ECO POWER
SUFFOLK

# EcoPower Suffolk Solar

# Draft Outline Public Rights of Way and Access Management Plan

June 2026

econergy

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# Executive Summary

Ex. 1 This draft outline Public Rights of Way and Access Management Plan (oPRoWAMP) has been prepared on behalf of EcoPower Suffolk Limited (the 'Applicant') as part of Preliminary Environmental Information being consulted upon to support a Development Consent Order (DCO) application for EcoPower Suffolk Solar (the 'Proposed Development').

Ex. 2 The oPRoWAMP sets out the framework for managing public rights of way (PRoW), recreational routes and permissive paths that interact with EcoPower Suffolk throughout the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development, helping to maintain safe public access and support compliance with relevant legislation and DCO requirements.

Ex. 3 The Proposed Development comprises a new solar farm (>100 MW) with Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) and Associated Development, including underground cabling and grid connection to the new Yaxley 400 kV National Grid Substation being constructed by another developer.

Ex. 4 Subject to receiving consent, one or more detailed PRoWAMP(s) will be prepared by the appointed Contractor(s) substantially in accordance with the final oPRoWAMP submitted for approval by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council (BMSDC) before the relevant phases of work commence.

Ex. 5 The oPRoWAMP combines embedded design measures, professional judgement and a hierarchy of management responses, including retaining routes with signage where possible, short temporary closures, early reprovision of alternative routes when closure of a PRoW is required, and the provision of new or permissive paths to maintain and enhance connectivity while prioritising public safety.

Ex. 6 Mitigation, management and access arrangements will be developed in liaison with Suffolk County Council (SCC), BMSDC and other relevant stakeholders, with measures including route buffers, signage, advance notice of closures, condition surveys, alternative route arrangements and community liaison procedures to minimise disruption and support safe, well-managed public access throughout the lifetime of the Proposed Development. The detailed PRoWAMP(s) will be secured through the DCO.

Ex. 7 Comments on the management measures proposed within this draft oPRoWAMP are invited as part of this consultation.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Overview and Purpose of the Document

1.1.1 This draft outline Public Rights of Way and Access Management Plan (oPRoWAMP) has been prepared on behalf of EcoPower Suffolk Limited (the 'Applicant') as part of the consultation process relating a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the construction, operation and decommissioning of EcoPower Suffolk Solar (the 'Proposed Development').

1.1.2 The oPRoWAMP provides a framework for the management of walking, cycling and horse riding and other public access routes throughout each phase of the Proposed Development. The key objective is to ensure public rights of way (PRoW) remain open and safe at all times throughout the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development, with the same applying to permissive paths during the operational phase.

1.1.3 An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is being undertaken of the Proposed Development and Preliminary Environmental Information has been prepared in accordance with the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (Ref.1-1).

1.1.4 The oPRoWAMP incorporates embedded and good practice measures, as well as any further mitigation that arises from the EIA process. The oPRoWAMP will be submitted alongside the Environmental Statement (ES) as part of the DCO application to secure the commitments relied upon within each technical assessment. A Requirement will be included in the draft DCO to secure the development of detailed PRoWAMP(s) by the appointed Contractor(s), substantially in accordance with the oPRoWAMP to be submitted for approval by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council (BMSDC) in advance of starting the relevant phase of works.

1.1.5 It is recognised there could be multiple detailed PRoWAMP(s) prepared which relate to different parts of the Proposed Development, depending on the detailed construction, operational and decommissioning strategies and programme. Where this is the case, each detailed PRoWAMP will set out how the management of impacts will be co-ordinated across areas covered by the other detailed PRoWAMPs.

1.1.6 The draft oPRoWAMP will be refined and updated to take account of feedback received during consultation as well as detailed technical assessments being carried out as part of the EIA process. The oPRoWAMP should be read alongside the outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) and outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (oCTMP) which are also available in draft for comment as part of the Preliminary Environmental Information.

1.1.7 This oPRoWAMP considers both PRoWs and permissive paths:

a. currently or proposed within the Draft Order Limits;

b. during the construction phase of the Proposed Development;

c. during the operational phase of the Proposed Development; and

d. during the decommissioning phase of the Proposed Development.

## 1.2. Stakeholder engagement

1.2.1 There is ongoing engagement with landowners within the Draft Order Limits regarding the potential to introduce new permissive paths and to link up existing PRoW, where possible, in close proximity to the Draft Order Limits.

1.2.2 As part of this process, there will be engagement with Suffolk County Council (SCC) Public Rights of Way and Access Officers regarding the proposed re-routing of PRoW and proposals for permissive paths. These proposals have generally been welcomed as a means of providing accessible alternatives where existing routes are often fragmented and poorly used to accessibility, condition or waymarking.

1.2.3 A summary of engagement will be included in the final PRoWAMP to be submitted with the DCO application.

## 1.3. Structure of the oPRoWAMP

1.3.1 The oPRoWAMP is structured as follows:

a. **Introduction**: provides an introduction and overview to this document.

b. **Draft Order Limits and Proposed Development**: provides a summary of the Proposed Development, including likely construction, operational and decommissioning activities, programme and standard management measures.

c. **Environmental management**: sets out the general assumed management principles and arrangements for all phases of the Proposed Development and project team roles.

d. **Methodology:** sets out the definitions of PRoW, assumptions made, how and which PRoW have been identified within the Draft Order Limits and surrounding area.

e. **Mitigation and management**: sets out the general provisions, design measures, signage and information, forms of management closure principles and creation of permissive paths.

# 2. Draft Order Limits and Proposed Development

## 2.1. Draft Order Limits

2.1.1 The Draft Order Limits outline the maximum extent of the land that will be required to facilitate the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning of the Proposed Development. The Draft Order Limits are described in the Preliminary Environmental Findings provided as part of this consultation and are shown on Figure 1.1: Site Location Plan of the Preliminary Environmental Findings.

2.1.2 The Draft Order Limits cover an area of approximately 1,150 hectares (ha) located within the administrative areas of BMSDC and SCC, near to the settlements of Yaxley, Stuston, Brome, Oakley, Eye, Gislingham, Thrandeston, Mellis and Occold.

2.1.3 The Draft Order Limits will continue to be refined in response to consultation feedback and detailed technical assessment work being carried out as part of the EIA process. The final Order Limits will be submitted with the DCO application.

## 2.2. Description of the Proposed Development

2.2.1 The Proposed Development comprises the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of a new solar farm with a generating capacity over 100 megawatts (MW), Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) and Associated Development, along with underground cabling and grid connection infrastructure to connect to a Point of Connection (PoC) at the new Yaxley 400 kilovolt (kV) National Grid Substation being constructed by another developer.

2.2.2 The Proposed Development comprises five Areas (Areas 1 to 5) which form the Principal Area and accommodate the solar photovoltaic (PV) arrays, BESS and Associated Development, including substations and environmental mitigation and enhancement areas. Area 5 Thrandeston and Mellis, closest to the Yaxley 400 kV National Grid Substation, is anticipated to accommodate the centralised BESS, adjacent to the Main Substation. Additional, distributed BESS units are proposed to be co-located within the solar array areas across the Principal Area. The BESS is intended to store surplus electricity generated by the solar PV arrays and/or energy from the grid.

2.2.3 The Proposed Development will also include underground cabling to be routed within areas shown as ‘Draft Cable Corridors’ which are being refined. The underground cabling will connect the five Areas to one another (Interconnecting Cables) and to the PoC at Yaxley 400 kV National Grid Substation via a Grid Connection Cable running from Area 5 Thrandeston and Mellis.

2.2.4 A more detailed description of the Proposed Development, including the proposed environmental mitigation, is set out within Section 2 of the Preliminary Environmental Findings. The indicative layout of the proposed environmental mitigation is shown within the Illustrative Environmental Masterplan (see Figure 2.4) provided as part of the Preliminary Environmental Information. This provides an illustration of how the mitigation and enhancement commitments and outcomes set out in the Preliminary Environmental Information could be delivered, and secured through the DCO.

# 3. Environmental management

## 3.1. Introduction

3.1.1 The following section sets out the general assumed principals of arrangements for the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development.

## 3.2. Roles and responsibilities

3.2.1 Named individuals will have key responsibilities in supporting the implementation of the detailed PRoWAMP(s) prior to commencement of the construction phase of the Proposed Development.

3.2.2 The roles outlined below, which should be involved in the development of future iterations of PRoWAMP, will likely include but are not limited to:

a. **The Applicant** – 'Undertaker' in the draft DCO: Overall compliance with the DCO.

b. **Construction Project Manager** – overall responsibility for ensuring all elements of the DCO, the detailed PRoWAMP(s) and all environmental and other requirements are implemented, and appropriately resourced, managed, reviewed and reported.

c. **Site Manager** – overall responsibility for activity on site with a presence on site full time. Also responsible for the safety of the workers and local communities.

d. **Community Liaison Officer** – the Community Liaison Group set up during the pre-application process would continue in accordance with the relevant DCO Requirement prior to construction and will continue through until final commissioning of the Proposed Development as a formal forum for local issues to be raised. A Community Liaison Officer will be appointed to lead discussions with local communities and also act as the primary point of contact should there be queries or complaints.

e. **Local Planning Authority(s) PRoW and Access Officer(s)** – responsibility for the discussion of, and agreement to matters in future iterations of this Management Plan and overseeing the appropriate implementation at the relevant stages.

3.2.3 These roles and responsibilities are provisional and will be finalised in the detailed PRoWAMP(s) developed for each phase of the Proposed Development as a Requirement of the DCO. It is noted that even if there is more than one detailed PRoWAMP, this does not necessarily mean the above roles will be duplicated to match each PRoWAMP. Any detailed PRoWAMP(s) which follow a first PRoWAMP to be approved will set out how roles and responsibilities will be managed across the different works covered by the respective PRoWAMPs.

## 3.3. Construction

3.3.1 Subject to being granted development consent and following a final investment decision, the earliest construction could start is in 2028. Commencement of construction work would be staggered across the Areas.

3.3.2 Each individual Area and the Cable Corridor would likely require different lengths of construction given their variance in size, and therefore there would be some overlap between them.

3.3.3 Therefore, for the purpose of providing the most robust assessment, it has been assumed that the Principal Area and the Cable Corridors would be constructed simultaneously.

3.3.4 Construction works within the Cable Corridor would commence with multiple teams spread along the route. It is estimated that the construction period would require approximately 30 months in total.

## 3.4. Operation

3.4.1 Operation of the Proposed Development is expected to start following construction, with an anticipated completion and connection to the grid by early to mid-2031. The Proposed Development will operate for 40 years and decommissioning is estimated to commence around 2070.

3.4.2 During the operational phase, general activity within the Proposed Development would be minimal and restricted principally to vegetation management, equipment maintenance and servicing, replacement and renewal of any components that fail, and monitoring. It is anticipated that maintenance and servicing would include the inspection, removal, reconstruction, refurbishment, or replacement of faulty or broken equipment to ensure the continued effective operation of the Proposed Development.

3.4.3 Across the anticipated lifetime of the Proposed Development of up to 40 years, it is expected that alongside the regular maintenance of equipment, infrastructure such as panels and batteries would require replacement. As components of the Proposed Development approach the end of their design life, an evaluation wouldl be conducted to determine if they require maintenance or replacement across the Proposed Development.

3.4.4 During the Proposed Development's operation and maintenance phase, each Area is expected to receive approximately five maintenance visits per month (equating to less than one trip per day) for security, deliveries, and maintenance servicing of equipment purposes. These would typically be made by Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs). The installed Grid Connection Cables (within the Cable Corridors) will be located underground. Access may be required for inspection and maintenance, but this is only likely once or twice a year.

3.4.5 Alongside regular maintenance trips it is expected, as noted above, that some infrastructure i.e. solar panels and batteries would require replacement during the 40-year life cycle.

## 3.5. Decommissioning programme

3.5.1 The decommissioning of the Proposed Development is expected to take between 12 and 24 months to be completed.

3.5.2 The Proposed Development is assessed in the EIA as being decommissioned after up to 40 years of operation.

3.5.3 The process of decommissioning would involve the removal of all solar infrastructure, including the solar PV modules, and BESS and Substations. The components would be recycled or disposed of in accordance with good practice and processes at that time. Any piles would be removed.

3.5.4 Upon decommissioning, the above-ground physical infrastructure at the Principal Area would be removed and each Area restored to its current use and returned to the landowner. This would include the areas of agricultural land where the agricultural resource has been maintained (and potentially improved) during operation, and the established habitats. Post-decommissioning, the landowners would choose how the land is to be used and managed, the landowner may return all of the land to arable use, although it is likely that established habitats such as hedgerows and woodland would be retained given their potential benefits to agricultural land and the wider farming estate.

3.5.5 During the initial stages of decommissioning, access to the permissive paths would be maintained where this is reasonably practicable. Following the initial stages, permissive paths would be removed, with the precise timing to be determined by the Contractor(s) and communicated to the relevant local authority in accordance with the detailed DEMP.

# 4. Methodology

## 4.1. PRoW and routes with public access rights

4.1.1 There are a number of PRoW that run through the Draft Order Limits which includes both the Principal Area and the Cable Corridors.

4.1.2 PRoWs are defined as the following[1]:

a. a *footpath*, being a highway over which the public have a right of way on foot only, not being a footway;

b. a *bridleway*, being a highway over which the public have the following, but no other, rights of way, that is to say, a right of way on foot and a right of way on horseback or leading a horse, with or without a right to drive animals of any description along the highway;

c. a *byway open to all traffic (BOAT)*, being a highway over which the public have a right of way for vehicular and all other kinds of traffic, but which is used by the public mainly for the purpose for which footpaths and bridleways are so used; or

d. a *restricted byway*, being a highway over which the public have restricted byway rights, with or without a right to drive animals of any description along the highway, but no other rights of way. This is set out in the Countryside Right of Way Act (CROW) (Ref.1-2).

e. a *cycle track*, being a way constituting or comprised in a highway, being a way over which the public have the following, but no other, rights of way, that is to say, a right of way on pedal cycles (other than pedal cycles which are motor vehicles within the meaning of the Road Traffic Act 1988) with or without a right of way on foot.

4.1.3 Restricted byway rights mean (a) a right of way on foot, (b) a right of way on horseback or leading a horse, and (c) a right of way for vehicles other than mechanically propelled vehicles. It is also acknowledged that non-motorised users have a right to use highways which are also ‘classified’ roads under section 12 of the Highways Act 1980.

4.1.4 All types of PRoW listed above (a. to e.) are located within the Draft Order Limits.

4.1.5 Unsurfaced Unclassified Roads (UURs) are other routes, which while often used by vehicles, they have public access rights, and are typically public highways maintained at public expense that often lack a sealed surface. They are part of the public highway network but are not classified as formal PRoW and do not feature on the Definitive Maps. The minimum recognised right is usually that of a footpath, yet many are used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

[1] Definitions follow those created in Section 329 of the Highways Act 1980 except for a byway open to all traffic, which is defined by Section 66 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

4.1.6 A permissive path is a route which the public can use because a landowner has made a route across their land available to the public (i.e. permitted the public to access otherwise private land). It is not, nor should it, become a PRoW.

4.1.7 Any works required to the routes described in this draft oPRoWAMP will be consented through the DCO and when the application is formally submitted the draft DCO will include the required works in the relevant Schedules and Plans.

## 4.2. Assumptions made in this document

4.2.1 Safety has been an important consideration to stopping up proposals, for example, where existing routes are considered to pose public safety risks and would be affected by the Proposed Development.

4.2.2 Where PRoWs would be stopped up for construction and subsequently reinstated or diverted, a condition survey would ensure that any reinstated route would be of similar or better quality.

4.2.3 For diverted and new PRoW, classifications seek to help ensure improved connectivity and public safety.

4.2.4 Any surface finishes, interpretation boards or signage would be agreed between the Applicant and the relevant Local Planning Authority prior to implementation.

## 4.3. Identification of PRoW

### Data collection

4.3.1 PRoW mapping data has been collected via Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework, National Trails and Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (formerly Sustrans) websites (Ref.1-3) (Ref.1-4) (Ref.1-5) and as such has been taken to represent the most up to date and accurate record of PRoW within the area surrounding the Proposed Development. PRoW potentially affected by the Proposed Development were identified through examination of this data and site walkovers undertaken by the Applicant's team for landscape viewpoint photography.

## 4.4. Stakeholder engagement

4.4.1 Early engagement has been undertaken with BMSDC and SCC in the development of the Proposed Development to date. A period of Non-Statutory Consultation was held in March to April 2025. Responses to the EIA Scoping Opinion have also been reviewed and considered within the evolving design of the Proposed Development.

## 4.5. PRoW that interact with the Draft Order Limits

4.5.1 Members of the public can access countryside and nature through numerous PRoW through and immediately adjoining the Draft Order Limits, predominately around Areas 2 and 3, near Eye and Gislingham.

4.5.2 National Cycle Route (NCN) 30 and the Mid Suffolk Footpath long-distance path run partially through the Draft Order Limits.

4.5.3 The PRoW and recreational routes that interact with the Draft Order Limits and are considered within this draft oPRoWAMP are listed in Table 4-1. PRoW are ordered consecutively by Area / Cable Corridor, and then by Suffolk Rights of Way Route ID.

*Table 4-1 Existing PRoW and recreational routes that interact with the Draft Order Limits*

| PRoW / Recreational Route Reference | Description | Principal Area / Cable Corridor |
|---|---|---|
| SK\|W-165\|001 | Footpath | Area 1 Stuston |
| SK\|W-165\|002 | Footpath | Area 1 Stuston |
| SK\|W-165\|003 | Footpath | Area 1 Stuston and Area 1 Stuston to Area 2 Eye Cable Corridor |
| SK\|W-505\|005 | Footpath | Area 1 Stuston and Area 1 Stuston Interconnecting Cables |
| SK\|W-505\|006 | Footpath | Area 1 Stuston |
| SK\|W-522\|006 | Footpath | Area 1 Stuston and Area 5 Thrandeston and Mellis to Area 1 Stuston Cable Corridor |
| SK\|W-165\|009 | Footpath | Area 2 Eye |
| SK\|W-239\|019 | Footpath | Area 2 Eye |
| SK\|W-239\|020 | Footpath | Area 2 Eye |
| SK\|W-239\|034 | Footpath | Area 2 Eye and Area 2 Eye Interconnecting Cables |
| Mid Suffolk Footpath | Long Distance Footpath | Area 2 Eye and Area 2 Eye Interconnecting Cables |
| SK\|W-416\|008 | Footpath | Area 2 Eye |
| SK\|W-172\|022 | Bridleway | Area 3 Gislingham |
| SK\|W-172\|027 | Footpath | Area 3 Gislingham |
| SK\|W-267\|008 | Footpath | Area 3 Gislingham |
| SK\|W-267\|009 | Footpath | Area 3 Gislingham |
| SK\|W-267\|014 | Footpath | Area 3 Gislingham |
| SK\|W-267\|014 | Bridleway | Area 3 Gislingham |
| SK\|W-267\|053 | Footpath | Area 3 Gislingham |
| SK\|W-267\|052 | Footpath | Area 3 Gislingham |
| SK\|W-239\|044 | Footpath | Area 4 Occold |
| SK\|W-417\|021 | Bridleway | Area 4 Occold |
| SK\|W-417\|025 | Bridleway | Area 4 Occold |
| SK\|W-417\|026 | Footpath | Area 4 Occold |
| SK\|W-522\|012 | Footpath | Area 5 Thrandeston and Mellis |
| SK\|W-172\|034 | Byway Open to All Traffic | Area 3 Gislingham to Area 5 Thrandeston and Mellis Cable Corridor |
| SK\|W-172\|040 | Byway Open to All Traffic | Area 3 Gislingham to Area 5 Thrandeston and Mellis Cable Corridor and Area 5 |

| PRoW / Recreational Route Reference | Description | Principal Area / Cable Corridor |
|---|---|---|
| SK\|W-389\|003 | Footpath | Area 3 Gislingham to Area 5 Thrandeston and Mellis Cable Corridor and Area 5 |
| SK\|W-389\|004 | Footpath | Area 3 Gislingham to Area 5 Thrandeston and Mellis Cable Corridor |
| SK\|W-389\|012 | Byway Open to All Traffic | Area 3 Gislingham to Area 5 Thrandeston and Mellis Cable Corridor |
| SK\|W-522\|010 | Footpath | Area 5 Thrandeston and Mellis to Area 1 Stuston Cable Corridor |
| SK\|W-239\|016 | Footpath | Area 4 Occold to Area 2 Eye Cable Corridor |
| SK\|W-239\|021 | Footpath | Area 4 Occold to Area 2 Eye Cable Corridor |
| SK\|W-239\|022 | Footpath | Area 4 Occold to Area 2 Eye Cable Corridor |
| SK\|W-239\|023 | Footpath | Area 4 Occold to Area 2 Eye Cable Corridor |
| SK\|W-239\|024 | Footpath | Area 4 Occold to Area 2 Eye Cable Corridor |
| SK\|W-239\|025 | Footpath | Area 4 Occold to Area 2 Eye Cable Corridor |
| SK\|W-239\|026 | Footpath | Area 4 Occold to Area 2 Eye Cable Corridor |
| SK\|W-239\|045 | Restricted Byway | Area 4 Occold to Area 2 Eye Cable Corridor |
| NCN 30 | Cycle Route | Area 5 Thrandeston and Mellis, Area 3 Gislingham to Area 5 Thrandeston and Mellis Cable Corridor, Area 5 Thrandeston to Mellis Grid Connection Corridor and Area 4 Occold to Area 2 Eye Cable Corridor |
| SK\|W-522\|013 | Bridleway | Area 5 Thrandeston and Mellis to Area 1 Stuston Cable Corridor |
| SK\|W-522\|009 | Footpath | Area 5 Thrandeston and Mellis to Area 1 Stuston Cable Corridor |
| SK\|W-522\|011 | Bridleway | Area 5 Thrandeston to Mellis Grid Connection Corridor |

# 5. Mitigation and management

## 5.1. General Provisions

5.1.1 The DCO would grant the necessary powers to manage and, where required, alter the PRoW network within the Draft Order Limits as follows:

a. powers to temporarily stop-up and divert PRoW;

b. powers for the extinguishment and reprovision of PRoW (if identified as being required astage). This would require that any alternative PRoW must be provided before the extinguishment takes place;

c. measures described in this draft oPRoWAMP will inform a detailed PRoWAMP which must be submitted to and approved by the relevant planning authority in consultation with the highway authority, as a Requirement of the DCO; and

d. the PRoWAMP provides the securing mechanism through which any new permissive Paths committed to will be implemented.

5.1.2 The Applicant is committed to minimising disruption to the public along the PRoW network wherever possible but this needs to be balanced with the Applicant's commitments to safety for the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development.

5.1.3 Where a potential conflict between these two objectives is identified, a pragmatic approach to safety will be taken, balancing the risks to the public and users of PRoW against the disruption that removing the risk will cause.

5.1.4 This oPRoWAMP has been prepared based on an application of professional judgement given the current understanding of the Proposed Development. As such, this plan will be further developed to a detailed PRoWAMP prior to the construction of the Proposed Development by the Applicant, to help ensure the safety of users during construction.

5.1.5 This oPRoWAMP has sought to retain access for the public through phasing/timing of works based on the current understanding and assumptions. Where an alternative approach to PRoW management emerges, this will be developed at the detailed design stage in consultation with the relevant local authority.

## 5.2. Design measures

5.2.1 All PRoWs would have at least a 5 m buffer on either side to any infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development including fencing. Therefore, PRoWs would be located within an open corridor.

## 5.3. Signage and information

5.3.1 At all points where PRoWs or recreational routes intersect the Proposed Development, appropriate signage will be erected to advise of planned works and dates of any planned closures.

5.3.2 Signage would, where applicable, provide information on any alternative routes/diversions and new routes. The location and details of these signs will be discussed and agreed with Norfolk County Council PRoW and Highway officers.

5.3.3 Information signs detailing works and giving the project Community Liaison Officers contact number details will be maintained across the site during construction.

5.3.4 As part of the detailed PRoWAMP, a programme of PRoW closures and alternative/new routes would be produced by the Applicant, and SCC's PRoW and Highways Officers, affected parish councils and if required, landowners and/or their agents will be notified at least seven days in advance of any closure.

## 5.4. Forms of managed closure

5.4.1 The exact details of the forms of closure will be developed by the Applicant and subject to further discussions and agreements with SCC.

5.4.2 The Applicant will make every reasonable effort to minimise disruption along the PRoW network and follow the hierarchy of actions listed below:

a. use of signage where PRoW can remain open, but users need to be warned of the presence of construction vehicles or activities (local management). This may be possible for example where the fence line has been erected and the PRoW runs outside of this boundary;

b. implementation of short, temporary closures where local works might affect safety of users (local closures);

c. closure/extinguishment of a PRoW following the early implementation of an alternative/new route (e.g. via a new but similar length and location of route) (early reprovision); or

d. provision of new routes as part of the Proposed Development (new routes).

5.4.3 Any short term, temporary closures would be for as short a duration as possible and likely linked to specific work items. Where short term, temporary closures along sections of the PRoW network are required, the detail of these will be discussed and agreed with SCC's PRoW Officers as part of the detailed PRoWAMP secured under the draft DCO.

5.4.4 All interventions will be developed in liaison with SCC's PRoW and Access Officers.

## 5.5. Permissive paths

5.5.1 The Applicant would create permissive paths where necessary to maintain or improve local connectivity particularly during periods where PRoW are inaccessible and need to be temporarily closed or diverted, and where there are opportunities to improve local connectivity. Permissive paths would be provided during the operational phase of the Proposed Development. An initial layout for permissive paths is provided on the Illustrative Environmental Masterplan (see Figure 2.4 provided as part of the Preliminary Environmental Information) for comment at this consultation.

# 6. References

Ref.1-1 The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. SI 2017/572. [Online]. London: The Stationery Office. Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/572/contents (Accessed: 22 May 2026).

Ref.1-2 Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. (c.37) [Online]. Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/pdfs/ukpga_20000037_en.pdf

Ref.1-3 Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework. [Online]. Available at: https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/Home.aspx

Ref.1-4 National Trails [Online]. Available at: https://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/en_GB/trails/

Ref.1-5 Walk Wheel Cycle Trust; National Cycle Network. [Online]. Available at: https://www.walkwheelcycletrust.org.uk/national-cycle-network/

# Abbreviations

*Table 6-1 Abbreviations*

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| BESS | Battery Energy Storage Systems |
| BMSDC | Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council |
| CEMP | Construction Environmental Management Plan |
| CTMP | Construction Traffic Management Plan |
| DCO | Development Consent Order |
| EIA | Environmental Impact Assessment |
| ES | Environmental Statement |
| kV | kilovolt |
| MW | Megawatt |
| PoC | Point of Connection |
| PRoWAMP | Public Rights of Way and Access Management Plan |
| PV | Photovoltaic |
| oCEMP | Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan |
| oCTMP | Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan |
| oPRoWAMP | Outline Public Rights of Way and Access Management Plan |
| SCC | Suffolk County Council |
| UUR | Unsurfaced Unclassified Roads |

# Glossary

*Table 6-2 Glossary*

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| the Applicant | EcoPower Suffolk Solar Limited, a Special Purpose Vehicle of Econergy International Ltd. Econergy is an international independent power producer of renewable energy projects, operating across seven different countries in Europe, including the United Kingdom. The Applicant has a current pipeline of projects under various stages of development across Europe, with an approximate generation capacity of 8 GW and storage capacity of 11 GWh. |
| the DCO application | Development Consent Order application. |

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| Area | Area of land wholly contained within the Site which will contain solar photovoltaic panels, ecological mitigation and other Associated Development. There are five discrete Areas within the Principal Area, connected by Cable Corridors. |
| Associated Development | Development which is associated with the Proposed Development. This includes inverters, transformers, switchgear, substations, environmental mitigation and enhancement measures, supporting ancillary works comprising maintenance and welfare facilities, temporary compounds, fencing, boundary treatments, security measures, lighting, drainage and utility works, signage, earthworks, and highway works to facilitate access, including permissive paths. |
| Battery Energy Storage System | Battery Energy Storage Systems, is used to describe the battery storage installation to allow for the storage, importation, and exportation of energy to the National Grid. Both centralised and decentralised (DC-coupled) options are included within the Proposed Development. |
| Cable Corridor | Land within the Site where interconnecting cables connect the five Areas within the Principal Area and grid connection cables connect the Principal Area to the Yaxley 400 kV National Grid Substation. The extent of the Cable Corridors is currently indicative to cover a number of different cabling routing and alignment options, as well as to allow an area for the construction of temporary haul roads for access. |
| Draft Order Limits | The draft physical boundary which contains the Site and within which the Proposed Development may be carried out and land acquired or used. |
| EIA Regulations | Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, as amended. |
| Grid Connection Cable | Underground cabling (400 kV) connecting the Main Substation to the Yaxley 400 kV National Grid Substation. |
| Illustrative Environmental Masterplan | A draft, high level plan showing proposed environmental mitigation and enhancement measures. |
| Interconnecting Cable | Underground cabling (33 kV or 132 kV) connecting the Field Substations within the Principal Area to the Main Substation and Secondary Substations. |
| Preliminary Environmental Findings | Forms part of the Preliminary Environmental Information that has been prepared to inform consultation. It provides an overview of the preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment undertaken to date, written in a non-technical language to help members of the public, statutory consultees and other stakeholders to develop an informed view of the Proposed Development and understand the potential likely significant environmental effects of the Proposed Development. |
| Principal Area | Collective term for all land parcels within each of the five Areas all of which are contained within the Site that will contain solar |

| Term | Definition |
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| | photovoltaic panels, ecological mitigation and other Associated Development. |
| Proposed Development | EcoPower Suffolk Solar, comprising all infrastructure and development associated with the project i.e. the solar PV panels, battery storage and Associated Development for connection to the Yaxley 400 kV National Grid Substation. |
| Site | Collective term for all the land within the Draft Order Limits (the Principal Area and the Cable Corridors). |
| Solar photovoltaic array | Solar photovoltaic panel designed to convert solar irradiance to electrical energy. The solar photovoltaic panel is attached to a Mounting Structure. |
| Temporary Construction Compound | A temporary laydown area comprising hard standing which could include offices, car parking, materials storage and equipment during the construction and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development. |
| Yaxley 400 kV National Grid Substation | The National Grid 400 kV Substation being constructed at Yaxley, Suffolk, by another developer. |