

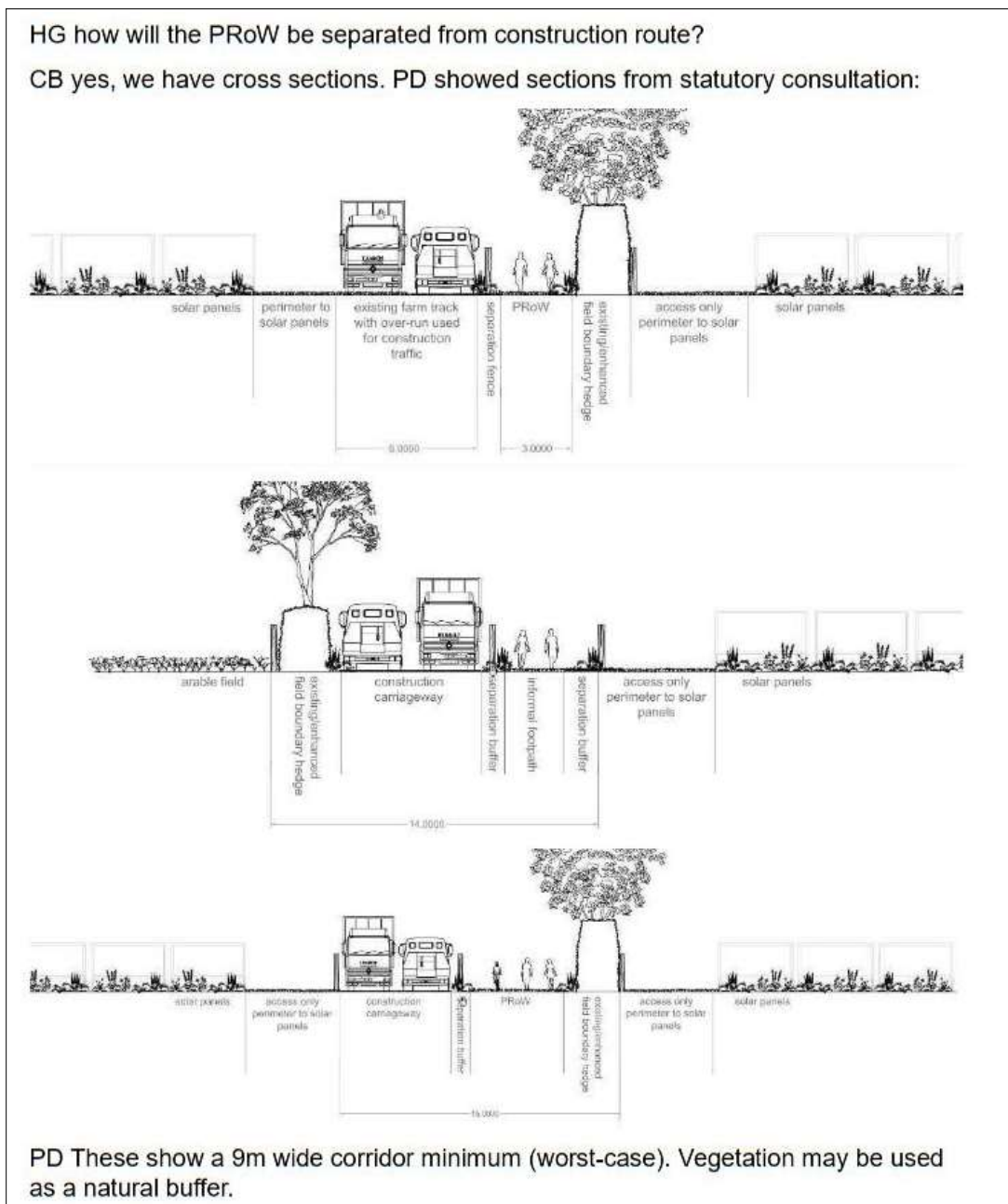
(RR-037) Essex Local Access Forum (ELAF) OBJECTION -Longfield Solar Farm Development Consent Order

1) It is repeated that the development should conform to NPPF paragraph 100 which states that – **ELAF bold:**

*Planning policies and decisions should **protect and enhance public rights of way and access**, including taking opportunities **to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails**.*

The proposed scheme does NOT enhance and does NOT add links to existing the existing PROW network.

2) The undertaking that the PROWs and permissive paths will be inside a 10 metre wide passageway is welcome. However several (sections of) the paths appear to be in the same space or very close to the proposed vehicular access tracks. For example, Terling FP 30 [113_30], Boreham FP 4 [213_4] / Terling FP 32 [113_32] and Terling FP 25 [113_25] & 33 [113_33] (at Scarlett's Farm). The diagram in the Transport Assessment [APP-093] included in the discussion with Essex Highways PROW in August 2021 shows that the 10 metre space will be shared with the vehicular access track. No new hedge planting alongside the solar panel field fencing is shown in these diagrams. Whilst the access tracks are stated as not being used intensively by vehicles in the 40 year operational phase, **this juxtaposition is objected to.**



The provision of banksmen, signage, and notices where the site access routes impinge on the public rights of way network is welcome.

- 3) The environment of the on-site public footpaths will of course be negatively affected by passing between or alongside fields of solar panels. This is particularly the case at the south of the site. For example Boreham FP 18 [213_18] & extensive lengths of Terling FP 32 [113_30] /also Boreham 4 [213_4] and Terling FP 30 [113_3] and continuing north Terling 25 & 33 [113_25 & 113_33]. **Planting alongside the proposed 2.5 metre high solar panel fence MUST occur** before or at the latest on day 1 of construction to be effective. Path widths must be maintained bearing in mind that hedges grow sideways.
- 4) North of Ringer's Wood there are fewer public rights of way so the use of the vehicular access tracks as permissive paths is an enhancement. As noted in ELAF's submission of 3 June 2022, the permissive route should be a **multi-user route available for ALL users** - walkers, cyclists, runners, horse-riders and mobility impaired / wheelchair users – not just for walkers and cyclists. There should be no stiles or gates across the route.
- 5) **A permanent multi-user route** north from Ringer's Wood to Sandy Wood and Terling 11 (the Essex Way) and a link between Boreham footpaths 18 & 19 [213_18 & 213_19], west of Toppinghoehall Wood, would be adding links to the PROW network as per NPPF paragraph 100. **A permanent route that followed the access track and /or field boundaries should be included in the decommissioning plan.** Noakes Farm Road, a protected lane, would provide a useful cycling and horse-riding access point – see also point 6).
- 6) ELAF repeat the request made ELAF's submission of 3 June 2022 for a **new multi-user route connection** from Boreham Bridleway 48 [213-48], near Bull's Lodge sub-station, east /north-east to Boreham 17 and then Boreham 19 & 20 on the east side of Waltham Road, within the Order Limits of the cable route corridor – see the map below. This connection would mitigate the historic loss of safe crossings of the railway line and the A12 and would link in with the new WCH bridge at Payne's Lane / Boreham brideways 45 & 23 [213_45 & 213_23].



- 7) As noted in ELAF's submission of 3 June 2022 and also noted in submissions made by other interested parties, much can happen to companies in 40 years, so money to cover the decommissioning costs should be deposited in a safe account / as a bond to ensure that the finances are there when needed.

Katherine Evans
 Chairman - Essex Local Access Forum (ELAF)



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