

# Statutory Consultation

## Steeple Renewables Project Statutory Consultation Brochure

Welcome to our statutory consultation on plans for a new solar and battery storage project at the former West Burton Power Station and Sturton-le-Steeple, Nottinghamshire.

20 January - 03 March 2025



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## Introduction

### Welcome to our statutory consultation

#### Welcome to our statutory consultation on plans for a new solar and battery storage project at West Burton Power Station and Sturton-le-Steeple, Nottinghamshire.

Steeple Renewables Project could deliver up to 600MW of solar power generation and battery storage capacity. Given this scale, the project qualifies as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) and as such will proceed through the Development Consent Order (DCO) planning process. This means that, following public consultation and assessment, the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero will make the final decision on project approval.

This renewable energy project would make an important contribution in supporting the UK's journey towards decarbonisation by generating clean, sustainable energy locally and reducing reliance on fossil fuels. By pairing solar power with battery storage, we can provide a consistent, reliable source of renewable energy that helps stabilise the grid and enhances energy security.

### About the consultation

Our statutory consultation will run from **Monday 20 January until 11:59pm on Monday 03 March 2025**. This consultation process has been designed to provide transparent information about the project and to encourage your feedback on the emerging proposals which have been informed by feedback received at our early informal consultation. The statutory consultation is a formal requirement for NSIPs and offers a vital opportunity for community input in shaping the final proposal submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.

We encourage feedback on all aspects of the project, but your local insight on the following areas would be especially valuable in helping refine the design:

- The overall proposals for Steeple Renewables Project
- The updated site plan for the land under consideration
- Measures proposed to avoid or minimise impacts identified in our preliminary environmental assessments
- Whilst outside of the considerations for the DCO application, our proposals for community benefits and Local Electricity Discount Scheme (LEDS).

Details on the statutory consultation, events and how to get involved are available on page 31 of this brochure.

### Who is RES?

**RES is the world's largest independent renewable energy company, working across 24 countries and active in wind, solar, energy storage, green hydrogen, transmission, and distribution. An industry innovator for over 40 years, RES has delivered more than 27GW of renewable energy projects across the globe and plans to bring more than 22GW of new capacity online in the next five years.**

As a service provider, RES has the skills and experience in asset management, operations and maintenance (O&M), and spare parts – supporting 41GW of renewable assets across 1,300 sites. RES brings to the market a range of purposeful, practical technology-based products and digital solutions designed to maximise investment and deployment of renewable energy.

RES is the power behind a clean energy future where everyone has access to affordable zero carbon energy bringing together global experience, passion, and the innovation of its 4,500 people to transform the way energy is generated, stored and supplied. Visit: [www.res-group.com](http://www.res-group.com)



## Responding to your feedback

We would like to thank those that took part in our early informal consultation that took place in late 2023. The feedback received during this consultation highlighted several key areas of interest and concern. Below, we've summarised the main themes and explained how the project has evolved to address them:

You said	Our response
<b>We received comments regarding the size of the land under consideration presented at early informal consultation and concerns regarding potential visual impact.</b>	Since our early informal consultation, we have refined the land that is under consideration, reducing the total area of the project.  Not all of the land shown will be used for solar panels. Substantial areas of land shown on our site plan will be set aside for habitat creation and biodiversity mitigation and enhancement. Alongside the solar panels some of the land will also be used for battery storage and associated infrastructure.
<b>We received comments raising concerns about a loss of habitats and wildlife as a result of the proposals.</b>	The proposals for Steeple Renewables Project include designated areas of land set aside for environmental mitigation and habitat creation. We now have more information about where this land is likely to be located. You can find out more on page 26 of this brochure.
<b>We received comments about general flood risk in the area and concern that the project could exacerbate this.</b>	Since the early informal consultation, we have been conducting detailed surveys and assessments to evaluate the potential flood risk across the site and the potential impact of the project.  Our proposals adhere to government guidance and we are committed to ensuring the development does not worsen existing flood conditions. We also believe that the proposals offer an opportunity to introduce measures that would help to alleviate existing flooding problems in the village. More detail can be found on pages 24 and 25 of this brochure.
<b>The feedback we received during our early informal consultation expressed concern about our proposals for the Local Electricity Discount Scheme (LEDS), with people questioning whether the scheme will offer a real benefit to the local community.</b>	As part of this statutory consultation, we continue to seek input on how people would best like the community benefits package to be delivered, which could include RES' unique LEDS. We have presented further detail on what LEDS could look like, if Steeple Renewables Project is consented and becomes operational, on page 29 of this brochure, by showing an indicative scenario on which we invite feedback regarding the proposed eligible area and discount per property.
<b>Concerns were raised about developing the land near to the River Trent on the eastern side of the site. Respondents stated that this land is a hub for biodiversity and should be protected.</b>	We carefully considered your feedback from the early informal consultation, and alongside our extensive environmental work and assessments, we will ensure the land near the River Trent is prioritised for biodiversity protection and enhancement.  Considering this, no solar panels will be installed on this land, safeguarding its ecological value.

## Need for the project

### The need for solar

With the global climate emergency becoming increasingly urgent, the UK is accelerating its efforts to transition to a clean energy system. The target of achieving a carbon-free electricity grid by 2030 underscores the country's commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions based on the clean energy action plan.

This expansion is central to the Government's renewable energy strategy, which aims to reduce energy costs for households and businesses, enhance energy security, and establish the UK as a global leader in clean energy. Solar energy enables more electricity to be generated domestically without reliance on imports and is not subject to sudden price fluctuations or the uncertainty of global markets. It can therefore play an important role in improving the security and diversification of the UK's energy supply.

Government forecasting places solar as the cheapest source of new electricity generation for the coming years. This means investment in solar projects like Steeple Renewables Project is not just good for the environment but also for the consumer.

### Solar power in the UK key facts:



**Cost-effective:** Solar is one of the most affordable sources of electricity, helping to reduce energy bills for the UK.



**Creation and investment:** Solar projects generate local jobs and attract long-term investments, boosting local economies.



**Efficient and reliable:** Modern solar technology is highly efficient and, when paired with battery storage, can supply energy when it's needed most.



**Carbon reduction:** Each megawatt of solar energy reduces greenhouse gas emissions, contributing directly to a cleaner environment.

### The Site and Site Selection

The decommissioning of West Burton Power Station has created a unique opportunity for renewable energy development in Nottinghamshire. With newly available grid capacity directly adjacent to our proposed site, Steeple Renewables Project has secured a connection agreement with National Grid, allowing the project to tap into this infrastructure and repurpose it for sustainable energy. This site's location continues the region's legacy of energy generation, shifting from traditional fossil fuels to clean, green power.

#### Why This Site is Suitable for Solar Development

- **Grid connectivity:** Immediate access to the existing grid reduces the need for extensive new transmission infrastructure, making the site ideal for efficient integration of renewable energy.
- **Land availability:** The land surrounding the former power station provides sufficient space for both solar panels and battery storage.
- **Community and environmental considerations:** The site selection allows for the careful planning of impacts and the opportunity for local investment and benefits.

## Emerging proposals








Steeple Renewables Project is a proposed solar and battery storage development located near the decommissioned West Burton Power Station, Nottinghamshire. This project aims to generate up to 600MW of solar energy and battery storage, providing clean, sustainable electricity to approximately 180,000 homes every year. RES has a grid connection agreement for up to 600MW - the precise distribution between solar and battery components is yet to be finalised. Whilst we currently anticipate a configuration of approximately 75% solar and 25% battery, this ratio will be refined based on ongoing assessments and the valuable feedback gathered during this consultation.

The project will harness solar power during daylight hours and store excess energy in battery storage systems, ensuring a reliable, consistent energy supply even when the sun isn't shining. This combination of solar generation and energy storage will help stabilise the national grid and contribute to the UK's broader decarbonisation goals.

Steeple Renewables Project is designed to play a key role in reducing the UK's reliance on fossil fuels, boosting energy security, and supporting the transition to a cleaner, greener energy future. In addition to the environmental benefits, the project will create local employment opportunities and foster economic growth through investments in green technologies and infrastructure. The development also seeks to minimise any potential environmental impacts, ensuring that the area's natural landscape is preserved, and local communities are supported throughout the process.

### Proposals at a glance

#### Steeple Renewables Project could:

-  Generate enough renewable energy to power 180,000<sup>1</sup> homes, around 50% of all homes in Nottinghamshire
-  Support the UK's targets to reach net-zero by 2050
-  Utilise electricity grid capacity made available from the decommissioning of the adjacent West Burton Power Station
-  Deliver £320,000 a year in community benefits, equating to approximately £13 million over the lifetime of the project. This could include RES' unique Local Electricity Discount Scheme (LEDS) which is proposed to provide a minimum discount of £350\* on the electricity bills of the closest homes and businesses every year.
-  Deliver £224 million of investment into the construction of the scheme, providing a boost to the local construction sector<sup>2</sup>
-  Create 400 jobs over the 24-month build programme, supporting skills and employment in the local community<sup>3</sup>
-  Enable continued agricultural use of the land alongside the renewable energy project

<sup>1</sup> The homes figure has been calculated by taking the predicted average annual electricity generation of the site and dividing this by the annual average electricity figures from DESNZ (Department for Energy Security and Net Zero) showing that the annual GB average domestic household consumption is 3,239 kWh (January 2024).

<sup>2</sup> Based on information provided by the client, a value of £560,000 per MW has been used to calculate construction cost. This cost per MW is multiplied by 400MW, an approximate figure for the generation capacity of the project, to reach a total construction cost of around £224 million.

<sup>3</sup> Based on previous experience of other solar farms, the construction phase could support around 1 job per MW during the peak of the construction phase, therefore Steeple could support in the region of 400 jobs.

\*More information is included on pages 28 and 29 of this brochure.

## Components of Steeple Renewables Project

### What does a solar farm with battery storage look like?

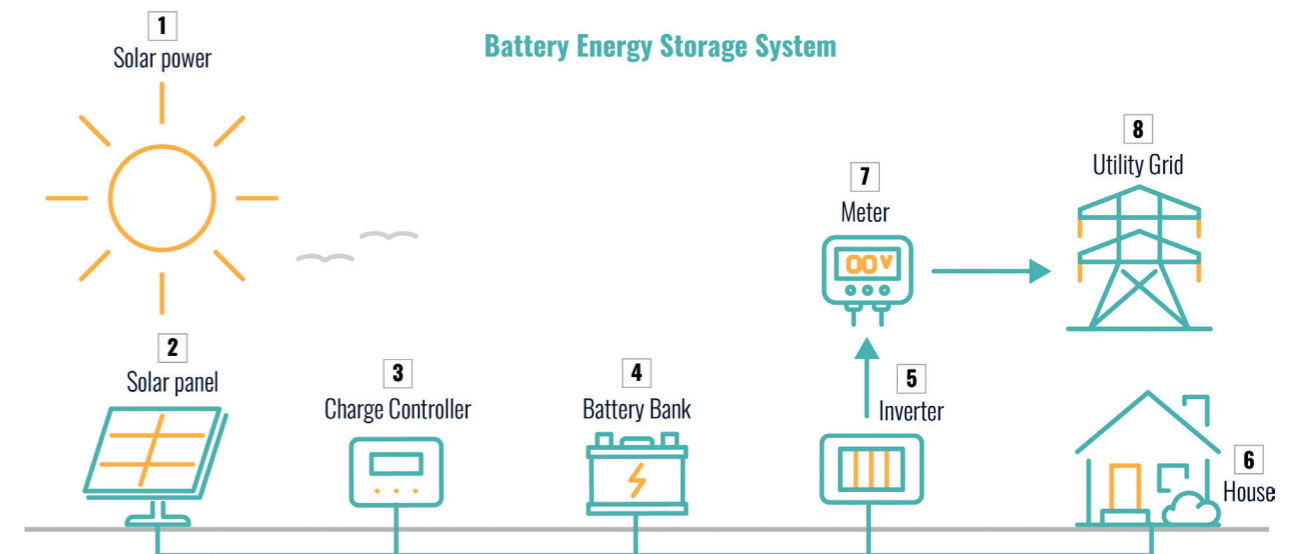
While the precise configuration and components of the infrastructure at Steeple Renewables Project are still under consideration, the following elements are anticipated to be included in the project:

- Solar PV modules and the associated mounting structures
- On-site supporting equipment including inverters, transformers, and switchgears
- Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)
- Underground cabling within the areas of the solar PV modules and connecting solar PV module areas to the on-site substation
- Supporting infrastructure including access tracks, security measures, gates and lighting
- Opportunities to consider a range of measures to allow for Biodiversity Net Gain and landscaping works upon the site
- Improvements to the local footpath network. Please note that these details are subject to confirmation and may be subject to adjustments as the project progresses.

### How does battery storage work?

Energy storage is the capture of energy for use at a later time, and a BESS is a form of energy storage.

Battery energy storage has a variety of useful applications, such as balancing energy demand and supply for either the short or long term. This ensures the grid operates more efficiently. Plus, batteries are able to respond to changing supply or demand levels within a second.





## How does solar work?

Solar PV panels are typically made from silicon, which is a great semi-conductor, installed in a metal panel frame with a glass casing.

The sun gives off light, even on cloudy days, and when these light particles, or photons, hit the thin layer of silicon on the top of a solar panel, they knock electrons off the silicon atoms which creates a direct current (DC) of electricity. This is captured by the wiring in the solar panels.

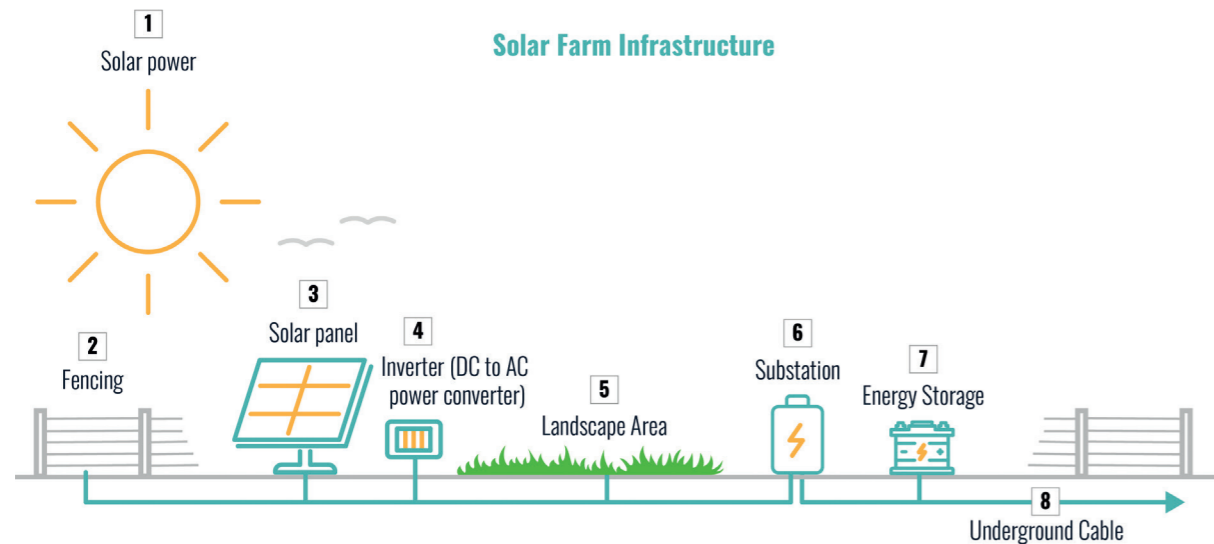
This DC electricity is then converted to alternating current (AC) by an inverter which is then funnelled into the grid network.

AC is the type of electrical current used when you plug appliances into normal wall sockets.

Bifacial modules have two sides of solar cells, enabling additional energy generation from the diffuse light reflected off the grass, on the rear-side of the panels.

In most cases solar panels are recyclable and there are well established industrial processes to do this. There are organisations around the UK and Europe specialising in solar recycling, such as PV Cycle and the European Recycling Platform.

They are working with solar developers to minimise electrical waste and recycle old panels in line with the Waste from Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) regulations.



### Cable Installation Methods

The installation of underground cabling will employ various methods depending on the terrain and specific needs of the route:

- **Cable plough:** This primary installation method is efficient and minimally invasive, cutting, laying, and backfilling the cable in a single operation, significantly reducing ground disturbance.
- **Open-cut trenching:** For areas where the cable plough is not suitable, a trench 1.2 metres deep and 1.5 metres wide will be used, requiring a working width of 15-30 metres to safely lay and secure the cables.
- **Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD):** In cases where open-cut trenching is not feasible (such as crossing roads, railways, or large drainage ditches), HDD will be utilised. This technique allows cables to be installed beneath the surface without disrupting the above-ground landscape.

## Project Evolution

Since our early informal consultation in 2023, we have been conducting a series of surveys and technical assessments to refine our proposals for Steeple Renewables Project. This comprehensive approach has allowed us to make significant progress in several key areas.

### Site refinement

Since 2023, we have carefully reviewed and refined the overall area of the proposed site for the project. This process has led to a reduction in the total project area, ensuring that we focus on the most viable and sustainable locations. Our extensive environmental and technical analyses have been instrumental in establishing key parameters that will guide the development of the project.

### Environmental and technical analysis

Through rigorous environmental and technical assessments, we have identified the most suitable areas for solar development, alongside the areas that are best suited for biodiversity mitigation and enhancement. By integrating these findings, we are able to design a project that not only meets our energy goals but also prioritises the protection and preservation of the local environment.

### Biodiversity mitigation and enhancement

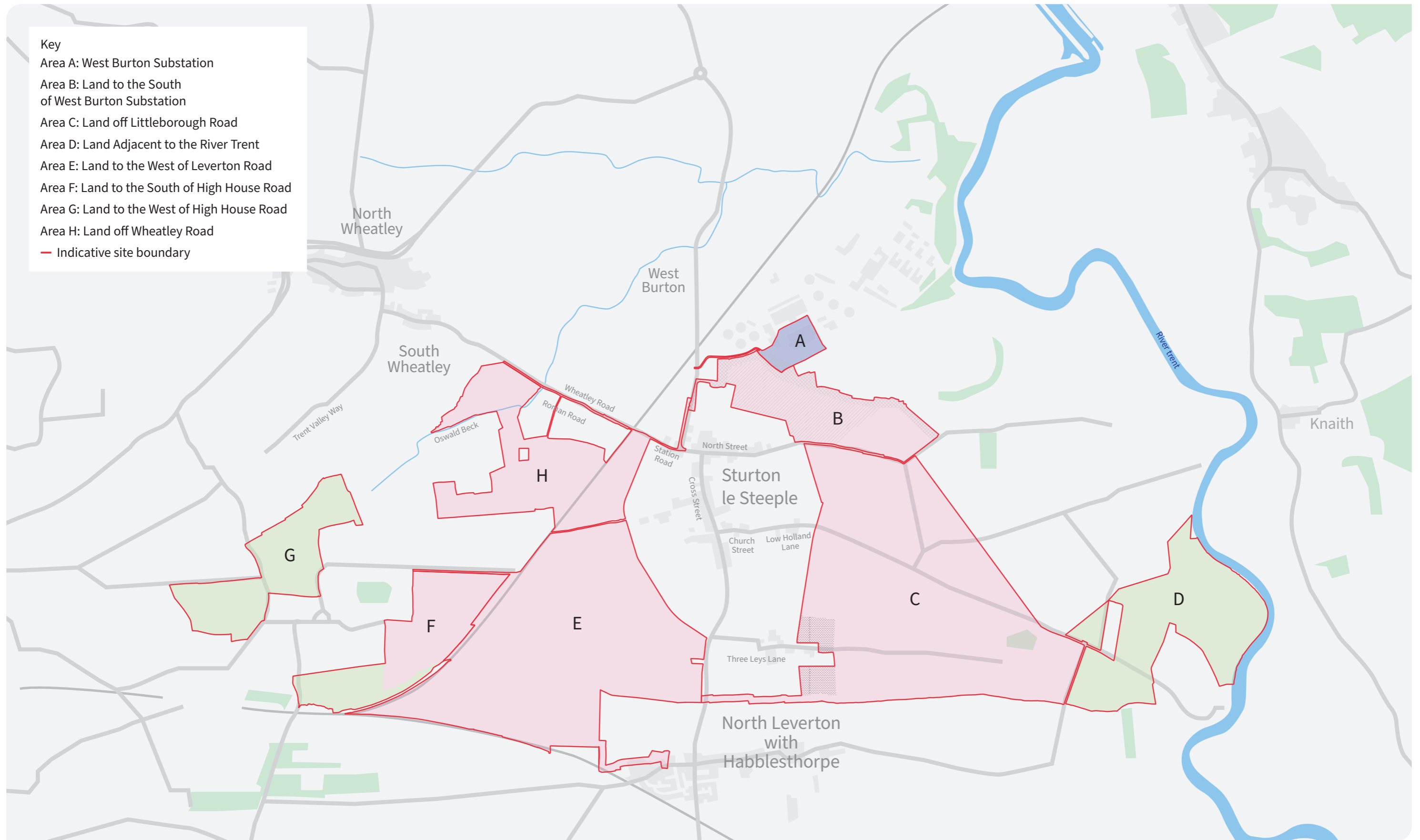
Our approach to biodiversity is reflected in our careful planning. We have identified specific areas where we can implement measures to mitigate any potential impacts on local wildlife and enhance biodiversity.

### Site access and construction layout

Over the past year, we have also focused on logistical aspects of the project. We have pinpointed potential access points to the site, ensuring that construction and operational activities can be carried out efficiently and with minimal disruption to the surrounding community. Additionally, we have identified optimal locations for construction compounds, which will facilitate a thoughtful and efficient project layout.



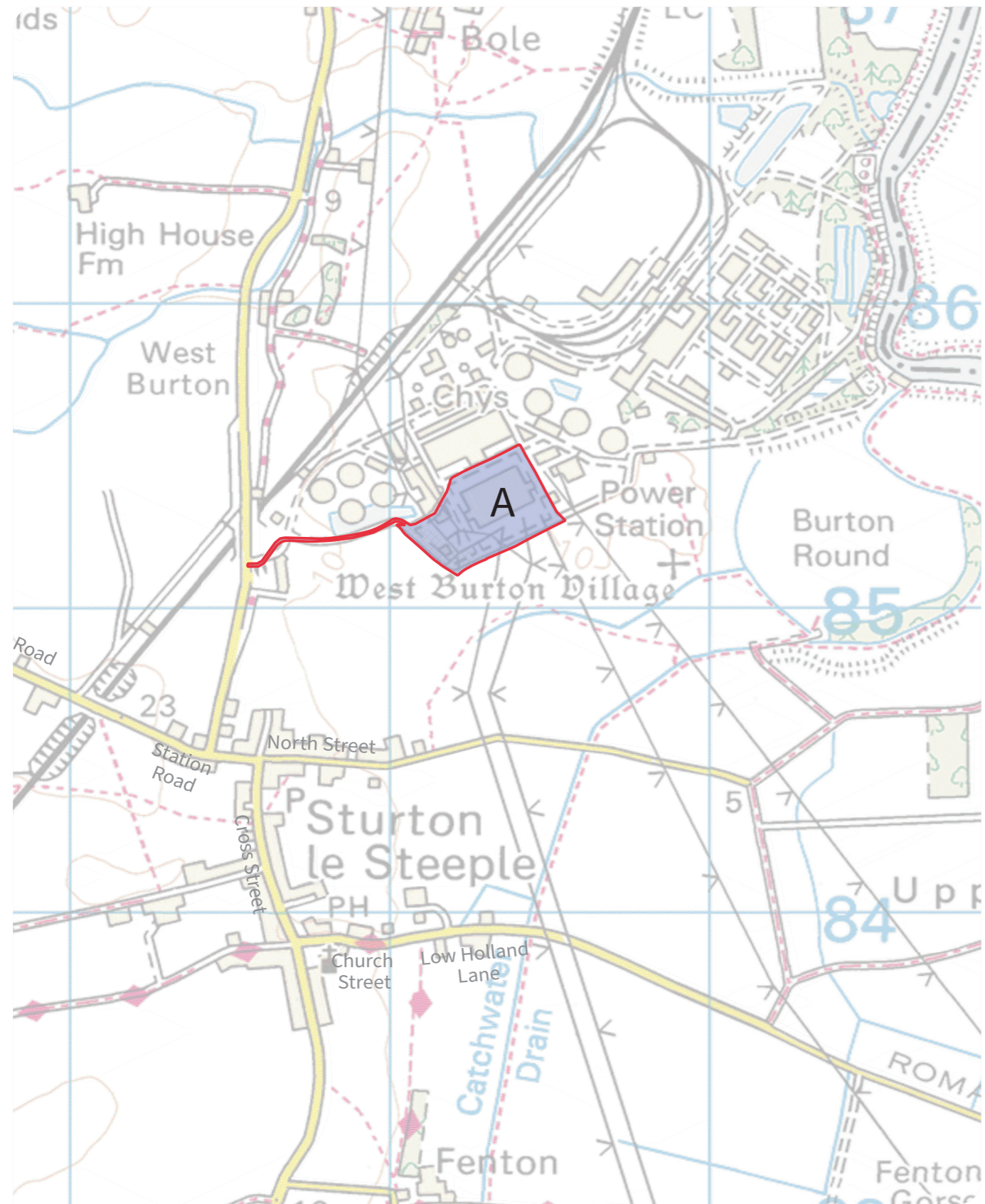
## The proposed site



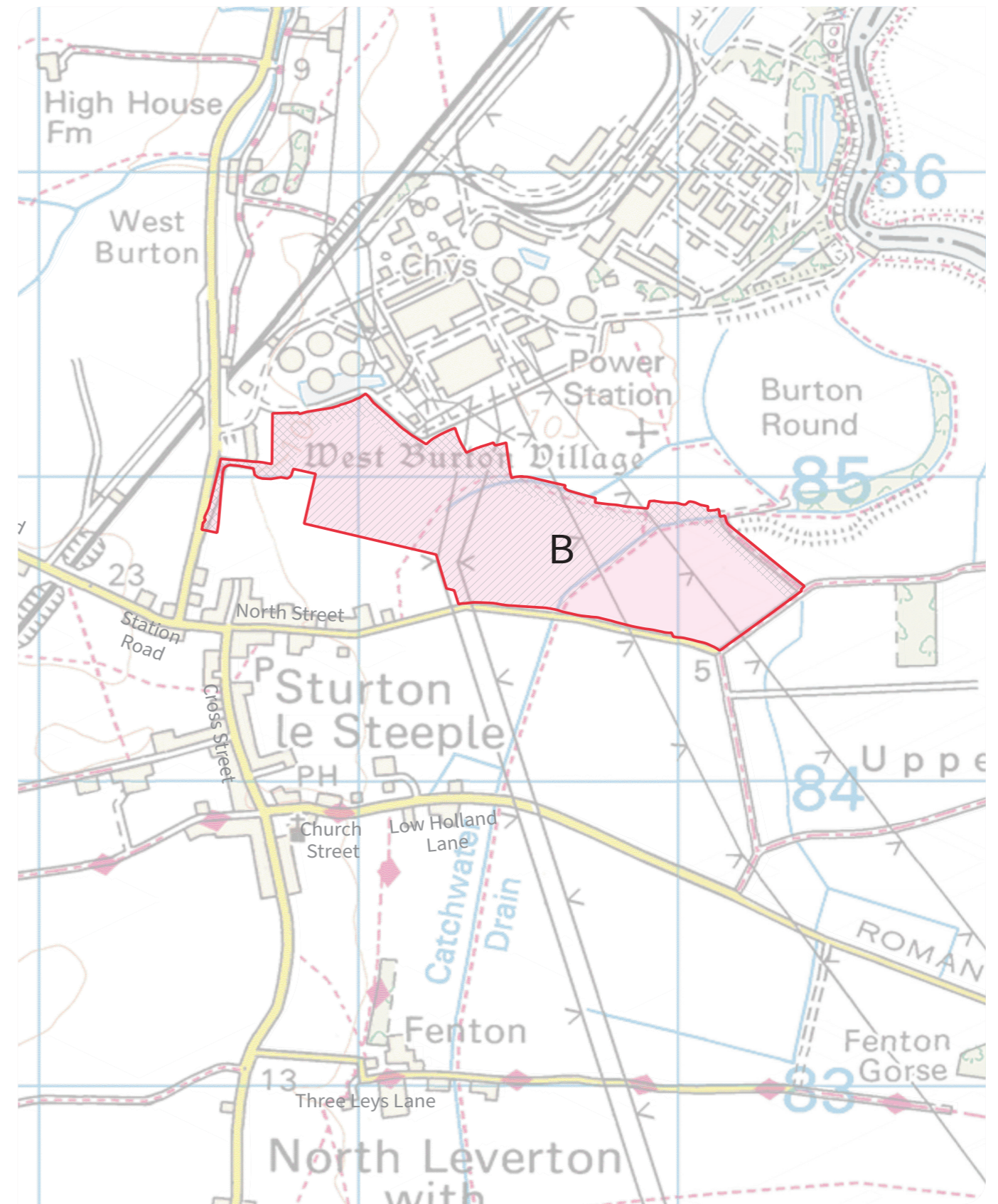


To assist in understanding the site area plan, we have broken down the land under consideration for the project into eight areas coded A-H, the following eight pages will display plans for each land area.

### Area A: West Burton Substation

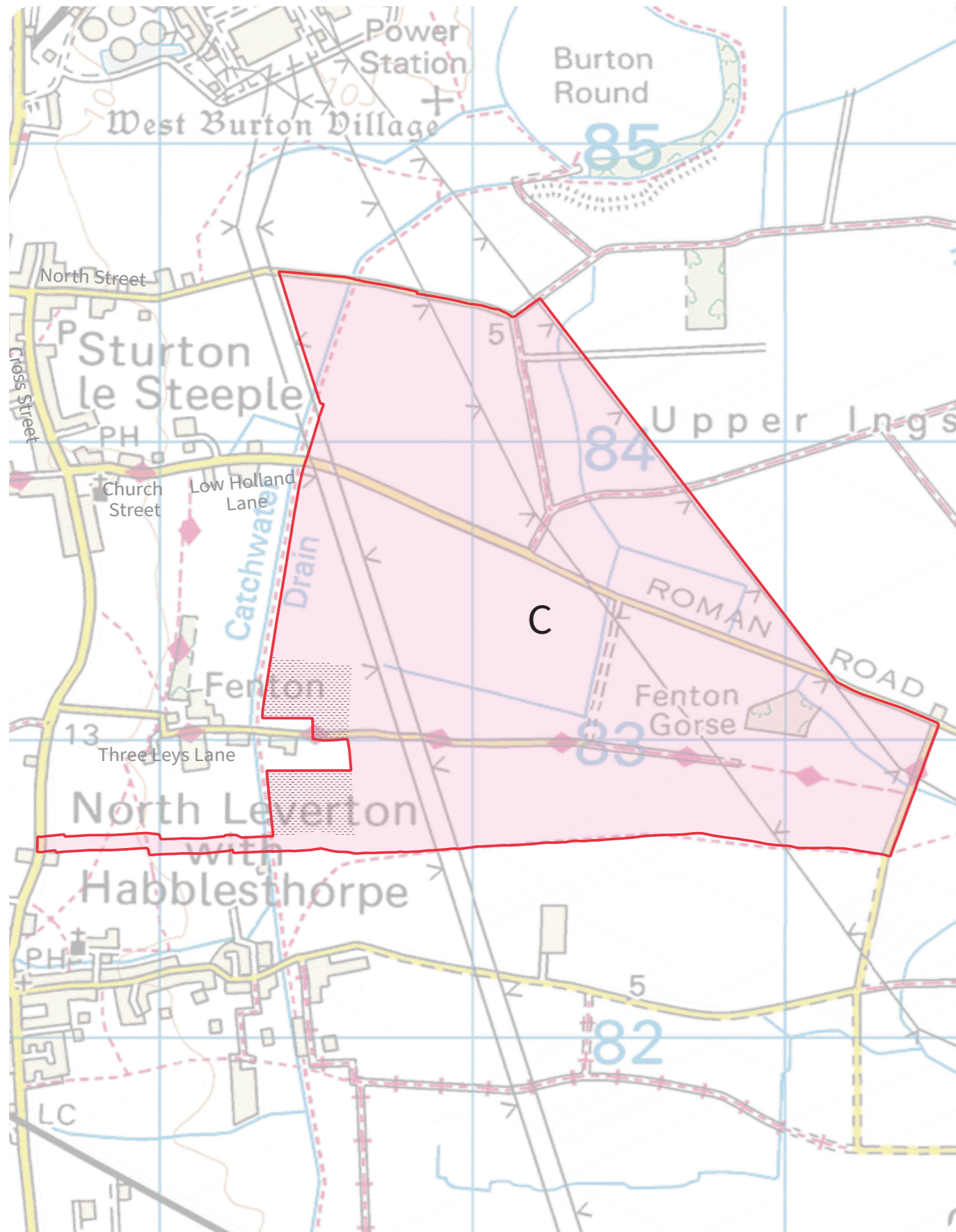


### Area B: Land to the South of West Burton Substation

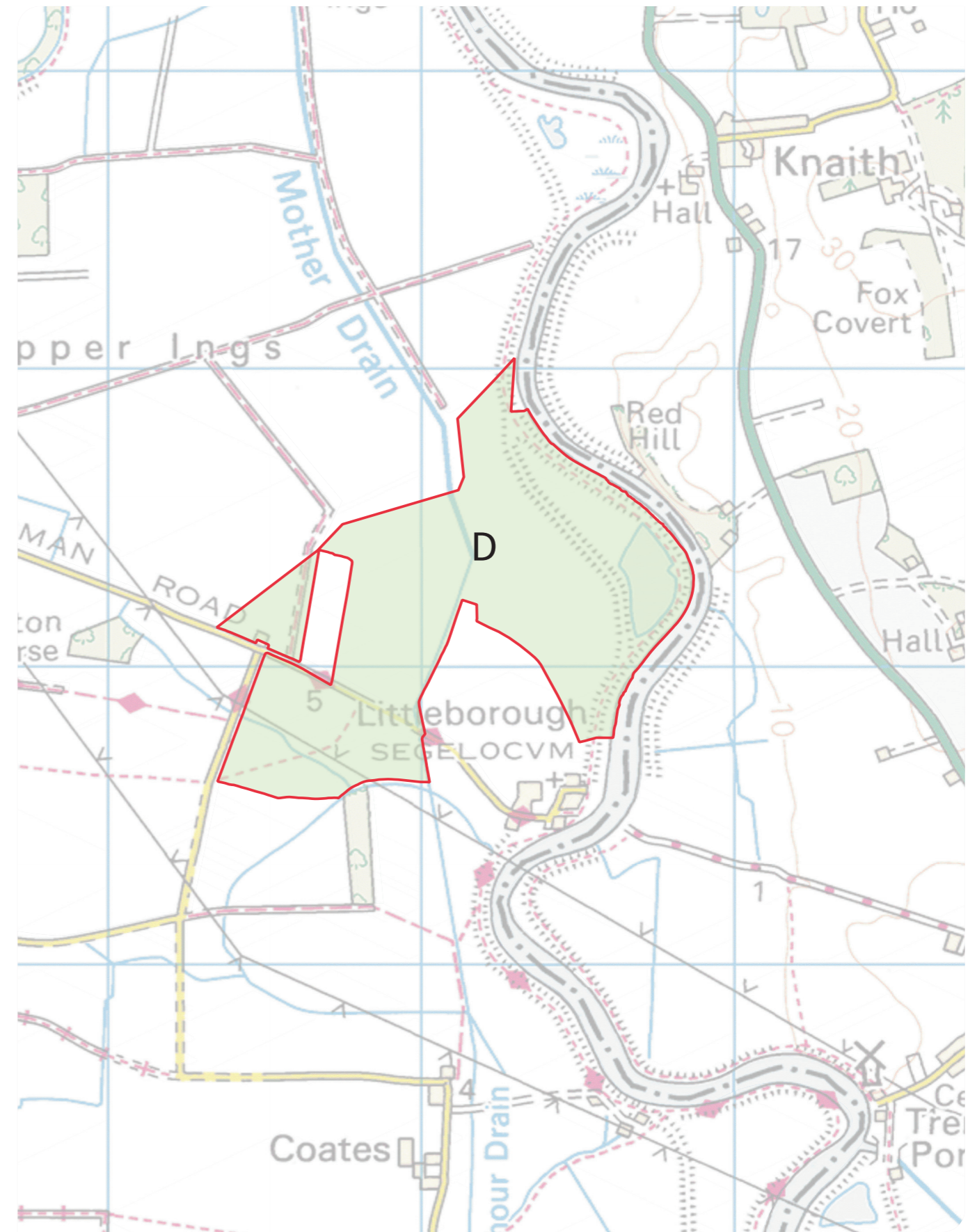




### Area C: Land off Littleborough Road

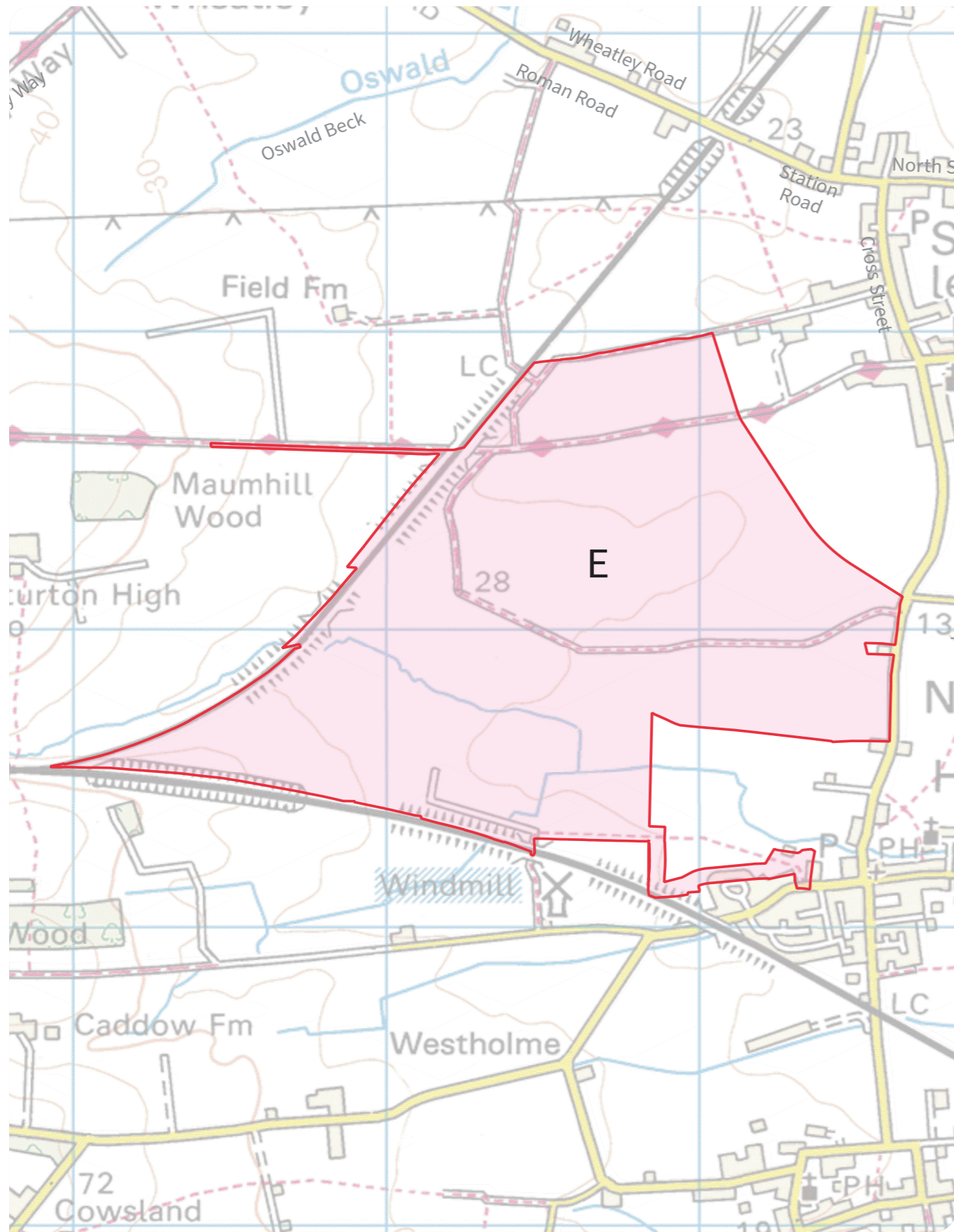


### Area D: Land Adjacent to the River Trent

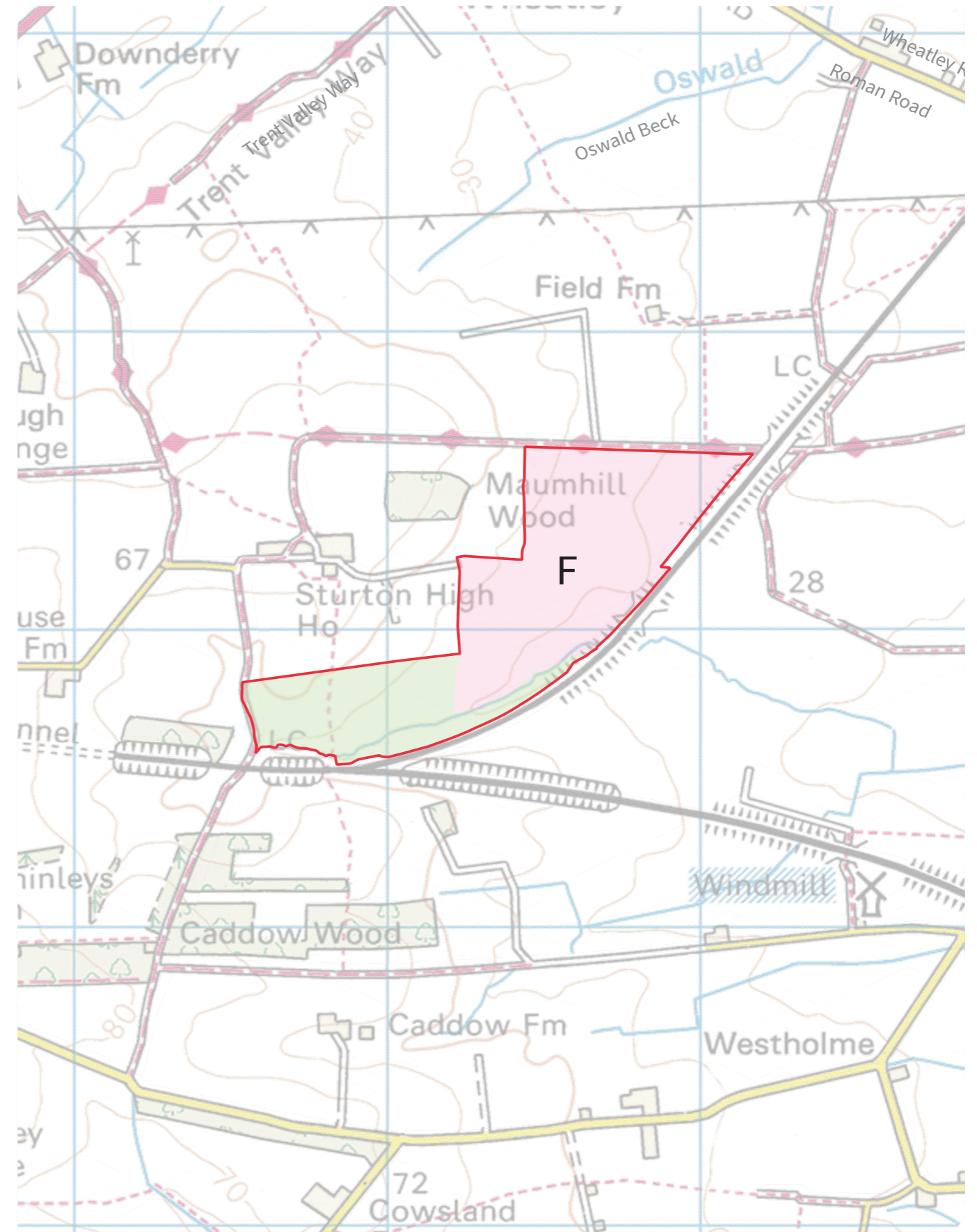




### Area E: Land to the West of Leverton Road

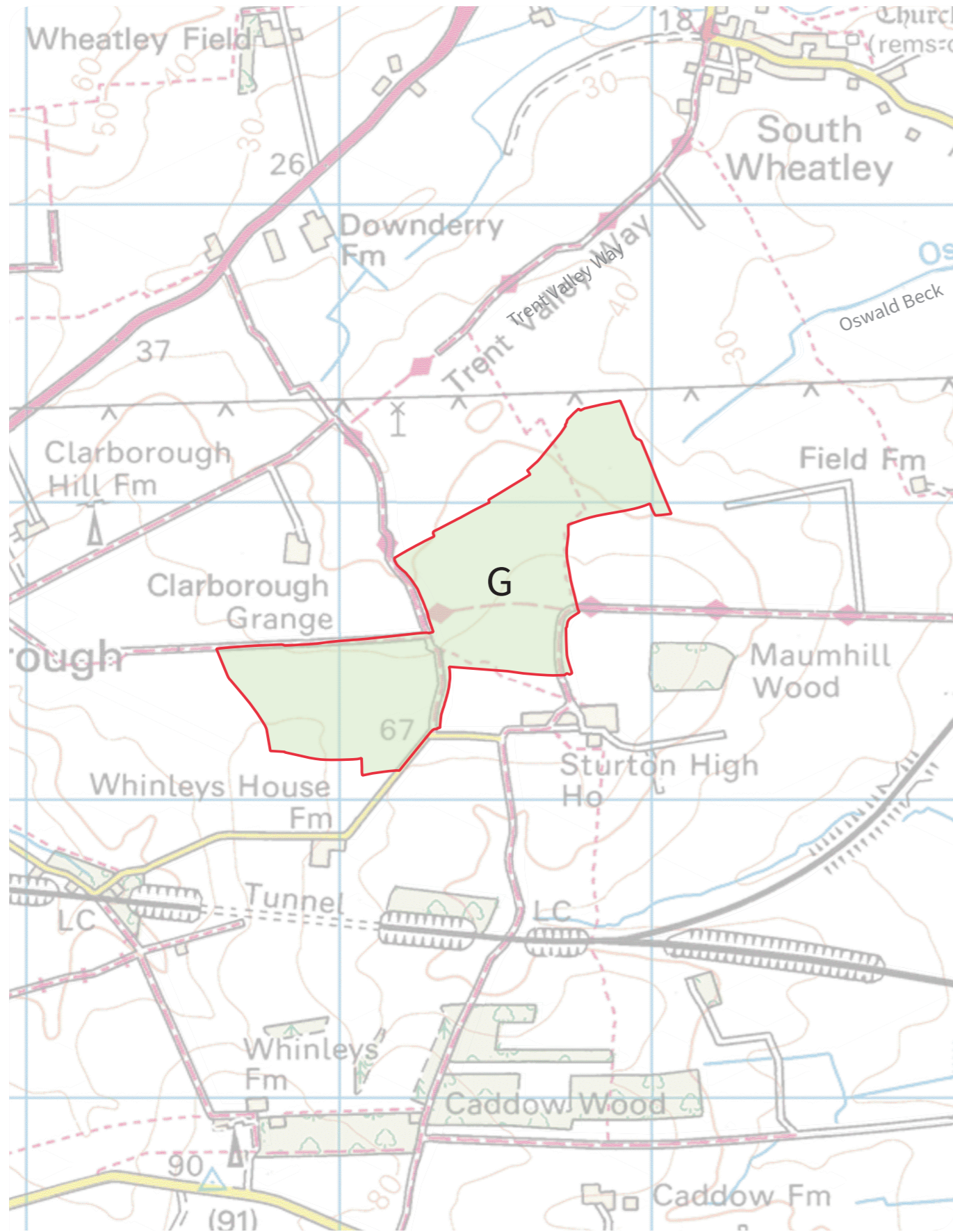


### Area F: Land to the South of High House Road

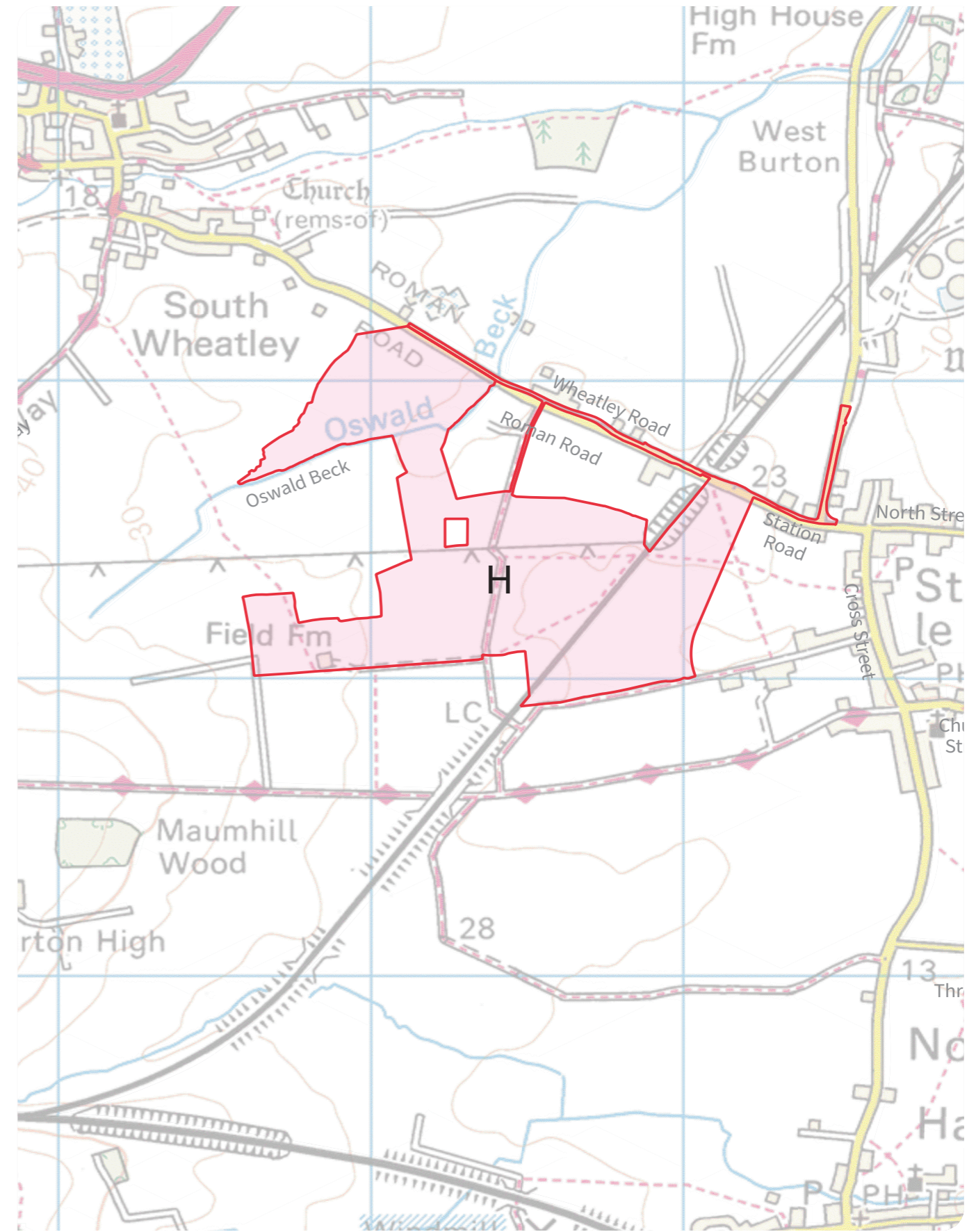




**Area G: Land to the West of High House Road**



**Area H: Land off Wheatley Road**





## Construction, operation and decommissioning

If consented, construction of Steeple Renewables Project is anticipated to begin in 2027, with the build expected to take approximately 24 months to complete. During this period, around 400 workers will be employed, including skilled labourers, technicians, and support staff. This will benefit the local economy by providing job opportunities and supporting local businesses.

### Construction

The construction phase will include:

**Preparation of the site:** Clearing vegetation where necessary, and installing drainage to prepare for infrastructure installation.

**Solar PV and battery installation:** Mounting solar panels, installing inverters, and constructing battery energy storage systems (BESS).

**Cabling and grid connection:** Laying underground cables and connecting them to the substation at the nearby West Burton Power Station. This involves using efficient methods such as cable ploughing and horizontal directional drilling (HDD) for minimal disruption.

**Fencing and security:** Erecting fencing around the site to ensure safety during construction and operation.

**Temporary construction compounds:** Setting up facilities for workers, including offices, welfare units, and equipment storage areas.

### Operation

During the operational phase, Steeple Renewables Project will run with minimal disruption to the local community. Key activities will include:

**Maintenance and monitoring:** Routine maintenance will ensure the efficient performance of the solar panels and battery systems. This will involve the periodic replacement of components, cleaning of panels, and checks on electrical systems.

**Environmental management:** Regular environmental checks will be carried out to monitor the success of newly planted vegetation and biodiversity enhancements. Maintenance of local vegetation and amenity areas will ensure they remain in good condition.

**Safety and security:** To ensure the safety and security of the site, security fencing and perimeter CCTV cameras will be installed around the solar panel areas. Regular security checks will also be conducted to safeguard the infrastructure and surrounding environment.

With these measures, the site will operate efficiently while continuing to integrate with its surroundings.

### Decommissioning

At the end of its operational life, after 40 years, Steeple Renewables Project will be responsibly decommissioned. This process will involve:

**Equipment removal:** Solar panels, batteries, and infrastructure will be dismantled and recycled where feasible.

**Recycling:** Materials such as silicon, glass, and metals will be recovered through certified recycling centres.

**Land restoration:** The site will be returned to its original state or suitable for agreed-upon uses.

A Decommissioning Plan, prepared as part of the DCO application, will ensure the process is sustainable and environmentally responsible.

Collaboration with the landowner and stakeholders will guide effective restoration.

## Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) – Work so far

### What is the EIA and why is it important?

The EIA is a systematic process designed to identify, predict, and assess potential environmental effects arising from the proposed Steeple Renewables Project. Its purpose is to ensure that environmental factors are thoroughly considered during project design and decision-making, minimising negative impacts and maximising benefits where possible.

### EIA Scoping and progress to date

The EIA Scoping Report was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) in April 2024, with the Scoping Response received in June 2024. These documents identified the topics requiring detailed assessment, which have been shaped by consultation, on-site investigations, and stakeholder engagement. As such, the topics listed in the table below are being thoroughly assessed as part of the EIA with more information found in the relevant PEIR chapter.

### Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)

The PEIR serves as a detailed early assessment of the project. It includes findings from 18 months of studies and fieldwork. The PEIR has also been informed by Scoping feedback and ongoing discussions with consultees.

Most potential impacts can be avoided or minimised through project design, mitigation measures, and best practice during construction, operation and decommissioning. Some localised significant effects are anticipated, particularly related to landscape and visual amenity, as is typical for developments of this nature. Efforts to reduce these effects are ongoing.

The PEIR findings will guide the final Environmental Statement (ES) based on the definitive layout and design.

### Assessment topics and PEIR Chapters

Assessment Category	PEIR Chapter
Introduction	Chapter 1
EIA Methodology and Public Consultation	Chapter 2
Site Description, Site Selection and Iterative Design Process	Chapter 3
The Proposed Development	Chapter 4
Planning Policy	Chapter 5
Landscape and Visual Impact and Residential Amenity	Chapter 6
Ecology and Biodiversity	Chapter 7
Hydrology, Hydrogeology, Flood Risk and Drainage	Chapter 8
Cultural Heritage	Chapter 9
Socioeconomics	Chapter 10
Noise	Chapter 11
Climate Change	Chapter 12
Transport and Access	Chapter 13
Air Quality	Chapter 14
Land Use and Agriculture	Chapter 15
Glint and Glare	Chapter 16
Miscellaneous Issues	Chapter 17
Summary	Chapter 18
Glossary	Chapter 18

## Ecology and Biodiversity

The ecological impact of Steeple Renewables Project site has been assessed through extensive surveys, ensuring any potential impacts are identified and appropriately mitigated. Our approach prioritises the protection and enhancement of local biodiversity.

### Site Characteristics

The site comprises:



Large arable fields bordered by hedgerows and individual trees.



Water features, including ditches, drains, ponds, and other waterbodies.



Habitats including small woodland blocks, grassland pasture fields, and agricultural buildings.

### Biodiversity Impacts

A range of ecological surveys has been conducted to assess the potential impact of the project. The species and habitats surveyed include:



**Birds:** Skylark, barn owl, and over wintering birds.



**Amphibians & Reptiles:** Great crested newts, common toad, and reptiles.



**Mammals:** Bats, badgers, otter, and water vole.



**Other Species:** Aquatic and terrestrial invertebrates, fish, and dormouse.

The surveys found that most species are unlikely to experience adverse effects due to the project. Mitigation measures and habitat enhancements will ensure neutral or beneficial impacts for most species. However, some adverse effects are anticipated for skylark, which will be addressed through targeted mitigation strategies.

The project will deliver a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain, exceeding regulatory requirements, by enhancing habitats and supporting local wildlife populations.



## Ecological mitigation and enhancement measures

To minimise impacts and enhance biodiversity, the project will include the following measures:

- Within the proposed solar areas, priority habitats (such as hedgerows, trees, arable field margins, woodland, watercourses, ponds and scrub) will be retained and incorporated into semi-natural habitat buffers. This will retain habitat for protected / notable species and ensure retention of habitat connectivity through the site and the local landscape.
- Areas for solar panels will be converted to grassland, with field margins enhanced with wildflowers to boost biodiversity.
- The area near the Clarborough Tunnel define will remain undeveloped and enhanced as species-rich grassland to complement the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and improve ecological connectivity.



### Wildlife safeguards

- Trees and buildings suitable for bats and barn owls will be retained.
- Main badger setts will be protected within no-disturbance buffer zones.
- Mammal gaps in security fencing will allow free movement of wildlife like badgers.
- Sensitive habitats will be fenced off during construction to prevent damage.
- Directional drilling for cables will protect hedgerows and watercourses.



### Construction and operational measures

- Clear-span crossings will be used for ditches and drains to avoid habitat damage.
- A lighting strategy will minimize impact on wildlife.
- Pollution, dust, and timing of works will be carefully managed to reduce disturbance.
- Special care, such as vegetation clearance outside bird nesting periods and precautions for reptiles, will prevent harm.
- Protected species licenses will be obtained where necessary (e.g., for bats, badgers, or great crested newts).



### Enhancement measures

- Creation of new habitats, such as wildflower grassland, hedgerows, and ponds, in designated biodiversity areas.
- Filling gaps in hedgerows and planting diverse vegetation to improve habitat quality.
- Improved management of retained habitats (e.g., grasslands, hedgerows, woodlands) to benefit species like dormice and birds.
- Installation of wildlife features like bat and bird boxes.

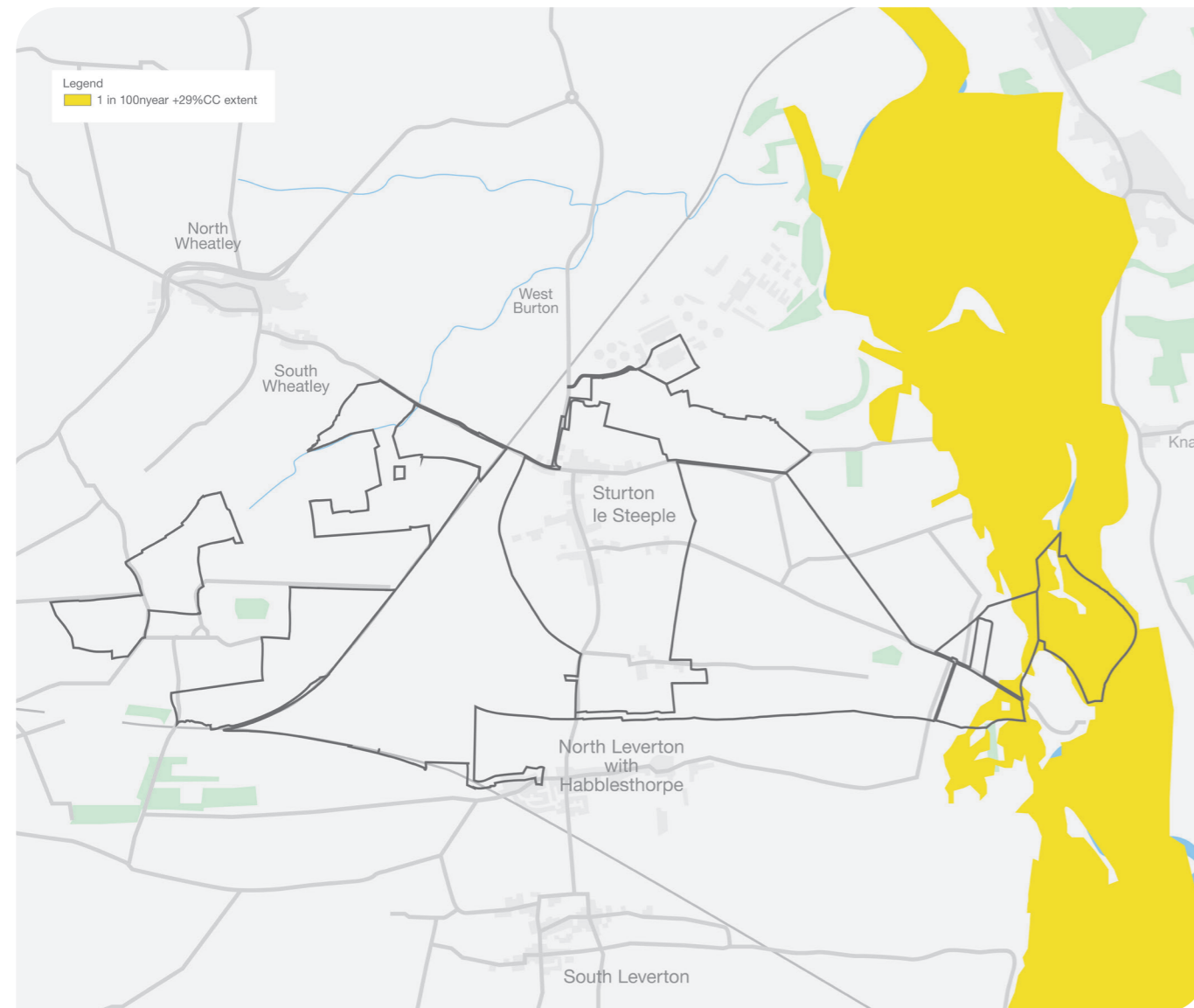


## Water and Flood Risk

As part of the EIA work, we have been undertaking a number of surveys and assessments to understand how the proposals will impact local drainage, flooding and watercourses.

However, this map does not consider the flood defences along the River Trent, which significantly reduce the flood risk in the area. We also need to consider other sources of flooding. The Environment Agency's map shows that some parts of the site are at medium or high risk of surface water flooding, especially along ditches, watercourses, and land east of the Catchwater Drain.

Our design will consider the 1 in 100-year flood event plus an agreed increase due to climate change, taking into account the existing defences as agreed with the Environment Agency (EA). The flood outline for this scenario is shown in yellow on the below map.



## Proposed mitigation measures

All our proposed mitigation has been discussed with the Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authority and Internal Drainage Board.

We are proposing a number of mitigation measures to limit the project's impact on flooding within Sturton-le-Steeple. These measures include:

- All infrastructure is being proposed outside of areas of the site that are at risk of a 1-in-100-year flood event, even when we consider climate change. Only the biodiversity area will be located within this extent.
- All sensitive infrastructure will be kept out of the areas shown to be at medium or high risk of surface water flooding.
- Appropriate development-free easements will be maintained either side of the existing watercourses, as agreed with the Lead Local Flood Authority and Internal Drainage Board. Any new watercourse crossings will ensure flows are not restricted.
- During the construction phase, a temporary drainage strategy will be installed to control runoff and ensure treatment of pollutants and sediment. Measures will be included in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to mitigate against release of pollutants / sediment during the construction phase.
- Rainwater from the solar panels will soak into the ground or flow into nearby streams, much like on farmland. The panels are spaced to prevent pooling, and grass planted beneath them will reduce erosion and absorb water. Regular checks will ensure the grass stays healthy. Features like filter trenches and swales near key areas will also help manage runoff and protect the land.

### Helping to reduce flooding in Sturton-le-Steeple

We are aware of recent flooding incidents in the centre of Sturton-le-Steeple, as part of our work we have inspected local watercourses and spoken with residents - although these incidents do not directly affect the development area, we have taken them into account.

Outside of the measures we are proposing to mitigate the potential impacts of Steeple Renewables Project we are proposing measures to help reduce flooding overall within Sturton-le-Steeple.

In response to concerns raised by local residents, the project includes measures to help reduce flooding in Sturton-le-Steeple, even though it's not required by policy. The flooding is mainly caused by heavy rainfall when the ground is already saturated, leading to water flowing overland to the west of the village. While the development itself won't worsen the flooding, it offers an opportunity to provide an improvement.

Two large basins are planned to the west of the village, designed to store rainwater and reduce flooding. These basins will cover over 5,000 square meters of land and can hold more than 4,000 cubic meters of water. The water will be released gradually into the local ditches at a safe, controlled rate, ensuring that it doesn't add to the flooding, especially during heavy rain. While the basins won't solve all the flooding problems, they will make a positive difference to the current situation.



## Landscape and visual

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) evaluates the potential effects of the project on the surrounding landscape and visual receptors, including:

- Landscape Designations: Examination of areas with special landscape protection status.
- Landscape Features: Analysis of local features such as hedgerows, trees, and open fields.
- Landscape Character: Assessment of how the development may alter the existing character of the landscape.
- Visual Effects: Consideration of views from individual properties, settlements, public rights of way (PROW), roads, and railways.

While some localised significant effects on the landscape and visual amenity are anticipated—particularly during construction—these impacts are typical for developments of this nature. We are working to minimise these through careful design and mitigation strategies.



### Mitigation Measures

To reduce impacts, we propose:

- Allowing existing hedgerows to grow to 3 metres and filling in gaps with native plants.
- Adding native trees to existing hedgerows at regular intervals.
- Planting new, species-rich hedgerows near footpaths and boundaries, designed to blend with the local landscape.
- Strengthening the Trent Valley Way by improving hedgerows and verges.
- Creating species-rich grasslands for grazing and improving existing grasslands and verges.
- Planting new orchards and maintaining existing ones to support local wildlife.
- Converting some cropland into grassland for Skylark breeding.
- Enhancing watercourses and creating wetlands and water meadows.
- Protecting and improving existing woodlands and scrub, and planting new woodlands and small copses.
- Adding new footpaths and pedestrian bridges to connect green spaces.
- Creating new allotments near residential areas for easy access.



### Traffic and Access

Access to the site will primarily use existing road networks, including those near Sturton-le-Steeple. Traffic management plans will ensure the safe and efficient delivery of materials and equipment while minimising disruption to the local community. These plans will also consider the protection of environmentally sensitive areas, and designated access routes will avoid such zones. Each area of the site will have its own access arrangements tailored to local conditions. There will be minimal disruption to the local network during the operational period of the project.



### Heritage

The heritage assessment considers the potential effects of the development on cultural and historical assets in the area, including listed buildings, scheduled monuments, and other heritage features.

**Findings:** The assessment has identified no direct impacts on designated heritage assets. However, indirect effects, such as changes to the setting of nearby heritage sites, will be carefully managed.

#### Heritage Mitigation Measures

To preserve local heritage, we propose:

- Buffer zones to protect the visual setting of heritage assets.
- Using appropriate materials and layouts to minimise intrusion on historic landscapes.
- Ongoing consultation with heritage experts and stakeholders to refine mitigation strategies.



### Agricultural Land Classification (ALC)

A provisional Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey of the Site was undertaken between July and September 2024. The provisional ALC results of the survey area demonstrated that:

- 6% of the Site is provisionally categorised as Grade 1 (BMV) land;
- 21% of the Site is provisionally categorised as Grade 2 (BMV) land;
- 61% of the Site is provisionally categorised as Grade 3a (BMV) land; and
- The remainder (12%) of the Site is provisionally categorised as Grade 3b (non-BMV land);
- Further detailed ALC work is being performed on the Site, which will be presented at ES stage.

The Site covers an area of land which is greater than the areas for which solar panels, energy storage, and ancillary equipment are proposed. Further, the Site comprises biodiversity net gain areas which have not been surveyed (as no infrastructure comprising the Proposed Development will be located on this land).





## Community benefits and Local Electricity Discount Scheme (LEDS)

If consented, Steeple Renewables Project is proposed to deliver a tailored community benefits package of £320,000 a year, equating to approximately £13 million over its 40-year lifetime. As part of this statutory consultation, we continue to seek feedback on how people would best like community benefits to be delivered by Steeple Renewables Project, once it's operational.

RES is committed to working directly with the communities that host its renewable energy projects to understand how they can best support the local area and help to secure meaningful and long-term economic, social and environmental benefits. This approach helps to tailor a package of benefits that is aligned with the local communities' priorities, and could for instance, provided funding for projects that sit outside the parameters of a traditional, application-based fund.

Some examples of ways we've worked with other communities include the delivery of:

- Business start-up initiatives
- Road safety initiatives
- Apprenticeships/educational schemes
- Improvements to village halls
- Improved broadband provision
- Improvements to local footpaths and/or signage

It might be that RES' unique Local Electricity Discount Scheme – known as LEDS – is a more preferable way to distribute the community benefit funding that will become available.

Further information about the scheme can be found below including an indicative eligible area and discount amount per property to illustrate what LEDS could look like if delivered by Steeple Renewables Project. We have included questions on this indicative scenario in our feedback form and welcome your views.

Please note: The provision of community benefits as part of Steeple Renewables Project is not treated as a material consideration in the DCO application. As such, it will not influence the recommendation of the Planning Inspectorate or the decision of the Secretary of State regarding consent for the project.

### What is LEDS?

Our unique Local Electricity Discount Scheme (LEDS) has been operating successfully since it was launched in 2013.

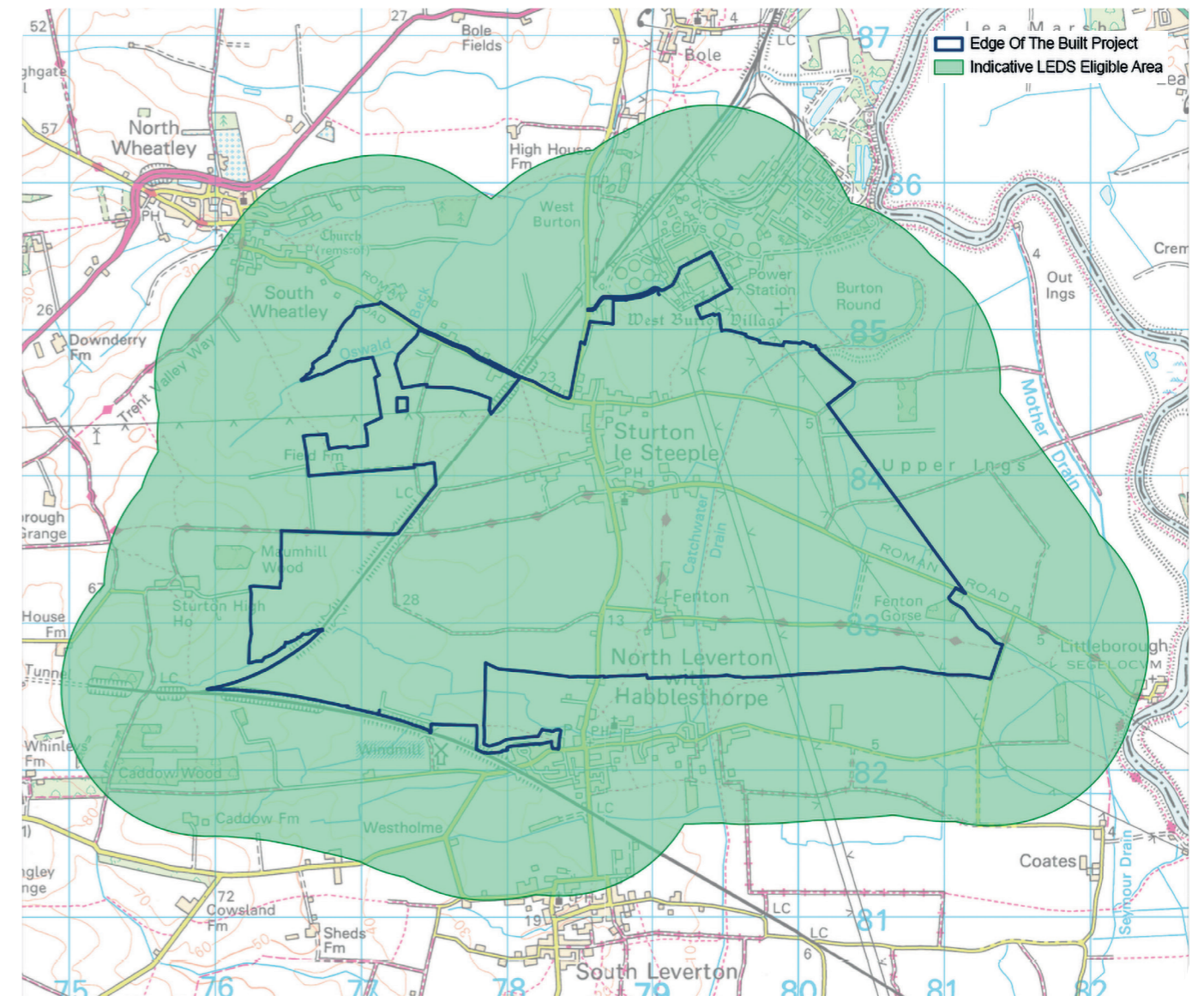
- RES was the first developer to design such a scheme, following consultation with the communities around its wind farm projects, where discounts on electricity bills came up as a top priority.
- On participating projects, LEDS offers an annual discount to the closest properties\* (ie within a defined eligible area).
- LEDS has been purposefully designed to be inclusive, with a simple methodology that is easy to understand.
- LEDS can be administered through any supplier; the money is simply credited to a household or business' electricity account. Participation in the scheme is voluntary and is not linked to any particular supplier or tariff.
- At a time of surging energy prices LEDS delivers direct and tangible benefits to local communities, while also supporting home grown, zero carbon electricity generation.

\*The scheme would be open to all residential, business and community buildings with an electricity meter (including schools, places of worship and village halls) within the defined eligible area.

### Indicative LEDS scenario for Steeple Renewables Project

The LEDS proposal illustrated below would offer all properties within the shaded eligible area a minimum discount of £350\* on their electricity bills, every year for the lifetime of the project. This is based on an indicative scenario of 400MW of installed solar capacity and an eligible area extending 1km from the edge of the 'built' project. If LEDS is something that you are interested in as a potential part of a tailored community benefits package at Steeple Renewables Project, please let us know.

\*The final LEDS discount per property, and extent of the eligible area, will be determined following consultation with the local community and will depend on the installed capacity of the final constructed project.





## Project Milestones

- **October – December 2023**  
 Early stage (non-statutory) consultation
- **Winter/Spring 2024**  
 Review of all community feedback and develop initial design
- **Spring 2024**  
 Ongoing Environmental Impact Assessment and design refinement
- **Autumn/Winter 2024**  
 Development of Statement of Community Consultation and formal consultation with local authorities
- **January – March 2025**  
 Statutory public consultation on our progressed proposals and the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)
- **Spring 2025**  
 Review all consultation feedback and assessments and refine the design
- **Summer 2025**  
 Development Consent Order (DCO) application submitted
- **2026**  
 Examination of the Development Consent Order application
- **Late 2026**  
 Determination of Development Consent Order application by Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero

## How we'll use your feedback and next steps

Your feedback is an essential part of shaping the Steeple Renewables Project. Following the statutory consultation, we will carefully review all the comments and insights provided by local communities, stakeholders, and statutory bodies. This feedback will help us:

- Refine the proposals
- Address concerns
- Complete the Environmental Statement (ES)
- Submit a well-informed Development Consent Order (DCO) application

A Consultation Report will be submitted as part of the DCO application, summarising the feedback received and detailing how it influenced the final project design.



**Your input plays a critical role in shaping the future of this renewable energy initiative. Thank you for engaging in this consultation and helping to create a project that benefits both the community and the environment.**

## How to get involved!

We hope that you will take the opportunity to learn more about Steeple Renewables Project and help shape the proposals. The deadline for responses is **11:59pm on Monday 03 March 2025**.

### Here is how you can get involved:

**Visit our website:** View our proposals, interactive maps, virtual exhibition and provide us with your feedback by visiting our consultation website at [www.steeplerenewablesproject.co.uk](http://www.steeplerenewablesproject.co.uk)


**Attend our events:** Come along to one of our in-person consultation events. Members of the project team will be on hand to discuss the proposals with you and answer questions. These events are detailed below.

**Contact us:** If you have any questions, suggestions, or would like to provide feedback on our proposals, our communications team is here to assist you.

### You can reach us via:

 **0115 718 2070**

 **info@steeplerenewablesproject.co.uk**

 **FREEPOST Steeple Renewables Project**

### Unable to get online?

If you are unable to access the internet and unable to attend one of our in-person events, you can contact the Freephone line on **0115 718 2070**. A member of our team will be happy to arrange for copies of the consultation materials and printed feedback form to be sent in the post. If you would like this document in large print, audio or braille, please let us know.

## Consultation events

We hope that you will be able to attend one of the following events to learn more about Steeple Renewables Project, speak with the project team and share your thoughts:

Date	Location or join our webinar	Time
<b>Saturday 01 February 2025</b>	Sturton Hall and Conference Centre, Brickings Way Sturton-le-Steeple DN22 9HY	10:00 - 15:00
<b>Wednesday 05 February 2025</b>	Memorial Institute, South Leverton Town St, South Leverton, Retford DN22 0BT	14:00 - 19:00
<b>Wednesday 12 February 2025</b>	Online webinar – you can register to attend via the project website at <a href="http://www.steeplerenewablesproject.co.uk">www.steeplerenewablesproject.co.uk</a>	18:30 - 20:00
<b>Wednesday 19 February 2025</b>	Sturton Hall and Conference Centre, Brickings Way Sturton-le-Steeple DN22 9HY	14:00 - 19:00

## Deposit locations

A physical copy of the consultation documents, along with feedback forms and Freepost envelopes, will be available to view throughout the consultation period at the deposit locations detailed below. A hard copy of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report can be requested for a charge £0.35 per page to cover printing and posting costs.

Location	Opening times
Retford Library 17 Churchgate, Retford DN22 6PE	<b>Mon:</b> 9AM - 6PM, <b>Tue:</b> 9AM - 6PM, <b>Wed:</b> 9AM - 6PM, <b>Thu:</b> 9AM - 6PM, <b>Fri:</b> 9AM - 6PM, <b>Sat:</b> 9AM - 3:30PM, <b>Sun:</b> Closed
Gainsborough Library Cobden St, Gainsborough DN21 2NG	<b>Mon:</b> 9AM - 5PM, <b>Tue:</b> 9AM - 5PM, <b>Wed:</b> 9AM - 5PM, <b>Thu:</b> 9AM - 6PM, <b>Fri:</b> 9AM - 6PM, <b>Sat:</b> 9AM - 1PM, <b>Sun:</b> Closed

Materials are also available for viewing and collection at Sturton Hall and Conference Centre, Brickings Way, Sturton-le-Steeple, DN22 9HY. However, please be aware that the venue does not have regular opening hours.





**POWER  
FOR  
GOOD**



## Get in touch

Contact a member of the team for any enquiries regarding the project

[steplerenewablesproject.co.uk](http://steplerenewablesproject.co.uk)

[info@steplerenewablesproject.co.uk](mailto:info@steplerenewablesproject.co.uk)

0115 718 2070

**FREEPOST Steeple Renewables Project**

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**res**

[www.res-group.com](http://www.res-group.com)