The Planning Inspectorate

# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 November 2024

**by L N Hughes BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 10 December 2024**

**Appeal Ref: APP/A4520/W/24/3350689**
**Land immediately to the east of West Boldon Substation, West Boldon NE36 0BG**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Whirlwind Energy Storage Limited against the decision of South Tyneside Council.
- The application Ref is ST/0486/23/FUL.
- The development proposed is the construction and operation of a Battery Energy Storage System consisting of a landscaped compound surrounded by perimeter landscaping, accommodating up to 360 energy storage cabinets, associated power converter units, a grid connection compound containing a large transformer and air-insulated switchgear; two control rooms (one for the battery operator and one for the network operator); a site office, a storage container, and 7 CCTV masts.

## Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the construction and operation of a Battery Energy Storage System consisting of a landscaped compound surrounded by perimeter landscaping, accommodating up to 360 energy storage cabinets, associated power converter units, a grid connection compound containing a large transformer and air-insulated switchgear; two control rooms (one for the battery operator and one for the network operator); a site office, a storage container, and 7 CCTV masts, at Land immediately to the east of West Boldon Substation, West Boldon, NE36 0BG in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref ST/0486/23/FUL, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions in the attached Schedule.

## Preliminary Matters

2. The application form address cited: 'Land immediately to the east of West Boldon Substation, 400m south of the A184, and 300m east of the A189, West Boldon, South Tyneside NE36 0BG'. I have instead used the address from the decision notice and appeal form, for conciseness.

3. The decision notice added '7 CCTV masts' onto the description of development from the application form. For clarity, I have made the same amendment.

## Main Issues

4. The appeal site is located within the Green Belt, as identified on the Key Diagram of the South Tyneside Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy (CS). The emerging South Tyneside Local Plan, currently at Regulation 19 stage, proposes no changes in this regard.

5. The main parties have agreed that the proposal would represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt, under the terms of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') (2023) paragraphs 154 and 155. I concur with this position. The Framework paragraph 152 states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

6. The main issues are therefore:
   - the effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it;
   - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area;
   - the effect of the proposal on ecology; and
   - whether any harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, would be clearly outweighed by other considerations, so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify the proposal.

## Reasons

7. The site is a series of triangular grassed fields, although only approximately 0.9ha in the central part would be developed. It lies to the south of the A184/B1294 roundabout in West Boldon, with its eastern boundary running alongside the River Don, with open fields beyond and to the north. Part of its western boundary runs alongside the grounds of the West Boldon Lodge, with the West Boldon Substation beyond.

8. The proposal is to construct and operate a battery energy storage system (BESS) with an import and export capacity of up to 60 MW and a storage capacity of 120 MW. This would comprise up to 360 energy storage cabinets in 18 groups of 20, along with associated control infrastructure and landscaping. It would be enclosed by a high wire fence, with even higher CCTV masts. Consent is sought for a temporary period of 50 years, after which the site would be decommissioned and restored to its current state.

9. I find the magnitude of a 50 year timescale to be at the limits of what could reasonably be described as temporary development in the Green Belt, in terms of generational experience and future plan making. Notwithstanding the ability to reinstate the site to an acceptable condition after decommissioning, I find that the proposal should thus be considered to be permanent for the purposes of Green Belt and landscape character assessment in this instance.

*Openness of the Green Belt*

10. The Framework paragraph 142 identifies that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. The CS Policy EA1(B) also identifies that the openness of the Green Belt will be protected and enhanced. Openness has spatial and visual aspects, and is a matter of planning judgement.

11. The Green Belt openness is clearly evident around and across the appeal site and the wider area of countryside. The appellant accepts that the proposal would affect this openness for the lifespan of the development. I similarly find that the introduction of the structures across and around the site would result in additional volumetric massing in spatial terms. Visually, the current open field would also be replaced with this built form, despite additional screening

from new planting. This would be most apparent immediately adjacent to the site along the cycle path, albeit less so in longer range views due to topography and vegetation screening. I address this impact on visual character and appearance below, but with relation solely to the openness of the Green Belt, I find the proposal would thus cause moderate harm.

12. Furthermore, the Framework paragraph 143 identifies five essential purposes of the Green Belt. I note the appellant's submissions in this regard about the relative size and location of the proposal. However, the site lies within a relatively narrow Green Belt gap between the built form of South Tyneside and Sunderland. It would thus conflict with the Framework aims of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas, and preventing neighbouring towns merging into one another. The proposal would therefore fail to accord with the Framework paragraph 143.

13. Overall, the proposal would result in inappropriate development in the Green Belt, and harm its openness and conflict with its purposes. It would thus conflict with the CS Policy EA1(B), and the Framework Section 13.

*Character and Appearance*

14. The site lies within open countryside, at the bottom of a gentle valley. At close range the height and bulk of the appeal structures would be clearly visible to passersby along the adjacent bridleway route between Boldon and Sunderland. The character of the open fields would change to one containing built form and infrastructure, exacerbated by the high boundary fencing.

15. West Boldon Lodge is an outdoor educational centre operated by Groundwork South and North Tyneside, and National Grid. It comprises a visitor centre 120m to the northwest of the proposed BESS, and an open area in the woodland and marsh around the West Boldon substation for outdoor activities. The BESS units and associated infrastructure would be visible within some views out from its rearmost field/allotment and adjacent woodland.

16. However, at close range the landscape is already dominated by the existing 5 pylons and overhead power lines, such that additional utilitarian infrastructure would not be completely alien. The security fencing would be relatively lightweight mesh, minimising its impact. The proposed height of the CCTV masts would be commensurate with their function.

17. Furthermore, all of these immediate views would be restricted and softened by existing and proposed hedgerows. There would be at most, very limited views of the site from the remainder of the Lodge's site. The immediate experience of being within nature would remain, alongside juxtaposition with the existing substation infrastructure. The vegetation and bridleway alignment to the south would heavily restrict views of the site, despite the height of the proposed structures. Overall, at close range I find there would be moderate harm to the landscape appearance, and the experience of its character.

18. The South Tyneside Landscape Character Study (2012) defines the area around the proposed BESS as the Boldon Fell Character Area. This is identified as being a characteristically urban fringe area predominantly in agricultural use, with larger fields. Limited areas of mature woodland are considered to have significant value, with areas of new planting also apparent. The presence of infrastructure including the main road network and overhead power lines dominates the area.

19. The landscape east of the site is relatively open and rolling in character, rising to towards the Boldon Hills. The appeal proposal would be visible when looking down from Downhill Lane and the properties coming off it, the Boldon Hills, and the highest part of Boldon Bridge. It would also be visible at a closer range from around the A184 roundabout junction to the north.

20. The BESS units would appear as large and regimented structures within this agricultural setting, and the grid connection compound would also be noticeable due to its height. However, this countryside is already dissected in two directions by relatively dominant lines of paired electricity pylons and overhead cables. The appeal proposal would be sited at the lowest point within this view where this infrastructure converges. As such, the pylons would form a visual association with it. It would also be visually subservient to them, and be set in front of the softer woodland backdrop around the substation.

21. The wide vista expanse also encompasses a range of buildings and road infrastructure. The proposal would also involve additional planting as mitigation, which would soften its impact, albeit not entirely screen it from view. A condition to agree the colour of the BESS units could ensure that they were grey or green, and the buildings would have green roofs, further muting the impact. The site size would not be excessive compared to the extent of the fields around. The outfall would have minimal visibility within this setting. I therefore do not find the proposal to be especially visually prominent within this context, with general retention of the open aspect and the area's distinctive characteristics.

22. For similar reasons, and particularly due to vegetation screening, the appeal proposal would only be briefly glimpsed in views from its west and south including from the A19.

23. Overall, I find that there would be moderate harm to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would conflict with the LDF Development Management Policies (DMP) Policy DM1(A), which requires development to convey sensitive consideration of its surroundings, and the CS Policy EA1, which aims to conserve the best qualities of South Tyneside's built and natural environment and to preserve the special and separate characters of the urban fringe villages.

24. The DMP Policy DM7 also identifies amongst other matters, that development affecting the integrity and natural character of land which forms part of the borough's strategic green infrastructure, will only be approved where the benefits of development clearly outweigh any adverse impact. As I address the benefits of the scheme below, I have therefore not concluded at this point whether the proposal would conflict with policy DM7.

*Biodiversity*

25. The second reason for refusal is the absence of a significant biodiversity net gain delivery in order to compensate for the proposal's ecological impacts. The CS Policy EA3 seeks to optimise conditions for wildlife by measures including enhancing the biodiversity value of wildlife corridors.

26. The northern field is arable farmed. The central field comprises 'other neutral grassland' and is horse grazed, with the ecology evidence suggesting it has low to local value with no shortage of this type of habitat in the wider area. The site is partly located within an east-west wildlife corridor as defined within the CS

Key Diagram, and a Local Wildlife Site (LWS) 'Make Me Rich Meadow', the majority of which lies to the south of the site and along the river. A further LWS 'Mount Pleasant Marsh' lies around the West Boldon Lodge and substation.

27. The site's natural character would be adversely impacted from the change to hardstanding, and the loss of a small part of the existing hedgerow. The small outfall pipe would lie within the LWS meadow. Construction and ongoing use may cause disturbance to local wildlife travelling along the wildlife corridor.

28. To address this, mitigation and enhancement measures include green roofing on the compound buildings, removal/thinning of non-native scrub and trees along the riverbank, removal of fencing alongside the river, treatment of invasive species, reseeding and management of neutral grassland, verge enhancement, and bat roost and bird nesting provision. There would be 88m of hedgerow maintained and enhanced, and 103m of new species rich native hedgerow planted as the northern boundary to the battery units. There would be no night time lighting, and construction disturbance would be temporary.

29. Incorporated within these measures, the proposal would deliver a biodiversity net gain (BNG) of 1.6% above the identified baseline. Although in accordance with the statutory requirements at the time the application was submitted, I find this increase to be almost negligible. Despite the positive nature of the 194% hedgerow net gain, I find the proposal's ecological impacts due to its location with respect to the wildlife corridor and the LWSs, are such that the proposed BNG would be insufficient to outweigh the harm.

30. However, the appellant suggests the imposition of a planning condition requiring at least 10% BNG. Based on the ecology evidence and the size of the overall site, I am satisfied sufficient land is available for additional biodiversity gain to be achieved. Given such facts, there is a realistic prospect of such measures being delivered on the site. As 10% would align with the statutory requirement were the proposal to be submitted as a new application at the present time, I find it reasonable to impose such a condition.

31. With this enhancement in place, the proposal would thus comply with those parts of the CS Policy EA3 and DMP Policy DM7 which require schemes to enhance nature conservation and biodiversity, and to have no adverse effect on Local Wildlife Sites and wildlife corridors.

*Other Matters*

Heritage Assets

32. Section 16 of the Framework requires great weight to be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, and so I am required to consider the impact upon the West Boldon Conservation Area, and the listed buildings at Downhill Farm. Given the 400m and 50m distance to these heritage assets, and the proposal's location lower down and proximate to existing infrastructure, I find that their settings would be preserved. I note that the Council made the same conclusion.

Fire Safety

33. The Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service did not object to the proposal. The appellant has explained in detail how the design and operation would take full account of advice from the National Fire Chiefs Council and relevant UK BESS

guidance, and that equipment would require relevant certification. Fire-fighting water would be held in an on-site underground reservoir, significantly in excess of the guideline amount. I could impose a condition to require additional detailed information relating to the scheme design, operation, and methods for responses in emergency scenarios. This further level of approval following consultation with the relevant parties, would provide additional assurance. As such, I am satisfied that fire safety matters have been satisfactorily addressed.

34. West Boldon Lodge has a completely separate access to the proposed BESS, which would remain available in the event of a BESS fire. Were West Boldon Lodge visitors required to evacuate due to an emergency at the substation, their evacuation muster point would be on the bridleway adjacent to the appeal site access. Although the Lodge raises concerns that visitors would potentially be at greater risk in this location, I am satisfied with the safety information provided such that this evacuation point would not be compromised.

Flood Risk and Watercourses

35. The proposed development is not located within flood zones 2 or 3. A detention basin would ensure appropriate management and discharge of surface water run-off via an outfall to the river. To address the contamination risk from surface water including that used for fire-fighting, the site would also incorporate an emergency waste-water storage system to intercept and contain any contaminated water within the site, and prevent it from potentially flowing into the River Don. Alongside the Council and the Lead Local Flood Authority, I am satisfied with the SuDS information and strategy provided. This would be bolstered by additional information to be approved via the imposition of conditions, to ensure that water discharge does not increase the risk of flooding or contamination.

Anti-Social Behaviour

36. Although interested parties consider the proposal would cause anti-social behaviour as has occurred at West Boldon Lodge, Northumbria Police has not objected to the proposal. There would be 24-hour monitoring, including site security, which would respond to any security matters. The appellant has also offered that the proposed system could be adapted to encompass parts of West Boldon Lodge site. I cannot give weight to this as a benefit of the proposal prior to any agreement from the Groundwork Trust, but this would be a sensible approach to attempt to allay such concerns.

Alternative Sites

37. I have assessed the proposal before me on its own merits. However, I am also unconvinced that the construction of the Hylton Castle substation on the nearby International Advanced Manufacturing Park makes the appeal proposal superfluous to requirements. That substation would serve existing and proposed advanced manufacturing within the Park. Moreover, the connection capacity has been secured at West Boldon for the appeal proposal. While no timescale for this has been identified, I accept the importance of proximity to reduce the significant cost of the high voltage connecting cable, and to reduce electrical transmission losses. The appellant also submits that any other locations using this connection point would also be within the Green Belt.

Noise

38. The Council has not objected on the grounds of noise, based on the submitted Noise Impact Assessment. Interested parties identify that additional noise may be discernible within part of the West Boldon Lodge site due to its proximity, however, the acoustic environment is already dominated by road noise. Although the Noise Impact Assessment does not identify exact noise levels due to the equipment specification needing to be the most up to date at the time of construction, any new noise source is predicted to be well below the measured background noise level in the day and night. Furthermore, an additional noise assessment would be required prior to commencement. I therefore find there would be no undue effect on visitors to the Lodge in this regard.

Further Matters

39. Although parties refer to a negative impact on the West Boldon Lodge educational activities and conservation work, it is unclear how specifically these would be compromised by a renewable energy facility, beyond those matters I have addressed above. Construction works would have some impact, but could be mitigated as far as possible through agreement of a construction management plan.

40. I note other local resident objections on matters including traffic generation, disruption to cycleway users, contamination and air pollution, disruption during construction, and loss of arable land. The Council did not raise any of these as reasons for refusal. I am similarly content that the proposal would either cause no harm in relation to these matters, or that potential harm would be satisfactorily addressed due to the imposition of appropriate conditions as identified below, such that there would be no unduly negative impacts.

*Other Considerations*

41. BESS developments import and store electrical power from renewable generators which would otherwise be wasted, and export this back into the grid during low generation periods or at periods of high demand. As such, they are categorised by the PPG as 'renewable and low carbon energy'. The PPG indicates benefits as being this flexible use of energy and the cost effective de-carbonisation of the energy system. They allow balancing of demand without resorting to additional generation from fossil fuels, and also reduce the need for further fossil fuel-based grid balancing technologies. The West Boldon BESS would save between 2,592 and 4,044 tonnes of CO2 per year.

42. South Tyneside Council declared a Borough-wide climate emergency in 2019, aiming for carbon neutrality by 2030. The Council identifies a commitment to being a champion for a carbon neutral future for South Tyneside, including using advocacy to influence actions that promote carbon reductions across the region. The proposal would also find support in the DMP Policy DM1(I) which requires development to be designed to achieve lower carbon emissions, and to be energy efficient and maximise the use of renewable and low carbon energy sources.

43. The Government also has well publicised Net Zero ambitions and targets, and the Framework paragraph 157 identifies that the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. There is a clear national need for BESS facilities. Although the stored energy would not be

ringfenced solely to South Tyneside residents, the proposal would contribute to the achievement of these national and local ambitions, such that I give this significant benefit substantial weight.

44. The proposal would create the equivalent of approximately 2 new full-time jobs. There would also be jobs created during the construction phase, albeit over a time limited period. I give minor weight to this economic benefit. I give minor weight to the benefit of the 10% BNG.

**Conditions**

45. I have imposed the Council's suggested conditions, subject to slight amendment to reflect paragraph 56 of the Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance. The appellant has agreed to my suggested conditions, including those for which pre-commencement consent is required.

46. I have attached the statutory condition to limit the lifespan of the planning permission, and specified the approved plans to provide clarity for the terms of the permission (condition 1, 2). A condition to limit the operational period to 50 years is needed to manage the impacts on the openness of the Green Belt (3).

47. A water drainage scheme shall ensure that drainage and flood risk and impact on wildlife are properly addressed (4, 5). A 10% BNG is required as outlined in my reasoning above, so I have included additional conditions than suggested by the Council, to require a biodiversity plan, and a habitat management and monitoring plan with notice in writing following implementation (6, and 7). Further protection for biodiversity requires the provision of an Invasive Non-Native Species survey (8), a Construction Environmental Management Plan (9), and lighting details (13).

48. A Construction Method Statement and a noise assessment are required to minimise undue adverse impacts, including on highway safety and amenity impacts particularly for West Boldon Lodge visitors (10, 11). The Tyne and Wear Fire Rescue Service has provided detailed requirements for a risk reduction and mitigation strategy to minimise the impact of an incident. I have condensed this advice within a single condition in the interests of brevity (12).

49. Conditions are imposed to ensure that hard and soft landscaping, and external finishes of buildings and structures, help to minimise the proposal’s visual impact on the local character (14, 15). A condition to require details of the security system allows for discussions to be held regarding its expansion to also cover the West Boldon Lodge site, as identified above (16).

50. Finally, conditions to require suitable decommissioning of the BESS and restoration of the site are in the interests of character and appearance, and ensure the 50 year timeframe or an earlier timeframe if the BESS ceases to operate for more than 6 months (17, 18, 19).

**Planning Balance**

51. The Framework Paragraph 153 makes clear that substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt and ‘very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

52. The proposed development would reduce the openness of the Green Belt, and would conflict with the purposes of including land within it. It would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, which is harmful by definition. I therefore attach substantial weight to that harm as required by the Framework paragraph 153, albeit in this instance I find the harm to be moderate. It would also cause moderate harm to the character and appearance of the area, to which I give moderate weight. The development would therefore be in conflict with some development plan policies.

53. Against the totality of this harm, I have placed substantial weight on the proposal's significant benefit with respect to the contribution the BESS would make to mitigate climate change and help regulate electricity flows within the wider supply network, and minor weight on its biodiversity and economic benefits. I find these other considerations to be cumulatively sufficient such that they amount to the very special circumstances which clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and any other harm, and thus justify the proposal in this instance. This also results in the proposal's compliance with the DMP Policy DM7.

**Conclusion**

54. In conclusion therefore, the proposed development would be in some conflict with the development plan, with respect to harm to the Green Belt and to the character and appearance of the area. However other material considerations, including the Framework and the very special circumstances cited in this case, indicate that permission should be granted. I therefore allow the appeal.

*L N Hughes*

Inspector

## SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.

2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans;

   EW / 07 / 01A Location Plan

   EW / 07 / 02 Existing Contour Plan and Red Line Boundary

   EW / 07 / 03C General Layout

   EW / 07 / 04A Drainage and Setting Out Plan

   EW / 07 / 05 Sections M001 and M002

   EW / 07 / 06A Fence, CCTV Mast and Control Room Details

   EW / 07 / 07 Storage Unit and Office Plans and Elevations

   EW / 07 / 08 Battery Storage Units, Transformer and Inverter

   EW / 07 / 09 Substation Switch Gear Plan and Elevation.

3) No electricity shall be imported/exported from the development hereby permitted unless the local planning authority is notified of the commencement date of that use at least 14 days before that use occurring. The development hereby permitted shall be limited to a period of 50 years from the date of its first beneficial use.

4) No development shall take place until a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The submitted details shall:

   a) be in accordance with the "Outline SuDS Strategy" received 14 March 2024;

   b) include hydraulic calculations, a detailed development layout, and civil engineering details including for all drainage and SuDS features and the outfall into the River Don;

   c) include a full method statement and implementation timetable for the installation of that system;

   d) include a management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for adoption by any public authority or statutory undertaker, and any other arrangements to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime; and

   e) provide information about the measures taken to prevent pollution of the receiving groundwater and/or surface waters, including from water used for fire-fighting.

   The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The sustainable drainage system shall be managed and maintained thereafter in accordance with the approved management and maintenance plan.

5) The development shall not be brought into use until a verification report evidencing the completion of the approved sustainable drainage system, including its installation methodology, evidence of depths and dimensions,

and supporting images from installation, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

6) No development shall take place until a biodiversity gain plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The plan shall broadly accord with the measures set out in the submitted Taxus Ecology 'Ecological Impact Assessment for West Boldon, South Tyneside 21-042_R4' dated March 2024, and the Taxus Ecology 'Biodiversity Net Gain Report for West Boldon Battery Storage Site 21 042_R4' dated March 2024, and shall include details of:

   a) the steps taken or to be taken to minimise the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the onsite habitat and any other habitat;

   b) the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat; and

   c) the post-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat which must be at least a 10% increase relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat.

7) No development shall take place until a habitat management and monitoring plan prepared in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The habitat management and monitoring plan shall include details of:

   a) the project's biodiversity baseline assessment against which BNG outcomes are assessed and monitored;

   b) the management measures to maintain habitat in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan for a period of 30 years from the first beneficial use of the development;

   c) the roles and responsibilities of those involved with implementing and monitoring the BNG design during the implementation and post-implementation stages; and

   d) a monitoring plan to inform decisions about management, whether assessing progress towards the BNG targets is on track, and whether changes to management are required to achieve the targets;

   e) provision for any approved landscaping that is removed, dies or becomes seriously diseased within the agreed timescales for achieving and maintaining the BNG targets to be replaced in the next planting season with landscaping of similar size and species to that which it replaces.

   The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. Notice in writing shall be given to the Council when the habitat creation and enhancement works as set out in the habitat management and monitoring plan have been completed in accordance with its approved timescales.

8) No development shall take place until an Invasive Non-Native Species survey and management plan have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

9) No development shall take place until a Construction Environmental Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The construction of the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

10) No development shall take place until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Statement shall include details of construction working hours, the parking of site operative and visitor vehicles, accommodation for site operatives, loading and unloading of plant and materials, storage of plant and materials, the erection and maintenance of security hoarding, wheel washing facilities, measures to control the emission of dust and dirt, site security features, and delivery and construction working hours. The approved Construction Method Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period for the development.

11) No development shall take place until a noise assessment, including details of existing background noise levels, noise levels generated by the proposed plant/structures, and any proposed noise mitigation measures, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details, and retained as such thereafter.

12) No development shall take place until a risk reduction and mitigation strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall include details of:

    a) how the impact of an incident will be minimised through the design, construction, installation, operation, and decommissioning phases;

    b) a fire emergency response plan containing site specific information regarding the hazards, locations of hydrants, and electrical isolators, measures to be taken during an incident, and responses required post incident;

    c) water supplies available for manual fire-fighting; and

    d) A review/update of the strategy every 10 years.

    The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

13) No development above ground level shall take place until details of any external lighting have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

14) No development above ground level shall take place until full details of hard and soft landscape works and an implementation programme have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The hard landscaping details shall include details of all means of enclosure and hard surfacing materials. The soft landscaping details shall include specification of species, tree and plant sizes, number and planting densities. The landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the first beneficial use of the development, in accordance with the agreed implementation programme. If within a period of five years from the date of the planting or establishment of any tree, or shrub or plant specified in the approved details, that tree, shrub, or plant or any replacement is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies or becomes seriously damaged or defective, another tree or shrub, or plant of the same species and size as that originally planted, shall be planted at the same place.

15) No development above ground level shall take place until details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the

buildings and structures hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

16) No electricity shall be imported/exported from the development hereby permitted until details of the range of security measures to be in place across the site and its setting shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

17) At least 11 months before the planning permission is due to expire, a decommissioning scheme to include the removal of all structures, equipment, and infrastructure relating to the development hereby permitted must be submitted to the local planning authority, which shall be approved in writing by the local planning authority before the expiry of the 50 year operation period.

18) Within 1 year of the expiry of the 50 year operation period, the site shall be decommissioned and restored in accordance with the approved decommissioning scheme.

19) In the event of the battery energy storage system ceasing to import and export electricity to the grid for a continuous period of 6 months, it will be deemed to have ceased to be required. The battery energy storage system and all ancillary equipment and structures shall be removed from the site within 1 year of the deemed cessation date and the site restored, in accordance with a decommissioning scheme that shall first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority within 6 months of the deemed cessation date.

**END OF SCHEDULE**