

# **OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON THE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL**

**District:** South Oxfordshire

**Application no:** P24/S1498/FUL

**Proposal:** The development of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), comprising a 500 megawatt (MW) battery storage facility with associated infrastructure, access and landscaping, with a connection into the Culham Jet National Grid substation.

**Location:** Land to the north of the Culham Science Centre Thame Lane OX14 3GY

**Response Date:** 17th June 2024

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This report sets out the officer views of Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) on the above proposal. These are set out by individual service area/technical discipline and include details of any planning conditions or Informatives that should be attached in the event that permission is granted and any obligations to be secured by way of a S106 agreement. Where considered appropriate, an overarching strategic commentary is also included. If the local County Council member has provided comments on the application these are provided as a separate attachment.

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## **General Information and Advice**

### **Recommendations for approval contrary to OCC objection:**

If within this response an OCC officer has raised an objection but the Local Planning Authority are still minded to recommend approval, OCC would be grateful for notification (via [planningconsultations@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:planningconsultations@oxfordshire.gov.uk)) as to why material consideration outweighs OCC's objections, and to be given an opportunity to make further representations.

### **Outline applications and contributions**

The anticipated number and type of dwellings and/or the floor space may be set by the developer at the time of application which is used to assess necessary mitigation. If not stated in the application, a policy compliant mix will be used. The number and type of dwellings used when assessing S106 planning obligations is set out on the first page of this response.

In the case of outline applications, once the unit mix/floor space is confirmed by reserved matters approval/discharge of condition a matrix (if appropriate) will be applied to establish any increase in contributions payable. A further increase in contributions may result if there is a reserved matters approval changing the unit mix/floor space.

### **Where a S106/Planning Obligation is required:**

- **Index Linked** – in order to maintain the real value of S106 contributions, contributions will be index linked. Base values and the index to be applied are set out in the Schedules to this response.
- **Administration and Monitoring Fee - TBC**  
This is an estimate of the amount required to cover the monitoring and administration associated with the S106 agreement. The final amount will be based on the OCC's scale of fees and will be adjusted to take account of the number of obligations and the complexity of the S106 agreement.
- **OCC Legal Fees** The applicant will be required to pay OCC's legal fees in relation to legal agreements. Please note the fees apply whether a S106 agreement is completed or not.

**Security of payment for deferred contributions** - Applicants should be aware that an approved bond will be required to secure a payment where a S106 contribution is to be paid post implementation and

- the contribution amounts to 25% or more (including anticipated indexation) of the cost of the project it is towards and that project cost £7.5m or more

- the developer is direct delivering an item of infrastructure costing £7.5m or more
- where aggregate contributions towards bus services exceeds £1m (including anticipated indexation).

A bond will also be required where a developer is direct delivering an item of infrastructure.

The County Infrastructure Funding Team can provide the full policy and advice, on request.

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## **Transport Schedule**

### **Recommendation:**

Objection - However, if the Applicant submits further clarifying information/details, then the Highway Authority will be able to consider further.

### **Key Issues**

- The applicant is required to provide justification for the proposed 14 parking spaces.

### **Conditions**

PLC:3502 Wheel washing facilities: Wheel washing facilities shall be established within the site in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development. Such facilities shall be established prior to the commencement of demolition or construction and shall be kept in operation at all times during demolition and construction works. Reason: To prevent the tracking out of materials onto the highway in the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy TRANS5 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035.

PLC:3503 Construction Traffic Management. The submitted Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) shall be implemented prior to any works being carried out on site and shall be maintained throughout the course of the development. Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to mitigate the impact of construction vehicles on the surrounding highway network, road infrastructure and local residents, particularly at morning and afternoon peak traffic times and in accordance with Policy TRANS5 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035.

### **Detailed Comments:**

### **Development Proposals**

1. I understand this application is for the development of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), comprising a 500 megawatt (MW) battery storage facility with associated infrastructure, access and landscaping, with a connection into the Culham Jet National Grid substation at Land to the north of the Culham Science Centre Thame Lane OX14 3GY.
2. The site comprises areas of open fields and is crossed by a tarmac track (Thame Lane, a non-public highway) as well as an existing farm track.

### **Site Access**

3. The site is currently accessed by the Thame Lane, which connects to Abingdon Road to the south.
4. The applicant proposes access to the site for construction vehicles from A415 Abingdon Road to the south use the eastern junction with Station Road. and along a private road which runs to the east of Culham No.1 Industrial Estate.
5. Following construction of the battery storage, the applicant proposes operational site access from A415 Abingdon Road to the south use the eastern junction with Station Road. and along a private road which runs through Culham No.1 Industrial Estate.
6. Visibility splays, in line with the posted speed limit, can be achieved from the Station Road access onto A415 Abingdon Road.

### **Trip Generation and Highway Impact**

7. The applicant has confirmed in the Planning, Design and Access Statement (para 8.24) that once installed, the development will be unmanned and will generate very minimal extra traffic movements. The impact of the proposed development, during the operational phase, will therefore be minimal. They will therefore be no or very little impact on the local highway network.
8. During the construction phase is development is expected to generate circa 50 Heavy Duty Vehicles (HDVs) however the applicant states that this is the peak and will be confined to the early earthworks / civils phase of the project.

### **Car Parking**

9. The applicant states that during the operational phase a total of 14 car parking spaces will be provide (para 8.25 of the Planning, Design and Access Statement). That design the planning design access statement para 8.24 states that the proposed developments when operational will generate 'very minimal extra traffic movements'.  
The applicant is therefore required to provide justification for the proposed 14 parking spaces.

### **Construction Traffic Management Plan**

10. The applicant has submitted a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP).
11. The CTMP states (para 2.9) that deliveries and collections by HGVs will be restricted to weekdays only and between 09:30 and 16:00 (outside of school term) and between 09:30 and 15:00 (during school term).
12. The CTMP also states (para 2.8) that a temporary car parking area (including spaces for minibuses and vans) will be provided within the on-site contractor's compound.
13. The submitted CTMP is acceptable to the County.

**Officer's Name: Judith Goodwin**

**Officer's Title:** Senior Transport Development Officer

**Date:** 04/06/2024

**Application no: P24/S1498/FUL**

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**Lead Local Flood Authority**

**Recommendation:**

Comments

**Detailed comments:**

The FRA is consistent with the LLFA's requirements. Nothing further is required.

**Officer's Name: Diane Rotherham**

**Officer's Title:** Flood Risk Engineer

**Date:** 15/06/2024

**Application no: P24/S1498/FUL**

**Location:** Land to the north of the Culham Science Centre Thame Lane OX14 3GY

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## **Archaeology**

### **Recommendation:**

Objection for the following reason/s:

### **Comments:**

The results of an archaeological trenched evaluation, will need to be submitted in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (2023), paragraph 200, prior to the determination of this planning application.

We have previously provided archaeological advice on this site in a pre-application response (E0700179/2022/031212) in July 2022 where we advised that an archaeological desk-based assessment and the results of an archaeological evaluation would need to be submitted with any planning application for the site. We have also provided advice on the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) as part of the formal scoping opinion sought by the applicant (P22/S4551/SCO) in January 2023 where we further reiterated that a programme of archaeological trenched evaluation would need to be undertaken.

We previously noted in our scoping comments that the results of a desk-based assessment and geophysical survey alone would not provide for a sufficient and 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. These comments are acknowledged in the Consultations table of Chapter 3: Cultural Heritage of the submitted Environmental Statement (ES).

Throughout Chapter 3 of the submitted ES it is stated that a trenched evaluation is to be conducted, this required to appropriately inform the archaeology baseline (paragraph 3.8) and reduce existing limitations on assessing and understanding the effects of proposed development on the below ground archaeological resource (paragraph 3.30). A proposed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for undertaking trenched evaluation is also provided at Annexe 4, Appendix Cultural Heritage of Volume 3 of the submitted ES. This submitted WSI itself acknowledges at paragraph 1.1.2 that the trenched evaluation is to be undertaken to inform the Planning Authority in support of submission of a planning application.

As set out by our previous comments to this application, the results of an archaeological trenched evaluation will therefore need to be undertaken on the site, and the agreed results submitted prior to the determination of this application.



The archaeological field evaluation must be undertaken in line with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists standards and guidance including the submission and agreement of a suitable WSI. Whilst we acknowledge the submission of a proposed outline WSI provided at Annexe 4, Appendix Cultural Heritage of Volume 3 of the submitted ES, there are a number of issues with this WSI that will require amendment before we could agree that it is acceptable.

An appropriately amended WSI for the required archaeological trenched evaluation works will therefore need to be submitted and agreed.

**Officer's Name: County Archaeological Services**

**Officer's Title:** Archaeologist

**Date:** 31/05/2024