

The Planning Inspectorate

COMMENTS ON CASE (Online Version)

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Appeal Reference: APP/C3430/W/24/3344658

DETAILS OF THE CASE

Appeal Reference	APP/C3430/W/24/3344658
Appeal By	ANGLO ES LEVEDALE LTD, C/O MR JAMES STONE OF ANGLO RENEWABLES LTD
Site Address	Land on the southwest side of Levedale Road Penkridge Staffordshire ST18 9AH Grid Ref Easting: 390077 Grid Ref Northing: 315785

SENDER DETAILS

Name	MR MIKE DEWSBURY
Address	Eastlea Levedale STAFFORD ST18 9AH

ABOUT YOUR COMMENTS

In what capacity do you wish to make representations on this case?

- Appellant
- Agent
- Interested Party / Person
- Land Owner
- Rule 6 (6)

What kind of representation are you making?

- Final Comments
- Proof of Evidence
- Statement
- Statement of Common Ground
- Interested Party/Person Correspondence

Other

YOUR COMMENTS ON THE CASE

I write regarding the planning appeal APP/C3430/W/24/3344658 for the proposed introduction of a commercial site within a couple of hundred metres of our rural family home, Eastlea. I am not aware of any material changes to the application that was rejected by the South Staffs Planning Committee and therefore would like to register my on-going concern to the appeals inspector for your consideration. We purchased Eastlea in late 2019 as we fell in love with the views and surrounding countryside that would provide for the perfect location for our family forever home for myself, my wife and our four children. We cherish the views from our home which would be 100% impacted by the creation of the proposed battery plant and we must be realistic that despite all best intentions with careful construction work and well-designed landscaping schemes, the aftermath of these works would leave a visual impact for decades to come. We must not be fooled that a nine month period of disruption for the building stage followed by remote monitoring would be the full extent of the impact of allowing this proposal to proceed. We must also be mindful that it is the local residents whose lives will be impacted everyday as we tuck our children in bed at night with the knowledge that the severe risk of fire and explosion presented by such a facility is unbearably close by. Finally, I fully support the need for us to secure sustainable energy sources for the future but we must work hard to site these facilities in appropriate places and not simply grant permission on a first come first served basis.

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SENDER DETAILS

Name	MRS LAURA MATTHEWS
Address	Oak Barns Levedale Road Penkridge ST18 9AH

ABOUT YOUR COMMENTS

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YOUR COMMENTS ON THE CASE

I am writing to you as a resident of Oak Barns for 14 years which is directly opposite the proposed site for the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at Levedale Road, Penkridge. The appeal against the refusal of planning application No. 23/00145/FUL is of great concern to me and my family, given the profound impact this development would have on the rural character of our home and the surrounding area. I strongly support the South Staffordshire Council's original decision to refuse this application, and I urge the Planning Inspectorate to uphold that decision.

We moved to Oak Barns for the express purpose of enjoying the peace, tranquillity, and beautiful open views that the countryside here provides. The proposed BESS development stands in stark contrast to everything that defines this landscape and would irrevocably alter the very reasons we chose to live here. The open fields and natural surroundings that are intrinsic to this part of South Staffordshire would be dominated by an industrial installation that is entirely out of place in such a rural setting. This was rightly recognised by the planning committee when they refused the application on the grounds that it would create a discordant feature in the open countryside, contrary to South Staffordshire Core Strategy Policy OC1. This policy is specifically designed to protect areas like ours from inappropriate development that fails to respect the rural environment.

Furthermore, the planning committee's decision took into account the significant visual impact that the BESS would have on the landscape. The proposed site is currently an area of natural beauty, characterised by its openness and uninterrupted views. The introduction of a large-scale industrial facility would severely disrupt this, and no amount of screening or planting, as suggested in the appellant's Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), can adequately mitigate the impact. The LVIA's proposals are insufficient because they underestimate the scale of the BESS infrastructure and its visibility from multiple vantage points, including from my own home. The cumulative effect of this development, when combined with other industrial developments such as the nearby solar farm, would be devastating to the character and appearance of the landscape. This cumulative impact is directly contrary to Policy EQ4 of the South Staffordshire Core Strategy, which aims to protect and enhance the character and appearance of the landscape.

Moreover, the rural character of this area is not solely about the visual landscape; it is also about the quality of life that comes from living in a peaceful, rural environment. The proposed BESS would introduce industrial noise, increased traffic, and other disruptions that would fundamentally alter the way of life for residents in the vicinity. This area is currently characterised by its tranquillity and the slow pace of rural life, which would be severely compromised by the constant hum of industrial machinery and the movement of heavy vehicles. The Noise Assessment Report submitted by the appellant fails to fully address the potential impact of continuous noise on the local environment, particularly when considering the combined noise levels from the BESS and the nearby solar farm. Such noise would not only affect the residents but also the local wildlife, which thrives in this quiet, natural setting. This is particularly concerning given the protections afforded to such environments under Policy EQ5, which seeks to conserve and enhance the natural environment, ensuring that developments do not negatively impact biodiversity or disrupt ecological networks.

The decision to refuse this application was made after careful consideration of the planning policies designed to protect rural areas like ours. The reasons for refusal were well-founded, reflecting a deep understanding of the potential negative impacts that this development would have on both the environment and the local community. The planning committee recognised that the BESS is not an appropriate development for this location and that it would be harmful to the character of the countryside, which is exactly what these policies are intended to prevent.

The appellant's new submissions, including the Noise Assessment Report and the LVIA, do not sufficiently address the key issues that led to the refusal of the application. The proposed mitigation measures are inadequate and do not change the fundamental fact that the BESS would be a visually intrusive and environmentally harmful development in a rural setting. The introduction of such an

industrial facility would cause irreparable damage to the landscape, compromise the quality of life for residents, and set a dangerous precedent for further inappropriate developments in the countryside.

Given the strong, policy-based reasons for the original refusal, I respectfully ask that the Planning Inspectorate uphold South Staffordshire Council's decision. The BESS development is wholly unsuitable for this location, and its approval would be contrary to the core principles of the South Staffordshire Core Strategy, particularly Policies OC1, EQ4, and EQ5. Protecting the character, environment, and quality of life in rural areas is paramount, and this proposed development threatens to undermine all of these aspects. For these reasons, the appeal should be dismissed, and the refusal of the planning application should be maintained.

Thank you for considering my objection.

Yours sincerely,
Laura Matthews
Resident of Oak Barns
Levedale Road, Penkridge

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SENDER DETAILS

Name	MRS BEVERLEY SALMON
Address	4 Longridge Farm Longridge Dunston STAFFORD ST18 9AL

ABOUT YOUR COMMENTS

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- Agent
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Other

YOUR COMMENTS ON THE CASE

I would like to place a formal objection to this application based on the following facts.

1. The plot is currently highly productive farmland producing crops for human consumption.
2. Danger to human life, there are several residential homes bordering the site and a school for disabled children. It is a fact that all these battery storage facilities will have a major issue at some point in their lives and so we as residents will just be waiting for the day it explodes seriously affecting our mental health and wellbeing.
3. The site is within 200 meters of a grade 2 listed house and in the visual sight lines and so it will be affecting the heritage of the house in relation to its countryside location which will be lost forever.
4. The application admits that it will be poisoning the pond next door so the applicants are paying compensation to the newt habitat scheme, however, that pond is connected to other ponds on a neighbouring farm and the river Penk by land drains so if the first pond gets poisoned so will all the other ponds on the neighbouring farm and the river Penk causing an ecological disaster.
5. Being in this location, if there is a meltdown are the local fire services prepared and equipped to deal with the resulting explosions and fire, and what will be their response times? Also, when there is an incident, where will any chemicals spilt as a result end up do you think?
6. The farmer behind this application is a registered objector to another active solar farm application closer to her home, down the road from this site. So she does not want to have one close to her but is more than happy to put other people's lives at risk for profit, she is not a green ambassador at all, but just another money-hungry hypocrite.

So to sum up, we have a purely profit-driven application from profit-hungry hypocrites with no green or eco credentials at all, who want to build a facility on highly productive farmland, in beautiful open countryside, that will be lost forever at the cost of an ecological disaster and possibly resident's lives. There were many good reasons that this application was rejected by the council originally and I hope that the inspectorate as is also sensible enough to back those reasons and reject it again.

✕ Gmail - Formal Objection to the Appeal on Behalf of Lisa Emmers

Paragraph 180 of the NPPF emphasises that planning decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location, considering the likely effects of noise pollution on health and quality of life. The persistent noise from the BESS, particularly at night, would degrade the tranquillity of the area, which is a key aspect of its rural character.

6. Community Opposition and the Planning Process

This appeal must not ignore the strong opposition from the local community. The original decision to refuse the BESS application was made on an informed basis, with detailed submissions from both the applicant and objectors. The tens of objections submitted reflect the deep concern within the community about the impact of this development.

The planning process was thorough and considered the detailed evidence presented by all parties. The council's decision to refuse was based on a careful consideration of the material planning considerations and was in full alignment with local and national planning policies. The appeal should not overturn this well-founded decision, which was made to protect the character, safety, and environment of our countryside.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed BESS development is fundamentally incompatible with the rural character and environment of South Staffordshire.

The cumulative impact of this industrial development, alongside the solar farm, would devastate the open countryside, leading to the irreversible loss of its intrinsic value. The risks to safety, biodiversity, and the community are significant and cannot be justified by the purported benefits of the development.

I respectfully urge the Planning Inspectorate to uphold the council's decision to refuse the BESS application. This decision is critical to preserving the character and safety of our countryside and protecting it from inappropriate industrial development.

Thank you for considering my objection.

Yours sincerely,

Lisa Emmerson
Poppywell Farm
Levedale Road, South Staffordshire

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SENDER DETAILS

Name	MRS BERYL WILLIAMS
Address	Longridge Dunston Stafford ST18 9AL

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YOUR COMMENTS ON THE CASE

I am a resident of Myrtle Cottage. I have lived here for over 60 years. My property will be directly affected by the proposed battery installation and the already approved solar farm.

The battery installation is of grave concern to me. Both the environmental impact and the danger of fire from these installations. They have a poor safety record. The noise from this installation is a worry for all the nearby livestock.

Construction traffic along a narrow, pot holed rural lane is going to be of danger to current road users including cars, tractors, horse riders and cyclists.

You have already rejected this application once. Do so again for the health and well-being of the residents and livestock.

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SENDER DETAILS

Name	MRS LISA EMMERSON
Address	Poppywell farm Levedale road Penkridge Staffs ST18 9AH
Company/Group/Organisation Name	Owners Poppywell farm, Levedale road, Penkridge Staffs ST18 9AH

ABOUT YOUR COMMENTS

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COMMENT DOCUMENTS

The documents listed below were uploaded with this form:

Relates to Section: REPRESENTATION
Document Description: Your comments on the appeal.
File name: IMG_4336.png
File name: IMG_4337.png
File name: IMG_4338.png

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Appeal By

ANGLO ES LEVEDALE LTD, C/O MR JAMES STONE OF ANGLO RENEWABLES LTD

Site Address

Land on the southwest side of Levedale Road
Penkridge
Staffordshire
ST18 9AH
Grid Ref Easting: 390077
Grid Ref Northing: 315785

SENDER DETAILS

Name

MR NEIL FELLOWS

Address

1 Longridge Farm Longridge
Dunston
STAFFORD
ST18 9AL

ABOUT YOUR COMMENTS

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YOUR COMMENTS ON THE CASE

To whomever this may concern. My name is Neil Fellows and I live at 1, Longridge Farm, Levedale Road, Dunston, ST18 9AL. I am the owner occupier of said residential property. I have lived here since March 2004.

I have previously submitted my objection to the proposed battery storage facility in November 2023, but unsurprisingly we find ourselves here again. I am aware of the strong opposition from fellow residents so it is not my intention to repeat their reasoning, ad nauseum.

My position remains unchanged regarding the unequivocal danger that these installations represent. Since the planning hearing there has been globally a myriad of instances where domestic battery ev's and appliances have exploded with devastating consequences. We have no doubt all viewed them with abject horror.

Factor this on an industrial scale and you have the recipe for a catastrophe. The question needs to be asked "do the benefits outweigh the risks?" I strongly suggest they do not!

My understanding is that this is nothing more than a commercial venture but to the detriment and ultimately cost of local residents. Any council, government body has a duty of care to residents, surely it must always come down to the safety and well-being of people. These are fundamental human rights we are constantly reminded of.

I would implore anyone with the responsibility of reviewing this appeal to do some soul-searching and ask themselves the question, "would I like to live in proximity to such a facility with potential risk?" I'm sure the answer for most people would be a resounding "no!"

For the unfortunates with 'line-of-view' and the majority living within the fall-out spread of this abomination each day will be like living with the sword of Damocles hanging over them. This not to mention the negative impact in terms of devaluation of people's homes that will be significant.

Please, please do the right thing and uphold the council's original decision, this was and still is the right decision.

Thank you for your time and consideration, Neil Fellows.

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SENDER DETAILS

Name	MRS SHIRLEY PENRICE
Address	Apple Tree Farm Levedale STAFFORD ST18 9AH

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YOUR COMMENTS ON THE CASE

BESS involves lithium batteries which carry a High Consequence Risk of fires and explosions, which occur regularly in BESS and lithium batteries in EV vehicles across the world. The consequence is death and injury to residents and livestock, evacuation for an unknown length of time, and contamination of land and water. Attempts to extinguish BESS fires involve a high volume of water which can contaminate water supply and land over a wide area. There is no proposal to contain this water in this application.

The risks of Lithium battery technology are increased by the fact that the proposed site is unstaffed, operated remotely and with limited maintenance records, in a rural area far from the nearest Fire Station.

The Fire Service is not a statutory consultee, meaning that there will be no review by the Fire Service as to safety until after an installation is in place. There can be no confidence therefore that the plans for operation, maintenance or remediation will be effective.

The Planning Officer cannot know what is needed from a technical perspective and therefore is dependent on the developer who clearly has a quite different set of incentives. BESS are essentially an industrial trading operation, buying and selling energy for profit.

BESS should not be installed on rural land, removing this for farmland and food production at a time of rising food prices. Residents are continually fighting each proposal, one after the other. This is creating a high degree of distress and hardship and the effect is concentrated in this small Parish, a heavy burden for residents to carry.

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SENDER DETAILS

Name	MR GARY PLIVA
Address	2 Longridge Farm Longridge Dunston STAFFORD ST18 9AL

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YOUR COMMENTS ON THE CASE

I would like to object in the strongest possible tones to the above appeal. The application was dismissed . We live in a barn conversion next to Longridge School and are extremely concerned how they propose to put a potential time bomb (Multiple High Energy Lithium Batteries) so close to residential properties. There are at least 2 lithium battery fires per week in London alone and also there have been severe cases of serious injury and death from these BESS plants around the world. The owner of this Prime Agricultural Land is proposing this site several miles from where he lives and would not be affected by a fire or explosion, he has land close to his own residence but has not propose putting it in his own back yard! These potential fires are extremely difficult to extinguish and require chemicals extremely hazardous to the environment, run off would find its way into the River Penk and hence into the River Trent. It has also been stated that every BESS unit will have a failure/incident in its proposed 40 year lifespan.

Has the applicant obtained a scheduled date for connecting into the already overloaded grid? The proposed BESS site at the West Midlands Interchange 5 miles away have been told 2035 at the earliest. We are worried about the environmental impact this site will have on local wildlife.

Finally it would seem more sensible to build these storage sites in the grounds of decommissioned power stations where easy connection to the grid is available

This site is definitely not required in open countryside and prime farm land which should be kept for food production.

✕ Gmail - Formal Objection to the Appeal on Behalf of Lisa Emmers

Objection to the Appeal Against the Refusal of Planning Application for BESS at Levedale Road

Dear Planning Inspectorate,

I am Lisa Emmerson, a resident of Poppywell Farm, which directly overlooks the proposed site for the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at Levedale Road. I am writing to formally object to the appeal lodged by the applicants following the refusal of their planning application. My family and I have grave concerns about the potential impact this development will have on our environment, safety, and the cherished rural character of our community. The landscape would be forever changed and lost.

1. Impact on the Open Countryside

The area surrounding our home is characterised by its historical farming significance, with listed farm houses such as Longridge house (and breathtaking natural beauty). It is a landscape of rolling fields, woodlands, and agricultural land that has remained largely unchanged for generations. This open countryside is not just a backdrop; it is the essence of our community and our way of life. From every part of our home and garden, we have a clear, uninterrupted view of this beautiful rural environment, and the proposed BESS development would irreversibly alter this cherished landscape. Industrialising the countryside.

The South Staffordshire Core Strategy, particularly **Policy OC1**, aims to protect this open countryside from inappropriate development. The BESS is an industrial installation, entirely at odds with the agricultural and rural uses that Policy OC1 seeks to protect. Allowing this development would set a dangerous precedent, opening the door to further industrialisation in protected rural areas. This policy exists to ensure that the rural character of our countryside is preserved, and the introduction of such a discordant feature would be fundamentally incompatible with this goal.

2. Cumulative Impact of Current and Potential Future Developments

When the planning committee initially refused this application, the cumulative impact of the BESS alongside a solar farm was not a material consideration, as the solar farm had not yet been passed. However, since then, the approval of a nearby solar farm has dramatically changed the concerns for the landscape and community. The addition of the BESS would compound this transformation, effectively industrialising a significant portion of the countryside.

Furthermore, I understand there is a planning appeal underway for the Butterhill Solar Farm, located further up the road. If this appeal is successful, the cumulative impact of multiple large-scale industrial developments within a relatively small rural area would be **devastating**. The combined effect of the BESS, the recently approved solar farm, and potentially the Butterhill Solar Farm would overwhelm the character of the countryside, converting what was once a peaceful, rural environment into an industrial zone, and the road cannot cope with the current traffic as previously evidenced and not in dispute by the applicant. This cumulative impact directly conflicts with **Policy EQ4**, which is designed to protect and enhance the character and appearance of the landscape.

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Name	MRS LISA EMMERSON
Address	Poppywell farm Levedale Road Penkridge Staffs ST18 9AH
Company/Group/Organisation Name	Owner poppywell farm Levedale road Penkridge staffs ST18 9AH

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SENDER DETAILS

Name

MR JULIAN SALMON

Address

4 Longridge Farm Longridge
Dunston
STAFFORD
ST18 9AL

ABOUT YOUR COMMENTS

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YOUR COMMENTS ON THE CASE

I would like to place a formal objection to this planning application based on the following facts.

- 1, The application is for highly fertile farmland currently used for high-yield food production crops.
- 2, The plot is also within 200 metres and line of sight of a grade 2 listed building which houses a school for disabled children.
- 3, The plot is also very close to other housing and properties putting their lives at risk in the case of an explosion.
- 4, The builders are paying compensation for the destruction of newt habitat through the poisoning of a pond in a neighbouring field, however, that pond is linked by land drains to other ponds on a neighbouring farmer and eventually into the river penk, so any contamination would destroy the neighbouring farmland and contaminate the river penk.
5. Research has shown that EVERY battery storage facility will have a major issue at some point over its lifetime, so I also question if the location is suitable for emergency response and if the local fire service is equipped and trained to respond to a facility such as this.

So in short this is a danger to the health and lives of local neighbours including disabled school children living around the site, it will destroy prime agricultural farmland, wildlife habitat, neighbouring farmland and local waterways and destruction of the visible amenity of a grade 2 listed building.

Finally, I would also like to point out that the farmer behind this application has put it at the furthest point on their land from where they live, it is also not a green development it is purely money-making by buying cheap power from the grid during low use periods and then selling it back at a profit during high use periods so wanton destruction of the countryside for individual profit without any eco credentials at all.

✕ Gmail - Formal Objection to the Appeal on Behalf of Lisa Emmers

3. Threats to Safety and Well-being

My initial objections to this development raised critical concerns about the safety of my family, our animals, and the broader community. These concerns remain valid and are supported by substantial evidence:

- **Fire Risks:** BESS facilities have a documented history of fire risks, including incidents where fires have been difficult to control and have resulted in significant damage. Given the proximity of our home to the proposed site, the potential for a catastrophic fire poses a genuine and terrifying risk to our lives and property. The remote location of Levedale Road would make it difficult for emergency services to respond quickly, exacerbating the danger, cars and lorry's struggle to pass daily on the lanes and roads are without exception closed most weeks to the area (certainly over the last few months).
- **Water Contamination:** The potential for contamination of local waterways is another serious concern. Our farm and others in the vicinity rely on local water sources for drinking water and agricultural use. The introduction of industrial chemicals from the BESS, particularly in the event of a fire or spill, could lead to the contamination of these vital resources, with devastating consequences for local wildlife, livestock, and the community. **Policy EQ9**, which addresses sustainable water management, is directly relevant here. The risk of contamination from this development is in direct conflict with the policy's objective to protect and manage water resources sustainably.
- **Road Safety:** The construction and maintenance of the BESS would bring a significant increase in heavy goods vehicle (HGV) traffic on Levedale Road. This narrow, rural road is already unsuitable for large vehicles, and the additional traffic would pose a serious risk to road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and horse riders. My family has already experienced the dangers of HGV traffic on this road, with a recent accident leaving me with long-term injuries. The increased traffic would only heighten the risk of further incidents, placing the safety of all road users in jeopardy.

4. Impact on Biodiversity and the Natural Environment

The proposed BESS development threatens to disrupt local ecosystems, particularly those that depend on the waterways that run through and around the site. The appellant's environmental assessments have not adequately addressed the long-term ecological impacts of the development. The destruction of natural habitats, particularly those supporting protected species, is a direct violation of **Policy EQ5**, which aims to conserve and enhance the natural environment.

The proximity of the development to significant wildlife habitats, including ponds and woodlands, poses a substantial risk to local biodiversity. The potential contamination of waterways, the disruption of land due to construction, and the ongoing presence of industrial infrastructure would have devastating effects on the flora and fauna that are part of the fabric of this landscape.

5. Noise and Environmental Impact

The noise assessment provided by the appellant downplays the impact of the BESS on the local soundscape. However, even if the noise levels are within legal limits, the introduction of continuous industrial noise into a previously quiet rural area is entirely inappropriate. This change will significantly affect the quality of life for my family and other residents.

Objection to the Appeal Against the Refusal of Planning Application for BESS at Levedale Road

Dear Planning Inspectorate,

I am Lisa Emmerson, a resident of Poppywell Farm, which directly overlooks the proposed site for the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at Levedale Road. I am writing to formally object to the appeal lodged by the applicants following the refusal of their planning application. My family and I have grave concerns about the potential impact this development will have on our environment, safety, and the cherished rural character of our community. The landscape would be forever changed and lost.

1. Impact on the Open Countryside

The area surrounding our home is characterised by its historical farming significance, with listed farm houses such as Longridge house (and breathtaking natural beauty). It is a landscape of rolling fields, woodlands, and agricultural land that has remained largely unchanged for generations. This open countryside is not just a backdrop; it is the essence of our community and our way of life. From every part of our home and garden, we have a clear, uninterrupted view of this beautiful rural environment, and the proposed BESS development would irreversibly alter this cherished landscape. Industrialising the countryside.

The South Staffordshire Core Strategy, particularly Policy OC1, aims to protect this open countryside from inappropriate development. The BESS is an industrial installation, entirely at odds with the agricultural and rural uses that Policy OC1 seeks to protect. Allowing this development would set a dangerous precedent, opening the door to further industrialisation in protected rural areas. This policy exists to ensure that the rural character of our countryside is preserved, and the introduction of such a discordant feature would be fundamentally incompatible with this goal.

2. Cumulative Impact of Current and Potential Future Developments

When the planning committee initially refused this application, the cumulative impact of the BESS alongside a solar farm was not a material consideration, as the solar farm had not yet been passed. However, since then, the approval of a nearby solar farm has dramatically changed the concerns for the landscape and community. The addition of the BESS would compound this transformation, effectively industrialising a significant portion of the countryside.

Furthermore, I understand there is a planning appeal underway for the Butterhill Solar Farm, located further up the road. If this appeal is successful, the cumulative impact of multiple large-scale industrial developments within a relatively small rural area would be devastating. The combined effect of the BESS, the recently approved solar farm, and potentially the Butterhill Solar Farm would overwhelm the character of the countryside, converting what was once a peaceful, rural environment into an industrial zone, and the road cannot cope with the current traffic as previously evidenced and not in dispute by the applicant. This cumulative impact directly

conflicts with Policy EQ4, which is designed to protect and enhance the character and appearance of the landscape.

3. Threats to Safety and Well-being

My initial objections to this development raised critical concerns about the safety of my family, our animals, and the broader community. These concerns remain valid and are supported by substantial evidence:

Fire Risks: BESS facilities have a documented history of fire risks, including incidents where fires have been difficult to control and have resulted in significant damage. Given the proximity of our home to the proposed site, the potential for a catastrophic fire poses a genuine and terrifying risk to our lives and property. The remote location of Levedale Road would make it difficult for emergency services to respond quickly, exacerbating the danger, cars and lorry's struggle to pass daily on the lanes and roads are without exception closed most weeks to the area (certainly over the last few months).

Water Contamination: The potential for contamination of local waterways is another serious concern.

Our farm and others in the vicinity rely on local water sources for drinking water and agricultural use, natural flows of water into ditches and pools. The introduction of industrial chemicals from the BESS, particularly in the event of a fire or spill, could lead to the contamination of these vital resources, with devastating consequences for local wildlife, livestock, and the community. Policy EQ9, which addresses sustainable water management, is directly relevant here. The risk of contamination from this development is in direct conflict with the policy's objective to protect and manage water resources sustainably for our animals.

Road Safety: The construction and maintenance of the BESS would bring a significant increase in heavy goods vehicle (HGV) traffic on Levedale Road. This narrow, rural road is already unsuitable for large vehicles, and the additional traffic would pose a serious risk to road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and horse riders. My family has already experienced the dangers of HGV traffic on this road, with a recent accident leaving me with long-term injuries. The increased traffic would only heighten the risk of further incidents, placing the safety of all road users in jeopardy.

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Paragraph 180 of the NPPF emphasises that planning decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location, considering the likely effects of noise pollution on health and quality of life. The persistent noise from the BESS, particularly at night, would degrade the tranquillity of the area, which is a key aspect of its rural character.

6. Community Opposition and the Planning Process

This appeal must not ignore the strong opposition from the local community. The original decision to refuse the BESS application was made on an informed basis, with detailed submissions from both the applicant and objectors. The tens of objections submitted reflect the deep concern within the community about the impact of this development.

The planning process was thorough and considered the detailed evidence presented by all parties. The council's decision to refuse was based on a careful consideration of the material planning considerations and was in full alignment with local and national planning policies. The appeal should not overturn this well-founded decision, which was made to protect the character, safety, and environment of our countryside.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed BESS development is fundamentally incompatible with the rural character and environment of South Staffordshire. The cumulative impact of this industrial development, alongside the solar farm, would devastate the open countryside, leading to the irreversible loss of its intrinsic value. The risks to safety, biodiversity, and the community are significant and cannot be justified by the purported benefits of the development.

I respectfully urge the Planning Inspectorate to uphold the council's decision to refuse the BESS application. This decision is critical to preserving the character and safety of our countryside and protecting it from inappropriate industrial development.

Thank you for considering
my objection.

Yours sincerely,
Lisa Emmerson
Poppywell Farm
Levedale Road, South Staffordshire