



Longfield Solar Farm

Environmental Statement [PINS Ref: EN010118]

Volume 2

Appendix 13C: Public Rights of Way Management Plan

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Longfield Solar Energy Farm Limited (**the Applicant**) is applying for a Development Consent Order (**DCO**) for Longfield Solar Farm. Longfield Solar Farm comprises the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning of a solar photovoltaic (PV) array electricity generating facility, electrical storage facility, and export connection to the National Grid, including an extension of the existing Bulls Lodge Substation (**the Scheme**).
- 1.1.2 The Scheme for which development consent is sought has been carefully developed following a detailed iterative design process. The design process has taken account of relevant national and local design policy and guidance, information from site appraisals and field work and feedback from stakeholders.

1.2 Purpose and Structure of this Plan

- 1.2.1 This Public Rights of Way (PRoW) Management Plan (PRoW MP) outlines how PRoW will be managed by the Applicant for the Scheme to ensure they are safe and accessible.
- 1.2.2 It has been prepared in view of the Draft National Policy Statement (NPS) for Renewable Energy EN-3 (Ref. 1-1), which was published for consultation in September 2021. The Draft NPS may be subject to change in the final version, but nevertheless currently states, (it should be noted, the existing version of the document published in 2011, does not consider the potential effects of proposed developments and how these may affect the provision of local footpath networks and public rights of way):
 - a. Paragraph 2.49.5 - "*Considering the likely extent of solar sites, it is possible that proposed developments may affect the provision of local footpath networks and public rights of way. Public rights of way may need to be temporarily stopped up to enable construction; however it should be the applicant's intention, where practicable and safe, to keep all public rights of way that cross the proposed development site open during construction and to protect users where a public right of way borders or crosses the site. Developers are encouraged to design the layout and appearance of the site to ensure continued recreational use of public rights of way, where possible during construction, but in particular across the operation of the site, and to minimise as much as possible the visual outlook from existing footpaths. It should be noted that sites may provide the opportunity to facilitate enhancements to the local footpath network and the adoption of new public rights of way through site layout and design of access*"
 - b. Paragraph 2.49.6 - "*It is anticipated that detail on how public rights of way would be managed to ensure they are safe to use is detailed in an outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan*".

- 1.2.3 Both the Chelmsford and Braintree Local Plan documents (Ref. 1-2, 1-3) also emphasise the importance of ensuring existing PRoW are kept open and are minimally disrupted during construction.
- 1.2.4 Chelmsford City Council (CCC) and Essex Police raised this issue during statutory consultation (between 01 June 2021 and 13 July 2021), with regards to their concerns with PRoW running through arrays of panels that were said to be too narrow or have restricted visibility splays (especially where they turn), which has the potential for the user to feel closed in and unable to evaluate potential risk, reducing the feeling of personal safety and therefore the desire to use the footpaths and open space available.
- 1.2.5 In light of these comments and the Draft NPS, the Applicant is keen to demonstrate the Scheme has taken appropriate measures to ensure the safety and continued recreational use for the local community when using PRoW during construction, operation, and decommissioning.
- 1.2.6 It should be noted that details relating to permissive paths during the operational phase are provided within the **Outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (OEMP) [EN010118/APP/7.11(B)]** and are also shown on a separate **Permissive Paths Plan [EN010118/APP/7.14]**.

2. Baseline Conditions

2.1 Present-day Baseline

- 2.1.1 There are a number of PRoW which pass through or run adjacent to the Site boundary (the ‘Order limits’) which are summarised below. The details of the PRoW have been obtained from the PRoW Interactive Map available on the Essex County Council (ECC) website. The PRoW routes (footpaths and bridleways) are also shown on a plan held within **Figure 1** (please note this forms **Figure 2-2 of the ES [EN010118/APP/6.3]**).
- 2.1.2 The following PRoW pass through the Order limits, running progressively from north to south:
- a. PRoW 221_30 (far north): The footpath commences in the west from Boreham Road and continues for approximately 560m south of Lyons Hall Cottage where the route joins with PRoW 113_11 in the east.
 - b. PRoW 113_11 (far north): The footpath runs through the site south of Sandy Wood, joining with PRoW 221_30 to the west, PRoW 113_35 to the north, and PRoW 113_13 to the east; the route is approximately 2,030m in length.
 - c. PRoW 221_53 (north): The footpath commences in the west from Boreham Road and continues for approximately 480m through Scarlett’s Wood where it links with PRoW 113_33 in the east.
 - d. PRoW 113_33 (north): Runs from the west where it links with PRoW 221_53 at Scarlett’s Wood and continues eastwards for approximately 1,160m past Scarlett’s Farm towards Terling Hall Road.
 - e. PRoW 113_25 (north): The footpath commences to the west of Noakes Lane and runs eastwards near Noakes Farm for approximately 490m before joining Noakes Farm Road.
 - f. PRoW 113_30 (centre): Runs from where it joins with PRoW 213_4 to the west, continuing eastwards to the north of Ringers Wood for approximately 1,140m until crossing Terling Hall Road to the east where it links to PRoW 113_28.
 - g. PRoW 213_4 (centre): Runs from where it joins with PRoW 113_30 to the north, continuing southwards for approximately 600m where it joins PRoW 113_32.
 - h. PRoW 113_32 (centre): The footpath commences in the south in Porter’s Wood where it joins with PRoW 213_18 and then runs northwards for approximately 1,150m where it joins with PRoW 213_5 before continuing further northwards for approximately 350m where it joins to PRoW 213_4.
 - i. PRoW 213_5 (centre): The footpath commences in the west from Waltham Road leading into the site to the east along Stocks Farm; the route runs for approximately 480m before joining with PRoW 113_32.
 - j. PRoW 213_18 (south): The footpath commences in the west from Waltham Road leading into the site to the east; the route continues to the

north of Kenwood House for approximately 580m where it joins with PRoW 113_32 in Porter's Wood.

- k. PRoW 213_19 (south): The footpath commences in the west from Waltham Road leading into the site to the east; the route continues to the south of Kenwood House and further east for approximately 570m where it joins with PRoW 90_36 south of Toppinghoehall Wood.
- l. PRoW 213_20 (south): The footpath commences in the west from Waltham Road and runs eastwards for approximately 650m where it forms a connection with Chantry Lane.
- m. PRoW 213_21 (south): The footpath commences in the north from Waltham Road and runs along Wallace's Lane to the southwest before heading south, forming a connection with PRoW 213_17 and then heading further south through the site boundary; the route is approximately 1,480m in length.
- n. PRoW 213_48 (southwest): The bridleway commences in the north at a connection with PRoW 213_16 and PRoW 213_17, running south to join a private road and then running west along the private road for approximately 550m to join PRoW 213_49 and PRoW 213_15.
- o. PRoW 213_23 (southwest): The bridleway commences in the west at a connection with PRoW 213_8 and PRoW 213_10, running east to cross the Radial Distributor Road (RDR) and a private road before continuing southeast towards the A12(T). The route is approximately 900m in length.

2.1.3 Further to the above, the following PRoW run either adjacent to or within close proximity to the Order limits, running progressively from north to south:

- a. PRoW 113_35 (far north): Footpath, north of Sandy Wood;
- b. PRoW 76_16 (far north): Footpath, north of Sandy Wood;
- c. PRoW 113_13 (far north): Footpath, east of Sandy Wood;
- d. PRoW 113_12 (far north): Footpath, east of Sandy Wood;
- e. PRoW 113_22 (northeast): Footpath, east of Sparrow's Farm;
- f. PRoW 113_28 (northeast): Footpath, east of Roll's Farm;
- g. PRoW 113_27 (northeast): Footpath, north of Ringer's Farm;
- h. PRoW 221_54 (northwest): Footpath, north of Chopping's Wood;
- i. PRoW 221_56 (northwest): Footpath, south of Chopping's Wood;
- j. PRoW 221_57 (northwest): Footpath, north of Lawns Farm;
- k. PRoW 213_1 (northwest): Footpath, north of Bird's Farm;
- l. PRoW 213_2 (west): Footpath, southwest of Boreham Road;
- m. PRoW 225_60 (west): Footpath, north of Cranham Road;
- n. PRoW 213_51 (west): Footpath, north of Cranham Road
- o. PRoW 225_37 (west): Footpath, southwest of Power's Farm;
- p. PRoW 225_19 (west): Footpath, northeast of Wheeler's Farm;
- q. PRoW 225_36 (west): Footpath, south of Wheeler's Farm;

- r. PRoW 90_36 (south): Footpath, south of Toppinghoehall Wood;
 - s. PRoW 213_17 (south): Footpath, south of Wallace's Farm Cottages;
 - t. PRoW 213_24 (southwest): Footpath, south of Bulls Lodge Quarry;
 - u. PRoW 213_49 (southwest): Footpath, west of Bull's Lodge Quarry; and
 - v. PRoW 213_15 (southwest): Footpath, south of Walford Farm House.
- 2.1.4 These PRoW form part of a wide network of PRoW in the surrounding area.
- 2.1.5 During early consultation with ECC Highways in January 2021, it was advised that pedestrian surveys should be carried out in spring/ summer 2021 (if possible) for any pedestrian or cycle routes to be potentially affected by the Scheme. However, given the ongoing restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic and based on the proposed mitigation set out within the Framework CTMP and this PRoW MP, the proposed impacts on PRoW within the Order limits during construction are not expected to be significant. No requirement to carry out surveys was identified during a PRoW Transport Meeting with ECC Highways in August 2021, and ECC Highways subsequently confirmed (in January 2022) that surveys were not considered to be required in view of the above. As such, no baseline data is available regarding the local pedestrian and cycle usage.

2.2 Future Baseline (2025)

- 2.2.1 The future baseline conditions of PRoW are broadly expected to reflect existing conditions as presented in **Section 2.1**, albeit a few potential changes have been identified below.
- 2.2.2 The A12 Chelmsford to A120 Widening Scheme includes a proposed pedestrian/ cycle link over the A12(T) to the north of the Boreham Interchange, which will improve connectivity in the area including connections with the proposed Chelmsford Garden Village. This will also create a link between PRoW 213_45 and PRoW 213_23 (to the south of the Order limits), as well as with PRoW 213_48 located to the southwest of the Order limits to the west of Bulls Lodge Substation.

3. The Proposed Scheme

3.1 Construction

Impacts

- 3.1.1 Access to all existing PRoW will be retained during the construction phase, with no PRoW closures and a limited number of temporary PRoW diversions around the Grid Connection Route works area when this is installed as well as a couple of temporary PRoW diversions within the Solar Farm Site. The PRoW will be managed throughout the construction phase to ensure that they can continue to be used safely.
- 3.1.2 It should be noted that whilst the proposed construction routes and crossing point locations within the Order limits (see **Framework Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) [EN010118/APP/6.2(B)]** and **Streets, Access and Rights of Way (SARoW) plans** 60640215-1013-AROW-003, 60640215-1013-AROW-004 and 60640215-1013-AROW-007 to 60640215-1013-AROW-009 [**EN010118/APP/2.3(A)**] for further details) may be subject to minor changes during detailed design, these changes would not change the principles presented in this PRoW Management Plan or result in any additional adverse impacts. The approach agreed with the relevant local authority in terms of how these changes are proposed to be managed will remain unchanged throughout the construction phase of the Scheme.

Solar Farm Site

- 3.1.3 It is important that public safety is maintained when there are moving vehicles along the construction routes within the Solar Farm Site. The proposed construction routes through the Solar Farm Site and the relevant works will be physically separated from existing PRoW using mesh, heras, or other similar types of fencing, to maximise the safety of pedestrians and cyclists within the Solar Farm Site .
- 3.1.4 The following existing PRoW will run alongside, but will be physically separated from, the proposed construction routes:
- a. PRoW 113_25 – to be physically separated from the primary construction route for a length of circa. 110m;
 - b. PRoW 213_4 – to be temporarily diverted throughout construction and physically separated from the primary construction route for a length of circa. 575m (circa. 75m additional length); and
 - c. PRoW 113_32 – to be temporarily diverted throughout construction and physically separated from the primary construction route for a length of circa. 450m (no additional length).
- 3.1.5 Each diversion will be clearly marked out, along with appropriate signage at either end of the diversion. The diversion routes will be agreed with the relevant local authority prior to construction.
- 3.1.6 The existing PRoW will be reinstated during the operational phase, albeit public access will be retained throughout as a result of the PRoW diversions.

- 3.1.7 The minimum legal PRoW widths (specified by ECC) will be maintained for all PRoW throughout the construction phase. The above locations including details of minimum legal PRoW widths are presented on **Figure 2**. The proposed temporary diversions of PRoW 213_4 and 113_32 are also indicatively presented on **Figure 3**.
- 3.1.8 The proposed construction routes will cross existing PRoW within the Solar Farm Site at a number of locations. These locations are listed below and include the main (primary) construction route which will be utilised throughout the construction programme and secondary routes which will be utilised less frequently to access certain parcels when required:
- a. PRoW 113_33 – 1 x primary crossing point and 1 x secondary crossing point;
 - b. PRoW 221_53 – 1 x secondary crossing point;
 - c. PRoW 113_25 – 1 x primary crossing point;
 - d. PRoW 113_30 – 1 x primary crossing point and 2 x secondary crossing points;
 - e. PRoW 213_4 – 1 x primary crossing point along diverted section;
 - f. PRoW 213_5 – 1 x primary crossing point;
 - g. PRoW 113_32 – 2 x primary crossing points and 1 x secondary crossing point along diverted section; and
 - h. PRoW 213_18 – 1 x secondary crossing point.
- 3.1.9 The existing PRoW and proposed crossing points will be carefully managed to allow all users to safely pass through these areas as follows (also set out within Section 7.4.6 of the Framework CTMP):
- a. Providing manned controls at each crossing point (including marshals/banksmen and gates), with a default priority that construction traffic will give-way to other users;
 - b. Providing advanced signage to warn users of the potential presence of construction vehicles; and
 - c. Maximising visibility between construction vehicles and other users at the crossing points (through hedgerow clearance for example).
- 3.1.10 The above locations are presented on **Figure 2**.
- 3.1.11 Further to the above, it should be noted that several temporary PRoW diversions will be required for a short duration (no longer than one week) in order to install the secondary collector cables across the Solar Farm Site. The locations of these are identified on the **Streets, Access and Rights of Way (SARoW) plans** 60640215-1013-AROW-001 to 60640215-1013-AROW-009 [**EN010118/APP/2.3(A)**]. Given the short duration and localised nature of these PRoW diversions (expected to be no more than one week), the installation of these secondary collector cables is not expected to result in a material impact and will be locally managed as appropriate.

Grid Connection Route

- 3.1.12 The proposed Grid Connection Route will cross three existing PRoW as shown on **Figure 2**, and it is therefore proposed to temporarily (and locally) divert these PRoW around each works area, for a short period (circa. 2-3 weeks each), when the cables are installed:
- a. PRoW 213_19 – temporary PRoW diversion around the works area during cable installation (circa. 20m additional length);
 - b. PRoW 213_20 – temporary PRoW diversion around the works area during cable installation (circa. 30m additional length); and
 - c. PRoW 213_21 – temporary PRoW diversion around the works area during cable installation (circa. 45m additional length).
- 3.1.13 The construction works will be very localised at the above locations and the temporary PRoW diversions will therefore only displace the existing PRoW around the works area before re-joining the existing PRoW. This is illustrated by Figure 4 as well as the Streets, Access and Rights of Way (SARoW) plans (60640215-1013-AROW-002 and 60640215-1013-AROW-003) which indicate that temporary diversions would increase the length of each PRoW by circa. 20-45m, allowing a 5m buffer from the edge of the works area.
- 3.1.14 Each minor diversion will be clearly marked out, along with appropriate signage at either end of the diversion. The diversion routes will be agreed with the relevant local authority for each diversion prior to construction of the Scheme.
- 3.1.15 The existing PRoW will be reinstated once the Grid Connection Route has been installed at each location, albeit public access will be retained throughout as a result of the localised PRoW diversions.

Bulls Lodge Substation Access

- 3.1.16 An existing bridleway (PRoW 213_48) runs along the existing private road to/ from Bulls Lodge Substation for a distance of circa. 550m. In addition, an existing bridleway (PRoW 213_23) crosses the existing private road to/ from Bulls Lodge Substation approximately 200m to the northeast of the junction with the RDR.
- 3.1.17 The private road currently accommodates agricultural vehicles as well as maintenance vehicles for the existing Bulls Lodge substation. During the development and network peak hours, there is expected to be a maximum of 20 additional two-way vehicle movements on the private road to/ fro Bulls Lodge substation, via the Boreham Interchnage and the A12(T) as a result of the Scheme during the construction phase. This equates to a maximum of one additional vehicle every three minutes.
- 3.1.18 The private road will be utilised by construction vehicles associated with the extension of the existing Bulls Lodge Substation, with a maximum of 46 HGVs per day and 48 LGVs/ cars per day (during peak construction phase).
- 3.1.19 In order to safely manage access along the private road, safety measures such as signage and bamsmen will be provided at either end of the 550m section to both manage and increase awareness of construction vehicles and PRoW users when required. This has been agreed as the preferred approach

with ECC Highways, rather than seeking to temporarily divert or close the PRoW. It should be noted that no physical modifications to the street furniture are expected to be necessary to accommodate construction vehicles on the private road, other than to accommodate the eastern and western access points for the extension of the existing Bulls Lodge Substation) as it is currently used by vehicles of a similar size and type.

Mitigation and Management Measures

- 3.1.20 As set out within Section 7.4.11 of the **Framework CTMP [EN010118/APP/6.2(B)]**, and further to the measures already identified above, proposed mitigation and management measures relating to PRoW include:
- a. Maintaining access to/ along PRoW during the construction phase, including minimum legal widths for PRoW users;
 - b. Providing temporary PRoW diversion routes where necessary e.g. when the Grid Connection Route is installed, to avoid any PRoW closures. Each diversion will be clearly marked out, along with appropriate signage at either end of the diversion. The diversion routes will be agreed with the relevant local authority prior to construction;
 - c. Providing sufficient protection/ separation between existing PRoW and the proposed construction route where necessary;
 - d. Managing areas where the internal construction route crosses any existing PRoW (where these are unable to be diverted) , by maximising visibility between construction vehicles and other users (pedestrians and cyclists), implementing traffic management e.g. advanced signage to advise other users of the works, as well as manned controls at each crossing point (marshals/ banksmen), with a default priority that construction traffic will give-way to other users. This includes several PRoW crossing points;
 - e. Providing sufficient cycle parking spaces within the Order limits to encourage construction staff to travel by bicycle where viable (50 cycle parking spaces to be provided); and
 - f. Developing a communications strategy including regular meetings with contractors to review and address any issues associated with walking or cycling to/ from the Order limits, as well as to relay information including any restrictions and requirements which should be followed.
- 3.1.21 It should be noted that pedestrian and cycle routes will be maintained and remain unobstructed at all times when in use (other than for a few hours when the secondary collector cables are installed), to ensure the continued safe passage of the public including when using the PRoW through the Order limits and at crossing points.

3.2 Operation

- 3.2.1 The existing PRoW will be unaffected during operation. All PRoW will have a minimum 5m spacing (each way) between the centreline of the PRoW and any infrastructure such as solar PV fencing, and located within a minimum 10m wide undeveloped passageway. This will avoid the tunnelling issue that ECC and Essex Police raised as a potential concern during statutory

consultation i.e. 10m is considered sufficient width to allow safe passage for pedestrians/ cyclists along the PRoW.

- 3.2.2 Plate 1 shows an example of where the minimum spacing for a PRoW is implemented; typically this is for short distances only and not for the full length of the PRoW. In the example shown there is a widening around a pond.

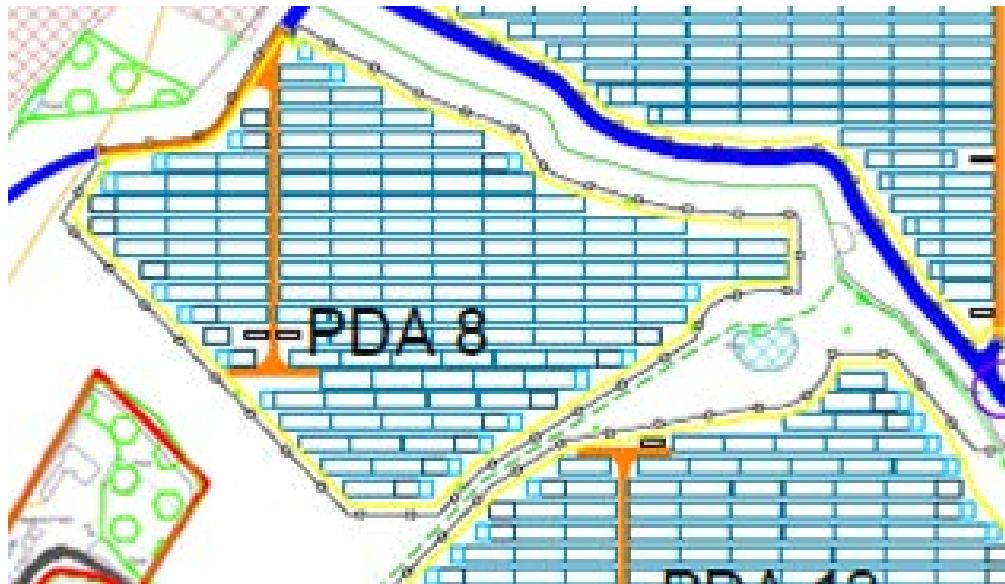


Plate 1: Example Spacing for PRoW

- 3.2.3 During the operational phase, a number of green routes/ permissive paths will be provided to improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity throughout the Solar Farm Site including with existing PRoW. It is not expected that any TTM, PRoW diversions or closures will be required and the majority of vehicles accessing the Order limits will be maintenance vehicles/ Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs).
- 3.2.4 The Scheme will retain the existing links with Essex Way and NCN Route 50 to the north of the Order limits. The operational phase of the Scheme is set to promote many benefits by improving walking and cycling connectivity within the Order limits, as following relates to PRoW within the Order limits:
- Maintaining access to all existing PRoW within the Order limits, with no diversions or closures (any PRoW temporarily diverted during the construction phase will be reinstated during the operational phase); and
 - Controlling areas where the internal maintenance route crosses any existing PRoW or local access roads (such as by providing gates), permitting only operational traffic to utilise these internal routes (Greenways) within the Order limits. Operational traffic would give-way to other users when utilising the crossing points. Visibility will be maximised between operational vehicles and other users, with warning signage provided if required.
- 3.2.5 Additional benefits related to the operational phase of the scale related to pedestrian and cyclists are included within Section 9.5 of the TA.
- 3.2.6 A minimum width has been incorporated into the Scheme design for PRoW, as well as the corridor in which they will be provided (between Scheme

infrastructure). In all cases the PRoW will be of typical width, with at least 5m spacing either side of the centreline of the PRoW and therefore delivering a minimum 10m space. This will avoid the perception of being channelled into narrow passages between PV Panels.

- 3.2.7 Details relating to permissive paths are set out within an **Outline OEMP [EN010118/APP/7.11(B)]** and a separate Permissive Path Plan which include details relating to the proposals for and management of proposed permissive paths during the operational phase. Where any proposed cycle paths connect to PRoW (where pedestrians have the right of way) or join public highways, signage will be installed to instruct cyclists to dismount and warn of the hazard ahead. Bollards or gates will be installed to slow cyclists where there is considered to be an elevated safety hazard to cyclists or pedestrians. This detail will be agreed with the relevant local authority at detailed design stage post consent as part of the final OEMP, along with the Permissive Path Plan showing the route, surfacing material, and widths of proposed permissive paths.
- 3.2.8 The **Outline OEMP [EN010118/APP/7.11(B)]** will be developed into an OEMP in liaison with BDC, and CCC, prior to commissioning of the Scheme.

3.3 Decommissioning

- 3.3.1 During the decommissioning phase, the PRoW will be managed in the same way as discussed in **Section 3.1**. There will be no PRoW closures although some minor diversions are likely to be required to provide safe access across the Order limits whilst decommissioning activities are taking place. These diversions will be temporary and are expected to be similar in nature and duration to those during the construction phase.
- 3.3.2 A Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan and a Decommissioning Travel Management Plan will be required to be produced prior to commencing decommissioning activities on site (in relation to the Solar Farm Site works and the Grid Connection Route works, as defined in the draft DCO). A **Decommissioning Strategy [EN010118/APP/7.12(A)]** is provided as part of this application.

4. Summary and Conclusions

- 4.1.1 This document has outlined the current PRoW in the Order limits and how safe access will be maintained along these PRoW during the construction, operation, and decommissioning of the Scheme, in accordance with Paragraph 2.49.6 of the Draft NPS EN-3.
- 4.1.2 A separate **Outline OEMP [EN010118/APP/7.11(B)]** and **Permissive Path Plan [EN010118/APP/7.14]** have been prepared which review the proposals for and management of proposed permissive paths during the operational phase.

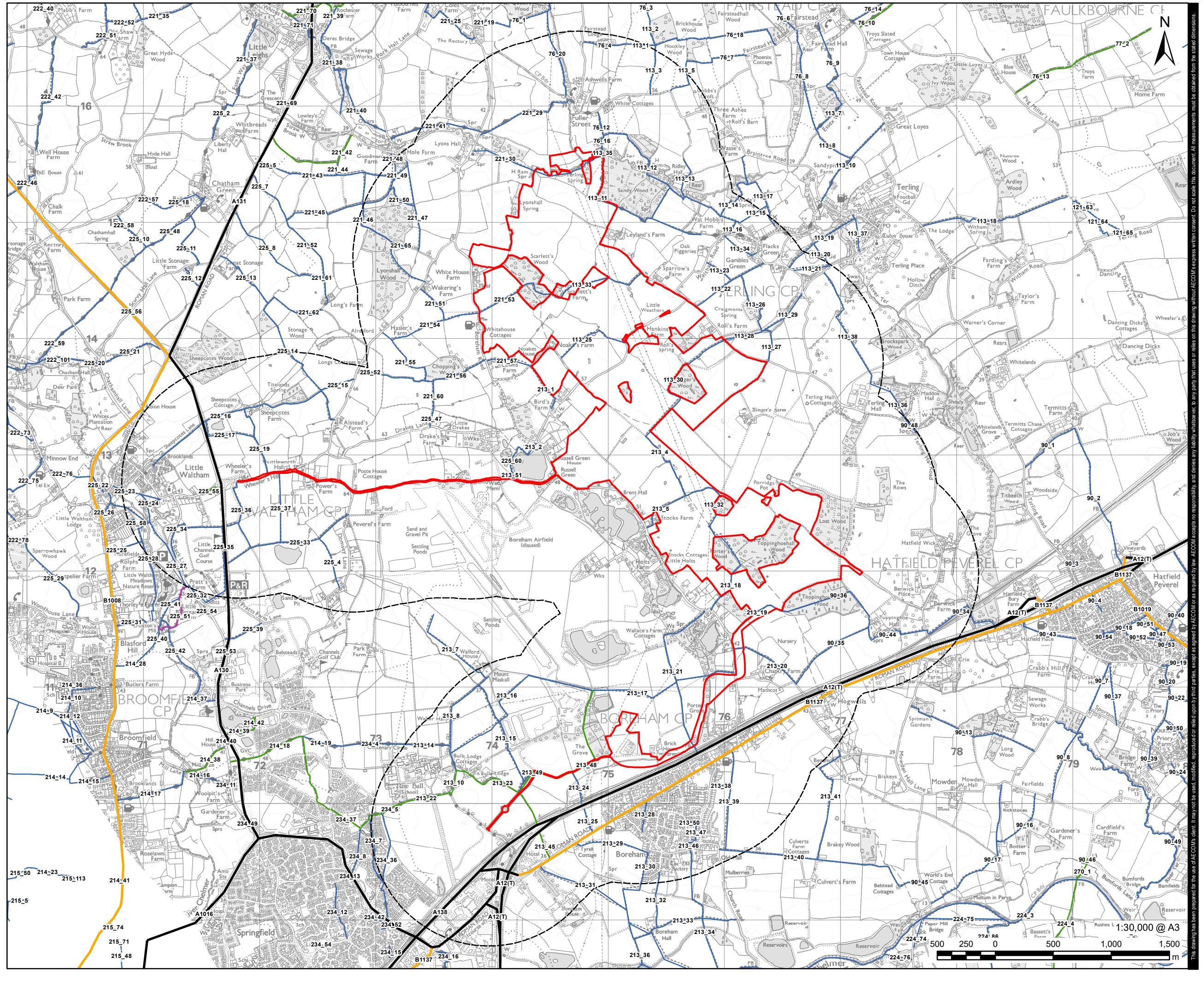
5. Figures

Figure 1 – Existing PRoW

Figure 2 – PRoW Management (Construction Phase)

Figure 3 – Temporary PRoW Diversions (Solar Farm Site)

Figure 4 – Temporary PRoW Diversions (Cable Route)

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LEGEND

- Order Limits
- 1km Scheme Buffer
- A Roads
- B Roads
- Bridleway
- Byway
- Footpath

NOTES

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ISSUE PURPOSE

Environmental Statement

PINS REFERENCE NUMBER

EN010118

FIGURE TITLE

Public Rights of Way

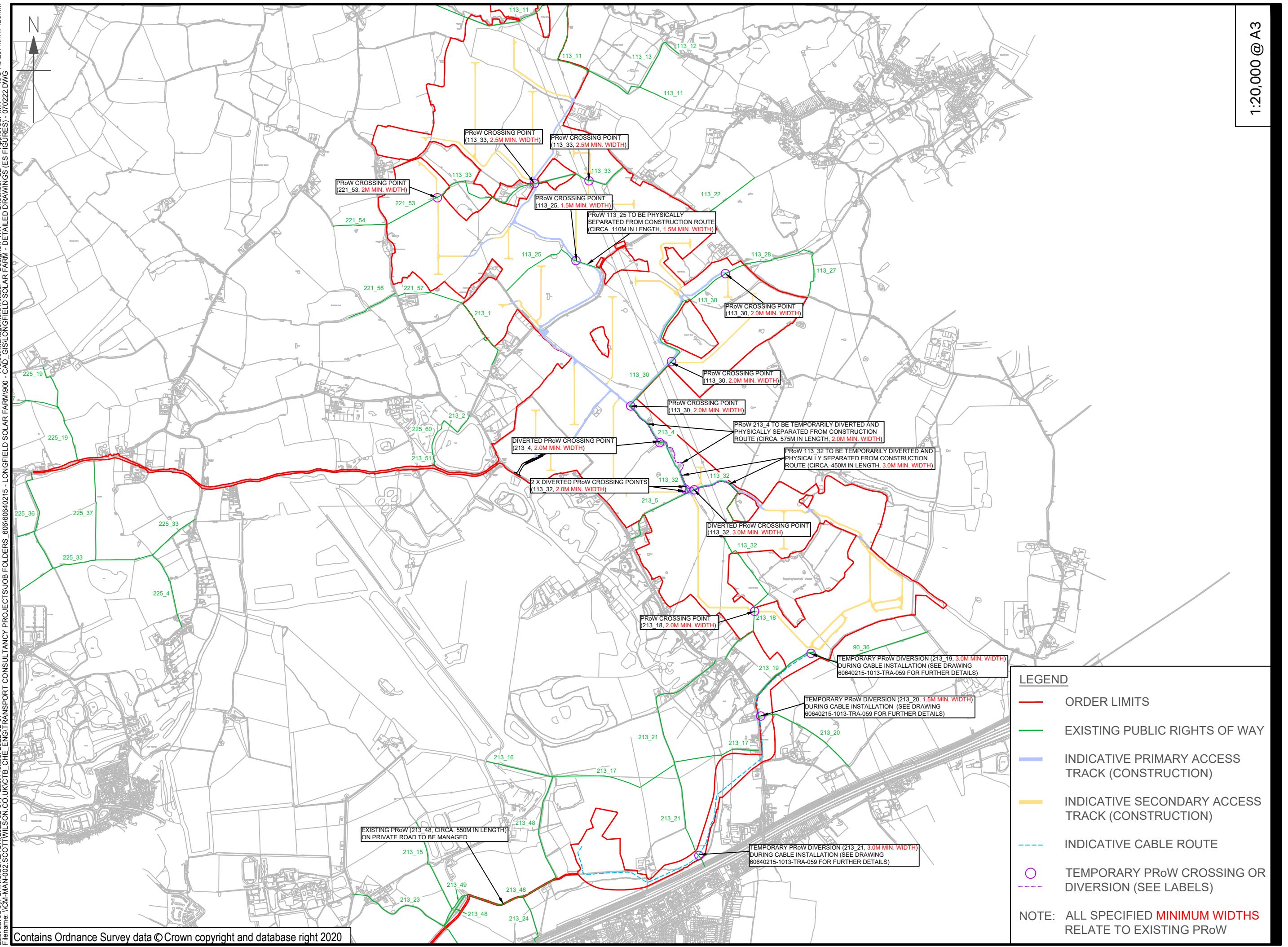
FIGURE NUMBER

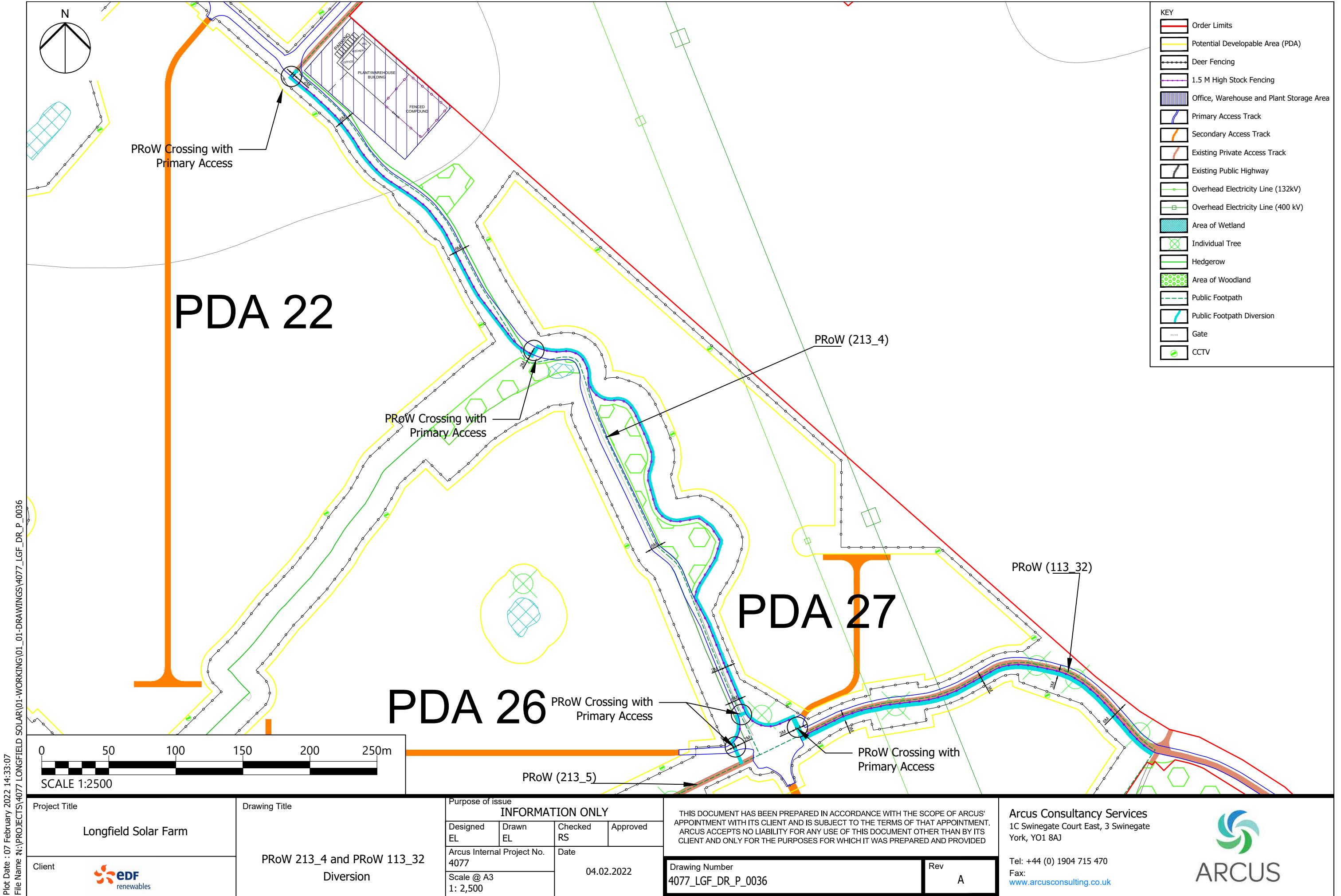
Figure 2-2

Note: Drawing scale is designed to show all
PRoW on a single sheet for ease of reference

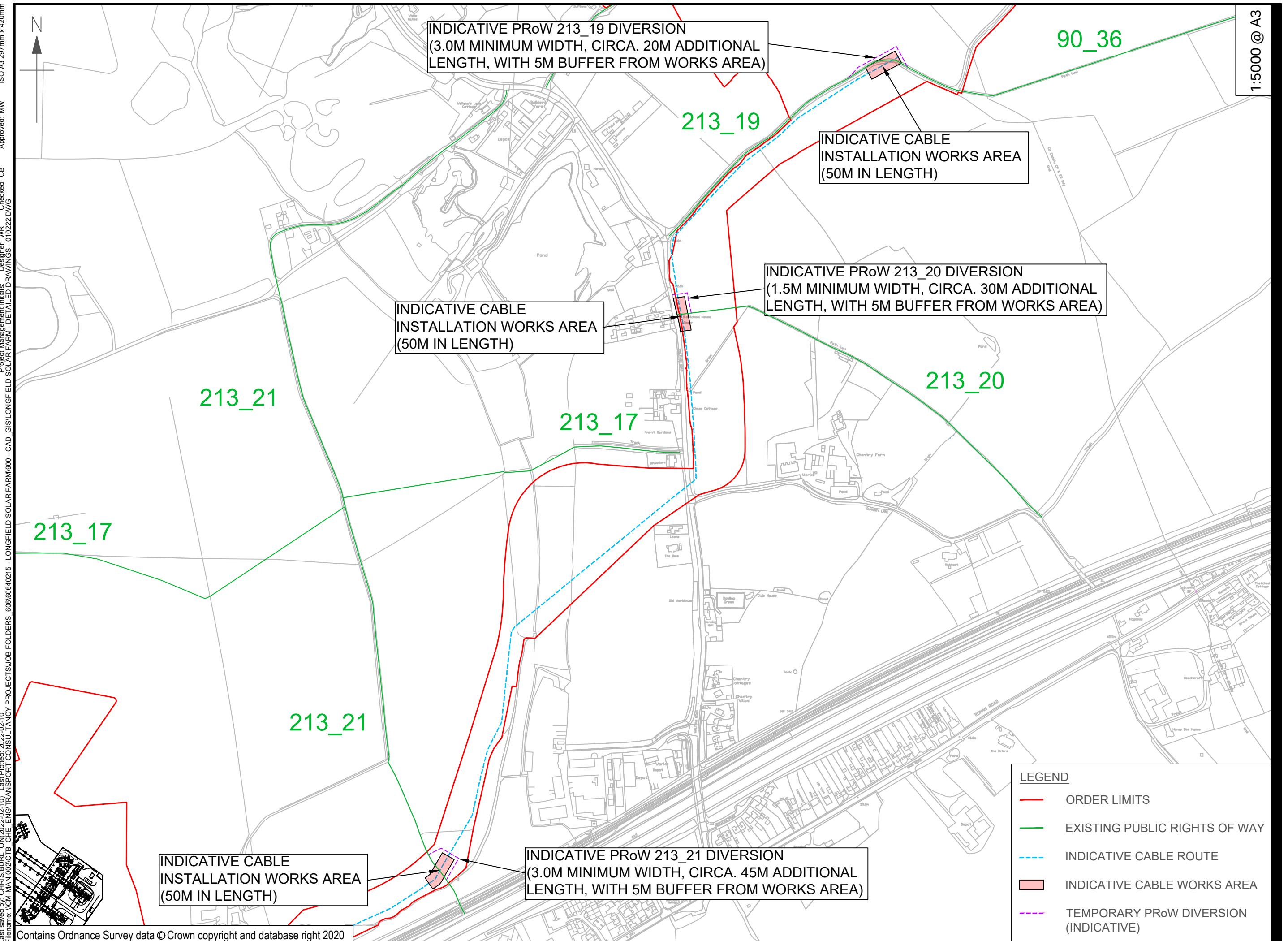
Longfield Solar Farm Environmental Statement - PRoW Management Plan (Construction Phase)

PINS Ref: EN010118





Note: Drawing scale is designed to show temporary PRoW diversions on a single sheet for ease of reference



6. References

- Ref 1-1 BEIS (2021), Draft National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3).
- Ref 1-2 Chelmsford City Council, (2020); Chelmsford Local Plan 2013-2036
- Ref 1-3 Braintree District Council, (2021); Braintree District Draft Local Plan