Ecological Impact Assessment
for
Cleator BESS

December 2025

CLEATOR BATTERY STORAGE LIMITED
C/O Gresham House Asset Management Limited
5 New Street Square
London
EC4A 3TW

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Contents

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Summary

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and BNG Baseline was undertaken on the active Cleator Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Site at Cleator, Cumbria, on the 12th November 2025. The survey work and subsequent reporting have been carried out on the instruction of Gresham House in the context of the preparation of a planning application to update and replace the equipment within the existing Site, and extend slightly to the west and south.

The Site is located at an approximate central grid reference NY 01045 13016, between Cleator and Woodend, in Cumbria.

Summary table	
Habitat Assessment	The Site consists of an active BESS compound, which is fenced on all sides, and a small area of bund to the west and south. Very small areas of grassland bund will be lost to the development, the remainder lies on already developed, hardstanding within the original compound.
Biodiversity Net Gain	A Biodiversity Net Gain Metric and Report will be completed separately.
Designated Sites	Two designated sites were found within 2km of the Site boundary. These were Clints Quarry SSSI and Nature Reserve and River Ehen (Ennerdale Water to Keekle Confluence) SSSI and SAC. Clints Quarry lies 0.4km south west of the Site, no effects are likely as a result of the development. River Ehen lies closer, at 0.13km south east of the Site. Given the Site is already an active BESS site and will only be subject to augmentation and slight extension, it is unlikely that any effects will occur on the River Ehen SSSI.
Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS)	No INNS were recorded during the survey.
Bats	No potential roost sites are present within the Site boundary, bats may utilise surrounding habitats for foraging and commuting. Habitats on Site are considered low value for bats.
Great Crested Newts	No ponds are present within 250m of the Site, therefore this species is not considered further within this assessment.
Birds	Habitats on Site are negligible to low value to nesting and foraging birds.
Reptiles	Habitats on Site are considered low value for reptiles.
Badger	No evidence of badger use was recorded, and no setts were observed. Habitats on Site are of low value to badger.
Otter and Water vole	No habitats present on or adjacent to Site therefore species not considered further.
White-clawed crayfish and Pearl mussel	No habitats present on or adjacent to Site therefore species not considered further.
Assessment of Effects	The development may lead to the following effects: • The loss of low distinctiveness habitat; bare ground; and

	• The disturbance through lighting during construction, to nocturnal species (bats, badger) utilising off-site features. • Harm to reptiles or other amphibians during Site clearance.
Mitigation	• No new lighting should be installed during construction, or, if it is required, it should be directed away from adjacent habitats such as adjacent grassland. • No trenches or holes will be left open overnight without a suitable means of escape for small mammals. A ramp should be created at the edge of the trench, to allow any animals that may become trapped to escape.; this should be at least 300mm in width and angled at no greater than 45°. • All conduits will be capped when not in use. • The working area will be checked for the presence of reptiles or other amphibians prior to Site clearance by a suitably qualified ecologist.

1 Introduction

1.1 Instruction Details

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was undertaken on the currently active Cleator Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Site (hereby referred to as the 'Site') at Cleator, Cumbria, on the 12th November 2025.

The survey work and subsequent reporting has been carried out on the instruction of Gresham House in the context of the preparation of a of a planning application to update and replace the equipment within the existing Site.

Survey work was completed within the Site boundary, as defined within the red line boundary as detailed in Appendix A.

1.2 Development Proposal

The proposal is in relation to the replacement of battery storage units, within an existing and active Site, with a small extension into the bund surrounding the fenced area. The battery units will be changed for different battery units, and further battery units will be installed within Site.

1.3 Site Description

The Site is located at an approximate central grid reference NY 01045 13016, between Cleator and Woodend within Cumbria.

The Site is currently an active BESS, surrounded by a fence line. Within the fence line lies the current battery units. The proposed development lies within the existing fenced area.

1.4 Objective of Survey and Subsequent Reporting

The objectives of the survey were:

- To survey and determine the ecological value of the Site according to the JNCC, (2010), Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey - a technique for environmental audit and CIEEM (2018) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland in order to inform an impact assessment and mitigation strategy;
- To identify the use or potential use of the Site by protected species in order to inform an impact assessment and mitigation strategy;
- To identify how protected species are / may be using the Site in order to assess its functionality to the local populations;
- To recommend survey work at an appropriate level and to revise these recommendations as data collected at the Site is analysed and interpreted;
- To consider impacts to all habitats immediately adjacent to the Site;
- To consider potential impacts to local statutory and non-statutory sites either within 2km or for European level designations, a buffer deemed as appropriate by the relevant Planning Authority;
- To assess the presence of ponds within 250m and advise the client of any access requirements which they must attempt to secure if great crested newts are present within the area;
- To ensure that mitigation, where necessary, is designed to ensure that no protected species or important ecological habitat are harmed during Site works and the local conservation status of any species is not significantly affected post-development; and
- To provide mitigation measures which are deliverable, agreed with the client and that are proportionate to the conclusions of the survey work undertaken at the Site.

2 Legislation and Policy Guidance

2.1 Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) outlines the government's policies, inclusion those relating to the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment (Chapter 15), in line with existing wildlife legislation, through the planning process. Planning authorities must take into account the principles detailed within the document when preparing local plans and assessing local development applications.

The following key principles are included within the NPPF which are relevant to ecology and nature conservation:

Habitats and Biodiversity

To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and steppingstones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and

b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative Site with less harmful impacts),

b) adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;

c) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;

d) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and

e) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.

The following should be given the same protection as habitats sites:

a) potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation;

b) listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and

c) sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.

The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.

2.2 Species and Habitats Legislation

2.2.1 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) consolidates all various amendments made to The Conservation (Natural Habitats & c.) Regulations 1994, in respect of England and Wales. The 1994 Regulations transposed the EC Habitats Directive 1992 (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora) into national law.

Annexes I and II of the Habitats Directive list (respectively) habitats and species for which member states are required to establish and monitor SACs. The EC Birds Directive provides a similar network of sites (SPAs) for all rare or vulnerable species listed in Annex I and all regularly occurring migratory species, with particular focus on wetlands of international importance.

Together with SACs, SPAs form a network of pan-European protected areas known as 'NATURA 2000' sites.

The Habitats Regulations also make it an offence (subject to exceptions) to deliberately capture, kill, disturb, or trade on the animals listed in Schedule 2, or pick, cut, uproot, destroy or trade in the plants listed in Schedule 4.

2.2.2 The Convention on Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention 1979)

The Convention on Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention 1979)

The Convention on Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention 1979) aims to ensure conservation and protection of all wild plant and animal species and their natural habitats (listed in Appendices I and II of the Convention), to increase cooperation between contracting parties, and to afford special protection to the most vulnerable or threatened species (including migratory species).

2.2.3 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA 1981)

The WCA is the primary UK mechanism for statutory site designation (Sites of Special Scientific Interest [SSSIs]) and the protection of individual species listed under Schedule 1,2,5 and 8 of the Act, each subject to varying levels of protection.

2.2.4 The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

This legislation strengthens the provision of the 1981 WCA (as amended), both in respect of statutory sites such as SSSIs and protected species. It also places a statutory obligation on Local Authorities and other public bodies to further conservation of biodiversity in the exercise of their functions, thus providing a statutory basis to the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) process, which began in 1994. Section 74 of the Act lists the habitat types and species of principal importance in England. The UK Biodiversity action Plan has now been superseded by the 'UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework' (July 2012), however, many of the species and habitats in the UK and local BAPs have not been updated and are still considered relevant to date.

2.2.5 Hedgerow Regulations 1997

The Hedgerow Regulations 1997 are intended to protect important countryside hedges for destruction of damage in England and Wales.

2.2.6 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

The 'NERC' Act makes provision in respect of biodiversity, pesticides harmful to wildlife, protection of birds and invasive non-native species. Section 40 of the act also introduces a new duty on public bodies to have regards to the purpose of conserving biodiversity in the exercise of their functions.

2.3 Relevant Protected Species Legislation Potentially Relating to the Site

2.3.1 Birds

All bird species receive protection from killing, injury or taking from the wild any wild bird or their eggs. Bird's nests are protected while being built and when in use.

A number of bird species are also listed on Schedule 1 of the WCA (1981) and receive the above protection as well as extended protection which includes intentional or reckless disturbance of Schedule 1 listed species which are nesting or rearing young.

2.3.2 Bats (all species)

All European species of bats are listed on Annex IV of the EC Habitats Directive as being in need of "strict protection". This is implemented in Britain under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). All British bats are included on Schedule 5 of the WCA 1981 (as amended) and the whole of Section 9 of The Act applies to European bat species. In summary, the above legislation collectively prohibits the following:

- Deliberately or recklessly capturing, injuring, taking or killing of a bat;
- Deliberately or recklessly harassing a bat;
- Intentionally of recklessly disturbing a bat in its place of rest (roost), or which is used for protection or rearing young;
- Deliberately or recklessly damaging, destroying or obstructing access to any resting place or breeding area used by bats;
- Deliberately or recklessly disturbing a bat in any way which is likely to significantly affect the local population of the species, either through affecting their distribution or abundance, or affect any individual's ability to survive, reproduce or rear young; and
- Possession or advertisement/sale/exchange of a bat (dead or alive) or any part of a bat.

In England, licences are issued by Natural England for any actions that may compromise the protection of a European protected species, including bats, under the Habitats Regulations 2010 (as amended). This includes all developments, regardless of whether they require planning permission.

Bats are also protected by the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996 and selected species are listed on the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (BFS).

2.3.3 Great Crested Newt

Great crested newts are protected under European and British law, having the same level of protection as bats (see above). Licences are issued by Natural England for any action that may compromise the protection of these species, under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended). This includes all developments, regardless of whether or not they require planning permission.

The species is also listed on the UK BFS.

2.3.4 Badger

Badger are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, which makes it an offence to:

- Knowingly kill, capture, injure or disturb any individual;
- Intentionally damage or destroy a badger sett, or any part thereof;
- Obstruct access to an area which is used for breeding, resting or shelter; and
- Disturb a badger while it is using any place used for breeding, resting or shelter.

The species is also protected by the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996.

2.3.5 Reptiles

Common reptiles (grass snake, adder, common lizard and slow-worm) receive partial protection under the WCA 1981 (as amended), which makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally or recklessly kill or injure these species; and
- Sell, offer or advertise for sale, possess or transport for the purposes of sale these animals, whether alive or dead, or any part thereof.

In addition, smooth snake and sand lizard are listed on both the WCA 1981 and the Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations 2010 (as amended), which makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally or recklessly kill or injure these species;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage or destroy any place used by these species for shelter, protection, resting or breeding; and
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any place used for shelter, protection, resting or breeding by these species.

All six species of native reptile are listed on the UK BFS.

3 Methods

Achieving the objectives outlined in Section 1.4 comprise a desktop study followed by a Site visit and appropriate survey effort.

3.1 Desk-top Study

The desk study was undertaken by referring to the following data sources:

- Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre;
- Aerial mapping, including historic mapping where available;
- Ordnance Survey maps;
- The Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website; and
- In-house knowledge of the local area.

3.2 Field Survey

Field surveys were completed of the Site in order to obtain detailed baseline information regarding the habitats and protected species present. The field survey was undertaken by Taxus Ecology Limited ecologists Hannah Haggon and David White, both full members of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). Further details on qualifications and experience can be provided on request.

3.2.1 UKHab Habitat Survey

The UKHab Habitat survey was undertaken on 12th November 2025 which involved identifying and mapping the dominant habitat types within the survey boundary, following the UKHab Habitat survey methodology. Dominant plant species were noted, as were uncommon species indicative of particular habitat types. In addition, any non-native invasive species present within and adjacent to the Site were also recorded.

During the survey a note was made of any field signs indicating the presence of protected species and the location of these signs was mapped. A record was also made of any other animal species identified within the Site or adjacent areas during the survey. The results of the UKHab habitat survey are shown in Appendix A.

3.3 Protected and UKBAP Species

3.3.1 Bats

All survey work and assessment was undertaken following guidance within the Bat Conservation Trust Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines (4th Ed, 2023). An assessment of the potential value of the Site for bats was undertaken.

3.3.2 Great Crested Newt

The annual cycle of an adult amphibian generally comprises only a short period during the breeding season spent in aquatic habitats. The remainder of the year is spent in terrestrial habitat. Therefore, where ponds are present in the wider area, the Site was assessed for its suitability to support amphibians in their terrestrial phase.

3.3.3 Birds

Trees and buildings were inspected for signs of use by nesting birds. A general assessment of species likely to breed or overwinter on Site according to habitats present on Site and in the surrounding area was produced.

3.3.4 Reptiles

In the absence of a more recent consensus on survey methods, all survey works were undertaken following the Froglife Advice Sheet 10 in order to assess the Sites suitability to support reptile species. No specific survey was undertaken, but a habitats assessment was carried out for the Site and adjacent habitats.

3.3.5 Badger

Survey methods were adapted from recommendations of the Scottish Badgers: Surveying for Badgers and Good Practice Guidelines (2018) and The Mammal Society, Publication 9 – Surveying Badgers.

The suitability of the Site for badger was determined during the survey, during which a note was made of any field signs recorded such as tracks, latrines, hair (which is often caught on fences), footprints, snuffle holes, bedding, trails or setts.

3.3.6 Biodiversity Framework/Other Species

During the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal habitats of value to UKBAP or priority species were identified during the survey.

3.4 Assessment Methodology

In order to determine the value of the habitats and species found through the surveys detailed above, the baseline and survey results were assessed against the criteria developed by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). These criteria are outlined in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Guidance for Determining Nature Conservation Value of Specific Features

Value of Feature	Key Examples
International	An internationally designated site or candidate site (SPA, pSPA, SAC, cSAC, Ramsar site, Biogenetic Reserve) or an area which meets the designation criteria for such sites. Internationally significant and viable areas of a habitat type listed in Annexe 1 of the Habitats Directive or smaller areas of such habitat, which are essential to maintain the viability of a larger whole. Any regularly occurring, globally threatened species. A regularly occurring population of an internationally important species, which is threatened or rare in the UK, of uncertain conservation status. A regularly occurring nationally significant population/number of any internationally important species.
National	A nationally designated Site (e.g. SSSI, NNR) or a discrete area which meets the published selection criteria for national designation (e.g. SSSI selection guidelines) irrespective of whether or not it has yet been notified. A viable area of a UK BAP priority habitat or smaller areas of such habitat which are essential to maintain the viability of a larger whole. A regularly occurring significant number/population of a nationally important species e.g. listed on the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). A regularly occurring population of nationally important species that is threatened or rare in the county or region. A feature identified as being of critical importance in the UK BAP/Scottish Biodiversity List.

Value of Feature	Key Examples
Regional/County	Viable areas of key habitat identified in the Regional or County BAP or smaller areas of such a habitat, which are essential to maintain the viability of the larger whole. Regional/County significant and viable areas of key habitat identified as being of regional value in the appropriate English Nature (now Natural England) Natural Area. A regularly occurring significant population/number of any important species important at a regional/county level. Any regularly occurring, locally significant population of a species which is listed in a Regional/County BFS on account of its regional rarity or localisation. Sites of conservation importance that exceed the district selection criteria but fall short of SSSI selection guidelines.
District/City/Borough	Areas of habitat identified in a District/City/Borough BAP or in the relevant Natural Area profile. Sites that the designation authority has determined meet the published ecological selection criteria for designation, including Local Nature Reserves selected on District/City/Borough ecological criteria. Sites/features that are scarce within the District/City/Borough or which appreciably enrich the District/City/Borough habitat resource. A diverse and/or ecologically valuable hedgerow network. A population of a species that is listed in a District/City/Borough BAP because of its rarity in the locality or in the relevant Natural Area profile because of its regional rarity or localisation.
Parish/Local	Areas identified in a Local BAP or the relevant natural area profile. Sites/features which are scarce in the locality or which are considered to appreciably enrich the habitat resource within the local context, e.g. species-rich hedgerows. Local Nature Reserves selected on Parish/Local ecological criteria. Significant numbers/population of a locally important species e.g. one which is listed on the Local BAP. Any species, populations or habitats of local importance.
Low	Habitats of moderate to low diversity which support a range of locally and nationally common species, the loss of which can be easily mitigated.

3.5 Constraints and Limitations

The survey was undertaken at a sub-optimal time of year for habitat surveys. However, habitats on Site were straightforward and it is unlikely that a re-assessment in spring or summer would change the conclusions within this report.

4 Baseline Conditions

This section summarises the information acquired through desk studies and field surveys. Site photographs are provided in Appendix B.

4.1 Desk-top Study

Statutory designated sites of international and national importance for their ecological interest were identified within 2km of the Site, through the Government's 'MAGIC' website on 1st December 2025. Records of designated sites, as well as protected and notable species recorded within 2km were requested from Rotherham Biological Records Centre – results are awaited.

4.1.1 Designated Sites

The following statutory designated sites were shown within 2km of the Site, using MAGIC:

- Clints Quarry SSSI and Nature Reserve – 0.4km south west of the Site; and
- River Ehen (Ennerdale Water to Keekle Confluence) SSSI and SAC – 0.15km southeast of the Site.

Non-statutory site recorded from CBDC include:

- Longlands Lake CWS - <0.1km east of the Site, designated for its aquatic, grassland and woodland habitats;
- River Ehen Ponds CWS – 0.7km south of the Site;
- Clints Quarry LGS and SIS – 0.4km south west of the Site; and
- Orebank House LGS – 0.15km south west of the Site.

4.1.2 Protected and Notable Species

Protected and notable species recorded within 2km of the Site include:

- Amphibians – great crested newt - closest record 0.4km from Site and common toad;
- Mammals – Otter – closest record 0.2km from the Site within the River Ehen, badger – 0.4km from Site and red squirrel. *Myotis* bat, Daubenton's bat, Whiskered bat, noctule, common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle. Clostes bat records are from Longlands Lake to the east of Site.
- Reptiles – slow-worm and common lizard.

4.2 UKHab Habitat Survey

Photographs of the Site are detailed in Appendix B.

4.2.1 Habitats

The Site consists of a fenced compound, which consists of compacted hardcore over weed membrane, with small concrete foundations beneath existing battery units. Very small amounts of vegetation is growing through the weed membrane, consisting of *Holcus Lanatus* (Yorkshire fog), however, the majority of this vegetation was dead. A grassland bund is present around the Site, with some small scrub/trees planted to the east and south sides.

The bund sides which fall within the fenceline include the following species: *Ranunculus repens* (Creeping Buttercup), *Arrhenatherum e*latius (False Oat-grass), *Rumex acetosa* (Common sorrel), *Plantago lanceolata* (Ribwort Plantain), *Poa* sp., *Dactylis glomerata* (Cock's-foot), *Cirsium arvense* (Creeping Thistle), *Achillea millefolium* (Yarrow), *Cirsium vulgare* (Spear Thistle), *Prunella vulgaris* (Selfheal), *Leontodon hispidus* (Rough Hawkbit), *Vicia* sp., *Chamaenerion angustifolium* (Rosebay

Willowherb), *Taraxacum* spp. (Dandelions), *Trifolium repens* (White Clover), *Holcus lanatus* (Yorkshire-fog), *Geranium* sp. and *Ranunculus acris* (Meadow Buttercup).

The Bund around the outside of the fenceline, on the bund created when the site was constructed, consists of the following species: *Cirsium arvense* (Creeping Thistle), *Agrostis capillaris* (Common Bent), *Holcus lanatus* (Yorkshire-fog), *Juncus effusus* (Soft-rush), *Urtica dioica* (Common Nettle), *Tussilago farfara* (Colt's-foot), *Ranunculus repens* (Creeping Buttercup), *Trifolium repens* (White Clover), *Taraxacum* spp. (Dandelions), *Vicia* sp. (Vetch sp.). Young scrub/trees are present within this area, including the following species: *Crataegus monogyna* (Hawthorn), *Ilex aquifolium* (Holly), *Quercus robur* (Pedunculate Oak) and *Betula* sp. (Birch sp.). A patch of dense *Rubus fruticosus* (Bramble) is present to the north, outside of the fenceline.

4.3 Protected and Notable Species

4.3.1 Bats

No potential bat roosts were recorded during the survey. The main compound area is hard core or built on and considered negligible for foraging or commuting bats. The bund around the Site is grassland, providing small areas of foraging habitats for bats. CBDC provided records of *Myotis* bat, Daubenton's bat, Whiskered bat, noctule, common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle within 2km of the Site.

4.3.2 Great Crested Newt

No evidence of great crested newts was recorded during the survey. The hardstanding across the majority of the Site is considered negligible to great crested newts. A single pond is present within 250m of the Site, however, this lies on the other side of the River Ehen and therefore commuting newts are unlikely to cross the river and move into the Site. It is therefore considered unlikely that great crested newts would be present within the bund habitats on site and the species is not considered further within this assessment. CBDC provided records of GCN, the majority were associated with Clints Quarry 0.4km from the Site. Most recent records were from 2011.

4.3.3 Birds

No evidence of nesting birds was recorded during the survey, however, the survey was undertaken outside of the breeding bird season. The main compound is considered negligible to nesting birds, lacking any suitable nesting habitats. The bund habitats within and around the fenced compound have the potential to support nesting birds.

4.3.4 Reptiles

No evidence indicating the presence of reptiles was recorded during the survey. The grassland bunds may support reptiles, if a population is present within the area, however, the Site is quite isolated away from other suitable habitats, with agricultural land to the north and east, a road to the south and higher value habitats present along the River Ehen, approximately 150m to the south west. CBDC provided single records of slow-worm and common lizard, through these are considered historic being from 1988 and 1995, respectively.

4.3.5 Badger

No evidence of badger was recorded during the survey. The main compound is considered negligible for badger, being compacted hardcore and fully fenced off. The bunds could be utilised by foraging badger at times, however, no evidence of them was recorded and no setts were present.

4.3.6 Otter

Habitats on Site are not suitable for otter, given the lack of watercourses or ponds present on or directly adjacent to it. The River Ehen, approximately 150m to the south east provides much more

suitable habitats for this species with records provided by CBDC. Therefore, this species is not considered further in this assessment.

4.3.7 Water vole

No habitats suitable for water vole are present within the Site or directly adjacent to it. Therefore, this species is not considered further within the assessment.

4.3.8 White-clawed crayfish

No habitats suitable for white-clawed crayfish are present within the Site or directly adjacent to it. They are, however, known to be present in the River Ehen, which is 150m away from the Site. As the Site does not feature suitable habitats and the river is an adequate distance away to mitigate effects, this species is not considered further within the assessment.

4.3.9 Pearl mussel

No habitats suitable for pearl mussel fall within the Site boundary or directly adjacent to it. Pearl mussel are known to be present in the River Ehen, which is 150m away from the Site. As the Site does not feature suitable habitats and the river is an adequate distance away to mitigate effects, this species is not considered further within the assessment.

4.3.10 Biodiversity Framework Species/Other Species

No other species were recorded on Site.

5 Assessment of Value and Potential Effects

The assessment of potential effects is based on plan SOP_103_SITE LAYOUT_REV_A provided by Gresham House which details the areas within the compound that will be utilised for new battery infrastructure. This will result in the loss of bare ground, of low distinctiveness, and other neutral grassland, medium distinctiveness in moderate condition.

5.1.1 Habitats

Habitats within the development area are considered to be of low distinctiveness (bare ground) and medium distinctiveness (other neutral grassland). The development will lead to the loss of some habitats within the red line boundary, which comprises:

- Loss of low distinctiveness bare ground. Medium distinctiveness other neutral grassland in moderate condition.

A Biodiversity Net Gain assessment has been completed to further detail the Site baseline and provide details of how the development will attain at least a 10% net gain through on-site or off-site mitigation.

5.1.2 Designated Sites

Clints Quarry lies 0.4km south west of the Site, no effects are likely as a result of the development due to the scale of development and distance from the designated site.

River Ehen lies closer, at 0.13km south east of the Site. Given the Site is already an active BESS site and will only be subject to augmentation and slight extension, it is unlikely that any effects will occur on the River Ehen SSSI.

5.1.3 Bats

The Site is considered overall as low value to bat species.

The development will lead to the following effects:

- The disturbance through lighting during construction, to bats foraging or commuting along bunds and offsite features.

No further surveys are recommended.

5.1.4 Badger

Habitats on Site are considered of negligible value to badger.

Potential effects on badger could include:

- Disturbance of badger utilising the grassland bunds around the Site, or off site features, through construction lighting.

No further surveys are recommended.

5.1.5 Reptiles

Habitats on Site are considered to be of at most, low value to reptiles.

Potential effects on badger could include:

- Harm to reptile species utilising the grassland bunds around the Site, or off site features, through construction lighting. During Site clearance.

No further surveys are recommended due to the very small land take.

6 Mitigation and Enhancements

Mitigation measures below relate to those species and habitats that have been identified as having potential effects during the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.

6.1.1 Habitats

The habitats on Site should be subject to a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment, to ensure no net loss, and at least a 10% net gain, either on-site, or off-site. All planting within the Site should be native species, and subject to a 30 year management and monitoring plan.

6.1.2 Nocturnal Species (Badgers, Bats)

No new lighting should be installed during construction, or, if it is required, it should be directed away from adjacent habitats such as grassland.

6.1.3 Mammals (Badgers, Rabbits)

No trenches or holes will be left open overnight without a suitable means of escape for small mammals. A ramp should be created at the edge of the trench, to allow any animals that may become trapped to escape; this should be at least 300mm in width and angled at no greater than 45^{o}.

All conduits will be capped when not in use.

6.1.4 Reptiles

The working area will be checked for the presence of reptiles (or amphibians) prior to Site clearance by a suitably qualified ecologist. Any reptiles or amphibians found will be relocated outside of the working area.

7 Conclusions

The development will take a very small footprint of land from the surrounding bunds, has very few potential impacts and is considered very low risk. A small amount of bare ground and other neutral grassland will be lost to the development, all within existing fenced compound and directly adjacent to it on bunds created during the initial development.

8 References

1. Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th ed.). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.
2. JNCC, (2010), Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey - a technique for environmental audit.
3. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2018) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the United Kingdom and Ireland (version September 2018).
4. Oldham R.S., Keeble J., Swan M.J.S. & Jeffcote M. (2000). Evaluating the suitability of habitat for the Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*). Herpetological Journal 10(4), 143-155.
5. Chanin P (2003). Monitoring the Otter *Lutra lutra*. Conserving Natura 2000 Rivers Monitoring Series No. 10, English Nature, Peterborough.
6. Strachan, R., Moorhouse, T. and Gelling, M. (2011) Water vole Conservation Handbook (third edition).
7. Froglife (1999). Froglife Advice Sheet 10: reptile survey.
8. The Mammal Society (2012) UKBAP Mammals Interim Guidance.
9. Scottish Badgers (2018) Surveying for Badgers Good Practice Guidelines
10. The Mammal Society, Publication 9 – Surveying Badgers.

Appendix A

Habitat Map

Cleator

- Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface
- Other neutral grassland
- Boundary

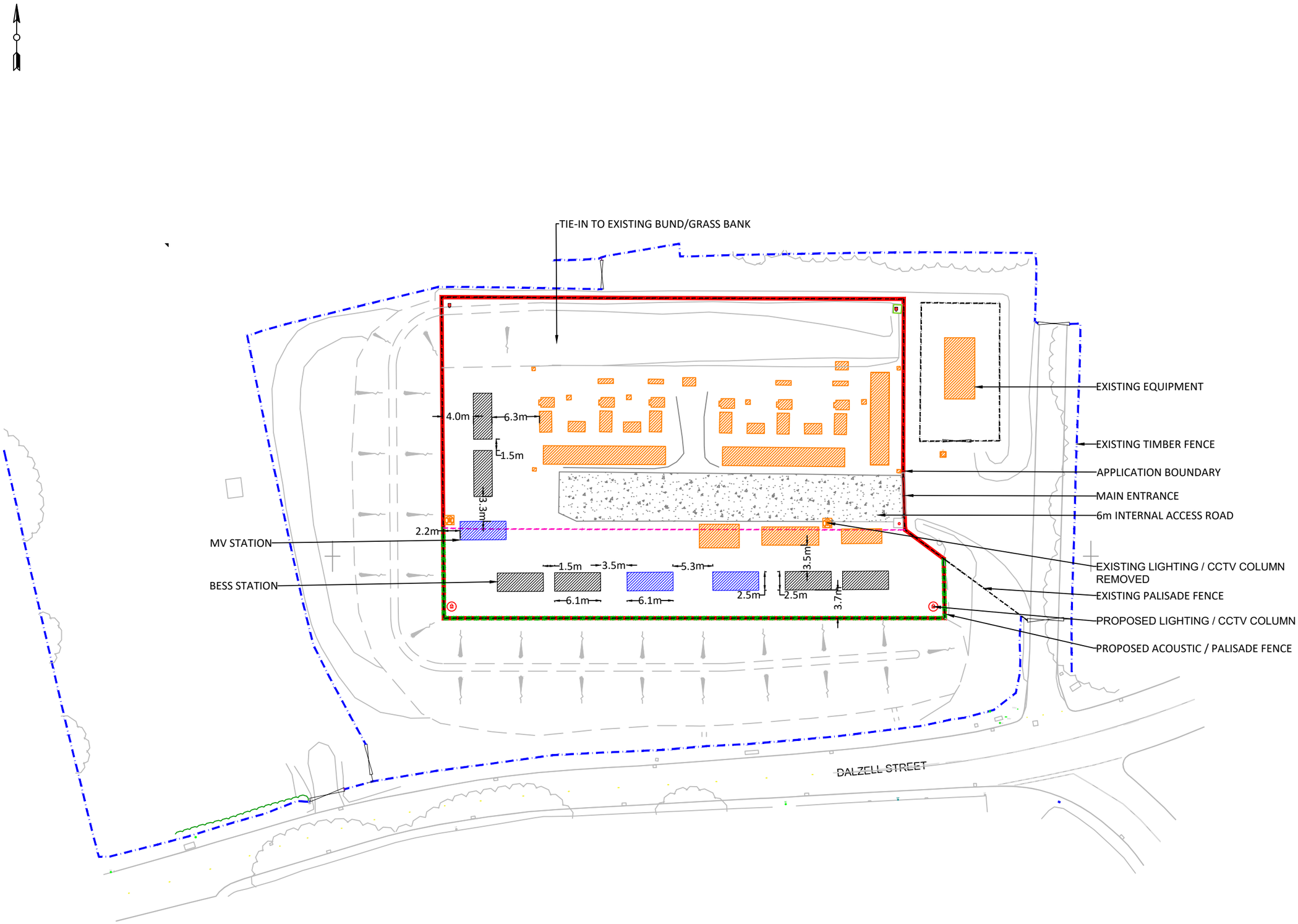
Version Number: 1 Version State: Final

Design by: DW	Date: 04/12/25
Drawn by: DW	Date: 04/12/25
Reviewed by: HH	Date: 04/12/25
Approved by: HH	Date: 04/12/25

Scale @ A3 1:750

Drawing ref: Cleator

TAXUS ECOLOGY



0 50

metres

NOTES
1. Do not scale
2. All dimensions in meters unless otherwise.
3. For planning only
4. Proposed fence (palisade or acoustic)
5. Bund extents indicative subject to detail design.

KEY

- EXISTING EQUIPMENT
- MV STATION
- BESS STATION
- 6m INTERNAL ACCESS ROAD
- APPLICATION BOUNDARY
- EXISTING TIMBER FENCE
- EXISTING PALISADE FENCE
- EXISTING FENCE REMOVED
- PROPOSED ACOUSTIC/PALISADE FENCE
- PROPOSED BAND (SEE NOTE 5)
- EXISTING LIGHTING / CCTV COLUMN REMOVED
- PROPOSED LIGHTING / CCTV COLUMN

No	INFORMATION	By	Date	Chkd
	First issue	KT	15.10.25	PB

REVISIONS

ISSUE: PLANNING

TITLE: CLEATOR ENERGY STORAGE FACILITY EXTENSION

CLIENT: GRESHAM

LOCATION: CLEATOR, DALZELL STREET CA22 2TA, UK

CAD REFERENCE: SOP_103_SITE LAYOUT

SCALE: 1:500	SHEET: A3
DRAWN BY: KT	DATE: 15.10.25
CHECKED BY: PB	DATE: 15.10.25

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Appendix B

Photograph 1: BESS site, west to east.

Photograph 2: Bund present within the fenced compound.

Photograph 3: Dense bramble scrub to the north of the Site.

Photograph 4: Newly planted saplings and slightly larger scrub to the west and south.

Photograph 5: Young trees on the southern bund.