

IDDENSHALL GRANGE

Proposed Solar Farm

Landscape Strategy – Supporting Text

Prepared for: Anesco Ltd

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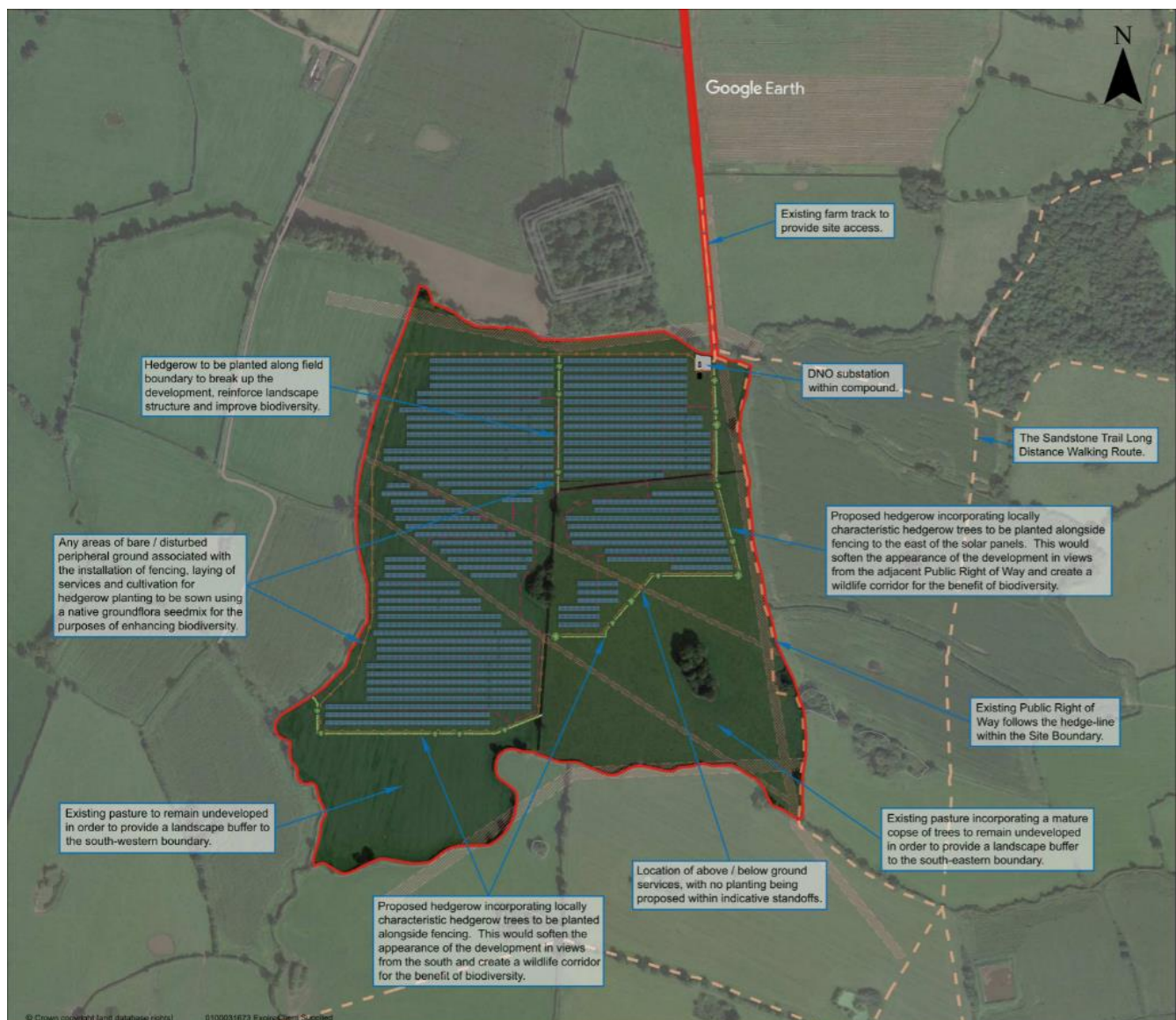
IG LS1: Landscape Strategy

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Overview

This text is to be read in conjunction with Drawing IG LS-1 – ‘Landscape Strategy’ that show the site’s context, the nature and extent of the proposed landscape treatments within the Site along with a brief description of the design rationale and what they also deliver in terms of ecological mitigation (extract shown below for reference purposes). Further details relating to each landscape treatment is provided in this document along with supporting graphics / illustrations.

Figure 1-1
Drawing IG LS-1 – ‘Landscape Strategy’



1.2 Design Rationale

With regards the design rationale the scheme aims to sensitively assimilate the proposals with their surroundings by softening its boundaries and providing a degree of visual mitigation, this is illustrated by IG LS-1 which shows the immediate context of the proposed development and how the proposed planting would strengthen landscape pattern and create links across the site and help the development to integrate with the wider network of hedgerows and woodland. The use of certain planting types / structure will add landscape value to the site in terms of both visual amenity and ecological value. The types of planting proposed have drawn from local landscape character studies and our own fieldwork. The image below being extracted from one of the many panoramic photographs obtained during our extensive fieldwork, this particular image showing the quality and maturity of the surrounding hedgerows and trees that would be retained and protected as part of these proposals

Figure 1-2
Site Reference Photograph



With regards to the Site layout buffer zones have been included, notably to the southern and eastern boundaries in order to allow a softer transition the peripheral landscape. As alluded to above high importance has been placed on the local ecological value, and as such a strong emphasis placed on their benefit to wildlife and structural qualities, by creation of new habitat and wildlife corridors to form linkages across the site; key to this will be the management of retained peripheral hedgerow and trees along with the enhancement of their margins by introduction of native wildflowers; this would have a cumulative value, by forming both an understorey and canopy to reinforce these linkages and form wildlife corridors. Native groundflora would also be introduced to other areas of ground disturbed as part of the construction process such as along track edges, trenching for services and foundations for the solar panels themselves, these semi-shaded areas providing an excellent opportunity to support a more diverse pattern of vegetation types that are still in line with those seen in the wider rural landscape. As it matures this planting will form a robust habitat network with hedgerow tree planting being locally characteristic and increasing the inherent level of visual mitigation, albeit with the proposals not being wholly relied upon to control views of the proposals.

The following subsections provide more detail relating to the selection of soft landscaping proposals and how they would manifest as part of the wider scheme. Details relating to how each landscape treatment would be delivered are also provided and the subsequent aftercare requirements.

2.0 Landscaping Proposals

2.1 Hedgerow Planting

Sections of new hedgerow would be established using a mix of native species and in combination with the tree planting would form a network of habitat linkages / wildlife corridors across the application site. The chosen species mix is shown in Table 2-1; this combination of species will create a hedgerow of seasonal interest and high wildlife value; such as Dog rose and Guelder rose providing an excellent source of food for birds, Hazel providing food for insects and small mammals, Field Maple creating great autumn colour with Holly providing an evergreen element. An image of a native hedge being shown in Figure 2-1, this also illustrates an un-farmed margin or 'headland' incorporating wildflowers that would also be established as part of this scheme (see section 2.3).

Native hedgerow planting would be introduced to a 500mm wide cultivated trench as a double staggered row; at 450mm intervals, depending on the nature of the substrate backfill to the trench may require additional slow release fertiliser / compost to aid establishment. Planting in this way is equivalent to 5 plants per linear metre. Planting stock would be sourced from local provenance wherever possible and introduced as bare rooted 1+1 transplants that are 60-80 cm tall. All newly planted hedgerows would be protected using transparent rabbit spirals or shrub shelters, supported by 450mm stout bamboo canes.

Table 2-1
Native Hedgerow Planting Mix

Species	Common Name	%
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn	25
<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	Blackthorn	20
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel	15
<i>Acer campestre</i>	Field Maple	15
<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>	Wild Privet	10
<i>Rosa canina</i>	Dog Rose	5
<i>Viburnum opulus</i>	Guelder Rose	5
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly	5

Figure 2-1
Native hedgerow planting with unfarmed margin

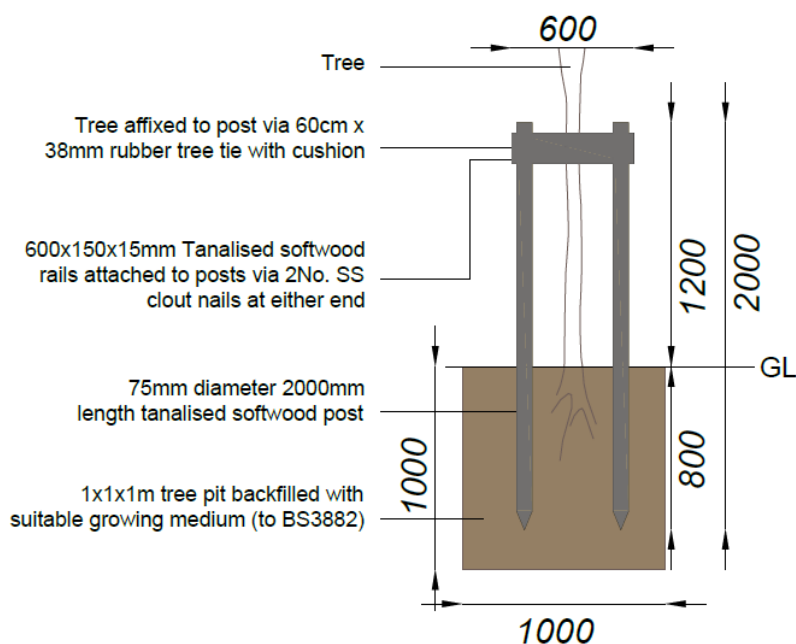


2.2 Hedgerow Tree planting

We have shown at least 18 No. hedgerow trees on the Landscape Strategy Plan, the positions of these are indicative as they would be sited to respond to ground conditions and any other constraints. The tree species to be used would include English Oak (*Quercus robur*), Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) and Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*); Oak is locally the most characteristic of these species so would comprise the majority of this aspect of the planting, with the inclusion of Beech and Rowan providing some variety for the purposes of biodiversity.

All hedgerow trees would be introduced as Selected Standards of 10-12cm girth, 300-350cm height, 175-200cm clear stem; provision will also be made for creating a tree pit backfilled with suitable soils, basic root irrigation system and for the trees to be supported by long timber stakes with a cross member and rubber ties. Figure 2-2 below provides an indicative tree pit detail including means of support:

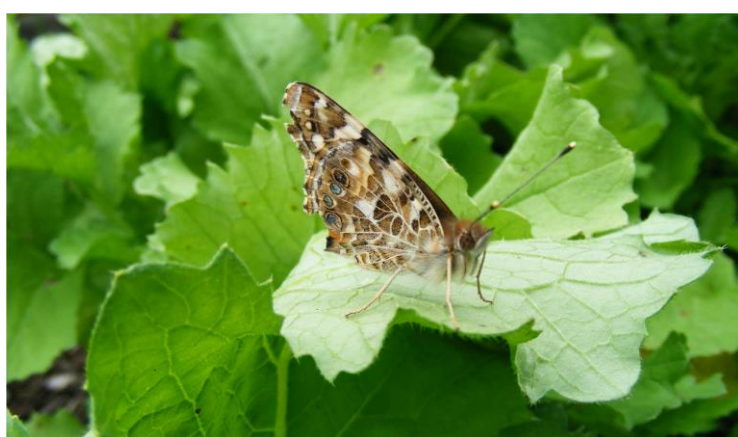
Figure 2-2
Tree pit detail including means of support



2.3 Native Ground Flora

The semi-shaded areas associated with hedgerows and marginal areas that are disturbed as part of the construction process would be seeded with a native ground flora mix. The mix would be chosen to reflect the type of vegetation seen locally within woodland edges and along hedgerows and are suited to semi shade.

Figure 2-3
Native Ground Flora attracts a range of wildlife



A wildflower seed mix (such as Emorsgate EH1F for Hedgerows / Semi-Shade) would be used to seed areas associated with hedgerows and marginal areas that are disturbed as part of the construction process. This mix, shown below in Seed Mix 1 - Semi-Shaded Areas (see would be sown at 5g per Sq.m, and is used for both ecological benefit and to improve the visual interest of external spaces.

The exact mix (to include min 20% wildflower species) would be agreed following analysis of ground conditions and in consultation with the appointed Ecologist.

Table 2-2
Seed Mix 1 – Semi-Shaded Areas

Species	Common Name	%
Achillea millefolium	<u>Yarrow</u>	2.5
Agrimonia eupatoria	<u>Agrimony</u>	6
Alliaria petiolata	<u>Garlic Mustard</u>	12
Centaurea nigra	<u>Common Knapweed</u>	10
Clinopodium vulgare	<u>Wild Basil</u>	2
Geum urbanum	<u>Wood Avens</u>	10
Hypericum perforatum	<u>Perforate St John's Wort</u>	5
Leucanthemum vulgare	<u>Oxeye Daisy</u>	5
Plantago lanceolata	<u>Ribwort Plantain</u>	5
Primula veris	<u>Cowslip</u>	2.5
Silene dioica	<u>Red Campion</u>	10
Silene vulgaris	<u>Bladder Campion</u>	7.5
Stachys sylvatica	<u>Hedge Woundwort</u>	5
Torilis japonica	<u>Upright Hedge-parsley</u>	10
Tragopogon pratensis	<u>Goat's-beard</u>	2.5
Vicia cracca	<u>Tufted Vetch</u>	5

2.4 Maintenance of Trees, shrubs and Hedgerow Planting

A visual inspection of the planting would be carried out on an annual basis to check for good strong foliage and growth. Where this is not obvious soil samples may be taken to assess nutrient levels and determine specific fertiliser applications.

All planting areas would be kept weed free, and maintenance visits would be carried out as necessary to re-adjust guards and canes which have become loose, over-tight or broken. Any plants that become loose would also be re-firmed and adjusted. In year five, all tree / hedgerow planting would be checked for establishment, all guards/shelters, stakes, canes and ties that are no longer required would be removed and the general shape and requirements for formative pruning and singling out of leaders would be assessed.

The level of control of rabbits and other pests including grey squirrels would also be assessed in relation any effects on the establishment of vegetation.

This would be checked throughout the aftercare period and control measures may be necessary. Maintenance works shall be carried out in accordance with the following programme. Visits would be spaced at no less than six week intervals and no greater than sixteen week intervals for multiple visit years.

December – March	No Visit
April – Mid June	1 Visit
Mid June – August	1 Visit
September – November	1 Visit

The number of visits each season would vary according to the stage of management and maintenance.

Years 1 and 2	3 Visits
Year 3	2 Visits
Years 4 and 5	1 Visit

On each visit the following activities would be carried out:

- a. Spray around the plants with 'Roundup' (glyphosate) or similar, within a radial distance of 500mm from the stems. Application of weedkiller shall be carried out using an Arbor-guard to protect planting from spray damage.
- b. Cut back the areas between plants to 100mm above ground level if required, in order to keep the planted areas clear of weeds and long grass.
- c. Refirm planting where loosened and prune any damaged growth back to healthy wood.
- d. Check the security and fitting of any tree stakes, ties and guards and renew and adjust where necessary.
- e. Inspect and maintain fencing in good order, especially ensuring that straining wires are kept at the correct tension, posts are firmly held in the ground and all staples and fittings are securely in place.
- f. Supply and apply at approved rates any fertiliser, pesticide or fungicide required for the successful establishment of the planting.

If necessary replacement planting would be undertaken as required on an annual basis during the management and maintenance period.

2.5 Maintenance of Ground Flora / Wildflower Areas

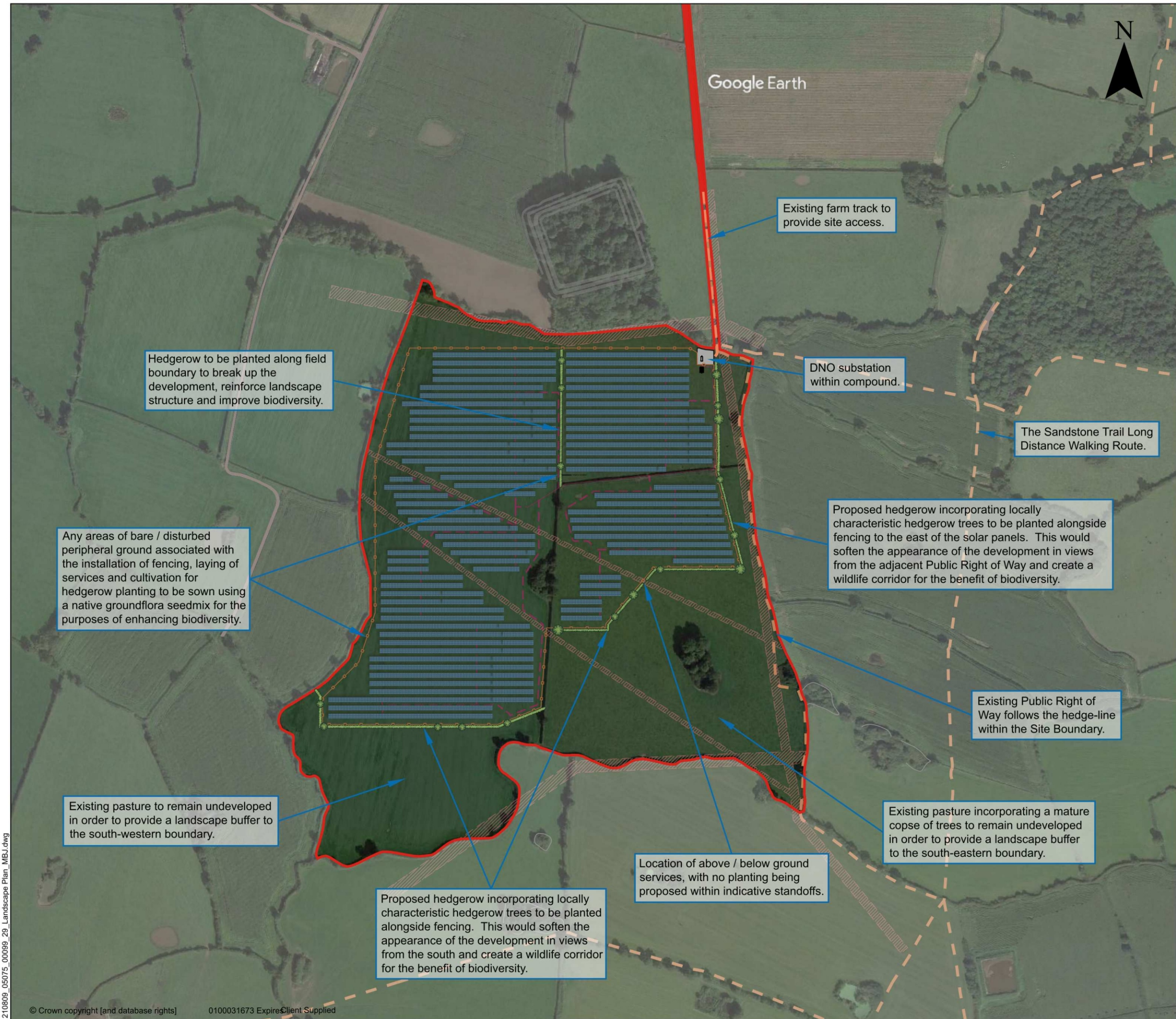
After sowing it is preferable that these areas are kept relatively short (30-50mm) to encourage tillering. Cutting should stop in April and not recommence until July/August to allow the grasses / flowers to mature and set seed. Most of the sown wildflower species are perennial and will be slow to germinate, grow and flower, particularly against the competition from established grasses, as such maintenance in the early years would be carried out sensitively. Ultimately these areas would be cut / strimmed twice a year allowing all plants to flower and seed. It may be conducive to leave arisings insitu until the areas have become fully established as this will maximise the return of seed.

3.0 Closure

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LEGEND

SITE BOUNDARY

EXISTING SERVICES AND STAND-OFF

EXISTING PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY

PROPOSED SOLAR PANELS

PROPOSED DNO SUBSTATION

PROPOSED STOCK-PROOF FENCING

PROPOSED HEDGEROW

PROPOSED HEDGEROW TREE

Revision	By	Chk'd By	Date	Comments

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Project
PROPOSED SOLAR FARM

Drawing Title
LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

Scale
1:5000 @ A3

Date
JULY 2021

Drawing Number
IG LS-1

Revision
0

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