



STEPHENSON
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Planning, Landscape & Environment
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SWEETBRIAR BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM (BESS)

Planning Statement

Including:
Design and Access Statement

Lightrock Power Limited

June 2025

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Document history

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

- 1.1.1 This supporting Planning Statement including Design and Access Statement (the ‘Planning Statement’) has been prepared by Stephenson Halliday Ltd to accompany the planning application by Lightrock Power Limited (the ‘Applicant’) to North Lincolnshire Council (‘the Council’) to construct, install and operate a c.800 MW / 4-hour duration Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) with associated infrastructure (‘the Proposed Development’) on land to the south of Sweetbriar Farm, Ulceby, North Lincolnshire (‘the Site’).
- 1.1.2 The planning application seeks the permission for the following:
“The construction and installation of a Battery Energy Storage System, associated infrastructure, landscaping, fencing, access tracks, and biodiversity net gain planting.”
- 1.1.3 Planning permission is sought for a temporary period of 40 years. A full description of the Proposed Development is provided in Chapter 4.
- 1.1.4 The purpose of this Planning Statement is to assess the Proposed Development against policies within the Development Plan and to take into account any other material planning considerations. The Planning Statement also considers the relevant design and access requirements, proportionate to this type of development.
- 1.1.5 The design evolution of the Proposed Development and Site access is set out and discussed in detail at Chapter 5.
- 1.1.6 The Planning Statement is set out as follows:
- **Chapter 1** – Introduction;
 - **Chapter 2** – The Need for the Proposed Development;
 - **Chapter 3** – Site and Surroundings;
 - **Chapter 4** – The Proposed Development;
 - **Chapter 5** – Design and Access Statement;
 - **Chapter 6** – Planning Policy and Material Considerations;
 - **Chapter 7** – Assessment of the Proposed Development (including Overall Planning Balance); and,
 - **Chapter 8** – Conclusions.

1.2 Supporting Documentation

- 1.2.1 This Planning Statement is supported by the following appendices:

- Appendix 1: Relevant North Lincolnshire Council Local Development Framework Policies (Prepared by Stephenson Halliday, May 2025); and
- Appendix 2: EIA Screening Opinion and Proforma (North Lincolnshire Council, February 2025).

1.2.2 The planning application is also accompanied by the following supporting documentation, which are submitted separately to the Planning Statement:

- Covering letter;
- Application Form and Certificates;
- Planning Figures including:
 - Planning Figure 1: Site Location Plan
 - Planning Figure 2: Proposed Site Layout Plan
 - Planning Figure 3: Proposed 400kV Substation Plan
 - Planning Figure 4: Proposed 400kV Substation Elevations
 - Planning Figure 5: Proposed Medium Voltage Station
 - Planning Figure 6: Proposed BESS Plan and Elevations
 - Planning Figure 7: Proposed 33kV Metered Switchroom
 - Planning Figure 8: Proposed 400 kV Relay and Control Room
 - Planning Figure 9: Proposed 400kV Aux Transformer
 - Planning Figure 10: Proposed LV Units
 - Planning Figure 11: Proposed Harmonic Filter Plans and Elevations
 - Planning Figure 12: Proposed Statcom Plans and Elevations
 - Planning Figure 13: Spares, Welfare and Operations Plan
 - Planning Figure 14: Proposed Water Tank (228,000L)
 - Planning Figure 15: Proposed Cat2 Mesh / Substation Gate and Fence
 - Planning Figure 16: Proposed Palisade and Acoustic Fence
 - Planning Figure 17: Proposed CCTV Elevations
 - Planning Figure 18: Proposed Track Section
 - Planning Figure 19: BESS Aux Transformer Plan and Elevations

- Planning Figure 20: BESS Control Room Plan and Elevations
- Planning Figure 21: Proposed Site Elevations
- Planning Figure 22: Proposed Site Sections
- Planning Figure 23: Proposed BESS Platform
- Planning Figure 24: Proposed BESS Platform Cross Sections 1/2
- Planning Figure 25: Proposed BESS Platform Cross Sections 2/2
- Statement of Community Involvement (Lightrock Power Limited, May 2025);
- Landscape and Visual Appraisal (Prepared by Stephenson Halliday, June 2025);
- Ecological Assessment Report (Prepared by Avian Ecology, May 2025);
- Arboricultural Assessment (Prepared by RSK Biocensus, June 2025);
- Historic Environment Assessment (Prepared by Heritage Archaeology, June 2025);
- Flood Risk Assessment & Surface Water Drainage Strategy (Prepared by RSK LDE, June 2025).
- Noise Assessment (Prepared by Metrica Environmental Consulting, June 2025);
- Transport Assessment and Traffic Management Plan (Prepared by Beacon Transport Planning, June 2025);
- Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Survey (Prepared by Kernon Countryside Consultants, May 2025); and
- Outline Battery Safety Management Plan (OBSMP) (Prepared by Abbott Risk Consulting, June 2025).

1.3 The Applicant

- 1.3.1 Lightrock Power Limited ('Lightrock Power') develops ground mounted solar farms and storage solutions across the UK to provide a more reliable energy supply. The team have delivered several successful operational projects that are providing home-grown, clean energy to the grid.
- 1.3.2 Lightrock Power focuses on schemes that can be sensitively designed into the existing surrounding landscape, helping meet both national and local renewable energy targets. Central to their projects are the three core pillars – environment, economy, and ecology, which are incorporated throughout Lightrock Power's schemes wherever possible.

- 1.3.3 Solar Energy UK's Solar Habitat 2025¹ report shows that well-managed solar farms are becoming important habitats for wildlife. Lightrock Power seek to raise industry standards across the board, by working in partnership with RSPB and Buglife to develop projects that provide a meaningful benefit to local biodiversity.

1.4 Pre-Application Discussions

- 1.4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) places considerable emphasis on the importance of Pre-Application engagement within the planning process. It is recognised that early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application process for all parties. It is to be seen as a collaborative process between the applicant and other relevant parties, such as the Local Planning Authority (LPA), statutory and non-statutory consultees, elected members, and the local community.
- 1.4.2 A Pre-Application Enquiry was submitted to the Council on the 23rd of January 2025 and a response from the Council was received on 13th February 2025 from Senior Planning Officer Scott Jackson (Pre-Application Reference: PRE/2024/145).
- 1.4.3 Feedback received from the Council has been considered in the final design of the Proposed Development and the methodologies and scope for the technical assessments which form part of the application.
- 1.4.4 The Pre-Application response set out the relevant local policies to the Site and Proposed Development and also confirmed that both development plan policies and the NPPF support the delivery of renewable and low-carbon energy and associated infrastructure. The response clarified that although the development itself will not deliver renewable energy, the proposal would directly support energy-generating facilities which will increasingly be delivered from renewable energy sources and the Proposed Development is regarded as low carbon energy associated infrastructure. The response set out that the acceptability of any particular proposal will be dependent on its environmental impacts.

1.5 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

- 1.5.1 Under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Regulations) 2017, where development falls under Schedule 2, the need for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is determined based on a set of criteria, as set out below:

“Development falls within one of the classes of development stated in Schedule 2; AND,

EITHER exceeds the size threshold for that class of development; OR is in a sensitive area as defined by the EIA Regulations; AND,

It is likely to have significant environmental effects due to factors such as nature, size or location.”

- 1.5.2 BESS are not developments specifically listed under Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations. However, Schedule 2 refers to ‘Energy Industry’ categories. It is considered that the Proposed Development falls within the category of *“industrial installations for the production of electricity,*

¹ <https://solarenergyuk.org/resource/solar-habitat-2025/>

steam and hot water (unless included in Schedule 1)” and exceeds the 0.5ha threshold for EIA Screening.

- 1.5.3 Therefore, on the 23rd of January 2025, the Applicant sought a Screening Opinion from the Council in accordance with Part 2, Section 6 of the EIA 2017 Regulations to determine whether the Council considered the Proposed Development is likely to give rise to any significant effects on the environment; and therefore, require an EIA.
- 1.5.4 The Council’s Screening Opinion (Application Reference: PA/SCR/2025/1) (Appendix 2) received on the 28th of February 2025 confirmed that the Proposed Development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its size, nature, previous use, or location. Accordingly, the Council considered that the Proposed Development does not constitute EIA development.
- 1.5.5 As the Site boundary has changed following the EIA Screening Request submitted in January (to include an area for a temporary construction access) it is requested that the Council re-screen the Proposed Development upon submission of the planning application.

1.6 Community Engagement

- 1.6.1 The Applicant has undertaken comprehensive community engagement activities to share information on the proposal and seek feedback from the local community. This process was managed by the Applicant, and a comprehensive Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) setting out the engagement process has been prepared and accompanies the application. This section of the Planning Statement provides an overview.
- 1.6.2 A staggered approach was taken to informing the community of the Proposed Development, with initial communications being sent to key stakeholders during the week commencing 27th of January 2025, and the 31-day consultation opening on the 11th of February 2025. Methods of communication from Lighthorpe Power included:
- Introductory emails sent to key stakeholders on the 28th of January 2025 including Martin Vickers, MP for Brigg & Immingham, Ward members for Ferry, Cllr Peter Clark, Cllr Richard Hannigan, and Cllr David Wells, and Ulceby Parish Council;
 - Introductory letters sent to the closest 58 properties on the 29th of January 2025;
 - Consultation launch postcard issued to 1,209 properties in the week commencing 3rd of February 2025;
 - Consultation launch emails sent on the 11th of February 2025 to Martin Vickers, MP for Brigg & Immingham, Ward members for Ferry, Cllr Peter Clark and Cllr David Wells, and Ulceby Parish Council;
 - A press release issued to The Grimsby Telegraph, LincsOnline, Lincolnshire Echo and BBC Look North on the 11th of February 2025. Grimsby Telegraph published an article on the 13th of February 2025. The Grimsby Telegraph article also featured on MSN News and Yahoo News. The Applicant also took out a paid advertisement, in the printed edition of the Grimsby Telegraph. This was placed on the 11th, 15th and 22nd of February 2025;

- A dedicated consultation website (<https://www.sweetbriareenergypark.com>) launched on the 27th of January 2025 which includes an overview of the project, an interactive map, a section on BESS, a section on the Site, details of the in-person exhibitions and webinar, a survey link, link to the online exhibition, and Q&S;
- In-person exhibitions to allow local residents to meet the project team held at Ulceby Village Hall on the 4th of March 2025 1pm-5pm and at Wootton Village Hall on the 6th of March 2025 3pm-7pm;
- An online webinar held on the 11th of March 2025 from 6pm-7pm;
- Dedicated contact details publicised throughout the consultation. An email address, phone number and freepost address were available for all community stakeholders.

1.6.3 Please refer to the SCI accompanying the planning application for details of feedback to the proposals and the Applicant's responses.

1.7 Community Benefit Fund

1.7.1 As identified within the community engagement materials, the Applicant has proposed the provision of a Community Benefit Fund as part of the Proposed Development. The Applicant envisages that the benefit funds would be paid into a community endowment which would ensure that income is generated beyond the lifetime of the Proposed Development.

1.7.2 Additional funds are also available for local projects that align with the Applicant's core values. As part of the community engagement activities, the Applicant asked for suggestions of recipients that might benefit from these additional funds.

1.7.3 It is recognised that the Community Benefit Fund cannot be taken into account as part of the overall planning balance to be considered by the Council and, as such, is not referenced again in this Planning Statement.

2 THE NEED FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Energy Generation and Storage in the UK

- 2.1.1 The Climate Change Act 2008 sets a legal duty on the Secretary of State to reduce greenhouse gas emissions significantly by 2050. The Act also established the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) to ensure that emissions targets are evidence-based and independently assessed.
- 2.1.2 The CCC published 'Net Zero – The UK's Contribution to Stopping Global Warming' in May 2019². The report responds to a request from the Governments of the UK, Wales, and Scotland, asking the Committee to reassess the UK's long-term emissions targets. The report recommends a target for the UK of net zero emissions by 2050 and specifically highlights the falling cost of key renewable technologies including solar PV, which is now generally comparable or lower cost than power from fossil fuels, while bringing significant co- benefits such as reduced air pollution.
- 2.1.3 The UK is on course for rapid change in the way in which energy is generated. Large scale, centralised fossil fuel and older nuclear power stations are being phased out and new smaller scale, decentralised renewable energy generation is taking their place. The last coal fired power station, Ratcliffe-on-Soar, ceased generating electricity in September 2024.
- 2.1.4 On the 13th of December 2024, the UK government released its much-anticipated Clean Power Action Plan 2030³, in which it states that battery systems: *“could not only cut bills for consumers, but minimise the amount of more costly generation and associated network infrastructure that needs to be built, whilst maintaining security of supply.”*
- 2.1.5 Figures released by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) in the 'Digest of UK Energy Statistics Annual data for UK', July 2024⁴ emphasise the scale and pace of change to smaller scale, decentralised generation. DESNZ confirms that in 2023 fossil fuel production hit record lows, with oil down 36% compared to 2019. Output from renewable forms of energy generation broadly matched the previous highs of 2020 and 2022 with *“renewables share of electricity generation increased to a record 46.4 per cent up from 41.7 per cent last year, largely due to wind and solar generation shares reaching new record highs.”*
- 2.1.6 As the UK moves forward with its aim to mitigate the effects of climate change and achieve a net zero economy, greener and more sustainable modes of power generation are being introduced which can be intermittent in character (e.g. Wind and Solar PV). This places certain demands on the electricity grid due to fluctuations in power generation and demand.

²<https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/net-zero-the-uks-contribution-to-stopping-global-warming/#:~:text=Key%20findings,the%20UK%20as%20a%20whole.>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-power-2030-action-plan>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/digest-of-uk-energy-statistics-dukes-2024>

- 2.1.7 The National Grid experiences a large fluctuation of demand throughout the day and at different times of the year. Historically, conventional power stations could increase electricity generation as and when necessary to do so. Renewable installations are less able to do this on their own, as renewable sources such as wind and solar are dependent upon atmospheric conditions. The introduction of BESS and other storage technologies allows for the storage of electricity when the conditions for renewable energy generation are optimal. This can then be exported to the grid when an increase in electricity is required, for example, during hours of darkness.
- 2.1.8 Whilst renewable energy production is increasing, the demand for electricity is also increasing rapidly through the electrification of the transport and heat sectors and an increasing uptake of electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles. However, energy supply from renewable resources is intermittent and less predictable, and when combined with changing consumption patterns, can introduce significant imbalance into the market. As an example, in May 2019, unusually low demand for electricity and unusually high quantities of renewable power on the grid caused negative pricing for more than 9 hours in the UK. Negative pricing has been experienced on several occasions since, causing balancing difficulties for National Grid. National Grid acknowledges that a significant standby generation capacity is now essential to store energy when it is not needed and to regenerate it when it is.
- 2.1.9 BESS do not emit carbon dioxide and provide a balancing mechanism drawing electricity (charging) when levels on the Network are above that of demand. They represent an essential service needed to support the roll out of renewables and provide sub-second response times, offering a solution to several of the Grid's balancing issues. Thus, they support the development and deployment of low carbon intermittent energy technologies upon which society must increasingly rely on to satisfy its energy requirements. The 'Leading the Way – The Route to 2050' National Grid Future Energy Scenario (FES) 2023⁵ outlines four long-term scenarios which are necessary in relation to ESS, the scenario states:
- “Total electricity generation capacity is 269 GW, plus a further 79 GW of electricity storage and interconnection, meeting lower annual and peak demands than the other net zero scenarios. Electricity generation output is three times that of today at 779 TWh, with 104 TWh exported.”*
- 2.1.10 National Grid's FES 2024⁶ (published July 2024) outlines that: *“the evolving dynamics of the energy system call for decisive action within the next two years to deliver the fundamental changes required to achieve a fair, affordable, sustainable and secure clean energy system by 2050”.*
- 2.1.11 FES 2024 outlines eight key actions, with Key Action 1 setting out the need to: *“Accelerate the delivery of whole system infrastructure through a strategic approach to network investment and introduction of planning reforms.”*
- 2.1.12 In recognition of the importance of energy storage in moving to net-zero carbon by 2050 (as required by the Climate Change Act 2008), and the interim target of 78% reduction in emissions by 2035 (required by the 6th Carbon Budget), the Government introduced legislative changes to encourage higher capacity BESS to be processed by Local Planning Authorities

⁵ <https://www.neso.energy/document/283101/download>

⁶ <https://www.neso.energy/publications/future-energy-scenarios-fes#Reducing-Great-Britain%E2%80%99s-emissions-and-our-pathways-to-net-zero>

under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). In July 2021, the Government published 'Transitioning to a Net Zero energy system Smart Systems and Flexibility Plan 2021'⁷ setting out the actions it will take in order to drive towards achieving the UK's challenging climate change targets and the importance of furthering system flexibility and opening up competitive markets for storage technology. It states that:

- 2.1.13 *"Flexibility is essential for cost-effective integration of renewable generation, while meeting increased demand from electrified heat and transport. The largest system savings are from lower generation capital costs. Flexibility allows for generation and demand to be shifted to avoid curtailment and results in better utilisation of low carbon generation and less overbuilding of capacity. Flexibility also lowers the peak demand on the system, reducing network upgrade costs."*
- 2.1.14 National Policy Statement (NPS) EN-1 Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy sets out the Government's policy for delivery of major energy infrastructure. EN-1 describes the importance of storage for different types of electricity infrastructure, the flexibility that storage provides in meeting demand and how it reduces the need for new network infrastructure. The role of storage is set out from Paragraphs 3.3.25 – 3.3.31. Paragraph 3.3.25 states:
- "Storage has a key role to play in achieving net zero and providing flexibility to the energy system, so that high volumes of low carbon power, heat and transport can be integrated."*
- 2.1.15 On the 24th of April 2025, the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero published a draft revised EN-1, with proposed updates to strengthen the process for delivering major new infrastructure in England and Wales.
- 2.1.16 The proposed EN-1 revisions reference the Clean Power 2030 Action Plan published in December 2024 and reinforce the government's ambition to produce at least 95% of Great Britain's energy through clean sources and achieve the sixth Carbon Budget.
- 2.1.17 NPS EN-3: National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure sets out national guidance for renewable energy infrastructure, whilst the NPS does not specifically reference BESS, Chapter 2.9 pertains to Pumped Hydro Storage. Paragraph 2.9.9 recognises the importance of electricity storage, with paragraph 2.9.10 then stating:
- "The need for electricity storage is rising as we increase the volume of variable renewables and increase peak demand through the electrification of heat and transport. It will be critical to maintaining energy security as we shift away from gas over the 2020s-30s"*
- 2.1.18 As with EN-1, proposed revisions to EN-3 were published for consultation on the 24th of April 2025. The proposed revisions do not explicitly reference BESS however, as discussed above, Chapter 2.9 of EN-3 continues to reflect the recognition of the important role electricity storage plays in achieving the targets of Clean Power 2030.
- 2.1.19 The NPS for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5) was first published in 22nd of November 2023 and came into force in January 2024. It sets out national guidance for electricity networks infrastructure and also refers to energy storage in its first paragraph (1.1.1), stating that:

⁷<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transitioning-to-a-net-zero-energy-system-smart-systems-and-flexibility-plan-2021>

“The security and reliability of the UK’s current and future energy supply is highly dependent on having an electricity network which will enable the new electricity generation, storage, and interconnection infrastructure that our country needs to meet the rapid increase in electricity demand required to transition to net zero, while maintaining energy security.”

- 2.1.20 Proposed revisions to EN-5 were published for consultation on the 24th of April 2025. The revisions also emphasise the ambitions of accelerating the deployment of clean energy capacity and energy storage to meet the Government’s ambitions for the Clean Power 2030 Mission.

for Zulu Farm. The existing track would be improved to provide a consistent 4m width and a new, connecting section of track would be formed just before the entrance to Zulu Farm, with the access route deviating through the field to the south of Zulu Farm to the north-east of the BESS Compound. Another existing access to the south-west of the Site is available via an existing access off Cross Road/Thornton Lane. Access will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5.

3.3 Surrounding Land Use

- 3.3.1 The immediate landscape is predominantly agricultural in nature, with the initial 1km radius from the Site primarily comprising arable and pastoral fields, with dispersed agricultural buildings scattered throughout. The villages of Ulceby and Wootton are located c. 0.6km south and c. 1.3km west respectively, with Ulceby Sewage Treatment Works situated adjacent to the south-west of the Site. Further afield to the east, towards Immingham, are several large industrial areas with chimney and flare stacks visible from the Site. The boundary of the consented, but not yet constructed, Sweetbriar Solar Farm (Application Reference: PA/2022/443) is located adjacent to the north of the existing Zulu Farm access track comprising part of the Site.
- 3.3.2 There are no Public Rights of Ways (PRoW) which intersect the Site. The closest to the Site is Footpath 130 which lies c.1.1km to the north-east of the Site at the closest point and runs north – south along the Goxhill to Ulceby railway (Barton Line).
- 3.3.3 There are no statutory ecological designations within the Site; the closest is Kirmington Pits Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located c.4.0km south of the Site. The Humber Estuary SSSI, Ramsar Site, Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA) is situated c.6.3km north-east of the Site at the closest point.
- 3.3.4 There are no areas of Ancient Woodland within the Site; the closest is Alder Carr Wood, located c.2.8km south-east of the Site. Furthermore, there are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) within the Site, with the closest registered TPOs being clustered around the village of Ulceby to the south.
- 3.3.5 There are no statutory designated heritage assets within the Site boundary. Two Listed Buildings are located within a 1km radius of the Site boundary, comprising the Grade II Listed Ashdale Farmhouse, located c.0.6km west of the Site and the Grade II Listed Holly Farmhouse located c.0.9km south-west of the Site. Further Listed Buildings are primarily situated within the 2km radius area, and are clustered around the villages of Ulceby, Wootton and Thornton Curtis.
- 3.3.6 The closest Scheduled Monument to the Site is the Thornton Abbey Augustinian monastery: gatehouse, precinct, medieval road and bridge, moat, fishponds, post-Dissolution college and school, and house, which is situated c.1.7km to the north-east of the Site at the closest point. The closest Conservation Area is the Barrow-Upon-Humber Conservation Area located c.5.1km to the north-west.

3.4 Planning History

- 3.4.1 A review of the Council's Public Access planning application search system was undertaken on the 29th of April 2025 for the Site and the immediately adjacent land, within a recent 3-year period, to identify any extant planning permissions.

- 3.4.2 The search identified one relevant application within the Site, that being the EIA Screening Application: PA/SCR/2025/1 submitted with respect to the Proposed Development. No relevant applications were identified on the land adjacent to the Site.

3.5 Cumulative Sites

- 3.5.1 A cumulative sites search was undertaken on the 19th of March 2025 for the Site and a 3km search radius, utilising the Council's Public Access System and the Renewable Energy Planning Database⁸. This search identified two relevant applications within the search area:

- Sweetbriar Solar Farm - Application Reference: PA/2022/443 for: *"the installation of a solar photovoltaic array/solar farm and associated infrastructure"* at Sweet Briar Farm, Carr Road, Ulceby, DN39 6TX. Approved with Conditions 09/02/2024, awaiting construction with anticipated capacity of c. 39MW. Located adjacent to the north of the Site.
- Humber Low Carbon Pipeline - Application Reference: PA/SCO/2022/6 for: *"the construction of dual pipelines to transport carbon dioxide (to facilitate carbon capture, usage and storage (CCUS)) and hydrogen between Drax in North Yorkshire to a landfall point on the Holderness coast in East Riding of Yorkshire together with associated above ground installations"*. Intersects the Site.

- 3.5.2 Given the proximity to the Site, the potential for cumulative effects with Sweetbriar Solar Farm is assessed in relevant technical assessments accompanying the planning application.

- 3.5.3 It is noted that the consultation end date for the Council's Scoping response on the Humber Low Carbon Pipeline was set as the 28th of April 2022. There are no details associated with the Humber Low Carbon Pipeline project available on the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) website⁹. It is understood that the Scoping request did not preclude the granting of planning permission for Sweetbriar Solar Farm which also intersects the proposed cable corridor.

- 3.5.4 A separate review was undertaken of the NSIP register to a 3km search radius. This search identified the following relevant applications within the search area:

- Humber Carbon Capture Pipeline – Application Reference: EN0710003 for: *"an onshore underground CO2 pipeline and associated above ground infrastructure to transport captured carbon dioxide from emitters in the Humber region and Drax to Easington comprising a linear route extending from Drax (North Yorkshire) to Easington (East Riding of Yorkshire)"*. Situated approximately 2.2km west of the Site at the closest point.

- 3.5.5 The NSIP is currently at the Pre-Application stage, having received a Scoping Opinion in January 2025. It is anticipated that a full application will be submitted between October and December 2026. It is expected that the design of the scheme will evolve following the receipt of the Scoping Opinion, public consultations, and continuing technical surveys prior to

⁸ <https://data.barbour-abi.com/smart-map/repd/desnz/?type=repd>

⁹ national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk

anticipated submission at the end of 2026¹⁰. As such, it is deemed to be at too early a stage to consider. Further, it is necessary for NSIP projects to consider cumulative impacts and the future submission would therefore include an assessment of cumulative effects with the Proposed Development.

¹⁰ <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN0710003>

4 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 The Proposed Development comprises the BESS compound, 400kV substation compound, associated onsite infrastructure, and landscape and biodiversity planting. Key infrastructure is listed below:

BESS Compound

- Battery cabinets;
- Medium Voltage Stations (MVS);
- Spares container;
- Control rooms;
- Operations office;
- Welfare facilities; and
- BESS auxiliary transformers.

400kV Substation Compound

- 1 x 400/33kV power transformer;
- 3 x harmonic filters with housing;
- Auxiliary transformers;
- 33kV metered switchroom;
- Relay and control rooms; and
- Statcom building.

Other Onsite Infrastructure

- Internal access tracks (cellular);
- Temporary access tracks;
- Infra-red CCTV cameras mounted on poles;

- LV back-up supply;
- Palisade security fencing;
- Acoustic fencing;
- Cat 2 mesh electric fencing;
- Gates;
- Car parking;
- Underground cabling;
- Water Tanks; and
- Attenuation pond.

Landscape and Biodiversity Planting

- 4.1.2 The northern field and a section of the southern field comprising the Site are allocated for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and landscape planting.

4.2 Main Component Descriptions

Battery Storage Units

- 4.2.1 Electricity is transmitted through the National Grid as Alternating Current (AC). Batteries store and deliver electricity as Direct Current (DC); they have inbuilt inverters which convert electricity bi-directionally from AC to DC, allowing suitable electricity to be exported to the National Grid. The layout accommodates up to 656 battery storage units.
- 4.2.2 The battery containers charge and store energy from the National Grid when supply is higher than demand and release this back for use when demand is higher than supply.
- 4.2.3 The proposed battery storage units are illustrated in **Planning Figure 6: Proposed BESS Plan and Elevations**. The maximum height of the battery containers when positioned on a concrete plinth/stone base is 3.05m.

Medium Voltage Stations (MVS)

- 4.2.4 Each group of four batteries would be accompanied by a containerised Medium Voltage Station (MVS) which contain MV/LV (Medium Voltage/Low Voltage) transformers. These ensure the appropriate electricity voltage required for exporting to the National Grid is provided.
- 4.2.5 The Proposed Development would include up to a maximum of 164 no. MVS. The MVS containers would have a maximum height of 3.05m including a concrete base/plinth. The proposed MVS are shown in **Planning Figure 5: Proposed Medium Voltage Station**.

BESS Control Room

- 4.2.6 A BESS Control Room is situated within the north-east of the BESS Compound. The BESS Control Room would be a containerised module with a maximum height of 3m including a concrete base/plinth of 0.15m. Proposed elevations are available in **Planning Figure 20: BESS Control Room Plan and Elevations**.

Operations Office

- 4.2.7 An operations office within the BESS compound would be a containerised module with similar dimensions to a standard 40ft shipping container with a maximum height of 2.75m including a concrete base/plinth and would be finished in neutral colours. Proposed elevations are available in **Planning Figure 13: Spares, Welfare and Operations Plan**.

Spares Container

- 4.2.8 A spares container is proposed for the storage of replacement parts, tools, and maintenance equipment on Site. The container would have similar dimensions to a standard 40ft shipping container with a maximum height of 2.75m including a concrete base/plinth and would be finished in neutral colours. Proposed elevations are available in **Planning Figure 13: Spares, Welfare and Operations Plan**.

Welfare Facilities

- 4.2.9 Welfare facilities are proposed within the BESS compound and would comprise a containerised module. The container would have similar dimensions to a standard 40ft shipping container with a maximum height of 2.75m including a concrete base/plinth and would be finished in neutral colours. Proposed elevations are available in **Planning Figure 13: Spares, Welfare and Operations Plan**.

Water Tanks

- 4.2.10 Two 228,000 litre water tanks with a maximum height of 2.65m including a concrete base/plinth would be located within the BESS compound. The two tanks would store an onsite supply of 456,000 litres of water for potential firefighting, exceeding that required in guidance published by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC, 2022) for Grid Scale BESS. Proposed elevations are available in **Planning Figure 14: Proposed Water Tank (228,000L)**.

Underground Cables

- 4.2.11 Low voltage electrical cabling is required to connect infrastructure within the BESS compound, in particular the battery containers to the MVS units. These cables would be underground in trenches.

400kV Substation Compound

- 4.2.12 A substation compound (33/400kV) is required to increase the voltage of electricity from 33kV to 400kV so that it can be transmitted to the electricity network. The main component is the 400kV/33kV power transformer.

- 4.2.13 Associated 'high level infrastructure' within the compound includes 3x harmonic filters with housing, auxiliary transformers, 33kV metered Switchroom, relay and control rooms, and a statcom building.
- 4.2.14 The highest piece of equipment within the 400kV Substation Compound is associated with the busbars of the 400kv/33kv power transformer which will have a maximum elevation of 12m.
- 4.2.15 An indicative layout and elevational sections of the onsite 400kV substation are provided on **Planning Figure 3: 400kV Substation Plan** and **Planning Figure 4: 400kV Substation Elevations**.

Internal Access Tracks

- 4.2.16 New internal cellular access tracks will consist of a three-dimensional cellular confinement system with an aggregate infill. Where new access tracks are planned, the footprint will be 4m-6m wide and excavated down to approximately 450mm depth, depending on the underlying formation. An indicative cross-section of new access tracks can be seen in **Planning Figure 18: Proposed Track Section**.

Security

- 4.2.17 The BESS compound will be bounded by 2.4m tall palisade fencing along the northern, eastern, and southern boundaries as shown in **Planning Figure 16: Proposed Palisade and Acoustic Fence**. The 400kV substation compound would be bounded by approximately 3.4m tall wire mesh fencing including an electrified security pulse fence at the top (Cat 2 mesh fencing) as shown in **Planning Figure 15: Proposed Cat2 Mesh / Substation Gate and Fence**.
- 4.2.18 Acoustic fencing up to 4m in height is also proposed around the boundary of the BESS and 400kV substation compounds, on the inside of the palisade and Cat 2 mesh fencing. Elevations are provided on **Planning Figure 16: Proposed Palisade and Acoustic Fence**.
- 4.2.19 Gates (6m wide) will be required where the access tracks enter fenced off areas. Indicative elevations are provided on **Planning Figures 15 and 16**.
- 4.2.20 CCTV infra-red cameras will be mounted on poles along the Site perimeter fencing at regular intervals, allowing for offsite security monitoring. The maximum height of the CCTV cameras will be 4.5m. An indicative elevation of the proposed pole-mounted CCTV can be seen in **Planning Figure 17: Proposed CCTV Elevations**.
- 4.2.21 There will be no permanent lighting within the Site, with only emergency lighting being installed. Emergency lighting will consist of passive infra-red (PIR) lighting at the entrances to the various buildings and spares storage units for use during maintenance visits. Lighting will be designed to be downward facing to minimise any light-spill. This will prevent any unacceptable light pollution outside the Site and potential disturbance of any nocturnal species. It is proposed that details of the proposed lighting would be secured post-consent through an appropriately worded condition.

Earthworks

- 4.2.22 Levelling earthworks are proposed to optimise the identified area for the BESS Compound and 400kV Substation Compound. Proposed Site levels are shown on **Planning Figure 2: Proposed Site Layout Plan, Planning Figure 23: Proposed BESS Platform, Planning Figure 24: Proposed BESS Platform Cross Sections 1/2, and Planning Figure 25: Proposed BESS Platform Cross Sections 2/2.**

Landscape and Biodiversity Planting

- 4.2.23 The northern field and south-western corner of the southern field comprising the Site are allocated for BNG and landscape planting. They have been designed to deliver biodiversity benefits, whilst also enhancing the landscape fabric of the Site.
- 4.2.24 Key features of the landscape and visual mitigation strategy are as follows:
- Existing woodland and trees, and respective root protection zones, within the Site will be retained and protected during construction. In doing so the primary landscape fabric of the Site will be retained;
 - Existing hedgerows around the perimeter of the Site will be strengthened as necessary with infill planting. The hedgerows will then be maintained at a minimum height of 3m to 3.5m. Hedgerows will be cut on a three-year rotational basis;
 - Creation of new hedgerows with hedgerow trees along the Site's eastern boundary and a section of its northern boundary;
 - Scattered tree planting and creation of an orchard; and
 - Creation of Bee Banks.
- 4.2.25 Please refer to the Landscape Mitigation and Enhancement Plan created in collaboration with the RSPB and Buglife accompanying the Landscape and Visual Appraisal for a comprehensive summary of the proposed landscape and biodiversity planting.

4.3 Construction Phase Activity

- 4.3.1 It is estimated that construction of the Proposed Development would take approximately 12 – 18 months, with the latter months comprising testing and commissioning.
- 4.3.2 At this stage it is proposed that construction activities on Site would take place between the hours of 08:00 – 18:00 on weekdays, and between 08:00 – 13:00 on Saturdays, with no activities on Sundays or bank holidays. Any works outside of these hours would be limited to emergency works unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Council.
- 4.3.3 The construction of the Proposed Development would be conducted in accordance with a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to manage activities and ensure there are no significant environmental effects. It is anticipated that provision of the CEMP would be secured by way of an appropriately worded planning condition.

4.4 Operation Phase Activity

- 4.4.1 During the 40-year operational phase, activity within the Proposed Development will be minimal and will be restricted primarily to: vegetation management; equipment maintenance and servicing; replacement and renewal of any components if necessary; and monitoring.
- 4.4.2 The Site will not be manned full time and will be monitored remotely continuously. The use of remote monitoring reduces the number of visits required. However, regular checks will be undertaken to ensure the BESS units, associated infrastructure and fencing are all in good working order.
- 4.4.3 During normal operations, personnel will visit the Site approximately once a fortnight, in a light van or four-wheel drive vehicle, thus generating very few traffic movements. Vehicles would park onsite and would not block any roads in the vicinity of the Site.
- 4.4.4 Operations for vegetation management would be comparable to common agricultural activities and will typically include the following:
- Cutting existing and newly established hedgerows to the specified heights;
 - Maintenance of existing and new tree planting and shrub areas;
 - Maintenance of access tracks;
 - Maintaining a buffer zone from fencing through vegetation cutting and collection; and,
 - General weed control, litter removal and fence repairs.

4.5 Decommissioning Phase Activity

- 4.5.1 At the end of the operational lifespan of the Proposed Development, the Site would be fully restored back to its former use with all equipment removed. Decommissioning would be carried out in accordance with industry best practice at the time.

5 DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

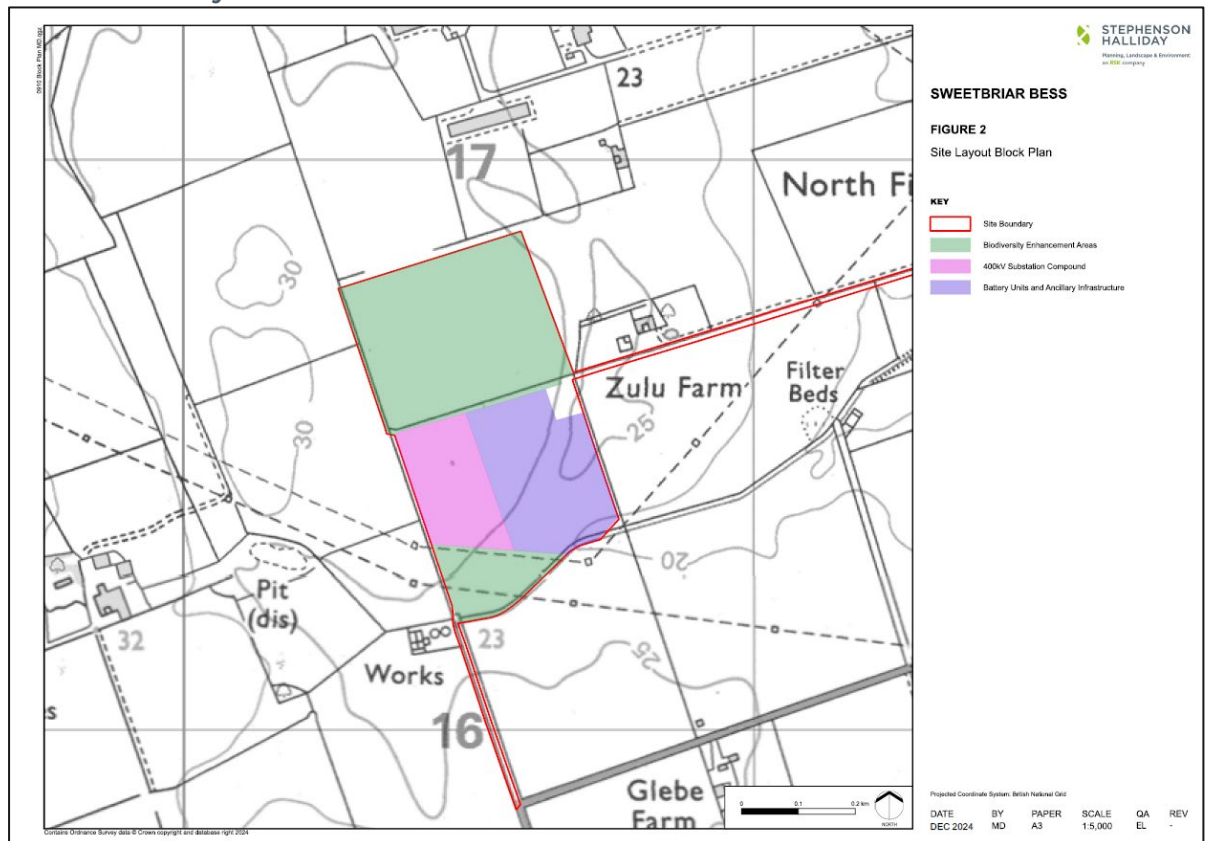
5.1 Design Evolution

5.1.1 The Proposed Development has been subject to an iterative design process with a series of amendments made to the scheme in order to incorporate responses from consultation, the findings of technical assessments and reports, to introduce appropriate mitigation measures, and incorporate landscape and ecological planting.

5.1.2 Following the identification of the Site, survey work was undertaken in order to refine the location of the BESS and 400kV substation compounds within the wider land parcel and the siting of equipment. The southern field comprising the Site was identified due to being less visible than the northern field. Two 400kV overhead lines also cross the southern field and it was considered that any views of the Proposed Development would be in the context of the existing high voltage infrastructure. Once appropriate buffers had been applied to the overhead lines, the opportunity for BNG and landscape planting underneath and to the south of the overhead lines was noted in addition to within the northern field parcel.

5.1.3 An initial Site Layout Block Plan was developed as a starting point to inform both the design process and the surveys and site visits undertaken by the technical specialists comprising the project team. The Site Layout Block Plan was also shared with the Council as part of the Pre-Application Enquiry and EIA Screening Request packages. The Block Plan can be viewed in **Plate 5.1** below.

Plate 5.1 Site Layout Block Plan



- 5.1.4 As baseline surveys progressed, the Site Layout Plan was populated with the main components set out in Section 4.2 and the landscape and ecology teams identified opportunities for planting in order to bolster the existing screening of the Site and contribute to BNG.
- 5.1.5 Iteration 5 of the Site Layout Plan (**Plate 5.2**) was used to inform the artistic impression of the Proposed Development provided on the public consultation exhibition boards, an example of which is shown on **Plate 5.3** below.
- 5.1.6 At the time of the in-person exhibition events held on the 4th and 6th of March 2025, it was intended that the construction and operational access would be taken via the existing private access to Zulu Farm off Carr Lane, with an additional emergency access via an existing track off Cross Road.

Plate 5.2 Iteration 5 of the Site Layout Plan

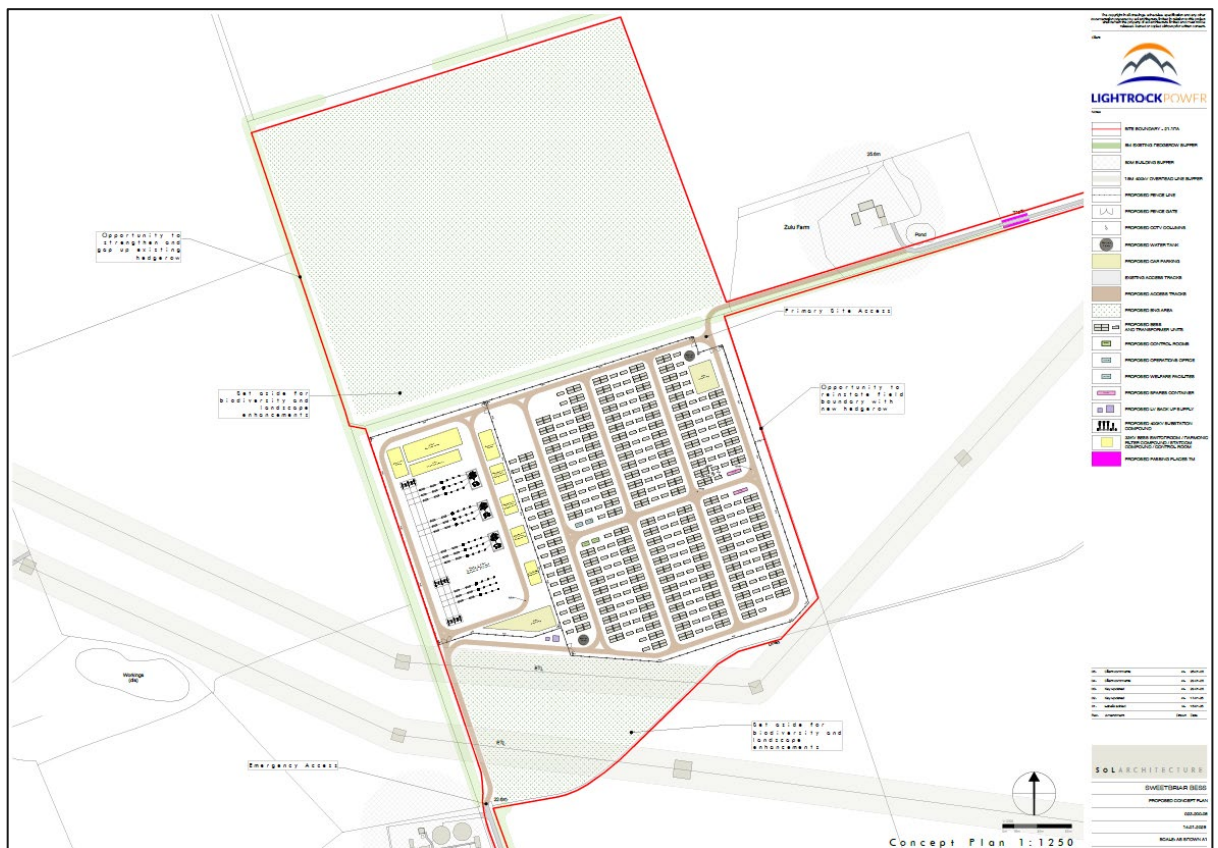
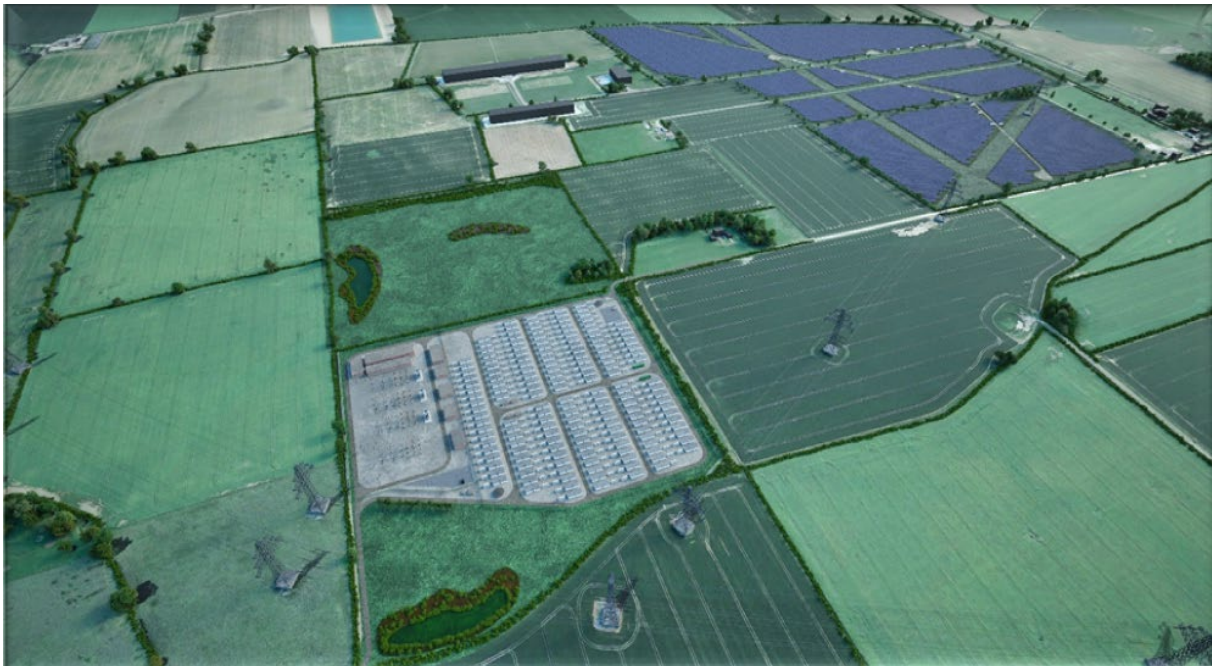


Plate 5.3 Artistic impression of the Proposed Development provided during public consultation

- 5.1.7 Following the receipt of the Council's Pre-Application advice, EIA Screening Opinion, and feedback from the public consultation, the Site Layout Plan went through further rounds of review. The Applicant also engaged with the RSPB and Buglife to develop the biodiversity proposals onsite.
- 5.1.8 The main amendments made ahead of the final Site Layout design are summarised as follows:
- Addition of temporary construction route, primarily utilising the existing Cote Pit Lane off Cross Road. This access was introduced following concerns raised by local residents at the public consultation events regarding construction traffic along Carr Lane. Construction traffic will be directed off Carr Lane sooner, reducing the number of residential properties passed along the route;
 - Addition of attenuation pond which comprises part of the Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDS) proposed in order to manage surface water run-off from the Site. The attenuation pond also provides biodiversity benefits in line with RSPB and Buglife recommendations;
 - Addition of acoustic fencing around the inside of the BESS compound and 400kV substation compound perimeter fencing. This reduces noise emissions from the Proposed Development; and
 - Adjustment of internal access tracks to ensure they can suitably accommodate Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) for delivery during construction.
- 5.1.9 The final design of the Proposed Development is a careful balance between addressing Site constraints and operational requirements, minimising environmental impact, addressing feedback from consultees including the local community, and maximising landscape and biodiversity planting.

5.1.10 **Plate 5.4** depicts the Final Site Layout as shown in **Planning Figure 2** and **Plate 5.5** depicts the final Landscape Mitigation and Enhancement Plan.

Plate 5.4 Final Site Layout Plan

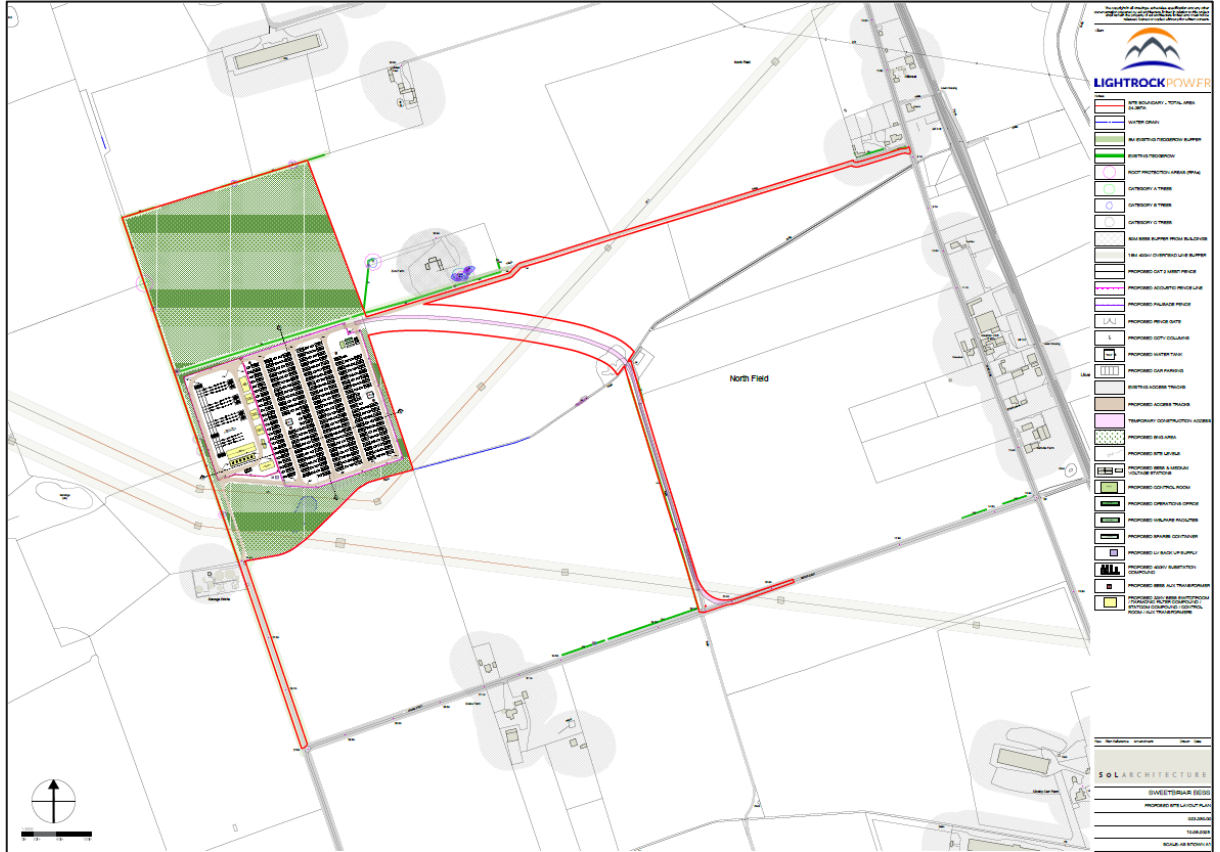
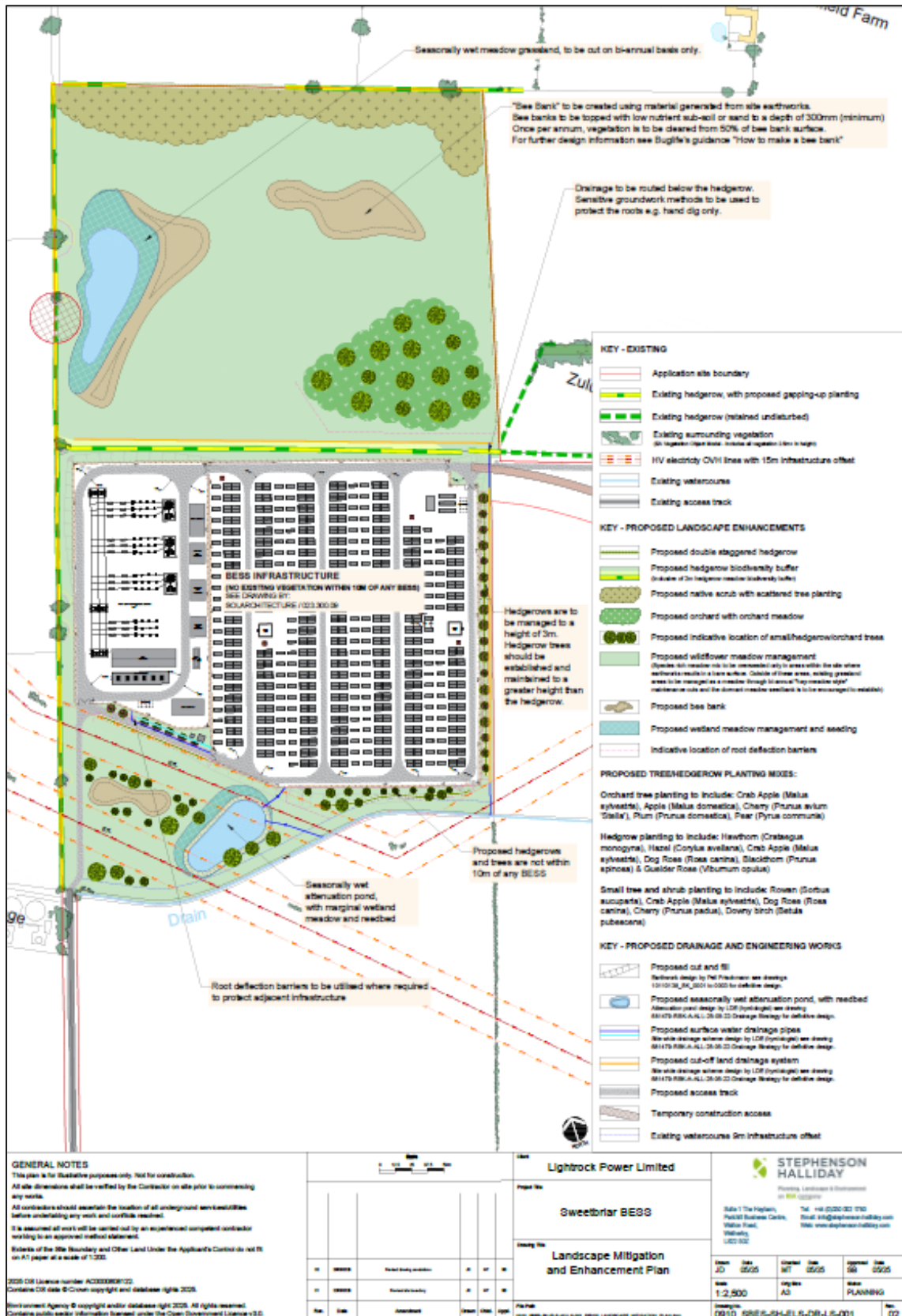


Plate 5.5 Final Landscape Mitigation and Enhancement Plan



5.2 Design Parameters

- 5.2.1 The use of the Rochdale Envelope approach, as described in the Planning Inspectorate Advice Note 9¹¹, has been adopted for this planning application to ensure some flexibility in the final layout design ahead of the tendering process for construction. This involves assessing the maximum (and where relevant, minimum) parameters of the Proposed Development, where flexibility needs to be retained. A planning condition can be used to require any final dimensions/elevations and locations to be submitted and agreed with the Council, if considered necessary.
- 5.2.2 Wherever an element of flexibility is maintained, likely worst-case impacts have been assessed and reported within the planning application documents.
- 5.2.3 Table 5.2 below sets out the details of the components that comprise the Proposed Development.

Table 5.1 Components of the Proposed Development

Scheme Component	Applicable Parameters
Battery storage units	<p>The layout accommodates up to 656 no. battery cabinets.</p> <p>The maximum height of the highest part of the containers would be 3.05m when positioned on a concrete plinth / stone base of 0.15m.</p> <p>Cabinets would be metal and likely finished in a neutral colour.</p> <p>Please refer to Planning Figure 6: Proposed BESS Plan and Elevations</p>
Medium voltage stations (MVS)	<p>The layout accommodates up to 164 no. MVS.</p> <p>The maximum height of the highest part of the equipment would be 3.05m when positioned on a concrete plinth / stone base of 0.15m. MVS will be finished in a neutral colour.</p> <p>Please refer to Planning Figure 5: Proposed Medium Voltage Station.</p>
BESS control room	<p>The maximum height of the BESS Control Room would be 3m when positioned on a concrete plinth / stone base of 0.15m. The BESS Control Room will be finished in a neutral colour.</p> <p>Please refer to Planning Figure 20: BESS Control Room Plan and Elevations.</p>

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects-advice-note-nine-rochdale-envelope>

BESS transformers	auxiliary	<p>The maximum height of the BESS Auxiliary Transformer would be 2.558m when positioned on a concrete plinth/stone base of 0.15m. The BESS auxiliary transformers will be finished in a neutral colour.</p> <p>Please refer to Planning Figure 19: BESS Aux Transformer Plan and Elevations.</p>
Operations office		<p>The maximum height of the operations office would be 2.75m, including the concrete plinth/stone base of 0.15m. The operations office will be finished in a neutral colour.</p> <p>Please refer to Planning Figure 13: Spares, Welfare and Operations Plan.</p>
Spares container		<p>The maximum height of the operations office would be 2.75m, including the concrete plinth/stone base of 0.15m. The spares container will be finished in a neutral colour.</p> <p>Please refer to Planning Figure 13: Spares, Welfare and Operations Plan.</p>
Welfare facilities		<p>The maximum height of the welfare facilities would be 2.75m, including the concrete plinth/stone base of 0.15m. The welfare facilities will be finished in a neutral colour.</p> <p>Please refer to Planning Figure 13: Spares, Welfare and Operations Plan.</p>
Water tanks		<p>Two 228,000L water tanks will be provided onsite, each with a maximum height of 2.65m including a 0.15m concrete plinth/stone base. The water tanks will be finished in a neutral colour.</p> <p>Please refer to Planning Figure 14: Proposed Water Tank (228,000L).</p>
400/33kV transformer	power	<p>The highest part of the substation will be the busbars associated with the 400/33kV power transformer, with a maximum height of 12m AGL.</p> <p>Please refer to Planning Figure 4: Proposed 400kV Substation Elevations.</p>
400kV transformers	auxiliary	<p>The maximum height of the highest part of the equipment would be 2.716m when set on a concrete plinth or stone base with a maximum height of 0.15m AGL.</p> <p>Surrounded by 2.4m high perimeter palisade fencing.</p> <p>Please refer to Planning Figure 9: Proposed 400kV Aux Transformer.</p>
Harmonic housing	filters with	<p>The maximum height of the highest part of the equipment would be 5m when positioned on a concrete plinth / stone base of 0.15m. The housing will be finished in a neutral colour.</p>

		<p>Please refer to Planning Figure 11: Proposed Harmonic Filter Plans and Elevations.</p>
33kV switchroom	metered	<p>The maximum height of the highest part of the equipment would be 5m when positioned on a concrete plinth / stone base of 0.15m. The 33kV metered switchroom will be finished in a neutral colour.</p> <p>Please refer to Planning Figure 7: Proposed 33kV Metered Switchroom.</p>
Relay and control rooms		<p>The maximum height of the highest part of the equipment would be 5m when positioned on a concrete plinth / stone base of 0.15m. The relay and control rooms will be finished in a neutral colour.</p> <p>Please refer to Planning Figure 8: Proposed 400 kV Relay and Control Room.</p>
Statcom building		<p>The maximum height of the Statcom building would be 5m when positioned on a concrete plinth / stone base of 0.15m. The statcom building will be finished in a neutral colour.</p> <p>Please refer to Planning Figure 12: Proposed Statcom Plan and Elevations.</p>
Internal access tracks		<p>Minimum width of 4m, utilising a cellular confinement system.</p> <p>Please refer to Planning Figure 18: Proposed Track Section.</p>
Acoustic fencing		<p>The maximum height of the acoustic fencing will be 4.0m, set into below ground concrete foundations. The fencing will be finished in a neutral colour.</p> <p>Please refer to Planning Figure 16: Proposed Palisade and Acoustic Fence.</p>
Palisade fencing		<p>The maximum height of the perimeter fencing will be 2.4m, set into below ground concrete foundations. The fencing will be finished in a neutral colour.</p> <p>Please refer to Planning Figure 16: Proposed Palisade and Acoustic Fence.</p>
Cat 2 Mesh fencing		<p>The maximum height of the perimeter fencing will be 3.4m, set into below ground concrete foundations. The fencing will be finished in a neutral colour.</p> <p>Please refer to Planning Figure 15: Proposed Cat2 Mesh / Substation Gate and Fence.</p>
CCTV columns		<p>The maximum height of the pole mounted CCTV cameras will be 4.5m.</p> <p>Please refer to Planning Figure 17: Proposed CCTV Elevations.</p>

Parking spaces	The proposed Site Layout provides 8 parking spaces. Please refer to Planning Drawing 2: Site Layout Plan.
Maximum capacity	800MW/1600MWh

5.3 Site Access

Carr Lane (Operational Access)

- 5.3.1 The Site benefits from an existing private access route for Zulu Farm off Carr Lane. Access for the maintenance of the Proposed Development during the operational phase would be taken via this existing private track and much of the route would overlap with the existing private access for Zulu Farm. As it approaches Zulu Farm, the access route would deviate through the field to the south of Zulu Farm to the north-east of the BESS Compound.
- 5.3.2 This access is a stone-surfaced track initially comprising a 5m-wide field-edge section bypassing a previously used shared driveway with Southlands, which rejoins the original route after approximately 100m. The existing track would be improved to provide a consistent 4m width and a new, connecting section of track would be formed just before the entrance to Zulu Farm, with the access route deviating through the field to the south of Zulu Farm, the access track to the BESS Compound measures 4m in width.
- 5.3.3 At the junction with Carr Lane the access widens to 10m and is adjoined by a 2m-wide strip of concrete running along the nearside edge of the highway for a distance of approximately 25m to the south. Visibility splays in excess of 2.4m x 160m are provided in both directions along Carr Lane, commensurate with the design speed requirements.

Cote Pit Lane (Construction Access)

- 5.3.4 Construction access would be taken via the existing private access Cote Pit Lane off Cross Road. Cote Pit Lane is gated at its junction with Cross Road, where visibility splays in excess of 2.4m x 215m are provided in each direction. From the junction, the track routes northwards, crossing an existing culvert before terminating at a field edge.
- 5.3.5 A new temporary construction access is proposed, adjoining to the existing access track along Cote Pit Lane, formed diagonally across to the north-eastern corner of the BESS Compound. The temporary track would be removed at the end of the construction phase.
- 5.3.6 Cote Pit Lane is considered to be optimal in terms of construction access due to its reduced amenity impacts when compared with Carr Lane.

Cross Road (Emergency Access)

- 5.3.7 An emergency access track taken from Cross Road / Thornton Lane to the south-west of the Site is proposed in accordance with National Fire Chief's Council guidelines for Grid Scale BESS. Please refer to the Outline Battery Safety Management Plan (OBSMP) accompanying the planning application for further information. The existing track comprises a stone-surfaced track measuring between 3.5-4m in width.
- 5.3.8 Further details of the access arrangement, including supporting figures, are outlined in the Transport Statement and Traffic Management Plan accompanying this planning application.

6 PLANNING POLICY AND MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 This section of the Planning Statement identifies the key policies contained within the Development Plan and other material planning considerations pertinent to the Site and the Proposed Development.

6.2 The Legislative Context

6.2.1 As set out in Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, all planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6.2.2 These legislative provisions are reiterated within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states that:

“Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise.”

6.2.3 The primacy of the Development Plan in the application decision making process is established in both planning guidance and statute. Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that: *“...in dealing with an application for planning permission, the authority shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application”*.

6.3 The Development Plan

6.3.1 The Site is situated within the administrative boundary of North Lincolnshire Council and located c.0.6km north of the village of Ulceby. The Site is located within the Ulceby Parish and is not located within the jurisdiction of an adopted Neighbourhood Area.

6.3.2 The adopted North Lincolnshire Council Local Development Framework (LDF) comprises a suite of Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and supporting documents which set out the local planning policy for the area. There are no adopted Minerals planning documents within the North Lincolnshire LDF.

6.3.3 The LDF documents considered applicable to the Site and Proposed Development comprise:

- Core Strategy DPD (adopted June 2011);
- Housing & Employment Land Allocations DPD (adopted March 2016);
- ‘Saved’ policies of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan (adopted May 2003); and
- Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) set out below.

Core Strategy

- 6.3.4 The Core Strategy, adopted June 2011, covers the plan period 2011 – 2026 and sets out the long-term vision for North Lincolnshire, providing a guide for managing growth and development in the area.
- 6.3.5 The adopted development plan document contains one of the key determining policies for the Proposed Development, with Policy CS18: Sustainable Resource Use and Climate Change setting out that the Council will actively promote development which utilises natural resource as efficiently and sustainably as possible, including through:
- “11. Supporting renewable sources of energy in appropriate locations, where possible, and ensuring that development maximises the use of combined heat and power, particularly at the South Humber Bank employment site and where energy demands for more than 2MW are required for development.”*
- 6.3.6 Furthermore, supporting Core Strategy text at section: Sustainable Resource Use and Climate Change, sets out at paragraph 11.20 that the Council aims to slow down the rate of, and be resilient to, climate change, and sets out the reduction of consumption of natural and non-renewable resources where possible to be a key contributing aim.
- 6.3.7 The Site is located out with defined settlement limits and therefore is situated within the countryside, as highlighted through Policy CS3: Development Limits. The Policy sets out that development within the countryside will be restricted, and only essential development meeting listed criteria will be supported, including for uses that require a countryside location.
- 6.3.8 Further Policies considered pertinent to the Proposed Development are listed in Appendix 1: Relevant North Lincolnshire Council Local Development Framework Policies.

Housing & Employment Land Allocations DPD

- 6.3.9 The Housing & Employment Land Allocations (HELA) DPD adopted March 2016, complements the approach of the North Lincolnshire Core Strategy DPD, setting out an approach towards housing and employment growth across North Lincolnshire.
- 6.3.10 While the document focuses primarily on setting out the policy direction for housing and employment, it also sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development as per paragraph 11 of the NPPF.
- 6.3.11 Policy PS1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development states:
- “When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.*
- Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.*

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

- Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or
- Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.”

Saved Policies of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan

- 6.3.12 On adoption of the Core Strategy and the HELA DPD, several policies contained within the superseded 2003 Local Plan were ‘Saved’, with the list most recently updated in October 2024.
- 6.3.13 ‘Saved’ Policy DS21: Renewable Energy, permits proposals for the generation of energy through renewable resources provided that the environmental benefits outweigh any detrimental effect on features of acknowledged importance (e.g., local character and amenity) and as long as proposals detail all associated developments (e.g., access roads and ancillary buildings) and their likely impact upon the environment.
- 6.3.14 ‘Saved’ Policy RD2: Development in the Open Countryside, is also deemed pertinent considering the location of the Site and sets out the criteria that proposals in the open countryside must meet in order for planning permission to be granted.
- 6.3.15 ‘Saved’ Policy RD7: Agriculture, Forestry and Farm Diversification, sets out that proposals for farm diversification will be acceptable in principle provided that there is no adverse impact on high quality agricultural land.
- 6.3.16 Other relevant ‘Saved’ policies are listed in Appendix 1.

Planning for Renewable Energy Development SPD

- 6.3.17 The Planning for Renewable Energy Development SPD was adopted in November 2011 and reiterates that the Council are: *“strongly supportive of renewable energy and views it as being a key part of the transformation of its economy”*, noting that *“North Lincolnshire is not just leading the way in power generation from renewable sources but is also a key location for the development of renewable energy technologies”*.
- 6.3.18 While the document does not explicitly discuss BESS technologies, it expresses a clear support for renewable energy and supporting technologies.
- 6.3.19 Policies considered to be pertinent to the Proposed Development from the Planning for Renewable Energy Development SPD are listed in Appendix 1.

Trees and Development SPD

- 6.3.20 The Trees and Development SPD, adopted in March 2003 highlights the Council’s aim to promote development which is planned, executed, and managed in a sustainable manner and can contribute significantly to the retention of trees and hedges as part of the wider economic, wildlife and amenity resource of the area.

- 6.3.21 The document sets out guidance notes on a range of factors to be considered throughout design development, including: Land and Tree Surveys; Protecting Soil Structure; Sustainable Site Design; Site Access and Services; Tree Planting and Planning and Arboricultural Method Statements.

Design in the Countryside SPD

- 6.3.22 The Design in the Countryside SPD, adopted in March 2003, sets out guidance for development in the countryside, including guidance for landscape planning in the countryside. It notes that the immediate setting for development in the countryside is defined by the boundary of the site and therefore should be similar in nature to the immediate setting.
- 6.3.23 In order to maintain local habitats and conserve the natural heritage of the countryside, the SPD highlights the importance of new tree and shrub planting being native to the site, and notes that new planting is of most value to wildlife if undertaken in substantial belts or groups of trees linked to existing hedgerows or copses.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and Flood Risk Guidance

- 6.3.24 The Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and Flood Risk Guidance SPD was adopted in April 2017 and provides advice for developers and designers on SuDS and their appropriateness for developments, depending on size and location, to avoid increasing the risk of flooding to sites and their surrounding areas. The document sets out that all developments should be: *“designed and built in a way that avoids increasing the risk of flooding to the Site and the surrounding areas.”*
- 6.3.25 The Council’s requirements at the end of the document set out that the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) should be consulted at the pre-planning stage, and that surface water runoff should be limited for all new developments to greenfield runoff rate.

Emerging North Lincolnshire Local Plan

- 6.3.26 On the 30th of September 2024, the Council made the resolution to withdraw the emerging North Lincolnshire Local Plan (2020 – 2038), as made under Section 22(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 which provides that a LPA may withdraw their plan at any point prior to the adoption of the plan.
- 6.3.27 The Emerging North Lincolnshire Local Plan is not considered any further in this Planning Statement.

6.4 Material Considerations

- 6.4.1 This section outlines other key material considerations relevant to the application, in addition to the national policy and need for BESS developments as set out in Chapter 2.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 6.4.2 Whilst planning law requires development to firstly accord with the Development Plan, the NPPF is an important material consideration when determining planning applications.

- 6.4.3 The NPPF establishes the overall direction of planning policy in England and confirms how decision-making should occur at the local level. The Government published the revised NPPF in July 2018, updated in 2019, July 2012, September 2023, December 2023, and most recently December 2024.
- 6.4.4 Paragraph 201 of the NPPF sets out that the focus of planning policies and decisions should be on whether a proposed development constitutes “*an acceptable use of land, rather than the control of processes...*”, going on to note that decisions should assume these developments, if consented, will operate effectively,
- 6.4.5 Central to the Framework is the concept of sustainable development whereby the “*presumption in favour of sustainable development*” forms the overarching role. Paragraph 7 indicates that the purpose of the planning system is to achieve sustainable development and defines it as “*meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*”.

Presumption in Favour of the Development Plan

- 6.4.6 The NPPF sets out that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, for which it identifies three overarching objectives – economic, social, and environmental. Paragraph 8 identifies the three overarching objectives which all jointly support the achievement of sustainable development, stressing that these three strands “*are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways*”.
- 6.4.7 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF requires that decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking this means:
- “c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*
- d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.”*
- 6.4.8 Footnote 7 sets out that the policies Paragraph 11 refers to are those contained within the NPPF, rather than those in development plans, relating to: habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 189) and / or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Green Belt, Local Green Space, National Landscape, National Park, Heritage Coast, irreplaceable habitats, designated heritage, and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.
- 6.4.9 NPPF Paragraph 39 affirms that LPAs should use the full range of planning tools available, to enable developments that will improve the economic, social, and environmental conditions of the area and that decisions should be made in favour of sustainable development.

6.4.10 Addressing climate change is one of the core land use planning principles which the NPPF expects to underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. The NPPF emphasises that responding to climate change is central to the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. National planning policy and guidance is clear that effective spatial planning is an important part of a successful response to climate change as it can influence the emission of greenhouse gases. In doing so, LPAs should ensure that protecting the local environment is properly considered alongside the broader issues of protecting the global environment.

Low Carbon and Renewable Energy

6.4.11 The NPPF is supportive of low carbon and renewable energy and makes it clear that LPAs should approach renewable energy as part of a positive strategy for tackling climate change. Section 14 deals with meeting the challenge of climate change, with paragraph 161 stating:

6.4.12 *“The planning system should support the transition to net zero by 2050 and take full account of all climate impacts including overheating, water scarcity, storm and flood risks and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.”*

6.4.13 In order to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, paragraph 162 stipulates that: *“Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating and drought from rising temperatures.”*

6.4.14 NPPF paragraph 165 sets out that to help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should:

“a) provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, and their future re-powering and life extension, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed appropriately (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts);

b) consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their development; and

c) identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.”

6.4.15 Paragraph 166 continues to set out that in determining planning applications, LPAs should expect new development to:

“a) comply with any development plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable; and

b) take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption”

6.4.16 NPPF paragraph 168 continues to set out that, with regard to determining planning applications for all forms of renewable and low carbon energy developments and their associated infrastructure, LPAs should:

“a) not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, and give significant weight to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation and the proposal’s contribution to a net zero future;

b) recognise that small-scale and community-led projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions;

c) in the case of applications for the repowering and life-extension of existing renewable sites, give significant weight to the benefits of utilising an established site.”

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

6.4.17 The Government’s NPPG was launched on the 6th of March 2014 and provides guidance, which is periodically updated, on a variety of planning matters. The NPPG should be read alongside the NPPF and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Planning Practice Guidance

6.4.18 The Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was published in June 2015 and last updated in August 2023. It offers LPAs guidance on the development of policy considerations for renewable and low carbon energy and highlights the importance of increasing the amount of energy from renewable and local carbon technologies to help make sure the UK has a secure energy supply. The PPG outlines that LPAs are responsible for renewable and low carbon energy developments of 50MW or less.

6.4.19 The 2023 update included new advice specifically for BESS developments. The new section highlights the importance of BESS in the transition to lower carbon energy generation stating:

“Electricity storage can enable us to use energy more flexibly and de-carbonise our energy system cost-effectively – for example, by helping to balance the system at lower cost, maximizing the usable output from intermittent low carbon generation (e.g., solar and wind), and deferring or avoiding the need for costly network upgrades and new generation capacity.”

6.4.20 Further, the August 2023 update endorses the use of the National Fire Chiefs Council’s (NFCC) Grid Scale BESS planning guidance for Fire and Rescue Services (FRS)¹² when considering BESS schemes. The planning guidance encourages engagement with the local fire and rescue service, on matters such as access, layout, and prevention of impacts.

6.4.21 All parties are encouraged to consider the guidance produced by NFCC (dated November 2023). The guidance has been developed with the safety of the public and emergency responders in mind. It aims to reduce risk as far as reasonably practicable, whilst recognising that ultimate responsibility for the safe design and running of these facilities rests with the operator.

¹² <https://nfcc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Grid-Scale-Battery-Energy-Storage-System-planning-Guidance-for-FRS.pdf>

- 6.4.22 It is noted that a consultation on a new draft version of the NFCC Grid Scale BESS was held over summer in 2024. The NFCC anticipate that the new revised version of the BESS guidance will be published in 2025.

Climate Change Planning Practice Guidance

- 6.4.23 The Climate Change PPG, published in June 2014 with a subsequent update March 2019, offers advice and guidance on the identification of mitigation and adaptation measures required in the planning process to address the impacts of climate change.
- 6.4.24 It outlines the importance of Planning in addressing and improving resilience to climate change. In order to be found sound, local plans must reflect this to enable delivery of sustainable development in line with the NPPF.
- 6.4.25 The PPG does not explicitly reference BESS developments, however, does state *“local planning authorities should pay particular attention to integrating adaptation and mitigation approaches and looking for ‘win-win’ solutions that will support sustainable development”*.

Natural Environment Planning Practice Guidance

- 6.4.26 The Natural Environment NPPG, published January 2016 and updated January 2024, discusses the importance of the planning systems regard for the Natural Environment and designations, including considerations at the local scale.
- 6.4.27 The PPG sets out that: *“Information on biodiversity and geodiversity impacts and opportunities needs to inform all stages of development (including site selection and design, pre-application consultation and the application itself). An ecological survey will be necessary in advance of a planning application if the type and location of development could have a significant impact on biodiversity and existing information is lacking or inadequate.”*
- 6.4.28 For Agricultural Land, the PPG identifies MAFFs provisional Agricultural Land Classification to assess the quality of farmland, stating: *“planning policies and decisions should take account of the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land”*.

National Policy Statements (NPS)

- 6.4.29 Supporting the NPPF and PPG are National Policy Statements (NPSs). NPSs are designated under the Planning Act 2008 to provide guidance for decision-makers on the application of government policy when determining applications for development in relation to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs), however they are also a material consideration in the determination of relevant planning applications.

EN-1: Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy

- 6.4.30 As set out in Chapter 2, the Overarching NPS for Energy (EN-1) was first published in July 2011 and revised in November 2023 before coming into force in January 2024. EN-1 is part of a suite of NPS's issued by the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change. It sets out the Government's policy for delivery of major energy infrastructure.
- 6.4.31 Paragraphs 3.3.4 to 3.3.6 describe the importance of storage for different types of electricity infrastructure, the flexibility storage provides in meeting demand and how it reduces the need for new network infrastructure. The role of storage is set out from Paragraphs 3.3.25 – 3.3.31. Paragraph 3.3.25 states:

“Storage has a key role to play in achieving net zero and providing flexibility to the energy system, so that high volumes of low carbon power, heat and transport can be integrated.”

6.4.32 EN-1 also identifies energy storage as having a pertinent role in reducing electricity costs and improving energy security Paragraph 3.3.26 continues:

“Storage is needed to reduce the costs of the electricity system and increase reliability by storing surplus electricity in times of low demand to provide electricity when demand is higher.”

6.4.33 Paragraph 3.3.27 continues and recognises that:

“Storage can provide various services, locally and at the national level. These include maximising the usable output from intermittent low carbon generation (e.g. solar and wind), reducing the total amount of generation capacity needed on the system; providing a range of balancing services to the NETSO and Distribution Network operators (DNOs) to help operate the system; and reducing constraints on the networks, helping to defer or avoid the need for costly network upgrades as demand increases”.

6.4.34 Paragraph 3.3.62 outlines that the Government has concluded that there is a critical national priority (CNP) for the provision of nationally significant low carbon infrastructure. Paragraph 4.2.5 sets out what is classed as low carbon infrastructure which includes: *“for other energy infrastructure, fuels, pipelines and storage infrastructure, which fits within the normal definition of “low carbon,” such as hydrogen distribution, and carbon dioxide distribution”.*

6.4.35 In a recent Appeal Decision for a Battery Energy Storage proposal at Lowlands Farm, Halesowen (Reference. APP/C4615/W/24/3341383), the inspector gave significant weight to the benefits of the proposal for energy security, flexibility, and the contribution to achieving net zero. The inspector also referenced that EN-1 states low carbon infrastructure is a critical national policy (CNP). A similar statement was made in the Appeal Decision for a Battery Energy Storage site at Whites Farm, Essex (Reference. APP/V1505/W/23/3332888), with the inspector stating: *“Provision of battery energy storage is a Critical National Priority (CNP) as set out in NPS EN-1, and it is undisputed that the proposal falls within this category.”*

EN-1: Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy Draft

6.4.36 , As set out in Chapter 2, the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero published a draft revised EN-1 on the 24th of April 2025, with the consultation period lasting until the 29th of May 2025. The proposed updates strengthen the process for delivering major new infrastructure in England and Wales.

6.4.37 The proposed EN-1 revisions reference the Clean Power 2030 Action Plan published in December 2024 and reinforce the government’s ambition to produce at least 95% of Great Britain’s energy through clean sources and achieve the sixth Carbon Budget.

6.4.38 Paragraph 2.3.2 sets out the objectives for meeting the Clean Power 2030, noting the mission to ensure the UK’s supply of energy remains secure, reliable, affordable, and consistent, thus necessitating a significant amount of new energy infrastructure both through nationally significant developments and small-scale developments determined at a local level.

6.4.39 Paragraph 2.3.4 continues to state that: *“we need to rapidly increase deployment of all relevant infrastructure to meet the Clean Power 2030 Mission capacity ranges and decarbonise the power sector”.*

EN-3: National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure

6.4.40 As set out in Chapter 2, the NPS for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3) was also first published in July 2011 and was revised in November 2023 (also came into force in January 2024). It sets out national guidance for renewable energy infrastructure. Paragraph 1.1.2 states that:

6.4.41 *“Electricity generation from renewable sources in an essential element of the transition to net zero and meeting our statutory targets for the sixth carbon budget (CB6). Our analysis suggests that demand for electricity is likely to increase significantly over the coming years and could more than double by 2050”.*

6.4.42 Whilst the NPS does not specifically reference BESS, Chapter 2.9 pertains to Pumped Hydro Storage. Paragraph 2.9.9 recognises the importance of electricity storage, it states:

6.4.43 *“Electricity storage is essential for a net zero energy system, it stores electricity when it is abundance for periods when it is scarce, as well as providing a range of services to help maintain the resilience and stability of the grid.”*

6.4.44 Paragraph 2.9.10 continues and states:

“The need for electricity storage is rising as we increase the volume of variable renewables and increase peak demand through the electrification of heat and transport. It will be critical to maintaining energy security as we shift away from gas over the 2020s-30s”.

EN-3: National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure Draft

6.4.45 As with EN-1, proposed revisions to EN-3 were published for consultation on the 24th of April 2025, with consultation set to conclude on the 29th of May 2025.

6.4.46 The proposed revisions do not explicitly reference BESS however, as discussed above, Chapter 2.9 of EN-3 continues to reflect the recognition of the important role electricity storage plays in achieving the targets of Clean Power 2030.

EN-5: National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure

6.4.47 As set out in Chapter 2, the NPS for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5) was first published in 22nd of November 2023 and came into force in January 2024. It sets out national guidance for electricity networks infrastructure and also refers to energy storage in its first paragraph (1.1.1), stating that:

“The security and reliability of the UK’s current and future energy supply is highly dependent on having an electricity network which will enable the new electricity generation, storage, and interconnection infrastructure that our country needs to meet the rapid increase in electricity demand required to transition to net zero, while maintaining energy security.”

6.4.48 Section 2.2 of EN-5 sets out that the initiating and terminating points (development zone) of electricity networks infrastructure is not substantially within the control of the applicant, with siting instead determined by:

- *“the location of new generating stations or other infrastructure requiring connection to the network, and/or*

- *system capacity and resilience requirements determined by the Electricity System Operator.”*

6.4.49 EN-5 recognises that there are locationally specific beginnings and ends to transmission lines, representing potentially suitable points of Grid connection.

6.4.50 Low carbon new generation and storage projects such as BESS schemes will only be viable in proximity to these appropriate points of connection.

EN-5: National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure Draft

6.4.51 As with EN-1 and EN-3, proposed revisions to EN-5 were published for consultation on the 24th of April 2025, with consultation set to conclude on the 29th of May 2025.

6.4.52 The revisions emphasise the ambitions of accelerating the deployment of clean energy capacity and energy storage to meet the Government’s ambitions for the Clean Power 2030 Mission.

International, National, and Regional Energy Policy Targets

International

UN Climate Change Conference (COP 29)

6.4.53 The 29th annual United Nations Climate Change Conference closed on the 24th of November 2024, following its commencement on the 11th of November 2024. The Conference, held in Baku, Azerbaijan, was attended by almost 200 countries, reaching breakthrough agreements, and committing to a new finance goal to help countries to protect their people and economies against climate disasters, and share in the vast benefits of the clean energy boom. Discussions were underpinned by the overarching aim of keeping global temperature increases well within the 2°C goal and ideally the 1.5°C pre-industrial limit.

6.4.54 A cornerstone achievement of the Conference was the Global Energy Storage and Grids Pledge. The Pledge encourages investment in energy storage, set a target to deploy 1,500 gigawatts of energy storage capacity and adding or refurbishing 25 million kilometres of grid infrastructure by 2030. The Conference highlighted that the cost of Energy Storage Systems (ESS) solutions has decreased by 90% since 2009, now making ESS a viable option to help ensure stable and secure energy supply.

6.4.55 The financial goal set at COP29 builds on action taken at COP27, which agreed an historic Loss and Damage Fund, and COP28, which delivered a global agreement to transition away from all fossil fuels in energy systems.

6.4.56 Simon Stiell, Executive Secretary of UN Climate Change set out that the new finance goal “*is an insurance policy for humanity, amid worsening climate impacts hitting every country [...] It will keep the clean energy boom growing, helping all countries to share in its huge benefits: more jobs, stronger growth, cheaper and cleaner energy for all.*”

6.4.57 The finance agreement achieved follows a requirement for all countries to provide stronger national climate plans next year, which must cover all greenhouse gases and all sectors. Importantly, COP29 resulted in the UK setting out clear signals that they “*plan to ramp up climate action in their (Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs))*”.

6.4.58 COP29 reached agreements on carbon markets – aiding countries to deliver climate plans with greater efficiency and make rapid progress in reducing net global carbon emissions this decade.

2023 UN Climate Change Conference (COP 28)

6.4.59 COP28 took place in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, concluding on the 13th of December 2023, where negotiators from nearly 200 Parties came together with a decision on the world's first 'global stocktake' to ratchet up climate action before the end of the decade. The global stocktake was considered to be the central outcome of the COP, as it contained every element that was under negotiation which now can be used by countries to develop stronger climate action plans due by 2025.

6.4.60 The stocktake recognised the science that indicates global greenhouse gas emissions need to be cut 43% by 2030, compared to 2019 levels, to limit global warming to 1.5°C, but noted that Parties are off track when it comes to meeting their Paris Agreement goals.

6.4.61 COP28 also emphasised the potential of energy storage to significantly shape a sustainable energy future. Initiatives such as the Supercharging Battery Storage Initiative, ESS Consortium, and Net Zero World all point in one direction, addressing energy poverty, promoting sustainability, and achieving clean energy goals.

2022 UN Climate Change Conference (COP27)

6.4.62 COP27 took place in Sharm el-Sheikh in November 2022 and was attended by over 35,000 participants including more than 100 Heads of State and Governments. During the conference, governments were requested to revisit and strengthen 2030 targets for mitigating climate change in their national climate plans by the end of 2023.

6.4.63 The Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan emphasises there is an “*urgent need for immediate, deep, rapid, and sustained reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions in order to limit global warming to 1.5°C*”.

2021 UN Climate Change Conference (COP26)

6.4.64 The UK held the Presidency of the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) and its aim was to keep alive the hope of limiting global temperature rises to 1.5°C. This ambition could be realised with compliance with the agreeing the Glasgow Climate Pact – this global agreement will accelerate action on climate this decade and finally completes the Paris Rulebook.

6.4.65 The UK's work to prepare for COP26 focused on the following four goals:

- Mitigation - reducing emissions;
- Adaptation - helping those already impacted by climate change;
- Finance - enabling countries to deliver on their climate goals; and,
- Collaboration - working together to deliver even greater action.

- 6.4.66 One of the key messages highlighted at COP26 is the importance of moving away from coal power and the importance of scaling up clean power as an alternative including renewable energy generation.

United Nations (UN) Conference of the Parties Climate Change Conferences

- 6.4.67 The UN Conference of the Parties (COP) has convened an annual meeting since 1995, to assess progress in dealing with climate change and negotiate global climate action. In 2015, the UN Climate Change Conference agreed that in order to limit significant impacts arising from global warming, a worldwide temperature increase would need to be limited to 1.5°C.

National

The Seventh Carbon Budget

- 6.4.67.1. In February 2025, the UK Government announced the seventh Carbon Budget, this covers 2038 to 2040¹³. Goal 1 - Energy sets out aims to ensure a reliable low-carbon energy supply through renewables, storable energy, batteries, and interconnected markets. The Budget sets out how the cost of batteries have fallen substantially over the period of the first three carbon budgets.

Clean Power 2030 Action Plan

- 6.4.68 On the 13th of December 2024, the UK Government published the Clean Power 2030 Action Plan¹⁴, which sets out a pathway to a clean power system by 2030. Building on advice published by the National Energy System Operator (NESO) in November 2024, the goal is to reduce the carbon intensity of the UK's energy generation from 171gCO₂e/kWh in 2023 to well below 50gCO₂e/kWh in 2030.

- 6.4.69 The Clean Power Action Plan highlights the importance of moving away from fossil fuels and increasing the UK's domestic supply of clean energy stating:

"In an increasingly unstable world, our dependence on fossil fuels leaves us deeply vulnerable as a country – and that is true no matter where they come from."

- 6.4.70 The Action Plan goes on to emphasise the underpinning role of battery storage and other technologies providing short-duration flexibility for the National Grid, stating:

"As we build an energy system reliant increasingly on variable renewables, improving the flexibility of the wider electricity system is key."

- 6.4.71 The Action Plan references a variety of meaningful advantages associated with increasing battery storage capacity in the UK including: reducing energy bills for consumers, minimising the amount of more costly generation and associated network infrastructure that needs to be built, and maintaining security of supply.

- 6.4.72 The Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) expects 23-27 GW of battery storage to be needed by 2030 to support clean power generation. With a current battery

¹³ <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/the-seventh-carbon-budget/>

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-power-2030-action-plan>

storage capacity of 4.5GW, a significant increase in capacity is required, with DESNZ expecting most of this to come from grid-scale batteries.

2024 Committee on Climate Change Progress Report to Parliament

6.4.73 In July 2024, the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) published their latest report to the UK Parliament on the progress to date in reducing greenhouse gas emissions¹⁵. The report recognises that the UK has met all carbon reduction targets so far, with a successful record of emissions reductions.

6.4.74 In relation to the nationwide commitment to reduce emissions by 68% in 2030, compared to 1990 levels, the report notes out that urgent action must be taken. The report sets out that, despite significant progress in reducing carbon emissions in 2023, the country is not on track to achieve its Net-Zero 2030 target.

6.4.75 The Executive Summary outlines that there was significant fall in emissions last year but notes that this fall was not enough. The CCC go on to state:

“Our assessment is that only a third of the emissions reductions required to achieve the 2030 target are currently covered by credible plans. Action is needed across all sectors of the economy, with low-carbon technologies becoming the norm.”

6.4.76 The Report also outlines ten priority actions, noting that the UK should be in a phase of rapid investment and delivery, however indicators for the delivery and development of low-carbon technologies are off-track. Priority actions by 2030 include to:

- *“Make electricity cheaper;*
- *Reverse recent policy rollbacks;*
- *Remove planning barriers for heat pumps, electric vehicle charge points and onshore wind;*
- *Introduce a comprehensive programme for decarbonisation of public sector buildings;*
- *Effectively design and implement the upcoming renewable energy CfD auctions;*
- *Accelerate electrification of industrial heat;*
- *Ramp up tree planting and peatland restoration;*
- *Finalise business models for large-scale deployment of engineered removal;*
- *Publish a strategy to support skills; and*
- *Strengthen NAP3”.*

6.4.77 The CCC note that, following the election of the new Government, there is an opportunity to reset the UK’s direction. The report sets out that the Government *“must send long-term*

¹⁵ <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/progress-in-reducing-emissions-2024-report-to-parliament/>

consistent messages on the importance of climate action to businesses and households, back that up with key policies to support investment and focus on removing barriers to deployment.”

British Energy Security

- 6.4.78 Energy security has become a significant concern since the invasion of Ukraine and soaring energy prices. It is becoming increasingly evident that there is a desire within the Government to be as self-sufficient as possible with our energy supply.
- 6.4.79 The British Energy Security Strategy policy paper (April 2022)¹⁶ focused on strategies to ensure long-term secure, clean, and affordable energy for the UK. Within a section on ‘networks, storage and flexibility,’ the paper outlined the importance of storage in improving the efficiency of the UK energy system.
- 6.4.80 The policy paper set out the two priorities for the UK energy system: *“anticipating need because planning ahead minimises cost and public disruption; and hyper-flexibility in matching supply and demand so that minimal energy is wasted.”*

The Sixth Carbon Budget

- 6.4.81 In April 2021, the UK Government announced that the UK’s sixth Carbon Budget will enshrine in law a new target to reduce carbon emissions by 78% (compared to 1990 levels) by 2035, the world’s most ambitious climate change budget. The target has now been made a legal requirement.

Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019

- 6.4.82 In June 2019, the UK became the first major economy in the world to pass laws to end its contribution to global warming by 2050. The legally binding target will require the UK to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to Net Zero by 2050, compared with the previous target of at least 80% reduction from 1990 levels. The UK’s 2050 Net Zero target, one of the most ambitious in the world, was recommended by the Committee on Climate Change, the UK’s independent climate advisory body. Net Zero means any emissions would be balanced by schemes to offset an equivalent amount of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere, such as planting trees or using technology such as carbon capture and storage.

2019 Committee on Climate Change Progress Report to Parliament

- 6.4.83 The CCC published ‘Net Zero – The UK’s Contribution to Stopping Global Warming’¹⁷ in May 2019. The report responds to a request from the Governments of the UK, Wales, and Scotland, asking the Committee to reassess the UK’s long-term emissions targets. The report recommends a target for the UK of net zero emissions by 2050 and specifically highlights the falling cost of key renewable technologies including solar PV, which is now generally comparable or lower cost than power from fossil fuels, while bringing significant co-benefits such as reduced air pollution.

¹⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/british-energy-security-strategy/british-energy-security-strategy>

¹⁷ <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/net-zero-the-uks-contribution-to-stopping-global-warming/>

The UK Clean Growth Strategy 2017

- 6.4.84 In October 2017, the Government published a Clean Growth Strategy¹⁸, focussing on growing national income whilst cutting greenhouse gas emissions. The strategy recognises that the way in which energy is generated in the UK is changing and that complementary mechanisms, including energy storage, will play a vital role.

Paris Agreement 2015

- 6.4.85 The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change. It was adopted by 196 Parties including the UK at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP21) in Paris, France, on the 12th of December 2015. The overarching goal of the Paris Agreement is to hold: “the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels” and pursue efforts “to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels”¹⁹. The UK’s commitment to the 2015 Paris Agreement, and its long-term objective of a 2050 decarbonised economy, makes the transition to a decarbonised energy system essential.

Climate Change Act 2008

- 6.4.86 The Climate Change Act 2008²⁰ sets a legal duty on the Secretary of State to reduce greenhouse gas emissions significantly by 2050. The Act mandates that the UK government set legally binding, five-year carbon budgets to guide the country towards its net-zero emissions target by 2050 and also established the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) to ensure that emissions targets are evidence-based and independently assessed.

Regional

- 6.4.87 It is evident that the Council have a history of considering the need to address Climate Change, with their ‘Carbon Management Strategy (2017 – 2022)’²¹ setting out four priorities for action, comprising:
- Priority One Low Carbon Council – Reduce carbon emissions across the council estate, operations, and street lighting;
 - Priority Two Low Carbon Economy – Promote business resource efficiency and help low carbon and local businesses grow in North Lincolnshire;
 - Priority Three Low Carbon Communities – Support and promote community action for low carbon living; and
 - Priority Four Low Carbon Transport – Reducing energy use and carbon emissions from transport.

¹⁸ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5ad5f11ded915d32a3a70c03/clean-growth-strategy-correction-april-2018.pdf>

¹⁹ <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement>

²⁰ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/contents>

²¹ <https://www.northlincs.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Carbon-Management-Strategy-2017-22.pdf>

6.4.88 Further, through ‘Themes and Aims to achieve a Green Future’²², the Council set out four themes and eight aims that comprise their strategy to better the environment and work towards ending their contribution to climate change. These four themes and their associated aims comprise:

- Theme 1 – Net Zero and Sustainable Energy:
 - Aim 1 – By 2030, the council will achieve ‘net zero’ and we will end the council’s contribution to global warming.
 - Aim 2 – Clean Growth – working together for net zero industry and commerce and good air quality.
 - Aim 3 – The shift to net zero embeds decarbonisation in our economic growth. Decarbonisation is one of the foundations of our future prosperity.
 - Aim 4 – Net zero living is easy and accessible. It benefits the environment and improves people’s lives.
- Theme 2 – Resources, Waste and Water Management:
 - Aim 5 – Resources are used more efficiently. The amount of waste North Lincolnshire produces is minimised.
- Theme 3 – Our Natural Environment: People and Place:
 - Aim 6 – Everyone is connected with our environment. We enhance and protect it.
- Theme 4 – A Shared Responsibility and A Shared Vision:
 - Aim 7: People feel the benefit of our environment, and everyone has a stake in it.
 - Aim 8: A Network to Achieve Our Vision for ‘A Green Future’.

6.4.89 Aim 1 sets out that, despite achieving significant carbon emission reductions since 2009, the Council are still responsible for emitting c. 12’200 tonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere each year. By 2030, they strive to source all energy from renewable sources and use their own renewable sources wherever possible.

6.4.90 Additionally, Aim 3 highlights the economic benefits of a transition to net zero, and notes that the accelerated deployment of renewable and clean sources of energy provides an opportunity increase supply diversification and affordability.

²² <https://www.northlincs.gov.uk/your-council/our-policy/>

7 ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 This section provides an assessment of the Proposed Development against the Local Development Framework and other material considerations.

7.2 Weight of the Development Plan and the NPPF

7.2.1 Paragraph 2 of the NPPF states:

“Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework must be taken into account in preparing the development plan and is a material consideration in planning decisions. Planning policies and decisions must also reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements.”

7.2.2 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development and states:

“For decision-taking this means:

c) approving development that accords with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) where there is no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important are out-of-date, granting planning permission unless:

i) the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”

7.2.3 Policy PS1 of the HELA DPD states:

“When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

- *Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or*
- *Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.”*

7.2.4 Thus, weight can be attributed to the Development Plan policies except where there are any inconsistencies with the NPPF, in which case the latter should take precedence.

7.2.5 The Local Plan comprises documents adopted in 2016, 2011, and ‘Saved’ policies from 2003. Generally, the policies are considered to be consistent with the NPPF however, some are more restrictive and do not allow for the same consideration of planning balance as opposed to the NPPF. This is the case for ‘Saved’ Local Plan Policy RD2 which applies a strict approach to development within the ‘Open Countryside’ with a list of the type of developments that would be considered acceptable. This list is considered more prohibitive than the requirements of the NPPF and is not consistent with newer adopted policies in the Development Plan, which allow developments in the countryside where that location is necessary.

7.2.6 Therefore, it is considered that generally weight can be applied to the Development Plan policies, despite their time since adoption, except ‘Saved’ Local Plan Policy RD2 which is inconsistent with current national and more recent local policies.

7.3 Principle of Development

7.3.1 As set out in Chapters 2 and 6, the urgent need to decarbonise the National Grid is supported at a national and international level through both legislation and policy. Climate change is widely regarded as the greatest threat faced by current and future generations.

7.3.2 As set out above, BESS developments are key ancillary infrastructure for renewable energy generation, which is typically intermittent. BESS developments store surplus energy from the National Grid when supply is higher than demand and release the energy back to the National Grid when demand is higher than supply. This both prevents the need for curtailment of renewable energy developments and also reduces the risk of shortfalls in energy supply and blackouts.

7.3.3 Section 7.4 of the NPPF is supportive of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. The NPPF makes it clear that planning has a key role to play in the transition to a low carbon future. At Paragraph 168 (a), the NPPF sets out that applicants are not expected to have to justify the need for the renewable and low carbon development and that LPAs should approve such applications where impacts are (or can be made) acceptable. The text goes on to state that LPAs should: *“give significant weight to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation and the proposal’s contribution to a net zero future.”*

7.3.4 ‘Saved’ Local Plan Policy DS21: Renewable energy, outlines that the Council will permit proposals for generation of energy from renewable resources provided that the environmental benefits outweigh any detrimental effects on important features including when considering all associated infrastructure. Core Strategy Policy CS18: Sustainable Resource and Climate Change, also sets out that the Council will support renewable sources of energy in appropriate locations. The Proposed Development will enable the Grid to sustain a greater proportion of renewable and zero carbon energy by balancing the intermittency of renewable sources of energy. BESS are an essential service needed to support the roll out of renewables and provide sub-second response times, offering an effective solution to several of the Grid’s

balancing issues. Thus, they support the development and deployment of low carbon intermittent energy technologies upon which society must increasingly rely on to satisfy its energy requirements. It is therefore considered that the support provided for renewable energy developments by policies DS21 and CS18 is translatable to BESS.

- 7.3.5 This Planning Statement is accompanied by a suite of technical assessments which have assessed the Proposed Development against local and national policies relevant to the discipline. As set out in Chapter 5, an iterative design process was followed to develop the design of the Proposed Development which was informed by consultation responses, comprehensive surveys and site walkovers and associated technical assessments and reports. This approach also ensured that any necessary mitigation measures have been embedded into the design of the Proposed Development. Summaries of any residual effects are provided in the discipline assessments below in sections 7.4 – 7.11, but it is considered that the benefits of the Proposed Development, and weight to be attributed to it, as detailed above, outweigh any limited ‘harm’ and thus it is in accordance with policies DS21 and CS18.
- 7.3.6 The Site is located out with development limits and is therefore regarded as ‘Countryside,’ as per Core Strategy Policy CS3: Development Limits. Along with Policy CS3, Core Strategy policies CS1: Spatial Strategy For North Lincolnshire, CS2: Delivering More Sustainable Development, and ‘Saved’ Local Plan Policy LC7: Landscape Protection, set out the criteria for acceptable proposals in the countryside. It is noted that policies CS3 and CS2 state that development outside defined boundaries will be restricted to that which is essential to the functioning of the countryside, including other uses which require a countryside location. Locations for BESS are primarily determined by grid connection availability, land suitability, and proximity to demand. The Applicant has a contract for a grid connection for a proposed BESS project at the Site. The Point of Connection will be at or in the vicinity of the Site but it is subject to final determination by National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc and the wider Grid Connection Reform process being undertaken nationally over the second half of 2025.
- 7.3.7 Consistent with the approach taken on the adjacent solar farm decision (Application Reference: PA/2022/443), given the limited impacts of the Proposed Development and in light of the above policy context, the Site is considered to be an acceptable location and in accordance with policies CS1, CS2, CS3, and LC7.
- 7.3.8 Overall, there is strong policy support for the principle of development with regard to the location, purpose, and benefits of the Proposed Development. It is considered that the principal of development is clearly justified, and that the Proposed Development is in accordance with Core Strategy policies DS21, CS18, CS1, CS2, and CS3, ‘Saved’ Local Plan Policy LC7, and the requirements of the NPPF.

7.4 Landscape and Visual

- 7.4.1 A Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) accompanies this planning application.
- 7.4.2 The NPPF sets out that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.
- 7.4.3 Core Strategy Policy CS5: Delivering Quality Design In North Lincolnshire, sets out that new development should be well designed and appropriate for their context. It also sets out that new development should incorporate appropriate landscaping and planting which enhances biodiversity or geological features whilst contributing to the creation of a network of linked

greenspaces across the area. Core Strategy Policy CS16: North Lincolnshire's Landscape, Greenspace and Waterscape, sets out that the Council requires that developments improve the quality and quantity of accessible landscape, greenspace, and waterscape where appropriate.

- 7.4.4 Additionally, 'Saved' Local Plan Policy DS1: General Requirements, sets out that a high standard of design is expected in all developments in both built-up areas and the countryside, with the design and layout reflecting or enhancing the character, appearance and setting of the immediate area. 'Saved' Local Plan Policy LC7: Landscape Protection, states that where possible, development should have regard for the conservation and enhancement of the districts landscape.
- 7.4.5 Policy 2 of the Planning for Renewable Energy Development SPD: Landscape, builds upon the above policies, setting out the importance of considering landscape at an early stage in the design process, ensuring developments are sensitive to the character and quality of the landscape. Policy 3: Visual Effects, states that where unacceptable negative impacts on visual amenity are identified, developers should ensure these are satisfactorily addressed. Policy 10: Cumulative Effects sets out that developers should consider the potential for, and address, cumulative visual and landscape effects. Policy 14: Local Grid Connections and Ancillary Equipment, seeks to minimise visual clutter whilst screening ancillary equipment with landforms and vegetation. Policy 13: Highways and Rights of Way establishes that developers should consider impacts on existing the proposed PRoWs.
- 7.4.6 As set out in section 5.1, following the identification of the Site, survey work was undertaken in order to refine the location of the BESS and 400kV substation compounds within the wider land parcel and inform the siting of equipment. The southern field comprising the Site was identified due to being less visible than the northern field due to the existing and surrounding topography and vegetation. Two 400kV overhead lines also cross the southern field and it was considered that any views of the Proposed Development would be in the context of the existing high voltage infrastructure.
- 7.4.7 At an early stage of design, large areas of the Site were identified for biodiversity and landscape planting, with the proposals guided by the project landscape architect to ensure that planting is appropriate for the character of the area, the project ecologist to maximise biodiversity value, the RSPB, and Buglife. Apart from a 'cut-off' land drain, no infrastructure will be sited in the northern field of the Site which will be used to mitigate the Proposed Development and enhance landscape character and biodiversity. The area out with the BESS Compound in the southern field is also proposed for biodiversity and landscape planting. The proposals include: gapping of existing hedgerow, planting new sections of species rich hedgerow to reinstate historic field boundaries, native scrub with scattered tree planting, and orchard trees with an orchard meadow, area of seasonally wet meadow, wildflower meadow, and creation of bee banks.
- 7.4.8 The Site and much of the 3km study area is situated within Landscape Character Area (LCAr) Lincolnshire Drift, and Landscape Character Type (LCT) Open Undulating Farmland, as set out by the North Lincolnshire Landscape Character Assessment and Guidelines.
- 7.4.9 The LVA assesses the effects of the Proposed Development on landscape character during construction, operation prior to the establishment of mitigation planting, and operation following establishment. The LVA notes that the existing field boundary vegetation structure would be supplemented by the mitigation planting to further filter visibility of the Site and strengthen the vegetated character of LCT Open Undulating Farmland. There would be a Minor adverse effect

on landscape character during construction of the Proposed Development, a Moderate/Minor adverse effect operation prior to establishment of mitigation planting, and a Minor neutral effect following planting establishment.

- 7.4.10 The LVA sets out that the visual amenity experienced across the study area comprises low and high voltage pylons and transmission cables, scattered farmsteads, large agricultural outbuildings, road, and rail infrastructure. Given the Proposed Development would not introduce vertical features of the same scale as the existing pylons and transmission cables, it is considered the Proposed Development would not have a greater visual impact on scale than what is already present within the landscape.
- 7.4.11 The LVA also assess effects to visual receptors groups (VRGs) and on the effects to visual amenity of public spaces. Prior to the establishment of planting, Moderate adverse effects are anticipated on 'The Local Road network south-east of the Site,' which is considered to have low sensitivity, during the operational phase of the Proposed Development. However, following the establishment of mitigation planting (assumed to be between 5-10 years) there would only be a marginal change in views.
- 7.4.12 A Moderate/Minor adverse effect prior to mitigation planting is anticipated on Carr Lane VRG, reducing to a Minor neutral effect following establishment. A Moderate/Minor adverse effect is anticipated on the A1077; Ulceby to Wootton, reducing to minor/negligible neutral following the establishment of planting. The effect on all other VRGs prior to establishment of mitigation planting is anticipated to be Minor or Negligible.
- 7.4.13 Given the proximity of the consented, but yet constructed Sweetbriar Solar Farm, the LVA assesses the potential for cumulative effects arising in conjunction with the consented scheme.
- 7.4.14 The Proposed Development, if constructed alongside Sweetbriar Solar Farm, would have only a localised effect on LCT Open Undulating Farmland. BESS developments have reasonably small footprints and low vertical extents compared to other forms of electrical energy generation. Cumulative effects on LCT Open Undulating Farmland would remain localised even in combination with Sweetbriar Solar Farm. Combined effects would be Moderate/Minor adverse after planting establishes.
- 7.4.15 There are relatively few locations where the Proposed Development would be visible in combination with Sweetbriar Solar Farm. Most notable is from Carr Lane to the south of the access road for Zulu Farm where Sweetbriar Solar Farm would have a Moderate-Major adverse effect prior to the establishment of mitigation planting. The Proposed Development would not give rise to greater sequential effects on receptors than if Sweetbriar Solar Farm were to be consented and constructed on its own.
- 7.4.16 In conclusion, the Proposed Development would result in some limited localised adverse impacts on the character and appearance of the area. Saved Policy DS21 requires these impacts to be weighed against the environmental benefits of the Proposed Development. Thus, it is considered that the Proposed Development would be acceptable in accordance with the aims of Core Strategy policies CS5 and CS16, 'Saved' Local Plan policies DS1 and LC7, policies 2, 3, 10, 13, and 14 of the Planning for Renewable Energy Development SPD, and the requirements of the NPPF.

7.5 Ecology and Biodiversity

- 7.5.1 An Ecological Assessment Report (EAR) accompanies this planning application.

- 7.5.2 The NPPF places a strong emphasis on the planning system being able to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. This should be achieved, in part, by minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks.
- 7.5.3 As set out above, Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy states that new development should incorporate appropriate landscaping and planting which enhances biodiversity or geological features whilst contributing to the creation of a network of linked greenspaces across the area. Core Strategy Policy CS17: Biodiversity, builds on this by setting out how the Council will promote effective stewardship of North Lincolnshire wildlife, including through ensuring developments provide a net gain in biodiversity and appropriately mitigating any unavoidable impacts.
- 7.5.4 'Saved' Local Plan Policy DS1 states that proposals should not have an adverse effect on features of acknowledged importance, on or surrounding, a site, including species of plants and animals of nature conservation value. 'Saved' Local Plan Policy LC5: Species Protection, reinforces this setting out that weight will be afforded to species protection in the planning process and permission will not be granted where development would have an adverse impact on badgers or species protected by Schedules 1, 5 or 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). 'Saved' Local Plan Policy LC6: Habitat Creation, outlines that provision should be made for the creation of new wildlife habitats, in keeping with national targets and provision for protected species. 'Saved' Local Plan Policy LC1: Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites, sets out that where proposals may affect an SPA, proposed SPA, SAC, or proposed SAC, they will be assessed according to the implications of the development and should conclusively demonstrate the overriding public interest for the development.
- 7.5.5 Policy 1: Biodiversity, of the Planning for Renewable Energy Development SPD requires developers to assess the effects of renewable developments on biodiversity sites, habitats, and species to avoid or mitigate harm, and securing conservation and enhancement. Policy 10 sets out that developers should consider, and address, the potential for cumulative effects on ecology.
- 7.5.6 Field surveys including an extended habitat survey, eDNA, and non-breeding bird surveys have been carried out to understand the baseline ecology of the Site.
- 7.5.7 Avoidance and mitigation measures have been embedded into the design of the Proposed Development through the iterative design process to ensure that any adverse impacts are reduced as far as possible, including protection of offsite statutory and non-statutory designated sites through pollution prevention controls.
- 7.5.8 Mitigation measures are proposed for the protection of protected species include fencing and buffers to protect retained trees, a sensitive lighting strategy during construction and operation, industry best practice guidelines during construction, toolbox talks, and sensitive habitat clearance.
- 7.5.9 Additionally, as set out above, a suite of biodiversity and landscape planting and maintenance is proposed including: gapping of existing hedgerow, planting new sections of species rich hedgerow to reinstate historic field boundaries, native scrub with scattered tree planting, and orchard trees with an orchard meadow, area of seasonally wet meadow, wildflower meadow, and creation of bee banks.

- 7.5.10 The EAR assesses the potential impacts of the Proposed Development on the Humber Estuary Suite of designated Sites, South Cloister Covert Local Wildlife Site (LWS), priority habitats, birds, bats, badger, amphibians, reptiles, and other protected/notable species. The EAR includes information to inform a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA).
- 7.5.11 Due to the physical separation between the Site and Humber Estuary, no direct impacts are anticipated. Considering standard best practice mitigation measures are to be secured through a CEMP, there are no impact pathways by which the Proposed Development could impact non-mobile qualifying features or those features for which there is no suitable habitat within or immediately adjacent to the Site. The EAR concludes that the Site does not constitute functionally linked land to the Humber Estuary SPA or Ramsar site. The EAR also confirms that the Proposed Development does not have the potential to contribute to potentially significant adverse in-combination effects on any European site.
- 7.5.12 Non-breeding bird surveys were conducted for the consented Sweetbriar Solar Farm application and the survey area included the Site. It is noted that in the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) (Stages 1 and 2) produced by the Council for Sweetbriar Solar Farm, the Council concluded:
- “Given the very limited use of the site by Humber Estuary assemblage species in very small numbers on an infrequent basis, the site is not considered to be functionally linked land performing a role of any particular importance for features of the Humber Estuary SPSA or Ramsar site.”*
- 7.5.13 The HRA for Sweetbriar Solar Farm also concluded the proposal would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Humber Estuary SPA and Ramsar in combination with other plans or projects.
- 7.5.14 The EAR sets out that no impacts associated with the Proposed Development on the South Cloister Covert LWS are anticipated.
- 7.5.15 When considering the standard best practice mitigation measures, applied offsets, and the proposed mosaic of habitats, the EAR did not conclude any significant adverse impacts on protected species. Higher value boundary habitats including hedgerows and trees will be retained and protected.
- 7.5.16 In order to assess the biodiversity impacts associated with the Proposed Development the Defra Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain Metric Calculator was utilised. The calculation results show that the Proposed Development will result in a biodiversity net gain of +76.180% in Habitat Units, 49.14% in Hedgerow Units and 16% in Watercourse Units, well above the obligatory net gain percentage of +10%.
- 7.5.17 Based on the conclusions of the EAR, it is considered that the Proposed Development accords with Policies CS5 and CS16 of the Core Strategy, ‘Saved’ Local Plan policies LC1, LC5, LC6, and DS1, Policies 1 and 10 of the Planning for Renewable Energy Development SPD, and the requirements of the NPPF.

7.6 Arboriculture

- 7.6.1 An Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report and Method Statement accompanies this planning application.

- 7.6.2 The NPPF places a strong emphasis on the protection of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient of veteran trees) and emphasises the importance of retaining existing trees wherever possible due to their ecosystem services and important contribution to character.
- 7.6.3 Core Strategy Policy CS16: North Lincolnshire’s Landscape, Greenspace and Waterscape, emphasises the requirement for developments to protect existing trees and hedgerows wherever possible and appropriate. This stance is reflected in the Local Plan ‘Saved’ policies with Policy LC12: Protection of Trees, Woodland, and Hedgerows, setting out that proposals for all new development should ensure the protection of trees, woodland, and hedgerows wherever possible. The policy goes on to state: *“Landscaping and tree and hedgerow planting schemes will be required to company applications for new development where it is appropriate to the development and its setting.”*
- 7.6.4 There are no areas of woodland or ancient woodland within or adjacent to the Site, nor are any of the individual trees or hedgerows protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) or Conservation Areas.
- 7.6.5 The Site benefits from existing screening in the form of hedgerows with intermittent trees lining the northern and western field boundaries. Individual trees and groups of trees within the Site have been assessed and categorised as part of the Arboricultural Assessment, with a Tree Plan produced to identify the root protection areas (RPAs) of onsite trees.
- 7.6.6 An iterative design process has been implemented to ensure that the Proposed Development retains as many of the existing trees and hedgerows within the Site as possible, with buffers applied to onsite arboricultural features. No tree removal is required to facilitate the Proposed Development. For trees closest to the BESS compound, an alignment of root protection fencing shall be implemented as a protection measure for the duration of construction. It is considered this is not required around hedgerows as adequate spacing has been incorporated into the design.
- 7.6.7 Existing access tracks and existing field access points to the Site are being utilised in order to minimise impacts on hedgerows and trees. In addition, the project team has identified the opportunity to reinstate historic field boundaries within the Site and overall c.825m of species-rich native hedgerow would be planted as part of the landscape and biodiversity planting scheme.
- 7.6.8 It is considered by the Arboricultural Assessment that the Proposed Development would have a negligible impact upon the arboricultural value of the Site.
- 7.6.9 Based on the conclusions of the Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report, and with consideration of the proposed landscape and biodiversity mitigation and enhancements, it is considered that the Proposed Development accords with Core Strategy Policy CS16, ‘Saved’ Local Policy LC12, and the requirements of the NPPF.

7.7 Heritage and Archaeology

- 7.7.1 A Historic Environment Assessment (HEA) accompanies this planning application.
- 7.7.2 Section 16 of the NPPF is concerned with conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraph 202 recognises that heritage assets are *“an irreplaceable resource and should be*

conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.”

- 7.7.3 This national level protection is mirrored in local policy, notably within Core Strategy Policy CS6: Historic Environment, which sets out the Council will seek to protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment including the settings and characters of historic features, continuing to state that “*all new development must respect and enhance the local character and distinctiveness of the area*”. Policy CS5 also reinforces that new development should take into account existing built heritage from the earliest stages of design.
- 7.7.4 Additionally, ‘Saved’ Local Plan Policy HE8: Ancient Monuments, sets out that where proposals would result in an adverse effect on Scheduled Monuments they will not be permitted. ‘Saved’ Local Plan Policy HE9: Archaeological Evaluation, sets out that where proposals affect sites of known or suspected archaeological importance, an archaeological assessment will be required prior to the determination of a planning application.
- 7.7.5 Policy 4: Heritage Assets, of the Planning for Renewable Energy Development SPD outlines that developers should consider the impact on heritage and the historic environment both during and after construction, demonstrating that the objectives of the designation would not be compromised by the development, and that any significant adverse effects are clearly outweighed by the benefits of the development.
- 7.7.6 There are no designated heritage assets within the Site, with one within a 1km radius, and a number further afield within a 3km radius. The HEA notes that while the wider surrounding area has the potential to contribute to understanding and appreciating the heritage interest of these assets, the distance of separation and lack of intervisibility is such that the significance of these assets would not be affected by the Proposed Development.
- 7.7.7 There are two previously recorded non-designated heritage assets within the Site. Neither asset is within the footprint of the BESS and 400kV substation compounds. A further 13 non-designated assets have been identified within a 1km study area. A geophysical survey has been undertaken and did not indicate any probable archaeology. Further, a degree of modern disturbance has been observed within the Site, particularly associated with modern farming practice. The Site is considered to have a low potential for as yet unknown archaeology dating to the prehistoric, Roman, or medieval period to be present. Any archaeology onsite is likely to be post-medieval and of low to negligible value.
- 7.7.8 Archaeological observations associated with the adjacent consented Sweetbriar Solar Farm (Application Reference: PA/2022/443), comprising a geophysical survey and trenched evaluation did not identify any archaeologically significant evidence.
- 7.7.9 In accordance with paragraph 216 of the NPPF, the assessed effects should be balanced against the benefits of the Proposed Development, having regard to the low scale of harm and low significance of the assets. It would be proportionate to the archaeological potential of the Site, and the level of effect, for any necessary additional field surveys or mitigation to be secured as a condition of consent, in accordance with the NPPF at paragraph 218.
- 7.7.10 Based on the conclusions of the HEA, it is considered that the Proposed Development accords with policies CS5 and CS6 of the Core Strategy, Local Plan ‘Saved’ policies HE8 and HE9, Policy 4 of the Planning for Renewable Energy Development SPD, and the requirements of the NPPF.

7.8 Flood Risk and Drainage

- 7.8.1 A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Surface Water Drainage Strategy accompanies the planning application.
- 7.8.2 Section 14 of the NPPF details the overarching requirements relating to flood risk for any development. The key message is that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.
- 7.8.3 Core Strategy Policy CS19: Flood Risk, sets out that the Council will support proposals where they do not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere and are not situated within areas at current or future risk of flooding, reflecting the provisions of the NPPF.
- 7.8.4 ‘Saved’ Local Plan Policy DS14: Foul Sewage and Surface Water Drainage, sets out that the Council will require satisfactory provision to be made for surface water arising from new development. ‘Saved’ Local Plan Policy DS16: Flood Risk, further sets out that development will not be permitted within floodplains unless certain criteria are met.
- 7.8.5 Additionally, Policy 6: Flood Risk, of the Renewable Energy Development SPD outlines the requirement for a FRA to be submitted with all renewable energy proposals and their associated ancillary infrastructure in Flood Zone 1 where the site exceeds 1ha.
- 7.8.6 The Site lies primarily within Flood Zone 1 and therefore has a ‘low probability’ of flooding with a less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of fluvial flooding. Small areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3 are present within the southernmost extents of the Site associated with the Skitter Beck. Only the ecology and landscape planting and a drainage outfall will overlap with the flood zone extents.
- 7.8.7 The Environment Agency’s surface water flood map shows that the Skitter Beck has small sections of high to medium risk of surface water flooding along the Site’s southern boundary. There are also three bands of medium to high risk of surface water flooding aligned north to south across the Site following the local topography. These areas correlate with the topographic low points that are clearly visible in the topographic survey.
- 7.8.8 NPPF Paragraph 173 addresses the requirement for a sequential risk-based approach for areas known to be at risk, whether now or in the future, from any form of flooding. Paragraph 177 goes on to note that where a sequential test has been undertaken, and determined it is not possible for development to be located in areas with a lower risk of flooding, the exception test may need to be applied. BESS are considered ‘essential infrastructure’ and in line with the Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification set out at Annex 3 of the NPPF²³, there is no requirement to apply the Exception Test as the built development footprint is within Flood Zone 1.
- 7.8.9 A review of the Environment Agency’s Flood Risk Map for Planning²⁴ demonstrates that pockets of surface water flooding are extremely prevalent in the wider area and it is considered

²³ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change#table2>

²⁴ <https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk/map>

that no other land within a viable distance from the anticipated grid connection location would be sequentially preferable in relation to surface water flooding.

- 7.8.10 A careful approach to design has ensured that there will be no built development within the areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3 associated with Skitter Beck other than an underground drainage outfall to Skitter Beck which is considered compatible with the flood zones.
- 7.8.11 Earthworks (land grading) are proposed to facilitate the installation of the Proposed Development. This will result in the removal of the topographic depressions in the southern field that are at risk of surface water flooding. As illustrated by **Planning Figure 6: Proposed BESS Plan and Elevations**, battery units would also be raised with a 150mm stone / concrete platform. The provision of the proposed surface water drainage strategy, as set out in the FRA, will also prevent surface water run-off from pooling within the BESS compound.
- 7.8.12 The Proposed Development will result in an increase in impermeable area and, as such, a surface water drainage system is proposed to ensure that run-off is able to infiltrate onsite. The proposed SuDS for the Site include a combination of an attenuation basin located south of the main compounds with an outfall to the Skitter Beck watercourse, with flows being restricted to greenfield rates.
- 7.8.13 The system has sufficient attenuation for all events up to the 1 in 100-year event (including 40% allowance for climate change) and has also been designed to accommodate the volume of water that could be used during an emergency response as set out by the National Fire Chiefs Council in their Grid-Scale BESS Guidance²⁵. As well as this, an isolating void space located underneath the battery units would incorporate an impermeable liner preventing any potential infiltration into the ground. In the event of an emergency, automatic shut-off valves would close to ensure that any run-off water is contained onsite.
- 7.8.14 In conclusion, the Site Layout has been sequentially designed to ensure all built infrastructure has been situated within Flood Zone 1 and also outside areas of existing medium or high risk of surface water flooding as far as possible. The proposed mitigation and SuDS controls would provide a betterment and reduce the risk of surface water flooding, and the Proposed Development would not increase the rate of runoff leaving the space.
- 7.8.15 The FRA concludes that the Proposed Development should not be precluded on flood risk grounds and it is therefore considered that the Proposed Development accords with Core Strategy Policy CS19, 'Saved' Local Plan Policy DS14, Policy 6 of the Planning for Renewable Energy Development SPD, and the requirements of the NPPF.

7.9 Noise

- 7.9.1 A Noise Impact Assessment accompanies the planning application.
- 7.9.2 Section 15 of the NPPF is concerned with conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Paragraph 187 stipulates that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by “e) *preventing new and existing development from contributing to,*

²⁵ <https://nfcc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Grid-Scale-Battery-Energy-Storage-System-planning-Guidance-for-FRS.pdf>

being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability”.

- 7.9.3 Furthermore, paragraph 198 sets out that decisions should also ensure new development is appropriate for its location, taking into account the likely effects of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment and, in doing so, should “a) *mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life*”.
- 7.9.4 ‘Saved’ Local Plan Policy DS1: General requirements, reflects the NPPF’s protection of amenity and the natural environment, highlighting that: “*no unacceptable loss of amenity to neighbouring land uses should result in terms of noise, smell, fumes, dust or other nuisance, or through the effects of overlooking or overshadowing*”. ‘Saved’ Local Plan Policy DS11: Polluting Activities, similarly, establishes that development will only be permitted where, amongst other criteria, smell or noise does not pose a danger.
- 7.9.5 Policy 10: Cumulative Effects, of the Planning for Renewable Energy Development SPD sets out that developers should address the potential for cumulative noise impacts.
- 7.9.6 Potential noise impacts of the Proposed Development were considered at an early stage in the design of the scheme, with adjustments made to the proposed Site Layout to minimise impacts on nearby residential properties. It is proposed that noise emitted during the operational phase of the Proposed Development is mitigated with the implementation of 4m high acoustic fence around the inside of compound perimeter fencing to reduce the potential for any adverse impacts.
- 7.9.7 The Proposed Development has been modelled on a worst-case basis, with the assumption that all plant and equipment are operating at 100% power. The noise modelling identified that during the daytime, noise generated by the Proposed Development would increase noise levels by +2dB above the background sound level at Zulu Farm, the closest residential receptor to the BESS Compound. At night, noise generated by the Proposed Development would increase noise levels by +5dB above background sound levels at Zulu Farm. Zulu Farm is financially involved, and as such, the sensitivity of this receptor is low.
- 7.9.8 At the remaining receptors, predictions are below the level at which adverse impacts would occur during both daytime and night-time periods.
- 7.9.9 A cumulative noise assessment was carried out to assess the potential for in-combination effects of the Proposed Development with Sweetbriar Solar Farm. The Rating Levels from Sweetbriar Solar Farm are around 10dB below the Rating Levels from the Proposed Development, and overall result in a 1dB increase in the predicted noise level at one receptor (NSR4 - Northfield Farm). This increase is negligible, and predictions at NSR4 would remain below the background level during both daytime and night-time periods.
- 7.9.10 It is noted that Condition 19 of the Sweetbriar Solar Farm consent states:
“The total cumulative rating level of noise emitted from the installation shall not exceed 5 dB above the background noise level at any residential property. The assessment of rating level shall be as described in BS 4142:2014+A1:2019.”
- 7.9.11 As demonstrated by the Noise Impact Assessment, cumulative predictions from both Sweetbriar Solar Farm and the Proposed Development are below the limit set out in Condition

19 of the Solar Farm consent. As such the impact of noise due to the Proposed Development would be no more than already consented.

- 7.9.12 Based on the conclusions of the Noise Impact Assessment, it is considered that the Proposed Development accords with 'Saved' Local Plan policies DS1 and DS11, Policy 10 of the Planning for Renewable Energy Development SPD, and the requirements of the NPPF.

7.10 Transport

- 7.10.1 A Transport Statement and Traffic Management Plan (TS&TMP) accompanies this planning application.
- 7.10.2 Section 9 of the NPPF relates to the promotion of sustainable transport, setting out that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of development design, feeding into the design process to deliver well-designed solutions.
- 7.10.3 Paragraph 115 of the NPPF requires that, amongst other criterion, "*sustainable transport modes are prioritised taking account of the vision for the site, the type of development and its location*" and "*any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree through a vision-led approach*".
- 7.10.4 Paragraph 116 further states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe, following the implementation of appropriate mitigation.
- 7.10.5 'Saved' Local Plan Policy T1: Location of Development sets out that development proposals generating significant traffic volumes will only be permitted if they have good access to the Strategic Road Network, or other forms of access e.g. rail, water, and air. 'Saved' Local Plan Policy T2: Access to Development, outlines that all developments must demonstrate satisfactory access, with 'Saved' Local Plan Policy T15 setting out that criteria that must be met for the Council to undertake highway improvements. Where new highway infrastructure is proposed as an element of a development, the design of the highway should take into account the need to conserve historic buildings, the landscape, natural environment, and historic features. It should also consider the safety of movement of other road users.
- 7.10.6 Policy 13: Highways and Rights of Way of the Planning for Renewable Energy Development SPD, sets out that developers should consider access to proposed sites for renewable energy development from the earliest stages in putting together proposals.
- 7.10.7 The Site benefits from an existing private access route for Zulu Farm off Carr Lane which is proposed to be utilised for the maintenance of the Proposed Development during the operational phase. The existing track would be improved to provide a consistent 4m width and a new, connecting section of track would be formed just before the entrance to Zulu Farm, with the access route deviating through the field to the south of Zulu Farm to the north-east of the BESS Compound. An emergency access track taken from Cross Road / Thornton Lane to the south-west of the Site is proposed in accordance with National Fire Chief's Council guidelines for Grid Scale BESS.
- 7.10.8 Following the public consultation events held in March 2025, a temporary access route is proposed for the construction phase of the Proposed Development, primarily utilising the

existing Cote Pit Lane off Cross Road. Construction traffic will be directed off Carr Lane sooner, reducing the number of residential properties passed along the route. Where the existing track of Cote Pit Lane ends, a new temporary construction access is proposed diagonally across to the north-eastern corner of the BESS Compound. The temporary track would be removed at the end of the construction phase. The Cross Road / Cote Pit Lane junction would be temporarily altered to accommodate two-way movements by large delivery vehicles, with a further passing place provided along Cote Pit Lane in order to mitigate the potential for construction vehicles meeting or queuing in the highway.

- 7.10.9 Within the Site, internal compacted-stone tracks provide routes through the battery units and inverters and are able to accommodate delivery vehicles.
- 7.10.10 The construction of the Proposed Development is anticipated to occur over a period of approximately 12 – 18 months. Based on this indicative programme, forecasts of vehicle movements indicate approximately 6 – 9 HGV deliveries (between 12 and 18 two-way movements) per weekday during the most intense period of construction. Including an allowance for worker arrivals and departures, there would be an average of between 32 and 38 total movements to / from the Site per weekday throughout the construction period.
- 7.10.11 As set out by the TS&TMP, connecting routes between Carr Lane south and the national Primary Route Network are available via the A1077 east, A1077 north and B1211 / A18. All routes are suitable to physically accommodate large / heavy vehicles however, the A1077 east presents the most direct route from/to the Primary Route Network and the shortest route through the Ferry Ward Area Weight Zone; it is by far the most efficient route, having the fewest constraints and most limited amenity impacts. All construction vehicles will therefore be routed to Cote Pit Lane via Cross Road east, Carr Lane south and the A1077 east.
- 7.10.12 It is noted that once operational, the Site would attract very few trips, limited to maintenance visits made by operational vehicles, with no staff permanently based at the Site.
- 7.10.13 The TS&TMP concludes that associated construction traffic would be suitably accommodated by the proposed access, local road and surrounding highway network, and highlights that that there would be no material impact upon the normal operation, character, or safety of the local highway network.
- 7.10.14 As such, the TS&TMP concludes that there are no transportation or highways matters that preclude the granting of planning permission for the development as proposed. It is therefore considered that the Proposed Development is in accordance with 'Saved' Local Plan policies T1, T2, and T15, Policy 13 of the Planning for Renewable Energy Development SPD, and the requirements of the NPPF.

7.11 Soil and Agricultural Land Classification

- 7.11.1 An Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Survey accompanies the planning application.
- 7.11.2 Annex 2 of the NPPF provides a glossary of terms and defines Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land as "*land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification*".
- 7.11.3 National Policy directs developments towards areas of poorer quality agricultural land where this is available but clearly sets out that ALC grade should not be a predominating factor in the determination of the suitability of sites.

- 7.11.4 At Chapter 15 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment, Paragraph 187 of the NPPF, it is outlined that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
- “b) Recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.”*
- 7.11.5 Footnote 65 addresses BMV land and states that: *“Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality.”*
- 7.11.6 ‘Saved’ Local Plan Policy RD7: Agriculture, Forestry and Farm Diversification, sets out that proposals for farm diversification will be acceptable in principle provided that there is no adverse impact on high quality agricultural land.
- 7.11.7 Policy 5: Soil and Hydrology, of the Planning for Renewable Energy Development SPD sets out that developers should consider the effects of proposals on, and avoid harm to, soil, hydrology, groundwater, and water quality.
- 7.11.8 A site-specific agricultural land classification survey was undertaken for the Site, with the report identifying that the Site comprises c.2.1ha (10%) of Grade 2 (Very Good) land, c.10.9ha (53%) of Grade 3a (Good) land, and c.7.4ha (37%) of Grade 3b (Moderate) land. A sequential approach has been taken through the design process, with infrastructure sited within areas of Grade 3b land wherever possible, with the areas of Grade 2 and 3a land reserved for biodiversity enhancement and mitigation planting, as outlined in the Landscape Mitigation and Enhancement Plan accompanying the LVA, and therefore there would be limited impact on the soil within this part of the Site.
- 7.11.9 When considering agricultural land classification grades across the North Lincolnshire administrative area, according to provisional regional data the majority of the district is categorised as Grade 2 (c.44%) and Grade 3 (c.37%).
- 7.11.10 Given the extent of BMV land within the district there is a requirement that some agricultural land, likely a certain proportion being BMV, will need to be used, for the generation of electricity by renewable or low carbon means in order to make a positive contribution to reducing carbon emissions and a net zero future.
- 7.11.11 An appeal for a battery energy storage facility on land at off Chapel Lane, Great Barr, Walsall (Appeal Reference: APP/V4630/W/24/3347424) was allowed by the inspector and planning permission granted on the 13th of January 2025. In the appeal decision, the inspector assesses (amongst other things) the effect of the proposals on, and the potential loss of, best and most versatile agricultural land. The inspector notes that part of the appeal site would be occupied by the BESS and the rest for BNG, with no grazing or arable use. The inspector continues that the manner in which land is farmed is not subject to planning control and that even if planning permission were to be refused, there would be nothing that prevents the landowner from leaving the appeal site unused. The inspector comments that resting part of the site would have the benefit of improving the soil’s health/structure for when the land would revert to agriculture at the end of the 40-year life of the BESS. The inspector notes that the site is located within a substantial area of Grade 3 land. They continue that whilst 40 years is a long time, in the grand-scale of land-use change, the temporary loss of some 3.19ha from potential agricultural use cannot reasonably be regarded as “significant” either in terms of size or current

use. Given this conclusion, the inspector deemed it unnecessary to consider further whether it should have been necessary to show that areas of poorer quality were considered.

- 7.11.12 An appeal for a solar farm and battery energy storage system on land off Great Sike Road, Old Malton, Malton (Appeal Reference: 23/00046/MFULE) was allowed by the inspector and planning permission granted on the 25th of February 2025. The appeal site comprised 52.86ha of agricultural land with 56% considered BMV land. In the decision notice, the inspector noted that the loss of 29.5ha of BMV could not sensibly be described as anything other than negligible in the context of the Secretary of State's decision at Mallard Pass which termed the loss of 360ha of BMV land as having a negligible impact on cereal production.
- 7.11.13 It is considered that the use of minimal BMV land for a period of 40 years is mitigated by the fact that it would be temporary and that there is a large hectareage of BMV land in the district (some of which will need to be used to contribute to local and national aims to address climate change), with temporary reuse outweighed by the wider economic and environmental benefits of the Proposed Development, including the delivery of significant net gains for biodiversity during the operational phase. At the end of the Proposed Development's operational phase, the BESS and all associated infrastructure would be removed and the Site decommissioned and restored. It is therefore considered there will be no permanent loss of BMV land as a result of the Proposed Development, and any effects would temporary.
- 7.11.14 Based on the above, it is considered that the Proposed Development is in accordance with 'Saved' Local Plan Policy RD7, Policy 5 of the Planning for Renewable Energy Development SPD, and the requirements of the NPPF.

7.12 Overall Planning Balance

- 7.12.1 As set out within this Planning Statement, the application is accompanied by a range of technical assessments and it is acknowledged that the Proposed Development may result in some environmental impacts. This includes some landscape and visual effects on the immediate Site and surroundings, and temporary use of BMV land.
- 7.12.2 Whilst some impacts are anticipated of a development of this scale, in this instance these are limited and should be weighed against the benefits of the Proposed Development, which constitute material considerations.
- 7.12.3 In a recent Appeal for a Battery Energy Storage proposal at Lowlands Farm, Halesowen (Appeal Reference: APP/C4615/W/24/3341383) against Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, the inspector gave significant weight to the benefits of the proposal for energy security, flexibility, and the contribution to achieving net zero in the appeal decision. The inspector referenced that EN-1 states low carbon infrastructure is a critical national policy (CNP). A similar statement was made in the Appeal Decision for a Battery Energy Storage site at Whites Farm, Essex (Appeal Reference: APP/V1505/W/23/3332888) against Basildon Borough Council, with the inspector stating: *"Provision of battery energy storage is a Critical National Priority (CNP) as set out in NPS EN-1, and it is undisputed that the proposal falls within this category."*
- 7.12.4 On this basis, it is clear that the principle of the Proposed Development is supported by the NPPF and that material considerations weigh heavily in favour with significant weight being afforded to them.

- 7.12.5 As highlighted in Chapters 2 and 6, BESS are essential for energy security, flexibility, and the contribution to achieving net zero. Significant weight should be attributed to this, as previously highlighted in the appeal decisions referenced above.
- 7.12.6 Additional benefits include a +76.18% increase in habitat units, a +49.14% increase in hedgerow units, and a +16% increase in watercourse units, well above the obligatory net gain percentage of +10%.
- 7.12.7 The NPPF requires that development proposals that accord with an up-to-date Development Plan should be approved without delay; the policy assessment set out above demonstrates that the Proposed Development accords with all relevant policies of the Development Plan.
- 7.12.8 HELA SPD Policy PS1 states that the Council will take a positive approach to development in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development outlined in the NPPF and that applications in accordance with the Local Plan, when taken as a whole, will be approved without delay. The Proposed Development will help to deliver the de-carbonisation of the Grid by supporting the deployment of renewable energy technologies and ensuring Grid stability. It would also support the diversification of the existing farm enterprise, providing a guaranteed income to the landowner and also makes use of a Site with relatively low ecological value. Assessment against the remaining applicable policies of the Local Plan continues below.
- 7.12.9 'Saved' Policy DS21 and Core Strategy Policy CS18 are considered to be the most pertinent policies in relation to the Proposed Development. BESS are an essential service needed to support the roll out of renewables, offering a solution to several of the Grid's balancing issues. It is therefore considered that the support provided for renewable energy developments by policies DS21 and CS18 is translatable to BESS.
- 7.12.10 Thus, it is clear that: the benefits, and the weight that should be attributed to them, demonstrably outweigh any of the limited impacts and the Proposed Development is in accordance with the relevant Development Plan policies.

8 CONCLUSION

- 8.1.1 Lightrock Power Limited are applying for: *“The construction and installation of a Battery Energy Storage System, associated infrastructure, landscaping, fencing, access tracks, and biodiversity net gain planting.”*
- 8.1.2 There is a UK Climate Emergency and it is evident that the Council have a history of considering the need to address Climate Change. Recent appeal decisions clearly evidence the significant weight that should be attributed to the Proposed Development.
- 8.1.3 The Proposed Development accords with the NPPF and the local Development Plan. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that: *“Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”*. For decision-taking this means: *“c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.”*
- 8.1.4 It is therefore considered that planning permission should be granted.

APPENDIX 1: RELEVANT NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK POLICIES

North Lincolnshire Council Core Strategy

Table 1 Relevant policies of the North Lincolnshire Council Core Strategy (Adopted 2011)

Policy Number	Policy Title	Planning Policy Text
CS1	Spatial Strategy For North Lincolnshire	<p><i>“The spatial vision and the future development requirements will be delivered through the spatial strategy for North Lincolnshire as outlined below and on the key diagram.</i></p> <p><i>a) The spatial strategy will focus on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Delivering an urban renaissance in Scunthorpe and supporting its role as a major sub-a) regional town.</i> <i>• Scunthorpe will be the focus for the majority of new development and growth, including housing, employment, retail, sustainable transport links, and higher order services and facilities to serve North Lincolnshire.</i> <i>• High quality well designed new housing will be provided on a range of previously developed sites within the urban area followed by a greenfield urban extension with a focus on areas to the west of the built up area. During the plan period Scunthorpe should contribute around 9,892 new dwellings.</i> <i>• Opportunities for economic development will be provided within existing established employment locations as well as on additional sites. Focus will be on the town centre and areas to the north of the Scunthorpe urban area around the Normanby Enterprise Park. A range of sites and premises will be required to meet business needs and to meet the overall aim of diversifying the economy. A high quality business park will be developed in combination with the Lincolnshire Lakes development. During the plan period around 71 hectares of employment land should be developed. It will be important all existing and future employment sites are accessible by sustainable modes of transport from existing and proposed residential areas.</i> <i>• The town centre will be the main focus of new retail, leisure, commercial office and cultural developments in the area. As part of the urban renaissance programme, significant regeneration will take place within the town centre to provide new retail opportunities, a new market hall, cultural and leisure facilities as well as enhancements to the public realm and urban fabric. The use of high quality and innovative design will be supported in the town centre. Mixed use development will be encouraged in the town centre.</i> <i>• Major flagship urban renaissance projects will be delivered to enhance the town and its image. The largest of these is the Lincolnshire Lakes, which will be located to the west of the town creating a major new sustainable waterside setting that will</i>

soften the edge and provide an impressive gateway to the town and place it on a new economic trajectory. A knowledge campus will be created that develops the town's existing Further Education offer by bringing together local educational institutions to broaden the opportunities and encourage local people to access higher education. Also a major new state of the art leisure and sports facility will be provided in the form of The Pods that will deliver sports, education and training. Work is also underway to create a new multi-use venue to host live performances, events and conferencing. This development, known as The Baths Hall and regeneration of Doncaster Road, will help to create a quality gateway into the town.

- b) *Supporting the Market Towns of Barton upon Humber, Brigg, Crowle, Epworth, Kirton inb) Lindsey and Winterton as thriving places to live, work and visit, and as important service centres serving the needs of local communities across North Lincolnshire.*
- North Lincolnshire's Market Towns will continue to provide important services for the area's rural communities and support the higher level services provided by Scunthorpe. Levels of growth and development will be more limited reflecting their position in the settlement hierarchy. All growth will take account of existing infrastructure, environmental constraints and ensure that the distinctive character of the town is protected.*
 - An appropriate level and range of new housing development will be provided to support the market towns as sustainable communities. During the plan period, the market towns will provide over 2,171 new dwellings.*
 - Small and medium scale employment opportunities will be encouraged to meet the need to provide local jobs. The retention of existing local employment sites will be supported and where appropriate additional land will be allocated. Around 10 hectares of employment land will be provided in the market towns, with the majority being focussed in Barton upon Humber and Brigg.*
 - The existing market town will be supported as key locations for shopping and services. Over the plan period limited levels of new retail development will be permitted and should be located within the town centres. The level of development will be dependent on local need and should be in keeping with the historic nature of these centres.*
 - Transport links between the market towns and their surrounding settlements will • be improved by working with public transport providers to ensure that services are convenient and accessible.*
 - The Rural Renaissance programme will be supported in Crowle to improve the fabric of • the town centre, market place and to develop the range of services and employment opportunities available.*
- c) *Supporting thriving rural communities and a vibrant countryside through the protection and enhancement of local services, creating opportunities for rural economic diversification and the promotion of tourism.*
- Rural settlements will be supported as thriving sustainable communities, with a strong focus on retaining and enhancing*

		<p><i>existing local services to meet local needs. Development will be limited and should take into account levels of local service provision, infrastructure capacity and accessibility. Any development that takes place should be in keeping with the character and nature of the settlement.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>In the countryside, support will be given to development that promotes rural economic diversification and small-scale employment opportunities, particularly on previously used land or in existing rural buildings. Tourism development will also be supported, in particular the development of green tourism making the most of the area's important natural and built environments.</i> <p><i>d) Supporting the development of key strategic employment sites at the South Humber Bank, Humberside Airport and Sandtoft Airfield."</i></p>
CS2	Delivering More Sustainable Development	<p><i>"In supporting the delivery of the spatial strategy set out in policy CS1, as well as determining how future development needs will be met in North Lincolnshire, a sequential approach will be adopted. Development should be focused on:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Previously developed land and buildings within the Scunthorpe urban area, followed by other suitable infill opportunities within the town, then by appropriate greenfield urban extensions</i> <i>Previously developed land and buildings within the defined development limits of North Lincolnshire's Market Towns, followed by other suitable infill opportunities then appropriate small scale greenfield extensions to meet identified local needs</i> <i>Small scale developments within the defined development limits of rural settlements to meet identified local needs.</i> <p><i>Any development that takes place outside the defined development limits of settlements or in rural settlements in the countryside will be restricted. Only development which is essential to the functioning of the countryside will be allowed to take place. This might include uses such as that related to agriculture, forestry or other uses which require a countryside location or which will contribute to the sustainable development of the tourist industry.</i></p> <p><i>A 'sequential approach' will also be applied to ensure that development is, where possible, directed to those areas that have the lowest probability of flooding, taking account the vulnerability of the type of development proposed, its contribution to creating sustainable communities and achieving the sustainable development objectives of the plan. Where development does take place in the flood plain, mitigation measures should be applied to ensure that the development is safe.</i></p> <p><i>All future development in North Lincolnshire will be required to contribute towards achieving sustainable development. Proposals should comply with the overall spatial strategy together with the following sustainable development principles:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Be located to minimise the need to travel and to encourage any journeys that remain necessary to be possible by walking, cycling and public transport. It should be compliant with public transport accessibility criteria as set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy</i> <p><i>Be located where it can make the best use of existing transport infrastructure and capacity, as well as taking account of capacity constraints and deliverable transport improvements particularly in relation to junctions on the Strategic Road Network</i></p>

- *Where large freight movements are involved the use of rail and water transport should be maximised*
- *Contribute towards to the creation of locally distinctive, sustainable, inclusive, healthy and vibrant communities*
- *Contribute to achieving sustainable economic development to support a competitive business and industrial sector*
- *Ensure that everyone has access to health, education, jobs, shops, leisure and other community and cultural facilities that they need for their daily lives*
- *Ensure the appropriate provision of services, facilities and infrastructure to meet the needs of the development, but where appropriate it is to be recognised that a phased approach may not be required on small scale development proposals.*
- *To be constructed and operated using a minimum amount of non-renewable resources including increasing the use of renewable energy in construction and operation*
- *Take account of local environmental capacity and to improve air, water and soil quality and minimise the risk and hazards associated with flooding, and*
- *Be designed to a high standard, consistent with policy CS5, and use sustainable construction and design techniques.*

All change will be managed in an environmentally sustainable way by avoiding/minimising or mitigating development pressure on the area's natural and built environment, its existing utilities and associated infrastructure and areas at risk of flooding. Environmental impacts to or from development that cannot be avoided should be adequately mitigated for it to be acceptable."

CS3

Development Limits

"Development limits will be applied to the Scunthorpe urban area, the Market Towns and Rural Settlements. They will not be applied to rural settlements in the countryside.

In applying development limits the following considerations will be taken into account:

- *Existing development patterns - the development limit will be drawn around the main built up area of the settlement. Scattered, sporadic or dispersed development or buildings separated from the main body of the settlement by areas of undeveloped land, roads or industrial areas will not be included. Where possible, limits should follow clearly defined features or constraints such as roads.*
- *Capacity - the ability of the settlement to accommodate future development based on existing and proposed infrastructure, on its access to facilities and services and levels of public transport. This also includes the availability of previously developed land.*
- *Existing planning consents/development - land with planning consent for residential development or community facilities where development has been implemented.*
- *Character - the limit will be drawn to reflect the need to protect and enhance settlement character. This means protecting areas of open space or land with the characteristics of open countryside within and adjacent to settlements by not including them within development limits. Large rear gardens or*

		<p><i>paddocks stretching well out the villages built form will also be excluded.</i></p> <p><i>Development outside these defined boundaries will be restricted to that which is essential to the functioning of the countryside. This will include uses such as that related to agriculture, forestry or other uses which require a countryside location or that which will contribute to the sustainable development of the tourist industry.</i></p> <p><i>The extent of the development limits will be defined in the Housing & Employment Land Allocations Development Plan Documents and shown on the accompanying Proposals Map and settlement insets.”</i></p>
CS5	Delivering Quality Design In North Lincolnshire	<p><i>“All new development in North Lincolnshire should be well designed and appropriate for their context. It should contribute to creating a sense of place. The council will encourage contemporary design, provided that it is appropriate for its location and is informed by its surrounding context.</i></p> <p><i>Design which is inappropriate to the local area or fails to maximise opportunities for improving the character and quality of the area will not be acceptable.</i></p> <p><i>New development in North Lincolnshire should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Contribute towards creating a positive and strong identity for North Lincolnshire by enhancing and promoting the image of the area through the creation of high quality townscapes and streetscapes.</i> <i>• Ensure it takes account of the existing built heritage from the earliest stages in the design process, in particular terms of scale, density, layout and access.</i> <i>• Incorporate the principles of sustainable development throughout the whole design process. This will include site layout, minimising energy consumption, maximising use of on-site renewable forms of energy whilst mitigating against the impacts of climate change; for instance flood risk.</i> <i>• Create safe and secure environments, which reduce the opportunities for crime and increase the sense of security for local residents through the use of Secured by Design guidance.</i> <i>• Consider the relationship between any buildings and the spaces around them, and how they interact with each other as well as the surrounding area. The function of buildings should also be considered in terms of its appropriateness for the context in which it is located.</i> <i>• Create attractive, accessible and easily distinguished public and private spaces that complement the built form.</i> <i>• Support sustainable living and ensure that a mix of uses, which complement one another are incorporated.</i> <i>• Provide flexibility in that new and existing buildings and spaces are able to respond to future social, technological, environmental and economic needs.</i> <i>• Be easily accessible to all users via recognisable routes, interchanges and landmarks that are suitably connected to public transport links, community facilities and services and individual communities and neighbourhoods in North Lincolnshire. Buildings and spaces should be accessible by all sections of the community, and ensure that the principles of inclusive design are reflected.</i>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate appropriate landscaping and planting which enhances biodiversity or geological features whilst contributing to the creation of a network of linked greenspaces across the area. Tree planting and landscaping schemes can also assist in minimising the impacts of carbon emissions upon the environment. • Integrate car parking provision within the existing public realm and other pedestrian and cycle routes.”
CS6	Historic Environment	<p>“The council will promote the effective management of North Lincolnshire’s historic assets through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding the nationally significant medieval landscapes of the Isle of Axholme (notably the open strip fields and turbaries) and supporting initiatives which seek to realise the potential of these areas as a tourist, educational and environmental resource. • Preserving and enhancing the rich archaeological heritage of North Lincolnshire • Ensuring that development within Epworth (including schemes needed to exploit the economic potential of the Wesleys or manage visitors) safeguards and, where possible, improves the setting of buildings associated with its Methodist heritage. • Ensuring that development within North Lincolnshire’s Market Towns safeguards their distinctive character and landscape setting, especially Barton upon Humber, Crowle and Epworth. <p>The council will seek to protect, conserve and enhance North Lincolnshire’s historic environment, as well as the character and setting of areas of acknowledged importance including historic buildings, conservation areas, listed buildings (both statutory and locally listed), registered parks and gardens, scheduled ancient monuments and archaeological remains.</p> <p>All new development must respect and enhance the local character and distinctiveness of the area in which it would be situated, particularly in areas with high heritage value.</p> <p>Development proposals should provide archaeological assessments where appropriate.”</p>
CS11	Provision And Distribution Of Employment Land	<p>“The council will support the continued expansion and improvement of North Lincolnshire’s economy in order to create a step change in the area’s role regionally and nationally. This will be achieved through the identification and allocation in the Housing and Employment Land Allocations DPD of a range of appropriate sites for employment and economic uses that will meet the requirement for an additional 40 hectares of employment land between 2006 and 2021 as identified within the Regional Spatial Strategy. This land will accommodate traditional land use (use classes B1, B2 & B8) as well as key priority growth sectors.</p> <p>Strategic employment sites will be identified in the following broad locations:</p> <p>Scunthorpe – 71 Hectares</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To support the renaissance of Scunthorpe around 71 hectares will be identified and allocated. Principle locations will be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scunthorpe North – B1, B2 and B8 uses • Town Centre – B1 and town centre uses • Scunthorpe West – B1- High quality business park – Lincolnshire Lakes.

		<p><i>Market Towns – 10 Hectares</i></p> <p>2. <i>To support North Lincolnshire’s market towns as key hubs of the rural economy.</i></p> <p><i>Humberside Airport – 20 Hectares</i></p> <p>3. <i>To support the key role of the airport in delivering economic growth both locally and regionally, around 20 hectares will be reserved for economic activities with airport links.</i></p> <p><i>Sandtoft Business Park – 58.5 Hectares</i></p> <p>4. <i>To support the growing logistics industry in North Lincolnshire and to take advantage of the connections provided by the airports of Humberside and Doncaster Robin Hood, and the South Humber Bank ports, around 59 hectares will be allocated for a logistics and distribution park. The development of this strategic location will be subject to satisfactory access arrangements being put in place.</i></p> <p><i>General Provisions</i></p> <p><i>To support development elsewhere within North Lincolnshire that meet local employment needs and maximises other special locations.</i></p> <p><i>In considering all development proposals for employment purposes in North Lincolnshire, regard should be given to making all locations accessible by range of transport modes in particular by public transport, cycling and walking. Accordingly, travel plans will be required setting out how employment locations will be linked to settlements in the area.</i></p> <p><i>Rural Economy</i></p> <p><i>To deliver a thriving rural economy by supporting development or activities that assist in rural regeneration and that strengthen or diversify rural businesses.”</i></p>
CS16	North Lincolnshire’s Landscape, Greenspace and Waterscape	<p><i>“The council will protect, enhance and support a diverse and multi-functional network of landscape, greenspace and waterscape through:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Identifying in supporting documents within or evidencing the Local Development Framework, a network of strategically and locally important landscape, greenspace and waterscape areas. Development on or adjacent to these areas will not be permitted where it would result in unacceptable conflict with the function(s) or characteristic of that area.</i> 2. <i>Requiring development proposals to improve the quality and quantity of accessible landscape, greenspace and waterscape, where appropriate.</i> 3. <i>Requiring development proposals to address local deficiencies in accessible landscape, waterscape and greenspace where appropriate.</i> 4. <i>Requiring the protection of trees, hedgerows and historic landscape to be specified where appropriate.</i> <p><i>The creation and maintenance of the network of landscape, green space and waterscapes will be secured by a range of measures, including protecting open space, creating new open spaces as part of new development, and by using developer contributions to create, improve and maintain green infrastructure assets where appropriate.”</i></p>
CS17	Biodiversity	<p><i>“The council will promote effective stewardship of North Lincolnshire’s wildlife through:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Safeguarding national and international protected sites for nature conservation from inappropriate development.</i>

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. <i>Appropriate consideration being given to European and nationally important habitats and species.</i> 3. <i>Maintaining and promoting a North Lincolnshire network of local wildlife sites and corridors, links and stepping stones between areas of natural green space.</i> 4. <i>Ensuring development retains, protects and enhances features of biological and geological interest and provides for the appropriate management of these features.</i> 5. <i>Ensuring development seeks to produce a net gain in biodiversity by designing in wildlife, and ensuring any unavoidable impacts are appropriately mitigated for.</i> 6. <i>Supporting wildlife enhancements that contribute to the habitat restoration targets set out in the North Lincolnshire's Nature Map and in national, regional and local biodiversity action plans.</i> 7. <i>Improving access to and education/interpretation of biodiversity sites for tourism and the local population, providing their ecological integrity is not harmed."</i>
CS18	Sustainable Resource And Climate Change	<p><i>"The council will actively promote development that utilises natural resources as efficiently and sustainably as possible. This will include:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Meeting high water efficiency standards, and incorporating new technologies to recycle and conserve water resources.</i> 2. <i>Requiring the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) where practicable.</i> 3. <i>Supporting the necessary improvement of flood defences and surface water infrastructure required against the actions of climate change, and preventing development in high flood risk areas wherever practicable and possible.</i> 4. <i>Meeting required national reductions of predicted CO2 emissions by at least 34% in 2020 and 80% in 2050 by applying the following measures on development proposals. Requiring all industrial and commercial premises greater than 1000 square metres to provide 20% of their expected energy demand from on site renewable energy until the code for such buildings is applied nationally. Where developers consider these Codes and targets cannot be met on the basis of viability they will be required to provide proof through open book discussions with the council at the planning application stage.</i> 5. <i>Ensuring building design reduces energy consumption by appropriate methods such as high standards of insulation, avoiding development in areas subject to significant effects from shadow, wind and frost, using natural lighting and ventilation, capturing the sun's heat, where appropriate.</i> 6. <i>Supporting development that minimises the consumption and extraction of minerals by making the greatest possible reuse or recycling of materials in new construction, and by making best use of existing buildings and infrastructure.</i> 7. <i>Supporting development that seeks to minimise waste and facilitates recycling and using waste for energy where appropriate.</i> 8. <i>Ensuring that development and land use in areas close to the Humber Estuary and rivers responds appropriately to the character of the area, in the interests of preserving and making best use of limited resources.</i> 9. <i>Supporting development that will help to reduce the need to travel for people using that development.</i>

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. <i>Ensuring development and land use helps to protect people and the environment from unsafe, unhealthy and polluted environments, by protecting and improving the quality of the air, land and water.</i> 11. <i>Supporting renewable sources of energy in appropriate locations, where possible, and ensuring that development maximises the use of combined heat and power, particularly at the South Humber Bank employment site and where energy demands for more than 2MW are required for development.</i> 12. <i>Supporting new technology and development for carbon capture and the best available clean and efficient energy technology, particularly in relation to the heavy industrial users in North Lincolnshire, to help reduce CO2 emissions.</i> 13. <i>Promote the use of a greenspace strategy and a green infrastructure plan, where applicable, which could help reduce the effects of climate change.”</i>
CS19	Flood Risk	<p><i>“The council will support development proposals that avoid areas of current or future flood risk, and which do not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. This will involve a risk based sequential approach to determine the suitability of land for development that uses the principle of locating development, where possible, on land that has a lower flood risk, and relates land use to its vulnerability to flood. Development in areas of high flood risk will only be permitted where it meets the following prerequisites:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>It can be demonstrated that the development provides wider sustainability benefits to the community and the area that outweigh flood risk.</i> 2. <i>The development should be on previously used land. If not, there must be no reasonable alternative developable sites on previously developed land.</i> 3. <i>A flood risk assessment has demonstrated that the development will be safe, without increasing flood risk elsewhere by integrating water management methods into development.</i> <p><i>Development within the Lincolnshire Lakes area will comply with the flood management principals set out in the Western Scunthorpe Urban Extension Exception Test Strategy. Any further flood management proposals will have to be agreed by both the council and the Environment Agency during the process of the Lincolnshire Lakes Area Action Plan. Development proposals in flood risk areas which come forward in the remainder of North Lincolnshire shall be guided by the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire. This will ensure that proposals include site specific flood risk assessments which take into account strategic flood management objectives and properly apply the Sequential and, where necessary, Exception Tests.</i></p> <p><i>In addition development will be required, wherever practicable, to incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) to manage surface water drainage. The Council will also seek to reduce the increase in flood risk due to climate change through measures to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.”</i></p>

North Lincolnshire Housing and Employment Land Allocations Development Plan Document

Table 2 Relevant policies of the Housing and Employment Land Allocations DPD (Adopted 2016)

Policy Number	Policy Title	Planning Policy Text
PS1	Presumption in favour of sustainable development	<p><i>“When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.</i></p> <p><i>Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.</i></p> <p><i>Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or</i> <i>• Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.”</i>

Saved Policies of the 2003 North Lincolnshire Local Plan

Table 3 Relevant saved policies of the 2003 North Lincolnshire Local Plan (Updated October 2024)

Policy Number	Policy Title	Planning Policy Text
RD2	Development in the Open Countryside	<p><i>“Development in the open countryside will be strictly controlled. Planning permission will only be granted for development which is:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i) essential to the efficient operation of agriculture or forestry;</i> <i>ii) employment related development appropriate to the open countryside;</i> <i>iii) affordable housing to meet a proven local need;</i> <i>iv) essential for the provision of outdoor sport, countryside recreation, or local community facilities;</i> <i>v) for the re-use and adaptation of existing rural buildings;</i> <i>vi) for diversification of an established agricultural business;</i> <i>vii) for the replacement, alteration or extension of an existing dwelling;</i> <i>viii) essential for the provision of an appropriate level of roadside services or the provision of utility services.</i> <p><i>Provided that:</i></p>

		<p>a) <i>the open countryside is the only appropriate location and development cannot reasonably be accommodated within defined development boundaries;</i></p> <p>b) <i>the proposed development accords with the specific requirements set out in the relevant policies of this chapter and elsewhere in this Local Plan;</i></p> <p>c) <i>the development would not be detrimental to the character or appearance of the open countryside or a nearby settlement in terms of siting, scale, massing, design and use of materials; and</i></p> <p>d) <i>the development would not be detrimental to residential amenity or highway safety; and</i></p> <p>e) <i>account is taken of whether the site is capable of being served by public transport; and</i></p> <p>f) <i>the development is sited to make the best use of existing and new landscaping.”</i></p>
RD7	Agriculture, Forestry and Farm Diversification	<p><i>“Proposals for agriculture, forestry and farm diversification will be acceptable in principle provided that:</i></p> <p>i) <i>the proposal does not conflict with the operational requirements of the agricultural or forestry enterprise;</i></p> <p>ii) <i>there is no adverse impact on high quality agricultural land;</i></p> <p>iii) <i>the proposal should, wherever possible, re-use existing farm buildings, or if new building is necessary, should be sited in, or adjacent to, an existing group of buildings and be of a design, scale and construction appropriate to its surroundings; and</i></p> <p>iv) <i>the likely level of traffic generated by the proposal is acceptable taking account of the suitability of existing access and approach roads; and</i></p> <p>v) <i>any parking associated with the proposal would not be visually intrusive.”</i></p>
T1	Location of Development	<p><i>“Development proposals, which generate a significant volume of traffic movement, will be permitted provided that they are located:</i></p> <p>i) <i>in the urban area of Scunthorpe and Bottesford, Barton upon Humber, Brigg, and the areas identified for development at the South Humber Bank and Humberside International Airport; and</i></p> <p>ii) <i>where there is good access to rail, water and air transport, or to the North Lincolnshire Strategic Road Network; and</i></p> <p>iii) <i>where there is good foot, cycle and public transport provision or where there are opportunities for foot, cycle and public transport to be provided.”</i></p>
T2	Access to Development	<p><i>“All development must be provided with a satisfactory access. In larger developments it should be served adequately by:</i></p> <p>i) <i>being readily accessible by a choice of transport modes; and</i></p> <p>ii) <i>existing public transport services and infrastructure; or</i></p> <p>iii) <i>additions or extensions to such services linked directly to the development; and</i></p> <p>iv) <i>the existing highway network.”</i></p>
T15	Highway Improvements and New	<p><i>“The Council will only undertake highway improvements and construct new highways where they:</i></p> <p>i) <i>calm traffic;</i></p>

	Highway Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii) improve road safety; iii) relieve the impact of traffic on local communities, environmentally sensitive areas or designated sites; iv) optimise the ease of movement for sustainable modes of travel and the mobility impaired; v) assist public transport; vi) improve access to employment areas; vii) provide access to land allocated for agreed development; or viii) form part of, or directly access, the North Lincolnshire Strategic Road Network. <p>Where new highway infrastructure is being developed, or is included as an element of a development proposal, the design of the highway should take into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the optimum ease and safety of movement for public transport, pedestrians, cyclists and those with a mobility handicap; and b) the need to conserve important architectural and historic buildings and areas, landscape, the natural environment and archaeological features.”
T18	Traffic Management	<p>“Traffic management measures (such as accident reduction schemes, speed reduction schemes and traffic regulation orders) will be introduced on the road network so as to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) minimise the danger and nuisance caused by through traffic in residential and other environmentally sensitive areas; and/or ii) give priority to selected types of transport, in particular buses, cyclists and pedestrians; and/or iii) concentrate through traffic onto the most suitable roads; and/or iv) minimise the problems caused by parking conflicts.”
LC1	Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar Sites	<p>“Proposals for development which may affect an SPA, a proposed SPA, a SAC or candidate SAC will be assessed according to their implications for the site’s conservation objectives.</p> <p>Proposals not directly connected with, or necessary for, the site, and which are likely to have a significant effect on the site (either individually or in combination with other proposals), will not be permitted unless it can be conclusively demonstrated that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) there is no alternative solution; and ii) there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the development. <p>Where the site hosts a priority natural habitat type or a priority species, proposals will not be permitted unless it can be conclusively demonstrated that it is necessary for reasons of human health or public safety, or for consequences of primary importance for nature conservation.</p> <p>Where such a development does proceed, the use of conditions or planning obligations to secure all compensatory measures necessary to comply with Article 3 of the EEC Habitats and Species Directive will be considered.”</p>
LC5	Species Protection	<p>“Planning permission will not be granted for development or land use changes which would have an adverse impact on badgers or species protected by Schedules 1, 5 or 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Where development is permitted that may have an effect on those species, conditions or the use of planning agreements will be considered to:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) facilitate the survival of individual members of the species; and ii) disturbance to a minimum; and iii) provide adequate alternative habitats to sustain at least the current levels of population.”
LC6	Habitat Creation	<p>“Provision will be made for the creation of nature reserves and new wildlife habitats both in rural and urban areas. Where appropriate, in granting planning permission, the creation of such areas will be required for the following types of development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) in association with the reclamation of former mineral workings and waste disposal sites; ii) in association with schemes for derelict land clearance; iii) on land which is no longer required for long term agricultural use. <p>Particular emphasis will be placed on the creation of habitats such as wet and dry heathland, wet woodland and reedbed in keeping with local and national biodiversity targets and provision of habitat for protected species.”</p>
LC7	Landscape Protection	<p>“Where development is permitted within rural settlements or within the open countryside, special attention will be given to the protection of the scenic quality and distinctive local character of the landscape. Development which does not respect the character of the local landscape will not be permitted.”</p>
LC12	Protection of Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows	<p>“Proposals for all new development will, wherever possible ensure the retention of trees, woodland and hedgerows. Particular regard will be given to the protection of these features within the setting of settlements, the protection of ancient woodlands and historic hedgerows and the amenity value of trees within built up areas. Tree preservation orders will be made where trees which contribute to local amenity or local landscape character are at risk. Landscaping and tree and hedgerow planting schemes will be required to accompany applications for new development where it is appropriate to the development and its setting.”</p>
HE8	Ancient Monuments	<p>“Development proposals which would result in an adverse effect on Scheduled Ancient Monuments and other nationally important monuments, or their settings, will not be permitted.”</p>
HE9	Archaeological Evaluation	<p>“Where development proposals affect sites of known or suspected archaeological importance, an archaeological assessment to be submitted prior to the determination of a planning application will be required. Planning permission will not be granted without adequate assessment of the nature, extent and significance of the remains present and the degree to which the proposed development is likely to affect them.</p> <p>Sites of known archaeological importance will be protected. When development affecting such sites is acceptable in principle, mitigation of damage must be ensured and the preservation of the remains in situ is a preferred solution. When in situ preservation is not justified, the developer will be required to make adequate provision for excavation and recording before and during development.”</p>
DS1	General Requirements	<p>“A high standard of design is expected in all developments in both built-up areas and the countryside and proposals for poorly designed development will be refused. All proposals will be considered against the criteria set out below:</p> <p>Quality of Design</p>

- i) *The design and external appearance of the proposal should reflect or enhance the character, appearance and setting of the immediate area; and*
- ii) *the design and layout should respect and where possible retain and/or enhance the existing landform of the site.*

Amenity

- iii) *No unacceptable loss of amenity to neighbouring land uses should result in terms of noise, smell, fumes, dust or other nuisance, or through the effects of overlooking or overshadowing;*
- iv) *and amenity open space in the area should be retained, wherever possible; and*
- v) *no pollution of water, air or land should result which poses a danger or creates detrimental environmental conditions.*

Where appropriate, conditions will be imposed requiring the provision of landscaping to enhance new development.

Conservation

- vi) *There should not be an adverse effect on features of acknowledged importance, on or surrounding, the site, including species of plants and animals of nature conservation value (particularly species protected by Schedules 1, 5 and 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981), Scheduled Ancient Monuments, archaeological remains, listed buildings and Conservation Areas or trees and woodland covered by Tree Preservation Orders; and*
- vii) *the development must ensure the retention of those existing site features that make an important contribution to the character or amenity of the site or the surrounding area; and*
- viii) *development proposals should include the results of archaeological assessment, where appropriate, and adequate measures to ensure that there would be no unacceptable impacts on archaeological remains. Conditions will be imposed to secure suitable mitigation at the appropriate time in the development process.*

Resources

- ix) *There should be no conflict with an allocated or approved land-use proposal in the locality nor should the reasonable potential for development of a neighbouring site be prejudiced; and*
- x) *the location and design of developments on the urban fringe (sites adjoining settlement development limits) should take into account the need to minimise the impact of the development on adjoining agricultural land or other countryside interests; and*
- xi) *measures to conserve energy will be expected in:*
 - a) *the design, orientation and layout of buildings; and*
 - b) *the location of development; and*
 - c) *improvements to the transport network and in the management of traffic.*

Utilities and Services

- xii) *There should be no reliance on public finances being available to provide infrastructure and services; and*

		<p>xiii) <i>suitable on-site drainage should be provided and where there are off-site drainage problems the developer will be expected to overcome them.</i></p>
DS11	Polluting Activities	<p><i>“Planning permission for development, including extensions to existing premises and changes of use, will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the levels of potentially polluting emissions, including effluent, leachates, smoke, fumes, gases, dust, steam, smell or noise do not pose a danger by way of toxic release; result in land contamination; pose a threat to current and future surface or underground water resources; or create adverse environmental conditions likely to affect nearby developments and adjacent areas.”</i></p>
DS12	Light Pollution	<p><i>“Planning applications which involve light generating development including floodlighting will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there would be no adverse impact on local amenities.”</i></p>
DS14	Foul Sewage and Surface Water Drainage	<p><i>“The Council will require satisfactory provision to be made for the disposal of foul and surface water from new development, either by agreeing details before planning permission is granted, or by imposing conditions on a planning permission or completing planning agreements to achieve the same outcome.”</i></p>
DS16	Flood Risk	<p><i>“Development will not be permitted within floodplains where it would:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i) increase the number of people or buildings at risk; or</i> <i>ii) impede the flow of floodwater; or</i> <i>iii) impede access for the future maintenance of watercourses; or</i> <i>iv) reduce the storage capacity of the floodplain; or</i> <i>v) increase the risk of flooding elsewhere; or</i> <i>vi) undermine the integrity of existing flood defences</i> <p><i>unless adequate protection or mitigation measures are undertaken.”</i></p>
DS21	Renewable Energy	<p><i>“Proposals for the generation of energy from renewable resources will be permitted provided that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i) any detrimental effect on features and interests of acknowledged importance, including local character and amenity, is outweighed by environmental benefits; and</i> <i>ii) proposals include details of associated developments including access roads and other ancillary buildings and their likely impact upon the environment.</i> <p><i>Where appropriate, conditions will be imposed requiring the restoration of the site to its original condition or the implementation of an agreed scheme of after-use and restoration.”</i></p>

Planning for Renewable Energy Development Supplementary Planning Document

Table 4 Relevant policies of the Planning for Renewable Energy Development SPD (Adopted 2011)

Policy Number	Policy Title	Planning Policy Text
1	Biodiversity	<p><i>“Developers should assess the effects of potential renewable energy developments, alone or cumulatively on biodiversity sites, habitats and species and identify measures to avoid or mitigate harm to them and secure their conservation and enhancement.</i></p>

		<p><i>If a scheme, alone and/or in combination with other plans and projects, could have an impact on an internationally designated site developers must submit all relevant information to the council for them to carry out an assessment of the likely significant effects of the scheme in accordance with the Habitats Regulations.</i></p> <p><i>Developers should also pay attention to assessing the effects of renewable energy developments, alone and in combination with other development on bats, birds and other mobile species within and around the site. Measures should be identified to avoid or mitigate the harm to these species and secure their conservation and enhancement.”</i></p>
2	Landscape	<p><i>“Developers should consider the landscape impacts of their proposal for renewable energy development.</i></p> <p><i>Consideration should be given at the earliest stage in the design process to the character and quality of the landscape, the extent of the physical change involved, and the ability of the landscape to accommodate the change.</i></p> <p><i>Proposals in areas of high landscape value or which affect their setting will be rigorously assessed in relation to their impacts on these important landscapes. If adverse impacts are identified these should be avoided or mitigated. Should this prove impossible the proposal will be refused.</i></p> <p><i>A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), which must be agreed with the council, should be prepared and submitted alongside any planning application. Developers should also consult the council’s approved Supplementary Planning Guidance on Landscape Character Assessment and Guidelines, and Countryside Design Summary.”</i></p>
3	Visual Effects	<p><i>“The impact on visual amenity is a key consideration for developers in preparing schemes for renewable energy development. The size and appearance of the development should be taken into account from the earliest stage in the design process.</i></p> <p><i>A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), which must be agreed with the council, should be prepared and submitted alongside any planning application. Developers should consult the council’s approved Supplementary Planning Guidance on Landscape Character Assessment and Guidelines, and Countryside Design Summary.</i></p> <p><i>Where unacceptable negative impacts on visual amenity are identified, developers should ensure that they are satisfactorily addressed. If this cannot be done, the development will be refused.”</i></p>
4	Heritage Assets	<p><i>“Developers should consider the impact of their proposal for renewable energy development, both during and after construction on heritage and the historic environment.</i></p> <p><i>Developers need to demonstrate that the objectives of the designation of the area or individual assets will not be compromised by the development, and that any significant adverse effects on the on the qualities for which the area has been designated are clearly outweighed by the environmental, social and economic benefits.”</i></p>
5	Soil and Hydrology	<p><i>“Developers should consider the effects of their proposal for renewable energy development on the soil, hydrology, groundwater and water quality in and around a site. Development should avoid harming soils, hydrology and water quality that would have a negative affect on habitats of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity.”</i></p>
6	Flood Risk	<p><i>“Developers must provide a Flood Risk Assessment with any renewable energy development proposal of 1 hectare or more in Flood Zone 1 and any proposal in Flood Zone 2 or 3. If proposals are put forward in areas of high</i></p>

		<p><i>flood risk (zone 3), development will be required to pass an Exception Test. This must demonstrate that the development will be safe during its lifetime, without increasing flood risk elsewhere and where possible will reduce flood risk overall. These requirements also apply to proposals for ancillary development related to renewable energy developments.”</i></p>
7	Community Impact	<p><i>“Developers should work with the local communities which are affected by their proposals for renewable energy development in order to identify and address key concerns. The council should be satisfied that appropriate levels of community engagement have taken place and where concerns are raised, they are appropriately mitigated or minimised.”</i></p>
10	Cumulative Effects	<p><i>“In preparing proposals for renewable energy development, developers should address the cumulative impact that the scheme could have on North Lincolnshire, taking into account operational and approved developments, any extensions to operational or approved proposals, and other proposals being advanced through the planning system. Any assessments should address cumulative visual and landscape impacts, as well as hydrology, hydrogeology, ecology, traffic and transport, aviation and radar, noise, recreation and local amenity impacts.”</i></p>
13	Highways and Rights of Way	<p><i>“Developers should consider access to proposed sites for renewable energy development from the earliest stages in putting together proposals. All proposals should be accompanied by an assessment of the full access route to the site, which should meet the requirements of the Highway Authority. Where appropriate mitigation measures should be identified.</i></p> <p><i>Developers should also consider the impact of their proposals on existing and proposed Public Rights of Way as part of any Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment submitted with any planning application. Particular attention should be given to Natural England’s and the British Horse Society’s advice on minimum distance between Public Rights of Way/bridleways and wind turbines.</i></p> <p><i>Where developments adversely affect PROWs and/or landscapes, new PROW’s should be provided where possible to offset any disadvantages to the public.”</i></p>
14	Local Grid Connections and Ancillary Equipment	<p><i>“In determining the best route for grid connections and the positioning of ancillary equipment as part of renewable energy development, developers should ensure that they properly integrate the layout of the development with the landscape and topography of the site. Visual clutter should be minimised whilst existing landforms and vegetation should be used to screen ancillary equipment.</i></p> <p><i>Areas of sensitive soils and vegetation as well as changes which have a negative impact on local hydrology should be avoided. Also trees and archaeological features should be protected. Where development does involve sensitive areas developers should provide a construction and reinstatement method statement as part of any planning application.</i></p> <p><i>In designing access to, and around sites, developers should consider using existing tracks and access points. Track lengths should be minimised and they should be designed to blend into the landscape in order to be less visually intrusive. At decommissioning they should be return to their original state.”</i></p>

APPENDIX 2: EIA SCREENING OPINION AND PROFORMA

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Our Reference: PA/SCR/2025/1
Date: 26 February 2025

North Lincolnshire Council

www.northlincs.gov.uk

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Emma Lewis - Stephenson Halliday Ltd
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Dear Ms Lewis

SCREENING OPINION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017

Proposal: EIA screening request for a proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)

Location: Land to the south of Sweetbriar Farm and north east of Ulceby

Applicant: Lightrock Power Limited


I am writing to provide you with a screening opinion of the local planning authority under Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017.

This screening opinion is provided in response to development proposals for a proposed new Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at land to the south of Sweetbriar Farm, Ulceby.

Given the understanding of the site environment and the development proposal at the time of writing, the local planning authority considers that the development would not comprise EIA development. As such, the authority cannot ask you to undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment of the development proposed or submit an Environmental Statement with an application for planning permission.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss any aspect of this response.

Yours faithfully



**Scott Jackson
Senior Planning Officer**

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

Screening Opinion under Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017

Application Reference: PA/SCR/2025/1

Address: Land to the south of Sweetbriar Farm, Ulceby

Proposal: Battery Energy Storage System or BESS

Has the LPA adopted a Screening Opinion for this proposal? YES NO

1	Is the proposal a Schedule 1 Project?	NO X	Go to question 2	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	
2	Is the application listed in Schedule 2 of the EIA Regs 2017?	NO <input type="checkbox"/>		YES X	Go to question 3 <i>3(a) Industrial installations for the production of electricity, steam and hot water</i>
3	Is the proposal in a sensitive area as defined in the EIA Regs 2017?	NO X	Go to question 4	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	
4	Does it exceed the threshold and criteria in Schedule 2?	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>EIA <u>not</u> required</i>	YES X	<i>The area of works exceeds 0.5 hectares</i>

Selection Criteria for Screening Schedule 2 Development as set out in Schedule 3 of the 2017 Regulations.

1. Characteristics of the Development

The characteristics of the development must be considered having regard, in particular to the following:

Size:

Does the proposal exceed the indicative sizes given in Planning Practice Guidance-Environmental Impact Assessments? YES NO

This is based on the site area presented with the screening request; however it is noted the site area in which the BESS is proposed is substantially smaller than the overall site area of 21.1 hectares. The BESS covers approximately 5 hectares and the substation compound 3.4 hectares of the site and the biodiversity and landscaping area equating to approximately 11 hectares. The battery units will be used to store and distribute energy rather than generating it themselves. The key issues to consider in relation to battery energy storage projects relate to visual impact; the other key issues listed in the guidance are emissions to air and transportation of fuel which are not of relevance to battery storage.

The level of emissions to air would be minimal during the construction phase and negligible during the operational phase. There would be no transportation of fuel because the proposal is for a battery storage facility and the electricity is not generated via the combustion of fuels on site.

Cumulative Impacts:

Will the proposal be undertaken in conjunction with other development? YES NO

It is however acknowledged that the BESS is proposed in close proximity to the solar farm approved at Sweetbriar Farm under PA/2022/443.

Use of Natural Resources:

Will any natural resources be lost? (If no proceed to Production of Waste) YES NO

This is an undulating site where some topographical changes may be made as a result of development (i.e. land levelling works) and to mitigate the pooling of water in parts of the site.

Loss of Grade 3a and 3b agricultural grade land.

Will their loss be significant? YES NO

The site is located in an area with an abundance of high-quality agricultural land and the temporary loss of Grade 3a and 3b land to accommodate the battery storage facility is not considered to be significant. Furthermore, as the batteries are containerised and have a finite life expectancy it is possible that the land could be returned to agricultural purposes once the batteries reach the end of their life and as such the loss of agricultural land would be temporary and reversible.

Production of Waste:

Will the proposal generate waste (if no proceed to Pollution and Nuisances) YES NO

Construction waste and from the decommissioning of the development. However, waste produced during the construction phase will follow the waste hierarchy and there is no evidence that the nature or volume of waste cannot be accommodated within established regimes for collection and disposal.

Pollution and Nuisances:

Will the proposal cause any pollution/nuisance (If no proceed to accidents) YES NO

The construction phase of the development will generate traffic and general construction activities such as the installation of the concrete pads for the containers and the equipment within the substation compound.

There is no evidence that the pollutants will have exceptional or significant effects in that the risks can be controlled through the planning process, for example the submission of a CEMP or Construction Environmental Management Plan. Such a document would help to mitigate impacts during the construction phase. No significant impacts are anticipated from the development in this regard.

Will it be short term (during construction)? YES NO

Will it be longer term? YES NO

It is likely that both the construction and operational phases of the development could result in issues relating to noise, vibration and light. The site is within a rural location where there are residential properties (or sensitive receptors) within 350m of the site and therefore potential for some disturbance, particularly during the construction period and due to the scale of the development proposed. However, the supporting information does state there will be no permanent lighting to be

installed and any lighting will be inward facing with a downward trajectory. Some noise is anticipated (owing to the number of batteries and associated apparatus proposed within the site), however it is considered this will be of a localised effect. There will be noise generated by the battery units associated with the cooling/air conditioning units and the associated plant and equipment, including that proposed within the substation compound. There are only a very limited number of residential properties in the surrounding area with the potential to be impacted by noise generated by the development. A noise impact assessment would be required to support any planning application, and this matter is capable of being appropriately assessed and mitigated without the need for an EIA.

Accidents:

A higher than average risk of accidents during construction? YES X NO

A higher than average risk of accidents during operation? YES X NO

There are no significant anticipated risks associated with the operational phase of the development.

The batteries are designed to minimise the risk of fire and thermal runaway. Each of the modules would also be fitted with fire suppression and containment systems and air conditioning to ensure that a constant and safe operating temperature is maintained. These will be subject to 24-hour monitoring.

Risks to Human Health:

Will the proposal increase risk to human health? YES X NO

2. Location of Development

The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by development must be considered, having regard, in particular, to the following:

What is the existing land use?

The existing land use is agricultural fields (in arable production) extending to 21.1 hectares in area to the north of Cross Road. It is located to the west of Carr Lane, to the south west of Sweet Briar Farm. The land is in the open countryside, away from the defined settlement boundaries of Ulceby, Wootton and Thornton Curtis and is rectangular in shape with an access road from Carr Lane to the east (which provides vehicular access to Zulu Farm) and from Thornton Lane/Cross Road to the south west. It is located in flood zone 1, there is a field drain along the southern boundary of the site and a sewage treatment works is located to the south east of the site. The site is traversed by some overhead power lines and has some hedges along its field margins.

Is the Site in a 'Sensitive Area' as defined in the Regulation? YES X NO

Is the site sensitive in another way?

(contaminated, densely populated, archaeology, landscape etc)

If yes give details?

YES X NO

Briefly comment on the relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of the natural resources in the area affected:

3. Characteristics of the Potential Impact:

Use the table below to assess whether there are likely to be any effects on the environment due to the listed characteristics of the development or because of the location of the development. Add more rows if necessary.

- YES** An effect is likely
NO An effect is not expected
? It is uncertain whether an effect will occur or not

Characteristic of the Location	Is there likely to be an effect on the environment?
Archaeological Potential	?
Landscape character	YES
Traffic generation	?
Air quality	No
Drainage and Flood Risk	?
Noise emission	?
Ecology	?

Archaeological Potential

The impact on the archaeological potential of the site is unknown. Given the scale of development being proposed, the extent of the site area and the level excavation required to form some of the development proposals or for land, the proposal has the potential for impacts upon archaeological assets on the site. The development site is located within an area where heritage assets of archaeological significance from all periods are to be anticipated.

The proposed site lies within an area of archaeological potential where archaeological sites and finds of prehistoric and Roman date are recorded and as such there is high potential for the site to contain unrecorded archaeological remains.

Given this evidence, there is the potential that the proposed battery energy storage facility site contains archaeological remains that would be disturbed and could be destroyed during construction. It is considered that the proposal is unlikely to have significant effects upon landscapes and sites of historical, cultural or archaeological significance but any future application for planning permission must include an appropriate heritage assessment.

Measures to enhance and conserve the heritage assets and their settings should inform the planning and design of the development. Mitigation measures should be detailed in the application including the provision of written schemes of investigation for further archaeological work as may be necessary. The scope and specification of the work for each stage of the pre-application field evaluation should be discussed and agreed with the HER prior to commencement. The assessment should be carried out by a suitably experienced heritage specialist.

Landscape Character

The site comprises two agricultural fields and is significant in size at 21.1 hectares. However, it is noted that the battery energy storage facility will not occupy all of the site (approximately 5 hectares) , with the western edge (shown indicatively) being used as the substation compound (approximately 3.4 hectares) and biodiversity enhancement areas (approximately 11 hectares) proposed to both the north and south of the site (and which could include substantial tree planting and landscaping) which could help to screen views once established. The height and design of the battery containers and associated infrastructure are, in themselves, modest at 3.2m, but it is noted the transformers could have elements as tall as 12m, however these are likely to be viewed in the rural landscape in conjunction with much bulkier/taller features such as the electricity pylons which traverse across part

of the site and in the wider landscape with the large scale industrial installations at North Killingholme which dominate views.

The primary visual impact arises from the quantity of containers and their potential regimented layout set within the landscape and from the height of some of the associated infrastructure. The site is located in an undulating open landscape and has some screening afforded to it through a combination of the undulating landscape profile and field hedge cover along the margins.

The land is not subject to any formal landscape designations and the nature of the surrounding landscape and its existing hedge lines would mitigate the visual and landscape impact of the proposed development to some extent (including three electricity power lines and associated pylons which dominate the local landscape) and therefore it is considered that such an impact would be of local significance only.

The cumulative visual impact of the proposed development, when considered in conjunction with the solar farm approved on the site to the east and north east is considered to be localised in its impact on landscape character and appearance (with the solar farm being relatively low lying in terms of its apparatus) and thus is not considered to result in significant cumulative environmental effects. An application for planning permission must include a Landscape and Visual Appraisal.

Traffic Generation

There are no public rights of way which intersect or border the site. It is anticipated there will be an increase in traffic generation during the construction and delivery of the components of the energy storage facility, some of this is likely to be of a bulkier nature and this combined with the deliveries associated with the construction of the solar farm (which also proposes to utilise Carr Lane for delivery purposes) there could be potential for disruption to the local highway network. There is the potential for impact on the local highway network during construction; however any impacts are likely to be localised in nature and could be mitigated by a robust Construction Traffic Management Plan. No information has been provided with regards to anticipated traffic generation associated with the construction phase. However, operational traffic would be minimal.

The construction phase traffic is not considered to give rise to significant environmental effects to warrant EIA. Any planning application must provide a Transport Statement which encompasses a Construction Phase Traffic Management Plan with vehicle routeing and details how the impact of construction traffic on Carr Lane and other local roads will be mitigated.

Drainage and flood risk

The site is located within flood zone 1, however due to the scale of the development proposal a flood risk and drainage assessment would be required within any future planning application submission, these would demonstrate whether the development is safe from flood without increasing flood risk and to ensure a satisfactory means of drainage disposal which is a key issue for consideration if it is proposed to introduce significant areas of hardstanding into this field and land levels are to be revised to address localised pooling of water.

Flood risk is not considered to result in significant environmental effects and can be appropriately assessed and mitigated through the submission of a flood risk and drainage assessment.

Noise

Operational pollution and nuisance may arise from noise generated by the facility including 'humming' sounds from electrical elements and any fans that might be associated with the cooling of the battery units, together with the operation of the inverters and transformers. A noise assessment with mitigation measures, if necessary, would prevent significant environmental effects. The noise impact

assessment report shall provide details of existing background noise levels, noise sources generated by the proposed development, mitigation methods to be employed and the resulting predicted level of noise at sensitive locations (such as dwellings).

A construction environmental management plan (CEMP) to document methods to mitigate noise, dust and light during the construction phase will also be required but could be conditioned should planning permission be granted. Noise is not considered to result in significant environmental effects.

Ecology

The Site is not located within or adjacent to any statutory, or non-statutory, ecological designations. The application site supports agricultural land, with hedgerows and a drain along the site boundaries, as well as an existing access track. Hedgerows, drains and wooded patches are adjacent to the site; however, the site is primarily surrounded by agricultural land attached to multiple farms.

Whilst the site comprises 21.1 hectares of arable land, it is noted the proposed battery storage facility, and the substation compound would not occupy all of the site area (approximately 8.4 hectares in total) and as such the potential impacts are limited with land to the north and south west proposed for biodiversity enhancement and potential mitigation (approximately 11 hectares). Natural England has identified the proposal site as being within an "amber risk zone" for great crested newts - a European Protected Species. The potential for harm to great crested newts (and thus an offence) therefore needs to be taken into account on this site.

With regard to protected species a preliminary ecological appraisal or extended Phase 1 survey or UK Habitats Survey should be carried out and submitted with the application for planning permission as well as wintering and passage bird surveys and potentially a water vole and otter survey, owing to the presence of a ditch along the southern boundary. It is worth noting the site is located in proximity to the solar farm at Sweet Briar Farm and the screening for that site concluded the potential for an impact on ecology and protected species is unlikely to warrant an EIA, taking into account the fact this site is in close proximity and shares similar features.

Overall, there are not considered to be ecological effects that would result in likely significant environmental impact to warrant an EIA.

Conclusion:

Is an Environmental Statement required?

YES X NO

Further comments:

The potential impacts have been assessed as not being significant and are not considered to be so complex as to require an EIA.

Whilst there may be some non-significant environmental impacts that result from the development, these are largely local in nature and can be appropriately assessed and mitigated without the need for an Environmental Statement.

Finally, it is noted that the proposed development is temporary in nature and that all the associated potential impacts are reversible. Once the battery storage facility has been decommissioned the site can be restored to its former condition and use.

It is considered that the proposal will not have significant effects on the environment.

The potential impacts of the proposed development are considered to be no greater than of local significance and therefore it is not EIA development and an Environmental Statement will not need to be provided should a planning application be submitted for the works.

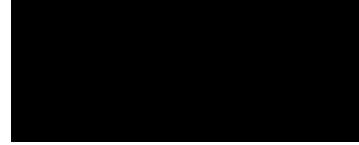
Officer: Scott Jackson.....

Authorised by: Andrew Law

Signature:



Signature:



Date: 26/02/25.....

Date: 28/02/2025

If YES required, date applicant notified: