

PLANNING STATEMENT

LAND SOUTH OF DOCKS WAY DISPOSAL SITE, DOCKS WAY, NEWPORT

November 25



Summary

Proposal

Full application for a new Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), trenching for underground cabling associated with the solar development approved under 23/0989 together with associated works

Location

Land South of Docks Way Disposal Site, Docks Way, Newport, NP20 2NS

Date

November 25

Project Reference

DG/GM/25.249

Client

Newport City Council

Product of

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Introduction

- 1.1 Asbri Planning is appointed as planning agent to Newport City Council to prepare this Planning Statement to accompany a full application for a new Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), trenching for underground cabling associated with the solar development approved under 23/0989 together with associated works at land at Docks Way, Newport, NP20 2NS.
- 1.2 The application site is located to the south of Docks Way Disposal Site and to the north of the proposed mounted solar development and associated works approved on the 7th of August 2024.
- 1.3 The proposed development will seek to provide a new location for the trenching associated with the approved ground mounted solar development alongside a new Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated works.
- 1.4 The Planning Statement acts as a supporting document to the accompanying planning application and should be read in conjunction with all other elements of the application. The following drawings prepared by Dulas to accompany the application:

Drawing name	Drawing reference
Site Location Plan	TS010-Figure 013
BESS Layout Plan	TS010-Figure 014
Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Floor and Elevation Plan	TS010-Figure 011

- 1.5 In addition, the following supporting documents are submitted.

Document	Prepared by
Planning application forms	Asbri Planning
Covering Letter	Asbri Planning
Planning Statement inc Green Infrastructure Statement	Asbri Planning

- 1.6 This Planning Statement presents the planning case for the proposed development having regard to the site and its surroundings, the planning history, and policy context. It considers the key policy issues and planning merits of the proposed development. The statement is structured as follows:
 - Section 2: provides a description of the site and its surroundings, including a review of the site's planning history;
 - Section 3: summarises the development proposals.
 - Section 4: provides an overview of pre-application dialogue undertaken in regard to the emerging scheme.
 - Section 5: outlines the relevant planning policy context, at both the national and local level.
 - Section 6: addresses the key planning considerations associated with the development proposal.
 - Section 7: provides a conclusion regarding the overall acceptability of the application.

Site Description

General Location

- 2.1 The Docksway Disposal Site is situated approximately 2km southwest of Newport City Centre, between the River Ebbw and Newport Docks. The site is centred on grid coordinates E: 330654; N:185779.
- 2.2 The application site is located to the south of the Newport Household Waste Recycling Centre, on the edge of the carpark and is ancillary to the ground mounted solar development to the south (application ref 23/0989).

Site Description

- 2.3 The site is under the ownership of Newport City Council and consists primarily of hardstanding, measuring approximately 0.612ha. The site is relatively flat in topography, making it an ideal location to situate the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS).
- 2.4 According to the Cadw online mapping service, there are no listed buildings or scheduled monuments within or adjacent to the site boundary. The nearest heritage asset to the site is Castell Glas Castle Mound, a Scheduled Monument (reference number MM190) located approximately 430m to the west of the site. This monument dates back to the Medieval period, and is designated for its potential to enhance the public knowledge of medieval architecture, according to Cadw information.
- 2.5 According to NRW's Flood Map for Planning the site does not fall into flood zone 2 or 3 for rivers and sea and surface water and small watercourses, meaning that a Flood Risk Assessment is not required.

Access

- 2.6 Access onto the site is solely facilitated by the access road serving Newport Household Waste Recycling Centre, which is accessed off the A48 (Docks Way) roundabout to the north-west of the site. The A48 acts as a key local route into and out of Newport, between the application site and the M4 motorway at Junctions 24 and 28.
- 2.7 There are no footways provided along the A48, however, there is a footway link to the National Cycle Route 4 that runs along the north side of Docks Way. This National Cycle Route is also referenced as Public Right of Way 403/2/1 on the Newport City Council interactive mapping service. The footway connection crosses the A48 on the west side of Maesglas Roundabout at a signal-controlled crossing.
- 2.8 Both the A48 and Docks Way Household Waste Recycling Centre are considered to appropriately accommodate significant HGV movements, given the existing use of the local area for both recycling and wider industrial uses.

Planning History

- 2.9 A review of Newport City Council's online planning register indicates that the following planning applications are of most relevance to the site:

Application Ref	Proposals	Date determined	Decision
23/0989	Proposed ground mounted solar development and associated works	Wed 07 Aug 2024	Granted with Conditions

13/0184	Partial discharge of condition 13 (scheme of landscaping and tree planting) of planning permission 11/1226 for the change of use of land for city's refuse collection fleet incorporating refuse vehicle shelter buildings, staff accommodation blocks, fuel tanks and car parking	Mon 15 Apr 2013	Approved
13/0154	Partial discharge of condition 09 (chemical testing of clean-fill or capping material) of planning permission 11/1226 for the change of use of land for city's refuse collection fleet incorporating refuse vehicle shelter buildings, staff accommodation blocks, fuel tanks and car parking	Mon 15 Apr 2013	Approved
13/0089	Partial discharge of condition 10 (materials) relating to planning permission 11/1226 for the change of use of land for city's refuse collection fleet incorporating refuse vehicle shelter buildings, staff accommodation blocks, fuel tanks and car parking	Fri 08 Mar 2013	Approved
12/1192	Partial discharge of conditions 1 (archaeology), 2 (cesspit), 7 (storage of oils), 08B (ground gas), 12 (drainage), 15 (construction management plan), 16 (fuel tanks), and 17 (elevations/materials) of planning permission 11/1226 for the change of use of land for city's refuse collection fleet incorporating refuse vehicle shelter buildings, staff accommodation blocks, fuel tanks and car parking.	Fri 08 Mar 2013	Approved
12/1078	Partial discharge of conditions 3 (habitat compensation), 4 (reptiles), 5 (Japanese knotweed), 11 (slab levels) and 14 (barrier fencing) relating to planning permission 11/1226 for the change of use of land for city's refuse collection fleet incorporating refuse vehicle shelter buildings, staff accommodation blocks, fuel tanks and car parking.	Thu 03 Jan 2013	Approved
11/1226	Change of use of land for city's refuse collection fleet incorporating refuse vehicle shelter buildings, staff accommodation blocks, fuel tanks and car parking.	Fri 03 Feb 2012	Granted with Conditions
06/1568	Erection of extension to existing transfer station.	Wed 20 Dec 2006	Granted with Conditions

- 2.10 The principle of development in this location is, therefore, considered to be acceptable providing it meets all national and local planning policies.

Proposals

- 3.1 The proposed development seeks to develop a small parcel of land to include a new Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and trenching for underground cabling to accompany the 1MW ground mounted solar development south of Docksway Household Waste Recycling Centre (application ref 23/0989).
- 3.2 The two units in the Battery Storage System (BESS) will allow the energy from the solar development to be stored and used at a later date, therefore helping to conserve more renewable energy. These are to be situated 750mm above ground level and accessed via a small staircase on the front of the units. In terms of height, they are to measure at 3.4m. Internally, they will include a control system, inverter and energy storage racks. In terms of the specification of the BESS, this will not be provided until a later stage.
- 3.3 The proposals also include trenching for underground cabling which will allow the energy to be transmitted to the neighbouring building to charge the refuse vehicles directly. The previous application originally set out to transmit the energy to a substation to the north. It is no longer a requirement to tap into National Grid infrastructure meaning a new solution was formulated using BESS to transmit the energy directly to the building.
- 3.4 Access to the site will continue to be provided from the A48 and through the Newport Household Recycling Centre.

Planning Policy Context

Introduction

- 4.1 The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (which came into force on 1st April 2016) requires *“public bodies to do things in pursuit of the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales in a way that accords with the sustainable development principle”*.
- 4.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 plays a significant role in shaping the planning system in Wales, embedding sustainable development principles into planning policy and decisions. The Act reinforces the planning system’s shift towards a holistic, sustainable approach, emphasising that planning in Wales must consider not just present needs but also the well-being of future generations.
- 4.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with **the Development Plan** unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.4 The Development Plan comprises the following:
- National Development Framework: Future Wales – The National Plan 2040 (February, 2021);
 - Newport Local Development Plan 2011-2026 (Adopted January 2015)
- 4.5 In addition to the Development Plan, the Planning Application has been informed by **Policy** and **Guidance** set out in the following:
- Planning Policy Wales Edition 12 (February, 2024), informed by The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and supplemented by Technical Advice Notes;
 - Relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance

The Development Plan

- 4.6 The development plan comprises Future Wales and the Newport Local Development Plan (Adopted January 2015).

National Development Framework: Future Wales – The National Plan 2040

- 4.7 The National Development Framework: Future Wales – the National Plan 2040 was published on 24th February 2021. ‘Future Wales’ sets out the Welsh Government’s strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy; achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience; developing strong ecosystems; and improving the health and well-being of our communities. As stated above, the National Development Framework has Development Plan status.
- 4.8 Future Wales advocates for the development of renewable energy infrastructure. Policy 17 in particular strongly supports the principle of developing renewable and low carbon energy from all technologies and at all scales in order to meet future demand. This also helps to support Wales’ international commitment to generate 70% of consumed electricity by renewable means by 2030.
- 4.9 Future Wales sets out its overarching ambitions based on the national planning principles and national sustainable placemaking outcomes set out in Planning Policy Wales by means of 11 Outcomes. As set out on Pages 54-56 of Future Wales, the 11 Outcomes are collectively a statement of where the Welsh Government aspire Wales to be in 20 years’ time, as follows:

A Wales where people live:

- 1 ...and work in connected, inclusive and healthy places
- 2 ...in vibrant rural places with access to homes, jobs and services
- 3 ...in distinctive regions that tackle health and socio-economic inequality through sustainable growth
- 4 ...in places with a thriving Welsh Language
- 5 ...and work in towns and cities which are a focus and springboard for sustainable growth
- 6 ...in places where prosperity, innovation and culture are promoted
- 7 ...in places where travel is sustainable
- 8 ...in places with world-class digital infrastructure
- 9 ...in places that sustainably manage their natural resources and reduce pollution
- 10 ...in places with biodiverse, resilient and connected ecosystems
- 11 ...in places which are decarbonised and climate-resilient

4.10 Point 11 is of particular relevance to the renewable nature of the scheme.

4.11 Newport is defined as a 'National Growth Area' within Welsh Government's strategic growth, as outlined in Policy 1 of Future Wales as follows:

Policy 1 – Where Wales will Grow

The Welsh Government supports sustainable growth in all parts of Wales. In three National Growth Areas there will be growth in employment and housing opportunities and investment in infrastructure. The National Growth Areas are:

- Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys
- Swansea Bay and Llanelli
- Wrexham and Deeside

Local Level

4.12 The Newport Local Development Plan was adopted in January 2015 and comprises part of the prevailing development plan for the area.

4.13 The following Local Plan policies are considered the most relevant in the context of the proposed development:

Policy reference	Relating to
<i>Strategic Policies</i>	
SP1	Sustainability
SP2	Health
SP3	Flood Risk
SP8	Special Landscape Areas
SP9	Conservation of the Natural, Historic and Built Environment
SP13	Planning Obligations
<i>General Policies</i>	
GP1	General Development Principles – Climate Change
GP2	General Development Principles – General Amenity
GP3	General Development Principles – Service Infrastructure

GP4	General Development Principles – Highways and Accessibility
GP5	General Development Principles – Natural Environment
GP6	General Development Principles – Quality of Design
GP7	General Development Principles – Environmental Protection and Public Health
<i>Environment</i>	
CE1	Routeways, Corridors and Gateways
CE6	Archaeology
CE9	Coastal Zone
CE10	Renewable Energy
<i>Transport</i>	
T2	Heavy Commercial Vehicle Movements
T3	Road Hierarchy
T4	Parking
<i>Waste</i>	
W3	Provision for Waste Management Facilities in Development

4.14 Policy SP1 'Sustainability', one of the overarching policies of the Newport Local Development Plan, states:

"Proposals will be required to make a positive contribution to sustainable development by concentrating development in sustainable locations on brownfield land within the settlement boundary. They will be assessed as to their potential contribution to:

- i) the efficient use of land;*
- ii) the reuse of previously developed land and empty properties in preference to greenfield sites;*
- iii) providing integrated transportation systems, as well as encouraging the co-location of housing and other uses, including employment, which together will minimise the overall need to travel, reduce car usage and encourage a modal shift to more sustainable modes of transport;*
- iv) reducing energy consumption, increasing energy efficiency and the use of low and zero carbon energy sources;*
- v) the minimisation, re-use and recycling of waste;*
- vi) minimising the risk of and from flood risk, sea level rise and the impact of climate change;*
- vii) improving facilities, services and overall social and environmental equality of existing and future communities;*
- viii) encouraging economic diversification and in particular improving the vitality and viability of the city centre and district centres;*
- ix) conserving, enhancing and linking green infrastructure, protecting and enhancing the built and natural environment;*
- x) conserving and ensuring the efficient use of resources such as water and minerals."*

4.15 Policy GP1 'General Development Principles – Climate Change' sets out the Council's approach for addressing climate change in new development. This is shown in full below:

“Development proposals should:

- i) be designed to withstand the predicted changes in the local climate and to reduce the risk of flooding on site and elsewhere by demonstrating where appropriate that the risks and consequences of flooding can be acceptably managed, including avoiding the use of non-permeable hard surfaces;*
- ii) be designed to minimise energy requirements and incorporate appropriate renewable, low or zero carbon energy sources, including on site energy provision where practicable;*
- iii) be designed to reuse or recycle existing construction materials present on the site;*
- iv) meet the relevant breezeam or code for sustainable homes level.”*

4.16 Policy CE9 ‘Coastal Zone’ is of relevance due to the site’s inclusion with the identified Coastal Zone. This states that development will not be permitted in the coastal area unless such development is required to be on the coast to meet an exceptional need, and that the area is not at risk of flooding nor will the proposed development exacerbate risks from flooding, erosion or land instability.

4.17 Of key relevance is Local Development Plan Policy CE10 ‘Renewable Energy’. This details the Council’s approach to renewable energy developments, and states:

“Renewable energy schemes will be considered favourably, subject to there being no over-riding environmental and amenity considerations. Small scale micro-generation will be encouraged within the settlement boundary. Large scale proposals may be more appropriately located outside of the defined settlement boundary if no appropriate brownfield sites exist. The cumulative impacts of renewable energy schemes will be an important consideration.”

Supplementary Planning Guidance

4.18 The following Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) adopted by Newport City Council is of relevance to the proposed development:

- Waste Storage and Collection (January 2020)
- Wildlife and Development (August 2015)
- Air Quality (February 2018)

National Policy and Guidance

Planning Policy Wales Edition 12

4.19 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 12 was published in February 2024. The primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

4.20 Sustainable Development is defined at Page 7 of PPW as follows: *“the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the well-being goals”.*

4.21 Paragraph 1.18 sets out that *“Legislation secures a presumption in favour of sustainable development in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise to ensure that social, economic, cultural and environmental issues are balanced and integrated”.*

Energy

4.22 National policy has a strong presumption in favour of renewable energy development. Paragraph 5.7.2 sets out that *“The system will need to integrate renewable generation with storage and other flexibility services, in order to minimise the need for new generation and grid system reinforcement. Collectively we*

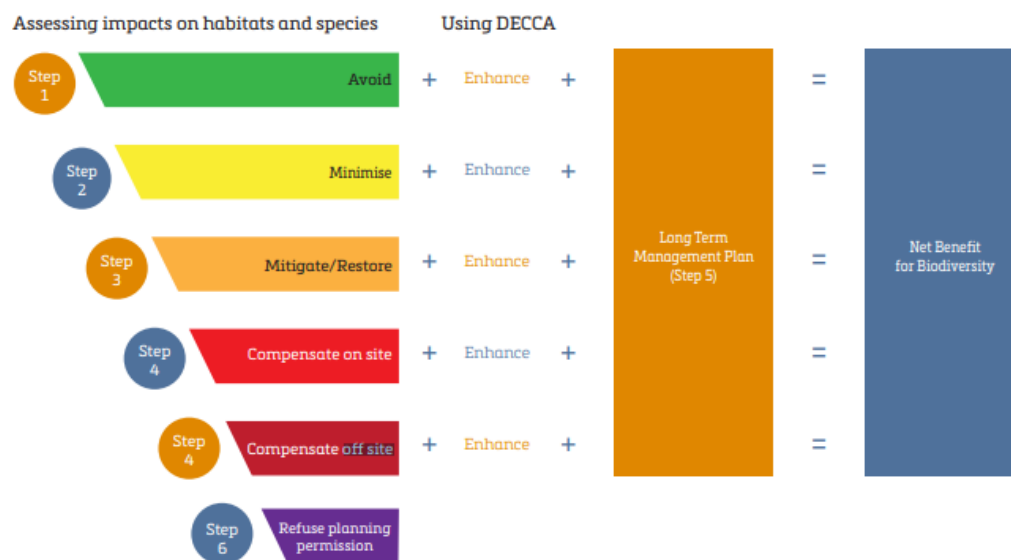
will need to concentrate on reducing emissions from fossil fuel sources, whilst driving further renewable generation which delivers value to Wales."

- 4.23 Paragraph 5.7.12 has particular focus on energy storage *"Energy storage has an important part to play in managing the transition to a low carbon economy. The growth in energy generation from renewable sources requires the management of the resultant intermittency in supply, and energy storage can help balance supply and demand. Proposals for new storage facilities should be supported wherever possible."*
- 4.24 Paragraph 5.9.1 relates to Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Energy in terms of local authorities, stating: *"Local authorities should facilitate all forms of renewable and low carbon energy development and should seek cross-department cooperation to achieve this. In doing so, planning authorities should seek to ensure their area's full potential for renewable and low carbon energy generation is maximised and renewable energy targets are achieved. Planning authorities should seek to maximise the potential of renewable energy by linking the development plan with other local authority strategies, including Local Well-being plans and Economic/Regeneration strategies."*

Green Infrastructure

- 4.25 The importance of green infrastructure is highlighted throughout PPW. It is summarised at Paragraph 6.2.11 that *"The quality of the built environment should be enhanced by integrating green infrastructure into development through appropriate site selection and use of creative design. With careful planning and design, informed by an appropriate level of assessment, green infrastructure can embed the benefits of biodiversity and ecosystem services into new development and places, help to overcome the potential for conflicting objectives, and contribute to health and well-being outcomes"*.
- 4.26 Paragraph 6.2.12 confirms that *"A green infrastructure statement should be submitted with all planning applications. This will be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed and will describe how green infrastructure has been incorporated into the proposal. In the case of minor development this will be a short description and should not be an onerous requirement for applicants. The green infrastructure statement will be an effective way of demonstrating positive multi-functional outcomes which are appropriate to the site in question and must be used for demonstrating how the step-wise approach (Paragraph 6.4.15) has been applied"*.
- 4.27 The Step-Wise Approach is depicted at figure 12 and discussed at paragraph 6.4.15 which confirms that the first priority for planning authorities is to avoid damage, if that is not possible then there is a requirement to minimise, mitigate, compensate on site, and then only as a last resort off-site compensation for unavoidable damage must be provided.

Figure 12: Summary of the Step-Wise Approach



Technical Advice Notes

- 4.28 The following Technical Advice Notes (TANS) are of relevance to the proposed development:
- 4.29 TAN 5 Nature Conservation and Planning (2009): provides advice about how the land use planning system should contribute to protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geological conservation. It seeks to demonstrate how local planning authorities, developers and key stakeholders in conservation can work together to deliver more sustainable development that does not result in losses from the natural heritage but instead takes every opportunity to enhance it.
- 4.30 TAN 11 Noise (1997): provides advice on how the planning system can be used to minimise impact of noise without placing unreasonable restrictions on development. It outlines some of the main considerations which local planning authorities should take into account in drawing up development plan policies and when determining planning applications for development which will either generate noise or be exposed to existing noise sources.
- 4.31 TAN 12 Design (2016): provides advice on design considerations and states that development should aim to:
- Create places with the needs of people in mind, which are distinctive and respect local character
 - Promote layouts and design features which encourage community safety and accessibility
 - Focus on the quality of the places and living environments for pedestrians rather than the movement and parking of vehicles
 - Avoid inflexible planning standards and encourage layouts which manage vehicle speeds through the geometry of the road and building
 - Promote environmental sustainability features, such as energy efficiency, in new housing and make clear specific commitments to carbon reductions and/or sustainable building standards
 - Secures the most efficient use of land including appropriate densities
 - Consider and balance potential conflicts between these criteria

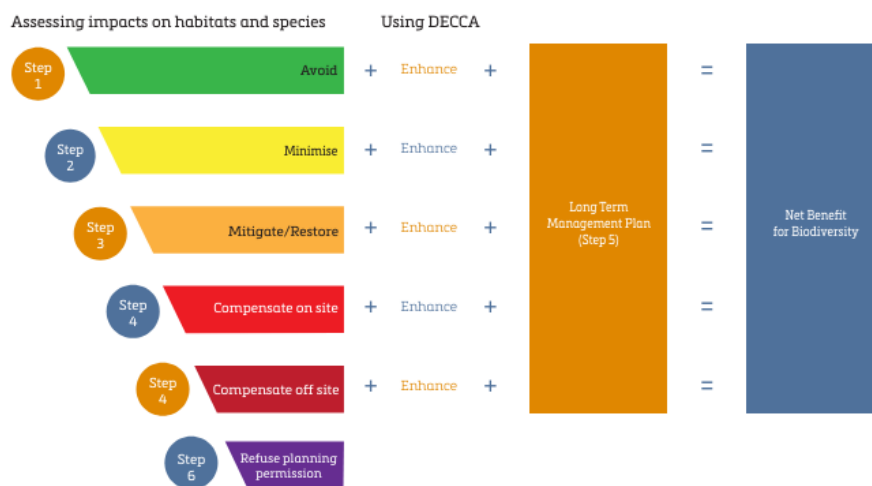
Green Infrastructure Statement

- 5.1 Paragraph 6.21 of Planning Policy Wales defines green infrastructure as *"the network of natural and semi-natural features, green spaces, rivers and lakes that intersperse and connect places. Component elements of green infrastructure can function at different scales and some components, such as trees and woodland, are often universally present and function at all levels. At the landscape scale green infrastructure can comprise entire ecosystems such as wetlands, waterways, peatlands and mountain ranges or be connected networks of mosaic habitats, including grasslands. At a local scale, it might comprise parks, fields, ponds, natural green spaces, public rights of way, allotments, cemeteries and gardens or may be designed or managed features such as sustainable drainage systems. At smaller scales, individual urban interventions such as street trees, hedgerows, roadside verges, and green roofs/walls can all contribute to green infrastructure networks."*
- 5.2 The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 provides a context for the delivery of multi-functional green infrastructure. Its protection and provision can make a significant contribution to the sustainable management of natural resources, and in particular to protecting, maintaining and enhancing biodiversity and the resilience of ecosystems in terms of the diversity within and connections between ecosystems and the extent and condition of these ecosystems, so that they are better able to resist, recover from and adapt to pressures. This means that the development of green infrastructure is an important way for local authorities to deliver their Section 6 duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.
- 5.3 The quality of the built environment should be enhanced by integrating green infrastructure into development through appropriate site selection and use of creative design. With careful planning and design, informed by an appropriate level of assessment, green infrastructure can embed the benefits of biodiversity and ecosystem services into new development and places, help to overcome the potential for conflicting objectives, and contribute to health and well-being outcomes.
- 5.4 **The DECCA Framework and Net Benefits for Biodiversity:** The DECCA framework is used for evaluating ecosystem resilience based on five attributes and properties specified in the Environment (Wales) Act. These are: Diversity, Extent, Condition, Connectivity and Aspects of ecosystem resilience. A summary of the definitions is described below:
- **Diversity:** maintaining and enhancing diversity at every scale, including genetic, structural, habitat and between-habitat levels. This supports the complexity of ecosystem functions and interactions that deliver services and benefits.
 - **Extent:** incorporating measures which maintain and increase the area of semi-natural habitat/features and linkages between habitats. In general, smaller ecosystems have reduced capacity to adapt, recover or resist disturbance.
 - **Condition:** The condition of an ecosystem is affected by multiple and complex pressures acting both as short term and longer term types of disturbance. Both direct and wider impacts should be considered, for example avoiding or mitigating pressures such as climate change, pollution, invasive species, land management neglect etc.
 - **Connectivity:** This refers to the links between and within habitats, which may take the form of physical corridors, stepping stones in the landscape, or patches of the same or related vegetation types that together create a network that enables the flow or movement of genes, species and natural resources. Developments should take opportunities to develop functional habitat and ecological networks within and between ecosystems, building on existing connectivity.

- **Aspects of ecosystem resilience (adaptability, recovery and resistance):** ecosystem resilience is a product of the above four attributes. Adaptability, recovery and resistance to/from a disturbance are defining features of ecosystem resilience.

5.5 Paragraph 6.4.11 of Planning Policy Wales states that “*planning authorities must follow a step-wise approach to maintain and enhance biodiversity, build resilient ecological networks and deliver net benefits for biodiversity by ensuring that any adverse environmental effects are firstly avoided, then minimized, mitigated, and as a last resort compensated for. Enhancement must be secured by delivering a biodiversity benefit primarily on site or immediately adjacent to the site, over and above that required to mitigate or compensate for any negative impact.*”

Figure 12: Summary of the Step-Wise Approach



5.6 Paragraph 6.2.12 of Planning Policy Wales states that “*a green infrastructure statement should be submitted with all planning applications. This will be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed and will describe how green infrastructure has been incorporated into the proposal. In the case of minor development this will be a short description and should not be an onerous requirement for applicants. The green infrastructure statement will be an effective way of demonstrating positive multi-functional outcomes which are appropriate to the site in question and must be used for demonstrating how the step-wise approach (Paragraph 6.4.15) has been applied.*”

5.7 The step wise approach has been taken into consideration and due to the BESS and trenching being ancillary to the solar development to the south, development in this location cannot be avoided; it is necessary to allow an alternative arrangement to store the energy created by the adjoining solar development. In terms of minimising the development, this was also not possible due to the amount of battery storage required, however, the location of the BESS has been carefully chosen to ensure it is positioned on an area of hardstanding with minimal ecological value. As a result of the site consisting of hardstanding, there is no scope to mitigate or restore on site or compensate on site. This means that the development will have to compensate off site.

5.8 It is acknowledged that any green infrastructure and biodiversity enhancements should be proportionate to the development. Accordingly, it is proposed that a hibernaculum will be provided elsewhere in the blue land to ensure that the development provides necessary provision for biodiversity enhancements.

5.9 On the basis of the above, it is considered that the proposed scheme complies with the updated Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales which sets out the policy for biodiversity and nature and follows the Step-Wise Approach.

Appraisal

Overview

- 6.1 As stated above, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This section of the Planning Statement aims to identify the main issues of relevance to the determination of the Planning Application and assess the scheme against the Development Plan.
- 6.2 The key material planning considerations are as follows:
- The principle of development
 - The impact of development on ecology and landscape
 - The impact of development on highways and access

Principle of Development

- 6.3 In regard to the principle of development, the site is located within the defined settlement boundary for Newport, in which development is generally considered acceptable. The proposed development will provide battery storage and trenching for the approved solar development at the waste recycling centre, meaning it is ancillary to a development that is already deemed to be acceptable. It is also key to note that the development is solely upon hardstanding which constitutes 'brownfield land', which is favourable for development as stated in paragraph 3.55 of PPW edition 12 and LDP Policy SP1 'Sustainability'.
- 6.4 LDP Policy CE10 'Renewable Energy' states that renewable energy schemes will be considered favourably, subject to there being no overriding amenity and environmental considerations. Furthermore, it states that the cumulative impacts of renewable energy schemes will be an important consideration when determining a relevant planning application. Given the isolated location adjacent to the waste recycling centre, the impact on neighbouring amenity is thought to be minimal, therefore satisfying Policy CE10.
- 6.5 Criterion i of CE9 Coastal Zone states how development will not be permitted unless it is required to be on the coast to meet an exceptional need which cannot be reasonably accommodated elsewhere. The fact that the development stores renewable energy from the approved solar development, means that it is required to be located at this site. The energy storage will allow for the Newport City Council's fleet of refuse collection vehicles to be powered electrically. This will replace the diesel-powered vehicles, contributing to carbon reduction in Newport, in line with the declaration of an ecological and climate emergency.
- 6.6 Criterion ii of Policy GP1 'General Development Principles – Climate Change' states that development should be '*designed to minimise energy requirements and incorporate appropriate renewable, low or zero carbon energy sources, including on site energy provision*'. The proposal meets this criterion as it allows renewable energy to be stored on site for use by refuse collection vehicles.
- 6.7 National policy is favourable of renewable energy storage; this is outlined in paragraph 5.7.12 of PPW which states that 'energy storage has an important role to play in managing the transition to low carbon energy' and 'proposals for new storage facilities should be supported wherever possible'. The proposals would therefore align with the support of PPW.

Ecology and Landscape

- 6.8 The site consists of hardstanding, meaning that the impact on ecology and the landscape is minimal. The enclosed Green Infrastructure Statement outlines how measures such as integrating a hibernaculum on

site will enhance local biodiversity. This means that the criteria in policy GP5 General Development Principles – Natural Environment can be met.

Highways and Access

- 6.9 As summarised in the previous solar development application, the Docks Way Household Waste Recycling Centre already accommodates significant amounts of HGV movements and it is not considered that further mitigation measures to allow for the accommodation of additional vehicular movements will be required. It was considered that construction vehicles can be accommodated without undue adverse impact on the public highway, therefore satisfying policy GP4 'General Development Principles – Highways and Accessibility'. Due to the site being ancillary to this, the same conclusion can be drawn.

Conclusion

- 7.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Newport City Council in relation to the proposed full planning application for a new Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), trenching for underground cabling associated with the solar development approved under 23/0989 together with associated works at land at Docks Way, Newport, NP20 2NS.
- 7.2 The proposed development presents an opportunity for Newport City Council to have storage for the on-site electricity generated by the adjacent solar farm approved under application 23/0989. This will allow the electric refuse vehicles to be charged directly from the building. It will also assist in the council's ambitious plans to reduce emissions and to increase renewable energy production, in line with its declaration of an ecological and climate emergency.
- 7.3 The site is located within the settlement boundary of Newport and the Coastal Zone, according to the Newport Local Development Plan Proposals Map. Despite being in the Coastal Zone, it is not at risk of river or surface water flooding.
- 7.4 Given that the site is situated on hardstanding south of the Newport Household Waste Recycling Centre, the site can be classed as brownfield land and is considered to be low in ecological value. As such, any impacts on biodiversity and landscape are considered to be minimal and proposed GI measures, although minimal, will enhance the site in terms of biodiversity.
- 7.5 In light of the above, it is considered that the proposed development is in accordance with LDP Policies Policy SP1 'Sustainability', SP3 'Flood Risk', Policy GP1 'General Development Principles – Climate Change', Policy CE10 'Renewable Energy', Policy GP5 'General Development Principles – Natural Environment' and Policy GP4 'General Development Principles – Highways and Accessibility'. In terms of national policy, PPW edition 12 is supportive of renewable energy storage as outlined in paragraph 5.7.12.
- 7.6 The proposals therefore comply with the relevant national and development plan planning policies and supplementary planning guidance. It is for these reasons that it is respectfully requested that Newport City Council grant planning permission for the proposed development.