

The Great Grid Upgrade

Proposed Electricity Substation and Overhead Line Works at Weston Marsh

Great Crested Newt Survey Report

June 2026

nationalgrid

Proposed Electricity Substation and Overhead Line Works at Weston Marsh

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1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 This Great Crested Newt (GCN) Survey Report has been prepared by National Grid Electricity Transmission plc (National Grid).
- 1.1.2 National Grid are proposing to undertake works to construct a new electricity substation, new sections of overhead line and modification of existing overhead lines west of the Spalding Tee-Point in the Weston Marsh area, within the administrative boundary of South Holland District Council (SHDC) in Lincolnshire.

1.2 Summary of the Scheme

- 1.2.1 In totality, the Scheme consists of four components, each planned to be progressed via separate consenting routes. These are summarised in **Table 1.1**.

Table 1.1 Components of the Scheme

Works Required	Consenting Regime
Construction of the new Air Insulated Substation (AIS) – 400kV Weston Marsh Substation A, associated landscaping and environmental mitigation works, drainage, highways and other associated works.	Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA) (Ref 1) Component referred to as ' the Substation Works '
Construction of new sections of overhead line to connect the new substation into the existing 4ZM overhead lines. Removal of a section of the existing 4ZM overhead lines. Other associated works.	Section 37 (S37) of the Electricity Act 1989 (Ref 2) and deemed consent pursuant to section 90(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Component referred to as ' S37 4ZM Overhead Line Works '
Construction of a new section of overhead line to connect the new substation into the existing 2WS overhead lines. Removal of a section of the existing 2WS overhead lines. Other associated works.	S37 of the Electricity Act 1989 and deemed consent pursuant to section 90(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Component referred to as ' S37 2WS Overhead Line Works '
Reconductoring works required on the existing 4ZM overhead line. Two spans of temporary overhead lines.	The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (Ref 3) and The Overhead Lines (Exemption) (England and Wales) Regulations 2009 (Ref 4) Component referred to as ' Exempt Overhead Line Works '

- 1.2.1 The Substation Works will require consent from SHDC under the TCPA.
- 1.2.2 The S37 4ZM Overhead Line Works and S37 2WS Overhead Line Works (collectively referred to as ‘S37 Overhead Line Works’) will require consent from the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989 (Section 37).
- 1.2.3 The Exempt Overhead Line Works constitute permitted development under Part 15 Class B of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 and The Overhead Lines (Exemption) (England and Wales) Regulations 2009.
- 1.2.4 The Scheme Site Boundary, which consists of the land required to construct and operate the Scheme in its entirety, is illustrated on **Figure 1**. The areas of land required to construct and operate each individual component described in **Table 1.1** are also illustrated on **Figure 1**.
- 1.2.5 The Scheme in its totality is a standalone development to enable connection of the Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind Farm to the national electricity transmission system. Each component stated in **Table 1.1** above is required for the Scheme to fully function as part of the national electricity transmission system (NETS).

1.3 Purpose of this report

- 1.3.1 The purpose of this report is to present the results of the GCN surveys undertaken and to inform the ecology baseline for the Scheme.
- 1.3.2 This GCN Survey Report has been prepared in support of the necessary consent applications required to deliver the Scheme. It has been informed by engagement between National Grid and the relevant consenting authorities.
- 1.3.3 The GCN survey data has been collected across the Scheme Site Boundary in its entirety. However, the survey results in **Section 4** are presented in relation to each component of the Scheme as outlined in **Table 1.1**. This approach enables the relevant consenting authority to readily identify and consider only those survey results that are associated with the application before them, whilst also maintaining a clear understanding of the Scheme in its wider context.
- 1.3.4 The objectives for this report are to:
 - 1) present desk study information of relevance to GCN;
 - 2) identify the presence or likely absence of GCN; and
 - 3) provide sufficient information to inform an assessment of potential impacts to GCN as a result of the Scheme or identify where further survey is required to inform such assessment.
- 1.3.5 The assessment of potential impacts to badgers and mitigation (where required) is reported within the **Ecological Impact Assessment** [document number GWNC-ARU-SS50-XXXXXX-RPT-ES-000005].

2. Legislative and Policy Framework

2.1.0 Legislation and national and local planning policy relevant to the Scheme is described in further detail in the Planning, Design and Access Statement (TCPA application) and the Section 37 Statement (S37 applications). Key legislation and policy relevant to GCN is summarised in the following sections.

2.1 Legislation and National Policy

- 2.1.1 GCN are a European Protected Species (EPS). GCN and their habitats are protected under Schedule 5 and Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (Ref 6) and Schedule 2 and Regulation 43 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (Ref 7). This legislation taken together makes it an offence to:
- 1) deliberately kill, injure or capture (take) a GCN;
 - 2) intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection by a GCN;
 - 3) intentionally or recklessly disturb a GCN while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose;
 - 4) deliberately disturb GCN in such a way as to be likely to significantly affect the ability of a population to survive over time, breed or rear or nurture their young;
 - 5) deliberately disturb GCN in such a way as to be likely to significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species; and,
 - 6) damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a GCN.
- 2.1.2 Licences can be granted by Natural England, the licensing authority in England, to allow activities that would otherwise be illegal (e.g., the destruction of GCN habitat because of development activity), to take place. The activities must be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the licence whereby the favourable conservation status of the species is maintained.
- 2.1.3 Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC) (Ref 9) places a duty on all public bodies to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in England, when carrying out their normal functions (the biodiversity duty).
- 2.1.4 GCN is listed as a 'Species of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity' under Section 41 of NERC. This act places a responsibility on local authorities and government departments to consider the purposes of conserving biodiversity in a manner consistent with their normal duties, such as policy and decision-making, and ties together wildlife legislation and planning policies.
- 2.1.5 Guidance on how to assess a planning application when GCN are on or near a proposed development site was published by Natural England in 2022 (Ref 10) and is a material planning consideration for local planning authorities (LPAs).

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.1.6 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was most recently updated in December 2024 (Ref 5) and revised in February 2025, is a material consideration for planning decisions. The Framework establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11) as its central principle and requires the planning system to pursue three mutually supportive overarching objectives (economic, social and environmental objectives (paragraph 8)).
- 2.1.7 Chapter 15 of the NPPF is directly relevant to the receptors identified within this report. Paragraph 187 requires planning policies and decisions to protect and enhance sites of biodiversity value and to minimise impacts on valued habitats and species. Paragraph 193 establishes the key decision-making principles: where significant harm cannot be avoided through alternative siting, adequately mitigated, or as a last resort compensated for, planning permission should be refused; and development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats should be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons. Paragraphs 193(b), 194 and 195 afford strong protection to sites of special scientific interest, and habitats sites, with the presumption in favour of sustainable development disapplied where a plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on such a site.

2.2 Regional and Local Policy

- 2.2.1 Regional and local plans or policies relevant to this assessment are as follows:
- 1) South Holland District (Lincolnshire): South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036 (Ref 11):
 - a) Policy 28 The Natural Environment: supports protecting, managing and enhancing a high quality, comprehensive ecological network of interconnected designated sites, sites of nature conservation importance and wildlife-friendly greenspace.
 - b) Policy 31 Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy: notes that all development proposals will be required to demonstrate that the consequences of current climate change have been addressed, minimised and mitigated by (amongst other measures) incorporating measures which promote and enhance green infrastructure and provide an overall net gain in biodiversity. This policy also stipulates that the development of renewable energy facilities and associated infrastructure will be permitted provided that individually or cumulatively, there would be no significant harm to the natural environment.
 - 2) Lincolnshire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) (3rd edition) (Ref 12) provides the local nature conservation strategy for identifying threats to species within the county and set out the action plans necessary to conserve them. It also identifies priorities for conservation and enhancement but confers no particular legislative or policy protection to the species identifies. However, in some cases this is provided through related legislation and local planning. The Lincolnshire BAP lists the following threats to newt species within the county:
 - a) Loss of suitable breeding ponds due to due to lowered water-tables, infilling for development, farming or waste disposal, neglect, natural succession and shading from surrounding vegetation.

- b) Degradation, loss and fragmentation of terrestrial habitats.
- c) Introduction of fish into breeding ponds, which eat young newts and eggs.
- d) Chemical pollution, eutrophication and toxic effects of agrochemicals.

3. Methodology

3.1 Scope of the Assessment

- 3.1.1 The scope of this survey report has been determined in accordance with relevant industry guidance.
- 3.1.2 An evaluation of the potential constraints associated with GCN, incorporating both desk-based and field-based data collection, was conducted in accordance with established guidelines for best practices (Ref 10, Ref 13 and Ref 14). The methods undertaken are detailed below.

3.2 Study Area and Survey Area

- 3.2.1 The desk study area (hereinafter referred to as the 'Study Area') for GCN is defined as within 2 km of the Scheme Site Boundary (see **Figure 1**).
- 3.2.2 The Survey Area for ponds was defined as 250 m from the overhead line components of the Scheme (due to 250 m being considered the average migratory distance of GCN from breeding ponds during their terrestrial phase (Ref 15) and 500 m from the new Weston Marsh Substation A, due to the proposed permanent habitat loss at this location (see **Figure 2**).
- 3.2.3 Ponds separated from the Scheme by major barriers to dispersal (e.g. major roads and flowing watercourses) were scoped out of the assessment in accordance with the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines (Ref 14). The ponds scoped out were P784 and P785 (separated from the Scheme by the River Welland and Vernatt's Drain) and P798 (separated from the Scheme by the A151 road).
- 3.2.4 A total of two ponds were identified within Survey Area with connectivity to the Scheme. These were P783 and P947.
- 3.2.5 The Survey Area for ditches was defined where the Scheme has the potential to influence the water body e.g. crossing points. A total of 20 ditches were identified (see **Figure 2**).

3.3 Data Collection

Desk Study

- 3.3.1 A desk study was completed as part of the **Ecological Impact Assessment** and has been reviewed to inform this report.
- 3.3.2 As part of the desk study, Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership (GLNP) were contacted in February 2026 to obtain desk study data within 2 km of the Scheme Site Boundary (i.e. the 'Study Area'). The data provided records of protected or notable species (including GCN) within the last 10 years.

- 3.3.3 Further additional online resources have been utilised to collate desk study data and have included the following:
- 1) The Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website (Ref 16) to identify the presence of statutory designated sites designated for GCN within 2 km of the Scheme Site Boundary and the location and details of any granted GCN European Protected Mitigation Species Licence (EPSL) applications.
 - 2) Aerial imagery on Google, Bing and Ordnance Survey (OS) maps to identify all ponds and waterbodies within 250 m of the components of the Scheme and 500 m of the substations (i.e. the Survey Area).

Field Surveys

Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) (Ponds)

- 3.3.4 HSI assessments of ponds to determine the suitability of the ponds within the Survey Area for support GCN was commenced in 2024 and will be completed in 2026.
- 3.3.5 Surveys followed the HSI assessment methodology detailed within best practice guidance (Ref 17), in which waterbodies are visited in the daytime to undertake an initial assessment of the waterbody’s suitability to support GCN.
- 3.3.6 A summary of the ponds surveyed, survey dates and surveyors are provided in **Table 3.1** below.

Table 3.1 Ponds surveyed for the Scheme

Waterbody ID	Date Surveyed	Surveyors
P783	04/06/2025	P.H and D.H

- 3.3.7 Each suitability variable is assessed separately and then mathematically combined to provide a numerical index between 0 and 1, using the following equation: $HSI = (SI_1 * SI_2 * SI_3 * SI_4 * SI_5 * SI_6 * SI_7 * SI_8 * SI_9 * SI_{10}) / 10$. The categorisation of the final HSI score to pond suitability is as follows:
- 1) <0.5 = poor suitability;
 - 2) 0.5 – 0.59 = below average suitability;
 - 3) 0.6 – 0.69 = average suitability;
 - 4) 0.7 – 0.79 = good suitability; and
 - 5) >0.8 = excellent suitability.
- 3.3.8 The suitability indices and category definitions are summarised below in **Table 3.2**.

Table 3.2 Habitat Suitability Index - Summary of categories and scoring

Waterbody ID	Definition of Categories	Scoring Summary
Geographic Location (SI ₁)	Scoring provided based upon the defined geographic zone in which they occur.	SI scoring is based on geographic location. Zone A is optimal – 1.0, Zone B marginal 0.5 and Zone C unsuitable 0.01.
Pond Area (SI ₂)	Scoring based upon the area of the waterbody, usually taken in the spring (where water is at its highest level).	SI scoring increases with pond area up to 700 m ² (from 0 to 1.0), then slowly declines. This factor is omitted for ponds over 2000 m ² and for linear waterbodies (ditches).
Permanence (SI ₃)	Scoring based upon frequency of the waterbody drying up, deduced from local knowledge and personal judgement.	SI scoring ranges between ‘dries annually’ (0.1) to ‘never dries’ (0.9), with ‘rarely dries’ (dries no more than two years in ten or only in drought) scored a 1.0.
Water Quality (SI ₄)	Scoring based upon invertebrate diversity, submerged water plants and knowledge of water sources feeding the pond.	SI scoring ranges between ‘bad’ (clearly polluted – 0.01) to ‘good’ (abundant/diverse invertebrate community and submerged plants – 1.0).
Shade (SI ₅)	Scoring based upon the percentage of pond shading from the perimeter to at least 1m from the shore.	SI scoring decreases with level of shading from 1.0 to 0.2 when a 60% to 100% shading is recorded.
Waterfowl (SI ₆)	Scoring based upon the impacts of waterfowl on the ponds and newts.	SI scoring includes ‘major’ (severe impact on pond plants, banks, water quality etc. – 0.01), ‘minor’ (waterfowl present but little indication if impact on pond vegetation – 0.67), and ‘absent’ (no evidence – 1.0).
Fish (SI ₇)	Scoring based upon fish stocking of ponds, deduced from local knowledge and surveyor observation.	SI scoring ranges between ‘major’ (dense populations of fish – 0.01) to ‘absent’ (no records of fish – 1.0).
Pond Count (SI ₈)	Scoring based upon the quality of newt habitat surrounding up to 250 m from the survey pond (i.e., offering suitable cover and foraging opportunities).	Number of ponds should be divided by 3.14 to calculate the density per km ² . SI scoring increases with pond density from 0.1 to 1.0, with 4+ ponds given an SI scoring of 1.0.
Terrestrial habitat (SI ₉)	Scoring based upon the quality of newt habitat surrounding up to 250 m from the survey pond	SI scoring ranges between ‘none’ (no suitable habitat – 0.01) to ‘good’

Waterbody ID	Definition of Categories	Scoring Summary
	(i.e., offering suitable cover and foraging opportunities).	(offers good opportunities for foraging and shelter – 1.0).
Macrophyte (SI ₁₀)	Scoring based upon the percentage of the pond surface area occupied by macrophyte cover, including emergent, floating (excluding duckweed) and submerged.	SI scoring increases from 0.3 to 1.0 with increase macrophyte cover, then declines to 0.8 when macrophyte cover reaches 80%.

Habitat Suitability (Ditches)

- 3.3.9 The standard HSI assessment was developed for ponds and cannot be applied readily to a ditch system due to its linear and interconnected nature. An adapted habitat suitability assessment for GCN was instead undertaken during winter aquatic habitat appraisal surveys.
- 3.3.10 The winter aquatic habitat appraisal exercise was initiated in November 2024 and included recording key physical features of the aquatic habitats. It also included a scoping element of the survey to assess the potential of the habitats to support protected and/or notable species including GCN.
- 3.3.6 A summary of the ditches surveyed, survey dates and surveyors are provided in **Table 3.3** below.

Table 3.3 Habitat Suitability Surveyed Ditches

Waterbody ID (Aquatic)	Date Surveyed	Surveyors
GtW-ARP-AHALn-20640	22/01/2025	A.P and D.W
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21205	18/02/2025	R.H and A.P
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21760	25/03/2025	K.R and B.D
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21763	25/03/2025	K.R and B.D
GtW-ARP-AHALn-20490	20/01/2025	A.P and D.W
GtW-ARP-AHALn-20853	29/01/2025	D.H and O.P
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21181	17/02/2025	A.P and R.H
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21261	20/02/2025	D.H and D.S
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21283	24/02/2025	M.E and J.M
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21285	24/02/2025	M.E and J.M
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21287	24/02/2025	M.E and J.M
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21288	24/02/2025	M.E and J.M
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21289	24/02/2025	M.E and J.M
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21292	24/02/2025	M.E and J.M

Waterbody ID (Aquatic)	Date Surveyed	Surveyors
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21294	24/02/2025	M.E and J.M
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21357	26/02/2025	D.H and A.C
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21670	18/03/2025	P.P and D.S
GtW-ARP-AHALn-GtW-ARP-AHALn-21679	18/03/2025	P.P and D.S
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21757	25/03/2025	K.R and B.D
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21766	25/03/2025	K.R and B.D

- 3.3.7 A simplified suitability score for ditches was formulated to generate a suitability score based on key ditch characteristics (**Table 3.4**). Ditches found to have an overall positive or neutral score using the five ditch characteristics will be subject to full survey.
- 3.3.8 A sixth characteristic, water flow, is also be applied to the ditch HSI. In terms of the scoring system for water flow, where water flow is assessed to be fast the ditches will be automatically scoped out as fast flowing water would not provide suitable breeding habitat for GCN.
- 3.3.9 Although this does not fully replicate the standard “pond-oriented” HSI, it does provide a consistent and efficient characterisation of the ditches in respect of amphibian breeding requirements.

Table 3.4 Habitat Suitability Index - Ditch-specific characteristics and scoring measures

Ditch Characteristic	Negative Measure	Score	Positive Measure	Score
Permanence	Dry or dries annually	-2	Wet (even water distribution, water level >5cm deep)	+1
Vegetation	No suitable egg laying plants present	-1	Suitable egg laying plants present	+1
Fish	Present	-1	Absent	+1
Shade	Shaded (>60% shaded, 1m from shore)	-1	Not shaded (>40% open, 1m from shore)	+1
Water quality	Poor (e.g., evidence of pollution or enrichment)	-1	Moderate / good (no evidence of pollution or enrichment)	+1

- 3.3.10 The calculated score will therefore be between -6 and +5. Any ditch with a neutral or positive score indicates the potential requirement for further survey work to establish presence/likely absence (i.e. eDNA).

eDNA Surveys (Ponds and Ditches)

- 3.3.11 eDNA surveys were conducted on ponds and ditches suitable for survey within the appropriate time period for sampling (between April 15 2025 and June 30 2025).
- 3.3.12 Water samples were collected in accordance with published guidance (Ref 18) and instructions provided by the suppliers of the sample equipment and analysis services (i.e. ADAS).
- 3.3.13 The waterbodies were not entered by surveyors during sample collection so not to disturb the sediment and new, sterile equipment was used for each waterbody to prevent contamination between samples. Samples were subject to laboratory analysis to detect the presence of GCN DNA.
- 3.3.14 All surveyors undertaking eDNA surveys were licenced by Natural England to survey for GCN.
- 3.3.15 A summary of the waterbodies surveyed, survey dates and surveyors are provided in **Table 3.5** and **Table 3.6** below (eDNA results are presented in **Appendix B**).

Table 3.5 eDNA Surveyed Ponds

Waterbody ID	Date Surveyed	Surveyors
P783	N/A – to be surveyed in 2026	TBC
P947	N/A – to be surveyed in 2026	TBC

Table 3.6 eDNA Surveyed Ditches (including those found to be dry)

Waterbody ID	Date Surveyed	Surveyors
GtW-ARP-AHALn-20640	15/05/2025	D.H and C.N
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21205	23/06/2025	J.P and S.H
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21679	15/05/2025	D.H and C.N
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21763	23/06/2025	J.P and S.H
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21670	24/04/2026	D.H and P.M
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21760	N/A – to be surveyed in 2026	TBC

3.4 Assumptions and Limitations

Desk study

- 3.4.1 Species records provided by local records centres are not often collected as a result of systematic surveys and therefore geographic, temporal, and species coverage are not often representative. As such, a lack of records of a species in an area does not necessarily mean an absence of this species.

Field surveys

3.4.2 It was not possible to undertake eDNA analysis and a HSI assessment of all waterbodies within the Survey Area due land access permission and dense vegetation. A summary of the limitations for the survey at each waterbody is provided in **Table 3.7** below.

Table 3.7 Summary of survey access limitations

Waterbody ID	Habitat Suitability Survey Undertaken	eDNA Survey Undertaken	Summary of Limitations
P783	Yes, but water quality indeterminable due to presence of dense reeds	No	Provisional HSI score calculated due to presence of dense reeds restricting access. eDNA survey not possible as pond was mostly dry at the time of survey. To be re-surveyed in 2026.
P947	No	No	No access, to be surveyed in 2026.
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21760	Yes	No	To be surveyed in 2026.

4. Baseline and Evaluation

4.1 Results

Desk Study

- 4.1.1 There are no sites designated for GCN within the Study Area.
- 4.1.2 There are no recent records of GCN returned within the Study Area.
- 4.1.3 There are no European Protected Species Mitigation Licence (EPSML) returns within the Study Area.

Field Surveys

Habitat Suitability Index (HSI)

- 4.1.4 The results of the HSI surveys within the Survey Areas for each consenting boundary (Substation Works Site Boundary, S37 4ZM Overhead Line Works Site Boundary, S37 2WS Overhead Line Works Site Boundary, Exempt Overhead Line Works Site Boundary) are summarised in **Table 4.1** and **Table 4.2** below, detailed within **Appendix A** and illustrated in **Figure 3**.

Table 4.1 HSI Survey Results for ponds present within each consenting boundary Survey Area

Waterbody ID	Substation Works Site Boundary	S37 4ZM Overhead Line Works Site Boundary	S37 2WS Overhead Line Works Site Boundary	Exempt Overhead Line Works Site Boundary	HSI Survey Result
P783				✓	Below Average
P947				✓	N/A – survey to be completed in 2026

Table 4.2 HSI Survey Results for ditches crossing each consenting boundary

Waterbody ID	Substation Works Site Boundary	S37 4ZM Overhead Line Works Site Boundary	S37 2WS Overhead Line Works Site Boundary	Exempt Overhead Line Works Site Boundary	Habitat Suitability Survey Result
GtW-ARP-AHALn-20640				✓	Suitable
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21205	✓	✓	✓		Suitable
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21760		✓	✓	✓	Suitable
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21763	✓	✓		✓	Suitable
GtW-ARP-AHALn-20490	✓	✓	✓		Not Suitable
GtW-ARP-AHALn-20853				✓	Not Suitable
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21181	✓	✓	✓		Not Suitable
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21261			✓		Not Suitable
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21283	✓	✓	✓	✓	Not Suitable
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21285	✓				Not Suitable
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21287	✓	✓	✓		Not Suitable
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21288	✓	✓	✓	✓	Not Suitable
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21289	✓	✓	✓	✓	Not Suitable
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21292	✓	✓	✓	✓	Not Suitable
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21294	✓	✓			Not Suitable
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21357				✓	Not Suitable
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21670	✓	✓	✓	✓	Suitable

Waterbody ID	Substation Works Site Boundary	S37 4ZM Overhead Line Works Site Boundary	S37 2WS Overhead Line Works Site Boundary	Exempt Overhead Line Works Site Boundary	Habitat Suitability Survey Result
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21679	✓	✓	✓		Suitable
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21757	✓	✓		✓	Not Suitable
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21766				✓	Not Suitable

eDNA Surveys

4.1.5 The results of the eDNA surveys within the Survey Areas for each consenting boundary (Substation Works Site Boundary, S37 4ZM Overhead Line Works Site Boundary, S37 2WS Overhead Line Works Site Boundary, Exempt Overhead Line Works Site Boundary) are summarised in **Table 4.3** and **Table 4.4** below and illustrated in **Figure 4**. The associated laboratory reports are provided in **Appendix B**.

Table 4.3 eDNA Survey Results for ponds present within the Survey Area for each consenting boundary

Waterbody ID	Substation Works Site Boundary	S37 4ZM Overhead Line Works Site Boundary	S37 2WS Overhead Line Works Site Boundary	Exempt Overhead Line Works Site Boundary	EDNA Survey Result
P783				✓	N/A – survey to be completed in 2026
P947				✓	N/A – survey to be completed in 2026

Table 4.4 eDNA Survey Results for ditches within each consenting boundary

Waterbody ID	Substation Works Site Boundary	S37 4ZM Overhead Line Works Site Boundary	S37 2WS Overhead Line Works Site Boundary	Exempt Overhead Line Works Site Boundary	EDNA Survey Result
GtW-ARP-AHALn-20640				✓	N/A - dry
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21205	✓	✓	✓		N/A - dry
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21679	✓	✓	✓		Negative
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21763	✓	✓		✓	N/A – dry
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21670	✓	✓	✓	✓	N/A – dry
GtW-ARP-AHALn-21760		✓	✓	✓	N/A – survey to be completed in 2026

5. Summary

5.1.1 No evidence of GCN was identified during the desk study or field surveys to date.

5.1.2 There are two ponds and one ditch left to survey for GCN in spring 2026. Following the results of these surveys an overall assessment will be made to determine the likelihood of GCN being present within the aquatic and terrestrial habitats within the four consenting boundaries (Substation Works Site Boundary, S37 4ZM Overhead Line Works Site Boundary, S37 2WS Overhead Line Works Site Boundary, Exempt Overhead Line Works Site Boundary). The results and overall assessment will be provided within an addendum report.

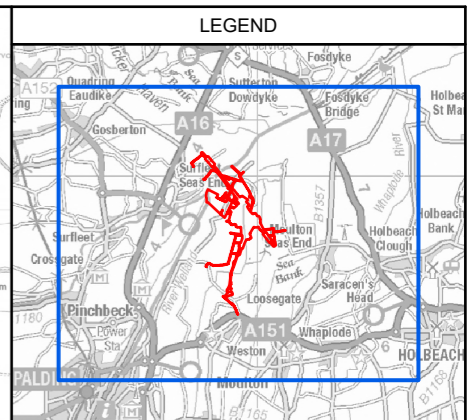
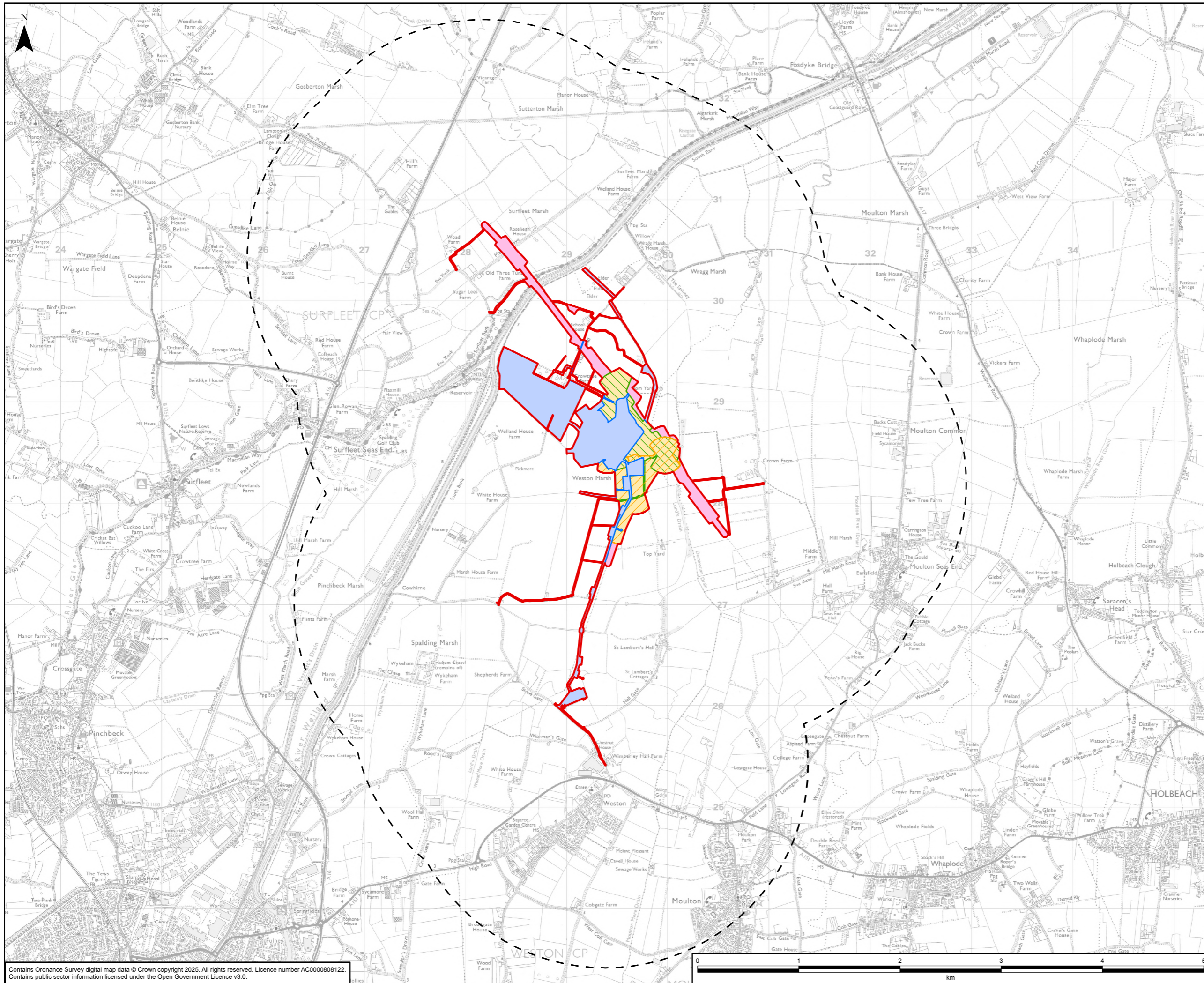
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Figures

Figure 1 Great Crested Newt Desk Study Scope



- Legend**
- Scheme Site Boundary
 - Substation Works Site Boundary
 - 2km Study Area
 - S37 OHL Works Site Boundary
 - Exempt Overhead Line Works Site Boundary
 - S37 - 4ZM - OHL Works Site Boundary
 - S37 - 2WS - OHL Works Site Boundary

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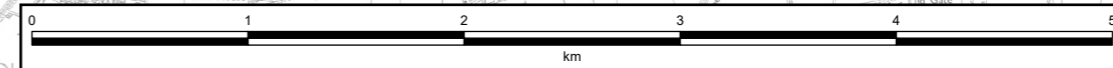
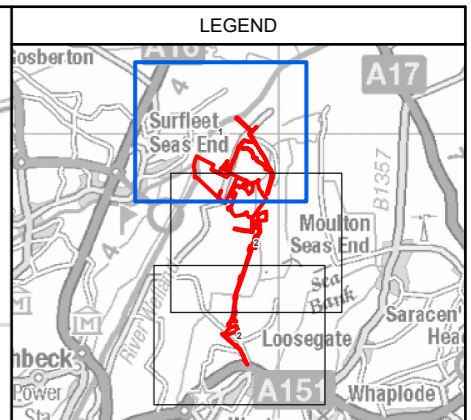
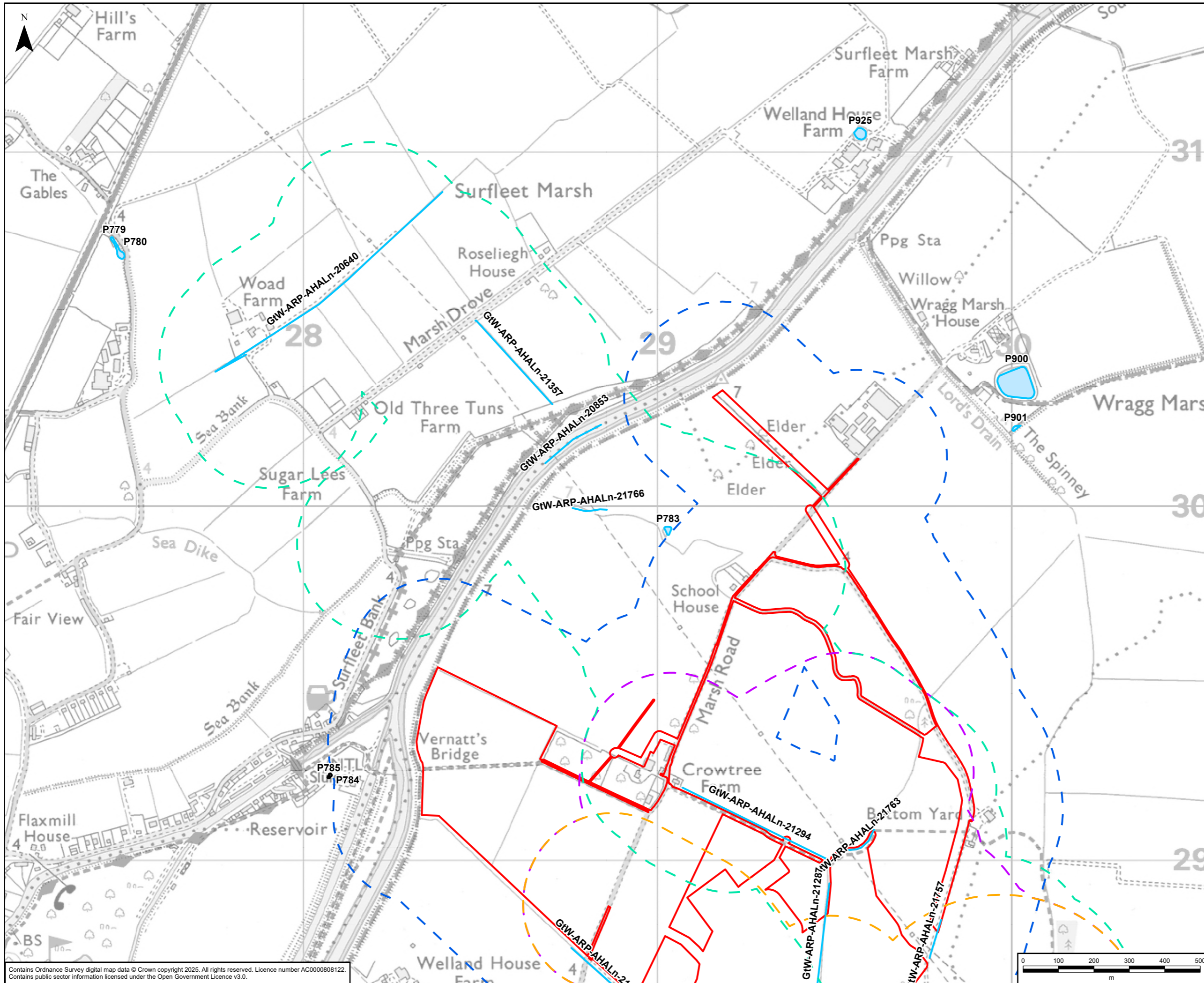


Figure 2 Great Crested Newt Survey Scope

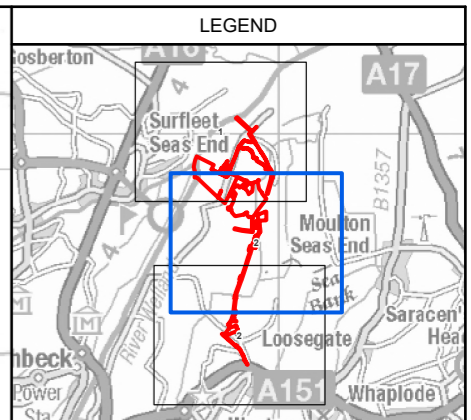
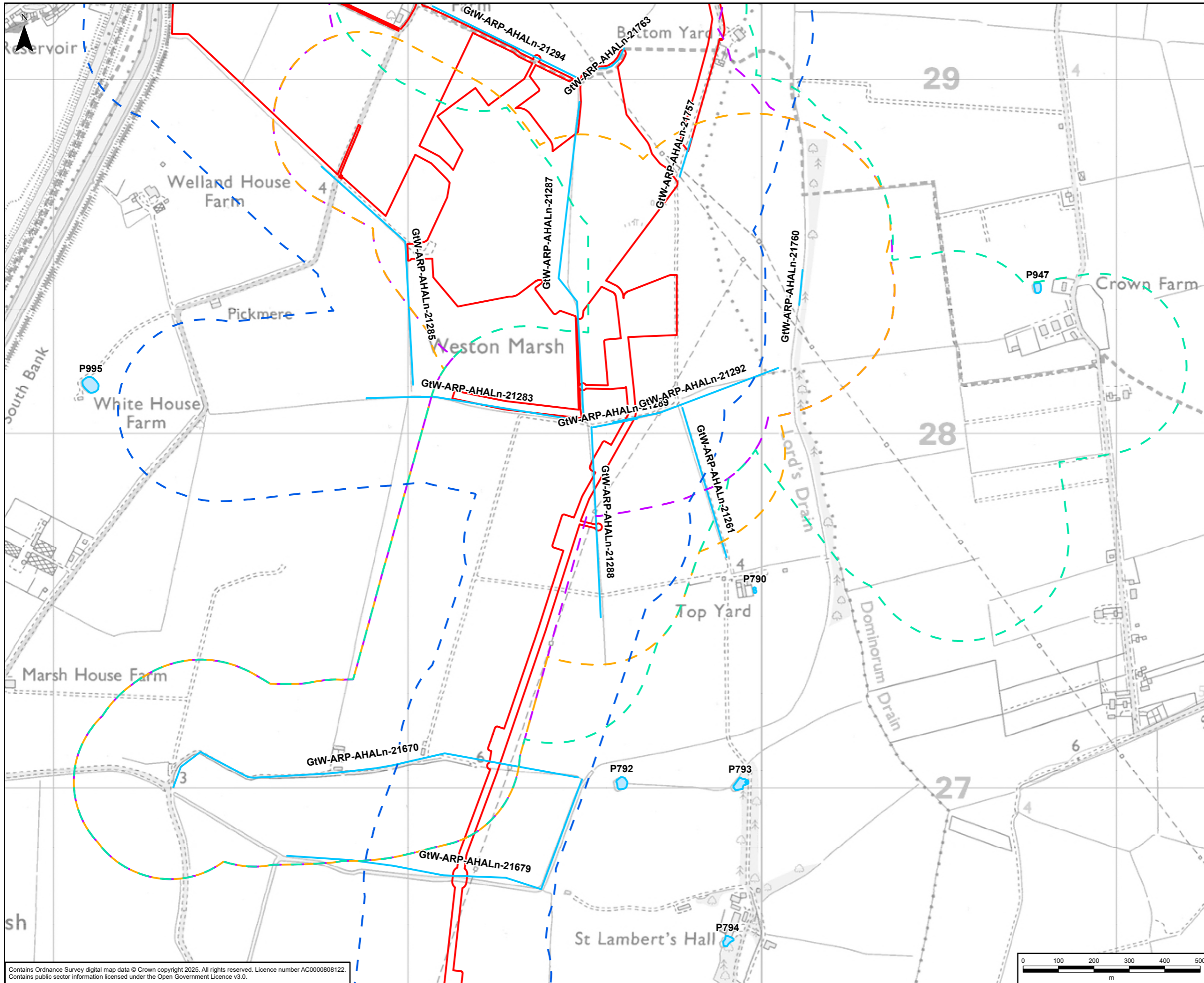


- Legend**
- Scheme Site Boundary
 - 250m Study Area - S37 4ZM
 - 250m Study Area - S37 2WS
 - 250m Study Area - Exempt Overhead Line Works
 - 250m Study Area - Substation Works
 - Ditch
 - Pond
 - Pond - Scoped out of assessment

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- Legend**
- Scheme Site Boundary
 - 250m Study Area - S37 4ZM
 - 250m Study Area - S37 2WS
 - 250m Study Area - Exempt Overhead Line Works
 - 250m Study Area - Substation Works
 - Ditch
 - Pond

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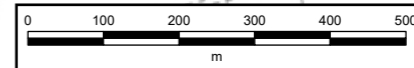
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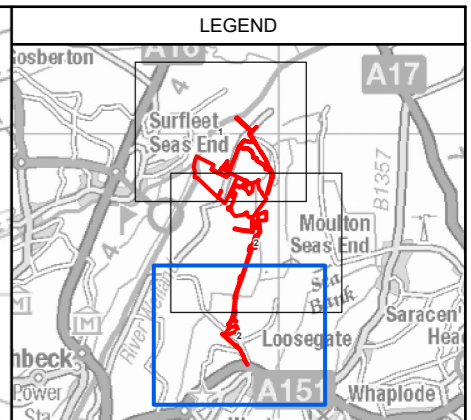
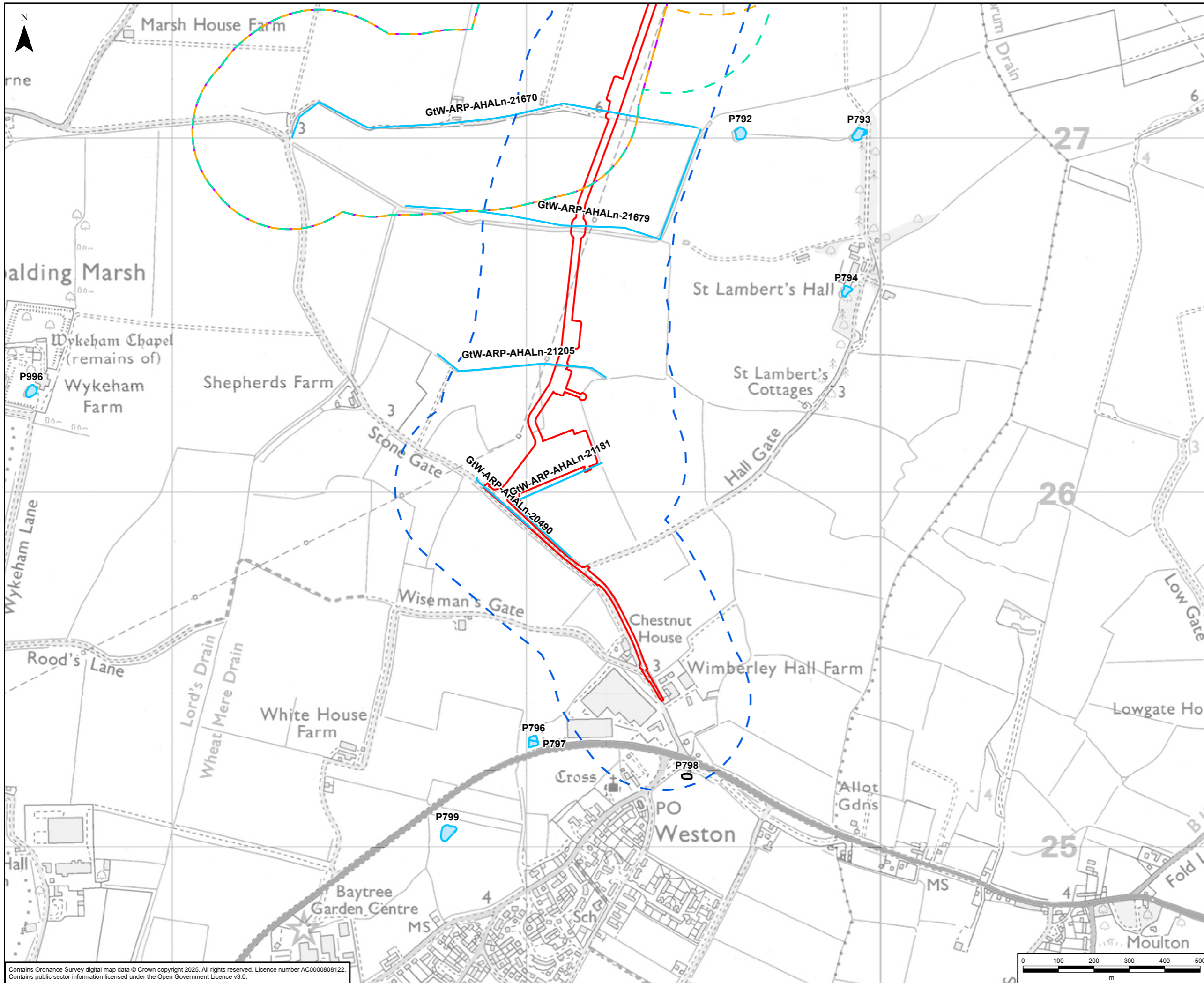
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Legend

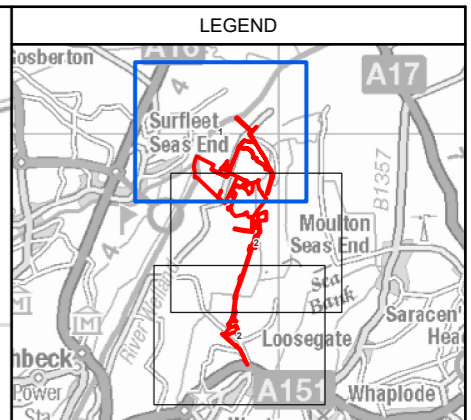
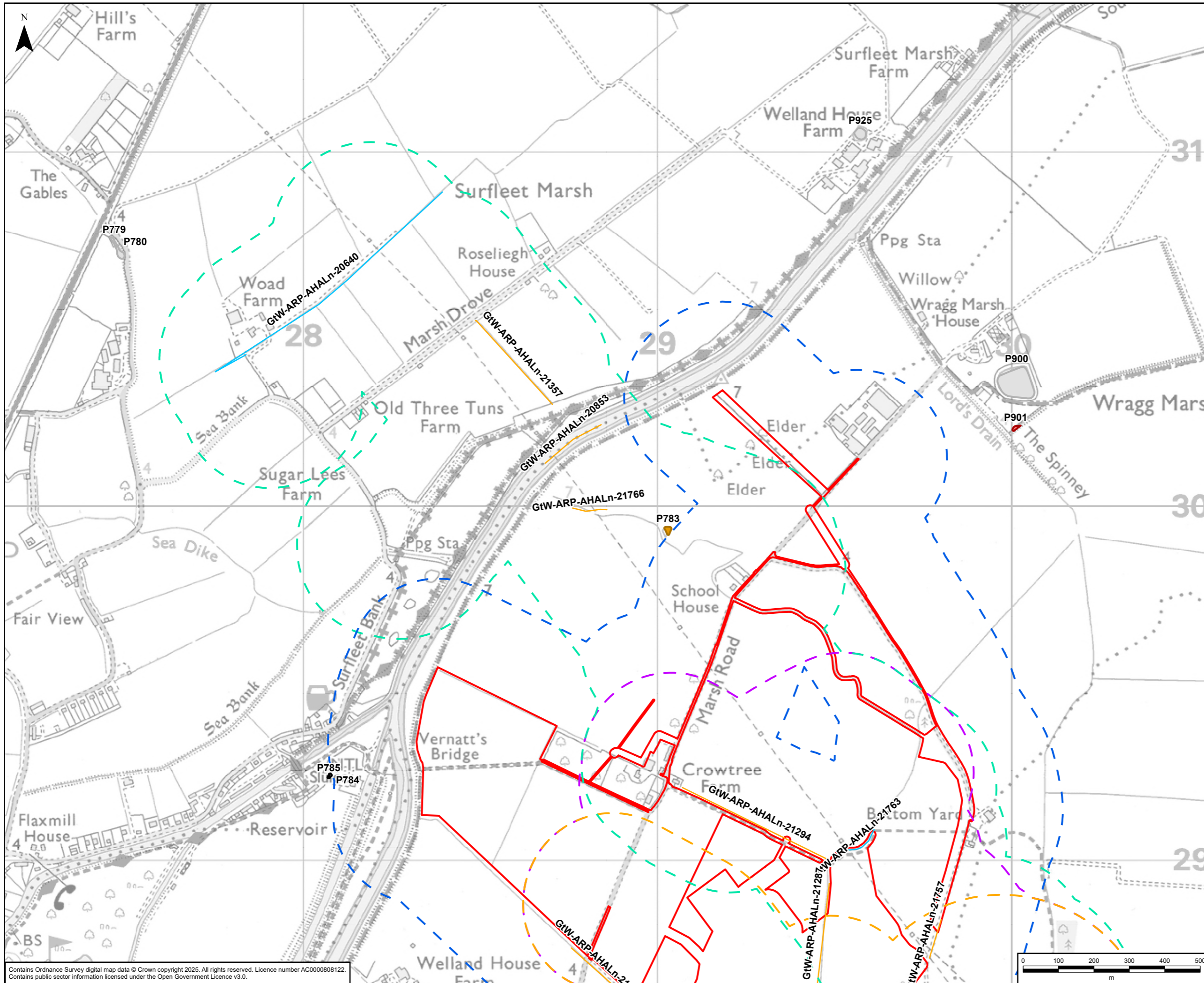
- Scheme Site Boundary
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- 250m Study Area - S37 2WS
- 250m Study Area - Exempt Overhead Line Works
- 250m Study Area - Substation Works
- Ditch
- Pond
- Pond - Scoped out of assessment

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Figure 3 Great Crested Newt Survey Results – HSI

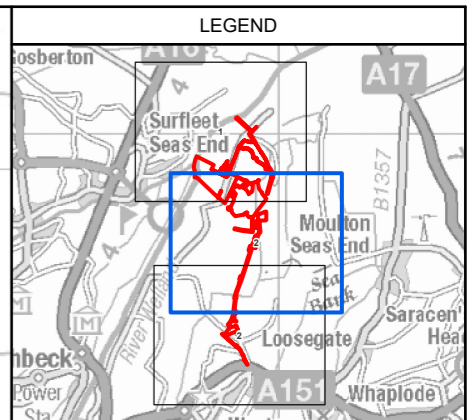
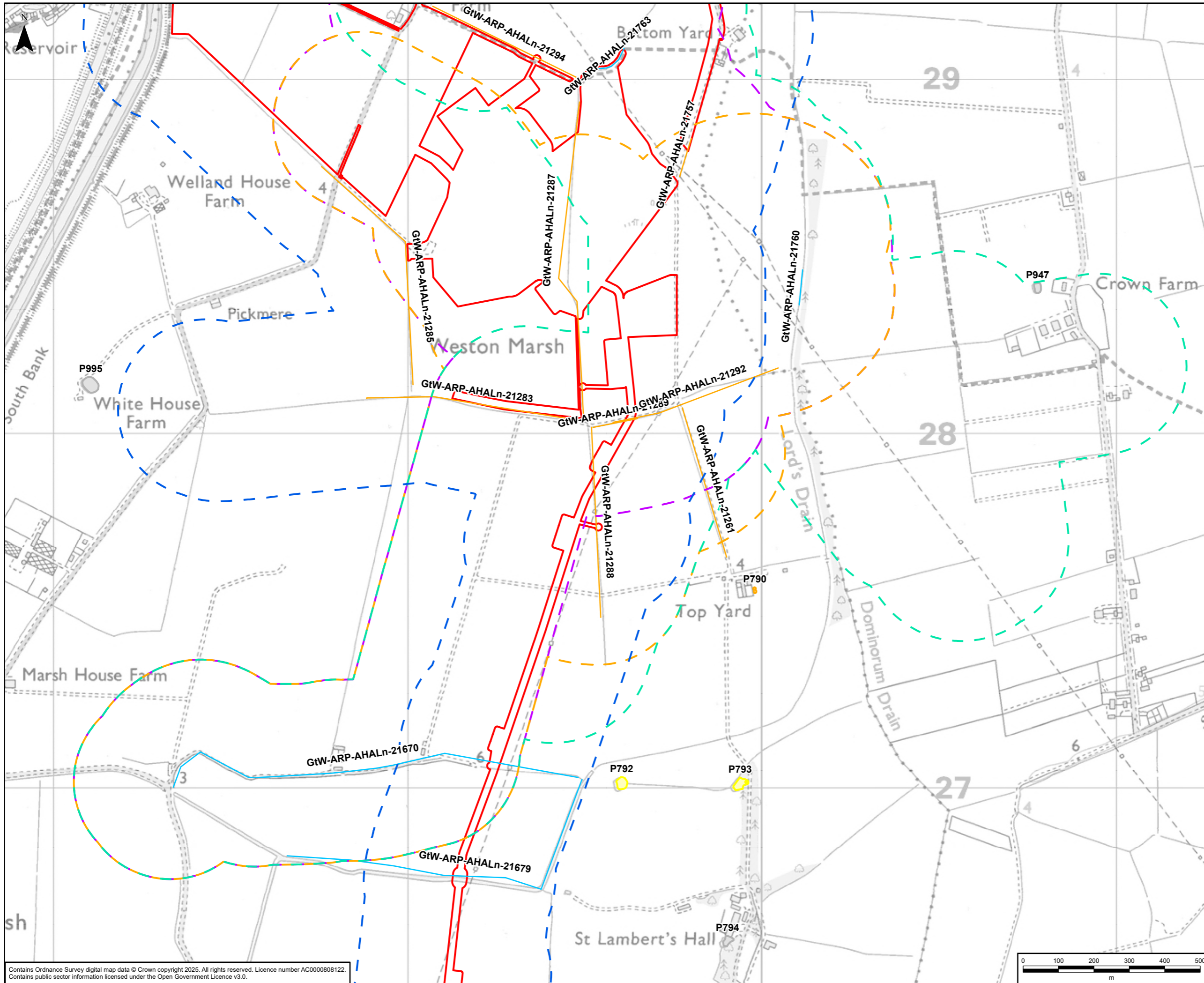


- Legend**
- Scheme Site Boundary
 - 250m Study Area - S37 4ZM
 - 250m Study Area - S37 2WS
 - 250m Study Area - Exempt Overhead Line Works
 - 250m Study Area - Substation Works
 - Ditch - Habitat Suitability
 - Suitable
 - Not Suitable
 - Pond - Habitat Suitability Rating
 - Below Average
 - Poor
 - Unsurveyed
 - Pond - Scoped out of assessment

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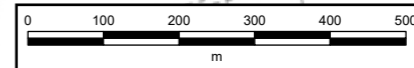


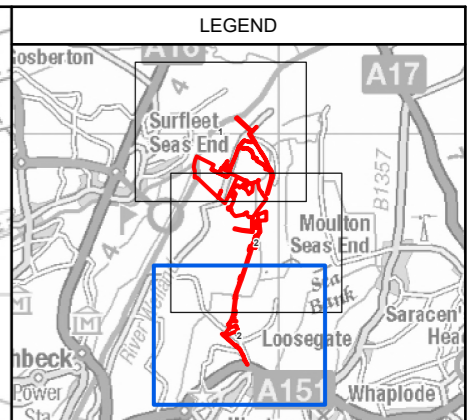
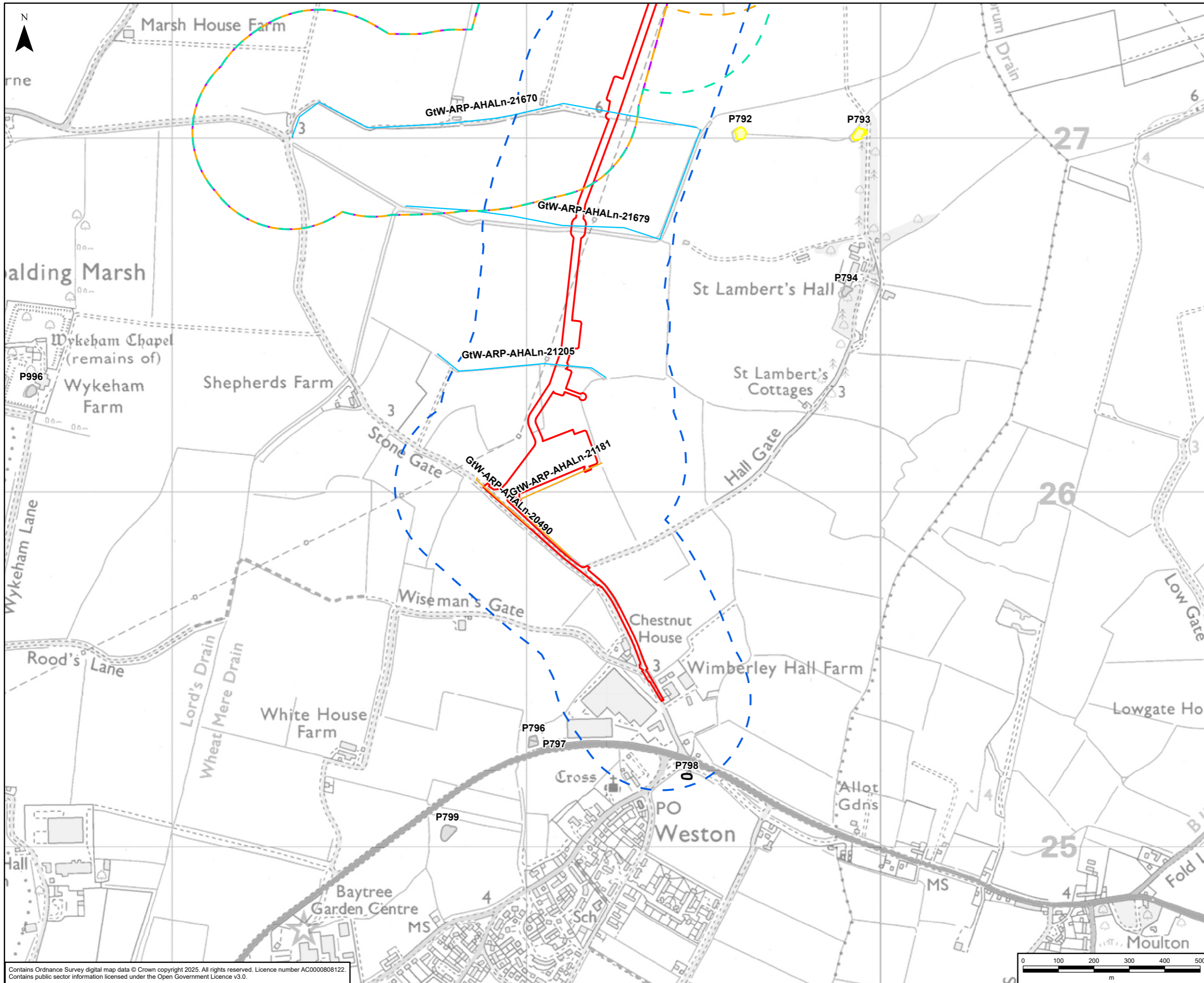
- Legend**
- Scheme Site Boundary
 - 250m Study Area - S37 4ZM
 - 250m Study Area - S37 2WS
 - 250m Study Area - Exempt Overhead Line Works
 - 250m Study Area - Substation Works
 - Ditch - Habitat Suitability
 - Suitable
 - Not Suitable
 - Pond - Habitat Suitability Rating
 - Good
 - Average
 - Unsurveyed

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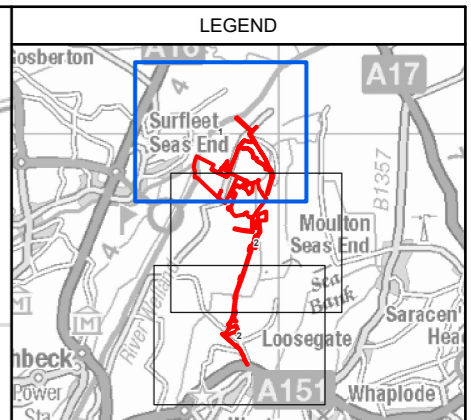
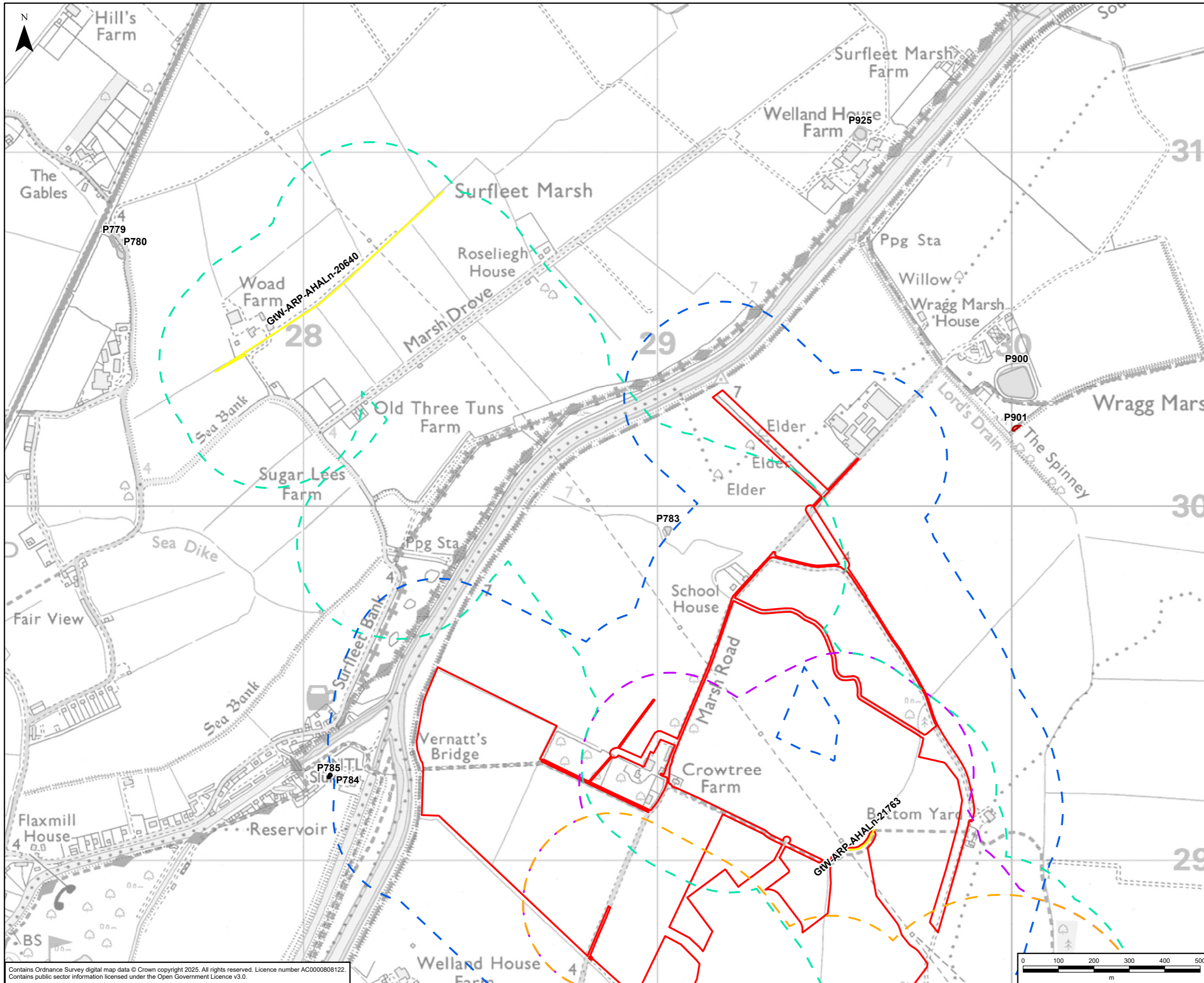
- LEGEND**
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 - 250m Study Area - S37 4ZM
 - 250m Study Area - S37 2WS
 - 250m Study Area - Exempt Overhead Line Works
 - 250m Study Area - Substation Works
 - Ditch - Habitat Suitability
 - Suitable
 - Not Suitable
 - Pond - Habitat Suitability Rating
 - Good
 - Unsurveyed
 - Pond - Scoped out of assessment

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Figure 4 Great Crested Newt Survey Results – eDNA

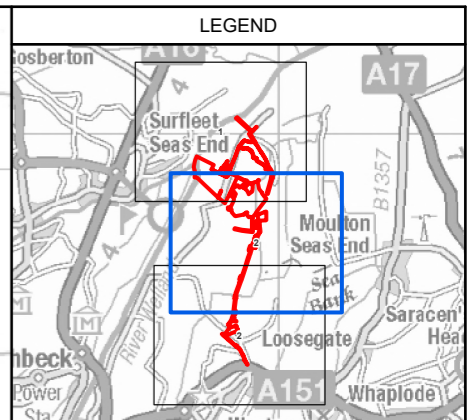
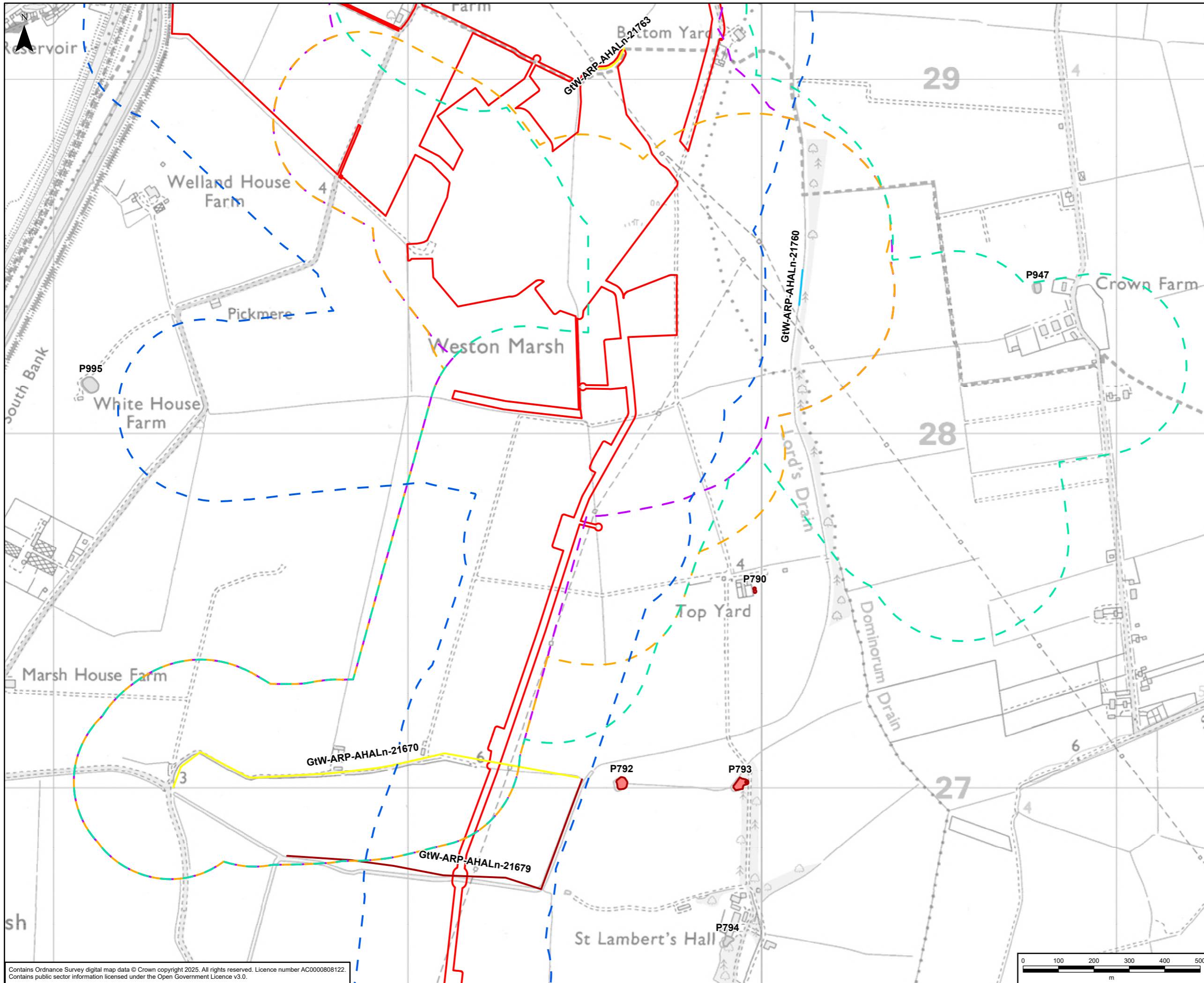


- Legend**
- Scheme Site Boundary
 - 250m Study Area - S37 2WS
 - 250m Study Area - S37 4ZM
 - 250m Study Area - Exempt Overhead Line Works
 - 250m Study Area - Substation Works
 - Ditch - eDNA Result
 - N/A - Dry
 - Pond - eDNA Result
 - Negative
 - Unsurveyed
 - Pond - Scoped out of assessment

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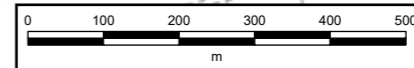


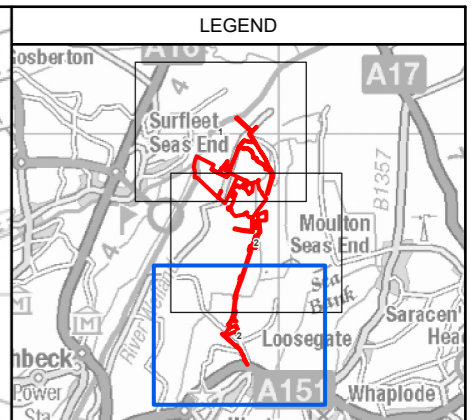
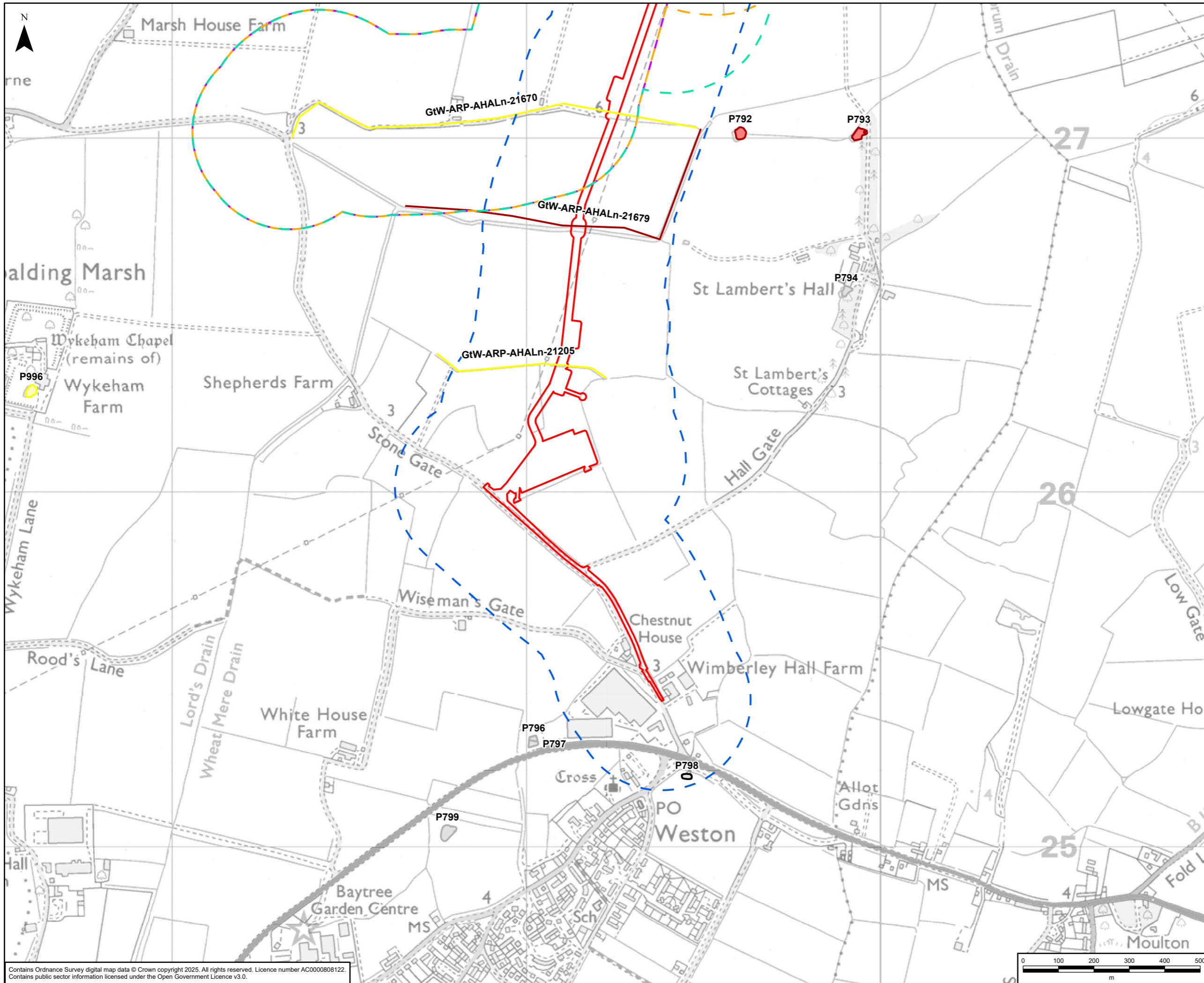
- Legend**
- Scheme Site Boundary
 - 250m Study Area - S37 2WS
 - 250m Study Area - S37 4ZM
 - 250m Study Area - Exempt Overhead Line Works
 - 250m Study Area - Substation Works
 - Ditch - eDNA Result**
 - Negative
 - N/A - Dry
 - To be surveyed in 2026
 - Pond - eDNA Result**
 - Negative
 - Unsurveyed

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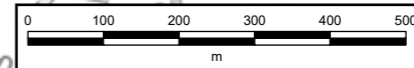


- LEGEND**
- Scheme Site Boundary
 - 250m Study Area - S37 2WS
 - 250m Study Area - S37 4ZM
 - 250m Study Area - Exempt Overhead Line Works
 - 250m Study Area - Substation Works
 - Ditch - eDNA Result
 - Negative
 - N/A - Dry
 - Pond - eDNA Result
 - Negative
 - Dry
 - Unsurveyed
 - Pond - Scoped out of assessment

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Appendices

Appendix A Habitat Suitability Index Survey Results

Table A.5.1 Great Crested Newt Habitat Suitability Index Scores – Ponds

	Pond ID
Habitat Suitability Indicator	P783
Geographic Location	Zone A/1.00
Pond Area	300m2/0.6
Pond Permanence	Sometimes Dries/0.5
Water Quality	Poor/0.33
Shade	90/0.35
Water Fowl Effect	Minor/0.67
Fish Presence	Possible/0.67
Pond Density	1/0.65
Terrestrial Habitat	Moderate/0.67
Macrophyte Cover	30/0.6
HSI Score	0.5
Overall Pond Suitability	Below Average


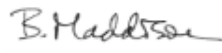
Table A.5.2 Great Crested Newt Habitat Suitability Index Scores – Ditches

Habitat Suitability Indicator	Waterbody ID										
	20640	21205	21760	21763	20490	20853	21181	21261	21283	21285	21287
Survey Date	22/01/20 25	18/02/20 25	25/03/20 25	25/03/20 25	20/01/20 25	29/01/20 25	17/02/20 25	20/02/20 25	24/02/20 25	24/02/20 25	24/02/20 25
Waterbody present and suitable for GCN habitat assessment?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Permanence	Wet (>5cm deep)	Wet (>5cm deep)	Wet (>5cm deep)	Wet (>5cm deep)	Dry / Dries annually	-	-	-	-	Dry / Dries annually	Dry / Dries annually
Vegetation: suitable egg laying plants present?	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	-	-	-	-	No	No
Fish present?	Absent	Absent	Possible	Possible	Absent	-	-	-	-	Absent	Absent
Shade >60% shaded 1m from shore?	No	No	No	Yes	No	-	-	-	-	No	No
Water quality	Moderate to good	Moderate to good	Moderate to good	Moderate to good	Poor	-	-	-	-	Poor	Poor
GCN Habitat Suitability Score	5	3	4.67	2.67	-2	-	-	-	-	-2	-2
Habitat Suitability Survey Result	Suitable	Suitable	Suitable	Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable

Habitat Suitability Indicator	Waterbody ID									
	21288	21289	21292	21294	21357	21670	21673	21679	21757	21766
Survey Date	24/02/20 25	24/02/20 25	24/02/20 25	24/02/20 25	26/02/20 25	18/03/20 25	18/03/20 25	18/03/20 25	25/03/20 25	25/03/20 25
Waterbody present and suitable for GCN habitat assessment?	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Permanence	-	-	-	-	-	Dry / Dries annually	Wet (>5m deep)	Wet (>5m deep)	-	-
Vegetation: suitable egg laying plants present?	-	-	-	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	-
Fish present?	-	-	-	-	-	Absent	Possible	Possible	-	-
Shade >60% shaded 1m from shore?	-	-	-	-	-	No	No	No	-	-
Water quality	-	-	-	-	-	Moderate to Good	Moderate to Good	Moderate to Good	-	-
GCN Habitat Suitability Score	-	-	-	-	-	2	4.67	4.67	-	-
Habitat Suitability Survey Result	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Suitable	Suitable	Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable

Appendix B Environmental DNA Survey Results

B.1. Ditch 21679 (eDNA ID 22308)

Sample ID: ADAS-7068			
Client Identifier: Ditch 22308		Grid references/coordinates: Not Supplied	
Description: pond water samples in preservative		Condition on Receipt: Low White Precipitate	
Date of Receipt : 23/05/2025		Volume: Passed	
Determinant	Result	Method	Date of Analysis
Inhibition Control [†]	0 of 2	Real Time PCR	30/05/2025
Degradation Control [‡]	Within limits	Real Time PCR	30/05/2025
Great Crested Newt*	0 of 12 (negative)	Real Time PCR	30/05/2025
Negative PCR Control (Nuclease Free Water)	0 of 4	Real Time PCR	As above for GCN
Positive PCR Control (GCN DNA 10 ⁻⁴ ng/μL) [‡]	4 of 4	Real Time PCR	As above for GCN
Report Prepared by:	Dr Helen Rees	Report Issued by:	Dr Ben Maddison
Signed:		Signed:	
Position:	Director: Biotechnology	Position:	MD: Biotechnology
Date of preparation:	03/06/2025	Date of issue:	03/06/2025

eDNA analysis was carried out in accordance with the stipulated methodology found in the Technical Advice Note (WC1067 Appendix 5 Technical Advice Note) published by DEFRA and adopted by Natural England.

* If all PCR controls and extraction blanks give the expected results a sample is considered: negative for GCN if all of the replicates are negative; positive for GCN if one or more of the replicates are positive.

[†] Recorded as the number of positive replicate reactions at expected C_t value. If the expected C_t value is not

[‡] No degradation is expected within time frame of kit preparation, sample collection and analysis.

[‡] Additional positive controls (10⁻¹, 10⁻², 10⁻³ ng/μL) are also routinely run, results not shown here.

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