

ELLEN ROAD, NEWHEY

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

Root Power

YLEM1500Iva



Contact Details:

LVIA Ltd.
Bellamy House
Longney
Gloucester
GL2 3SJ

tel: 07940 749051
email: jp@lvialtd.com
www: lvialtd.com

Landscape and Visual Appraisal	
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1.0 Executive Summary

- i. LVIA Ltd were instructed to undertake a landscape and visual appraisal for a 30MW battery storage site with fencing, BESS units, water tanks and switchroom located at Ellen Road by Root Power in July 2024. The site and its surrounding landscape were assessed and a total of four viewpoints were selected to represent a variety of receptors in the surrounding area.
- ii. The aim of this report is to provide an assessment of the potential landscape and visual effects of a proposed development upon the receiving landscape, in line with current legislation and guidance. It comprises two main assessments, the first for landscape and the second for visual effects.
- iii. The assessment has been conducted in line with published best practice guidelines and includes a desk study; (review of local plan policies, published landscape character assessment and production of a computer generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)) and onsite observations.
- iv. The site is currently formed by part of a large field in agricultural use that is bound by a combination of hedgerows with intermittent trees to the north along the M62 motorway and fencing on other boundaries. The site sits within the urban fringe of the settlement on the interface between urban and agricultural. The site landform is undulating. The site falls within no areas of national designation related to landscape but falls within the Green Belt which is not normally considered a landscape policy but has a visual aspect.
- v. Due to the existing local area, the proposed scheme would not be substantially out of character with its surroundings when considered as part of the wider landscape.
- vi. Mitigation measures have been suggested to aid the schemes visual blending with the existing environs.
- vii. Four viewpoints were considered and of these none were considered to be subject to material visual impacts. A number of the rights of way that sit closest to the site were inaccessible during the site visit, but views from the higher landform to the south and east provided enough locations to illustrate the potential change from the wider landscape.
- viii. With the implementation of a successful mitigation strategy, the overall impact on the landscape is considered to have a minor/negligible overall effect on the surrounding character baseline and a minor effect on the visual baseline. It should be considered that this type of development is not out of character within the receiving landscape.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1.1 LVIA Ltd were commissioned by Root Power in July 2024, to carry out a landscape and visual appraisal of the proposed development site located at Newhey.
- 2.1.2 The brief was to assess the likely landscape and visual impact of the development and identify the degree of change over the existing use and site conditions.
- 2.1.3 The field survey was carried out during August 2024, and all viewpoints were chosen from publicly accessible vantage points.
- 2.1.4 Particular attention was paid to the potential views of receptors of high sensitivity, e.g. users of Public Rights of Way (PRoW).
- 2.1.5 Landscape and visual impact assessments can be defined as a mechanism by which the landscape can be assessed against its capacity to accommodate change. The aim of this report is to provide an assessment of the potential landscape and visual effects of the proposed development upon the receiving landscape, in line with current legislation and guidance.

The Site

- 2.1.6 The site is accessed from Bentgate Street and the proposals are for a 30MW battery storage site with fencing, BESS units, water tanks, switchroom and landscaping.
- 2.1.7 The site is currently formed by part of a large field in agricultural use that is bound by a combination of hedgerows with intermittent trees to the north along the M62 motorway and fencing on other boundaries. The site sits within the urban fringe of the settlement on the interface between urban and agricultural. The site landform is undulating. The site falls within no areas of national designation related to landscape but falls within the Green Belt which is not normally considered a landscape policy but has a visual aspect.

3.0 Methodology

- 3.1.1 In conjunction with the landscape survey and assessment of the study area, a detailed visual survey has been undertaken in order to assess any potential visual impact of the development. In order to evaluate what the visual impact of the development will be and what can be done to ameliorate the impact, it is necessary to describe the existing situation to describe a basis against which any change can be assessed.
- 3.1.2 As a matter of best practice the assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the advisory guidelines set out in the document - “Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment – Third Edition”, published by The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Assessment (2013).
- 3.1.3 The landscape assessment includes a baseline study that describes, and evaluates the existing landscape and visual resources, focusing on their sensitivity and ability to accommodate change.
- 3.1.4 The prime objective is to minimise the potential impact of the development by minimising the potential for visual impact wherever possible.
- 3.1.5 Information regarding the site and surroundings was gathered from Ordnance Survey maps, aerial photographs and on-site observations.
- 3.1.6 In order to assist in the assessment of the potential visual effects of any development, a computer-generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) has been modelled. The computer ZTV is used as a working tool to inform the assessment team of the extent of the zone within which the proposed development may have an influence or effect on landscape character and visual amenity and the areas within which the study area together with site survey work should be concentrated. It should be noted that this is a topographical information based exercise with no account being taken of the potential effects of vegetation or buildings on views.
- 3.1.7 Landscape has two separate but closely related aspects; firstly is the impact on the character of the landscape which includes responses that are felt toward the combined effect of the development. The significance of this will depend partly on the number of people affected and also on the judgements about how much the changes will matter in relation to the human senses of those concerned. Secondly, visual impact, in contrast to landscape character, is perhaps less prone to being subjective. Visual impact may occur by means of intrusion and/or obstruction, where visual intrusion is impact on the view without blocking it and visual obstruction is impact on a view that would be hidden by the development.

Table 1: Landscape Quality (or Condition)

Landscape Quality (or Condition)	Typical Indicators
Very High	All landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Buildings are in local vernacular and materials. No detracting elements are evident
High	Most landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Most buildings are in local vernacular and materials. Few detracting elements are evident
Medium	Some landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Some buildings are in local vernacular and materials and some detracting elements are evident
Low	Few landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Few buildings are in local vernacular and materials. Many detracting or incongruous elements are evident
Very Low	No landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Buildings are not in local vernacular and materials. Detracting or incongruous elements are much in evidence

Table 2: Landscape Value

Landscape Value	Typical Indicators
Very High	Areas comprising a clear composition of valued landscape components in robust form and health, free of disruptive visual detractors and with a strong sense of place. Areas containing a strong, balanced structure with distinct features worthy of conservation. Such areas would generally be internationally or nationally recognised designations, such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
High	Areas primarily containing valued landscape components combined in an aesthetically pleasing composition and lacking prominent disruptive visual detractors. Areas containing a strong structure with noteworthy features or elements, exhibiting a sense of place. Such areas would generally be national statutorily designated areas. Such areas may also relate to the setting of internationally or nationally statutory designated areas, such as AONB.
Medium	Areas primarily of valued landscape components combined in an aesthetically pleasing composition with low levels of disruptive visual detractors, exhibiting a recognisable landscape structure. Such areas would generally be non-statutory locally designated areas such as Areas of Great Landscape Value.
Low	Areas containing some features of landscape value but lacking a coherent and aesthetically pleasing composition with frequent detracting visual elements, exhibiting a distinguishable structure often concealed by mixed land uses or development. Such areas would be commonplace at the local level and would generally be undesignated, offering scope for improvement.
Very Low	Areas lacking valued landscape components or comprising degraded, disturbed or derelict features, lacking any aesthetically pleasing composition with a dominance of visually detracting elements, exhibiting mixed land uses which conceal the baseline structure. Such areas would generally be restricted to the local level and identified as requiring recovery.

Table 3: Character Sensitivity

Character Sensitivity	Typical Indicators
Very High	Landscape elements: Important elements of the landscape susceptible to change and of high quality and condition. Scale and Enclosure: Small-scale landform/land cover/ development, human scale indicators, fine grained, enclosed with narrow views, sheltered. Manmade influence: Absence of manmade elements, traditional or historic settlements, natural features and 'natural' forms of amenity parkland, perceived as natural 'wild land' lacking in man-made features, land use elements and detractors Remoteness and Tranquillity: Sense of peace, isolation or wildness, remote and empty, no evident movement.
High	Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Very High criteria but exceed those for Medium
Medium	Landscape elements: Important elements of the landscape of moderate susceptibility to change and of medium quality and condition. Scale and Enclosure: Medium-scale landform/land cover/ development, textured, semi-enclosed with middle distance views. Manmade influence: Some presence of man-made elements, which may be partially out of scale with the landscape and be of only partially consistent with vernacular styles. Remoteness and Tranquillity: some noise, evident, but not dominant human activity and development, noticeable movement.
Low	Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Medium criteria but exceed those for Very Low.
Very Low	Landscape elements: Important elements of the landscape insusceptible to change and of low quality and condition. Scale and Enclosure: Large-scale landform/land cover/ development, Featureless, coarse grained, open with broad views. Manmade influence: Frequent presence of utility, infrastructure or industrial elements, contemporary structures e.g. masts, pylons, cranes, silos, industrial sheds with vertical emphasis, functional man-made land-use patterns and engineered aspects. Remoteness and Tranquillity: Busy and noisy, human activity and development, prominent movement.

Table 4: Landscape Visual Sensitivity

Landscape Visual Sensitivity	Typical Indicators
Very High	Visual interruption: Flat or gently undulating topography, few if any vegetative or built features. Nature of views: Densely populated, dispersed pattern of small settlements, outward looking settlement, landscape focused recreation routes and/or visitor facilities, distinctive settings, gateways or public viewpoints.
High	Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Very High criteria but exceed those for Medium.
Medium	Visual interruption: Undulating or gently rolling topography, some vegetative and built features. Nature of views: Moderate density of population, settlements of moderate size with some views outwards, routes with some degree of focus on the landscape.
Low	Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Medium criteria but exceed those for Very Low.
Very Low	Visual interruption: Rolling topography, frequent vegetative or built features. Nature of views: Unpopulated or sparsely populated, concentrated pattern of large settlements, introspective settlement, inaccessible, indistinctive or industrial settings.

Table 5: Definition of Magnitude of Landscape Impacts

Magnitude	Description
Large	Total loss of or major alteration to key valued elements, features, and characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements considered being prominent and totally uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. Would be at a considerable variance with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape. Would cause a high quality landscape to be permanently changed and its quality diminished.
Medium	Partial loss of or alteration to one or more key elements, features, characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not be considered to be substantially uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. Would be out of scale with the landscape, and at odds with the local pattern and landform. Will leave an adverse impact on a landscape of recognised quality.
Small	Minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements, features, characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not be uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. May not quite fit into the landform and scale of the landscape. Affect an area of recognised landscape character
Negligible	Very minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements, features, and characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. Maintain existing landscape quality, and maybe slightly at odds to the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape.

3.1.8 'Material' landscape effects would be those effects assessed to be major or major/moderate and are indicated by shading in the following table.

Table 6: Significance of Landscape Effects

Magnitude	Sensitivity				
	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low
Large	Major	Major	Major/ moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ minor
Medium	Major	Major/ moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ minor	Minor/ negligible
Small	Moderate	Moderate/ minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible
Negligible	Minor/ moderate	Minor	Minor/ negligible	Negligible	Negligible

3.1.9 The prediction and extent of effect cannot always be absolute. It is for each assessment to determine the assessment criteria and the significance thresholds, using informed and well-reasoned professional judgement supported by thorough justification for their selection, and explanation as to how the conclusions about significance for each effect assessed have been derived, as noted in GLVIA 3rd edition para 2.23-2.26 and 3.32-36.

3.1.10 In order to determine the magnitude of impact for any critical viewpoints of the subject site, whether in the immediate locality or further afield, the assessment of visual impact takes into account the;

- Sensitivity of the views and viewers (visual receptor) affected;
- Extent of the proposed development that will be visible;
- Degree of visual intrusion or obstruction that will occur;
- Distance of the view;
- Change in character or quality of the view compared to the existing.

3.1.11 The locations from which the proposed development will be visible are known as 'visual receptors'. For the purposes of a visual assessment the visual receptors would be graded according to their sensitivity to change.

Table 7: Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Receptor Sensitivity	Description
High	Occupiers of residential properties. Users of outdoor recreational facilities, including public rights of way, whose attention or interest may be focused on the landscape Communities where the development results in changes in the landscape setting or valued views enjoyed by the community.
Medium	People travelling through or past the affected landscape in cars, on trains or other transport routes where higher speeds are involved and views sporadic and short-lived. People engaged in outdoor recreation where enjoyment of the landscape is incidental rather than the main interest.
Low	People at their place of work, Industrial facilities.

Table 8: Definition of Magnitude of Visual Impact

Magnitude	Description
Very Large	The development would result in a dramatic change in the existing view and/or would cause a dramatic change in the quality and/or character of the view. The development would appear large scale and/or form the dominant elements within the overall view and/or may be in full view the observer or receptor. Commanding, controlling the view.
Large	The development would result in a prominent change in the existing view and/or would cause a prominent change in the quality and /or character of the view. The development would form prominent elements within the overall view and/or may be easily noticed by the observer or receptor. Standing out, striking, sharp, unmistakeable, easily seen.
Medium	The development would result in a noticeable change in the existing view and/or would cause a noticeable change in the quality and/or character of the view. The development would form a conspicuous element within the overall view and/or may be readily noticed by the observer or receptor. Noticeable, distinct, catching the eye or attention, clearly visible, well defined.
Small	The development would result in a perceptible change in the existing view, and/or without affecting the overall quality and/or character of the view. The development would form an apparent small element in the wider landscape that may be missed by the observer or receptor. Visible, evident, obvious.
Very Small	The development would result in a barely perceptible change in the existing view, and/or without affecting the overall quality and/or would form an inconspicuous minor element in the wider landscape that may be missed by the observer or receptor. Lacking sharpness of definition, not obvious, indistinct, not clear, obscure, blurred, indefinite.
Negligible	Only a small part of the development would be discernible and/or it is at such a distance that no change to the existing view can be appreciated. Weak, not legible, near limit of acuity of human eye.

Table 9: Significance of Visual Effects

Magnitude	Sensitivity		
	High	Medium	Low
Very large	Major	Major	Major/moderate
Large	Major	Major/moderate	Moderate
Medium	Major/moderate	Moderate	Moderate/minor
Small	Moderate	Moderate/minor	Minor
Very Small	Minor	Minor	Negligible
Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

(Shaded areas show material effects)

4.0 Landscape Baseline

Landscape Baseline

- 4.1.1 The overall landscape character of the site and its surroundings can be determined as the result of the relationship between landform, land cover, landscape elements and climate.
- 4.1.2 An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment which was published by Natural England in 2014 offers five key principles of Landscape Assessment at paragraph 1.4. These are given as:
- Landscape is everywhere and all landscape and seascape has character;
 - Landscape occurs at all scales and the process of Landscape Character Assessment can be undertaken at any scale;
 - The process of Landscape Character Assessment should involve an understanding of how the landscape is perceived and experienced by people;
 - A Landscape Character Assessment can provide a landscape evidence base to inform a range of decisions and applications;
 - A Landscape Character Assessment can provide an integrating spatial framework – a multitude of variables come together to give us our distinctive landscapes.
- 4.1.3 The site falls within national character area (NCA) 54 – Manchester Pennine Fringe; as defined by Natural England in their nationwide assessment.
- 4.1.4 The key characteristics of NCA 54 are defined as (points of relevance to the site and its context are highlighted for clarity):
- **Transitional zone between elevated, open moorlands and densely populated urban areas on lower ground.**
 - Landform is a transition from upland to lowland, with smooth shoulders of land divided by steep-sided valleys with fast-flowing rivers.
 - Elevated vantage points provide extensive views across the adjacent Manchester Conurbation NCA.
 - Fringe area underlain by the Carboniferous Coal Measures rising to the north and east, into the Carboniferous Millstone Grit uplands.
 - Several rivers flow through the area from the Pennine uplands, linking with adjacent lowland areas.
 - Woodland cover is characterised by a range of woodland types concentrated along river valleys, as well as some newer community woodlands in the urban areas.
 - Field boundaries include dry 'gritstone' walls at higher elevations and hedgerows at lower elevations.
 - Limited semi-natural habitats include broadleaved mixed and yew woodland, lowland dry acid grassland, lowland meadows, lowland heathland, and purple moor-grass and rush pasture, which are often fragmented.

- Extensive evidence of 18th- and 19th-century stone and brick-built industrial buildings, including mill lodges and reservoirs originating from the woollen and cotton industries.
- Historic trans-Pennine communication routes, especially railways and canals.
- Much of the countryside is influenced by recreational use from adjacent urban areas and the diversification of farmland, giving the area a distinct urban fringe character.
- High population densities across a belt of industrial towns, with **busy transport networks and motorways**. Almost half of this NCA is classed as urban.

4.1.5 The NCA 54 covers a relatively wide and diverse area. The site and its context exhibit very few of the key characteristics of the NCA, predominantly only where they relate to the transitional nature of the area on the urban/agricultural interface and the busy transport network that sits locally. This lack of close relation to the key characteristics is to be expected due to the relatively large scale of the national character area.

Sub-Regional Character

Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment (GMLCA)

4.1.6 The GMLCA was published to provide the baseline study of the landscape character, at a sub-regional level that gives a further understanding of the landscape resource.

4.1.7 The site falls within landscape character Type (LCT): Pennine Foothills (West/South Pennines). The site is located close to the urban edge character area.

4.1.8 The key characteristics of relevance to the study area are reproduced below (points of relevance to the site and setting are shown highlighted in bold text):

- Variable visual character depending on topography and vegetation cover; there are long views across the urban conurbation to the West and South Pennine uplands beyond where vegetation allows. Areas within the Peak District National Park are visible from some vantage points. Other areas are visually enclosed due to valleys or vegetation which creates wooded skylines.
- Occasionally, masts and pylons/overhead lines intrude on the wooded skylines. **Other intrusive modern influences include the M62 motorway and prominent views of urban development**, including tower blocks breaking horizons.
- Other skyline features including chimneys, the war memorial in Tandle Hill Country Park and views to monuments on higher ground within the uplands including Peel Tower and Bishop Park Monument.
- Windswept and exposed on higher ground as the landscape transitions to the upland fringe. This contrasts with the sheltered, **enclosed feel of the valleys which have limited views in and out**.
- Areas with relatively high levels of tranquillity despite the close proximity of urban development and major infrastructure e.g. Tandle Hill Country Park.

4.1.9 The site and its context exhibit relatively few of the key characteristics of the LCT, predominantly where they relate to the current clear connection with the M62 motorway and the enclosure which is formed by the valley landform.

- 4.1.10 The LCT is further subdivided into landscape character areas (LCA). The site falls within LCA 28: Rochdale and Oldham South Pennine Foothills.
- 4.1.11 It is noted that the LCT and LCA have a moderate-high sensitivity to commercial/industrial developments. In the case of this proposal, as it is considered to be a temporary change, it may not be fully considered of the same sensitivity.
- 4.1.12 Guidance is provided for the future development and landscape enhancement. Of relevance to the site, it is noted that the undulating landform should be used to integrate development

Landscape Sensitivity

- 4.1.13 The site is currently formed by part of a large field in agricultural use that is bound by a combination of hedgerows with intermittent trees to the north along the M62 motorway and fencing on other boundaries. The site sits within the urban fringe of the settlement on the interface between urban and agricultural. The site landform is undulating. The site falls within no areas of national designation related to landscape but falls within the Green Belt which is not normally considered a landscape policy but has a visual aspect.
- 4.1.14 Vehicular noise can be clearly heard within the site from the nearby M62 motorway due to its close proximity.
- 4.1.15 The area contains some features of landscape value but lacks a coherent composition. The landscape elements within the area are commonplace at the local level and are of varying quality. There is frequent presence of manmade elements and road noise and human activity is prominent. Vegetative features and the undulating landform create enclosure in some areas, although longer range views are available where vegetation is less prevalent and the topography allows.
- 4.1.16 Due to the context formed by the receiving landscape, the susceptibility to change is considered to be medium and the value is considered to be small. The overall sensitivity of the landscape is considered to be medium.

5.0 Visual Baseline

Limits to study Area

- 5.1.1 The limits to the study area have been determined by the visual envelope of the development site. This area has been adopted as the main study area, as it surrounds the site and may be considered likely to be most impacted by physical change.
- 5.1.2 In order to assist in the assessment of the potential visual effects of any development, a computer-generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) has been modelled. The computer ZTV is used as a working tool to inform the assessment team of the extent of the zone within which the proposed development may have an influence or effect on landscape character and visual amenity and the areas within which the study area together with site survey work should be concentrated. It should be noted that this is a topographical information based exercise with no account being taken of the potential effects of vegetation or buildings acting as a visual barrier. The ZTV is shown in Figure 3: Zone of Theoretical Visibility.
- 5.1.3 The initial study area was set to a radius of approximately 2.5km from the centre of the site (approximately N53°35'59, W02°06'50) on the basis that at this distance, this form of development, when seen by the human eye, would be hardly discernible or not legible.
- 5.1.4 Viewpoints have been detailed in table 10: Viewpoint Details which outlines location and rationale for selection.

Table 10: Viewpoint Details

No	Location	Distance (km) and direction of view	Northing	Westing	Sensitivity of Visual Receptor
1	Footpath MilFp346	0.19, NW	53°35'52	02°06'46	High - users of PRoW
2	Footpath MilFp348	0.48, N	53°35'42	02°06'51	High - users of PRoW
3	Footpath 69 CROMP	0.52, NW	53°35'44	02°06'32	High - users of PRoW
4	Bridleway MilBp137	1.05, SW	53°36'09	02°05'50	High - users of PRoW

Views to the site

- 5.1.5 It is clear that, despite the study area being potentially visible from a wide variety of locations, at varying distances and from a limited number of private and public areas, the visual envelope is actually quite limited.
- 5.1.6 The visibility of the site is dependent on a range of factors, including location of viewpoint, distance of view, the angle of the sun, time of year and climatic conditions. Of equal importance will be whether the site is seen completely or in part of the skyline, where land provides a backcloth and where there is a complex foreground or an expansive landscape surrounding the view. The aspect of dwellings and whether it is a main view or one from a secondary window less frequently used is also a consideration.
- 5.1.7 A photographic study of the site has been undertaken. The viewpoints are at varying distances from the site and have been selected to represent potential views seen by the most sensitive receptors from around the site.
- 5.1.8 The site visit has been undertaken during winter months when vegetation has lost its foliage and is acting as less dense visual barriers. In months when vegetation retains its foliage, it will act as denser visual barriers.
- 5.1.9 The sensitivity of most of the local receptors is assessed as high as shown in table 7: Visual Receptor Sensitivity.
- 5.1.10 A number of the rights of way that sits closest to the site were inaccessible during the site visit, but views from the higher landform to the south and east provided enough locations to illustrate the potential change from the wider landscape.
- 5.1.11 For the field assessment, a Canon EOS 500D camera with an 18-55mm lens was used, set at 35mm focal length. This is in line with best practice as shown in the Visual Representation of Development Proposals technical guidance note issued by the Landscape Institute (Technical Guidance Note 06/19).
- 5.1.12 The site was visited on the 2nd of August 2024; the weather was bright and clear.

Viewpoint 1: View from footpath MilFp346



Vp1	Panoramic View <i>(Distance 0.19km looking north west)</i>	
Baseline Description	This is a view from footpath MilFp346 looking north west towards the proposed site. Due to the relatively elevated position of the viewpoint longer range views of the landscape are available of distant hills and the settlement of Rochdale. The route of the M62 motorway can be seen with lighting columns and stanchions following its course through a generally well vegetated corridor. Large scale industrial and light industrial development can be seen to the north west at Kingsway Business Park and north east where the chimney of Ellenroad Engine House Steam Museum punctuates the view. Vehicular noise and movement are clear in the area. Three containers sit to the north east of the site boundary within a field in agricultural use that is defined by mature vegetation to the north along the motorway and by fencing along other boundaries. Pylons and wind turbines form manmade elements with a vertical emphasis on views.	
Predicted change	From this viewpoint, the proposals will be perceptible in the view set against the backcloth formed by mature vegetation that sits on either side of the M62 motorway to the north. The change will be obvious, although seen in the context of the receiving urban fringe and will not affect the overall character of the view. The proposed elements on site will sit lower in the landform and will not break the skyline.	
Type of effect	The introduction of the proposed building would form a very limited reduction in the quality of the present environment.	
Magnitude of Change	The development would result in a perceptible change in the view that would be obvious to an observer but that would not affect the character of views.	
Assessment	Sensitivity	High – Users of PROW
	Magnitude	Small
Significance of Effect		Moderate – Not a material change

Viewpoint 2: View from footpath MilFp348



Vp2	Panoramic View (Distance 0.48km looking north)	
Baseline Description	This is a view from footpath MilFp348 looking north towards the proposed site. Due to the relatively elevated position of the viewpoint longer range views of the landscape are available of distant hills and the settlement of Rochdale. Garside Farm sits to the north of the viewpoint and the nucleated farm complex prevents views of the lower landform beyond. The route of the M62 motorway can be seen with lighting columns and stanchions following its course through a generally well vegetated corridor. Large scale industrial and light industrial development can be seen to the north west at Kingsway Business Park. Vehicular noise and movement are clear in the area. Pylons and wind turbines form manmade elements with a vertical emphasis on views. Local fields are defined by a combination of vegetation, fencing and stone walls.	
Predicted change	From this viewpoint, the proposals will be barely perceptible with partial views of the proposed elements set against the backcloth formed by mature vegetation that sits on either side of the M62 motorway. The change will not be obvious and will not affect the overall character of the view. The proposed elements on site will sit lower in the landform and will not break the skyline.	
Type of effect	The introduction of the proposed building would form a very limited reduction in the quality of the present environment.	
Magnitude of Change	The development would result in a barely perceptible change in the view that would not be obvious to an observer and would not affect the quality of views.	
Assessment	Sensitivity	High – Users of PRow
	Magnitude	Very small
Significance of Effect		Minor – Not a material change

Viewpoint 3: View from footpath 69 CROMP



Vp3	Panoramic View <i>(Distance 0.52km looking north west)</i>	
Baseline Description	This is a view from footpath 69 CROMP looking north west towards the proposed site. Due to the relatively elevated position of the viewpoint longer range views of the landscape are available of distant hills and the settlement of Rochdale. The route of the M62 motorway can be seen with lighting columns and stanchions following its course through a generally well vegetated corridor. Large scale industrial and light industrial development can be seen to the north west at Kingsway Business Park and north east where the chimney of Ellenroad Engine House Steam Museum punctuates the view. Vehicular noise and movement are clear in the area. Pylons and wind turbines form manmade elements with a vertical emphasis on views. Local fields are defined by a combination of fencing and stone walls with vegetation set on the steeper landform.	
Predicted change	From this viewpoint, the proposals will be perceptible in the view set against the backcloth formed by mature vegetation that sits on either side of the M62 motorway to the north. The change will be obvious, although seen in the context of the receiving urban fringe and will not affect the overall character of the view. The proposed elements on site will sit lower in the landform and will not break the skyline.	
Type of effect	The introduction of the proposed building would form a very limited reduction in the quality of the present environment.	
Magnitude of Change	The development would result in a perceptible change in the view that would be obvious to an observer but that would not affect the character of views.	
Assessment	Sensitivity	High – Users of PROW
	Magnitude	Small
Significance of Effect		Moderate – Not a material change

Viewpoint 4: View from bridleway MilBp137



Vp4	Panoramic View (Distance 1.05km looking south west)	
Baseline Description	This is a view from bridleway MilBp137 looking south west towards the proposed site. The bridleway is bound by mature vegetation and fencing to the west, but a short section of the route allows a vista towards the site. The local area is relatively well vegetated with fields defined by hedgerows with trees and mature vegetation following the railway line which creates a more enclosed landscape. The route of the M62 motorway can be seen with lighting columns and stanchions following its course through a generally well vegetated corridor. Kingsway Business Park and the chimney at Ellenroad Engine House Steam Museum can be seen. Vehicular noise and movement are clear in the area. Green Hill can be seen rising to the south west.	
Predicted change	From this viewpoint, only a small part of the proposals will be discernible through the vista created by vegetation in the intervening landscape and will be set against the backcloth formed by mature vegetation that sits along the M62 motorway. The proposed elements on site will sit lower in the landform and will not break the skyline.	
Type of effect	The introduction of the proposed building would form no change to the quality of the present environment.	
Magnitude of Change	Only a small part of the development would be discernible in the view to an observer.	
Assessment	Sensitivity	High – Users of PRoW
	Magnitude	Negligible
Significance of Effect		Negligible – Not a material change

6.0 Characteristics of Proposal

- 6.1.1 The proposed scheme is a 30MW battery storage site with fencing, BESS units, water tanks, switchroom and landscaping with access from Bentgate Street.
- 6.1.2 As the site represents an energy scheme, the change will be long term temporary and reversible.
- 6.1.3 The construction of building elements, together with associated traffic, parking, lighting and security fencing can temporarily but substantially change the landscape character of an area and impact upon its existing visual and/or recreational amenity.
- 6.1.4 In order to minimise potential impacts, together with the optimum benefit for landscape character and visual amenity the proposals should provide environmental enhancement and make a positive contribution to the landscape, not only of the development itself, but to its wider setting. This should include visual barriers as close to the viewer as possible. Its principal objectives are to:
- Minimise views from residential areas
 - Assist visual integration of the development
 - Provide an internal site landscape structure
 - Reinforce the opportunity to maintain wildlife corridors at the site boundaries.
- 6.1.5 The initial construction phase will give rise to temporary, short term impacts. Any modifications or extensions that occur from time to time in the future will also give rise to this short term construction impact.
- 6.1.6 The site and its context has an overall weighted medium landscape sensitivity. This conclusion was reached in line with the definitions of landscape impact shown in tables 1 to 4 within this document.
- 6.1.7 The scale and nature of the proposal will have an overall weighted landscape impact that could be considered small as they would be prominent but are not uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the existing landscape. This conclusion was reached in line with the definitions of landscape impact shown in table 5 within this document.
- 6.1.8 The overall weighted level of landscape effect can be considered minor (i.e. not a material change).
- 6.1.9 The visual impact and the significance of the impacts of the development on the open countryside have been assessed as potentially moderate (i.e. not a material change) without mitigation from viewpoint 1 that sits on footpath MilFp346.
- 6.1.10 As is previously noted, a number of the rights of way that sits closest to the site were inaccessible during the site visit, but views from the higher landform to the south and east provided enough locations to illustrate the potential change from the wider landscape.
- 6.1.11 The visual change from the local landscape is generally localised and limited due to the mature vegetation that sits in the surrounding landscape, the undulating landform and the similar setting of the receiving landscape.
- 6.1.12 Measures have been recommended to further reduce these impacts and these are located in section 7.0: Mitigation.

7.0 Mitigation

7.1.1 Mitigation measures would include:

- Management and retention of the native tree and hedgerow planting that sits along the site's western boundary;
- The heights of built form limited to reduce the potential for longer range views due to the relatively flat landform;
- Built form set back from boundaries to allow growth of boundary vegetation;
- The use of materials for the external envelope of the elements on site which minimise potential visual intrusion to aid visual blending.

7.1.2 With suitable mitigation measures, the development will have a minor visual impact and a minor/negligible landscape effect (i.e. not a material change).

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1.1 The scale and nature of the development and the receiving landscape fabric will have a medium landscape character sensitivity and the magnitude of change is small; therefore resulting in a level of landscape effect of minor (i.e. not a material change).
- 8.1.2 The visual effects are generally localised and limited due in most part to dense intervening mature vegetation between the viewer and site, the topography in the area and the similar setting of the proposed scheme formed by local residential dwellings.
- 8.1.3 For the proposed site and the surroundings during construction, an increase of delivery vehicles and people travelling to the works can be expected. These effects will be short lived however and will not require mitigation during the construction process.
- 8.1.4 The viewpoints assessed showed that although the site is at least partly visible from all of the four assessed, none can be considered subject to a material change.
- 8.1.5 The majority of receptors in the local area can be considered of a high sensitivity (users of PRow). The visual impact of the development on the open countryside has been assessed, at worst case scenario, as moderate (i.e. not a material change) from viewpoint 1 that is along footpath MilFp346. Viewpoints generally offer limited or partial views of the site due in most part to mature vegetation, existing built form and the undulating landform acting as visual barriers.
- 8.1.6 With suitable mitigation measures, the development will have a minor visual impact and a minor/negligible landscape effect (i.e. not a material change).

9.0 Appendices

Figure 1: Ordnance Survey Map

Figure 2: Aerial Photograph

Figure 3: Zone of Theoretical Visibility

Figure 4: Viewpoint Location Plan

Figure 5: Designation Plan



LEGEND



Site boundary



For ordnance survey map legend, refer to:
<https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/docs/legends/25k-raster-legend.pdf>

Scheme: Ellen Road Farm, Newhey

Drawing: Ordnance Survey Plan

Figure No: 1

LVIA Ltd Ref: YLEM1500

Scale: NTS@A3

Drawn: SC

Checked: JPF





LEGEND



Site boundary



Image supplied by Google Maps
<https://maps.google.co.uk/>
 Accessed 03/08/2024

Scheme: Ellen Road Farm, Newhey

Drawing: Aerial Photograph

Figure No: 2

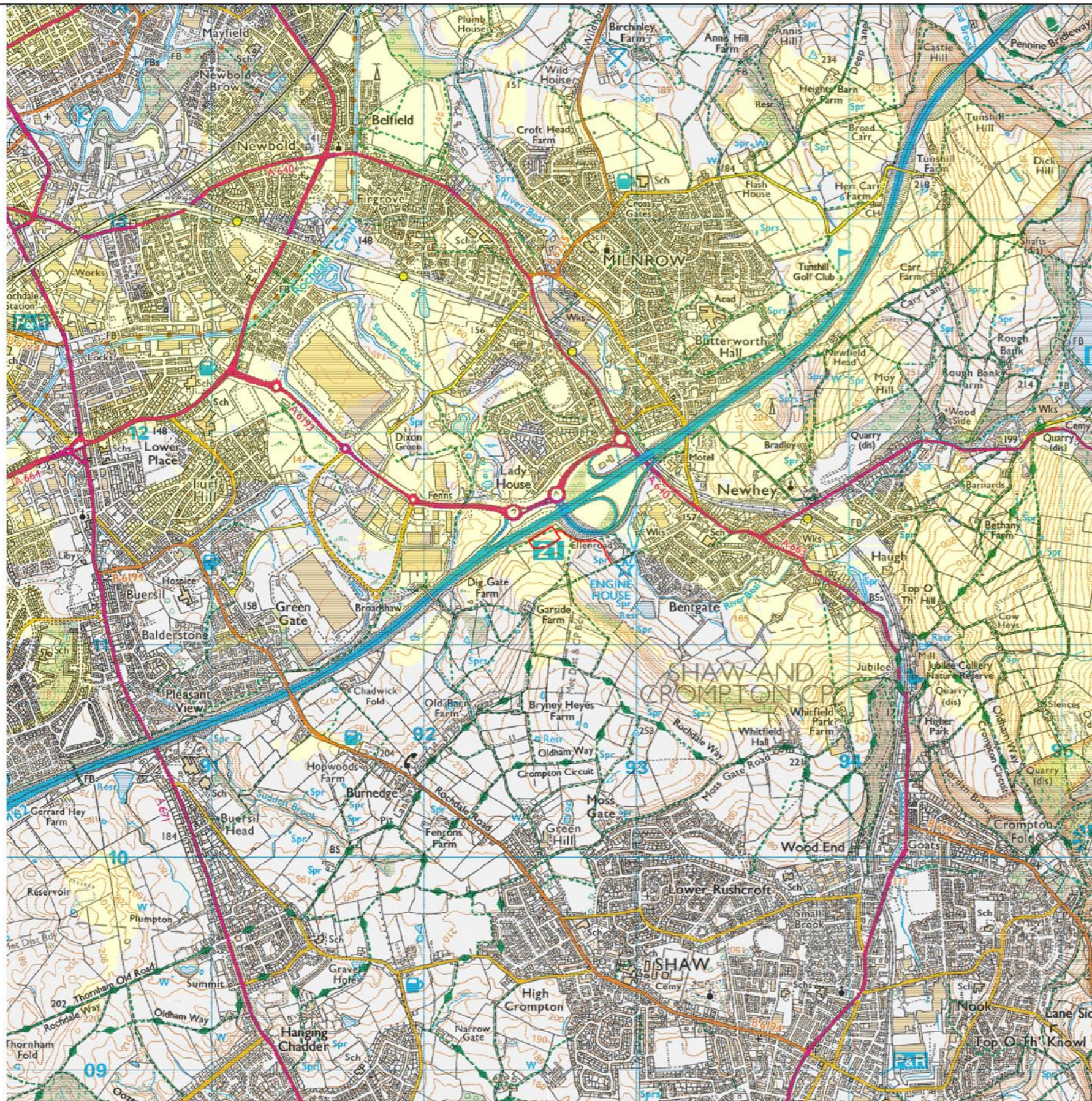
LVIA Ltd Ref: YLEM1500

Scale: NTS@A3

Drawn: JPF

Checked: JPF





LEGEND



Site boundary

Zone of theoretical visibility



Yellow wash - Potential view



Grey wash - No potential view

NB: Viewshed analysis run with 1.6m viewer height and buildings at a 5m height with mapinfo and represents surface topography, without taking into account potential visual barriers in the form of trees, hedgerows, woodland, buildings and other manmade elements.



Scheme: Ellen Road Farm, Newhey

Drawing: Zone of Theoretical Visibility

Figure No: 3

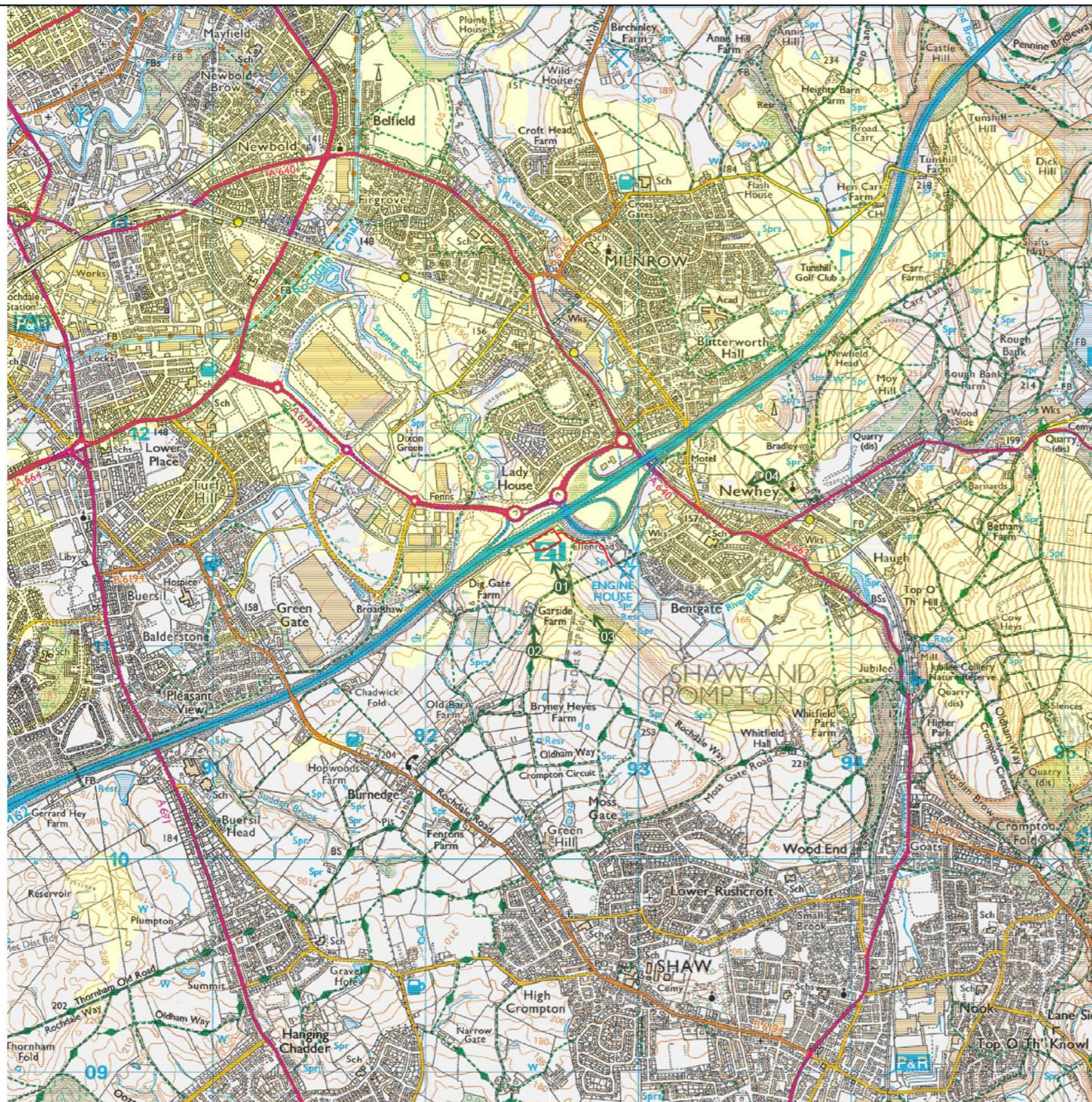
LVIA Ltd Ref: YLEM1500

Scale: NTS@A3

Drawn: SC

Checked: JPF





LEGEND



Site boundary



Viewpoint location

Zone of theoretical visibility



Yellow wash - Potential view



Grey wash - No potential view

NB: Viewshed analysis run with 1.6m viewer height and buildings at a 5m height with mapinfo and represents surface topography, without taking into account potential visual barriers in the form of trees, hedgerows, woodland, buildings and other manmade elements.



Scheme: Ellen Road Farm, Newhey

Drawing: Viewpoint Location Plan

Figure No: 4

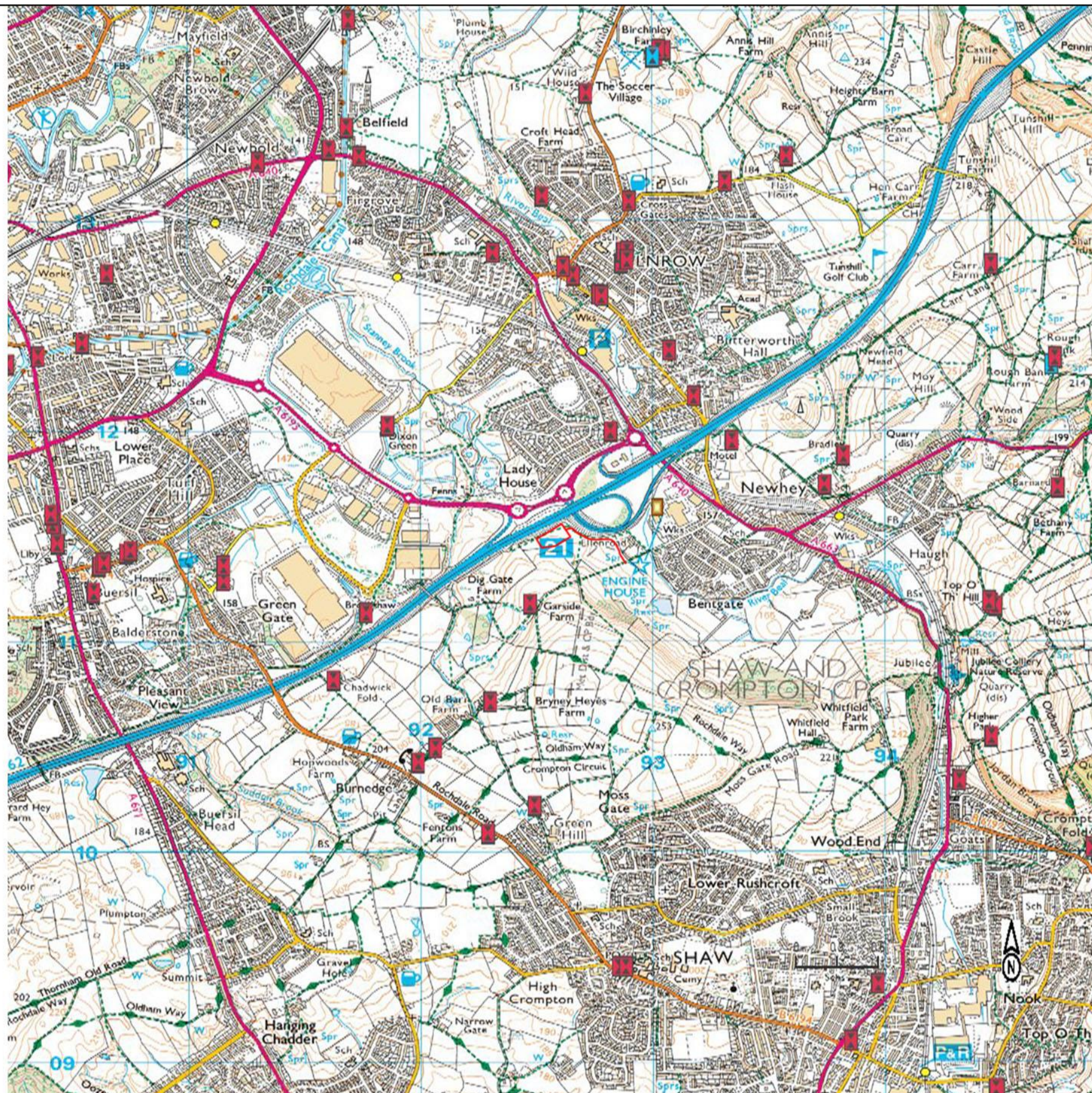
LVIA Ltd Ref: YLEM1500

Scale: NTS@A3

Drawn: SC

Checked: JPF





LEGEND



Site Boundary

■ Scheduled Monuments (England)
- points

Listed Buildings (England)



I
II
II*



Scheme: Ellen Road Farm, Newhey

Drawing: Designations Plan

Figure No: 5

LVIA Ltd Ref: YLEM1500

Scale: NTS@A3

Drawn: SC

Checked: JPF





Head Office
Bellamy House
Longney
Gloucester
GL2 3SJ
Tel: 07940 749051

Email: jp@lvialtd.com
Website: www.lvialtd.com

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PROJECT MANAGEMENT | EXPERT WITNESS | LANDSCAPE DESIGN & PLANNING
LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT