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Sent: 03 February 2025 15:53
To: Laura Ashton
Cc: Planning Folder New
Subject: 24/00632/FUL | Highway Verge Hinckley Road / Desford Road Enderby
Attachments: Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan.pdf; Mitigation Area A.png; Mitigation Area C.png; Mitigation Area D Part 1.png; Mitigation Area E Part 1.png; Mitigation Area B.png; Mitigation Area D Part 2.png; Mitigation Area E Part 2.png

Dear Laura,

24/00632/FUL | Installation of an underground grid connection cable within the highway verge to connect Enderby Substation (Cross-boundary with Blaby District Council) | Highway Verge Hinckley Road / Desford Road Enderby

Archaeological considerations

We have been consulted by Blaby District Council (24/0575/FUL) following the submission by the applicant of an Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (OCEMP), please see attached. We have submitted comments to Blaby, outlining our recommendation for a post-determination archaeological mitigation programme of works. I am re-sending the same comments in relation to the corresponding Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council planning application, 24/00632/FUL.

We recommend that you advise the applicant of the following archaeological requirements, for a phased programme of works to be outlined within an Archaeological Mitigation Plan (AMP), with each phase further detailed through the submission of individual Written Schemes of Investigation (WSIs). This phased programme should consist of an initial stage of trial trenching to define the scope of subsequent Strip, Plan and Record areas, which will target sections of the cable route containing a heightened archaeological potential.

Consideration of the submitted desk-based assessment (submitted 22/10/2024) and the Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment (HER) identifies five zones across the application area where there is a known potential for significant Iron Age and Roman buried remains to be present. In addition to the known areas of archaeological interest, the potential for further significant buried remains within the remainder of the route cannot currently be confidently anticipated, as much of this landscape has not been subject to prior archaeological investigation. The AMP should therefore outline an initial phase of exploratory trial trenching to evaluate the potential for archaeological remains beyond those areas currently identified, in order to define the full extent and character of the subsequent archaeological mitigation programme.

Any buried remains located within the footprint of the cable trench have the potential to be impacted by the proposals, the extent of disturbance would depend on whether the cable trench is located within the road or within the verges/agricultural fields. The submitted Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (OCEMP) states that further details, such as the confirmed route and a definitive methodology for installing the cable, is anticipated to be required to satisfy a planning condition. Given the nature of the proposals, the known archaeological resource and the likely previous disturbance from construction works along the route (roads and associated services), we are satisfied that the archaeological issues can be readily managed via a conditioned programme of archaeological works. In the absence of the further information a detailed CEMP would provide, we would recommend that provision be made available for a precautionary level of archaeological mitigation, outlined within a submitted AMP.

Please see the attached plans which illustrate the areas of known archaeological potential where a Strip, Plan and Record excavation should be undertaken; between Hill Farm solar farm and the A47 (Mitigation Area A); intersection of Dan's Lane/A47 (Mitigation Area B); intersection of the A47 within the Desford Cross Roads area (Mitigation Area C); area adjacent to Narborough Wood Cottage (Mitigation Area D); section of the route at Billsdon's Hollow

(Mitigation Area E). The applicant may also choose to undertake further exploratory trial trenching within these areas to refine the extent of the Strip, Plan and Record excavations.

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Section 16, paragraph 207, the development area is of archaeological interest and also has the potential for further unidentified archaeological deposits. Based upon the available information, it is anticipated that these remains whilst significant and warranting further archaeological mitigation prior to the impact of development, are not of such importance to represent an obstacle to the determination of the application (NPPF paragraph 208).

NPPF paragraph 218, states that Local Planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact of development, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible.

In that context it is recommended that the current application is approved subject to conditions for an appropriate programme of archaeological mitigation, including an initial phase of exploratory trial trenching, followed, as necessary by intrusive and non-intrusive investigation and recording. The Historic & Natural Environment Team (HNET) will provide a formal Brief for the latter work at the applicant's request.

If planning permission is granted the applicant must obtain a suitable AMP covering both phases of archaeological investigation from an organisation acceptable to the planning authority. The AMP must be submitted to the planning authority and HNET, as archaeological advisors to your authority, for approval before the start of development. They should comply with the above mentioned Brief, and with relevant Chartered Institute for Archaeologists "Standards" and "Code of Practice". It should include a suitable indication of arrangements for the implementation of the archaeological work, and the proposed timetable for the development.

We therefore recommend that any planning permission be granted subject to the following planning conditions (informed by paragraph 37 of Historic England's Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment GPA 2), to safeguard any important archaeological remains potentially present:

1. *No demolition/development shall take place/commence until the programme of archaeological mitigation has been defined within an Archaeological Mitigation Plan (AMP), which has been [submitted to and] approved by the local planning authority in writing. For land that is included within the AMP, no demolition/development shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed programme. The AMP will make provision for two fieldwork stages and their associated post-excavation requirements:*

- *an initial phase of archaeological trial trenching and;*
- *a subsequent stage of archaeological investigation and recording of significant archaeological remains.*

Reason: To ensure satisfactory programme of archaeological mitigation and to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

2. *Prior to the commencement of each stage of the AMP (condition 1 above), a written scheme of investigation (WSI), will be [submitted to and] approved by the local planning authority in writing. The WSI will define the required archaeological work, and will include a statement of significance and research objectives, and*

- *The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works*
- *The programme for post-investigation assessment and subsequent analysis, publication & dissemination and deposition of resulting material. This part of the condition shall not be discharged until these elements have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI*

Reason: To ensure each stage of the archaeological investigation is undertaken in accordance with best practice, including its investigation, recording, dissemination and archiving

The AMP and subsequent WSIs must be prepared by an archaeological contractor acceptable to the Planning Authority. To demonstrate that the implementation of the AMP/WSIs has been secured the applicant must provide a signed contract or similar legal agreement between themselves and their approved archaeological contractor.

The Historic and Natural Environment Team, as advisors to the planning authority, will monitor the archaeological work, to ensure that the necessary programme of archaeological work is undertaken to the satisfaction of the planning authority.

Please will you ensure a copy of the Decision Notice is sent to us in due course, to enable us to continue to monitor and safeguard the archaeology of this site. Should you or the applicant have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

William

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Project: Clump Farm Solar Farm

**Document Title: Outline Construction
Environmental Management Plan
(OCEMP)**

Revision Record						
REV	Description	Date Issued	Originated By	Checked By	Approved By	
					Project Manager	Head of Projects
A	For Planning	06/01/25	AGY	CMY	CMY	SDN

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1. Introduction

1.1. Overview

Clump Farm Solar Limited (the Applicant) applied for planning permission in July 2024 for the installation of an underground grid connection cable (the Proposed Development) between the consented Hill Farm Solar Farm (Blaby District Council ref. 21/1386/FUL) and Clump Farm Solar Farm (Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council ref. 21/01242/FUL) to Enderby Substation, Desford Road, Enderby, Leicestershire. The Proposed Development is essential infrastructure required to facilitate the connection of these two consented renewable energy developments to the National Grid.

The Proposed Development comprises the construction of approximately 7 km underground cable route from the consented solar farms, which crosses agricultural fields adjacent to Hill Farm Solar Farm and then follows the A47 (Hinckley Road and Leicester Road) and the B582 (Desford Road) to the connection point at Enderby Substation.

As the Proposed Development crosses two local authority boundaries, identical planning applications were submitted to Blaby District Council and Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, under the following planning application references:

- Blaby District Council (ref. 24/0575/FUL); and
- Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (ref. 24/00632/FUL).

As the exact location of the cable route will not be known until detailed design is undertaken, the entirety of the planning application boundary has been assessed. The full width of the planning application would not be utilised as the cable trench will be approximately 0.92 meter (m) wide. With the exception of the ~300 m of agricultural land, the intention is to install the cable route within the public highway however, sections of highway verge have been included in the planning application boundary for flexibility.

1.2. Purpose of this Document

This Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (OCEMP) has been prepared to detail good practice methods for ensuring the management of environmental impacts likely to arise during the construction phase of the Proposed Development. It incorporates good practice methods, risk mitigation and monitoring.

This OCEMP sets out the minimum detail to be provided in the detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which is anticipated to be required to satisfy a planning condition, attached to any consent. This OCEMP intends to provide an outline structure for the detailed CEMP, however, is not exhaustive (i.e., other commitments may be included following receipt of planning conditions and detailed design).

Following consultation on the planning applications for the Proposed Development, further details on construction methodology was requested by the County Archaeologist. As such, detail on archaeology is provided in Section 4 of this OCEMP whereas other matters will be populated in the detailed CEMP, submitted to satisfy the relevant planning conditions.

If a planning condition for an Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) is proposed, the Applicant will ensure any information provided in the detail CEMP is consistent. Depending on the wording of planning conditions imposed, the single CEMP might be produced to cover the construction of the solar sites and the Proposed Development. If a single CEMP is produced, as a minimum, it will cover the detail outlined in this OCEMP.

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2. The Proposed Development

2.1. Components

The Proposed Development comprises an underground cable route within the public highway / verge and ~300m of agricultural land located between the consented Hill Farm Solar Farm and Clump Farm Solar Farm to the point of connection at Enderby Substation, Desford Road, Enderby, Leicestershire.

The cable will consist of copper conductors suitable for the design power rating, ducts, earthing wires, pilot/fibre optic media, marker tape, protective elements, joints etc, as specified by National Grid.

The cable route would be designed to accommodate 2 x 33kV circuits, enclosed within uPVC ducts and covered with sand for protection. The cable trench will be approximately 0.92 m wide. The depth will vary depending on location, however, will be approximately 1.1 m. Appendix A provides an indicative cross section of the cable route.

The only other infrastructure that forms part of the Proposed Development is a temporary access track within the ~300 m of agricultural land, utilised during construction. With an approximate 5 m width, the temporary access track will likely comprise of geotextile matting with stone laid on top. As the temporary access track will not require excavation, it will not impact on unknown archaeology, soil conditions etc. Any vehicles utilising the temporary access track will be akin to vehicles used for agriculture, which is the extant land use. As such, the small number of construction vehicles will not exacerbate compaction of soil and therefore, not impact unknown archaeology. The temporary access track will be removed following installation of the cable route.

The construction compounds / laydown areas associated with the consented Hill Farm Solar Farm and Clump Farm Solar Farm will be utilised during construction of the Proposed Development. Construction equipment be laid down within the temporary access track on the agricultural land for short periods of time, however, will be stored securely in the construction compounds associated with the solar farms overnight. As such, the Proposed Development does not include additional construction compounds.

Once construction has been completed, there will be no residual visual impact resulting from the development.

2.2. Cable Route Location

As the cable trench will be approximately 0.92 m wide, the full width of the planning application would not be utilised. With the exception of the ~300 m of agricultural land, the intention is to install the cable route within the public highway however, some sections of highway verge have been included in the planning application boundary for flexibility.

Locating the cable route within the public highway is subject to agreement with the Highways Authority via a Section 50 Licence¹, which will be required following detailed design. Detailed design will be undertaken by an Independent Connections Provider (ICP), appointed by the Applicant following consent.

¹ In accordance with the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991.

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Given the requirement for agreement with the Highways Authority to utilise the public highway, the highway verge has been included in the planning application boundary to allow for flexibility. The cable route might be required to be installed in the highway verge if the highway itself is not suitable (e.g., due to technical reasons presented by the Highways Authority). Given the above, at this stage of development, it is not possible to commit to avoiding the highway verges in its entirety.

However, the Applicant has taken steps to minimising impacts on the highway verge based on known information.

The Applicant has committed to avoiding the removal of trees and hedgerows through detailed design and installation techniques. As shown on the 'Proposed Cable Route Planning Boundary – Constraints' submitted with the Application(s), the highway verge includes trees and hedgerows. Where trees and hedgerows are present in the highway verge, the cable route is proposed to be installed in the public highway (subject to agreement with the Highway Authority) to minimise impacts on arboriculture.

Utilities data obtained suggests that the highway verge is constrained by existing utilities at certain points, see Appendix B. Given the congestion in the highway verge, this suggests that the cable route might need to be located within the highways itself however, this will be confirmed by the ICP during detailed design.

Given the volume of utilities already installed within the highway verge, the likelihood of encountering archaeological assets that have not already been disturbed is considered unlikely.

2.3. *Further Controls*

The exact location of the cable route will not be known until following detailed design and approval by the Highways Authority. However, it is anticipated that any forthcoming consent will include a planning condition requiring the LPAs to approve the detailed design, prior to commencement of construction.

As such, the LPAs retains control over the final location of the cable trench.

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3. Construction Method Statement

3.1. Overview

The cable would be installed in accordance with the approved installation procedure for all underground cables set out in National Grid's Company Directive relating to the Installation of Underground Cables; or as adopted at the time of installation.

The Proposed Development will be a narrow cut with the trench width of approximately 0.92 m.

It is envisaged that approximately three teams would work simultaneously across the cable route in order to complete the project as soon as possible, whilst also minimising disruption. The proposed construction works are anticipated to last between 25 - 45 weeks in total.

3.2. Primary Installation Method

The primary method for installing the cables will involve a trench excavation by stripping the surfacing and excavation to a depth of approximately 1.1 m and width of approximately 0.92 m.

A vehicle with low ground pressure tyres closely follows the excavator installing dust into the trench. Another vehicle with a bespoke trailer unit which lays the ducting will follow. Thereafter, sand will be installed to cover the ducting and marker boards installed. The trench is then backfilled with excavated material, to current ground level and then the surface restored to current use (e.g., highway, highway verge or agricultural land).

No personnel will be required to enter the trench.

3.3. Secondary Installation Method

There are a small number of hedgerows within the planning application boundary, primarily within the agricultural land and where it joins the A47. Should the cable route require to cross a hedgerow, this will be likely be installed via Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD).

The drilling rig and exit point will be positioned approximately 10 m from the hedgerow to minimise vehicles within proximity to hedgerows. The drilling rig and exit point will comprise of geotextile matting with stone laid on top and therefore not require excavation.

The HDD will bypass the hedgerows at a depth of approximately 5 m – 10 m and will have no effect on the roots of the hedgerows. The hedgerows will therefore be unaffected by the Proposed Development.

Utilising this construction method will ensure hedgerow habitats are not removed to facilitate the Proposed Development. If required, further details on HDD will be provided through the submission of a CEMP to be secured by planning condition.

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3.4. *Temporary Access Track*

The temporary access track will likely comprise of geotextile matting with stone laid on top and therefore not require excavation. The temporary access track will be approximately 5 m wide.

Any vehicles utilising the temporary access track will be akin to vehicles used for agriculture, which is the extant land use. In addition, vehicles with low ground pressure tyres will be utilised. The small number of construction vehicles will not exacerbate compaction of soil and therefore, not impact unknown archaeology or Root Protection Areas (RPAs).

The temporary access track will be removed following installation of the cable route.

3.5. *Construction Compounds / Laydown Areas*

The construction compounds / laydown areas associated with the consented Hill Farm Solar Farm and Clump Farm Solar Farm will be utilised during construction of the Proposed Development.

Construction equipment be laid down within the temporary access track on the agricultural land for short periods of time, however, will be stored securely in the construction compounds associated with the solar farms overnight. As such, these do not form part of these Applications.

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4. Construction Matters

4.1. Overview

Where relevant, the following section of the detailed CEMP will include details of:

- Hours of Work;
- Parking of Vehicles;
- Pedestrian Access;
- Temporary Construction Compound;
- Wheel Cleaning;
- Noise;
- Dust;
- Water Quality; and
- Biodiversity.

Given the comments received from the County Archaeologist, this section has been populated.

4.2. Archaeology

The consented solar farms were supported by Historical Environment Desk Based Assessments (DBA) and Geophysical surveys. These documents set out assessments of the potential effects of the solar farms on designated and non-designated heritage assets, including impacts on archaeology. The impacts were assessed as being acceptable.

A further Heritage DBA was undertaken for the Proposed Development, identifying archaeological potential. Remains associated with Iron Age and Roman period activity, recorded adjacent to the cable route, and with medieval and later agriculture, the remains of which are extensively noted across the landscape, are anticipated to be encountered within the cable trench.

It should be noted that subsequent development, including construction of public highway and Enderby Substation, is likely to have affected survival of archaeological remains across large parts of the planning application boundary (where the cable trench locations, when designed in detail, coincides with their footprints).

Excavation of trenches will be required for the laying of the cable, approximately 0.92 m wide. The exact location of the cable route will be confirmed following detailed design. It is anticipated that an open cut methodology would be used to install the majority of the cable route, with the exception of small areas of constraints where HDD might be used (e.g., hedgerows).

The impact is limited to a narrow open cut (approximately 0.92 m wide), primarily in the public highway or in areas of highway verge already disturbed by the installation of existing utilities. As such, it is proposed that the impacts upon the archaeological resource can be managed through a reactive programme (e.g., monitoring during works), secured via an appropriately worded planning condition.

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5. Community Engagement

It is the intention of the Applicant to work with the LPAs and the local community to programme the works to reduce the disruption and total duration of the works as much as possible. This will be done by identifying in the early stages, constraints in relation to community events or locations whereby specific works can be planned in order to mitigate any adverse impacts.

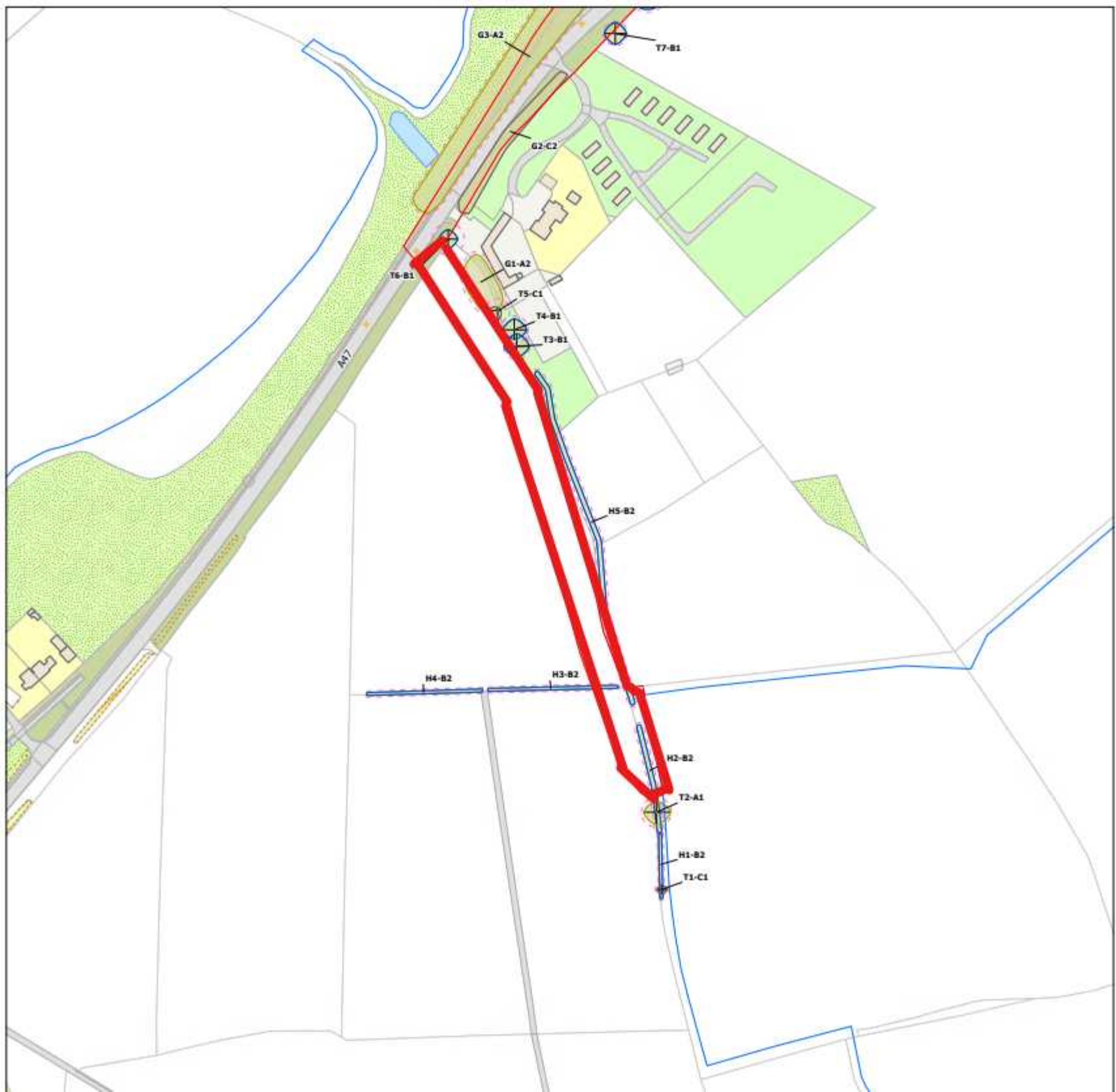
The CEMP will provide a mechanism to inform local residents and businesses that may be affected by the construction activities particularly the potential for temporary road closures or traffic management. Any changes to the CEMP will be clearly communicated in a timely manner.

6. Emergency Response Plan

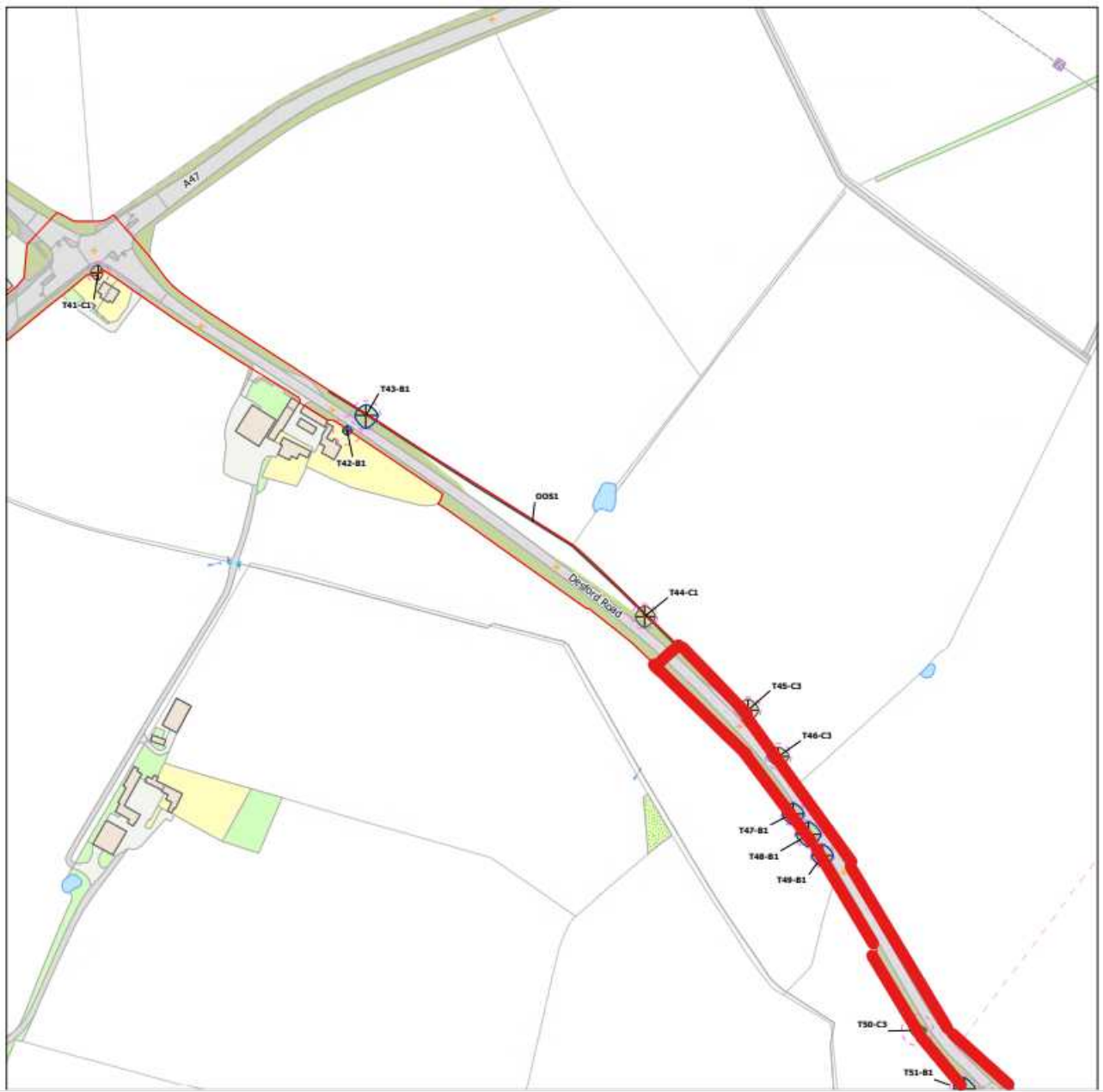
Emergency response procedures will be established to effectively manage any environmental incidents occurring onsite. The principal contractor will be responsible for implementing these procedures and ensuring that site personnel are familiar with them. The emergency procedures will contain relevant emergency phone numbers and contact numbers for key personnel.

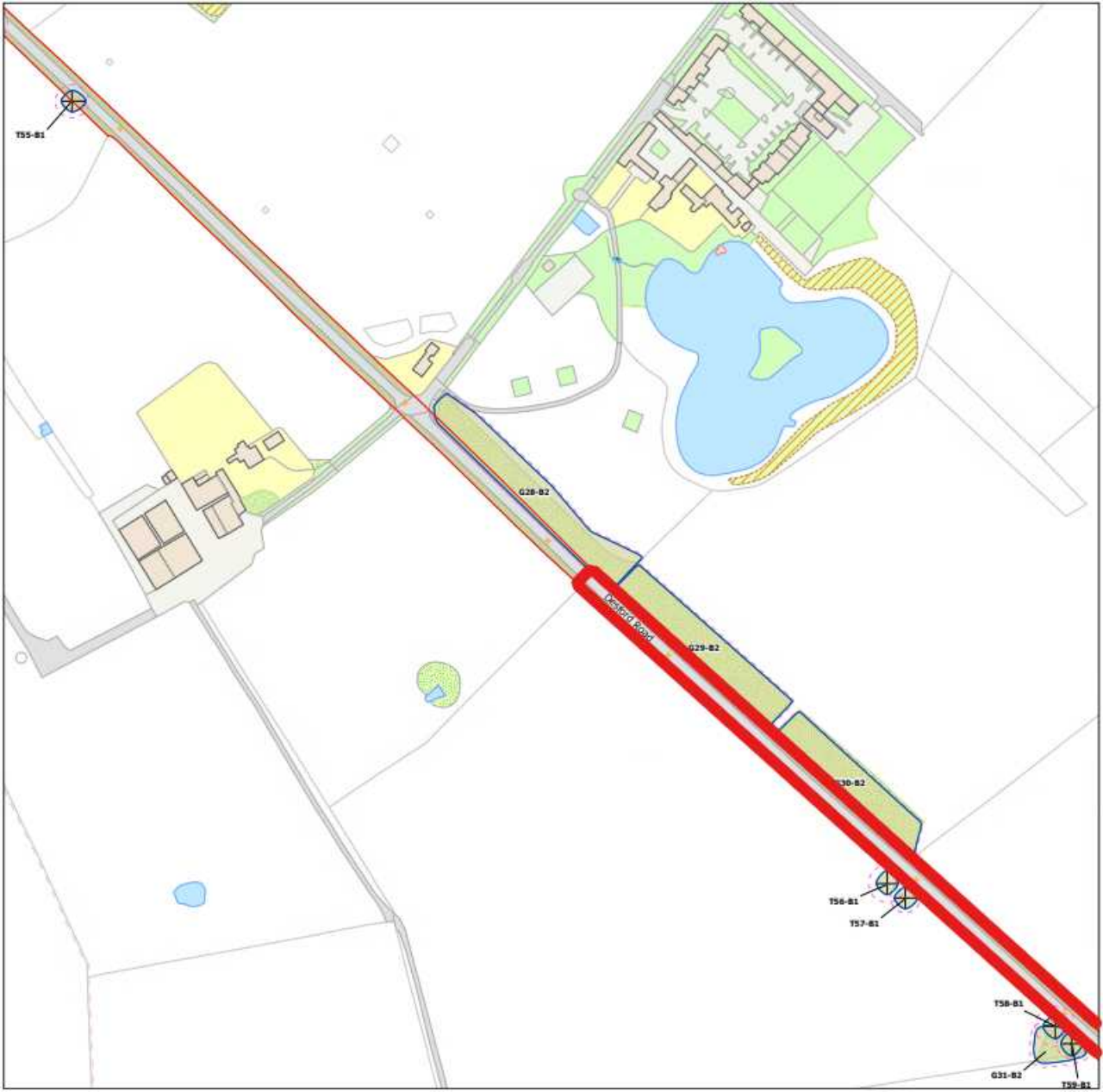
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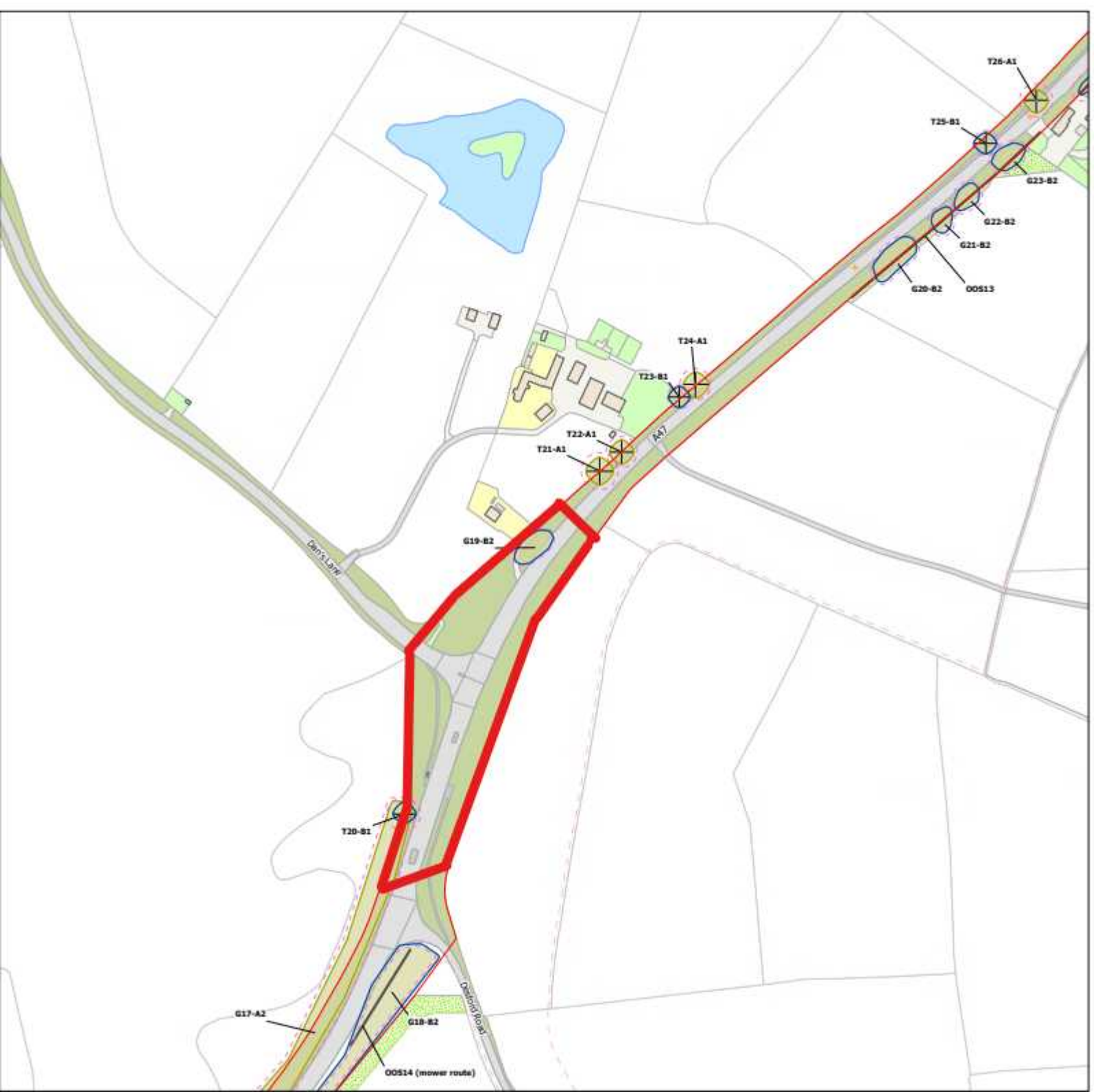
Appendix B: Utilities Data

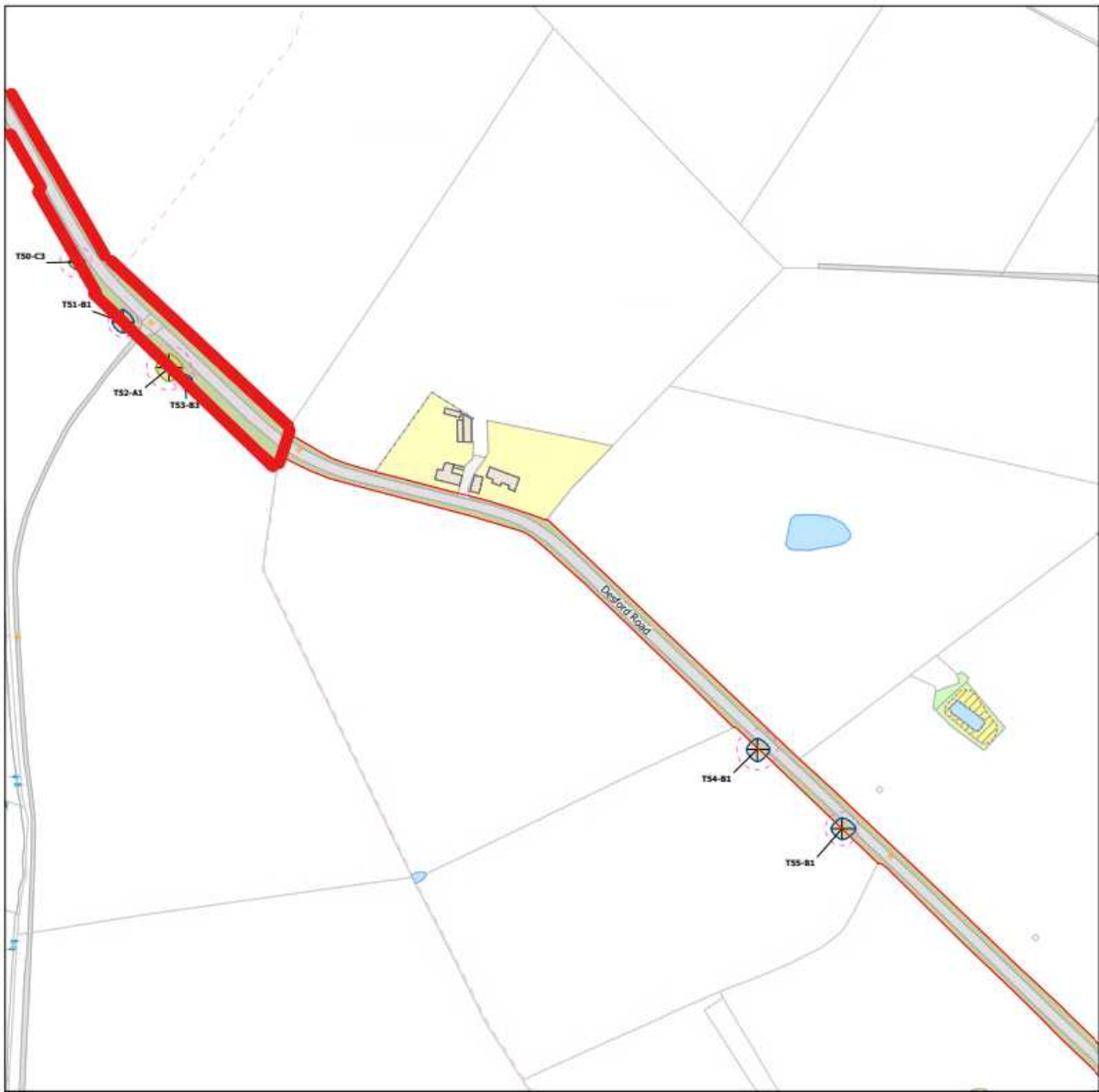












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