

# PLANNING

ELECTRONIC  
VERSION

## Planning Decision

P24/S1498/FUL

Culham Storage Limited  
Ms Kirsty Cassie  
4th Floor 80 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1E5JL

## REFUSAL OF PLANNING PERMISSION

Application No : **P24/S1498/FUL**

Application proposal, including any amendments :

**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.(A hard copy of the Environmental Statement can be viewed at South Oxfordshire District Council, Abbey House Abbey Close Abingdon OX14 3JE).**

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

South Oxfordshire District Council hereby gives notice that **planning permission is REFUSED** for the carrying out of the development referred to above for the following reason(s) :

1. The development is inappropriate development in the Green Belt that would be harmful to the spatial and visual openness of the Green Belt and would conflict with the purposes of the Green Belt. This site additionally provides an important Green Belt function in relation to strategic sites removed from the Green Belt for development. The application does not constitute very special circumstances as required by the National Planning Policy Framework to outweigh the substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt. As such, the proposal is contrary to the NPPF, and Policies STRAT6 and DES9 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035.
2. The site proposed for battery storage provides a valuable transition between the registered parkland and the Culham Science site. The battery storage is



large scale, would be industrial in appearance, and would introduce an urban industrial development into an important area of rural countryside. It would result in significant adverse effects on the landscape character and to views including those from public rights of way. The proposed mitigation is ineffective in mitigating this harm and the proposal is contrary to the NPPF, and Policies ENV1, DES1 and DES2 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035, and Policy CUL5 of the Culham Neighbourhood Plan.

Further, this proposal, in addition to the development on allocated sites STRAT8 and STRAT9, will create an increased cumulative impact harmful to the landscape character of the area, contrary to Policies ENV1, DES1 and DES2 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035.

3. The proposed development of an industrial nature would encroach into the Nuneham Courtenay Grade I Registered Park and Garden (RPG), a highly significant C18 parkland landscape, which contains several listed buildings and structures. The development will result in significant adverse impacts to the designated heritage asset, and the setting of the RPG. The proposed landscape mitigation fails to respect the character of the RPG and its setting and would result in further harm. The harm to the heritage assets considerably outweighs the benefits of the proposed development and the proposal is therefore contrary to the NPPF and Policies ENV6 and ENV10 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035.

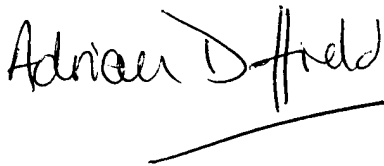
Further, this proposal, in addition to the development on allocated sites STRAT8 and STRAT9, will create an increased cumulative impact harmful to the setting of the designated Registered Park and Garden, contrary to Policies ENV6 and ENV10 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035, the NPPF.

4. The loss of Best and Most Versatile land throughout the lifetime of the proposed development (40 years) has not been justified by compelling evidence in accordance with the written ministerial statement of 15 May 2024 concerning the use of agricultural land, which is reflected in policy DES7 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 and the NPPF.
5. Insufficient information relating to the results of an archaeological trenched evaluation has been submitted to demonstrate that the proposed development would protect against harm to archaeological assets. As this information has not been provided, and the County Archaeologist has been unable to assess the impacts of the development, the development is contrary to Policy ENV9 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035.
6. Insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate that the proposed development would be served by an appropriate drainage strategy. As such, the proposal is contrary to Policies INF4, EP4 and STRAT4 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035.

7. Insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate that the proposed development would address Biodiversity Net Gain requirements. As such, the proposal is contrary to Policy ENV3 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035.
8. There is insufficient and inconsistent information regarding Arboricultural matters and to adequately assess any harmful impact on trees.  
As such, the proposal is contrary to Policy ENV1 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan.

In accordance with paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework the Council takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals. The Planning Service works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by offering a pre-application advice service and by advising applicants/agents of issues that arise during the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions to problems.

Note : A more detailed explanation is available in the officer's report, available in the application case file.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adrian D. Field', with a long horizontal line extending from the bottom of the signature.

Head of Planning  
**8th August 2024**

## STATUTORY INFORMATIVE

### Appeals to the Secretary of State

If you are aggrieved by the decision of your local planning authority to refuse permission for the proposed development or to grant it subject to conditions, then you can appeal to the Secretary of State for the Environment under sections 78 and 79 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

If you want to appeal, then you must do so within **six months** of the date of this notice, using a form which you can get from :

The Planning Inspectorate  
Customer Support Unit  
Temple Quay House  
2 The Square  
Temple Quay  
Bristol  
BS1 6PN  
Telephone : 0303 444 5000  
[www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk)  
email: [enquiries@pins.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@pins.gsi.gov.uk).

The Secretary of State can allow a longer period for giving notice of an appeal, but he will not normally be prepared to use this power unless there are special circumstances which excuse the delay in giving notice of appeal.

The Secretary of State need not consider an appeal if it seems to him that the local planning authority could not have granted planning permission for the proposed development or could not have granted it without the conditions it imposed, having regard to the statutory requirements, to the provisions of the development order and to any directions given under the order.

In practice, the Secretary of State does not refuse to consider appeals solely because the local planning authority based its decision on a direction given by him.

### Purchase Notice

If either the local planning authority or the Secretary of State for the Environment refuses permission to develop land or grants it subject to conditions, the owner may claim that he can neither put the land to a reasonably beneficial use in its existing state nor can he render the land capable of a reasonably beneficial use by the carrying out of any development which has been or would be permitted.

In these circumstances, the owner may serve a purchase notice on the Council

(District Council, London Borough Council or Common Council of the City of London) in whose area the land is situated. This notice will require the Council to purchase his interest in the land in accordance with the provisions of Part VI, Chapter 1 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

### **Compensation**

In certain circumstances compensation may be claimed from the local planning authority if permission is refused or granted subject to conditions by the Secretary of State on appeal or on reference of the application to him.

These circumstances are set out in sections 114 and related provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

### **OTHER INFORMATION**

The Planning Portal contains a wide range of helpful planning-related guidance and services. You may wish to view their website ([www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk)).

### **BUILDING OVER GAS MAINS AND SERVICES**

Please note before you plan to dig, or carry out building work within the SGN gas network, you must:

1. Check your proposals against the information held at <https://www.linesearchbeforeudig.co.uk/> to assess any risk associated with your development **and**
2. Contact the SGN Plant Protection team to let them know. Plant location enquiries must be made via email, but you can phone SGN with general plant protection queries. See SGN details below: Phone 0800 912 1722 or email [plantlocation@sgn.co.uk](mailto:plantlocation@sgn.co.uk)

For further information please refer to:

<https://www.sgn.co.uk/damage-prevention>

<https://www.sgn.co.uk/help-and-advice/digging-safely>