STEPHENSON HALLIDAY

Planning, Landscape & Environment
an RSK company

JT ENERGY STORAGE LTD

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

JT Energy Storage Ltd & Windel Energy

May 2025

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	Name	Date
Author	Stuart Robinson	May 2025
Technical Reviewer	Rosemary Walker	May 2025
Approved	Stuart Robinson	May 2025

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Stephenson Halliday, an RSK Company, was commissioned in January 2025 to prepare a landscape and visual appraisal (LVA) of the Proposed Development at Egremont, Cumbria on behalf of JT Energy Storage Ltd (Windel Energy) . This assessment forms part of a suite of documents supporting the application for this development proposal.

1.1.2 This LVA: defines the existing landscape and visual baseline environments; assesses their sensitivity to change; describes the key landscape and visual related aspects of the Proposed Development; and, describes the nature of the anticipated changes and assesses the effects arising during construction and operation.

1.1.3 The LVA considers the potential effects upon:

- landscape fabric;
- landscape character;
- the special qualities of any landscape designations; and
- visual receptors including residential, transport and recreational receptors.

1.1.4 The LVA has been undertaken in accordance with published best practice; namely the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Third Edition), Landscape Institute and IEMA 2013 (GLVIA3) and associated technical guidance notes published by the Landscape Institute.

1.1.5 Although linked, landscape and visual effects are considered separately. Landscape effects derive from changes in the landscape fabric, which may result in changes to the character, whereas visual effects are the effect of these changes as experienced by people (visual receptors). Effects on the setting of any heritage assets are dealt with as part of a separate heritage report.

1.2 The Site and Proposals

1.2.1 Figure 1 places the Proposed Development within its local context. The Site comprises approximately 1.18ha of pasture land, which has most recently been used for the grazing of livestock. The Site is split across two fields, separated by an access track, with its boundaries demarcated by hedgerow and scattered trees.

1.2.2 The Site comprises land to the east of Dalzell Street between the villages of Bigrigg, Cleator and Moor Row. The larger settlements of Egremont, Cleator Moor and Whitehaven are all located within a 5km radius of the Site. The Lake District National Park boundary lies approximately 2.7km to the north-east. The Site is wholly located within the administrative boundary of Cumberland Council.

1.2.3 The Proposed Development is for a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) with associated access, landscaping and ancillary works. An accompanying landscape scheme is proposed

as mitigation to soften views of the Proposed Development, to integrate with the surrounding landscape context and to contribute to achieving a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). A full description of the Proposed Development is contained in the Planning, Design and Access Statement that accompanies the application.

1.3 Competence

1.3.1 This report has been prepared by Chartered Landscape Architects at Stephenson Halliday. The Practice has over 25 years of experience working in a variety of sectors throughout the UK. Key individuals working on this project have over 10 years' experience as practicing Landscape Architects, including the preparation of LVA reports and are Chartered Members of the Landscape Institute (CMLI).

1.3.2 The Practice is a Landscape Institute and IEMA registered practice and all work is prepared and reviewed internally by senior highly experienced landscape planners with Public Inquiry experience.

1.3.3 To inform the assessment, a Site visit was made to various locations within the Study Area including, but not restricted to, representative viewpoints by Stephenson Halliday's assessment team during April 2025.

1.4 Study Area

1.4.1 In GLVIA3 it recommends that the Study Area for a consideration of landscape effects should *'include the site itself and the full extent of the wider landscape around it which the proposed development may influence in a significant manner*.' It also recommends that the LVA should consider the area from which the Proposed Development will potentially be visible but that the emphasis '*must be on a reasonable approach which is proportional to the scale and nature of the Proposed Development*.'

1.4.2 It is accepted practice within landscape and visual appraisal work that the extent of the Study Area for a development proposal is broadly defined by the visual envelope of the Proposed Development. In this case a study area of 3km has been used (as shown by Figure 1). This Study Area is considered proportionate and adequate to identify all non-negligible effects on landscape and visual receptors.

1.5 Report Structure and Terminology

1.5.1 This report is structured as set out in the table of contents.

1.5.2 Supporting appendices have been prepared that supplement the sections regarding methodology, planning policy and baseline. The appendices are important to the assessment and should be read alongside this report.

1.5.3 Key terms used within the assessment are described in Section 3 and Appendix 1 which set out the methodology. A glossary is provided within Appendix 1.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Overview

2.1.1 This section provides a summary of the methodology adopted for the LVA. Full details of the assessment methodology, including assessment criteria, are provided in Appendix 1.

2.1.2 In accordance with GLVIA3, the level of landscape and visual effects is determined by considering, in tandem, the sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors (landscape elements, landscape character areas, landscape designations and groups of people who may be affected by changes in visual amenity) and the magnitude of effect arising from the Proposed Development.

2.2 Sensitivity

2.2.1 Sensitivity (described as High, Medium or Low) is judged by combining component judgements about the value and susceptibility of the receptor, as illustrated in Table 2.1 and Table 2.2. An explanation of how susceptibility and value has been determined is provided in Appendix 1. Detailed susceptibility and value criteria for landscape receptors are established in Appendix 3 whilst detailed visual susceptibility and value criteria are set out in Appendix 4. It should be noted that intermediate assessments of value or susceptibility may be applied (e.g. High/Medium, Medium/Low or National/Regional, Regional/Community). Likewise, when combining susceptibility and value to determine sensitivity, an intermediate assessment is adopted where overall sensitivity is judged to lie between levels. In all instances, professional judgement is employed and the tables below should not be interpreted rigidly to give a specific answer. A slightly greater weight is given to susceptibility in judging the sensitivity of visual receptors.

Table 2.1 Landscape Sensitivity

LANDSCAPE RECEPTORS		Susceptibility		
		High	**Medium**	**Low**
Value	**National**	High	High/Medium	Medium
	Regional	High/Medium	Medium	Medium/Low
	Community	Medium	Medium/Low	Low

Table 2.2 Visual Sensitivity

VISUAL RECEPTORS		Susceptibility		
		High	**Medium**	**Low**
Value	**National**	High	High/Medium	Medium
	Regional	High/Medium	High/Medium	Medium/Low
	Community	High/Medium	Medium	Low

2.3 Magnitude

2.3.1 The magnitude of effect arising from the Proposed Development (described as Substantial, Moderate, Slight or Negligible) is assessed in terms of its scale, geographic extent of the area or receptor that is influenced and its duration.

2.3.2 Scale of change (expressed as Large, Medium, Small, Negligible) is the first and primary factor in determining magnitude. Geographical extent and duration of the effect are modifying factors to the overall magnitude judgement which may be higher if the effect is particularly widespread and/or long lasting, or lower if it is constrained in geographic extent and/or timescale.

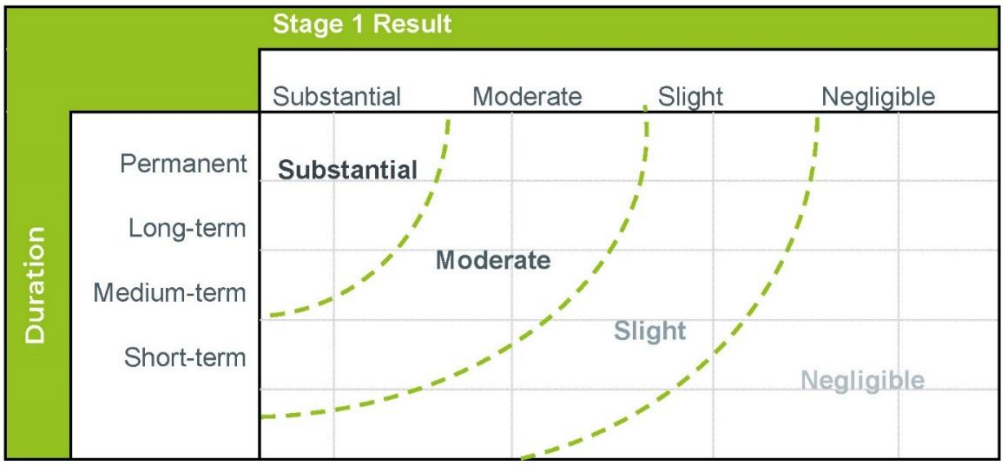
2.3.3 The diagrams presented in Plate 1 below illustrate in outline how these two modifying factors are considered in a two-stage process and further explanation is provided in Appendix 1. Plate 1 is not intended to be interpreted rigidly as a chart to provide definitive answers; professional judgement is employed as appropriate to arrive at an overall judgement on the magnitude of effect. A definition of the terms used in the diagrams in Plate 1 is provided in Appendix 1.

2.3.4 Where magnitude of effect (or other judgements) is judged to lie between levels, an intermediate assessment is adopted and is expressed as e.g. Moderate/slight.

Plate 1 - Illustration of how Magnitude of Effect is Established

Stage 1 - Modifying Influence of Geographic Extent on Magnitude of Effect

Stage 2 - Modifying Influence of Duration on Magnitude of Effect



2.4 Level of Effects

2.4.1 The importance of a landscape or visual effect (described as Major, Moderate, Minor or Negligible) is assessed using professional judgement, combining the sensitivity of the receptor with the predicted magnitude of effect, as summarised in Table 2.3. Table 2.3 is not used as a prescriptive tool and illustrates the typical outcomes, allowing for the exercise of professional judgement. In some instances, a particular parameter may be considered as having a determining effect on the analysis. Where importance is judged to lie between levels, an intermediate assessment will be adopted for example 'Moderate/Minor'. Such a judgement indicates that the importance of effect is less than Moderate but more than Minor.

Table 2.3 Significance

		Magnitude of Change			
		Substantial	**Moderate**	**Slight**	**Negligible**
Receptor Sensitivity	**High**	Major	Major/Moderate	Moderate	Minor
	Medium	Major/Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/Minor	Minor/Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Minor	Negligible

Beneficial/Adverse

2.4.2 Landscape and visual effects can be beneficial or adverse and in some instances may be considered neutral. Neutral effects are those which overall are neither adverse nor positive but may incorporate a combination of both. Whether an effect is beneficial, neutral or adverse is identified based on professional judgement.

2.4.3 However, for the avoidance of doubt, in this assessment it has been assumed that where new infrastructure is introduced into the landscape or views, this will generally constitute an adverse effect. Any variation from this stance will be clearly justified.

2.5 Cumulative Assessment

2.5.1 Cumulative assessment relates to the assessment of the effects of more than one development. The approach to cumulative assessment is set out within Appendix 1.

2.5.2 As set out in Appendix 1: Methodology, proposals in planning are considered where there is good reason to assume that the timing of decisions may be similar and important cumulative effects are likely. Proposals in scoping are not considered within the cumulative assessment, as there is no certainty that these proposals will progress to planning submissions and the nature of the proposed schemes may be subject to change.

2.5.3 The following developments, in combination with the Proposed Development, will be considered within the cumulative assessment:

- Land at Woodend, Cleator (Ref: 4/22/2335/OF1).

2.6 Residential Amenity

2.6.1 As set out within LI Technical Guidance Note 02//19 'Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA)':

"Changes in views and visual amenity are considered in the planning process. In respect of private views and visual amenity, it is widely known that, no one has 'a right to a view.' …

It is not uncommon for significant adverse effects on views and visual amenity to be experienced by people at their place of residence as a result of introducing a new development into the landscape. In itself this does not necessarily cause particular planning concern. However, there are situations where the effect on the outlook / visual amenity of a residential property is so great that it is not generally considered to be in the public interest to permit such conditions to occur where they did not exist before."

2.6.2 This report does not include an assessment of residential visual amenity as it is judged that the Proposed Development would not give rise to effects meeting the threshold described above.

2.7 Distances

2.7.1 Where distances are given in the assessment, these are approximate distances between the nearest part of the Site and the nearest part of the receptor in question, unless explicitly stated otherwise.

2.8 Visual Aids

2.8.1 Photographs of the existing views and views with annotation are presented in Appendix 5, which accord with guidance for 'Type 1' visualisations as defined in Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/19 (TGN 06/19).

2.8.2 The visualisations are considered adequate to enable Council officers/members and members of the public who wish to comment on the application to understand the extent of the development in key views and to visualise the Proposed Development in its landscape context.

3 PLANNING POLICY

3.1 National Planning Policy

3.1.1 Relevant national planning policy is addressed in the Planning Statement which accompanies the planning application for the Proposed Development.

3.2 Local Planning Policy

3.2.1 The Local Planning Authority is Cumberland Council. The current adopted development plan comprises the following:

- Copeland Local Plan 2021 – 2039 (adopted November 2024).

Copeland Local Plan 2021 - 2039

3.2.2 The following policies are considered to be of relevance to this LVA regarding the Proposed Development and issues relating to environmental, landscape and visual matters.

Policy DS5: Hard and Soft Landscaping

3.2.3 This policy states *"where appropriate a high-quality landscaping scheme should be submitted with all proposals for development. This should include:*

- *A management plan which identifies all existing trees, hedgerows, ponds and other wildlife features and demonstrates how they will be integrated within the development. Landscaping should be well assimilated into the wider surrounding landscape.*
- *Details of the position, species and number of new trees, hedgerows and landscape features. Species used should be appropriate for the location and should be native where possible with consideration given to future growth rates and proximity to buildings.*
- *Details of any trees, hedgerows and landscape features that will be lost or replaced*
- *Details of any hard landscaping proposed including materials, levels etc.*
- *Details of future maintenance of the landscaping and replacement/replanting should the landscaping fail".*

Policy N6: Landscape Protection

3.2.4 This policy states *"Copeland's landscapes will be protected and enhanced by:*

a) Supporting proposals which enhance the value of Copeland's landscapes;

b) Protecting all landscapes from inappropriate change by ensuring that development conserves and enhances the distinctive characteristics of that particular area in a manner commensurate with their statutory status and value;

c) Ensuring development proposals demonstrate that their location, scale, design and materials will conserve and where possible enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural

heritage of the Lake District National Park and Heritage Coast where proposals could impact on their setting and views into and from the National Park or Heritage Coast;

d) Requiring a Landscape Appraisal, and where appropriate a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, to be submitted where development has the potential to impact upon landscape character or a protected landscape. Where harm is identified the development will only be permitted where the benefits of the development outweigh any potential harm and mitigation and compensation measures must be provided".

Policy N9: Green Infrastructure

3.2.5 This policy states *"The amount of green infrastructure on the development site should be maximised and developers should take opportunities to create new connections, expand networks and enhance existing green infrastructure to support the movement of plants and animals. Green infrastructure should be multi-functional where possible and should be considered at the start of the design process".*

Policy N14: Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows

3.2.6 This policy states *"Existing trees and hedgerows which contribute positively to the visual amenity and environmental value of their location will be protected. Developers should incorporate additional native tree planting and hedgerows into new developments where possible and appropriate".*

4 BASELINE

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 An overview of the baseline study results is provided in this section with the full baseline description of the individual landscape and visual receptors being provided alongside the assessment in Section 6 for ease of reference.

4.1.2 This section provides a review of the key local baseline studies and guidance documents and identifies those landscape and visual receptors which merit detailed consideration in the assessment of effects, and those which are not taken forward for further assessment as effects "*have been judged unlikely to occur or so insignificant that it is not essential to consider them further*" (GLVIA3, para. 3.19).

4.1.3 Both this baseline section and the effects section describe landscape character and visual receptors before considering designated areas as it is common for designations to encompass both character and visual considerations within their special qualities or purposes of designation.

4.2 ZTV study

4.2.1 A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) study was generated based on the Proposed Development. This is shown on Figure 4 and indicates areas of potential visibility. The ZTV study was used to aid the identification of those receptors that are likely to be most affected by the Proposed Development and those that do not require detailed consideration.

4.2.2 The ZTV analysis was carried out using a topographic model and including buildings and trees (with heights derived from LiDAR surface mapping data) as visual barriers in order to provide a more realistic indication of potential visibility. It should be noted that some areas shown as having potential visibility may have visibility of the development screened by more recent development, and some new views may have been opened up by demolitions.

4.2.3 The ZTV indicates that overall, there would be very limited intervisibility between the Proposed Development and surrounding visual receptors. Receptors likely to have greatest visibility of the Proposed Development are those within closest proximity to the Site, including those along Dalzell Street and users of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) within 500m. The ZTV indicates that there would also be potential visibility from the northern edge of Cleator, approximately 800 – 900m east of the Site.

4.2.4 Beyond 1km, potential intervisibility between the Proposed Development and surrounding visual receptors becomes more sporadic due to the intervening vegetation, landform and settlement that characterise the landscape. The ZTV indicates no visibility to the north, west or south, however there are potential views from properties on the southern edge of Cleator Moor, approximately 1.3km from the Site.

4.2.5 Visibility increases towards the more elevated landscape in the east, notably around Dent Fell which is a localised high point within the Study Area, located approximately 3km east of the Site. Similarly, there are potential elevated views around Kinniside Cop within the Lake District National Park further east beyond the 3km Study Area. It should be noted that visibility from these more distant and elevated locations would result in only limited visual changes due to the intervening distance, vegetation and built form.

4.2.6 As is typical for all such ZTVs, the visibility shown on the figure is exaggerated and the actual extent of visibility of any development on the Site is likely to be considerably more constrained than is indicated on the ZTV. Effects on landscape or visual receptors outside the areas of visibility shown on the ZTV study would be Negligible and are not assessed in detail.

4.3 Landscape Character

4.3.1 Published landscape character documents which are relevant to the Study Area have been reviewed and these documents have helped to inform the description of the existing baseline. The following documents have been referenced within the landscape character assessment:

- National Character Area (NCA) Profile: 7 West Cumbria Coastal Plain;
- Lake District National Park Landscape Character Assessment and Guidelines (Revised 2021); and
- Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and Toolkit (2011).

National Landscape Character

NCA 7: West Cumbria Coastal Plain

4.3.2 The Site and the entirety of the Study Area sits within NCA 7: West Cumbria Coastal Plain. It is described as *"… a plain of varying width between the Cumbrian High Fells NCA in the east and the Irish Sea to the west. Views inland are set against the Lake District mountains, with long-distance views to the Isle of Man and southern Scotland across the sea. The coastline encompasses a diverse range of habitats including mudflats, shingle and pebble beaches, honeycomb worm reefs, soft cliffs, the high sandstone cliffs of St Bees, dune systems, expansive estuarine systems and the barrier islands of Walney and Foulney*".

4.3.3 The NCAs give a good context for the character, however, for the size and scale of the Proposed Development it is considered that effects on landscape character on a more localised scale is more appropriate. Therefore NCA 7 will not be assessed further within this report.

Lake District National Park Landscape Character Assessment and Guidelines, Revised 2021

4.3.4 The Lake District National Park Character Assessment and Guidelines was first published in 2008 and subsequently revised in 2018 and again in 2021. The assessment seeks to establish a framework for developing a shared understanding of the character of the Lake District's landscapes and its future management needs. The assessment identifies that part of Landscape Character Type (LCT) J: High Fell Fringe lies within the eastern part of the Study Area, described as:

"The landscape varies between intimate pastoral patterns of small fields to rolling higher topography with long distance views."

4.3.5 The assessment also notes that "*this Landscape Character Type extends outside the Park in several areas in the north west and south of the Park. Here it forms the setting to the Park*". The majority of this LCT that falls within the Study Area lies outside of the National Park boundary.

4.3.6 Given the limited intervisibility illustrated on the ZTV study and observed during field survey work, as well as the intervening distance between the Proposed Development and the LCT, effects on LCT J: High Fell Fringe are considered unlikely to exceed negligible and will therefore not be assessed in detail within this LVA.

Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and Toolkit, 2011

4.3.7 The Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and Toolkit was commissioned by Cumbria County Council in 2009 and subsequently published in 2011 to provide an updated baseline to guide and influence where future development within Cumbria should take place. The published assessment identifies a series of larger landscape character types and smaller landscape sub-types. With regards to this assessment, it is the landscape sub-types that considered to be of most relevance, therefore these will be assessed in detail within Section 6. The broader LCTs will not be assessed in detail.

4.3.8 The following landscape sub-types are of relevance to this assessment, as they form the published baseline landscape character of the Study Area:

- **Sub-type 5d: Urban Fringe (within LCT 5: Lowland).**

4.3.9 As illustrated on Figure 3 Landscape Character, a number of other landscape sub-types lie within the Study Area:

- **LCT 4: Coastal Sandstone (no sub-types present within LCT)** – located to the west of the Site and covers the majority of the western part of the Study Area.
- **Sub-type 5a: Ridge and Valley (within LCT 5: Lowland)** – located to the north, east and south east of the Site. This sub-type covers the area to the north of Cleator Moor and a narrow area between sub-types 5d and 11a to the east and south east of the Site.
- **Sub-type 5b: Low Farmland (within LCT 5: Lowland)** – located to the south west, approximately 1.4km from the Site at its nearest point. This sub-type covers the majority of the south western part of the Study Area, extending southwards beyond.
- **Sub-type 11a: Foothills (within LCT Upland Fringe)** – located to the east, approximately 1.5km from the Site at its nearest point. This sub-type covers the easternmost part of the Study Area, extending beyond.

4.3.10 Given the limited intervisibility illustrated on the ZTV study, as well as the intervening distance between the Proposed Development and these adjacent landscape sub-types, effects on these landscape receptors are considered unlikely to exceed negligible and will therefore not be assessed in detail within this LVA.

4.4 Visual Receptors

4.4.1 Visual receptors are "*the different groups of people who may experience views of the development*"(GLVIA, 3rd edition, para 6.3). The ZTV study, baseline desk study and a Site visit have been used in order to identify those groups who may be notably affected.

4.4.2 The different types of groups assessed within this report encompass local residents; people using key routes such as roads; cycle ways, people within accessible or recreational landscapes; people using Public Rights of Way; or people visiting key viewpoints. In dealing

with areas of settlement, Public Rights of Way and local roads, receptors are grouped into areas where effects might be expected to be broadly similar, or areas which share particular factors in common.

4.4.3 Representative viewpoints have been selected to aid the assessment of effects on visual receptors and are presented in Appendix 5, while their locations are illustrated on Figure 4.

Baseline Visual Environment

4.4.4 As shown on Figure 1, the Site is located between Dalzell Street and National Cycle Network (NCN) 72 across a small parcel of agricultural land, approximately 2km north of Egremont. The Site is afforded a high degree of containment from the surrounding landscape due to the vegetation and landform around the boundaries of the Site and within the immediately adjacent landscape. Potential longer distance views are also often contained by intervening built form within Cleator and Cleator Moor.

4.4.5 The setting of the Site is characterised by agricultural built form and energy infrastructure, such as pylons and overhead lines, which often provide already prominent features within views. The Site is located nearby to a number of these features.

Visual Receptor Groups

4.4.6 The following visual receptor groups are located within the Study Area and are likely to have visibility of the Proposed Development, as shown on the ZTV study on Figure 4 and are considered further in Section 6:

Public Rights of Way Network

- **PRoW's within 1km of the Site –** this includes PRoW 403005 – located to the north and east of the Site, and PRoW 406015 – located to the south west of the Site between Dalzell Street and Bigrigg.

Settlements

- **Cleator** – located to the east and south east of the Site; and
- **Cleator Moor** - located to the north east of the Site.

Key Routes

4.4.7 As shown on Figure 1, the following longer distance routes lie within the study area:

Roads

- **Dalzell Street** – located immediately west of the Site extending between Egremont and Moor Row; and
- **Cleator Gate** – located to the east Site between Cleator and Cleator Moor.

4.4.8 Other roads within the Study Area are more likely to be used for local journeys and are considered within the receptor group areas they lie within.

Recreational Routes

4.4.9 **National Cycle Network Route 72** – located immediately east and south of the Site and runs broadly north to south between Egremont and Moor Row.

Specific Viewpoints

- **Dent Fell** – located within the elevated landscape to the east of the Site. Dent is a small fell on the edge of the Lake District National Park and offers uninterrupted views of the Cumbrian coast.

4.5 Landscape Designations and Value

Designated areas

Lake District National Park & World Heritage Site

4.5.1 The Lake District National Park lies to the east of the Site and within a very small proportion of the Study Area, approximately 2.7km from the Site at its nearest point. The Lake District National Park Partnership's Management Plan 2020 – 2025 (adopted October 2021) outlines the landscapes main purposes:

"Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage; and

Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of national parks by the public".

4.5.2 The management plan also identifies the following special qualities for the Lake District:

- *"A world class cultural landscape;*
- *Complex geology and geomorphology;*
- *Rich archaeology and historic landscape;*
- *Unique farming heritage and concentration of common land;*
- *The high fells;*
- *Wealth of habitats and wildlife;*
- *Mosaic of lakes, tarns, rivers and coast;*
- *Extensive seminatural woodlands;*
- *Distinctive buildings and settlement character;*
- *A source of artistic inspiration;*
- *A model for protecting cultural landscapes;*

- *A long tradition of tourism and outdoor activities; and*
- *Opportunities for quiet enjoyment".*

4.5.3 The ZTV study in Figure 4 illustrates that there is likely to be some intervisibility from within the Lake District National Park from limited locations beyond the Study Area, greater than 3km from the Site. Following Site survey work, it is considered that publicly accessible locations within the Lake District would have very limited or no intervisibility with the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development would be small scale in comparison to the designated landscape and would not result in any direct effects on the National Park.

4.5.4 Furthermore, as illustrated on Figure 3, the Site lies outside of landscapes that would be considered to be in the setting of the National Park. The proposed BESS development would not affect any of the special qualities outlined above, and where glimpsed, would appear as part of the well settled landscape that characterises the immediate setting of the Lake District National Park. As such, effects on the Lake District National Park and World Heritage Site and its setting are not considered to exceed negligible and will not be assessed further within this LVA.

5 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

5.1 The Proposal

5.1.1 The following section provides an overview of the main aspects of the Proposed Development which might give rise to landscape and visual effects. Please refer to the planning application documents for full and further detail.

5.2 Design Approach and Mitigation

5.2.1 The design of the Proposed Development has followed an iterative process that has considered the Site location and Site constraints and looked to minimise any adverse effects where possible.

5.2.2 The Proposed Development comprises the following key components along with associated ancillary infrastructure and equipment:

- 16 no. battery storage containers providing a total capacity of 30MW. Each BESS unit typically resembles a storage container, measuring 6.1m in length, 2.5m width and 2.9m in height;
- 8 no. inverter stations, measuring 6.1m in length, 2.5m in width and 2.9m in height;
- Spare parts container, measuring 12.2m in length, 2.5m in width and 2.6m in height;
- 2 Substations:
  - Client substation: 7.5m length, 3.5m width and 3.3m in height;
  - DNO substation: 7.5m in length, 5.35m in width and 3.3m in height;
- Access track comprised of crushed stone;
- Fencing – 3m high mesh fence;
- CCTV cameras;
- Water tank: 10.45m depth and 3.9m in height;
- Aux transformer: 4.7m in length, 3.8m in width and 2.4m in height; and
- Landscaping and biodiversity enhancements.

5.2.3 In terms of Site location, careful consideration has been given to selecting a Site that can accommodate BESS infrastructure, ensuring that a sensitive and well thought out approach has been adopted.

5.2.4 While there is no current specific local policy or guidance relating to the siting of BESS within Cumbria, the siting, layout and appearance of the Proposed Development have been

considered to minimise any landscape and visual effects within the Study Area, which is addressed in section 6 of this report.

5.2.5 In terms of primary mitigation, siting of the proposals has been a paramount concern, avoiding locations where a clearly visible enclosed compound could be considered incongruous, affecting both views and the surrounding landscape character.

5.2.6 Visual effects have been reduced as a result of the Site selection and siting of the proposals, ensuring that they are set well back from the more sensitive eastern Site boundary, adjacent to the existing National Cycle Route, with sufficient room provided for new vegetation, which will introduce an additional layer of screening and softening to the Proposed Development. Visual and perceptual effects are also largely limited to the immediate Site context, namely from the surrounding PRoW and highway network.

5.2.7 Careful consideration has been given to the accompanying landscape scheme, which is designed to supplement and reinforce the existing Site fabric, with particular emphasis on reinforcing the Site boundary vegetation and introducing new mitigation around the perimeter of the BESS compound. This new mitigation planting is proposed to provide screening and separation for these close range receptors, utilising suitable native species of local provenance.

5.2.8 No permanent external lighting is included in the Proposed Development that would affect nearby residential properties or the tranquillity of the surrounding receptors. Site visits for routine inspection, maintenance and repair work would be undertaken during daylight hours.

5.2.9 The Site will not be illuminated at night, except by infra-red motion sensor CCTV with downward facing lighting for emergency or security purposes only. This lighting will be in the form of LEDs with a warm white spectrum, with timers set for short term illumination. All lighting will be installed and operated in compliance with the guidelines set out in ‘Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK (2023)’.

5.3 Construction & Decommissioning

5.3.1 Construction of the Proposed Development would typically take 6 months, with the majority of the activity and movement occurring in the first few months during the Site preparation and civil engineering works to bring the Site to levels and create foundations. Furthermore, later construction activity will include the delivery and installation of surfacing, boundary fencing and BESS equipment.

5.3.2 Once operational, the development would largely be autonomous and visits would be limited to scheduled maintenance visits. The proposal will have a lifespan of 40 years, after which all equipment will be removed and the Site will be decommissioned and restored to its current use.

5.3.3 The decommissioning of the Site is expected to follow similar timescales to those identified during construction.

5.3.4 Following decommissioning and Site restoration, the landscape scheme planted as mitigation does not preclude a return to agricultural land use, it will therefore be retained in situ where the proposed landscaping is expected to have a permanent beneficial effect on the landscape character Sub-type 5d – Urban Fringe.

6 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 This section sets out the effects that the Proposed Development would have on landscape and visual receptors.

6.1.2 To inform the appraisal, a Site visit was made to various locations within the Study Area that were identified as having potential intervisibility with the Proposed Development as illustrated on Figure 4, including, but not restricted to, representative viewpoints by Stephenson Halliday's assessment team during April 2025.

6.2 Effects on Site Fabric

6.2.1 This section describes the physical effects of the Proposed Development on the existing landscape components or elements that are present on the Site. These in combination form the 'fabric' of the Site, including the existing landcover, vegetation (within the Site and along its boundaries) and Site levels that are affected.

6.2.2 The primary effect is the loss of existing ground cover which currently comprises areas of pastoral enclosure. This will be replaced by hardstanding, BESS infrastructure, new fencing and a series of small buildings.

6.2.3 The Proposed Development would introduce built elements into the Site, comprising mainly the battery modules, a small office building and containers, as well as a 2.4m high palisade security fence around the extent of the proposals.

6.2.4 There are a number of existing trees within the Site, most of which are located along the Site boundaries. There is also a small group of trees on the northern side of the internal track. The proposals would require the removal of two small trees along the western boundary to facilitate the Proposed Development, however the more established trees to the north and south of the compound would not be affected.

6.2.5 The proposed landscape scheme would introduce new hedgerows, trees and species rich meadow grassland which would also change the Site fabric, replacing the existing agricultural groundcover.

6.2.6 The construction phase would see an increase in human activity with the potential for physical effects on Site fabric beyond the final footprint of the Proposed Development, such as plant movement, deliveries, stockpiling of materials, lighting and an increased human presence on Site. However, these would be temporary and, most likely, reversible. The effects of human activity during the operational stage are expected to be minimal, comprising occasional maintenance and security visits.

6.3 Viewpoint Analysis

6.3.1 A total of 9no. viewpoints have been selected from representative viewpoint locations to inform the assessment of landscape and visual effects arising as a result of the Proposed Development. The viewpoint locations are illustrated on Figure 4 and annotated viewpoint photosheets are presented in Appendix 5. Visualisations are presented as annotated

photosheets (Type 1 visualisation) for all viewpoints. Viewpoints 1 to 8 are taken from locations within the 3km Study Area, while Viewpoint 9 is taken from just the Study Area outside but within the Lake District National Park. This was to ensure that views from within the designated landscape were considered.

6.3.2 The full viewpoint analysis is contained within Appendix 4: Viewpoint Analysis. The findings are summarised below in Table 6.1: Viewpoint Analysis Summary. In each case, distances are listed in relation to the nearest part of the Site to the viewpoint.

6.3.3 Please note that Appendix 4: Viewpoint Analysis considers the nature and the scale of changes to character and views at each viewpoint location only. The sensitivity of receptors and wider extent of the effect (beyond the individual viewpoint location) and its duration are considered in the main body of the assessment text below as part of the consideration of the magnitude and importance of effects.

Table 6.1 Viewpoint Analysis Summary

Viewpoint No.	Viewpoint	Distance to Proposed Development/ direction	Scale of Landscape Effect	Scale of Visual Effect
1	**National Cycle Network Route 72**	Along Site boundary	Large / Medium (Construction & Year 1) Medium / Small (Year 15)	Large (Construction) Medium (Year 1) Small (Year 15)
2	**Dalzell Street**	Along Site boundary	Large / Medium (Construction & Year 1) Medium / Small (Year 15)	Large (Construction) Medium (Year 1) Small (Year 15)
3	**PRoW 403 005**	75m north	Negligible (Construction, Year 1 and 15)	Medium (Construction) Negligible (Year 1 & 15)
4	**PRoW 406 015**	220m south	Small (Construction & Year 1) Negligible (Year 15)	Small (Construction) Negligible (Year 1 & 15)
5	**Cleator Gate**	700m east	Small (Construction & Year 1) Negligible (Year 15)	Small (Construction) Negligible (Year 1 & 15)
6	**Holden Place, Cleator Moor**	1.3km north east	Negligible (Construction, Year 1 & 15)	Negligible (Construction, Year 1 & 15)
7	**Unnamed Lane, west of Blackhow Wood**	1.5km east	Negligible (Construction, Year 1 & 15)	Negligible (Construction, Year 1 & 15)
8	**Dent Fell**	3km east	Negligible (Construction, Year 1 & 15)	Negligible (Construction, Year 1 & 15)
9	**Unnamed Lane, south of Kinniside Kop (Lake District National Park)**	3,2km north east	Negligible (Construction, Year 1 & 15)	Negligible (Construction, Year 1 & 15)

6.3.4 Each of the viewpoints is a 'sample' of the potential effects, representing a wide range of receptors - including not only those actually at the viewpoint, but also those nearby, at a similar distance and/or direction. From these viewpoints, it can be seen that the distribution of effects would be as follows:

6.3.5 Scale of Landscape change:

- Large scale effects would be limited to the footprint of the proposed compound containing the BESS equipment where the Site fabric would be altered from agricultural enclosure to areas of hardstanding containing built structures, surrounded by palisade fencing, an access track and areas of new native vegetation. This arises from the change in landcover and the introduction of built elements. Aside from the construction phase, there is little expected in the way of increased human activity as Site visits would be occasional and for maintenance and security purposes.

- Medium scale effects would be contained to the immediate Site context up to 100m, where the increase in built form would likely be evident along with the loss of the agricultural landcover. The potential effects on landscape character is however, reduced as a result of the retention of the majority of the existing boundary vegetation, along with the integration of new vegetation along the western, eastern and southern boundaries and to the north of the compound, which would reduce the visual and perceptual effects on the landscape character. The presence of existing energy infrastructure in the form of the pylons and overhead lines would further reduce the landscape effects as these form part of the existing baseline characteristics within the immediate setting of the Site.

- Beyond the immediate context, any on-site physical changes as a result of the Proposed Development would have only a small to negligible effect on the landscape character of the Study Area. These would be perceptual only.

6.3.6 Effects on views:

- The extent of large scale visual effects, where the Proposed Development would form a major alteration to key elements, features, qualities and characteristics of the view such that the baseline will be fundamentally changed, would generally be limited to Dalzell Street and NCN 72, immediately adjacent to the Site.
- Beyond this area, medium scale visual effects would arise within 100m, as the Proposed Development would become further screened from view by the intervening vegetation and landform.
- Beyond approximately 100m from the Site boundary, the Proposed Development would be increasingly only seen in glimpses due to the Site boundary vegetation and landform.

6.4 Effects on Landscape Character

6.4.1 A description for the assessed character areas is briefly summarised below, along with further observations from Site-based work. Information and detail on how landscape sensitivity, magnitude of effect and level of effects are assessed is provided in Appendix 1 Methodology.

Sub-type 5d – Urban Fringe

6.4.2 The entirety of the Site lies within Sub-type 5d - Urban Fringe, which covers the majority of the central part of the Study Area, extending northwards beyond the Study Area extent and south towards Egremont. The published character assessment describes Sub-type 5d as:

"*These agricultural landscapes have been subjected to urban and industrial influences for a long time and in many parts maintain a rural character. Field patterns remain distinct in the largely pastoral areas, often bounded by strong hedges and hedgerow trees*".

6.4.3 The published assessment identifies the following key characteristics with regards to Sub-type 5d:

- "*Long term urban influences on agricultural land;*
- *Recreation, large scale buildings and industrial estates are common;*
- *Mining and opencast coal workings are found around Keekle and Moor Row;*
- *Wooded valleys, restored woodlands and some semi-urbanised woodland provide interest*".

6.4.4 Large and medium scale effects of the Proposed Development would be limited to the Site and its immediate context, for the purposes of this report considered to be up to 100m from the Site boundary.

6.4.5 Effects on the character of Sub-type 5d beyond 100m would be considered to be more evident during the construction stage, becoming less so on completion/operation, given the small scale of the Proposed Development, and reducing further as the proposals become an established feature within the landscape and the proposed mitigation planting has established.

6.4.6 The prevailing field pattern of Sub-type 5d would remain unaffected by the proposals. The Site layout would create as smaller subdivision of a narrow strip of agricultural land and would introduce a new BESS development into the Site, bound by new and retained vegetation and perimeter fencing. This would not substantially affect the field pattern or landscape character where enclosures are typical of the landscape and where energy infrastructure is already present in the landscape.

6.4.7 The agricultural landscape would be partially affected by the loss of landcover within the Site to make way for the BESS development. This would be limited to within the Site itself, with the immediate and wider setting of the Site remaining unaffected by the Proposed Development.

6.4.8 The Proposed Development would see new built form introduced into the Site, into an area that is by definition and urban fringe landscape, where built form is a key characteristic. The pylons and overhead lines nearby to the Site also mean that energy infrastructure is a common feature of the area, already influencing landscape character and views. Scattered agricultural buildings and smaller settlements at Bigrigg, Moor Row and Cleator within the Sub-type also create an urban presence within 1km of the Site and means that the proposals would not be an uncharacteristic feature.

6.4.9 Whilst the Proposed Development would introduce a new BESS development into the landscape, the scheme would also bring opportunities to enhance some of the existing on Site landscape features, including grasslands and areas of tree planting. New native hedgerows

will also be introduced that will further aid habitat connectivity around the Site and enhance the sense of enclosure that is already a strong feature of the local landscape. This aligns to the management objectives outlined in the published character assessment that seeks to enhance traditional field boundaries, maintain a rural character and provide visual relief to urban areas.

6.4.10 The largely well contained nature of the Site, created by the combination of surrounding vegetation, landform and nearby built form, would ensure that the Proposed Development is afforded a good degree of physical and visual separation from the surrounding landscape, both across Sub-type 5d and the wider Study Area.

6.4.11 With reference Appendix 3, Sub-type 5d – Urban Fringe is assessed as being of **Community** value, with a susceptibility of **Medium / Low** to the type of development proposed. The overall sensitivity for Sub-type 5d is assessed as **Low**.

Construction Phase Effects on Sub-type 5d - Urban Fringe

6.4.12 It is acknowledged that the Proposed Development would introduce new construction activities into the Site which is currently in use as agricultural land and undeveloped. However, it is also noted that the Site is already influenced by urbanising features such as Dalzell Street, residential and agricultural built form, pylons and overhead lines within the surrounding areas.

6.4.13 The construction works would affect the physical characteristics of a very small area within Sub-type 5d, limited to the Site and its immediate setting. For the most part, the construction works would be afforded a degree of containment by the vegetated Site boundaries and localised landform, particularly in views beyond Dalzell Street to the west. Although the construction works would have a direct effect on the Sub-type, this would be over the short term and limited to the Site and its immediate setting. Construction activities would only affect the physical features of the Site itself, retaining and safeguarding the majority of existing boundary vegetation and landform, while features within the wider Sub-type would remain unaffected. There would be a noticeable change in character within the Site and its immediate setting, resulting in a **Moderate / Slight** magnitude of effect on the landscape character of the Site as a result of the large scale of change over a limited geographical extent and short-term duration. This would result an effect of **Moderate / Minor Adverse** during construction.

6.4.14 Beyond the Site and its immediate setting within Sub-type 5d, effects as a result of the Proposed Development would be perceptual only. The magnitude of effect on the wider landscape of Sub-type 5d during construction is considered to be **Negligible** due to the negligible scale of change over a limited extent and short-term duration. This would result in an overall effect of **Negligible Adverse** for the wider Sub-type.

Early Operational Phase Effect on Sub-type 5d - Urban Fringe

6.4.15 On completion, the Proposed Development would introduce a new BESS development into the Site, altering the landscape character of the Site and its immediate setting. There would be highly localised effects on the character of this part of Sub-type 5d, with the completed development representing a new component in the landscape. The existing boundary vegetation and landform, in combination with the proposed landscaping would provide some softening to the BESS compound, as well as providing some localised benefits to the overall tree and hedgerow resource of the local landscape. However, there would still be a substantial change to the characteristics of the Site.

6.4.16 At Year 1, the magnitude of effect is considered to be **Moderate / Slight** due to the large scale of change over a limited geographic extent and medium-term duration, resulting in an overall effect of **Moderate / Minor Adverse** on the Site and its immediate setting within Sub-type 5d.

6.4.17 Within the wider landscape of Sub-type 5d, the Proposed Development would introduce new built components into the landscape that would occupy only a small proportion of the Sub-type. Changes to the character of the landscape receptor would be highly localised and well contained, set within a landscape already influenced by residential, agricultural and energy infrastructure. New vegetation along the Site boundaries would be introduced to strengthen and enhance the on-site vegetation resource, providing habitat links to wider ecological assets. While the proposed landscaping would provide localised benefits to the scheme, at the early operational phase they would not yet have matured enough to provide any substantial screening or landscape enhancements. The changes to the landscape within the BESS compound would be long term, while the proposed mitigation planting would represent a permanent change that would remain beyond the decommissioning of the BESS development. The magnitude of effect on the wider character of Sub-type 5d is considered to be **Negligible** as a result of the negligible scale of change over a limited geographic extent. The overall effect is assessed as **Negligible Adverse** in the medium-term.

Later Operational Phase Effect on Sub-type 5d - Urban Fringe

6.4.18 By the later operational phase and once the proposed mitigation planting has established and begun to mature, this would result in a small improvement to the overall vegetation cover of Sub-type 5d which in turn would help to integrate the Proposed Development into the landscape. The proposed BESS development would remain a long-term feature in the landscape but would be afforded a good degree of containment from the wider landscape by the maturing vegetation and localised landform. The proposed tree and hedgerow planting would help to enclose and contain the Proposed Development further from the majority of the wider landscape and would help to integrate it into its setting. The magnitude of effect for the Site and its immediate setting is considered to reduce to **Slight** due to the medium scale of change over a limited extent and long-term duration, resulting in an overall effect of **Minor Adverse**.

6.4.19 Within the wider landscape of Sub-type 5d during the later operational phase, the proposed mitigation planting within the Site would have had time to establish and begin to mature, resulting in a small improvement to the vegetation cover of the Sub-type. The magnitude of effect on the landscape character of the wider Sub-type would remain as **Negligible**, however the maturing vegetation would represent a permanent beneficial change in the context of the wider landscape. It is considered that that the overall level of effect, on the wider landscape character of Sub-type 5d, would be **Negligible Neutral** in the long-term.

Visual Receptor Groups

6.4.20 This assessment focuses on effects on groups of visual receptors, incorporating effects on views from publicly accessible locations within the Study Area. Effects on private residential amenity are a separate matter, and as set out at Section 2.5 above do not merit detailed assessment in respect of this development.

Public Rights of Way Network

PRoWs within 1km of the Site (Viewpoints 3 and 4)

6.4.21 This receptor group includes users of the localised PRoW network within 1km of the Site for which there is potential for intervisibility with the Proposed Development as illustrated on Figure 4. Users of the PRoW network are considered to be high / medium sensitivity receptors due to their community value and high susceptibility.

6.4.22 PRoWs within 1km of the Site that are identified as having potential visibility of the Proposed Development are PRoWs 403005, to the north of the Site, and 406015 to the south west of the Site. Both routes extend through the agricultural landscape that surrounds the Site.

6.4.23 Views from these PRoWs are afforded a degree of containment from the intervening hedgerow vegetation and localised landform along the boundaries of the Site and in the adjacent fields. Views from these routes are already influenced by Dalzell Street which forms a main link between Egremont and Moor Row, residential built form and the pylons and overhead lines.

Construction Phase Effects on PRoWs within 1km of the Site

6.4.24 During construction, receptors using both routes have potential to view taller elements of the construction activities, such as cranes, above the intervening vegetation, along the western and northern boundaries. While these would introduce new urbanising features into the views, they would be short-term and lower elements would be afforded a greater degree of screening by the intervening vegetation and landform. Receptors would be aware of construction activities on the Site but they would be viewed in the context of the urbanising features in the surrounding landscape, albeit closer to the receptor's location. The magnitude of effects is assessed as **Moderate / Slight** due to the medium scale of change over a limited extent and short-term duration, resulting in an overall effect of **Moderate Adverse**.

Early Operational Phase Effects on PRoWs within 1km of the Site

6.4.25 On completion, it is considered that a large proportion of the Proposed Development would be screened from these PRoWs, leaving only the tops of the proposed infrastructure visible through and above the intervening hedgerows, which already screens views towards the internal parts of the Site. Where the proposed vegetation may be visible to the north and west of the BESS compound, this would not yet have matured enough to provide additional screening to the proposals but would soften views to a degree. The ZTV at Figure 4 indicates that only a very limited extent of both routes would be likely to experience views towards the completed development, which reduces the overall effect on these receptors. At Year 1 of operation, the magnitude of effect would be **Slight** due to the medium / small scale of change over a limited extent and medium-term duration, resulting in an effect of **Moderate / Minor Adverse**.

Later Operational Phase Effects on PRoWs within 1km of the Site

6.4.26 By the later operational phase and once the proposed landscaping to the west and north of the BESS compound has started to mature, this would provide some additional screening and softening to the tops of the Proposed Development and would help to integrate the proposals into their vegetated setting. The magnitude of effect would reduce to **Slight / Negligible** for receptors along both routes, resulting in an overall effect of **Minor Adverse** in the long-term.

Settlements

6.4.27 This receptor group includes receptors within and on the edge of the nearby settlements of Cleator and Cleator Moor, represented by Viewpoints 5 and 6. Receptors within settlements are considered to be of a high / medium sensitivity due to their community value and high susceptibility.

Cleator (Viewpoint 5)

6.4.28 The settlement of Cleator lies approximately 600m east and south east of the Site at its nearest point. The ZTV at Figure 4 indicates that the Proposed Development would be screened from the majority of the settlement by intervening vegetation and landform, however there are a small number of residential properties (approximately 20 to 25) on the northern edge of the village who are likely to experience visibility of the proposals.

Construction Phase Effects on Cleator

6.4.29 From here, there would be filtered views towards the taller construction elements, set back behind the intervening rural landscape and established elevated vegetation that characterises the route of NCN 72 along the eastern Site boundary. Views from the settlement edge would predominantly be limited to rear gardens within a recently completed extension to the village. The new properties would also help to screen views towards properties along Main Street to the east.

6.4.30 The magnitude of effect for the construction phase would be **Negligible** due to the negligible scale of change over a localised extent and short-term duration, resulting in a **Minor / Negligible Adverse** effect.

Early and Later Operational Phase Effects on Cleator

6.4.31 On completion, the Proposed Development would be largely screened by the intervening vegetation and landform. There is potential for glimpses towards the tops of the proposals through wintering vegetation, however these would be heavily filtered by the established vegetation along the route of NCN 72 and would form a very small component in the view. At both Years 1 and 15 of operation, the magnitude of effect would be **Negligible** due to the negligible scale of change over a localised extent, resulting in an overall effect of **Negligible Neutral** in the medium and long-term.

Cleator Moor (Viewpoint 6)

6.4.32 The settlement of Cleator Moor lies approximately 1.3km north east of the Site at its nearest point. The ZTV at Figure 4 indicates that the Proposed Development is likely to be visible from a number of properties on the south western edge of the settlement and that views would be screened from the wider settlement by intervening vegetation and built form.

Construction Phase Effects on Cleator Moor

6.4.33 Receptors on the edge of Cleator Moor have the potential to experience heavily filtered views towards the taller construction elements within a very small proportion of the well vegetated view, set back behind the intervening rural landscape and established field boundary vegetation from over 1km away. Existing views from the edge of the settlement towards the Site are characterised by numerous urbanising features which include residential development at Moor Row, wind turbines, pylons and overhead lines that form prominent features on the

skyline. In some instances, sheds and containers are located on the settlement edge, often in disrepair, presenting visually detracting features close to the receptor's location. Any glimpses towards the construction activities would be seen in this context and, given the intervening distance, are likely to be barely perceptible in the views.

6.4.34 The magnitude of effect for the construction phase would be **Negligible** due to the negligible scale of change over a localised extent and short-term duration, resulting in a **Minor / Negligible Adverse** effect.

Early and Later Operational Phase Effects on Cleator Moor

6.4.35 On completion, the Proposed Development would be largely screened by the intervening vegetation and landform. There is potential for glimpses towards the tops of the proposals through wintering vegetation, however these would be heavily filtered by the established vegetation within the intervening agricultural fields, and would form a very small component in the view, further softened by the maturing mitigation planting to the north and east of the BESS compound. At both Years 1 and 15 of operation, the magnitude of effect would remain at **Negligible** due to the negligible scale of change over a localised extent, however the proposed planting would improve the visible vegetation structure of the view, albeit only slightly. The overall effect is assessed as **Negligible Neutral** in the medium and long-term.

Key Routes

6.4.36 This receptor group contains users of key routes within the Study Area, represented by viewpoints 1, 2, 5 and 7. Motorists on main roads are considered to be low sensitivity receptors, while users of country lanes and National Cycle Network routes are considered to be high / medium sensitivity receptors.

Roads

Dalzell Street (Viewpoint 2)

6.4.37 Dalzell Street is located immediately west of the Site and forms the western boundary to the Proposed Development. This rural lane runs broadly north to south between Egremont and Moor Row and would provide access to the Proposed Development.

Construction Phase Effects on Dalzell Street

6.4.38 From here, views towards the construction activities would be evident given the close range of the route to the Site. Vegetation along the Site's western boundary is largely absent at present, limited to several small trees and a grass verge. The Site is set behind a timber post and wire fence and field gate which afford clear views through to the internal landcover of the Site. Views from Dalzell Street would be fleeting and seen obliquely to the receptor's direction of travel for a very brief section of the road, but construction activities would be noticeable.

6.4.39 During the construction phase, the magnitude of effect would be **Moderate** due to the large scale of change over a limited extent of the route and short-term duration, resulting in an overall effect of **Moderate Adverse**.

Early and Later Operational Phase Effects on Dalzell Street

6.4.40 On completion, there is potential for fleeting and transient views through and above the newly planted native hedgerow and trees along the western Site boundary towards the BESS

compound, which would introduce a new urbanising feature into these close range views. Given the largely autonomous nature of the Proposed Development, the BESS compound would be a static feature in views with limited additional human activity.

6.4.41 At Year 1 of operation, the magnitude of effect is expected to remain at **Moderate** due to the large scale of change over a limited extent in the medium-term. The proposed mitigation planting would not yet have established or matured to provide any additional softening to the proposals. The overall effect is assessed as **Moderate Adverse**.

6.4.42 By Year 15, once the proposed native hedgerow and trees have established and begin maturing, these will provide a degree of softening to the Proposed Development. There is potential for some incidental loss of views towards the Lake District National Park due to the maturing vegetation. The BESS infrastructure would remain visible in transient glimpses, given the proximity of the route to the proposals, however it is considered that the magnitude of effect would reduce to **Slight**, resulting in an overall effect of **Moderate / Minor Adverse** in the long term.

Cleator Gate (Viewpoint 5)

6.4.43 Cleator Gate lies approximately 700m east of the Site at its nearest point and forms a rural lane between Cleator and Cleator Moor.

Construction Phase Effects on Cleator Gate

6.4.44 From here, views towards the construction activities would be partially screened and heavily filtered by the intervening vegetation along the River Keekle corridor in the valley and the established field boundary vegetation. The elevated and vegetated route of NCN 72 is visible in views and also aids in containing the proposals from the road. Views from Cleator Gate would be fleeting and seen obliquely to the receptor's direction of travel for a brief section of the road. Taller elements of the construction activities, such as cranes, would be noticeable above the intervening vegetation and landform, seen in the context of the scattered buildings, telegraph poles, pylons and overhead lines that characterise views towards the Site.

6.4.45 During the construction phase, the magnitude of effect would be **Slight / Negligible** due to the small scale of change over a localised extent of the route and short-term duration, resulting in an overall effect of **Minor Adverse**.

Early and Later Operational Phase Effects on Cleator Gate

6.4.46 On completion, the Proposed Development would be largely screened by the intervening vegetation and landform. There is potential for glimpses towards the tops of the proposals through wintering vegetation, however these would be heavily filtered by the established vegetation within the intervening agricultural fields, and would form a very small component in the transient view, further softened by the maturing mitigation planting to the north and east of the BESS compound. At both Years 1 and 15 of operation, the magnitude of effect would reduce to **Negligible** due to the negligible scale of change over a localised extent of the route, however the proposed planting would improve the visible vegetation structure of the view, albeit only slightly. The overall effect is assessed as **Negligible Neutral** in the medium and long-term.

Recreational Routes

National Cycle Network Route 72 (Viewpoint 1)

6.4.47 NCN 72 lies immediately east of the Site and forms the eastern boundary to the Proposed Development. The route is located at the top of a localised bund and forms an elevated route in the vicinity of the Site. NCN 72 provides a combined online / offline cycle route between Egremont to the south and beyond, and northwards towards Moor Row where it meets NCN 7.

6.4.48 The route is well vegetated where it forms the eastern Site boundary, however gaps in the vegetation allow for views east and west across the agricultural landscape, with intermittent clear views towards the internal part of the Site. There are views towards urbanising features which form a key component in the adjacent landscapes, including pylons and overhead lines to the west and residential and agricultural built form to the east.

Construction Phase Effects on National Cycle Network Route 72

6.4.49 During construction, views towards the construction activities would be evident given the close range of the route to the Site. Construction activities would be viewed through gaps in the existing vegetation from an elevated location. Clear views would be experienced over a limited extent of the route (approximately 170m), however beyond this, any effects on the route would be perceptual and views towards the construction activities would be screened or heavily filtered.

6.4.50 During the construction phase, the magnitude of effect would be **Moderate** due to the large scale of change over a limited extent of the route and short-term duration, resulting in an overall effect of **Moderate Adverse**.

Early and Later Operational Phase Effects on National Cycle Network Route 72

6.4.51 On completion, the Proposed Development would be evident through gaps in the vegetation along the route, albeit would be seen in the context of the surrounding urbanising features. Activity within the Site would be limited to occasional maintenance visits and the for the most part, the BESS would be autonomous. The proposed landscaping to the east and north of the BESS compound would improve the vegetation resource in the view but would yet have established or matured to provide any softening to the proposals, and given the elevated nature of the route, the BESS would remain evident in views for a limited proportion of NCN 72. The magnitude of effect would be **Moderate** due to the large scale of change over a limited extent of the route and medium-term duration, resulting in an overall effect of **Moderate Adverse**.

6.4.52 At Year 15, once the proposed landscaping has established and begun to mature, this would help to soften views towards the BESS compound. However, the elevated nature of the route means that views towards the proposals would remain through and above the maturing vegetation, seen in the context of the surrounding urban features and for a limited extent of the route. It is considered that the magnitude of effect would reduce to **Slight**, due to the small scale of change over a limited extent, resulting in an overall effect of **Moderate / Minor Adverse**.

6.5 Specific viewpoints

Dent Fell (Viewpoint 8)

6.5.1 Dent Fell forms a localised high point within the Study Area, with the summit located approximately 3km east of the Site. Dent Fell lies outside of the Lake District National Park but forms a prominent landform within the setting of the designated landscape. The summit is accessed by several routes, with views from the top comprising 360 degree views towards the Cumbrian coast, agricultural landscape and scattered settlements.

Construction, Early and Later Operational Phase Effects on Dent Fell

6.5.2 Despite the prominence and long distance nature of the views, given the intervening distance, small scale of the Proposed Development and well established network of vegetation that characterises the intervening landscape, views towards the construction activities and completed development would be barely perceptible from this location. The view comprises numerous references to built form including settlements, scattered rural properties, roads and pylons in the direction of the Site, while in the wider view there are references to more prominent urban features including Sellafield, the former nuclear power station.

6.5.3 As such, the magnitude of effect at the construction, early and later operational phases is considered to be **Negligible** due to the negligible scale of change, over a limited extent. This would give rise to a **Negligible Neutral** effect in the short, medium and long-term.

6.6 Cumulative Assessment

6.6.1 Schemes that have been considered for potential cumulative effects are presented below.

Land at Woodend, Cleator (Ref: 4/22/2335/0F1)

6.6.2 The scheme is for an extension to a battery storage facility located to the south of the Proposed Development on the northern edge of Dalzell Street. This scheme would extend the existing BESS site to the south and west, introducing a new earth bund planted with native woodland, with wildflower grassland proposed on the bund slopes. This scheme was granted planning permission on 15th December 2022 and is subject to a three year implementation condition, expiring on the 15th December 2025. Whilst the scheme is not yet implemented, there is still potential for it to come forward. As such, it has been considered within the cumulative assessment.

6.6.3 Both developments lie within Sub-type 5d – Urban Fringe but when considered cumulatively, would only form a very small part of the wider Sub-type. Given the good degree of containment afforded to the cumulative site due to the existing BESS compound and adjacent substation and woodland, as well as intervening landform, the two sites do not visually interact with each other and prevents both sites being visible in the same view. As such, other than the very slight combined loss of Sub-type 5d to development, there would be no notable cumulative effects arising from these two schemes.

6.7 Conclusion

6.7.1 The Proposed Development is located along Dalzell Street between Egremont and Moor Row in Cumbria. The proposals would be small scale and afforded a good degree of containment by the combination of mature boundary vegetation, vegetation within the wider setting of the

Site and localised landform along the Site boundaries. The landscape proposals would help to integrate the Proposed Development into its setting, reinforcing the well vegetated context within which it would be located and strengthening the green infrastructure connectivity around the Site boundaries through new tree and hedgerow planting, as well as providing new pollinator friendly habitats through areas of species-rich meadow grassland.

6.7.2 The greatest effects on landscape character would be within the Site itself, introducing new BESS infrastructure, small scale buildings and an access track into an agricultural field. This would be accompanied by improvements to the overall landscape fabric including new trees, hedgerows and grassland.

6.7.3 The greatest effects on visual amenity would be limited to receptors in the immediate setting of the Site, namely motorists along Dalzell Street, whose perception of the proposals would be limited to fleeting views and receptors using NCN 72 which forms an elevated route along the eastern Site boundary. Visual effects would be highly localised and the proposed mitigation planting would soften views towards the Proposed Development in the long-term. Within the wider setting, the majority of views would be screened or heavily filtered in the long-term.

6.7.4 Effects upon Sub-type 5d - Urban Fringe are considered to be **Moderate / Minor Adverse** for the Site and its setting at completion, reducing to **Negligible Adverse** within the wider Sub-type. Once the new planting has established and begun to mature, it is assessed that effects on the Site and its setting within Sub-type 5d would reduce to **Minor Adverse**, with an overall effect of **Negligible Neutral** for the wider Sub-type.

6.7.5 For users of the localised PRoW network within 1km of the Site, given the high degree of containment created by the intervening vegetation and landform, effects at completion would be **Moderate / Minor Adverse**, reducing to **Minor Adverse** once the proposed mitigation planting has established and begun to mature.

6.7.6 Receptors within settlements would be limited to a small number of properties within Cleator to the east and Cleator Moor to the north east. Given the intervening vegetation cover and landform, it is considered that these receptors would experience **Negligible Neutral** effects in both the medium and long-term.

6.7.7 For road users, views would be limited to routes within close proximity to the Site, namely Dalzell Street and Cleator Gate. Receptors along Dalzell Street would experience **Moderate Adverse** effects on completion, reducing to **Moderate / Minor Adverse** in the long-term once the proposed vegetation has established. Receptors at Cleator Gate would experience **Negligible Neutral** effects at completion and in the long-term.

6.7.8 Receptors using NCN 72 along the eastern boundary of the Site would experience effects of **Moderate Adverse** on completion, reducing to **Moderate / Minor Adverse** in the long-term once the mitigation planting has established to provide a degree of softening to the proposals.

6.7.9 Views from Dent Fell are considered to be **Negligible Neutral** at all stages given the long distance nature of the view, small scale of the proposals and intervening vegetation along the Site's eastern boundary.