



Fastned UK Ltd

Electric Vehicle Charging Station, Balhaldie, Dunblane

Planning, Design and Access Statement

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RSK GENERAL NOTES

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Planning, Design and Access Statement

Client: Fastned UK Ltd

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Date: 20 March 2024

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1 INTRODUCTION

This Planning, Design and Access Statement (PDAS) has been prepared in support of the application for an Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Station to be installed within a previously owned Subway break spot, located on the A9 in Scotland between Perth and the M80/M9 in the village of Balhaldie (Grid Reference (GR): NN 81389 05405) by Fastned UK Ltd ('the Applicant').

The EV Charging Station will provide 10no. EV charging bays, comprising rapid charging facilities for up to 10no. vehicles being deployed simultaneously (hereafter referred to as the 'proposed development'). 21 existing parking spaces will be removed, and in their place, 10 EV charging bays will be installed within the planning red line boundary. The existing building at the front of the site, which was previously Subway, will be renovated back into a cafe which will be subleased to the tenant. A full list of the proposed development components is supplied in **section 2** below.

The proposed development requires planning permission under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019) (hereafter 'the Act').

This PDAS provides a description of the proposed development and assesses it in the context of the national and local planning policy. The PDAS should be read in conjunction with the drawings prepared to national and local validation requirements, as well as the planning application forms (ePlanning.scot ref. **PP-100638443**).

1.1 Project Need

Fastned's mission is to give freedom to electric drivers and accelerate the transition to sustainable mobility. A core aim is to provide the best user experience for fast charging (400kW+) for all EVs on primary routes, to create a network of stations which will unlock cross-country, regional, and local journeys. Fastned envisage 1000 fast charging stations at prime locations across the UK and Europe, where EVs can charge with 100% renewable energy. For Fastned, freedom incorporates the best possible customer experience for EV drivers - an experience that is safe, intuitive and consistently reliable, and one that we have developed through several iterations over the previous 10 years. In Europe, particularly in the Netherlands, where 80 percent of Fastned's 300+ stations are located, the Fastned name and wings motif have come to represent industry-leading and effortless charging.

Fastned have recently been awarded the Best EV charging network for the second consecutive year by Zapmap who detailed their reasons here: <https://www.zap-map.com/news/best-en-route-charging-networks-2023-24>.

The planning policy context summarised in **section 4** of this document details the policy background as to why it is essential to rapidly develop renewable energy and EV charging



infrastructure if we are to deliver on the Government objective for almost every car to be a zero-emission vehicle by 2050. Indeed, The Automated and Electric Vehicles Act 2018 (as amended) seeks to improve the network of EV charging points to this aim and has geared the national and local planning policy towards the provision of this network.

A key aspect currently inhibiting the mass adoption of EVs in the UK is the availability of reliable charging infrastructure. The phrase of 'range anxiety' has long been used, caused by the possibility of not completing a journey due to lack of charge, but this is now coupling with 'charger anxiety' due to not knowing when or where a charger will be found. To enable longer journeys with batteries of limited (but growing) capacity it will be important to have a network of facilities along major routes. Fast-charging facilities on main routes with high traffic numbers require minimal dwell time and increased utilisation of chargers providing users with short mid-journey stops.

2 PROJECT AND SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Site Description and Access

The site of the proposed development (hereafter referred to as the ‘site’) is located on the A9 in Scotland between Perth and the M80/M9 in the village of Balhaldie, under the jurisdiction of Perth and Kinross Council. The site is to be installed within a previously owned Subway break spot in the proximity of A9 Dunblane, Scotland, FK15 0JE.

The proposed development would sit at the northwestern part of the car park (GR: NN 81389 05405) which is accessed by car and pedestrians via the existing entrance off A9 slip road, leading to the wider car park.

The total site area is approximately 2642 sqm (0.26 ha).

A site location plan is shown below in **Figure 2.1** (courtesy of Fastned UK Ltd.).

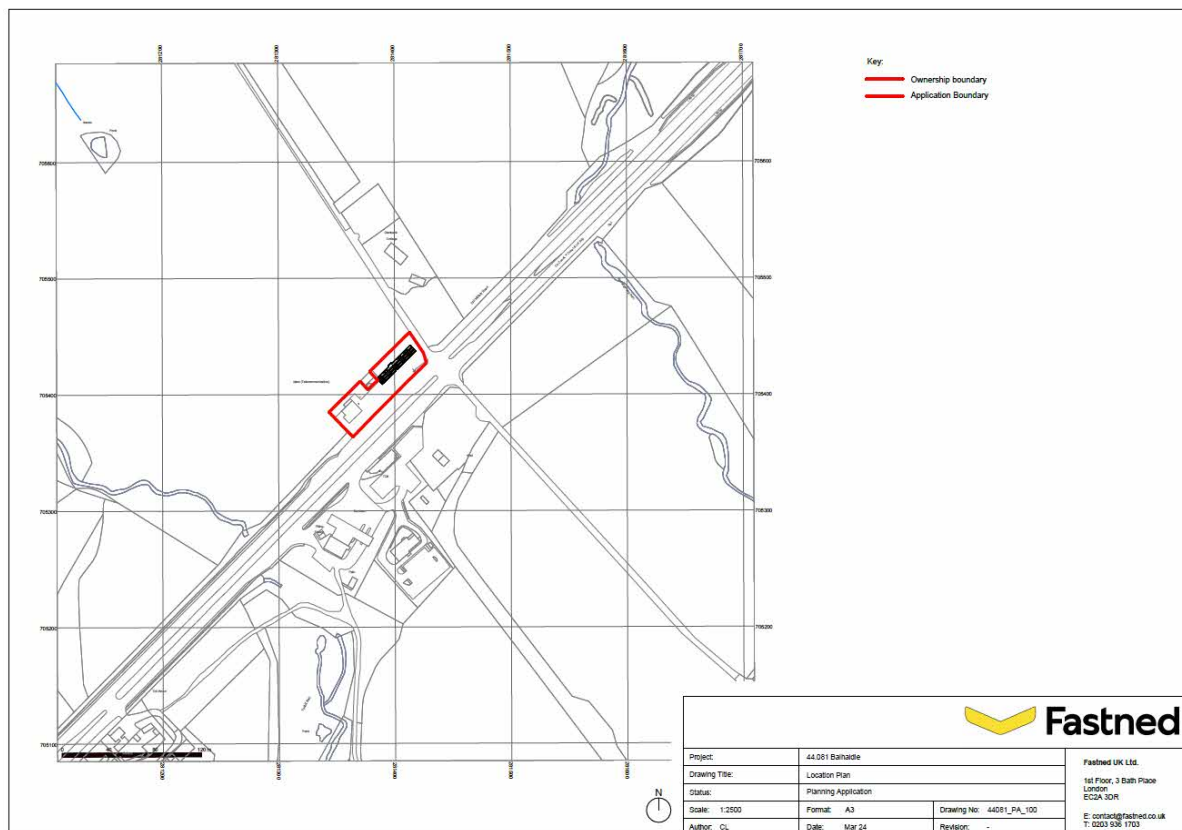


Figure 2.1 Site Location Plan

The site was previously a Subway break spot, which now sits vacant and the car park is not in use. The immediate site surrounds are comprised primarily of the car park, which forms the northwest and southeast borders of the site. The southwestern border of the site stands the existing break

stop structure, earmarked for conversion into a café. Mature trees and a telecommunications mast screen the site's northwest and northeast perimeters.

The wider surroundings, beyond the trees and to the southwest of the site, lies agricultural land bordered by the local highway network (A9) to the southwest. Further to the south of the site, beyond the A9, consists of an existing lay-by services including; Starbucks and Shell garage Given the proximity of the A9 to the site, a Transport Statement was conducted, with detailed findings presented in subsequent sections of the PDAS. Moreover, approximately 100 m north of the site, screened by trees, is the nearest residential property.

There are no statutory designated sites of ecological or geological importance adjacent to or within the immediate surroundings the site. The closest site of ecological importance is Quoigs Meadow Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) 1.5 km east of the site. While the development site initially comprises a car park, the proposed development encroaches onto grassy terrain and near mature trees. Consequently, it was deemed necessary to conduct additional evaluation, leading to the completion of both a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) and an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA). The results of this assessment are provided in later sections of this PDAS.

There are no Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens or Listed Buildings within 500 m of the site. The nearest Listed Buildings is 1.9 km west of the site: Category B Garden House, Glassingal. The closest Scheduled Monument 'Loch Thom-Overton' water cut, is located approximately 1.9 km southwest of the site.

As per assessments by the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) and Future Flood Maps, the site falls completely outside areas prone to river or surface water flooding. The site is stated to have 'no specific risk' which means there is no specific likelihood of river or surface water flooding identified for this area but there could still be localised effects from flooding in some places. The nearest main river watercourse is located 750 m north of the site (Allan Water).

2.1.1 Access

The A9, which runs to the south-east of the site, is managed by Transport Scotland and provides a connection between the A9 / M9 roundabout at Stirling in the south and Perth and beyond to the north. It is a dual carriageway with two lanes in both directions and subjected to a 70 mph (national speed limit). There are right turn refuge lanes immediately north of the site to accommodate north and southbound right turning traffic entering the private accesses either side (by car and pedestrians).

The proposed development will preserve this existing access, which will also serve the other surrounding facility, the planned renovated café.

2.2 Proposed Development Overview

The proposed development is for an EV Charging Station and associated ancillary works. The Charging Station is modelled after similar developments in Europe and the UK and is designed to allow EVs to receive a rapid charge (approximately 15-20 minutes) before continuing their onward journey. The proposal entails 4no. rapid charge units serving 8no. charging bays and associated electrical substation.

The proposed development is being implemented by Fastned UK Ltd; the UK subsidiary of the Netherlands based Fastned BV, a European developer and operator of EV rapid charging stations. Fastned currently operates in excess of 300 multi-charger rapid charging stations in the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland and France. The proposed development at the application site is based upon the designs and technology used in these existing facilities and, together with a number of similar projects currently proposed by Fastned, will be among the first of its kind in the UK.

2.2.1 Design and Space Requirements

The proposed development incorporates stylised sustainably sourced timber 'tree' structures with a natural finish and lightweight glazed canopies, which allow light transmission and shelter from the elements whilst charging. The concept of the tree-like structure has been designed with sensitivity to balance a natural aesthetic with the Fastned branding, causing drivers to associate the yellow-trimmed canopies with fast charging. The structures themselves are modular units and have flexibility to be deployed on multiple topographies and in different contexts. The canopies are prefabricated at set dimensions, which enable efficient engineering, manufacturing, and installation processes. This is important to achieve Fastned's mission quickly enough for charging infrastructure not to become a bottleneck for the mass uptake of EVs. The canopy silhouette has become uniquely distinguishable as Fastned fast charging.

The technical area includes Glass Reinforced Plastic (GRP) plant enclosures for the transformer and low voltage switchgear. There is no accompanying habitable space or payment kiosk due to the electronic nature of payment directly at chargers. This has made possible a lean, design, focussed on delivering the essentials of high power charging in a safe and inclusive environment.

Fastned's internal space standards have been developed over the previous decade of building similar stations in six countries including the UK and cater for all cars and users. To cater for all types of cars and users, Fastned charging bays are a minimum of 3 m wide. This is wider than the 2.4 or 2.5 m bays commonly used within car parks.

2.2.2 Safety and Security

Customer security and comfort are integral design parameters. Fastned believe EV drivers are just as important as petrol/diesel drivers, and so should have shelter from the elements and lighting to provide a visibly safe space to operate in, rather than be tucked away in an exposed corner of a car park with inadequate lighting as is so often the case. A perceived lack of security and safety at existing UK charge points has recently led to the creation of an independent rating and certification body¹ that, with the backing of the head of the AA², aims to drive a sea-change in the quality of charging provision. It will score facilities on a number of metrics, in particular whether a site has lighting, CCTV, a canopy, maintenance, and 24/7 customer support. Common downfalls of charging areas which we design to avoid have been well noted by Heycar.³

2.2.3 Visual Impact and Wayfinding

Visual identification from afar is extremely important to help to diminish the feeling of ‘range anxiety’, where drivers need to charge but do not know when or where they might see the next charging point. On major roads signage and identification from afar becomes even more important as vehicle speeds are higher and more planning is required to navigate to the charging points, a very different experience to driving in slower speed residential areas.

For efficient wayfinding as well as safety, having a visual sight-line to the charging station itself is beneficial. In-car navigation systems and apps are ultimately no match for physical wayfinding once users are in close proximity to the destination. For the newer crop of more affordable cars entering the market, drivers may still have to rely on their phones and visual identification. Furthermore, on the safety aspect of close-range navigation, driving towards a visual target leaves less room for driver error than when following digital instructions, and means EV drivers looking for the charging station do not risk clogging up car parks as they visually scan the vicinity for invisible chargers.

2.2.4 Proposed Infrastructure

The proposed development will be located within the northwestern boundary of the car park, within Balhaldie, around 6.8 km northeast of Dunblane and around 16.4 km north of Stirling. The site layout would comprise 10no. charging bays, each 3.2 m wide and 5.0 m long; and 1no. fully accessible charging bay (hatched marking on either side). This is supported by a substation (3.1 m x 3.2 m respectively) at the northernmost portion of the site and a Low Voltage (LV) switchboard (0.8 m x 3.5 m respectively), located behind the charging bays along the northwestern border. Five charging units will be installed to support two bays simultaneously, each standing 1.94 m in height,

¹ <http://www.chargesafe.co.uk/>

² <https://www.chargesafe.uk/who-what-why>

³ <https://heycar.co.uk/blog/ev-charging-safety>

0.84 m wide and 0.83 m in length as shown on drawing no. 44081_PA_301 provided, replicated as **Figure 2.2** below.

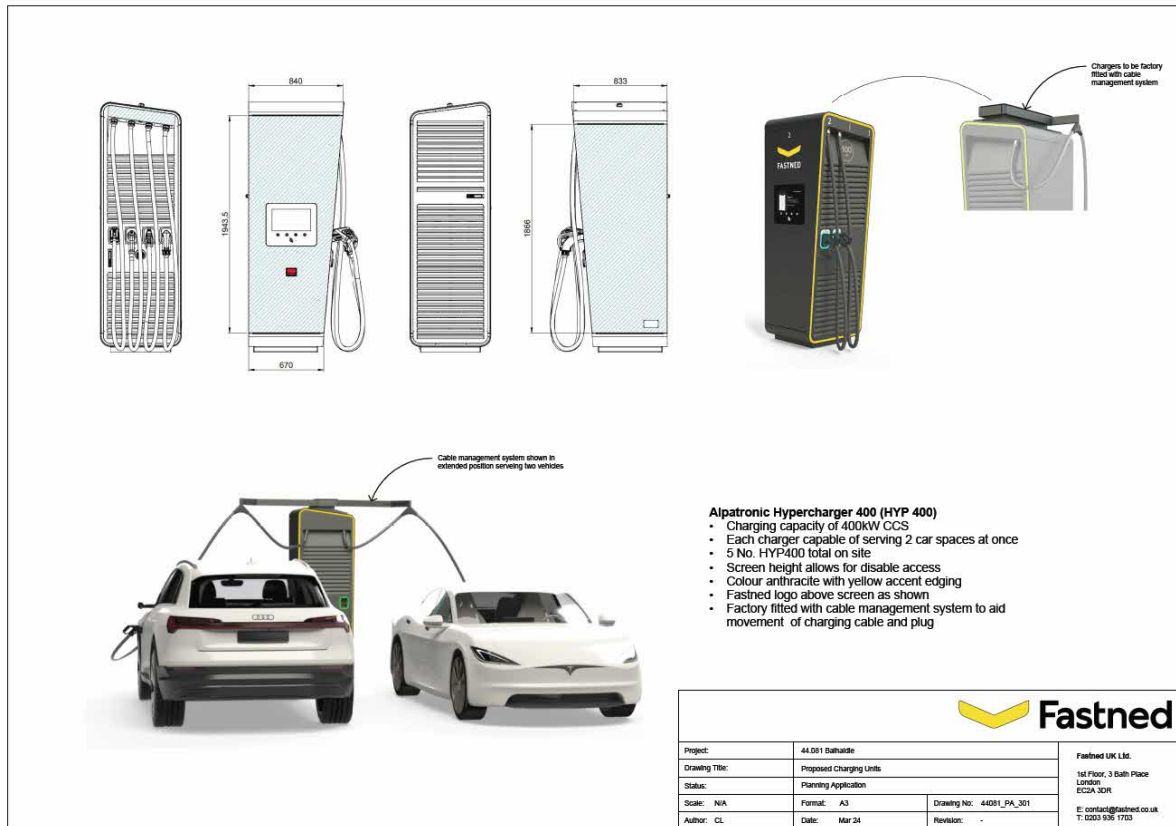


Figure 2.2 Charger Specification

Dimensions of the proposed development are provided within drawing no. 44081_PA_103 and 44081_PA_200 (also provided as **Figure 2.3** and **Figure 2.4** below).

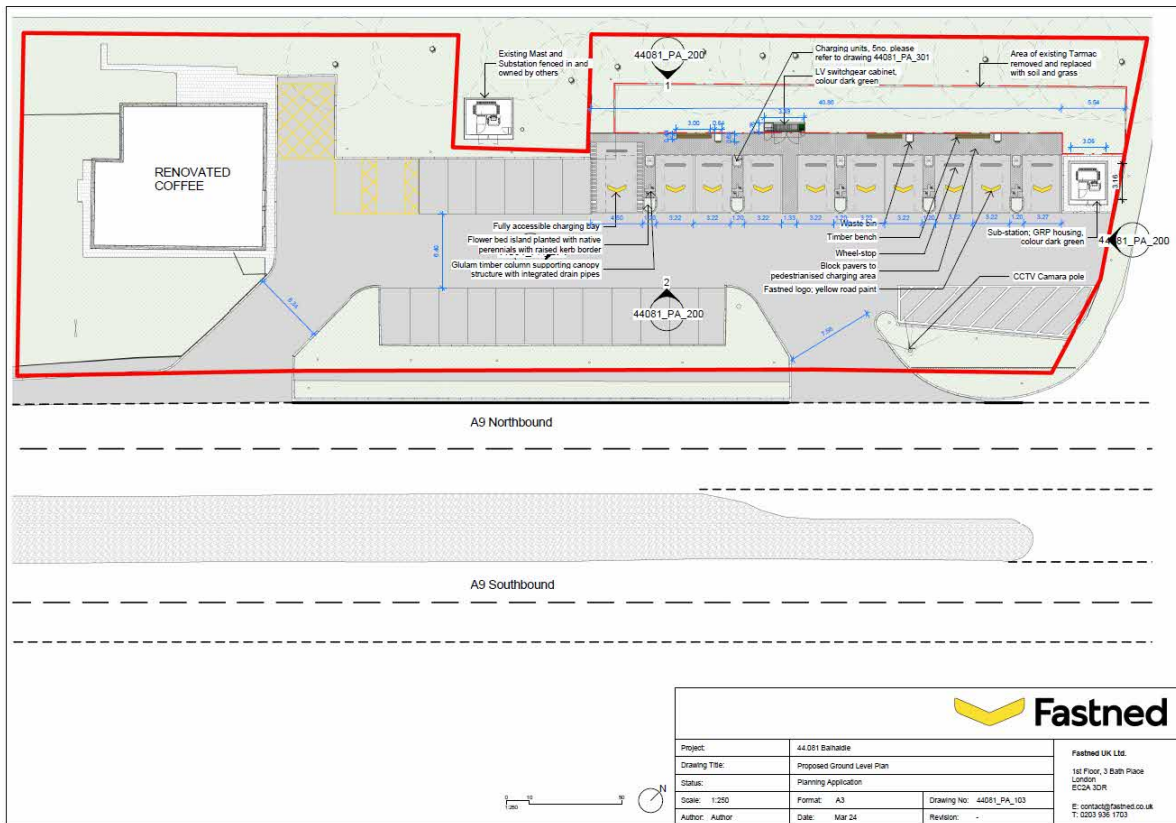


Figure 2.3 Proposed Ground Level Plan

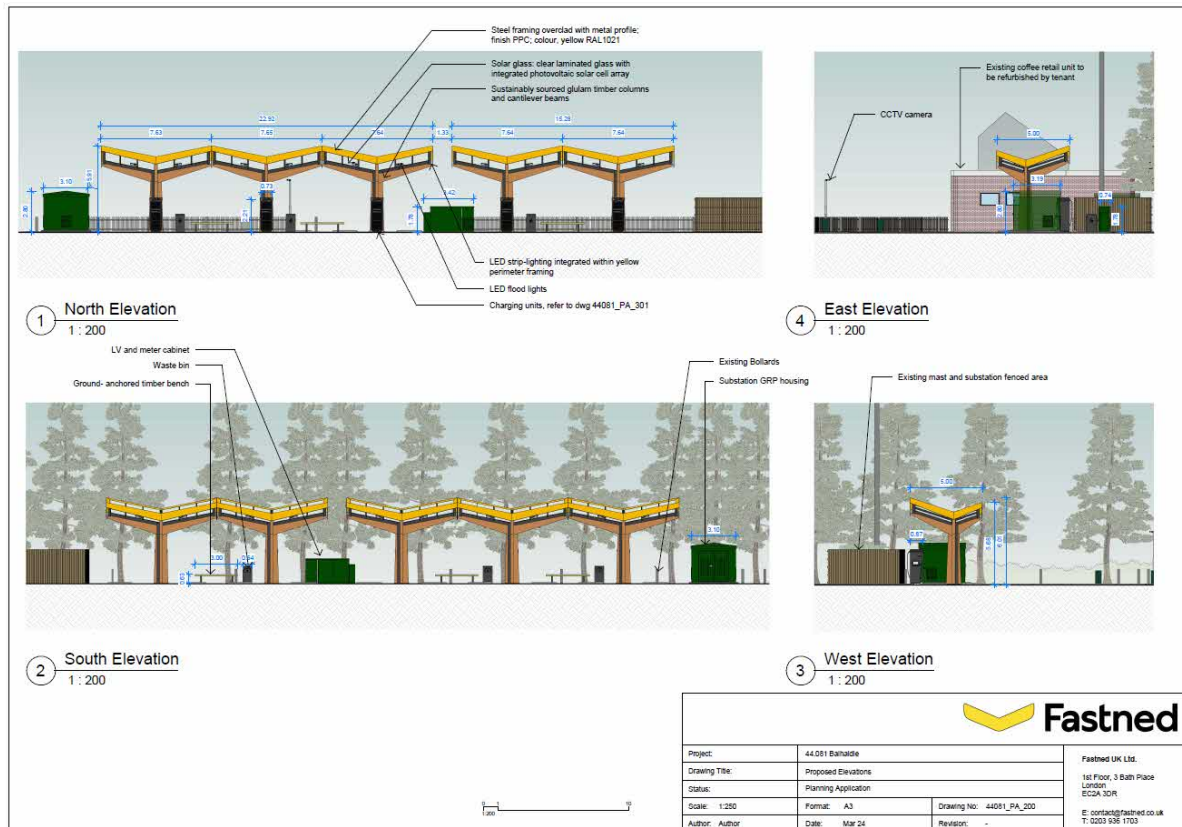


Figure 2.4 Proposed Elevations

The proposed infrastructure features two pre-fabricated photovoltaic (PV) solar canopies comprised in one duo and one triple. Each canopy is 7.6 m long, 6.0 m high and 5.0 m wide, making the duo canopy structure 15.3 m long and the triple canopy structure 22.9 m long in total as shown on drawing no. 44081_PA_104 (**Figure 2.5** below). This will produce low-carbon, renewable energy for use by the Charging Station as well as providing shelter for users.

The proposed solar canopies will comprise glulam timber columns and cantilever beams holding up glazed metal-framed canopies, with 'Fastned Yellow' cladding to the canopy frames and integrated perimeter strip lighting, allowing ready identification of the Charging Station to passing drivers.

On the underside of the canopies, the charging points will be equipped with LED (light-emitting diode) floodlights mounted to the underside of the canopies to ensure night-time visibility and safety for customers. These lights will be on timed motion sensors and capable of being dimmed remotely to ensure that any impact on local amenity is negligible.

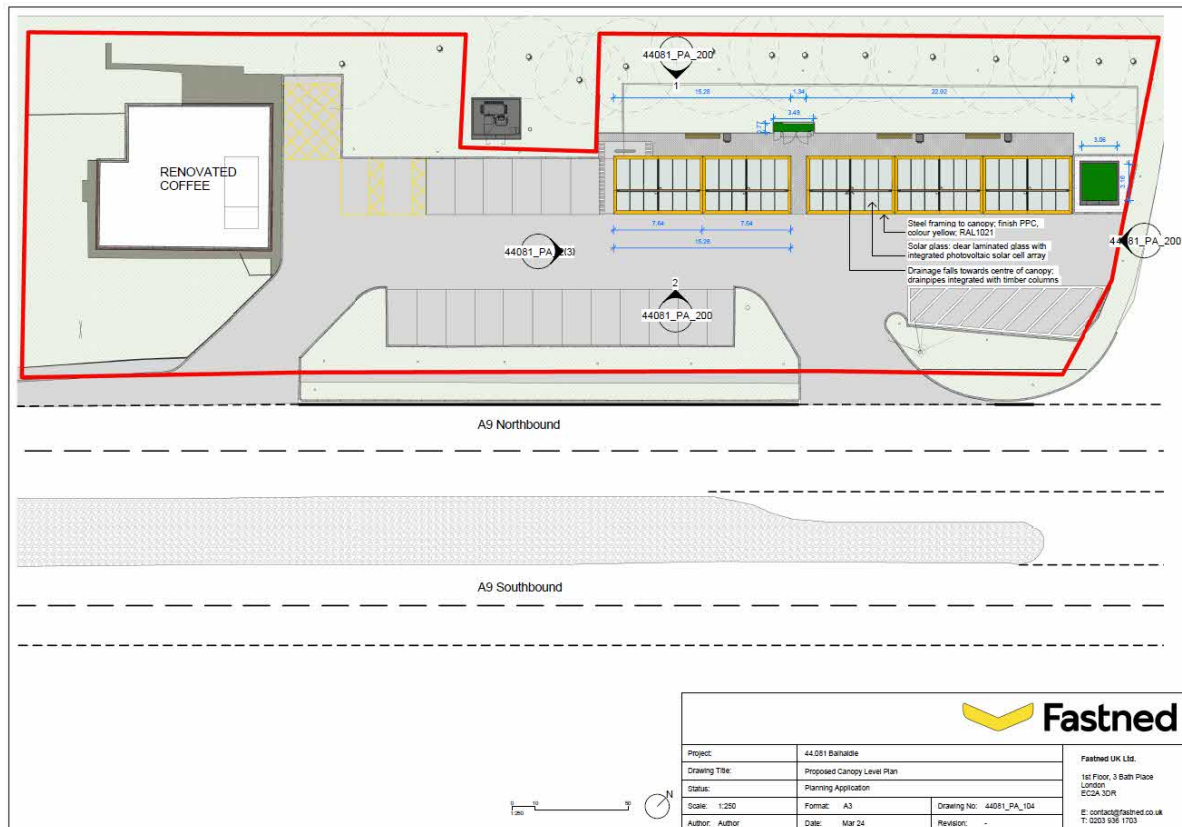


Figure 2.5 Proposed Canopy Level Plan

2.2.5 Substation

The proposed development will require construction of a new electricity substation and associated LV switchboard on land immediately north of the proposed EV Charging Station, as shown in the site layout provided as drawing no. 44081_PA_103 (**Figure 2.3** above).

2.2.6 Branding

The proposed development is additionally inclusive of branding, ensuring visibility to customers.

Each of the bays will feature a Fastned symbol painted onto the floor, which will be approximately 2m in length and 0.63m in width. The charging infrastructure will also be branded with the Fastned logo, as shown on drawing nos. 44081_PA_301 and 44081_PA_103 (**Figure 2.2** and **Figure 2.3** above).

2.2.7 Construction Details

The proposed construction materials are as shown on application drawing no. 44081_PA_103 and elevation drawing no. 44081_PA_200. The main built element of the proposed development will be the solar canopies that cover the charging area (see **Figure 2.4** above). This will consist of engineered laminated timber and stainless-steel frame with a clear tempered and laminated glass

roof with inset solar panels. The edge of the frame will be painted yellow to match the Fastned branding.

The substation will consist of a GRP enclosure as shown in application drawing no. 44081_PA_103.

2.2.8 Development Programme

The proposed development will take place in three phases: Phase 1, Preparation of groundwork and infrastructure; Phase 2, Assembly; and Phase 3, Finishing infrastructure. These have been outlined as the following:

Phase 1: Preparation, groundwork, infrastructure

The first phase will involve preparations by the construction contractor, such as fencing the site and implementing any access improvement measures necessary to allow safe access and egress from the public highway.

The initial construction activities will entail:

- Ground improvement measures, exact methods to be confirmed subject to ground investigation but typically requiring the removal of existing ground layer and filling the area partly with a base layer of clean construction sand or aggregate (this would be for the charger island footprint only, or for the whole area if it is to be repaved);
- Localised ground improvement and stabilisation, if required, to provide a suitable foundation for the proposed development and to remove any unsuitable fill materials;
- Installing and connecting the metering cabinet including all switchgear and electricity meter to the feeder pillar installed and commissioned by the Distribution Network Operator (DNO);
- Preparation of any necessary drainage measures (not likely to be required);
- Preparation for electric cables by installing cable ducts; and,
- Finishing the groundworks by filling up the remaining area with a layer of base course.

Project risks in this phase are related to pre-existing underground infrastructure and the impact that excavation works could have on those. "Check Before You Dig" processes will be carried out in the preparation phase and this information will be considered when carrying out the detailed design of the Charging Station.

Phase 2: Assembly

The proposed development involves a PV solar canopy structure to shelter the charging areas and provide recognition of the site function to passing drivers and the wider public.

Each canopy structure will be prefabricated to Fastned specifications off-site and delivered to the site by road. It will then be assembled and erected by crane.

A solar panel roof will then be installed on top of the canopy. This activity is carried out using an aerial working platform to allow the crew to safely work at heights while assembling the roof, which will be prefabricated off-site ready for installation.

In parallel to the installation of the solar roof, the electrician will commence works with putting cables through the cable ducts and installing the CCTV systems, 4G antennas, Wi-Fi antennas, etc. Additionally, the lights under the canopy will be installed and the solar power system connected and commissioned.

The installation of the charging points will be executed by the main contractor. After installation the electrical contractor, will configure the chargers on location – if all tests are successful, the rapid charger will be operational and ready for use.

Experience of Fastned's other sites in the UK and Europe indicate that construction of the canopy, including installation of the solar panels will take approximately 1-2 weeks to complete.

Phase 3: Finishing infrastructure

In the final phase, the remaining aspects of the Charging Station are installed, commissioned and tested prior to opening. More specifically, the Charging Station is completed with the presence of all suppliers on site, with the contractor tasked with keeping overview and register of all parties present and that all necessary security measures are being complied with.

Activities completed at this stage involve:

- Laying of pavement (if necessary);
- Completion of the technical installations;
- Commissioning of the CCTV system (if necessary);
- Installation of the signage and traffic signs;
- Commissioning of the illumination system;
- Commissioning of the chargers;
- Installing, configuring, and commissioning the 4G and Wi-Fi network;
- Finishing surrounding grounds; and,
- Connecting to and configuring the station to Fastned's systems.

On successful completion of all testing, the Charging Station is declared operational and is handed over to the network operations team for operation.

2.2.9 Visualisations

Visualisations of the envisaged appearance of the completed development are provided below in **Figures 2.6** and **Figure 2.7**.



Figure 2.6 Visualisations of the envisaged appearance of the completed development. A recently completed charging station of a similar design in Melksham, UK.



Figure 2.7 A recently completed charging station at Ramac Way in Greenwich, London.

3 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

1.1 Introduction

A couple of technical assessments have been undertaken to support this application, including an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA), a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) Report and a Transport Statement. For the purpose of conciseness, these technical reports have not been duplicated in full here, but a summary of the key findings is presented in the following sections.

1.2 Arboriculture

Existing hard surfaces within the site will be resurfaced to facilitate the development, with some sections of hard standing present within the RPAs of retained trees being available for reinstatement as soft landscaped areas, and it is intended to utilise the existing access from the A9 for traffic circulation.

The proposed development will not require the removal of any trees within the site to facilitate its implementation, however it is recommended that the two dead category U trees (T6 & T14) are removed for safety reasons as they are within falling distance of the proposed development.

The proposed development will require localised excavations within the RPAs of five retained trees (T5, T8, T10, T11 and T12) to facilitate construction of the new canopies, transformer station, feeder pillars and associated cable runs. These works all occur within sections of the RPAs that are currently hard surfaced in areas where root development is likely to have been impaired by suboptimal growing conditions. It is considered that the potential for significant harm to occur to the retained trees from these operations is likely to be within tolerable limits subject to the adoption of some precautions in detailed design and adherence to appropriate working methodologies, under arboricultural supervision, at construction stage.

Overall, ADAS is satisfied that, providing the recommendations contained within this report are followed, the proposed development can be successfully achieved without significantly impacting the overall tree stock of the site and causing undue long-term harm to those trees identified for retention.

1.3 Ecology

1.3.1 Designated Sites

Internationally designated sites

SACs and SPAs are part of the 'national site network' and are afforded protection under the provisions of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the

'Habitats Regulations') or their equivalents in the devolved administrations (refer to Appendix A in the PEA report). These sites are designated as being of international importance for ecology and nature conservation. Furthermore, Ramsar sites are also of international importance, being wetlands that have been designated under the criteria of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands for containing representative, rare, or unique wetland types or for their importance in conserving biological diversity.

There are four internationally statutory designated sites within 10 km of the site boundary, these are the Kippenrait Glen SAC (4.9 km), South Tayside Goose Roosts SPA and Ramsar (4.9 km), Shelforkie Moss SAC (4.9 km) and River Teith SAC (5.7 km).

Based on the nature and scale of the proposed works, it is considered that the designated sites and their corresponding species will not experience significant impact. This is due to the absence of suitable habitat for the species within the survey area and lack of ecological connectivity to the designated sites. As a result, a habitat regulations appraisal (HRA) is therefore not considered necessary.

Nationally designated sites

Two designated sites are within 2 km of the site boundary: Quoigs SSSI (1.4 km) and Kippenrait Glen SSSI (4.9 km). Considering the distance and the lack of ecological connectivity of the proposed development to these designated sites, it is expected that there would be no impacts on these designated sites.

Non-statutory designated sites

There are three non-statutory sites and nine areas of ancient semi-natural woodland located within 2 km of the proposed site boundary: Kinbuck Muir LNC (632 m), Kinbuck LNC (1.5 km) and Black Hill LNC (1.9 km). Considering the lack of ecological connectivity to these designated sites, no impacts on them is predicted.

1.3.2 Habitats and Plants

Habitats

Neutral grassland, which is grass dominated, makes up a large portion of the habitats recorded within the survey area. Neutral grassland of this type is locally common and species-poor with limited value for wildlife. This habitat is widespread and very common throughout the lowlands of Scotland and the UK as a whole.

Due to the extent of neutral grassland along the carpark verge, it is likely that some of this habitat will be directly affected by the proposed EV charging bays. Where this habitat is directly affected,

the working width in this area should be kept at a minimum and this habitat should be re-instated following completion of works where possible.

As the hedgerow present is species-poor, it is not considered to be of high value and do not qualify as a priority habitat.

Plants

All of the plants found within the survey area are common, found elsewhere in the surrounding landscape and are listed as least concern on the GB red list (<https://sdgdata.gov.uk/15-5-1>).

1.3.3 Assessment for protected vertebrates

Habitats with the potential to support nesting birds, badgers and bats were recorded. The following section outlines recommendations for further surveys and mitigation.

Nesting Birds

Suitable habitat is present on site with swallow nests recorded on the building and the line of trees provides nesting opportunities.

Active bird nests are protected by law from destruction. It is therefore recommended that any work to building or trees on site is carried out outside of the nesting season (March – September, inclusive).

Should this not be possible then a nesting bird check should be completed by an experienced ecologist no more than 48 hours prior to works commencing. If active nests are found, then the nests must be protected by a species-specific buffer so that they remain undisturbed until all the young have fledged. A temporary pause of works may also be required in order to identify the species and monitor for any signs of disturbance, as different species have different tolerances to disturbance.

Badgers

No evidence of badger was found during the survey and there are minimal suitable habitats present within the survey area.

Although no badger signs were found during the survey and the site is considered to have low suitability for badger, it is advisable to conduct a pre-construction badger survey. This is because badgers are a mobile species and any work within a 30 m radius of a badger sett is considered disturbance and it is a punishable offence. Preconstruction surveys should be completed as close to the construction period as possible, and no more than three months before the start of works.

Bats

The building on site has been assessed as having negligible to low potential to support roosting bats. However, given that a potential root feature (PRF) was located, it is recommended as a precaution, that any works to the PRF are carried out under the supervision of a bat licensed ecologist, to prevent against accidental harm/disturbance occurring to bats.

The following measures are to be followed to prevent against accidental harm/disturbance occurring to bats and must be implemented on site by a bat licensed ecologist;

- Toolbox talk on bats given by on-site by ecologist;
- Soft strip protocol to be followed when working on the wooden structure on top of the roof which recorded a PRF;
- All contractors to be briefed on best practice methods and protocol in the event that a bat is located; and
- A full inspection of the PRF before works start.

When the PRF has been removed to the ecologist's satisfaction, then work may continue unsupervised. However, should a bat be encountered during remaining works, then all works should stop, and the ecologist consulted.

While it is unlikely that the site represents a foraging or commuting resource for bats, a sensitive lighting scheme should be maintained during the course of works to maintain dark commuting corridors, particularly along the southern site boundary.

Other species of principal importance

All excavation pits should be filled at the end of each day or otherwise covered over to prevent animals falling in and becoming entrapped (e.g., foxes). If this is not possible, adequate means of escape should be provided (i.e., a ramp or gently graded side walls or equivalent).

1.4 Transport

The accident history demonstrates that there is no accident problem in the immediate vicinity with excellent visibility to / from the accesses and junctions.

The proposed development is estimated to have capacity for 240 – 300 charges across a typical 12 hr day based on 25 - 30min dwell times, with the ability to provide additional stations in the future. The proposed capacity is deemed sufficient to accommodate the anticipated demand across the day, with the facilities primarily aimed at longer distance drivers. The proposed EV Station would not result in an unacceptable impact on the local highway network, with the facility contributing towards an improved network for charging electric cars.

2 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Introduction

This Chapter sets out the prevailing planning policy context within which the proposed development falls to be determined. In so doing, it sets out the basis of the planning policy rationale for the proposed development and has provided the context for guiding the evolution of the design.

Relevant policy considered in this section includes:

- National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) (February 2023); and
- Perth and Kinross Council Local Development Plan (Adopted Local Plan 2017-2027).

2.2 Policy Background

The Scottish Government is promoting the use of ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs), aiming to phase out the need for new petrol and diesel vehicles by 2032, ahead of the UK Government's 2040 Emissions Target. Data gathered by the Department for Transport (DfT) licensing suggests nearly 8,000 plug-in electric vehicles (EVS) have been licensed in Scotland by the end of the first quarter of 2018.

Amendments to the Climate Change Bill have been lodged to set a legally binding target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 at the latest with Scotland becoming carbon neutral by 2040. The existing targets proposed in the Bill were already world-leading. In response to calls from young people, scientists and businesses across the country, Scottish Ministers have adopted the advice of independent experts, the UK Climate Change Committee.

This means that in addition to the net-zero target for 2045, Scotland will reduce emissions by 70% by 2030 and 100% by 2045 – the most ambitious statutory targets in the world for these years. This will be driven by a significant increase in the uptake of ultra-low emission electric vehicles which will account for a significant proportion of overall emissions reduction.

The Switched on Scotland Action Plan (2017) sets out how Scotland is seeking to increase electric vehicle usage, including working alongside several partners to decrease cost, increase convenience and promote cultural change to ensure EVs are the preferred option over petrol and diesel cars and vans. Additionally, the Programme for Government 2017 – 2018 commits to a number of actions which aim to increase the use of low carbon and EVs throughout Scotland, such as those actions relating to tackling air pollution.

Additionally, the Scottish Government published a plan, through Transport Scotland, which seeks to put Scotland at the forefront of markets in Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles. The Scottish Government is providing over £30 million this financial year (2022) to accelerate the shift to zero

emission transport to expand the EV charging network and the broader zero emission transport sector in the short and medium term.

Scotland has one of the most comprehensive EV charging networks in Europe through the employment of ChargePlace Scotland (CPS). Since 2012, the Scottish Government has invested approximately £15 million into the CPS network, which has allowed more than 800 charging points to be installed throughout the country. Overall, they have provided over £85m through the Low Carbon Transport Loan (LCTL) to help people and businesses make the switch to ultra-low emission vehicles. With the intention to invest £120 million over the next five years to support the roll out of fully electric battery and hydrogen buses.

The Scottish Government has several grants and funds in place to promote the purchase and use of EVs. More specifically, Transport Scotland funds interest free loans through the LCTL. These offer drivers up to £35,000 to cover the cost of purchasing a new pure electric or plug-in hybrid vehicle or up to £10,000 to cover the cost of purchasing a new electric motorbike/ scooter. In alignment with the Switched on Scotland Action Plan (2017), the LCTL was increased from 2018 to 2019 from £8 million to £20 million. NPF4 provides detail on the strategy of supporting development in locations that allow walkable access to local amenities and are also accessible by cycling and public transport. Also, proposals will now need to demonstrate how they provide for and prioritise transport in line with the National Transport Strategy (NTS2) hierarchies.

Further grants are offered via Switched on Towns and Cities Challenge Fund, which is a competitive capital fund implemented by the Scottish Government to incentivise and promote EV uptake, and the Low Carbon Travel and Transport Challenge Fund (LCTT) which is a strategic intervention of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) that invests in low carbon transport and active travel hubs that support low carbon vehicle refuelling⁴.

2.3 National Planning Policy

2.3.1 National Planning Framework 4 (February 2023)

The Fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4), adopted by Scottish Ministers on 13th February 2023, now forms part of the statutory Development Plan. The adoption of the NPF4 means Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) and NPF3 have been superseded and Strategic Development Plans (SDP) and their associated Supplementary Guidance cease to have effect. The primacy of the Development Plan in determining planning applications is established by Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended). This provision requires decision makers to determine planning applications in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

⁴ <https://www.gov.scot/policies/renewable-and-low-carbon-energy/low-carbon-transport/#ev>

NPF4 sets out Scottish Government's long-term vision for development and investment in Scotland. The NPF4 spatially expresses the Scottish Government Economic Strategy and sets out the Government's national development plans and infrastructure investment plan. The Framework additionally identifies national developments and other strategically important development.

NPF4 proposes a continuation of recognising, in new national planning policy, the national importance of infrastructure to facilitate greater use of low carbon fuel options. NPF4 re-emphasises NPF3 and SPP goals, which set out an approach to planning and development that help to achieve a net zero, sustainable Scotland by 2045. Including; recovery and restoration projects, traffic and transport projects (with associated infrastructure) to strengthen resilience and decarbonise connectivity and support sustainable development.

2.4 Local Planning Policy

2.4.1 Perth and Kinross Local Development Plan 2 (Adopted November 2019)

The Statutory Development Plan for the Perth and Kinross Council Planning Authority Area comprises of the adopted National Planning Framework on 4 February 2023 (NPF4), the Strategic Development Plan (SDP) and the Perth and Kinross Local Development Plan 2, November 2019 (LDP2) and its supplementary guidance.

This sets out how the Council sees the Perth and Kinross LDP2 area developing over the next 10 years. It is the Council's statutory corporate document that guides all future development and use of the land. It acts as a catalyst for changes and improvement in the area and shapes the environment and economy of Perth and Kinross.

The Plan represents the Council's view on how the area should be developed from the plan's adoption to 2019, and beyond to 2036. The Plan contains a spatial strategy which explains the overall view of where development should go and the principles behind that. It identifies future development sites and the scale of development that is expected to be seen on each of the identified site. It also specifies what developers require to do when designing and delivering development, emphasising the need for masterplans, for all the major sites. The policies explain what uses are acceptable in different areas and set out the requirements for different types of development.

The following policies in **Table 4.1** are considered to be consistent with NPF4 and relevant to the consideration of this planning application.

Table 4.1 Policy Compliance

Policy	Proposal Compliance	Comment
<p>▪ Perth and Kinross Local Development Plan 2 (Adopted November 2019)</p>		
Policy 1: Placemaking	Complies	The proposed development will encourage the continued uptake of EVs, a sustainable, safe and efficient transport alternative, which in turn will reduce emissions on a local and national level.
Policy 14: Open Spaces Retention and Provision	Complies	The proposed development is to be located on hardstanding and will not result in any loss of open spaces, trees, bushes or hedgerows, and thus, any direct and indirect negative impacts upon biodiversity shall be minimal as the site presents low ecological value.
Policy 26, Policy 27 and Policy 28: Historic Environment	Complies	The proposed development will not have any direct and indirect negative impacts on Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Enabling Development, Scheduled Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Gardens/Designed Landscapes.
Policy 33: Renewable and Low-Carbon Energy	Complies	The proposed development will enable low-carbon development and promote social and economic convergence and thus, benefiting the local economy in long-term. As Scotland progresses into a low-carbon economy, it is expected that there will be an increased uptake in EVs throughout Scotland, and therefore an increased demand for ultra-fast charging units and the integration of charging stations into the transport network.
Policy 43: Green Belt	Complies	The proposed development is situated on an area of an existing car park that was previously a Subway break spot thus, no impact on Green Belt will result from the proposed development.

Policy	Proposal Compliance	Comment
Policy 52: New Development and Flooding	Complies	An FRA has been prepared which demonstrates that the proposed development is suitable within the chosen location and will not pose an increase in risk to flooding elsewhere.
Policy 57: Air Quality	Complies	The proposed development has been designed to be sustainable and carbon efficient through the use of the most recent, efficient charging technologies commercially available and the individual aspects of the design are prefabricated to reduce construction waste.
Policy 60: Transport and Accessibility	Complies	The proposed development will provide an additional key service by providing sustainable transport infrastructure. The proposed development will enable connectivity and enhance accessibility for EV users around Balhaldie. The installation of the proposed development will also encourage EV users to visit the business units immediately adjacent to the site, as well as encourage increased uptake of EVs locally.

2.5 Planning History

Table 4.2 summarises the planning permissions and applications within the last five years located either surrounding the proposed development or within Perth and Kinross area.

Table 4.2 Planning History

Planning reference no.	Description	Date of Validation / Decision	Outcome
23/01326/FLL	Installation of 8 electric vehicle charging units with canopy, 3 replacement enclosed jet wash bays, enclosed substation and associated works.	14 Aug 2023	Permitted

Planning reference no.	Description	Date of Validation / Decision	Outcome
22/01749/LBC	Installation of electric vehicle charging point	01 Jan 2023	Permitted
22/00322/FLL	Installation of 3 electric vehicle charging units (in retrospect)	28 Mar 2022	Permitted
21/02128/FLL	Installation of 2 electric vehicle charging units and associated works	11 Apr 2022	Permitted

3 CONCLUSION

The proposed development is shown to be fully compliant with relevant national and local planning policy.

The following considerations have been given in relation to the proposal:

Transport: In the short term, the proposed development is unlikely to have any perceptible impact on the highway network, and in the longer term the charging station will become one of many such facilities that come forward to meet demand.

Arboriculture: It is concluded that the proposed development can be successfully achieved without significantly impacting the overall tree stock of the site and causing undue long-term harm to those trees identified for retention.

Ecology and Nature Conservation: The site is not located within or nearby any ecologically designated sites. It is considered that the internationally designated sites within 10 km of the site, and the species for which they are designated, will not be significantly affected by the proposed development. The survey area shows that a suitable habitat for birds is present on site with swallow nests recorded on the building and the line of trees provides nesting opportunities. It is therefore recommended that if any vegetation clearance is necessary for the works to proceed, it should be cleared outside of the nesting bird season (March – September, inclusive). Further opportunities for enhancement have been provided by the specialists, these can be found in the full PEA report.

Archaeology and Cultural Heritage: There are no Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens or Listed Buildings within 500 m of the site. The nearest Listed Buildings is 1.9 km west of the site: Category B Garden House, Glassingal. The closest Scheduled Monument 'Loch Thom-Overton' water cut, is located approximately 1.9 km southwest of the site.

Landscape and Visual Amenity: The site is located on a plot of land on existing hardstanding, serving the nearby development (across the A9) comprising a redeveloped café. The site is bordered by the local highways network (A9) to the south, stretching north-east and south-west of the site. The northern perimeter of the site is screened by a group of mature trees, beyond these trees is agricultural land and one residential property. The proposed development is considered to be compatible with the existing and surrounding land use and therefore is not anticipated to impact upon the visual amenity of the area.

The proposed development is considered to be wholly consistent with the context of the local area of Balhaldie and the wider Perth and Kenross as a whole. It is therefore concluded that the proposed development should be supported, and planning permission granted.