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| <b>SMDC Planning Reference –</b>        | <b>NMA/2024/0027</b>                                                                                                                                                                                  |                              |         |
| <b>Site Name –</b>                      | Cellarhead BESS (Rownall Road side)                                                                                                                                                                   |                              |         |
| <b>Summary of proposals -</b>           | Modifications to proposed levels, compound areas and width of screening treatments                                                                                                                    |                              |         |
| <b>Consultation Note Subject –</b>      | Landscape and Visual Effects                                                                                                                                                                          |                              |         |
| <b>Planning Case Officer –</b>          | Jane Curley – Principal Planning Officer                                                                                                                                                              |                              |         |
| <b>Landscape comments prepared by –</b> | Stuart Ryder of Ryder Landscape Consultants                                                                                                                                                           |                              |         |
| <b>Date(s) of site visit —</b>          | 2022 & 2024                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Date of this response</b> | 16/2/25 |
| <b>Number / Purpose of note</b>         | No.2 to review the modifications to the BESS bunding and retention that were provided to address matters of concern about narrowing of earth bunding                                                  |                              |         |
| <b>Summary of consultation response</b> | The updated proposals are now considered acceptable and the inclusion of gabion walling at the south west corner assists in overcoming previous concerns about the height of the bund in that corner. |                              |         |

Dear Madam

**Cellarhead BESS (Rownall Road side) - Landscape and Visual Consultation on proposed NMA Modification Works**

This note addresses the following matters;

1. Purpose of note
2. Identified changes using previous comments table but updated (green font)
3. Summary comments on updated drawings
4. Overall Summary

**1. Purpose and methodology of note**

To consider the updated drawing pack in support of the NMA application to increase the size of the battery compound to accommodate 50MW rows and alternative DNO sub-station provision.

**2. Site Layout Comparison Comments**

I have reviewed the updated drawings and use the same table to confirm if the query still remains or has fallen away with the additional information. My original comments are in black, the Applicant's replies in red and my further updated remarks in green.

I have also removed the RAG traffic light colour column.

| No. | Nature of Change                                                                                                                                         | Foreseeable landscape and visual effect arising from change                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | Reduction of corner width from up to 50m to 30m.<br>Width of bund narrowed with tree RPA acting as a constraint.<br>More battery containers in the area. | Width of sensitive corner of the scheme set close to the PROW and major tree group has been reduced. The 'nibbing' of the corner was seen as an advantage to the earlier layout to create space for adequate, structural planting and screening at this corner where path users will have a more focussed view of the BESS. The depth of the corner treatment will reduce its effectiveness in terms of screening from the footpath (FP53).<br><b>We have reviewed and revised our site layout and can confirm the corner width is now around 38m. the revision now makes the North side Bund approx. 15m D, as discussed we have made a provision to include a gabion wall on the inside of the bund with a gradual grade to the top of the wall which will maintain</b> |

| No. | Nature of Change                                                                | Foreseeable landscape and visual effect arising from change                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|     |                                                                                 | <p>the overall required height of 2m across the bund.</p> <p>This corner arrangement is now considered acceptable as it allows a 2m high bund to be formed when looked upon from the footpath to the west. Gradient of outer face of bund noted to be 1:3 when scaled from drawing which is acceptable as the maximum steepness of gradient for the outward facing slopes.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 2   | Reduction in width of western buffer from 33m to 24m.<br>Width of bund reduced. | <p>With less available width from planting the effectiveness of the screen will be reduced for walkers heading in an easterly direction walking towards the BESS from the west. The naturalness of the bund profile in narrower areas is not as easy to form. We have reviewed and revised our site layout and now increased this to around 28m, we have maintained the 19m wide bund and created more planting area, the height of the bund will be maintained at 2m as per the original planning requirements therefore having the same visual screen.</p> <p>The final 5m reduction in bund width is considered acceptable and will not lead to any meaningful reduction in the effective of the bund or planting for screening purposes.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 3   | Doubling up of fencing lines                                                    | <p>The need for a 2.4m (8 foot) palisade fence around a higher 4.0m (13 foot) acoustic fence is questioned. The acoustic fence was the only one shown on the earlier plans. Recognising that the palisade fence is down in the lowered platform reduces sight to it and that security fencing is required around a sub-station facility, the gap between the twin fence lines will be hard to maintain and will add to the industrial character of the facility. There is a project requirement for the palisade security fence, some of the original planning section drawings show the fence in certain areas, the two fences will be built side by side and gap will be minimal/consistent along the perimeter – the palisade fence will be coloured green (as requested by the LPA), and will be lower than the surrounding bund therefore not visible from outside of the facility, so will not result in an industrial character.</p> <p>The need for a palisade style fence for security purposes is recognized and how it is safely maintained needs to be considered in the Landscape Maintenance and Management Plan.</p> |
| 4   | Reducing northern buffer from 32.7m to 20.2m                                    | <p>Again concern is expressed at the effectiveness of the remaining planting to act as structure planting. The reduced width of the bund will make it more difficult to blend into the ground profile. The cable run from Cellarhead appears to clash with the end tree (as before) when setting it to the gap to the west may save that existing tree.</p> <p>We have reviewed and revised our site layout and the buffer is now around 27m, the height of the bund will be maintained at 2m as per the original planning requirements therefore creating the same visual screen. The cable run is shown in this location as per the original planning drawings, we are currently looking into the design of the cable installation, the route will be confirmed on the completion of the design, we will not be removing any trees as part of these cable route works.</p> <p>The final 6m reduction in bund width is considered acceptable and will not lead to any meaningful reduction in the effective of the bund or planting for screening purposes.</p>                                                                    |

| No. | Nature of Change                                     | Foreseeable landscape and visual effect arising from change                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
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| 5   | Sloping ground profile instead of battery compound   | The sloping of this portion of the former battery compound and its excavation removes approximately 16 battery containers from this part of the scheme. There are no visual or landscape benefits of removing these and possibly a dis-benefit if they are being relocated to the south west corner near my point 1. <b>This area has been returned to level site ground and will be used for the welfare/storage containers and the remainder landscaped. This change is considered acceptable now it has been demonstrated that the south west corner of the scheme can be kept as a bund at 2.0m high.</b>                                                                                                                          |
| 6   | Retaining wall near mature tree line                 | How does the retaining wall relate to the trees' RPA's? I see the 2m slope is drawn to follow around the tree canopy but the RPA is likely to be larger and the proposed new wall could affect roots and in turn the viability or vitality of the tree. Your Tree Officer may wish to consider this point if they are being consulted. <b>The 2m slope is created based on the RPA, the retaining wall respects the RPAs of all trees and is around 5m from the extent of the RPA.</b><br><b>Accepted and the retaining wall or gabions needs to be labelled on the D114 Series of Dwgs and Sections particularly Section A-A that it appears to be absent from. It should also be included on the Landscape Drawing LS-001-Rev 7.</b> |
| 7   | Attenuation pond size and location – To be confirmed | Not a helpful situation but a pond may look better lower down in the field, or a flatter part to minimise the amount of cut into the slope of the field. There is also the possible need to link it as a drainage feature to the access track – see comment 14.<br><b>The location of the pond is detailed on sheet 2 of the landscaping drawings, It is now located in the lower field in a flatter area of the site reducing the amount of cut required and allows the drainage system to operate via gravity. This is explained in detail in the drainage strategy for condition 18.</b><br><b>Noted and accepted as a better position visually and technically.</b>                                                                |
| 8   | Confirmation of land use the remaining field         | No indication of how the remaining field is to be managed, sown, fenced, grazed? – see comment 13 as well.<br><b>Sheet 2 of the landscaping drawings provided confirm the details within this field in line with the original approved planning drawings.</b><br><b>Landscape Sheet 2 is useful to indicate this and as discussed at the meeting not required to determine the NMA for the battery compound. However field access from Rownall Road, or ideally the new access point is a matter for final confirmation as is the protection of trees from deer / livestock browsing should the field be managed by grazing.</b>                                                                                                       |
| 9   | Tree symbols missing                                 | Row of existing inter field tree symbols not shown on current Rev G proposals – assumed draughting oversight. <b>Noted, now included.</b><br><b>Thank you</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 10  | Tree symbols missing                                 | Row of existing highway boundary tree symbols not shown on current Rev G proposals – assumed draughting oversight. Proposed woodland area appears to have changed in shape and been pulled back from the red line boundary. <b>Noted, now included.</b><br><b>Thank you</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

| No. | Nature of Change                                  | Foreseeable landscape and visual effect arising from change                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
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| 11  | Colour differentiation                            | Limited differentiation between greens used for bund, woodland and native areas and difference in colours between the bund on the plan and within the key. <b>Noted, now revised for clarity.</b><br><b>New colours are easier to discern – thank you.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 12  | 4 No. containers unmarked in key                  | 4 No thin containers set next to the graded area – what are they? Staff welfare, stores? These thin containers are not shown on the Planting Plan. <b>Noted, now included.</b><br><b>Noted.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 13  | Sloping access track and field access             | It appears that the access track is shown sloping downwards compared to the filed level grade to get a ‘head start’ into reaching the lower level of the sub-station compound. The issue with this is that it will make field access difficult. A recognisable point of entry, ideally near a field corner is recommended to aid stock management. <b>The access track has been designed to provide a consistent gradient from Rownall Road into the new BESS site, Our review of the previous application drawings CELLARHEAD-D-115 shts. 1 &amp; 3 sections ‘FF’ (although not clearly labeled and some of the levels are incorrect) show this detail. We have also created a new drawing D-118 (attached) showing additional section details.</b><br><b>The new section details are helpful to see the change in level as the track progresses into the Site. Field entry is presumed at the start of this slow ramp. Consideration of a possible passing place is suggested to the south (field) side of the track to aid with traffic movements.</b> |
| 14  | Long drainage reach on access track               | By setting the access track at a lower grade than the adjacent field level and with having a lowered sub-station compound at its head then a surface water drainage route could be inadvertently formed. Ditching or other active drainage system is likely to be necessary with possible link to the now unconfirmed SuDS attenuation pond (See Comment No.7)<br><b>A full drainage design has been prepared for the BESS site including the new access road – this is detailed in pre-condition 18. We can confirm the access road drainage will be connected to the new attenuation pond – the access road belmouth will also have a linear drain installed as per the CTMP</b><br><b>Thank you for confirming that. Do the drainage proposals consider matters relevant to fire fighting e.g. water supply and control of run-off in a spill situation?</b>                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 15  | Enclosed GIS substation and change in orientation | The previous substation was open to the elements whereas the Rev G version is a Gas Insulated Substation (GIS) it will be a building in the landscape. There is the potential for a visual improvement within development as the building is more discrete than an external substation. However the building will need to look agricultural in shape, scale and colour to aid its assimilation into the landscape. <b>The GIS substation is the same configuration as the approved planning drawings – Indoor switchgear area and outdoor transformer area – the Building will be below the bund/fence line therefore not visible from the outside the facility – building will also be coloured green as agreed with the LPA.</b><br><b>Accepted and noted as such, there should be no difference in landscape and visual effects from this arrangement.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                             |

| No. | Nature of Change                                        | Foreseeable landscape and visual effect arising from change                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| 16  | Change of proposed native hedgerow to a new native area | <p>This happens to the south, west and north with the greatest effect occurring in the south west corner where there is the greatest proximity between path users and the BESS equipment. A hedge is a useful way of screening views but I note the proposed scrub and tree planting over the bund and consider this an acceptable alternative to the hedge in the south west corner. My earlier comments about sufficient depth of planting (see Comment 1) still remain.</p> <p>I note from the Landscape plan that the hedge has been removed and it is scrub planting and some standard tree planting on the bund's outer face that will be supplying screening at this corner.</p> |

### 3. Drawing comments

I have viewed all the drawings issued to SMDC on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> February and pass the following minor comments on them. They indicate the proposals sufficiently so that the external realm, including the bunding arrangement can be understand. None of the comments listed below are considered substantive but could be addressed in any future revisions of the drawings.

| Drawing Series & Topic                          | Comment / Observation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Dwg D-114 Series<br>Site Layout/Cross Sections  | Grey retaining block of gabions not included in dwg key<br>Section A-A not showing retention through east boundary required for tree root protection but marked elsewhere.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Dwg D-115 Series<br>Cross Sections              | Section G-G not showing gabions at south west corner but shown on other sections including new Dwg D-119<br>The sections now spread further and show relationship of bund to adjacent ground levels which makes them more useful                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Dwg D-116 Series<br>Elevations                  | Elevation B is useful for demonstrating the bunds relationship to the footpath.<br>What is the light green colour that is shown on some of the elevations, a key may assist in understanding different elements.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Dwg D-118<br>Site Access Road Plan&<br>Sections | Red dashed line shown at boundary, please confirm that this is not a proposed new boundary fence – it is very tall and a simpler agricultural fence is preferred.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Dwg D-119<br>New section drawing                | Section B-B is most useful.<br>Demonstrates 1 in 4 outer slope and confirms 2m bund height above ground level to the west.<br>The difficulty of access around three barriers (gabions, palisade and acoustic is again highlighted so it can be addressed in the Landscape Maintenance and Management Plan.                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Dwg D-307 Series<br>Sub-station arrangement     | Mostly electrical kit and information.<br>Sheets 3 & 4 indicate potential high boundary feature or is this a drawing line simply picking out the boundary?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Landscape Plans                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| LS-001 Rev 7                                    | Shows gabion uplift to the south west corner and spot heights confirm the 2m change in level.<br>There is some coniferous planting in the mix to give seasonal screening but not too much that it will appear artificial.<br>Horse chestnuts need to be supplied from a certifiable source free of diseases that affect this species.<br>The Landscape GA Plan Sheet 1 does not show the gabions to the east side that protect the RPA of the eastern field trees. It is however shown on D114 plan. |
| LS-002                                          | Tree guards and fencing may be required to protect tree planting from deer or farmstock browsing. This can be a matter of future detail.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| LS-003                                          | No remarks to make.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| LS-004                                          | Good to see rounded top to the bund and this should ideally be replicated on other sections before a start on site.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| LS-005                                          | Slacker embankment of 1:4.5 as scaled from the drawing is noted and appears better than a 1:3 as there is more space at this location.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

#### 4. Overall summary

The additional information and modifications to the south west corner of the Site has demonstrated to me that the original landscape intent of creating a 2m high bund with planting on the outer face can be achieved.

The narrowing of the width of the bunds and buffer planting to the west and north boundaries now to an acceptable level where sufficient space is left for the earthworks and planting.

Finally I agree that based on the information submitted the different sub-station arrangement including the Gas Insulated Sub-station should not alter the appearance of this part of the BESS.

Based on the above I consider the updated NMA proposals are acceptable and will not lead to any material changes with regards to landscape and visual effects when compared to the previous consented proposals.

Please contact me should you wish to discuss any of these points further.

**Stuart Ryder**

Ryder Landscape Consultants

16/2/25