Landscape, Visual & Green Belt Statement

Newfields Farm BESS

Installation of battery storage compound, fencing, CCTV, access and associated infrastructure

On behalf of the Appellant, Newfields BESS Limited

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1. Author's Background and Particulars

1.1. The author of this Statement is Andrew Cook who holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Geography (BA Hons) and a Masters Degree in Landscape Design (MLD). He is a Chartered Landscape Architect, Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute (CMLI), Chartered Environmentalist (C Env) and Member of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (M IEMA).

1.2. He is one of the founding Executive Directors of Pegasus Group and the national head of Environment. Pegasus Group was established in 2003 and since then, the company has grown, establishing sixteen offices across the UK, employing approximately 350 planning and environmental planning professionals. The company is a corporate member of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) and was a founding member of IEMA's Quality Mark scheme, which he managed.

1.3. He has gained over 35 years of landscape planning consultancy experience. Prior to Pegasus, he was an Environmental Director at RPS (formerly Chapman Warren Planning Consultants) where he specialised in addressing landscape planning issues related to a wide range of development projects. He has considerable experience of and involvement in a wide range of renewable development and built infrastructure projects throughout the UK, many of which have involved sites in statutory protected National Landscapes including National Parks (NP), National Landscape (NL) formerly known as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and also as 'valued landscapes'. He has presented evidence at Public Inquiries and Hearings on many occasions to address various landscape and visual issues.

1.4. He is based in the Cirencester office of Pegasus Group where he manages a team of 32 environmental planners and landscape architects. The landscape architects within his entire team at Pegasus Group undertake their work in compliance with the Landscape Institute's Code of Standards of Conduct and Practice for Landscape Professionals.

1.5. This landscape statement is based on the author's professional judgement and is presented in accordance with the guidance of his professional institution the content of which is true to the best of his knowledge and belief and is presented irrespective of by whom he is instructed.

2. Introduction and Scope

Introduction

2.1. Pegasus are instructed on behalf of Newfields BESS Limited, (hereafter referred to as the 'Appellant'), to prepare a statement relating to landscape, visual, and Green Belt matters concerning the construction and operation of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), fencing, CCTV, access and associated infrastructure (the 'Proposals'). This statement forms an appendix to the Appellant's Statement of Case (the 'SoC').

2.2. The Proposals are located on land at Newfields Farm, Rownall Road, in the parish of Cheddleton, Staffordshire, ST9 0BS (the 'site') (please refer to **Figure 1**).

2.3. The background to the appeal is set out in full in the Applicant's overarching Statement of Case. The application was determined on 27th September 2024 with the Decision Notice citing a single Reason for Refusal (the 'RfR'):

> ***"1. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, the proposed development would result in inappropriate development within the Green Belt. The development would fail to preserve the openness of the Green Belt and would conflict with the purposes of including the land in the Green Belt through encroachment into the countryside. The harm to the Green Belt attracts substantial weight against the proposals.***
>
> ***There are also concerns regarding the overall cumulative effect of similar development in the area and the industrialisation of the landscape, increased risk of a safety incident in a localised area and wider environmental implications. The development would be prominent to the users of the adjacent public right of way (Cheddleton 48), due to insufficient landscaping and lack of information regarding maintenance arrangements for existing and proposed vegetation and would have a harmful effect on the visual amenities of the countryside.***
>
> ***The development has an unsustainable relationship with Newfields Farmhouse due to noise effects and, as such, requires its occupation to cease. The loss of housing stock, at a time when the Council cannot demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing is considered to weigh against the proposal.***
>
> ***The development would have only one point of access into the site through the farm buildings, contrary to guidance, which leads to concerns for fire service access and the overall safety of the site.***
>
> ***These factors all amount to additional harm which weigh against the proposed development. It is noted that there are other considerations which weigh in favour of the development. However, these do not clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and other harm identified above and, as such, very special circumstances do not exist.***
>
> ***The development is therefore contrary to Policies SS1, SS10, SD2, DC1, DC3, C3, and NE1 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted September 2020) and the guidance contained within National Planning Policy Framework."***

Scope of this Statement

2.4. In setting out our representation we explain why in landscape, visual, and Green Belt terms the proposed scheme is considered acceptable, given the character of the site, the surrounding development context, and the Green Belt context. The overall planning balance is covered by the Appellant in their Statement of Case.

2.5. In line with the SoC (**CD3.4**) this statement sets out the following:

- how the character of the site, coupled with the existing vegetation, temporary and reversible nature of the scheme, and proposed planting mitigate the harm;
- that the site and its locality are not a 'valued' landscape;
- effects on landscape elements within the site;
- effects on landscape character;
- effects on visual amenity;
- effects on residential visual amenity;
- cumulative effects;
- legacy benefits of the proposed planting and its positive contribution to the local landscape;
- the site is considered Grey Belt land, with specific reference to Green Belt purposes (a), (b), and (d);
- Green Belt openness.

2.6. In short, this landscape statement explains how the proposal would affect landscape elements, landscape character and visual amenity, and in particular how these aspects relate to the sense of openness and the Green Belt purposes.

2.7. In preparing this representation, the author has reviewed the relevant documents submitted as part of the planning application, the report to committee, and the Decision Notice.

2.8. Where appropriate this statement draws upon relevant information from the above documents. However, in the interests of brevity, we do not unnecessarily state detailed amounts of information where this has been previously documented.

2.9. A site visit was undertaken in October 2024 to inform this statement. Assessment in the field, including from representative viewpoint locations, were made to ensure that the maximum visibility scenario was considered when deciduous vegetation was not in leaf.

Representative Viewpoints and Visualisations

2.10. It is considered that the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA, **CD**) photography and those appended to this statement are representative of views available from publicly accessible locations in the landscape surrounding the site. It is anticipated that the Inspector will visit these representative viewpoints and use all the visuals that have been provided.

2.11. It should be recognised that it is not practical to include viewpoints from every possible location. The viewpoints which have been selected illustrate a range of visual receptors at different distances and directions from the site. The locations of the viewpoints have been

carefully considered, and the photography has been undertaken when atmospheric conditions and visibility were good.

2.12. The representative viewpoints and visualisations have been prepared mindful of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition (GLVIA3) and other Landscape Institute guidance (i.e. TGN 06/19) relevant at the time of production; however, it is recognised that there is no substitute for visiting the viewpoints in the field to gain a first-hand appreciation of the viewing context.

2.13. With this information, the Case Officer was fully informed of the visual implications of the proposal.

Ryder Landscape Consultants Review

2.14. Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC) appointed Ryder Landscape Consultants (RLC) to consider the submitted scheme and supporting documents in February 2024. In particular, RLC were appointed to review the landscape and visual aspects of the submitted planning application. The review was issued on 7th May 2024.

2.15. In response, Pegasus issued a written statement to address several of the points made by RLC. This report also included a further cumulative assessment in relation to addition cumulative schemes that had come forward since the submission of the LVIA.

2.16. The Pegasus response noted that the RLC comments comprise a standalone review of the site, the Proposals, and the likely landscape and visual impacts. The comments do not include a review of the submitted LVIA.

2.17. The Pegasus response noted that there were some minor variations to the conclusions reached; however, this was determined to be a matter of limited differences in professional judgements only, relating to landscape/visual receptor sensitivity and magnitude of impact (and the extent to which these influence the subsequent assessment of effects), the overall assessments of landscape and visual effects were considered to be broadly in alignment. Some of the effects in the RLC comments were lower than those in the submitted LVIA. It was not considered that any of these differences were material (Paragraph 6.4).

2.18. The Pegasus review of additional cumulative effects concluded Moderate adverse effects to a limited number of receptors (Paragraph 6.6). The report notes that these cumulative effects would reduce over time following maturation of the mitigation planting proposals and reiterates that the comparatively small scale of the Proposals (in comparison to many of the cumulative sites), immediately adjacent to the Cellarhead substation, ensures that they would be noticeably less visible in the local landscape than many of the other cumulative schemes.

2.19. Together, the combination of the submitted LVIA and the Pegasus review are considered a comprehensive assessment of the landscape and visual effects that concluded limited residual effects overall. This level of effect was subsequently taken forward to the consideration of the overall planning balance by SMDC.

Committee Report

2.20. The Committee Report (the 'CR') considers Green Belt matters at Paragraphs 7.4-7.23, and landscape and visual matters at Paragraphs 7.63-9.90.

2.21. At Paragraph 7.13 the CR notes that ***"the development would be visible from the local public right of way network. Visibility of the site would vary to some degree depending on location of the receptor, nonetheless from some vantage points the development would be prominent. This may be tempered by some degree by its proximity to the Cellarhead substation, and existing farm buildings. Nonetheless, there would result a visual erosion to the openness of the Green Belt"***.

2.22. At Paragraphs 7.18 the CR determines that ***"the development would also conflict with the purposes of including the land within the Green Belt due to failing to safeguard the countryside from encroachment"***. Importantly, the other four purposes are not referenced in the CR or the RfR, and it is therefore concluded that, in the Officer's opinion, the Appeal Scheme would not conflict with them.

2.23. Consideration of landscape, visual and cumulative effects is summarised at Paragraph 7.89 of the CR:

> ***"... it is inevitable that a development of this nature, scale and location will have some adverse landscape and visual effects, particularly in the short term. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that this would add further energy related infrastructure into the wider receiving landscape. This weighs against the development. However, it is acknowledged that the proposals are well contained and represent a rounding off of the Cellarhead sub-station parameters, without being prominent on the landscape from a wide range of vantage points. The proposals do not affect, but work with, existing landscape structure. Through mitigation any residual harm is likely to be limited and localised. Ultimately this is a temporary development and a reversible project and after decommissioning there could be some landscape improvement. All of these factors limit the extent of landscape harm."*** (Author's emphasis)

2.24. Consequently, at Paragraph 7.90, the CR determines that the landscape and visual harm can be mitigated at through the proposed planting in the longer-term, and that this mitigation can be secured through a suitably worded planning condition.

2.25. When considering the overall planning balance at Paragraph 8.4, the CR makes the following observation:

> ***"In this instance, it is considered that other harm would arise by reason of the inevitable landscape and visual impacts of the development, along with the slight cumulative effect to the landscape in the area generally, with other approvals. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that the extent of harm is reduced by the relatively modest scale of the proposals, and its close relationship with existing built form. Together, these limit the overall landscape effects. Furthermore, a landscaping strategy for the site would make the effects more acceptable in the medium to longer term, while the development could be seen to be reversible. Together, these factors mean that the additional harm, in planning terms, would add slight weight against the development."*** (Author's emphasis)

2.26. At Paragraph 8.9, the CR also notes that the site lies immediately adjacent to the Cellarhead substation complex, and this direct access allows the scheme to be implemented without the need for additional overground or underground infrastructure. The CR states ***"this is an optimum location for a development of this nature, whilst also limiting the wider environmental effects on the landscape"***.

Professional Judgement

2.27. The assessment was based on winter views, representing the worst-case scenario in terms of visibility with the site.

2.28. The degree of landscape or visual effect is identified by means of a descriptive scale as per the GLVIA3 guidance. However, it is also necessary to consider the nature of the landscape and visual effects. GLVIA3 assists by noting that with regard to landscape effects paragraph 5.37 states that:

> ***"One of the more challenging issues is deciding whether the landscape effects should be categorised as positive or negative. It is also possible for effects to be neutral in their consequences for the landscape. An informed professional judgement should be made about this and the criteria used in reaching the judgement should be clearly stated. They might include, but should not be restricted to:***
>
> ***The degree to which the proposal fits with existing character.***
>
> ***The contribution to the landscape that the development may make its own right, usually by virtue of good design, even if it is in contrast to existing character.***
>
> ***The importance of perceptions of landscape is emphasised by the European Landscape Convention, and others may of course hold different opinions on whether the effects are positive or negative, but this is not a reason to avoid making this judgement, which will ultimately be weighed against the opinions of others in the decision-making process."***

2.29. With regard to visual effects, paragraph 6.29 states that:

> ***"As with landscape effects an informed professional judgement should be made as to whether the visual effects can be described as positive or negative (or in some cases neutral) in their consequences for views and visual amenity. This will need to be based on a judgement about whether the changes will affect the quality of the visual experience for those groups of people who will see the changes, given the nature of the existing views."***

2.30. In this instance and for the purposes of this statement, the effects upon the landscape are specifically considered in terms of effect upon firstly landscape elements and secondly landscape character which considers the combinations of landscape elements. The statement also sets out how the proposal would have a bearing upon the general visual amenity associated with the area.

2.31. The proposed design includes Green Infrastructure which would be in character and in keeping with the rural area. We are aware that people on the whole generally adopt an adverse reaction to change, particularly with regard to their local environments, with which they are very familiar irrespective of whether it's harmful or indeed beneficial. We have

adopted a precautionary approach here and as such, we consider that the proposed BESS facility would be adverse in terms of the nature of effect in visual terms unless otherwise stated. There would be beneficial effects for some landscape elements.

2.32. The author of this statement has reviewed the LVIA report prepared by Pegasus as part of the application. Notwithstanding this, the author has undertaken his own assessment as to how the scheme would have an effect upon landscape elements, landscape character and visual amenity. This assessment is based on a methodology which is set out in **Appendix 1**, to this statement. In undertaking this exercise, there are some differences between the analysis in this statement and that of the LVIA. Overall conclusions are not dissimilar.

3. Description of the Proposal

Introduction

3.1. The application seeks planning permission to construct a BESS on agricultural land. The actual land take of the energy storage element of the development would be smaller than the full site area and not all the land within the site area would accommodate the BESS compound. Within the main compound (i.e. not including the access road from Rownall Road) the Proposals amount to approximately 37.5% of the area with the remaining 62.5% undeveloped as soft landscape.

3.2. The Proposals would be a temporary use of the land, as the equipment would be removed, and the land returned to its former condition when the development is decommissioned 40-years from the date of the first export of electricity to the electrical grid. Full details of the Proposals are set out within the SoC. This is not repeated here, however, a further description of the approach to the landscape design for the site is included.

3.3. The site lies *immediately* adjacent to the Cellarhead substation complex. This direct access means that the scheme can be implemented without the need for additional overground or underground infrastructure. On this basis, SMDC acknowledged in the CR (Paragraph 8.9. **CD**) that the site represents an optimum location for a development of this nature, whilst also limiting the wider environmental effects on the landscape. Importantly, the Appellant also has a connection agreement with National Grid. The Proposals are therefore not speculative and can delivered in a reasonable timeframe

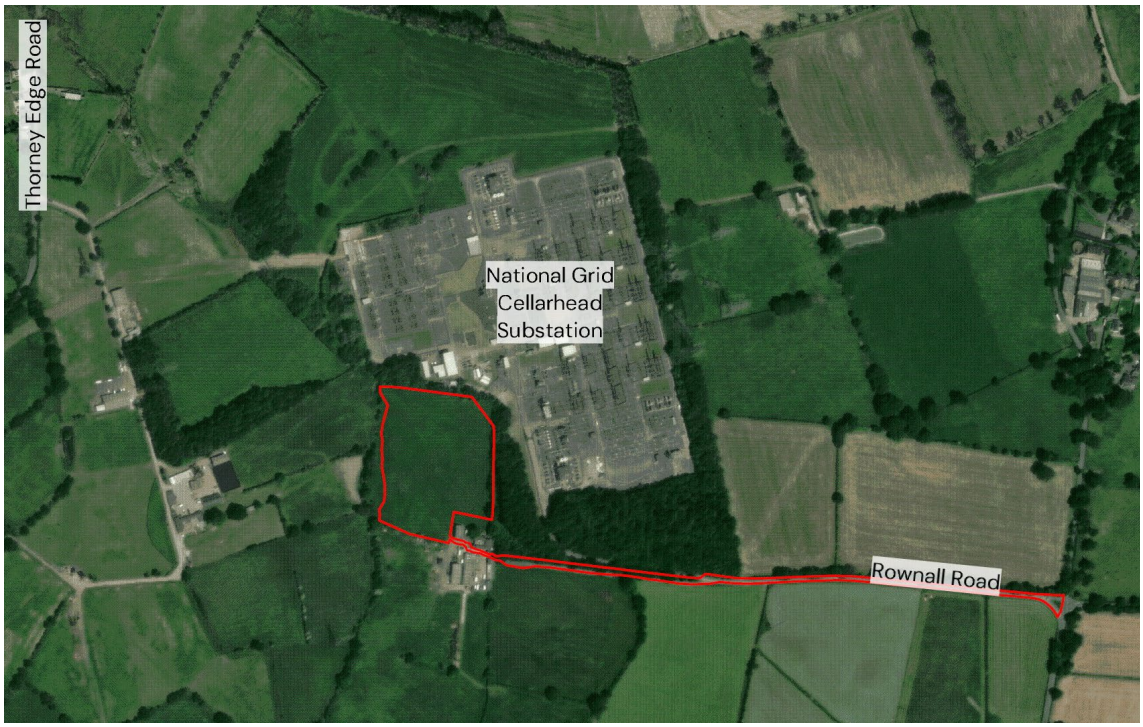


Figure 1: Aerial plan of the site

3.4. The Proposals comprises the installation and operation of a Battery Electricity Storage System (BESS), including:

- battery units (similar in appearance to shipping containers);
- inverter/transformers;
- control buildings and switch rooms;
- 132kV/33kV switchyard and connection to the Cellarhead substation and national high voltage transmission network;
- access roads, compound fencing, and an acoustic fence to the south and south-eastern sides of the compound (up to switchyard);
- 3m high bund around the western and south-western edges of the compound;
- structural landscape planting comprising woodland and woodland edge / scrub; and
- a new hedgerow along PRoW Cheddleton 48 parallel to the eastern boundary separating the BESS compound area from the footpath corridor.

Opportunities and Constraints

3.5. The following constraints were identified by the LVIA:

- Existing planting around (but beyond) the boundaries of the site. This planting may require stand offs in terms of root / canopy protection;
- Several PRoW's in the vicinity of the site from which the local context can be experienced, and where users would be subject to visual impacts; and
- A few local viewpoints

3.6. The following opportunities for the site were identified:

- Immediate enclosure within the local landscape provided by the existing Cellarhead substation to the north and east with its existing large-scale electricity transmission infrastructure elements and the Newfield farmstead to the south;
- Existing field boundary vegetation and tree belts surrounding the substation adjoining and in close proximity to the site providing the basis for a strong Green Infrastructure framework extending into the site; and
- The low-lying topography of the surrounding landscape, and the absence of notable high points and associated longer distance views.

3.7. The Opportunities and constraints analysis was subsequently used to inform the design process, and to implement a mitigation strategy that minimises and/or avoids potential impacts. The mitigation proposals are therefore embedded, and integral to, the proposals.

Landscape Strategy

3.8. The vision for the proposals, includes Green Infrastructure that would provide a strengthened network to reinforce the character of the local landscape. The landscape strategy before this hearing also benefits from input from Ryder Landscape Consultants (RLC) where appropriate.

3.9. The overarching principles for the landscape strategy include:

- Conserve and enhance the surrounding landscape character beyond the site boundaries by minimising off-site visibility;
- Maximize the benefits for assimilating the Proposals with the existing landscape features and elements immediately surrounding the site;
- Optimise protection and screening for visual receptors (including the interface with the countryside to the south and west).

3.10. The landscape strategy is illustrated at **Figure 7 - Strategic Landscape Planting Plan**, which has been updated to include some minor design changes, most notably the removal of the acoustic fence at the top of the bund, and to incorporate some design recommendations from RLC:

Figure 2: Landscape Masterplan

3.11. The landscape strategy includes several key elements:

- Distribution of the proposed structural landscaping is designed to integrate with the existing woodland and tree belts which surround the Cellarhead substation, to maximise habitat connectivity and to minimise visibility of the Proposals;

- Creation of a 3m height earth bund around the western and south-western extents of the Proposals, which would be planted with native trees and shrubs. The bund would raise the height of the proposed tree and shrub planting on these sides and thereby enhance their effectiveness in the shorter term. The bund would be created with no greater than a 1 in 5 gradient on the outer face. Soils would also be spread at the foot of the bund to graduate the base of its slope into the immediately surrounding landform to achieve closest possible integration of the earthworks with the local gently undulating topography;

- The woodland planting would be fringed where appropriate with predominantly shrub/scrub planting to create a graduated woodland edge to the new structural planting block for both visual graduation and habitat structure;

- Planting to the north and south of the main engineering area would also be implemented to integrate with the proposed woodland and contributing to a reduction in visibility of the structures within the BESS compound;

- The structural landscaping strategy would also serve to provide some softening or screening of built elements at the existing Cellarhead substation, primarily in views looking towards the site from the south and west; and

- New hedgerow planting would be included to run in parallel with PRoW Cheddleton 48 and the eastern boundary, creating a corridor along the footpath route where it passes between the Proposals and the existing Cellarhead substation, offering some visual screening of the BESS compound.

3.12. The above landscape strategy responds to and reflects design practice in the National Design Guide (updated January 2021).

3.13. At a macro level, the proposed Green Infrastructure ensures that the Proposals would:

- Conserve and reinforce local landscape character;
- Protect and enhance existing Green Infrastructure assets namely the trees and hedgerows so that they can be appreciated and valued by everyone for future generations;
- Protect and create habitats to enable biodiversity habitats and flora and fauna species to thrive; and
- Provide a resilient and adaptive environment in the face of climate change.

3.14. No permanent operational lighting required at the site. Manually operated lights may be attached to the substation, batteries and inverter/transformer stations in the event of an emergency maintenance visit being required in the hours of darkness.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

3.15. The enhancement of the biodiversity of the site is demonstrated through the biodiversity net gain calculation which confirms that the biodiversity would be improved with an approximate net gain of +99% for habitats and +12.78% for hedgerows which would be delivered through the implementation of the Proposals.

Decommissioning

3.16. The Proposals comprise a range of energy storage plant and equipment including energy storage units, inverters, transformers and associated equipment, access tracks and grid connection compound. All of the infrastructure associated with the Proposals, including the construction and maintenance tracks would be removed as part of the decommissioning stage to ensure that the green field site as a pastoral field reverts back to its original state prior to construction.

3.17. The mitigation and enhancement planting including the hedgerows, trees and shrubs would remain in place. Where the built form is removed, the land will be reinstated as grassland to reflect the existing pastoral fields in the locality. The landowner post-decommissioning would have the opportunity to either continue to practice pastoral farming or convert to arable use where such decisions do not require any planning permission.

4. Effect on Landscape Elements

Introduction

4.1. This section of the statement therefore assesses the effects on those landscape elements (features) that currently characterise the site itself. It particularly considers the introduction of the new elements that make up the scheme and how these will physically affect the existing features present within the site. It also explains why the scheme would in overall terms result in a beneficial effect as far as some landscape elements are concerned.

Topography

4.2. The site falls gently from south-east to north-west, with elevations of approx. 230m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) in the south-east corner and approx. 225m AOD in the north-west (as illustrated by the **Topography Plan** at **Figure 3**).

4.3. There would be changes to the gradual fall of the land within the eastern part of the site, whereby cut and fill would create a generally level platform for the BESS within the central part of the site. To the north-west, west, and south-west the levels would be raised to form a 3m height bund which would tie in with the wider gradient of the field. The proposed level changes are illustrated by the **Cut and Fill Plan** and Landscape Sections (at **Figure 8**). The susceptibility of the topography to the type of development proposed is considered to be Medium which combined with a Medium value, would result in a Medium sensitivity.

4.4. Changes to the topographic profile would generally be reversible and would be localised to the extent of the site. It is considered that the overall magnitude of change to the ground profile of the site would be Medium. With a Medium sensitivity and a Medium magnitude of change, the overall effect on the topography would be **Moderate** (adverse).

Vegetation Pattern

4.5. Field boundaries are a mix of hedgerows and trees. Hedgerow trees are of variable frequency, in places almost continuous and rarely completely absent. Field sizes are typically small to medium, occasionally larger, with predominantly rectilinear boundaries.

4.6. Mature screen belts enclose the Cellarhead substation on three sides, including adjacent to the site. There are several small woodlands around Bagnall and to the north-east of Rownall, with more extensive areas at Consall Wood (to the east), and to the north of Caverswall and Dilhorne (to the south).

4.7. The site's northern, eastern and western boundaries generally comprise mature landscaping of hedgerows and/or trees. Overall, the susceptibility of the boundary vegetation to the Proposals is considered to be Medium and with a Medium value, resulting in a Medium sensitivity.

4.8. As indicated by the **Strategic Landscape Planting Plan** (at **Figure 7**), the existing boundary vegetation would be further strengthened with new indigenous tree and shrub species. The proposed planting is judged to deliver a Low magnitude of change, which would result in a **Minor** (beneficial) degree of effect at Year 1. The magnitude of change would increase to Medium at Year 15, leading to a **Moderate** (beneficial) effect.

Land Cover / Land Use

4.9. There would be an inevitable change to the existing land cover in the part of the site where the proposed built form would be situated. Currently, the land cover within the site comprises permanent pasture, used for grazing livestock. For the duration of the proposals, the grass ward within the site would be lost to accommodate built elements such as the access track and the BESS units themselves.

4.10. No land will be permanently lost as a result of the proposals. Only a small area for access tracks and the BESS units would be temporarily lost whilst the scheme is operational, but this land would be restored on decommissioning. The installation and decommissioning process would not have any significant or long-term adverse effects on soils subject to the proposal following good practice.

4.11. With a Medium susceptibility and Medium value, the land use sensitivity is assessed as Medium. The magnitude of change is assessed as medium, resulting in a **Moderate** (adverse) degree of effect (temporary)

Public Rights of Way

4.12. In terms of public rights of way (PRoWs), public footpaths Cheddleton 60 and Cheddleton 48 run east-west and north-south along the site's southern and eastern boundaries respectively. Cheddleton 60 passes along the southern edge of the field containing the Proposals and continues west, and Cheddleton 48 follows the eastern boundaries of the field, between the site and the Cellarhead substation, before crossing into the woodland surrounding the substation before turning north. At the time of the field survey, parts of PRoW Cheddleton 48 were more or less impassable due to overgrown vegetation, suggesting that the route is not regularly used.

Water Features

4.13. The public rights of way are of hight susceptibility, value and sensitivity. None of the adjacent public footpath would be physically affected as a resource as a consequence of the development and as such there would be no magnitude of change and therefore no degree of effect. In other words, all the public rights of way would remain unaffected by the proposals. The visual amity aspect experience by user of this route is a separately addressed in section 6 of this statement.

4.14. There are no water features on site, and none would be effected in the locality. With a high susceptibility, value and sensitivity combined with no magnitude of change there would be no degree of effect with regard to water features.

Summary of Effects upon Landscape Elements

4.15. In overall terms, the scheme would result in some beneficial effects with regard to the landscape elements that currently define the landscape character of the site, which would change from fields with pastoral and arable use to a BESS scheme occupying part of the field, set within grassland and structural vegetation. However, the elements that currently contribute to defining the character of the site, namely trees and hedgerows would be retained and enhanced to form a more robust framework of landscape elements, albeit set within the context of a BESS scheme.

4.16. It is also worth reiterating that the Proposals can be described as long-term in nature (i.e., 40 years), with the land cover being temporary; meaning that it will be possible for the land to be returned to its previous agricultural use. BESS developments are characterised by their low profile and reversible nature. The timescale of up to 40-years is similar to some other elements in the landscape such as timber crop production.

4.17. The Proposals are time-limited for up to 40-years and therefore following the decommissioning stage, all infrastructure would be removed. However, all the new planting introduced would be retained, having matured along with the ongoing management and maintenance of the other retained features and consequently there would be a clear beneficial legacy from this project in terms of landscape elements, reflecting historic field boundaries which also collectively would enhance landscape character as advocated in the published Landscape Character Assessments.

4.18. Indeed, the Inspector in the Land West of Honiley decision concluded that ***"whilst the proposal would alter the character and appearance of the area during the lifetime of the development, this would be reasonably mitigated through the use of landscaping that would be in-keeping with that found in the locality"***. It is the Appellant's view that this is also the case in this instance.

4.19. The scheme would result in some beneficial effects on the landscape elements within the site.

5. Effect on Landscape Character

5.1. The site is located in the following landscape character types/areas (LCTs/LCAs) as illustrated by **LVIA Figure 4 - Landscape Character**:

- National Character Area (NCA) 64: Potteries and Churnet Valley[1]; and
- Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment of Staffordshire Moorlands (2008)[2].

National Landscape Character

5.2. The site occupies approximately 0.005% of **NCA64: Potteries and Churnet Valley**, hence the key characteristics of the NCA are considered to be of only limited relevance to this assessment. Those characteristics which do relate to the site and its environs include:

- ***"Dissected hills and small plateaux, cut by river valleys and steep ravines, contrast with the industrial and densely settled conurbation of the Potteries;***
- ***Sandstones from the Millstone Grit Group and Coal Measures produce prominent, roughly north–south ridges. Softer mudstones with poorly drained and seasonally waterlogged soils and peaty soils form the intervening moorland plateaux, and mudstones and siltstones from the Triassic Mercia Mudstone Group underlie the generally lower-lying ground on the margins of the Needwood Basin;***
- ***The well-wooded character throughout the Churnet Valley contrasts strongly with the urban, sparsely wooded landscapes of the Potteries. Many of the woodlands in the south consist of conifer plantations managed for commercial forestry;***
- ***Agriculture is predominantly permanent pasture for grazing and stock rearing with some dairying; flatter areas are used for silage production and some arable cropping in the south, mainly cereals;***
- ***… there is heathland on higher ground and significant areas of open mosaic habitat on restored industrial land within urban areas;***
- ***There is a contrast between the settlement pattern of valley-bottom villages with scattered farmsteads and hamlets on the valley slopes in the east and the sprawling conurbation of the Potteries in the west; and***
- ***Major transport infrastructure includes several A roads (A34, A50 and A52) and the Stoke-on-Trent to London railway. The Caldon Canal and Trent and Mersey Canal link the conurbation with the Churnet Valley."***

[1] NCA Profile: 64 Potteries and Churnet Valley - NE509
[2] Landscape_and_Settlement_Character_Assessment.pdf

5.3. All of these key characteristics would remain and prevail with the scheme in place. It is also noted that the following Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEO) are identified in the description of the NCA:

> ***"SEO 1: Manage, expand, link and buffer the characteristic semi-natural woodland and protect the ancient woodland, for example in the Churnet Valley, reducing habitat fragmentation to benefit landscape character, biodiversity, resource protection and regulation; and enhancing the recreational and experiential qualities of the NCA.***
>
> ***SEO 3: Manage and expand areas of characteristic unimproved grassland pastures in the Churnet Valley and heathland and moorland of the Staffordshire Moorlands, reducing habitat fragmentation and restoring traditional boundary features to benefit landscape character, sense of place, biodiversity and resource protection while enhancing the recreational and experiential qualities…"*** (Author's emphasis)

5.4. The proposed development retains and enhances the existing field boundaries with an increase in the tree and woodland cover, and the addition of new hedgerows to reinstate former field boundaries within this site. The proposals respond positively to the above Statements of Environmental Opportunity SEO1 and SEO3.

5.5. Furthermore, the field pattern, hedgerows and hedgerow trees and the grain of the landscape would all remain in place, albeit that there would be internal changes to land cover and topography. There would be no net loss of any features other than the current grassland within part of the site. In character terms, beyond the site and its immediate environs, there would be no material change to the physical and experiential characteristics of the landscape.

5.6. This Natural England assessment is inevitably a high-level character assessment, but it provides a useful overview to understand the character of the local and wider landscape and its surroundings. To complete a more detailed appraisal of potential landscape and visual issues, reference has been made to the published landscape character assessment prepared at a finer grain and more local scale.

5.7. All of the key characteristics identified above would remain and prevail beyond the site itself with the BESS development in place and landscape effects would be **Negligible** (adverse).

District Landscape Character

5.8. The *Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment of Staffordshire Moorlands (2008)* locates the site within the **Ancient Plateau Farmlands LCT**. The wider context also includes the Ancient Slope and Valley Farmlands LCT, encompassing land broadly to the north and east within 1km of the site, and the Settled Plateau Farmlands LCT to the south of Werrington.

5.9. The key characteristics of Ancient Plateau Farmlands LCT include:

- ***"Gentle undulating landform with some steep slopes;***
- ***Heathland including wet heath with rushes and rough grasses;***
- ***Drystone walls with remains of unmanaged hedgerows and isolated trees;***
- ***Fields often demarcated by fencing;***

- ***Dairy farming and horse grazing;***
- ***Small woodlands, broadleaf and conifer;***
- ***Isolated stone farmhouses and buildings converted to residential dwellings; and***
- ***Electricity power lines and substation."***

5.10. All of these key characteristics would remain and prevail with the scheme in place

5.11. The Cellarhead substation and associated steel-lattice pylons are specifically noted both as landscape detractors and as a key planning and management issue: ***"Power lines and electricity substation are dominant incongruous features within the landscape"***.

5.12. The landscape is said to be in decline and in need of restoration: ***"Urban fringe pressures have had a particularly adverse impact on the landscape quality of this area due to the proliferation of incongruous features and the deteriorating condition of existing landscape features"***.

5.13. Landscape planning guidelines include:

- ***"Planting should be used to screen the conurbation edge and other intrusive and incongruous urban features;***
- ***Where new development is proposed, the edge of the development and public open spaces associated with it should contain appropriate tree and shrub planting to reduce the visual impact of the development and to enable it to be more readily assimilated into the landscape."***

5.14. Land management guidelines include:

- ***"Ancient/semi-natural broad-leaved woodland: It is highly important to the character and quality of the landscape that degraded ancient/semi-natural broad-leaved woodlands are restored and that new woodlands should be recreated or regenerated.***
- ***Hedgerows: It is highly important that ancient and diverse hedgerows, particularly the hedgerow trees along them, are maintained and managed. Where hedgerows are planted or restored it is important that they should be species rich reflecting local indigenous hedge mixes and that the plants where possible should be grown locally. Consideration should be given to how the current practice of the erection of stock proof fencing rather than maintenance and management of hedgerows can be checked and the retention and maintenance of hedgerows be encouraged."***

Analysis of the Predicted Effects on the Site & its Surroundings

5.15. The site lies immediately adjacent to the existing Cellarhead substation, and this represents an urbanising feature in the immediate context to the site. Elsewhere within the surrounding landscape, multiple steel-lattice pylons supporting the high voltage powerlines which connect the substation to the national grid are prominent in many views.

5.16. The settlement pattern in the landscape surrounding the site comprises mainly individual farmstead and residential properties, sometimes grouped into small hamlets. The larger villages of Werrington and Cellarhead lie approximately 1.2km to the south of the site, and the village of Bagnall lies approximately 2.2km to the north-west. The larger conurbation of Stoke-on-Trent lies to the west of the site, with the nearest suburbs being approximately 3km from the site. The Newfields Farmhouse is currently not occupied and forms part of the same landownership.

5.17. The main road (the A52) is on the southern edge of Werrington and Cellarhead, approximately 1.4km to the south, with the A520 heading north from the A52 to the east of Cellarhead. A network of minor roads connects the various farmsteads, individual residential properties and settlements. There are no railway lines in the vicinity of the site.

5.18. The detailed evaluation undertaken by the LVIA confirmed that the immediate context to the site shared a number of characteristics identified in the published baseline landscape character assessments described above, particularly the district-level assessment. Key characteristics of the site and its immediate context, including those considered to be consistent with published guidance include:

- Gently undulating topography;
- Remnant hedgerow field boundaries often replaced by post and wire fences;
- Small blocks/belts of woodland (inc. those surrounding the Cellarhead substation);
- Pastoral farmland is the main land use, though in many places this is now replaced by horsiculture as a form of farm diversification;
- Farmyards also used for caravan storage (e.g., Newfields Farm and Armshead Farm), with the light colours of the caravans being prominent in the landscape; and
- The existing Cellarhead substation and associated steel-lattice pylons dominate the immediate context to the site, forming strong landscape detractors in many existing views towards the site.

5.19. At Paragraph 5.13, the LVIA determines the landscape value of the site and the and local landscape context relevant. The considerations and professional judgements used to determine value ranking were summarised in a table that made reference to GLVIA3, page 84, Box 5.1 and to LI TGN 02/21.

5.20. The LVIA concluded that the site had a Medium – Low value, whilst the adjacent Cellarhead substation was judged to be of Low value. Whilst these rankings are considered fair and consistent with the applied methodology, the author considers that the site also shares characteristics and features with the wider surrounding countryside. It is considered the site has a medium susceptibility value and sensitivity.

5.21. The LVIA considers the site's ability to accommodate change without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline condition, known as the susceptibility of the host landscape, at Paragraphs 5.15-5.18. The LVIA concludes that the site is considered to have a Medium – Low susceptibility to development of the type proposed due to the limited intervisibility and the nature of the immediate context. It is the author's professional

judgment that the site has a medium susceptibility, given its relationship to the Cellarhead substation and the enclosure provided by the existing boundary vegetation.

5.22. On balance, it is the authors professional judgement that the site and its surrounding context has a Medium susceptibility to the type of development proposed, and consequently a Medium sensitivity. The wider Ancient Plateau Farmlands LCT is considered to be of Medium sensitivity.

5.23. Construction effects would include initial ground clearance, earthworks, and activities associated with the installation of energy infrastructure. This process will also include the implementation of temporary measures such as site hoardings, temporary fencing and peripheral vegetation and tree protection measures. The impacts associated with these activities would be temporary.

5.24. The magnitude of change would be medium and with a medium sensitivity would result in a moderate and adverse effect with regard to the site itself.

Sounding area beyond the site

5.25. Direct physical effects on the character of the Ancient Plateau Farmlands LCT would be limited to the site itself, although perceptual effects would extend into the surrounding local landscape to the south and west to a very limited extent (given the dominating influence of the Cellarhead substation to the north and east). The combination of undulating topography and consecutive layers of field boundary vegetation ensures that perceptual (predominantly visual) effects would generally be localised. The existing substation is already visible in areas where these perceptual effects would be felt, and the proposals would not therefore result in change to the LCT's overriding character.

5.26. With a Medium susceptibility value and sensitivity and a Negligible magnitude of change, the predicted effect on the wider Ancient Plateau Farmlands LCT, is judged to be **Negligible** (adverse) beyond the site. The proposed BESS would introduce some structures in the form of energy storage infrastructure, but the facility would not be perceived as a major feature into the wider landscape given the site's relationship with the existing Cellarhead substation and would therefore have a negligible effect.

5.27. Following decommissioning at the end of a permission, the site would be returned to its current condition; however, the landscape enhancements would remain. There would be Minor to Moderate long-term benefits to the local landscape character arising from the mitigation measures, the enhancements to the landscape elements, and biodiversity within the site.

Summary

5.28. In overall terms, it is considered that there would be a **Moderate** (adverse) effect upon the landscape character of the site itself following the introduction of the proposals. The level of effect would reduce to **Minor** (adverse) over time as the proposed planting reaches maturity. No off-site works are required. The physical character of the surrounding landscape would remain and prevail materially unchanged with the Proposals in place.

5.29. The hedgerows would be reinforced with further hedgerow planting and the tree cover resource associated with the site would also be reinforced with additional tree and woodland planting. The hedgerows would be managed so that their density and longevity is promoted.

5.30. Beyond the immediate environs of the site, the effects upon landscape character of the area would be **Negligible.**

5.31. Upon completion of the decommissioning phase, all energy storage infrastructure would be removed both above and below ground across the entirety of the site. The management and growth of the hedgerows and trees across the site would continue to remain as part of the landscape post decommissioning phase and would leave a positive legacy in terms of landscape character given that trees and hedgerows contribute to the landscape character locally and would reflect the former small, field pattern.

6. Effect on General Visual Amenity (Appearance)

6.1. To reiterate, character and appearance are two different aspects. The physical character of the surrounding landscape would remain unaltered with the Proposals in place.

6.2. To gain a better understanding of the extent and nature of the change brought about by the Proposals on the appearance of the local landscape, their effect on the general visual amenity of the landscape and the perception of those visual receptors (people) using the landscape is examined.

6.3. This assessment relates to the representative LVIA viewpoints, which locations are indicated at **Figure 5.** The associated Viewpoint Photographs are shown on **Figure 6: Viewpoint Photographs**. These viewpoints represent a selection of potential visual receptors in the local landscape context, including where views are potentially available and to address a range of receptor types and locations.

6.4. Visual amenity is defined by GLVIA3 (p.158) as:

> ***"The overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area."***

6.5. The site lies adjacent to the existing Cellarhead substation, with the substation and associated tree planting on two sides of the site to the immediate north and east. This combines with gently undulating topography, agricultural buildings at Newfields Farm, intervening field boundary vegetation, tree belts and small woodlands to limit the visibility of the site. The structures within the Cellarhead substation (many of which are large in scale) and the associated steel-lattice pylons to the east and west are also prominent in many local views, providing the context to the Proposals.

6.6. As a result, notable effects on visual amenity would be limited to within the immediate environs to the site, notably users of Footpaths Cheddleton 48, Cheddleton 60 and Cheddleton 58.

6.7. The detailed analysis set out within the table at Paragraph 6.6 of the LVIA and photomontages (CD4.5) is not repeated in this statement but further consideration and analysis is set out to provide context to this detailed analysis and reflect the revised Proposals and landscape masterplan.

6.8. The appreciation of views from the countryside is mainly gained from vantage points accessible to the public. The two main ways in which members of the public can gain an appreciation of views when in the countryside are primarily from public highways and by using the various PRoW that pass through the landscape.

Road Users

6.9. Roads with potential views of the Proposals include local routes, from which visibility of the BESS would be limited and from sections of Armshead Road, Thornyedge Road, and Bagnall Road. Effects on users of these roads would typically be **Negligible** (adverse) where any change could potentially be perceived.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

6.10. There is a network of PRoWs within the study area, together with access land at Wetley Moor. However, the proposal would not be visible from the majority of local routes. While there is the potential for some visibility from a number of routes to the south and west of the site within approximately 1km, the effects of the Proposals on visual amenity would typically be negligible.

6.11. Effects on PRoW users would be generally limited to users of Footpaths Cheddleton 48 and Cheddleton 60 where these pass around the boundaries of the site. The proposed access road for the development would also cross these routes as it passes around the farm buildings at Newfields Farm.

6.12. For users of parts of Cheddleton 58 to the south-west of the site where this path is in closest proximity to the proposals partial views of the Proposals could be experienced through the intervening vegetation, though views from all of these routes are already heavily influenced by the structures within the existing substation.

Views towards the Proposals from the North

6.13. As previously noted, the existing Cellarhead substation encloses the site to the north and east, which limits views towards the Proposals to users of PRoW Cheddleton 48 looking south into the site. Construction activities and the completed BESS facility would be partially visible from this section of the footpath occupying much of the foreground of views.

6.14. On completion the Proposals would be fronted by newly planted woodland within the northern part of the site. Views would be partially filtered by the intervening vegetation. By Year 15, establishment of this woodland would notably reduce any visibility of the proposals.

6.15. The existing view (Viewpoint 1) of a pastoral field would have been replaced with a view of native woodland planting at short distance, and the predicted level of visual effect would therefore reduce from **Moderate** (adverse) to **Negligible** (adverse).

6.16. There is some limited visibility towards the scheme from the rising ground immediately to the north of the substation, and also from a restricted area to the north-west of the site, both areas within approximately 500m of the site. They include partial views of the BESS compound in the north-eastern part of the site from PRoW Cheddleton 47 (Viewpoint 4) to the north of the Cellarhead substation; however, any such views would be glimpsed and almost entirely screened by the existing substation infrastructure. The level of effects would be **Negligible** (adverse). Views towards the proposals would be barely discernible from PRoW Bagnall 31 (Viewpoints 15 & 16).

Views towards the Proposals from the East

6.17. Given the site relationship with the Cellarhead substation, the only available view from the east would be from PRoW Cheddleton 48 as it follows the eastern edge of the site, looking west. Construction activities would be partially visible from this section of the footpath occupying much of the foreground of views.

6.18. The revised landscape proposals include the provision of a new hedgerow, ready grown to a height of 3m at installation. On this basis, views into the site would be filtered and screened

from the outset of the operational period. The hedgerow would mature and increase in density over the duration of the operational period. Where filtered views are available, users would be able to perceive the 132kV/33kV switchyard to the north of the BESS compound, and acoustic fencing to the south of the compound that would in itself screen views of the battery containers and transformers.

6.19. The existing view (Viewpoint 2) of a pastoral field would have been replaced with a view of native woodland planting at short distance, and the predicted level of visual effect would therefore reduce from **Major** (adverse) during the construction period and Year 1, reducing to Negligible following the establishment of the hedgerow.

6.20. Users of the footpath would only experience this level of effect when passing in close proximity to the site, and the effects will quickly reduce as they move onwards through the surrounding PRoW network.

Views towards the Proposals from the South

6.21. PRoW Cheddleton 60 passes through the site along the southern boundary of the field, and there will be some views of the various construction activities, and of the Proposals upon completion. Users of this footpath would have some views over the proposed bund of the acoustic fence that will contain the southern and south-eastern parts of the BESS compound. The predicted level of visual effect would therefore reduce from **Major** (adverse) during the construction period and Year 1, with **Negligible** residual effects following maturation of the woodland planting along the bund. Users of the footpath would only experience this level of effect when passing the site, in close proximity and the effects will quickly reduce as they move onwards through the surrounding PRoW network.

6.22. There may be some limited visibility of construction activities from PRoW Cheddleton 58, particularly those involving taller items of plant such as cranes; however, the agricultural buildings at Newfields Farm typically screen views from the south-east (Viewpoint 5) and south (Viewpoint 6). This results in **No Effects (none)**, to **Moderate** (adverse) effects respectively, with the effects for PRoW users at Viewpoint 6 reducing further to **Negligibl**e overtime following growth of proposed woodland vegetation on the south facing slope of the bund.

6.23. There would also be limited visibility of the Proposals from PRoW Cheddleton 49, south-east of Platt's Farm (Viewpoint 8) and west of Field View Farm (Viewpoint 9); however, given the layering effect provided by the intervening vegetation, the level of effect is judged to be **None** (adverse).

6.24. At restricted number of locations, intermittent visibility extends as far as Armshead Road, approximately 1 - 1.2km from the site, including road users and residential occupiers at the junction of Armshead Road and Draw Well Lane (Viewpoint 10); road users and residential occupiers at the Armshead Road between Armshead and Werrington (Viewpoint 11); PRoW Public Cheddleton 49 to the east of Armshead Farm (Viewpoint 12); and road users and residential occupiers on Armshead Road at the entrance to Armshead Farm.

6.25. Road users are predicted to experience **No Effects** to **Negligible** (adverse) effects and on the whole residential occupiers would also be **Negligible** to **Moderate**, reducing as the mitigation planting matures.

Views towards the Proposals from the West

6.26. To the west, visibility extends to some restricted areas out as far as Thornyedge Road, approximately 500 - 800m from the site, although levels of visibility are dependent on the presence or absence of field boundary vegetation, woodlands and farm buildings. Views from the west are typically limited to PRoW Cheddleton 60 at the south-western corner of the site (Viewpoint 3), looking north-east. Construction activities and, upon completion, the proposed bund and associated woodland planting would be partially visible from this section of the footpath.

6.27. By Year 15, the growth and development of the proposed woodland planting around the west and south-west of the compound (closest to the viewpoint) would substantially reduce the visibility of the Proposals. The view of a pastoral field would be replaced by a view of native woodland and woodland edge planting. The BESS compound would be screened from view, as would much of the currently visible Cellarhead substation infrastructure. The level of effect is predicted to reduce from **Major** (adverse) to **Negligible** (adverse) in the immediate vicinity of the site.

6.28. Further to the south west at the junction of PRoW Cheddleton 58 and Cheddleton 60 (Viewpoint 7), the level of effect would be **Moderate** (adverse) reducing to **Negligible** (adverse) following maturation of the mitigation planting.

Summary

6.29. The combination of the context provided by the existing Cellarhead substation, and the screening effects of gently undulating topography and existing tree belts, woodlands and field boundary vegetation, means that the effects on local visual amenity that would arise from the Proposals would be very limited.

6.30. Effects on visual amenity would be limited to within the immediate environs of the site, notably users of Footpaths Cheddleton 48 and Cheddleton 60 that pass through the eastern and southern parts of the site. Within the immediate context of the site, effects are predicted to be **Major** to **Moderate** (adverse) during construction and Year 1, reducing to **Negligible** (adverse) at Year 1. The level of effect will continue to reduce for users of Cheddleton 60 following maturation of the woodland planting on the bund.

6.31. Furthermore, where the BESS facility may be visible in the local landscape, existing structures within the Cellarhead substation are generally already visible, and the proposals would not therefore result in a material change to the nature of the view or the balance of features within it. The level of visual effect will be **Negligible** to **Moderate** (adverse) for users of the wider PRoW network beyond the immediate vicinity of the site. The effects experienced by receptors within the environs of the site would in any case reduce following maturation of the proposed mitigation planting.

7. Effect on Residential Visual Amenity

7.1. It is right to make a distinction between residential and general visual amenity. The latter term from a planning policy perspective usually relates to the public realm and the wider landscape whilst the former is concerned with the private visual amenity of an individual residential property.

7.2. The separation between what is a private interest and what should be considered in the public interest is clear and has no status in terms of being part of statutory documentation, planning policy or guidance. Furthermore, it is noted that no individual has the right to a particular view but there does come a point where, by virtue of the proximity, size and scale of a given development, a residential property or properties would be rendered so unattractive as a place in which to live that planning permission should justifiably be refused.

7.3. The test relates to the position which would pertain with the proposed scheme in situ, irrespective of the position beforehand. In other words, the test is not whether, in relative terms, a property would become a substantially less attractive place to live, the test is whether viewed objectively and in the public interest a property would become an unattractive place in which to live. Such a situation if left unchecked would lead clearly to undesirable consequences.

7.4. In this regard, Inspector Lavender in his decision letter for the allowed Carland Cross Wind Farm Appeal[3]:

> ***"The planning system is designed to protect public rather than private interests, but both interests coincide here where, for example, a visual intrusion is of such a magnitude as to render a property an unattractive place to live. This is because it is not in the public interest to create such living conditions where they did not exist before. This I do not consider that simply being able to see a turbine or turbines from a particular window or part of a garden of a house is sufficient reason to find the visual impact unacceptable (even though a particular occupier might find it objectionable). However, when turbines are present in such number, size and proximity that they represent an unpleasantly overwhelming and unavoidable presence in main views from a house or garden, there is every likelihood that the property concerned would come to be widely regarded as unattractive (rather than simply less attractive, but not necessarily unhabitable) place in which to live."***

7.5. The threshold of what would be unacceptably unattractive should be an objective test, albeit that professional judgement is required in its application to the circumstances of each particular case. There needs to be a degree of harm over and above an identified substantial adverse effect on a private interest to take a case into the category of refusal in the public interest. Change in the outlook from a property is not sufficient; indeed, even a fundamental change in outlook is not necessarily unacceptable.

7.6. It is worthy of note that the visual component of residential amenity should be addressed 'in the round' taking into account factors such as distance, the direction of the view, size of the

[3] Paragraph 23, Carland Cross Appeal Decision (APP/D0840/A/09/2103026)

development and its layout, the layout of particular dwellings in terms of their floor plans, their garden environment, and the lines of sight towards the scheme.

7.7. The Proposals would be visible in some views from a limited number of properties to the south and west of the site, such as Platts Farm, Field View Farm, Armshead Farm, Green Farm, Bungalow Farm and Greenfields; however, any such visibility would be interrupted by the layering effect of intervening vegetation (see Viewpoints 6 and 8).

7.8. The closest dwellings to the site is Newfields Farm, which is an "involved" property. Whilst there would be some direct visibility of the proposals from the farmhouse, it is currently unoccupied but in the same landownership as the site.

8. Effect of Cumulative Development

8.1. This section provides an assessment of the potential effects of the Proposals in conjunction with potential changes arising from other developments in the surrounding area, as illustrated at p.11 of the RLC Review:

1. SMD/2022/0444 – Site to north-east of Cellarhead substation. Planning permission approved (22/12/22) – facility for 196no. battery containers, 98no. inverter units, 49no. transformer units, application site area 9.42ha (2.58ha of developed area) - **Consented**;

2. SMD/2022/0548 – Site to east of Cellarhead substation. Planning permission approved (27/06/23) facility for 112no. battery containers, and 56no. transformers, application site area 5.4ha - **Consented**;

3. SMD/2022/0574 – Site at Armshead Farm. Planning permission refused – facility for 64no. battery containers, 32no. transformer units, application site area 1.3ha – **Allowed at Appeal**;

4. SMD/2024/0019 - The site;

5. SMD/2024/0055 - Erection of a Flexible Energy Facility, associated works, landscaping and habitat creation – facility for 248no. battery containers, 62no. transformers and 124no. invertors on a total site of 22.4ha. The area of the facility where the proposed plant and machinery will be located extends to 4.45ha. EIA development - **Consented**;

6. SMD/2023/0523 - Land At Rownall Farm. Installation of a solar farm comprising ground mounted solar PV panels with a generating capacity of up to 49.99MW. Site 58ha in area. Application submitted pending consideration – **Decision Pending**; and

7. SMD/2023/0639 - Land at Greenfields Farm, Thorney Edge Road. EIA Screening opinion for battery storage (no numbers specified) on 8.9ha site. EIA development – **Decision Pending**.

8.2. Whilst not considered in the RLC Review, the Appellant is aware of an additional development in the surrounding area: SMD/2024/0568 - Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated infrastructure (EIA development) (New House Farm, Luzlow Lane, Bagnall, Staffordshire, ST9 9JZ). – **Decision Pending** (site no. 8). This scheme is located to the west of the appeal site, near the junction of Luzlow Lane with Armstead Road/Thorney Edge Road, near New House Farm.

8.3. Cumulative effects can be defined as landscape and visual effects that ***"result from additional changes to the landscape or visual amenity caused by the proposed development in conjunction with other developments"***.

8.4. Cumulative effects are considered using the same methodology as is adopted for the main LVIA. In addition, this includes assessing where environmental effects could combine to create a more significant impact on a particular receptor or receptors.

8.5. Cumulative effects on visual amenity can occur either:

- Simultaneously – where two or more developments are visible from the same location, including where the viewer must turn to see multiple developments; or

- Sequentially – where two or more developments are seen at different times and from different locations as the viewer travels along a linear route such as a road or PRoW.

8.6. Cumulative effects are assessed on the basis of the already consented and in-planning developments being built out first, with effects arising from the Proposals being in addition to this.

8.7. Cumulative effects can arise during the construction phase if the considered developments are in close proximity and the construction phases for two or more developments temporally coincide. However, most construction projects employ construction management controls and good practice to minimise impacts occurring outside the site boundary, and construction phase cumulative effects are therefore considered unlikely to be any greater than those arising during the operational phase of the Proposals.

8.8. For the Proposals and the consented and in-planning developments, cumulative effects would occur both to landscape character and local visual amenity. Reference has been made to the ZTVs produced as part of the cumulative schemes' planning applications.

8.9. The likely cumulative effects are set out below:

Summary of Cumulative Effects

Receptor	Description of Cumulative Effects
Site	The seven cumulative sites and the site are separate and distinct, therefore there would be no cumulative impact on the character of the sites themselves. No magnitude of effect, resulting in **No** cumulative effects of the site (or other sites).
Site Environs	The site is physically and visually separated from sites 1, 2 and 6 by the Cellarhead substation and the associated tree belts to the south and east of the substation. In landscape terms, the environs to the site are considered separate and distinct to the environs to these schemes. Effects on landscape character in these areas would be perceptual or experiential only, relating to the visibility (or not) of multiple schemes. There is a limited area of cumulative theoretical visibility with sites 1, 2 and 6 to the south of the substation, with a further very small area to the north of the substation where there is theoretical visibility of both sites 1 and 6 and the Proposals. The fieldwork has shown that effects arising from the Proposals on the area to the north of the substation would be very limited due to views towards the site being through and over the substation and its associated structures.

	Visibility of the substation itself would also be limited in this area due to the screening provided by intervening woodland areas. To the south of the substation where schemes on sites, 1, 2 and 6 may be visible, the Proposals would appear as an extension to substation by virtue of the similar equipment it holds and therefore judged to result in a very limited change to the view. However, it is not considered that existing substation would appear any larger in the wider landscape given the scale difference between these proposals and the existing facility. For sites to the south of the substation, there is likely to be greater cumulative visibility, with varying levels of visibility of sites 3, 5 and 7 extending across much of the area between Rownall Road to the east, Armshead Road to the south, and Thorny Edge Road to the west. However, the limited visibility of the Proposals beyond its immediate environs means that cumulative effects on landscape character would be limited. With regards to site 8, opportunities to view this site and the Proposals would be restricted by intervening vegetation. On balance, notable cumulative effects on landscape character, in the form of perceptual/experiential effects only, within the environs to the six sites and the site would be limited to areas in close proximity to the Proposals. Whilst the Proposals would result in the conversion of part of a pasture field to electricity storage infrastructure, this would not be introducing such structures to the local landscape for the first time as they are already present at the substation. Medium susceptibility, value, sensitivity with a low magnitude of effect, resulting in **Minor** (adverse) cumulative effects.
Ancient Plateau Farmlands LCT	The six cumulative schemes would together result in a larger proportion of farmland within the LCT being converted to energy infrastructure. The site is considerably smaller than sites 1, 5, 6 and 7, and of similar scale to sites 2, 3 and 8. The site would be better contained by existing and proposed structural planting than many of the other sites. Nevertheless, the Proposals would still result in limited cumulative experiential effects on the character of the LCT, predominantly experienced within much of the area between Rownall Road to the east, Armshead Road to the south, and Thorny Edge Road to the west. Low magnitude of effect, resulting in **Minor** (adverse) cumulative effects.

PRoW Users	The comparatively small scale of the site (in comparison to many of the cumulative sites), combined with its location adjacent to the Cellarhead substation, together with the screening effects of the substation and associated tree cover, ensure that the Proposals would be noticeably less visible in the local landscape than many of the cumulative schemes: Cheddleton FP60 – users would experience simultaneous visibility of the sites 1, 2, 5 and 6, and then subsequent sequential visibility of the Proposals as footpath users travel east to west (see Viewpoint 3). From the eastern section of the route, the proposed woodland planting within site 5 would screen views of structures and other proposed development within this site following establishment. Users of Cheddleton 60 would also experience simultaneous and sequential visibility of the Proposals and site 7. Views towards site 3 would be restricted by the intervening field boundary vegetation. Cheddleton FP47 - users would experience very limited simultaneous visibility of site 6 and the Proposals from a short section of the route to the north of the substation (see Viewpoint 4). As users travel south along the route, they would then experience sequential visibility of sites 1, 2 and 5, but not of the Proposals. Cheddleton FP58 – this route (as well as part of Cheddleton 59) would be diverted to the east and south as part of the site 5 scheme. With the diversion in place, views towards the Proposals from the diverted section of footpath would be restricted by structures within the site 5. Users of the footpath would have simultaneous visibility of sites 1, 2 and 5, and then simultaneous visibility of these sites and the Proposals from a restricted area to the east of Far Little Waste Farm. The visibility of the Proposals would be limited (see Viewpoint 6). The eastern part of the route would pass through a proposed area of woodland planting within site 5 which over time would reduce visibility towards sites 1 and 2. Further to the west (see Viewpoint 7), there would be simultaneous visibility of the Proposals and site 7. Views towards site 3 are likely to be restricted by consecutive layers of intervening field boundary vegetation. Cheddleton FP49 – views north from the eastern section of this route would be partially restricted by structures within site 5. As users travel south-east to north-west towards Field View Farm, there would be simultaneous and sequential visibility of sites 1, 2 and 5, and then views of the proposals may be possible from a short section of the path to the south-east of Platts Farm. Visibility of the proposals from this area would be very limited (see Viewpoint 8). As the route turns to the west beyond Field View Farm, views

	towards the Proposals would be increasingly filtered and screened; however, sites 7 and 3 would become increasingly visible. Bagnell FP35 – there would be simultaneous views of the Proposals and site 7 from the eastern part of this route as users approach the junction with Cheddleton 58 and Cheddleton 60. Cumulative visual effects experienced by PRoW users are unlikely to occur in relation to site 8, due to intervening vegetation and the separation between the Proposals and site 8. High susceptibility, value, of a sensitivity with a low magnitude of effect would result in moderate (adverse) cumulative effects.
Residential Occupiers	Residential occupiers at Platts Farm and Field View Farm may have limited visibility of the site, and sites 5 and 7, though the visibility of the Proposals would be very limited (see Viewpoint 8). Residential occupiers at Bungalow Farm and Green Farm (see Viewpoint 14) would have some limited views of site 7, and may have limited visibility of sites 1, 2 and 6, as well as of the proposals. The visibility of sites 1 and 2 is likely to be very limited from both properties, and views towards Site 6 would be partially screened by the Cellarhead substation and associated tree cover. Views towards the Proposals would be very limited from Green Farm due to structures proposed within site 7. Cumulative visual effects experienced by residential occupiers are unlikely to occur in relation to site 8, due to intervening vegetation and the separation between the Proposals and site 8. High susceptibility, value, and sensitivity combined in Low magnitude of effect, resulting in **Moderate** (adverse) cumulative effects.
Minor Road Users	Armshead Road – glimpsed sequential and simultaneous visibility of all six cumulative schemes and the Proposals may be possible from some sections of the road. The visibility of sites 1, 2, 6 would be limited, with greater visibility of sites 3, 5 and 7. Intervisibility with the Proposals would be very limited. Thorny Edge Road / Bagnall Road – clear views towards the Site 6 scheme would be possible, then glimpsed sequential visibility of the site 1 scheme, followed by glimpsed simultaneous visibility of the site 2 scheme and Proposals. Intervisibility with the site 1 and 2 schemes is likely to be very limited. Restricted simultaneous and sequential visibility of the site 5 and site 7 schemes and the proposals

	may be possible, with more limited visibility of the site 3 scheme. The LVIA has identified that the visibility of the Proposals from these routes is likely to be very limited, and any cumulative visibility is likely to be similarly limited. Low susceptibility, value, sensitivity combined with negligible magnitude of effect, resulting in **Negligible** (adverse) cumulative effects.

Summary

8.10. In summary, for cumulative effects these would be limited to:

- perceptual/experiential effects on local landscape character within a limited area in close proximity to the Cellarhead substation where multiple cumulative schemes not generally visible in addition to the proposals; and
- users along restricted sections of the local PRoW network, predominantly users of Footpath Cheddleton 60 who would experience sequential and in places simultaneous visibility of the multiple cumulative schemes to the east and south of the site.

8.11. The proposals and many of the cumulative schemes would be seen in the context of the existing Cellarhead substation. In particular, the Proposals will appear as an extension to the substation by virtue of the similar type of infrastructure contained within both; however, it is not considered that the substation will appear any more prominent in the wider landscape given the scale difference between the Proposals and the existing facility.

8.12. The comparatively small scale nature of the proposals (in comparison to many of the cumulative sites), combined with its location immediately adjacent to the substation and the screening effects of the substation itself and the associated tree cover, mean that the Proposals would be noticeably less visible in the local landscape than many of the cumulative schemes.

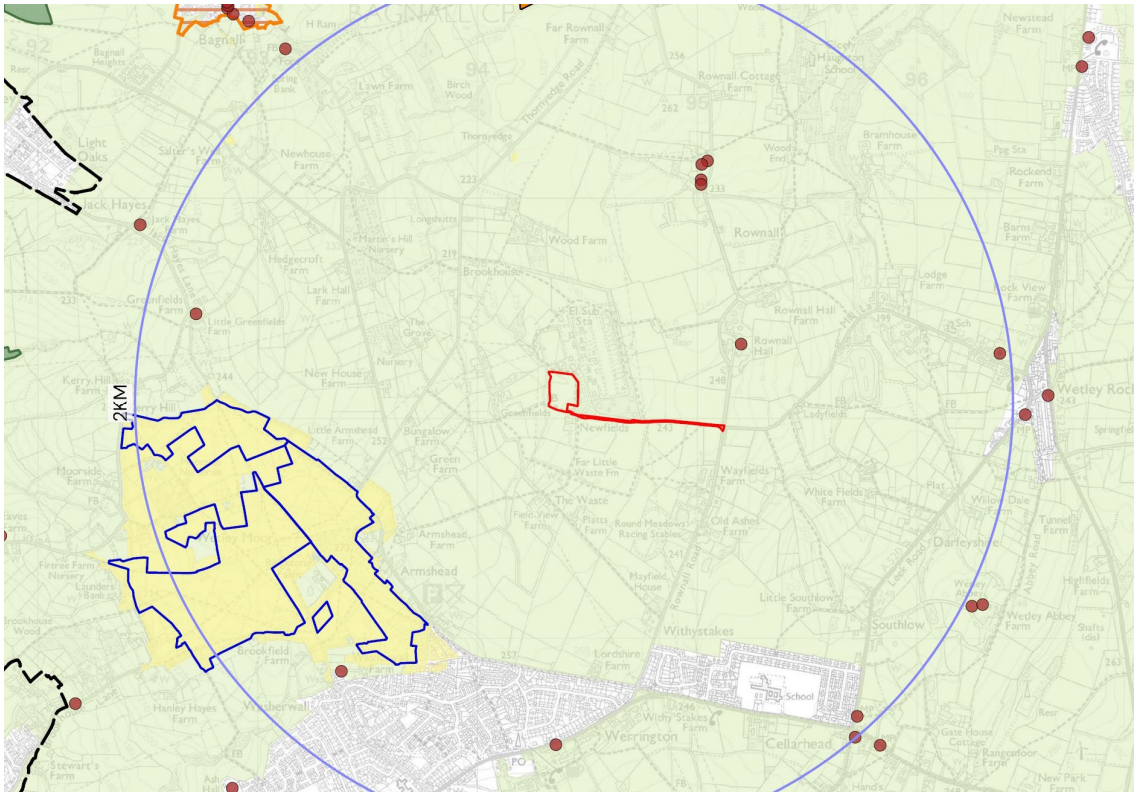
8.13. Cumulative effects would reduce as the proposed landscape mitigation measures on all the schemes establish and mature.

9. Effect on the Openness of Green Belt

Introduction

9.1. The site forms part of the Stoke on Trent Green Belt. The Development Plan via policies SS2 & SS10 of the adopted Local Plan rely on national policy for Green Belt considerations and are therefore consistent with national policy in this regard.

9.2. The wider context of the Green Belt is illustrated by the **Planning Designations Plan,** (**Figure 2**), with an extract of this plan reproduced below.



Green Belt Plan

9.3. The government attaches great importance to Green Belts with the fundamental aim of the policy to prevent urban sprawl by keeping the land permanently open and therefore, the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their 'openness.' This is set out at Paragraph 142 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024).

9.4. The aspect of openness relates to the landscape having an absence of built form. In this context, this section of the statement considers how the Proposals would have a bearing on the openness with regard to the Green Belt in this locality.

9.5. Assessing the impact of a proposal on the openness of the Green Belt, where it is relevant to do so, requires a judgment based on the circumstances of the case (see NPPG Reference ID 64-001-20190722). To elaborate, the Courts have identified a number of matters which may need to be taken into account in undertaking any such assessment.

9.6. These include but are not limited to:

- openness is capable of having both spatial and visual aspects, in other words, the visual impact of the proposal may be relevant, as could its volume in spatial terms;
- the duration of the development, and its remediability – taking into account any provisions to return land to its original state or to an equivalent (or improved) state of openness; and
- the degree of activity likely to be generated, such as traffic generation.

Spatial Aspect

9.7. The Proposals would have a localised footprint located upon plinths comprising and connected via a new access track to Rownall Road. A large proportion of the field in which the Proposals are located would remain free of built infrastructure. The development would not generally extend above 3m in height; indeed, this is the case for the majority of the installation which will be at 2.9m (the BESS containers). This is not dissimilar to agricultural buildings in the locality (indeed, considerably lower than some agricultural buildings).

9.8. However, given these development parameters, there would be an inevitable effect upon the spatial aspect of Green Belt openness within the site. This would be limited given the relatively low-profile nature of the Proposals. Given the site's relationship with the existing Cellarhead substation, which contains it to the north and east, the Proposals would represent a very modest infill of the south-western corner of this existing facility. This is acknowledged by the Committee Report that concludes ***"… it is acknowledged that the proposals are well contained and represent a rounding off of the Cellarhead substation parameters, without being prominent on the landscape from a wide range of vantage points. The proposals do not affect, but work with, existing landscape structure …"*** and ***"it is considered that the extent of harm is reduced by the relatively modest scale of the proposals, and its close relationship with existing built form"*** at Paragraphs 7.89 and 8.4 respectively.

9.9. The perceived loss of any spatial aspect associated with the site would be limited and highly localised, resulting in a **Moderate** degree of harm in this regard.

Visual Aspect

9.10. In terms of the visual aspect (perception) of openness, there is already a relatively strong sense of enclosure associated with the site. This is due to the presence of well-established tree cover to the north and east of the site (including a small woodland to the south of the Cellarhead substation), with further hedgerow and outgrown hedgerow trees forming the western boundary. The site has a more open aspect on its southern boundary.

9.11. Ensuring a level platform for the various components requires a cut and fill exercise. The soil would be retained and used to create bunding along the western and south-western edges of the compound. These features, together with the proposed woodland planting, would limit views to the upper parts of the battery containers and the other components.

9.12. This aspect of relatively strong enclosure would continue to remain and prevail with the proposed BESS in place such that, in the wider area of Green Belt countryside beyond the

site, there would be generally very little visibility of the Appeal Scheme from publicly accessible locations. Consequently, there would be little change to the perceived sense of openness within the locality and this particular part of the Green Belt as a result of the proposed BESS.

9.13. The visual aspect of openness as it relates to the site can be most readily appreciated from locations where members of the public have access to the countryside passing through the environment and therefore, the focus is restricted to views from both public highways and PRoW, where there is the potential for the Proposals to impact the visual aspect of openness.

Visual Aspect as perceived from the Countryside to the North

9.14. As previously noted, the existing Cellarhead substation encloses the site to the north and east, which limits views towards the Proposals to users of PRoW Cheddleton 48 looking south into the site. Construction activities and the completed BESS facility would be clearly visible from this section of the footpath occupying much of the foreground of views.

9.15. On completion the proposals would be fronted by newly planted woodland within the northern part of the site. Views would be partially filtered by the intervening vegetation. By Year 15, establishment of this woodland would notably reduce any visibility of the proposals.

9.16. There is some very limited visibility towards the site from the rising ground immediately to the north of the substation, and also from a restricted area to the north-west of the site, both areas within approximately 500m of the site. They include partial views of the proposals from PRoW Cheddleton 47 to the north of the Cellarhead substation; however, any such views would be glimpsed and almost entirely screened by the existing substation infrastructure.

9.17. Consequently, for the majority of footpath users, until they are in close proximity to the site (see Viewpoint 1), they would be unaffected by the Proposals and there would be very limited change to their appreciation of openness.

Visual Aspect as perceived from the Countryside to the East

9.18. Given the site relationship with the Cellarhead substation, the only available view from the east would be from PRoW Cheddleton 48 as it follows the eastern edge of the site, looking west. Construction activities would be clearly visible from this section of the footpath occupying much of the foreground of views.

9.19. The revised landscape proposals include the provision of a new hedgerow, ready grown to a height of 1.8m at installation. On this basis, views into the site would be filtered and screened from the outset of the operational period. The hedgerow would mature and increase in density over the duration of the operational period. The presence of a pedestrian fire access from the BESS compound to PRoW Cheddleton 48 would allow for glimpsed views through the gated access when passing.

9.20. Consequently, for the majority of road and footpath users, until they are in close proximity to the site (see Viewpoint 2), they would be unaffected by the Proposals and there would be very limited change to their appreciation of openness.

Visual Aspect as perceived from the Countryside to the South

9.21. There may be some limited visibility of construction activities from PRoW Cheddleton 58, particularly those involving taller items of plant such as cranes; however, the agricultural buildings at Newfields Farm typically screen views from the south-east and south .

9.22. There may also be very limited visibility of construction activities and the Proposals from PRoW Cheddleton 49, south-east of Platt's Farm and west of Field View Farm.

9.23. At restricted number of locations, intermittent visibility extends as far as Armshead Road, approximately 1 - 1.2km from the site, including road users and residential occupiers at the junction of Armshead Road and Draw Well Lane (Viewpoint 10); road users and residential occupiers at the Armshead Road between Armshead and Werrington (Viewpoint 11); PRoW Public Cheddleton 49 to the east of Armshead Farm (Viewpoint 12).

9.24. Roads in the locality are frequently flanked by roadside hedgerows, and where gaps do exist, such as at field gateways, opportunities to look across the adjacent landscape are fleeting in nature and frequently oblique. Elsewhere, the layering effect of intervening vegetation would generally filter and screen views towards the BESS compound from locations to the south of the site. Consequently, for the majority of road and footpath users, until they are in close proximity to the site (see Viewpoint 2), they would be largely unaffected by the Proposals and there would be very limited change to their appreciation of openness from a restricted number of locations.

Visual Aspect as perceived from the Countryside to the West

9.25. To the west, visibility extends to some restricted areas out as far as Thornyedge Road, approximately 500 - 800m from the site, although levels of visibility are dependent on the presence or absence of field boundary vegetation, woodlands and farm buildings. Views from the west are typically limited to PRoW Cheddleton 60 at the south-western corner of the site (Viewpoint 3), looking north-east. Construction activities and, upon completion, the proposed bund and associated woodland planting would be clearly visible from this section of the footpath. The taller parts of the structures and buildings within the BESS compound may be visible above the bund.

9.26. By Year 15, the growth and development of the proposed woodland planting around the west and south-west of the compound (closest to the viewpoint) would substantially reduce the visibility of the Proposals. The view of a pastoral field would be replaced by a view of native woodland and woodland edge planting on the rising ground of the bund along with the access. The BESS compound would be screened from view, as would much of the currently visible Cellarhead substation infrastructure, and there would not be a material change to the perception of openness with the proposal in place.

9.27. Further afield from locations to the south west at the junction of PRoW Cheddleton 58 and Cheddleton 60 (Viewpoint 7), taller parts of the BESS facility may be visible over the proposed bund, and consequently the perception of openness would remain largely unchanged with the Proposals in place.

Summary of Visual Aspect

9.28. The combination of the context provided by the existing Cellarhead substation, and the screening effects of gently undulating topography and existing tree belts, woodlands and field boundary vegetation, ensures that the perceived effects on visual openness would arising from the proposals would be limited.

9.29. Effects on visual openness would be limited to within the immediate environs to the site, notably users of Footpaths Cheddleton 48, Cheddleton 60 and Cheddleton 58.

9.30. Furthermore, where the BESS facility may be visible in the local landscape, existing structures within the Cellarhead substation are generally already visible, and the Proposals would not therefore result in a notable to change to the nature of the view or the balance of features within it. Consequently, the perception of openness would remain largely unchanged with the Proposals in place.

9.31. Mindful of the Appeal Proposal's limited visual envelope, particularly to the north and east, there would be a limited and highly localised, **Minor** degree of harm with regard to the visual aspect of openness.

Duration of the Development and Remediability

9.32. The Proposals would be in place for a time-limited period of up to 40-years, before being fully decommissioned and the land returned to its former condition. As such, whilst 40 years is a long period of time, it is still not permanent. Therefore, the impact on the openness of the Green Belt would be reduced and the site reinstated to its current open character. Consequently, both spatially and visually, the proposed development would result in some limited and localised harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

9.33. The approach to the time-limited nature of development such as this was considered by the SoS within the decision which consented a solar and BESS development on land west of Honiley Road, Kenilworth. The Inspector, in their report to the SoS, described that the magnitude of harm to the Green Belt was limited ***"by the fact that the proposal is time limited itself"*** (Paragraph 2, digital page 27 and para 102, digital page 44) and with which the SoS agreed (Paragraph 14, digital page 2), stating ***"For the reasons given at IR97-102 the Secretary of State agrees that the introduction of development onto the site would be harmful to the purpose of the Green Belt in (c) assisting in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, although this would be time limited harm given the ability to impose a condition on the overall lifetime of the proposed development (IR102)"***.

9.34. As part of the decommissioning stage all of the energy storage infrastructure would be removed, returning the site to its original state in terms of openness except for the planting which is proposed to be undertaken as part of the Appeal Proposal which would reflect historic field boundaries which have been lost over time. With regard to this matter, it is considered that the Proposals would only cause limited harm to the Green Belt whilst operational.

9.35. This approach was acknowledged in the recent Chapel Lane, Walsall, appeal decision for a BESS facility. The Inspector noted the temporary nature of the development and the remediability of the site, stating the following at Paragraph 48:

"As the boundary planting matures, the visual and spatial impact of the proposal would be progressively mitigated. Post construction, the BESS would generate a limited amount of activity for maintenance purposes. Albeit 40 years is a long time, the BESS would be a temporary feature, after which, the site would be restored, and the mature boundary planting would be retained. In this context, it could not be said that the land would be completely restored to its original, equivalent or an improved state of openness. That said, it is an overarching landscape/biodiversity objective that existing hedgerows are retained, and new hedgerows planted. Moreover, there is nothing to prevent the landowner/occupier undertaking similar boundary planting."

Degree of Activity

9.36. The Proposals would generate little activity in the form of traffic, both with regard to management and maintenance. Any activity associated with traffic movement would not have a material bearing upon the openness of the Green Belt.

9.37. The BESS facility would generate some limited traffic movement for routine maintenance; however, the opportunity to appreciate any traffic movement would be limited, restricted by the screening effect of the surrounding landscape framework, topography and/or distance. Furthermore, the activity associated with the development would generally be limited and less than agricultural traffic movement associated with the management of the land, on average less than one van every three months, and therefore would cause limited harm to the appreciation of openness.

Summary

9.38. It is accepted that the introduction of the Proposals would detract to some degree from the openness of the landscape with the introduction of demountable energy storage equipment within a series of containers, substation, surfacing, fencing and infrastructure elements. It is pertinent to note the way in which the Inspector in the called-in Land West of Honiley Road decision considered the effects of that scheme against Policy EN-1 where it was set out that ***"there are few of the documents where government specific energy policy is explained in such detail as provided within the NPS documents"***[4]. The Inspector concluded that ***"that EN-1 in its totality is a material consideration in this case. Furthermore, the remarkable shift and clear policy steer that it gives in relation to Greenbelt and solar developments is pertinent in this case"***[5]. Although the Honiley development included solar and BESS, the relevance of the application of Policy EN-1 can equally be applied in this instance, particularly where having regard to the limited adverse effects can be reasonably and suitably mitigated.

9.39. The proposals would represent a modest infill of the south-western corner of this existing Cellarhead substation, that would be well-contained without being prominent on the landscape from a wide range of vantage points. The extent of harm to the openness of the Green Belt is reduced by the relatively modest scale of the proposals, and its close relationship with existing built form.

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[4] Reference: APP/T3725/V/23/3332671 (planninginspectorate.gov.uk), para 197, digital page 60.

[5] Ibid, para 198, digital page 60.

9.40. In overall terms there would be limited and localised, minor adverse effect on openness and result of the scheme, but this would be time limited to the operational life of the facility.

10. Effect on the Purposes of the Green Belt

Introduction

10.1. The NPPF internal paragraph 143 identifies five purposes of the Green Belt. These are namely:

a) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

b) To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

c) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

d) To preserve the setting and special character of the historic towns

e) To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land

10.2. Each of these purposes is addressed in turn in this section, first by reference to the published Green Belt assessments carried out on behalf of the Local Authority, and then with specific reference to the site itself.

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Green Belt Review Study (2015)

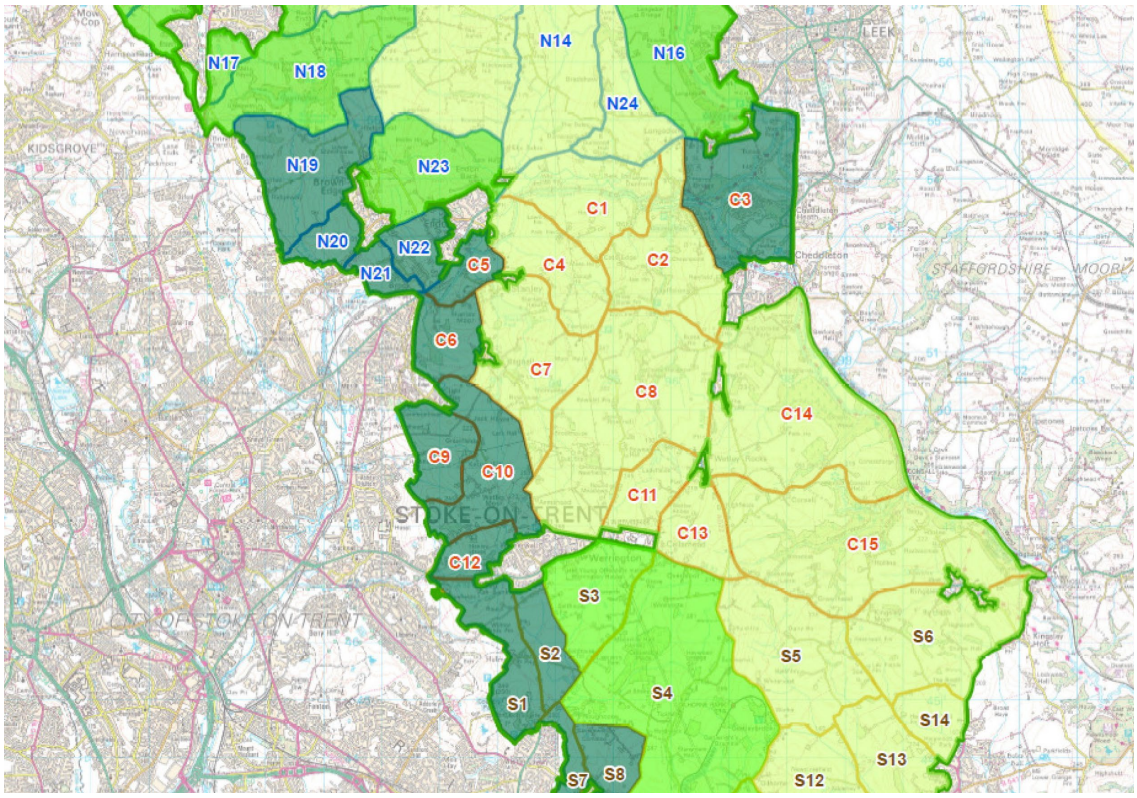
10.3. This assessment was produced as part of the adopted Local Plan evidence base for Staffordshire Moorlands Council to review the Green Belt across the District. The study was undertaken in two stages:

- a strategic review of Green Belt purposes; and
- a more detailed site-based assessment of potential land which could be considered for review of the Green Belt boundaries.

10.4. The Stage 1 assessment notes at Paragraph 7 that the ***"character of the Green Belt within Staffordshire Moorlands is diverse, reflecting the sharp gradient from the generally well-defined urban edge of Stoke-on-Trent to what are relatively remote rural areas. In this respect the Green Belt serves its primary function of helping to contain the Stoke-on-Trent conurbation, in particular creating a clearly defined separation between town and country on its eastern fringes"***.

10.5. The report clarifies that the identification of appropriate land parcels for survey was initially desk-based, and the boundaries of these parcels were adjusted following site visits, particularly in the vicinity of settlements. They do not bear any specific relation to landscape character areas, for example, or areas of ecological importance, although these factors could have a bearing on recommendations of the appropriateness of land for release. In total, 61no. parcels identified to survey Green Belt form and function. These parcels were subsequently split into three broad groups – north, central and south – divided by the A53 Endon to Leek Road and the A52 Werrington to Kingsley Road. The site is located within the central **Parcel C8 – Land to the north east of Werrington**. This is a considerable large area when compared to the site in question as can be seen on the plan.

10.6. The assessment uses a simple colouring system and accompanying narrative to set out the conclusions for each parcel. There are a total of six maps which summarise the extent to which each parcel fulfils each Green Belt purpose.



Parcel C8 – Land to the north east of Werrington (SMDC Green Belt Review Study)

10.7. The Stage 1 assessment uses a three-point scale to describe variations in contribution to each Green Belt purpose:

- Parcel makes a **Significant Contribution** to Green Belt purposes and a boundary review should probably be avoided, although this would not preclude release either in whole or in part;
- Parcel makes a **Contribution** to Green Belt purposes indicating that the purposes are partially being fulfilled, and that the boundary could be revised in light of other planning factors; and
- Parcel makes a **Limited Contribution** overall to Green Belt purposes indicating that these areas might be more readily considered for Green Belt release, subject to other planning considerations.

10.8. Parcel C8 is described as ***"Relatively remote, though still accessible via the A52 and A520, land which forms part of the core of the Green Belt (parcels C8, C11 and C13)"***. The assessment concludes the following in relation to the parcel's contribution to the Green Belt purposes:

Purpose a): To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas:

10.9. In relation to Purpose 1, the Stage 1 assessment concludes a **Limited Contribution** (i.e. the lowest possible ranking):

> **"A significant part of the core of the Green Belt of a largely rural aspect (notwithstanding some significant intrusions such as an electricity substation)."**

Purpose b): To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another:

10.10. In relation to Purpose 2, the Stage 1 assessment concludes a **Limited Contribution** (i.e. the lowest possible ranking):

> **"No clear role."**

Purpose c): To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment:

10.11. In relation to Purpose 3, the Stage 1 assessment concludes a **Contribution**:

> **"Largely open countryside character with clear boundaries through the edge of Werrington and roads. Settlement pattern comprises farmsteads and isolated dwellings which is sensitive to change, particularly in the vicinity of the A520 corridor and to the north of Werrington/Cellarhead."**

Purpose d): To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns:

10.12. In relation to Purpose 4, the Stage 1 assessment concludes a **Limited Contribution** (i.e. the lowest possible ranking):

> **"No clear role."**

Purpose e): To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land:

10.13. In relation to purpose 5, the Stage 1 assessment concludes a **Limited Contribution** (i.e. the lowest possible ranking):

> **"No clear role given location."**

10.14. Overall, Parcel C8 was judged to make a **Contribution** to the Green Belt purposes on the basis of its performance against Purpose 3, and the largely open countryside character of the landscape surrounding the site.

10.15. The author notes that the published assessment provides high-level analysis of Parcel C8, that covers a much larger area of the Green Belt than the site. No assessment has been undertaken looking at a granular level of the site, as advocated in PPG February 2025. The following sections cover the author's detailed assessment of the Proposals, and the site's performance against the five purposes.

Purpose a): To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

10.16. Unrestricted sprawl is directly related to the sprawl of large built-up areas. It is noted that the site does not lie adjacent to any large built-up areas and there are no large settlements in proximity to the site. As such, there would be no perception of unrestricted sprawl associated with large built-up areas with regard to site.

10.17. The site makes no contribution to Purpose (a): **No Contribution**. The proposed scheme would not harm this purpose.

10.18. Purpose b): To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

10.19. This purpose specifically focuses on towns and avoiding such settlements from merging, physically or visually into one another. The site lies in the centre of the Green Belt well away from nearby towns. The Green Belt in its wider context, extends over the countryside to maintain spatial separation between each of these towns. With the Proposals in place, the physical and visual separation that currently exists defined by the Green Belt between these settlements would remain unchanged. As such, the proposals would not harm this purpose and would not conflict with it in Green Belt terms. The proposal would not harm this purpose.

10.20. The site makes no contribution to Purpose (b): **No Contribution.** The proposed scheme would not harm this purpose.

Purpose c): To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

10.21. Introducing built infrastructure into what is currently an open farmland would represent encroachment of development into the countryside. The Proposals would introduce built development and infrastructure into a single field that would represent a rounding off of the extents of the existing Cellarhead substation, without being prominent in the landscape from a wide range of view point.

10.22. Where the Proposals are visible, they would be observed in the context of the existing infrastructure at the adjoining substation. The generally low-level nature of the BESS facility and the landscape mitigation associated with the Proposals would limit the perception of encroachment.

10.23. Notwithstanding these factors, the BESS would in principle result in encroachment and would therefore conflict with this particular purpose of the Green Belt, albeit that the conflict is moderate and not substantial due to the nature of the Proposals, its temporary nature, remediability, and the mitigation adopted.

10.24. The site makes a limited contribution to Purpose (c): **Limited Contribution.** The proposed scheme would cause moderate harm to this purpose concerning encroachment.

Purpose d): To preserve the setting and special character of the historic towns

10.25. It is noted that paragraph 143 of the NPPF relates to the preservation of the '*setting and special character of historic towns*', not individual heritage assets such as listed buildings and scheduled monuments.

10.26. The site does not fall within the setting of a historic town and the strategic function of the remaining Green Belt for this purpose would remain intact.

10.27. The site makes no contribution to Purpose (d): **No Contribution.** The proposed scheme would not harm this purpose.

Purpose e): To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land

10.28. A further purpose of the Green Belt is to deflect new development towards previously developed land (PDL) to assist urban regeneration. The nature of BESS and proximity to a point of connection is constrained in terms of location due to accessibility, connectivity and capacity with regard to the local electricity grid which in the wider area includes land within the Green Belt. Accordingly, the Proposals would not conflict with this purpose of the Green Belt so far as it is relevant to the consideration of this application.

10.29. The site makes no contribution to Purpose (e) : **No Contribution.** The proposed scheme would not harm this purpose.

Grey Belt Assessment

10.30. The site **does not** therefore perform **strongly** against any of Purposes (a), (b) or (d); and is therefore considered to be Grey Belt as per the definition set out in the NPPF. The footnote number 7 constraints are noted as follows.

Footnote 7 Constraints

10.31. The second part of the NPPF definition of 'Grey Belt' notes that: ***"'Grey belt' excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development."***

10.32. Footnote 7 notes that the policies referred to within Paragraph 11 are those in the Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to the following areas or assets of particular importance when assessing Grey Belt sites:

- *Habitats sites (and those sites listed in Paragraph 194 – potential Special Protection Areas (SPA); possible Special Areas of Conservation (SAC); listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites) and/or designated as sites of Special Scientific Interest;*
- *Land designated as Local Green Space;*
- *Land designated as a National Landscape;*
- *Land designated as a National Park (or within the Broads Authority);*
- *Land designated as Heritage Coast;*
- *Irreplaceable habitats;*
- *Designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in Footnote 75 – i.e. non-designated heritage assets of archaeological*

interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments); and

- *Areas at risk of flooding or coastal change*.

10.33. None of the footnote 7 criteria apply in this instant.

11. Summary and Conclusions

Location, Scale, Layout and Appearance

11.1. Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 006 (Reference ID: 5-006-20140306) acknowledges that the proximity of grid connection infrastructure can affect the siting of renewable energy technologies. The location of the site is determined by the ability for it to connect to the grid. Beyond this key consideration, the site has been proposed in a location which is not covered by any statutory designation which recognises landscape or visual qualities.

11.2. The design of development within the site has considered existing screening provided by the adjacent, local topography, hedges and trees in the intervening landscape and the ability to incorporate landscape mitigation of a nature which would be appropriate within their surrounding landscape context. The resulting quantum of energy infrastructure development that is anticipated would extend to only 37.5% of the main BESS area (i.e. excluding the access road from Rownall Road).

11.3. The location of the Proposals as a 'rounding off' of the existing Cellarhead substation, the retention of arisings on site to construct a gently sloping bund along the southern and western boundaries, along with the proposed landscape and visual mitigation and enhancements, demonstrate good design in terms of siting relative to existing landscape character, landform and vegetation and positively respond to the Government's overarching planning framework for all energy infrastructure, NPS EN-1, in ***"ensuring that such development contributes to the quality of the area"*** (Para. 4.7.6).

Effect on Landscape Elements

11.4. The proposed development would have a **Moderate** (adverse) effect on topography within the area of the BESS development compound and access routes.

11.5. In consideration of the extent of new hedgerow and tree planting. It is considered that the effects of the landscape strategy would result in **Moderate** (beneficial) effects upon the hedgerow and tree resources across the site following maturation of the proposed planting (Year 15).

11.6. There would be a **Moderate** (adverse) effect with regard to land cover/land use with the introduction of the BESS development superimposed over grassland which partially moderated by the improvements to new and retained grassland within the site.

11.7. No public rights of way will be physical affect by the proposals

11.8. There would be no physical effect upon any water features and there are non-present associated with the site.

Effect on Landscape Character

11.9. In overall terms, it is considered that there would be a **Moderate** (adverse) effect upon the landscape character of the site itself. These effects would reduce to **Minor** (adverse) following maturation of the proposed planting, that would serve to further contain the

Proposals. No off-site works are required. The physical character of the surrounding landscape would remain and prevail unchanged with the Proposals in place.

11.10. Beyond the immediate environs of the site, the effects upon landscape character of the area would be **Negligible**, with the surrounding field pattern remaining intact.

11.11. Upon completion of the decommissioning phase, all energy storage infrastructure would be removed across the entirety of the site. The management and growth of the hedgerows and trees across the site would continue to remain as part of the landscape post decommissioning phase and would leave a positive legacy in terms of landscape character given that trees and hedgerows contribute to the landscape character locally and would reflect the former smaller, field pattern.

Effect on General Visual Amenity (Appearance)

11.12. The combination of the context provided by the existing Cellarhead substation, and the screening effects of gently undulating topography and existing tree belts, woodlands and field boundary vegetation, means that the effects on local visual amenity that would arise from the Proposals would be limited and highly localised.

11.13. Effects on visual amenity would be limited to within the immediate environs of the site, notably users of Footpaths Cheddleton 48 and Cheddleton 60 that pass through the eastern and southern parts of the site. Within the immediate context of the site, effects are predicted to be **Major** to **Moderate** (adverse) during construction and Year 1, reducing to **Negligible** (adverse) at Year 1. The level of effect will continue to reduce for users of Cheddleton 60 following maturation of the woodland planting on the bund.

11.14. Furthermore, where the BESS facility would be visible in the local landscape, existing structures within the Cellarhead substation are generally already visible, and the Proposals would not therefore result in a notable to change to the nature of the view. The level of visual effect will be **Negligible** to **Moderate** (adverse) for users of the wider PRoW network beyond the immediate vicinity of the site. The effects experienced by receptors within the environs of the site would in any case reduce following maturation of the proposed mitigation planting.

11.15. The field survey has demonstrated that the proposals would not be visible in views from publicly accessible areas within the Bagnall Conservation Area.

Effect on Residential Visual Amenity

11.16. The Proposals would be partially visible in some views from a few properties to the south and west of the site, such as Platts Farm, Field View Farm, Armshead Farm, Green Farm, Bungalow Farm and Greenfields; however, any such visibility would be interrupted by the layering effect of intervening vegetation (see Viewpoints 6 and 8).

11.17. There would be little visibility from some properties on the northern edge of Werrington and Armshead (see Viewpoints 10-14 and 16). Views towards the site from these properties already include the infrastructure within the existing substation, and the proposals would not therefore result in any material change to the views.

Effect of Cumulative Development

11.18. In summary, cumulative effects would be no greater than **Moderate** (adverse), with these effects limited to:

- perceptual/experiential effects on local landscape character within a limited area in close proximity to the Cellarhead substation where multiple cumulative schemes may be visible in addition to the Proposals; and

- users along restricted sections of the local PRoW network, predominantly users of Footpath Cheddleton 60 who would experience sequential and in places simultaneous visibility of the multiple cumulative schemes to the east and south of the site.

11.19. The Proposals and many of the cumulative schemes would be seen in the context of the existing Cellarhead substation. In particular, the Proposals will appear as an extension to the substation by virtue of the similar type of infrastructure contained within both; however, it is not considered that the substation will appear any larger in the wider landscape given the scale difference between the proposals and the existing facility.

11.20. It is also important to reiterate that the comparatively small scale of the proposals (in comparison to many of the cumulative sites), combined with its location immediately adjacent to the substation and the screening effects of the substation itself and the associated tree cover, mean that the proposals would be noticeably less visible in the local landscape than many of the cumulative schemes.

11.21. Cumulative effects would reduce as the proposed landscape mitigation measures mature.

Effect on the Openness of the Green Belt

11.22. It is not possible to appreciate the proposal in terms of views from the wider countryside to the north and east. In these instances, any associated perception of openness related to this land is very limited. The perception of openness is most readily appreciated from the PRoW to the south and west of the site, particularly those within the environs of the site.

11.23. The proposals would undoubtedly introduce energy storage equipment where there is none currently (which in Green Belt terms would be considered to be built form); however, regarding the visual aspect of Green Belt openness, it is evident that the perception of openness, as it relates to the site, is only readily appreciated from the locations within and in close proximity to it.

11.24. The proposals would typically be perceived as a very modest extension to Cellarhead substation; however, it is not considered that this would result in a material loss of visual openness given the existing substation in the wider landscape given the scale difference between the proposals and the existing facility.

11.25. The proposed development would be in place for a period of up to 40-years, before being decommissioned and the land returned to its former condition. As such, whilst 40-years is a long period of time, it is still not permanent. This was acknowledged in the Secretary of State (SoS) decision for Land West of Honiley Road, where the Inspector, in their report to the SoS, described the magnitude of harm to the Green Belt was limited ***"by the fact that***

the proposal is time limited itself" (Appeal ref 3332671[6], para 2, digital page 27) and with which the SoS agreed (para 14, digital page 2). Therefore, the impact on the openness of the Green Belt would be reduced and the site reinstated to its current open character. Consequently, both spatially and visually, the proposed development would result in some limited and localised harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

11.26. There would be moderate level of harm regarding spatial aspect, the visual affected to a limited degree, as would duration and activity and as such the overall level of harm to openness would be limited and harm localised.

Effects on the Purposes of the Green Belt

11.27. The site would not have any bearing upon the first purpose of the Green Belt, namely, to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas. The proposals would not cause any neighbouring towns to merge into one another. Indeed, the geographical disposition of neighbouring towns would remain unchanged with the proposals in place and as such, the proposal would not conflict with this purpose.

11.28. Introducing a BESS compound into what is currently an open farmland would represent encroachment of development into the countryside. The proposals would introduce built development and infrastructure into a single field that would represent a rounding off of the extents of the existing Cellarhead substation, without being prominent in the landscape from a wide range of vantage points. Where the proposals are visible, they would always be observed in the context of the existing infrastructure at the adjoining substation. The generally low-level nature of the BESS facility and the landscape mitigation associated with the proposals would limit the harm regarding encroachment, purpose (c).

11.29. The proposals would be physically limited to the site itself. There would continue to be a strong disconnection between the distant urban areas beyond the Green Belt with the scheme in place.

11.30. Notwithstanding these factors, the BESS would inevitably cause encroachment in principle result in encroachment and would therefore conflict with this particular purpose of the Green Belt, albeit that the conflict is moderate and not substantial due to the nature of the proposals, its temporary nature, remediability, and the mitigation adopted. The site therefore makes a limited contribution to Purpose (c): **Limited Contribution**. The scheme itself would cause moderate harm with regard to encroachment.

11.31. The proposals would not affect the setting and special character of historic towns. The proposal would not have a bearing upon the recycling of derelict and urban land and as such, would not conflict with this purpose so far as it is relevant.

Effect of the Development on the Remaining Green Belt

11.32. The NPPF at para. 155 addresses the matter of development in the Green Belt and notes under subparagraph (a) that with regard to (a) that development should not be regarded as inappropriate where development would utilise Grey Belt land and would not fundamentally

[6] Reference: APP/T3725/V/23/3332671 (planninginspectorate.gov.uk)

undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the Plan. In this instance, the site sits within the heart of the Green Belt. With the proposed development in place, it would not fundamentally undermine the five purposes (when taken together) of the remaining Green Belt which extends around and far beyond the site.

Conclusions

11.33. For the reasons articulated in the preceding paragraphs, it is the authors professional judgement that whilst there would be some limited harm on landscape character and visual amenity this would be localised. There would be localised and limited harm to the openness of the Green Belt and the proposal would cause moderate harm with regard to one purpose of the Green Belt in terms of encroachment in the countryside. The other four remaining purposes would not be undermined by the proposed development. It is considered there are no substantive landscape, visual or Green Belt reasons from a landscape planning perspective for refusing planning permission for the proposed BESS development.

Appendix 1: Methodology.

APPENDIX 1: LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Contents.

1. Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology

1.1. The Analysis is based on this methodology which has been undertaken with regards to best practice as outlined within the following publications:

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition, 2013) - Landscape Institute / Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment;
- Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA3) - Technical Guidance Note LITGN-2024-01 (2024);
- Visual Representation of Development Proposals (2019) - Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/19;
- An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (2014) - Natural England;
- An Approach to Landscape Sensitivity Assessment - To Inform Spatial Planning and Land Management (2019) - Natural England.
- Reviewing Landscape Visual Impact Assessments (LVIAs and Landscape and Visual appraisals (LVAs) Technical Guidance Note 1/20 Landscape Institute.
- Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations, Technical Guidance Note 02/21 - Landscape Institute (2021).

1.2. GLVIA3 states within paragraph 1.1 that "Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity."[1]

1.3. GLVIA3 also states within paragraph 1.17 that when identifying landscape and visual effects there is a "need for an approach that is in proportion to the scale of the project that is being assessed and the nature of the likely effects. Judgement needs to be exercised at all stages in terms of the scale of investigation that is appropriate and proportional."[2]

1.4. GLVIA3 recognises within paragraph 2.23 that "professional judgement is a very important part of LVIA. While there is some scope for quantitative measurement of some relatively objective matters much of the assessment must rely on qualitative judgements"[3] undertaken by a landscape consultant or a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute (CMLI).

1.5. GLVIA3 notes in paragraph 1.3 that "LVIA may be carried out either formally, as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), or informally, as a contribution to the 'appraisal' of development proposals and planning applications"[4] Although the proposed development is not subject to an EIA requiring an assessment of the likely significance of effects, this

[1] Para 1.1, Page 4, GLVIA, 3rd Edition
[2] Para 1.17, Page 9, GLVIA, 3rd Edition
[3] Para 2.23, Page 21, GLVIA, 3rd Edition
[4] Para 1.3, Page 4, GLVIA, 3rd Edition

assessment is also titled as an LVIA rather than an 'appraisal' in the interests of common understanding with other planning consultants.

1.6. The effects on cultural heritage and ecology are not considered within this LVIA.

Study Area

1.7. The study area for this LVIA covers a 3km radius from the site. However, the main focus of the assessment was taken as a radius of 1km from the site as it is considered that even with clear visibility the proposals would not be perceptible in the landscape beyond this distance.

Effects Assessed

1.8. Landscape and visual effects are assessed through professional judgements on the sensitivity of landscape elements, character and visual receptors combined with the predicted magnitude of change arising from the proposals. The landscape and visual effects have been assessed in the following sections:

- Effects on landscape elements;
- Effects on landscape character; and
- Effects on visual amenity.

1.9. Sensitivity is defined in GLVIA3 as "a term applied to specific receptors, combining judgments of susceptibility of the receptor to a specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor."[5] Various factors in relation to the value and susceptibility of landscape elements, character, visual receptors or representative viewpoints are considered below and cross referenced to determine the overall sensitivity as shown in Table 1:

Table 1, Overall sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors

		VALUE		
SUSCEPTIBILITY		**HIGH**	**MEDIUM**	**LOW**
	HIGH	High	High	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Medium
	LOW	Medium	Medium	Low

1.10. Magnitude of change is defined in GLVIA3 as "a term that combines judgements about the size and scale of the effect, the extent over which it occurs, whether it is reversible or irreversible and whether it is short or long term in duration."[6] Various factors contribute to

[5] Glossary, Page 158, GLVIA, 3rd Edition
[6] Glossary, Page 158, GLVIA, 3rd Edition

the magnitude of change on landscape elements, character, visual receptors and representative viewpoints.

1.11. The sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptor and the magnitude of change arising from the proposals are cross referenced in Table 11 to determine the overall degree of landscape and visual effects.

2. Effects on Landscape Elements

2.1. The effects on landscape elements includes the direct physical change to the fabric of the land, such as the removal of woodland, hedgerows or grassland to allow for the proposals.

Sensitivity of Landscape Elements

2.2. Sensitivity is determined by a combination of the value that is attached to a landscape element and the susceptibility of the landscape element to changes that would arise as a result of the proposals – see pages 88-90 of GLVIA3. Both value and susceptibility are assessed on a scale of high, medium or low.

2.3. The criteria for assessing the value of landscape elements and landscape character is shown in Table 2:

Table 2, Criteria for assessing the value of landscape elements and landscape character

HIGH	Designated landscape including but not limited to World Heritage Sites, National Parks, National Landscapes (formerly Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) considered to be an important component of the country's character or non-designated landscape of a similar character and quality. Landscape condition is good and components are generally maintained to a high standard. In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and absence of major built infrastructure, the landscape has an elevated level of tranquility. Rare or distinctive landscape elements and features are key components that contribute to the landscape character of the area.
MEDIUM	Undesignated landscape including urban fringe and rural countryside considered to be a distinctive component of the national or local landscape character. Landscape condition is fair and components are generally well maintained. In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and some major built infrastructure, the landscape has a moderate level of tranquility. Rare or distinctive landscape elements and features are notable components that contribute to the character of the area.
LOW	Undesignated landscape including urban fringe and rural countryside considered to be of unremarkable character. Landscape condition may be poor and components poorly maintained or damaged. In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and significant major built infrastructure, the landscape has limited levels of tranquility. Rare or distinctive elements and features are not notable components that contribute to the landscape character of the area.

2.4. The criteria for assessing the susceptibility of landscape elements and landscape character is shown in Table 3:

Table 3, Criteria for assessing landscape susceptibility

HIGH	Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a low capacity to accommodate the type of development being proposed owing to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover, built form, etc. Nature of land use – landscapes with no or little existing reference or context to the type of development being proposed. Nature of existing elements – landscapes with components that are not easily replaced or substituted (e.g. ancient woodland, mature trees, historic parkland, etc). Nature of existing features – landscapes where detracting features, major infrastructure or industry is not present or where present has a limited influence on landscape character.
MEDIUM	Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a medium capacity to accommodate the type of development being proposed owing to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover, built form, etc. Nature of land use – landscapes with some existing reference or context to the type of development being proposed. Nature of existing elements – landscapes with components that are easily replaced or substituted. Nature of existing features – landscapes where detracting features, major infrastructure or industry is present and has a noticeable influence on landscape character.
LOW	Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a high capacity to accommodate the type of development being proposed owing to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover, built form, etc. Nature of land use – landscapes with extensive existing reference or context to the type of development being proposed. Nature of existing features – landscapes where detracting features or major infrastructure is present and has a dominating influence on the landscape.

2.5. Various factors in relation to the value and susceptibility of landscape elements are assessed and cross referenced to determine the overall sensitivity as shown in Table 1.

2.6. Sensitivity is defined in GLVIA3 as "a term applied to specific receptors, combining judgments of susceptibility of the receptor to a specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor."[7] The definitions for high, medium, low landscape sensitivity are shown in Table 4:

[7] Glossary, Page 158, GLVIA, 3rd Edition

Table 4, Criteria for assessing landscape sensitivity

HIGH	Landscape element or character area defined as being of high value combined with a high or medium susceptibility to change. Landscape element or character area defined as being of medium value combined with a high susceptibility to change.
MEDIUM	Landscape element or character area defined as being of high value combined with a low susceptibility to change. Landscape element or character area defined as being of medium value combined with a medium or low susceptibility to change. Landscape element or character area defined as being of low value combined with a high or medium susceptibility to change.
LOW	Landscape element or character area defined as being of low value combined with a low susceptibility to change.

Magnitude of Change on Landscape Elements

2.7. Professional judgement has been used to determine the magnitude of change on individual landscape elements within the site as shown in Table 5:

Table 5, Criteria for assessing magnitude of change for landscape elements

HIGH	Substantial loss/gain of a landscape element.
MEDIUM	Partial loss/gain or alteration to part of a landscape element.
LOW	Minor loss/gain or alteration to part of a landscape element.
NEGLIGIBLE	No loss/gain or very limited alteration to part of a landscape element.

3. Effects on Landscape Character

3.1. Landscape character is defined as the "distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse."[8]

3.2. The assessment of effects on landscape character considers how the introduction of new landscape elements physically alters the landform, landcover, landscape pattern and perceptual attributes of the site or how visibility of the proposals changes the way in which the landscape character is perceived.

Sensitivity of Landscape Character

3.3. Sensitivity is determined by a combination of the value that is attached to a landscape and the susceptibility of the landscape to changes that would arise as a result of the proposals – see pages 88-90 of GLVIA3. Both value and susceptibility are assessed on a scale of high, medium or low.

3.4. The criteria for assessing the value of landscape character is shown in Table 2.

3.5. The criteria for assessing the susceptibility of landscape character is shown in Table 3.

3.6. The overall sensitivity is determined through cross referencing the value and susceptibility of landscape character as shown in Table 1.

Magnitude of Change on Landscape Character

3.7. Professional judgement has been used to determine the magnitude of change on landscape character as shown in Table 6:

Table 6, Criteria for assessing magnitude of change on landscape character

HIGH	Introduction of major new elements into the landscape or some major change to the scale, landform, landcover or pattern of the landscape.
MEDIUM	Introduction of some notable new elements into the landscape or some notable change to the scale, landform, landcover or pattern of the landscape.
LOW	Introduction of minor new elements into the landscape or some minor change to the scale, landform, landcover or pattern of the landscape.
NEGLIGIBLE	No notable or appreciable introduction of new elements into the landscape or change to the scale, landform, landcover or pattern of the landscape.

[8] Glossary, Page 157, GLVIA, 3rd Edition

4. Effects on Visual Amenity

4.1. Visual amenity is defined within GLVIA3 as the "overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area." [9]

4.2. The effects on visual amenity considers the changes in views arising from the proposals in relation to visual receptors including settlements, residential properties, transport routes, recreational facilities and attractions; and representative viewpoints or specific locations within the study area as agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

4.3. Sensitivity is determined by a combination of the value that is attached to a view and the susceptibility of the visual receptor to changes in that view that would arise as a result of the proposals – see pages 113-114 of GLVIA3. Both value and susceptibility are assessed on a scale of high, medium or low.

4.4. The criteria for assessing the value of views are shown in Table 7:

Table 7, Criteria for assessing the value of views

HIGH	Views with high scenic value within designated landscapes including but not limited to World Heritage Sites, National Parks, National Landscape (formerly Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty), etc. Likely to include key viewpoints on OS maps or reference within guidebooks, provision of facilities, presence of interpretation boards, etc.
MEDIUM	Views with moderate scenic value within undesignated landscape including urban fringe and rural countryside.
LOW	Views with unremarkable scenic value within undesignated landscape with partly degraded visual quality and detractors.

4.5. The criteria for assessing the susceptibility of views are shown in Table 8:

Table 8, Criteria for assessing visual susceptibility

HIGH	Includes occupiers of residential properties and people engaged in recreational activities in the countryside using public rights of way (PROW).
MEDIUM	Includes people engaged in outdoor sporting activities and people travelling through the landscape on minor roads and trains.
LOW	Includes people at places of work e.g. industrial and commercial premises and people travelling through the landscape on major roads and motorways.

4.6. Sensitivity is defined in GLVIA3 as "a term applied to specific receptors, combining judgments of susceptibility of the receptor to a specific type of change or development

[9] Page 158, Glossary, GLVIA3

proposed and the value related to that receptor."[10] The definitions for high, medium, low visual sensitivity are shown in Table 9:

Table 9, Criteria for assessing visual sensitivity

HIGH	Visual receptor defined as being of high value combined with a high or medium susceptibility to change. Visual receptor defined as being of medium value combined with a high susceptibility to change.
MEDIUM	Visual receptor defined as being of high value combined with a low susceptibility to change. Visual receptor defined as being of medium value combined with a medium or low susceptibility to change. Visual receptor defined as being of low value combined with a high or medium susceptibility to change.
LOW	Visual receptor defined as being of low value combined with a low susceptibility to change.

Magnitude of Change on Visual Receptors

4.7. Professional judgement has been used to determine the magnitude of change on visual receptors as shown in Table 10:

Table 10, Criteria for assessing magnitude of change for visual receptors

HIGH	Major change in the view that has a substantial influence on the overall view.
MEDIUM	Some change in the view that is clearly visible and forms an important but not defining element in the view.
LOW	Some change in the view that is appreciable with few visual receptors affected.
NEGLIGIBLE	No notable change in the view.

[10] Glossary, Page 158, GLVIA, 3rd Edition

5. Significance of Landscape And Visual Effects

5.1. The likely significance of effects is dependent on all of the factors considered in the sensitivity and the magnitude of change upon the relevant landscape and visual receptors. These factors are assimilated to assess whether or not the proposed development will have a likely significant or not significant effect. The variables considered in the evaluation of the sensitivity and the magnitude of change is reviewed holistically to inform the professional judgement of significance.

5.2. Within Table 11 below, the major effects highlighted in grey are considered to be significant in terms of the EIA Regulations. It should be noted that whilst an individual effect may be significant, it does not necessarily follow that the proposed development would be unacceptable in the planning balance. The cross referencing of the sensitivity and magnitude of change on the landscape and visual receptor determines the significance of effect as shown in Table 11:

Table 11, Significance of landscape and visual effects

		Sensitivity		
		HIGH	**MEDIUM**	**LOW**
Magnitude of Change	**HIGH**	Major	Major	Moderate
	MEDIUM	Major	Moderate	Minor
	LOW	Moderate	Minor	Minor
	NEGLIGIBLE	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

6. Typical Descriptors of Landscape Effects

6.1. The typical descriptors of the landscape effects are detailed within Table 12:

Table 12, Typical Descriptors of Landscape Effects

MAJOR BENEFICIAL	Substantially: - enhance the character (including value) of the landscape; - enhance the restoration of characteristic features and elements lost as a result of changes from inappropriate management or development; - enable a sense of place to be enhanced.
MODERATE BENEFICIAL	Moderately: - enhance the character (including value) of the landscape; - enable the restoration of characteristic features and elements partially lost or diminished as a result of changes from inappropriate management or development; - enable a sense of place to be restored.
MINOR BENEFICIAL	Slightly: - complement the character (including value) of the landscape; - maintain or enhance characteristic features or elements; - enable some sense of place to be restored.
NEGLIGIBLE	The proposed changes would (on balance) maintain the character (including value) of the landscape and would: - be in keeping with landscape character and blend in with characteristic features and elements; - Enable a sense of place to be maintained.
NO CHANGE	The proposed changes would not be visible and there would be no change to landscape character.
MINOR ADVERSE	Slightly: - not quite fit the character (including value) of the landscape; - be a variance with characteristic features and elements; - detract from the sense of place.
MODERATE ADVERSE	Moderately: - conflict with the character (including value) of the landscape; - have an adverse effect on characteristic features or elements; - diminish a sense of place.
MAJOR ADVERSE	Substantially: - be at variance with the character (including value) of the landscape; - degrade or diminish the integrity of a range of characteristic features and elements or cause them to be lost; - change a sense of place.

7. Typical Descriptors of Visual Effects

7.1. The typical descriptors of the visual effects are detailed within Table 13:

Table 13, Typical Descriptors of Visual Effects

MAJOR BENEFICIAL	Proposals would result in a major improvement in the view.
MODERATE BENEFICIAL	Proposals would result in a clear improvement in the view.
MINOR BENEFICIAL	Proposals would result in a slight improvement in the view.
NEGLIGIBLE	The proposed changes would be in keeping with, and would maintain, the existing view or where (on balance) the proposed changes would maintain the general appearance of the view (which may include adverse effects which are offset by beneficial effects for the same receptor) or due to distance from the receptor, the proposed change would be barely perceptible to the naked eye.
NO CHANGE	The proposed changes would not be visible and there would be no change to the view.
MINOR ADVERSE	Proposals would result in a slight deterioration in the view.
MODERATE ADVERSE	Proposals would result in a clear deterioration in the view.
MAJOR ADVERSE	Proposals would result in a major deterioration in the view.

8. Nature of Effects

8.1. GLVIA3 includes an entry that states *"effects can be described as positive or negative (or in some cases neutral) in their consequences for views and visual amenity."*[11] GLVIA3 does not, however, state how negative or positive effects should be assessed, and this therefore becomes a matter of professional judgement supported by site specific justification within the LVIA.

[11] Para 6.29, Page 113, GLVIA 3rd Edition

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

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Appendix 2: Summary Visual Impact Schedule

Appendix 2: Summary of Visual Effects based on Viewpoints
Effects are assessed as adverse unless otherwise stated.

Viewpoint	Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity	Magnitude – Year 1	Effect – Year 1	Magnitude – Year 15	Effect – Year 15
1	PRoW	Medium	High	High	Low	Moderate	Negligible	Negligible
2	PRoW	Medium	High	High	High	Major	Negligible	Negligible
3	PRoW	Medium	High	High	High	Major	Negligible	Negligible
4	PRoW	Medium	High	High	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
5	PRoW	Medium	High	High	None	None	None	None
6	PRoW	Medium	High	High	Low	Moderate	Negligible	Negligible
7	PRoW	Medium	High	High	Low	Moderate	Negligible	Negligible
8	PRoW	Medium	High	High	None	None	None	None
9	PRoW	Medium	High	High	None	None	None	None
10	PRoW	Medium	High	High	None	None	None	None
11	Road	Low	Low	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
12	PRoW	Medium	High	High	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
13	Road	Low	Low	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
14	Road	Low	Low	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
15	PRoW	Medium	High	High	None	None	None	None
16	PRoW	Medium	High	High	None	None	None	None

Figure 1: Site Location Plan.

Key

Site Boundary

DATE	NO	REVISION NOTE
12/01/2024	C	Amended
04/01/2024	B	Updated red line
11/12/2023	A	Updated redline
13/03/2023	-	First Issue

Figure 1: Site Location Plan

Newfields Farm
Rownall Road

CLIENT
Newfields BESS Ltd

N 0 50 100 m

DATE	SCALE	TEAM	APPRVD
17/04/2023	1:5000@A3	JW	JWA

DRAWING NUMBER

P23-0415_EN_0001_C_1 SL

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Figure 2: Planning Designations Plan.

Issue:

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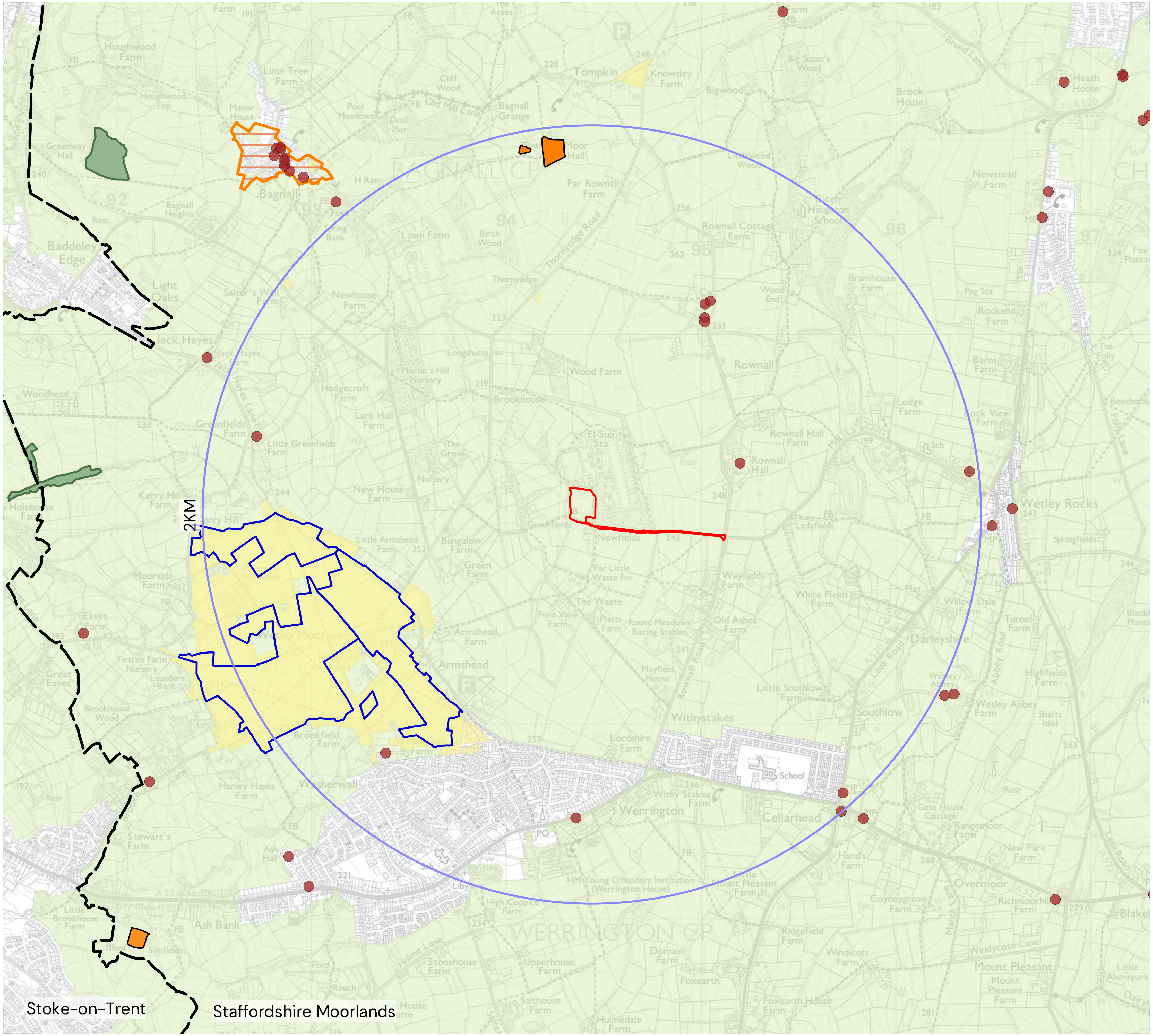

Key

- Site Boundary
- Local Authority Boundary
- Conservation Area
- Scheduled Monument
- Listed Building
- Ancient Woodland
- Green Belt & Countryside (SS9, SS10, H1 & DC3)
  Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Local Plan
- CROW
- SSSI

DATE	NO	REVISION NOTE
12/01/2024	C	Amended
04/01/2024	B	Updated red line
11/12/2023	A	Updated redline
28/03/2023	-	First Issue

Figure 2: Planning Designations

Newfields Farm
Rownall Road

CLIENT
Newfields BESS Ltd

N
0 250 500 m

DATE	SCALE	TEAM	APPRVD
28/03/2023	1:20000 @A3	SRE	JWA

DRAWING NUMBER

P23-0415_EN_0002_C_1 PD

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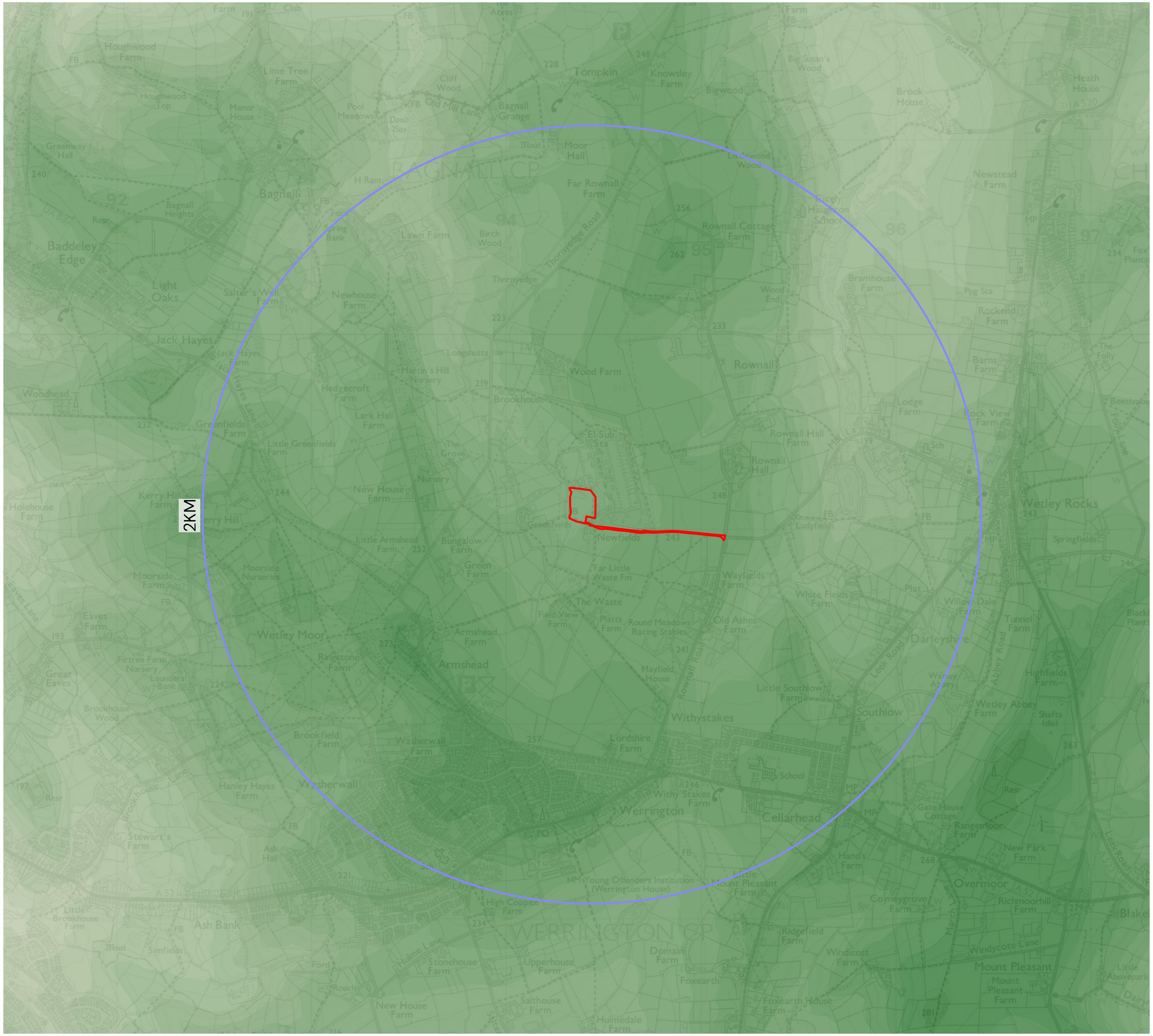
Figure 3: Topography Plan.

Issue:



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Key

Symbol	Description
Red line	Site Boundary
	280m-290m AOD
	270m-280m AOD
	260m-270m AOD
	250m-260m AOD
	240m-250m AOD
	230m-240m AOD
	220m-230m AOD
	210m-220m AOD
	200m-210m AOD
	190m-200m AOD
	180m-190m AOD
	170m-180m AOD
	160m-170m AOD
	150m-160m AOD
	140m-150m AOD
	130m-140m AOD

DATE	NO	REVISION NOTE
12/01/2024	C	Amended
04/01/2024	B	Updated red line
11/12/2023	A	Updated redline
13/03/2023	-	First Issue

Figure 3: Topography

Newfields Farm
Rownall Road

CLIENT
Newfields BESS Ltd

DATE	SCALE	TEAM	APPRVD
17/04/2023	1:20000 @A3	JW	KM

DRAWING NUMBER

P23-0415_EN_0003_C_1 TP

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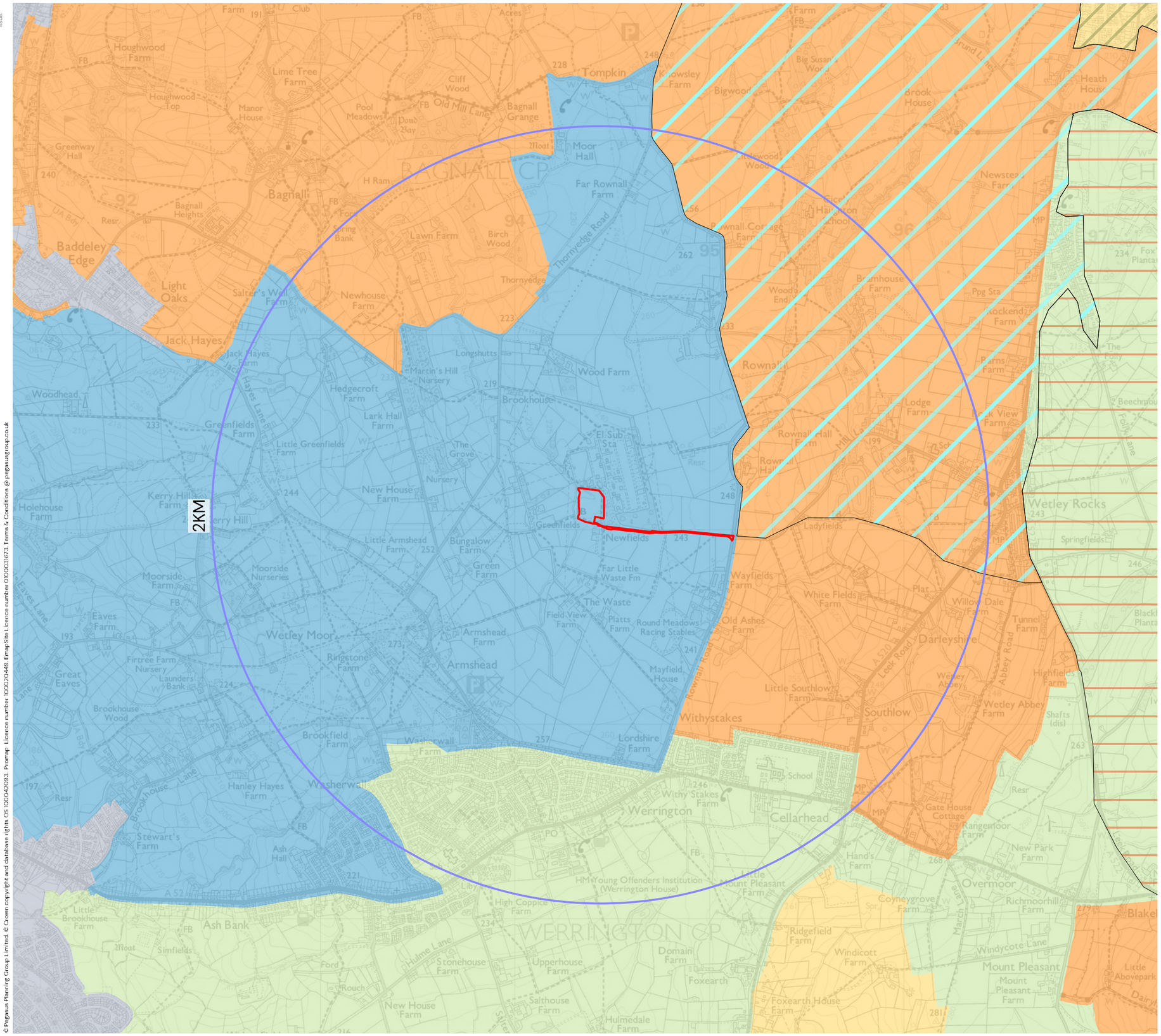
Figure 4: Landscape Character Plan.



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Key

Site Boundary

National Character Area 64: Potteries and Churnet Valley
(The whole site sits within NCA 64)

Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (2008)

- Ancient Plateau Farmlands
- Ancient slope and valley farmlands
- Dissected sandstone cloughs and valleys
- Settled Plateau Farmlands
- Urban

Churnet Valley Landscape Character Assessment
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (2011)

- Ancient Slope and Valley Farmlands
  5a - Wetley Rocks
- Settled Plateau Farmlands
  4a - Consall
- Dissected Sandstone Cloughs and Valleys
  1c - Cheddleton & Longsdon

DATE	NO	REVISION NOTE
12/01/2024	C	Amended
04/01/2024	B	Updated red line

Figure 4: Landscape Character

Newfields Farm
Rownall Road

CLIENT
Newfields BESS Ltd

N 0 250 500 m

DATE	SCALE	TEAM	APPRVD
29/03/2023	1:20000@A3	SRE	JWA

DRAWING NUMBER

P23-0415_EN_0004_C_1 LC

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Figure 5: Viewpoints and Public Rights of Way Plan.

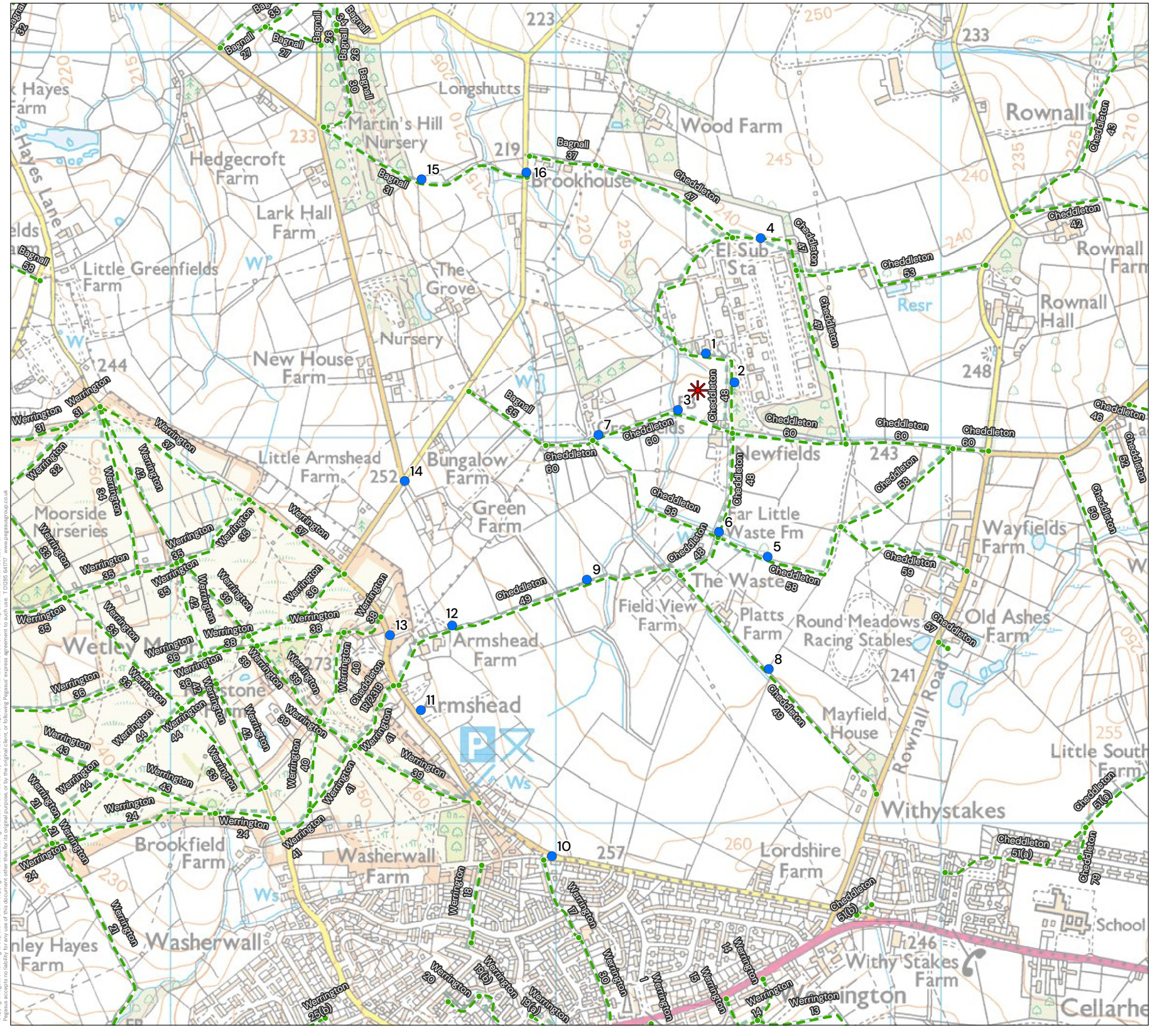

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FIGURE 5 : VIEWPOINT AND PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY PLAN

NEWFIELDS FARM

CLIENT
Newfields BESS Ltd.

0 0.2 km

DATE	SCALE	TEAM	APPROVED
20/03/2025	1:10,000@A3	NC	AC

SHEET	REVISION
-	A

DRAWING NUMBER
P23-0415_EN_11

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Figure 6: Viewpoint Photographs.

Approximate extent of site (foreground field)

Viewpoint 1: Public footpath Cheddleton 48 to the north of the site, looking south.

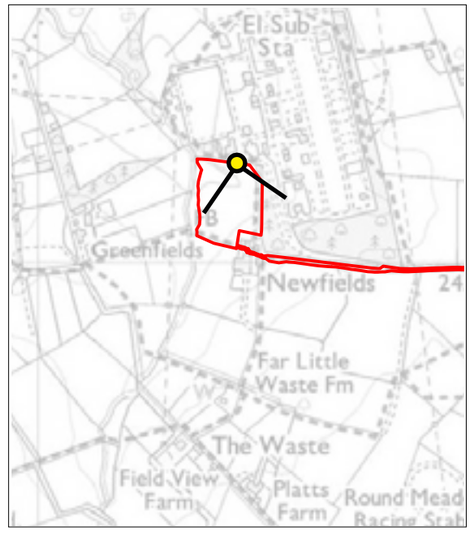

Figure 6: Viewpoint Photographs

Site | Newfields Farm, Rownall Road

Client | Newfields BESS Ltd

Drawing number | P23-0415_EN_0006_B_0001

Date 05/05/2023
Team JW
App JWA

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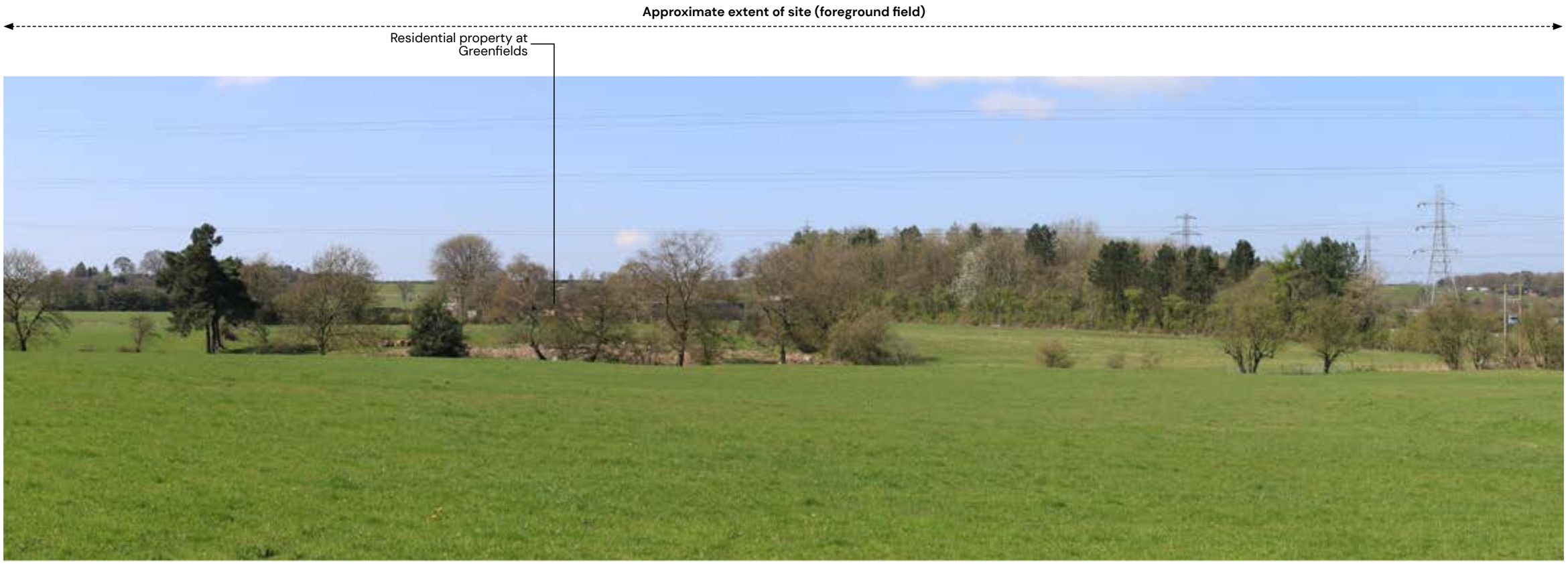
Viewpoint 1: Public footpath Cheddleton 48 to the north of the site, looking south.



Viewpoint 2: Public footpath Cheddleton 48 on the eastern edge of the field containing the site, looking west.

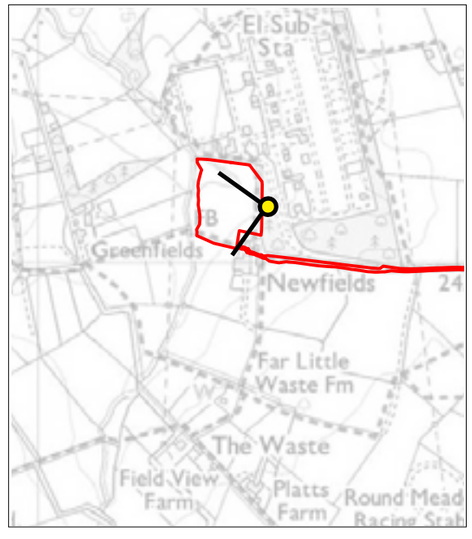


Figure 6: Viewpoint Photographs

Site | Newfields Farm, Rownall Road

Client | Newfields BESS Ltd

Drawing number | P23-0415_EN_0006_B_0001

Date 05/05/2023
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Viewpoint 2: Public footpath Cheddleton 48 on the eastern edge of the field containing the site, looking west.

Viewpoint 3: Public footpath Cheddleton 60 in the south-western corner of the field containing the site, looking north-east.

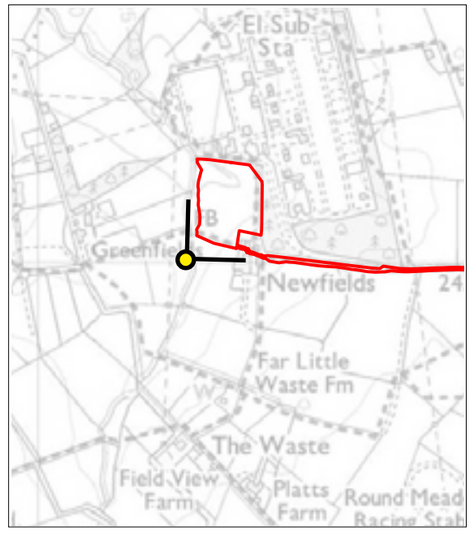

Figure 6: Viewpoint Photographs

Site | Newfields Farm, Rownall Road

Client | Newfields BESS Ltd

Drawing number | P23-0415_EN_0006_B_0001

Date 05/05/2023
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Viewpoint 3: Public footpath Cheddleton 60 in the south-western corner of the field containing the site, looking north-east.

Viewpoint 4: Public footpath Cheddleton 47 to the north of the Cellarhead Substation, looking south-south-west.

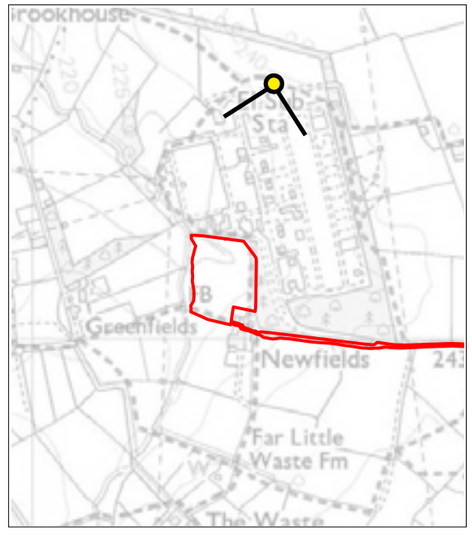

Figure 6: Viewpoint Photographs

Site | Newfields Farm, Rownall Road

Client | Newfields BESS Ltd

Drawing number | P23-0415_EN_0006_B_0001

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Viewpoint 4: Public footpath Cheddleton 47 to the north of the Cellarhead Substation, looking south-south-west.

Viewpoint 5: Public footpath Cheddleton 58 to north-east of Platts Farm, looking north-north-west.

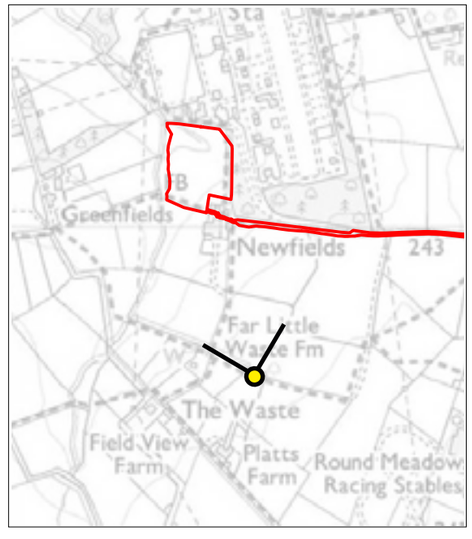

Figure 6: Viewpoint Photographs

Site | Newfields Farm, Rownall Road

Client | Newfields BESS Ltd

Drawing number | P23-0415_EN_0006_B_0001

Date 05/05/2023
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Viewpoint 5: Public footpath Cheddleton 58 to north-east of Platts Farm, looking north-north-west.

Viewpoint 6: Public footpath Cheddleton 58 at junction with footpath Cheddleton 48 next to Far Little Waste Farm, looking north.

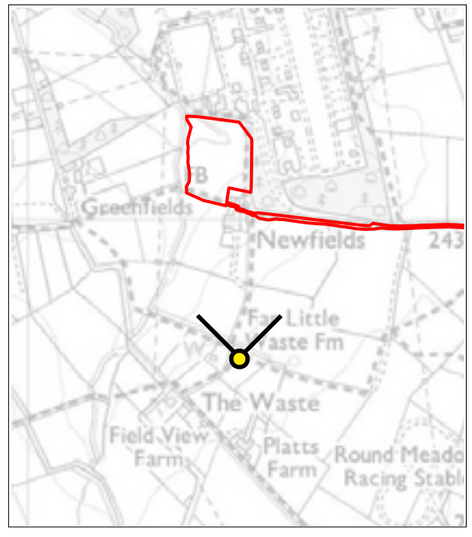

Figure 6: Viewpoint Photographs

Site | Newfields Farm, Rownall Road

Client | Newfields BESS Ltd

Drawing number | P23-0415_EN_0006_B_0001

Date 05/05/2023
Team JW
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Viewpoint 6: Public footpath Cheddleton 58 at junction with footpath Cheddleton 48 next to Far Little Waste Farm, looking north.

Viewpoint 7: Junction of public footpaths Cheddleton 58 and Cheddleton 60 to the south of Greenfields, looking east-north-east. Also partially representative of views from nearby residential properties.

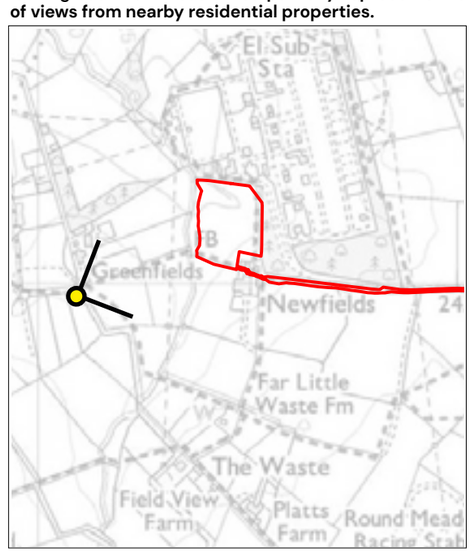

Figure 6: Viewpoint Photographs

Site | Newfields Farm, Rownall Road

Client | Newfields BESS Ltd

Drawing number | P23-0415_EN_0006_B_0001

Date 05/05/2023
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Viewpoint 7: Junction of public footpaths Cheddleton 58 and Cheddleton 60 to the south of Greenfields, looking east-north-east. Also partially representative of views from nearby residential properties.

Viewpoint 8: Public footpath Cheddleton 49 to south-east of Platts Farm, looking north-north-west. Also represents views from nearby residential properties.

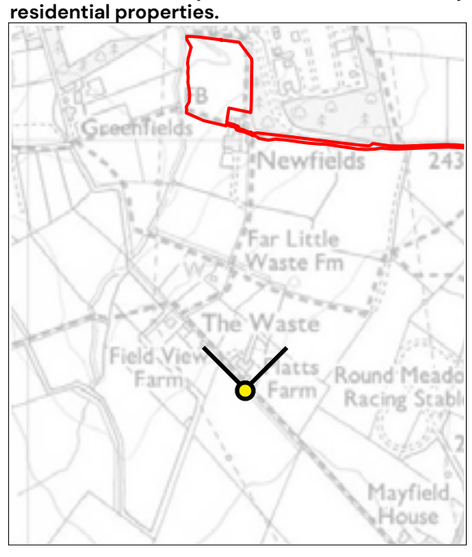

Figure 6: Viewpoint Photographs

Site | Newfields Farm, Rownall Road

Client | Newfields BESS Ltd

Drawing number | P23-0415_EN_0006_B_0001

Date 05/05/2023
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Viewpoint 8: Public footpath Cheddleton 49 to south-east of Platts Farm, looking north-north-west. Also represents views from nearby residential properties.

Viewpoint 9: Public footpath Cheddleton 49 to west of Field View Farm, looking north-east.

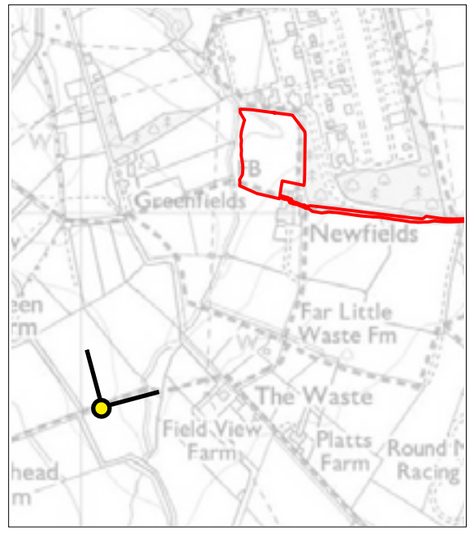

Figure 6: Viewpoint Photographs

Site | Newfields Farm, Rownall Road

Client | Newfields BESS Ltd

Drawing number | P23-0415_EN_0006_B_0001

Date 05/05/2023
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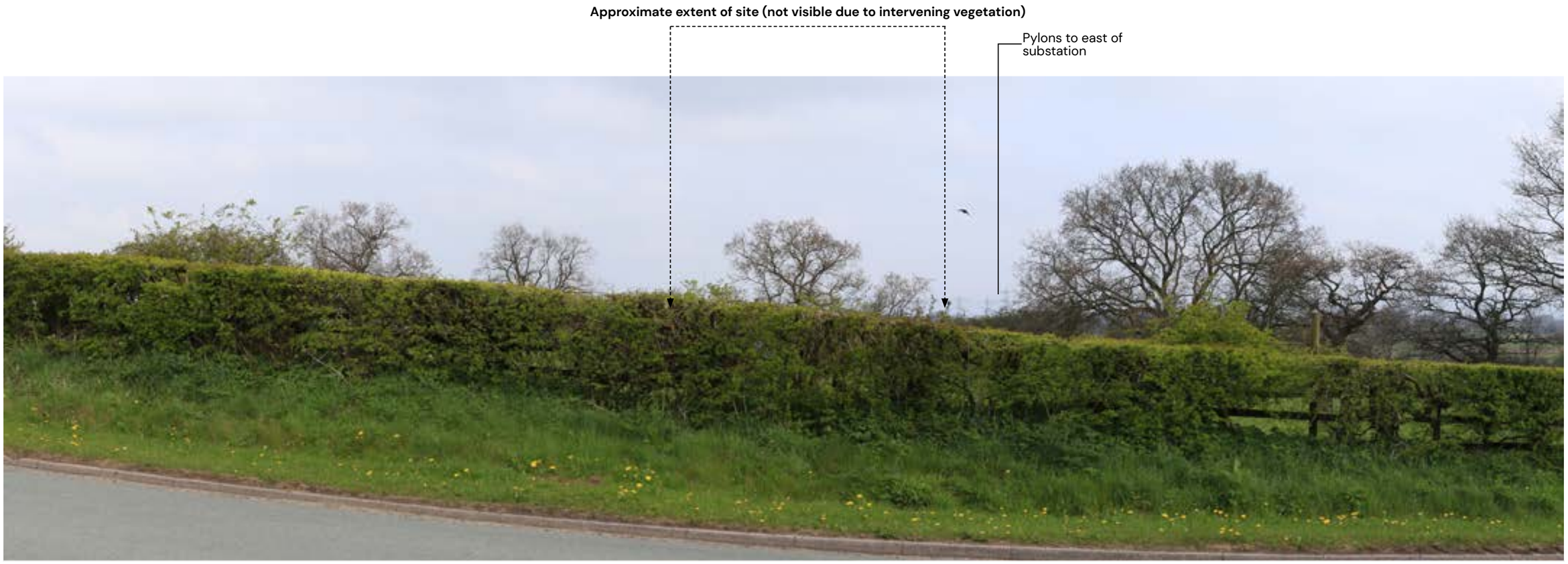
Viewpoint 9: Public footpath Cheddleton 49 to west of Field View Farm, looking north-east.



Viewpoint 10: Junction of Armshead Road, Draw Well Lane and public footpath Werrington 17 on northern edge of Werrington, looking north-east.

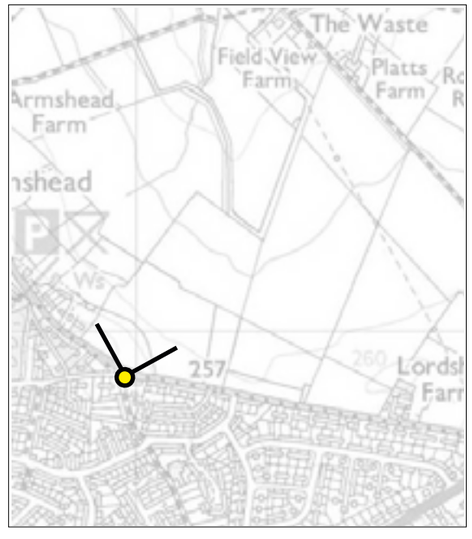


Figure 6: Viewpoint Photographs

Site | Newfields Farm, Rownall Road

Client | Newfields BESS Ltd

Drawing number | P23-0415_EN_0006_B_0001

Date 05/05/2023
Team JW
App JWA

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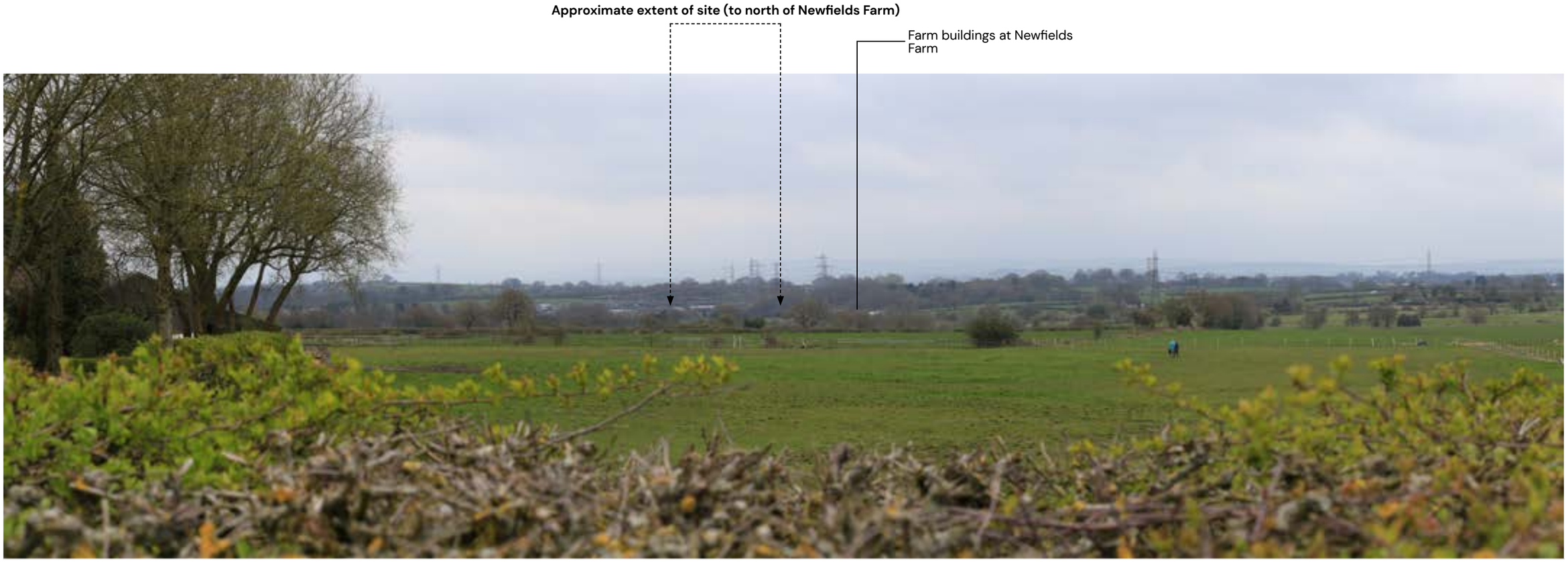
Viewpoint 10: Junction of Armshead Road, Draw Well Lane and public footpath Werrington 17 on northern edge of Werrington, looking north-east.



Viewpoint 11: Armshead Road between Armshead and Werrington, looking north-east. Also partially representative of views from nearby residential properties.

Figure 6: Viewpoint Photographs

Site | Newfields Farm, Rownall Road

Client | Newfields BESS Ltd

Drawing number | P23-0415_EN_0006_B_0001

Date 05/05/2023
Team JW
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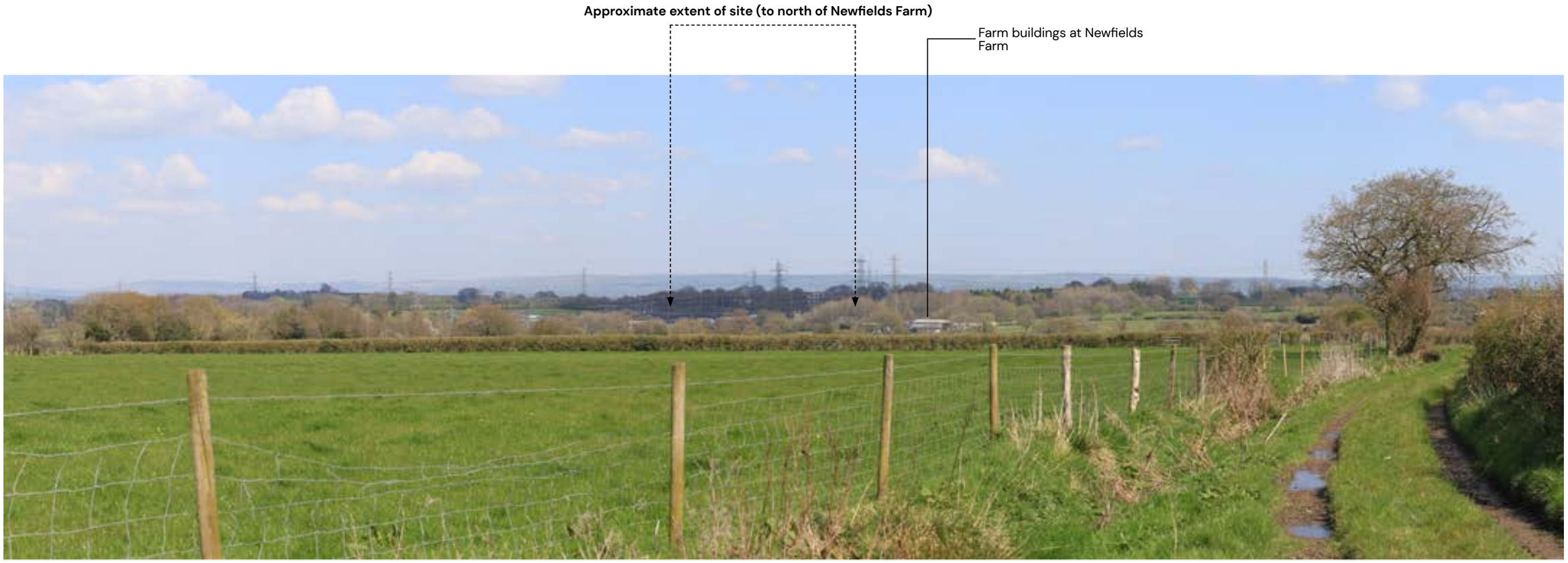
Viewpoint 11: Armshead Road between Armshead and Werrington, looking north-east. Also partially representative of views from nearby residential properties.



Viewpoint 12: Public footpath Cheddleton 49 to east of Armshead Farm, looking north-east.

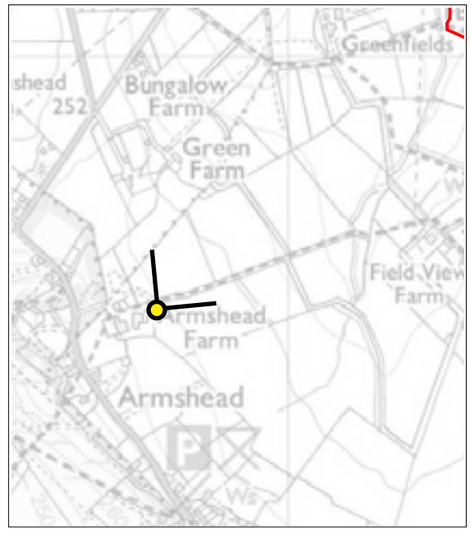


Figure 6: Viewpoint Photographs

Site | Newfields Farm, Rownall Road

Client | Newfields BESS Ltd

Drawing number | P23-0415_EN_0006_B_0001

Date 05/05/2023
Team JW
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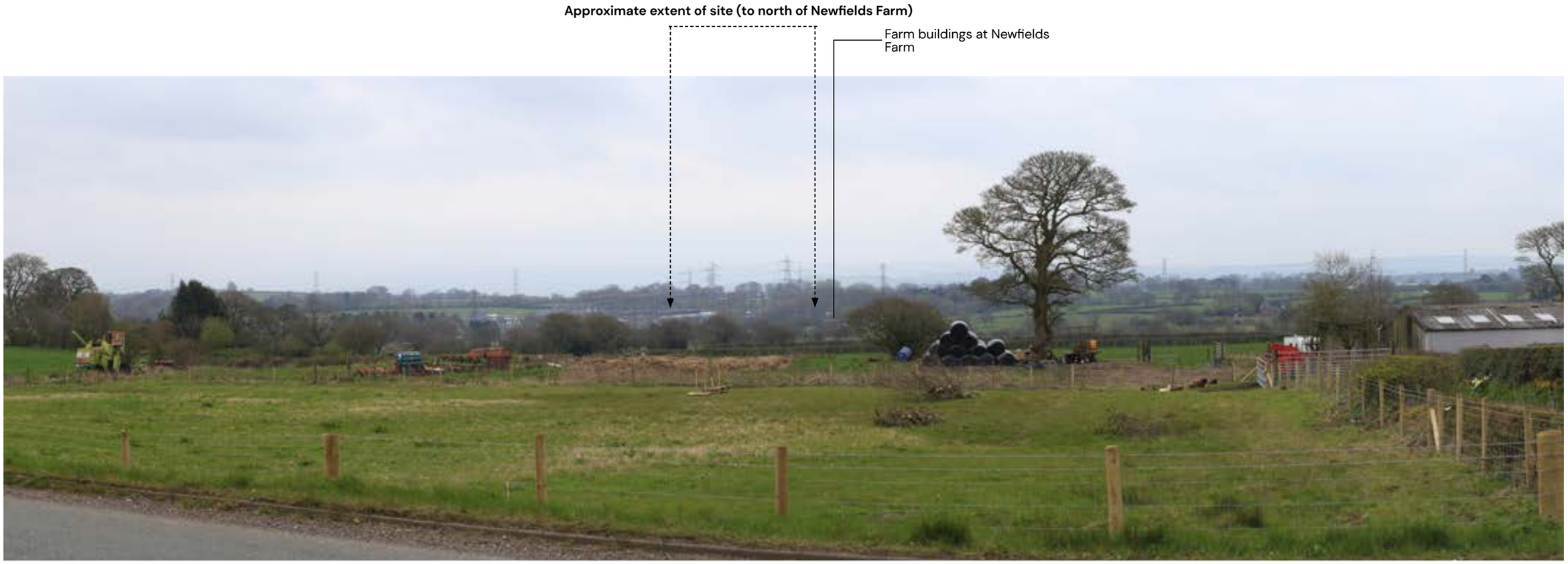
Viewpoint 12: Public footpath Cheddleton 49 to east of Armshead Farm, looking north-east.



Viewpoint 13: Armshead Road at entrance to Armshead Farm, looking north-east. Also partially representative of views from residential properties at Nos. 289 and 301 Armshead Road.

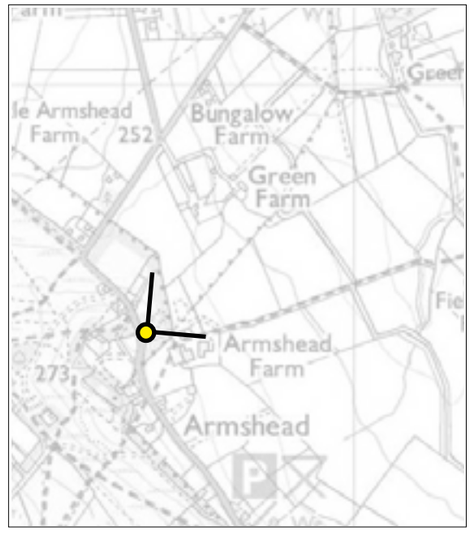


Figure 6: Viewpoint Photographs

Site | Newfields Farm, Rownall Road

Client | Newfields BESS Ltd

Drawing number | P23-0415_EN_0006_B_0001

Date 05/05/2023
Team JW
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Viewpoint 13: Armshead Road at entrance to Armshead Farm, looking north-east. Also partially representative of views from residential properties at Nos. 289 and 301 Armshead Road.

Viewpoint 14: Junction of Armshead Road, Bagnall Road and Thornyedge Road, looking east-north-east. Also partially representative of views from some nearby residential properties.

Figure 6: Viewpoint Photographs

Site | Newfields Farm, Rownall Road

Client | Newfields BESS Ltd

Drawing number | P23-0415_EN_0006_B_0001

Date 05/05/2023
Team JW
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Viewpoint 14: Junction of Armshead Road, Bagnall Road and Thornyedge Road, looking east-north-east. Also partially representative of views from some nearby residential properties.

Viewpoint 15: Public footpath Bagnall 31 between Bagnall Road & Thornyedge Road, looking south-east.

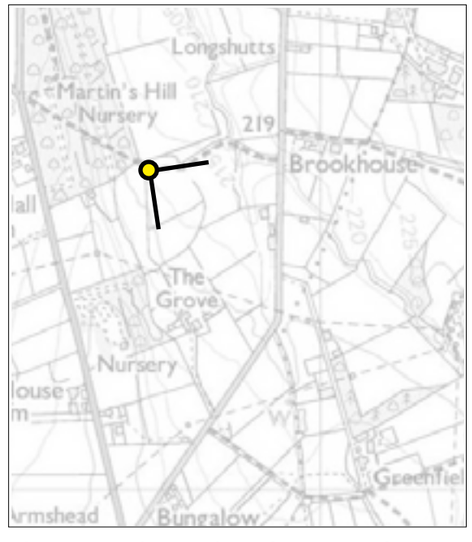

Figure 6: Viewpoint Photographs

Site | Newfields Farm, Rownall Road

Client | Newfields BESS Ltd

Drawing number | P23-0415_EN_0006_B_0001

Date 05/05/2023
Team JW
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Viewpoint 15: Public footpath Bagnall 31 between Bagnall Road & Thornyedge Road, looking south-east.

Approximate extent of site (not discernible in the view)

Viewpoint 16: Public footpath Bagnall 31 at junction with Thornyedge Road close to Little Brookhouse Farm, looking south-east.Also represents residents' views from Little Brookhouse Farm and Holly Grove.

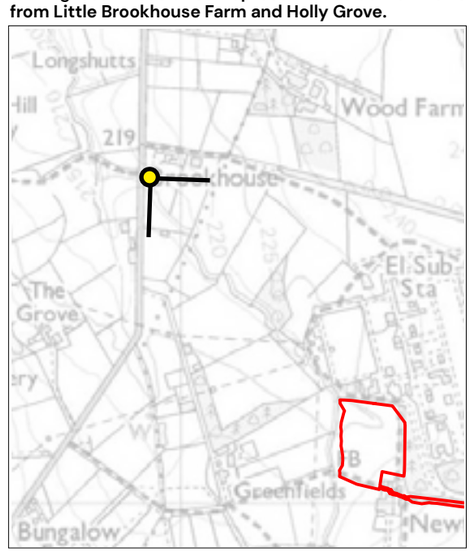

Figure 6: Viewpoint Photographs

Site | Newfields Farm, Rownall Road

Client | Newfields BESS Ltd

Drawing number | P23-0415_EN_0006_B_0001

Date 05/05/2023
Team JW
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Viewpoint 16: Public footpath Bagnall 31 at junction with Thornyedge Road close to Little Brookhouse Farm, looking south-east.Also represents residents' views from Little Brookhouse Farm and Holly Grove.

Figure 7: Strategic Landscape Planting Plan.

PLANT SCHEDULE

HEDGEROW

Instant hedge comprising a mix of native species, such as Practicality Brown Practical Instant Hedge' Native Mix at 1.8-2m height containing roughly equal quantities of Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Hornbeam, Hazel and common Privet (or other similar approved).
Total length = 146m

WOODLAND PLANTING

SPECIES	ROOT	SIZE(cm)	MIX(%)	NO.
Quercus robur (oak)	BR	80-100	25	442
Corylus avellana (hazel)	BR	80-100	10	176
Crataegus monogyna (hawthorn)	BR	80-100	10	176
Ilex aquifolium (holly)	C (3L)	60-80	10	176
Betula pendula (Silver birch)	BR	80-100	15	265
Betula pubescens (downy birch)	BR	80-100	10	176
Ulmus glabra (wych elm)	BR	80-100	10	176
Sorbus aucuparia (rowan)	BR	80-100	10	176

Total area = 4080sqm, Total plants = 1813 @ 1.5m spacing.
Species to be planted randomly in single species groups between 2 and 5 plants.

SCRUB PLANTING

SPECIES	ROOT	SIZE(cm)	MIX(%)	NO.
Prunus spinosa (blackthorn)	BR	60-80	35	392
Corylus avellana (hazel)	BR	60-80	15	168
Crataegus monogyna (hawthorn)	BR	60-80	20	224
Sambucus nigra (elder)	BR	60-80	20	224
Viburnum opulus (Guelder rose)	BR	60-80	10	112

Total area = 1210sqm, Total plants = 1210 @ 1m spacing.
Species to be planted randomly in single species groups between 2 and 5 plants.

GRASSLAND

Existing neutral grassland (pasture) to be enhanced with over-seeding (or re-seeding where required following construction) with Emorsgate EM" Standard General Purpose Meadow Mixture' or similar approved by the supervising landscape architect or ecologist. To be sown at the rate and as per the specification set out in the supplier's recommendations.

Total area = 5750 sqm

- Site Boundary
- Existing vegetation
- Existing public right of way
- Existing pasture enhanced with meadow seeding
- Proposed layout
- Proposed bund (See drawing 'P23-0415_EN_0008_-_0001 Illustrative Landscape Sections' for more information)
- Proposed broadleaved woodland planting
- Proposed scrub planting
- Proposed instant hedgerow
- Proposed acoustic fence
- Proposed ridgeline
- Proposed security fence

INSET MAP 1:10,000

DATE	NO	REVISION NOTE
28/02/2025	G	Updated to revised layout
25/06/2024	F	Graphic Amend
25/06/2024	E	Updated Layout
04/04/2024	D	Amended Bund
14/02/2024	C	Updated PROW

Figure 7: Strategic Landscape Planting Plan

Newfields Farm, Rownall Road

CLIENT
Newfields BESS Ltd

N 0 10 25 m

DATE	SCALE	TEAM	APPRVD
13/12/2023	1:1000@A3	BR/JW	KE

DRAWING NUMBER

P23-0415_EN_0007_G_0001

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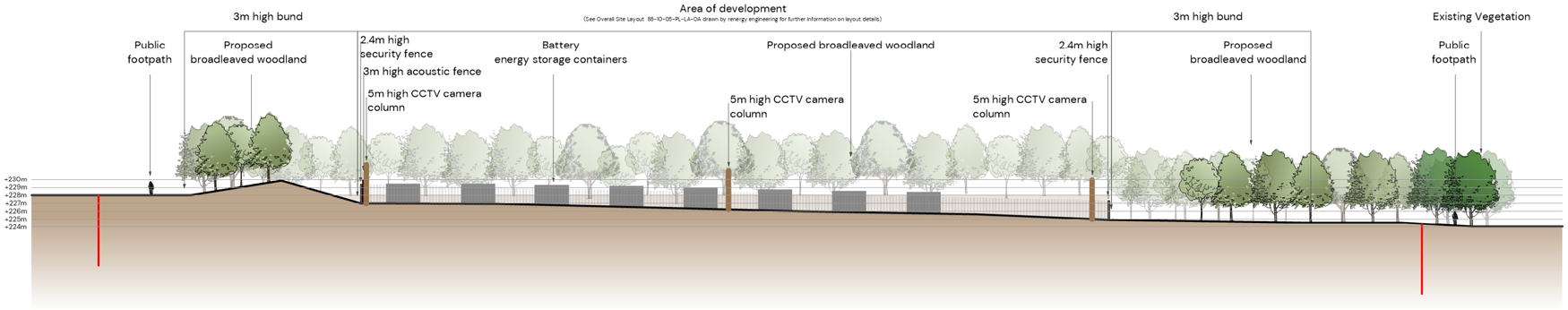
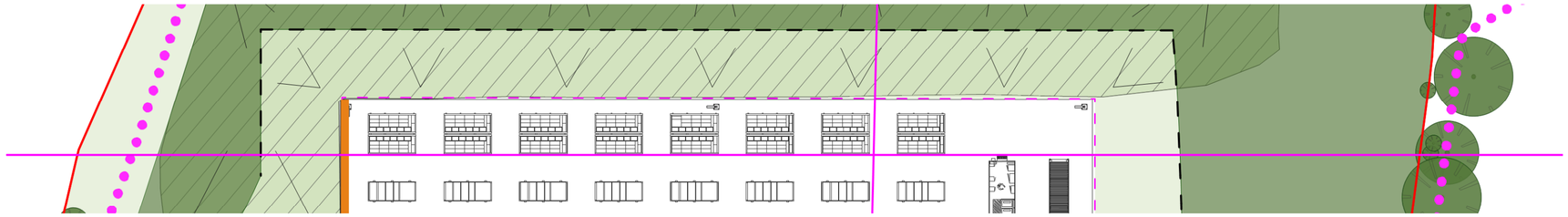
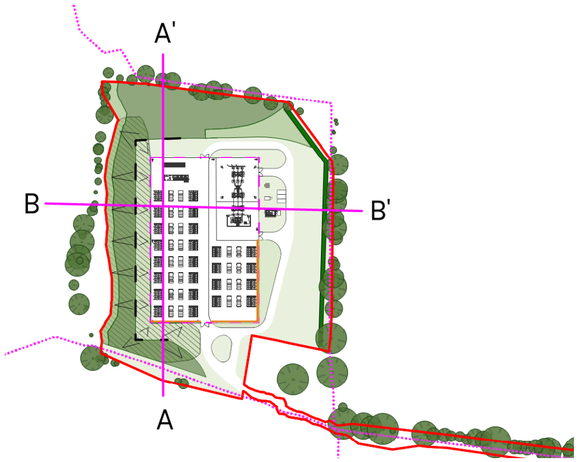
Figure 8: Landscape Sections.

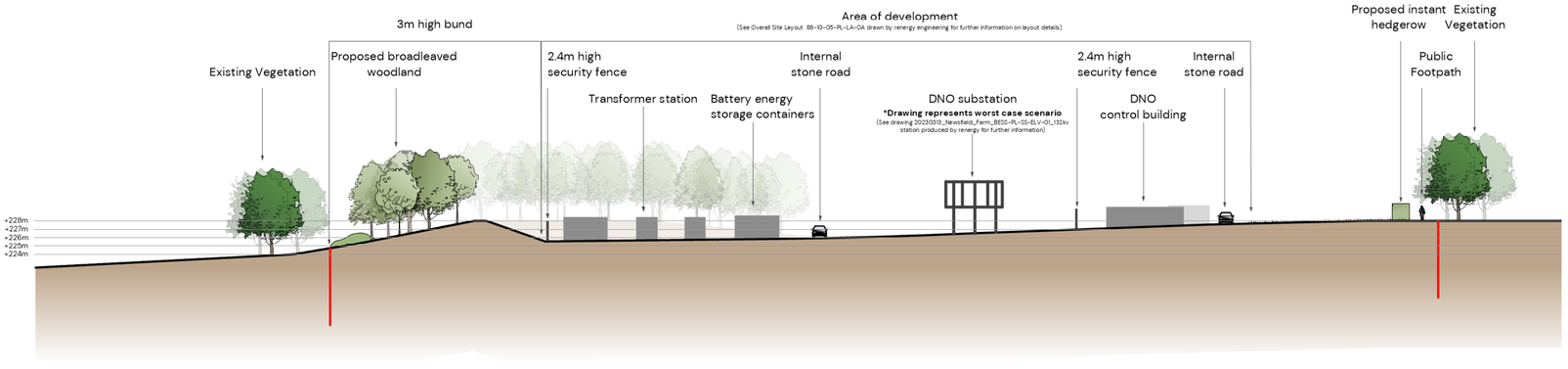


Section AA'
Scale 1:500 @ A2

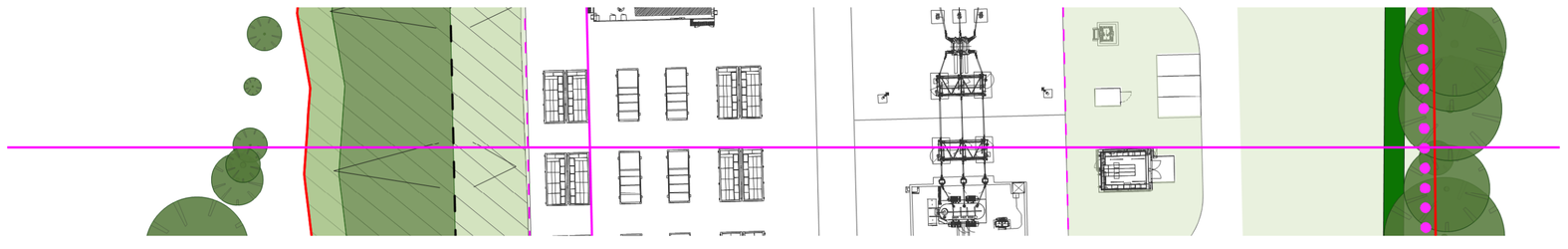




SECTION LINE INSET MAP - NTS



Section BB'
Scale 1:500 @ A2



03/03/2025	K	Updated to client comments.
28/02/2025	J	Updated to revised layout
25/06/2024	H	Graphic Amend
25/06/2024	G	Updated Layout
10/04/2024	F	Client comments
DATE	NO	REVISION NOTE

Figure 8: Illustrative Landscape Sections

Newfields Farm, Rownall Road

CLIENT
Newfields BESS Ltd

N 0 10 25 m

DATE	SCALE	TEAM	APPRVD
14/12/2023	1:500@A2	JW	KE

DRAWING NUMBER

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