



The countryside charity
Oxfordshire

Campaigning to protect our rural county

Ben Duffy– Case Officer
South Oxfordshire District Council
Via email: planning@southoxon.gov.uk

27th June 2024

RE: P24/S1498/FUL

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**Land to the north of the Culham Science Centre Thame Lane near Clifton Hampden OX14 3GY -
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.**

Dear Ben Duffy

The Campaign to Protect Rural England Oxfordshire [CPRE] works to improve, protect and preserve the landscape of Oxfordshire and its towns and villages for the benefit of everyone.

The CPRE South Oxfordshire Committee OBJECTS to this application for large-scale building with the Oxford Green Belt. Hazel Osbourne, Landscape Officer, SODC, and Samantha Allen, Heritage officer, SODC, clearly set out many reasons to reject the application, including the harm the development will cause to the landscape, the Oxford Green Belt and on heritage assets. We fully support the officers' reasons to reject this application and will not repeat them here. Except to say that The LUC Oxfordshire Green Belt Study¹ showed that this site as part of Broad Area 6:

- rated highly in meeting Purpose 3 of the Green Belt – to safeguard the countryside from encroachment.
- rated highly in meeting Purpose 4: To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Development should be restricted to areas identified under STRAT 8 Culham Science Centre & STRAT 9 Land adjacent to Culham Science Centre.

The committee also objects to this application as it will result in the loss of Best & Most Versatile agricultural land (Grade 2 & 3a) for over 40 years.

The design & access statement dismisses the loss of views / PRoW as insignificant. The response from our RoW consultant and the landscape officer do not agree with the appellant's arguments. The future urban sprawl on the adjacent greenfield site allocated for development under STRAT 9 will ruin the amenity value of Thame Lane PRoW and this development will cause further harm to the amenity value of the PRoWs in this area.

Therefore, this application is *unacceptable in principle*, the development would cause a *significantly adverse effect to the Green Belt, landscape, heritage and amenity assets*, contrary to local & national planning policies, including but not limited to LP2035 DES9. Policy DES9: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy paragraphs i, ii, iii) and v).

There are no exceptional nor special circumstances to support approval of this application.

Yours sincerely

The Committee of South Oxfordshire District of CPRE

¹ [LUC Oxford GB Study 2015](#)