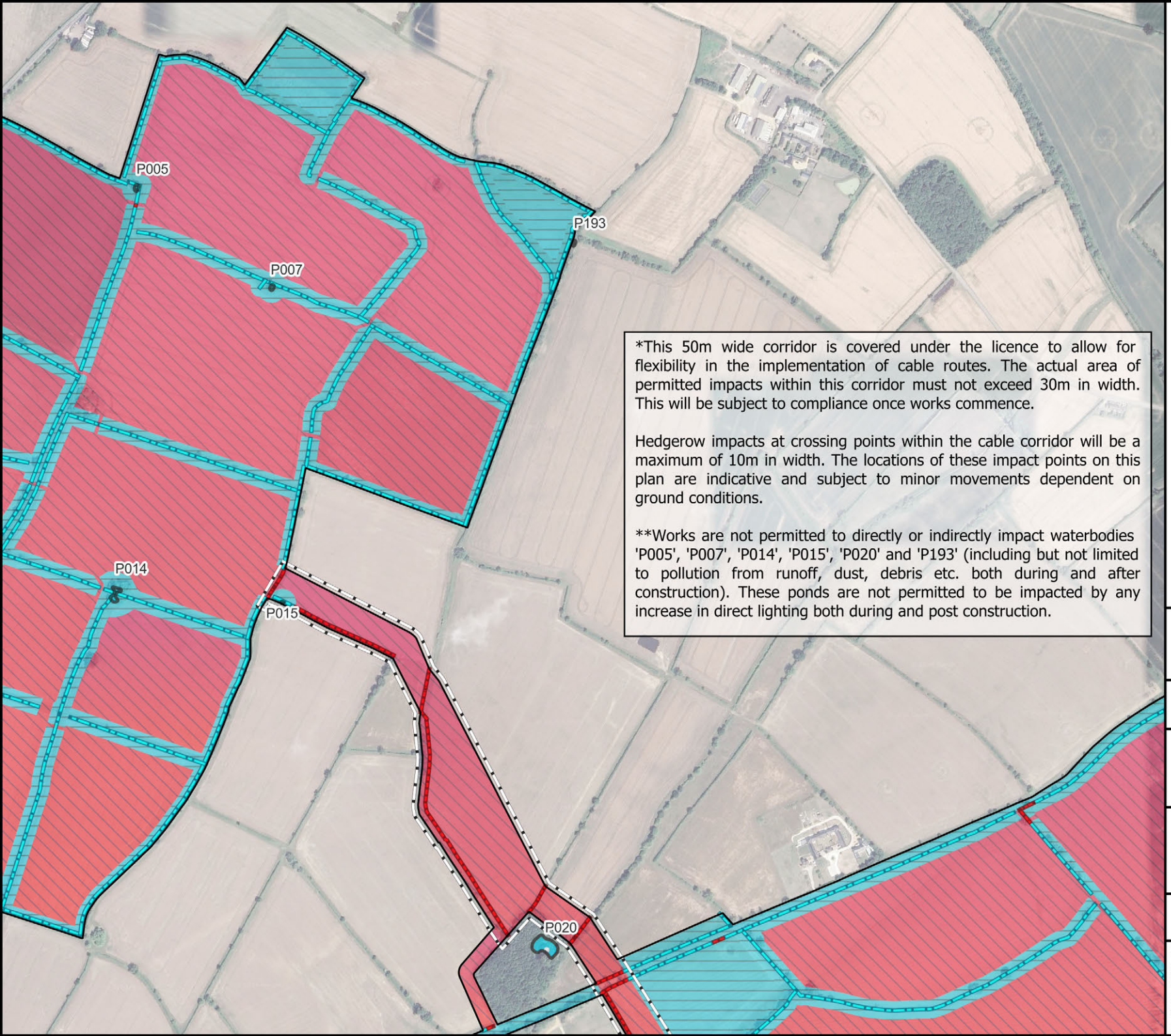
1:8000 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
Projection: OSGB 36 BNG - ESPG 27700

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 1 of 24)

1st April 2026 | VERSION 5



*This 50m wide corridor is covered under the licence to allow for flexibility in the implementation of cable routes. The actual area of permitted impacts within this corridor must not exceed 30m in width. This will be subject to compliance once works commence.

Hedgerow impacts at crossing points within the cable corridor will be a maximum of 10m in width. The locations of these impact points on this plan are indicative and subject to minor movements dependent on ground conditions.

**Works are not permitted to directly or indirectly impact waterbodies 'P005', 'P007', 'P014', 'P015', 'P020' and 'P193' (including but not limited to pollution from runoff, dust, debris etc. both during and after construction). These ponds are not permitted to be impacted by any increase in direct lighting both during and post construction.

LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary
- Cable route impact boundary*

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Waterbody impacts:

- Impacts prohibited**

0 100 200 300 m

1:8000 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
Projection: OSGB 36 BNG - ESPG 27700

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 2 of 24)

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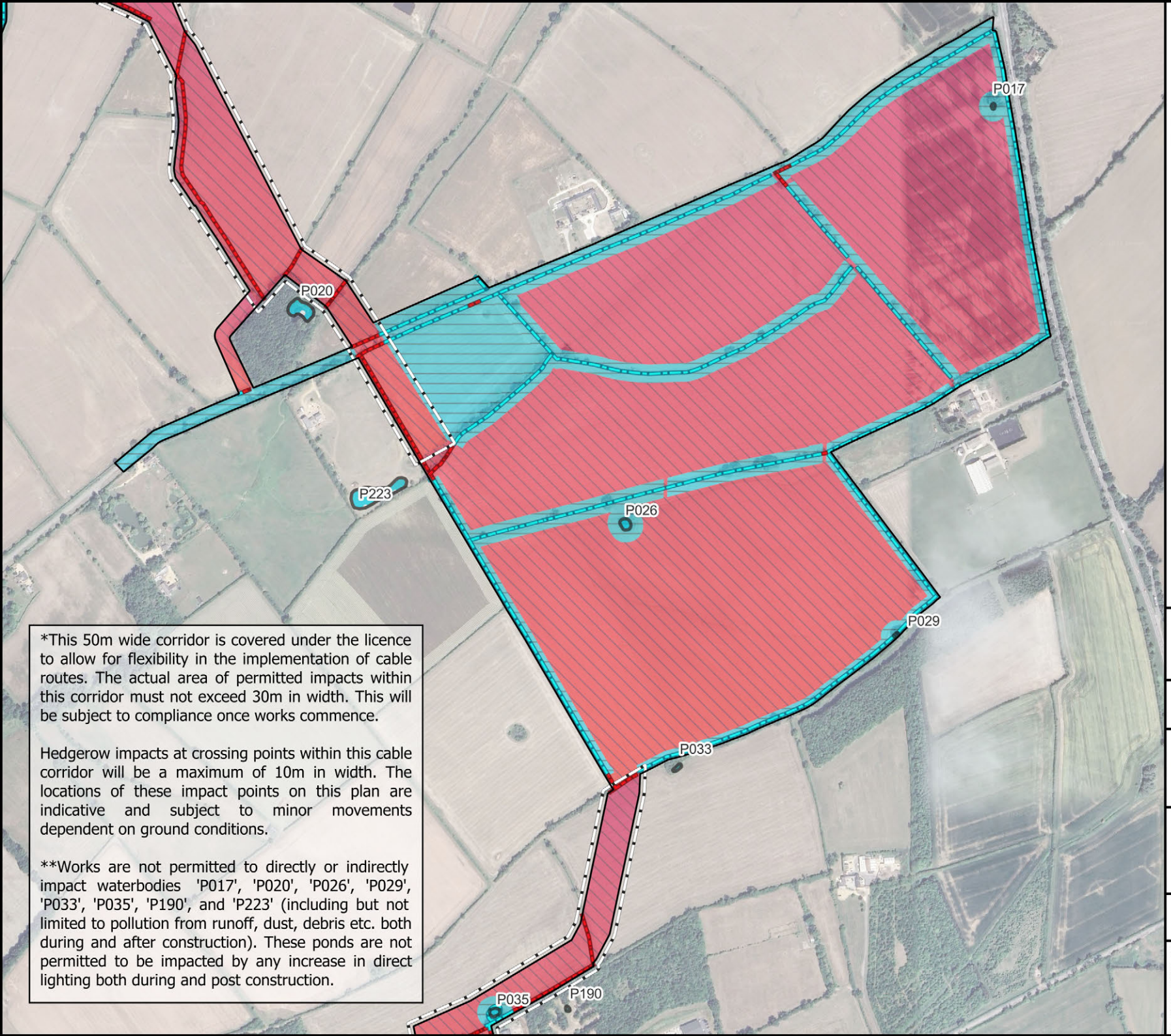

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Hedgerow impacts at crossing points within this cable corridor will be a maximum of 10m in width. The locations of these impact points on this plan are indicative and subject to minor movements dependent on ground conditions.

**Works are not permitted to directly or indirectly impact waterbodies 'P017', 'P020', 'P026', 'P029', 'P033', 'P035', 'P190', and 'P223' (including but not limited to pollution from runoff, dust, debris etc. both during and after construction). These ponds are not permitted to be impacted by any increase in direct lighting both during and post construction.

LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary
- Cable route impact boundary*

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Waterbody impacts:

- Impacts prohibited**

0 100 200 300 m

1:8000 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
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NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 3 of 24)

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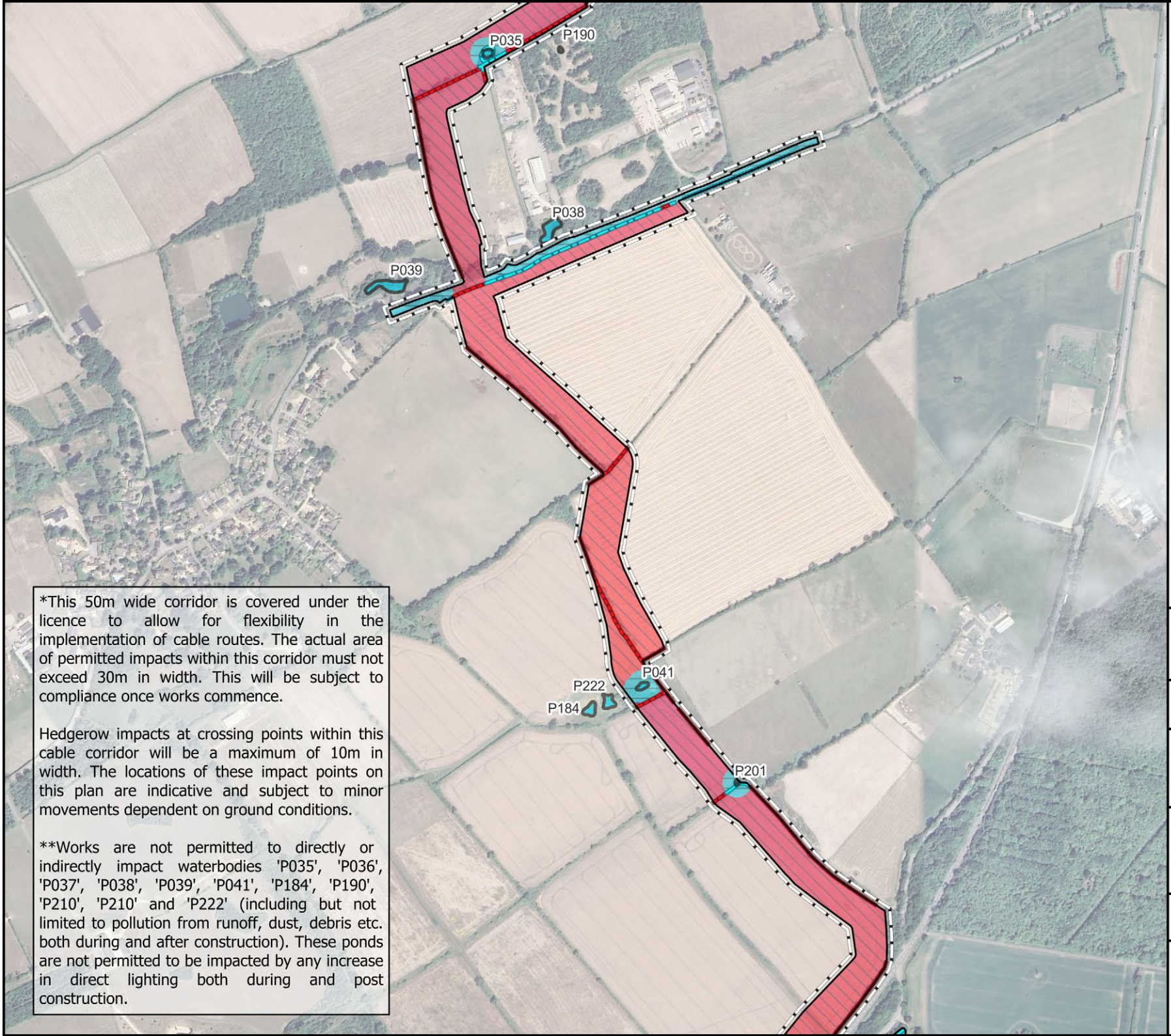

*This 50m wide corridor is covered under the licence to allow for flexibility in the implementation of cable routes. The actual area of permitted impacts within this corridor must not exceed 30m in width. This will be subject to compliance once works commence.

Hedgerow impacts at crossing points within this cable corridor will be a maximum of 10m in width. The locations of these impact points on this plan are indicative and subject to minor movements dependent on ground conditions.

**Works are not permitted to directly or indirectly impact waterbodies 'P035', 'P036', 'P037', 'P038', 'P039', 'P041', 'P184', 'P190', 'P210', 'P210' and 'P222' (including but not limited to pollution from runoff, dust, debris etc. both during and after construction). These ponds are not permitted to be impacted by any increase in direct lighting both during and post construction.

LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary
- Cable route impact boundary*

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Waterbody impacts:

- Impacts prohibited**

0 100 200 300 m

1:8000 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
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NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 4 of 24)

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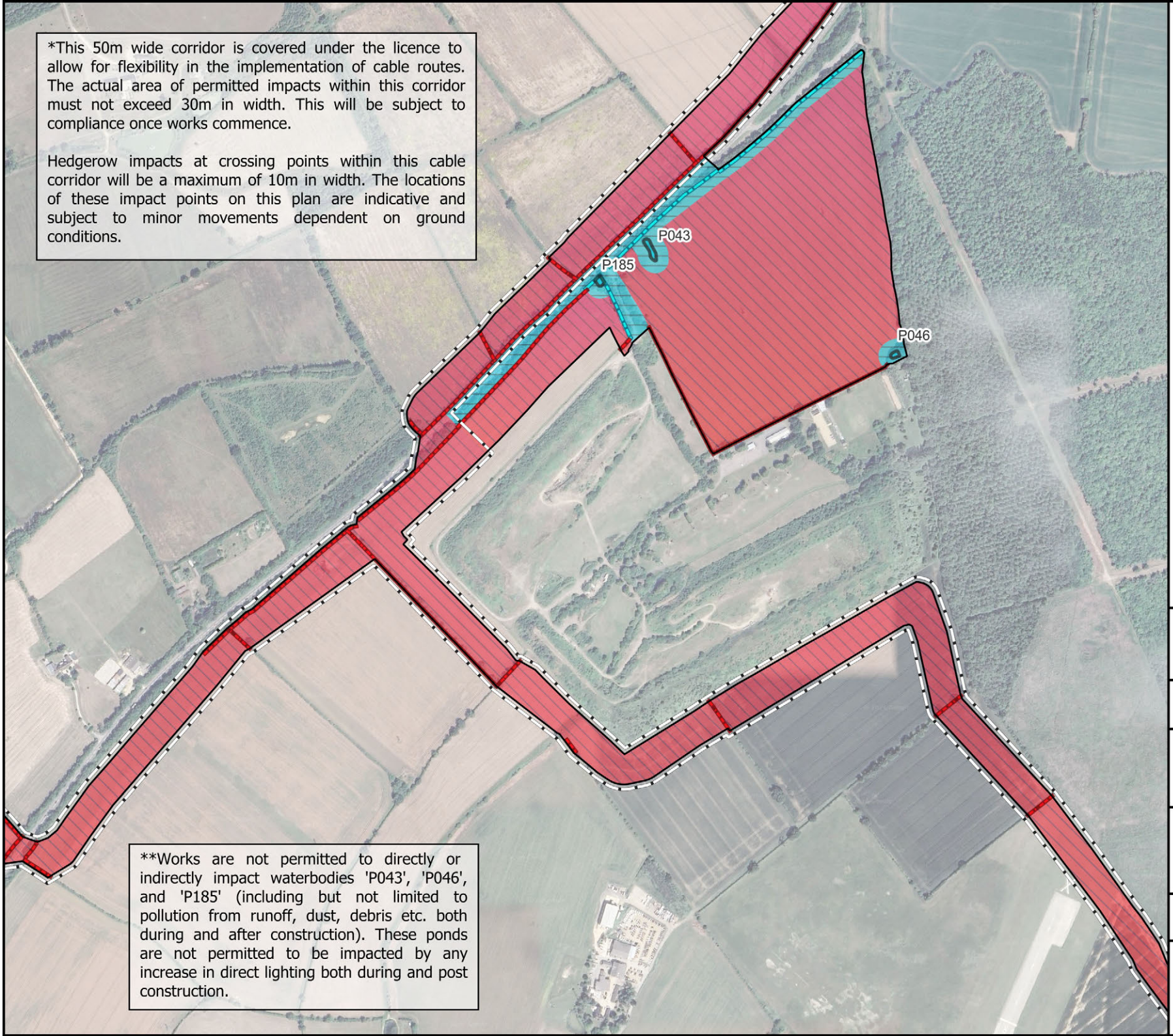

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Hedgerow impacts at crossing points within this cable corridor will be a maximum of 10m in width. The locations of these impact points on this plan are indicative and subject to minor movements dependent on ground conditions.

**Works are not permitted to directly or indirectly impact waterbodies 'P043', 'P046', and 'P185' (including but not limited to pollution from runoff, dust, debris etc. both during and after construction). These ponds are not permitted to be impacted by any increase in direct lighting both during and post construction.

LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary
- Cable route impact boundary*

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Waterbody impacts:

- Impacts prohibited**

0 100 200 300 m

1:8000 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
Projection: OSGB 36 BNG - ESPG 27700

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 5 of 24)

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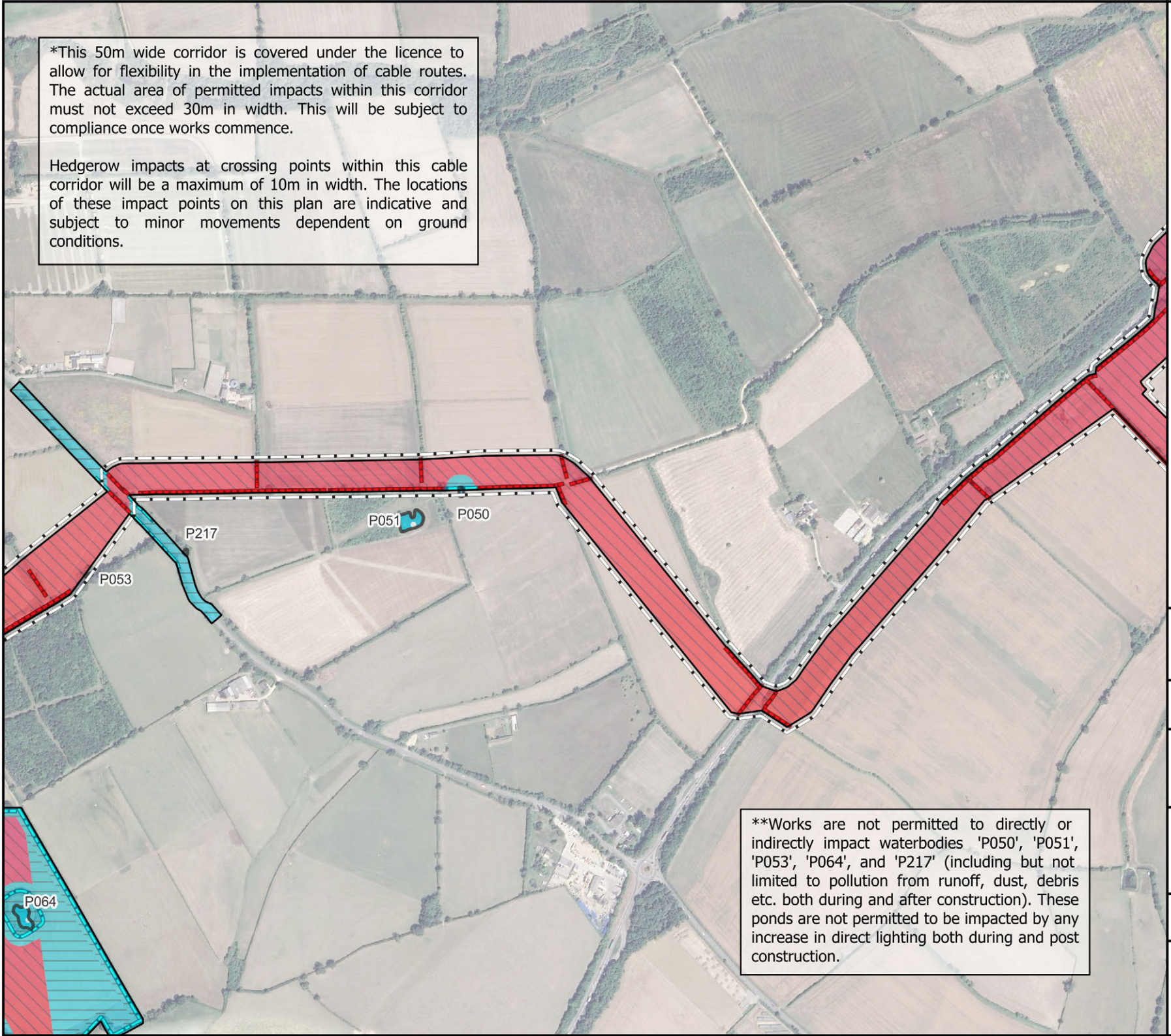

LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary
- Cable route impact boundary*

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Waterbody impacts:

- Impacts prohibited**

0 100 200 300 m

1:8000 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
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NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 6 of 24)

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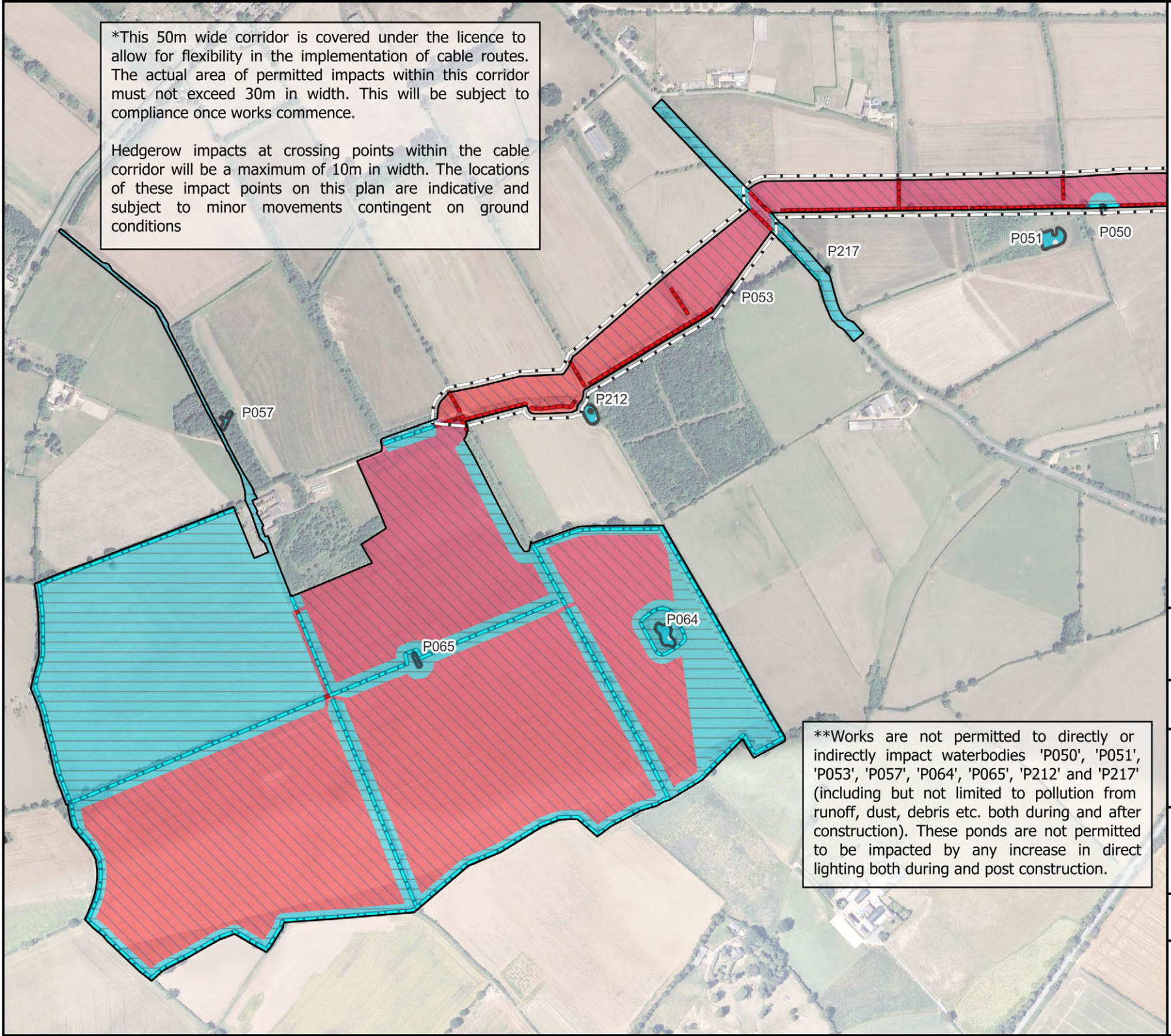


LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary
- Cable route impact boundary*

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Waterbody impacts:

- Impacts prohibited**

0 100 200 300 m

1:8000 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
Projection: OSGB 36 BNG - ESPG 27700

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 7 of 24)

1st April 2026	VERSION 5

*This 50m wide corridor is covered under the licence to allow for flexibility in the implementation of cable routes. The actual area of permitted impacts within this corridor must not exceed 30m in width. This will be subject to compliance once works commence.

Hedgerow impacts at crossing points within this cable corridor will be a maximum of 10m in width. The locations of these impact points on this plan are indicative and subject to minor movements dependent on ground conditions.

**Works are not permitted to directly or indirectly impact waterbodies 'P069', 'P075' and 'P196' (including but not limited to pollution from runoff, dust, debris etc. both during and after construction). These ponds are not permitted to be impacted by any increase in direct lighting both during and post construction.

LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary
- Cable route impact boundary*

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Waterbody impacts:

- Impacts prohibited**

0 100 200 300 m

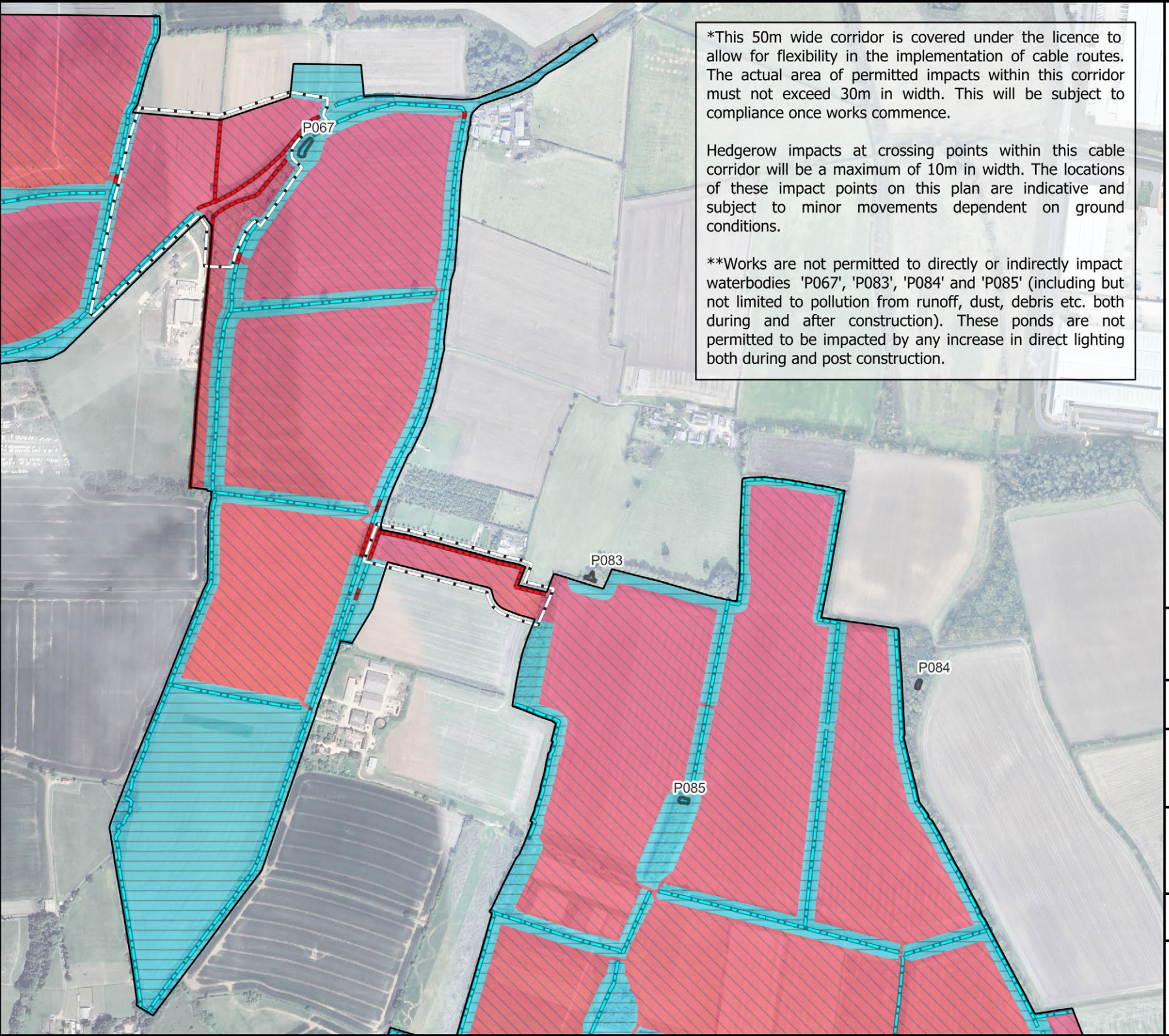
1:8000 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
Projection: OSGB 36 BNG - ESPG 27700

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 8 of 24)

1st April 2026 | VERSION 5



*This 50m wide corridor is covered under the licence to allow for flexibility in the implementation of cable routes. The actual area of permitted impacts within this corridor must not exceed 30m in width. This will be subject to compliance once works commence.

Hedgerow impacts at crossing points within this cable corridor will be a maximum of 10m in width. The locations of these impact points on this plan are indicative and subject to minor movements dependent on ground conditions.

**Works are not permitted to directly or indirectly impact waterbodies 'P067', 'P083', 'P084' and 'P085' (including but not limited to pollution from runoff, dust, debris etc. both during and after construction). These ponds are not permitted to be impacted by any increase in direct lighting both during and post construction.

LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary
- Cable route impact boundary*

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Waterbody impacts:

- Impacts prohibited**

0 100 200 300 m

1:8500 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
Projection: OSGB 36 BNG - ESPG 27700

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 9 of 24)

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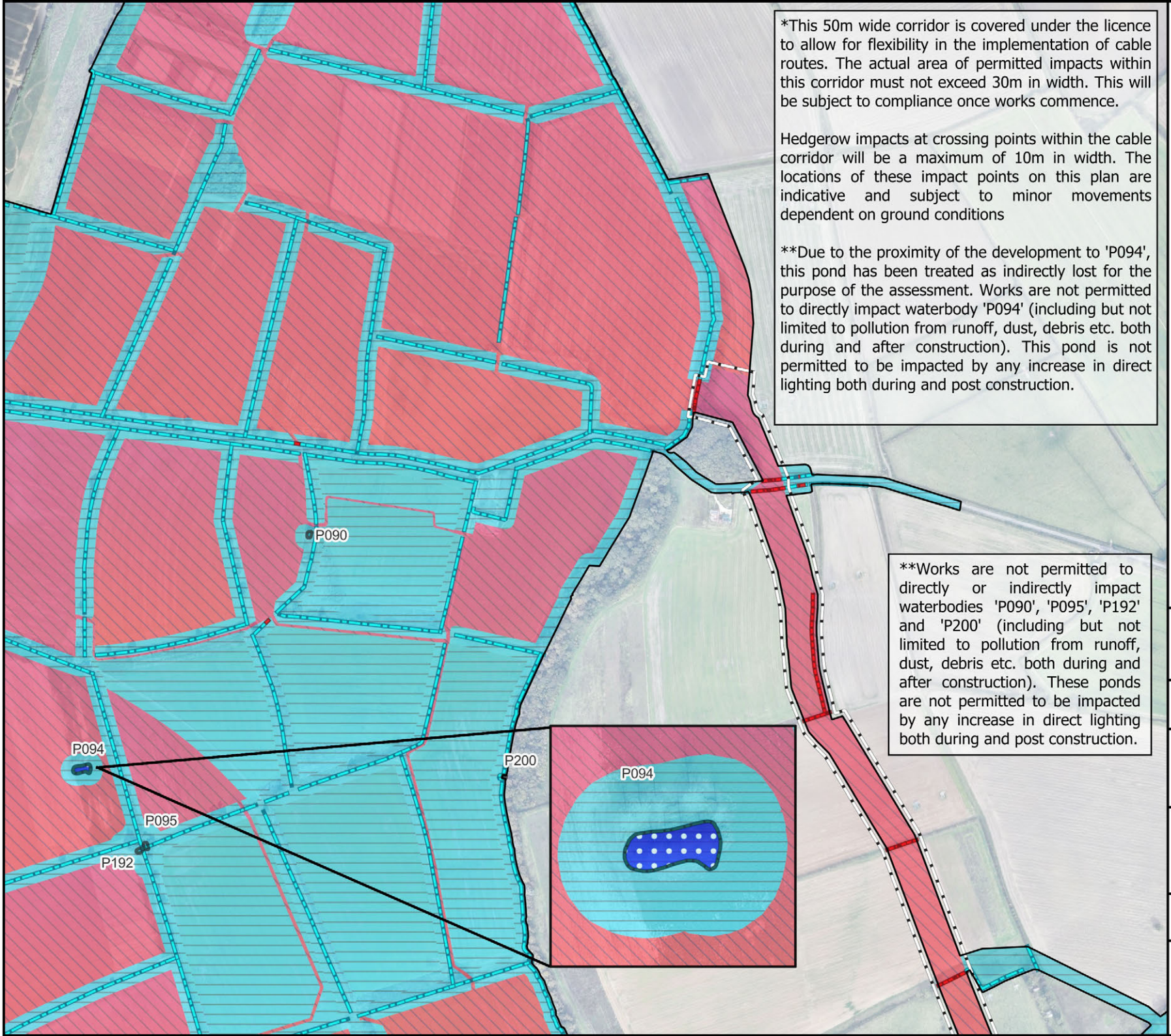


*This 50m wide corridor is covered under the licence to allow for flexibility in the implementation of cable routes. The actual area of permitted impacts within this corridor must not exceed 30m in width. This will be subject to compliance once works commence.

Hedgerow impacts at crossing points within the cable corridor will be a maximum of 10m in width. The locations of these impact points on this plan are indicative and subject to minor movements dependent on ground conditions

**Due to the proximity of the development to 'P094', this pond has been treated as indirectly lost for the purpose of the assessment. Works are not permitted to directly impact waterbody 'P094' (including but not limited to pollution from runoff, dust, debris etc. both during and after construction). This pond is not permitted to be impacted by any increase in direct lighting both during and post construction.

**Works are not permitted to directly or indirectly impact waterbodies 'P090', 'P095', 'P192' and 'P200' (including but not limited to pollution from runoff, dust, debris etc. both during and after construction). These ponds are not permitted to be impacted by any increase in direct lighting both during and post construction.

LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary
- Cable route impact boundary*

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Waterbody impacts:

- Indirectly lost: direct impacts prohibited**
- Impacts prohibited***

0 100 200 300 m

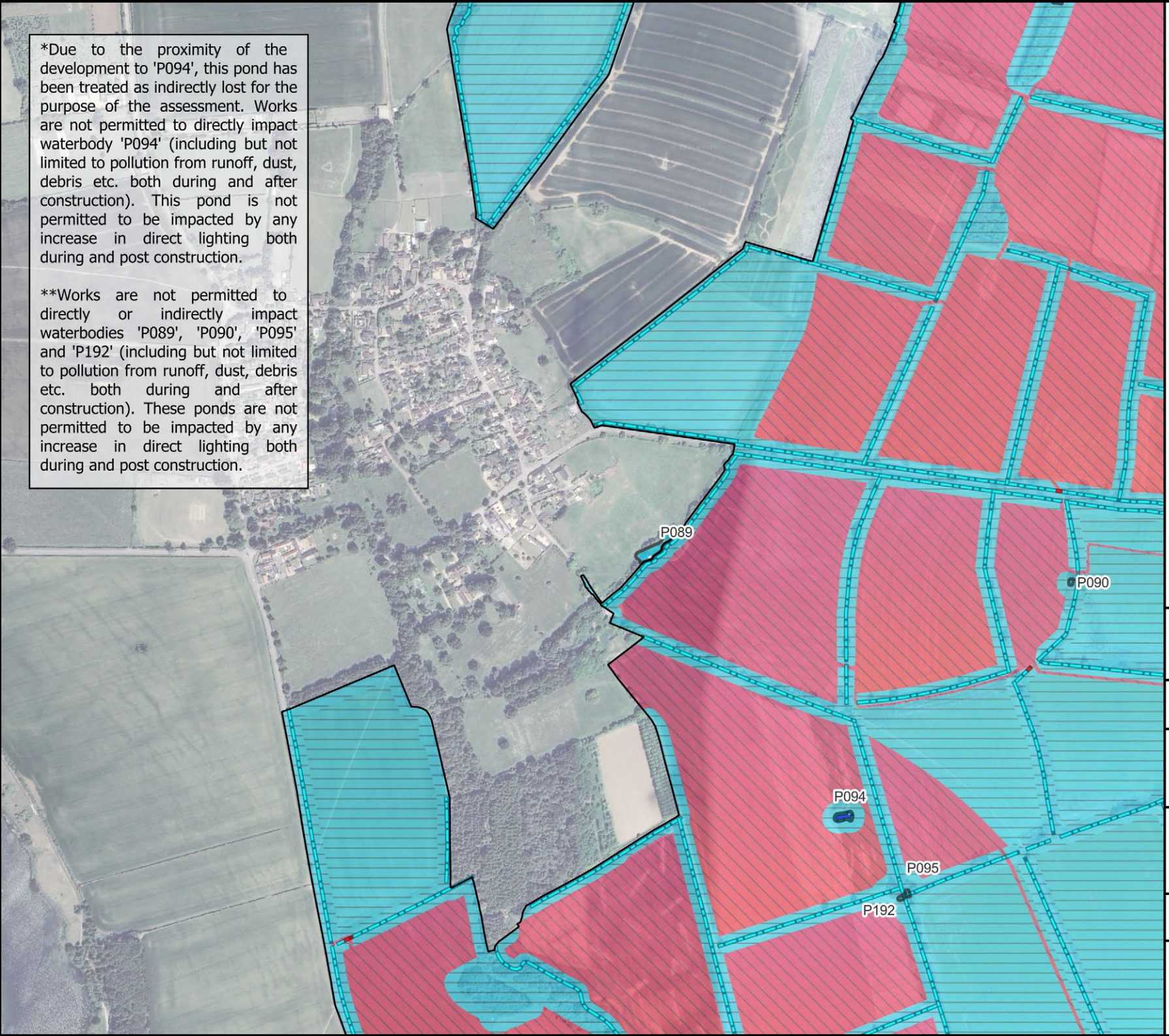
1:8000 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
Projection: OSGB 36 BNG - ESPG 27700

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 10 of 24)

1st April 2026 | VERSION 5



LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Waterbody impacts:

- Indirectly lost: direct impacts prohibited*
- Impacts prohibited**

0 100 200 300 m

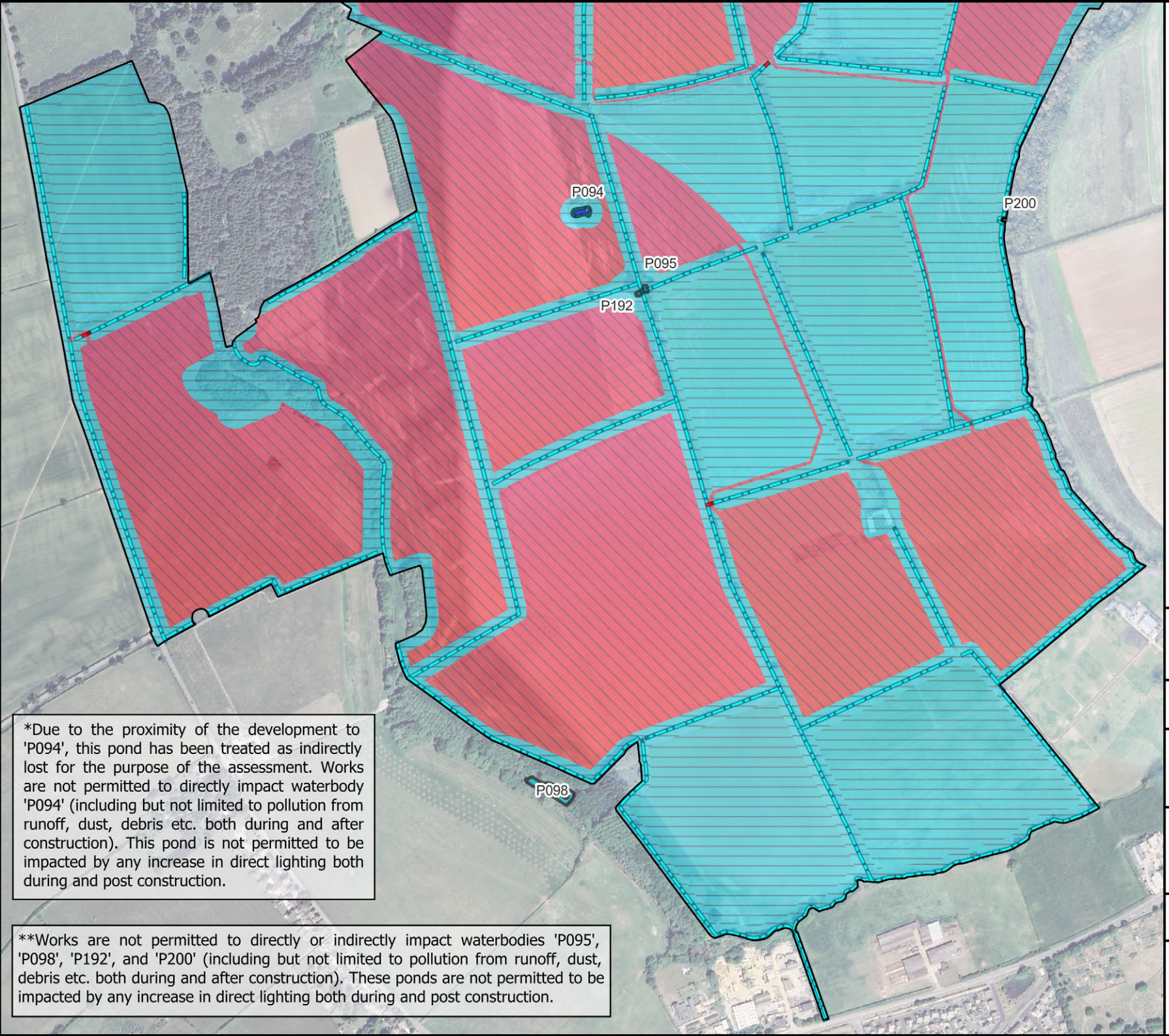
1:8000 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
Projection: OSGB 36 BNG - ESPG 27700

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 11 of 24)

1st April 2026	VERSION 5



LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Waterbody impacts:

- Indirectly lost: direct impacts prohibited*
- Impacts prohibited**

0 100 200 300 m

1:8000 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
Projection: OSGB 36 BNG - ESPG 27700

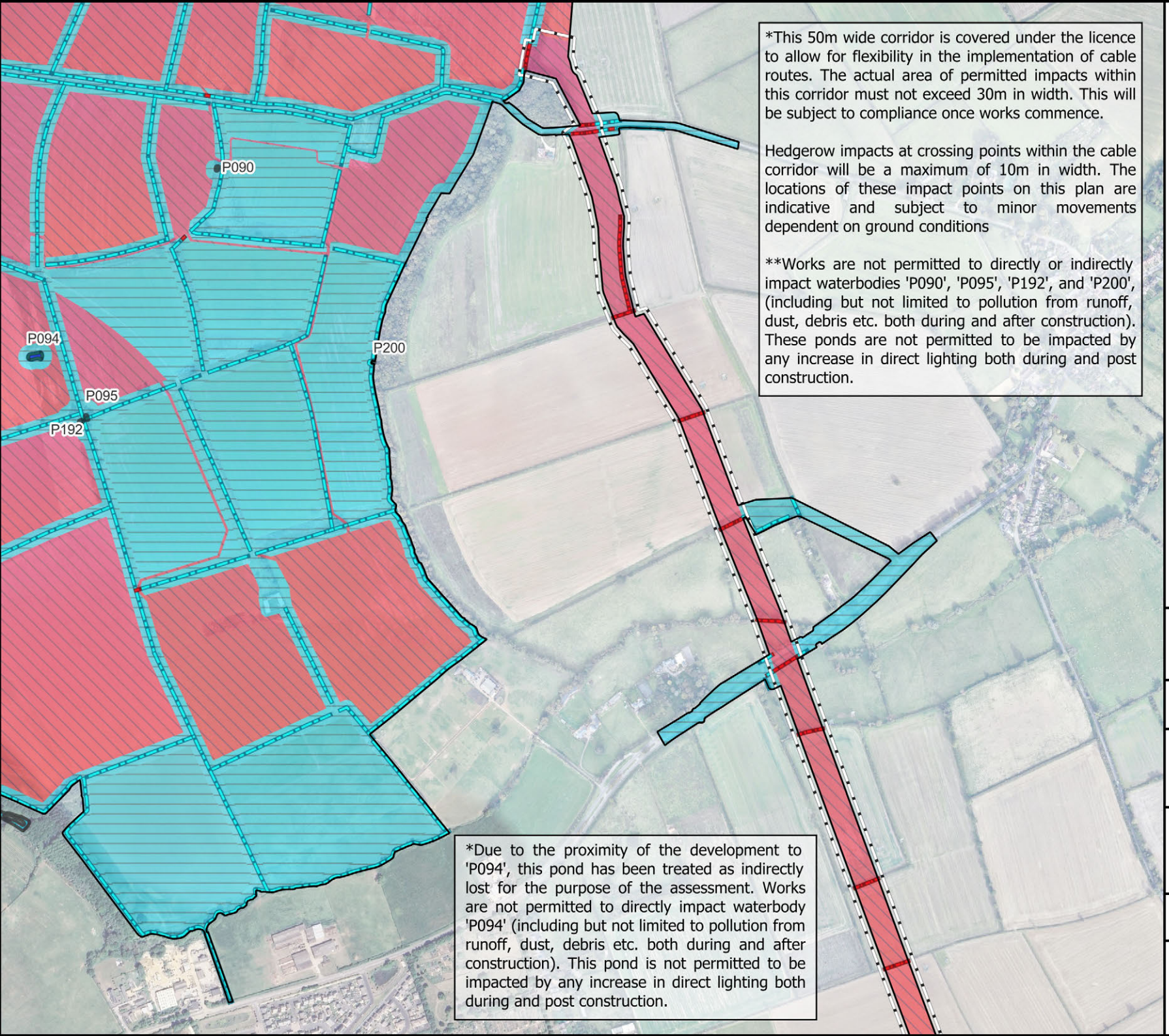
NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 12 of 24)

1st April 2026 | VERSION 5

*Due to the proximity of the development to 'P094', this pond has been treated as indirectly lost for the purpose of the assessment. Works are not permitted to directly impact waterbody 'P094' (including but not limited to pollution from runoff, dust, debris etc. both during and after construction). This pond is not permitted to be impacted by any increase in direct lighting both during and post construction.

**Works are not permitted to directly or indirectly impact waterbodies 'P095', 'P098', 'P192', and 'P200' (including but not limited to pollution from runoff, dust, debris etc. both during and after construction). These ponds are not permitted to be impacted by any increase in direct lighting both during and post construction.



*This 50m wide corridor is covered under the licence to allow for flexibility in the implementation of cable routes. The actual area of permitted impacts within this corridor must not exceed 30m in width. This will be subject to compliance once works commence.

Hedgerow impacts at crossing points within the cable corridor will be a maximum of 10m in width. The locations of these impact points on this plan are indicative and subject to minor movements dependent on ground conditions

**Works are not permitted to directly or indirectly impact waterbodies 'P090', 'P095', 'P192', and 'P200', (including but not limited to pollution from runoff, dust, debris etc. both during and after construction). These ponds are not permitted to be impacted by any increase in direct lighting both during and post construction.

*Due to the proximity of the development to 'P094', this pond has been treated as indirectly lost for the purpose of the assessment. Works are not permitted to directly impact waterbody 'P094' (including but not limited to pollution from runoff, dust, debris etc. both during and after construction). This pond is not permitted to be impacted by any increase in direct lighting both during and post construction.

LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary
- Cable route impact boundary*

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Waterbody impacts:

- Indirectly lost: direct impacts prohibited*
- Impacts prohibited**

0 100 200 300 m

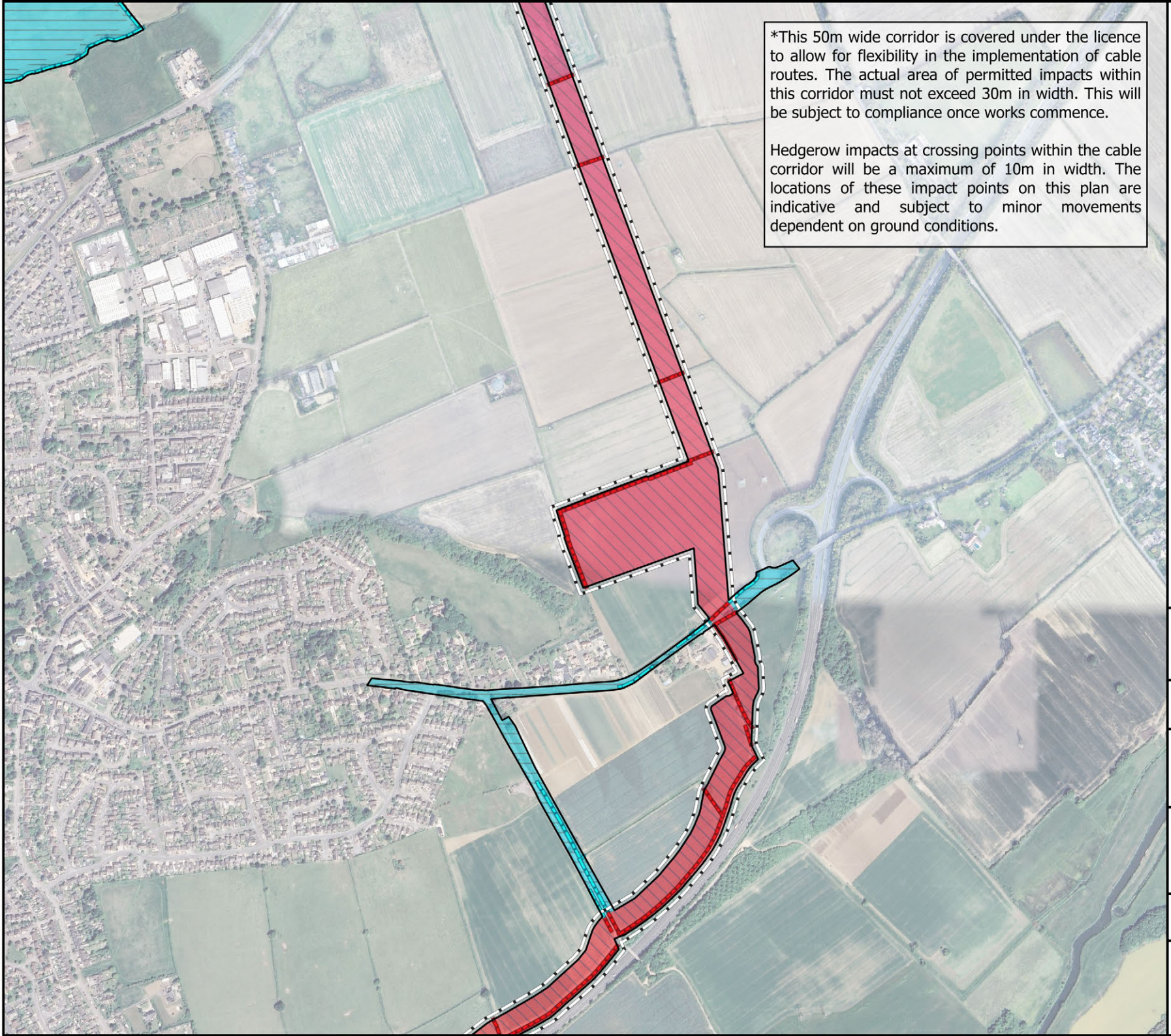
1:10000 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
Projection: OSGB 36 BNG - ESPG 27700

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 13 of 24)

1st April 2026 | VERSION 5



LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary
- Cable route impact boundary*

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

0 100 200 300 m

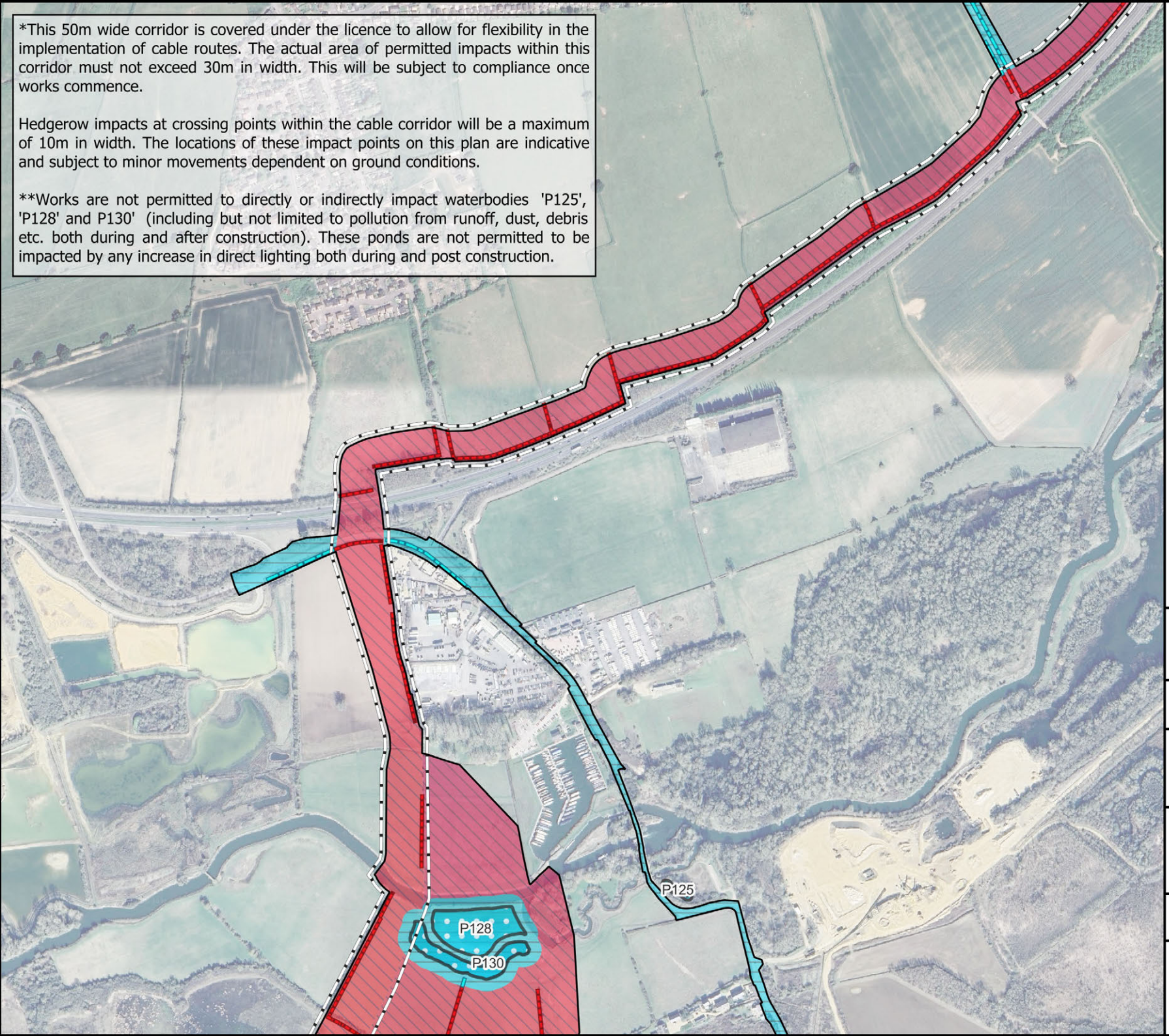
1:10000 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
Projection: OSGB 36 BNG - ESPG 27700

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 14 of 24)

1st April 2026 | VERSION 5



*This 50m wide corridor is covered under the licence to allow for flexibility in the implementation of cable routes. The actual area of permitted impacts within this corridor must not exceed 30m in width. This will be subject to compliance once works commence.

Hedgerow impacts at crossing points within the cable corridor will be a maximum of 10m in width. The locations of these impact points on this plan are indicative and subject to minor movements dependent on ground conditions.

**Works are not permitted to directly or indirectly impact waterbodies 'P125', 'P128' and P130' (including but not limited to pollution from runoff, dust, debris etc. both during and after construction). These ponds are not permitted to be impacted by any increase in direct lighting both during and post construction.

LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary
- Cable route impact boundary*

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Waterbody impacts:

- Impacts prohibited**

0 100 200 300 m

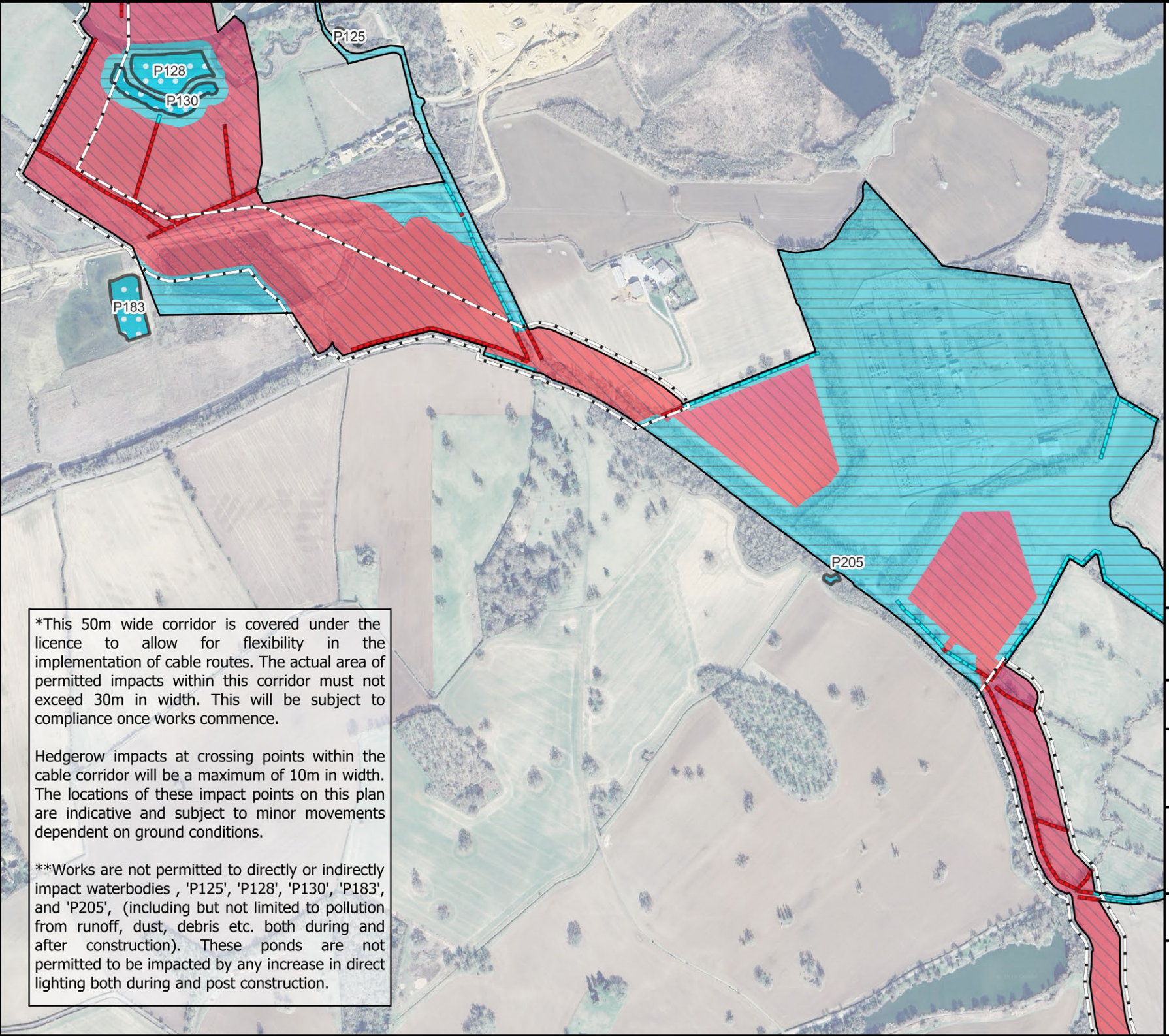
1:8000 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
Projection: OSGB 36 BNG - ESPG 27700

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 15 of 24)

1st April 2026 | VERSION 5



LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary
- Cable route impact boundary*

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Waterbody impacts:

- Impacts prohibited**

*This 50m wide corridor is covered under the licence to allow for flexibility in the implementation of cable routes. The actual area of permitted impacts within this corridor must not exceed 30m in width. This will be subject to compliance once works commence.

Hedgerow impacts at crossing points within the cable corridor will be a maximum of 10m in width. The locations of these impact points on this plan are indicative and subject to minor movements dependent on ground conditions.

**Works are not permitted to directly or indirectly impact waterbodies , 'P125', 'P128', 'P130', 'P183', and 'P205', (including but not limited to pollution from runoff, dust, debris etc. both during and after construction). These ponds are not permitted to be impacted by any increase in direct lighting both during and post construction.

0 100 200 300 m

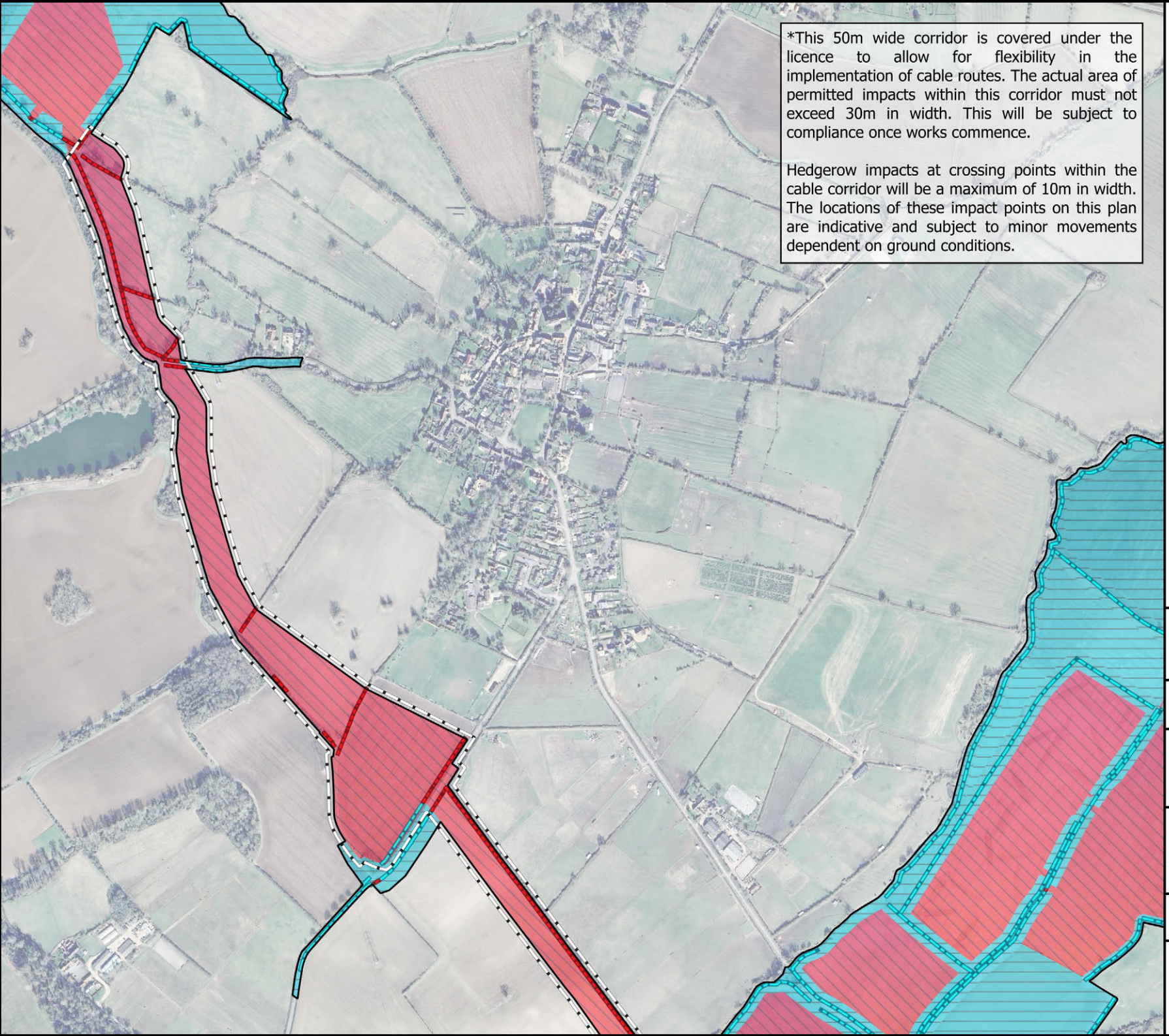
1:9000 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
Projection: OSGB 36 BNG - ESPG 27700

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 16 of 24)

1st April 2026	VERSION 5



*This 50m wide corridor is covered under the licence to allow for flexibility in the implementation of cable routes. The actual area of permitted impacts within this corridor must not exceed 30m in width. This will be subject to compliance once works commence.

Hedgerow impacts at crossing points within the cable corridor will be a maximum of 10m in width. The locations of these impact points on this plan are indicative and subject to minor movements dependent on ground conditions.

LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary
- Cable route impact boundary*

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

0 100 200 300 m

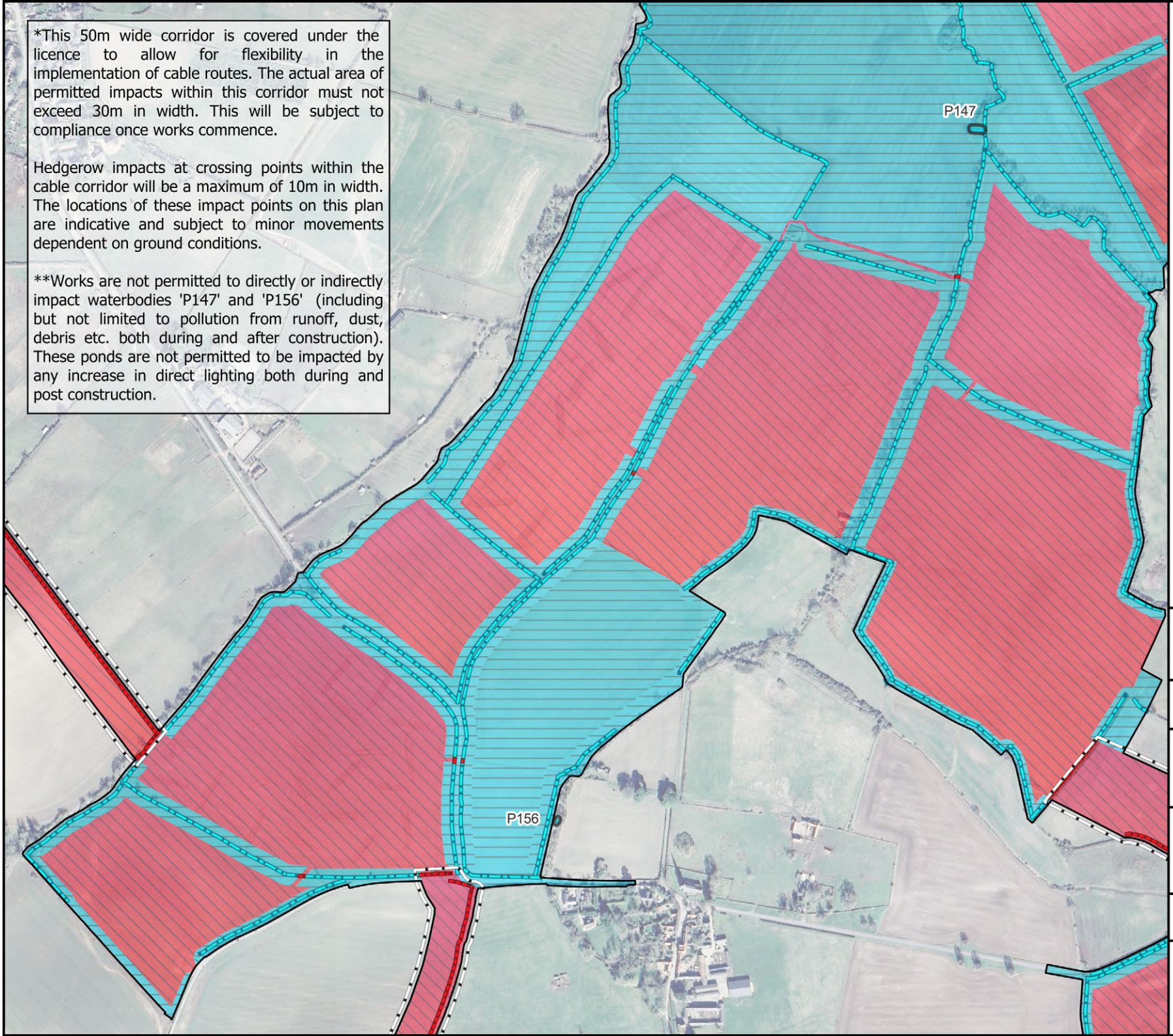
1:9000 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
Projection: OSGB 36 BNG - ESPG 27700

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 17 of 24)

1st April 2026 | VERSION 5



*This 50m wide corridor is covered under the licence to allow for flexibility in the implementation of cable routes. The actual area of permitted impacts within this corridor must not exceed 30m in width. This will be subject to compliance once works commence.

Hedgerow impacts at crossing points within the cable corridor will be a maximum of 10m in width. The locations of these impact points on this plan are indicative and subject to minor movements dependent on ground conditions.

**Works are not permitted to directly or indirectly impact waterbodies 'P147' and 'P156' (including but not limited to pollution from runoff, dust, debris etc. both during and after construction). These ponds are not permitted to be impacted by any increase in direct lighting both during and post construction.

LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary
- Cable route impact boundary*

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Waterbody impacts:

- Impacts prohibited**

0 100 200 m

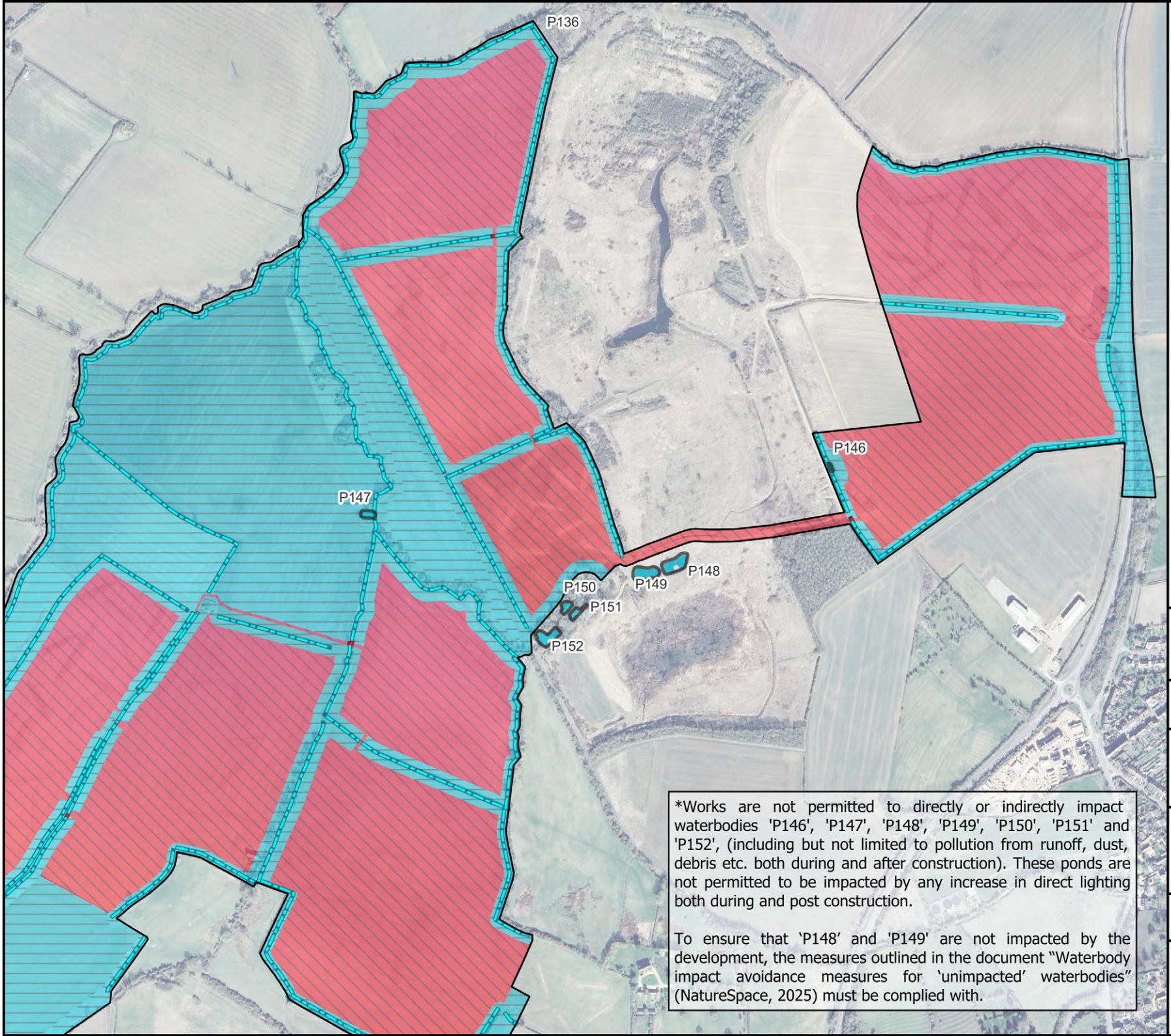
1:7000 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
Projection: OSGB 36 BNG - ESPG 27700

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 18 of 24)

1st April 2026 | VERSION 5



LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Waterbody impacts:

- Impacts prohibited*

0 100 200 300 m

1:8000 at A4

*Works are not permitted to directly or indirectly impact waterbodies 'P146', 'P147', 'P148', 'P149', 'P150', 'P151' and 'P152', (including but not limited to pollution from runoff, dust, debris etc. both during and after construction). These ponds are not permitted to be impacted by any increase in direct lighting both during and post construction.

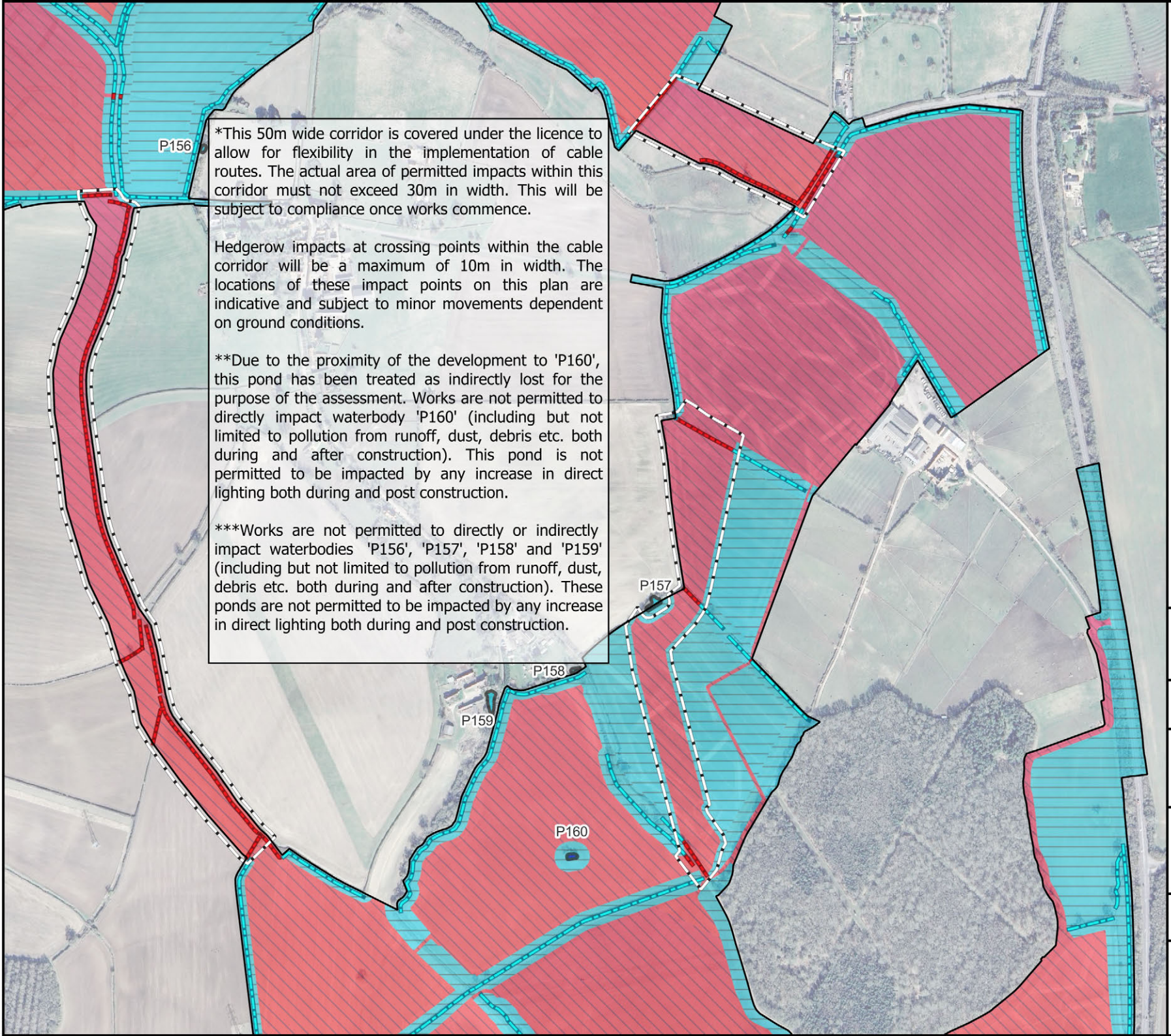
To ensure that 'P148' and 'P149' are not impacted by the development, the measures outlined in the document "Waterbody impact avoidance measures for 'unimpacted' waterbodies" (NatureSpace, 2025) must be complied with.

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
Projection: OSGB 36 BNG - ESPG 27700

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 19 of 24)

1st April 2026 | VERSION 5



*This 50m wide corridor is covered under the licence to allow for flexibility in the implementation of cable routes. The actual area of permitted impacts within this corridor must not exceed 30m in width. This will be subject to compliance once works commence.

Hedgerow impacts at crossing points within the cable corridor will be a maximum of 10m in width. The locations of these impact points on this plan are indicative and subject to minor movements dependent on ground conditions.

**Due to the proximity of the development to 'P160', this pond has been treated as indirectly lost for the purpose of the assessment. Works are not permitted to directly impact waterbody 'P160' (including but not limited to pollution from runoff, dust, debris etc. both during and after construction). This pond is not permitted to be impacted by any increase in direct lighting both during and post construction.

***Works are not permitted to directly or indirectly impact waterbodies 'P156', 'P157', 'P158' and 'P159' (including but not limited to pollution from runoff, dust, debris etc. both during and after construction). These ponds are not permitted to be impacted by any increase in direct lighting both during and post construction.

LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary
- Cable route impact boundary*

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Waterbody impacts:

- Indirectly lost: direct impacts prohibited**
- Impacts prohibited***

0 100 200 300 m

1:8000 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
Projection: OSGB 36 BNG - ESPG 27700

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 20 of 24)

1st April 2026 | VERSION 5

LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary
- Cable route impact boundary*

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

*This 50m wide corridor is covered under the licence to allow for flexibility in the implementation of cable routes. The actual area of permitted impacts within this corridor must not exceed 30m in width. This will be subject to compliance once works commence.

Hedgerow impacts at crossing points within the cable corridor will be a maximum of 10m in width. The locations of these impact points on this plan are indicative and subject to minor movements dependent on ground conditions.

0 100 200 m

1:7000 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
Projection: OSGB 36 BNG - ESPG 27700

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 21 of 24)

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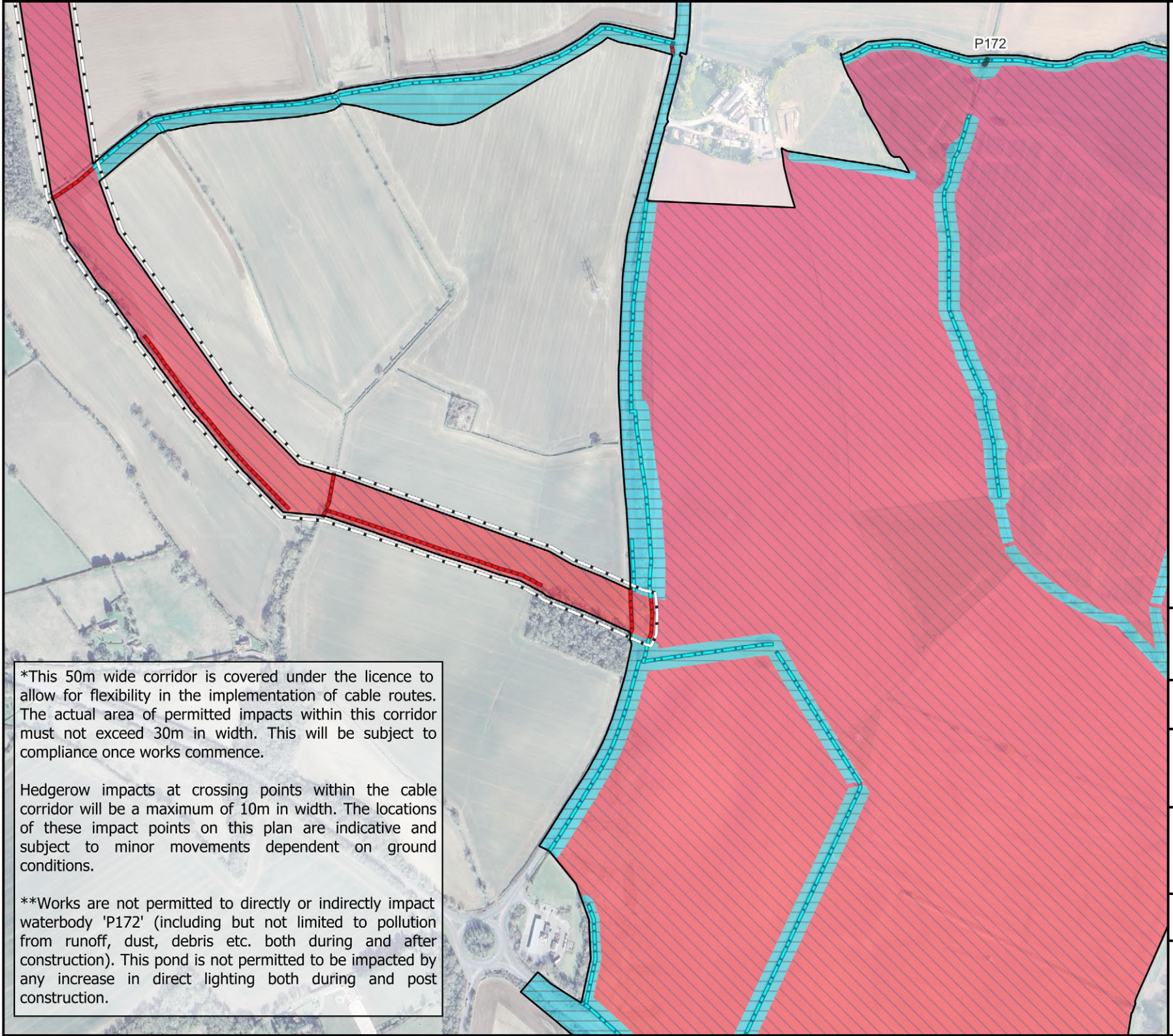


LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary
- Cable route impact boundary*

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Waterbody impacts:

- Impacts prohibited**

*This 50m wide corridor is covered under the licence to allow for flexibility in the implementation of cable routes. The actual area of permitted impacts within this corridor must not exceed 30m in width. This will be subject to compliance once works commence.

Hedgerow impacts at crossing points within the cable corridor will be a maximum of 10m in width. The locations of these impact points on this plan are indicative and subject to minor movements dependent on ground conditions.

**Works are not permitted to directly or indirectly impact waterbody 'P172' (including but not limited to pollution from runoff, dust, debris etc. both during and after construction). This pond is not permitted to be impacted by any increase in direct lighting both during and post construction.

0 100 200 m

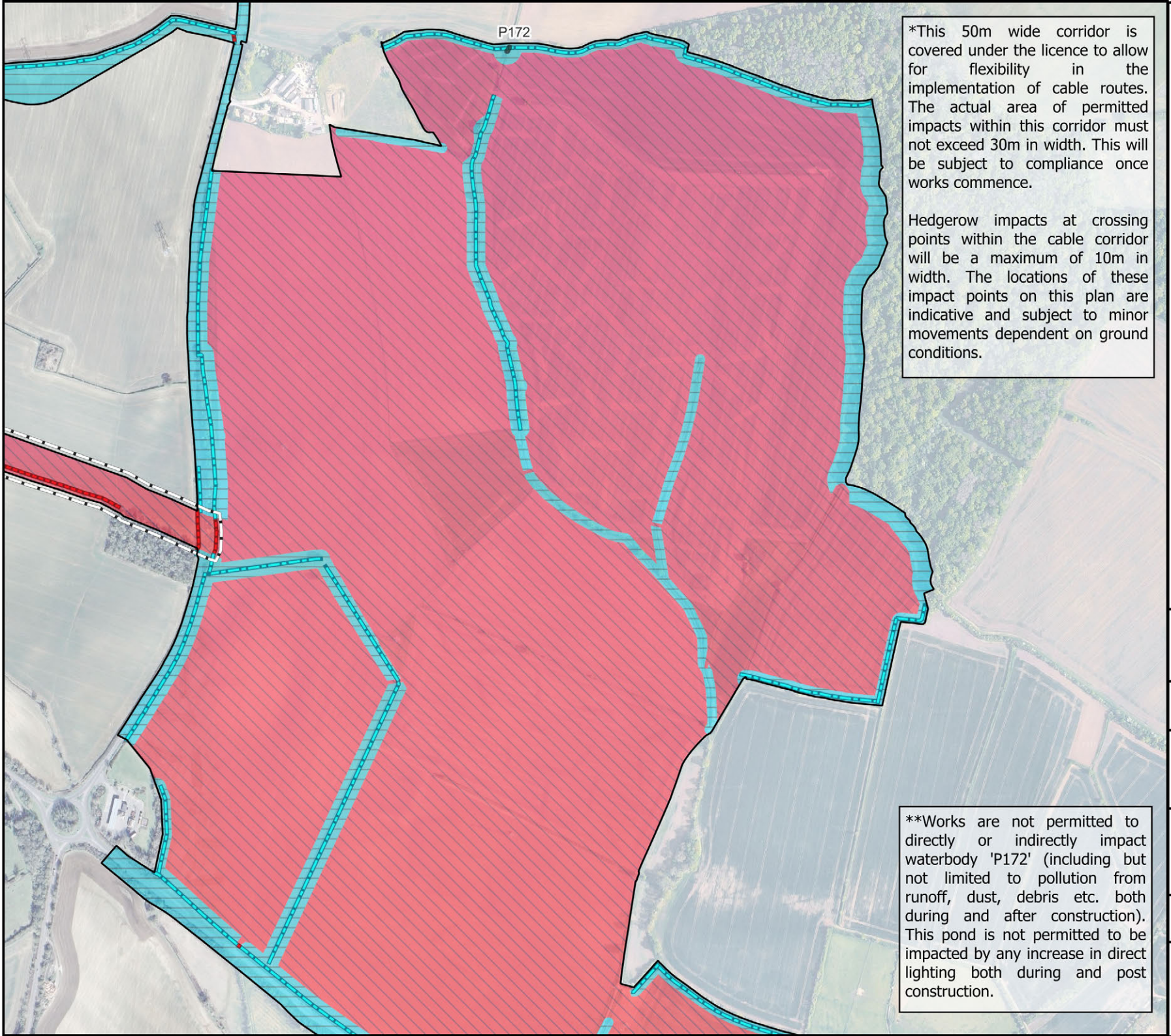
1:7000 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
Projection: OSGB 36 BNG - ESPG 27700

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 22 of 24)

1st April 2026 | VERSION 5



*This 50m wide corridor is covered under the licence to allow for flexibility in the implementation of cable routes. The actual area of permitted impacts within this corridor must not exceed 30m in width. This will be subject to compliance once works commence.

Hedgerow impacts at crossing points within the cable corridor will be a maximum of 10m in width. The locations of these impact points on this plan are indicative and subject to minor movements dependent on ground conditions.

**Works are not permitted to directly or indirectly impact waterbody 'P172' (including but not limited to pollution from runoff, dust, debris etc. both during and after construction). This pond is not permitted to be impacted by any increase in direct lighting both during and post construction.

LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary
- Cable route impact boundary*

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Iimpacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Waterbody impacts:

- Impacts prohibited**

0 100 200 300 m

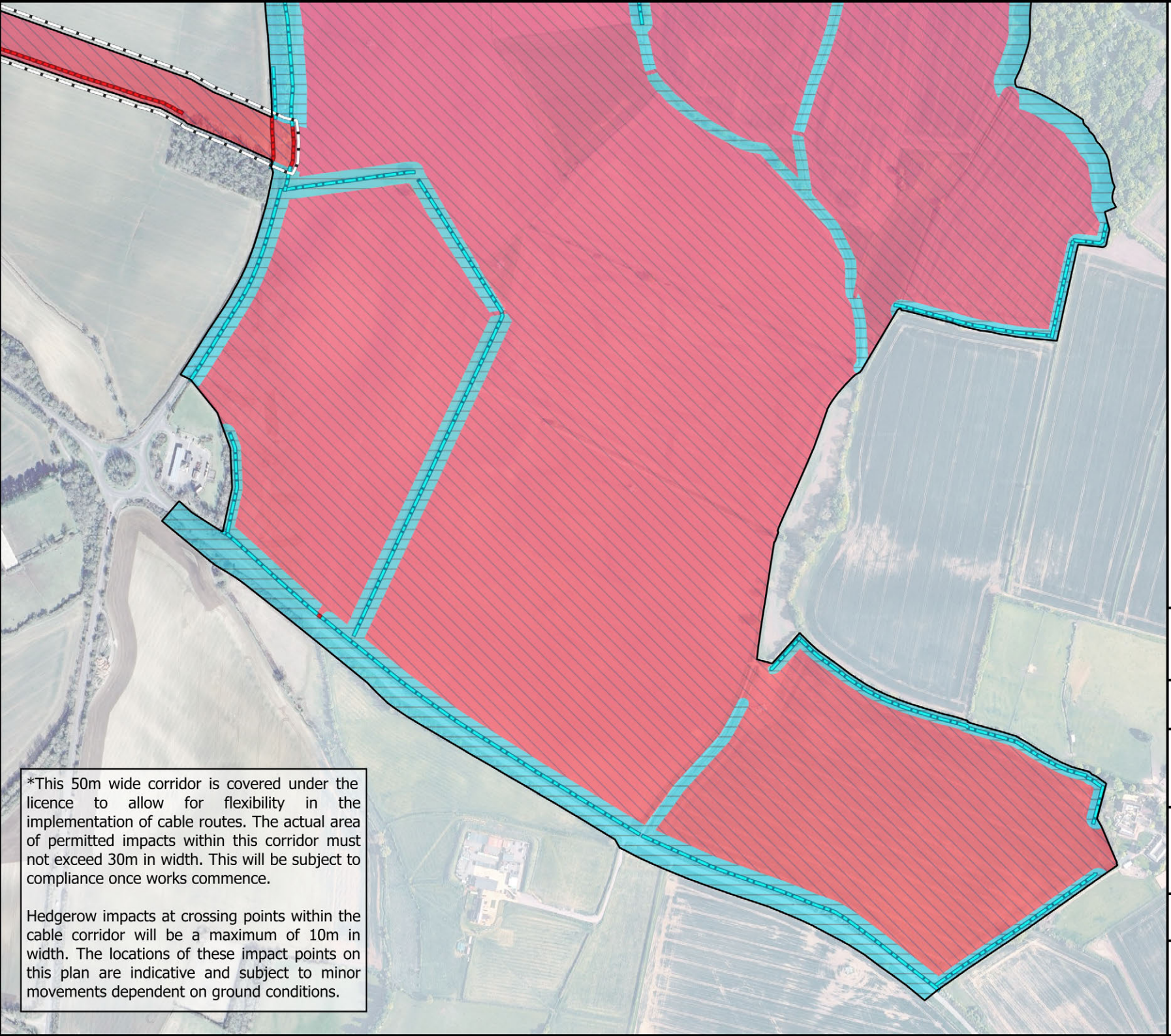
1:8000 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
Projection: OSGB 36 BNG - ESPG 27700

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 23 of 24)

1st April 2026 | VERSION 5



LEGEND:

- Proposed development boundary
- Cable route impact boundary*

Terrestrial habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

Linear habitat impacts:

- Impacts permitted (permanent)
- Impacts prohibited

0 100 200 m

1:7000 at A4

Central GR: SP 8482 6624
Projection: OSGB 36 BNG - ESPG 27700

NATURESPACE PARTNERSHIP

TITLE: Green Hill Solar Farm: Impact Plan for great crested newt District Licensing
(Sheet 24 of 24)

1st April 2026 | VERSION 5

*This 50m wide corridor is covered under the licence to allow for flexibility in the implementation of cable routes. The actual area of permitted impacts within this corridor must not exceed 30m in width. This will be subject to compliance once works commence.

Hedgerow impacts at crossing points within the cable corridor will be a maximum of 10m in width. The locations of these impact points on this plan are indicative and subject to minor movements dependent on ground conditions.