THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2017 SCREENING MATRIX

1. CASE DETAILS			
Case Reference	SMD/2024/0019 and SMD/2023/0318	**Brief description of the project / development**	Development of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) with ancillary infrastructure, security fence, access, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements, to provide balancing services to the local electricity grid
Applicant	Newfields BESS Ltd		
LPA	Staffordshire Moorlands DC		
2. EIA DETAILS			
Is the project Schedule 1 development according to Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations?			No
If YES, which description of development (THEN GO TO Q4)			Click here to enter text.
Is the project Schedule 2 development under the EIA Regulations?			Yes
If YES, under which description of development in Column 1 and Column 2?			Category 3 Energy Industry a) Industrial installations for the production of electricity
Is the development within, partly within, or near a 'sensitive area' as defined by Regulation 2 of the EIA Regulations?			Yes
If YES, which area?			Site near to: Wetley Moor SSSI (c. 1km south-west); Churnut Valley SSSI (c. 3.7km south-east); and, Hulme Quarry SSSI (c. 4.2km south-west)
Are the applicable thresholds/criteria in Column 2 exceeded/met?			Yes
If yes, which applicable threshold/criteria?			Area of development exceeds 0.5 hectares.
3. LPA/SOS SCREENING			
Has the LPA or SoS issued a Screening Opinion (SO) or Screening Direction (SD)? (In the case of Enforcement appeals, has a Regulation 37 notice been issued)			Yes
If yes, is a copy of the SO/SD on the file?			Yes
If yes, is the SO/SD positive?			No
4. ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT			
Has the appellant supplied an ES for the current or previous (if reserved matters or conditions) application?			No

WHEN COMPLETING THIS DOCUMENT IN RELATION TO AN ENFORCEMENT APPEAL, THE UNDERSIGNED OFFICER HAS HAD REGARD TO THE PROJECT AS ALLEGED IN THE RELEVANT ENFORCEMENT NOTICE WHEN REFERING TO THE PROJECT / DEVELOPMENT.

Question	(Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A)		(Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A)	
	Briefly explain answer to Part 2a and, if applicable and/or known, include name of feature and proximity to site **(If answer in Part 2a / 2b is 'No', the answer to Part 3a / 3b is 'N/A')**		Is a significant effect likely, having regard particularly to the magnitude and spatial extent (including population size affected), nature, intensity and complexity, probability, expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact and the possibility to effectively reduce the impact? If the finding of no significant effect is **reliant on specific features or measures** of the project envisaged to avoid, or prevent what might otherwise have been, significant adverse effects on the environment **these should be identified in bold**.	
1. NATURAL RESOURCES				
1.1 Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the topography of the area?	Yes	The scheme proposes cut and fill with the erection of an acoustic bund and levelling of parts of the site	No	The effect of the changes to land levels are likely to be fairly localised and in the context to built development on three sides of the site.
1.2 Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources above or below ground such as land, soil, water, materials/minerals or energy which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Yes	Due to land level changes the scheme would use natural resources of land and soil during construction. The use of vehicles and plant during construction would use resources for fuel.	No	The effect on land and soil would not be significant and would be retained on site. The construction process can be controlled through a CEMP and the scale of the scheme is not considered so significant to result in significant effects in this regard. There would be no direct effect on national and local statutory sites or watercourses.
1.3 Are there any areas on/around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the project, e.g. forestry, agriculture, water/coastal, fisheries, minerals?	Yes	The land is an open field. The land has an Agricultural Land Classification of Grade 4.	No	Grade 4 land is not Best and Most Versatile agricultural land, in addition the scale of the scheme is relatively small.
2. WASTE				
2.1 Will the project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Yes	Waste from the construction phase of development would arise. Operational waste would be unlikely due to nature of the development.	No	Due to the nature of the site, waste from the existing land would be limited. Construction waste would be inevitable, and the scale of the scheme is such that the effects are unlikely to be significant. The effects of

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				construction waste can be managed through a CEMP. Operational waste would be limited due to the land being unmanned and limited to maintenance.
3. POLLUTION AND NUISANCES				
3.1 Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	Yes	Dust and pollutants from construction vehicles may be generated during construction. During the operational phase, the development would not result in the release of any significant pollutants.	No	Dust and traffic emissions can be controlled through the implementation and agreement of an appropriate Construction Traffic Management Plan. In addition the effects of which would be temporary and limited to the construction of the development. Significant effects are not considered likely.
3.2 Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes	During operational phase the development would result in noise from associated plant and machinery, etc. During construction, noise and vibration would arise through traffic, plant and machinery.	No	The rural nature of the site is such that the number of noise sensitive receptors would be limited. A Noise Impact Assessment has been submitted to support the application as expected. Any effects would not be significant in the context of EIA and could be controlled/mitigated. Noise from traffic and works during construction, dust and vibration is unlikely to be significant and could be controlled through a Construction and Environment Management Plan (CEMP).
3.3 Will the project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	Yes	Potential for contaminants are considered to be limited to construction phase only. This could relate to fuel spills.	No	Mitigation measures will be required during the construction period in order to prevent any contamination of watercourses which run through the site. This could be controlled through a CEMP and effects are likely to be limited in the context of EIA.
3.4 Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage, e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?	No	No known existing pollution or environmental damage on or near to the site which could affect the project	N/A	

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4. POPULATION AND HUMAN HEALTH				
4.1 Will there be any risk of major accidents (including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge) during construction, operation or decommissioning?	Yes	During construction the development would result in increase in movement of large vehicles, plant and machinery along with the operation of such plant and machinery. During operational phase, there would be a fire risk from the use of lithium ion batteries.	No	The effects during construction would need to be carried out to best practice and could be adequately managed through a CEMP/CMTP. During operation the site would not use harmful substances which would be a danger to human health. Appropriate design of the facility would limit the risk of the development to human health. An outline Battery Safety Management Plan has been prepared which would be subject to consultation with the Fire Authority. While separate discussions, outside of the planning process, are ongoing. The rural location means that there is limited population surrounding the site. The effects are not considered to be significant.
4.2 Will the project present a risk to the population (having regard to population density) and their human health during construction, operation or decommissioning? (for example due to water contamination or air pollution)	Yes	As above, there would be a risk to population during operation due to the nature of the development.	No	The population density of the surrounding area is low, while appropriate management plans could be put in place. Therefore the effects would not be significant.
5. WATER RESOURCES				
5.1 Are there any water resources including surface waters, e.g. rivers, lakes/ponds, coastal or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project, particularly in terms of their volume and flood risk?	Yes	There are small watercourses adjacent to the site. The proposals would increase impermeable areas across the site, although the land below the panels would remain largely permeable.	No	Significant impacts unlikely, providing reasonable precautions are implemented e.g. pollution prevention, SuDS. A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy has been submitted with the planning application and its acceptability will be assessed. It is considered that appropriate mitigation to control the

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				effects could be provided. The effects are not considered to be significant.
6. BIODIVERSITY (SPECIES AND HABITATS)				
6.1 Are there any protected areas which are designated or classified for their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, or any non-designated / non-classified areas which are important or sensitive for reasons of their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, located on or around the location and which could be affected by the project? (e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other water-bodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, undesignated nature reserves or parks. (Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local))).	Yes	No designated or non-designated sites are located within or adjacent to the site boundary. Wetley Moor SSSI is located to the wet of the site, within 2km. Four Local Wildlife Sites and Biodiversity Alert Sites, which are of countywide ecological importance, are located within 2km of the site.	No	Unlikely to be significant with adequate survey, avoidance and mitigation. The application has been supported by necessary ecological surveys in the first instance. A CEMP, which could be secured by condition, would ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to avoid, limit or mitigate the effects on any designated site. Given the limited sites that could be potentially be affected by the development, significant effects are unlikely.
6.2 Could any protected, important or sensitive species of flora or fauna which use areas on or around the site, e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, over-wintering, or migration, be affected by the project?	Yes	Species of principal importance and/or their habitats may be affected by the proposed development. The site contains, or is connected to, native hedgerows, trees, ditches, while the fields could be terrestrial habitat. The application has been supported by an Ecological Impact Assessment which has identified the site to support potential habitat for reptiles, GCN's, bats and birds. The effect on other species has been identified as being negligible.	No	The application has been supported by the appropriate information, the findings of which will be considered/validated by the necessary specialists. A suite of mitigation measures have been identified. It is likely that the effects could be avoided, mitigated or and compensated for, and as such could be reduced to a level that is not significant. The nature of the scale of the development would require the delivery of BNG. A Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) can be delivered through condition.

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7. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL				
7.1 Are there any areas or features on or around the location which are protected for their landscape and scenic value, and/or any non-designated / non-classified areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the project? Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local).	Yes	The site or surrounding is not in an area designated for its high landscape or scenic value. The site and surrounding local landscape lie within the Ancient Plateau Farmlands LCT. The wider context also includes the 'Ancient Slope and Valley Farmlands' LCT encompassing land broadly to the north and east within 1km of the Site. The site lies within the Green Belt, which is not a landscape designation. Nonetheless, its openness and permanence is an essential characteristic.	?	The application has been supported by a LVIA as required. The site does not lie within any designated landscape. The value of the landscape would be considered by the appropriate landscape specialists. The development will inevitably result in change to the local landscape character and has the potential to have an adverse effect on the landscape, particularly in the short term. The scheme does include the retention of field hedgerows and the established field pattern and would be set against built development to the north, east and south. Proposals include mitigation/compensation through new planting and enhancement. Given the moderate sensitivity of the site, the modest scale of the proposals and the context, the development is not likely to have a significant effect in the context of EIA Regs.
7.2 Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people? (If so, from where, what direction, and what distance?)	Yes	The site lies within a rural location and not adjacent to any major transport routes. Public footpaths cross the site, and the development would be visible from numerous vantage points across the close landscape. The surrounding area includes scattered housing and other country lanes. The site may be visible from Werrington to the south, across the existing landscape. The LVIA identifies that the site has a potential zone of visual influence extending some distance to the south/southeast, potentially up to 2.5km.	No	Views from surrounding road infrastructure is likely to be limited due to established landscaping and topography. The development has the potential to be visible from a reasonably wide visual arc. However, the numbers of receptors may not be significant, while the development would be set against the backdrop of the prominent Cellarhead Power Station. The effects of the development on views/visual receptors are likely to be short term, once mitigating landscape features have established.

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				In this context the effect of the development would not be significant for the purposes of EIA.
8. CULTURAL HERITAGE/ARCHAEOLOGY				
8.1 Are there any areas or features which are protected for their cultural heritage or archaeological value, or any non-designated / classified areas and/or features of cultural heritage or archaeological importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project (including potential impacts on setting, and views to, from and within)? Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local).	Yes	The site does not contain any designated sites or non-designated heritage assets. The application has been supported by relevant information which identifies designated sites within close proximity to the site. Scheduled Monuments: moated site and pond at Moor Hall Farm (approx. 1.7km to the north of the Site); Listed buildings: those within 2km of the Site include: - Ivy Farmhouse and Rownall Farmhouse (both Grade II), approx. 1.1km to the north; - Grade II stables at former Rownall Hall (now demolished), 0.8km to the east; Various Grade II Listed Buildings in Werrington at over 1.5km to the south and within Bagnall Conservation Area over 2km to the north-west. The proposed development has the potential to disturb assets of archaeological importance. Although assessments identify the site as holding low archaeological potential.	No	The effects of the development can be assessed through a HIA at the application stage, where the degree of any harm to the setting of heritage assets can be established. The proposals do not result in any direct loss of heritage assets with the development only potentially affecting wider setting. If harm is identified then a balancing exercise would be required, in accordance with National guidance. With regard to the effect on any archaeology appropriate investigation and mitigation could be secured via condition. The effects on heritage assets would not be significant.
9. TRANSPORT AND ACCESS				
9.1 Are there any routes on or around the location which are used by the public for	Yes	Various public right of ways on/near the application site, including:	No	The increased traffic on the public footpath will be mainly during the construction period. Traffic can be

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access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the project?		• Bagnall 35 • Cheddleton 49 • Cheddleton 47/Bagnall 37 • Cheddleton 53 • Cheddleton 58 • Cheddleton 59 These routes could be affected by the development, particularly during construction from construction traffic.		managed through a Construction Traffic Management Plan submitted with the planning application to manage and minimise any risks to users of the footpath. The acceptability of the CTMP will be reviewed during the application. Effects would not be permanent or significant in this regard.
9.2 Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	No	No – although the surrounding routes are generally rural with no direct access from the site to main roads.	No	A routing agreement would be required as part of a Construction and Traffic management plan to determine the effect on the local transport network. Views of the Local Highways Authority and Highways England would be provided through the application proposes. The effects in this respect are not likely to be significant and short term.
10. LAND USE				
10.1 Are there existing land uses or community facilities on or around the location which could be affected by the project? E.g. housing, densely populated areas, industry / commerce, farm/agricultural holdings, forestry, tourism, mining, quarrying, facilities relating to health, education, places of worship, leisure /sports / recreation.	Yes	No land uses or community facilities on or around the location which could be affected. The proposals utilise agricultural land but would not result in the loss of BMV. The effect on recreational routes have been considered at 9.1.	No	The effects in this regard are not considered to be significant.
10.2 Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No	There are no applications or allocations for future land uses which would affect the development.	N/A	

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11. LAND STABILITY AND CLIMATE				
11.1 Is the location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, or extreme /adverse climatic conditions, e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	No	No anticipated issues in respect of land stability and/or climate	N/A	
12. CUMULATIVE EFFECTS				
12.1 Could this project together with existing and/or approved development result in cumulation of impacts together during the construction/operation phase?	Yes	There a number of submissions for similar developments within the wider area. SMD/2022/0444 – Site to north east of Cellardhead substation. Planning permission **approved** (22/12/22) – facility for 196 battery containers, 98 inverter units, 49 transformer units, application site area 9.42ha (2.58ha of developed area) SMD/2022/0548 – Site to east of Cellarhead substation. Planning permission **approved** (27/06/23) - facility for 112 battery containers, and 56 transformers, application site area 5.4ha SMD/2022/0574 – Land Adjacent to Armshead Farm (south west of application site. Planning permission **refused** (26/06/2023). Refused on grounds of effect on Green Belt and landscape (individually and cumulatively). SMD/2023/0639 – Land at Greenfields Farm (southwest of application site). **EIA Screening**, awaiting decision. Battery storage compound, substation and associated works. Site of 8.9ha.	?	Operational Phase The effects of the development, once operational is likely to be limited to the cumulative effect of the developments on the landscape. Two scheme have been approved which are located to the east of the Cellarhead substation. A much larger development to the south which is likely to have greater visual effects has yet to be screened for EIA development. While a large solar farm Cumulatively, the approved and proposed developments, along with the Cellarhead substation, would undoubtedly result in an urbanising effect that would change the nature of the landscape in the area if they were all to be approved and constructed. In terms of the actual application proposals, intervisibility between the proposed development and the approved storage schemes is likely to be limited given the relatively contained nature of the proposed site, along with the intervening substation. It is also noted that the scheme is much smaller than those approved. While the scheme is also much smaller and

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		SMD/2024/0055 – Land south of Cellarhead substation. **Application submitted (13/02/24).** 248 no. battery containers, 62 no. transformer units, 124 no. inverter units. Application extends to 22.4ha (4.45ha to be developed). Not yet screened for EIA. Other Proposals: SMD/2023/0523 - Land At Rownall Farm (to north of Cellarhead substation). Installation of a solar farm comprising ground mounted solar PV panels with a generating capacity of up to 49.99MW. Site 58ha in area. The proposals have the potential to give rise to cumulative effects both during construction (traffic, noise, disturbance) and at operational stage (landscape/visual effects) – if all approved.		more contained than other developments under consideration. As identified earlier the site is not a designated landscape. Vantage points and visual receptors would generally be limited and in the context of the substation. The proposals in each of the schemes, as it is understood, would not result in the significant loss of existing landscape features while mitigating landscaping is also proposed. The cumulative effects of the developments, those implemented, extant or under consideration would be considered through the LVIA and ordinary development management process. The cumulative effect of this development, with those approved, is not considered to trigger EIA development in this regard. <u>Construction</u> It is possible that the proposed development, if granted, would be carried out at a similar time to those already consented. These are likely to result in significant vehicular movements on the local highway network giving rise to matters relating to the effectiveness of the network and disturbance to residents. These matters can be considered and controlled appropriately through necessary CTMP and/or CEMP. As such it is not considered that the cumulative effects of the development in this regard would trigger EIA development.

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13. TRANSBOUNDARY EFFECTS				
13.1 Is the project likely to lead to transboundary effects?	No	Will not have any impact on the environment of other countries	N/A	
14. COMMENTS ON CONSULTATION				
14.1 Any consultation comments which require consideration?	Yes	Staffordshire Wildlife Trust I don't think the ecology issues would warrant an EIA Landscape/Trees EIA not required in rela on to landscape and visual impact issues, but nevertheless these issues must be demonstrably taken into account in designing the proposed scheme, with the subsequent planning application being supported by comprehensive tree and landscape impact assessments, landscape strategy and landscaping scheme. Two public comments: Contrary to Development Plan No special circumstances in Green Belt Risk of explosion and fire Cumulative effects Landscape and lighting effects Noise		The application has been supported by relevant documents regarding trees, ecology, BNG while an LVIA has been submitted which are standard for an application of this scale. The concerns of the public are also noted and can be considered through the application process, with regard to planning merits and Green Belt considerations. Other matters can also be considered through application process and do not trigger EIA development. The cumulative effects have been considered above while other schemes recently submitted are also noted (which will be screened for EIA development accordingly).

5. CONCLUSIONS – ACCORDING TO EIA REGULATIONS SCHEDULE 3
See attached letter

6. SCREENING DECISION	
If a SO/SD has been provided do you agree with it?	Yes
Is it necessary to issue a SD?	Yes
Is an ES required?	No

7. ASSESSMENT (EIA REGS SCHEDULE 2 DEVELOPMENT)	OUTCOME	
Is likely to have significant effects on the environment	ES required	
Not likely to have significant effects on the environment	ES not required	✓
More information is required to inform direction	Request further info	

NAME	Mr Declan Cleary
DATE	01 May 2024