The Story

This project set out to create an investment-ready plan for an EV charging scheme in the World Heritage Site area of the Belper Clusters. The need and benefits for such a scheme - around emissions reductions, air quality improvement, public health benefits and support for the 110 resident households to transition to electric vehicles - were well documented in the Rural Community Energy Fund (RCEF) Stage 1 project which preceded this project.

Challenges & Risks

The scheme faced many challenges, including complex planning restraints related to World Heritage Site status, listed building and conservation area consent. In addition, three listed railway bridges bisect the site and roads are unadopted and in complex ownership. Concerns were also expressed by a small group of residents who did not want more traffic to be attracted to the area.

Lessons Learned

Communication was difficult due to Covid restrictions, and, in hindsight, we would have found a way to communicate with residents more regularly. Barriers included a lengthy delay to a determination by a conservation specialist. We were also restricted by the need to source an acceptable EV charger for the location, as our desired business model was only offered by a company with one charger design.