The Droves Solar Farm

outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (Clean)

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7 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan

7.1 Introduction

7.1.0 This outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) sets out a framework for the planting, management and monitoring of landscaping and ecological mitigation and enhancement habitats for the proposed Droves Solar Farm (hereafter referred to as “the Scheme”). This oLEMP concerns works which will be required during both the construction and operational phases of the Scheme and refers to advanced work which will take place in winter 2025/2026. The oLEMP relates to all land within the Order limits as shown on the **Works Plan [APP/2.3].**

7.1.1 The oLEMP has been informed by a set of Island Green Power (IGP) Design Principles which guide the IGP’s projects and Project Level Draft Design Principles (PLDDP); **Design Principles, Parameters and Commitments [APP/5.8]** described further in Section 1.2 below. Consultation feedback has also fed into the oLEMP as referred to in **ES Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual [APP/6.2**] and **ES Chapter 7: Ecology and Biodiversity [APP/6.2].** This oLEMP is to be read with the following documents:

- **ES Chapter 5 Scheme Design [APP/6.1]** – details specific offsets/buffers from existing landscape features embedded into the design with the exception where Access Tracks, perimeter fencing and /or cable routes are required.
- **ES Figure 5.1: Concept Masterplan [APP/6.3]** – this illustrates the extent of the proposed Droves Solar Farm and the indicative zones for Solar Photovoltaic (PV), the Customer Substation and the new National Grid Substation; including Grid Connection Infrastructure and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). It also shows existing and proposed access.
- **ES Figure 5.2: Construction Masterplan [APP/6.3]** – this shows indicative access or crossing points, temporary hoarding and proposed areas for topsoil storage and decommissioning of existing overhead lines/towers. The Construction Masterplan also shows primary and Temporary Construction Compounds.

7.1.2 This document is supported by the following figures, provided in **Appendix 1 to 3 [APP/7.11]** of this document:

- **Appendix 1: Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans [APP/7.11]** – provide further detail at 1:2,500 scale on the Green Infrastructure Parameter Plans illustrating the Mitigation and Enhancement Areas
- **Appendix 2: Vegetation Removal Plan [APP/7.11]** – illustrates the location of vegetation to be removed to accommodate new access points; and

- **Appendix 3: Advanced Planting Plan [APP/7.11]** – this demonstrates the location of hedgerows to be gapped up during winter 2025/26.

7.1.3 The purpose of this oLEMP is to set out planting, management and monitoring prescriptions to be followed by, or on behalf of, the undertaker. It outlines a general management strategy for the Scheme which will be applied in specific areas as the design process progresses. While as much detail has been included in this oLEMP as practicable to accompany the Development Consent Order (DCO) application, it is anticipated that it shall be revised and finalised following the DCO examination process and receipt of consent. In some cases, in this report, options are set out in order to leave some flexibility in specification, but all achieve the same ecological goals.

7.1.4 A detailed version of the LEMP (detailed LEMP) will be produced prior to the commencement of construction and will be secured through the DCO. The detailed LEMP must be substantially in accordance with this outline LEMP and will be approved by the relevant planning authority pursuant to the relevant requirement in the **draft DCO [APP/3.1].**

7.1.5 This document focuses on all the planting, management and monitoring of existing and proposed habitats within the Order limits covering the Solar PV Site, BESS, Customer Substation, National Grid Substation (including Grid Connection Infrastructure) and areas for Eurasian Curlew and Skylark mitigation. Any planting required for the National Grid Substation will be managed by National Grid with the Applicant responsible for the “wider” Scheme under the client’s control. The management and monitoring of existing and proposed habitats associated with the “wider” Scheme will take place during the Scheme’s operational lifetime. Habitats falling under National Grid’s responsibility will remain in place post decommissioning. Details on the management of habitats under National Grid’s remit are referred to in a separate section of this document.

7.1.6 This document has been updated at Deadline 3 to include the commitment to a phasing schedule for the ground-nesting bird mitigation. Please refer to the **Guide to the Application [APP/1.3.4]** for the list of current versions of documents.

Approach to Construction and Maintenance Access Gaps at Hedgerows

7.1.7 Wherever feasible, the Scheme utilises existing access points to facilitate internal access within the Order limits, including access between fields, the Customer Substation and the National Grid Substation, including Grid Connection Infrastructure and BESS. In certain locations where existing access points do not exist, some minor hedgerow works (pruning and/or removal) are necessary (refer to **Appendix 2: Vegetation Removal Plan [APP/7.11]**). In other locations, existing gaps may need to be widened slightly or works carried out to hedgerows adjacent to private tracks or the public highway. These minor hedgerow works (pruning and/or removal, widening of existing gaps, and works to hedgerows adjacent to private tracks and the public highway) are required for the passage of vehicles during the construction and operational phases or for any apparatus used in connection with the Scheme, and creation of suitable visibility splays associated with vehicle access. In addition, minor hedgerow works may be required to facilitate the proposed hedgerow enhancement works.

7.1.8 Further details on the methodology to be followed during hedgerow works covering the protection of retained hedgerows (pruning/widening/removal) are included within the **outline Construction and Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) [APP/7.6]**, whilst the approach for reinstatement/replanting is discussed within the oLEMP below and will be detailed further within the detailed LEMP.

7.1.9 The extent of these minor hedgerow works (pruning and/or removal) and widenings of existing gaps will be confirmed post DCO consent. No hedgerow works (pruning and/or removal) can take place until a detailed LEMP has been approved by the relevant planning authority, as secured by the relevant requirement within Schedule 2 of the **Draft DCO [APP/3.1]**. All minor hedgerow works (pruning and/or removal) will be carried out in accordance with the final, approved version(s) of the detailed LEMP.

Key Personnel

7.1.10 The detailed LEMP will set out the roles and responsibilities of those involved in creating, managing and monitoring the prescriptions within this document. A suitably qualified person will be appointed to oversee the coordination of implementing the detailed LEMP, including sourcing seed/plants, which will need to be considered at an early stage given the quantities required for a Scheme of this scale.

7.2 Aims

7.2.0 The overarching aim of this oLEMP is to set out prescriptions for habitat creation and management in order to provide ecological enhancements, strengthen the green infrastructure within the local area, and to provide landscape and visual mitigation through screening of the Scheme, where necessary.

7.2.1 This document considers the habitats and species recorded within the Order limits, as well as those identified within the surrounding area during the desk study (**ES Appendix 7.2: Baseline Ecological Survey Report [APP/6.4]**), in order to maximise the biodiversity benefits of habitats within the Order limits for local wildlife. An overview of how habitats may be managed to provide targeted mitigation for protected species likely to be impacted by the Scheme, such as ground-nesting birds, is provided within this document.

7.2.2 Local conservation priorities have been considered within this document and will be used to steer the design and refinement of detailed habitat enhancements. Reference has been made to the Norfolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) (Ref 7-1), Norfolk Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) (Ref 7-2), as well as policies within the Breckland Local Plan (Ref 7-3). Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (Ref 7-4), Westacre Rewilding Project (Ref 7-30) and Securing Biodiversity in Breckland (2010) have also been closely considered alongside national habitat networks, as described below. The presence of designated sites for nature conservation has also been considered, along with opportunities to enhance or extend these features.

7.2.3 High level preliminary consultation with relevant bodies relating to ecological enhancement has been undertaken, principally Natural England and Norfolk Wildlife Trust. Further consultation with additional stakeholders, including Breckland Council, Norfolk County Council, Natural England and the Environment Agency is ongoing prior to submission of the DCO Application and will be undertaken during preparation of the detailed LEMP. Input from the local community, received via public consultations undertaken as part of the DCO process, has also been considered where appropriate.

Legislation, Policy and Guidance

7.2.4 The following documents have been consulted in the preparation of this oLEMP, with key policies and objectives considered and detailed in the paragraphs below:

- Breckland Local Plan (adopted September 2023) (Ref 7-3)
- Breckland Council Draft Local Plan Full Update Preferred Options (June 2024) (Ref 7-5)
- Breckland Design Guide (March 2024) (Ref 7-7)
- Securing Biodiversity in Breckland – Guidance for conservation and research (2010) (Ref 7-10)
- Norfolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy Public Consultation Draft 2025 (2025) (Ref 7-1)
- Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership’s Norfolk Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) (Ref 7-2)
- Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy – Habitats Regulations Assessment Strategy Document (March 2021) (Ref 7-12)
- Breckland Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (April 2022) (Ref 7-6)
- An Environmental Strategy Breckland Council – Consultation Document (January 2008) (Ref 7-8)
- Norfolk County Council’s Environmental Policy (October 2020) (Ref 7-13)
- Swaffham Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2036 Version 3: for Referendum (May 2019) (Ref 7-9)
- Buglife’s ‘B-Lines’ Initiative. (Ref 7-14); and
- Natural England's Habitat Network Mapping (Ref 7-31).

7.2.5 Landscape

7.2.6 Breckland Local Plan Policy ENV 05 ‘Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape’ specifies that development proposals should “enhance the local environment” by “maintaining the aesthetic and biodiversity qualities” of landscape features. The Brecks is recognised as a “regionally significant green infrastructure asset” and proposals should not harm key visual features, landscape components or landscape character.

7.2.7 Policy ENV 06 'Trees, Hedgerows and Development' of the Breckland Local Plan seeks to retain the existing green infrastructure network of trees, shrubs and hedgerow as an “integral part” of development.

7.2.8 Green Infrastructure

7.2.9 Policy ENV 01 of Breckland Local Plan seeks to retain and enhance the district’s green infrastructure network. Policy ENV 02 states that all development with the potential to affect biodiversity should demonstrate how such effects have been mitigated or, where possible, avoided. Where a proposed development may have a detrimental impact upon a protected species, appropriate mitigation measures should be fully implemented and monitored. Policy ENV 05 states that development should maintain the “biodiversity qualities” within the landscape such as trees, hedges, woodland, rivers and streams.

7.2.10 Biodiversity

7.2.11 Breckland Local Plan Policy ENV 02 (Biodiversity Protection and Enhancement) states that all development with the potential to affect biodiversity should consider how the effects can be avoided, if not minimised. Residual harm must be compensated for. All development should secure net gains for biodiversity.

7.2.12 Policy ENV 03 (The Brecks Protected Habitats & Species) outlines specific biodiversity protection required within the Breckland Special Protection Area. Development will only be permitted where it can demonstrate that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the Breckland Special Protection Area (SPA) or Breckland Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

7.2.13 Norfolk’s Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) was published on 31 October 2025 (Ref 7-1). The aim of LNRS is to provide information in relation to opportunities and priorities for nature recovery and restoration across the associated LNRS area, including the production of a local habitat map showing the location of key habitats for nature recovery actions and a written statement of biodiversity priorities for the area.

7.2.14 The LNRS outlines nature recovery principles based on the Lawton Principles, introduced in the 2010 report Making Space for Nature (Ref 7-24). These focus on making space for wildlife and ensuring habitats are better connected, more robust, and able to support biodiversity in the long term. The Local Habitat Map produced to accompany the LNRS identified key mapped priorities of relevance to the Order limits as follows:

- Discrete Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (APIB) within the Order limits in the form of Ancient/Veteran Trees (Irreplaceable Habitats);
- A number of Areas that Could become of Particular Importance for Biodiversity (ACB), which include field boundary vegetation (hedgerows) and woodland blocks; and

- A small number of ‘Lawton Zones’ (identified buffer zones around biodiversity priority habitats, reflecting Lawton principles).

7.2.15 The LNRS principles, where appropriate, have informed the approach to biodiversity enhancements across the Order limits. The following strategy areas listed in the LNRS are relevant to the Scheme and have been considered in the preparation of this oLEMP:

- Norfolk’s farmland
- Woodland, trees and scrub
- Freshwater habitats
- Grassland and heathland; and
- Distinct areas: The Brecks: supports a mosaic of woodland, grass, heathland, wetland, rivers and farmland, hosting over 2000 priority species including Stone-curlew.

7.2.16 Natural England’s Habitat Network Mapping has also been closely considered within this oLEMP for those priority habitats pertinent to the Scheme. The mapping identifies areas in which habitat restoration, enhancement and creation would be most beneficial in expanding existing habitats, increasing connectivity between fragmented habitats, and improve the biodiversity value of associated habitats.

7.2.17 Priorities and opportunities set out within Norfolk’s Strategy Areas (as defined within the LNRS), the Norfolk Biodiversity Action Plan and Buglife’s ‘B-Lines’ Initiative have been considered.

7.2.18 Where any further biodiversity policy and supplementary documents are identified (including any updates within the endorsed version of the Norfolk LNRS, published on 31 October 2025), locally relevant objectives will also be taken into account, to the extent practicable, within the detailed LEMP document.

Strategic Landscape and Ecological Opportunities and Habitat Network Mapping

7.2.19 Landscape and ecological enhancements and mitigation measures for the Scheme are shown on **Appendix 1: Green Infrastructure Plan [APP/7.11]**. Following a description of the ecological baseline, these opportunities are described below in the context of the PLDDPs with their contribution to the objectives of relevant policies and initiatives in mind.

Existing Ecological Baseline

7.2.20 Full details of the ecological baseline for the Scheme, including a description of habitats and protected and notable species recorded are provided in **ES Appendix 7.2: Baseline Ecological Survey Report [APP/6.4]**.

7.2.21 Land within the Order limits is dominated by large, intensively managed arable land with areas under rotation for pig grazing. Field boundary features include hedgerows, tree lines and scattered trees along with other habitats within or just adjacent to the Order limits:

- Arable
- Improved and Semi-improved Grassland
- Tall Forb Vegetation
- Bare Ground
- Hedgerows (largely species poor)
- Treelines
- Trees (including veteran trees)
- Dense and Scattered Scrub (edging disused marl pits, forming the edge of field boundaries and adjacent to blocks of woodland)
- Dry Ditch
- Woodlands (comprising blocks of coniferous plantation, broadleaved woodland and mixed woodland including broadleaved woodland around marl pits adjacent to and/or within the Order limits)
- Buildings and Hardstanding; and
- Ponds – currently in poor condition and largely linked to game management.

7.2.22 Of the habitats within the Order limits, hedgerows, woodland and a number of the ponds are considered to be Priority Habitats, whilst veteran trees represent irreplaceable habitat and therefore constitute important ecological features.

Strategic Landscape and Biodiversity Opportunities

7.2.23 To set a framework for the operational landscape and ecological management of the Scheme, a suite of strategic landscape and biodiversity opportunities have been defined. These opportunities are based upon IGP's DP and PLDDPs referred to in the **Design Approach Document [APP/5.7]** and sit beneath the principles in the design framework hierarchy. Most strategic landscape and biodiversity opportunities fall under PLDDPs 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.8, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4 and 3.5. Where appropriate management prescriptions drawn from the Norfolk BAP, Norfolk Wildlife Trust Woodlands for Wildlife and Pollinator Action Plans, LNRS[1] in accordance with PLDDP 3.2 are also detailed below with references made to opportunities to improve landscape character.

Strategic Landscape and Ecological Opportunity 1: Retain and enhance existing vegetation wherever reasonably possible to maintain the Order limits' fabric and aid assimilation of development into its context

7.2.24 Measures have been taken to retain and enhance existing vegetation including woodland / copses, veteran trees, scrub and hedgerows /hedgerow trees in accordance with PLDDP 2.2 (retain and enhance existing vegetation), with specific buffers to protect their root zones and opportunities created for habitat enhancement. Existing vegetation which sits within the Order limits will provide a strong landscape and ecological framework for the Scheme. Measures will be taken to manage existing woodland which falls within the Order limits sustainably; PLDDP 7.2.

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[1] With reference to map based potential measures.

7.2.25 **Appendix 2: Vegetation Removal Plan [APP/7.11]** identifies likely vegetation for removal for construction purposes. Wherever practicable, existing field accesses will be utilised for access to the Order limits. If a suitable field access does not exist, for example, due to poor highway visibility, new accesses would be constructed. Accesses would be designed to ensure there are no impacts on veteran or protected trees as a result of vehicle movements; however, there may be localised removal of sections of hedgerows as required, e.g. for visibility splays.

7.2.26 Existing vegetation not only provides important visual softening and screening functions but also protects and enhances biodiversity habitats and improves connectivity. Retention of existing vegetation will include:

- Retention of existing field pattern and wildlife corridors both during the construction and operational phases of the Scheme
- Protection of existing habitats for nesting birds and foraging and roosting bats
- Protection of existing habitat corridors along these features
- Protection of the functionality and ecosystem service of the landscape; and
- Provision and maintenance of suitable growth levels / heights for visual screening (as specified in Section 1.3).

7.2.27 The detailed design of the BESS, Customer Substation and National Grid Substation, where practicable, will consider opportunities through the layout and configuration to further assimilation of development into its context within the Scheme parameters and Limits of Deviation.

7.2.28 These measures have been considered in consultation with the following LNRS[2] and Norfolk BAP objectives (the LNRS notes that the mapped measures below overlap with an airfield safeguarding zone and therefore any potential measures need to be reviewed alongside existing land use to assess suitability and consider adapting measures if needed):

- **LNRS Potential Measure PM02 – Restore and enhance existing deciduous woodland** giving consideration to the reinstatement, adaption or introduction of appropriate management regimes, ensuring available management plans are fully implemented and improving biodiversity through targeted planting schemes. Tree canopies should be managed to reduce understorey shading, open areas within woodland created, woodland species and age profile diversified and a complex woodland understorey developed as well as managing deer and squirrel population to reduce browsing pressure and enhance natural regeneration.

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[2] Potential measures re drawn from specific recommendations on Norfolk Local Habitat Map Simplified

- **LNRS Potential Measure PM08 – Restore and Enhance Existing Scrub** where feasible and desirable which will include open space and transitional habitats such as scrub within woodland management plans (including consideration of hedgerows as components of linear scrub features). (*Consider hedgerows as components of linear scrub features)* and measures in relation to **Habitats in Farmed Landscapes** (including unmapped creation, restoration and enhancement of hedgerows using appropriate native species as unmapped measures, and mapped where possible when linked to other measures).
- **LNRS Potential Measure PM09 – Enlarge and Expand Existing Arable Field Margins.** Listed measures include carrying out annual scrub maintenance regimes where appropriate, adopting grazing regimes in appropriate areas to maintain scrub margins, ensuring allowance for successional stages, coppicing roadside scrub verges on long rotations (10-15 years), managing scrub so there is a diversity in age and structure, consider hedgerows as components of linear scrub features and employing sustainable deer management for scrub regeneration to avoid underneath being eaten out.
- **LNRS Potential Measure PM21 – Create New, Enlarge And Expand And Connect Existing Calcareous Grassland Areas Where Feasible and Desirable.** The LNRS lists the incorporation of management techniques in appropriate areas to allow natural processes to occur, along with the use of green hay and hand collected seed wherever possible.
- **LNRS Potential Measure PM30 – Strengthen Mosaic of Wetland Habitats along River Channels.** Listed measures include mitigation against pollution, abstractions, droughts and floods, reforestation increasing the number of trees and vegetation within the catchment where appropriate, maintenance of soil structure and vegetation cover, restoration of a more natural bed level, floodplain reconnection, construction of shallow vegetated waterbodies, restoration of natural processes and restoration of a more natural mosaic of habitats.
- **LNRS Potential Measure PM32 – Restore and Enhance Existing Still Water.**
- **Norfolk BAP –** Objectives for hedgerows include reducing hedgerow loss and ensuring the establishment of replacement hedgerow trees (where applicable). Actions include positive management of roadside hedgerows.
- **Norfolk BAP –** Objectives for ponds include maintaining the existing resource of ponds and restoration of existing ponds.

Strategic Landscape and Ecological Opportunity 2: Manage the Scheme to respond to the distinctive and unique local character of the Order limits, informed by Breckland Landscape Character Assessment, Kings Lynn and

West Norfolk Borough Landscape Character Assessment and Site Observations

7.2.29 New structural planting in the form of woodland belts, the gapping up and strengthening of hedgerows, new hedgerow / hedgerow tree planting and scrub will help to soften and screen the proposed infrastructure and integrate it into the existing landscape whilst also providing residential amenity, habitat for biodiversity in accordance with PLDDPs 2.1 (local character), 2.2 (retain and enhance existing vegetation), 2.7 (respect residential amenity) 3.1 (integrate the Scheme into the local environment). 3.4 (Biodiversity Net Gain) and working collaboratively with the developer of the High Grove Solar Farm; PLDDP 5.8.

7.2.30 Planting will be designed and managed to complement the existing vegetation mix, structure and pattern of the landscape. It will be informed by an understanding of the environmental context and aspirations of the LNRS and Norfolk BAP, landscape character assessments and Site observations. This will ensure:

- An enhanced landscape structure with improved green infrastructure corridors and connectivity around and within the Order limits such as along existing and proposed field boundaries and Public Rights of Way (PRoWs); and
- Screening and filtering of close views of the Scheme from PRoWs, local roads (such as the A1065) and other publicly accessible areas within and immediately adjacent to the Order limits.

7.2.31 Planting mixes shown indicatively in the following section below will be reviewed further post consent and in collaboration with planting proposals for High Grove Solar Farm to ensure that there is a smooth transition of the “look and feel” between one solar farm and another.

7.2.32 The minimum buffers between the fencing and / or Solar PV Arrays will be exceeded where practicable to the south of Keepers Cottage.

7.2.33 These measures have been considered in consultation with the following landscape character opportunities and LNRS and Norfolk BAP objectives:

- Breckland Landscape Character Assessment opportunities to conserve and enhance the character of the landscape include:
  - The retention of woodland blocks which provide an important focus in the landscape; and planting of additional woodland to reinforce existing farm woodlands (providing continuity of tree cover) whilst, overall, retaining the openness and historic field structure of the arable landscape.
  - Conservation of the well treed hedgerows concentrated on the network of rural roads and lanes, in addition to localised enclosed lanes, which impart an historic character to the landscape and provide evidence of the former landcover pattern. This extends to the Droves as important routes (now restricted byways) that cross the Order limits.

  - Succession planting of new hedgerow trees and reinforcement of field boundary hedgerows, particularly where field boundaries are degraded or have been lost due to agricultural intensification, improving the integrity of the landscape and strengthening character.
  - Retention and conservation of mature / veteran trees which have significant landscape, biodiversity and amenity value.
  - Enhance biodiversity of field margins, improving habitat connectivity.
  - Support opportunities to recover semi-natural heathland habitat in appropriate areas.
  - Consider the effect of tall or vertical structures on the landscape.
  - Opportunities to celebrate views to adjacent landscapes and character areas.
  - Seek to work with NWT in regard to potential for reintroduction of specialist Breckland species as part of long term habitat opportunities and suitable management strategies.
- **LNRS Potential Measure PM02 – Restore and enhance existing deciduous woodland** encouraging new developments to improve biodiversity within woodland areas through targeted planting schemes, management (including encouraging natural colonisation and promoting retention of dead wood), plant the veteran trees of the future, supporting species decisions, using Ecological Site Classification (ESC) profiles, creating mixed woodland to provide opportunities for recreation and increased access and heath, grassland, and woodland enhancement areas. The measure also seeks to create community woodlands and increase canopy cover area using a broad range of species to increase diversity and promote climate and pest/disease resilience and where possible creation should be achieved via natural regeneration processes, incorporating protection of the designated area and appropriate timeframes. This will maximise local genetic diversity and reduces risk of disease.
- **Norfolk BAP** objectives include maintaining lowland mixed deciduous woodland, expanding it where possible and encouraging a mix of management regimes (such as coppice, wood pasture, minimum intervention and managed high forest). Species that are Order limits-native or locally prevalent should be planted. Actions include identifying appropriate areas for restoration and expansion of woodland and developing long-term management plans (20+ years) that integrate a diversity of species to benefit nature conservation**.**
- **Norfolk Wildlife Trust's 'Woodlands for Wildlife'** guidance includes advice on choosing trees and shrubs, such as planting a range of native species suitable to Site conditions, including evergreens for winter shelter for birds. Guidance on woodland design includes creating an irregularly shaped woodland edge with warm, sheltered areas for wildlife and shrubs. The guidance advises to leave open glades and woodland rides where sunlight can encourage wildflowers and grasses to grow and vary the density at which woodland trees are planted to allow room for natural colonisation.

- **LNRS Potential Measure PM08** (*Consider hedgerows as components of linear scrub features)* and measures in relation to **Habitats in Farmed Landscapes** (including unmapped creation, restoration and enhancement of hedgerows using appropriate native species as unmapped measures, and mapped where possible when linked to other measures). **Norfolk BAP** objectives for hedgerows include reducing hedgerow loss and ensuring the establishment of replacement hedgerow trees (where applicable). Actions include positive management of roadside hedgerows.

Strategic Landscape and Ecological Opportunity 3: Extend and enhance local wildlife sites and priority habitats improving connectivity

7.2.34 New habitats will be created which extend and enhance existing habitats in the form of woodland belts, hedgerows/ hedgerow trees and grassland. The Scheme will integrate into the local environment through the retention and enhancement of existing PRoWs and Droves and encourage the movement of wildlife through the Order limits in accordance with PLDDPs 2.2 (retain and enhance existing vegetation), 2.3 (support Green infrastructure), 3.1 (Integrate the Scheme into the local environment) 3.4 (Biodiversity Net Gain) and 3.5 (Westacre Rewilding Project (Ref 7-30)).

7.2.35 Proposals will seek to improve ecological connections between the Nar Valley and new and improved habitats within the Order limits.

7.2.36 Measures will be taken to facilitate the movement of species, and this will include installing features such as badger gates. Dead ends and obstructed natural pathways will be designed out and measures taken to protect existing and new habitats. This opportunity will improve resilience and connectivity with priority ecological areas to the chalk stream of the Nar Valley to north and Breckland heath and forest to south; both recognised as ecological important for their ecology as well as linking with other key biodiversity hotspots.

7.2.37 These measures have been considered in consultation with the following LNRS and Norfolk BAP objectives:

- **Potential Measure PM02 – Restore and enhance existing deciduous woodland** giving consideration to the reinstatement, adaption or introduction of appropriate management regimes, ensuring available management plans are fully implemented and improving biodiversity through targeted planting schemes. Tree canopies should be managed to reduce understorey shading, open areas within woodland created, woodland species and age profile diversified, and a complex woodland understorey developed as well as managing deer and squirrel population to reduce browsing pressure and enhance natural regeneration.
- **LNRS Potential Measure PM08** (*Consider hedgerows as components of linear scrub features)* and measures in relation to **Habitats in Farmed Landscapes** (including unmapped creation, restoration and enhancement of hedgerows using appropriate native species as unmapped measures, and mapped where possible when linked to other measures).**Norfolk BAP –** Objectives for hedgerows include reducing hedgerow loss and ensuring the establishment of replacement hedgerow trees (where applicable). Actions include positive management of roadside hedgerows.

- **LNRS – Potential Measure PM32 – Restore and Enhance Existing Still Water** including controlling and managing invasive species, improving water quality, clearing woody vegetation, retaining biodiversity and reducing cover on existing overshaded ponds.
- **Norfolk BAP –** Objectives for ponds include maintaining the existing resource of ponds and restoration of existing ponds.

Strategic Landscape and Ecological Opportunity 4: Creation of new grassland habitats to support farmland birds

7.2.38 A mosaic of grassland habitats will be created to support key species across the Order limits in accordance with PLDDPs 2.2 (retain and enhance existing vegetation), 2.3 (Green Infrastructure) 2.4 (soil health), 3.3 (water runoff) and 3.4 (Biodiversity Net Gain). These habitats will complement retained vegetation and create a network of valuable habitats as shown on **Appendix 1: Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans [APP/7.11]**.

7.2.39 This network will maximise foraging, sheltering and breeding possibilities for a wide range of species including farmland birds and restore the land's ecological state prior to intensive farming. New habitats will include:

- Grassland open fields and margins incorporating existing marl pits, ponds and tree groups
    - Between the margins of hedgerows and Solar PV Arrays, and outside fence lines between Solar PV Arrays, hedgerows and trees, wildflower grasslands resulting in biodiversity hot spots attracting pollinators, invertebrates and nesting birds
- Creation of specific open grassland areas for mitigation associated with Eurasian Curlew
    - Grassland within the publicly accessible area within Field 4 and around Keepers Cottage
- Species-rich grassland inside fence lines to provide biodiversity benefits, improve soil health, store carbon, slow rainwater runoff and provide opportunities for grazing livestock; and
- Grassland under Solar PV Arrays to provide biodiversity benefits, improve soil health, store carbon, slow rainwater runoff and provide opportunities for grazing livestock.

7.2.40 These measures have been considered in consultation with the following LNRS and Norfolk BAP objectives:

- **LNRS Potential Measure PM21 Create New, Enlarge and Connect Existing Calcareous Grassland Areas Where Feasible and Deliverable**
- **Strategic Landscape and Ecological Opportunity 5: Use locally native species wherever possible to create new habitats, increase the number of pollinator species and create food sources for birds such as Skylark and Eurasian Curlew and other animals during winter months**

7.2.41 New planting will comprise local native species designed to increase the number of pollinator species and create food sources for birds such as Skylark and curlew during winter months in accordance with PLDDP 2.1 (local character), 2.3 (green infrastructure), 3.1 (wildlife movement), 3.2 (Local Nature Recovery Strategy), 3.4 (Biodiversity Net Gain) and 3.5 (rewilding).

7.2.42 Locally sourced green hay or brush harvested seed may be used for grassland creation where practical, and there will be emphasis on using seed mixes of local provenance should the first two options be unavailable.

7.2.43 The green infrastructure proposed would provide a large floristic resource across the Order limits. This will comprise a mix of locally native species which will flower at different times of the year and provide a long summer foraging window for pollinators and other insects. It will also provide a summer food source for birds, such as Skylark and Eurasian Curlew, which will also benefit in the winter with the creation of the wild bird cover/seeded arable margins.

7.2.44 Fruiting, berry and nut bearing species will be used to provide food and foraging sources for a variety of wildlife including birds, foxes, badgers, rodents and insects.

7.2.45 The Applicant will consult with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) in relation to the selection of plant species within the detailed LEMP, to discuss the potential for increased bird strike risk associated with the operations at RAF Marham.

7.2.46 These measures have been considered in consultation with the following LNRS and Norfolk BAP objectives and actions recommended by Norfolk Wildlife Trust:

- **LNRS Potential Measures in regard to Farmed Landscapes (see Table 27b):** Provide seed sources to support farmland birds, especially in late winter, there by direct provision or allowing plants to go to seed in suitable areas.
- **Norfolk BAP – Hedgerows:** a variety of BAP species, particularly birds such as tree sparrow, are associated with habitats. Flowers and fruits provide food for a range of wildlife.
- **Norfolk BAP – Skylark:** Skylarks need nesting habitat to produce up to three broods per year. Spring cereals provide an ideal nesting habitat for Skylarks. Skylarks feed on seeds and weeds throughout the year. Weedy stubbles are the most beneficial winter feeding habitat. Turning unproductive, sparse grass ley to hay meadow could provide a safer nesting habitat for Skylarks.
- **Norfolk Wildlife** Trust’s Pollinator Action Plans seeks to encourage the planting of nectar rich flowers, shrubs and trees, reduce and modify mowing regimes to allow grass to grow longer and connect pollinator spaces through green infrastructure

Strategic Landscape and Ecological Opportunity 6: Establish new planting at the earliest practicable opportunity

7.2.47 The Scheme will include new woodland, hedgerow trees and tree planting to meet PLDDPs 2.1 (local character) 2.3 (Green infrastructure), 3.1 (integrate the scheme into local environment). 3.2 (initiatives re LNRS), 3.4 (Biodiversity Net Gain) and 3.5 (Engage with Westacre Estate Rewilding Project (Ref 7-30)). Further design measures could be explored during the detailed design stage, such as the earlier implementation of proposed mitigation planting being planted during the pre-construction stage to allow for earlier establishment. The implementation of advanced planting totalling 3.8km has taken place in winter 2025/2026 to provide screening to the A1065 and Field 27 as referred on **Appendix 3: Advanced Planting Plan [APP/7.11]**.

Strategic Landscape and Ecological Opportunity 7: Deliver a biodiversity net gain beyond the minimum of 10%

7.2.48 The Scheme will deliver a BNG of at least 10% in accordance with PLDDP 3.4 throughout its operation.

7.2.49 For this current stage of the DCO process, Defra's Statutory Biodiversity Metric was used to assess the value of the baseline and proposed habitats and understand the net change in value of the Order limits based on **Appendix 1: Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans [APP/7.11]** of this oLEMP. The metric provides a separate assessment for habitat areas (referred to as habitat units), linear vegetated habitats (referred to as hedgerow units), and linear aquatic habitats (referred to as watercourse units). The results of this assessment are detailed in full in the **Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report [APP/7.4]** and summarised in Table 7-1 below.

Table 7-1 DCO Submission Stage Summary of BNG Calculations (updated at Deadline 1)

Unit Type	No. baseline units	Title No Units delivered by the Proposed Development	Net change in units	Unit % change
Habitats	1838.82	2250.89	+412.08	+22.41
Hedgerow Units	320.71	507.98	+187.21	+58.36
Watercourse Units	N/A - No watercourses present			

7.2.50 The detailed LEMP will include an update to the BNG calculations undertaken at detailed design stage using the Defra Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

Strategic Landscape and Ecological Opportunity 8: Retain all existing PRoW and protect their amenity

7.2.51 All existing PRoWs will be retained during the operational phase of the Scheme in accordance with PLDDP 5.10 and steps to improve accessibility and connectivity in accordance with PLDDP 5.11. In addition, consideration will be given to the amenity of recreational and road users reflected in PLDDP 2.8 and 2.9.

7.2.52 A total of seven PRoWs run through the Order limits and more run adjacent to the Scheme's boundary. An important objective is to minimise where possible the perceived detrimental impacts of the Scheme on recreational amenity. This has been addressed by:

- Provision of minimum 15m offsets to perimeter fencing surrounding Solar PV Arrays from all PRoW, with Fincham Drove and Petticoat Drove having increased offsets from the Scheme
- Set back of the Scheme from landscape features such as trees, hedgerows and woodland with the siting of security and deer fencing behind existing / proposed landscape features to reduce visual impact
- Retention and enhancement of existing vegetation and creation of new native planting along existing routes to screen and filter close views to the Scheme, comprising a combination of woodland belts, hedgerow / hedgerow trees and grassland with wildflower planting
- Introduction of new amenity areas and improved PRoWs; and
- Implementation of interpretation boards at appropriate junctions of PRoWs within the Order limits, which will allow for opportunities to better understand the positive contribution the Scheme will make in adapting to climate change.

7.2.53 These measures have been considered in consultation with the Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy which recommends in its Mitigation package that longer term projects should work with the Public Rights of Way team on projects regarding route diversions and site buffering. Policy ENV 8: 'Public Rights of Way & Access' exists to protect, enhance and promote PRoW and access.

Strategic Landscape and Ecological Opportunity 9: Enhance the PRoW network by providing new routes to increase connectivity and link with local settlements

7.2.54 Green infrastructure is a key thread through Breckland Council's adopted local plan, with continued emphasis placed on its importance within the emerging local plan. The Order limits are located between two strategic green infrastructure corridors which pass through or connect with core habitat areas along the valley corridor to the north and Swaffham Heath (and Breckland SPA) to the south.

7.2.55 With housing growth predicted at Swaffham and the Order limits' proximity to the Breckland SPA, the Order limits have the potential to contribute to the delivery of improved recreation connectivity between Swaffham and the Nar valley, diverting and deflecting residents and visitors away from the more sensitive habitats and species.

7.2.56 New on-Site permissive routes totalling 3.5km will be created as part of the Scheme in accordance with PLDDP 2.3 (Green infrastructure), 5.8 (collaboration with High Grove Solar Farm) and 5.11 (improved connectivity / accessibility) with the indicative alignment of these shown on **Appendix 1: Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans [APP/7.11]** and referred to in the **outline Public Right of Way and Permissive Path Management Plan (oPRoWPPMP) [APP/7.12]**. Specific measures focus on the creation of permissive routes to the southeast of the Order limits, linking to off-Site permissive paths associated with High Grove Solar Farm to achieve a continuous permissive path referred to as the "Swaffham Link" between Swaffham, South Acre, the Nar Valley and surrounding villages. The surface treatment of new permissive routes will be as per the existing surface treatment prior to construction phase.

7.2.57 These measures have been considered in consultation with **Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy** which seeks to protect and enhance Public Rights of Way, including the provision of new routes and links. It specifies that such routes will be provided through "attractive green corridors" and available for walkers, cyclists and those with limited mobility. The Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy also refer to the NPPF, whereby paragraph 171 states that the LPA should "*seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way network*".

Strategic Landscape and Ecological Opportunity 10: Encourage education and interpretation of the solar farm and the Order limits

7.2.58 The Scheme will be designed to provide education and interpretation in accordance with PLDDP 5.7. The Droves have been used since the Iron Age, with their use peaking in the 18th and 19th century to herd livestock across the land. Whilst this use has diminished, the routes are used for connecting people and valued for their historic context.

7.2.59 Opportunities for the local community to engage with and learn about the natural environment will be provided through informal, local interpretation boards at appropriate, strategic points across the Order limits. Information will also be provided on the Scheme, climate change, local history and ecology and the benefits of renewable energy. Way-markers will be erected at existing footpaths junctions or where routes enter the Order limits to aid interpretation. Both the boards and way markers will be installed prior to the first anniversary of the date of final commissioning of the Scheme. The detailed LEMP will confirm the proposed content and location of the interpretation boards which will be agreed with the relevant local planning authority prior to their installation.

7.2.60 These measures have been considered in consultation with the Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy Mitigation package which focusses on education and public engagement and methods of education and communication.

Strategic Landscape and Ecological Opportunity 11: Design for resilience and adaptation to future climate change

7.2.61 The Scheme will be designed for resilience and adaptation to future climate change in accordance with PLDDP 4.1.

7.2.62 The enhancement of existing vegetation and the implementation of proposed planting will promote improved interception, evapotranspiration and infiltration rates, whilst also providing water quality treatment for surface water runoff before it enters the watercourses within and surrounding the Order limits. These increased hydrological rates will provide a betterment on existing runoff rates, which is beneficial in any future climate change scenarios.

7.2.63 Species should be resilient to climate change impacts and disease / pests as far as is practicable and foreseeable. Detailed design and the accompanying detailed LEMP will provide further details in relation to species selection.

7.2.64 These measures have been considered in consultation with the following LNRS and Norfolk BAP objectives:

- **LNRS Potential MeasurePM02 Restore and Enhance Existing Deciduous Woodland** using a broad range of species to increase diversity and promote climate and pest/disease resilience.

7.3 Creation and Management Prescriptions by Habitat Type for the “Wider” Scheme

7.3.0 This section sets out the various principles and prescriptions for habitat creation and management which will drive the requirements for both landscape and ecological mitigation and enhancement identified in the **ES Chapter 7: Ecology and Biodiversity [APP/6.2].** This section refers to habitat creation and management for the “Wider Scheme” under the Applicant’s control.

7.3.1 The mitigation and enhancement measures are illustrated in **Appendix 1: Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans [APP/7.11]** as referenced throughout this document. Some planting types and habitat enhancements listed in this section could apply to different typologies set out within the Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans’ key, therefore, the relevant mitigation typologies from the Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans to which each management prescription applies are listed at the beginning of each subheading.

7.3.2 This section should be read in conjunction with Annex A – Outline Management Prescription Timetable in this document which sets out the timetable for management prescriptions, along with any seasonal restrictions on management measures, which would be adopted for the full operational lifetime of the Scheme.

7.3.3 For the purposes of this document and to inform **ES Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual [APP/6.2]** and supporting visualisations, the assumed vegetation growth rate is 300mm/year for the first five years and 400mm of growth per year thereafter. Growth rates err on the side of caution to reflect local variation in discussion with the Applicant's arboriculturist and based on project experience.

General Planting Implementation and Management Prescriptions

General Implementation Prescriptions

7.3.4 Planting will be undertaken in the planting season between October and March during construction, or within the first available year/season post construction[3]. Planting will be carried out during appropriate climatic conditions.

7.3.5 Where vegetation has re-established during the construction phase, the following clearance works should be undertaken prior to planting works:

- All grass and perennial vegetation should be cleared from Order limits, including epicormic and below ground growth
- All rubbish, debris and stones over 25 mm diameter should be cleared; and
- All arisings should be removed from within the Order limits.

7.3.6 The handling of plants within the Order limits must be in accordance with National Plant Specification 'Handling and Establishing Landscape Plants' (Ref 7-15).

7.3.7 All plants and planting operations are to comply with the requirements and recommendations of all current relevant British Standard specification, including but not limited to:

- BS 8545: 2014: Trees: From Nursery to Independence in the Landscape (Ref 7-11)
- BS 3936-1: 1992. Nursery stock. Specification for trees and shrubs (Ref 7-26)
- BS 4428: 1989. Code of practice for general landscape operations (excluding hard surfaces) (AMD 6784) (Ref 7-27)
- BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations (Ref 7-28); and
- BS 3998: 2010: Tree Work – Recommendations (Ref 7-29).

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[3] This excludes advanced planting, as referred to in **Appendix 3: Advanced Planting Plan [APP/7.11]** which would take place in the winter of 2025 and relates to hedgerow planting to screen Field 27 and the A1065.

7.3.8 Where appropriate, topsoil within planting pits should be cultivated to a minimum depth of 400 mm where tree, and/or woodland planting is proposed, to ensure sufficient room to accommodate new planting and to provide appropriate growing conditions for new planting. New infill hedgerow planting will be dug into the existing topsoil with a spade, within hedgerow gaps. Additional topsoil will be added, if required, to level the planting area.

7.3.9 Topsoil in areas to be seeded with wildflower and grass seed mixes should be cultivated using minimum tilling or direct drilling of seed straight into stubble of the previous arable crop. This retains some surface protection offered by the stubble and reduces the number of cultivator passes across the soil surface.

7.3.10 Where appropriate, pre-seeding of grassland will occur as part of the preliminary works for the Scheme to ensure successful establishment and for flood risk benefits to be realised.

7.3.11 In the event of construction damage to existing grassland and/or newly seeded areas, these areas are to be made good through adequate re-seeding with the appropriate management and maintenance undertaken thereafter.

7.3.12 No cultivation should take place in wet or waterlogged conditions or within the root protection areas of existing trees, as defined by BS5837:2012, on land not previously subject to arable crop production. Where drilling is required within the root protection areas of existing trees located within land not currently subject to arable production, this should include surface scarification only and of no more than 50 mm depth to ensure roots are not damaged.

7.3.13 No topsoil will be imported or exported from Order limits. Grading of the topsoil should be undertaken where required, such as those areas accommodating the BESS and Access Tracks.

7.3.14 In the interest of biodiversity protection, the use of herbicides should be kept to a minimum in the preparation or management of the planted or seeded areas.

7.3.15 All trees and shrubs are to be planted with the appropriate biodegradable tree or shrub guards, which will be removed subject to satisfactory establishment and growth within five years post construction, or as required to ensure establishment.

7.3.16 All tree and hedgerow specimens will be native and of UK provenance. Trees will be locally sourced and of local provenance where practicable. The “Local Seed Zone Provenance” (i.e., the region within which the Scheme lies) is 406 (Ref 7-16).

General Management Prescriptions

7.3.17 Any plants and trees which are found to be dying, damaged or diseased following planting will be replaced with the same species and specification for Years 1-5 of the Scheme, as per the timetable in Annex A – Outline Management Prescription Timetable. Thereafter, replacement planting will be required for any significant failures, identified through monitoring, and the specification for replacement planting will be appropriate to the conditions on Order limits, acknowledging the potential for conditions to change over the 60-year lifetime of the Scheme.

7.3.18 Any maintenance works such as cutting of trees or flailing, should take place during September to February which is outside of the main bird nesting season (March to August), for the full operational lifetime of the Scheme. These works should also be carried out when the ground is dry enough to allow machinery access.

7.3.19 All shelters, guards, rabbit spirals and stakes will be checked annually and secured or replaced where necessary. Shelters will be removed from all plants and will be disposed of off-site (subject to satisfactory establishment and growth) by Year 5 post planting.

7.3.20 Autumn sowing is preferable, with the seed sown as soon as practicable subsequent to construction of the Solar PV Array areas, to avoid a flush of unwanted species such as annual plants and injurious and invasive weeds (this is also dependent on careful preparation of the land prior to seeding, as set out above). Following this, weeds and invasive non-native species will be controlled by hand pulling, if not too excessive, or treated using a spot herbicide treatment if more widespread.

Existing Vegetation and Proposed Woodland Belt / Copses

7.3.21 **Appendix 1: Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans [APP/7.11]** key references:

- Existing vegetation including woodland to the northern corner of Field 26)
- Proposed woodland belt; and
- Area of grassland, scrub, copse planting and attenuation.

7.3.22 Tree planting will largely target planting within the hedgerow network as detailed below, but the planting of woodland belts and copses will be introduced within Field 27. Tree belts and copses will provide ‘stepping stones’ between larger areas of woodland, reflecting the strategic biodiversity opportunities for the Scheme set out within **ES Chapter 7: Ecology and Biodiversity [APP/6.2].** Woodland creation not only serves as visual screening at strategic locations but also ensures habitat connectivity throughout the landscape.

7.3.23 The proposed woodland belts are typically c.10 m wide. Both the woodland belts and copses comprise mixed native tree planting. Species to be included are shown in Table 7-2 below.

7.3.24 The tree species selected reflect the existing species identified within the Scheme or near the Scheme’s boundaries to ensure they are locally appropriate. Species selection has also drawn on the Norfolk Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) guidance (Ref 7-2) and been reviewed by the Applicant’s arboriculturist. Tree planting locations will require an appropriate offset from Solar PV Arrays to ensure shading will not occur once the tree has matured, or to ensure leaf fall does not become a problem on the structures. Lower growing species to be planted adjacent to the proposed Solar PV Array areas to avoid overshadowing, details of which will be provided in Detailed Landscape Proposal plans which would be prepared prior to implementation of the Scheme. Detailed Landscape Proposals plans would include detailed planting specification and schedule as well as locations of all proposed planting. Care will be taken to ensure that trees poisonous to livestock are not along the outer hedgerow boundaries of the Scheme or along Bridleways / Restricted Byways.

7.3.25 Existing woodland will be managed by the Landowner with the exception of the proposed woodland belts which will be managed by National Grid, as they serve as visual screening for the National Grid Substation post decommissioning of the Scheme. Common ash (Fraxinus excelsior) is present as a minor component of some woodlands edging / within the Order limits, many of which are more recent plantations. Overall, ash is less prevalent within woodlands than within hedgerows. Ash within woodlands tend to be isolated mature individuals, or self-seeded trees, rather than a more significant component of the species mix. No woodlands were assessed as being dominated by ash, or featuring ash as a major component of the species mix. None appeared to be in a condition which could be expected to deteriorate significantly as a result of ash dieback. Existing woodland lying within the northern edge of Field 26 does not include ash as a component of the woodland.

Existing Vegetation

7.3.26 Existing trees and woodland within the Site have been subject to limited management and this will continue. Appropriate buffers / offsets to veteran trees will be implemented to remove the need for unnecessary safety and management works that could impact on the trees and associated habitats. Where necessary, individual management plans will be put in place for veteran trees in order to ensure appropriate management and secure long term health. This may include soil amelioration and pruning is considered necessary to prevent catastrophic failures Further details will be provided in the **oCEMP [APP/7.6]**.

7.3.27 Similarly, appropriate buffers / offsets for existing woodland / trees will be implemented.

7.3.28 The Arboricultural Clerk of Works (ACoW) shall be consulted to advise on the appropriate specification and location of protective fencing for existing woodland and trees, and further details will be provided in the **oCEMP [APP/7.6]**.

Proposed Woodland Belt / Copse planting

7.3.29 Trees within proposed woodland tree belts and copses totalling 1.1ha will be planted at 1 to 2 m centres. Plant species will be planted as a mix of sizes ranging 60-90 cm transplants, 125–150 cm whips 200–250 cm feathered to standard / standard light 250-300cm trees. Tree species will be planted in groups of one, three, five and seven (of the same species) to reinforce a natural layout of species within the landscape.

7.3.30 Trees will be planted appropriately depending on size. Trees will be planted as whips, transplants and feathered specimens in pits approximately 300 mm wide x 400 mm deep, or the dimensions of the root ball, whichever is greater.

7.3.31 All trees should be planted with a 75 mm depth of bark mulch, 0.5 m in diameter around each tree or shrub to suppress weeds and retain soil moisture.

7.3.32 Planting will focus on long-lived trees in order to replace the frequent ash trees noted to be present within the hedgerow network, the majority of which can be expected to be lost in the next five years due to ash dieback. It may be desirable to plant trees not identified in the local area which are ecologically similar to ash or are resistant to both disease and climate change impacts.

7.3.33 A list of locally appropriate and resistant trees is provided in Table 7-2 below.

Table 7-2 Indicative Proposed Woodland Species for Planting within the Scheme

Scientific Name	Common Name	Size (cm)
Acer campestre	Field Maple	175-200
Betula pendula	Silver Birch	125-150
Carpinus betulus	European/Common Hornbeam	60-80
Castanea sativa	Sweet Chestnut	125-150
Malus sylvestris	Crab Apple	80-100
Pinus sylvestris	Scots Pine	60-80
Quercus robur	English Oak	250-300
Salix cinerea	Salix cinerea	175-200

Proposed Woodland Belt and Copse Management

7.3.34 All trees and shrubs will be regularly watered for a minimum of two growing seasons and as required thereafter to ensure successful establishment. There will be ongoing monitoring of new planting and replacement of failures during the first two years of the operational phase.

7.3.35 Bark mulch will be maintained at a depth of 75 mm, and 0.5m in diameter around each tree or shrub as required to suppress weeds and retain soil moisture.

7.3.36 Hand pulling of persistent weeds will be undertaken or treated using a spot herbicide where weeds are more widespread.

Existing and Proposed Native Hedgerows and Hedgerow Trees

7.3.37 **Appendix 1: Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans [APP/7.11]** key references:

- Existing hedgerows (including hedgerow trees) to be retained and gapped up with species rich hedgerow
- Existing hedgerows (including hedgerow trees) to be retained and gapped up with species rich hedgerow, and strengthened with additional hedgerow trees
- Proposed hedgerow; and
- Proposed hedgerow with hedgerow trees.

7.3.38 Hedgerows are a Habitat of Principal Importance under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 (Ref 7-25). Ancient and Veteran Trees are also recognised as irreplaceable habitats. The hedgerows within the Order limits are considered to quality as Priority Habitats, acting as important ecological features.

7.3.39 An extensive network of native hedgerows is present across the Order limits, many of which contain frequent mature standard trees. including a number of veteran trees (irreplaceable habitats). The composition of hedgerows across the Order limits vary in terms of species-richness, but the majority of hedgerows are species-poor.

7.3.40 The Scheme offers significant opportunities for tree and hedgerow planting, as well as enhancement of existing hedgerows, in line with national targets and local conservation priorities and to mitigate impacts to hedgerow habitat arising from the Scheme. Strengthening the local hedgerow network will significantly enhance the area for a wide range of wildlife, including but not limited to bat species, birds and invertebrates, as well as contributing to local green infrastructure.

7.3.41 All tree and hedgerow specimens will be native and of UK provenance. Trees will be locally sourced and of local provenance where practicable.

Hedgerow Planting

7.3.42 Proposed new hedgerows will provide additional linking habitat and reinforce the existing green network. Gaps in existing hedgerows will be ‘gapped up’ (infilled) wherever practicable with new hedgerow and hedgerow tree planting.

7.3.43 Infill hedgerow planting will be within gaps in existing hedgerow at the same planting density. However, to prevent root and soil disturbance of existing hedgerow, infill hedgerow whip planting will be dug into the existing topsoil with a spade, within hedgerow gaps. Additional topsoil should be added, if required, to level the planting area.

7.3.44 Locally appropriate species will be used, based on those already found within the local area and recommended within the Norfolk BAP. A list of locally appropriate species within a proposed mix is provided below in Table 7-3 (based on species identified within the hedgerows within the Order limits as well as the Norfolk Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) guidance) (Ref 7-2).

Table 7-3 Indicative Hedgerow Species for Planting within the Scheme

Scientific Name	Common Name	Size (cm)
Acer campestre	Field Maple	60-80
Cornus sanguinea	Common Dogwood	60-80
Corylus avellana	Common Hazel	60-80
Crataegus monogyna	Common Hawthorn	60-80
Euonymus europaeus	Field Spindle	60-80
Malus sylvestris	Crab Apple	60-80
Rhamnus cathartica	Purging Buckthorn	60-80
Sambucus nigra	Common Elder	60-80

Hedgerow Management

7.3.45 Whilst most hedgerows are currently in ‘moderate’ or ‘good’ condition when considering the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Condition Assessment criteria, as defined in the **Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report [APP/7.4]**, issues relating to poor management of hedgerows were frequently observed. These included over-management, lack of management, damage due to narrow field margins or drift of herbicides/pesticides and lack of replanting or gapping up. This oLEMP sets out appropriate management practices for hedgerows within the Scheme, with a focus on optimising this habitat for local wildlife.

7.3.46 Newly planted hedgerows will be regularly watered for a minimum of two growing seasons and as required thereafter to ensure successful establishment. There will be ongoing monitoring of new planting and replacement of failures during the first two years of the operational phase.

7.3.47 Weeds should be controlled through the use of bark mulch. A 75mm layer of bark mulch 0.5m either side of the hedge will be spread along the length of the hedge immediately after planting to suppress weeds and retain soil moisture.

7.3.48 Newly planted hedgerows should be trimmed in at least the first two years to encourage bushy growth, allowing the hedge to become taller and wider at each cut.

7.3.49 Hedgerows will be enhanced through less regular mechanical cutting, for example, every two-three years, and on rotation (either by rotating hedgerows or cutting each side of the hedgerow on rotation) in order to minimise disturbance and create a range of opportunities for faunal use. Cutting should take place outside the bird nesting season, and ideally in January/February where the ground is dry enough to allow machinery access. This will ensure that food sources for birds, such as nuts and berries, remain in the hedgerows over the winter months. This may be focussed on hedgerows adjacent to roads and tracks where a tractor will be able to access in wet conditions without damaging the ground.

7.3.50 The shrubby element of hedgerows (excluding select hedgerow trees) will be maintained to an optimum height of 4–5m tall.

7.3.51 All existing and proposed hedgerows will be maintained to a minimum height of 3m, to provide visual screening to the Scheme.

Hedgerow Tree Planting

7.3.52 All newly planted hedgerows will include feathered, light standards and standard trees randomly spaced between 5–15 m centres but not more than 20m apart. On occasions where visual receptors are likely to see visual effects in close proximity, denser tree planting of between 2–3 m centres may be adopted to provide more instant screening effects. Where this occurs, species will be appropriately mixed to ensure large species trees are intermittently mixed with smaller species trees to ensure suitable growing conditions in perpetuity.

7.3.53 Tree pits for hedgerow trees will vary according to size or dimensions of the rootball whichever is greater:

- Feathered trees – 500 x 500 x 600 mm depth; and
- Light standards / standards – 600 x 600 x 600 mm depth.

7.3.54 All trees should be planted with a 75 mm depth of bark mulch, 0.5 m in diameter around each tree or shrub to suppress weeds and retain soil moisture.

7.3.55 Any trees planted in or alongside hedgerows as part of the proposed hedgerows enhancements, are to be planted with a 1.5 m tall white tipped marker post. This will allow locations of newly planted trees to be noticeable to operators of flails during maintenance periods.

7.3.56 Planting will focus on trees capable of making a long-term contribution, to support development and continuity of habitat. A small proportion of common ash (Fraxinus excelsior) found within hedgerows (approximately 15%) are not expected to live beyond 10 years due to a combination of age-related decline and potential impacts of ash dieback (Hymenoscyphus fraxineus).

7.3.57 The tree species selected reflect the existing species identified within the Order limits or near the Order limits to ensure they are locally appropriate. The selection of species has drawn on the Norfolk Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) guidance (Ref 7-2) and been reviewed by the Applicant's arboriculturist.

7.3.58 A list of locally appropriate and resistant trees (feathered, light standards and standards) is given in Table 7-4 below.

Table 7-4 Indicative Hedgerow Tree Species for Planting within the Scheme

Scientific Name	Common Name	Size
Acer campestre	Field maple	Standard 8-10cm Girth 2.75-3.0m Height
Carpinus betulus	Common Hornbeam	Feathered 1.75-2.5m Height
Castanea sativa	Sweet Chestnut	Standard 8-10cm Girth 2.75-3.0m Height
Malus sylvestris	Crab Apple	Light standard 6-8cm Girth 2.5-2.75m Height
Prunus avium	Wild Cherry	Light standard 6-8cm Girth 2.5-2.75m Height
Quercus robur	English Oak	Light standard 6-8cm Girth 2.5-2.75m Height
Scots Pine		Light standard 6-8cm Girth

Scientific Name	Common Name	Size
		2.5-2.75m Height

Hedgerow Tree Management

7.3.59 An inspection and formative prune will be carried out annually in accordance with good arboricultural practice to BS 3998:2010. A clear stem of up to 2 m will be maintained for all hedgerow trees in order to be distinguishable.

7.3.60 All trees and shrubs will be regularly watered for a minimum of two growing seasons and as required thereafter to ensure successful establishment. There will be ongoing monitoring of new planting and replacement of failures during the first two years of the operational phase.

7.3.61 Bark mulch is to be maintained at a depth of 75 mm and form a diameter of at least 0.5 m around each tree or shrub as required to suppress weeds and retain soil moisture.

Permanent Grassland Habitat

7.3.62 **Appendix 1: Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans [APP/7.11]** key references:

- Grassland between the margins of hedgerows and Solar PV Arrays, and outside fence lines between Solar PV Arrays
- Grassland around existing marl pits and ponds
- Grassland in fence lines and under Solar PV Arrays; and
- Grassland to be retained and enhanced.

7.3.63 Diversification of grassland management between different areas of the Scheme, including between buffer areas and different areas within the Solar PV Arrays, maximises the available niches for invertebrates to lay eggs, overwinter and feed and in turn drive opportunities for diversification up the food chain.

7.3.64 It has been shown that diverse grassland can be created within Solar PV Array areas, where managed appropriately (Ref 7-17). This can have a significant benefit to biodiversity but can also benefit surrounding agricultural land through offering an increase in pollinator species. Other benefits in terms of ecosystem services include an increase in water quality as a result of the cessation of fertilisation and herbicide spraying as well as an increase in soil health as a result of the cessation of ploughing.

7.3.65 Conservation management of grassland will be applied throughout all grassland habitats within the Scheme (i.e., appropriate timing and frequency of grazing and/or cutting), and differing seed mixes and creation prescriptions have been specified between different habitat types, the locations of which will be provided within the detailed LEMP.

7.3.66 It has been assumed within this report that any grassland creation on previously arable land would require seeding given that the land has been under agricultural production for many years. Opportunities for green hay donor sites will be explored prior to the preparation of the detailed LEMP.

7.3.67 Where the above is not practicable, wildflower and grass seed will be required. Given the size of the Scheme, it is likely that a large proportion of seed will need to be purchased from outside the local area. Whilst this is acceptable, it is important that seed is sourced as locally as practicable and as a minimum will be native to the UK and UK sourced.

7.3.68 The following principles will be used when considering seeding:

- Where practicable, local donor sites will be used to source seed
- Where seed requires purchase from a supplier, the source will be as local as practicable (e.g., Habitat Aid gives details of their donor Order limits)
- Seed will be native to the UK and the supplier will have adopted the Flora Locale code of practice (Ref 7-18) (unless otherwise specified in the detailed LEMP); and
- It will be important to gain an understanding of soil conditions prior to any seeding being carried out – this will include an assessment of soil type and pH, as well as nutrient levels which may affect the species that will establish. Consequently, the information in this oLEMP may be subject to revision following completion of such investigations, which would further tailor and refine the appropriate seed mixes and habitat establishment techniques to be adopted.

Grassland in Open Fields and Margins

7.3.69 **Appendix 1: Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans [APP/7.11]** key references:

- Grassland between the margins of hedgerows and Solar PV Arrays, and outside fence lines between Solar PV Arrays; and
- Grassland around existing marl pits and ponds.

7.3.70 A floristically rich habitat of wildflower grassland will be created which will have a benefit for pollinating insects (Ref 7-14), therefore boosting invertebrate numbers which are currently in decline and providing ecosystem services for the adjacent arable land. This would also benefit species such as farmland birds, amphibians and reptiles.

7.3.71 In order to create this habitat, a more flower rich seed mix will be utilised which includes a carefully selected range of nectar rich flowers to allow for a long flowering season.

7.3.72 This habitat would be cut once on an annual basis, in September to avoid impacts on nesting birds, with arisings removed.

7.3.73 Suitable species mixes proposed will be ‘Emorsgate EM3 - Special General Purpose Meadow Mix’ or similar approved for field margins, and ‘EM8 - Meadow Mixture for Wetlands’ for the attenuation areas or similar approved.

Grassland within Fence Line and Beneath Solar PV Array Habitat

7.3.74 **Appendix 1: Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans [APP/7.11]** key references:

- Grassland under Solar PV Arrays covering inside fence lines and under Solar PV Arrays.

7.3.75 The Order limits are generally arable in character, with cropped fields comprising the majority of habitat area. Arable fields within the Order limits are typically intensively farmed monocultures; whilst the exact management practices are not known, it is likely that these fields receive periodic fertiliser and pesticide treatments with soils ploughed on a regular basis.

7.3.76 The arable fields across the Order limits are therefore generally botanically poor and contain little ecological interest, save for their value to a relatively small number of ground-nesting bird species and arable specialists including hunting raptors (several of which are notable species of conservation concern), and brown hare Lepus europaeus. Grassland fields were also typically low in species diversity.

7.3.77 Considerable opportunities for the enhancement of arable fields' ecological value, whilst being compatible with a Solar PV Array area and usable by hunting raptors and mammals such as brown hare, are possible. Reversion from intensive agriculture to low (or no) input (fertiliser and soil improvers) grassland alone would be expected to provide a net gain in plant and invertebrate species diversity over time.

7.3.78 Habitat areas within the security fencing, including directly beneath the Solar PV Arrays will be targeted for grassland creation of varying diversity, although it is recognised that grassland directly beneath the Solar PV Arrays will be limited in diversity as a result of shading impacts, and would remain in place for the operational life of the Scheme, likely being lost at the decommissioning stage due to the reversion to agricultural use at that stage.

7.3.79 A number of existing grasslands will be enhanced following the management measures set out in this section.

Grassland Creation and Early Establishment

7.3.80 Diverse grassland can take time to develop on previously arable land which has been fertilised and ploughed. However, with an appropriate seed mix selected and correct habitat management implemented, wildflower meadows have been created on many solar farms in the UK (Ref 7-19). The preparation of the fields before reversion to grassland will be key and must aim to minimise the impact of competition between desirable, sown species and unsown agricultural weeds and cereals.

7.3.81 Prior to finalisation of the detailed LEMP, soil investigations will be essential to ensure appropriateness of seed mix/establishment techniques and promote a high likelihood of success. The seed mixes will be selected to reflect the soil type, pH and nutrient levels in order to ensure that they establish successfully. A mix such as Emorsgate EM1 would be appropriate as it contains a diversity of native wildflowers and non-vigorous grasses.

7.3.82 Autumn sowing is preferable, with the seed sown as soon as practicable, subsequent to construction of the Solar PV Array to avoid a flush of unwanted species such as annual plants and injurious weeds (as well as careful preparation of the land prior to seeding, as set out above).

7.3.83 Management during the first year is critical, with more regular cutting taking place to tackle annual or agricultural plants and injurious weeds. Herbicide application may be necessary should there be an abundance of injurious weeds.

Grassland Management

7.3.84 After Year 1, management would be in the form of a “haycut” between late July and September and/or grazing by sheep (aftermath grazing). The grassland fields would be “shut up”, with no grazing or cutting between April and late July to allow the flowering species to grow, flower and set seed.

Cutting

7.3.85 Management by cutting would entail a late season “haycut” between August and September. No cutting will take place between April and late July, to allow the flowering species to grow, flower and set seed.

7.3.86 Where practicable, cutting will be carried out using a cut-and-collect system to minimise nutrient build up in the soil which stifles species diversity. It will be necessary to balance the requirement for a late cut to allow plants to flower and set seed and ensuring that the cut is not taken so late that too much dead material is present, rendering the baled material unsuitable for agricultural applications. Careful monitoring and selection of seed mixes will be required in order to achieve both a diverse grassland and a use for the arisings collected. Alternatively, there may be an opportunity to use the cuttings within local composting sites such as anaerobic digesters or open-air windrows. Grazing post-cutting is also possible (aftermath grazing).

7.3.87 An alternative to use of arisings for feedstock or composting is to use hay collected from the established meadow as a source of seed for other sites in the vicinity. However, this would be more appropriate where the meadow has been established using local seed, which will be defined in the finalised version of the detailed LEMP.

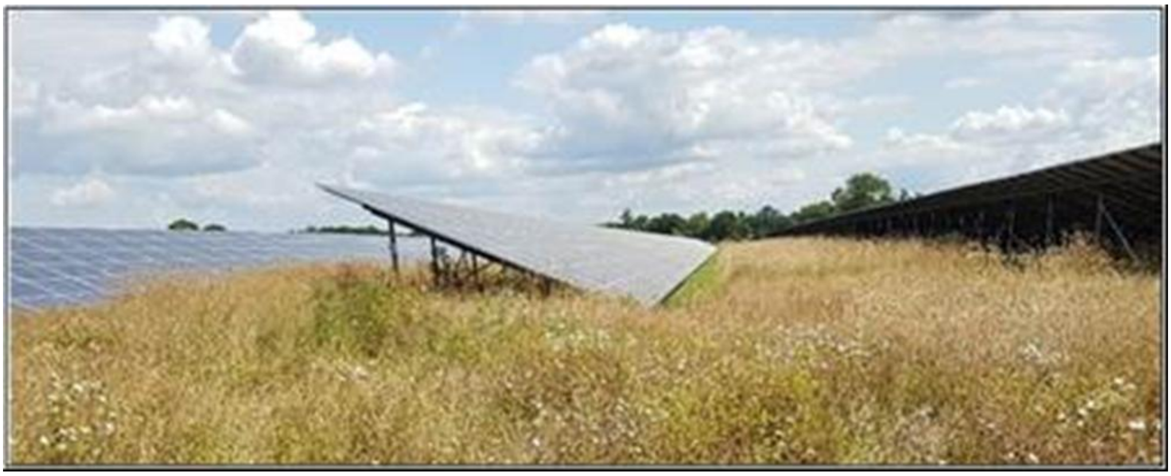
7.3.88 Cutting or mowing can be carried out relatively quickly and cost-effectively, particularly with Single Axis Trackers (although the type of Solar PV Arrays to be implemented in the Scheme is not currently confirmed), which can be moved so that they are vertical to allow machinery to access between Solar PV Array rows.

7.3.89 Where grassland becomes too long and shading of Solar PV Arrays is a problem, a “shade cut” may be taken along the leading edge of the Solar PV Arrays (i.e., a strip no more than

1 m wide) in order to reduce the sward height during the late summer months (as shown in Plate 1 below). However, careful selection of an appropriate seed mix may reduce the necessity of this type of management.

7.3.90 Image 1.1 below illustrates where a "Shade Cut" can be employed during the growing season to prevent shading of Solar PV Arrays but allow flowering meadows elsewhere.

Image 1.1: Shade Cut



Grazing

7.3.91 Low intensity grazing throughout the year may be employed, with a low enough stocking density to ensure a varied sward establishes, however, this type of management will need to be carefully monitored as it can lead to a lower number of flowering species given sheep will preferentially graze flowers. However, a diverse grassland can still develop under this management, which will benefit birds and invertebrates.

7.3.92 Pulse grazing with sheep at higher densities for shorter periods of time may be practicable as an alternative management strategy. Under this method, sheep would graze discrete parts of the Order limits, i.e., individual fields or portions of fields (electric fencing can be used to delineate areas) and then moved onto different areas once the sward reaches an appropriate height.

7.3.93 Grazing too often or too densely carries the risk of depleting botanical diversity through the raising of nutrient levels, favouring of fewer vigorous species, and inhibition of flowering and seed-setting. Ideal grazing regimes would include the limiting of number of animals per hectare/acre to 'conservation grazing' or Higher-Level Stewardship (agri-environment scheme) rates. Where practicable, sheep should be removed for at least eight weeks between April and August to allow for plants to flower and set seed.

7.3.94 The above management prescriptions may apply to all areas of within Order limits where Solar PV Arrays are proposed.

7.3.95 Suitable species mixes proposed will be Emorsgate EM1 – Basic General Purpose Meadow Mixture or similar approved.

Game Bird Mix

7.3.96 In order to comply with BNG habitat trading requirements, areas of game bird mix will be maintained within the Order limits during the operational lifetime of the Scheme. This could be created through annual cultivation, with a suitable proprietary seed mixture, including a mix of annual species, or every 2 years with two-year crops including a biennial crop. Depending on crop rotations, the approach taken may vary throughout the operational phase subject to the areas being maintained as game bird mix throughout the entire period.

7.3.97 Seed drilling will be undertakem during spring months with suitable temperatures, prior to the end of June, in line with Sustainable Farming Initiative (SFI) guidance.

7.3.98 Use of insecticides and herbicides will be kept to a minimum wherever possible.

7.3.99 Wild bird mix will be left unharvested over winter, in order to provide seed eating birds with a valuable food source during the period between cultivation of land following harvest for winter crops and new seed sources becoming available in the spring.

Wetland Habitats

Marl Pits / Ponds and Attenuation Areas

7.3.100 **Appendix 1: Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans [APP/7.11]** key references:

- Enhancement to existing Marl Pits / Ponds; and
- Existing marl pits will be managed to enhance wildlife through scrub management and will include the introduction of more diverse species of shrubs.

7.3.101 Scrub establishment will take the form of “rewilding”, with locally sourced tree seeds and berries being scattered within the areas to be established and allowing the habitat to grow without any specific planting. This will ensure local gene stock is used and the species which thrive will be those most suitable to the specific conditions in that area. Transplant planting will be undertaken where this approach is not successful.

7.3.102 Some management will be required, depending on the establishment of scrub, trees and prolific species. An ecologist will advise on the correct timing of any management required subsequent to the monitoring visits. Anticipated management will be as follows:

- Every five years: a cut of vegetation surrounding the attenuation areas to prevent tree growth and shading. This will be carried out in the winter months using hand-tools. Some patches of scrub will be left to develop on and arisings left in a pile close to the attenuation area; and

- Every ten years: Some hand pulling, or mechanical dredging may be required if there is a build-up of vegetation within the attenuation areas. This will only be carried out where there is a risk of all open water being covered and will be carried out under the direction of an ecologist where relevant (e.g. where great crested newts may be present).

Species Mitigation and Enhancement Features

Ground-Nesting Bird Mitigation Habitat

7.3.103 **Appendix 1: Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans [APP/7.11]** key references:

- Area for Eurasian Curlew Mitigation; and
- Area for Skylark Mitigation.

7.3.104 It is anticipated that provision of an appropriate quantum of suitable habitat will be required to mitigate for impacts on protected and notable bird species recorded within the Order limits, namely Eurasian Curlew *Numenius arquata* and Skylark *Alauda arvensis*, ground-nesting species.

7.3.105 Habitat creation and enhancement measures that may comprise mitigation/compensation for these species (which will also benefit other species) are set out below.

7.3.106 On-site mitigation/compensation for ground-nesting bird species, such as Eurasian Curlew and Skylark, will include the creation of a continuous area of open grassland for Eurasian Curlew, which will also provide partial mitigation for Skylark, and favourable management of the retained and created grassland and other habitats within the Order limits to provide enhanced foraging habitats for bird species including Skylark.

7.3.107 The area of mitigation habitat required, and further habitat prescriptions will be set out within the detailed LEMP document. A suitable phasing schedule will also be included within the detailed LEMP, once the associated timescales for the construction phase become clear. Fields proposed for the provision of ground-nesting bird mitigation habitat for Eurasian Curlew and Skylark are shown in Table 7-5 below.

Table 7-5 Proposed Ground - Nesting Bird Mitigation Habitat

Habitat Key Reference	Field Numbers	Approximate Total Area (ha)
Area for Eurasian Curlew mitigation	**Appendix 1: Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans [APP/7.11]**	8.8ha

Habitat Key Reference	Field Numbers	Approximate Total Area (ha)
Area for Skylark mitigation	**Appendix 1: Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans [APP/7.11]**	80ha

Area for Eurasian Curlew mitigation

7.3.108 An area of permanent grassland will be created within the Order limits, to provide foraging and nesting habitat for ground-nesting bird species. This area will comprise open grassland managed by livestock grazing, with livestock excluded during the nesting season (from March/April to July, inclusive).

7.3.109 Fencing will be erected around this area in order to ensure predators, such as Foxes, Badger, Stoats etc, are excluded, in particular during the Eurasian Curlew breeding period. Further specification for appropriate fencing will be included within the detailed LEMP.

7.3.110 Monitoring will focus on checking for the spread of undesirable plants. Remedial action will need to be taken should the spreads of these species be identified. In addition, monitoring measures will be undertaken to establish the uptake of the Eurasian Curlew mitigation area by Eurasian Curlew and other bird species, details of which will be identified within the detailed LEMP.

Area for Skylark mitigation

7.3.111 As set out in the **ES Appendix 7.3: Proposed Mitigation Strategy for Ground Nesting Birds Requiring Open Habitats [APP/6.4]**, Skylark will likely be displaced from the footprint of the Solar PV Array areas and so it is the intention to mitigate for this as far as practicable through the provision of Skylark plots.

7.3.112 As set out within the **ES Appendix 7.3: Proposed Mitigation Strategy for Ground Nesting Birds Requiring Open Habitats [APP/6.4]**, Skylark plots will therefore be provided across a minimum of 77ha arable farmland for the life of the proposed Solar development, at a density of 2 plots per ha. Individual plots will measure 6m x 4m, within land cropped for cereal production during that season and will be at least 50m from the nearest field boundary. Where 77ha cereals are not maintained in this way across the landholding, Skylark nesting habitat (in the form of cereal crops with Skylark plots or organic set-aside) will be provided across the identified area for Skylark mitigation shown at **Appendix 1: Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans [APP/7.11].**

Habitat Boxes and Wildlife Enhancement Features

7.3.113 Habitat boxes can be a useful tool for monitoring and can provide nesting/roosting opportunities where there is a lack of natural features within the landscape. The exact locations and specifications for bat and bird boxes will be finalised as part of the detailed LEMP.

Bird Boxes

7.3.114 Bird boxes that mimic cavities can be installed within the Order limits where there is a lack of mature trees which may naturally provide these features. Boxes can be installed according to the species which have been identified during the breeding bird surveys and their distribution. Spotted *Flycatcher Muscicapa* striata and House Sparrow *Parus domesticus* and Marsh tit *Poecile palustris* are species of conservation concern identified within the Order limits which may benefit from the provision of suitable bird boxes.

7.3.115 Barn Owl *Tyto alba* boxes are known to be particularly successful on solar sites (Ref 7-24), especially when placed close to areas of rough grassland where there will be an abundance of small mammals. Where no mature trees are present, Barn Owl boxes can be post mounted (although trees are preferable). Barn Owl is identified as a priority species within the Norfolk BAP and has been recorded breeding within the Order limits.

7.3.116 Additional raptor species recorded within the Order limits which may benefit from boxes or other enhancements include Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* and Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*. Consultation with relevant stakeholders and local wildlife groups would help shape any targeted measures for raptors that are known to be present within the Order limits and wider area.

7.3.117 All bird boxes will be installed out of direct sunlight, facing away from prevailing wind (northernly, north-westerly or north-easterly preferably). Boxes should also be placed clear of vegetation and away from ivy growth. All boxes will be placed at least 3 m off the ground, or as otherwise specified.

Bat Boxes

7.3.118 As with bird boxes, bat boxes can be particularly useful where natural cavities are limited. The installation of boxes suitable for crevice-dwelling bat species, such as Common Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, may act as an enhancement and could also provide an important monitoring tool. Monitoring of bat species within the Order limits may be particularly beneficial, in particular Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, which have been recorded within the Order limits and is a priority species within the Norfolk BAP.

7.3.119 Boxes could be installed in a variety of places including hedgerow trees, woodland or post mounted. Double panel bat boxes may be more desirable in some cases, as these prevent birds from nesting within the boxes. Bat boxes will be placed in sunny locations without obscuring vegetation and away from ivy growth. Boxes will be placed at least 3 m from the ground and preferably on south facing mature tree trunks.

Other Wildlife Enhancement Features

7.3.120 Log piles and hibernacula, comprising buried logs and rubble, will be created, particularly close to ponds and tussocky or scrub mosaic grassland. A minimum of 1x log pile/hibernacula associated with each existing pond will be provided. These habitat features provide shelter and hibernation opportunities for species such as reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates.

7.3.121 The creation of these features will ideally utilise wood and stone generated during construction where available. Additional log or brash piles may also be created throughout the lifetime of the Scheme, using materials resulting from habitat management, e.g. hedgerow or tree cutting.

7.3.122 Bee banks could be created as an enhancement for bees and other invertebrates. Bee banks would be created in line with Buglife guidance (Ref 7-14) and would comprise south-facing bare earth bunds which can be colonised by nesting solitary bees. The bunds would then be capped with low nutrient material, such as sand or sub-soil to suppress weeds and provide a substrate for bees to burrow into. Bare ground is also important for butterflies and beetles; these species in turn serve as food to other species.

Buffer Areas

7.3.123 Minimum buffer zones have been incorporated into the design of the Scheme to ensure an appropriately sized offset free from development between the various valued habitats typically located at field boundaries (hedgerows, watercourses and woodland etc.). Buffer zones will be located between the retained field boundary habitats and the perimeter security fence in the case of the 'outermost' fields, and between field boundary habitats and the Solar PV Arrays in other fields

7.3.124 A buffer has been included for veteran trees as detailed in Table 7-6 below. This is in accordance with standing advice produced by Natural England and the Forestry Commission for development proposals that affect ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees (Ref 7-20).

7.3.125 The criteria on which proposed buffers will be applied is as follows in Table 7-6 below.

Table 7-6 Summary of receptor development exclusion buffers (taken from Chapter 5 Scheme Design [APP/6.1] and Chapter 7 Ecology and Biodiversity [APP/6.2]

Receptor Development Exclusion Buffer	Buffer Size	Rationale
Hedgerows	8 m	To provide sufficient root protection area, and opportunities for
Hedgerows – with trees	10 m	

Receptor Development Exclusion Buffer	Buffer Size	Rationale
Individual trees and tree groups (including those with potential bat roosting features)	10 m (unless otherwise specified by an Arboricultural Consultant)	enhancement / habitat creation
Veteran and/ or ancient trees	15x width of stem at breast height	
Woodland (non-ancient)	15 m	
Watercourses and ditch bank tops	10 m	To fully retain ditches within permanently vegetated strips, and maximise ecological benefits, including mitigating for pollution events.
Ponds (eDNA Negative for Great Crested News)	10 m	To fully retain ponds within permanently vegetated strips, and maximise ecological benefits, including mitigating for pollution events.
Schedule 1 Bird Nests	Case by case	To safeguard protected species and account for specific species requirements.
Bat Roosts	Case by case	To safeguard protected species and account for specific species requirements.
Badger setts	30 m	To safeguard protected species in accordance with standing advice. (Ref 7-21)
Non statutory Sites (including the River Road RNR ref. U22086)	10 m	To retain and protect Dropwort, the notification for this designation.

7.3.126 Table 7-6 above shows that the proposed ecological buffer zones, when applied across the entire Scheme, will comprise a large amount of land outside the footprint of the Solar

PV Array areas which can be ecologically enhanced. Providing a range of habitats within these areas will create a mosaic within the landscape and provide green corridors across the Scheme to facilitate commuting species. Habitats proposed within the buffer areas include grasslands of varying structural and species composition, as well as successional scrub.

7.3.127 Flower-rich grassland buffers represent locally appropriate habitat types, as arable field margins and grassland fields were noted across the Order limits at baseline and are in keeping with the character of the local landscape.

7.3.128 Widening of existing arable field margins and the creation of additional, larger ecological buffer zones will have the beneficial effect of enhancing neighbouring features, such as hedgerows, ditches and woodland edges. This in turn will contribute to the connectivity of habitats within the Scheme and within the neighbouring landscape, a key tenet of the National Planning Policy Framework and local planning policy.

7.3.129 A sensitive lighting strategy (set out within the detailed CEMP) will specify where and how any artificial lighting will be used, which will serve to mitigate adverse impacts on ecological receptors such as bats.

Invasive Species Management

7.3.130 Survey work undertaken within the Order limits recorded the presence of small amounts of Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS), including those listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), in the form of Variegated Yellow Archangel and Three-cornered Garlic. It is an offence to cause to grow in the wild any plant listed on the schedule and, as such, all relevant precautions should be taken when carrying out actions that could potentially spread these plants, whilst reasonable measures should be taken to confine such species and present their spreading to the wider environment.

7.3.131 Accordingly, a specific Invasive Species Management Plan will be included within the detailed LEMP in order to confirm measures to be put in place to prevent the spread of these species and aim to eradicate them from the Order limits, resulting in a beneficial effect overall.

7.3.132 Detailed measures will be informed by updated survey work to confirm the extent of invasive species within the identified locations, along with appropriate measures (likely including targeted use of herbicide and/or excavation or pulling of material within the Order limits (which would then be disposed of appropriately to prevent colonisation of offsite areas)).

Health and Safety

7.3.133 Offsets (including specifications for slow and low growing species) associated with Health and Safety clearances to the National Grid substation will be developed further as part of the detailed LEMP giving consideration to health and safety guidelines stipulated in Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002, as amended by the Health and Safety Executive (Health and Safety Executive, 2002) (Ref 7-22) and Guidance Note GS 6 “Avoidance of Danger from Overhead Electric Lines, 2013, Health and Safety Executive” (Ref 7-23).

7.4 Management of National Grid Substation

7.4.0 The upkeep and management of all planting which surrounds the National Grid Substation within Field 27 will be the responsibility of National Grid and this will remain in place post decommissioning of the Scheme as indicated in **Appendix 1: Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans [APP/7.11]** of this document.

7.4.1 Relevant habitats and associated habitat prescriptions are detailed below.

Proposed Woodland Belt / Copse planting

7.4.2 Trees within proposed woodland tree belts on either side of Field 27 and copse planting to the north of Field 27 will be planted at 1 to 2 m centres. Plant species will be planted as a mix of sizes ranging 60-90 cm transplants, 125–150 cm whips 200–250 cm feathered to standard / standard light 250-300 cm trees. Tree species will be planted in groups of one, three, five and seven (of the same species) to reinforce a natural layout of species within the landscape.

7.4.3 Trees will be planted appropriately depending on size. Trees will be planted as whips, transplants and feathered specimens in pits approximately 300 mm wide x 400 mm deep, or the dimensions of the root ball, whichever is greater.

7.4.4 All trees should be planted with a 75 mm depth of bark mulch, 0.5 m in diameter around each tree or shrub to suppress weeds and retain soil moisture.

7.4.5 Planting will focus on long-lived trees in order to replace the frequent ash trees noted to be present within the hedgerow network, the majority of which can be expected to be lost in the next five years due to ash dieback. It may be desirable to plant trees not identified in the local area which are ecologically similar to ash or are resistant to both disease and climate change impacts.

7.4.6 A list of locally appropriate and resistant trees is provided in Table 7-7 below.

Table 7-7 Indicative Proposed Woodland Species for Planting within the Scheme

Scientific Name	Common Name	Size (cm)
Acer campestre	Field Maple	175-200
Betula pendula	Silver Birch	125-150

Scientific Name	Common Name	Size (cm)
Carpinus betulus	European/Common Hornbeam	60-80
Castanea sativa	Sweet Chestnut	125-150
Malus sylvestris	Crab Apple	80-100
Pinus sylvestris	Scots Pine	60-80
Quercus robur	English Oak	250-300
Salix cinerea	Salix cinerea	175-200

Proposed Woodland Belt and Copse Management

7.4.7 All trees and shrubs will be regularly watered for a minimum of two growing seasons and as required thereafter to ensure successful establishment. There will be ongoing monitoring of new planting and replacement of failures during the first two years of the operational phase.

7.4.8 Bark mulch will be maintained at a depth of 75 mm, and 0.5 m in diameter around each tree or shrub as required to suppress weeds and retain soil moisture.

7.4.9 Hand pulling of persistent weeds will be undertaken or treated using a spot herbicide where weeds are more widespread.

Existing Native Hedgerows and Hedgerow Trees

7.4.10 **Appendix 1: Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans [APP/7.11]** key references:

- Existing hedgerows (including hedgerow trees) to be retained and gapped up with species rich hedgerow, and strengthened with additional hedgerow trees; and
- Hedgerows are a Habitat of Principal Importance under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 (Ref 7-25). Ancient and Veteran Trees are also recognised as irreplaceable habitats. The hedgerows within the Order limits are considered to quality as Priority Habitats, acting as important ecological features.

7.4.11 An extensive network of native hedgerows is present across the Scheme, many of which contain frequent mature standard trees, including a number of veteran trees (irreplaceable habitats). The composition of hedgerows across the Order limits vary in terms of species-richness, but the majority of hedgerows are species-poor.

7.4.12 The Scheme offers significant opportunities for tree and hedgerow planting, as well as enhancement of existing hedgerows, in line with national targets and local conservation priorities and to mitigate impacts to hedgerow habitat arising from the Scheme. Strengthening the local hedgerow network will significantly enhance the area for a wide range of wildlife, including but not limited to bat species, birds and invertebrates, as well as contributing to local green infrastructure.

7.4.13 All tree and hedgerow specimens will be native and of UK provenance. Trees will be locally sourced and of local provenance where practicable.

Hedgerow Planting

7.4.14 Existing hedgerows to the west, east and north of Field 27 shall be ‘gapped up’ (infilled) wherever practicable with new hedgerow and hedgerow tree planting.

7.4.15 Infill hedgerow planting will be within gaps in existing hedgerow at the same planting density. However, to prevent root and soil disturbance of existing hedgerow, infill hedgerow whip planting will be dug into the existing topsoil with a spade, within hedgerow gaps. Additional topsoil should be added, if required, to level the planting area.

7.4.16 Locally appropriate species will be used, based on those already found within the local area and recommended within the Norfolk BAP. A list of locally appropriate species and proposed mix is provided below in Table 7-8 (based on species identified within the hedgerows within the Order limits as well as the Norfolk Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) guidance (Ref 7-2).

Table 7-8 Indicative Hedgerow Species for Planting within the Scheme

Scientific Name	Common Name	Size (cm)
Acer campestre	Field Maple	60-80
Cornus sanguinea	Common Dogwood	60-80
Corylus avellana	Common Hazel	60-80
Crataegus monogyna	Common Hawthorn	60-80
Euonymus europaeus	Field Spindle	60-80
Malus sylvestris	Crab Apple	60-80
Rhamnus cathartica	Purging Buckthorn	60-80
Sambucus nigra	Common Elder	60-80

Hedgerow Management

7.4.17 Whilst most hedgerows are currently in 'moderate' or 'good' condition when considering the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Condition Assessment criteria, as defined in the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report [APP/7.4], issues relating to poor management of hedgerows were frequently observed. These included over-management, lack of management, damage due to narrow field margins or drift of herbicides/pesticides and presence of substantial gaps within and between hedgerows in places. This oLEMP sets out appropriate management practices for hedgerows within the Scheme, with a focus on optimising this habitat for local wildlife. Where appropriate, further information and management prescriptions will be set out within the detailed LEMP.

7.4.18 Infill planting will be regularly watered for a minimum of two growing seasons and as required thereafter to ensure successful establishment. There will be ongoing monitoring of new planting and replacement of failures during the first two years of the operational phase.

A 75 mm layer of bark mulch 0.5 m either side of the plants will be spread along the infilled gap immediately after planting to suppress weeds and retain soil moisture.

7.4.19 Infill planting should be trimmed in at least the first two years to encourage bushy growth, allowing the hedge to become taller and wider at each cut.

7.4.20 Hedgerows will be enhanced through less regular mechanical cutting, for example, every two-three years, and on rotation (either by rotating hedgerows or cutting each side of the hedgerow on rotation).

7.4.21 Cutting should take place outside the bird nesting season, and ideally in January/February where the ground is dry enough to allow machinery access. This will ensure that food sources for birds, such as nuts and berries, remain in the hedgerows over the winter months. This may be focussed on hedgerows adjacent to roads and tracks where a tractor will be able to access in wet conditions without damaging the ground.

7.4.22 The shrubby element of hedgerows (excluding select hedgerow trees) will be maintained to an optimum height of 4-5 m tall.

7.4.23 All existing hedgerows will be maintained to a minimum height of 3m, to provide visual screening to the Scheme.

Hedgerow Tree Planting

7.4.24 Existing hedgerows will be strengthened with feathered, light standards and standard trees randomly spaced between 5-15 m centres but not more than 20 m apart. On occasions where visual receptors are likely to see visual effects in close proximity, denser tree planting of between 2-3 m centres may be adopted to provide more instant screening effects. Where this occurs, species will be appropriately mixed to ensure large species trees are intermittently mixed with smaller species trees to ensure suitable growing conditions in perpetuity.

7.4.25 Tree pits for hedgerow trees will vary according to size or dimensions of the rootball whichever is greater:

- Feathered trees – 500 x 500 x 600 mm depth; and
- Light standards / standards – 600 x 600 x 600 mm depth.

7.4.26 All trees should be planted with a 75 mm depth of bark mulch, 0.5 m in diameter around each tree or shrub to suppress weeds and retain soil moisture.

7.4.27 Any trees planted in or alongside hedgerows as part of the infill hedgerows enhancements, are to be planted with a 1.5 m tall white tipped marker post. This will allow locations of newly planted trees to be noticeable to operators of flails during maintenance periods.

7.4.28 Planting will focus on trees capable of making a long-term contribution, to support development and continuity of habitat. A small proportion of common ash (Fraxinus excelsior) found within hedgerows (approximately 15%) are not expected to live beyond 10 years due to a combination of age-related decline and potential impacts of ash dieback (Hymenoscyphus fraxineus).

7.4.29 The tree species selected reflect the existing species identified within the Order limits or near the Order limits to ensure they are locally appropriate. The selection of species has drawn on the Norfolk Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) guidance (Ref 7-2) and been reviewed by the Applicant's arboriculturist 'Seed'.

7.4.30 A list of locally appropriate and resistant trees (feathered, light standards and standards) is given in Table 7-9 below.

Table 7-9 Indicative Hedgerow Tree Species for Planting within the Scheme

Scientific Name	Common Name	Size
Acer campestre	Field maple	Standard 8-10 cm Girth 2.75-3.0 m Height
Carpinus betulus	Common Hornbeam	Feathered 1.75-2.5 m Height
Castanea sativa	Sweet Chestnut	Standard

Scientific Name	Common Name	Size
		8-10 cm Girth 2.75-3.0 m Height
Malus sylvestris	Crab Apple	Light standard 6-8 cm Girth 2.5-2.75 m Height
Prunus avium	Wild Cherry	Light standard 6-8 cm Girth 2.5-2.75 m Height
Quercus robur	English Oak	Light standard 6-8 cm Girth 2.5-2.75 m Height
Scots Pine		Light standard 6-8 cm Girth 2.5-2.75 m Height

Hedgerow Tree Management

7.4.31 An inspection and formative prune will be carried out annually in accordance with good arboricultural practice to BS 3998:2010. A clear stem of up to 2 m will be maintained for all hedgerow trees in order to be distinguishable.

7.4.32 All trees and shrubs will be regularly watered for a minimum of two growing seasons and as required thereafter to ensure successful establishment. There will be ongoing monitoring of new planting and replacement of failures during the first two years of the operational phase.

7.4.33 Bark mulch is to be maintained at a depth of 75 mm and form a diameter of at least 0.5 m around each tree or shrub as required to suppress weeds and retain soil moisture.

Scrub

7.4.34 **Appendix 1: Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans [APP/7.11]** key references:

- Area for grassland, scrub, copses planting and attenuation.

7.4.35 An area of grassland, scrub, copse planting and attenuation lies within the northern part of Field 27. Scrub is a valuable habitat as it provides shelter and food for invertebrates, birds and mammals. It can be a particularly valuable habitat to develop on woodland edges, as it provides an important transitional zone between the wooded area and grassland.

7.4.36 Where practicable, scrub establishment will take the form of “rewilding”, with locally sourced tree seeds and berries being scattered within the areas to be established and allowing the habitat to grow without any specific planting. This will ensure local gene stock is used and the species which thrive will be those most suitable to the specific conditions in that area. Transplant planting will be undertaken where this approach is not successful.

7.4.37 A list of locally appropriate species suitable for the supplementary approach highlighted above is given below in Table 7-10 below.

Table 7-10 Indicative Scrub Species for Planting within the Scheme

Scientific Name	Common Name
Acer campestre	Field Maple
Cornus sanguinea	Common Dogwood
Corylus avellana	Common Hazel
Crataegus monogyna	Common Hawthorn
Euonymus europaeus	European Spindle
Malus sylvestris	Crab Apple
Prunus spinosa	Blackthorn
Rhamnus cathartica	Purging Buckthorn
Rosa canina	Dog rose
Sambucus nigra	Common Elder
Ulex europaeus	Common Gorse

7.4.38 The scrub areas will require some management in the form of cutting, likely through cutting of small areas each year to encourage regeneration and structural diversity of the habitat. The management plan will aim to ensure the scrub areas are cut on rotation, with each area cut approximately every five to seven years. This will create a mosaic within the scrub areas, with some cut and some mature patches which creates valuable habitat for wildlife. The frequency of cuts will be prescribed in the Management Prescription timetable to be provided in the detailed LEMP document.

Permanent Grassland Habitat

7.4.39 Grassland which is floristically diverse is proposed to the north of Field 27 as part of an area of grassland scrub copses and attenuation areas, and around the margins of Field 27 where practicable.

7.4.40 **Appendix 1: Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans [APP/7.11]** key references:

- Area for grassland, scrub, copses planting and attenuation (wildflower grassland within attenuation areas outside the fence and for around existing marl pits and ponds); and
- Existing grassland to be retained and enhanced.

7.4.41 Diversification of grassland management between different areas of the Scheme, including between buffer areas and different areas within the Solar PV Arrays, maximises the available niches for invertebrates to lay eggs, overwinter and feed and in turn drive opportunities for diversification up the food chain.

7.4.42 It has been shown that diverse grassland can be created within Solar PV Array areas, where managed appropriately (Ref 7-17). This can have a significant benefit to biodiversity but can also benefit surrounding agricultural land through offering an increase in pollinator species. Other benefits in terms of ecosystem services include an increase in water quality as a result of the cessation of fertilisation and herbicide spraying as well as an increase in soil health as a result of the cessation of ploughing.

7.4.43 Conservation management of grassland will be applied throughout all grassland habitats within the Scheme (i.e., appropriate timing and frequency of grazing and/or cutting), and differing seed mixes and creation prescriptions have been specified between different habitat types, the locations of which will be provided within the detailed LEMP.

7.4.44 It has been assumed within this oLEMP that any grassland creation on previously arable land would require seeding given that the land has been under agricultural production for many years. Opportunities for green hay donor sites will be explored prior to the preparation of the detailed LEMP.

7.4.45 Where the above is not practicable, wildflower and grass seed will be required. Given the size of the Scheme, it is likely that a large proportion of seed will need to be purchased from outside the local area. Whilst this is acceptable, it is important that seed is sourced as locally as practicable and as a minimum will be native to the UK and UK sourced.

7.4.46 The following principles will be used when considering seeding:

- Where practicable, local donor sites will be used to source seed
- Where seed requires purchase from a supplier, the source will be as local as practicable (e.g., Habitat Aid gives details of their donor Order limits)
- Seed will be native to the UK and the supplier will have adopted the Flora Locale code of practice (Ref 7-18) (unless otherwise specified in the detailed LEMP); and
- It will be important to gain an understanding of soil conditions prior to any seeding being carried out – this will include an assessment of soil type and pH, as well as nutrient levels which may affect the species that will establish. Consequently, the information in this oLEMP may be subject to revision following completion of such investigations, which would further tailor and refine the appropriate seed mixes and habitat establishment techniques to be adopted.

Grassland Open Fields and Margins

7.4.47 **Appendix 1: Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans [APP/7.11]** key references:

- Area for grassland, scrub, copses planting and attenuation (wildflower grassland within attenuation areas outside the fence); and
- Grassland between the margins of hedgerows and BESS, Customer Substation and National Grid Substation, and Solar PV Arrays.

7.4.48 A floristically rich habitat of wildflower grassland will be created which will have a benefit for pollinating insects (Ref 7-14), therefore boosting invertebrate numbers which are currently in decline and providing ecosystem services for the adjacent arable land. This would also benefit species such as farmland birds, amphibians and reptiles.

7.4.49 In order to create this habitat, a more flower rich seed mix will be utilised which includes a carefully selected range of nectar rich flowers to allow for a long flowering season.

7.4.50 This habitat would be cut once on an annual basis, in September to avoid impacts on nesting birds, with arisings removed.

7.4.51 Suitable species mixes proposed will be 'Emorsgate EM3 – Special General Purpose Meadow Mix' or similar approved for field margins, and 'EM8 – Meadow Mixture for Wetlands' for the attenuation areas or similar approved.

Grassland Creation and Early Establishment

7.4.52 Diverse grassland can take time to develop on previously arable land which has been fertilised and ploughed. However, with an appropriate seed mix selected and correct habitat management implemented, wildflower meadows have been created on many solar farms in the UK (Ref 7-19). The preparation of the fields before reversion to grassland will be key and must aim to minimise the impact of competition between desirable, sown species and unsown agricultural weeds and cereals.

7.4.53 Prior to finalisation of the detailed LEMP, soil investigations will be essential to ensure appropriateness of seed mix/establishment techniques and promote a high likelihood of success. The seed mixes will be selected to reflect the soil type, pH and nutrient levels in order to ensure that they establish successfully. A mix such as Emorsgate EM1 would be appropriate as it contains a diversity of native wildflowers and non-vigorous grasses.

7.4.54 Autumn sowing is preferable, with the seed sown as soon as practicable subsequent to construction of the Solar PV Array to avoid a flush of unwanted species such as annual plants and injurious weeds (as well as careful preparation of the land prior to seeding, as set out above).

7.4.55 Management during the first year is critical, with more regular cutting taking place to tackle annual or agricultural plants and injurious weeds. Herbicide application may be necessary should there be an abundance of injurious weeds.

Grassland Management

7.4.56 After Year 1, management would be in the form of a “haycut” between late July and September and/or grazing by sheep (aftermath grazing). The grassland fields would be “shut up”, with no grazing or cutting between April and late July to allow the flowering species to grow, flower and set seed.

Cutting

7.4.57 Management by cutting would entail a late season “haycut” between August and September. No cutting will take place between April and July, to allow the flowering species to grow, flower and set seed.

7.4.58 Where practicable, cutting will be carried out using a cut-and-collect system to minimise nutrient build up in the soil which stifles species diversity. It will be necessary to balance the requirement for a late cut to allow plants to flower and set seed and ensuring that the cut is not taken so late that too much dead material is present, rendering the baled material unsuitable for agricultural applications. Careful monitoring and selection of seed mixes will be required in order to achieve both a diverse grassland and a use for the arisings collected. Alternatively, there may be an opportunity to use the cuttings within local composting sites such as anaerobic digesters or open-air windrows. Grazing post-cutting is also possible (aftermath grazing).

7.4.59 An alternative to use of arisings for feedstock or composting is to use hay collected from the established meadow as a source of seed for other sites in the vicinity. However, this would be more appropriate where the meadow has been established using local seed, which will be defined in the finalised version of the detailed LEMP.

Wetland Habitats

Marl Pits / Ponds and Attenuation Areas

7.4.60 **Appendix 1: Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans [APP/7.11]** key references:

- Area for grassland, scrub, copse planting and attenuation (light scrapes – seasonally inundated – Field 27).

7.4.61 Proposed attenuation areas in Field 27 will play a role in flood risk alleviation and water attenuation and take the form of shallow scrapes. Such features will be seasonally wet and management measures will be undertaken to maximise benefits for wildlife allowing for natural regeneration with minimal intervention where practicable.

7.4.62 The proposed attenuation areas will be checked during monitoring visits to ensure they are establishing without any problems.

7.4.63 Some management will be required, depending on the establishment of scrub, trees and prolific species. An ecologist will advise on the correct timing of any management required subsequent to the monitoring visits. Anticipated management will be as follows:

- Every five years: a cut of vegetation surrounding the attenuation areas to prevent tree growth and shading. This will be carried out in the winter months using hand-tools. Some patches of scrub will be left to develop on and arisings left in a pile close to the attenuation area; and
- Every ten years: Some hand pulling, or mechanical dredging may be required if there is a build-up of vegetation within the attenuation areas. This will only be carried out where there is a risk of all open water being covered and will be carried out under the direction of an ecologist as great crested newts may be present.

7.5 Ecological Monitoring

7.5.0 An outline ecological monitoring strategy is set out below, however, further details for essential regular monitoring of the developing habitats will be set out within the more detailed and final iterations of the detailed LEMP, based on a standardised approach. This monitoring will be carried out more regularly during the first five years of operation, when habitats are in the early stages of developing, with ongoing monitoring of relevant receptors for the operational lifetime of the Scheme where appropriate. This regular monitoring will identify issues early on so that remediation measures or changes in management can be applied.

7.5.1 Habitat specific monitoring will be required as part of BNG delivery and progress reporting and is included as a UKHabitat Classification (UKHab) survey along with Condition Assessments of the habitats recorded.

7.5.2 Relevant criteria for successful achievement of the BNG outcome in relation to the BNG metric (as set out within the **Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report [REP1-048]**) are provided by the criteria set out within The Statutory Biodiversity Metric – Technical Annex 1: Condition Assessment Sheets and Methodology (Defra, 2025). Remedial measures will be set out within the detailed LEMP should monitoring identify habitats are not on course to meet the proposed condition.

7.5.3 Where monitoring identifies failure to achieve targeted success criteria and long-term habitat performance indicators, or remedial measures are otherwise identified (as set out within the detailed LEMP) management measures will be updated to reflect the monitoring and remediation and ensure beneficial outcomes.

7.5.4 Responsibility for ongoing monitoring and implementation of management and, if necessary, remedial measures will be undertaken by the Applicant or specified contractor (as set out within the detailed LEMP).

7.5.5 The monitoring strategy will include:

- **UKHab Survey** – a habitat survey as well as Condition Assessments of the establishing habitats will be undertaken to ensure the habitats are developing as desired, and in line with BNG commitments
- **Botanical Quadrats** – fixed point quadrats will be recorded at selected locations. The distribution of quadrats will be designed to ensure each habitat is sampled, with the number of quadrats to be based on the size of the area and estimated species diversity of the proposed habitat. This will help to track establishment and identify any problems should the habitat not be forming as required. Where these quadrats are undertaken within Solar PV Array fields, locations will ensure that a representative sample will be obtained for all habitats, including directly beneath and between lines of Solar PV Arrays, as well as within the field edges, outside of the Solar PV Array areas
- **Soil Survey** – a measurement of soil properties. Basic measurements may include pH, soil type, soil organic matter, bulk density, soil moisture, infiltration capacity, and texture. Additional measurements may include soil carbon, nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium and magnesium. There may also be opportunities to monitor other indicators such as fungal:bacterial ratio or fungal DNA. A soil survey is also recommended prior to seeding to provide baseline information; and
- **Bird Surveys** – monitoring of the bird populations across the Order limits, both within the Solar PV Array areas and potential mitigation areas, will be undertaken and compared to baseline bird survey data collected for the Scheme. In particular, monitoring measures will be included for Eurasian Curlew (to be set out fully within the detailed LEMP)

7.5.6 Additional survey elements that may be included within the monitoring strategy include:

- **Bat Surveys** – monitoring of bat activity across the Order limits could be undertaken and compared to baseline bat survey data collected for the Scheme. Monitoring should seek to replicate baseline survey methods (i.e. consistent static bat detector locations); and

- **Additional Monitoring** – given the extensive baseline survey information, the range of habitats to be created and the size of the Scheme, there may be opportunities to link up with academic research either through supplying the collected baseline data to an academic body to analyse or through establishment of research plots within the Scheme. There may also be opportunities to link up with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as Norfolk Wildlife Trust (NWT), the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), People’s Trust for Endangered Species (PTES), or Bumblebee Trust (who have been involved in monitoring bumblebees on solar sites).

7.6 References

Ref 7-1 Norfolk County Council and Norfolk & Suffolk Nature Recovery Partnership (2025) *Norfolk Local Nature Recovery* Strategy *2025*. Available online at: *https://www.nsnrp.org/local-nature-recovery-strategy-lnrs*

Ref 7-2 Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership (no date). *Norfolk Biodiversity Action Plan*. Available at: https://www.norfolkbiodiversity.org/

Ref 7-3 Breckland Council (2023). *Breckland Local Plan September 2023*. Available at: https://www.breckland.gov.uk/article/18011/Adoption

Ref 7-4 Place Services (2021). *Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy.* Available at: North Norfolk. Gov. UK

Ref 7-5 Breckland Council (2024). *Draft Local Plan Full Update Preferred Options June 2024*. Available at: https://www.breckland.gov.uk/article/19942/Local-Plan-Full-Update-2024-2042

Ref 7-6 Tibbalds and LUC (2022). *Breckland Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment April 2022.*

Ref 7-7 Tibbalds (2024). *Breckland Design Guide.* Available at: Breckland Design Guide

Ref 7-8 Breckland Council (2008). *An Environmental Strategy Breckland Council*. Available at: Breckland Environmental Strategy

Ref 7-9 Swaffham Town Council (2019). *Swaffham Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2036 Version 3: for Referendum May 2019.* Available from: Swaffham Neighbourhood Plan

Ref 7-10 Securing Biodiversity in Breckland – Guidance for conservation and research (2010).

Ref 7-11 BS 8545: 2014: Trees: From Nursery to Independence in the Landscape (2014).

Ref 7-12 Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy – Habitats Regulations Assessment Strategy Document (March 2021).

Ref 7-13 Norfolk County Council's Environmental Policy (October 2020). Available at: https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/39008/Environmental-policy

Ref 7-14 Buglife. Online resource available at: https://www.buglife.org.uk/

Ref 7-15 National Plant Specification. Online resource available at: https://palette.csdhub.com/helpNPS/

Ref 7-16 Local Seed Zone Provenance. GOV resource. Available online at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5cc30474e5274a5a041bcc61/Regions_of_provenance_and_seed_zone_map.pdf

Ref 7-17 H. Montag, G Parker & T. Clarkson. (2016). The Effects of Solar Farms on Local Biodiversity; A Comparative Study. Clarkson and Woods and Wychwood Biodiversity

Ref 7-18 Code of Practice (2012). For collectors, growers and suppliers of native flora https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/FL-code-of-practice-growers-seeds.pdf

Ref 7-19 Solar Energy UK. A Standardised Approach to Monitoring Biodiversity on Solar Farms. Available at: https://solarenergyuk.org/resource/solar-energy-uk-guidance-a-standarised-approach-to-monitoring-biodiversity/

Ref 7-20 Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions, 14 January 2022, NE and FC

Ref 7-21 Badger Trust (2023) ‘Badger Protection: Best Practice Guidance for Developers, Ecologists and Planners (England)’

Ref 7-22 The Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002. Accessible online at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2002/2665/contents/made

Ref 7-23 Guidance Note HSE - Avoiding danger from overhead power lines (2013)

Ref 7-24 Making space for nature’: a review of England's wildlife Sites published today (2010). https://www.gov.uk/government/news/making-space-for-nature-a-review-of-englands-wildlife-site-published-today

Ref 7-25 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. Accessible online at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents

Ref 7-26 BS 3936-1: 1992. Nursery stock. Specification for trees and shrubs (1992)

Ref 7-27 BS 4428: 1989. Code of practice for general landscape operations (excluding hard surfaces) (AMD 6784)(1989)

Ref 7-28 BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations (2012)

Ref 7-29 BS 3998: 2010: Tree Work – Recommendations (2010)

Ref 7-30 West Acre Rewilding Project. Available online at: https://www.rewildingbritain.org.uk/rewilding-projects/westacre

Ref 7-31 Habitat Network Mapping. Available online at: https:www:naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/Defra::habitat-networks-combined-habitats-england/explore

Annex A Outline Management Prescription Timetable

Operation Management Prescription	Frequency per Annum	Season	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6 onwards
Existing Woodland – Management								
Pruning where appropriate to maintain health and vigour	Annually	October - March	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨
Remove and dispose of appropriately any identified invasive species	Annually	October - March	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨
Remove and dispose of appropriately any disease-ridden timber	Annually	October – March; outside of bird nesting season to prevent disturbance	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨
Partially bury deadwood that is clear of disease in locations where it would not impede rooting systems of retained vegetation, ideally where there is little to no groundcover.	Annually	October - March	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨
Appropriately dispose of trees infected with ash dieback and replace with an agreed alternative species	Annually	October - March	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨
Thinning / coppicing	Every 5 years	October - February					▨	▨ Every 5 years
Proposed Woodland Belts and Copses – Management								
Maintain weed free planting area through herbicide spot treatment and topping up bark mulch	Twice yearly at initial establishment	April - August	▨					
Thinning / coppicing	Every 5 years, after Year 10 once planting has established	October - February						▨ From Year 10

Operation Management Prescription	**Frequency per Annum**	**Season**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Year 4**	**Year 5**	**Year 6 onwards**
Replace all dead plants	Check annually	Next available planting season	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	
Replace any significant failures	Check annually	Next available planting season	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	Ongoing
Existing and Proposed Hedgerow Trees – Management								
Maintain weed free planting area through herbicide spot treatment and topping up bark mulch	Twice yearly at initial establishment	April - August	▨					
Inspection and formative prune carried out annually in accordance with good arboricultural practice to BS 3998:2010. A clear stem will be maintained for all hedgerow trees in order to be distinguishable	Annually	October - February	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	
Replace all dead plants	Check annually	Next available planting season	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	
Replace any significant failures	Check annually	Next available planting season						Ongoing
Existing and Proposed Hedgerow – Management								
Maintain weed free planting area through herbicide spot treatment and topping up bark mulch	Twice yearly at initial establishment	April - August	▨					
Mechanical cut	2-3 years on rotation	October - February			▨		▨	Ongoing
Replace all dead plants	Check annually	Next available planting season	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	
Replace any significant failures	Check annually	Next available planting season						Ongoing
Scrub – Management								

Operation Management Prescription	**Frequency per Annum**	**Season**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Year 4**	**Year 5**	**Year 6 onwards**
Mechanical cut on a rotation basis after Year 15, once scrub has established	Mechanically cut rotational areas once every 10 years	October - February						▨ From Year 15
Mechanical cut along internal edges to keep fence line clear	Annually	October - February	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨ Ongoing
Spot herbicide application	Where required	April - August	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨ Ongoing
Wildflower Grasslands (between the margins of hedgerows and Solar PV Arrays and outside fence lines) – Management								
Spot herbicide application	Where required	April - August	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨ Ongoing
Hay cut / graze	On a rotational basis; once every 3 years	September	▨			▨		▨ Ongoing
Wildflower Grassland (within fence line and beneath Solar PV Array habitat) – Management								
Year 1 only - regular cutting after seeding	3 times, spread across the year	March - September	▨					
Option 1 - Hay Cut	Annually after Year 1	August - September		▨	▨	▨	▨	▨ Ongoing
Option 2 - Grazing at a low stocking density	Annually after Year 1	Year-round, subject to winter ground conditions; (livestock removed during April to July inclusive for ground nesting bird mitigation areas and ideally for 6-8 weeks in summer for other areas)		▨	▨	▨	▨	▨ Ongoing
Option 3 – Pulse grazing at a higher stocking density	Annually after Year 1	Year-round, subject to winter ground conditions; (livestock removed during April to July inclusive for ground nesting bird		▨	▨	▨	▨	▨

Operation Management Prescription	Frequency per Annum	Season	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6 onwards
		mitigation areas and ideally for 6-8 weeks in summer for other areas)		▨	▨	▨	▨	▨
Spot herbicide application	Where required	April - August	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	Ongoing
Attenuation Areas								
Marginal vegetation thinning	Every 5 years	November - February					▨	Ongoing
Emergent vegetation removal/ dredging	Every 10 years	November - February						Ongoing
Set-Aside Habitat (Skylark and Eurasian Curlew)								
Lightly disced to a depth of no more than 7 cm	Every 2-5 years	February - March		▨	▨	▨	▨	Ongoing
Mechanical cut of vegetation (within Skylark habitat, if required)	Every 2-5 years	February - March		▨	▨	▨	▨	Ongoing
Bird & Bat Boxes								
Install boxes	Year 1	Any time, Jan-Dec	▨					
Inspect condition and clean out boxes (excluding bat and barn owl boxes)	Annually after Year 1	October - February		▨	▨	▨	▨	Ongoing
Bat boxes to be checked/monitored by suitably qualified/licenced ecologist outside of winter months	Annually after Year 1	April - October		▨	▨	▨	▨	Ongoing
Log Piles & Hibernacula								
Install features	Year 1	Any time, Jan-Dec	▨					
Inspect condition and repair as needed	Annually after Year 1	August - September		▨	▨	▨	▨	Ongoing

Appendix 1– Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans

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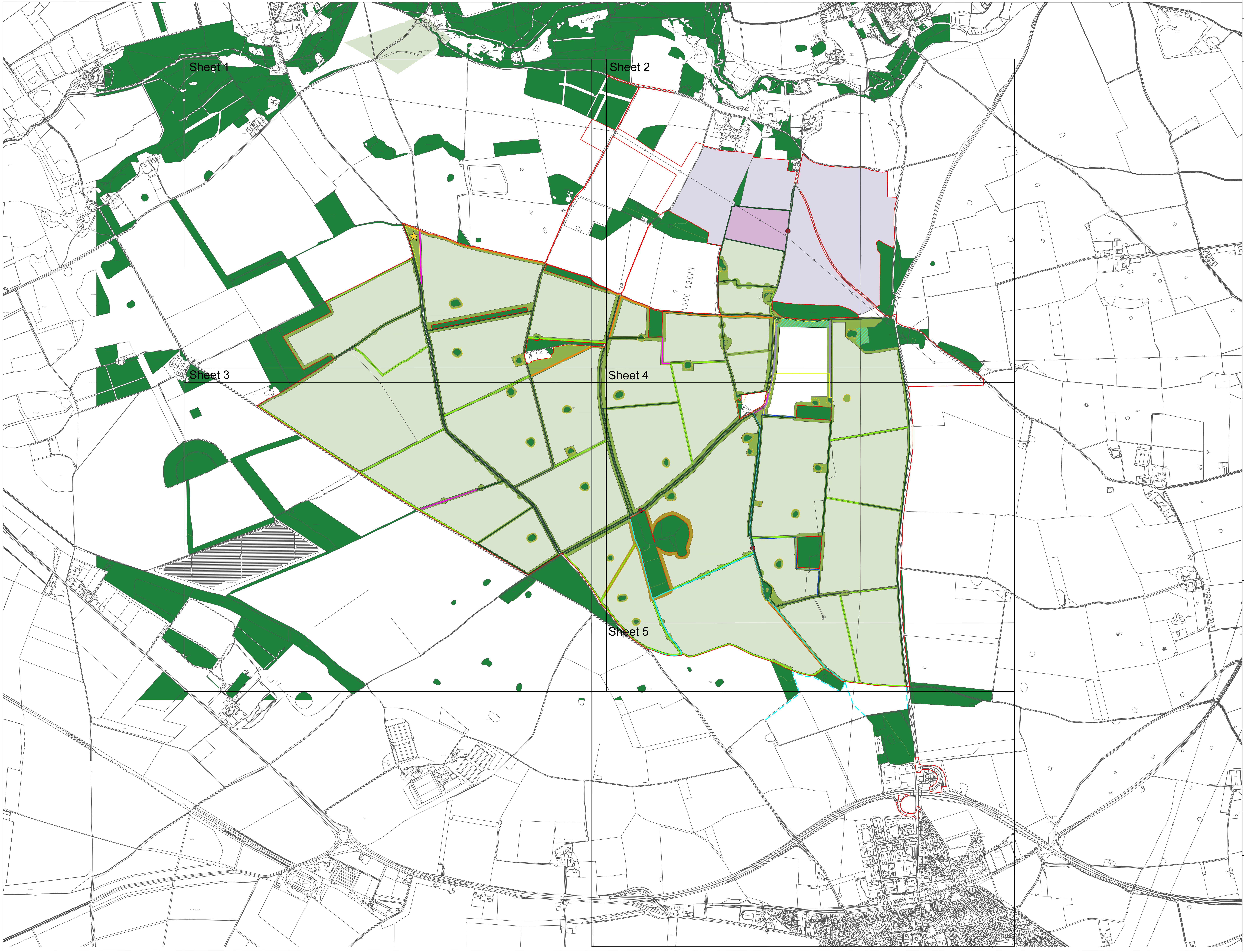

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THE DROVES
SOLAR FARM

DRAWING TITLE:

Key Plan

DOCUMENT:

Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans

LEGEND:

🟥	Order Limits
🟩	Existing vegetation
🟩	Grassland open fields and margins incorporating existing marl pits, ponds and tree groups
🟩	Grassland under Solar PV modules
╱	Existing hedgerows (including those with hedgerow trees) to be retained and gapped up with species rich hedgerow.
╱	Existing hedgerows (including those with hedgerow trees) to be retained and gapped up with species rich hedgerow; and strengthened with additional hedgerow trees.
╱	Proposed hedgerow
╱	Proposed hedgerow with hedgerow trees
╱	Proposed woodland belt
🟪	Area for curlew mitigation
🟪	Area for skylark mitigation
▨	Area for grassland, scrub, copse planting and attenuation
╱	Proposed on site permissive route (indicative alignment)
╌	Proposed off site permissive link (indicative alignment)
★	Potential for publicly accessible amenity space and interpretation boards (to be provided by others)
●	Potential location for interpretation boards
🟧	Game Bird Mix
○	Areas for enhancement to existing Marl Pits / Ponds
╱	Indicative alignment of access routes for landowner to undertake woodland maintenance
╱	Permanent area for Green Infrastructure and National Grid Substation left after decommissioning

Notes:

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2. The plans present the green infrastructure strategy the treatment in principle of existing and proposed landscape features. Gaps in existing and proposed hedgerows are not shown.

REV	DESCRIPTION	APP	DATE
P0	DCO Submission	RP	19/11/25

Sources Ordnance Survey (OS License number AC0000849896)

The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 – Regulation 5(2)(j)

PINS Ref: EN0110013

DWG. NO 9485_0455_A_GI_Strategy

Rev : P0

DATE November 25
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APPROVED RP

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Not to scale

North

LDĀ DESIGN

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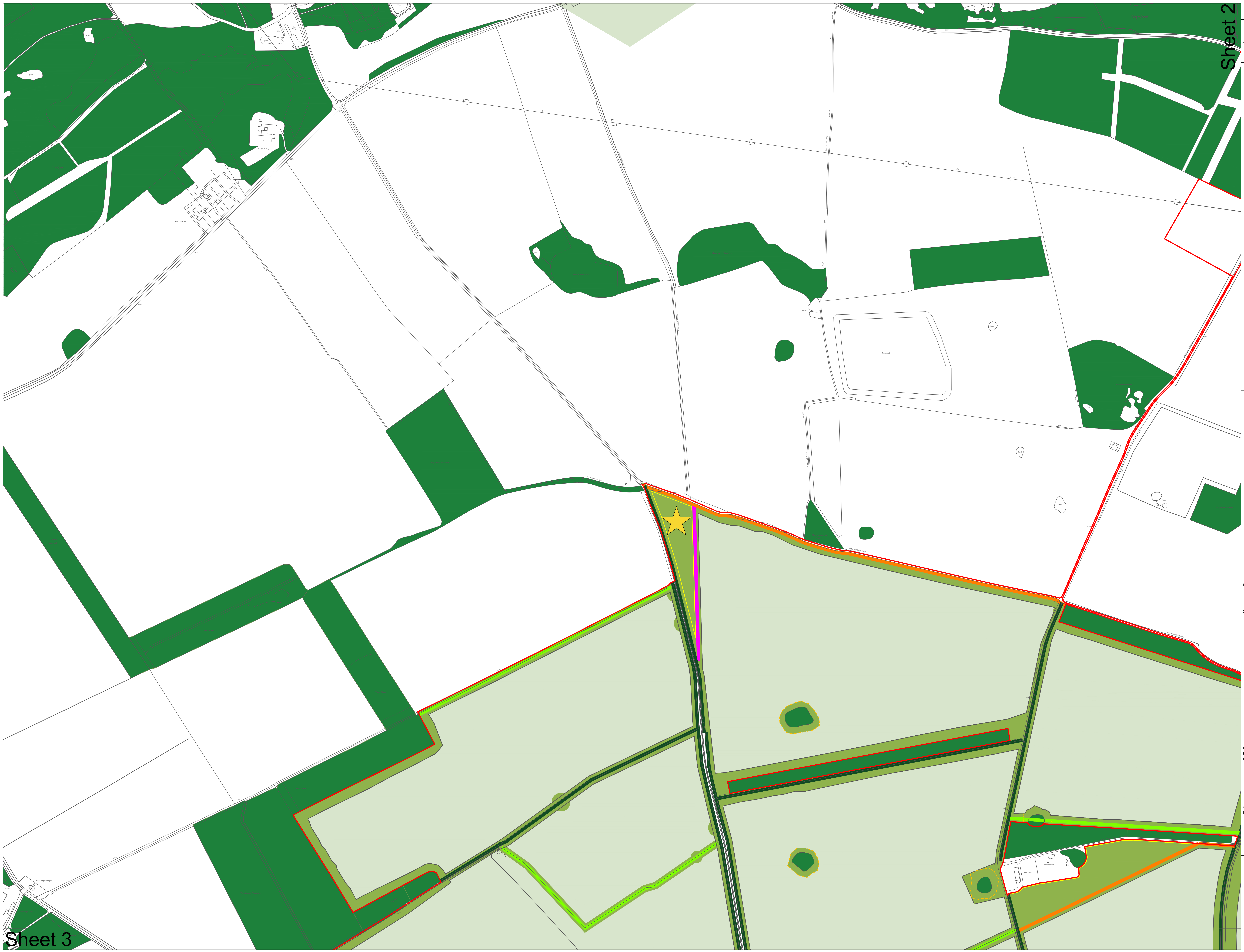

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THE DROVES
SOLAR FARM

DRAWING TITLE:

Sheet 1 of 5

DOCUMENT:

Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans

LEGEND:

🟥	Order Limits
🟩	Existing vegetation
🟩	Grassland open fields and margins incorporating existing marl pits, ponds and tree groups
🟩	Grassland under Solar PV modules
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╱	Proposed hedgerow
╱	Proposed hedgerow with hedgerow trees
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🟪	Area for curlew mitigation
▭	Area for skylark mitigation
▨	Area for grassland, scrub, copse planting and attenuation
╱	Proposed on site permissive route (indicative alignment)
╱	Proposed off site permissive link (indicative alignment)
★	Potential for publicly accessible amenity space and interpretation boards (to be provided by others)
●	Potential location for interpretation boards
🟧	Game Bird Mix
○	Areas for enhancement to existing Marl Pits / Ponds
╱	Indicative alignment of access routes for landowner to undertake woodland maintenance
╱	Permanent area for Green Infrastructure and National Grid Substation left after decommissioning

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P0.1	Deadline 1 updates	RP	19/05/26
P0	DCO Submission	RP	19/11/25

Sources Ordnance Survey (OS License number AC0000849896)

The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 – Regulation 5(2)(j)

PINS Ref: EN0110013

DWG. NO 9485_0456_A_GI_STRATEGY

Rev : P0.1

DATE May 26
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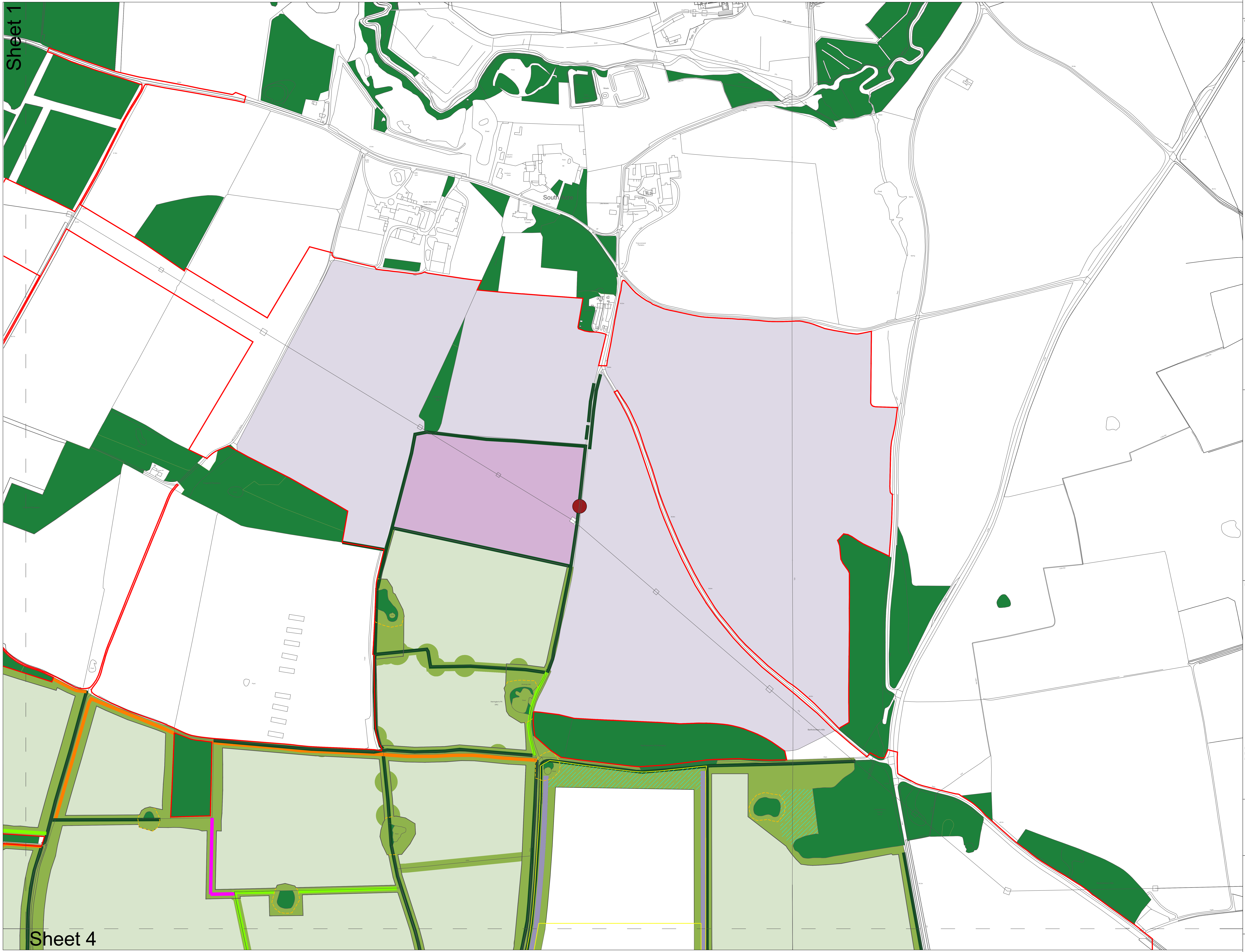

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THE DROVES
SOLAR FARM

DRAWING TITLE:

Sheet 2 of 5

DOCUMENT:

Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans

LEGEND:

▭	Order Limits
🟩	Existing vegetation
🟩	Grassland open fields and margins incorporating existing marl pits, ponds and tree groups
▢	Grassland under Solar PV modules
╱	Existing hedgerows (including those with hedgerow trees) to be retained and gapped up with species rich hedgerow.
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●	Potential location for interpretation boards
🟧	Game Bird Mix
○	Areas for enhancement to existing Marl Pits / Ponds
╱	Indicative alignment of access routes for landowner to undertake woodland maintenance
╱	Permanent area for Green Infrastructure and National Grid Substation left after decommissioning

Notes:

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P0	DCO Submission	RP	19/11/25

Sources Ordnance Survey (OS License number AC0000849896)

The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 – Regulation 5(2)(j)

PINS Ref: EN0110013

DWG. NO 9485_0457_A_GI_Strategy

Rev : P0.1

DATE May 26
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North

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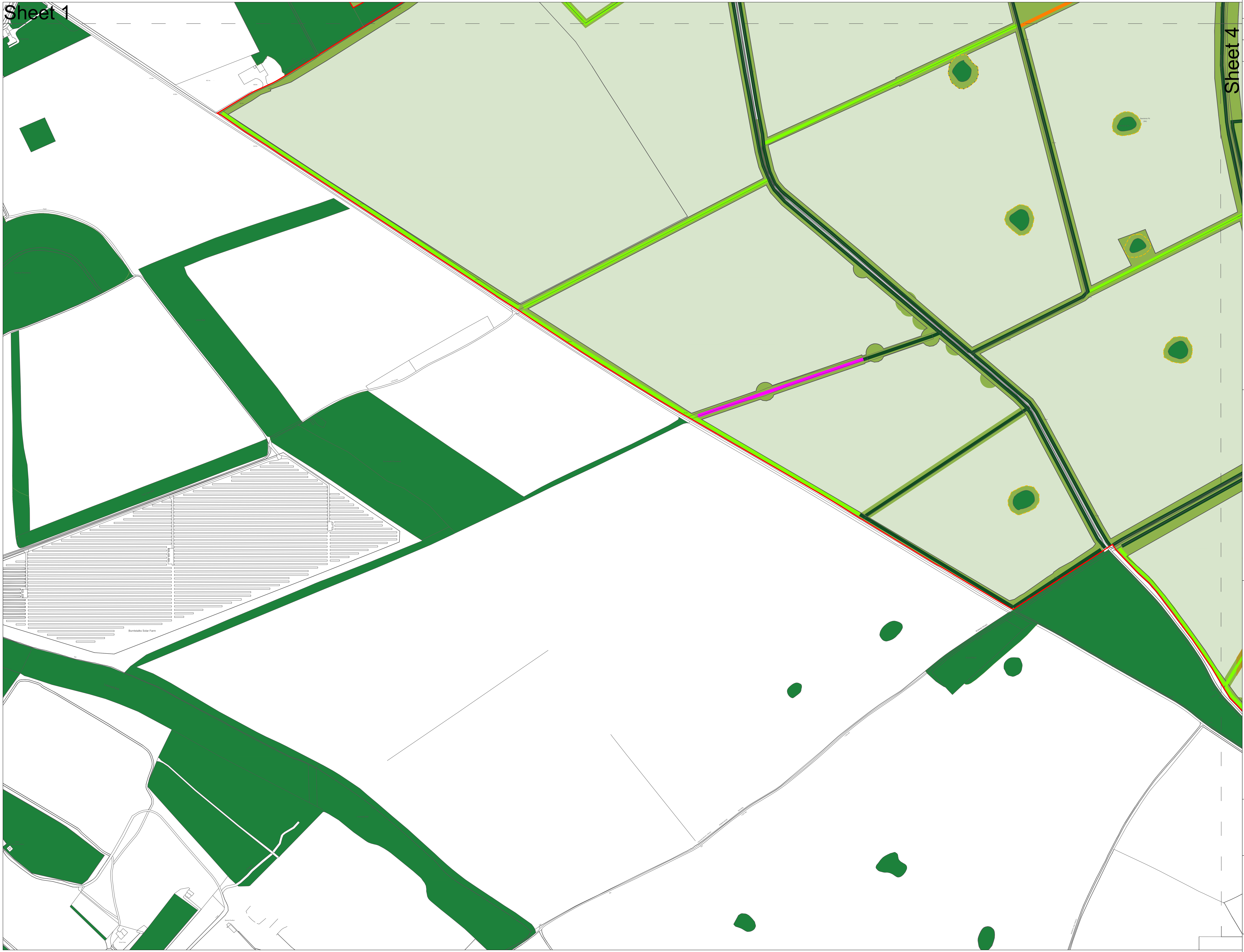

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THE DROVES
SOLAR FARM

DRAWING TITLE:

Sheet 3 of 5

DOCUMENT:

Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans

LEGEND:

🟥	Order Limits
🟩	Existing vegetation
🟩	Grassland open fields and margins incorporating existing marl pits, ponds and tree groups
🟩	Grassland under Solar PV modules
╱	Existing hedgerows (including those with hedgerow trees) to be retained and gapped up with species rich hedgerow.
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╱	Proposed hedgerow with hedgerow trees
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P0	DCO Submission	RP	19/11/25

Sources Ordnance Survey (OS License number AC0000849896)

The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 – Regulation 5(2)(j)

PINS Ref: EN0110013

DWG. NO 9485_0458_A_GI_STRATEGY

Rev : P0.1

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North

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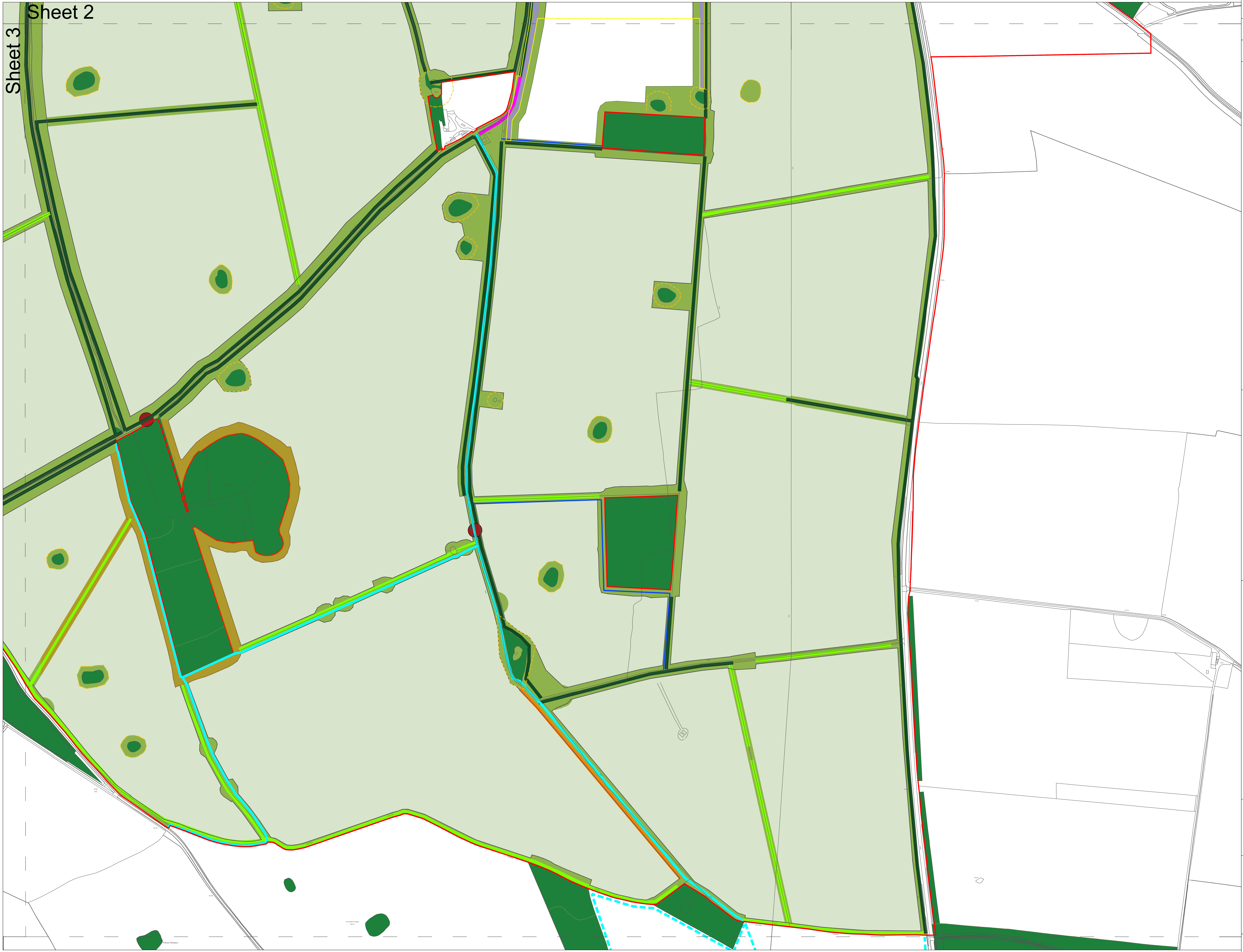

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THE DROVES
SOLAR FARM

DRAWING TITLE:

Sheet 4 of 5

DOCUMENT:

Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans

LEGEND:

🟥	Order Limits
🟩	Existing vegetation
🟩	Grassland open fields and margins incorporating existing marl pits, ponds and tree groups
🟩	Grassland under Solar PV modules
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★	Potential for publicly accessible amenity space and interpretation boards (to be provided by others)
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🟧	Game Bird Mix
⬡	Areas for enhancement to existing Marl Pits / Ponds
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P0.1	Deadline 1 updates	RP	19/05/26
P0	DCO Submission	RP	19/11/25

Sources Ordnance Survey (OS License number AC0000849896)

The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 – Regulation 5(2)(j)

PINS Ref: EN0110013

DWG. NO 9485_0459_A_GI_STRATEGY

Rev : P0.1

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North

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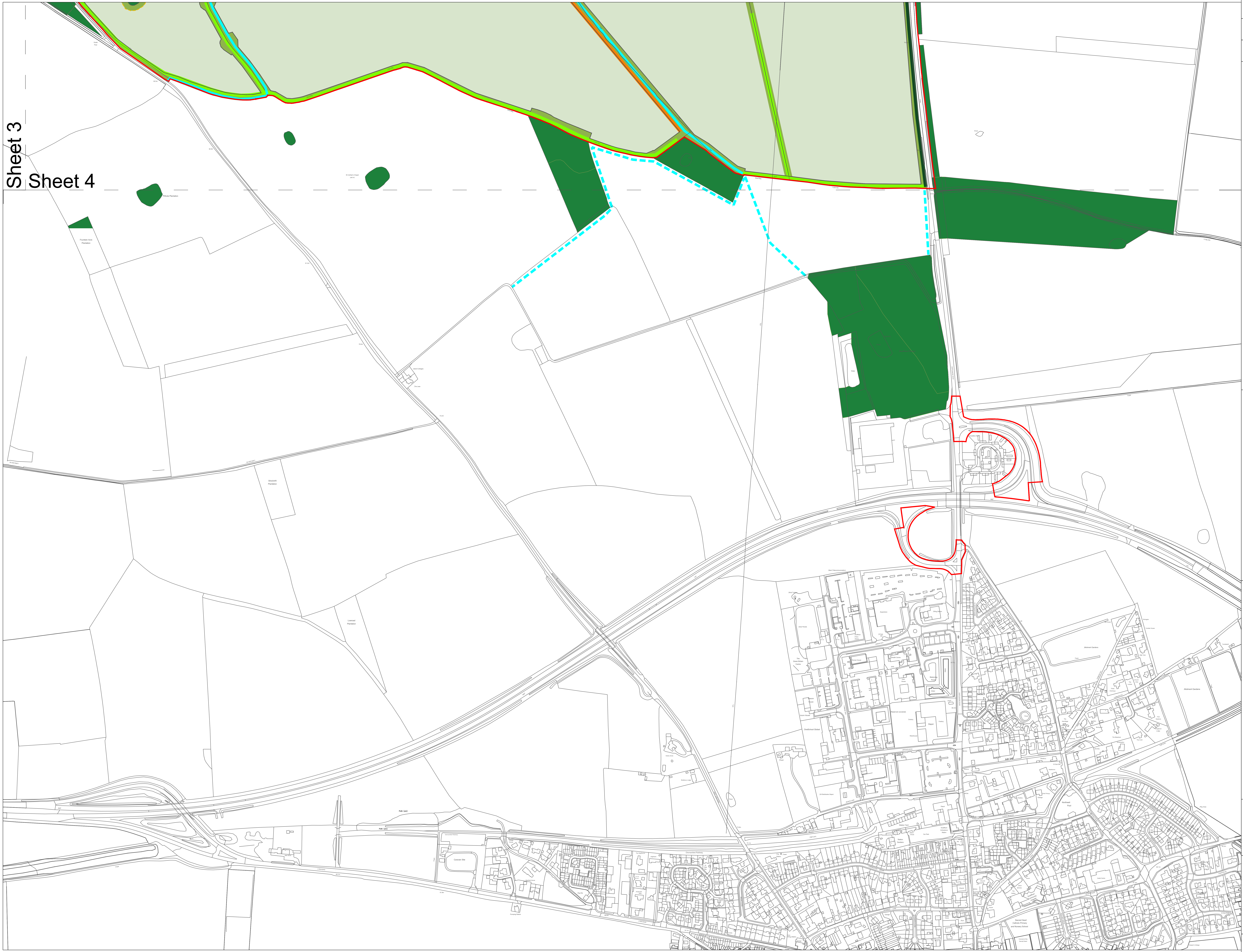

THE DROVES
SOLAR FARM

DRAWING TITLE:

Sheet 5 of 5

DOCUMENT:

Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans

LEGEND:

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🟩	Existing vegetation
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The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 – Regulation 5(2)(j)

PINS Ref: EN0110013

DWG. NO 9485_0460_A_GI_STRATEGY

Rev : P0.1

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North

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Appendix 2 – Vegetation Removal Plan

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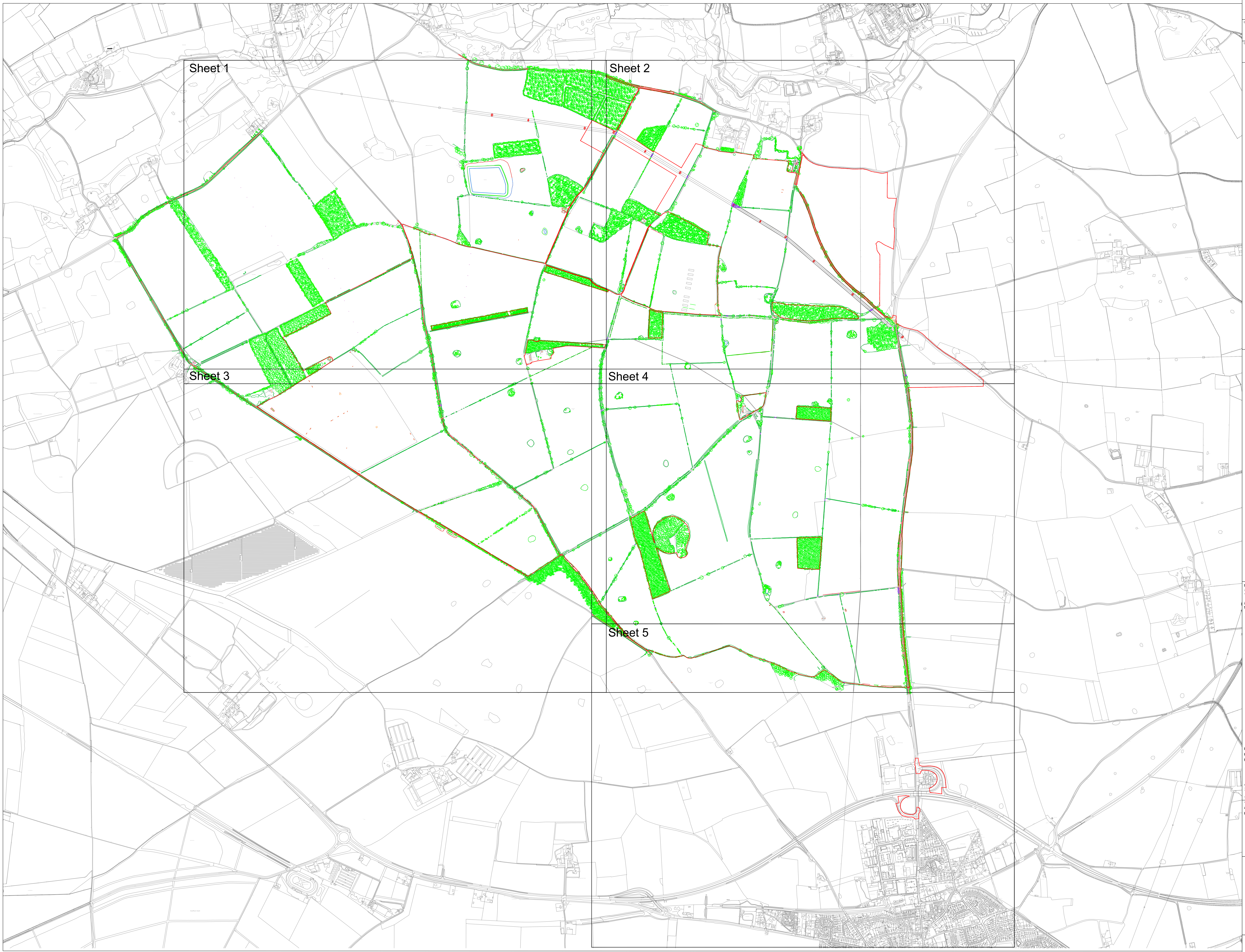

THE DROVES
SOLAR FARM

DRAWING TITLE:

Key plan

DOCUMENT:

Vegetation Removal Plan

LEGEND:

🟥 Order Limits

🟩 Existing Vegetation

🟪 Hedgerow Removal

Notes:

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P0.1	Deadline 1 updates	RP	15/05/26
P0	DCO Submission	RP	19/11/25
REV	DESCRIPTION	APP	DATE

Grid Reference
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Y: 312373.9613

Sources Ordnance Survey (OS License number AC0000849896)

The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 – Regulation 5(2)(q)

PINS Ref: EN0110013

DWG. NO 9485_0442_A_Vegetation_Removal_Plan

Rev : P0.1

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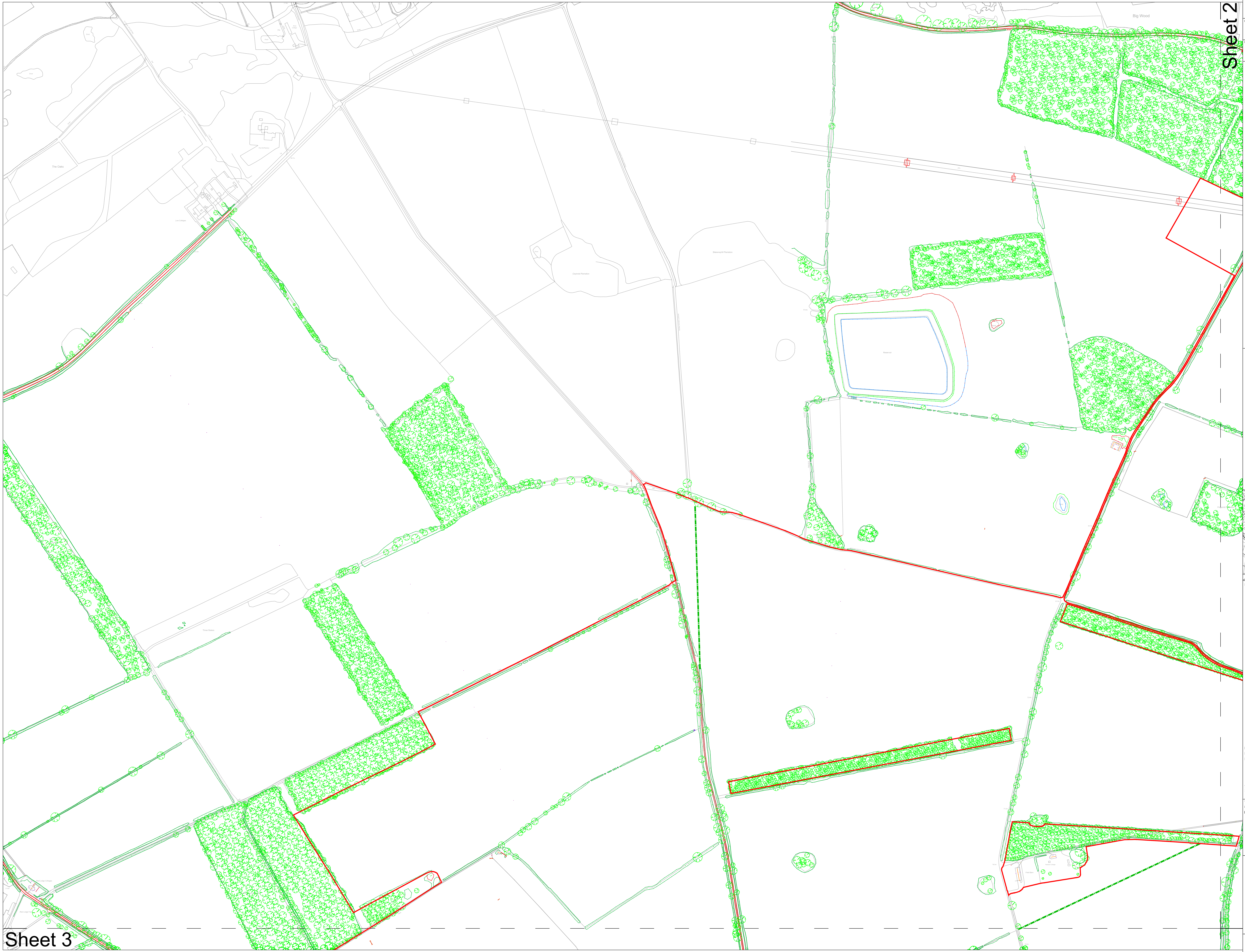


THE DROVES
SOLAR FARM

DRAWING TITLE:

Sheet 1 of 5

DOCUMENT:

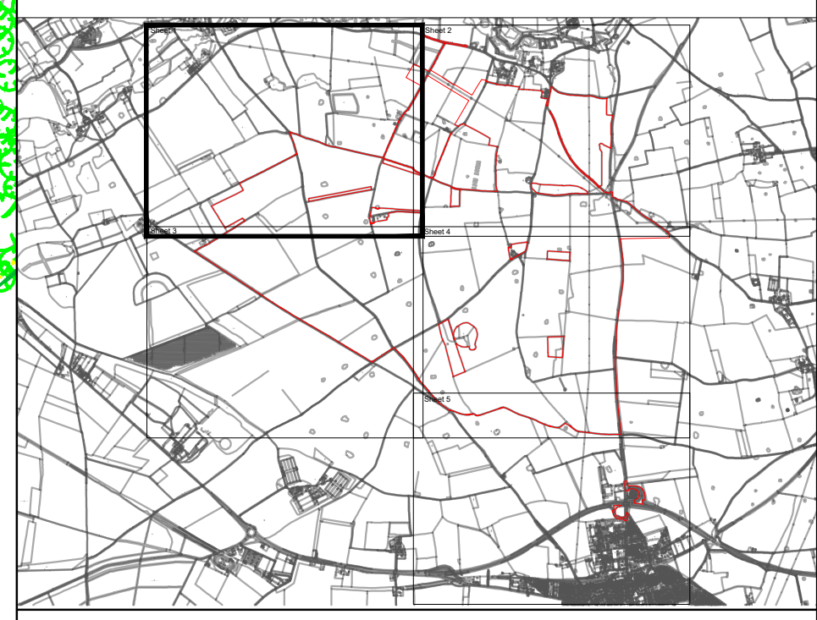
Vegetation Removal Plan

LEGEND:

🟥 Order Limits

🟩 Existing Vegetation

▨ Hedgerow Removal



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The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 – Regulation 5(2)(q)

PINS Ref: EN0110013

DWG. NO 9485_0443_A_Vegetation_Removal_Plan

Rev : P0.1

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Island GREEN POWER

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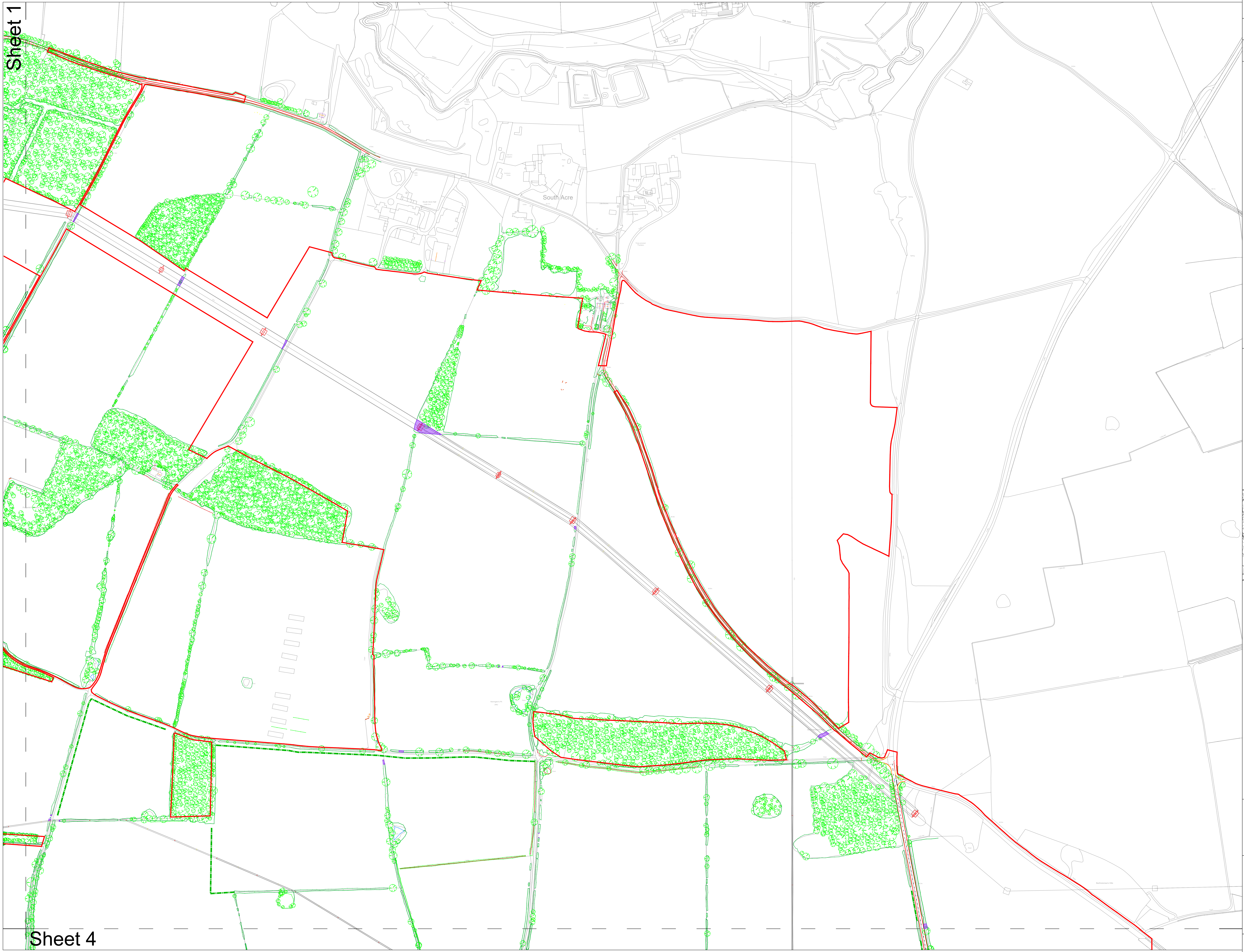


THE DROVES
SOLAR FARM

DRAWING TITLE:

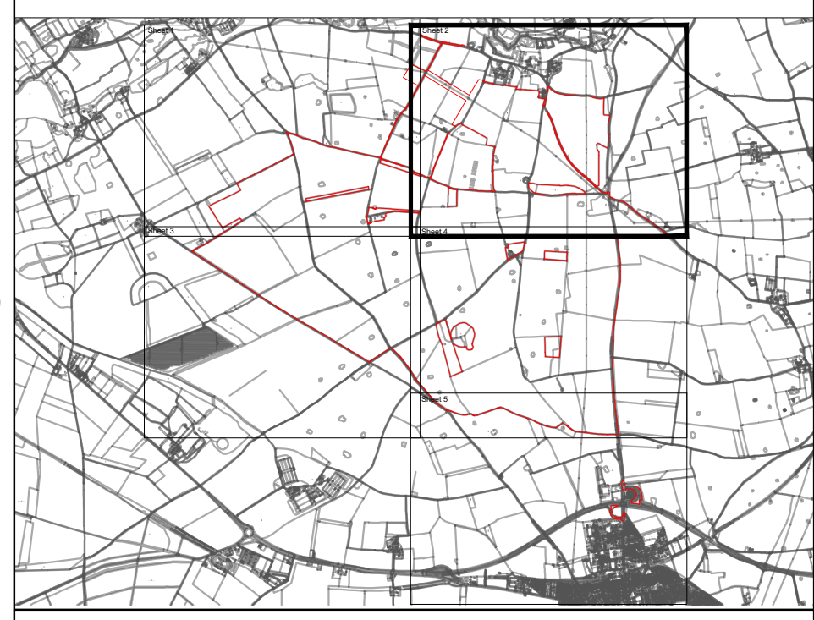
Sheet 2 of 5

DOCUMENT:

Vegetation Removal Plan

LEGEND:

🟥	Order Limits
▨	Existing Vegetation
▨	Hedgerow Removal



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Y: 312373.9613

Sources Ordnance Survey (OS License number AC0000849896)

The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 – Regulation 5(2)(q)

PINS Ref: EN0110013

DWG. NO 9485_0444_A_Vegetation_Removal_Plan

Rev : P0.1

DATE	May 2026	DRAWN	HW
SCALE@A0	1:2,500	CHECKED	CM
STATUS	FINAL	APPROVED	RP

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Area measurements for indicative purposes only.

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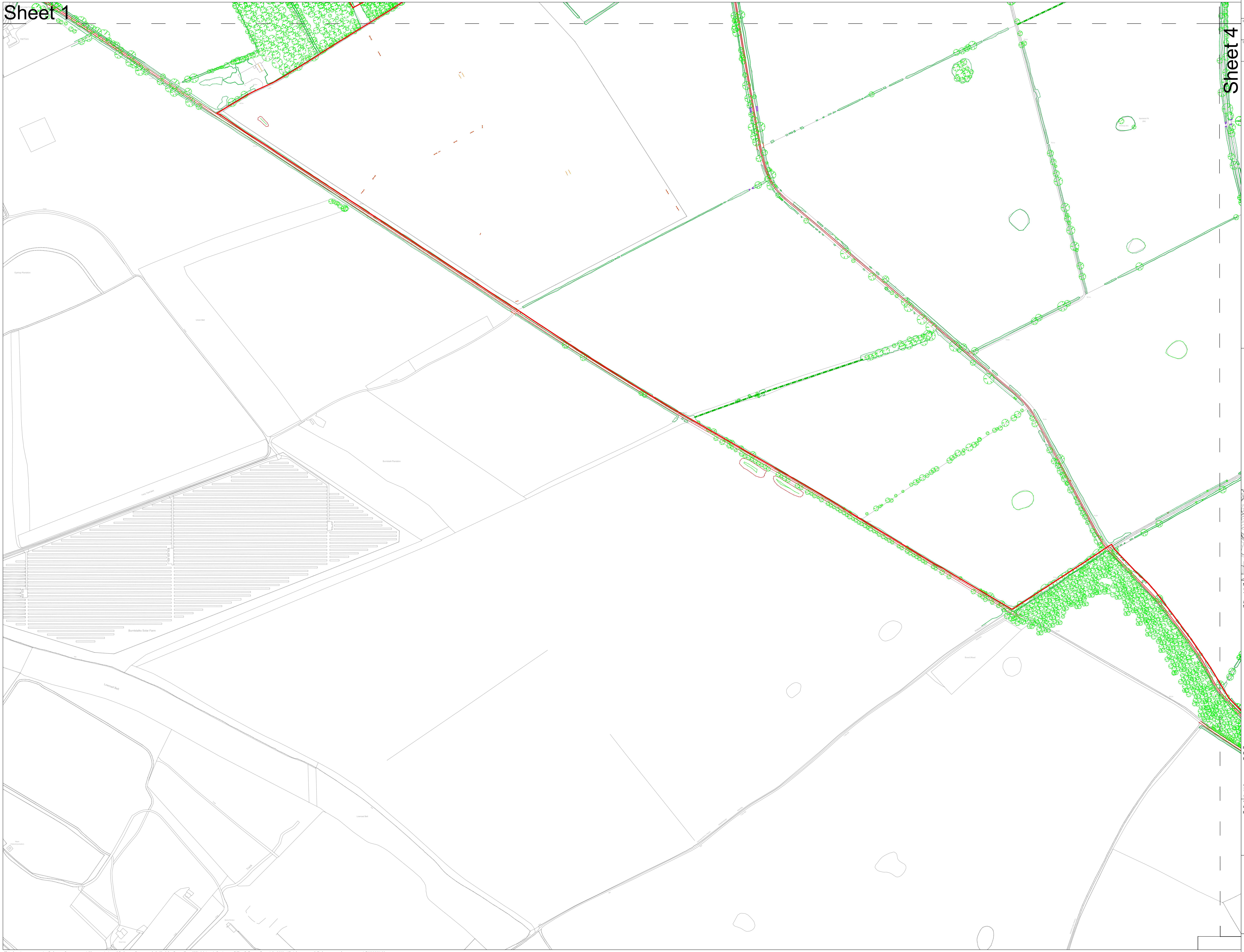


THE DROVES
SOLAR FARM

DRAWING TITLE:

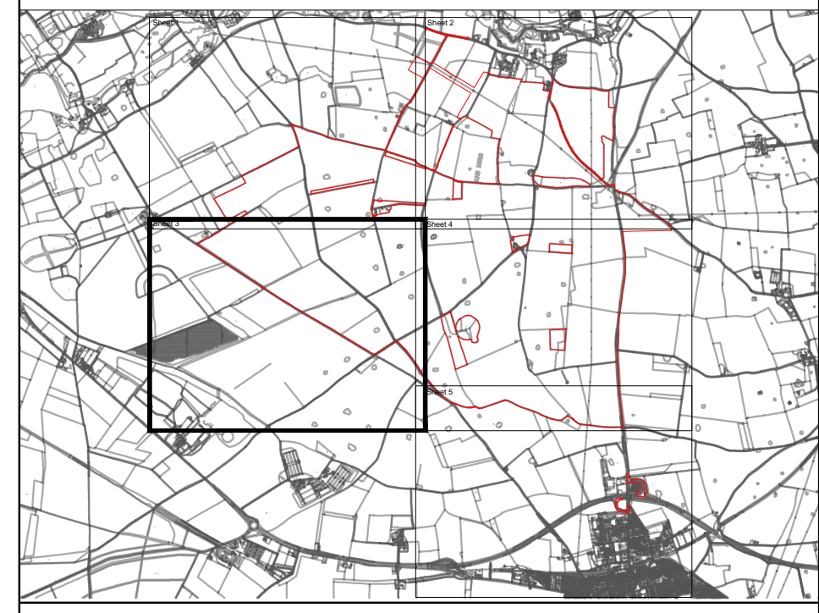
Sheet 3 of 5

DOCUMENT:

Vegetation Removal Plan

LEGEND:

🟥	Order Limits
🟩	Existing Vegetation
▨	Hedgerow Removal



Notes:

1. The Order limits has been drawn to the Land Registry boundaries and Topographical Survey data. The accuracy of Land Registry and the topographical survey differs from the OS Base Mapping which results in the Order limits not aligning with the line work shown on the OS Base Mapping.

REV	DESCRIPTION	APP	DATE
P0.1	Deadline 1 updates	RP	15/05/26
P0	DCO Submission	RP	19/11/25

Grid Reference
X: 580489.6342
Y: 312373.9613

Sources Ordnance Survey (OS License number AC0000849896)

The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 – Regulation 5(2)(q)

PINS Ref: EN0110013

DWG. NO 9485_0445_A_Vegetation_Removal_Plan

Rev : P0.1

DATE	May 2026	DRAWN	HW
SCALE@A0	1:2,500	CHECKED	CM
STATUS	FINAL	APPROVED	RP

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0 100m

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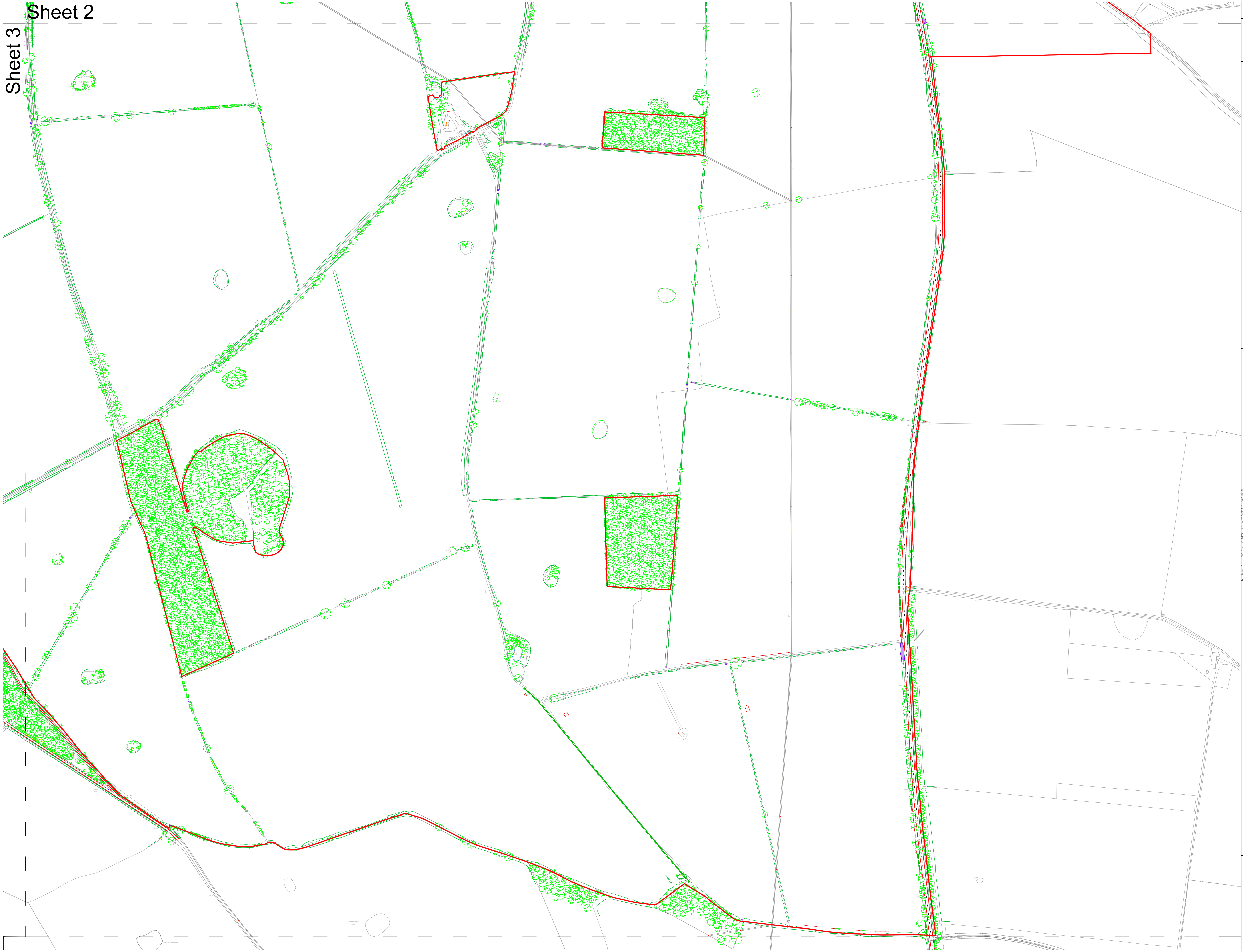
Z:\9485_KINGS_LYNN_SOLAR_FARM\7CAD\DRAWINGS\EXAMINATION UPDATES\5. VEG REMOVAL PLAN\9485_0442_0443_0444_0445_0446_0447_A_VEGETATION_REMOVAL_PLANS.DWG



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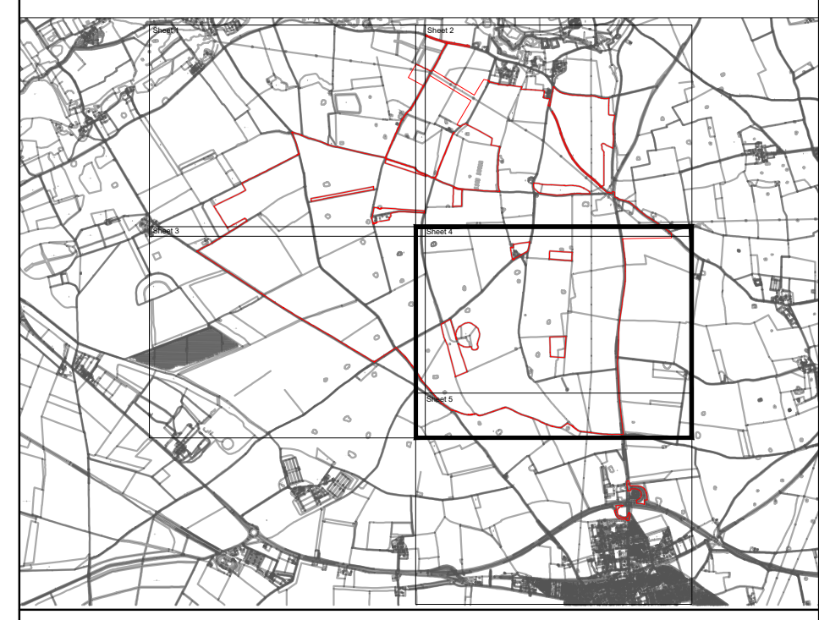
THE DROVES
SOLAR FARM

DRAWING TITLE:
Sheet 4 of 5

DOCUMENT:
Vegetation Removal Plan

LEGEND:

🟥	Order Limits
🟩	Existing Vegetation
▨	Hedgerow Removal



Notes:

1. The Order limits has been drawn to the Land Registry boundaries and Topographical Survey data. The accuracy of Land Registry and the topographical survey differs from the OS Base Mapping which results in the Order limits not aligning with the line work shown on the OS Base Mapping.

REV	DESCRIPTION	APP	DATE
P0.1	Deadline 1 updates	RP	15/05/26
P0	DCO Submission	RP	19/11/25

Grid Reference
X: 580489.6342
Y: 312373.9613
Sources Ordnance Survey (OS License number AC0000849896)

The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 – Regulation 5(2)(q)

PINS Ref: EN0110013

DWG. NO 9485_0446_A_Vegetation_Removal_Plan

Rev : P0.1

DATE	May 2026	DRAWN	HW
SCALE@A0	1:2,500	CHECKED	CM
STATUS	FINAL	APPROVED	RP

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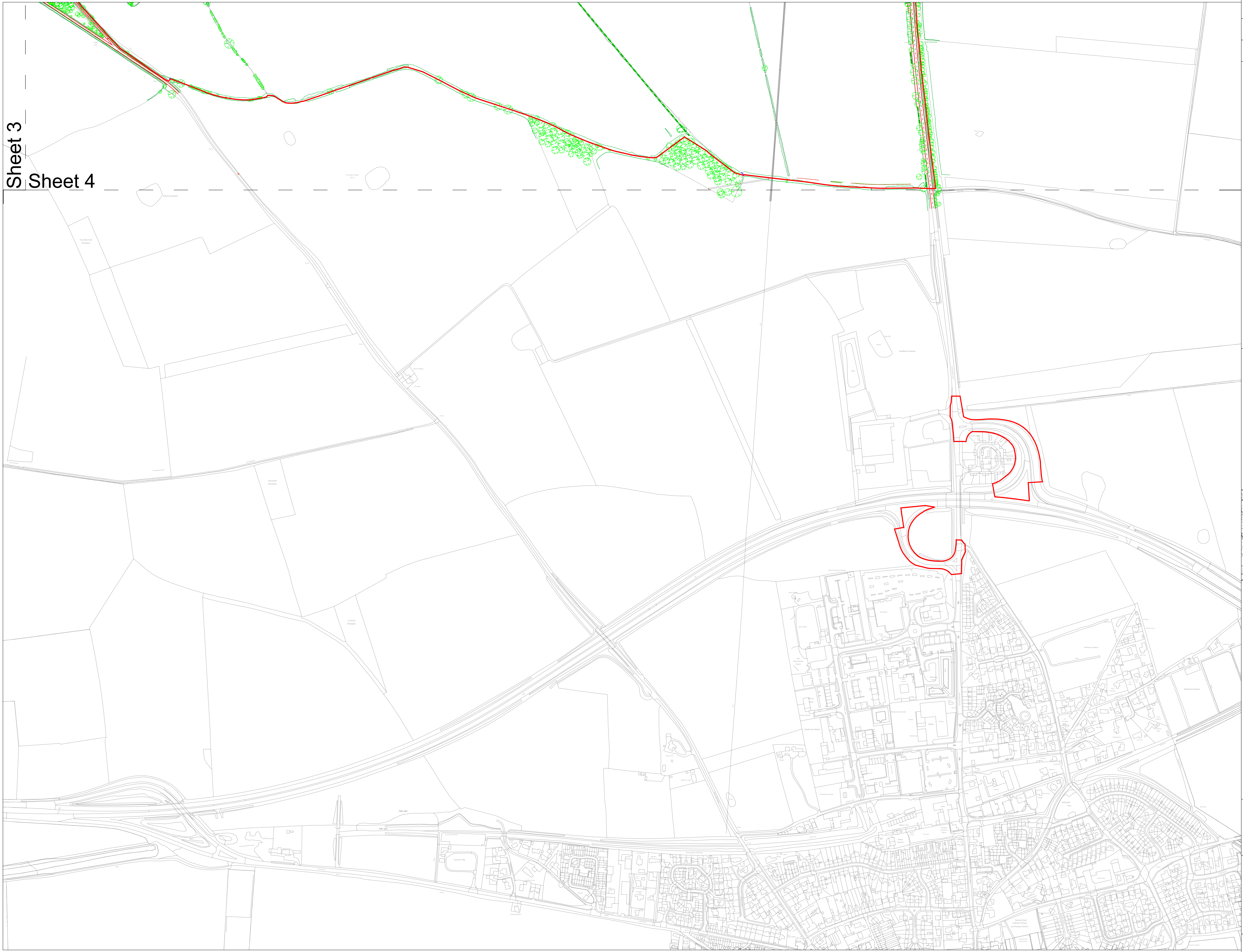

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THE DROVES
SOLAR FARM

DRAWING TITLE:

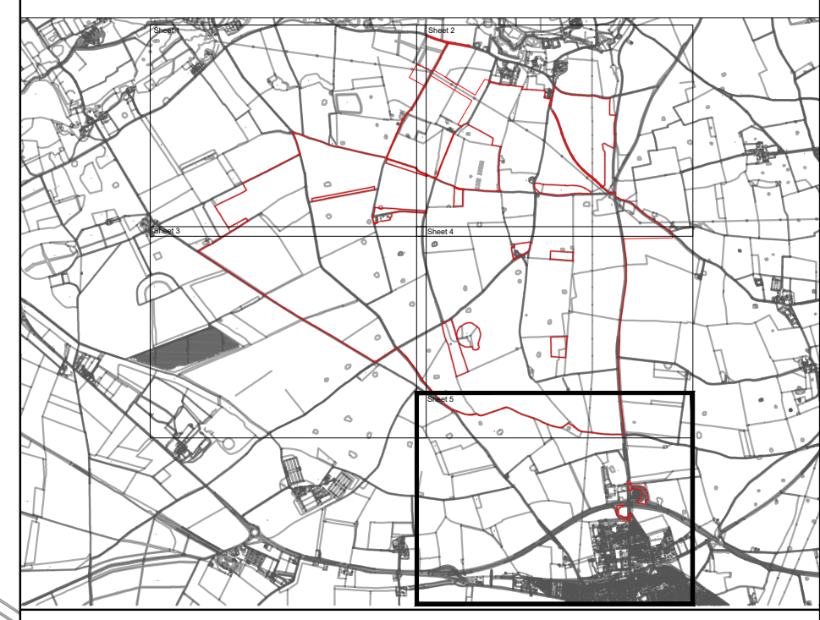
Sheet 5 of 5

DOCUMENT:

Vegetation Removal Plan

LEGEND:

🟥	Order Limits
🟩	Existing Vegetation
▨	Hedgerow Removal



Notes:

1. The Order limits has been drawn to the Land Registry boundaries and Topographical Survey data. The accuracy of Land Registry and the topographical survey differs from the OS Base Mapping which results in the Order limits not aligning with the line work shown on the OS Base Mapping.

REV	DESCRIPTION	APP	DATE
P0.1	Deadline 1 updates	RP	15/05/26
P0	DCO Submission	RP	19/11/25

Grid Reference
X: 580489.6342
Y: 312373.9613
Sources Ordnance Survey (OS License number AC0000849896)

The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 – Regulation 5(2)(q)

PINS Ref: EN0110013

DWG. NO 9485_0447_A_Vegetation_Removal_Plan

Rev : P0.1

DATE	May 2026	DRAWN	HW
SCALE@A0	1:2,500	CHECKED	CM
STATUS	FINAL	APPROVED	RP

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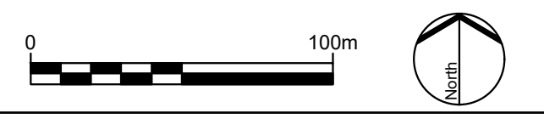

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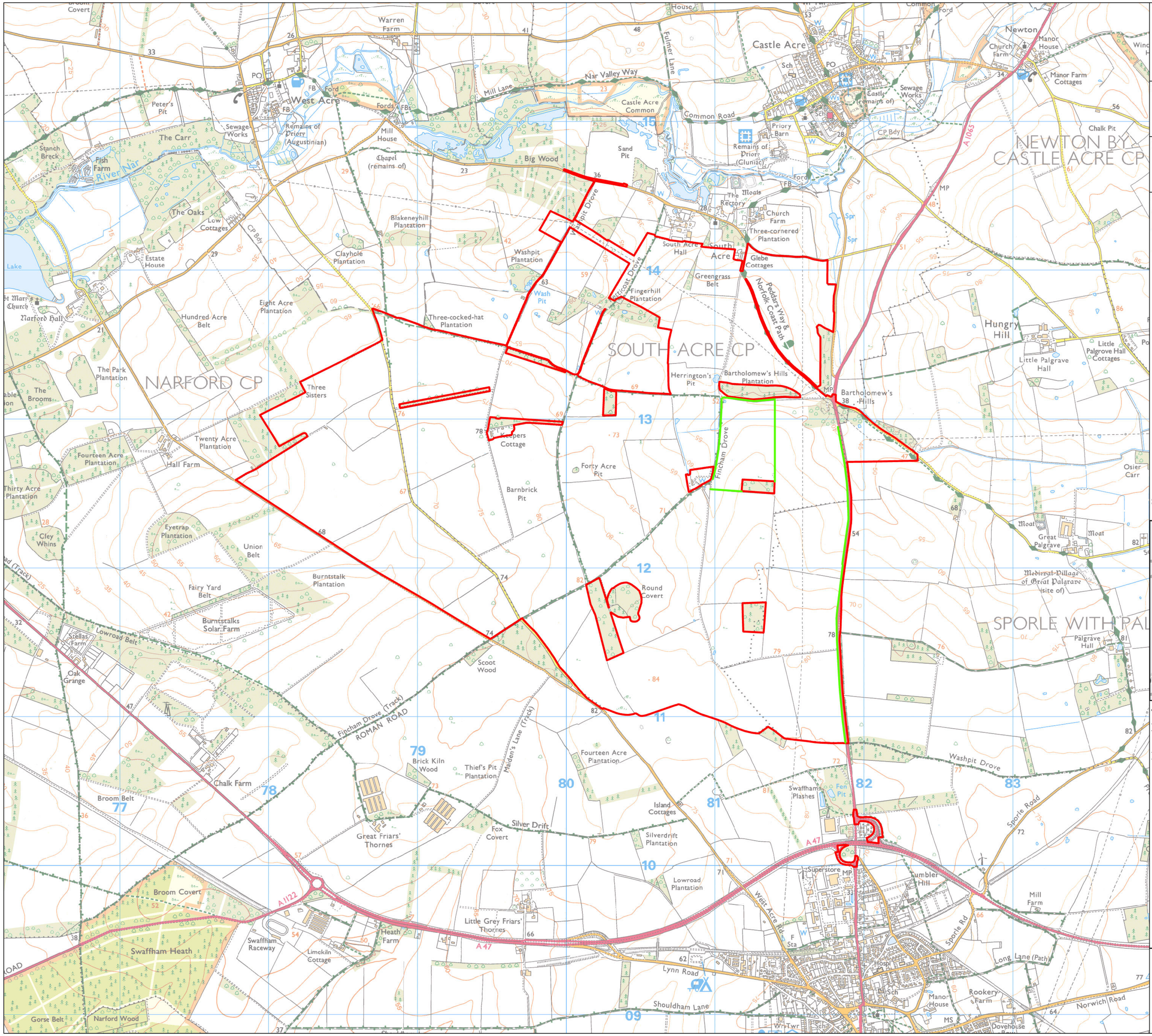
Appendix 3 – Advanced Planting Plan


Castle Acre
West Acre
Newton
NEWTON BY CASTLE ACRE CP
SOUTH ACRE CP
NARFORD CP
SPORLE WITH PALGRAVE
South Acre
Fincham Drove
Washpit Drove
Peddars Way & Norfolk Coast Path
Bartholomew's Hills
Bartholomew's Hills Plantation
Herrington's Pit
Round Covert
Three Sisters
Keepers Cottage
Forty Acre Pit
Barnbrick Pit
Burntstalk Plantation
Burntstalks Solar Farm
Scoot Wood
Hungry Hill
Little Palgrave Hall
Great Palgrave
Palgrave Hall
Swaffham Plashes
Swaffham Heath
Swaffham Raceway
A1065
A47
A1122
Roman Road
Lynn Road
Shouldham Lane
Sporle Road
Norwich Road
River Nar
Nar Valley Way
Common Road
Big Wood
Chalk Farm
Great Friars' Thornes
Little Grey Friars' Thornes
Brick Kiln Wood
Thief's Pit Plantation
Fourteen Acre Plantation
Island Cottages
Silverdrift Plantation
Lowroad Plantation
77
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15

THE DROVES
SOLAR FARM

DRAWING TITLE:

Appendix 3 - Advanced Planting Plan

DOCUMENT:

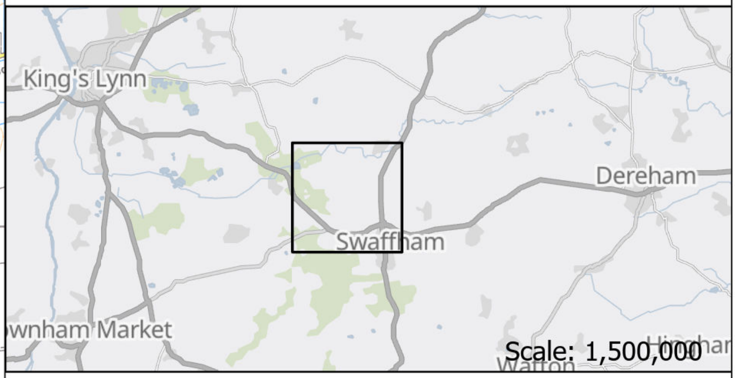
7.11.1 outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan
Appendix 3 - Advanced Planting Plan

LEGEND:

🟥	Order limits
—	Advanced Planting - Hedgerow to be gapped up during winter 25/26

*Note - No dimensions are to be scaled from this drawing. All dimensions are to be checked on site. Area measurements for indicative purposes only.

Sources: LDA Design, IGP 2025


King's Lynn
Dereham
Swaffham
Downham Market
Watton
Scale: 1,500,000

The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 – Reg 5(2)(q)

PINS Ref. EN0110013 Drawing no.: 9485_0461

DATE	Nov 2025	DRAWN	EC
SCALE @A3	1:25,000	CHECKED	PD
STATUS	Final	APPROVED	RP

REV.	DESCRIPTION	APP.	DATE
P1	Advanced planting extents updated	RB	29/05/2026
P0	DCO Submission	RP	19/11/2025

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THE DROVES
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