

LOCAL NATURE RESERVE DESIGNATION

Briefing note



BACKGROUND

The Natural Infrastructure (NI) team have been working with colleagues in strategic transport, Street Services and corporate property to develop a package of proposals to achieve a net gain of 47 hectares in Local Nature Reserve (LNR) area whilst allowing small areas of existing LNR's to be de-designated to allow for three highway improvement scheme designs to be developed. The new designations will provide legal protection for key areas of green space, safeguarding them for future generations. It will ensure that Plymouth's growth continues to be sustainable and that valuable green lungs are maintained for the community's enjoyment and for the benefit of the city's wildlife.

Once these three new sites are approved, Plymouth will have a total of 13 Local Nature Reserves and the area protected will increase to 302.7 hectares. This takes Plymouth above the threshold of 1ha per 1,000 inhabitants, which is Natural England's [Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard](#) for the UK.

These designations will also support the Council to achieve the ambitions SPT11 - Setting a strategic approach to the natural environment and DEV28 - Protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geological conservation in the Joint Local Plan area. Since 2007 the Council has designated 123.4ha of new LNR, far exceeding previous targets and these new designations continue this momentum of valuing natural spaces within the city.

Community Involvement

'Friends' Groups across the City already work with the NI Team and Street Services and are adding great value to our green spaces. Their efforts are greatly appreciated and valued. Each of the proposed new LNR sites has an emerging Friends Groups and will be involved in planning and carrying out their future management as well as helping to run events for the local community and schools.

The three new proposed LNR sites are:

- Kings Tamerton Woods
- Newnham Meadows
- Seaton and Lower Bircham Valley (part of Derriford Community Park)

Management plans and boundary maps (see Appendix 1) have been produced for each of these sites and we have funding committed to ensure that the improvements required will be delivered to achieve the required LNR standard for wildlife and public access and education. Further funding and partnership agreements are also in the pipeline to enhance the biodiversity value of the Lower Bircham and Seaton Valley site through species re-introduction programmes - beavers and water voles - which will enhance the city's claim be delivering sustainable growth and providing a high profile wildlife tourism site. Approval of this new designation and associated management plan will allow the Council Officers and partners to embark on the next step of this project which will see extensive stakeholder and public consultation on the plans, ensuring that the necessary licence

applications are in place from Natural England and securing the funding to ensure that the project delivers and evaluates the maximum biodiversity and community engagement impact. The proposals aim for the infrastructure to be in place for reintroduction programmes to begin in spring 2019.

There are three highways improvement schemes coming forward in the year ahead that are adjacent to LNR's and require small areas to be de-designated. The NI team have and continue to work closely with the Strategic Transport team to ensure that any LNR losses are minimised through the design process and only considered when other options are not feasible. Each of the schemes will provide environmental mitigation payments which will be used to enhance the habitat condition, access points and interpretation in the reserves. The three schemes resulting in de-designation of LNR area are:

1. Forder Valley Link Road (affecting Forder Valley LNR)
2. Forder Valley Interchange (affecting Forder Valley LNR)
3. Morlaix Drive and Brest Road improvement scheme (affecting Bircham Valley LNR)

Appendix 1 below includes boundary maps showing the proposed new boundaries to Forder and Bircham Valley LNR's. The management plans for these two reserves are currently in the process of being reviewed and rewritten and summaries will be submitted for review once completed.

These plans have been shared with Natural England (NE), who are a statutory consultee on LNR matters and following formal Cabinet approval of the new designations we will be required to formally consult and gain NE approval for this package of designation and de-designation of LNR area.

Table 1 summarises the gain/ loss of LNR area in relation to all of these proposals combined.

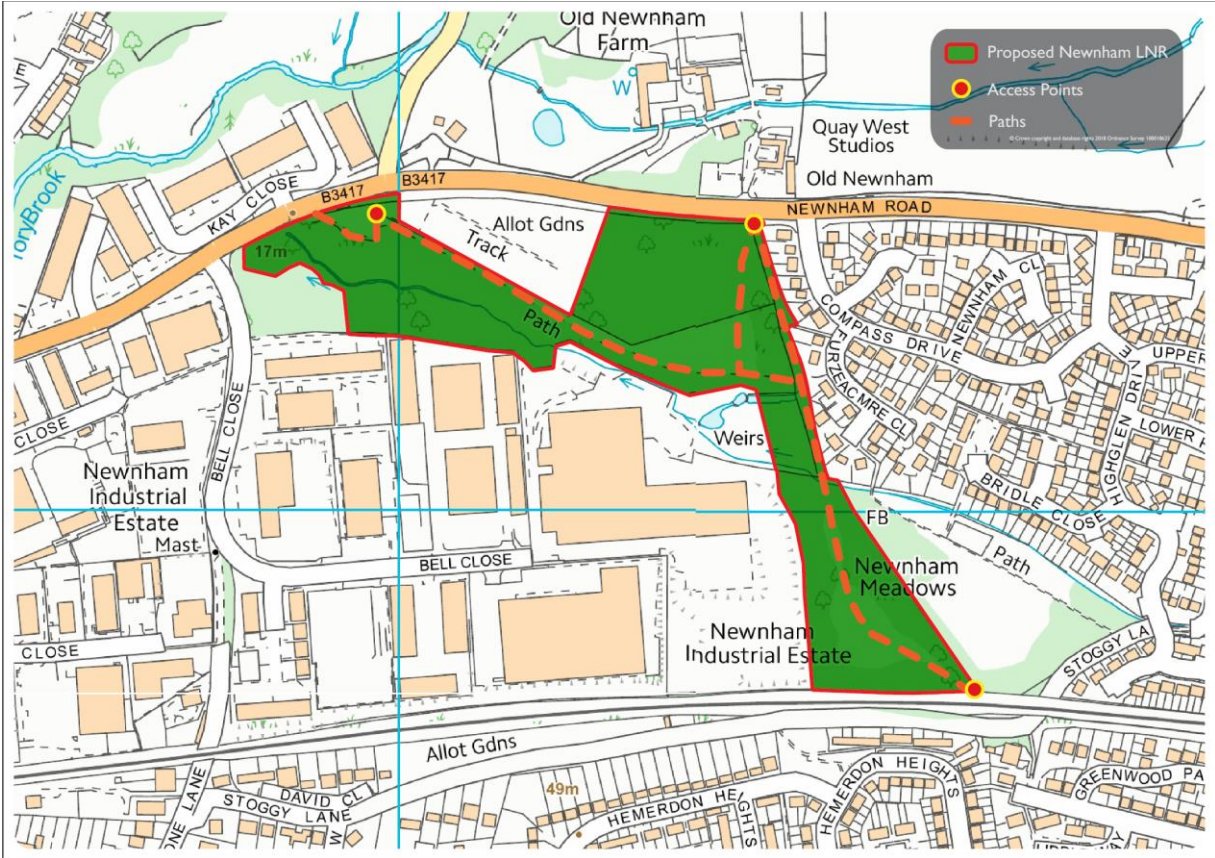
LNR Designations					
Site	Area (Ha)	Establishment cost	5 year establishment cost (annual)	Total 5 year cost	Funded through ...
Kings Tamerton Woods	7.7	£43,545.00	£2,000.00	£53,545.00	Section 106 payments - approved
Lower Bircham and Seaton Valleys	34.16	£24,500.00	£4,250.00	£45,750.00	Forder Valley Link Road scheme mitigation
Newnham Meadows	6.13	£15,050.00	£2,250.00	£26,300.00	Readjusting existing greenspace budgets and investigating future funding from developments
LNR De-designations					

Bircham Valley de-designation	-0.08	TBC between NI team and Strategic Transport team as detailed design for scheme develops			Morlaix Drive/ Brest Road improvement Scheme - secured through capital programme
Forder Valley de-designation	-0.73	TBC as part of capital contract issued for scheme delivery			Forder Valley Link Road and Forder Valley Interchange Scheme
Total	47.18	£83,095.00	£8,500.00	£125,595.00	

Table 1 – Summary of LNR designation and de-designation proposals

**CHRIS AVENT & KAT DEENEY
NATURAL INFRASTRUCTURE TEAM**

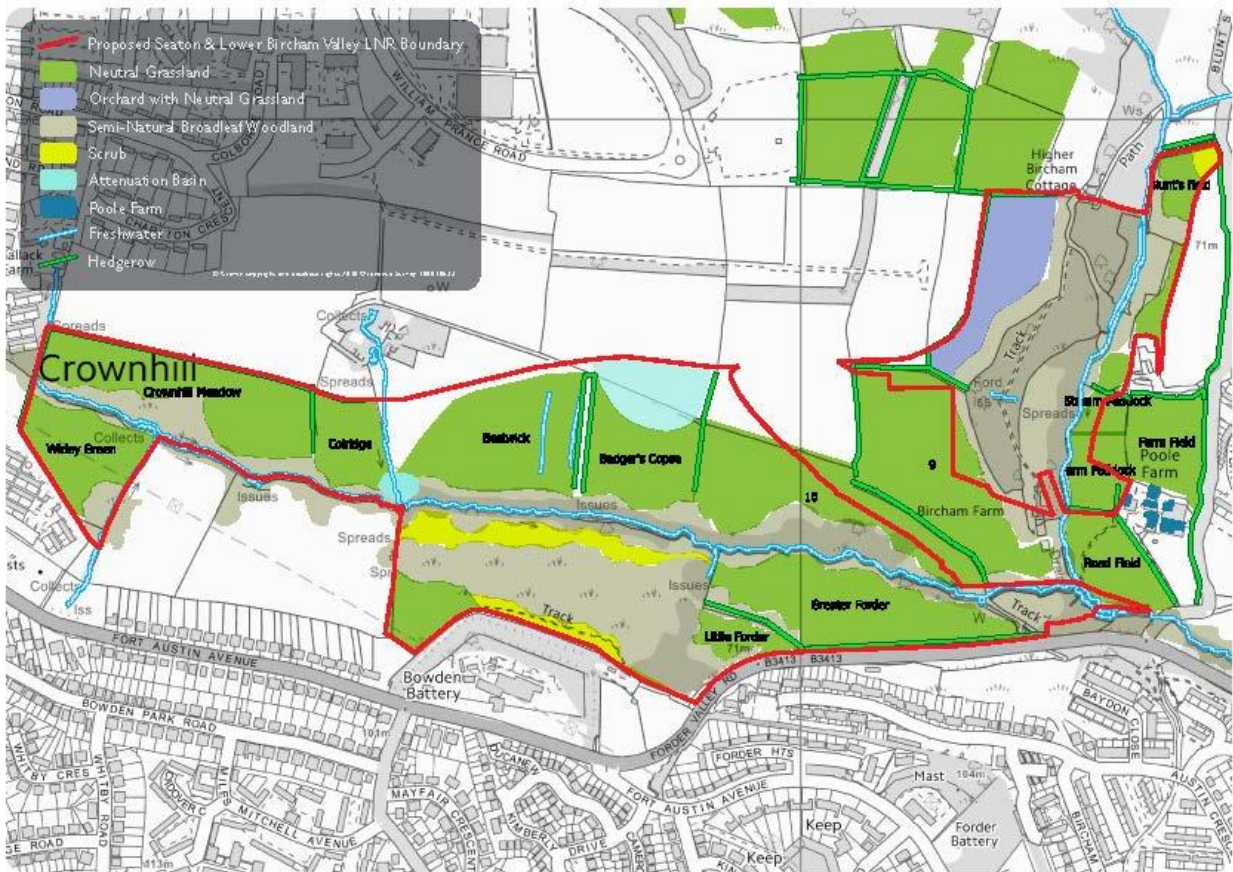
APPENDIX I – BOUNDARY MAPS OF PROPOSED NEW AND REVISED LNR'S



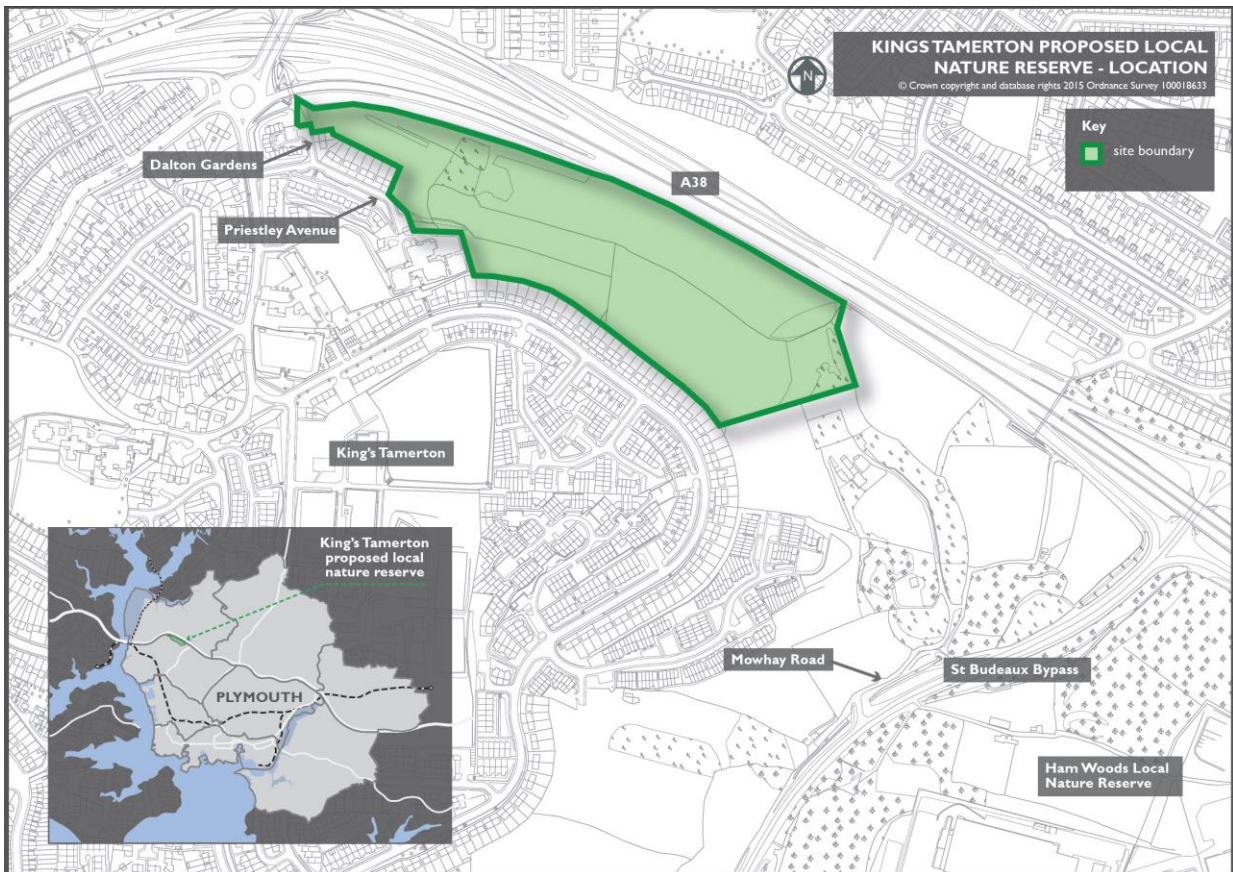
Map 1 – Location of proposed new LNR at Newnham Meadows, Plympton



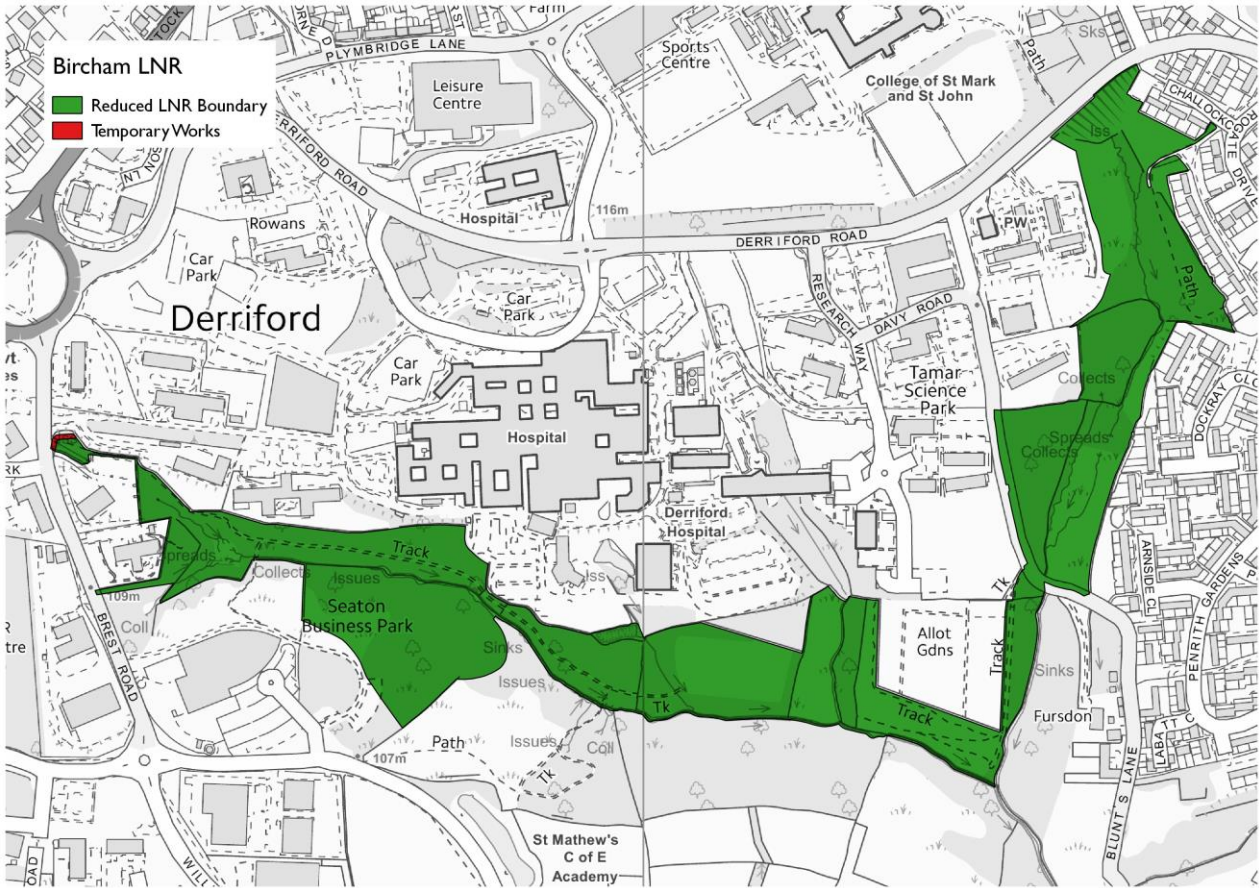
Map 2 – Location and footpath routes of proposed Lower Bircham and Seaton Valley LNR



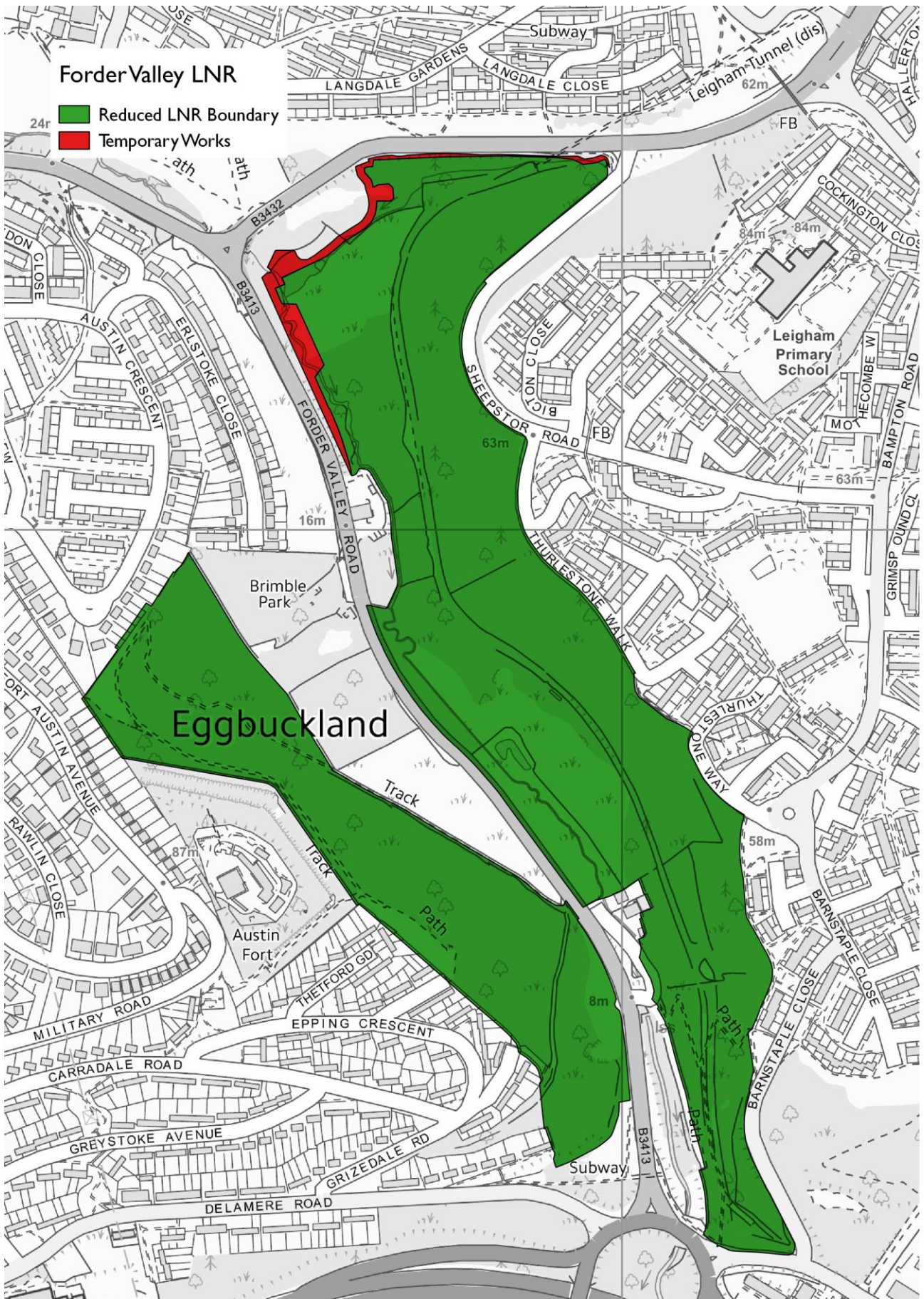
Map 3 – Location and boundary of proposed Lower Bircham and Seaton Valley LNR



Map 4 – Location and boundary of proposed Kings Tamerton Woods LNR



Map 5 – Revised boundary and temporary works area for Bircham Valley LNR



Map 6 – Revised boundary and temporary works area for Forder Valley LNR