

Appendix: Introduction and EIA Methodology

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Planning

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REF: P22/S4551/SCO

30 January 2023

Dear Sir/ Madam

Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017

Formal request for an Environmental Impact Assessment 'Scoping Opinion'

Location: Site North of Culham Science Centre, near Clifton Hampden

I refer to your letter and submissions received 16 December 2022 in relation to your request for a Scoping Opinion under Regulation 15 of the Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended).

I am writing to confirm that the Local Planning Authority has formally adopted the Scoping Opinion summarised in the attached report.

The Local Planning Authority has consulted on the Scoping Report and the responses received have been taken into account in adopting this Opinion.

Subject to the advice set out in the accompanying scoping opinion report, the Local Planning Authority is broadly in agreement with the Environmental Statement topic areas set out in the Screening Opinion Request, and the identified areas of environmental impact. However, it is recommended that the scope is widened in respect of Archaeology and Built Heritage, and account is taken of the uses on the adjoining site, including the effect of radioactive waste.

It is recommended that the Environmental Statement required for the proposed development should cover the format and topics as proposed by the applicant. The council has considered the scope of each chapter to remain in the Environmental Statement and provided advice, where appropriate, as to where that scope should be widened.

I can confirm that, in accordance with the regulations, a copy of this decision (together with a copy of your submission and the attached report) has been placed on the appropriate register.

Yours sincerely,

Adrian Duffield
Head of Planning

Enc EIA analysis

South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC)
Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Opinion

Proposal:

P22/S4551/SCO – Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Opinion
for a proposed development of a 500mw Battery Storage Facility with
associated infrastructure, access and landscaping.

Location: Site North of Culham Science Centre near Clifton Hampden

Date: January 2023

Relevant legislation:

Town and Country Planning (EIA Assessment) Regulations 2017

**Regulation 15 – Request for an Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Opinion
of the Local Planning Authority**

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to provide the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Opinion of South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) as the Local Planning Authority (LPA).
- 1.2 An application (ref: **P22/S4551/SCO**) has been made requesting the Scoping Opinion for development at Site North of Culham Science Centre near Clifton Hampden. It has been requested by Statera Energy Limited.
- 1.3 No request for a Screening Opinion from the LPA has been made prior to this application for a Scoping Opinion. However, upon screening the proposal, SODC agree that an EIA is required.
- 1.4 The proposed development is considered to be 'EIA Development' under the provisions of Schedule 2, 3 (a) of the EIA Regulations 2017. EIA assessment is required, and an Environmental Statement (ES) report should be prepared to assess the impact of the proposal on the environment.
- 1.5 This EIA Scoping Opinion Report is part of the 'Scoping' stage of EIA which is for determining the extent of issues to be considered in the assessment and reported in the ES. It provides the LPA's opinion on what information needs to be included.
- 1.6 The Opinion has taken account of the following information:
 - The EIA Regulations and Directives.
 - The nature and scale of the proposed development.
 - The nature of the receiving environment based on the data available.
 - Consultation responses to the scoping opinion request.
 - Current best practice guidance in the preparation of an Environmental Statement.
- 1.7 The ES report must include at least the information reasonably required to assess the likely significant environmental effects of the development. To assist, it is required that the council make available relevant information. SODC may request additional information if it is considered necessary.

2.0 Site Context and Information Provided on the Development Proposal

- 2.1 This section provides an overview of the Site context and Development Proposal based on the information submitted by the applicant.

The Site and surroundings

- 2.2 The applicant has provided details of the application site in the submitted Scoping Report. The application site and surroundings can be summarised as follows:
 - The Site comprises approximately 29ha of land.
 - The Site is located to the north of the Culham Science Centre, a Campus for Science and Innovation, itself, located north of the A415 Abingdon Road. The Didcot Parkway to Oxford train line runs along the western boundary of the Site.
 - The site is accessed from the east, south-east and south by the Thame Lane, which connects to Abingdon Road to the south.
 - The site currently comprises areas of open farmed fields and is crossed by Thame Lane, and an existing farm track.
 - Footpath 183/1/60 (part of the Oxford Greenbelt Way) Public Right of Way crosses the railway to the west of the site before passing through the south-western corner of the site.
 - A high voltage overhead transmission line passes through the site north-south, with a second high voltage line passing through the site from the south-east corner to the south-west of the site.
 - The site is irregular in shape and bordered by:
 - Woodland to north, beyond which lies the River Thames;
 - Agricultural land, an area of woodland, and Thame Lane to the east;
 - Thame Lane to the south of the site, with Culham Science Centre to the south-east, beyond which is Abingdon Road (A415) and Culham Rail Station further south; and
 - A railway line to the west (servicing Great Western Railway), adjoined by Oxford Greenbelt Way, beyond which lies agricultural land and Culham Park Mx (off-road race track)
 - The site does not contain any built heritage assets. However there are a number of designated and non-designated heritage assets locally, including Culham Station ticket office and waiting room (Grade II*), two railway bridges (Grade II), Fullamoor Farmhouse (Grade II), Scola Europaea (Grade II), and Nuneham House Registered Park and Garden (Grade I). The Registered Park and Garden is also within Nuneham Courtney Conservation Area, which adjoins the northern boundary of the site. Clifton Hampden Conservation Area is approximately 1.5km to the south east.
 - There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within or adjoining the Site. Culham Brake SSSI is located approximately 1.9 km to the west of the Site.
 - A Local Wildlife Site, Furze Brake is located less than 90m from the eastern boundary of the site and Radley Gravel Pits (Local Wildlife Site is located approximately 390m to the north of the site.
 - The site lies within Flood Zone 1.

- The Site lies wholly in the Green Belt.

2.3 The application site boundary is shown below in figure 1.

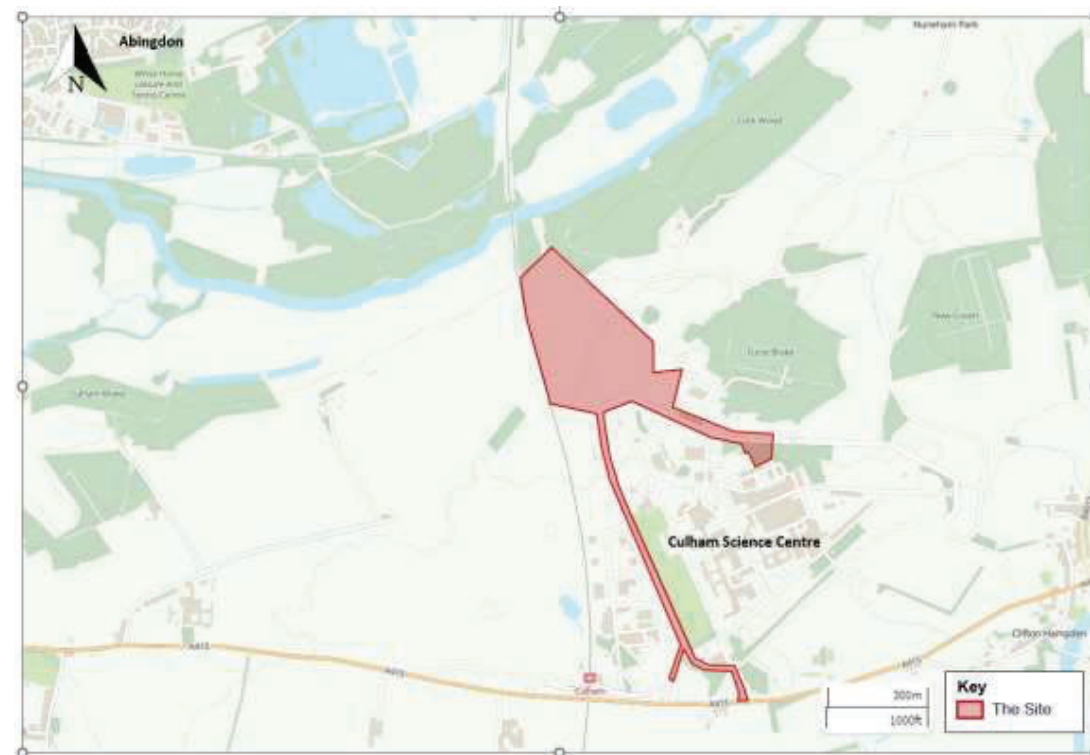


Figure 1: Site Area

The Development Proposal

2.4 The applicant has provided a description of the proposal as follows: “a Battery Energy Storage System (‘BESS’), comprising a 500 megawatt (MW) battery storage facility with associated infrastructure, access and landscaping”

3.0 Relevant Planning History

- 3.1 The site itself does not have any planning history, but there have been a significant number of planning applications on the Culham Science Centre site to the south. None of these are of relevance to the development proposal.
- 3.2 A previous Scoping Opinion, which encompassed this site (P17/S3719/SCO) was issued in 2017. This was in relation to a proposed development across a wider area for 3,500 homes, employment development and other associated facilities.

4.0 Planning Policy Context

- 4.1 The EIA should be undertaken in accordance with current legislation, national, regional and local plans as relevant to the environment. The ES should demonstrate the ways in which it complies with that requirement. This section is provided for context and to assist the applicant in undertaking the EIA but is not an exhaustive list.
- 4.2 The relevant documents of the Development Plan for the district comprise the following:
- South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 (adopted December 2020)
 - Any relevant Neighbourhood Plans
- 4.3 Other documents that are suggested as relevant are as follows:
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
 - National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
 - Local Plan evidence base documents, including South Oxfordshire Landscape Character Assessment
- 4.4 The following policies are suggested to be of relevance.

South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035

STRAT1: The Overall Strategy
 STRAT4: Strategic Development
 STRAT6: Green Belt
 STRAT8: Culham Science Centre
 STRAT9: Land Adjacent to Culham Science Centre
 INF1: Infrastructure Provision
 INF2: Electronic Communications
 INF4: Water Resources
 TRANS2: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility
 TRANS3: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Transport Schemes
 TRANS4: Transport Assessments, Transport Statements and Travel Plans
 TRANS5: Consideration of Development Proposals
 ENV1: Landscape and Countryside
 ENV2: Biodiversity – Designated Sites, Priority Habitats and Species
 ENV3: Biodiversity
 ENV4: Watercourses
 ENV6: Historic Environment
 ENV7: Listed Buildings
 ENV8: Conservation Areas
 ENV9: Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments
 ENV10: Historic Battlefields, Registered Parks and Gardens and Historic Landscapes
 ENV11: Pollution - Impact from Existing and/or Previous Land Uses on New Development (Potential Receptors of Pollution)
 ENV12: Pollution - Impact of Development on Human Health, the Natural Environment and/or Local Amenities (Sources)
 EP1: Air Quality

EP2: Hazardous Substances
EP3: Waste Collection and Recycling
DES1: Delivering High Quality Development
DES2: Enhancing Local Character
DES3: Design and Access Statements
DES7: Efficient Use of Resources
DES8: Promoting Sustainable Design
DES9: Renewable Energy
DES10: Carbon Reduction

5.0 Environmental Statement Standard Information Required

- 5.1 There is no statutory provision for the form of an ES. However, the ES must contain the information specified in Regulation 18(3) and must meet the requirements of Regulation 18(4).
- 5.2 It must also include any additional information specified in Schedule 4 of the 2017 Regulations.
- 5.3 This information is provided below for ease of reference when preparing the ES.

Regulation 18(3)

An Environmental Statement is a statement which includes at least:

- (a) a description of the proposed development comprising information on the site, design, size and other relevant features of the development;
- (b) a description of the likely significant effects of the proposed development on the environment;
- (c) a description of any features of the proposed development, or measures envisaged in order to avoid, prevent or reduce and, if possible, offset likely significant adverse effects on the environment;
- (d) a description of the reasonable alternatives studied by the developer, which are relevant to the proposed development and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for the option chosen, taking into account the effects of the development on the environment;
- (e) a non-technical summary of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) to (d); and
- (f) any additional information specified in Schedule 4 relevant to the specific characteristics of the particular development or type of development and to the environmental features likely to be significantly affected.

Regulation 18(4)

- (a) where a scoping opinion or direction has been issued in accordance with regulation 15 or 16, be based on the most recent scoping opinion or direction issued (so far as the proposed development remains materially the same as the proposed development which was subject to that opinion or direction);
- (b) include the information reasonably required for reaching a reasoned conclusion on

the significant effects of the development on the environment, taking into account current knowledge and methods of assessment; and
(c) be prepared, taking into account the results of any relevant UK environmental assessment, which are reasonably available to the person preparing the environmental statement, with a view to avoiding duplication of assessment.

Schedule 4 of EIA Regulations 2017

1. A description of the development, including in particular:
 - (a) a description of the location of the development;
 - (b) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole development, including, where relevant, requisite demolition works, and the land-use requirements during the construction and operational phases;
 - (c) a description of the main characteristics of the operational phase of the development (in particular any production process), for instance, energy demand and energy used, nature and quantity of the materials and natural resources (including water, land, soil and biodiversity) used;
 - (d) an estimate, by type and quantity, of expected residues and emissions (such as water, air, soil and subsoil pollution, noise, vibration, light, heat, radiation and quantities and types of waste produced during the construction and operation phases.
2. A description of the reasonable alternatives (for example in terms of development design, technology, location, size and scale) studied by the developer, which are relevant to the proposed project and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for selecting the chosen option, including a comparison of the environmental effects.
3. A description of the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment (baseline scenario) and an outline of the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the development as far as natural changes from the baseline scenario can be assessed with reasonable effort on the basis of the availability of environmental information and scientific knowledge.
4. A description of the factors specified in regulation 4(2) likely to be significantly affected by the development: population, human health, biodiversity (for example fauna and flora), land (for example land take), soil (for example organic matter, erosion, compaction, sealing), water (for example hydromorphological changes, quantity and quality), air, climate (for example greenhouse gas emissions, impacts relevant to adaptation), material assets, cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological aspects, and landscape.
5. A description of the likely significant effects of the development on the environment resulting from, inter alia:
 - (a) the construction and existence of the development, including, where relevant, demolition works;
 - (b) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity, considering as far as possible the sustainable availability of these resources;
 - (c) the emission of pollutants, noise, vibration, light, heat and radiation, the creation

- of nuisances, and the disposal and recovery of waste;
- (d) the risks to human health, cultural heritage or the environment (for example due to accidents or disasters);
- (e) the cumulation of effects with other existing and/or approved projects, taking into account any existing environmental problems relating to areas of particular environmental importance likely to be affected or the use of natural resources;
- (f) the impact of the project on climate (for example the nature and magnitude of greenhouse gas emissions) and the vulnerability of the project to climate change;
- (g) the technologies and the substances used.

The description of the likely significant effects on the factors specified in regulation 4(2) should cover the direct effects and any indirect, secondary, cumulative, transboundary, short-term, medium-term and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects of the development. This description should take into account the environmental protection objectives established at Union or Member State level which are relevant to the project, including in particular those established under Council Directive 92/43/EEC(1) and Directive 2009/147/EC(2).

6. A description of the forecasting methods or evidence, used to identify and assess the significant effects on the environment, including details of difficulties (for example technical deficiencies or lack of knowledge) encountered compiling the required information and the main uncertainties involved.
7. A description of the measures envisaged to avoid, prevent, reduce or, if possible, offset any identified significant adverse effects on the environment and, where appropriate, of any proposed monitoring arrangements (for example the preparation of a post-project analysis). That description should explain the extent, to which significant adverse effects on the environment are avoided, prevented, reduced or offset, and should cover both the construction and operational phases.
8. A description of the expected significant adverse effects of the development on the environment deriving from the vulnerability of the development to risks of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned. Relevant information available and obtained through risk assessments pursuant to EU legislation such as Directive 2012/18/EU(3) of the European Parliament and of the Council or Council Directive 2009/71/Euratom(4) or UK environmental assessments may be used for this purpose provided that the requirements of this Directive are met. Where appropriate, this description should include measures envisaged to prevent or mitigate the significant adverse effects of such events on the environment and details of the preparedness for and proposed response to such emergencies.
9. A non-technical summary of the information provided under paragraphs 1 to 8.
10. A reference list detailing the sources used for the descriptions and assessments included in the environmental statement.

6.0 Identification of Potential for Likely Significant Environmental Effects

- 6.1 This section considers the key information considered by the LPA in support of identifying the potential for likely significant environmental effects arising from the Development Proposal. It then identifies where there is potential for likely significant environmental effects.

Applicant's Scoping Report

- 6.2 A Scoping Report has been submitted by the applicant, which has been considered as part of preparing this Scoping Opinion. It includes the topics considered to be relevant to the proposal.
- 6.3 As such, the applicant proposes that the environmental parameters to be assessed and **scoped in** should include the following:
 - Archaeology and Heritage
 - Landscape and visual effects
 - Land Take and Soils
 - Climate Change
- 6.4 The applicant proposed the topics to be **scoped out** should include the following:
 - Water resources, drainage and flood risk
 - Ecology and biodiversity
 - Geoenvironmental Conditions (Land Contamination, Ground Conditions and Groundwater)
 - Traffic and Transport
 - Noise
 - Air Quality
 - Waste and materials
 - Project vulnerability
 - Socio-Economics and health
 - Other technical topics
- 6.5 To demonstrate that topics have not simply been overlooked, where topics are scoped out prior to submission of the application, the ES should clearly explain the reasoning and justify the approach taken.

Alternatives Considered

- 6.6 The applicant's Scoping Report does not provide details of reasonable alternatives. As such, reasonable alternatives have not been considered at this stage by the LPA.
- 6.7 The EIA should include a detailed consideration of reasonable alternatives to the development proposal. These should be considered in the ES and details provided of the options and choices made.

Scoping Opinion Consultation

- 6.8 In considering the request for a scoping opinion, SODC has consulted the following bodies:
- **Natural England**
 - Environment Agency
 - **Historic England**
 - **Highways England**
 - Network Rail
 - National Grid
 - **Oxfordshire County Council (Archaeology, Transport Development Management, and Lead Local Flood Risk Authority)**
 - Culham Parish Council
 - Nuneham Courtenay Parish Council
 - Clifton Hampden Parish Council
 - **SODC Landscape Officer**
 - **SODC Conservation Officer**
 - **SODC Countryside Officer**
 - **SODC Forestry Officer**
 - **SODC Drainage Engineer**
 - **SODC Air Quality Officer**
 - **SODC Environmental Protection Officer**
 - **SODC Contaminated Land Officer**
- 6.9 At the time of writing this response replies have been received from those consultees highlighted in bold text above.
- 6.10 The responses should be referred to by the applicant when preparing the EIA. The ES should demonstrate consideration of the points raised by the consultation bodies. The responses are received at the time of writing are available on the council's website. Any late responses will be made publicly available on the website.
- 6.11 It is recommended a table is provided summarising the scoping responses from the consultation bodies and providing details of how they have been addressed in the statement. It should include section and page references to assist.
- 6.12 The consultation responses have been used to identify the areas giving rise to potential likely significant environmental effects and to establish the topics to be scoped-in and included in the EIA based on the information available at the time of writing.

Cumulative and In-Combination Effects

- 6.13 Schedule 4 (5e) of the Regulations refers to the likely significant effects on the environment resulting from "the cumulation of effects with other existing and/or

approved projects, taking into account any existing environmental problems relating to areas of particular environmental importance likely to be affected or the use of natural resources".

- 6.14 The development proposals to be assessed should include those in the process of being built, permitted application(s) but not yet implemented and submitted application(s) not yet determined.
- 6.15 The submitted Scoping Report suggests that no relevant cumulative schemes have been identified for consideration within the EIA, however, it is the opinion of the Local Planning Authority that the cumulative impacts of application number P22/S1410/FUL Land in the North East Corner of, Culham Science Centre, near Clifton Hampden for the "Erection of a Fusion Demonstration Plant with ancillary office space, parking, landscaping and associated infrastructure, including plant and machinery." Should be considered in the EIA.
- 6.16 In relation to the adjacent strategic allocation (STRAT9 in the South Oxfordshire Local Plan) to deliver approximately 3,500 new homes, a net increase of at least 7.3ha of employment land in combination with the adjacent Science Centre and supporting services and facilities the applicants propose that the ES includes qualitative consideration of the strategic allocation to assess the potential for any likely significant future cumulative effects, although noting that this will be subject to future design and permissions sought within the strategic allocation area. The Local Planning Authority agree with this approach.

Monitoring

- 6.17 The 2017 EIA Regulations introduce new requirements in relation to monitoring. The Regulations require "the monitoring of any significant adverse effects on the environment of proposed development". It is important to note that the Regulations only require the monitoring of effects that are both significant and adverse. The ES should therefore ensure that it is clear to SODC which, if any, effects are both adverse and significant and may therefore require monitoring.

7.0 Topics to be Scoped-in to the Environmental Impact Assessment

- 7.1 Having regard to the information submitted as part of the Scoping Report, this section considers the approach to the EIA and topics to be scoped-in and comments on the approach to the ES.
- 7.2 The scope of the of the application should be clearly addressed and assessed consistently within the ES. Regulation 18(4) requires the ES to be:

"Based on the most recent scoping opinion or direction issued (so far as the proposed development remains materially the same as the proposed development which was subject to that opinion or direction".

- 7.3 This anticipates where details of a project may change after a Scoping Opinion has been made or where the assessment work demonstrates that the likely significant effects differ from those foreseen at the scoping stage. The topics below are considered on that basis.
- 7.4 The ES should provide a full factual description of development but must also include at least the information reasonably required to assess the likely significant environmental effects of the development. A non-technical summary should be provided.
- 7.5 SODC recommends that the ES should include a description of the proposed construction programme and methods.
- 7.6 The topics that the LPA consider should be scoped into the ES are as follows:
- Archaeology and Heritage
 - Landscape and visual effects
 - Land Take and Soils
 - Climate Change

Archaeology and Heritage

- 7.7 The site is located within the Grade I Registered Park and Garden of Nuneham Courtenay, and cropmarks and geophysical survey further identify prehistoric and/or Roman settlement and associated activity to be present both within and immediately adjacent to the proposal site. As such, it is recommended that any planning application for this site would require an archaeological desk based assessment, incorporating the results of a detailed geophysical survey, to be implemented to assess the potential of the site to contain archaeological deposits and the significance of any such deposits as well as the impact of this development on the registered park and garden and its setting. A programme of further archaeological investigation would likely be required ahead of the determination of any planning application for the site.
- 7.8 The scoping report submitted acknowledges the archaeological interest and potential of the site and sets out that the EIA will contain a chapter on Archaeology (buried heritage), this to be informed by a desk-based assessment and the results of a geophysical survey, previous written schemes of investigation for the implementation of which in line with the Chartered Institute for Archaeology standards and guidance have been submitted and agreed. It is not however agreed that this approach as scoped will allow for a suitably informed assessment of the potential archaeological resource within the site, an understanding as to its significance, and the likely effects of proposed development on that significance, to enable its appropriate determination. It is therefore recommended that the Archaeology (buried heritage) chapter of the EIA for the proposed development should be informed by the desk based assessment and geophysical survey as scoped, but also include the results of a programme of trenched evaluation.

- 7.9 The field evaluation (trial trenching) should be undertaken in line with the Chartered Institute for Archaeology standards and guidance including the submission of a written scheme of investigation to ensure that the scope of the assessment and fieldwork has been agreed.
- 7.10 In respect of built heritage, this development could, potentially, have an impact upon designated heritage assets and their settings in the area around the site. The application site lies in part within the Grade I Registered Park and Garden of Nuneham House. Impacts to this and other nearby designated and non-designated heritage assets including, but not limited to, Nuneham House and the garden structures within, Nuneham Courtenay Conservation Area, Thame Lane Bridge and the buildings of Culham Station should be scoped in to the Heritage Chapter of the ES.
- 7.11 As submitted, the report only refers to below ground archaeology and has overlooked all other forms of heritage asset. Although the RPG is rightly mentioned within the Landscape Chapter, it is a heritage asset as well as an important landscape feature and must also be included within a Heritage Chapter. This is regardless of whether built form will be constructed within the RPG boundary or not as development within its setting and new proposed landscaping will alter the current experience and condition of the asset.
- 7.12 It is vital that the heritage significance of these heritage assets (and all others scoped into the ES) are considered in the round and more broadly than simply as landscape features. Their significance as heritage assets should be clearly set out within the ES followed by an assessment the impact of the proposal would have upon that significance. How the assets are seen within the wider landscape may add to their significance but their value is far broader than that. To that end, it would make more sense to include assessment of them in the Heritage chapter. Where needed, their role within the wider landscape can also be included in the Landscape chapter.
- 7.13 It is also expected the ES will consider the potential impacts on non-designated features of historic, architectural, archaeological or artistic interest, since these can also be of national importance and make an important contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of an area and its sense of place. This information is available via the local authority Historic Environment Record (www.heritagegateway.org.uk) and relevant local authority staff.
- 7.14 It is important that the assessment is designed to ensure that all impacts are fully understood. Section drawings and techniques such as photomontages are a useful part of this. The assessment should also take account of the potential impact which associated activities (such as construction, servicing and maintenance, and associated traffic) might have upon perceptions, understanding and appreciation of the heritage assets in the area. The assessment should also consider, where appropriate, the likelihood of alterations to drainage patterns that might lead to *in situ* decomposition or destruction of below ground archaeological remains and deposits, and can also lead to subsidence of buildings and monuments.

Landscape and Visual

- 7.15 The scoping report recognises that the proposed development has the potential to result in significant landscape and visual impacts and states that a landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) will be carried out and included in the ES. No detail is given on the approach to this assessment, the LVIA should follow GLVIA3 guidelines, it is recommended that the methodology is submitted for agreement prior to undertaking the assessment.
- 7.16 Landscape receptors should include relevant landscape character areas/ types, physical landscape features, historic landscape features, including Nuneham Courtenay Registered Park and Garden, and perceptual landscape qualities. Visual receptors and viewpoints should be determined through site work, all visual receptor groups should be covered. Viewpoints should be submitted for agreement prior to carrying out the assessment. Photographs should be taken in winter when there is maximum visibility, summer views can also be included. The effect on the visual openness of the Green Belt should be considered.
- 7.17 The assessment of landscape and visual effects should include effects during construction and on completion in winter without established planting mitigation, and after 10 or 15 years in summer with planting mitigation established.
- 7.18 The effects of lighting on both landscape character and views should be considered.
- 7.19 Cumulative landscape and visual effects that may arise from the interaction of the development with other proposed developments in the area should be considered. The landscape and visual assessment should be used to inform the proposals, reference to this process should be included in the LVIA.
- 7.20 The LVIA should include a description of the mitigation proposed including the design objectives, these should take into account local landscape character guidelines and current planning policy and should complement and enhance local character and distinctiveness. Plans should be included indicating the landscape mitigation strategy, together with schedules of typical proposed plant species, sizes and planting density.
- 7.21 Photomontages from key viewpoints should be included, the proposed location of these should be submitted for agreement once photographs are available. Photomontages should be included to demonstrate the visual effects of the proposals before and after mitigation, using year 1 winter and year 10 or 15 summer views. Reference should be made to the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/19, Visual Representation of Development Proposals. Photomontages should be accurate verified images.
- 7.22 The LVIA should take account of the comments set out above. It is also recommended that the following are submitted for agreement prior to completing the assessment:
- Full landscape and visual assessment methodology.
 - Photograph and photomontage viewpoints.
 - Growth rates for the various types of planting mitigation

Land take and soils

- 7.23 The LPA is satisfied that the approach outlined in the Scoping Report is acceptable.

Climate Change

- 7.24 The EIA Regulations include a requirement for the assessment of development on the environment with relation to climate change where effects could be significant.

The EIA must identify, describe and assess in an appropriate manner, in light of each individual case, the direct and indirect significant effects of the proposed development... climate'

'A description of the likely significant effects of the development on the environment resulting from, inter alia: ... (f) the impact of the project on climate (for example the nature and magnitude of greenhouse gas emissions) and the vulnerability of the project to climate change'.

- 7.25 The EIA process should influence the location and basic design of the Proposed Development in order to limit its carbon emissions and this should be reported in the ES. Climate change mitigation (i.e. reducing effects of climate change) and adaption measures (i.e. increasing resilience to climate change) should be detailed within the relevant topics of the ES:
- effects on the environment arising from carbon emissions at each stage of the development, including embodied energy in the manufacture of construction materials;
 - emissions from construction traffic and on-site plant; operational emissions from development should be assessed;
 - provision of energy efficiency measures (e.g. insulation, motion-activated lights) and water efficiency measures (e.g. low water use fittings and white goods; rainwater harvesting) to reduce consumption; and
 - designing for reduced transport e.g. minimising the need for personal travel, car free commitments

- 7.26 The LPA is satisfied that the approach outlined in the Scoping Report is acceptable.

8.0 Topics to be scoped out

Water Resources, Drainage and Flood Risk

- 8.1 The site is located within Flood Zone 1 and the risk of surface water flooding is low. However, as the site exceeds 1 ha in size, the planning application will be supported by a Flood Risk Assessment. The LPA is satisfied that the approach outlined in the Scoping Report is acceptable and a separate chapter is not required in the ES

Ecology and Biodiversity

- 8.2 The site resides in close proximity to non-statutory designated sites (local wildlife sites), which can comprise 'sensitive areas' in the EIA regulations, but the LPA is satisfied that the nature and scale of the development is unlikely to harm the special interest of these sites. On this basis, The LPA is satisfied that the regular planning process is sufficient to assess the likely ecological impacts of the proposed development and that there need not be a specific section in the ES focusing on ecology/biodiversity.

Geoenvironmental Conditions (Land Contamination, Ground Conditions and Groundwater)

- 8.3 The site is currently undeveloped agricultural land. The potential for any existing ground contamination during the construction phase of the proposed development is low. However, the proposed site adjoins Culham JET site which is listed in the Minerals and Waste Local Plan as a waste facility dealing with radioactive waste. The effect on that site should be included in the EIA for the proposed application.

Traffic and Transport

- 8.4 A Transport Assessment/Statement (TA) will be required to inform the Planning application from a traffic and transport perspective. A detailed Transport Assessment/Statement scoping exercise should be undertaken with OCC to define the scope of the TA. The LPA is satisfied that the approach outlined in the Scoping Report is acceptable and a separate chapter in the ES is not required.

Noise

- 8.5 As outlined in the Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Opinion Request Report, there could be the potential for significant adverse noise effects to sensitive receptors during the operation of the proposed development, as well as noise from the construction phase. As such, further information would be required and commented on in subsequent applications, however, The LPA is satisfied that the regular planning process is sufficient to assess the likely noise impacts of the proposed development and that there need not be a specific section in the ES focusing on noise.

Air Quality

- 8.6 No significant effects are expected on air quality during both the construction and operational phase of the proposed development and the LPA is satisfied that the approach outlined in the Scoping Report is acceptable.

Waste and materials

- 8.7 The LPA is satisfied that the approach outlined in the Scoping Report is acceptable.

Project vulnerability

- 8.8 The LPA is satisfied that the approach outlined in the Scoping Report is acceptable.

Socio-Economics and Health

- 8.9 The LPA is satisfied that the approach outlined in the Scoping Report is acceptable.

Other Technical Topics

- 8.10 The LPA is satisfied that the approach outlined in the Scoping Report is acceptable.

9.0 Conclusion

- 9.1 The LPA consider that the applicant's Scoping Report fails to adequately address the effects on built heritage, as well as the scope of the archaeology work, and the effects on the nearby radioactive waste site. The comments above should be taken into account in the preparation of the ES.
- 9.2 The LPA is broadly in agreement with the other topic areas set out in the Scoping Report, and the identified areas of environmental impact, subject to the advice provided in this report.
- 9.3 It is recommended that the ES required for the Proposed Development should cover the format and topics as proposed by the applicant in addition to the information set out in this report.
- 9.4 For the avoidance of doubt the topics that the LPA consider should be **scoped into** the ES are as follows:
- Archaeology and Heritage
 - Landscape and visual effects
 - Land Take and Soils
 - Climate Change
 - Geo environmental Conditions (Land Contamination, Ground Conditions and Groundwater)
- 9.5 The LPA agree that the following topics can be **scoped out** of the ES:
- Water resources, drainage and flood risk
 - Ecology and biodiversity
 - Traffic and Transport
 - Noise
 - Air Quality
 - Waste and materials
 - Project vulnerability
 - Socio-Economics and health
 - Other technical topics
- 9.6 It is recommended the applicant seeks to agree the scope or detail or additional reporting or content for the Environmental Statement where this has been requested in this advice.

Prepared by: NS

Checked by:

Signed by:



Adrian Duffield
Head of Planning