

SMDC Planning Reference –	NMA/2025/0009		
Site Name –	Cellarhead BESS (Rownall Road side)		
Summary of proposals -	Modifications to proposed surface water drainage proposals		
Consultation Note Subject –	Landscape and Visual Effects		
Planning Case Officer –	Jane Curley – Principal Planning Officer		
Landscape comments prepared by –	Stuart Ryder of Ryder Landscape Consultants		
Date(s) of site visit —	2022 & 2024	Date of this response	10/5/25
Number / Purpose of note	No.1 to review the proposed modifications to the drainage scheme to facilitate a gravity fed solution in favour to pumped solutions.		
Summary of consultation response	The updated proposals are considered acceptable and the relocation of the surface water attenuation pond is not considered to be a material change. Subject to adequate detailing there is the potential to add a feature of interest to the local landscape and views from Footpath FP53.		

Dear Madam

Cellarhead BESS (Rownall Road side) - Landscape and Visual Consultation on proposed NMA for changing the location of a surface water attenuation pond

This note addresses the following matters:

1. Purpose of note
2. Site Layout comparison
3. Question related to the proposed change
4. Overall Summary

1. Purpose and methodology of note

To consider the updated landscape drawings that include a relocated attenuation basin to the south west of the Site's lower field near to Rownall Road. The comments are based entirely on the two following drawings supplied to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC) to illustrate the changed position.

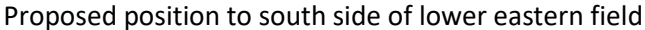
- CELDC-SH-ELS-DR-LS-001_Option1
- CELDC-SH-ELS-DR-LS-002_Option1

Even though they are referred to as options on the drawing on one has been passed to me to comment upon.

2. Site Layout Comparison

The area for the proposed SuDS attenuation basin was shown on the Approved 00 CELLARHEAD-D-114 Rev F drawing by Avon to be positioned more centrally in the lower eastern field. It is shown on the approved drawing as being an arbitrary circular shape.

The revised positioning is within the lower southern field and is more lozenge in shape to reflect the fundamental shape of the field and to protect nearby root protection areas. Its positioning on one of the lower parts of the Site will allow a more sustainable form of drainage under gravity rather than relying on pumps to move water. The two plans are set overleaf as a side by side comparison.



3. Details of changes

These are presented as a series of questions and answers for ease of presenting the information.

Q1: What was at this part of the site before?

A: The thin southern field before the basin was shown as woodland screen with a native woodland mix.

Q2: What are the effects of removing the proposed woodland?

A: There will be closer range views from Footpath Cheddleton FP53 to the attenuation pond and there is a slight potential to have a greater awareness of the BESS yard to the west.

Q3: Why is there a potential to see the BESS yard from FP53?

A: Because the depth of planting possible around the attenuation basin is not as great as it was before with the whole field put over to planting.

Q4: Will there be views from all of FP53 as it passed by the pond?

A: No, there will be a variety of views depending on foreground planting and other retained vegetation to the east of the BESS yard field, the view cannot be described as open. There will be no views for people walking eastwards after they have passed the BESS yard's outer bund as they are walking and looking away from the BESS.

Q5: Is there any proposed planting that is more critical to maintain screening to FH53 than other areas at the pond?

A: Yes the planting to the west end of the proposed basin is more important at providing a forward screen to the BESS Yard for people walking westwards to the BESS equipment. The path side hedgerow also remains important for providing screening along the lane that FP53 runs along.

Q6: Are the basin proposals at a detail stage yet?

A: No, they remain a shape on a plan with no cross-sectional information or details of how a basin will be constructed or maintained as a water attenuation feature in this location. The basin still requires detailing.

Q7: What planting proposals are included for the basin?

A: A series of willows and native grasses are proposed as plants around the basin. It is recommended that the willows are used judiciously as they have the potential to take over such a water body and make it hard to maintain for drainage purposes.

Q8: What if any design details or changes would you expect to see for a water basin to assimilate into the local agricultural landscape and act as an asset for wildlife and for people walking on FP53.

A: Varied slope gradient into the basin so it doesn't appear as a uniform farm reservoir.
Variety of gradients is useful for different habitats and wildlife value.
Reinforce planting to the west end of the basin to assist in screening.
Retain a grass maintenance track around the top of the basin for ease of future access.
Minimise tree planting on the north side so that a sunny, south facing slope
The south facing slope benefits insects and herpetofauna
Keep a section of lane side hedge lower to allow views along the basin feature

Q9 Does the change in location alter the perception or experience of the wider BESS proposals?

A: The proposed basin location does not alter the perception or experience of the wider BESS. If designed carefully it has the potential to add a more interesting feature to the field near FP53. Given its increase in size compared to the original proposal it has the potential to deliver greater ecological gain.

4. Overall summary

The proposed new position of the surface water attenuation basin will not alter the perception or appearance of the overall BESS proposals.

There will be a reduction in the amount of woodland trees planted in the area but not to a point where the BESS yard will become more visible from Footpath FP53. This is because a series of other vegetative layers exist and will grow between the viewer on the path and the equipment contained by the acoustic barrier of the BESS yard.

The proposals are not detailed at the moment and should remain subject to further submission of design details associated with earthworks, maintenance access, tree planting and final seeding mixes.

Based on the above I consider the updated NMA proposals are acceptable with regards to the principle of positioning the attenuation basin in the lower southern field and will not lead to any material changes with regards to landscape and visual effects when compared to the previous consented proposals. Further details of the basin's form and associated planting are suggested as necessary as a Condition.

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

Stuart Ryder

Ryder Landscape Consultants

10/5/25