



COTSWOLD
TRANSPORT
PLANNING

Statkraft UK Ltd

Sheepwash Solar Energy Farm

**Technical Note – Public Rights of
Way Mitigation Strategy**

February 2022





DOCUMENT REGISTER

CLIENT:	STATKRAFT UK LTD
PROJECT:	SHEEPWASH SOLAR ENERGY FARM
PROJECT CODE:	21-0354

REPORT TITLE:	TECHNICAL NOTE – PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY MITIGATION STRATEGY		
PREPARED BY:	KEVIN SYKES	DATE:	FEBRUARY 2022
CHECKED BY:	CHRIS ELLIOTT	DATE:	FEBRUARY 2022

REPORT STATUS:	V3 FINAL ISSUE
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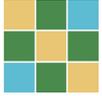
Prepared by **COTSWOLD** TRANSPORT PLANNING LTD

Bedford i-Lab
Stannard Way
Priory Business Park
Bedford
MK44 3RZ

Tel: 01234 836098

Email: bedford@cotswoldtp.co.uk

Web: www.cotswoldtp.co.uk



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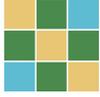
1 Introduction

Brief

- 1.1 Cotswold Transport Planning Ltd (CTP) has been instructed by Statkraft UK Ltd to prepare a Technical Note (TN) detailing a Public Rights of Way Mitigation Strategy (PROWMS) in support of a planning application for a Solar Energy Farm at land north of Sheephurst Lane, Marden, Kent.
- 1.2 Planning permission is sought for the development of a 50MW Solar Energy Farm with ancillary electrical infrastructure, including 15MW of battery energy storage. Further details of the proposal and the technology used together with the proposed site layout are included within the supporting documents, submitted separately with the planning application.
- 1.3 A Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) has also been prepared by CTP under separate cover to support this scheme.
- 1.4 This report has been prepared to outline the arrangements to keep Footpath KM248/2 safely open during the construction and operational phases of the Solar Energy Farm and to provide further detail with regard to the realignment of part of Footpath KM248/2 and introduction of a new permissive footpath adjacent to the site.
- 1.5 It is envisaged that a Planning Condition will be imposed to ensure that this document is adhered to at all times during the construction and operational phases.

Site Context

- 1.6 The site currently comprises a parcel of agricultural land which has an approximate area of 74.5 hectares.
 - 1.7 The site is located north of Sheephurst Lane and east of the B2162 Collier Street. The South Eastern Main Line extends in an east-west direction to the north of the site. Agricultural / undeveloped green fields border the site at all sides.
 - 1.8 Access to the site is currently via two gated agricultural accesses from Sheephurst Lane, which are located either side of semi-detached dwellings at the southern end of the site. Access is also achievable at the end of Burtons Lane at the northern end of the site where the Public Right of Way 0330/KM248/2 extends to the east along the northern boundary of the site.
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1.9 An indicative site location plan is provided at **Appendix A** of this report.



2 Public Rights of Way

Existing PROW Network

- 2.1 A Public Right of Way (PROW) known as footpath KM248/2 extends from the eastern end of Burtons Lane along the northern edge of the site boundary. Approximately 430m west of the northeastern corner of the site, footpath KM248/2 extends in a south easterly direction across the site until it meets the eastern site boundary approximately 140m south of the most northeastern corner.
- 2.2 At this point, footpath KM248/2 extends to the east as footpath KM248/3 to join a wider network of PROWs. **Figure 2.1** shows the PROWs in the vicinity of the proposed Solar Energy Farm.

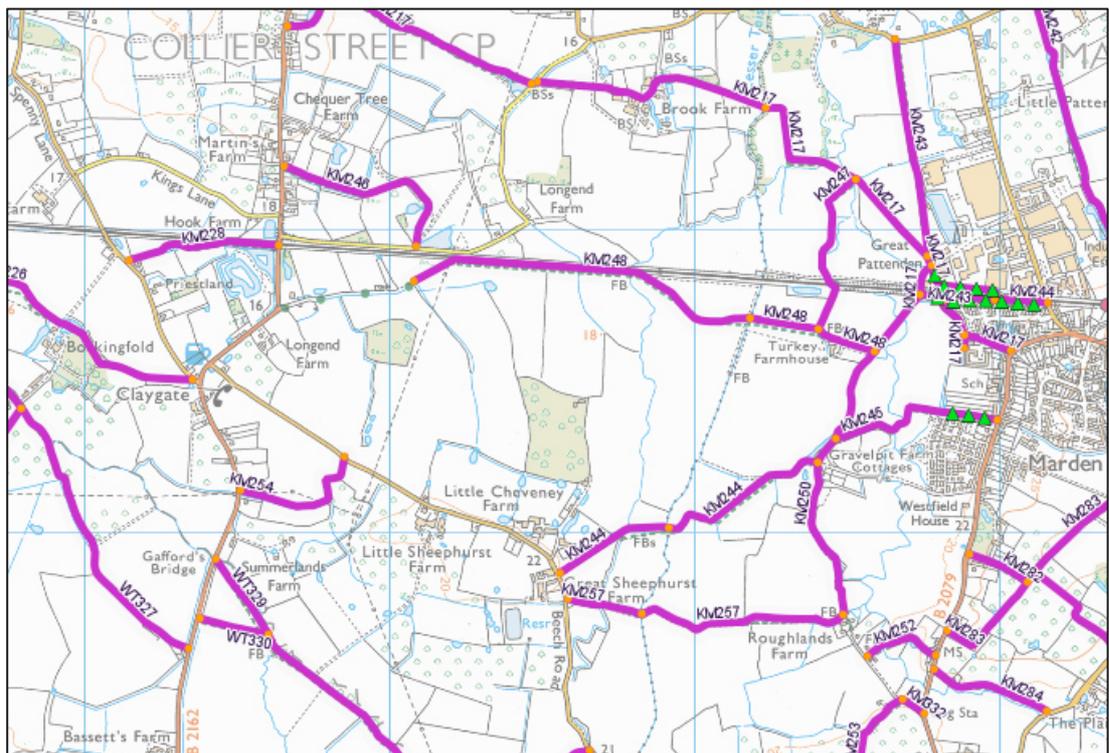


Figure 2.1: PROW network extract (source: KCC PROW Map)

Proposed Changes to PROW Network

- 2.3 As part of the development of the site, it is proposed to divert public footpath KM248/2 at the northeastern corner of the site to accommodate the Solar Energy Farm.
- 2.4 In addition, two new permissive footpaths are proposed to the west and east of the site. The western path extends from Sheephurst Lane in the south to Burtons Lane in



the north. The eastern path extends from KM248 on the northeastern boundary of the site to Sheephurst Lane. **Figure 2.2** shows the proposed diversion of footpath KM248/2 and location of the new permissive footpaths.

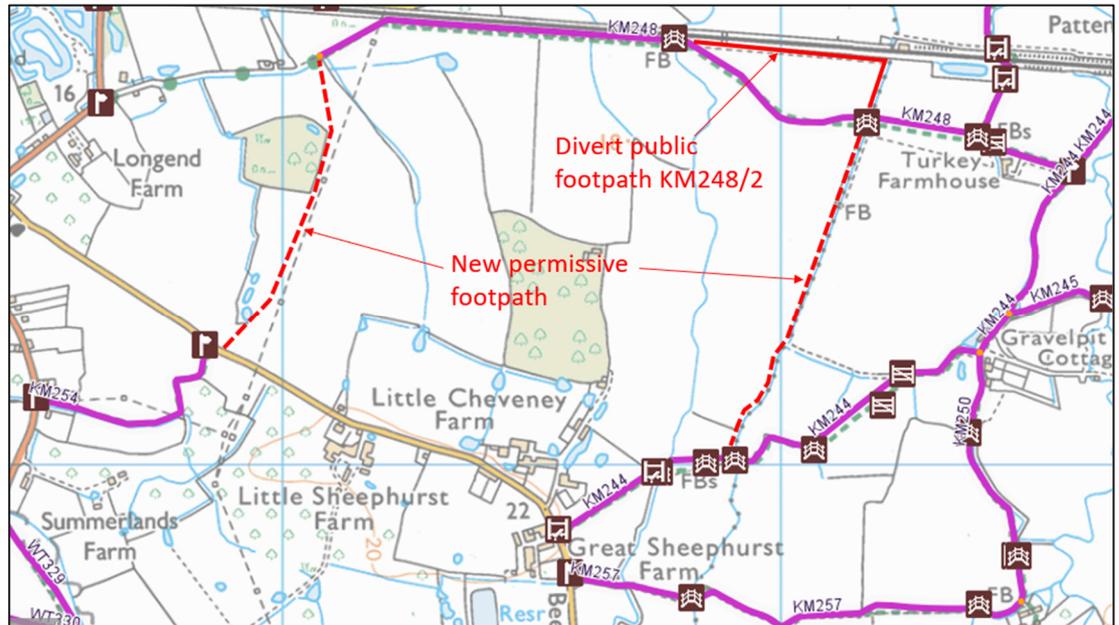


Figure 2.2: Proposed amendments to PROW network

- 2.5 Initial discussions have been held with KCC's Definitive Map Officer and PROW Area Officer who covers the Marden area with regard to the diversion of Footpath KM248/2 and introduction of the new permissive footpath.
- 2.6 The officers have advised that the proposals are considered acceptable in principle and that for the diversion of Footpath KM248/2 an application will need to be made in due course to Maidstone Borough Council.



3 Mitigation Strategy During Construction

Introduction

- 3.1 This section sets out the methods to be used to mitigate impact on the affected PROWs during the construction of the Solar Energy Farm.

PROW General Management

- 3.2 The applicant is committed to ensuring the highest levels of safety for the Solar Energy Farm, whilst also minimising disruption to the public. Where there is a potential conflict between the two, a pragmatic approach to safety would be based on balancing the risks to the public as a given time against the disruption that removing that risk would cause. It is the intention to seek to keep the majority of PROWs effectively open via management and the use of short term temporary closures where necessary.

Signage and Information

- 3.3 All locations where a PROW would be impacted by the Solar Energy Farm would have appropriate signage, which would advise of dates and hours affected. The applicant would develop, in discussion with PROW officers and Kent County Council (KCC) a standard form of signage relating to any temporary PROW closures which would be used across the site.
- 3.4 Signs would be erected informing PROW users of the potential presence of construction activities. Information signs detailing the works would, together with contact details for the construction team.
- 3.5 The location of signs providing information on any temporary diversions or closures would be agreed with PROW officers. Maps showing temporary diversions and alternative PROWs would be provided at the site.
- 3.6 In addition, signage well in advance of areas of construction may be helpful to avoid users having to turn back in certain locations. The applicant would agree a schedule of suitable locations for additional signage with PROW officers to provide this advanced information.

Managed Crossing and Temporary Closures

- 3.7 For each location at which a PROW would be affected by construction work, efforts would be made to minimise the impact on users following a simple decision making
-



process, which sets out a hierarchy of actions, starting with those that create the minimum impact. For example, in order of increasing impact:

- Using signs for both PROW users and construction vehicles to allow safe crossings of construction tracks for PROW users (Temporary Stopping Up (Managed));
- Using contract staff to hold PROW users for short periods (a few minutes) while construction vehicles pass or while construction activities are undertaken (Temporary Stopping Up (Managed)); and
- Closing the PROW for a short temporary period and signing an acceptable diversion route (Temporary Stopping Up and Diversion).

3.8 All interventions would be developed in liaison with the relevant PROW officers and would be indicated by the contractor using signs as appropriate and agreed. Users would be advised by contractors at the relevant location when works are completed and when it is safe to use the PROW.

3.9 More detailed examples of potential forms of intervention likely to be implemented by the applicant are set out below.

Managed Crossing of Temporary Access Track

3.10 Where a PROW crosses a temporary access track, it would be disproportionately disruptive to close the PROW for the duration of the use of the temporary access track, particularly when the risk to the public is likely to be lower than crossing a public road due to the low speeds of construction vehicles.

3.11 Instead, a system of signs informing PROW users of the construction activity would be used, together with signs warning drivers of construction vehicles using the temporary access track of the likely presence of PROW users crossing the temporary access track. This could be comparable to an uncontrolled crossing of a road, with low vehicle speeds giving the option for vehicles to slow or stop when they see pedestrians.

3.12 At certain locations, the contractor may provide a member of staff to assist crossing in a manner similar to school crossing patrols. In these instances, PROW users may have to wait for short periods of time whilst the PROW is in use by the construction team. Users would be advised when it is safe to cross the PROW at the crossing point by contractors.



Temporary Access Track Coincident with PROW

- 3.13 Where temporary construction access tracks follow an existing PROW, appropriate traffic management measures to minimise risk to PROW users would be employed. Signage, barrier treatment or segregation of the PROW would be used, and if necessary, a minor diversion put in place.

Temporary PROW Stopping Up and Diversions

- 3.14 Where a PROW has been identified for temporary stopping up and diversion for a longer duration (rather than management), the feasibility of temporary stopping up has been and will continue to be discussed with the relevant PROW officers.
- 3.15 PROW that would be Temporarily Stopped Up and Diverted could be managed for the entire construction period of the Solar Energy Farm. However, the applicant would endeavour to ensure durations are minimised as far as practical and PROWs would be reopened at the earliest opportunity if no longer affected by the construction activities and safe to do so.
- 3.16 As discussed in Section 2, Footpath KM248/2 that crosses the site at its northeastern corner will be permanently diverted to accommodate the Solar Energy Farm. The permanent diversion is likely to occur once the site has been developed and a temporary diversion will thus be in place for the duration of the works.



4 Mitigation Strategy During Operation

Introduction

- 4.1 This section sets out the methods to be used to mitigate impact on the affected PROWs during the ongoing operational phase once construction is completed.

Operational Access Requirements

- 4.2 Once the Solar Energy Farm is operational, there will be a requirement for infrequent access by maintenance vehicles. It is anticipated that this would be around 10-20 visits to the site a year for equipment maintenance. These would typically be made by light van or 4 x 4 type vehicles.
- 4.3 Whilst the temporary construction compound will have been removed, space will remain within the site for vehicle access and turning to ensure that all vehicles can enter and exit in forward gear.
- 4.4 Access for maintenance vehicles, will also be via the primary access from Sheephurst Lane and from Burtons Lane to access the Point of Connection (POC).

Signage and Information

- 4.5 All locations where a PROW may be impacted by operational maintenance vehicles, appropriate signage would be provided. Signs would be erected informing PROW users of the potential presence of maintenance vehicles.
- 4.6 A schedule of suitable locations for permanent signage will be agreed with PROW officers to provide this information.

Managed Use / Crossing of PROWs

- 4.7 At each location at which a PROW would be affected by operational maintenance vehicles, efforts would be made to minimise the impact on users. Given the relative infrequency of vehicle movements, it is considered that this would be limited to using signs for both PROW users and vehicles to allow safe use or crossings of PROWs by vehicles.
- 4.8 As above, this would be developed in liaison with the relevant PROW officers using signs as appropriate and agreed.



Managed Crossing of a PROW

- 4.9 Where a vehicle is required to cross a PROW, it would be disproportionately disruptive to close the PROW for the duration of the vehicle crossing.
- 4.10 Instead, a system of signs informing PROW users and maintenance vehicle drivers of the potential presence of vehicles / PROW users would be used.
- 4.11 Drivers of vehicles associated with operation / maintenance of the Solar Energy Farm will be instructed to wait until pedestrians using the public footpath have clearly and safely passed vehicles before continuing along the track. Priority will always be given to users of the public footpath.

Temporary Access Track Coincident with PROW

- 4.12 Where operational access requires vehicles to follow an existing PROW, appropriate signage would be put in place to minimise risk to PROW users.

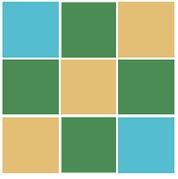
Temporary PROW Stopping Up and Diversions

- 4.13 For regular maintenance and operational vehicle movements, there will be no requirement for the temporary stopping up or diversion of PROWs. Should more significant maintenance work need to be undertaken, access requirements would be discussed with PROW officers and the requirement for any temporary stopping up or diversion of PROWs would be discussed and agreed as appropriate.
- 4.14 Should this be required, the applicant would seek to minimise any disruption to the PROW network through the use of measures as set out in relation to the construction phase of the development in Section 3 above.



5 Conclusion

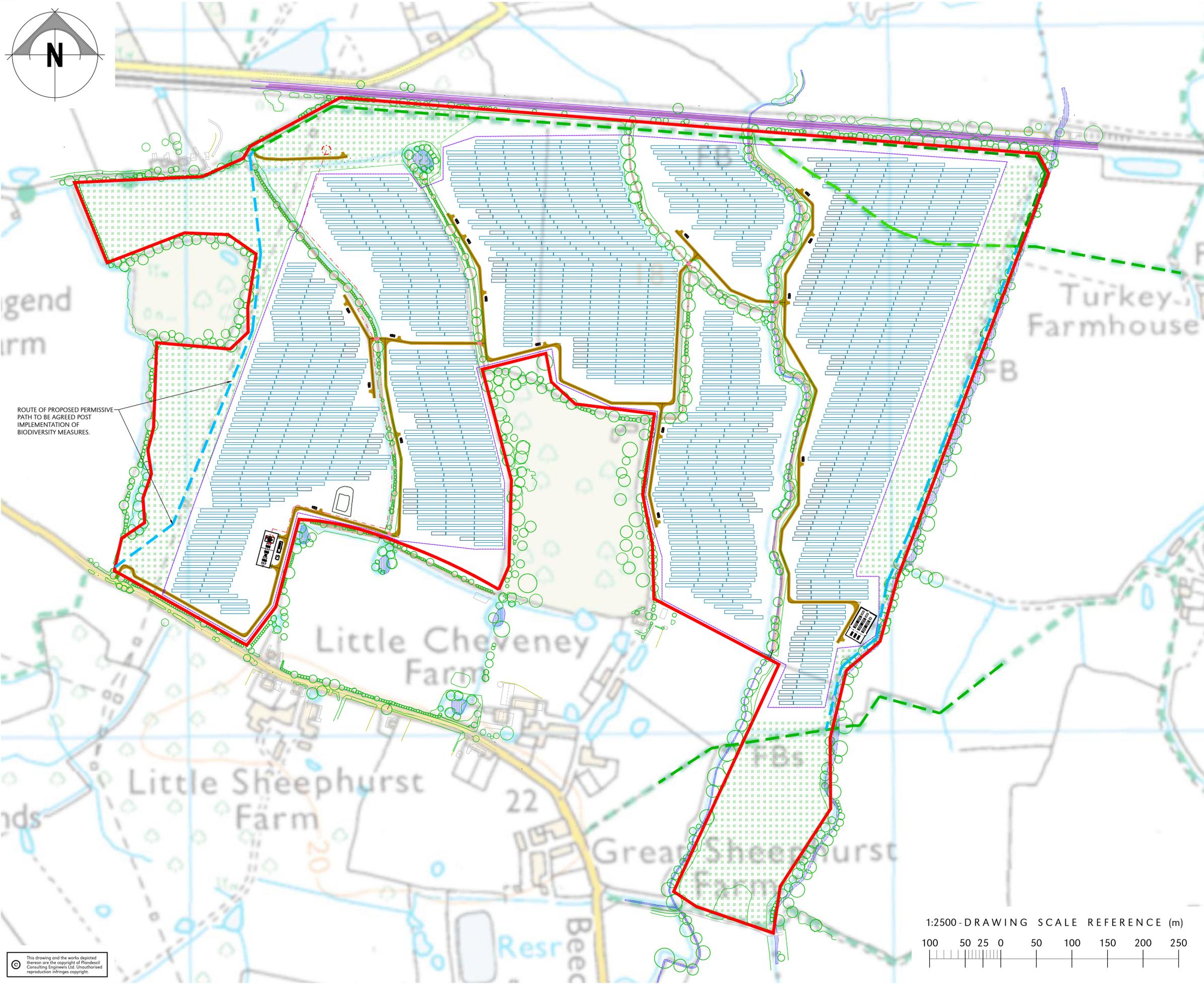
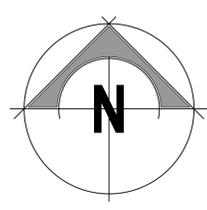
- 5.1 This PROW Mitigation Strategy has been produced in order to set out how any impact from the Solar Energy Farm on the PROW network would be managed and mitigated.
- 5.2 The proposed strategy seeks to ensure that PROWs would remain effectively open to users with Temporary Stopping Up and Management, using Diversion where required and only where necessary to ensure the continued and safe use of the PROW. Footpath KM248/2 will be permanently diverted, however, it is likely that it will be only temporarily diverted during the construction phase of the Solar Energy Farm. There is potential for further temporary stopping up and diversion of other PROWs.
- 5.3 The applicant and appointed contractor would maintain regular dialogue with PROW officers at KCC throughout the construction period to ensure the objectives of this PROW Mitigation Strategy are achieved.



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Appendix A

Site Layout Plan



ROUTE OF PROPOSED PERMISSIVE PATH TO BE AGREED POST IMPLEMENTATION OF BIODIVERSITY MEASURES.

- GENERAL NOTES:**
- All dimensions noted are in millimetres unless stated otherwise.
 - All levels to be above Ordnance Survey Datum defined levels (A.O.Dm) unless noted otherwise.
 - Do not scale from this drawing, if dimensions are not clear ask.
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 - Plandescil Ltd. to be immediately notified of any suspected omissions or discrepancies.
 - This drawing is to be read in conjunction with the following Plandescil drawings
 - 27899 - 051 Rev 0 - Proposed Solar Farm Aerial Site Location Plan
 - 27899 - 052 Rev 0 - Proposed Solar Farm Framework Plan and System Summary
 - 27899 - 053 Rev 0 - Proposed Solar Farm Footpath & Boundary Layout
 - All setting out to be coordinated by the Contractor and to be checked onsite prior to construction.

LEGEND

	Railway
	Existing Roads
	Connection Route
	Perimeter Fence (4,500 m)
	Boundary
	Public Footpath (Existing)
	Public Footpath Removed (Proposed)
	Public Footpath Relocation (Proposed)
	Permissive Footpath (Proposed)
	Biodiversity Area (8.78 ha)
	Maintenance Track
	Ditch Crossing
	Ditch
	Water
	Trees
	Power Station (x16)
	Battery Energy Storage System
	HV Compound
	PV Structure 2P30
	PV Structure 2P15
	Existing Properties

PROPOSAL ONLY
NOT CDM 2015 COMPLIANT

Note: Proposed site plan and information from Statkraft, no survey or design work undertaken by Plandescil Ltd.
 Drawing adapted from Statkraft drawing SCUKX-MARDN-000 100 (G)

ISSUED FOR CLIENT REVIEW

Rev	Date	Rev By	Chkd	Description
B	08-02-22	DAD	AF	Amendments to Boundary & Footpath
A	01-02-22	DAD	AF	Minor Amendments
0	18-01-22	-	AF	First Issue

plandescil
 consulting engineers

Connaught Road Attleborough Norfolk NR17 2BW
 Telephone: (01953) 452001 Fax: (01953) 456955
 Email: pdc@plandescil.co.uk www.plandescil.co.uk

civil / structural / environmental / surveying

Client
Origin Power Servcies Ltd

Project
**Proposed Solar Farm,
 Land North of Sheephurst Lane,
 Marden, Tonbridge**

Drawing Title
**Proposed Solar Farm
 Site Layout**

Scale	U.N.O.	Date	Drawn By
1:2500 (A1)		January 2022	DAD
Drawing No.	27899/050	Rev	B



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