



# Stonestreet Green Solar

## Written Summary of Oral Submissions from Issue Specific Hearing 2 and Responses to Action Points

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# 1 Written Summary of the Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 2

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## 1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This document summarises the oral submissions by EPL 001 Limited ('**EPL**' or the '**Applicant**'), at Issue Specific Hearing 2 ('**ISH2**') which took place in a blended format at the Ashford International Hotel and on Microsoft Teams on 21 November 2024.
- 1.1.2 In what follows, the Applicant's submissions on the points raised broadly follow the Agenda for the ISH2 set out in the Examining Authority's ('**ExA**') letter which was published on the Planning Inspectorate's website on 22 October 2024 (the Rule 6 letter) [\[PD-004\]](#). Where the comment is a post-hearing note submitted by the Applicant, this is indicated.
- 1.1.3 The Applicant, which is promoting the Stonestreet Green Solar Project (the '**Project**') was represented by Mr Hugh Flanagan of Francis Taylor Building, instructed by Herbert Smith Freehills LLP. He also introduced Mr David Stoddart, Associate Director at Prime Transport Planning and Mr Mike Humphrey, Director at Quod Planning Consultancy.

## 1.2 Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Introductions

- 1.2.1 The ExA welcomed attendees to ISH2 and provided introductory remarks about how the hearing would be conducted.

## 1.3 Agenda Item 2: Purpose of the Issue Specific Hearing

- 1.3.1 The ExA explained the purpose of ISH2, noting that the Applicant would be asked firstly to describe the proposed construction routes for the Project, secondly to explain its traffic management proposals in respect of the Project and discussions with local authorities on the same, and finally to consider the cumulative impacts of the Project with other schemes.
- 1.3.2 Mr Flanagan on behalf of the Applicant firstly provided an oral response to a query relating to the extent to which increased future generating capacity due to an improvement in technology could be accommodated within the grid connection agreement capacity of 99.9MW, which was raised during Issue Specific Hearing 1 (See paragraph 1.4.10 of the **Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 1 and responses to Action Points (Doc Ref. 8.5.3)**).
- 1.3.3 He noted there were three key points to mention:
- Firstly, the submitted illustrative design for the Project assumes the 655 watt panels, which results in an installed capacity of c.144MW, as is set out in

the Application documents. He noted that, as Mr Sharpe explained during ISH1, the position of the Applicant is that increases in generation capacity due to foreseeable technological improvements between now and the date of the operation of the Project will result in further optimisation of the use of the permitted grid capacity amount, rather than this being exceeded. He further explained that construction works on the Project are expected to commence in 2026, and between now and then increases in panel output of more than 30% are considered unlikely. Applying a 30% uplift means the panels will be around 850 watts. He noted that even at this larger panel capacity, the energy generated by the project could still be accommodated within the grid connection agreement with no energy loss. In conclusion, the Applicant is clear that the Project's installed capacity will not be oversized, and there is no evidence to the contrary. Extra energy generation is a good thing in terms of meeting decarbonisation objectives.

- Secondly, Mr Flanagan explained that paragraph 2.10.17 of National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (January 2024) (**'NPS EN-3'**) recognises that a solar farm requires around two to four acres per megawatt, and he confirmed that the Project is well within that range in terms of land take.
- Thirdly, Mr Flanagan referred to a point made by Mr Bromley during Open Floor Hearing 1 asking whether the Project should incorporate bifacial panels. Mr Flanagan confirmed that the design of the Project already incorporates and is based on bifacial panels.

## 1.4 Agenda Item 3: Construction traffic routes

- 1.4.1 The ExA asked the Applicant to present its proposals in relation to construction traffic in the locale. On behalf of the Applicant, Mr Flanagan introduced Mr Stoddart and explained that in response to the request from the ExA during the Preliminary Meeting for a visual fly through, the Applicant will present a drive through of the construction traffic routes which would be put on screen.
- 1.4.2 Mr Stoddart on behalf of the Applicant then explained that the construction traffic route for the Project is illustrated in Figure A1: Construction Traffic Route and Crossing Plan in Appendix A of the **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan ('CTMP') (Doc Ref. 7.9(A))**. The Project Site benefits from close proximity to the strategic road network, specifically the M20 motorway. He explained that the Primary Site Access is located just 4.5km from M20 Junction 10a with approximately 3.2km of the route utilising an A classified distributor road.
- 1.4.3 Mr Stoddart confirmed that all Heavy Goods Vehicles (**'HGVs'**) involved in the construction of the Project will utilise Junction 10a, with the junction having relatively recently opened in late 2019. This junction was constructed in compliance with national design standards to accommodate traffic from planned growth in and around Ashford and to alleviate congestion at Junction 10.
- 1.4.4 Mr Stoddart noted that the Applicant has engaged with both National Highways (**'NH'**) and Kent County Council (**'KCC'**) as the local highway authority and confirmed that neither party has raised an objection to the proposals. He noted that NH has

requested to be consulted on the detailed CTMP(s) when they are prepared post-DCO consent, which the Applicant is willing to agree to. He noted that the Applicant has had a number of discussions with KCC and has made changes relating to the points raised by them regarding minibus transport and access arrangements to Bank Farm. He confirmed that KCC has confirmed in writing that these are acceptable at this stage to demonstrate a workable solution will be deliverable, with details to be addressed as part of agreement of a detailed CTMP, if DCO consent is granted. This agreement is shown in the SoCGs with both highway authorities which will be submitted in due course.

- 1.4.5 Mr Stoddart then presented the 'fly through' of the route, as requested at the Preliminary Meeting. He played dashcam footage recorded by him during a site visit on the afternoon of Monday 4th July 2022. He noted there were two clips to present, the first being footage heading to the Site from M20 Junction 10a to the Primary Site Access off Station Road and the second clip showing the only material use of the local highway network, from the crossing location on Station Road at the south of Field 23 to the Goldwell Lane access.
- 1.4.6 While the first clip was playing, Mr Stoddart explained the route construction traffic would take. He confirmed that construction traffic exiting Junction 10a will travel around 3.2km on the A20 Hythe Road, an 'A' classified distributor road that links Ashford with Folkestone. He noted that the A20 is of a good standard and is regularly used in both directions by HGVs, buses and coaches and that it is subject to national speed limit which is 60mph for cars and motorcycles but 50mph for HGVs. The carriageway is generally around 6.5-7m wide which is wider than the 5.5m width stated in the Manual for Streets<sup>1</sup> to allow two heavy good vehicles to pass. He noted that a kerbed footway is provided on the northern side of the road with a verge consisting of grass and generally low-growing vegetation on the southern side. White centreline markings, reflective studs and edge of carriageway markings are provided.
- 1.4.7 Mr Stoddart then let the footage play through until the car reached the Smeeth Crossroads.
- 1.4.8 Mr Stoddart then described that construction traffic travelling towards the Site will turn right onto the C609 Station Road at the Smeeth Crossroads. The right turn into Station Road benefits from a ghost island which includes illuminated bollards on traffic islands and reflective studs. He confirmed that directional signage is also in place as is warning signage on approach on the A20, including crossroads warning signage on high visibility yellow backgrounds and added 'REDUCE SPEED NOW' advisory signage along with SLOW markings.
- 1.4.9 He confirmed that the ghost island has an effective length of 50m, which is long enough to accommodate three 16.5m long articulated HGVs or around 8 cars without them blocking ahead movements on the A20. Mr Stoddart noted that visibility for all traffic travelling along the A20 is excellent in this location, as it the visibility for vehicles turning left out of Station Road.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7e0035ed915d74e6223743/pdfmanforstreets.pdf>

- 1.4.10 Mr Stoddart explained that the C classified Station Road is of a reasonable width and standard, with the carriageway generally measuring between 5.5m and 7m wide. It is relatively straight with good forward visibility. Centreline markings are in place for much of its length indicating a minimum width of 5.5m in line with the Traffic Signs Manual.<sup>2</sup> He noted that the road is regularly used in both directions by heavy vehicles including HGVs, coaches and large agricultural vehicles as witnessed first-hand during several site visits. He confirmed that Station Road is clearly fit for purpose for the type of construction vehicles that will be using the road for the Project. Mr Stoddart explained that the construction traffic will continue south for around 1.3km on Station Road to the Primary Site Access immediately south of the railway line. Just 2 trips per hour in each direction are forecast to be HGVs, equivalent to just 1 HGV trip every 15-minutes. He noted the route passes over the HS1 railway line.
- 1.4.11 He confirmed that the Primary Site Access will utilise the existing access at this location, which is already constructed to a high standard with a macadam surface and is easily capable of accommodating large vehicles as demonstrated in the swept path analysis presented in Drawing P22034-001D-01 found in **Environmental Statement Volume 4: Appendices Chapter 13: Traffic and Access Appendix 13.7: Access Drawings (Doc Ref. 5.4)** [\[APP-113\]](#).
- 1.4.12 Mr Stoddart confirmed that the initial section of the Primary Site Access in front of the existing gate is adopted by KCC and was lined as a priority controlled T-junction with give-way markings. He noted that the markings are now worn and will be replenished as part of the Project. Appropriate signage will be in place during construction of the Project, including 'no left turn' signage to direct departing drivers to turn right only out of the Site, back onto the construction traffic route for their return journey to the M20 Junction 10a. He noted that a safe level of visibility aligning with national design standards based on independently recorded speeds in the vicinity of the access is achievable.
- 1.4.13 At KCC's request, vegetation on the inside of the bend will be cut-back to make the junction more visible on approach from the south-west, as secured by Schedule 5 (alteration of streets) to the **Draft DCO (Doc Ref 3.1(B))**. Use of an existing access offers a safety benefit compared to providing a new junction. He confirmed that KCC Highways is content with the Primary Site Access.
- 1.4.14 Mr Stoddart explained that the primary construction compounds will be located within the Site in Fields 25 and 26, as shown as Work No. 7 on the **Works Plans (Doc Ref. 2.3(B))**, close to the Primary Site Access. He noted that construction traffic will pull into the compounds where equipment and materials will be unloaded from the HGVs and loaded onto trailers which will be pulled by agricultural tractor to the various fields within the Site.
- 1.4.15 He confirmed that up to just two abnormal indivisible loads ('**AILs**') are forecast during the whole 12-month construction period, these being classed as abnormal based on the weight of the transformer components that they will be carrying, rather than their size. These abnormal loads will utilise the construction traffic route and

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/traffic-signs-manual>

will be unloaded in the primary construction compounds. Mr Stoddart confirmed that the weight limits of the structures on the construction traffic route have been checked and are capable of bearing the load of such trips. The appropriate abnormal road space booking process will be completed with both KCC and NH as appropriate during the construction period.

- 1.4.16 Mr Stoddart explained that a purpose built temporary internal haulage road ('IHR') will be installed from the primary construction compounds to transport the equipment and materials across the Site, which will minimise use of the local roads.
- 1.4.17 He noted that, most importantly, the IHR bypasses the most constrained sections of Station Road, including the two tight bends near Evegate Mill which were identified by both KCC and the Applicant, as being difficult to navigate for larger vehicles. He confirmed that the IHR also bypasses Calleywell Lane and much of Bank/Roman Road, with both roads providing access to residential properties and local businesses. Mr Stoddart explained the Applicant recognises these constraints and is able to offer the IHR as key embedded mitigation for the Project. He noted that KCC's highways team suggested the use of an internal haulage road during early discussions on the Project and have welcomed the arrangement.
- 1.4.18 Mr Stoddart confirmed that traffic management will be employed at the points where the IHR will need to cross local roads. This includes single crossing points on Station Road and Bank Road, three points on the Byway Open to All Traffic ('BOAT') (AE396) and two points on the very lightly trafficked Laws Lane. He noted that the exact crossing locations will be confirmed at the detailed design stage but are shown indicatively on Figure A1: Construction Traffic Route and Crossing Plan in Appendix A of the **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan ('CTMP')** (Doc Ref. **7.9(A)**).
- 1.4.19 He noted that a commitment is made in the Outline CTMP to provide appropriate traffic management measures to protect road and Public Right of Way ('PRoW') users, the specifics of which will be identified in the detailed CTMP following input from the Principal Contractor, and are likely to include, but are not limited to banksmen, signage and temporary traffic signal control.
- 1.4.20 Mr Stoddart confirmed that it is not possible to access the south-eastern fields of the Site using the IHR, and therefore a limited amount of tractor-trailer construction traffic will need to use the local highway network in this area. He noted that in order to mitigate any risk when navigating the c.90 degree bend on Goldwell Lane, escort vehicles, such as cars, vans or quad bikes, will be used. He further noted that the left turn onto Station Road is shown via swept path analysis on Drawing P22034-002D-01, and the navigation of the Goldwell Lane bend shown on Drawing P22034-003D-01. Both drawings are presented in **Environmental Statement Volume 4: Appendices Chapter 13: Traffic and Access Appendix 13.7: Access Drawings (Doc Ref. 5.4)** [[APP-113](#)].
- 1.4.21 He then played the second dashcam clip showing the route between the Station Road crossing point and the Goldwell Lane access to the Site. The footage commences at the location of the Station Road crossing.

- 1.4.22 While the dashcam video was playing, Mr Stoddart confirmed that the footage continues along Station Road where it becomes Goldwell Lane at the junction with Calleywell Lane and continues to the bend. He noted that this section of road is more typical of a country lane. The nature of the road, including its regular use by agricultural vehicles, generally encourages slower speeds at around 30mph despite it being subject to the national speed limit. He noted that the width of the bend and the sections immediately either side of the bend require the aforementioned traffic management, specifically the use of escort vehicles, to ensure the safe passage of tractors and trailers.
- 1.4.23 He explained that Goldwell Lane widens to the south of the bend with centreline markings in place. The Goldwell Lane access is located inside the 30mph speed limit section with the speed limit terminal highlighted by high friction surface treatment and a speed limit roundel in addition to the speed limit signage. The footage ends at the Goldwell Lane access which is currently a gated field access.
- 1.4.24 Mr Stoddart explained that when arriving at the Goldwell Lane access, signage and banksmen will be in place to aid the safe turn into and out of the Site, with 'no left turn' signage in place for vehicles exiting the Site as shown in Drawing P22034-004D-01 in **Environmental Statement Volume 4: Appendices Chapter 13: Traffic and Access Appendix 13.7: Access Drawings (Doc Ref. 5.4)** [[APP-113](#)].
- 1.4.25 He noted that the traffic management will not only aid construction traffic vehicles but other Goldwell Lane users including users of footpath AE474. An 8m buffer will be provided using temporary barrier fencing to separate PRoW users and construction traffic. Mr Stoddart confirmed that construction traffic trips to Goldwell Lane will be made by a trailer pulled by an agricultural tractor with the equipment having been unloaded from goods vehicles in the primary construction compounds. A single tractor and trailer trip in each direction is forecast per hour along Goldwell Lane, equivalent to just 1 round tractor and trailer trip per hour over a 5 month construction period.
- 1.4.26 Mr Stoddart explained that construction traffic will cross, but not travel along, Roman Road (also known as Bank Road), utilising the existing Bank Farm access. Construction vehicles will be held within the Site until the access is clear, with banksmen on hand to hold and direct both construction traffic and the general public.
- 1.4.27 He described that construction traffic will cross Church Lane south of Sellindge Substation in order to facilitate the cable route connection. Traffic management will be provided at the Church Lane crossing. He confirmed that it is anticipated that fewer than 10 construction trips per day will be made in each direction from/to the A20 Hythe Road along Church Lane to/from the existing accesses to Sellindge Substation for a 2-month period in order to complete the UK Power Networks upgrade works at the substation. This traffic will utilise the wide northern section of Church Lane rather than the narrow section south of the Substation. Mr Stoddart noted that the carriageway has been constructed to a width that comfortably allows for the passage of HGVs. Similarly, the height of the M20 bridge is sufficient to allow standard height HGVs to pass beneath it given the lack of any restricted height warning signage.



1.4.28 Mr Stoddart confirmed that the same construction traffic route will be used for decommissioning as stated in the **Outline Decommissioning Traffic Management Plan (Doc Ref. 7.13(A)) ('Outline DTMP')**.

1.4.29 Mr Stoddart concluded his presentation by providing the following summary regarding the construction traffic route:

- The Site benefits from close proximity to the motorway network and also utilises a section of a good quality A classified distributor road which accounts for around 3.2km of the 4.5km construction traffic route;
- Use of the local roads by HGVs is limited to a circa 1.3km long section of the C classified Station Road which already accommodates HGVs, coaches and large agricultural vehicles, and is therefore fit for the purpose of the construction vehicles, as well as a circa 1.2km long section of Goldwell Lane for up to 5-months where the tractor-trailer will be escorted;
- The construction traffic will only be added to the western and southern arms of the Smeeth Crossroads, with these arms benefitting from excellent visibility levels;
- The Primary Site Access is an existing access, already constructed to a high standard with a wide carriageway and where a safe level of visibility can be achieved in line with national design standards;
- As well as bypassing the tight bends on Station Road near Evegat Mill and minimising the use of local roads, the temporary IHR will mean that construction traffic will not be added to the roads in the centre of Aldington, specifically Goldwell Lane south of the Goldwell Lane access, Calleywell Lane and Roman Road;
- A small section of Goldwell Lane will be utilised over a period of 5-months by tractor-trailer to allow construction of the south-east area. Goldwell Lane is already used by such vehicles;
- Whilst a robust assessment of the level of construction traffic has been undertaken by the Applicant, the level of traffic forecast per hour is up to just 2 inbound and 2 outbound HGV movements to and from the Primary Site Access for the 12-month construction period;
- Just 1 tractor-trailer trip in each direction is forecast to and from the Goldwell Lane access for 5-months of the construction period (per hour), with these trips to be managed using escort vehicles;
- Only up to 2 abnormal load trips are forecast across the 12-month construction period, with these trips to be confined to the construction traffic route;
- The proposals accord with National Policy Statement for Energy EN-1 (January 2024) ('**NPS EN-1**'), paragraph 5.14.20, as the Applicant is content for requirements to be imposed to mitigate the transport impacts of the Project. The proposals also accord with paragraph 5.14.21 of NPS EN-1 as it has been demonstrated that the Project will not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety, the residual cumulative impacts on the road network will not be severe, and that the proposals give consideration to the

provision of adequate active public or shared transport access and provision.

- 1.4.30 Mr Stoddart also confirmed that updated SoCGs have been circulated to both NH and KCC with good progress having already been made and substantial agreement reached with both parties.
- 1.4.31 He confirmed that the professional officers at NH, who are responsible for the safe and efficient operation of the strategic road network, are content with the use of M20 Junction 10a, subject to review of the detailed CTMP(s) post-consent.
- 1.4.32 Mr Stoddart also noted that the professional officers at KCC have raised no objection to what is proposed. In particular, the officers (who are responsible for the safe and efficient operation of the local highway network) are content with the construction traffic route or the Project as a whole, subject to the implementation of the proposed accesses, IHR and the detailed CTMP(s). He reiterated that the use of the IHR, which was initially suggested by the local highway authority, has been welcomed.
- 1.4.33 The ExA asked the Applicant to confirm that the first clip of dashcam footage terminated as Primary Site Access and the second at Goldwell Lane.
- 1.4.34 The Applicant confirmed this was correct.
- 1.4.35 The ExA asked whether it was not possible to carry on the footage to show the secondary accesses such as Laws Lane.
- 1.4.36 In response, Mr Stoddart explained that the Applicant had concentrated on the main construction traffic routes and confirmed that traffic management will be in place at the crossing points with the highway. He confirmed that some footage could be provided of Laws Lane, but noted that the Applicant's understanding is that the byway is currently impassable. He also confirmed that footage of Church Lane could be provided.
- 1.4.37 The ExA asked the Applicant to confirm the time and date the footage was taken.
- 1.4.38 In response, Mr Stoddart confirmed that it was taken on Monday 4 July 2022 at around 2pm.
- 1.4.39 *Post-hearing note: there was a suggestion by an Interested Party during the hearing that this date was during the school holidays. The Applicant confirms that is not correct and that the footage was taken during term time.*
- 1.4.40 The ExA then requested comments from KCC, and Ms Potter on behalf of KCC confirmed that KCC would respond fully in writing. She did note that engagement with the Applicant had been positive.
- 1.4.41 Mr Nigel de Wit on behalf of National Highways ('NH') explained that the Applicant been in contact with NH to address points raised in NH's Relevant Representation [\[RR-205\]](#) including those on the **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan**

(‘CTMP’) (Doc Ref. 7.9(A)) and SoCG between the parties. He confirmed that active engagement was ongoing.

- 1.4.42 The ExA noted that **Environmental Statement Volume 2: Main Text Chapter 13: Traffic and Access (Doc Ref. 5.2(B))** provides accident data up to 31 March 2023. He asked if it was possible to extend this to 2024.
- 1.4.43 Mr Stoddart on behalf of the Applicant confirmed it would request this data from KCC, noting that it can take some time for them to process. He noted that the data in the chapter was the most up to date at the time the assessment was undertaken.
- 1.4.44 *Post-hearing note: Please see the Applicant's response to Action Point 2 below.*
- 1.4.45 The ExA noted that paragraph 4.5.3 of **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (‘CTMP’) (Doc Ref. 7.9(A))** refers to a minibus service being utilised by the Principal Contractor. He asked whether use of the minibus should be mandatory for all construction workers, or whether onsite parking would be provided.
- 1.4.46 In response, Mr Stoddart for the Applicant explained that there will be workers who are not working full time who will need car parking provision, but confirmed that the majority will be expected to travel to the Site via minibus.
- 1.4.47 The ExA noted that the **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (‘CTMP’) (Doc Ref. 7.9(A))** and **Outline Decommissioning Traffic Management Plan (‘DTMP’) (Doc Ref. 7.13(A))** both refer to the Considerate Contractors' Scheme. He asked the Applicant to explain how the scheme would be adopted and communicated to the community.
- 1.4.48 Mr Sharpe responded on behalf of the Applicant to confirm that the **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (‘CTMP’) (Doc Ref. 7.9(A))** includes a commitment to community liaison. He confirmed that the detailed CTMP will set out this detail in full, adding that production, approval and implementation of the detailed CTMP is secured by a requirement in the **Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(B))**.
- 1.4.49 The ExA noted that Article 15 (access to works) of the **Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(B))** relates to access to works and noted that the Applicant has requested powers to create permanent accesses and diversions. He asked whether the local authorities had any concerns about this power, given this is an application for temporary consent (of 40 years).
- 1.4.50 Ms Potter on behalf of KCC confirmed they would take that point away.
- 1.4.51 *Post-hearing note: Please see Action Point 3 below.*
- 1.4.52 The ExA requested comments on Article 17 (traffic regulation measures) of the **Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(B))** from KCC.
- 1.4.53 Ms Potter on behalf of KCC confirmed they would take that point away.

- 1.4.54 **Post-hearing note:** Please see Action Point 4 below.
- 1.4.55 The ExA asked what provisions have been made for maintenance where the Applicant is proposing to acquire portions of highway verges.
- 1.4.56 Mr Flanagan on behalf of the Applicant responded to confirm that these verges would likely to be offered back to KCC to be adopted by them, and then maintained and managed by them. This would be the mechanism for them to be maintained in perpetuity, as part of KCC's highway network.
- 1.4.57 The ExA noted that some relevant representations ([\[RR-088\]](#), [\[RR-135\]](#) and [\[RR-213\]](#)) raised issues relating to the existing condition of roads in the vicinity of the Site. He asked the Applicant to explain how it has had regard to existing road conditions including in relation to safety, noise and vibration.
- 1.4.58 Mr Stoddart on behalf of the Applicant responded to confirm that the existing condition of the local carriageways is KCC's responsibility, but that the Applicant has committed to undertaking a condition survey prior to commencing construction of the Project. This survey will be at various intervals to be agreed with KCC during the construction period. He confirmed that this commitment is included in the **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan ('CTMP') (Doc Ref. 7.9(A))**.
- 1.4.59 The ExA asked who would be responsible for any mitigation measures that the condition survey identified as being required, and when these would be undertaken.
- 1.4.60 Mr Stoddart confirmed this would be the responsibility of the Applicant and would be completed at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 1.4.61 Oral submissions were then made by the following parties, covering the following points:
- Ashford Borough Councillor ('Cllr') Linda Harman (ward member for Saxon Shore and Chair of Aldington and Bonnington Parish Council ('**ABPC**')) expressed disappointment in country representatives and concern about safety of local roads. She noted that Goldwell Lane is affected, which is very close to the Primary School and flagged parking issues along Goldwell Lane.
  - Mr Jonathan Tennant on behalf of Aldington and Mersham Support Group ('**AMSG**') described the character of the local highway network and noted that other users of the roads include those accessing Sellindge Substation, the Southern Water sewerage plant, and other local developments. He requested that the ExA visits the Smeeth Crossroads, noting the issue of vehicles approaching it at high speed. He also noted the issue of the gradient of the highway at the Primary Site Access. He noted that "construction traffic" is not a defined term, and asked the Applicant to confirm whether this includes worker transport via car and minibus, also noting concerns about minibus use.
  - Mr Simon Lunn on behalf of AMSG queried the number of crossings of

Laws Lane (2x) and the BOAT (3x) in the **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan ('CTMP') (Doc Ref. 7.9(A))**. He also raised the issue of mud at the crossing points and asked that provisions for cleaning mud off vehicles be included in the Application. He also noted concern about the effects of the construction traffic and effects to local byways on equestrian users.

- Mr Paul Bartlett spoke about the impact of traffic moving between Aldington and Mersham along Laws Lane and Bank Lane. He also (1) requested dashcam footage along Bank Road; (2) asked for communication of when construction vehicles would be using the Bank Farm access; and (3) he requested a programme of verge restoration to improve the quality of the local highway network.
- Mr Andrew Swarbrick, local resident and road user, noted that Station Road has several bends in it which are hard to pass large vehicles on. He also noted that the existing access at the proposed Primary Site Access is at a tight angle and is on a tight gradient and disagreed that the existing visibility and signage was effective. He asked: (1) how long would it take an HGV to manoeuvre at such an acute angle; (2) how long will escort vehicles take along Goldwell Lane; and (3) how many crossings of Station Road are anticipated.
- Cllr Clair Bell, KCC Cllr for Ashford Rural East stated she was disappointed that nobody from KCC highways had been able to attend the hearing. She requested dashcam footage from the winter, as the 12 month construction period will run over this. She noted concerns about the minibus proposals for construction workers.
- Ms Kate Beswick, countryside access officer at KCC, noted that the use by non-motorised users ('**NMUs**') of the local network should also be taken into account. She also noted she had been engaging with the Applicant for a number of years.

1.4.62 Mr Flanagan on behalf of the Applicant responded by acknowledging the concerns raised. He explained that, based on the technical evidence produced, the Applicant considers that what is proposed by way of traffic management (notably the embedded mitigation of the IHR) accords with policy and the advice of the professional officers at KCC. He also noted that it is important to keep in mind the numbers of construction vehicles concerned. For Station Road, there will be two HGV trips per hour in each direction over only a 12 month construction period. For Goldwell Lane, the number is even lower and over a five month period only. He also noted that the use of Church Lane to access Sellindge Substation will be less than 10 vehicles per day over a 2 month period.

1.4.63 Mr Flanagan then reintroduced Mr Stoddart, who covered the following points in response:

- **Smeeth Crossroads:** He noted that the Applicant recognises the issues with this junction, and has discussed this with KCC given they are responsible for highway safety. He confirmed that the Project would only be adding traffic to the western and southern arms of the junction, which both

have excellent visibility. He added that vehicles will only be turning left from Station Road, where there is excellent visibility and road hatching in accordance with the Design Manual for Road and Bridges is in place. He explained that the A20 is not part of the Strategic Road Network, but when applying those principles as a worst case scenario, the visibility at the junction is acceptable. He noted that the ghost island can accommodate 3 articulated lorries.

- In respect of collision data at the crossroads, he confirmed that the Applicant's assessment had considered data from a 6 year period, from 1 April 2017 to 1 March 2023. He confirmed that this does only include reported accidents causing injury, not damage only accidents, as it is rare for this information to be supplied by highways authorities. He confirmed there had been no fatal accidents in that 6 year period, and that there had been an average of 1.16 collisions per year given traffic use. One of these was a serious accident, caused by a vehicle unsafely pulling out of Church Road. In addition, there were 5 slight accidents during the period, and overall no haulage vehicles were involved in accidents. He further confirmed that the HGV drivers used for the construction of the Project will be qualified and professional drivers subject to more stringent testing than standard drivers. He also reiterated that KCC has acknowledged that the impact of the Project on the junction is acceptable.
- **Traffic displacement and delay:** He confirmed that at the Primary Site Access, construction traffic will have right of way turning left in, so vehicles following construction vehicles will have to slow down. Those same construction vehicles will turn right out of the Primary Site Access and will wait until it is safe to do so. In relation to the level of visibility at the junction, he noted that the design of the access (shown on Access drawing P2034-001D-01) has been based on the 85th percentile speed of traffic using Station Road, so rather than using an average speed, the design has considered the upper range of speeds. He confirmed that national design guidance in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges ('DMRB') had been used to design the access. He then noted that an estimate of 20 seconds has been provided for how long it would take traffic to cross Station Road in paragraph 13.4.8 of **Environmental Statement Volume 2: Main Text Chapter 13: Traffic and Access (Doc Ref. 5.2(B))**. He confirmed that the estimate of 20 seconds is a conservative figure, and that traffic would be controlled by banksmen and signage. He explained that he did not consider that any local traffic will actively re-route to avoid this crossing as a result of this effect. He also reiterated that no construction traffic would travel along the narrow part of Church Lane. He then quoted paragraphs 13.7.33 and 34 of **Environmental Statement Volume 2: Main Text Chapter 13: Traffic and Access (Doc Ref. 5.2(B))**, which state:

*"13.7.33 The Primary Site Access and Goldwell Lane Access will be left-in and right-out only. Therefore the only delay to users of the main road at these locations directly caused by construction traffic will be as a result of the construction traffic slowing down to make the left turn in. However, traffic approaching the Primary Site Access on Station Road should be slowing anyway as it approaches the bend, with 'SLOW' road markings and*

*side road on outside of bend warning signage being present. Similarly, traffic on Goldwell Lane should be slowing down as it is approaching Aldington village centre, with the access location also inside the 30mph speed limit section. The right turns out of both accesses will only result in delay to Project traffic turning out rather than any traffic on the public highway.*

*13.7.34 There may be very limited, short term delays caused at the two points where the internal haulage road will cross the public highway, as shown on ES Volume 3, Figure 13.1: Construction Traffic Route and Traffic Data Location Plan (Doc Ref. 5.3), however this is necessary from a highway safety perspective, with traffic management to be employed to manage road crossings for the haulage vehicles. No delay is anticipated for construction traffic crossing the BOAT or Laws Lane, which are very lightly trafficked."*

- **Bank Road crossing:** He noted that there may be short term delays caused at the two points where the IHR crosses the public highway, which is necessary from a highway safety perspective. He explained that traffic management will be employed and no delay is anticipated.
- **Usage of Laws Lane:** He confirmed that Laws Lane is very lightly trafficked and banksmen will enable safe crossings during the construction period.

## 1.5 Agenda Item 4: Traffic Management

- 1.5.1 The ExA asked the Applicant to outline its traffic management proposals and also to deal with the point raised by Cllr Bell regarding nighttime HGV movements. Mr Flanagan for the Applicant responded to confirm that Mr Stoddart would present the Applicant's traffic management proposals.

### *Traffic Management Proposals*

- 1.5.2 Mr Stoddart then explained that the **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan ('CTMP') (Doc Ref. 7.9(A))**, secured by Requirement 7 of the **Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(B))**, expresses the Applicant's commitment to managing construction traffic on the highway network within the vicinity of the Order Limits during the construction period of the Project, in order to minimise any potential disruptions and implications on the wider highway network, and on existing road users. He added that the **Outline Decommissioning Traffic Management Plan ('DTMP') (Doc Ref. 7.13(A))** commits to the same during the decommissioning stage.
- 1.5.3 He explained that the Outline CTMP sets out the proposals to manage freight traffic as well as staff vehicles and confirmed that both KCC highways team and NH were consulted as part of the preparation of the Outline CTMP.
- 1.5.4 Mr Stoddart explained that detailed CTMP(s) will be prepared for each phase of construction period for approval by Ashford Borough Council ('ABC') in consultation with the relevant highway authority. He confirmed that the detailed CTMP(s) will remain in place for the 12-month duration of the construction period for the Project.

- 1.5.5 He noted that the appointed Principal Contractor will be responsible for working in accordance with the controls outlined within the Outline CTMP and the detailed CTMP(s). The overall responsibility for implementation of the detailed CTMP(s) will lie with the appointed contractor as a contractual responsibility to the undertaker (as defined in the **Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(B))**), as the undertaker is ultimately responsible for compliance with the DCO.
- 1.5.6 Mr Stoddart explained that the objectives of the **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan ('CTMP') (Doc Ref. 7.9(A))** are to:
- Minimise the volume of construction traffic for the Project as far as reasonably practicable, particularly during local network peaks, to minimise the impact on the highway network;
  - Ensure that the movements of people and materials associated with the construction of the Project are achieved in a safe, efficient, timely and sustainable manner as far as reasonably practicable;
  - Minimise the constraints imposed on, and ensure efficient management of, the PRoW within the Order Limits during the construction phase of the Project as far as reasonably practicable; and
  - Ensure the ongoing monitoring, review and if necessary revision of the detailed CTMP(s).
- 1.5.7 He noted that the Outline CTMP includes a mixture of measures that are relatively standard practice for developments of this scale and nature, along with more bespoke measures to address local circumstances. He confirmed that the Principal Contractor will seek the agreement of KCC's Street Works team regarding the measures prior to commencement of construction of the Project.
- 1.5.8 Mr Stoddart then explained that the measures are presented in Section 6 of the **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan ('CTMP') (Doc Ref. 7.9(A))** and are summarised as follows:
- A 10mph speed limit within the Site;
  - A temporary 5mph speed limit for Project vehicles at the Primary Site Access, IHR crossing points with PRoWs and along the shared section with footpath AE474 at the Goldwell Lane access;
  - Appropriate warning signage to be installed along the affected PRoWs warning both PRoW users and Project traffic, along with information on construction times and contact details for a public liaison officer;
  - Construction traffic will be instructed to give-way to PRoW users;
  - Safety measures will be implemented at PRoW construction traffic crossing points, including but not limited to: additional signage, banksmen and escort vehicles;
  - All PRoWs to be kept clear of construction vehicles and apparatus outside of permitted construction hours so far as reasonably practicable;
  - Any damage to the PRoWs to be repaired as soon as reasonably



practicable;

- Exploration of opportunities to schedule deliveries in a way to minimise impact on the PRow will be explored;
- A PRow buffer zone, demarcated by temporary barrier fencing, to be used at AE474 to keep PRow users and construction traffic separate;
- The Principal Contractor will engage with local residents, businesses, schools, rambler groups and KCC prior to commencement of construction and during key stages of the construction period;
- Coordination of deliveries by HGV will be timed to avoid drop-off and pick-up times for The Caldecott School and the traditional network peak hours. Similar arrangements will be made at the Goldwell Lane access to avoid the drop-off and pick-up times for Aldington Primary School;
- Temporary warning signage will be installed on the construction traffic route to both direct construction traffic and warn general traffic of its presence;
- Temporary traffic management such as banksmen, signage or temporary traffic signals to be used at the points where construction traffic will interact with the highway;
- Escort vehicles will be used to help construction traffic to navigate the bend on Goldwell Lane;
- Temporary traffic lights or stop/go boards to be used during the laying of underground cables along Goldwell Lane;
- Deliveries will be coordinated to minimise disruption to local residents, businesses and schools. An on-site delivery manager will be appointed;
- Condition surveys will be undertaken pre-commencement of construction, post-construction and at regular intervals in between to ensure that any damage to the highway or PRow networks caused by the Project is repaired and made good in a timely manner and to KCC's satisfaction at cost to the undertaker;
- The Construction Site Manager will engage with local residents, businesses and schools prior to commencement of construction and during key stages of construction. The details of the Construction Site Manager will be provided to KCC in advance of any works. The details will also be provided on a board at the Site accesses;
- The Principal Contractor will operate using best working practices including the Considerate Constructors Scheme (CCS) and its Code of Considerate Practice; and
- Wheel and underbody vehicle washing facilities will be provided within the primary construction compound at the Primary Site Access to minimise the spill-over of any debris generated by the construction works. The ground protection matting at the internal haulage road crossing points and at the Goldwell Lane access will be kept clean negating the need for vehicle washing at these points. A mechanised street sweeper will also be deployed.

- 1.5.9 Mr Stoddart confirmed that the Construction Site Manager will log any unforeseen issues that arise in relation to construction vehicle movement. If necessary, these issues will be discussed with KCC so that they can be resolved. He noted that specific monitoring will include:
- Collision monitoring, particularly at the Smeeth Crossroads but also along all sections of the construction traffic route and at the crossing points;
  - Adherence to the agreed routing strategy; and
  - Road safety to be monitored on Station Road from the A20 Hythe Road to the Primary Site Access, on Goldwell Lane between the Station Road crossing point and the Goldwell Lane access, at public highway and PRoW crossing points for the IHR, at the Church Lane crossing point and at PRoW in proximity to the IHR.
- 1.5.10 He noted that the monitoring information will be reviewed to inform and adjust the measures implemented under the detailed CTMP(s), as necessary.
- 1.5.11 Mr Stoddart confirmed that the Detailed CTMP(s) will be issued by the Principal Contractor to all contractors and suppliers. Drivers will be briefed on the requirements including the booking system, designated routes and expected driver behaviour.
- 1.5.12 He noted that the detailed CTMP(s) will be enforced by the Principal Contractor. Warnings will be issued to any contractors or suppliers who fail to adhere to the requirements. Repeated failure will result in warning notices and further action will be taken if required.
- 1.5.13 He confirmed that the Principal Contractor will liaise with KCC (both the highways and PRoW teams) and NH on a regular basis as agreed in the detailed CTMP(s) to ensure that the practices employed during construction continue to be acceptable to the highway authorities.
- 1.5.14 Finally, Mr Stoddart confirmed that both KCC and NH are content with the **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan ('CTMP') (Doc Ref. 7.9(A))** and **Outline Decommissioning Traffic Management Plan ('DTMP') (Doc Ref. 7.13(A))**. He confirmed that ABC will consult the applicable highway authority covering the highways within the detailed CTMP(s)/DTMP(s) submitted for approval.

#### *Public Rights of Way Management*

- 1.5.15 On behalf of the Applicant, Mr Humphrey then provided an overview of PRoW related matters:
- 1.5.16 He confirmed that the Applicant recognises that the Site contains and is set within a dense network of PRoWs.
- 1.5.17 He noted that, in policy terms, it is acknowledged (in the National Policy Statement for renewable energy infrastructure (**'NPS EN-3'**) (January 2024)) that solar schemes may require PRoWs to be diverted or closed to deliver the renewable

energy benefits of such schemes. Paragraph 2.10.41 of NPS EN-3 states that: *"Public rights of way may need to be temporarily closed or diverted to enable construction, however, applicants should keep, as far as is practicable and safe, all public rights of way that cross the proposed development site open during construction and protect users where a public right of way borders or crosses the site."*

- 1.5.18 Mr Humphrey confirmed that the Applicant considers that the proposals comply with and are supported by NPS EN-3, secured through the provisions within the **Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(B))** and the **Outline Rights of Way and Access Strategy ('RoWAS') (Doc Ref. 7.15(A))**, to ensure that the network retains connectivity with as little disruption as practicable.
- 1.5.19 He noted that of particular importance in achieving this, paragraph 6.1.2 of the **Outline RoWAS (Doc Ref. 7.15(A))** confirms that *"Save in respect of those for which no alternative is to be provided (Part 3 of Schedule 8 of the Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1)), no PRow will be permanently closed during the construction or decommissioning phase without a suitable alternative in place, which in most cases for the construction phase would be the proposed alternative PRow for the operational phase (see Table 2-1)"*.
- 1.5.20 Mr Humphrey confirmed that this is secured by Article 18(2) of the **Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(B))** which requires the relevant highway authority to have confirmed the replacement route has been provided to its reasonable satisfaction.
- 1.5.21 He explained that an assessment of the effect of the construction phase of the Project on PRows and PRow users has been undertaken across two chapters of the Environmental Statement, focusing on the network's connectivity, severance of communities, pedestrian delay and amenity, fear and intimidation and pedestrian safety of the network during the construction and decommissioning phase. This is set out in **Environmental Statement Volume 2: Main Text Chapter 12: Socio-Economics (Doc Ref. 5.2(B))** and **Environmental Statement Volume 2: Main Text Chapter 13: Traffic and Access (Doc Ref. 5.2(B))**. Both chapters conclude that PRows and their users will experience change during the construction phase, but that these effects are not considered significant as a result of embedded mitigation and in several cases are negligible.
- 1.5.22 Mr Humphrey then explained that during the construction phase, several existing PRows or new / replacement PRows to be put in place to divert existing PRows which will be either intermittently crossed or run adjacent to construction routes or compounds, and as such may interact with construction vehicles during the construction phase.
- 1.5.23 He added that these are listed at Paragraph 12.7.24 of **5 Environmental Statement Volume 2: Main Text Chapter 12: Socio-Economics (Doc Ref. 5.2(B))**. He showed the **Streets, Rights of Way and Access Plans (Doc Ref. 2.5)** [[APP-011](#)] on screen and then summarised the proposals as follows:

- On sheet 3, the proposed diversion for AE431 which runs adjacent to the

main internal construction haulage road from the site entrance on Station Road / Goldwell Lane, with crossings to the south of Field 25, and west of Field 24;

- On sheet 3, the proposed extension to AE657 / FN-AE657 which would be crossed by an internal construction haulage road before its confluence with the diverted AE431 to the west of Field 24;
- On sheet 3, PRow New 7 / FN-7 which runs adjacent to the main internal construction haulage road on the west side of Station Road / Goldwell Lane;
- On sheet 2, the proposed diversion for AE378 runs through the internal construction haulage route for a short distance on the west side of the junction with Goldwell Lane / Calleywell Lane;
- On sheet 4, the proposed diversion for AE454 runs through an internal construction route for a short distance on the east side of Field 20;
- On sheet 4, AE474 which runs adjacent to an internal construction route from Goldwell Lane, south of Field 20; and
- On sheet 1, AE396 (the BOAT), which will be cleared and maintained, is crossed by construction access intermittently, as was discussed during Agenda Item 3.

1.5.24 Mr Humphrey explained that section 6.2 of the **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan ('CTMP') (Doc Ref. 7.9(A))** details the measures implemented to manage effects on these routes and their users, stating that:

- Temporary traffic lights or 'stop / go' boards will be used at the four locations where the internal haulage road crosses public highway and the BOAT, as provisionally agreed with KCC during pre-application discussions;
- Speeds to be limited to 10mph within the Site for Project vehicles;
- A temporary 5mph speed limit for Project vehicles at the Primary Site Access, IHR crossing points with PRowS and along the shared section with AE474 at the Goldwell Lane access;
- Appropriate signage will; be installed along the PRowS to make PRow users aware of the construction activity and to remind construction drivers of the presence of pedestrians and other NMUs. This will include information on construction times and contact details for a public liaison officer;
- Construction traffic drivers will stop and give-way to any PRow user;
- Safety measures to be employed on the construction traffic route to protect pedestrians and other NMUs crossing PRowS will include (but are not limited to) additional signage, and use of banksmen/marshals and escort vehicles;
- As has been previous explained, PRowS will be kept clear of construction vehicles and apparatus outside of permitted construction hours so far as is reasonably practicable to do so;
- Any damage to the surface of the PRowS caused by the construction traffic will be repaired as soon as practicable. The surface will be returned to its original condition following completion of construction; and

- Linked to this commitment, a pre-commencement condition survey will be undertaken where the IHR will cross public highway/BOAT/PRoWs at the IHR crossing points and at the shared section of AE474. Any defects arising solely as part of the construction activity will be rectified at the cost of the Applicant.
- 1.5.25 Mr Humphrey also noted that, additionally, Section 8.2 of the **Outline Rights of Way and Access Strategy ('RoWAS') (Doc Ref. 7.15(A))** confirms that the BOAT would be cleared and maintained during the construction and operational period of the Project.
- 1.5.26 Mr Humphrey explained that the Applicant has noted that there are some routes that are likely to be more sensitive to change as a result of their location, usage levels, and proximity to construction routes. Principally, he noted that AE474 is clearly the most well-used and sensitive route, based on engagement with local communities and KCC. He noted that it runs along the site access to the works area for Fields 20, 21 and 22 for a short distance. This route was surveyed at survey location 3, as set out within **Environmental Statement Volume 3: Figures Chapter 13: Traffic and Access Figures 13.2 - PRoW Survey Locations and Average Daily Trips (Doc Ref. 5.3) [APP-056]**. Mr Humphrey explained that this route arguably offers the greatest connectivity of the local routes as it connects Goldwell Lane to Church Lane, and is the closest PRoW in the study area to Aldington. He confirmed that it was the busiest location surveyed, with an average of 26 one-way trips per day, as set out within **Environmental Statement Volume 3: Figures Chapter 13: Traffic and Access Figures 13.3 - PRoW Survey Results – Daily PRoW Trips (Doc Ref. 5.3) [APP-056]**.
- 1.5.27 In terms of construction traffic use of this route, Mr Humphrey explained that up to 8 two-way peak hour construction trips, inclusive of 2 heavy vehicles, are forecast to travel along Goldwell Lane and into Fields 20-22, which is equivalent to around one trip every 7.5 minutes. He noted that the length of AE474 between Goldwell Lane and Field 20 is around 170m. He confirmed that to walk this distance at a leisurely pace would take around one minute, making the scope for conflict very limited.
- 1.5.28 Nonetheless, in terms of specific management for AE474 he noted the following points:
- A temporary 5mph speed limit with associated signage for construction vehicles will be provided at the Primary Site Access, along the shared section with AE474 at the Goldwell Lane Access and at the internal haulage road crossing points;
  - Escort vehicles, such as quad bikes, and / or vehicle marshallers / lookouts will be used where construction traffic will cross PRoW within the Site to ensure pedestrian and non-motorised user safety and actively manage any potential conflict / interaction;
  - As has been mentioned, a 8m PRoW buffer zone demarcated by temporary barrier fencing will be provided at the Goldwell Lane access to keep users of AE474 and construction vehicles accessing the South Eastern Area

apart; and

- A vehicle marshaller will be made aware of construction related traffic movements prior to a vehicle's arrival / departure and warn passing pedestrians of the pending movement.

1.5.29 Mr Humphrey noted that the Applicant has committed to ensuring all replacement, diversion and, importantly, new and enhanced PRow would be implemented during the construction phase (before the operational phase) – and in some cases these will provide benefits in terms of:

- Taking walkers off the highway: for example, the provision of new path FN-7 helps to reduce the need for walkers to cross Station Road/ Goldwell Lane; the replacement of AE 370 takes users off of a section of Bank Road; and new path FN-6 takes users away from traffic on a shared driveway with Handen Farm; and
- Offering new and alternative routes for connectivity and recreational use: for example, FN-2, 3 and 8, and AE657 and AE457 in the north east part of the Site.

1.5.30 He noted that, in terms of potential unforeseen issues, the **Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (Doc Ref 7.8(A))** sets out the roles and responsibilities of the undertaker and Principal Contractor during construction, which includes establishing and maintaining community relations and the development of a formal complaints procedure (as agreed with ABC), along with the provision of monthly environmental monitoring reports. He confirmed that this will include the identification and resolution of any issues related to construction effects on PRow.

1.5.31 Mr Humphrey explained that, in terms of decommissioning, the **Outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (Doc Ref. 7.12)** [[APP-157](#)] and the **Outline Decommissioning Traffic Management Plan (Doc Ref. 7.13(A))** sets out the measures to control the safety of users of PRow in relation to effects during decommissioning.

1.5.32 The ExA asked whether the Applicant had dealt with construction movements in hours of darkness.

1.5.33 Mr Flanagan on behalf of the Applicant confirmed that the **Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (Doc Ref. 7.8(A))** deals with lighting on site, which includes lighting off accesses. He confirmed that further detail would be provided in writing.

1.5.34 **Post-hearing note:** Please see the Applicant's response to Action Point 5 below.

1.5.35 The ExA noted that paragraph of 13.6.31 of **Environmental Statement Volume 2: Main Text Chapter 13: Traffic and Access (Doc Ref. 5.2(B))** refers to a pre-commencement condition survey where the IHR crosses the highway and PRow, and that any defects will be remediated at the cost of the Applicant. He asked for more detail on this point: how long will it take, who will the survey be shared with, who will be responsible for works, and will the survey locations be shown on a map.

- 1.5.36 Mr Stoddart on behalf of the Applicant responded that section 6.6 of the **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan ('CTMP') (Doc Ref. 7.9(A))** sets out how the condition survey will be undertaken. He noted that a representative from KCC will be invited to attend the survey to give them the opportunity to witness the conditions themselves. He explained that if highway works are required, detailed design drawings will then be shared with KCC's Street Works team. He also confirmed that the survey will be repeated post-construction and at set intervals.
- 1.5.37 The ExA noted that paragraphs 4.3 and 4.4 of the **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan ('CTMP') (Doc Ref. 7.9(A))** refer to HGVs and AILs. He asked for confirmation of the weight and size of AILs and asked whether this should be included as a restriction in the **Draft DCO (Doc Ref 3.1(B))**.
- 1.5.38 Mr Flanagan on behalf of the Applicant confirmed that the AILs were classified as such due to weight of the transformer. He confirmed that the Applicant would take this point away and see whether further information could be provided on the AILs and any necessary controls.
- 1.5.39 **Post-hearing note:** Please see the Applicant's response to Action Point 6 below.
- 1.5.40 The ExA noted that paragraph 2.1.8 of the **Outline Rights of Way and Access Strategy ('RoWAS') (Doc Ref. 7.15(A))** refers to **ES Volume 3, Figure 3.1: Existing Access Network (Doc Ref. 5.3)** [[APP-045](#)]. He noted it would be helpful if the Applicant provided a phasing plan for the proposed works to PRowS and which confirmed when PRowS would be unavailable during the construction phase. He also noted that it would be preferable for replacement PRowS to be provided and open for use before the PRowS they are replacing is stopped up, so the public are not at a disadvantage.
- 1.5.41 In response, Mr Flanagan confirmed that the Applicant had already taken away an action point to provide some further detail on phasing generally, and confirmed that the Applicant would incorporate within that action point further detail on how that phasing would work for PRowS. In respect of the second point, Mr Flanagan confirmed that the **Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(B))** contains a commitment which ensures substitute PRowS are provided before any diversion or any stopping up takes place.
- 1.5.42 **Post-hearing note:** Please see the Applicant's response to Action Point 7 below.
- 1.5.43 The ExA noted that he could not find a drawing in the Application documents showing a layout indicating how either the primary or secondary site compounds are going to be laid out and asked whether the Applicant could provide additional detail.
- 1.5.44 In response, Mr Flanagan confirmed that the Applicant would seek to provide further detail. He noted that the **Works Plans (Doc Ref. 2.3(B))** show where the compounds will be, and noted that these plans show there will be two primary and four secondary compounds. In terms of layout, he confirmed the Applicant would take this point away and consider what could be provided.

- 1.5.45 **Post-hearing note:** Please see the Applicant's response to Action Point 8 below.
- 1.5.46 The ExA noted that sheet 1 of the **Works Plans (Doc Ref. 2.3(B))** show that a secondary construction compound will be located in Field 9, which is located immediately adjacent to a working farm and in close proximity to residential properties on Frith Road. He then noted that Table 14.15 in **Environmental Statement Volume 2: Main Text Chapter 14: Noise (Doc Ref. 5.2)** [APP-038] sets out the number of noise sensitive receptors ('NSRs') within each magnitude of impact zone. This states that there would be no high, medium or low impact on NSRs from secondary construction compounds. He asked the Applicant to explain how these two statements marry up.
- 1.5.47 Mr Flanagan responded and explained that it would be for the Applicant's noise expert to explain how that conclusion has been arrived at and how it is robust. He noted that the conclusions may take account of mitigation. He confirmed the Applicant would take away an action to explain this point in writing.
- 1.5.48 **Post-hearing note:** Please see the Applicant's response to Action Point 9 below.
- 1.5.49 The ExA referred to Table 5.3 in **Environmental Statement Volume 2: Main Text Chapter 5: Alternatives and Design Evolution (Doc Ref. 5.2)** [APP-029]. He noted that it states that the PRoW proposals have been developed with input from ABC and KCC. He noted that both ABC and KCC's relevant representations ([RR-156] and [RR-018] respectively) state that they still have concerns relating to PRoWs. He also noted that Kent Ramblers' relevant representation [RR-158] cites concerns that there is a lack of clarity regarding mitigation measures. He asked KCC and ABC to confirm if they still had these concerns.
- 1.5.50 Ms Beswick on behalf of KCC noted that they still have concerns and are expecting further detail to be provided which will deal with these. She also noted that KCC have worked with the Applicant to ensure the byway will be kept open and managed at the Applicant's expense. ABC noted they do not have a PRoW officer, so are led by KCC on PRoW matters.
- 1.5.51 On behalf of the Applicant, Mr Humphrey provided the following response relating to PRoW management and equestrian use (which the ExA also asked the Applicant to respond on):
- In response to the request for plans showing the proximity of the existing and new PRoW network to IHR, he confirmed this could be provided at the next deadline.
  - **Post-hearing note:** Please see the Applicant's response to Action Point 10 below.
  - In respect of the pre-application consultation and engagement process and how this influenced the design of the Project, he explained there were detailed discussions both with statutory consultees and members of the public and access groups ahead of the submission of the application. He noted that Section 12.3 in the **Environmental Statement Volume 2: Main**



**Text Chapter 12: Socio-Economics (Doc Ref. 5.2(B))**, sets out the consultation and engagement undertaken in the pre-application period. He also noted it would be beneficial to refer to the PEIR addendum, Volume three, Chapter 11. Appendix 11.1 (Changes to Public Rights of Way), which shows how each stakeholders' concerns raised during the preceding statutory and non-statutory consultations have been responded to in detail, to demonstrate how the Applicant has incorporated consideration of them into the design of the Project. He noted that the document is not in the Examination library because it was related to consultation undertaken on an addendum to the Preliminary Environmental Information Report in summer 2023. He confirmed it could be provided.

- **Post-hearing note:** *Please see the Applicant's response to Action Point 11 below.*
- He noted that details regarding the PRow diversions are set out in the **Outline Rights of Way and Access Strategy ('RoWAS') (Doc Ref. 7.15(A))** and Part 4 and Schedules 8 and 9 to the **Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(B))**, as well as on the **Streets Rights of Way and Access Plans (Doc Ref. 2.5)** [APP-011] and in figure 3.2 in **ES Volume 3, Figure 3.1: Existing Access Network (Doc Ref. 5.3)** [APP-045]. He explained that the Applicant has given proportionate consideration to PRowS in the application, which is reflected in the scale of mitigation and management set out within the management plans. He noted that these plans are framework plans and will become more detailed and include implementation plans, as is explained within the **Outline Rights of Way and Access Strategy ('RoWAS') (Doc Ref. 7.15(A))**. He noted that these details will be subject to consultation with statutory consultees including KCC and will be approved by them. He also noted that the views of other groups will be considered through the Rights of Way and Access Working Group, details of which are set out in the RoWAS, and whose primary role is to support the development and delivery of the implementation plans.
- In respect of the BOAT, Mr Humphrey noted that the Applicant's understanding is that this is currently overgrown and relatively impassible. He noted that Section 8.2 of the **Outline Rights of Way and Access Strategy ('RoWAS') (Doc Ref. 7.15(A))** commits the Applicant to clearing the route and keeping it open during construction and operation, which will improve the accessibility compared with recent years. He also noted that no other bridleways across the Site, meaning it is the primary access (other than the highway network) for that subset of users, and so was important to include in the RoWAS.
- Mr Humphrey also noted that Mr Stoddart referred to para 13.4.18 of **Environmental Statement Volume 2: Main Text Chapter 13: Traffic and Access (Doc Ref. 5.2(B))**, which sets out that the crossing points of Station Road, Bank Road, Laws Lane and the BOAT have been scoped out of the assessment because the number of anticipated crossing does not meet the threshold where a significant effect is expected. He noted that at the crossing point of Station Road, traffic would only be stopped for an estimated crossing time of 20 seconds every 15-minutes, which is not considered to be a significant effect on driver, pedestrian or NMU delay, and

that this would be substantially less for the BOAT crossing.

- 1.5.52 The ExA asked whether the routes that may need to be cleared of vegetation would be the subject of an ecology survey prior to being cleared.
- 1.5.53 In response, Mr Humphrey confirmed that this commitment is contained in the **Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan ('CEMP') (Doc Ref. 7.8(A))**.
- 1.5.54 Cllr Harman noted that the Applicant had not explored options to reduce impacts on the village and noted that other solar developers in the area have designed their schemes around the PRoWs rather than through them. She also referred to the impacts on users of AE474.
- 1.5.55 In response, Mr Humphrey on behalf of the Applicant explained that, in respect of AE474, the length between Goldwell Lane and the entrance to Field 20 is around 170m. He noted that the traffic management measures are as set out in the **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan ('CTMP') (Doc Ref. 7.9(A))**, noting that there are specific measures proposed for AE474 in light of the sensitivity of the route. He noted there would be a temporary 5mph speed limit for construction vehicles using the route, which is otherwise 10mph across the Site. He also noted that marshals and escort vehicles will be used to ensure there is no interaction or conflict between users of the PRoW and construction vehicles.
- 1.5.56 The ExA then asked KCC and Applicant to consider engagement on PRoWs with the local community prior to construction of the Project.
- 1.5.57 Mr Tennant referred to Fields 25 and 26 where a primary construction compound is to be located, and noted that the eastern area of Field 26 floods every winter, so can only be used at the driest times of year. He noted there would be limited space in these fields for staff parking, deliveries, turning areas, laydown areas, emergency access. He also raised concerns about the powers in Article 45 (felling or lopping of trees and removal of hedgerows) of the **Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(B))**. He also noted he did not consider the **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan ('CTMP') (Doc Ref. 7.9(A))** to be appropriate, at only 22 pages long.
- 1.5.58 In response, Mr Flanagan on behalf of the Applicant made the following three points:
- He first noted that the **Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan ('CEMP') (Doc Ref. 7.8(A))** and **Outline Rights of Way and Access Strategy ('RoWAS') (Doc Ref. 7.15(A))** both expressly make provision for community liaison. He explained that the Outline CEMP provides that the construction manager, in conjunction with the undertaker and with the support of other relevant persons and specialists, will engage and provide for that community liaison as required. The manager will deal with concerns and complaints from the community. He noted that neighbouring properties and businesses will also be informed in advance of works taking place. He concluded that a raft of mechanisms are therefore already in the plan, to be fleshed out in further detail in the detailed CEMP(s).

- In respect of the comments regarding the suitability of the location in Fields 25 and 26 for a primary construction compound, Mr Flanagan confirmed that a full response would be provided in writing. He confirmed that matters such as topography and hydrology have been taken into account, and so the Applicant does not consider there are any issues with this location.
- In respect of comments relating to the appropriateness of framework plans at this stage, Mr Flanagan stated that the Applicant considers this to be entirely appropriate, and noted that this is why the production and approval of detailed management plans is secured through the **Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(B))**.

- 1.5.59 Mr Swarbrick then made submissions relating to the proposed Rights of Way and Access Working Group, and asked whether the condition surveys would be conducted on the existing or new PRowS and what standards they would be conducted to.
- 1.5.60 In response, Mr Flanagan confirmed that the Rights of Way and Access Working Group will review the implementation plans to minimise disruption and amenity loss. He explained that ABC and KCC, the contractor and the Applicant will be invited to the Working Group, and that others can be invited to contribute as appropriate.
- 1.5.61 In relation to the point raised by Mr Swarbrick regarding the condition of new and diverted PRowS, he explained that Article 18 in the **Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(B))** provides that the standard of substitute PRowS must be as specified in the **Outline Rights of Way and Access Strategy ('RoWAS') (Doc Ref. 7.15(A))**, meaning there is an express legal control to make sure that when there is a PRow diversion, what is being re-provided it is fit for purpose and meets the standards in RoWAS.
- 1.5.62 Mr Nigel Spencer on behalf of Kent Ramblers noted that there has to be an acceptance that if this Project goes ahead, there will be disruption during the construction phase.
- 1.5.63 The ExA noted in response that individuals affected have the opportunity to contribute to the Examination process.
- 1.5.64 Mr de Wit on behalf of NH stated that NH are not wholly content with the traffic management proposals in the **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan ('CTMP') (Doc Ref. 7.9(A))** and the **Outline Decommissioning Traffic Management Plan (Doc Ref. 7.13(A))**, as set out in NH's relevant representation [[RR-205](#)]. He noted that NH and the Applicant are continuing to engage.

## 1.6 Agenda Item 5: Cumulative Impacts from other projects

- 1.6.1 The ExA referred to paragraph 13.4.71 in **Environmental Statement Volume 2: Main Text Chapter 13: Traffic and Access (Doc Ref. 5.2(B))** which states that *"Traffic flow information for the above cumulative schemes has been sourced from the respective supporting traffic and transport related documents which accompany the planning applications"* and asked whether this information has been interrogated to ensure that they are modelled on a worst case scenario basis.

- 1.6.2 Mr Flanagan on behalf of the Applicant responded to confirm this was correct.
- 1.6.3 The ExA referred to paragraph 13.5.56 of the **Environmental Statement Volume 2: Main Text Chapter 13: Traffic and Access (Doc Ref. 5.2(B))** which states that "a summary of the future baseline traffic data, including projected background traffic growth but excluding trips associated with the cumulative schemes, is provided in **Environmental Statement Volume 4: Appendices Chapter 13: Traffic and Access Appendix 13.4: Summary of Traffic Data (Doc Ref. 5.4)** [APP-110] Table 13.3B". He noted this should read "Table 13.4B" and asked why trips associated with cumulative schemes are excluded.
- 1.6.4 In response, Mr Stoddart on behalf of the Applicant confirmed that trips associated with cumulative schemes are excluded in order to calculate a suitable future baseline, meaning that the future baseline just includes what we refer to as background traffic growth, which is information that is derived from Department for Transport software.
- 1.6.5 The ExA referred to the use of traffic data from 2022 in the assessment and asked how accurate this was, given the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on traffic levels and the time taken for recovery.
- 1.6.6 In response, Mr Stoddart explained that the Applicant had not used any traffic survey data from other schemes. Instead what has been used is their forecast trip generation which would have been calculated by other tools such as a first principles approach or the commonly used TRICS database. The assessment was not reliant on any raw traffic survey data from the cumulative schemes.
- 1.6.7 In respect of the query relating to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, Mr Stoddart explained that it is generally accepted that traffic flows began to rebound after the lockdowns. He noted that, from experience of undertaking assessments across the country the finding is that most highway authorities accept that from mid-2021 traffic flows were returning back to normal. He also explained that there is certainly an argument to say that traffic flows may never fully rebound to pre-pandemic levels, because there has been a considerable change in working patterns, which may mean that there is a "new normal" and we may never actually see 2019 traffic levels again. He also noted that KCC's highways team were satisfied with the road traffic survey data used in the assessments.
- 1.6.8 Ms Potter confirmed that KCC had nothing to add, but would provide further commentary in writing.
- 1.6.9 Mr Tennant asked the Applicant to confirm if the worst case scenario assessment includes closing Church Lane and it not being available as a route from the village to A20, meaning all of the construction traffic and other traffic would be routed onto Station Road. He also requested that the definition of "construction traffic" be clarified, querying whether it included staff vehicles.
- 1.6.10 In response, Mr Flanagan confirmed that there is a definition of construction traffic within **Environmental Statement Volume 2: Main Text Chapter 13: Traffic and**

**Access (Doc Ref. 5.2(B))**, which extends beyond HGVs and tractor and trailers. He confirmed it also includes lighter vehicles, in the numbers set out in the Environmental Statement. He noted that, overall, numbers are relatively low over the 12 month construction period and shorter periods for Goldwell Lane and Church Lane. He noted that there has been a focus on HGVs as they can be a particular concern, but confirmed that the lighter vehicles have not been ignored in the assessment.

- 1.6.11 In response to the question regarding whether the impacts of Church Lane being closed had been assessed, Mr Flanagan confirmed that this was not assessed because it does not constitute a reasonable worst case, which is what the Environmental Statement needs to assess. He confirmed that **Environmental Statement Volume 2: Main Text Chapter 13: Traffic and Access (Doc Ref. 5.2(B))** assesses what is likely to be a reasonable worst case. He also noted that the Applicant will only use the northern section of Church Lane – this is the route to the existing substation which is already used by HGV traffic. In respect of the southern section of Church Lane, he noted that the numbers and levels of usage are not such that the Applicant would anticipate delay or displacement of traffic.
- 1.6.12 Cllr Harman asked whether the reasonable worst case assessment had considered closure of the M20, noting this to be a frequent occurrence that increases traffic through the village by a factor of 50.
- 1.6.13 In response, Mr Stoddart confirmed that the assessment had not expressly considered this. He explained that the Applicant has the ability to manage its own construction vehicles in real time. The M20 is rarely closed for more than 1 day, and so any disruption would be limited to a short period of time.

## 1.7 Agenda Item 6: Next Steps

- 1.7.1 Mr Flanagan read out the list of Action Points.

## 1.8 Agenda Item 7: Closing

- 1.8.1 The ExA thanked participants for their submissions and closed the hearing at 13:07.

## 2 The Applicant's written submissions in response to Action Points

### 2.1 List of action points arising during the hearing and the Applicant's post-hearing responses

2.1.1 The table below sets out the list of action points that arose during the hearing and the Applicant's post-hearing response to them.

Table 2-1: Action points arising during the hearing and the Applicant's post-hearing responses

Action Point	Applicant's response
Action Point 1: The Applicant to provide supplementary dashcam footage or images of the proposed highway crossings.	<p>Appendix 1 to this note includes photographs of where construction traffic would cross the highway. A key plan is also then provided at the end of Appendix 1. This includes the images of Bank Road and Laws Lane, which were requested by the Examining Authority. Photos in these locations are considered to provide an accurate overview of the crossing point locations.</p> <p>Please note there are no photographs of the three crossing points in relation to the Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT) AE396, as this is currently inaccessible due to extensive overgrown vegetation. Crossing Point 6 includes a photograph showing the entrance to the BOAT. There is a commitment in the <b>Outline RoWAS (Doc Ref. 7.15(A))</b> that requires the Project to clear the BOAT and bring it back into usage.</p>
Action Point 2: The Applicant to request updated accident data from Kent County Council ('KCC').	<p>The Applicant requested updated accident data from KCC which was provided on 26 November 2024. This data relates to the period between 1 April 2023 and 30 June 2024. The Applicant has reviewed this data, and it is consistent with the baseline information used for the transport assessment.</p> <p>The updated information included the following updates relating to the period between 1 April 2023 and 30 June 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There were no accidents at the Smeeth Crossroads, Goldwell Lane, Bank Road or M20 J10a;</li> <li>▪ There was one slight accident on Station Road close to the Caldecott School access. This was a single car accident. The incident description suggests the driver was speeding/ driving recklessly;</li> </ul>

Action Point	Applicant's response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There were three accidents on A20 Hythe Road. There was one serious accident at the junction with The Ridgeway where a bus/coach pulled out in wet weather and a car swerved to avoid it. There were two slight accidents: one involving a motorcyclist who braked hard and slid down the road, and one at Bockham Lane junction when a taxi pulled out in front of a car.</li> </ul> <p>The updated accident data has been reviewed by the Applicant and KCC and it has been confirmed that this would not change the outcomes of the assessment presented in <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Traffic and Access (Doc Ref. 5.2(B))</b>.</p>
<p>Action Point 3: KCC to confirm its views regarding the power to carry out permanent access works pursuant to Article 15 of the Draft DCO.</p>	<p>No action for the Applicant.</p>
<p>Action Point 4: KCC to confirm its views regarding the power to carry out permanent traffic regulation measures pursuant to Article 17 of the Draft DCO.</p>	<p>No action for the Applicant.</p>
<p>Action Point 5: The Applicant to provide more information on the proposed mitigation measures for transport movements within the hours of darkness.</p>	<p>As noted at paragraph 1.4.62 of the written summary of the Applicant's submissions during ISH2, the HGV drivers used for the construction of the Project will be qualified and professional drivers subject to more stringent testing than standard drivers. Specific measures on highway safety are then set out in section 6.3 of the <b>Outline CTMP (Doc Ref. 7.9(A))</b>. This sets out the highway safety management measures that would be put in place during the construction period. These measures take account of the proposed construction hours and would provide appropriate measures to ensure the safe access to the site throughout the construction stage, including during hours of darkness.</p> <p>These measures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Temporary warning signage will be placed on the local highway network to direct construction vehicle drivers and warn motorists of the approaching Site access and slow-moving construction vehicles;</li> </ul>

## Action Point

## Applicant's response

- Other signage or traffic controls, as may be required;
- temporary speed limits; and
- a passing place near to Bank Road within the Order limits.

The full details of all construction traffic measures will be included in the detailed CTMP(s) to ensure these site access and crossing points are safely managed and to minimise disruption to all road users.

**Section 6.7** then includes a commitment to engage with the local community, with local residents, businesses and schools who will all receive correspondence prior to commencement of construction works and during key stages of construction, advising on the works involved, duration of development and necessary contact information.

The details of the Construction Site Manager will be provided to KCC in advance of any work being carried out.

The Construction Site Manager's details will also be provided on a Site board at the Site accesses. If anyone in the local community has any issues during the construction phase, the Construction Site Manager will be available to discuss these issues.

**Section 6.8** then commits to using best working practices including the principles of the Considerate Constructors Scheme ('CCS') and its Code of Considerate Practice.

**Section 6.10** then includes commitments relating to ongoing monitoring throughout the construction stage. Any unforeseen issues that arise in relation to construction vehicle movement will be logged by the Construction Site Manager. If necessary, the issues will be discussed with KCC so that they can be resolved as appropriate.

Road safety will also be monitored, with specific reference to Station Road from the A20 Hythe Road to the Primary Site Access, on Goldwell Lane between the Station Road crossing point the Goldwell Lane access, at public highway and PRoW crossing points for the internal haulage road, at the Church Lane crossing point and at PRoWs in proximity to the internal haulage road such as AE474.

The highway safety measures included in the **Outline CTMP (Doc Ref. 7.9(A))** have been reviewed and agreed by both KCC and National Highways. These measures are considered to provide a comprehensive set of controls that would ensure the construction routes, access to the site and



Action Point	Applicant's response
	<p>crossing points are safely managed and to minimise disruption to all road users and these are considered in line with traffic management arrangements typically employed for similar schemes.</p> <p>Production and approval of the final CTMP(s), in accordance with the <b>Outline CTMP (Doc Ref. 7.9(A))</b>, is secured through Requirement 7 in Schedule 2 to the <b>Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(B))</b>, which the undertaker and any contractors carrying out construction of the Project will be obliged to comply with throughout the duration of the construction period.</p>
<p>Action Point 6: The Applicant to provide the specifications of the proposed Abnormal Indivisible Loads and to confirm whether it considers that any further controls are required.</p>	<p>Up to two one-way Abnormal Indivisible Loads have been assessed in <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Traffic and Access (Doc Ref. 5.2(B))</b>. These are required to transport the Project Substation transformer units to the Site. Each transformer weight is approximately 50,000kg and therefore the load will be classified as a Special Types General Order (STGO) Category 2 load.</p> <p>Section 4.4 of the <b>Outline CTMP (Doc Ref. 7.9(A))</b> states that:</p> <p><i>"4.4.1 Up to two abnormal loads are forecast. These are the main transformer units, which will be delivered via articulated lorry. Whilst not abnormal in length terms, the weight of the units will likely result in them being classed as abnormal loads. KCC's and NH's abnormal loads officers will be contacted to discuss the arrangements in advance of the day of delivery to ensure the correct permits are obtained. The police will also be given advanced notice.</i></p> <p><i>4.4.2 The loading/weight limit of the two local highway network bridges on the construction route i.e., Station Road over the M20 and the HS1 railway line, have been investigated. It has been confirmed that both bridges can accommodate the loaded weight of the abnormal loads."</i></p> <p>Similarly, paragraph 6.5.7 states:</p> <p><i>"In relation to abnormal loads, KCC's and NH's abnormal loads officers will be contacted to discuss the arrangements in advance of the day of delivery to ensure the correct permits are obtained. The police will also be given advanced notice."</i></p> <p>Production and approval of the final CTMP(s), in accordance with the <b>Outline CTMP (Doc Ref. 7.9(A))</b>, is secured through Requirement 7 in Schedule 2 to the <b>Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(B))</b>, which the undertaker and any contractors carrying out construction of the Project will be obliged to comply</p>

Action Point	Applicant's response
	with throughout the duration of the construction period. As such, no further controls are considered to be necessary.
<p>Action Point 7: The Applicant to provide further information regarding the phasing of public rights of way closures.</p>	<p>The Applicant has produced the <b>Outline RoWAS (Doc Ref. 7.15(A))</b> to inform the DCO application. The <b>Outline RoWAS (Doc Ref. 7.15(A))</b> committed that a detailed RoWAS must be submitted and approved before each Phase of the Authorised Development can commence. A detailed RoWAS must set out details of any part of a PRow which is to be temporarily or permanently stopped up for that relevant Phase, pursuant to Article 18 of the <b>Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(B))</b> and must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Include details of measures to minimise the distance of any sections of the PRow to be temporarily or permanently stopped up;</li> <li>▪ Include details of advance publicity and signage in respect of any sections of PRow to be temporarily or permanently stopped up; and</li> <li>▪ Be generally in accordance with the Outline Strategy.</li> </ul> <p>The <b>Outline RoWAS (Doc Ref. 7.15(A))</b> (paragraph 6.1.2) states that <i>'Save in respect of those for which no alternative is to be provided (Part 3 of Schedule 8 of the Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1)), no PRow will be permanently closed during the construction or decommissioning phase without a suitable alternative in place, which in most cases for the construction phase would be the proposed alternative PRow for the operational phase (see Table 2-1).</i></p>
<p>Action Point 8: The Applicant to provide details of the proposed layout of the primary and secondary construction compounds.</p>	<p>The Applicant has provided illustrative layouts for each of the Primary and Secondary compounds. These are provided in Appendix 2 to this note. The approval of detailed design for the compounds post DCO consent is secured via Requirement 4 in Schedule 2 to the <b>Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1(B))</b>.</p>
<p>Action Point 9: The Applicant to provide further information regarding the conclusions reached in the Environmental Statement on the noise impacts</p>	<p>Four Secondary Construction Compounds are proposed for the construction of the Project. These will be located in Fields 8/9 (adjacent to Bank Farm), 19, 20 and 23, as shown on the <b>Works Plans (Doc Ref. 2.3(B))</b>. Paragraph 3.11.4 of <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 3: Description of Development (Doc Ref. 5.2(A))</b> states <i>"Secondary Construction Compounds will be unsurfaced and fuel / oil will not be stored in these areas. They will include welfare facilities, open areas and containers for storage of</i></p>

Action Point	Applicant's response
<p>from the secondary compounds in Fields 8/9 in light of the proximity of these compounds to a farm and residential properties on Frith Road.</p>	<p><i>materials and equipment, waste storage, and areas for turning and loading of vehicles.</i>” They are therefore unlikely to be significant sources of construction noise.</p> <p><b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Noise (Doc Ref. 5.2)</b> [APP-038] includes an assessment of noise from the use of Secondary Construction Compounds, as confirmed by paragraph 14.4.28 which states <i>“The use of the Primary Construction Compounds in Fields 25 and 26 and secondary construction compounds in Fields 8/9, 19, 20 and 23 are assessed, as well as use of the internal haulage road for the Project.”</i></p> <p>Figure 14.1 in <b>ES Volume 3, Figures 14.1 - 14.4 (Doc Ref. 5.3)</b> [APP-057] shows the location of the noise sensitive receptors (NSRs) considered by the noise assessment reported in <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Noise (Doc Ref 5.2)</b> [APP-038] and includes a number of NSRs in proximity to the proposed Secondary Construction Compounds. Specifically in relation to Bank Farm, NSR 008 Broadbanks is used as a representative receptor for assessment purposes as well as various NSRs on Frith Road to the south. Table 14.15 of <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Noise (Doc Ref 5.2)</b> [APP-038] shows that there are no NSRs within each zone of noise impacts from use of the Secondary Construction Compounds (either High, Medium and Low magnitude zones).</p> <p>As such, the effects of the use of Secondary Construction Compounds are adequately assessed by the ES and no significant effects are identified.</p>
<p>Action Point 10: The Applicant to provide plans showing the proximity of all (including diverted) public rights of way to the internal haulage route.</p>	<p>The Applicant has prepared a plan showing the proximity of all (including diverted) public rights of way to the internal haulage route. These diagrams are provided at Appendix 3 of this note.</p>
<p>Action Point 11: The Applicant to submit relevant extracts from the pre-application Preliminary Environmental Information Report Addendum which explains how feedback from the local community relating to the public</p>	<p>Appendix 11.1: Changes to Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and Permissive Path Network following Statutory Consultation of the PEIR Addendum covers off how feedback from the local community in relation to PRoW has influenced the Project design. This is provided as Appendix 4 to this note.</p>

Action Point	Applicant's response
rights of way influenced the Project design.	
<p>Action Point 12: The Applicant to provide information or signpost to information in the application documents to demonstrate how the location of the primary construction compounds in Fields 25/26 has been considered in the overall design of the Project.</p>	<p>Two Primary Construction Compounds are proposed and will be located in Fields 25 and 26 as shown on the <b>Works Plans (Doc Ref. 2.3(B))</b>. Paragraph 3.11.2 of <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 3: Description of Development (Doc Ref. 5.2(A))</b> states <i>“Two Primary Construction Compounds / primary decommissioning compounds will be located in Fields 25 and 26 as shown as Work No. 7 on the Works Plans (Doc Ref. 2.3) and have been selected to limit the distance vehicles will need to travel using local roads after exiting the A20 Hythe Road.</i></p> <p>Paragraph 3.11.2 then states:</p> <p><i>‘The Primary Construction Compounds will include temporary site offices/welfare facilities, turning and loading areas for incoming Heavy Goods Vehicles (‘HGVs’), containerised storage areas, waste storage area, PV panel testing area, bunded area for storage of fuels and hydrocarbons, parking, and security infrastructure (fencing, CCTV)’.</i></p> <p>Table 5.3 of <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 5: Alternatives and Design Evolution (Doc Ref. 5.2(A))</b> <a href="#">[AS-010]</a> confirms that the Primary Construction Compounds were selected in the northeast of the Site in favour of alternative locations. The Primary Construction Compound is located close to the A20 Hythe Road to the north and the C609/Station Road, and away from statutory or non-statutory designated nature conservation sites, notable habitats and residential receptors. This ensures that in respect of HGVs during construction and decommissioning effects on sensitive receptors would be minimised.</p>
<p>Action Point 13: The Applicant to check cross-referencing in the Environmental Statement Chapter 13, paragraph 13.5.56 to "Table 13.3B".</p>	<p>The Table referred to should be “13.4B” not “13.3B”. This has been updated in <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Traffic and Access (Doc Ref. 5.2(B))</b>.</p>



# Stonestreet Green Solar

## Appendix 1: Highway Crossing Point Photographs

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### Authorship

Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by
Rory Casey		

### Revision History

Revision	Revision Date	Authorised By	Position	Comment
Issue 1	03/12/24			
Issue 2	10/12/24			

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# 1 Road Crossings

## 1.1 Crossing Point 1 – Church Lane

### 1.1.1 Looking South





### 1.1.2 Looking North



## 1.2 Crossing Point 2 – Station Road

### 1.2.1 Looking South



### 1.2.2 Looking North



### 1.3 Crossing Point 3 – Bank Road

#### 1.3.1 Looking East



### 1.3.2 Looking West



## 1.4 Crossing Point 4 – Laws Lane North

### 1.4.1 Looking South



### 1.4.2 Looking North



## 1.5 Crossing Point 5 – Laws Lane South

### 1.5.1 Looking South





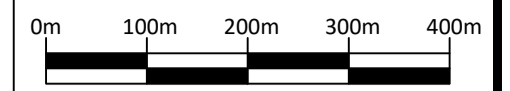
### 1.5.2 Looking North



## 1.6 Crossing Point 6 – Byway Open to All Traffic AE 396

### 1.6.1 Looking north

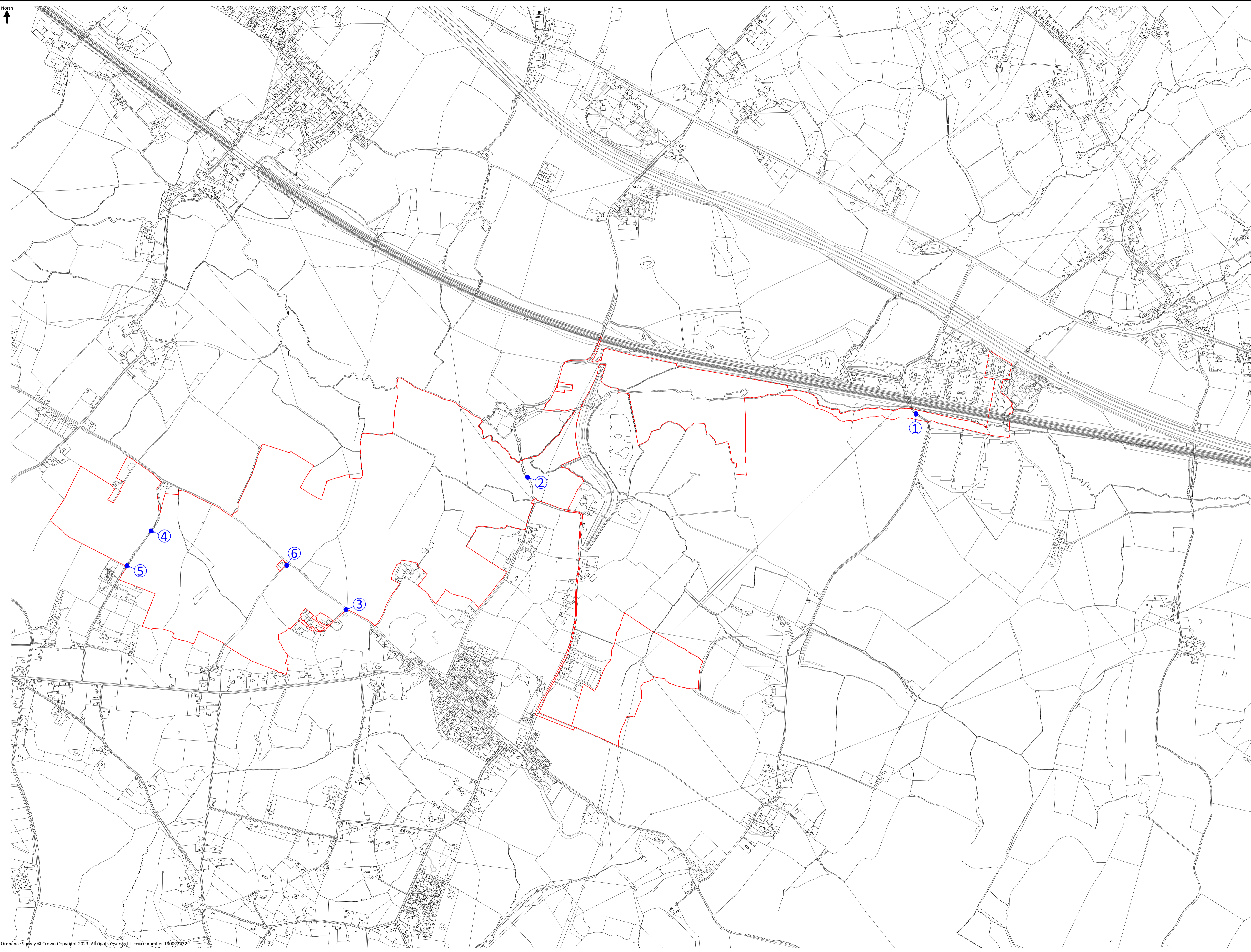




Notes:

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- Key:
- Order limits
  - Road Crossing Photo Location & Number



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Project Name:  
Stonestreet Green Solar  
Drawing Title:  
Road Crossing Locations  
Photo Key Plan

Document Reference #:  
142-01-76

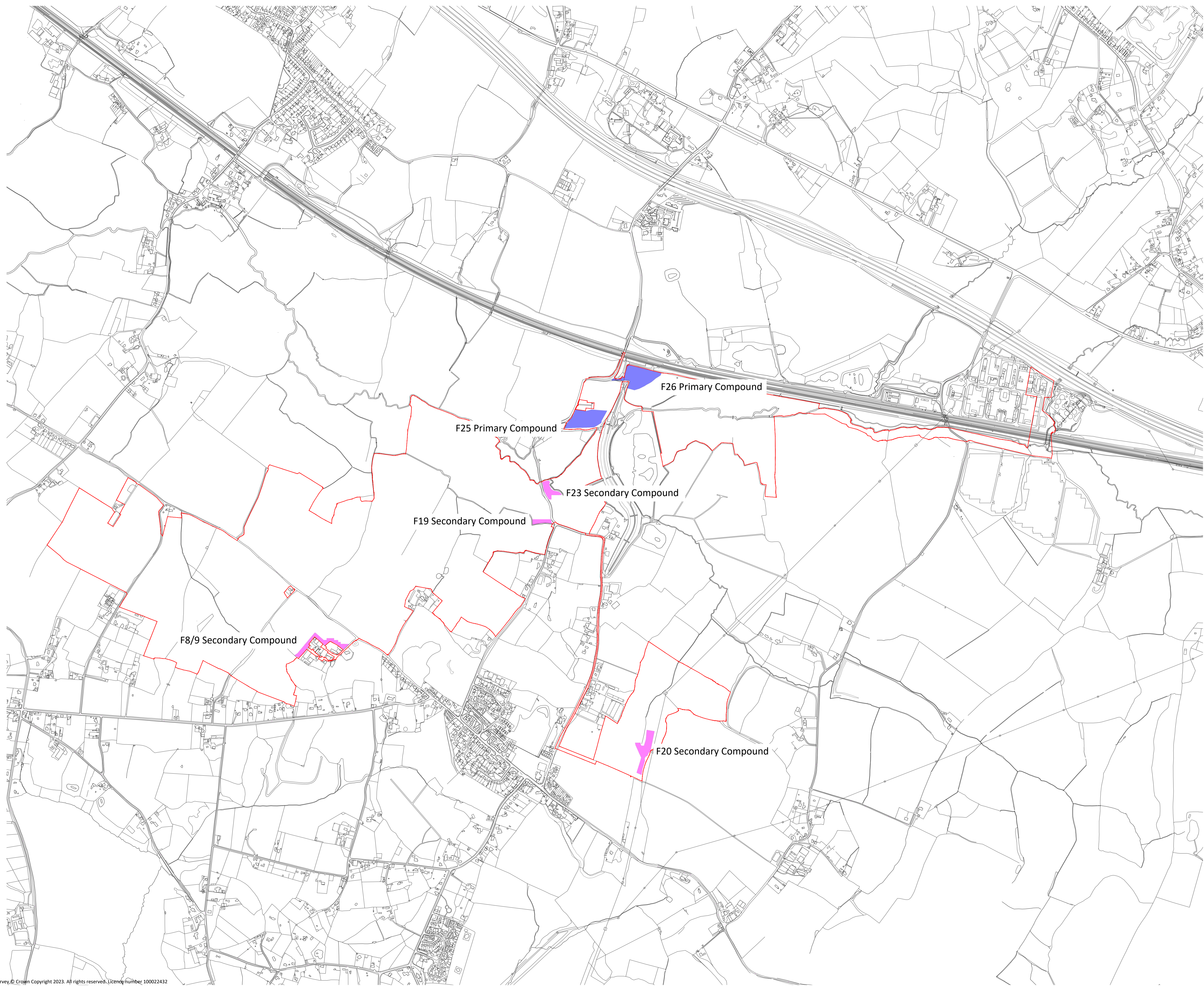
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## **Stonestreet Green Solar**

Appendix 2: Illustrative Layouts of  
the Primary and Secondary  
Construction Compounds

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**Project Name:**  
 Stonestreet Green Solar

**Drawing Title:**  
 Illustrative Construction  
 Compound Layouts  
 Key Plan

**Drawing Number:**  
 142-02-75-A

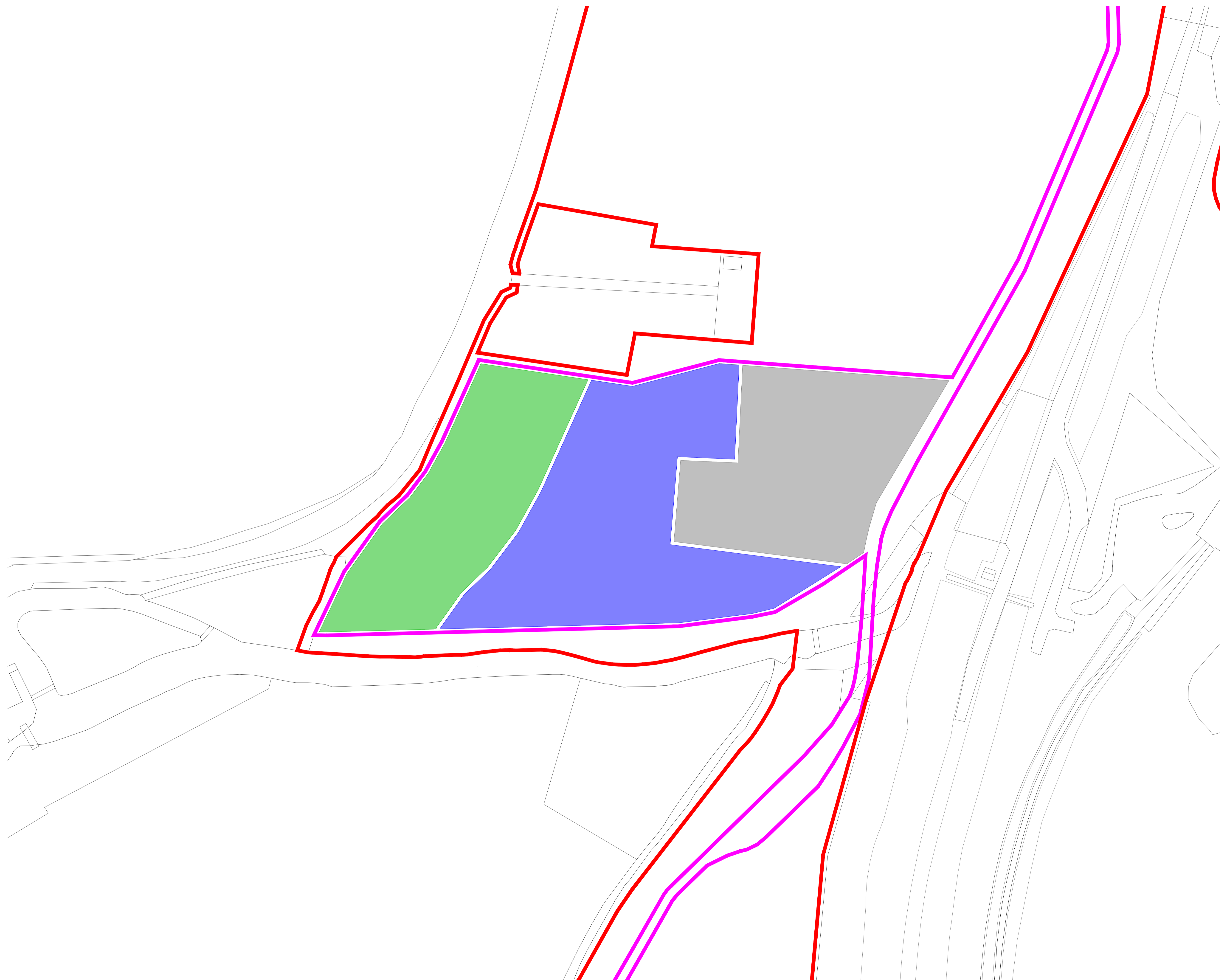
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- Key:
- Order limits
  - Work No. 7
  - Unloading / Turning Area
  - Storage And Distribution Area
  - Staff Area



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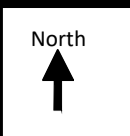
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142-02-75-C

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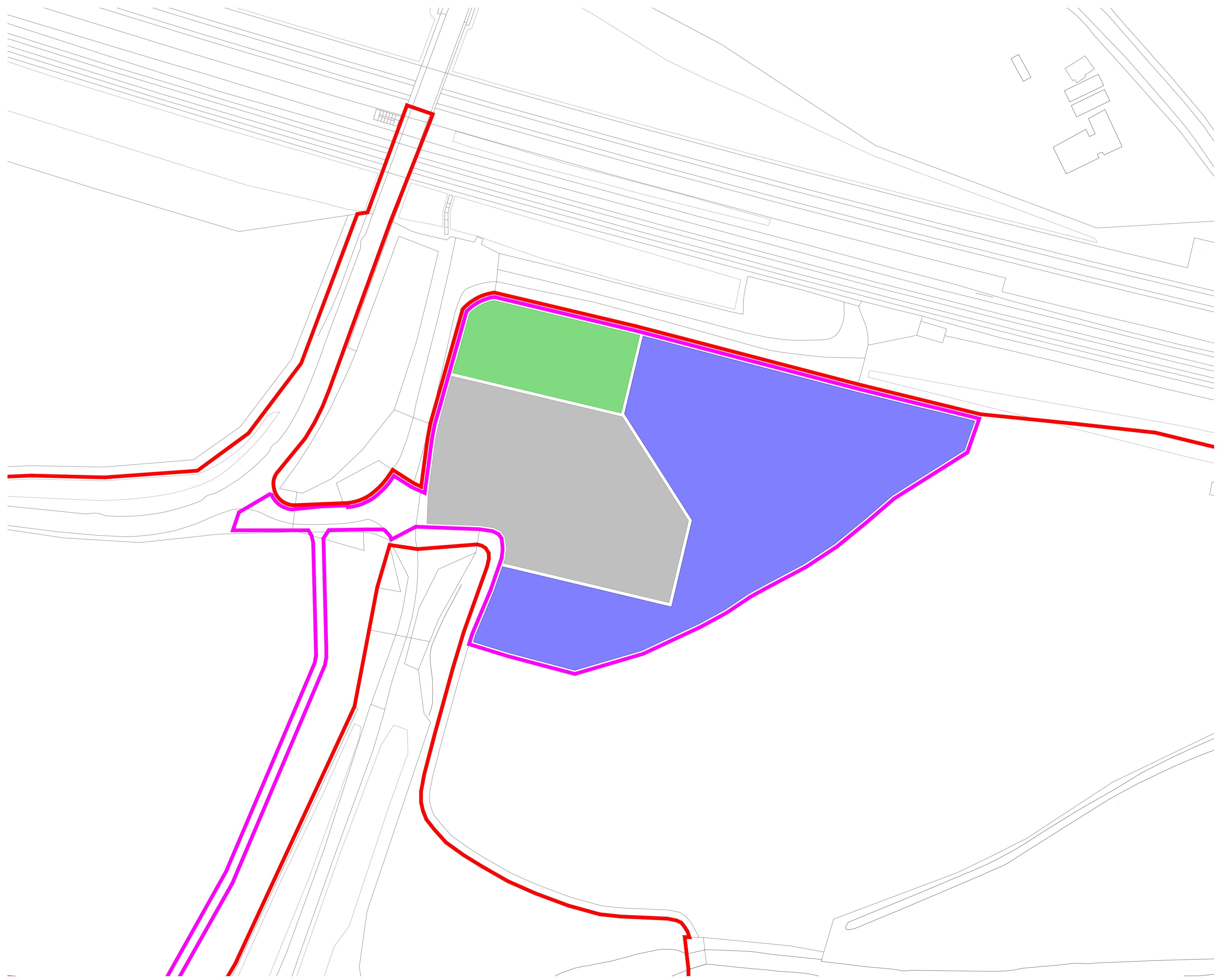


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- Key:
- Order limits
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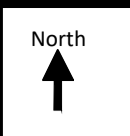
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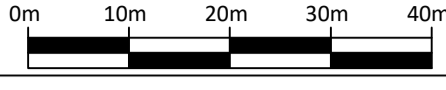
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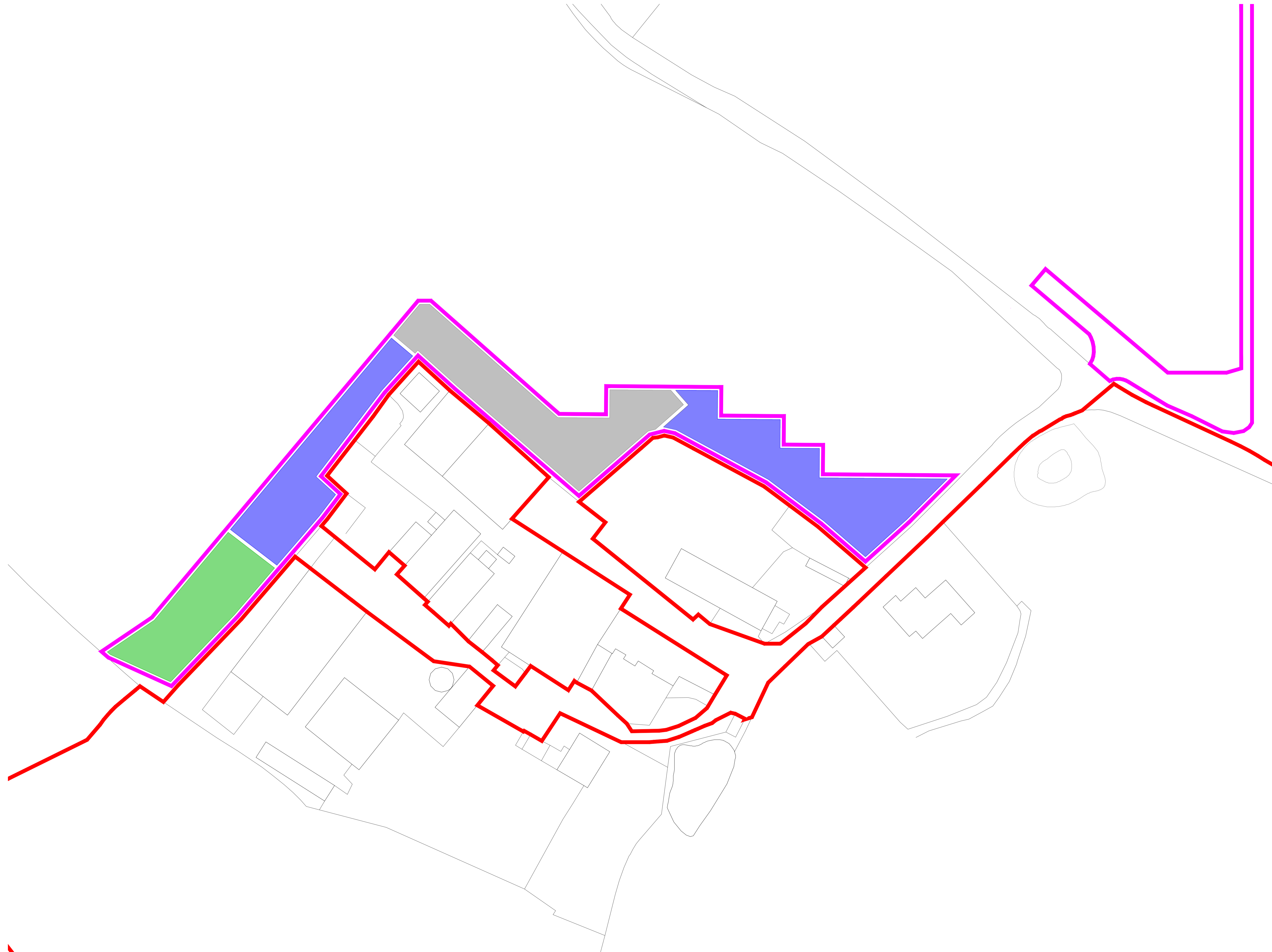


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Postcode: TN25 7HP W3W: paints.embodied.warp

- Key:
- Order limits
  - Work No. 7
  - Unloading / Turning Area
  - Distribution Area
  - Staff Area



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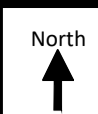
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Stonestreet Green Solar

Drawing Title:  
Illustrative Construction  
Compound Layouts  
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Drawing Number:  
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Scale: 1:500@A1

Produced: RC Checked: CM Date: December 2024 Version: 01



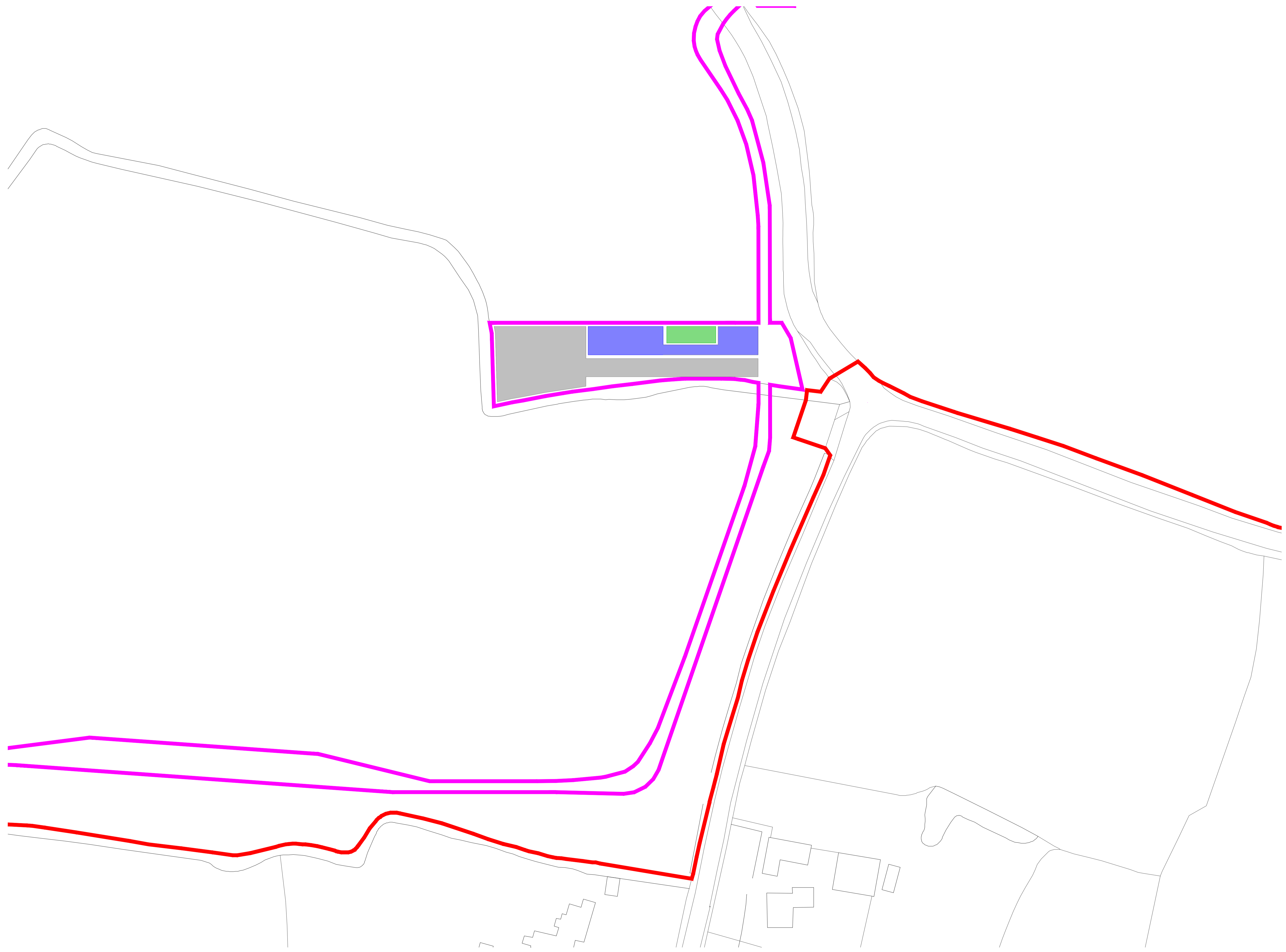


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- Key:
- Order limits
  - Work No. 7
  - Unloading / Turning Area
  - Distribution Area
  - Staff Area



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Project Name:  
Stonestreet Green Solar

Drawing Title:  
Illustrative Construction  
Compound Layouts  
F19 Secondary  
Compound

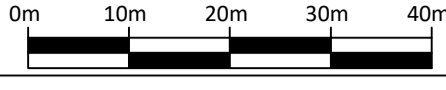
Drawing Number:  
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Produced: RC Checked: CM Date: December 2024 Version: 01



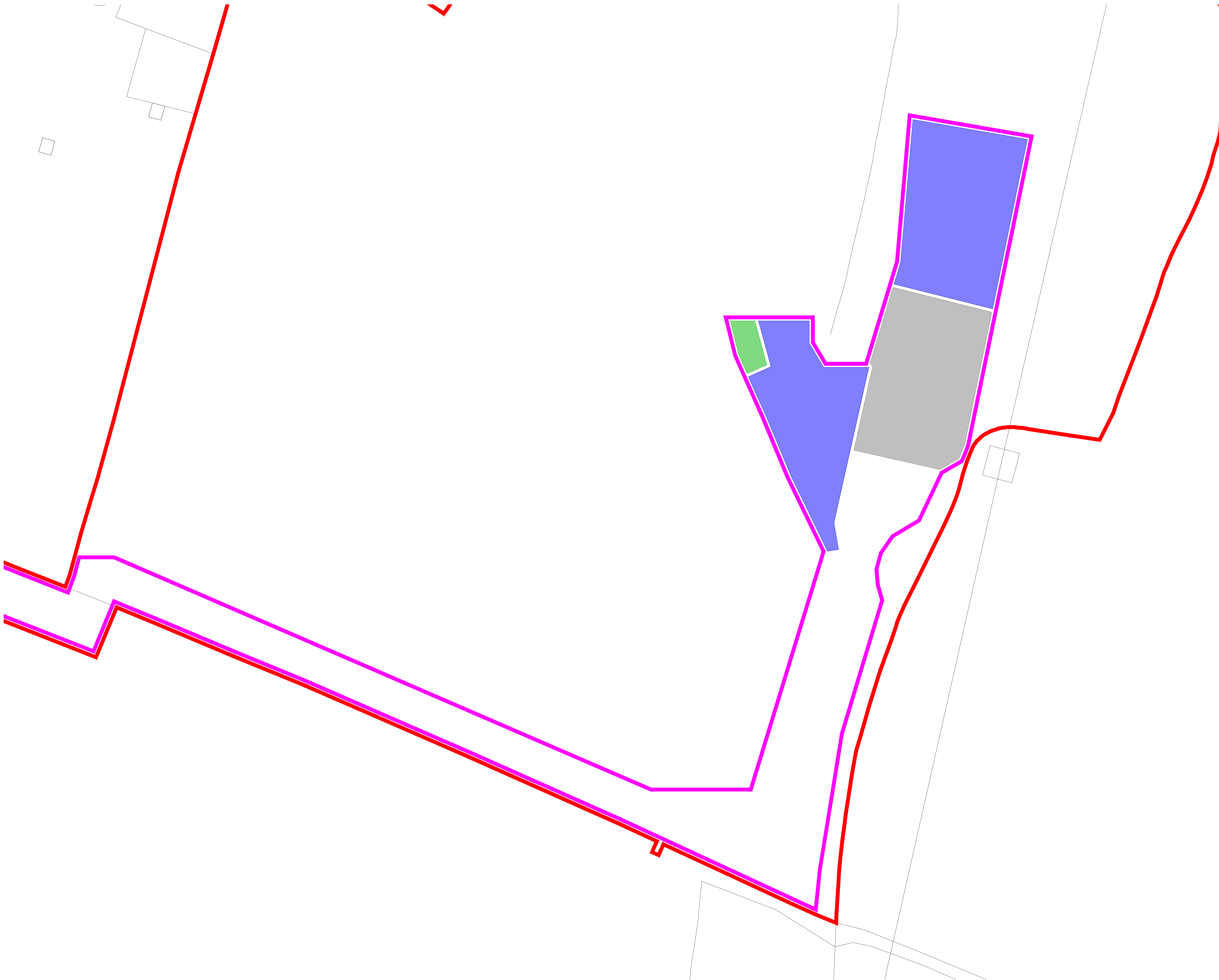
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- Key:
- Order limits
  - Work No. 7
  - Unloading / Turning Area
  - Distribution Area
  - Staff Area

North



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Project Name:  
Stonestreet Green Solar

Drawing Title:  
Illustrative Construction  
Compound Layouts  
F20 Secondary  
Compound

Drawing Number:  
142-02-75-F

Scale: 1:500@A1

Produced: RC Checked: CM Date: December 2024 Version: 01

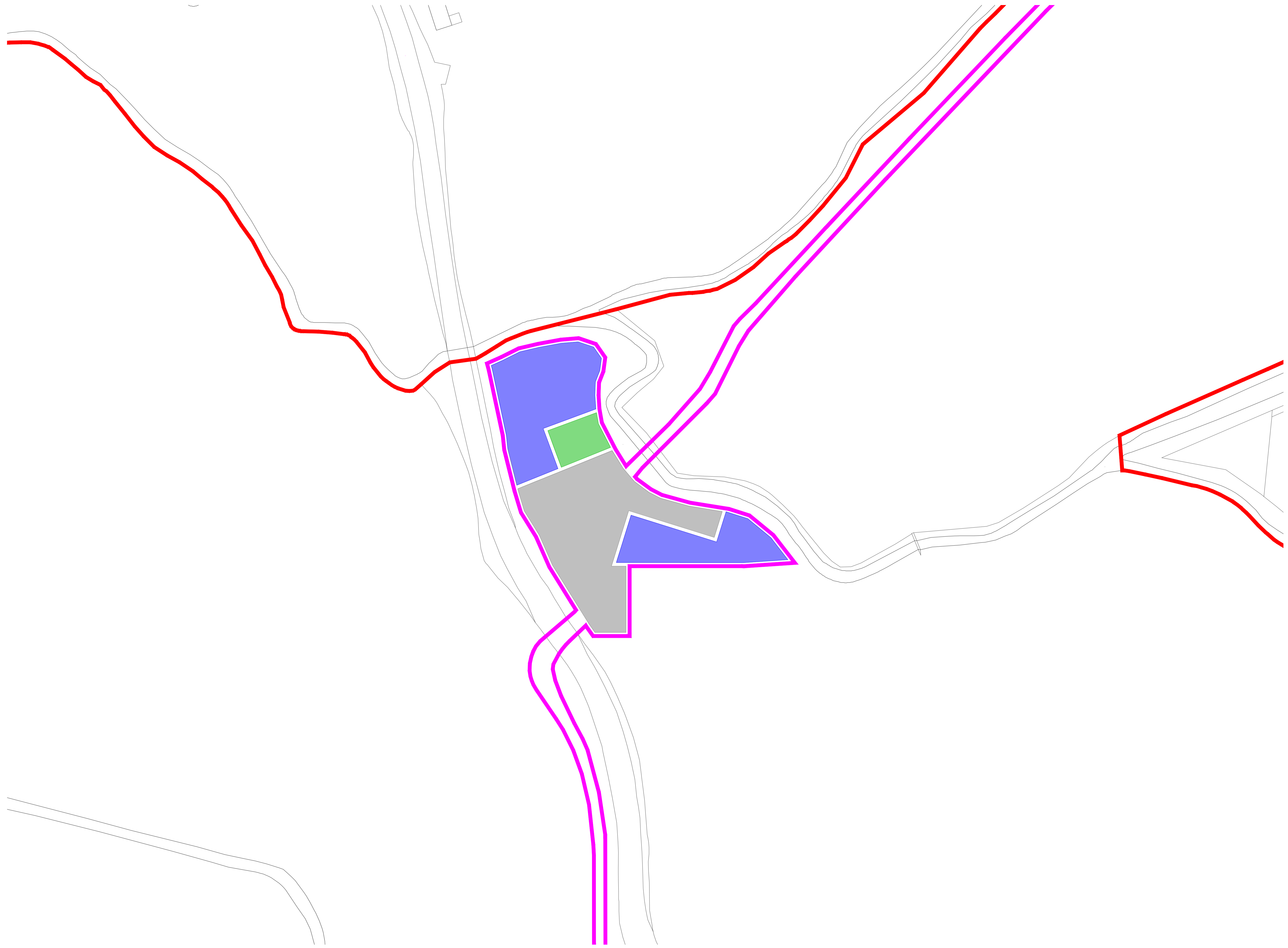
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- Key:
- Order limits
  - Work No. 7
  - Unloading / Turning Area
  - Distribution Area
  - Staff Area

North



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Project Name:  
Stonestreet Green Solar

Drawing Title:  
Illustrative Construction  
Compound Layouts  
F23 Secondary  
Compound

Drawing Number:  
142-02-75-D

Scale: 1:500@A1

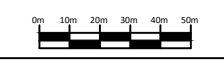
Produced:	Checked:	Date:	Version:
RC	CM	December 2024	01



## Stonestreet Green Solar

Appendix 3: Proximity of PRow  
to the Internal Haulage Route

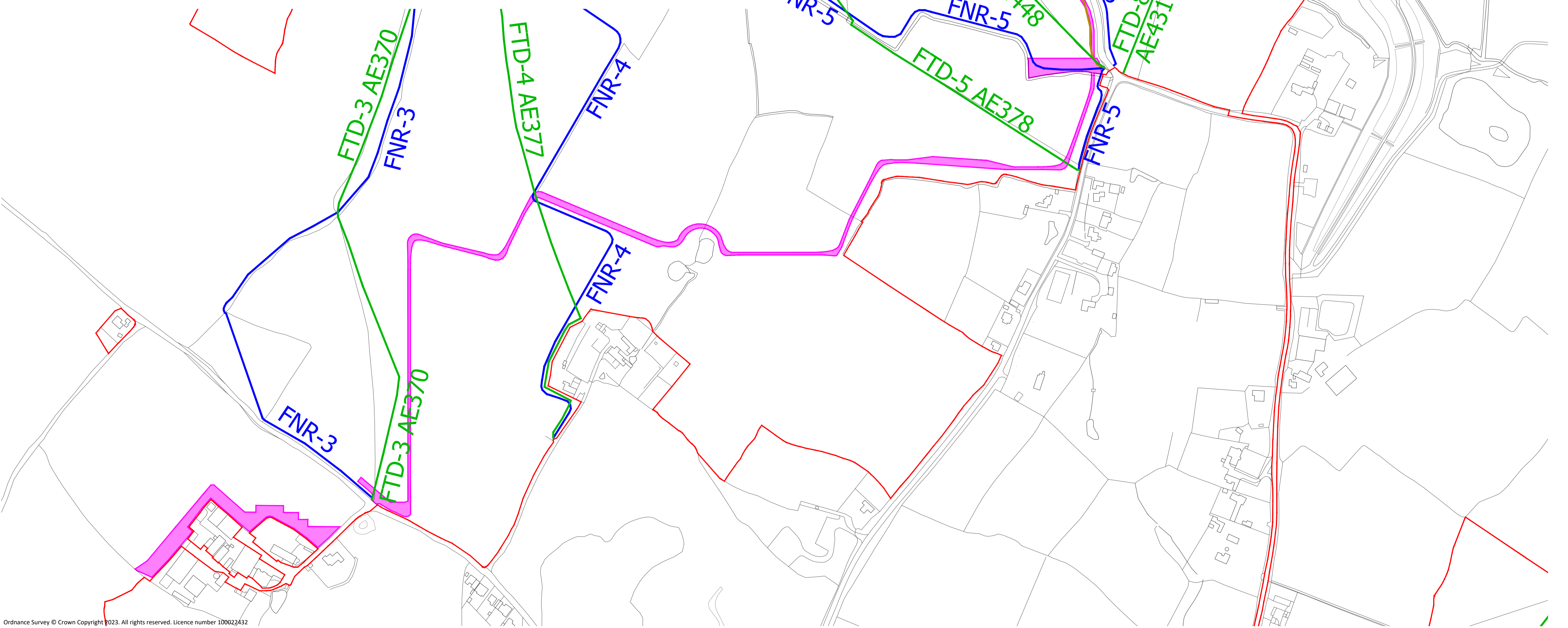
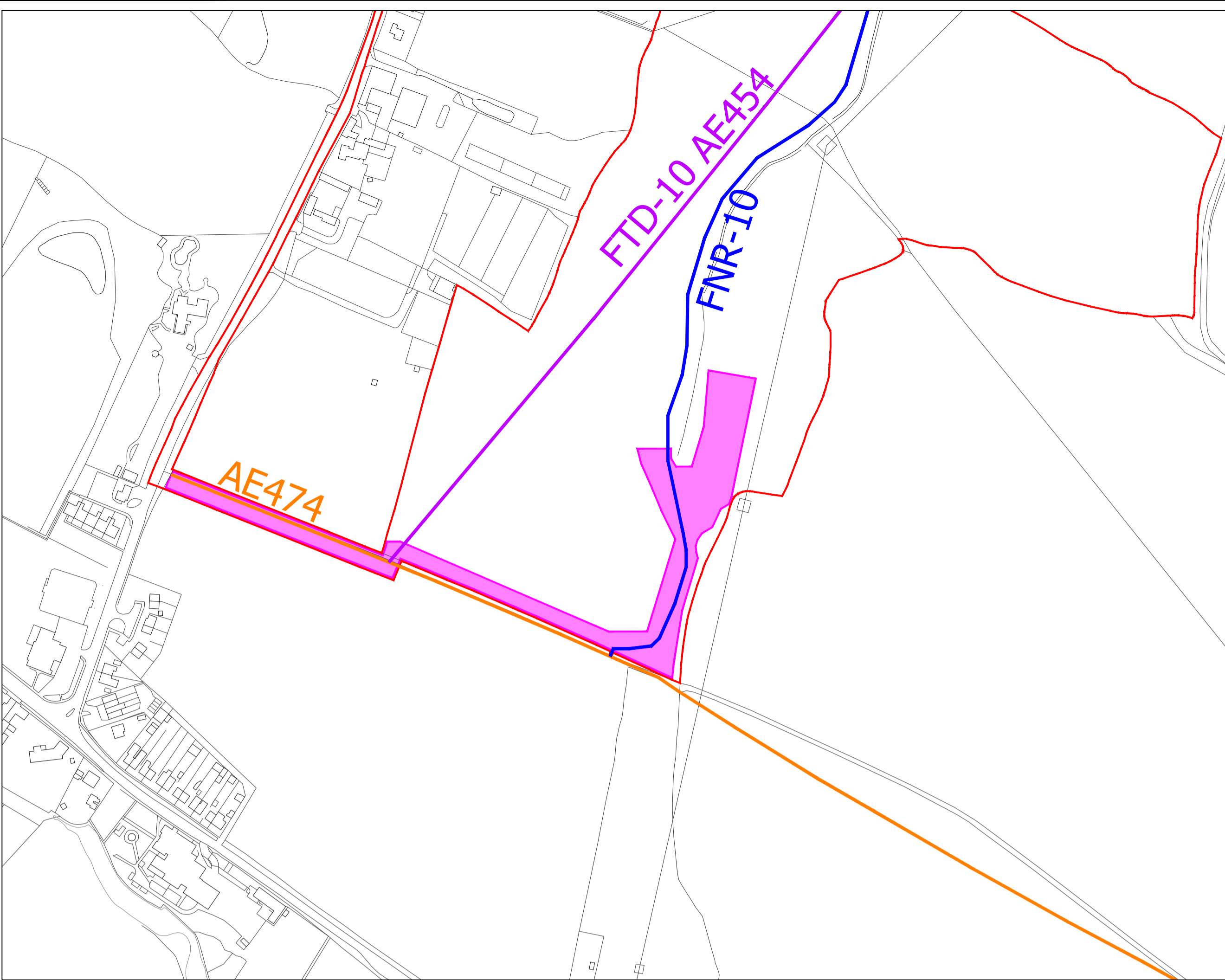
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Notes:  
This is a plan showing the layout of the Public Rights of Way as it will be once the construction of the Stonestreet Green Solar project has been completed.

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- Key:
- Order Limits
  - Existing PRoW
  - PRoW to be Diverted (FTD)
  - PRoW New Routes (FNR)
  - New PRoW Routes (FN)
  - Internal Haulage Road and construction / decommissioning compound areas



Project Name:  
Stonestreet Green Solar

Document Name:  
Plan showing diverted and new footpaths close to the Internal Haulage Road and construction / decommissioning compound areas

Document Reference #:  
142-01-74-B

Scale: 1:2500@A1

Produced: RC    Checked: CM    Date: December 2024    Version: 01



## Stonestreet Green Solar

Appendix 4: Extract from the PEIR  
Addendum (2023): Appendix 11.1:  
Changes to Public Rights of Way  
(PRoW) and Permissive Path Network

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## Appendix 11.1: Changes to Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and Permissive Path Network following Statutory Consultation

# Appendix 11.1: Changes to Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and Permissive Path Network following Statutory Consultation

East of Goldwell Lane (South)		
Routes Affected	PEIR Position and Stakeholder Feedback	Commentary and subsequent changes / considerations
AE 454 (Diversión)	<p><u>Baseline</u></p> <p>AE 454 currently runs diagonally across a field from AE 474 north-east to intersect with AE 475.</p> <p><u>PEIR Position</u></p> <p>The proposals consulted on at PEIR moved the existing start point of this link 172m further east to allow path to run adjacent to a proposed orchard, with the end point consistent with existing path. The total additional distance resulting from this change would be 196.1m or an increase of 35% for this link.</p> <p><u>Feedback / concerns raised:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <b>Additional distance</b> – KCC and other stakeholders note that the route is less direct and changes the intersection with AE 474. The re-routed path would be less convenient for users walking NE from Goldwell Lane – the direction from which most users are likely to come from.</li> <li>b) <b>Visual amenity</b> – Stakeholders note that the path would be enclosed between the perimeter of the installations and the edge of the streamlet on its Eastern side instead of enjoying open views towards the North Downs</li> <li>c) <b>Surface / Gradient</b> – May be more uneven but unclear as the diverted route is currently inaccessible.</li> <li>a) <b>Interaction with construction activity</b> – During the 12 month construction period, stakeholders are concerned about disturbance to path surface where construction</li> </ul>	<p>A re-route to the western edge of the field as proposed by some stakeholders has been considered, but is not considered possible as this is a protected species habitat area.</p> <p>Redirection of the footpath adjacent to proposed orchard east of the solar panels in Field 20 (west of the existing tree line) was intended to improve amenity value and help to reduce the impact of the existing overhead cables (which obscure any views to the North Downs).</p> <p>As such, it has been considered that the proposed route consulted on at PEIR – while increasing journey distance, has amenity benefits while not substantially increasing journey length on the network or interfering with uses important for habitat protection.</p> <p>It has been noted that disturbance to the path surface due to construction traffic crossing the path for a short period is a concern and this has been taken into account within the <b>Draft Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)</b> (Section 1.9) and will be developed through the <b>Draft Rights of Way and Access Strategy</b> (see <b>Appendix 11.2</b>)</p>



	<p>vehicles would follow or cross PRowWs such as at the junction of AE 474 with Goldwell Lane and the site entrance.</p> <p>d) <b>Alternative</b> - Moving the path a short distance south along 474 will reduce the extra distance for walkers who, we (stakeholders) believe, usually start from Aldington, and would provide a rectangular rather than triangular space around the current line, which might be a better site for the proposed orchard</p>	
<p>AE 475 (<b>Diversion</b>)</p>	<p><u>Baseline</u> AE 475 runs from Goldwell Road in the west in an easterly direction, first meeting AE 455 and then intersecting with AE 454.</p> <p><u>PEIR Position</u> The proposals set out at PEIR would lead to minor changes increasing the distance by 23.9m, with the path being aligned to follow an existing used route and field access points, with minor straightening of route. The route would meet with the new orientation of AE 454 and go to the north of the electricity pylon and then back on to the existing alignment.</p> <p><u>Feedback / concerns raised:</u> a) <b>Clarity</b> – KCC and other stakeholders noted that it wasn't clear from plans exactly how the route would be diverted.</p>	<p>The route proposed at Statutory Consultation / PEIR has not been amended.</p> <p>However, the design now includes a new hedgerow to partially screen views from AE 475 between Fields 20 and 21.</p> <p>To clarify, the current PRow runs in a straight line, south of the existing pylon, diverting from the existing fence line. The proposed re-route follows this line to the west of the pylon, but then runs north and around the north side of the pylon, re-joining the existing path after the pylon running east.</p>
<p>AE 455 (<b>Extinguish</b>)</p>	<p><u>Baseline</u> AE 455 runs diagonally across a field between AE 475 and AE 454 (where it intersects with AE 455).</p> <p><u>PEIR Position</u> At PEIR it was set out that this footpath would be extinguished to enable use of the field for solar panels. Users would be expected to divert around the southern and eastern sides of the field with an additional distance of 103m along AE 475/AE 454 to the start/end points of this PRow.</p> <p><u>Feedback / concerns raised:</u> a) <b>Additional Distance</b> – Stakeholders note that the path runs in a direct line between the two gates. Diversion via the re-routed AE 454 would increase the</p>	<p>The majority of feedback gained on this extinguishment and the proposed alternative route has indicated that this is not a concern of stakeholders, noting that it is a very short 'shortcut', increasing inconvenience but only slightly.</p> <p>The route proposed at Statutory Consultation / PEIR has not been amended.</p>

	distance between the two points by approximately 50% and would consequently be less convenient – however, stakeholders accept this is a very short shortcut.	
AE 474	<p><u>Baseline</u></p> <p>AE 474 runs from Goldwell Lane in the west in a south easterly direction to Church Lane. It is a well-established and direct, off-road route linking Aldington with Court Lodge Farm and St Martin's Church.</p> <p><u>PEIR Position</u></p> <p>This link was not proposed to be diverted or closed within the PEIR, and this remains the case. However, it would be crossed by construction vehicles periodically during the construction phase entering the construction site from Goldwell Lane in the east.</p> <p><u>Feedback / concerns raised:</u></p> <p>a) <b>Construction</b> - It is not clear how there will be avoidance of disturbance to the surface of paths (particularly severe rutting and/or mud) where construction vehicles would follow or cross PRoWs such as at the junction of AE 474 with Goldwell Lane and the site entrance.</p>	It has been noted that disturbance to the path surface due to construction traffic crossing the path for a short period is a concern and this has been taken into account within the <b>Draft Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)</b> (Section 1.9) and will be developed through the <b>Draft Rights of Way and Access Strategy</b> (see <b>Appendix 11.2</b> )
<b>East of Goldwell Lane (North); East Stour</b>		
<b>Routes Affected</b>	<b>PEIR Position and Stakeholder Feedback</b>	<b>Commentary and subsequent changes / considerations</b>
NEW 2 ( <b>New</b> ) and NEW 3 ( <b>New</b> )	<p><u>Baseline</u></p> <p>N/A – currently served by AE 657</p> <p><u>PEIR Position</u></p> <p>At PEIR, NEW 3 was proposed to run along the north bank of the East Stour River between AE 657 in the east and an existing track accessing Goldwell Lane in the west. NEW 2 was proposed to run south from the intersection of NEW 2 and that track to re-join AE 657, east of the fishing lake.</p> <p><u>Feedback / concerns raised:</u></p> <p>a) <b>Status/Specification</b> - KCC note that explanation is needed as to the proposed status and therefore specification – for example if this is to be a new recorded PRoW, it requires legal process, and future maintenance consideration. KCC</p>	<p>Proposals have been developed based on stakeholder feedback since PEIR to connect AE 657 to NEW 3, improving connectivity in the north of the site, allowing users to avoid an on-road transfer from AE 376 to AE 657 (currently, users are required to use Station Road to transition between AE 376 and AE 657).</p> <p>NEW 3, the existing AE 376 and the existing (and proposed minor re-route) of AE 657 (which leads to AE 656), together provide a complete route adjacent to the Proposed Development's northern boundary</p>

	<p>consider whether these new routes should be considered together with the proposal to divert AE 657/656 – i.e. diverting those routes onto this alignment.</p> <p>b) <b>Positive / Attractive</b> - The proposed “Riverside Walk” has the potential to be attractive and may serve as a useful link between Church Lane via AE657 and AE376 in the direction of Mersham.</p> <p>c) <b>Flooding</b> – Stakeholders considered that Proposed New Paths 2 &amp; 3 could provide a possible shorter diversion (than the proposed AE 657 diversion between AE 657 and the fishing lake)), but are likely to be susceptible to flooding when the East Stour flood defence is in operation</p> <p>d) <b>Remoteness</b> – The routes are remote at both ends from main areas of population (i.e. some distance from the main parts of Aldington) – though they may become more useful in the future as the Otterpool development area brings more people to the area.</p>	<p>and a direct pathway from Otterpool to Mersham (and ultimately Ashford).</p> <p>NEW 2 provides additional options for users to transition from existing AE657 to NEW 3.</p> <p>Continued engagement with KCC through the development of a <b>Draft Rights of Way and Access Strategy</b> (see <b>Appendix 11.2</b>) will determine the proposed approach to legal status, specification, maintenance and management arrangements.</p> <p>In principle, these new links provide new routes where there is no existing access.</p>
<p>AE 657 <b>(Diversion)</b></p> <p>AE 457 <b>(Diversion)</b></p> <p>NEW 5 <b>(New)</b></p>	<p><u>Baseline</u></p> <p>AE 657 currently runs from the railway line (intersecting with AE 656) in a south-westerly direction, crossing the East Stour River and running down to the east side of the fishing lake, continuing south of the fishing lake in westerly direction all the way to an intersection with AE 431 just east of Goldwell Lane.</p> <p>AE 457 currently runs south from where AE 657 crosses the East Stour, continuing south-easterly to the east of backhouse wood.</p> <p><u>PEIR Position</u></p> <p>The proposed diversion of AE 657 at PEIR involved the part of the route to the east of the intersection with AE 457, moving the alignment south slightly, and changing the intersection with AE 656 to a more easterly point. After crossing the East Stour the PEIR proposed routing the AE 657 around Field 29 to meet AE 457 and loop back around to re-join AE 657 running east of Backhouse Wood on a similar alignment to the existing AE 457.</p> <p><u>Feedback / concerns raised:</u></p> <p>a) <b>Loss not fully mitigated</b> – Stakeholders raised concerns that the proposed re-routed AE 657 to the north of Woodlease Farm would only partially mitigate the loss of accessibility from the existing AE 657 along with AE 431 and AE 436.</p>	<p>Based on feedback received, the following changes have been made:</p> <p>a) Provision of a new route through the gap between Fields 28 and 29, with an extension of AE 657 now allowing a complete loop near to Backhouse Wood to be walked (which was previously not possible).</p> <p>b) NEW 5 has been added to provide an alternative route around the eastern edge of Field 29.</p> <p>c) Alterations to the alignment of the north-eastern section to bring it into the middle of the field and through proposed landscaping/planting, rather than the existing route adjacent to the rail embankment.</p>

	<p>b) <b>Clarity</b> - KCC note that no proposed diversion route has been shown and that AE657 needs to connect to AE457 to maintain connectivity.</p> <p>c) <b>Additional Distance</b> – Concern was raised that the proposed diversion of this path to reach the diverted AE431 would add distance to the route, and that the route would add 1km to a route where the distance between destinations is only 200m. Stakeholders found this route completely unacceptable. There was general confusion as to the need to re-route around the east side of Field 29 rather than between Fields 28 and 29.</p>	
<b>Aldington to Stour Area</b>		
Routes Affected	PEIR Position and Stakeholder Feedback	Commentary and subsequent changes / considerations
<p>AE 370 (<b>Diversion</b>) / NEW 4 (<b>New</b>)</p>	<p><u>Baseline</u></p> <p>AE 370 currently runs from Frith Road north-westerly to cross Roman Road opposite the entrance to farm buildings, and then north across a field to a crossing of a small stream, and north to intersect with AE 377.</p> <p><u>PEIR Position</u></p> <p>The proposed diversion at PEIR (+176m) took the route along the north side of Roman Road and then north from a field boundary to then run alongside the stream, again to the intersection with AE 377.</p> <p><u>Feedback / concerns raised:</u></p> <p>a) <b>Adjacency to Bank Road</b> – KCC note that the south-west corner running along Bank Road (Roman Road) is not ideal.</p> <p>b) <b>Length of Diversion</b> – Stakeholders estimate the diversion at c. 50% additional distance.</p> <p>c) <b>Surface / Gradient</b> – The proposed diversion route was considered slightly hillier</p> <p>d) <b>Interaction with construction activity</b> – During the 12 month construction period, stakeholders are concerned about disturbance to path surface where construction vehicles would follow or cross PRowS such as the start of AE 370 where the internal construction route appears to be at a point where it will cross Bank Road (Roman Road).</p>	<p>This is the route of a proposed cycle route and therefore minimising turns has been a key consideration.</p> <p>Based on feedback received that adjacency to the road, albeit behind an established hedgerow, is a concern, it has been proposed to re-route across the middle of the small field bounded by Fields 12 and 13 diagonally, which would also reduce the distance and reduce change in grade.</p> <p>The revised route will take walkers through the open field to the west of Field 12, where existing views to the North Downs can be enjoyed from the Aldington Ridge. Timber benches will be provided in this area, with existing reinforced and proposed hedgerows to limit the impact of solar panels on viewers in this location</p> <p>It has been noted that disturbance to the path surface due to construction traffic crossing the path for a short period is a concern and this has been taken into account within the <b>Draft Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)</b> (Section 1.9) and</p>

	<p>e) <b>Cycle Route</b> – Stakeholders note that more clarity on the status of the diverted AE 370 as a cycle route is needed in order to reach a conclusion on its appropriateness.</p> <p>f) <b>Necessity</b> – In terms of the proposed route ‘NEW 4’ linking AE 370 to the intersection with AE 377, stakeholders recognise that this is a new route running parallel to an existing footpath, which could provide a cycle route (continuing along the length of the diverted AE 377).</p>	<p>will be developed through the <b>Draft Rights of Way and Access Strategy</b> (see <b>Appendix 11.2</b>).</p> <p>Further information on the status of the diverted AE 370 as a cycle route – including approach to standards / guidance relating to surfacing, sight lines and widths, will be developed through the <b>Draft Rights of Way and Access Strategy</b> (see <b>Appendix 11.2</b>).</p>
<p>AE 377 (<b>Diversion</b>) / NEW 6 (<b>New</b>)</p>	<p><u>Baseline</u></p> <p>AE 377 currently runs north from Roman Road to Handen Farm and then directly north-west across a field from Handen Farm to an intersection with AE 370 and beyond continues towards Ashford.</p> <p><u>PEIR Position</u></p> <p>The proposed diversion (+175.4m) set out at PEIR would divert the path via a “dog leg” just north of Handen Farm and then return west, then north, between Fields 13, 14, 15 and 16 to the intersection with AE 370.</p> <p><u>Feedback / concerns raised:</u></p> <p>a) <b>Connectivity</b> – KCC note that clarity is needed on the southern end of the route as PRoW should link highway to highway.</p> <p>b) <b>Visual Amenity</b> – Stakeholders consider the views from the path towards Mersham and northwards to The North Downs to be of high quality and extensive, and are concerns these would be lost as a result of fencing and the height of panels.</p> <p>c) <b>Length of Diversion</b> – Stakeholders noted that the proposed diversion of this path in two “doglegs” is lengthier by around 60% than the existing route.</p> <p>d) <b>Economic Effects</b> – Stakeholders are concerned that the combined effects on this route would affect residents and visitors accessing businesses in Merstham via this off-road walking route.</p> <p>e) <b>Interaction with construction activity</b> – During the 12 month construction period, stakeholders are concerned about disturbance to path surface where construction</p>	<p>The Applicant has taken into consideration comments about directness - as requested, the initial “dog leg” directly to the north of Handen Farm has been removed.</p> <p>The path follows reinstated historic hedge boundaries between Fields 14 and 15 which are key for biodiversity improvements, reduce visual impact and create legibility. Subject to development of Design Principles, it is the intention to hedge the sections of the diverted route to the south of Field 15 and north of Field 14.</p> <p>The path travels broadly in the intended direction throughout, with a 175.4m (24.4%) increase in distance over the link. While there remains a change in ‘directness’ of the link, the improved legibility, visual and biodiversity benefits of the re-route are considered important.</p> <p>‘NEW 6’ has been added as a new off-road footpath, parallel to an existing on-road route (AE 377) which will improve public amenity and safety concerns.</p> <p>It has been noted that disturbance to the path surface due to construction traffic crossing the path for a short period is a concern and this has been taken into account within the <b>Draft Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)</b> (Section 1.9) and</p>

	<p>vehicles would follow or cross PRowS such as where the internal construction route appears to coincide with parts of AE 377 near Handen Farm</p>	<p>will be developed through the <b>Draft Rights of Way and Access Strategy</b> (see <b>Appendix 11.2</b>).</p> <p>This link has been recognised as part of a key strategic route linking Aldington and Stonestreet Green to commercial and other uses in Merstham and will be assessed as such in the ES.</p>
<p><b>Summary / Additional Information</b></p> <p>KCC note in their response to statutory consultation that Byway AE 396 – although not altered by the Project - runs within the redline between Fields 6 and 7 on the west and 8 and 9 on the east. KCC note that specific attention should be paid to the maintenance of this byway, in particular to ensure the route is not susceptible to damage by off road motorised vehicles.</p> <p>Whilst this byway is within the project redline, it will not be impacted by the proposals. Currently the byway is very overgrown - clearing and maintaining this PRow/byway so that it is passable will form part of the maintenance plan for the PRowS within the project redline area and will improve connectivity.</p> <p>Further engagement with Kent County Council is planned to enable the development of a <b>Draft Rights of Way and Access Strategy</b> (see <b>Appendix 11.2</b>) which will set out roles and responsibilities, monitoring and approaches to maintenance of the Byway.</p>		
<p><b>Roman Road to East Stour</b></p>		
<p><b>Routes Affected</b></p>	<p><b>PEIR Position and Stakeholder Feedback</b></p>	<p><b>Commentary and subsequent changes / considerations</b></p>
<p>AE 385 (<b>Diversion</b>)</p>	<p><u>Baseline</u></p> <p>AE 385 currently runs north westerly between Frith Road in the south, crossing Laws Lane, and continuing to intersect with Bank Road just east of Coopers Lane.</p> <p><u>PEIR Position</u></p> <p>At PEIR, the proposals consulted on included diverting a section of the link between Laws Lane and approaching Coopers Lane to the south and west of Field 1.</p> <p><u>Feedback / Concerns Raised</u></p> <p>a) <b>Additional distance / Alternatives</b> – Walking Groups noted that the AE 380 new path to the South of Bank Road appears to be a continuation, across Bank Road, of a path from Mersham to join the diverted route of AE385 – for those wishins to reach Laws Lane, a shorter more convenient route use Bank Road and Laws Lane rather than the proposed diversion round the perimeter of the solar panels on</p>	<p>Since PEIR the Applicant has proposed a change to re-route AE 385 to the east of the existing route, in between Fields 1 and 2, and therefore to shorten the proposed new extension to AE 380 to link up to the replacement AE 385.</p> <p>The proposal connects the existing AE 380 path (that terminates at Bank Road) with AE 385, avoiding the need to walk on Bank Road and Laws Lane to continue progress. However, the Bank Road/Laws Lane route will remain in place for individuals who prefer this route.</p> <p>This is considered to alleviate concerns about a substantial increase in distance which would have</p>

	<p>AE385. The proposed diversion would add approximately 60% extra length to this section of the route which would be considered detrimental. The proposed diversion of to the SE of Laws Lane near Little Gains Farm is, however, short enough to be of little significant detriment to the route.</p>	<p>been the case if diverted to the south west of Field 1. The path would meet the existing AE 385 before reaching Laws Lane.</p> <p>The design includes a new hedgerow to partially screen views from PRoW AE385 between Fields 1 and 2.</p>
<p>AE 380 (New Extension)</p>	<p><u>Baseline</u></p> <p>At present, AE 380 stops at Roman Road, whereby users would need to travel east on Bank Road and then south on Laws Lane to re-join AE 385 travelling between Mersham and Aldington.</p> <p><u>PEIR Position</u></p> <p>The proposed extension to AE 380 at PEIR was provided to improve local connectivity by allowing direct transfer between AE 380 north of Bank Road and AE 385, avoiding an on-road route.</p> <p><u>Feedback / concerns raised:</u></p> <p>a) <b>Necessity</b> – Stakeholders raised concern (as above) that as a continuation, across Bank Road, of a path from Mersham to join the diverted route of AE385, that it would appear to serve little worthwhile purpose.</p>	
<p><b>Stonestreet Green, West of Goldwell Lane</b></p>		
<p><b>Routes Affected</b></p>	<p><b>PEIR Position and Stakeholder Feedback</b></p>	<p><b>Commentary and subsequent changes / considerations</b></p>
<p>AE 447 (Extinguished)</p>	<p><u>Baseline</u></p> <p>AE 447 runs between AE 378 and the East Stour River directly across a field linking to AE 448.</p> <p><u>PEIR Position</u></p> <p>This PRoW was identified for extinguishment at PEIR as a result of Field 19.</p> <p><u>Feedback / concerns raised</u></p> <p>a) <b>Alternatives</b> – Some stakeholders (Kent Ramblers) oppose this extinguishment unless AE 428 is retained across the field</p>	<p>It has been noted that the current route of AE 447 terminates at the northern hedge / stream with no onward connection to another PRoW.</p> <p>NEW 7 has now been added in order to maintain connectivity from Goldwell Lane to the East Stour River.</p> <p>The diversion of AE 448 provides a rationale for arriving at that point, in order to join the riverside walk going west to then intersect with AE 428.</p> <p>It is recognised that – through stakeholder feedback – this link forms part of a circular route used by dog</p>

	<p>b) <b>Currently of little use</b> – Stakeholders note that this path currently ends abruptly at a stream – there used to be a footbridge (according to OS maps) to reach the road near Evegat Mill. This very short section of the path is therefore currently of little use and could be extinguished with little inconvenience to most users.</p> <p>c) <b>Part of circular walk</b> - The section of AE 447 up to the intersection with the AE 448 affords a circular route used by dog walkers from Calleywell Lane via existing AE 378 returning via AE 448 to the end of Calleywell Lane.</p>	<p>walkers from Calleywell Lane and will be considered as such within the ES (NEW 1 and NEW 7 may offer an alternative route in terms of length and origin/destination).</p>
<p>AE 378 (<b>Diversion</b>)</p>	<p><u>Baseline</u></p> <p>AE 378 runs from Calleywell Lane in a westerly direction, first crossing a field and then running (mostly – except for one small portion) parallel to an existing established hedgerow and stream leading to a confluence with the East Stour River and AE 448.</p> <p><u>PEIR Position</u></p> <p>At PEIR, the proposals included running AE 378 adjacent to Calleywell Lane (around Field 18) to then turn west and run parallel to an existing hedgerow and stream (in much the same as its existing alignment).</p> <p><u>Feedback / concerns raised</u></p> <p>a) <b>Roadside nature and direction</b> - KCC note that the proposed diversion runs alongside a road in an uneven direction.</p> <p>b) <b>Acceptable change</b> – Some stakeholders consider that moving the route from the edge of the field to next to the ditch is sensible.</p> <p>c) <b>Additional distance (Calleywell Lane to East Stour)</b> – Stakeholders note that the proposed diversion would add approximately 50% to its length and join AE 378 at a point over 400m to the west of its current intersection – a total diverted route following AE 378 and AE 428 from Calleywell Lane to cross the River of around 1km.</p> <p>d) <b>Construction</b> – Stakeholders note that the path would be affected by construction traffic during the 12-month construction phase.</p>	<p>The proposed route runs parallel to existing hedgerows, and it is noted that Kent Ramblers agree this is a sensible minor diversion.</p> <p>The proposed diversion route offers no change in connectivity, albeit an increase in distance of 163.8m (21.1%) on that link.</p> <p>To clarify, the proposed section of the route adjacent to Calleywell Lane would pass to the west of the existing sewage pumping station and across the stream before turning west.</p> <p>It has been noted that disturbance to the path surface due to construction traffic crossing the path for a short period is a concern and this has been taken into account within the <b>Draft Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)</b> (Section 1.9) and will be developed through the <b>Draft Rights of Way and Access Strategy</b> (see <b>Appendix 11.2</b>)</p>
<p>AE 428 (<b>Diversion</b>)</p>	<p><u>Baseline</u></p>	<p>The existing route of AE 428 provides a connection from south to north side (footbridge) of Field 19, accessible from Goldwell Lane via AE 378.</p>



	<p>AE 428 currently runs from an intersection with AE 447 and AE 378 (having crossed a stream) in a north westerly direction to intersect with and cross the East Stour River, then continuing north to and across the railway line.</p> <p><u>PEIR Position</u></p> <p>At PEIR, it was proposed to divert AE 428 around the western boundary of Field 19, running parallel to the East Stour River and then intersecting with AE 378.</p> <p><u>Feedback / concerns raised</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <b>Clarity</b> – KCC consider that the proposed diversion is unclear</li> <li>b) <b>Additional distance (Calleywell Lane to AE 370)</b> – Stakeholders raise concern that the proposed diversion from Calleywell Lane to the junction with the AE428 diversion (to reach the old brick built bridge over the East Stour) would more than double the distance of the current direct route (diagonally straight across the field) making a previously direct route much longer and more inconvenient.</li> </ul>	<p>The proposed diversion, with introduction of NEW 7 following consultation feedback, maintains the start and end points of AE 248 and increases distance from Goldwell Lane to the footbridge by only 12m (697m to 705m) via NEW 7 and then the diverted AE 448 along the river.</p>
<p>AE 448 (<b>Diversion</b>)</p>	<p><u>Baseline</u></p> <p>AE 448 currently runs between the junction of Goldwell Lane and Calleywell Lane in a north westerly direction across an intersection with AE 447 to meet the East Stour River and intersect with AE 428.</p> <p><u>PEIR Position</u></p> <p>At PEIR, AE 448 was proposed to be moved from its current origin at the junction of Goldwell Lane and Calleywell Lane to a point where it would link with a diverted (see below) AE 431, and continuing westwards along the East Stour River to intersect with AE 428 and AE 378.</p> <p><u>Feedback / concerns raised</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <b>Clarity</b> – KCC consider that the proposed diversion is unclear</li> <li>b) <b>Qualified support</b> – Stakeholders note that many walkers have in effect used this route, next to the East Stour, since a wide edging to the field was formerly provided</li> <li>c) <b>Additional distance</b> - Stakeholders note that AE 448 – currently provides an almost direct route of around 500m to the East Stour footbridge. The diversion would add 20% distance along a less direct route.</li> </ul>	<p>By adding in NEW 7 in response to consultation feedback, safety concerns about needing to cross the road to connect AE 428 to Goldwell Lane via the rerouted AE 448 (river walk) have been addressed, and this ensures a new more direct replacement link (albeit slightly - 42.2m or 7.9% - longer).</p> <p>It has been noted that disturbance to access due to construction traffic crossing the path for a short period is a concern and this has been taken into account within the <b>Draft Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)</b> (Section 1.9) and will be developed through the <b>Draft Rights of Way and Access Strategy</b> (see <b>Appendix 11.2</b>)</p> <p>An investigation is being made into the potential previous status of the link as a Bridle Route in order to inform its status during the Project's operational phase and in perpetuity.</p>

	<p>d) <b>Safety concerns</b> – The less direct route would necessitate a user either walking along a busy narrow road with a number of bends or crossing the same road twice to follow the diverted course of AE431.</p> <p>e) <b>Bridleway status</b> - The route was previously a Bridle Road (apparently) - abandonment may preclude it being the subject of any future application for re-classification on historical grounds to Bridleway status</p> <p>f) <b>Construction</b> – Stakeholders note that the path would be affected by construction traffic during the 12-month construction phase.</p>	
<b>Stonestreet Green, East of Goldwell Lane</b>		
<b>Routes Affected</b>	<b>PEIR Position and Stakeholder Feedback</b>	<b>Commentary and subsequent changes / considerations</b>
<p>AE 431 (<b>Diversion</b>)</p>	<p><u>Baseline</u> AE 431 runs directly north between the point at which Calleywell Lane junctions with Goldwell Lane, across a stream and then the East Stour River, before intersecting with a track next to Station Road.</p> <p><u>PEIR Position</u> At PEIR, AE 431 was proposed to re-route initially along the eastern side of Goldwell Lane to intersect with the diverted AE 448, and then run north east parallel to an existing hedgerow between fields to its existing junction with a track next to Station Road (and to intersect with NEW 3 to provide onward connectivity towards Otterpool Park).</p> <p><u>Feedback / concerns raised</u></p> <p>a) <b>Adjacent Road</b> – KCC note that this proposed diversion moves the path from across a field to adjacent a road.</p> <p>b) <b>Additional distance</b> - The proposal would divert the path from its current route to the existing junction with AE 431 to join further South, adding to the distance.</p> <p>c) <b>Water / Flooding</b> – Concern that the proposed diversion route would run across ground that is subject to being waterlogged</p>	<p>The diverted AE 431 is considered to improve the potential for recreation and amenity, as it connects Calleywell Lane and AE 448 to proposed new routes alongside the East Stour River in the north-eastern parcel of the site (the river walk) without requiring an on-road journey whilst also maintaining a south/north route to AE 431.</p> <p>The Project has taken note of potential waterlogging which would impact the existing network in this area, and considers that the introduction of NEW 7 provides a parallel route on the other side of the road (where flood risk is lower) should AE 431 be periodically inaccessible for that reason.</p> <p>It has been noted that disturbance to access due to construction traffic crossing the path for a short period is a concern and this has been taken into account within the <b>Draft Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)</b> (Section 1.9) and will be developed through the <b>Draft Rights of Way and Access Strategy</b> (see <b>Appendix 11.2</b>)</p>

	<p>d) <b>Acceptable diversion</b> – Some stakeholders note that the proposed diversion to meet the river path at AE 448 (diverted) is acceptable.</p> <p>e) <b>Construction</b> – Stakeholders note that the path would be affected by construction traffic during the 12-month construction phase.</p>	
<p>AE 436 (<b>Diversion</b>) NEW 1 (<b>New</b>)</p>	<p><u>Baseline</u></p> <p>AE 436 is a short link that runs between AE 431 where it crosses a stream, to the perimeter of a farm site on the corner of Goldwell Lane, lacking network connectivity at the eastern end of the link.</p> <p><u>PEIR Position</u></p> <p>AE 436 originally crossed centre of Field 23 and at PEIR it was proposed to divert the route around the southern edge of that field along the north of Goldwell Lane to link the diverted AE 431. A new route (NEW 1) was then proposed running north-south linking the diverted AE 436 and AE 657.</p> <p>NEW 1 was added in order to complete the circuit around Field 23, and increases overall connectivity in the area. It allows for access to AE 657 from Goldwell Lane, reducing road distance for those approaching from this direction.</p> <p><u>Feedback / concerns raised</u></p> <p>a) <b>Adjacent Road</b> – KCC note that this proposed diversion moves the path from across a field to adjacent a road.</p> <p>b) <b>Additional distance</b> - The proposal would divert the path resulting in it joining AE 431 further South, adding to the distance. One stakeholder considers that as AE 431 is moving west to align with the road, this path should be retained.</p> <p>c) <b>Status/Specification</b> - KCC note that explanation is needed as to the proposed status of NEW 1 and therefore specification – for example if this is this to be a new recorded PRoW, it requires legal process, and future maintenance consideration.</p> <p>d) <b>Positive addition</b> - NEW 1 is a potentially short but useful addition to the PRoW network near Woodleas Farm, partly necessitated by the proposed diversions of paths AE431 and AE 436. Though some stakeholders consider that would it only partially mitigate the diversions of AE657, AE431 and AE436.</p>	<p>The existing AE 436 is only accessible from Goldwell Lane, and therefore requires on-road transit.</p> <p>The route facilitated by NEW 1 through AE 657 retains connectivity should this route be required, with the addition of AE 436 to provide off-road access to the southern start point of existing AE 436, thereby allowing users to reach this point without using Goldwell Lane.</p> <p>As such, the route proposed at Statutory Consultation / PEIR has not been amended.</p> <p>Continued engagement with KCC through the development of a <b>Draft Rights of Way and Access Strategy</b> (see <b>Appendix 11.2</b>) will determine the proposed approach to legal status, specification, maintenance and management arrangements for new links such as NEW 1.</p>

<p>AE 657 (Diversions)</p>	<p><u>Baseline</u></p> <p>Asset out above, AE 657 currently runs from the railway line (intersecting with AE 656) in a south-westerly direction, crossing the East Stour River and running down to the east side of the fishing lake, continuing south of the fishing lake in westerly direction all the way to an intersection with AE 431 just east of Goldwell Lane.</p> <p><u>PEIR Position</u></p> <p>At PEIR, a proposed extension to AE 657 was proposed to link it to the diverted AE431 and link up the strategic route across the site from east to west, joining the riverside walk via diverted AE 428.</p> <p><u>Feedback / concerns raised</u></p> <p>a) <b>Additional distance</b> - The proposed diversion of this path to reach the diverted AE431 would add distance to the route</p>	<p>Based on feedback, the Applicant has made a minor change to the western portion of the proposed AE 657 diversion along the northern edge of Field 23.</p> <p>An extension along southern boundary of Field 24 provides connection between AE 657 and AE 431.</p>
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