

Tollard Royal Landscape Improvement Scheme

Preliminary Ecological Assessment Report



Version	Date	Name	Title
0	2 nd December 2025	Dave Jones CEnv, MCIEEM	Principal Ecologist

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Summary of key issues and recommendations

A summary of the key issues identified by this Preliminary Ecological Assessment is provided below:

1. **Site of Special Scientific Interest.** Works will take place immediately adjacent to a SSSI. Good practice measures are recommended and should be followed when working within the vicinity of the site. Natural England's assent may be required if impacts to the SSSI are anticipated.
2. **Protected species.** Good practice recommendations are provided to reduce the risk of affecting dormice and breeding birds.
3. **Priority habitats.** Good practice recommendations are provided to avoid and reduce damage to nearby priority habitats, including chalk grassland and hedgerows.
4. **Hedgerow crossings.** Consent from Wiltshire Council would be required prior to the removal of any hedgerows.

1 Introduction

Project description

- 1.1 The proposed project involves the 'undergrounding' of approximately 6.5km of existing 33kV overhead line (OHL) between Tollard Royal (ST 94327 17919) and Charlton (ST 91141 21786), Wiltshire. The project is proposed as part of a landscape improvement scheme to conserve and enhance the visual amenity of Cranbourne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 1.2 The proposed underground cable would predominantly be installed using a mole plough. This technique avoids the need to excavate trenches and strip topsoil, although localised excavations may be required at boundary crossings and roads. A short section of horizontal directional drilling (HDD) is proposed to avoid impacts to a Scheduled Monument. The cable route has been designed in consultation with landowners and has been aligned to avoid, as far as practicable, nearby Scheduled Monuments and a Site of Special Scientific Interest.
- 1.3 Following installation of the new underground cable, the existing OHL network would be dismantled.
- 1.4 A location plan is provided in Appendix A.

Background information

- 1.5 This Preliminary Ecological Assessment Report (PEAR) describes potential ecological and hydrological constraints identified by a desk study and initial walkover survey. Where necessary, recommendations or actions will be provided if further surveys, assessment, consultation or mitigation are required. If the scope of the project changes, this PEAR may require updating and so further advice should be sought from the project's ecologist/environmental advisor. The advice within this document is valid for 18 months, unless otherwise stated.
- 1.6 This assessment has been prepared by SSEN's Principal Ecologist Dave Jones CEnv MCIEEM, in accordance with guidance produced by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) in the documents *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal* and *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater and Coastal*. Dave has over 20 years' experience as a professional ecologist undertaking and leading ecological surveys and impact assessments on a wide range of infrastructure projects.

Methodology

Desk study

- 1.7 The Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website was used to identify statutory designated wildlife sites and priority habitats within the study area. Records relating to European Protected Species (EPS) licences and ponds that have been surveyed for great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* (GCN) were also reviewed.
- 1.8 Wiltshire Council's planning explorer map and Core Strategy map were reviewed for information relating to non-statutory designated sites, protected trees and other environmental constraints.
- 1.9 The National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Atlas was reviewed for relevant protected species records within the local landscape.

- 1.10 Ordnance Survey (OS) maps were examined to locate ponds and wet ditches within 250m of the proposed project which might provide suitable habitat for GCN.
- 1.11 Environment Agency mapping was searched to identify the presence of main river watercourses and flood zones.

Field survey

- 1.12 An ecological walkover survey was undertaken on 24th November 2025. The habitats present were recorded on a field map with written target notes providing supplementary information, where necessary. The presence or potential presence of protected or notable species was also recorded.

Limitations

- 1.13 The poles to be removed or the access routes to them were not surveyed. Precautionary recommendations are provided to address potential risks associated with bat roosts and bird nests within poles, and for poles located within designated sites.
- 1.14 The cable route between Charlton and land to the east of Ferne Hollow was appraised from the carriageway and aerial imagery. There is very low risk of ecological constraints affecting this section of the route as the easement is predominantly confined to agricultural land. Appropriate recommendations and follow up surveys have been provided for locations where there is an increased risk of protected species or where other constraints apply, for example at hedgerow crossings.
- 1.15 The survey was undertaken outside the optimum time of year to record species of flora and classify habitats. The assessment is not designed nor required to present a complete inventory of flora or UKHabs classifications. However, the assessment was supplemented by a desk study that confirmed the presence of known habitats of importance, and these results correlated with the findings of the walkover survey.
- 1.16 An absence of a species record within an area does not necessarily reflect an absence of that species. Similarly, the distribution of species records may reflect survey effort rather than an accurate distribution of that species. As such, historic records should be assessed with caution and supplemented by detailed survey work, as appropriate.
- 1.17 A survey can only assess the site as it was found at the time of the visit and if the habitats found are subject to change, the results may no longer be representative of the site's conditions. Additionally, a preliminary survey only provides an indicative likelihood of the presence or absence of some protected or other notable species and further surveys may be required to confirm whether specific species of fauna or flora are present.

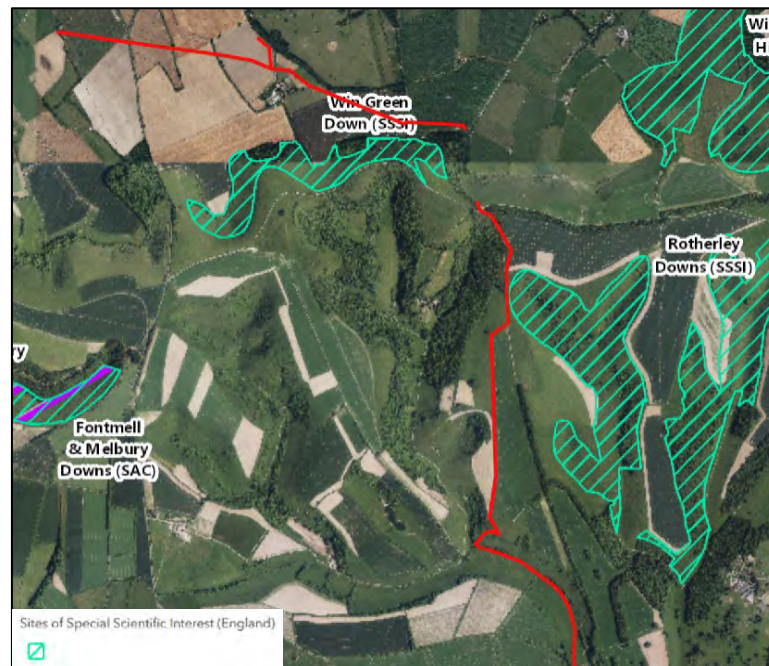
2 Results

Site description	
The proposed cable route and existing OHL are located within Cranborne Chase National Landscape and AONB. The landscape comprises areas of rolling chalk grassland, ancient woodlands, chalk escarpments, downland hillsides and chalk river valleys. From Tollard Royal, the cable route follows a westerly alignment through fields of modified grassland (g4) used for pasture, the northern boundary of which comprised a bank supporting the priority habitat lowland calcareous grassland (g2a). At grid reference ST 93724 18672, the cable route dog-legs to the north-east for 170m up a steep hillside of species-rich grassland, recorded on MAGIC as the priority habitats lowland calcareous grassland (g2a) and lowland meadows (g3a). At the top of the hillside at ST 93868 18742, the route crosses a boundary and follows the uncultivated edge of agricultural fields (c1c7) comprising 'other calcareous grassland' (g2c). Several of the species present indicated soil improvement from agricultural activity, included cock's-foot, common nettle, creeping thistle and yarrow. At ST 93904 20026, the route crosses a track and continues north along the edge of a field used for pasture and to the immediate west of Rotherley Downs SSSI; this field is recorded on MAGIC as supporting the priority habitat lowland calcareous grassland (g2a). Continuing north, the route passes through a field margin and arable field (c1c7) before following a track of bare earth to the carriageway of Ferne Hollow. Between ST 93653 21198 and the end of the route at ST 91141 21786, the cable route passes through agricultural fields comprising arable crops (c1c7) or modified grassland (g4) used for pasture. There are several hedgerow boundary crossings including the crossing of Ferne Hollow, Higher Berry Court Farm's access road, and Donhead Hollow. Photographs are provided in Appendix B.	
Ecological constraints	
Designated wildlife sites	
Statutory designations	The cable route is located to the immediate west of Rotherley Downs Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at ST 93917 20173. SSSIs are legally protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) due to their

	national importance for wildlife. Rotherley Downs SSSI is designated as it supports a notable example of calcareous grassland and associated flora. A location plan is provided, below. The proposed cable route does not encroach into the SSSI, although construction activity will be required within the immediate vicinity of the site. The proposed works at this location include mole ploughing and HDD below a Scheduled Monument. The existing OHL spans the edge of the SSSI with poles 82 and 83 located on the site's boundary. The proposed cable installation works would involve excavation and machinery movements, although these would be minimal and localised due to the construction techniques to be employed. The removal of poles 82 and 83 on the SSSI's boundary would mainly involve above-ground works with any ground disturbance being confined to the bases of the poles. As the works fall outside the boundary of the SSSI, the implementation of standard good practice measures should be sufficient to ensure that there are no adverse effects to the site. If all construction activities can be undertaken without encroachment into the SSSI and provided the good practice measures set out below can be implemented, there would be no requirement to obtain Natural England's assent prior to commencing. However, Natural England's assent would be required if damage to the SSSI were anticipated. 1. The following good practice measures will be required when working close to the SSSI: • There should be no encroachment into the SSSI without prior approval from an ecologist and/or assent from Natural England. • Construction workers will undergo a 'toolbox talk' to increase their awareness of environmental issues, in particular the special features, legal protection and mitigation measures relating to the SSSI. • The working area will be kept to the minimum possible to achieve safe completion of the project. • Construction traffic movements will be kept to the minimum reasonable for the effective and safe construction of the project. • Turves, topsoil and subsoil from earthworks will be stored separately alongside excavations and returned in the correct sequence. • There will be no dumping, fires, or intentional discharges within the SSSI. • No invasive species have been identified within the project's footprint, but machinery and tools would be cleaned before accessing work areas close to the SSSI to reduce the risk of introducing invasive non-native species from elsewhere. • Good practice pollution prevention measures should be followed: Pollution prevention for businesses - GOV.UK.
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- Potentially hazardous materials will not be stored within 30m of the SSSI unless essential to the activities being undertaken and securely stored (including use of secondary containment).
- All vehicles will be inspected upon arrival by the Site Manager and/or contractor. All vehicles showing signs of fuel/oil drips, missing fuel caps, damaged or worn hydraulic hoses, or other similar faults will be rejected from site and will not be permitted to operate near the SSSI before repair.
- Spill kits and plant nappies will be available on site.
- No new topsoil or other fill will be imported to the site.

2. Natural England's assent should be obtained if damage to the SSSI would arise. This process can take 28 days.



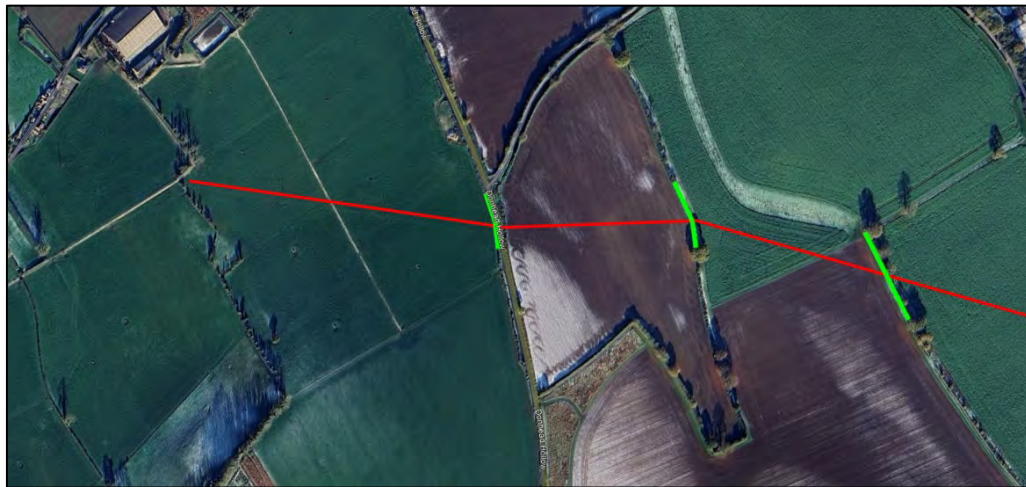
Non-statutory designations	Information relating to the location of non-statutory wildlife sites in Wiltshire is not freely available. A desk study and walkover survey have identified locations that support priority habitats, such as calcareous grassland, and these may align to areas that are designated as non-statutory wildlife sites. The proposed cable route would be installed using a mole plough and so damage to calcareous grassland would be minor, localised and reversible, especially if the good practice measures set out above (for SSSIs) could be applied at these locations . Further information is provided in the 'Priority habitats' section, below.
Protected and notable species of fauna	
Great crested newt (GCN)	<i>GCN and their habitat are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).</i> A desk study has been undertaken to assess the potential presence of GCN from habitat affected by the project. The desk study identified three ponds within 250m of the cable route at ST 94469 17844 and ST 92548 21946. All of the ponds are more than 150m from the proposed cable route. None of the ponds are recorded on MAGIC as having been surveyed by Natural England or subject to GCN class survey licence returns. There are no records of GCN held on the NBN Atlas within 2km of the cable route. Given the results of the desk study, and as cable installation would be achieved using a mole plough that requires minimal ground disturbance, there is a negligible risk of affecting GCN. No further surveys or mitigation with respect to GCN is recommended.
Bats	<i>Bats and their roosts are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).</i> Tree felling is not anticipated and so impacts to tree roosts would not arise. There is potential for bat roosts to be present within the poles that require removal if these support splits or woodpecker holes. The following is recommended, as a precaution: 1. Linesman to inspect all poles prior to their removal for features that could be used by roosting bats (e.g. splits, woodpecker holes, signage). If bats or signs of bats (e.g. droppings) are encountered, works affecting the pole must stop and the project ecologist consulted immediately for advice. A bat toolbox talk is available in Appendix C, and here: Bat Toolbox Talk.
Reptiles	<i>Reptiles are legally protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).</i> Grassland habitats on field margins, embankments and the steep hillside at ST 93724 18672 have potential to support reptiles, although these habitats are generally sub-optimal due to the short sward and limited opportunities for

	sheltering and hibernation. Based on the habitat suitability and proposed construction methodology, there is a low risk of affecting reptiles and no further surveys or mitigation are recommended.
Dormouse	<i>Dormice and their habitat are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).</i> The NBN Atlas holds several records of dormice within the local landscape. The proposed cable route is predominantly confined to grassland and agricultural habitats that are unsuitable for dormice, although there are several hedgerow crossings. Most of the hedges crossed by the route were tightly clipped and did not comprise a structure or diversity of species that are favoured by dormice. However, all of the hedges had connectivity to a wider hedgerow network and/or woodland, and so there is potential for dormice to be present. Cable installation would require the localised removal of hedgerows (<5m at each location) and so there is a low risk of impacting dormice. The following is recommended as a precaution): The following good practice measures should be followed to reduce the risk of affecting dormice at hedgerow crossings: - A toolbox talk should be provided to all site personnel prior to the beginning of works detailing the protection afforded to dormice and the method statement detailed below. A toolbox talk is provided in Appendix C, and here: Toolbox Talks. - Hedgerow removal should be restricted to the minimum area required to facilitate safe construction. Where practicable, existing gaps and gates should be used for access. - If hedgerow removal can be limited to <5m at each location, no pre-clearance surveys/inspections would be required. If gaps wider than 5m are required, an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) should inspect/fingertip search affected areas of hedgerow/scrub within 48hrs prior to removal commencing. - If any dormouse nests are found, works at that location should stop and further advice sought from an ecologist. - Gaps should be reinstated in accordance with a specification agreed by the project ecologist, landowner, and Local Planning Authority (the latter would be necessary if hedgerow removal consent were required).
Badger	<i>Badgers and their setts are legally protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. This legislation makes it an offence to interfere with a sett (e.g. by damaging or destroying it) and to disturb a badger within a sett.</i> No badger setts were recorded within the working area of the proposed cable easement.

Water vole	<i>Water voles and their habitat are legally protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).</i> The proposed works do not affect habitats that are suitable for water voles and no further surveys or mitigation are required with respect to this species.
Otter	<i>Otter and their habitat are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).</i> The proposed works do not affect habitats that are suitable for otter and no further surveys or mitigation are required with respect to this species.
Nesting birds	<i>Nesting birds, their chicks, eggs and nests are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).</i> The proposed cable route affects grassland, arable and hedgerow habitats that could be used by breeding birds. There is also potential for birds to nest in any splits or woodpecker holes that may be present within the affected poles. As cable installation will be achieved using a mole plough, ground disturbance and vegetation removal would be extremely localised and so there is a low risk of affecting nesting birds if undertaken during the breeding season. However, the following is recommended as a precaution: 1. If works are programmed for the period between 1st March and 14th August, the following is recommended: • A toolbox talk should be provided to all site personnel prior to the beginning of works detailing the protection afforded to breeding birds. A toolbox talk is provided in Appendix C, and here: Breeding birds Toolbox talk. • The removal of hedgerows at boundary crossings should be programmed for the period between 14th August and 28th February, if practicable. • If vegetation removal is required between 1st March and 14th August, pre-construction checks for nests should be undertaken in accordance with the procedure in Appendix D, and here: Breeding bird risk assessment and procedure. • Linesman to inspect all poles prior to their removal for nesting birds (e.g. splits, woodpecker holes). • If active nests, eggs or chicks are encountered, the nest must be safeguarded using appropriate fencing and signage. All works likely to affect the nest must stop until the chicks fledge or the nest becomes disused.

Other protected species	Based on the desk and field study, no other protected/notable species issues have been identified (e.g., white-clawed crayfish, fish, invertebrates, priority species listed on Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006).
Notable habitats and plants	
Ancient woodland	<i>Ancient woodland takes hundreds of years to establish and is defined as an irreplaceable habitat. Where possible, construction works should avoid ancient woodland.</i> A review of data held on the MAGIC website indicates that no areas of ancient woodland would be affected by the proposals. No further surveys or mitigation are required.
Hedgerows	<i>'Countryside' hedgerows are protected under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997. Hedgerows are also classified as 'Priority Habitats' under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and have potential to support protected species such as nesting birds, badgers and reptiles.</i> The proposed cable crosses several hedgerows, as shown below. With the exception of the hedgerows along the access road to Higher Berry Court Farm, all hedgerows are classed as 'countryside' hedgerows and so consent would be required from Wiltshire Council prior to any removal that may be required to facilitate access or cable installation. 1. If hedgerow crossings are required, the following is recommended: • The gap should be kept to the minimum width (i.e. <5m) required to facilitate cable installation and/or temporary access. • Consent should be obtained from Wiltshire Council prior to any hedgerow removal. The consent process can take 42 days to complete. • Prior to hedgerow removal, relevant recommendations relating to dormice and breeding birds should be following, as detailed above. • If practicable, a gap should be created by coppicing the hedgerow to ground level and leaving the stumps (stools) and root-balls intact. Tracking of machinery directly over the stumps should be avoided (e.g. by using a ramp) or minimised (e.g. one pass to lay the cable and one pass to leave the site). • If the stumps cannot be retained or would be damaged by vehicle movements: ○ stools should be carefully excavated keeping as much of the root-ball and soil intact as possible;

- stools should be covered with soil or stored under protective covering (e.g. hessian wrap) so the roots are always kept moist and free from frost damage; and
- stools should be reinstated as soon as possible in their original position.
- Whips should be planted to bolster reinstatement using plants sourced and grown in the south of England and in accordance with the specification agreed with Salisbury Council and the landowner.



Priority habitats	<i>Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 lists species and types of habitats which are regarded by Natural England to be of "principal importance" for the purposes of conserving biodiversity in England.</i> A desk study and walkover survey have identified locations that support priority habitats, including calcareous grassland, lowland meadows, and hedgerows. The proposed cable route would be installed using a mole plough and so damage to priority habitats would be minor, localised and reversible, especially if the good practice measures set out above (for SSSIs) could be applied at these locations. 1. The following good practice measures will be required when working close to priority habitats: • Construction workers will undergo a 'toolbox talk' to increase their awareness of environmental issues, in particular the importance of priority habitats and the good practice measures that are to be followed. • There should be no encroachment into priority habitats unless the cable easement passes through these areas. • The working area will be kept to the minimum possible to achieve safe completion of the project. • Construction traffic movements will be kept to the minimum reasonable for the effective and safe construction of the project. • Turves, topsoil and subsoil from earthworks will be stored separately alongside excavations and returned in the correct sequence. • There will be no dumping, fires, or intentional discharges within priority habitats. • No invasive species have been identified within the project's footprint, but machinery and tools would be cleaned before working within priority habitats to reduce the risk of introducing invasive non-native species from elsewhere. • Good practice pollution prevention measures should be followed: Pollution prevention for businesses - GOV.UK. • Potentially hazardous materials will not be stored within 30m of priority habitats unless essential to the activities being undertaken and securely stored (including use of secondary containment). • All vehicles will be inspected upon arrival by the Site Manager and/or contractor. All vehicles showing signs of fuel/oil drips, missing fuel caps, damaged or worn hydraulic hoses, or other similar faults will be rejected from site and will not be permitted to operate before repair. • Spill kits and plant nappies will be available on site. • No new topsoil or other fill will be imported to the site.
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	 Priority Habitat Inventory - Lowland Meadows (England) Priority Habitat Inventory - Lowland Calcareous Grassland (England) Priority Habitat Inventory - Lowland Calcareous Grassland (England)
Trees	A review of the Wiltshire Planning Explorer map and data held on the Ancient Tree Inventory indicate that no Tree Preservation Orders, ancient or veteran trees would be affected by the proposals. Tree felling is not proposed but cable installation works has the potential to damage trees or their roots, especially when using a mole plough along field boundaries or at boundary crossings with trees. The following is recommended as a precaution: 1. All works must conform with guidance in NJUG <i>Guidelines for the Planning, Installation and Maintenance of Utility Apparatus in Proximity to Trees</i> (Volume 4: Issue 2: 16/11/2007), especially with respect to the protection of roots (see Appendix E).
Invasive non-native species	<i>It is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to facilitate the spread of certain invasive non-native species (INNS) of plant that are listed on Schedule 9 of the Act.</i>

(INNS) e.g. Japanese knotweed, Himalayan balsam and giant hogweed	No invasive plants have been identified following a walkover survey. No further surveys or mitigation are required.
Other habitats and plant species	Based on the desk and field study, no other habitats or plant issues have been identified. No further surveys or mitigation are required.
No Net Loss of biodiversity Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)	The project is permitted development and so there is no requirement to deliver statutory BNG. The value of the project does not meet the threshold for SSE's internal BNG policy (£10 million). There would be no net loss of biodiversity as a result of the proposals. As such, there are no BNG requirements for this project.
Biodiversity enhancements	
SSEN has duties under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989, which, taken together, require SSEN to have regard for conserving and preserving biodiversity, flora and fauna. 'Conserving and preserving biodiversity' may include enhancing, restoring or protecting a population or a habitat.	
This project has limited opportunities to deliver biodiversity enhancements as the proposals would be restricted to third party land used for agriculture.	

Hydrological constraints	
Watercourses and flood zones	
Watercourse crossings – consents	No watercourse crossings are required.
Discharges to watercourses – consents	Cable installation would be achieved using a mole plough and so no discharges are anticipated as a result of the works. Slurry returns from HDD should be securely stored and removed from site in a tanker, as necessary.
Flood zones	The proposed project does not fall within a flood zone.
Pollution prevention	As discussed above, pollution and sediment control measures must be adhered to when working within or close to Rotherley Downs SSSI and areas of chalk grassland priority habitat.

Appendices

List of appendices:

Appendix A. Location plans

Appendix B. Photographs

Appendix C. Toolbox talks

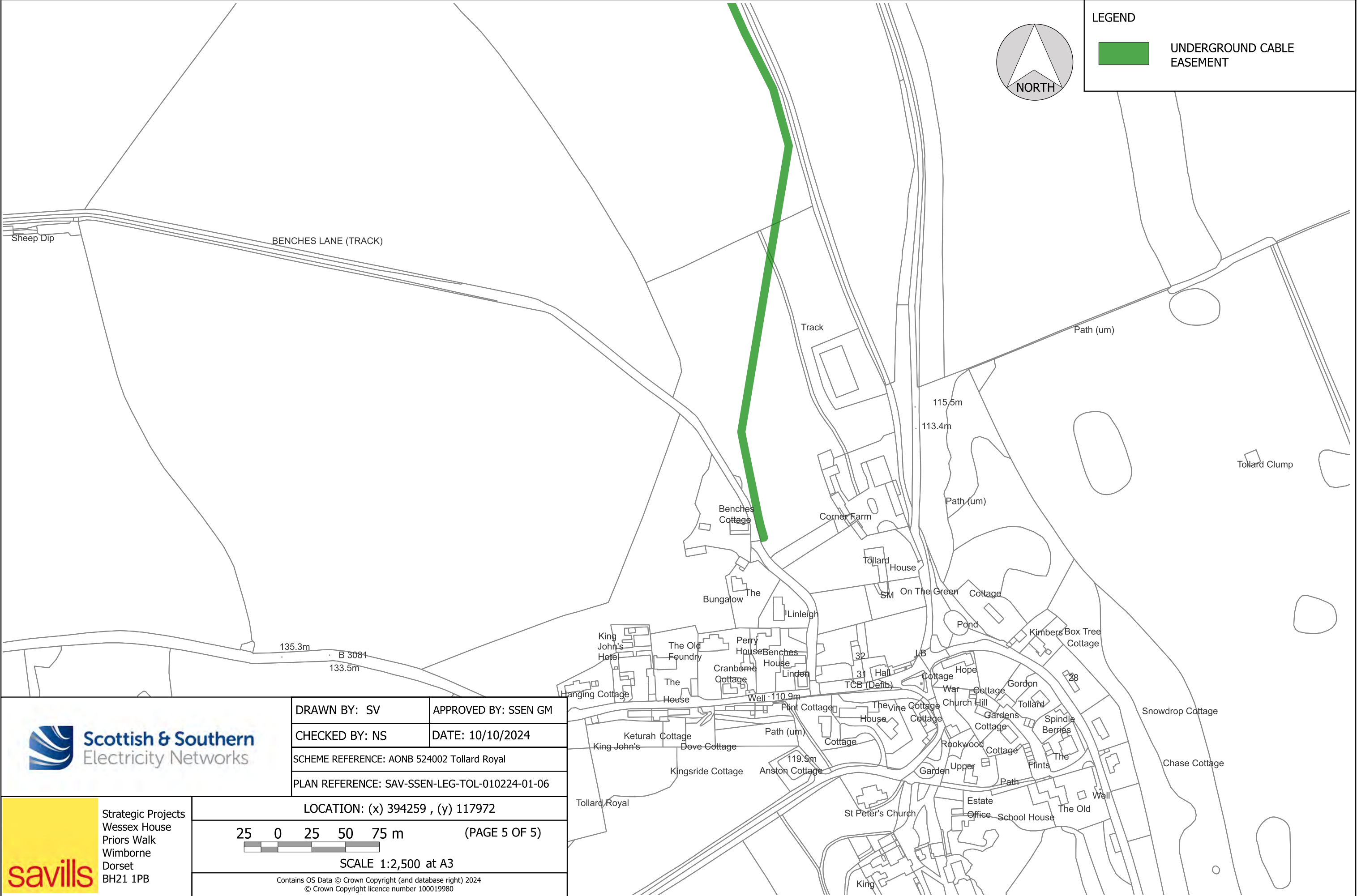
Appendix D. Breeding bird risk assessment and procedure

Appendix E. NJUG guidelines

Appendix F. Legislative context

Appendix A Location plans

TOLLARD HOUSE, CORNER FARM, TOLLARD ROYAL



DRAWN BY: SV	APPROVED BY: SSEN GM
CHECKED BY: NS	DATE: 10/10/2024
SCHEME REFERENCE: AONB 524002 Tollard Royal	
PLAN REFERENCE: SAV-SSEN-LEG-TOL-010224-01-06	

Strategic Projects
Wessex House
Priors Walk
Wimborne
Dorset
BH21 1PB



LOCATION: (x) 394259 , (y) 117972

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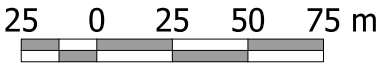
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TOLLARD HOUSE, CORNER FARM, TOLLARD ROYAL



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CHECKED BY: NS	DATE: 10/10/2024
SCHEME REFERENCE: AONB 524002 Tollard Royal	
PLAN REFERENCE: SAV-SSEN-LEG-TOL-010224-01-06	

LOCATION: (x) 394147 , (y) 118387



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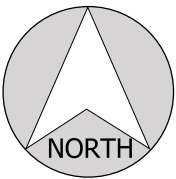
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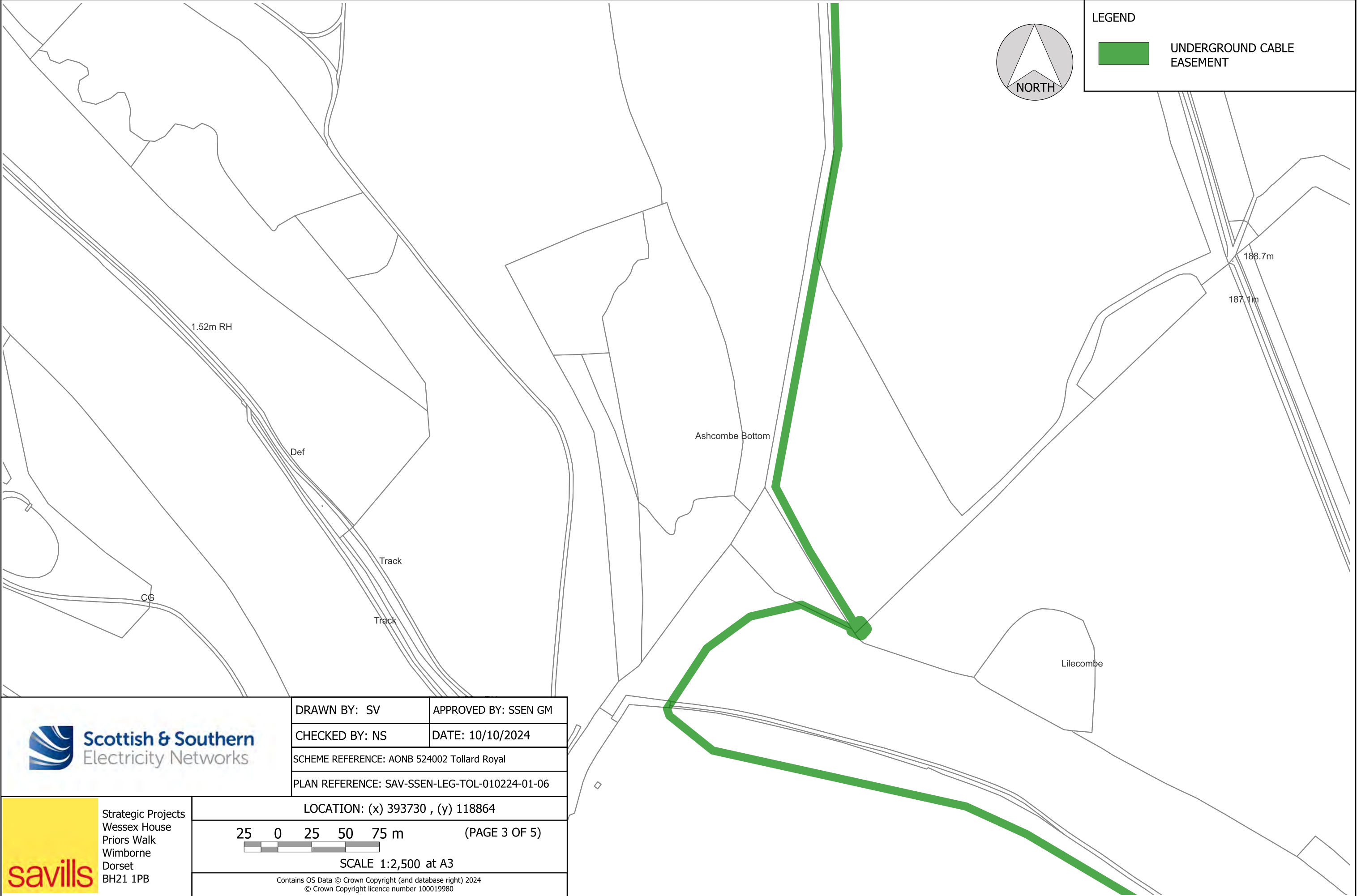
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Wessex House
Priors Walk
Wimborne
Dorset
BH21 1PB

TOLLARD HOUSE, CORNER FARM, TOLLARD ROYAL



LEGEND

UNDERGROUND CABLE EASEMENT



DRAWN BY: SV	APPROVED BY: SSEN GM
CHECKED BY: NS	DATE: 10/10/2024
SCHEME REFERENCE: AONB 524002 Tollard Royal	
PLAN REFERENCE: SAV-SSEN-LEG-TOL-010224-01-06	

LOCATION: (x) 393730 , (y) 118864

Strategic Projects
Wessex House
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Dorset
BH21 1PB

250255075 m

(PAGE 3 OF 5)

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TOLLARD HOUSE, CORNER FARM, TOLLARD ROYAL



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CHECKED BY: NS

DATE: 10/10/2024

SCHEME REFERENCE: AONB 524002 Tollard Royal

PLAN REFERENCE: SAV-SSEN-LEG-TOL-010224-01-06

LOCATION: (x) 393789 , (y) 119352

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(PAGE 2 OF 5)

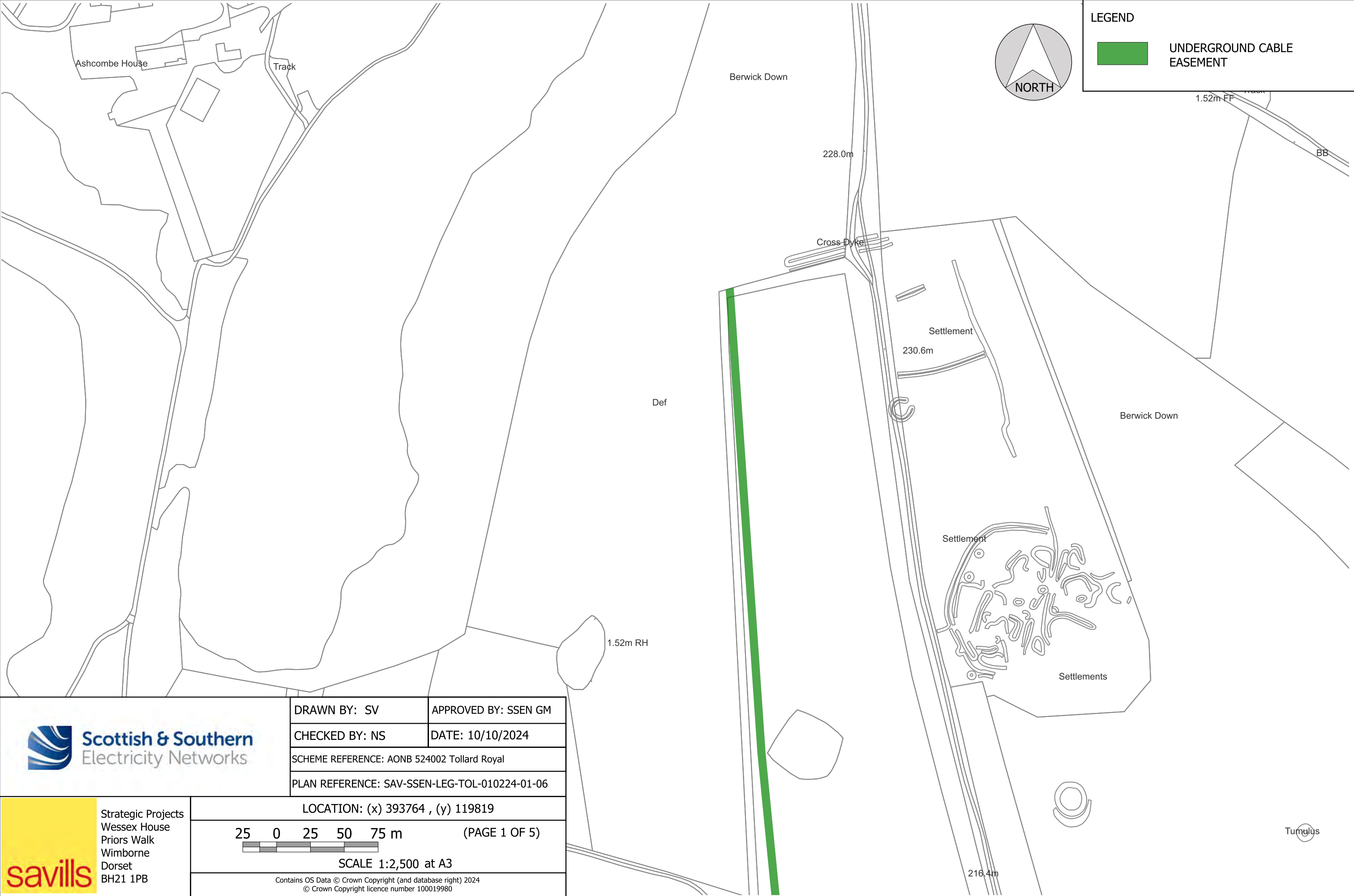
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BH21 1PB

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TOLLARD HOUSE, CORNER FARM, TOLLARD ROYAL



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APPROVED BY: SSEN GM

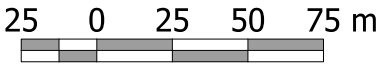
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PLAN REFERENCE: SAV-SSEN-LEG-TOL-010224-01-06

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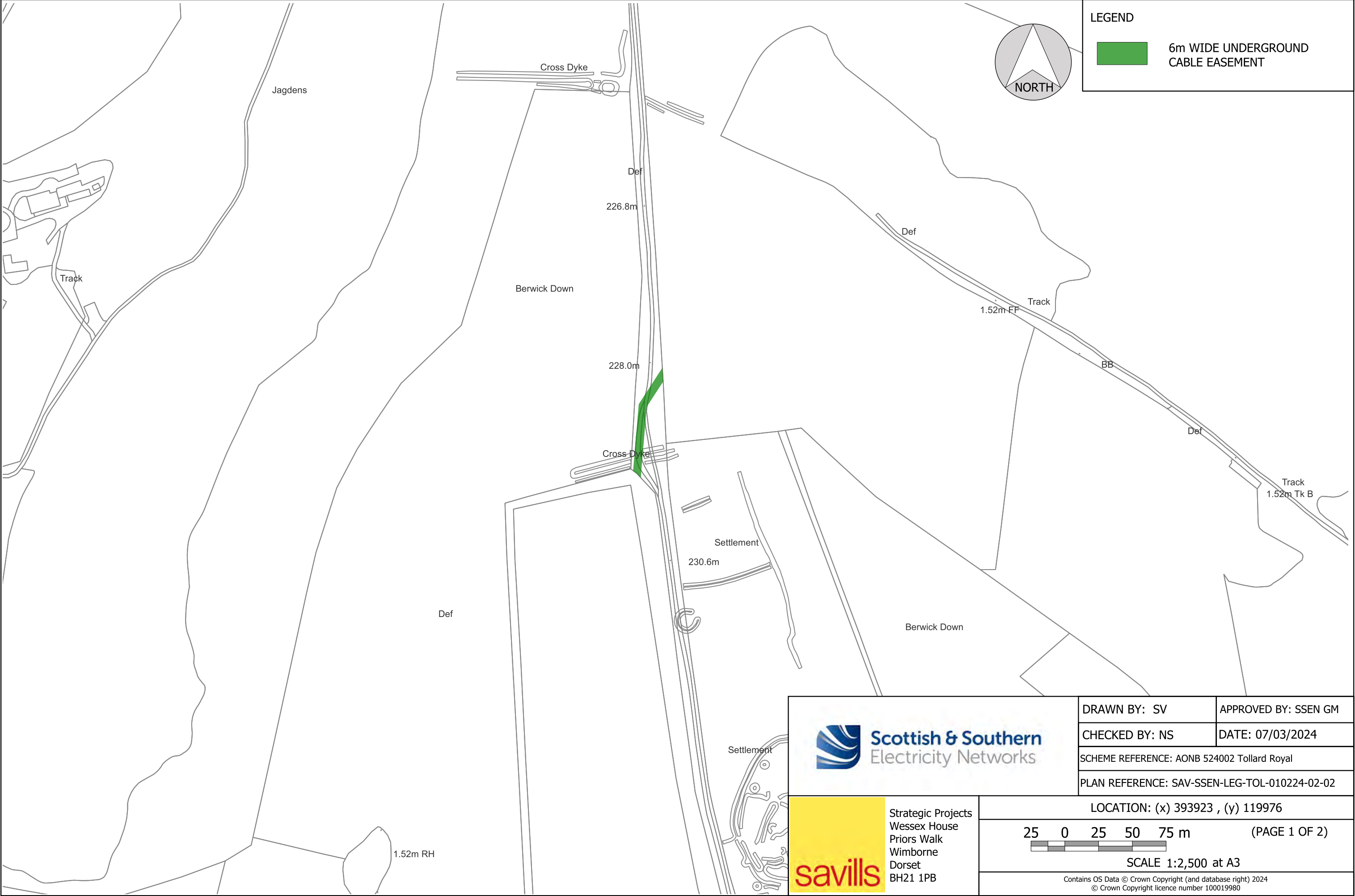
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BH21 1PB

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Tollard Royal, Salisbury SP5 5PP



LEGEND



6m WIDE UNDERGROUND
CABLE EASEMENT



Scottish & Southern
Electricity Networks

DRAWN BY: SV

APPROVED BY: SSEN GM

CHECKED BY: NS

DATE: 07/03/2024

SCHEME REFERENCE: AONB 524002 Tollard Royal

PLAN REFERENCE: SAV-SSEN-LEG-TOL-010224-02-02

LOCATION: (x) 393923 , (y) 119976

25 0 25 50 75 m

(PAGE 1 OF 2)

SCALE 1:2,500 at A3

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BH21 1PB

RUSHMORE ESTATE - LAND AT TOLLARD ROYAL, SALISBURY SP5 5QG

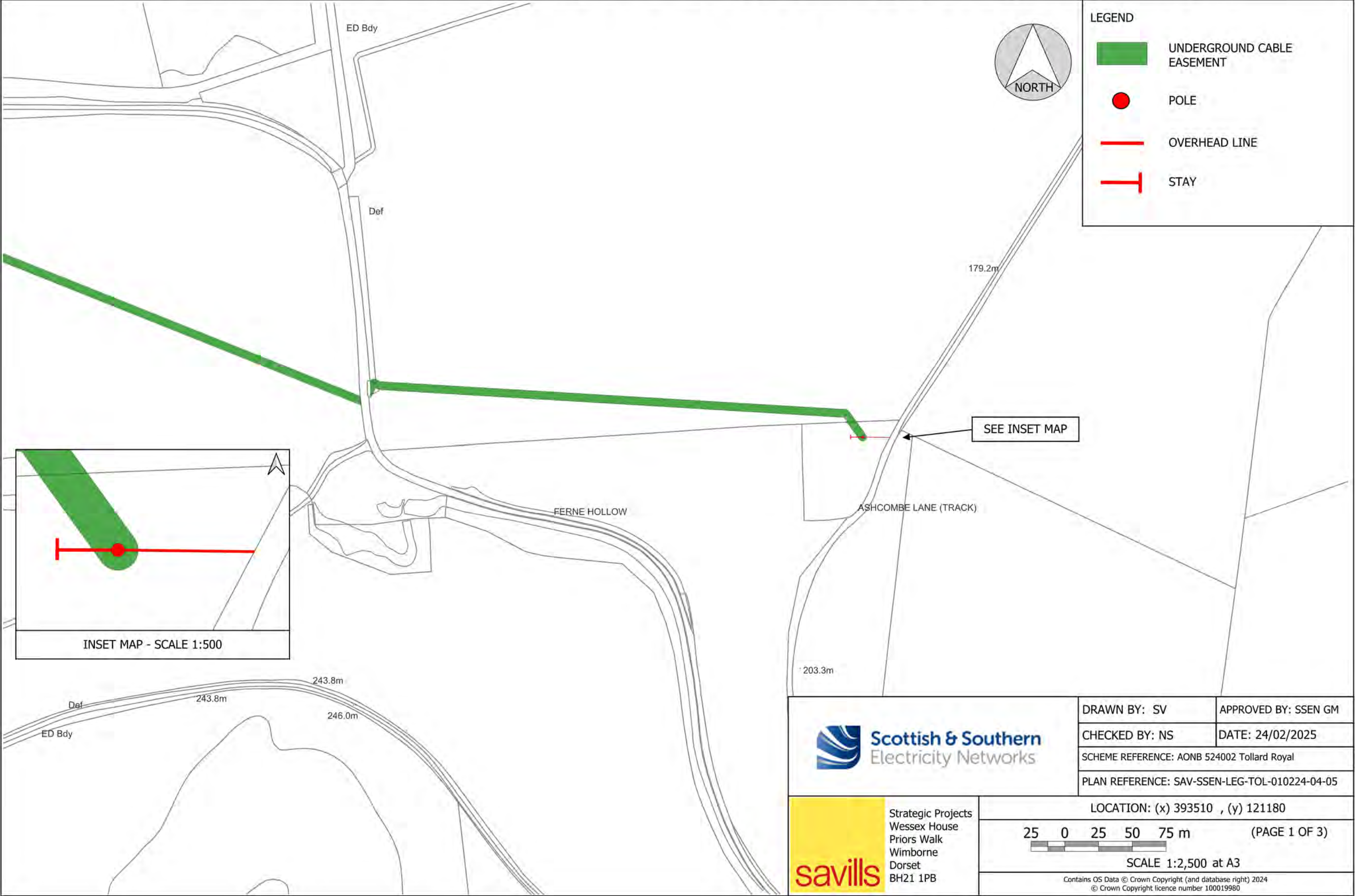


LAND AT ASHCOMBE HOUSE, TOLLARD ROYAL, SALISBURY WILTSHIRE SP5 5QG



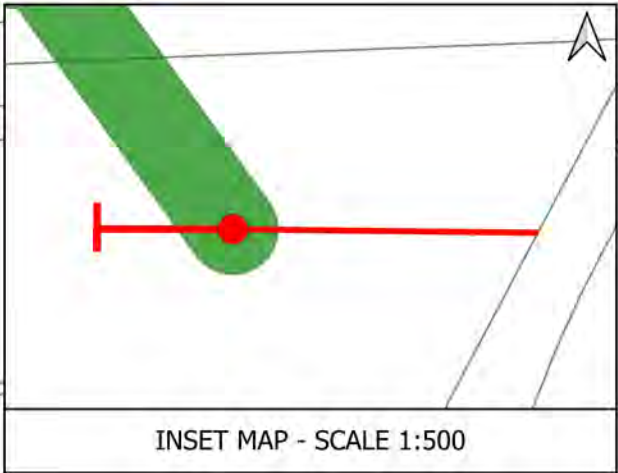
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	CHECKED BY: NS	DATE: 10/10/2024
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	PLAN REFERENCE: SAV-SSEN-LEG-TOL-101024-01-01	
 Strategic Projects Wessex House Priors Walk Wimborne Dorset BH21 1PB	LOCATION: (x) 393819 , (y) 120653	
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HIGHER BERRY COURT FARM AND LAND ON THE WEST SIDE OF ASHCOMBE LANE, BERWICK ST JOHN



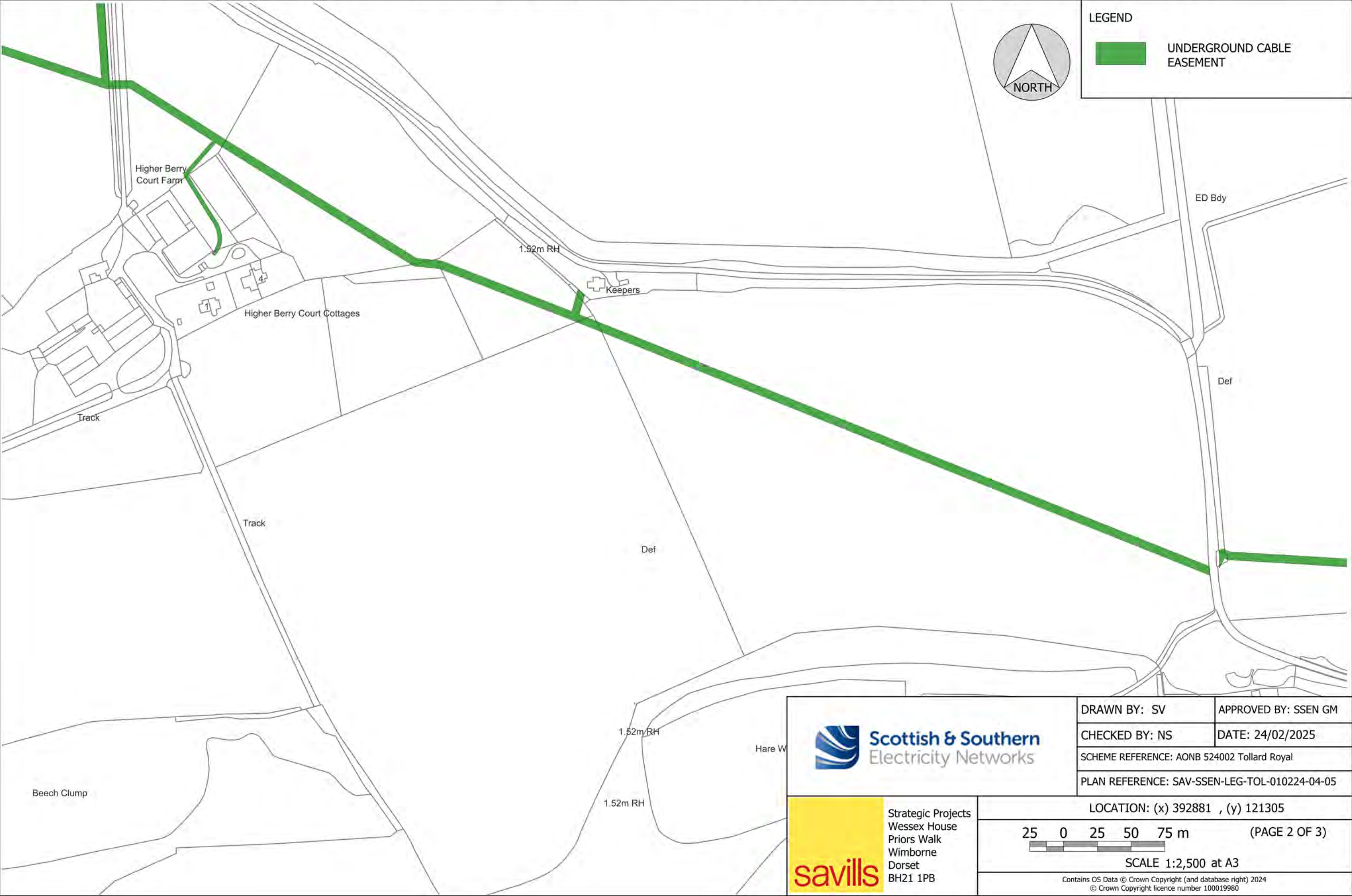
LEGEND

- UNDERGROUND CABLE EASEMENT
- POLE
- OVERHEAD LINE
- STAY



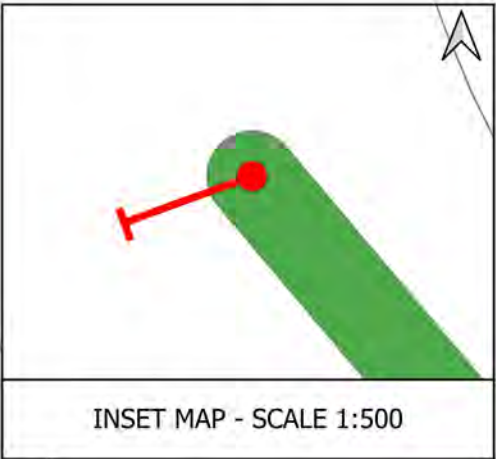
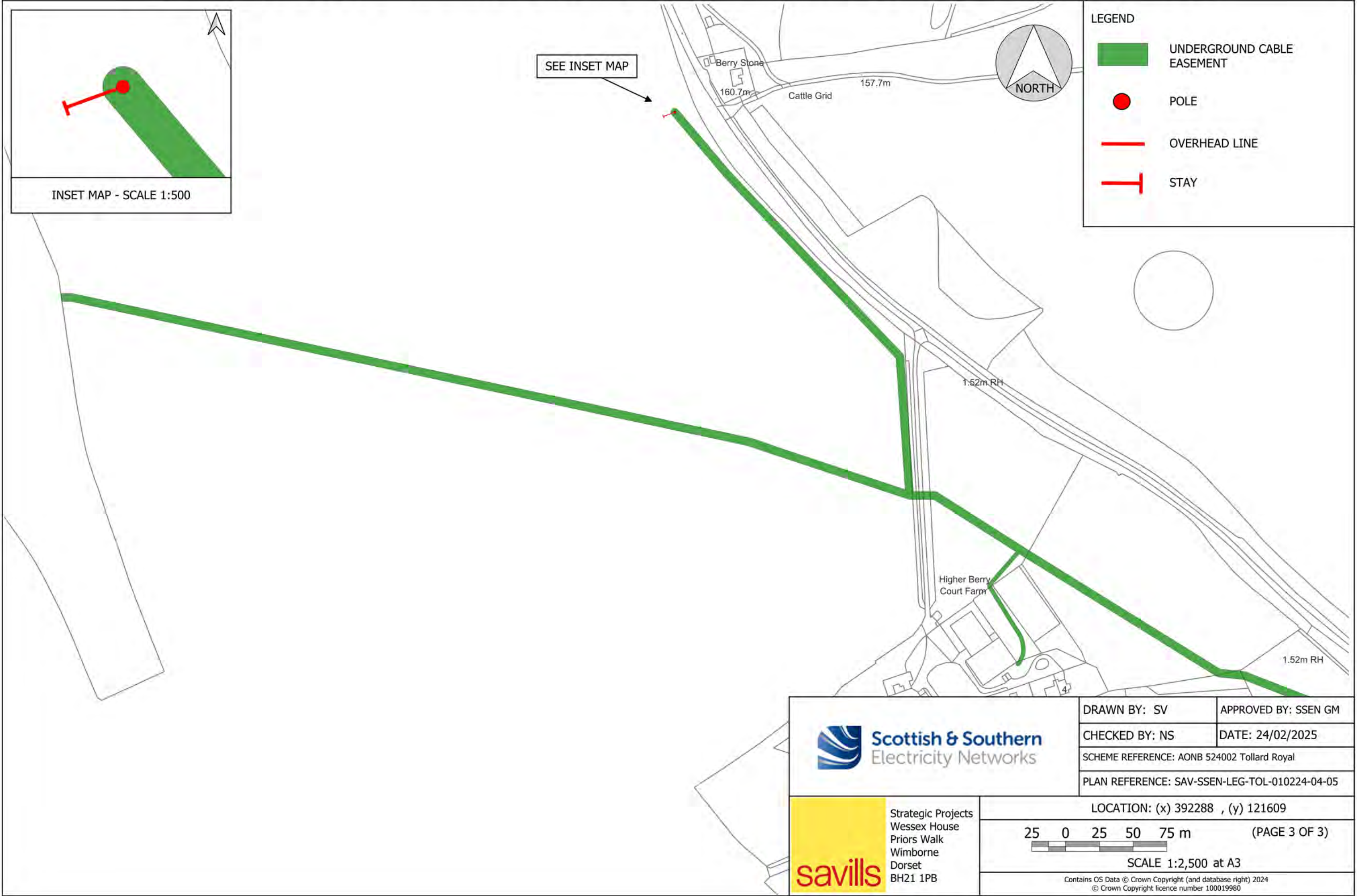
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	SCALE 1:2,500 at A3	
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HIGHER BERRY COURT FARM AND LAND ON THE WEST SIDE OF ASHCOMBE LANE, BERWICK ST JOHN



	DRAWN BY: SV	APPROVED BY: SSEN GM
	CHECKED BY: NS	DATE: 24/02/2025
	SCHEME REFERENCE: AONB 524002 Tollard Royal	
	PLAN REFERENCE: SAV-SSEN-LEG-TOL-010224-04-05	
 Strategic Projects Wessex House Priors Walk Wimborne Dorset BH21 1PB	LOCATION: (x) 392881, (y) 121305	
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HIGHER BERRY COURT FARM AND LAND ON THE WEST SIDE OF ASHCOMBE LANE, BERWICK ST JOHN



LEGEND

- UNDERGROUND CABLE EASEMENT
- POLE
- OVERHEAD LINE
- STAY

Scottish & Southern
Electricity Networks

DRAWN BY: SV	APPROVED BY: SSEN GM
CHECKED BY: NS	DATE: 24/02/2025
SCHEME REFERENCE: AONB 524002 Tollard Royal	
PLAN REFERENCE: SAV-SSEN-LEG-TOL-010224-04-05	

Strategic Projects
Wessex House
Priors Walk
Wimborne
Dorset
BH21 1PB

LOCATION: (x) 392288 , (y) 121609

25 0 25 50 75 m (PAGE 3 OF 3)

SCALE 1:2,500 at A3

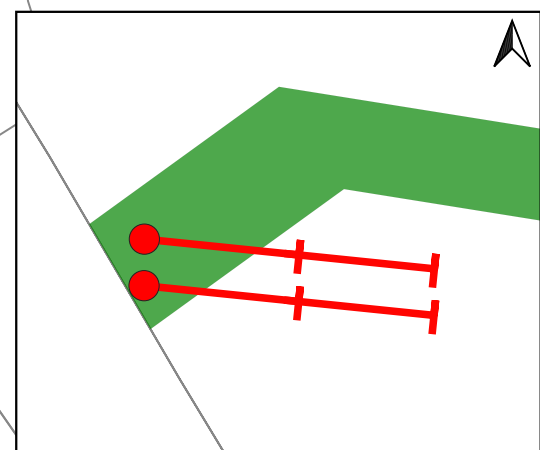
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THE PADDOCK, PECKONS HILL FARM AND LAND ON THE EAST SIDE OF DONHEAD HOLLOW



LOCATION PLAN

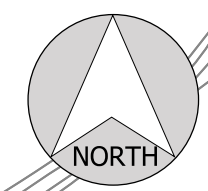
SEE INSET MAP



INSET MAP - SCALE 1:500

LEGEND

- UNDERGROUND CABLE EASEMENT
- POLE
- STAY



147.9m

GP

150.8m



Scottish & Southern
Electricity Networks

DRAWN BY: SV	APPROVED BY: SSEN GM
CHECKED BY: NS	DATE: 22/04/2024
SCHEME REFERENCE: AONB 524002 Tollard Royal	
PLAN REFERENCE: SAV-SSEN-LEG-TOL-010224-05-01	



Strategic Projects
Wessex House
Priors Walk
Wimborne
Dorset
BH21 1PB

LOCATION: (x) 391469 , (y) 121746

25 0 25 50 75 m

SCALE 1:2,500 at A3

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Appendix B Photographs



Plate 1. View south along route towards Tollard Royal. Modified grassland used as pasture. (ST 94102 18520)



Plate 2. Steep slope of priority habitats calcareous grassland and lowland meadows (ST 93724 18672)



Plate 3. View north along cable route. Field margin. (ST 93868 18742)



Plate 4. View south along cable route. Field margin. (ST 93820 18907)



Plate 5. View north along cable route. Arable field margin. (ST 93848 19366)



Plate 6. View north towards SSSI and Scheduled Monument. (ST 93904 20026)



Plate 7. Cable route following track towards Ferne Hollow. (ST 93882 20413)



Plate 8. View east along cable route from Ferne Hollow. (ST 93282 21230)



**Plate 9. Ferne Hollow hedgerow crossing,
western side. (ST 93282 21230)**



**Plate 10. Agricultural land and hedge crossing
viewed from land near Keepers. (ST 92826 21406)**



**Plate 11. Modified grassland crossed by cable
route. (ST 92629 21530)**



**Plate 11. Higher Berry Court Farm's access road.
(ST 92473 21538)**

Appendix C Toolbox talks

●●●● TOOLBOX TALK – BATS

Why it matters

- Bats are **legally protected**. You may be breaking the law if you:
 - kill, injure, or disturb bats
 - damage or destroy a bat roost
 - obstruct access to their roosts
- Bats are of conservation concern.
- Bats may be affected by a project at any time of year.
- SSEN has a legal duty under the Electricity Act 1989 to conserve animals like bats, and to avoid or mitigate any negative effects to them.
- Bats could result in **project delays, legal action, and reputational damage**, if not managed appropriately.



●●●● TOOLBOX TALK – BATS

Where are bat roosts found?

- **Poles**
 - woodpecker holes
 - splits
 - behind signage
 - close to woodland, water, hedges
- **Trees**
 - in holes, splits, cavities
 - behind flaking bark
 - behind dense ivy
- **Buildings**
- **Bat boxes**



Risks

- Tree works
- Pole replacement
- Building demolition or refurbishment

Your responsibilities

- Be vigilant for places that bats could roost, particularly during tree works or pole replacements.
- Be vigilant for signs of bats, such as droppings (always **crumbly**, never hard!).
- **Stop work immediately** if bats or signs of bats are found. Report to your Site Manager. Consult an ecologist.
- Never handle or relocate bats.
- Follow the method statements and RAMS relating to ecology.



TOOLBOX TALK – BREEDING BIRDS

Why it matters

- All wild birds, nests, eggs and young are legally protected. You may be breaking the law if you:
 - kill, injure or take any wild bird
 - take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built
 - take or destroy an egg of any wild bird
- Some birds receive additional protection which makes it an offence to disturb them whilst they're nesting.
- The nests of Golden Eagle, White-tailed Eagle and Osprey [England only] are protected at all times, even when they're not in use.
- SSEN has a legal duty under the Electricity Act 1989 to conserve animals like birds, and to avoid or mitigate any negative effects to them.

Beginnings of a nest



Ground-nesting Lapwing



Blackbird nest



Dunnock nest exposed from hedge cutting



TOOLBOX TALK – BREEDING BIRDS

Where are nesting birds found?

Birds will nest **almost anywhere**:

- **Poles, towers, transformers**
- On the ground
- Trees, including in holes and splits
- Hedgerows and scrub
- Buildings (internal and external)
- Grassland
- Arable fields
- Log piles
- Reed beds
- Riverbanks
- Rock/cliff faces

Dense scrub ideal for nesting



House martin and Sparrow nesting on a building



Your responsibilities

- **Avoid high risk activities during the bird breeding season** (1st March – 14th August inclusive), if practicable.
- Check for nesting birds prior to starting high risk activities during the breeding season.
- **Stop work immediately** if active nests are discovered and report to your Site Manager. Consult an ecologist.
- Follow the **method statements** and **RAMS** relating to ecology.
- Never handle or relocate birds or nests.
- Maintain buffer zones where present.

Risks

Between 1st March and 14th August:

- Vegetation removal:
 - Strimming
 - Tree surgery
 - Felling
- Topsoil stripping (in habitats listed above)
- Machinery movements (in habitats above)
- Alterations to buildings
- Asset maintenance



Nesting on electricity pole

TOOLBOX TALK – HAZEL DORMOUSE



Why it matters

- Dormice (hazel dormouse) are **legally protected**. You may be breaking the law if you:
 - kill, injure, or disturb a hazel dormouse
 - damage or destroy a dormouse nest or resting place (including vegetation or habitat that supports nests)
 - obstruct access to a dormouse nest
- Dormice are of conservation concern.
- Dormice may be affected by a project at any time of year, although the risk may be highest between April and October.
- SSEN has a legal duty under the Electricity Act 1989 to conserve animals like dormice, and to avoid or mitigate any negative effects to them.
- Impacts to dormice could result in **project delays, legal action, and reputational damage**, if not managed appropriately.

Where are dormice found?

Within the **SEPD regions of England** only (absent from Scotland), particularly Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Sussex, Surrey, Dorset, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire.

- Woodland, especially if ancient or large
- Woodland rides below overhead lines
- Scrub, including bramble
- Mature hedgerows (especially those connecting woodlands)
- Hazel coppice
- Nest boxes and dormouse 'tubes'



TOOLBOX TALK – HAZEL DORMOUSE

Risks

- Vegetation removal
- Hedge removal or cutting
- Tree felling and scrub clearance
- Excavation and machinery movements in woodland or scrub

Your responsibilities

- Be vigilant for habitats suitable for dormice.
- Be vigilant for dormouse nests during vegetation removal.
- **Stop work immediately** if dormice or their nests are found or suspected. Report to your Site Manager. Consult an ecologist.
- **Never disturb nests** or handle dormice.
- **Follow the method statements and RAMS** relating to ecology.

Dormouse nest identification

- **Shape:** spherical or oval shaped
- **Size:** typically, 10-15cm diameter
- **Structure:**
 - Constructed with a woven outer shell of **stripped bark** and **green leaves**.
 - Compact and **neatly woven**, unlike untidy or loosely built nests made by other animals.
- **Location:**
 - on the ground (hibernation nests) amongst leaf litter, moss, stumps, tussocks or coppice stools.
 - Off the ground (breeding nests) in scrub, hedges, trees, boxes.

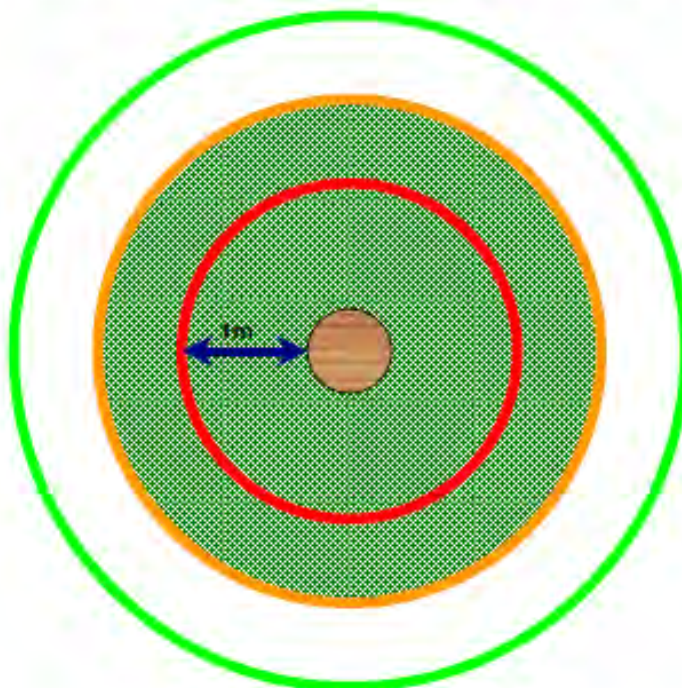


Appendix D Breeding bird risk assessment and procedure

[Breeding bird risk assessment and procedure](#)

Appendix E NJUG guidelines

FIGURE 1 – Tree Protection Zone



Key



Trunk of tree



Canopy or branch spread



PROHIBITED ZONE – 1m from trunk. Excavations of any kind must not be undertaken within this zone unless full consultation with the local authority Tree Officer is undertaken. Materials, plant and spoil must not be stored within this zone.



PRECAUTIONARY ZONE – 4 x tree circumference. Where excavations must be undertaken within this zone the use of mechanical excavation plant should be prohibited. Precautions should be undertaken to protect any exposed roots. Materials, plant and spoil should not be stored within this zone. Consult with the local authority Tree Officer if in any doubt.



PERMITTED ZONE – outside of the precautionary zone. Excavation works may be undertaken within this zone, however caution must be applied and the use of mechanical plant limited. Any exposed roots should be protected.

Appendix F Legislative context

Particular species of flora and fauna and their habitats are subject to legal protection, normally because of their vulnerable conservation status. The two principal pieces of legislation protecting wild species and habitats in England are the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Furthermore, some animals or habitat features are protected under their own legislation, for example the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and the Hedgerows Regulations 1997. A brief discussion of the legislation relevant to this study is provided below.

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 (as amended) places a duty upon all public authorities in England to have regard to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity. As a statutory undertaker, SSEN falls under the Act's definition of 'public authorities'.

Schedule 7A of the Environment Act 2021 sets out a requirement that any new planning application for development will be required to meet the objective that the *"biodiversity value attributable to the development exceeds the pre-development biodiversity value of the on-site habitat by at least [10%]"*. Mandatory biodiversity net gain is due to come into force in late 2023.

Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 places a duty on SSEN to have regard for the preservation and conservation of flora, fauna or physiographical features of special interest, and to take reasonable measures to mitigate any effect of a proposal on any such flora, fauna or features.

Bats

In England, all species of bat, their breeding sites and their resting places, are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). The combined effect of the legislation makes it an offence to:

- deliberately capture, injure or kill any such animal;
- deliberately disturb any such animal, in such a way as to be likely to:
 - o impair their ability:
 - to survive, breed or reproduce or rear or nurture their young; or
 - to hibernate or migrate;
 - o affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of animal such animal;
- damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of any such animal;
- intentionally or recklessly disturb any such animal while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection; or
- intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any place that any such animal uses for shelter or protection (whether the animal is present or not).

Badger

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 makes it an offence to:

- Kill, injure or take a badger;
- Attempt to kill, injure or take a badger; or
- To damage or interfere with a sett.

The 1992 Act defines a badger sett as 'any structure or place which displays signs indicating current use by a badger'.

Breeding birds

With certain exceptions, all wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected by Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Therefore, it is an offence, to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird;
- Intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built; or
- Intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.

Bird species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act receive further protection, thus for these species it is also an offence to:

- Intentionally or recklessly disturb any bird while it is nest building, or is at a nest containing eggs or young; or
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb the dependent young of any such bird.