

Heritage Statement

Rossendale Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)

March 2025

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1. Introduction

1.1 This Heritage Statement (the ‘Statement’) is prepared by Turley Heritage on behalf of Cubico UK Developments Limited (the ‘applicant’) in connection with an application for full planning permission for a Battery Energy Storage System (‘BESS’) (the ‘Proposed Development’) at land adjacent to Rochdale Road and Bamford Road, Turn Village, Rossendale (the ‘Site’).

1.2 The description of development is as follows:

“Construction, management and operation of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) with associated infrastructure, including access, drainage, security measures and landscaping and provision of a connecting cable to Croston Close Road substation.”

1.3 The Site contains no built heritage assets and does not form part of an area based heritage designation. There are a number of designated heritage assets located outside of the Site boundary with potential for their significance to be affected by the Proposed Development. These are:

- Holcombe Conservation Area
- Peel Monument (grade II listed building)
- Fecit Farmhouse with attached stable and shippon (grade II listed building)

1.4 In determining the full planning application, Rossendale Borough Council (‘RBC’) has a statutory duty under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the special interest and setting of listed buildings.¹ Case law has established that ‘considerable importance and weight’ should be given to this statutory duty.

1.5 While the setting of conservation areas is not expressly protected by legislation, Paragraph 212 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) (‘NPPF’) requires great weight to be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, including conservation areas.

1.6 In regard to information requirements for applications, NPPF Paragraph 207 states the following:

‘In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.’²

1.7 To comply with these requirements, Section 2 of this Statement introduces the Site and describes its context, history and development. Section 3 identifies relevant heritage

¹ s66(1) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

² MHCLG, 2024. *National Planning Policy Framework* - para. 207

assets with potential to be affected by the Proposed Development and Section 4 provides an assessment of their significance and setting, proportionate to both the importance of the asset and the likely impacts. An assessment of the impact of the Proposed Development on the significance of the relevant designated heritage assets is set out in Section 5, in light of the statutory duty of the 1990 Act, national planning policy set out in the NPPF and local planning policy for the historic environment (set out in detail at **Appendix 1**). The conclusions of the Statement are provided in Section 6.

- 1.8 This Statement has been prepared on the basis of published information, proportionate archival research and a site visit carried out in October 2024. It is informed by Historic England Good Practice Advice on 'Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment' (GPA 2), 'The Setting of Heritage Assets' (GPA 3) and 'Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets' (HEAN 12).

2. Site Context and Historical Development

Site Context

- 2.1 The Site is located on land at Higher Moss to the east of the settlement of Ramsbottom and within the district of Rossendale (grid ref. SD 81979 16942) (**Figure 2.1**). It is bounded to the east by Rochdale Road (A680), to the south by Bamford Road, to the west by Black Lane and to the north by agricultural land associated with Close Nooks Farm. It comprises a broadly triangular area of pasture currently used for the grazing of sheep (**Figure 2.2**).

Figure 2.1: Aerial view of the Site and surrounding area (Google Earth, 2022).



Figure 2.2: View of the Site from the south on Bamford Road.



- 2.2 The surrounding area comprises predominantly open agricultural land and moorland with scattered farmsteads and other small clusters of buildings. The Site lies within an area of undulating topography on the eastern side of a river valley which is traversed by a number of brooks and streams feeding the River Irwell. Fletcher Bank Quarry and the village of Ramsbottom are located in the lower valley to the west of the Site. To the north and east, the land rises steeply towards the ridges of Scout Moor and Knowl Moor which are lined with turbines.

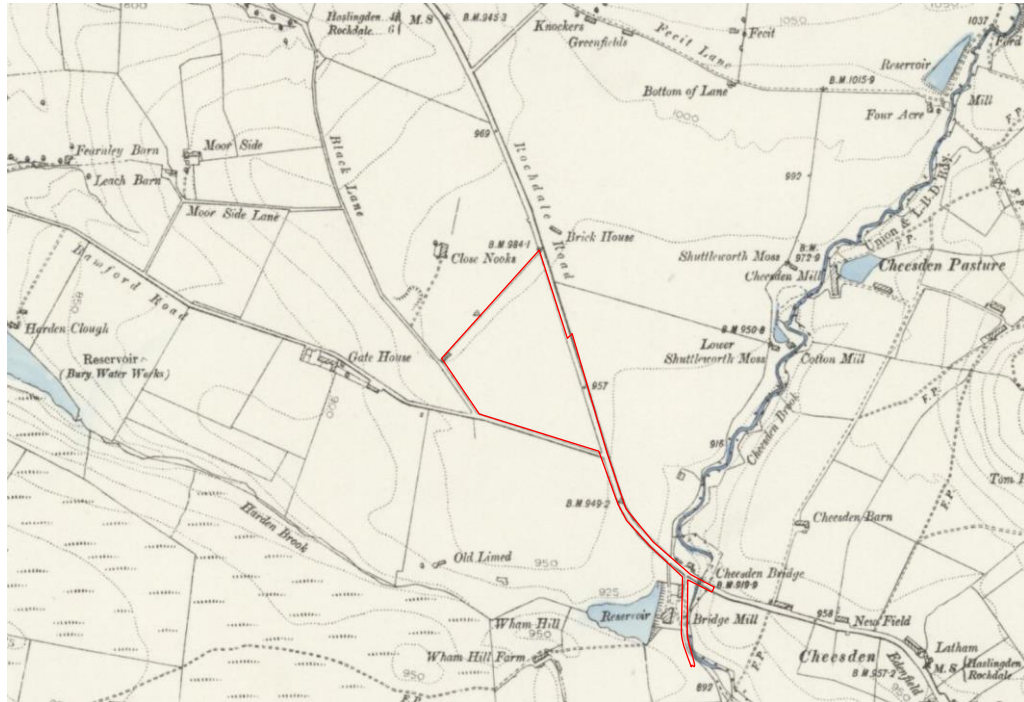
Historic Development of the Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.3 During the 19th century, the area surrounding the Site was part of a mixed agricultural and small-scale industrial landscape. While the undulating land between Cheesden and Shuttleworth was predominantly used as pasture, there were also stone quarries, coal mines and mill buildings peppered on the various local watercourses, mostly for the manufacture of cotton products but also wool, paper and corn (**Figure 2.3**). Several reservoirs were formed to control the flow of water to the mill buildings. Small farmsteads were also scattered around the landscape, often adjacent to roads or set back within their associated land and accessed by a private track. The closest farmsteads to the Site were Moss Side (later 'Gate House') to the west and Close Nooks to the north west.
- 2.4 The boundaries of the Site were loosely established by the mid 19th century. The north western boundary was originally demarcated by 'New Lane' which later fell out of use and was replaced by the existing stone boundary wall by the 1890s (**Figure 2.4**). The Site was also subdivided into five unequal fields in the mid 19th century, which were later merged, possibly indicating multiple ownership or use of the land for separate agricultural purposes.

Figure 2.3: Extract from the OS County Series Map of Lancashire, 1851



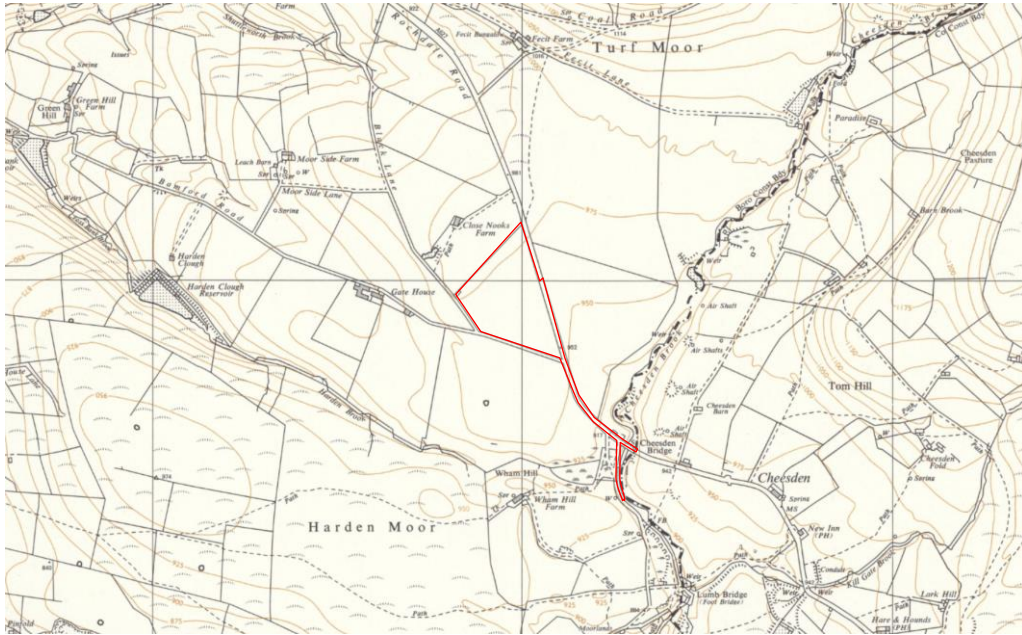
Figure 2.4: Extract from the OS County Series Map of Lancashire, 1894



- 2.5 The Site has generally remained open and unchanged since the late 19th century. The only structure known to have been built within the Site was a small building in the western corner which is shown in historic maps between 1894 and 1967. The building likely supported the agricultural function of the land during this period and has since been demolished. A public footpath runs along the north western boundary of the Site and reflects its provenance as part of a road or track that once linked Black Lane to Fecit Lane.
- 2.6 During the early 20th century, industrial activity in the area surrounding the Site declined and many of the nearby mills and mines were abandoned (**Figure 4.5**). The loss of industry resulted in the gradual contraction of the local settlements, including Cheesden, while existing larger settlements, such as Ramsbottom, continued to expand. Fletcher Bank Quarry, established in the early 19th century on the eastern side of Manchester Road (which runs to the east of the village of Ramsbottom), was gradually extended westwards and today covers an area of c.50ha in relatively close proximity to the Site. Scout Moor Wind Farm opened in 2008 with 26 turbines positioned on the ridges of Scout Moor and Knowl Moor to the north and east of the Site.

- 2.6 During the early 20th century, industrial activity in the area surrounding the Site declined and many of the nearby mills and mines were abandoned (**Figure 4.5**). The loss of industry resulted in the gradual contraction of the local settlements, including Cheesden, while existing larger settlements, such as Ramsbottom, continued to expand. Fletcher Bank Quarry, established in the early 19th century on the eastern side of Manchester Road (which runs to the east of the village of Ramsbottom), was gradually extended westwards and today covers an area of c.50ha in relatively close proximity to the Site. Scout Moor Wind Farm opened in 2008 with 26 turbines positioned on the ridges of Scout Moor and Knowl Moor to the north and east of the Site.

Figure 2.5: Extract from the 1967 OS National Grid



Summary of Historic Development

- The area surrounding the Site was used for mixed agriculture and small scale industrial activities during the 19th century.
- The boundaries of the Site were loosely established by the 19th century, though the Site was historically divided into five unequal fields.
- After these fields were merged, the Site has generally remained open and unchanged since the 19th century.
- Industrial activity in the area declined during the early 20th century and many nearby mills and mines were abandoned, causing the smaller local settlements to contract.
- Fletcher Bank Quarry has been extended since the early 19th century and now covers an area of c.50ha to the west of the Site.
- Scout Moor Wind Farm opened in 2008 on the ridges of Scout Moor and Knowl Moor to the north and east of the Site.

3. Heritage Assets

Heritage Assets

- 3.1 The NPPF (2024) defines a heritage asset as:

*“A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)”.*³

- 3.2 This Statement addresses built heritage assets only and does not include consideration of the archaeological resource or below ground heritage assets.
- 3.3 There are no designated or non-designated heritage assets within the Site boundary. However, there are a number of heritage assets within the surrounding area with potential to be affected by the Proposed Development as a result of development within their setting.

Designated Heritage Assets

- 3.4 Designated heritage assets are those which possess a level of heritage interest that justifies designation and are then subject to particular procedures in planning decisions that involve them. Designated heritage assets include, amongst others, conservation areas, listed buildings and scheduled monuments.

Conservation Areas

- 3.5 Whilst the Site does not form part of a conservation area, it is located approximately 3.25km to the east of the Holcombe Conservation Area.

Listed Buildings

- 3.6 The Site is located approx. 4.1km to the east of Peel Monument (grade II listed) and 500 metres to the south of Fecit Farmhouse with attached stable and shippon (grade II listed), both of which have the potential to be affected by the Proposed Development.
- 3.7 A number of listed buildings in proximity to the Site are unlikely to experience effects arising from the Proposed Development due to the following considerations:
- The nature and extent of their significance (including functional or historic connections);
 - Lack of visual relationship between the asset and the Proposed Development due to intervening development;
 - The orientation of view and the way in which a heritage asset is experienced and the contribution made by setting; and/or

³ MHCLG, 2024. *National Planning Policy Framework – Annex 2: Glossary.*

- The existing rural context that characterises their setting in which the Proposed Development would also be experienced.

3.8 The listed buildings in proximity to the Site which are not considered to be affected by the Proposed Development are:

- Owd Betts Public House
- Buckhurst Farmhouse and Cottage
- Barn c10 metres south of Buckhurst Farmhouse
- Ridshaw Farmhouse and Attached Barn
- Green Hill Farmhouse and Attached Barn

Non-designated Heritage Assets

3.9 The NPPF clarifies that heritage assets include both designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority including local listing. These are referred to as ‘non-designated heritage assets.’

3.10 Historic England’s guidance on ‘Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment’ (2015) states that:

“Non-designated heritage assets include those that have been identified in a Historic Environment Record, in a local plan, through local listing or during the process of considering the application.”⁴

3.11 RBC does not maintain a ‘local list’ of non-designated heritage assets. However, the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record (‘HER’) has been consulted and there are no non-designated heritage assets in the vicinity of the Site with potential to be affected by the Proposed Development.

⁴ Historic England, 2015. *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2, Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment*. Paragraph 5.

4. Significance of Heritage Assets

- 4.1 The NPPF defines the significance of a heritage asset as:

“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.”⁵

Conservation Areas

- 4.2 Conservation areas are designated on the basis of their special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Historic England has published guidance in respect of conservation areas which provides a framework for the appraisal and assessment of the special interest of a conservation area.⁶

Listed Buildings

- 4.3 Listed buildings are defined as designated heritage assets that hold architectural or historic interest that are, for the time being, included in a list compiled or approved by the Secretary of State under Section 1 of the Planning Act 1990, for the purposes of the Act. The Principles of Selection for Listed Buildings (2018)⁷ was published by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (‘DCMS’) and supported by Historic England’s Listing Selection Guides for each building type.

Setting

- 4.4 The NPPF defines the setting of a heritage asset as:

“The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.”⁸

- 4.5 Historic England has published guidance⁹ in respect of the setting of heritage assets, providing detail on understanding setting and the associated assessment of the impact of any changes. The guidance confirms that:

“Setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, rather its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the relevant heritage asset itself.”

- 4.6 The guidance sets out a step-by-step process for proportionate assessment of the significance of a heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal.

⁵ MHCLG, 2024. *National Planning Policy Framework – Annex 2: Glossary*

⁶ Historic England, 2019. *Good Practice Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management*

⁷ DCMS, 2018. *Principles of Selection for Listed Buildings*

⁸ MHCLG, 2024. *National Planning Policy Framework – Annex 2: Glossary*

⁹ Historic England, 2017. *Good Practice Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets*

- 4.7 Further guidance on the definition of setting and how it should be taken into account is set out in the national Planning Practice Guidance ('PPG') relating to the historic environment. The PPG sets out that:

"The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places".

- 4.8 The Catesby Estates Ltd v Steer (2018) EWCA Civ 1967 judgement confirmed that historic, social and economic connections are relevant in assessing the contribution made by the setting of heritage assets.

Assessment

- 4.9 This section provides assessments of the significance of the heritage assets identified in Section 3 as having the potential to be affected by the Proposed Development.
- 4.10 The assessments are intended to be proportionate to the importance of the heritage assets and sufficient to understand whether any potential impacts from the Proposed Development arise. They have been informed by a site visit carried out in October 2024 and proportionate desk-based research including historic map regression.

Holcombe Conservation Area

- 4.11 The Holcombe Conservation Area was designated in 1970 and its boundary was extended in 1978 and 2011. The boundary envelops much of the village of Holcombe, located on the shoulder of Harcles Hill (also referred to as 'Holcombe Hill') and to the west of the town of Ramsbottom. It stretches from the northern edge of Holcombe Brook in the south to Higher Barn and Rakes Fold in the north. The western boundary is marked by Peel Monument on Harcles Hill, Top o' th' Moor Farm and Simons Farm, while the eastern boundary is delineated by Lumb Carr Road, the path from Little Holcombe to Dundee Lane and part of Dundee Lane itself.

Character and Appearance

- 4.12 The conservation area comprises a series of scattered hamlets on the steep eastern slope of Harcles Hill. It is primarily rural in character and is characterised as much by the steeply sloping landscape which shifts from open moorland to pastoral fields as it is by its buildings, most of which date to the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries.
- 4.13 The buildings within the conservation area are arranged in tightly knit clusters along historic packhorse and turnpike routes. The junction between Chapel Lane and Lumb Carr Road (B6214) is slightly more densely developed and includes a number of key buildings, such as Emmanuel Church and Emmanuel Holcombe Primary School. There is a prevalence of farm buildings, cottages often arranged in rows, and larger houses with ancillary buildings. With the exception of Emmanuel Church with its tall spire and Peel Monument atop Harcles Hill which are prominent landmarks, most buildings within the conservation area are one or two storeys in scale.

- 4.14 The buildings have a common material palette of local millstone grit and stone slate and share similar vernacular architectural features and details, such as square coal doors and stone cills, lintels, architraves and gutter corbels. These common features create a strong sense of unity between the buildings which is reinforced by the consistent treatment of stone boundary walls, field walls, gateposts, paths, drives and traditional stone setts.
- 4.15 The rural character of the conservation area is supported by the presence of undeveloped green space comprising a mixture of open pasture, woodland and moorland, as well as managed green space in the form of private gardens and the churchyard. This rural character is further revealed in wide ranging views out from within the conservation area boundary, which includes long distance views to the north east of Shuttleworth Pike, and to the Peak District, Alderley Edge and the Cheshire sandstone ridge to the south.

Contribution of Setting to Significance (Physical Surroundings and Experience of the Asset)

- 4.16 The conservation area is located on higher ground to the west of the town of Ramsbottom, approximately 6 miles north of Bury and 12 miles north of Manchester, lying to the west of the M66, A56 and Irwell valley.
- 4.17 The land to the immediate south and east of the conservation area comprises the developed areas of Greenmount, Summerseat and Ramsbottom and is characterised by a mix of dwellings, commercial and industrial buildings. Beyond these areas, the landscape is more sparsely developed with farmsteads and other buildings interspersed within an area of undulating pasture and moorland extending to Scout Moor and Knowl Hill, within which the Site is located. The land to north and west of the conservation area is largely open in character, mostly comprising areas of moorland, pastoral farmland and woodland.
- 4.18 The open, rural character of parts of the setting of the conservation area serve to reinforce its significance as a collection of dispersed hamlets within the wider rural context of the Irwell Valley. This is experienced both gradually while moving through the landscape and in respect of static and kinetic views into and out of the conservation area boundary which reveal the relationship between the settlement of Holcombe and the wider rural landscape.
- 4.19 The widespread visibility of Peel Monument atop Harcles Hill and, to a lesser extent, the spire of Emmanuel Church reinforce their status as prominent local landmarks and in turn reinforce the significance of the conservation area. Furthermore, the panoramic views available from within the conservation area boundary, particularly at higher elevation and in proximity to Peel Monument, are characteristic of its landscape setting and support the ability to appreciate significance.

Contribution made by the Site

- 4.20 The Site is located on the opposite side of the Irwell Valley approximately 3.25km to the east of the conservation area. As a result of the topography of the area, the Site is experienced in conjunction with the conservation area in long distance kinetic views towards the area from the east, including on Rochdale Road (A680), Bamford Road (**Figure 4.1**), Black Lane and the public footpaths traversing Scout and Knowl Moors,

and in long distance views from within the conservation area, particularly along the eastern slope of Harcles Hill and near to Peel Monument (**Figures 4.2 and 4.3**). These views are characterised in part by the settlement of Ramsbottom and Fletcher Bank Quarry in the middle distance. Most other views towards the Site from within the conservation area are filtered or obscured by the intervening land, woodland, boundary trees, hedges, buildings, walls and other structures.

Figure 4.1: View west towards the Holcombe Conservation Area from Bamford Road to the immediate south of the Site

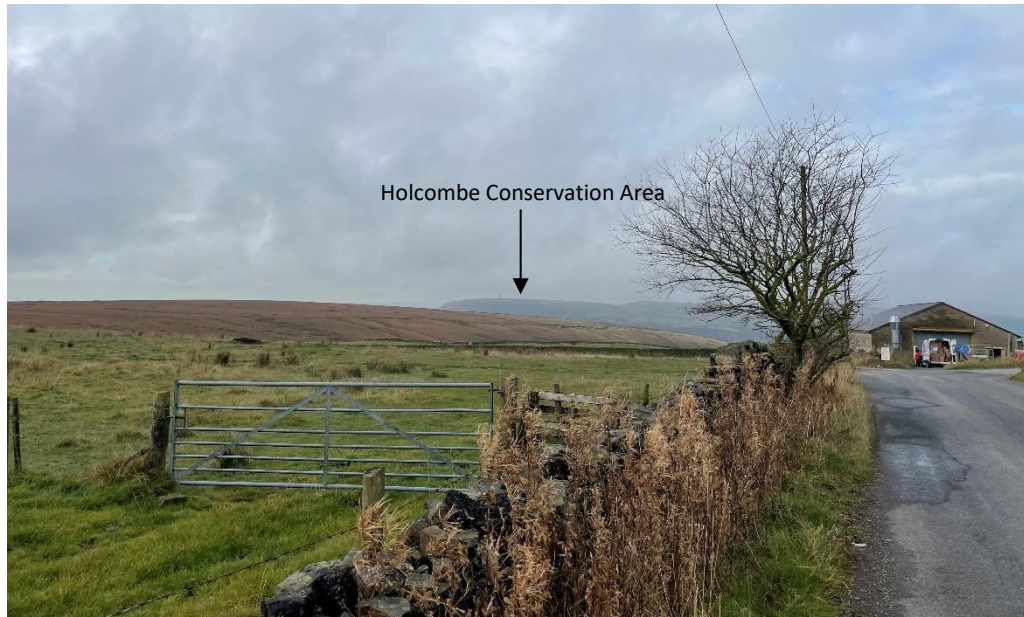


Figure 4.2: View east towards the Site from within the Holcombe Conservation Area on Harcles Hill and to the north of Peel Monument

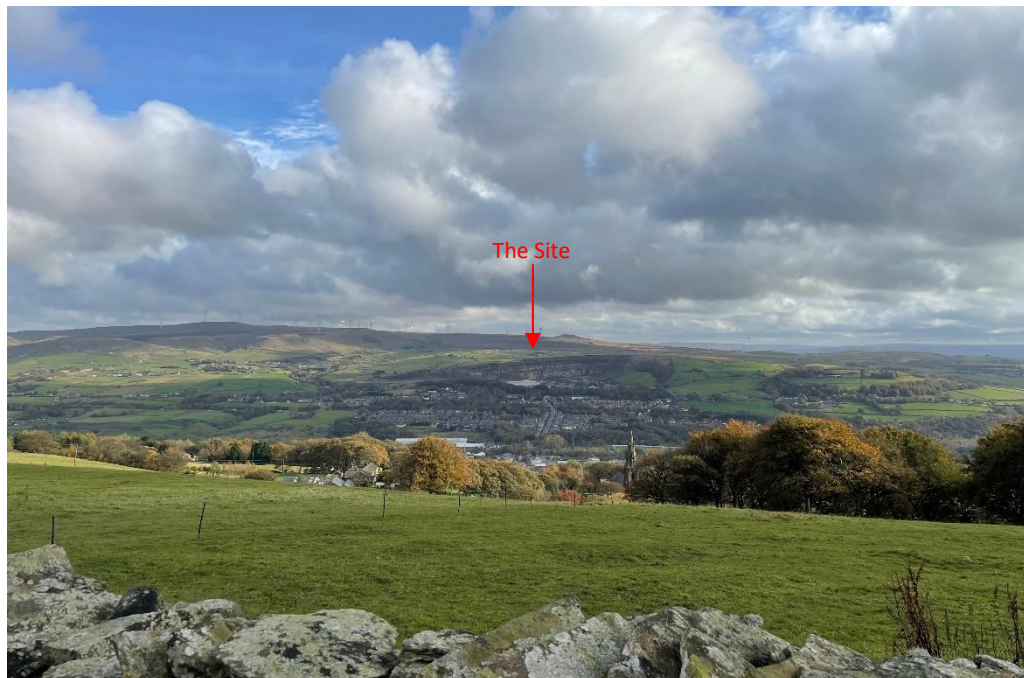


Figure 4.3: View north east towards the Site from within the Holcombe Conservation Area on Harcles Hill and to the south of Peel Monument



- 4.21 The Site forms part of the wider landscape context to the east of the conservation area, beyond Ramsbottom, Fletcher Bank Quarry, the M66 and A56, which is characterised by scattered farmsteads, open pasture and moorland and Scout Moor Wind Farm. This area provides an expansive backdrop to views out of the conservation area and supports an appreciation of the conservation area's historic rural context and geographical location. As an area of open pasture in its historic configuration, the Site makes a minor contribution to the significance of the conservation area, albeit to a very limited degree given the intervening distance and as part of a much wider area of landscape.

Peel Monument (grade II listed building)

- 4.22 Peel Monument was listed in February 1984. The grade II listed building comprises a mid 19th century monument to former Conservative Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel, whose family had long been associated with the area, following his death in 1850.

Architectural and Historic Interest

- 4.23 Peel Monument is of special architectural interest as a distinctive commemorative monument which forms a conspicuous landmark atop Harcles Hill overlooking Ramsbottom and the Irwell Valley. It comprises a 128 ft high stone tower with a crenelated single storey plinth supporting a narrow and tapered second stage of four storeys with a crenelated parapet (**Figure 4.4**).
- 4.24 It is of special historic interest for its association with Sir Robert Peel, a local man who twice served as Prime Minister and, among other achievements, is responsible for the founding of the police force and the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846. The monument was paid for by local subscription and the stone used in its construction was taken from an adjacent hollow in the hilltop. An excerpt from Peel's final speech to the House of Commons is inscribed on the entrance to the monument.

Figure 4.4: View of Peel Monument from the south on Harcles Hill



Contribution of Setting to Significance (Physical Surroundings and Experience of the Asset)

- 4.25 Peel Monument is located at the top of Harcles Hill and to the west of the settlements of Holcombe and Ramsbottom. It is surrounded by a plateau of moorland which extends to the north and west and is traversed by public footpaths. The land is steeper to the south and west where it slopes down into the Irwell Valley.
- 4.26 As a result of its siting atop Harcles Hill and the surrounding topography, Peel Monument is a widely visible landmark with a viewshed of over 20 miles across Greater Manchester and Lancashire. The listed building draws considerable significance from its landmark value, as well as the extensive panoramic views available from within its immediate context out towards the Manchester and Salford city skylines, Bury, Winter Hill, the Irwell Valley and the West Pennine Moors. These views comprise both rural and urban areas. The siting of the monument was specifically chosen at the insistence of William Grant, then chairman of the Monument Committee, in order to align with the tower of St Andrew's Church, Ramsbottom, when viewed from Nuttall Hall (demolished c.1945).

Contribution made by the Site

- 4.27 The Site is located approximately 4.1km to the east of Peel Monument, beyond the village of Ramsbottom, the M66 and A56, and Fletcher Bank Quarry. In spite of the intervening distance, there is a degree of intervisibility between the Site and the listed building. As illustrated in **Figure 4.1**, Peel Monument is visible on the skyline of Harcles Hill in views west from within the Site and in its immediate context, including on Rochdale Road, Bamford Road and Black Lane. These views reveal the extensive visual context of the listed building and its landmark quality but are widely replicated throughout the surrounding area and are not unique or distinct.

Figure 4.5: View east from Peel Monument towards the Site



- 4.28 The Site forms part of the wider landscape background to the east in the expansive panoramic views from the listed building and its immediate context atop Harcles Hill (**Figure 4.5**). These views feature the settlements of Holcombe and Ramsbottom in the foreground, Fletcher Bank Quarry and, beyond this, areas of pasture (including the Site), scattered farmsteads and moorland stretching to Scout Moor Wind Farm. In spite of their intervisibility and presence in shared views, the Site does not contribute to the significance of Peel Monument.

Fecit Farmhouse with attached stable and shippon (grade II listed building)

- 4.29 Fecit Farmhouse was listed in November 1984. The grade II listed building comprises an early 18th century two storey farmhouse with an adjoining former stable building to the north and a shippon to the south. A single storey garage and outbuilding were added to the southern end of the range in c.2000 but do not form part of the listing.

Architectural and Historic Interest

- 4.30 Fecit Farmhouse holds special architectural interest as a traditional farmhouse, stable and shippon which reflect the local vernacular in both style and materials (**Figure 4.6**). The layout, form and fenestration of the listed building also illustrates its original use

and the relationship between domestic and agricultural activities within the building range.

Figure 4.6: View of Fecit Farmhouse with attached stable and shippon from the south west on Fecit Lane



- 4.31 The constituent buildings are each of sandstone rubble construction with quoins and stone slate roofs. The farmhouse is formed of two bays with a later central projecting porch. The fenestration is simple, with limited architectural detailing except for stone recesses and hoodmoulds to the ground floor windows. The stable and shippon are slightly taller than the farmhouse and likely represent a separate phase of construction, albeit broadly contemporary and in the same style as the farmhouse. The shippon retains features indicative of its original use, including a ventilation window and loading door to the rear. The interior of the building is not considered in the listed entry description and has not been inspected for the purposes of this assessment.
- 4.32 The listed building holds special historic interest as a good example of an 18th century farmstead comprising farmhouse, barn and shippon, illustrating the extensive past and present use of the Irwell Valley for pastoral farming and the function and form of a traditional farmstead.

Contribution of Setting to Significance (Physical Surroundings and Experience of the Asset)

- 4.33 The listed building is located within a well-defined domestic curtilage to the north east of Rochdale Road and surrounded by a mixture of pastoral farmland and moorland. A bungalow and detached garage ('Fecit Bungalow') were built to the immediate north west of the listed building in the late 20th century. Both dwellings are accessed by a drive and public footpath leading from Rochdale Road and form a small linear building group.

- 4.34 Fecit Farmhouse is experienced within an open, agricultural and moorland setting which is reflective of its historic rural context and supports the ability to appreciate the significance of the listed building as a former farmstead. The significance of the building is principally appreciated from Rochdale Road to the south and west (**Figure 4.7**) and from a network of public footpaths which surround the building, including to the north on the historic routes of Fecit Lane and Coal Road (**Figure 4.8**).
- 4.35 Views from the north are now partially screened by a row of evergreen trees planted along the northern boundary of the building's domestic curtilage in c.2005. However, historically the listed building would have been more widely visible from this direction. The construction of Fecit Bungalow and the domestication of the listed building's curtilage after it ceased to be used for agricultural purposes has reduced the agrarian character of its immediate context, though the building's former agricultural use and its historic functional relationship with the surrounding landscape remains legible.

Contribution made by the Site

- 4.36 The Site is located approximately 500 metres to the south of Fecit Farmhouse and is experienced in conjunction with the listed building to varying degrees in views along Rochdale Road (**Figure 4.7**), Fecit Lane, Coal Road (**Figure 4.8**) and other public footpaths and roads in the surrounding area.

Figure 4.7: View north towards Fecit Farmhouse from Rochdale Road. The Site is located behind and to the left of this view location



Figure 4.8: View south towards Fecit Farmhouse from Coal Road (public footpath). The listed building is concealed behind the evergreen tree row.



- 4.37 Due to the distance between the listed building and the Site and the undulating nature of the intervening landscape, the Site is not a prominent element within the setting of the listed building but rather is experienced as part of its wider landscape context. As an area of open pasture, the Site reinforces the rural character of the landscape and to this limited degree facilitates an appreciation of the significance of the listed building. In most instances where the Site is experienced in combination with the listed building, the distance to the listed building means that its special architectural and historic interest can be experienced only to a limited degree (refer to **Figure 4.8**). There are also no known historical connections between the listed building and the Site.

5. Impact Assessment

Introduction

- 5.1 In determining the submitted application for full planning permission, RBC has a statutory duty under s.66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the special interest and setting of listed buildings.
- 5.2 Case law has confirmed that Parliament's intention in enacting s.66(1) was that decision makers should give considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the special interest and setting of listed buildings, where to 'preserve' means 'to cause no harm'.
- 5.3 Whilst the setting of conservation areas is not expressly protected by legislation, Paragraph 210 of the NPPF states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation, as well as the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 5.4 Paragraph 212 requires when considering the impact of development on the significance of a designated heritage asset that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. 'Conservation' is defined by the NPPF as the process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.
- 5.5 Paragraphs 214 and 215 differentiate between 'substantial' and 'less than substantial' harm and provide a framework for the consideration of harm to the significance of designated heritage assets where it arises, bearing in mind the considerable importance and weight that must be given to the statutory duty of the 1990 Act.
- 5.6 Paragraph 215 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
- 5.7 Paragraph 219 requires that local planning authorities look for opportunities for new development within the setting of heritage assets to better reveal their significance. It states that proposals that preserve those elements of setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.
- 5.8 The relevant heritage legislation, policy and guidance context for consideration of the Proposed Development is set out in full in **Appendix 1**.
- 5.9 The key heritage issue to be taken into consideration in assessing the Proposed Development is therefore the impact on the significance of the above identified designated heritage assets as a result of development within their respective settings.

The Proposed Development

5.10 Full planning permission is sought for the construction, management and operation of a BESS with associated infrastructure for a temporary period of up to 40 years. Full details of the Proposed Development are contained in the measured drawings prepared by CADmando and Design & Access Statement prepared by Turley. A series of Accurate Visual Representations (AVRs) were also prepared by The Environment Partnership to illustrate the Proposed Development and support the technical assessments. These are referred to where relevant in this section.

5.11 The Parameter Plan (**Appendix 2**) defines a series of parameters within which the Proposed Development would be delivered. These parameters were defined on the basis of the following key design objectives:

- Minimise the footprint of the development insofar as is operationally possible;
- Minimise the visibility of the battery storage containers, inverters and ancillary units through careful siting of infrastructure and manipulation of ground levels where required;
- Ensure noise impacts can be appropriately mitigated given the relative proximity of neighbouring farmhouses;
- Introduce new landscape planting to act as a spatial and visual buffer to the main BESS development platform and to deliver a net gain to biodiversity.

5.12 In this context, the BESS development platform would be located in the south eastern corner of the field within the Site and accessed through an existing opening in the dry stone boundary wall to Rochdale Road. An access road would be formed around the perimeter of the BESS development platform which would be broadly triangular in plan. The proposed BESS would be contained by a perimeter fence to a maximum height of 2.4m and the remainder of the field (a total of 4.25 hectares) would remain open. The following maximum height parameters are proposed for the BESS infrastructure:

- 33kV substation – 3.26m
- BESS units – 2.896m
- BESS transformers – 2.896m
- 240,000L water tank – 3.04m
- Spare parts – 2.6m
- Switchgear – 2.6m
- AUX transformer – 2.111m
- CCTV – 4m

- 5.13 The Illustrative Proposed Site Layout (**Appendix 3**) presents one example of how the Site could be developed within the defined parameters. However, only the Parameter Plan has been considered for the purposes of the assessment.

Impact Assessment

- 5.14 This section describes the impact of the Proposed Development on the significance of the Holcombe Conservation Area and grade II listed Peel Monument and Fecit Farmhouse with attached stable and shippon. The assessments employ national advice published by Historic England as an appropriate framework for analysis, including GPA 2, GPA 3 and HEAN 12, which emphasise the importance of good design and response to local distinctiveness in the historic environment.
- 5.15 In accordance with the NPPF and Historic England guidance, the following judgements are based on the effect of the Proposed Development on the significance of the identified assets, rather than whether the development will be visible from them, although this is also a consideration. NPPG also clarifies that it *“is the degree of harm to the asset’s significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed.”*

Impact on the Holcombe Conservation Area

- 5.16 The significance of the Holcombe Conservation Area is principally derived from its character and appearance as a series of scattered hamlets comprising 17th, 18th and 19th century buildings of a consistent vernacular architectural style and materials set within a dramatic, steeply sloping, rural landscape context. The presence of open pasture, woodland and moorland within the conservation area and in views out from within its boundary reinforces its rural character and landscape context.
- 5.17 The Site is located approximately 3.25km to the east of the conservation area and is visible in connection with the asset both in long distance kinetic views towards the area from the east and in views out from within the conservation area boundary at higher ground along the eastern slope of Harcles Hill. The Site is considered to make a minor contribution to the significance of the conservation as an area of open pasture forming part of its wider landscape context, albeit to a very limited degree given the intervening distance and as one small part of a much wider area of landscape.
- 5.18 The Proposed Development would introduce a series of BESS units and associated equipment within the south eastern corner of the field within the Site which would be visible, albeit at a significant distance and to a limited extent, from within the conservation area boundary. This includes views east from atop Harcles Hill and in proximity to Peel Monument, whilst most views from lower elevations would continue to be filtered or obscured by the intervening land, woodland, boundary trees, hedges, buildings, walls and other structures. The Proposed Development would also be experienced in connection with the conservation area in long distance views from the east in proximity to the Site, such as on Rochdale Road, Bamford Road, Black Lane and the public footpaths traversing Scout and Knowl Moors.
- 5.19 Whilst the Proposed Development would be visible from parts of the conservation area, these views are wide ranging and panoramic in nature, taking in a highly varied and expansive landscape which includes extensive areas of developed land as well as scattered farmsteads and other buildings, areas of pasture and moorland. Whilst the

Site forms part of an area which is primarily characterised by pasture and moorland, views towards this area are strongly characterised by the built area of Ramsbottom in the foreground and Fletcher Bank Quarry beyond. The Proposed Development, where visible, would be experienced as an isolated group of structures in a similar manner to the existing buildings and structures which form part of the wider landscape context to the east of the conservation area. Taking account of the limited scale and height of the Proposed Development, the intervening distance and the open green space which would be retained within the Site, the overall character of views out from within the conservation area and their contribution to significance would be sustained.

- 5.20 The Proposed Development would also be experienced in long distance views towards the conservation area from the east. Taking account of the intervening distance, these views do not reveal the character and appearance of the conservation area and serve only to illustrate its geographic location, topographic form and wider rural context. Whilst the Proposed Development would introduce buildings and structures within the Site, these would be concentrated in the south eastern corner of the field with most of the remaining land continuing to be open. This, combined with the retention of the dry stone boundary walls to the perimeter of the field, would ensure that the historic use of the land as open pasture remains legible, also taking account of the prevailing rural character of the wider surrounding area. This in turn would sustain the limited contribution made by the Site to the significance of the conservation area as part of its rural landscape context.
- 5.21 Taking account of its siting and distance from the conservation area, the Proposed Development would have no effect on the significance which the conservation area derives from its landscape character, historic layout, 17th, 18th and 19th century buildings and their vernacular architectural character, details and materials. It would also have no effect on the significance derived from the ability to appreciate the historic development of the conservation area and its historical associations, such as with the Peel family.
- 5.22 For these reasons, it is concluded that the significance of the Holcombe Conservation Area would be sustained.

Impact on Peel Monument (grade II listed building)

- 5.23 Peel Monument is of significance as a distinctive and widely visible mid 19th century commemorative monument to former Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel. The listed building draws considerable significance from its landmark value, as well as the extensive panoramic views available from within its immediate context.
- 5.24 The Site is located approximately 4.1km to the east of Peel Monument, beyond the village of Ramsbottom, the M66 and A56, and Fletcher Bank Quarry. There is a degree of intervisibility between the listed building and the Site as a result of the elevated location of the listed building and its extensive viewshed. In spite of their intervisibility, the Site is not considered to contribute to the significance of the listed building.
- 5.25 The Proposed Development would be visible in connection with the listed building both in terms of views east from its immediate context and views west from within the area surrounding the Site. Views east from the listed building feature the settlements of Holcombe and Ramsbottom in the foreground, Fletcher Bank Quarry and, beyond this,

areas of pasture, scattered farmsteads and moorland extending to Scout Moor Wind Farm. The listed building derives significance from the extensive and panoramic nature of such views, rather than their composition, which is highly varied and includes developed areas as well as areas of open, rural landscape. The significance which the listed building derives from long distance views would therefore be sustained.

- 5.26 Views west from within the context of the Site reveal the extensive visual context of the listed building and its landmark quality but are widely replicated in the surrounding area. The Proposed Development would introduce BESS units and associated structures to these views and, depending on their final arrangement within the Site, has the potential to filter or obscure some of the long distance views of the listed building available from Rochdale Road. There is no historic connection between the Site and the listed building and these views are not unique or distinct. Similar views are replicated throughout the surrounding area and would be unaffected by the Proposed Development. Taking account of the extensive viewshed of the listed building and the limited scale and nature of the Proposed Development, the significance which the listed building derives from its wide ranging visibility and landmark quality would be sustained.
- 5.27 Furthermore, the significance which the listed building derives from its design, architectural character and materiality would be sustained by the Proposed Development, as would the significance derived from its historic interest as a commemorative monument for former Prime Minister and prominent local individual Sir Robert Peel. The Proposed Development would also sustain the ability to appreciate the designed view of the monument from the former site of Nuttall Hall and its spatial relationship with St Andrew's Church in Ramsbottom.
- 5.28 For these reasons, the significance of grade II listed Peel Monument would be sustained.

Impact on Fecit Farmhouse with attached stable and shippon (grade II listed building)

- 5.29 Fecit Farmhouse is of significance as an 18th century farmhouse with an adjoining former stable building and shippon which together reflect the local traditional vernacular and the extensive past and present use of the Irwell Valley for pastoral farming. The listed building is located within a well-defined domestic curtilage surrounded by a mixture of pastoral farmland and moorland which is reflective of its historic rural context and supports the ability to appreciate the significance of the listed building as a former farmstead.
- 5.30 The Site is located approximately 500 metres to the south of the listed building and as an area of open pasture reinforces the rural character of the landscape. To this limited degree, the Site facilitates an appreciation of the significance of the building, though there are no known historical connections between the listed building and the Site.
- 5.31 The Proposed Development would be visible from within the immediate context of the listed building and the surrounding area, including in views towards the listed building on Rochdale Road and in the background of views of the listed building from nearby public footpaths to the north (albeit these views are currently obscured by a recently planted row of evergreen trees) (**Figure 5.1**). Where visible in connection with the

listed building, the proposed BESS units and associated infrastructure would slightly diminish the rural character of the south eastern corner of the Site.

- 5.32 The extent to which this change would affect the historic rural landscape character of the setting of the listed building and the ability to appreciate its significance is limited by the small scale of the Proposed Development and its distance from the listed building. The retention of open green space within the Site and the existing dry stone boundary walls combined with the rural character of the wider landscape surrounding the Site would ensure that the past agricultural use of the Site as pasture remains legible. Furthermore, views of the listed building from within the immediate context of the Site that would be most affected are taken from such a distance that the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building is revealed only to a limited degree (refer to **Figure 4.7**). Conversely, views of the listed building from a shorter distance, such as from Fecit Lane (refer to **Figure 4.6**), which are more valuable in revealing the architectural and historic interest of the asset would be affected to a much lesser extent.

Figure 5.1: Existing (top) and Proposed (bottom) AVRs towards the Site from the north on the public footpath to the north east of Fecit Farmhouse (which is out of frame to the right of the image)



- 5.33 The most important aspects of the significance of the listed building are its historic interest as an 18th century farmstead comprising farmhouse, stable and shippin, and its vernacular architectural style, form, materials and detailing. These key aspects of significance would be unaffected by the Proposed Development. The ability of the listed building to illustrate the past agricultural use of the surrounding land, the function of the former farmstead and the extensive wider past and present use of the Irwell Valley for pastoral farming would also be sustained. There are no historic

functional connections between the listed building and the land within the Site, such that any significance derived from the past use of land within the historic ownership of the listed building would also be sustained.

- 5.34 For these reasons, there would be a limited degree of harm to the significance of the listed building as a result of change within its setting. This is solely the result of the change in character of an area of open pasture within the Site which supports the ability to appreciate the significance of grade II listed Fecit Farmhouse and attached stable and shippon to a limited degree. The level of harm is concluded to be less than substantial and at the lowest end of that scale.

Statutory Duties and the NPPF

- 5.35 Based on our above assessment of the identified heritage assets with the potential to be affected by the Proposed Development, it is concluded that the significance of the Holcombe Conservation Area and grade II listed Peel Monument would be sustained. Therefore, in respect of these assets, the Proposed Development would meet the objectives of Paragraphs 210, 212 and 219 of the NPPF and the requirements of s.66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 can be satisfied if RBC grants planning permission.

- 5.36 In respect of grade II listed Fecit Farmhouse with attached stable and shippon, it is concluded that a very limited degree of harm would be caused to significance as a result of change within its setting. The level of harm is concluded to be 'less than substantial' in NPPF terms and is at the lowest end of that scale. Accordingly, NPPF Paragraph 215 is engaged which states the following:

"Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use."

- 5.37 The NPPF is also clear that in applying 'great weight' to the conservation of heritage assets, the more important the asset the greater the weight should be, irrespective of the level of harm.
- 5.38 NPPG confirms that public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives as described in Paragraph 8 of the NPPF.
- 5.39 A review of the public benefits of the Proposed Development and the balancing of identified heritage harm with those public benefits as required by Paragraph 215 of the NPPF is undertaken in the accompanying Planning Statement prepared by Turley, having regard to the considerable importance and weight to be given to the statutory duty.¹⁰

¹⁰ s.66(1) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Local Planning Policy

- 5.40 In accordance with Strategic Policy ENV2 of the Rossendale Local Plan, this Statement provides a description of the significance of the heritage assets with potential to be affected by the Proposed Development and an assessment of its potential impact. In respect of the Holcombe Conservation Area and grade II listed Peel Monument, the significance of the heritage assets would be sustained and the requirements of Strategic Policy ENV2 are satisfied. The significance of grade II listed Fecit Farmhouse with attached stable and shippon would be affected, resulting in less than substantial harm which should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals in accordance with the NPPF.

6. Summary and Conclusions

- 6.1 This Heritage Statement (the 'Statement') is prepared by Turley Heritage on behalf of Cubico UK Developments Limited (the 'applicant') in connection with an application for full planning permission for a Battery Energy Storage System ('BESS') (the 'Proposed Development') at land adjacent to Rochdale Road and Bamford Road, Turn Village, Rossendale (the 'Site').
- 6.2 The Site contains no built heritage assets and does not form part of an area based heritage designation. There are a number of designated heritage assets located outside of the Site boundary with potential for their significance to be affected by the Proposed Development. These are:
- Holcombe Conservation Area
 - Peel Monument (grade II listed building)
 - Fecit Farmhouse with attached stable and shippon (grade II listed building)
- 6.3 In determining the full planning application, RBC has a statutory duty under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the special interest and setting of listed buildings.¹¹ Case law has established that 'considerable importance and weight' should be given to this statutory duty.
- 6.4 A review of the history and development of the Site and surrounding area has been undertaken in Section 2 and the significance and setting of the heritage assets with potential to be affected by the Proposed Development has been described in Section 4. In its current form, the Site contributes to the significance of the Holcombe Conservation Area and grade II listed Fecit Farmhouse with attached stable and shippon to a very minor degree as part of their historic rural setting. It does not contribute to the significance of grade II listed Peel Monument.
- 6.5 Based on our assessment of heritage assets with the potential to be affected by the Proposed Development, it is concluded that the significance of the Holcombe Conservation Area and grade II listed Peel Monument would be sustained. Therefore, in respect of these assets, the Proposed Development would meet the objectives of Paragraphs 210, 212 and 219 of the NPPF and the requirements of s.66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 can be satisfied if RBC grants planning permission.
- 6.6 In respect of grade II listed Fecit Farmhouse with attached stable and shippon, it is concluded that a very limited degree of harm would be caused to significance as a result of change within its setting. The level of harm is concluded to be 'less than substantial' in NPPF terms and is at the lowest end of that scale. Accordingly, NPPF Paragraph 215 is engaged which states the following:

¹¹ s66(1) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”

- 6.7 A review of the public benefits of the Proposed Development and the balancing of identified heritage harm with those public benefits as required by Paragraph 215 of the NPPF is undertaken in the accompanying Planning Statement prepared by Turley, having regard to the considerable importance and weight to be given to the statutory duty.¹²

¹² s.66(1) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Appendix 1: Heritage Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance

Legislation

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

In determining applications for planning permission affecting the setting of statutory listed buildings, the following duty is placed on the decision maker:

“s.66 (1) In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”

Case law has confirmed that Parliament’s intention in enacting section 66(1) was that decision makers should give *“considerable importance and weight”* to the desirability of preserving the special interest and setting of listed buildings, where *“preserve”* means to *“to do no harm”*. The presumption is therefore that development proposals should not give rise to harm to the special interest of a listed building. This duty must be borne in mind strongly when considering cases where harm may be considered to accrue, and then the balancing of such harm against public benefits as required by national planning policy.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024)

The National Planning Policy Framework provides a statement of Government planning policies with regard to the protection of all heritage assets. One of the core planning principles of the NPPF is that planning should:

“conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.”

Chapter 16 outlines the Government’s guidance regarding conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Paragraph 207 outlines the information required to support planning applications affecting heritage assets, stating that applicants should provide a description of the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset’s importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

Paragraph 210 states that with regard to determining planning applications planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of the heritage assets, and putting them into viable uses consistent with their conservation, as well as the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 212 confirms that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. It is also confirmed that significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Any harm to, or loss, of significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.

Paragraph 213 confirms that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

Paragraph 214 states that where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

1. the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
2. no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
3. conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
4. the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

Paragraph 215 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Paragraph 219 states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of a heritage asset should be treated favourably.

National Guidance

National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (2024)

Whilst not planning policy, Planning Practice Guidance provides a clear indication of the Government's approach to the application of national policy contained in the NPPF. Where there is conflict between the guidance in PPG and earlier documents, PPG will take precedence.

Historic England: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment (2015)

GPA Note 2 provides information to assist in implementing historic environment policy in the Framework and the related guidance given in PPG. These include; assessing the significance of heritage assets, using appropriate expertise, historic environment records, recording and furthering understanding, neglect and unauthorised works, marketing and design and distinctiveness.

Guidance: Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition) (December 2017) 'The Setting of Heritage Assets'

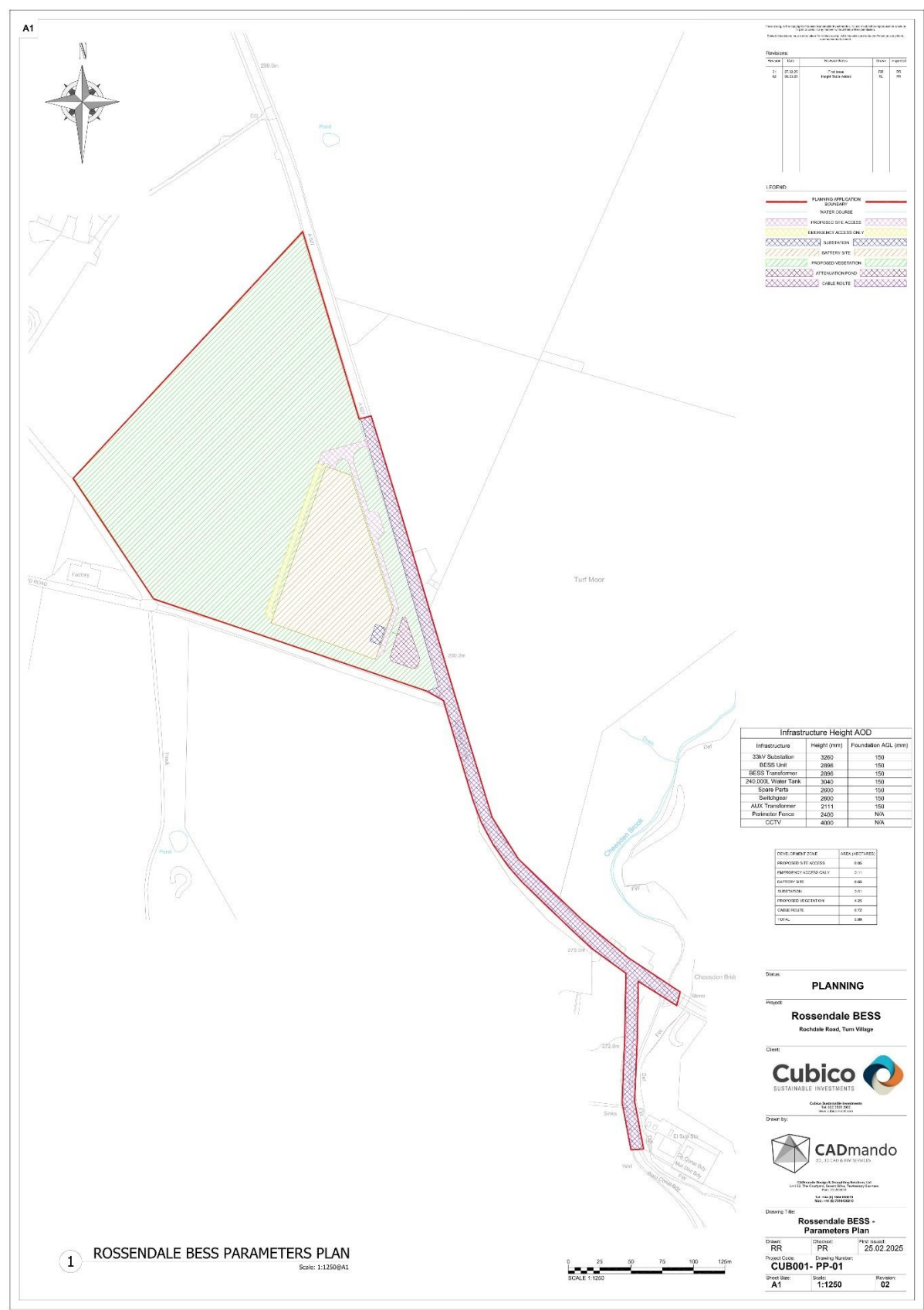
Historic England has recently published revised guidance relating to the setting and views of heritage assets. The document gives general advice on understanding setting and how it may contribute to the significance of heritage assets. It also provides advice on how views play a part in setting. It suggests a staged approach to taking decisions on the level of the contribution which setting and related views make to the significance of heritage assets.

Local Policy and Guidance

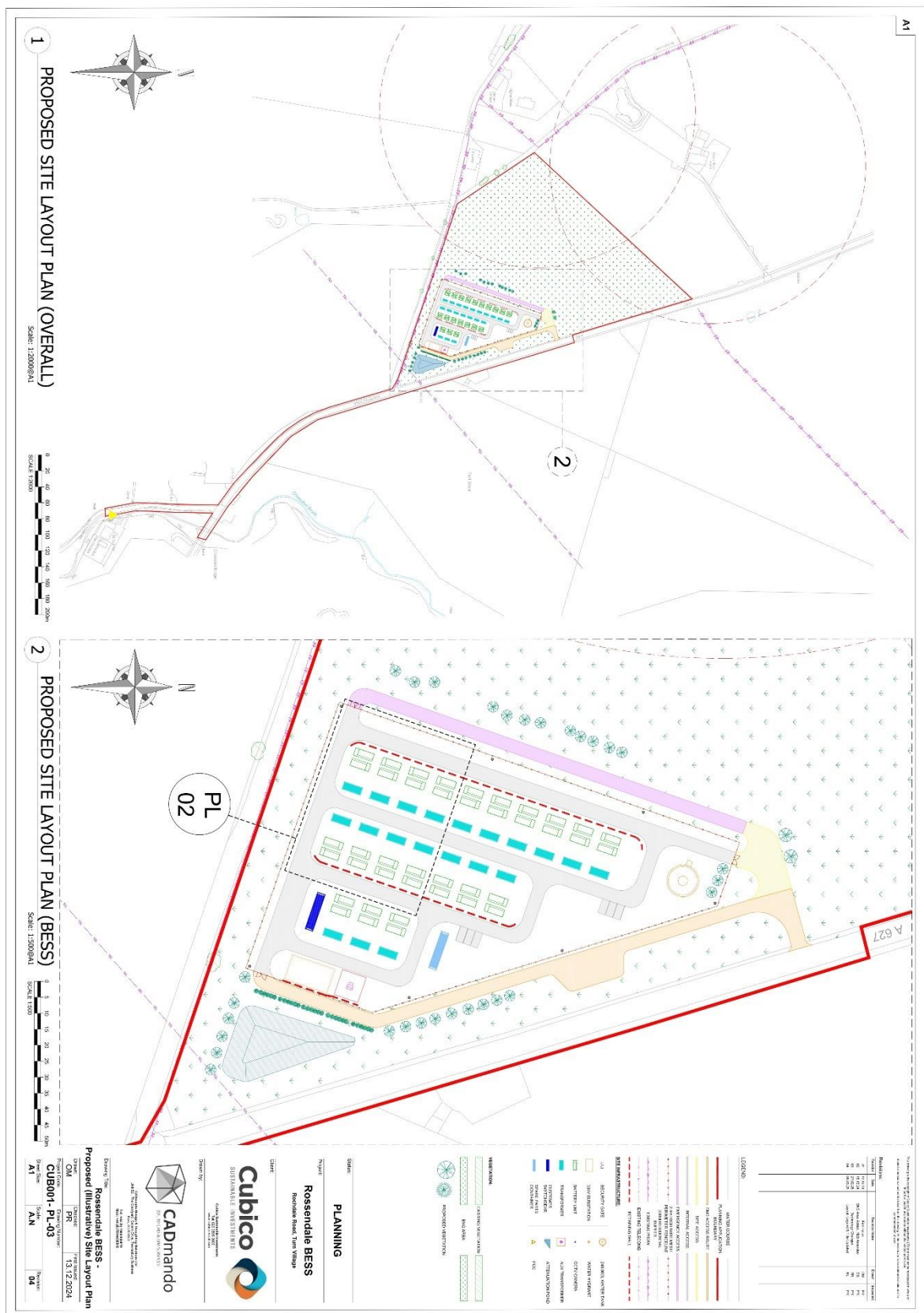
Rossendale Local Plan 2019 to 2036 (2021)

The Rossendale Local Plan 2019 to 2036 was adopted by RBC in December 2021. Strategic Policy ENV2 of the Local Plan concerns the historic environment and reinforces the requirements of national planning policy, stating that RBC will support proposals which conserve, or where appropriate, enhance the historic environment of Rossendale. Proposals affecting a designated heritage asset should conserve those elements which contribute to its significance.

Appendix 2: Proposed Parameter Plan



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