Proof of Evidence – Richard Lacey:

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
The Definitive Map and Statement of
Public Rights of Way for Gloucestershire

Ref: ROW/3377321 - Additional Public Footpaths across land known as Verney Fields and Surrounding Area, Stonehouse Parish Modification Order 2025

&

Ref: & ROW/3365454 - Additional Public Footpath Connecting Oak Way and MST30, Stonehouse Parish Modification Order 2025

1. My name is Richard Lacey and during the period 2003-2023, I lived at [redacted] Rosedale Avenue, Stonehouse, GL10 2QH. I used the paths shown on the Order Plans, appended **RL1** (Verney Fields) & **RL2** (Oak Way) from March 2001. I am not related to the landowner or ever in their employ.

2. Growing up in the 1950's I used the fields leading to Doverow Woods along with many others as they offered clean, open safe spaces to relax and play both for children and families. The views are spectacular from the whole area and thus were popular with all generations. The chance to explore in Doverow Woods was exciting. We accessed from different pathways as living in Ryeford. My wife growing up in Cashes Green had the same experiences with her family. To my recollection there were never any signs or obstructions to prevent access and certainly because of our upbringing we would have obeyed any such notices.

3. It was very natural for me therefore when we moved to Rosedale Avenue to want to visit Doverow Woods regularly with my wife as a means of recreation and reflection. This naturally was invaluable during the Covid period and we saw many others who used their daily allowed time out on the paths and watching the resident owl in his tree at the edge of the Doverow Woods.

4. My wife and I, and occasionally Grandchildren, used the routes I have outlined in my submission and confirm that we walked these routes in the early evenings and weekends whilst I was still at work but at other times also when I retired right through the period in question. During those walks we regularly saw many walkers and families also enjoying the facility particularly at blackberry picking times along the route noted as H to G.

5. At no time did we witness any signs of vandalism or aggression, indeed the opposite as people we met were valuing the open spaces and the opportunity to reflect on their personal thoughts particularly on the bench by the oak tree which I believe is near point O. There were no barriers to prevent access, and we met Farmer Martin Fletcher, who I knew for many years, on occasions at the fields in question and he said that he was happy to see people using the fields as long as they didn't hinder his farming.

6. We walked the route indicated as H-G-U-T-Q-O very regularly as it gave us access to MST30 and Doverow Woods which we walked through and alongside using the various designated footpaths. It was used widely by others too for leisure, to pick blackberries and on rarer occasions the short slope around the position Q for sledging in snowy weather.

7. In addition to using this route to access Doverow Woods we also used this to join up with routes O-N at the top of Verney Road to complete a circular walk back to our home in Rosedale Avenue. My wife and I benefitted hugely from the physical and mental effect of walking these routes and having the opportunity to be in the open with extensive views and clean air.

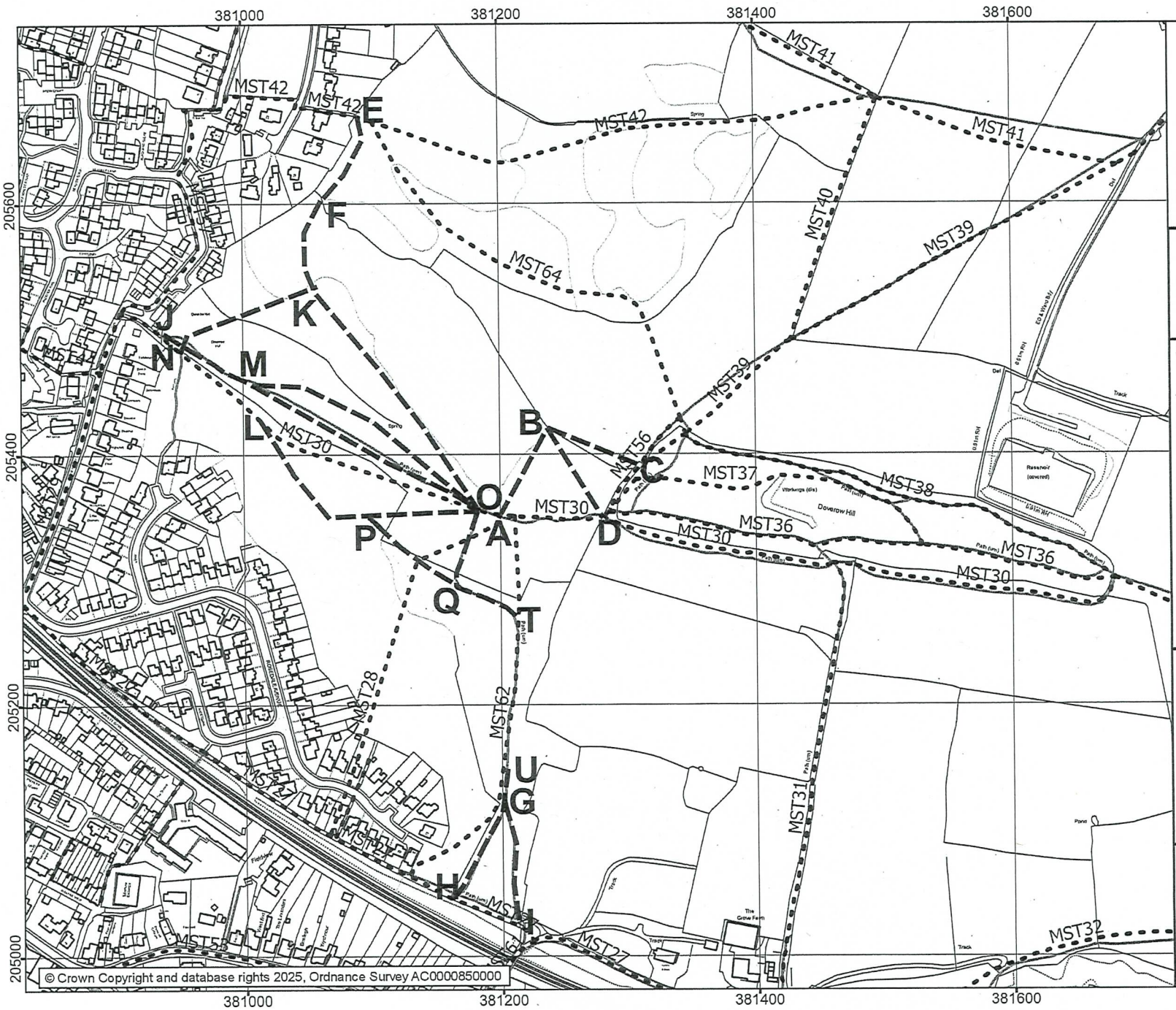
8. During part of the period in question, I was employed by Stonehouse Town Council as the Town Clerk. Part of my duties, as the Town Council was the custodian, meant that occasionally I had to visit Doverow Woods which was always a pleasure and I cannot recall any reports of issues made to the Council Office regarding restriction or denial of access to the fields during that time.

9. As a person of 77 who has lived in and around Stonehouse for 74 of those years I am always grateful for the opportunity to enjoy the freedom that these fields and Woods gave me in my life and would wish for others to have that privilege in the years to come.

10. I hereby declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief this is a true statement

Signature..... [redacted] **Date.....26/07/26.....**

RL1



ADDITIONAL PUBLIC FOOTPATHS ACROSS LAND KNOWN AS VERNEY FIELDS & SURROUNDING AREA, STONEHOUSE PARISH

DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDER 2025

Claimed footpaths:

A-B
B-D
B-C
E-F-K-O
O-Q-T
N-K
J-O
M-O
L-O
P-Q
U-H
G-I

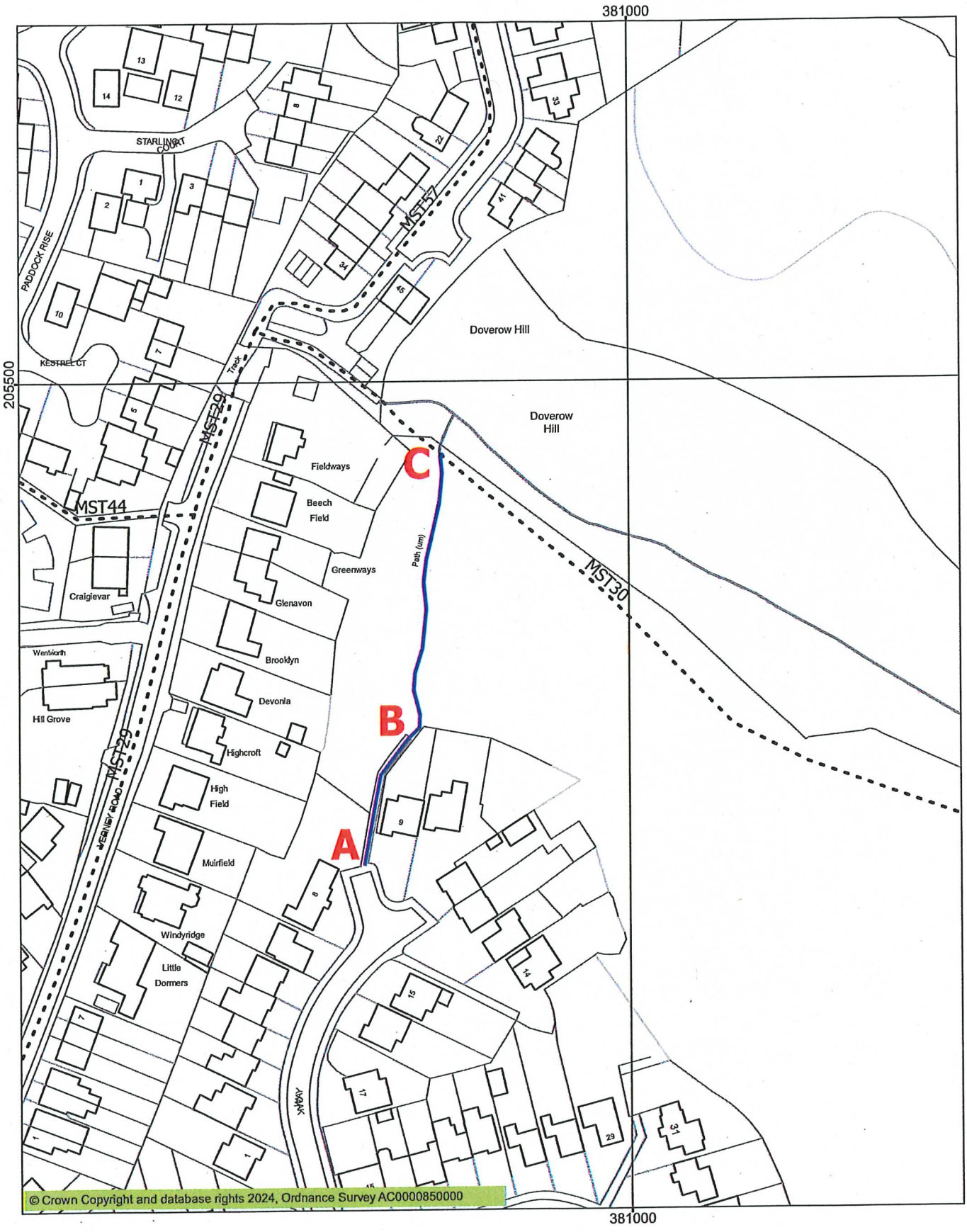
Public paths unaffected by this Order

Highway Records
Shire Hall, Westgate Street,
Gloucester GL1 2TG
Tel. 01452 328981
www.gloucestershire.gov.uk

Drawn by: J Harris
SCALE: 1:4,000
DATE: 08/01/2025

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RL2



Highway Records Shire Hall, Westgate Street, Gloucester GL1 2TG Tel. 01452 427969 www.gloucestershire.gov.uk	Drawn by: J Haworth SCALE: 1:1,250 DATE: 27 September	**CLAIMED ROUTE** **OAK WAY, STONEHOUSE PARISH** **(573/11/212(4))**

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Claimed Route ——————

Unaffected public rights of way - - - - - - - - - - - - - -