

Appeal Reference: APP/Q3115/W/24/3358132

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## **Annex X**

### **Suggested Site Visit Walking Route including Impact Assessment**

**Cultural Heritage Landscape Proof of Evidence on behalf of**

**South Oxfordshire District Council**

**Prepared by Sasha Berezina & Anne Priscott**

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.

**Land to the north of the Culham Campus Thame Lane, Clifton Hampden, OX14 3GY**

**Planning Application No. P24/S1498/FUL “Appeal Scheme”**

**Planning Inspectorate Appeal Reference: APP/Q3115/W/24/3358132**

**May 2025**

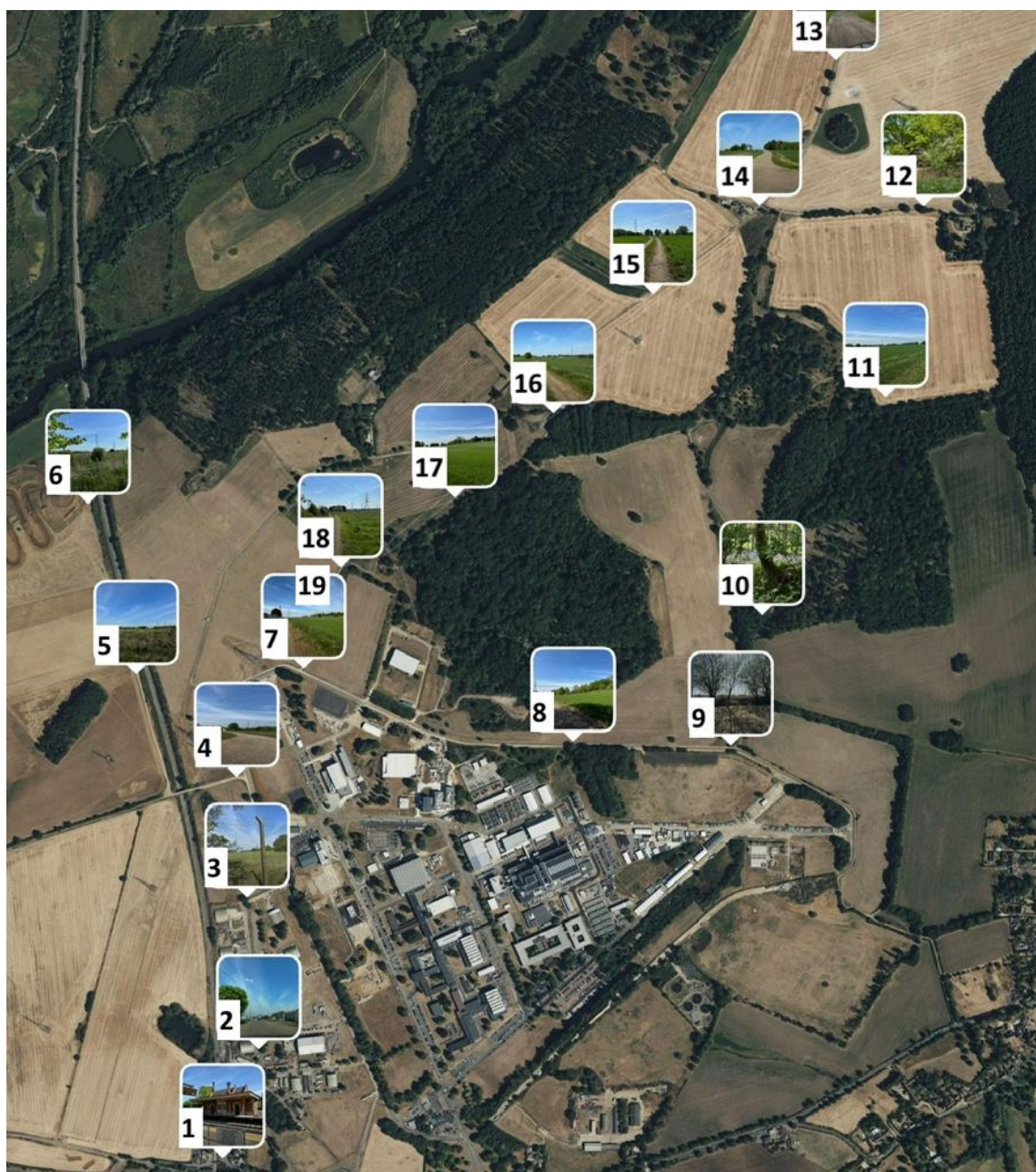
## Introduction

- x1. This Annex sets out a visual analysis that considers the site and its relationship to the surrounding landscape context, and the crucial role the Appeal Site plays in maintaining the undeveloped landscape setting to the parkland and the openness of the Green Belt.
- x2. In advance of agreeing a site visit route between the parties, on behalf of the Council the witnesses suggest the following and respectfully invite the inspector to note the points made in this annex which forms part of the Council's evidence. The purpose is to provide a narrative for the Inspector's unaccompanied site visit and to show how the impacts identified by the Council in Reasons for Refusal 1, 2 and 3 would be experienced from the Oxfordshire Green Belt Way, the parkland and the allocation area by a resident or visitor on the public highway and footpath networks.
- x3. The crucial purpose of this analysis is to demonstrate the contribution the Appeal Site makes in maintaining the perception of an open undeveloped sloping area of estate land with a pastoral character that seamlessly merges with the parkland character and creates a strong skyline and forms the setting of the Grade 1 registered parkland.
- x4. In this regard, a number of questions have been posed for each of the viewpoints, covering the nature of the view and the perception of the role the site plays to the viewer in maintaining the valued landscape characteristics, and what the development of the Appeal Site would mean in terms of changes in landscape and historic landscape perception and sense of place.
- x5. The key questions are:
- x6. Would the undeveloped open character of the Green Belt be eroded or lost? (relating to R for R 1)
- x7. What is the relationship of the viewer at this point in the landscape including with the proposed existing settlement edge and how would this change if the Appeal Site was developed? (relating to R for R 2)

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- x8. How would the perception of the landscape change if the Appeal Scheme were to be allowed? (relating to R for R 2)
- x9. How would the proposed development impact on the parkland, parkland setting and appreciation of the heritage assets? (relating to R for R 3)

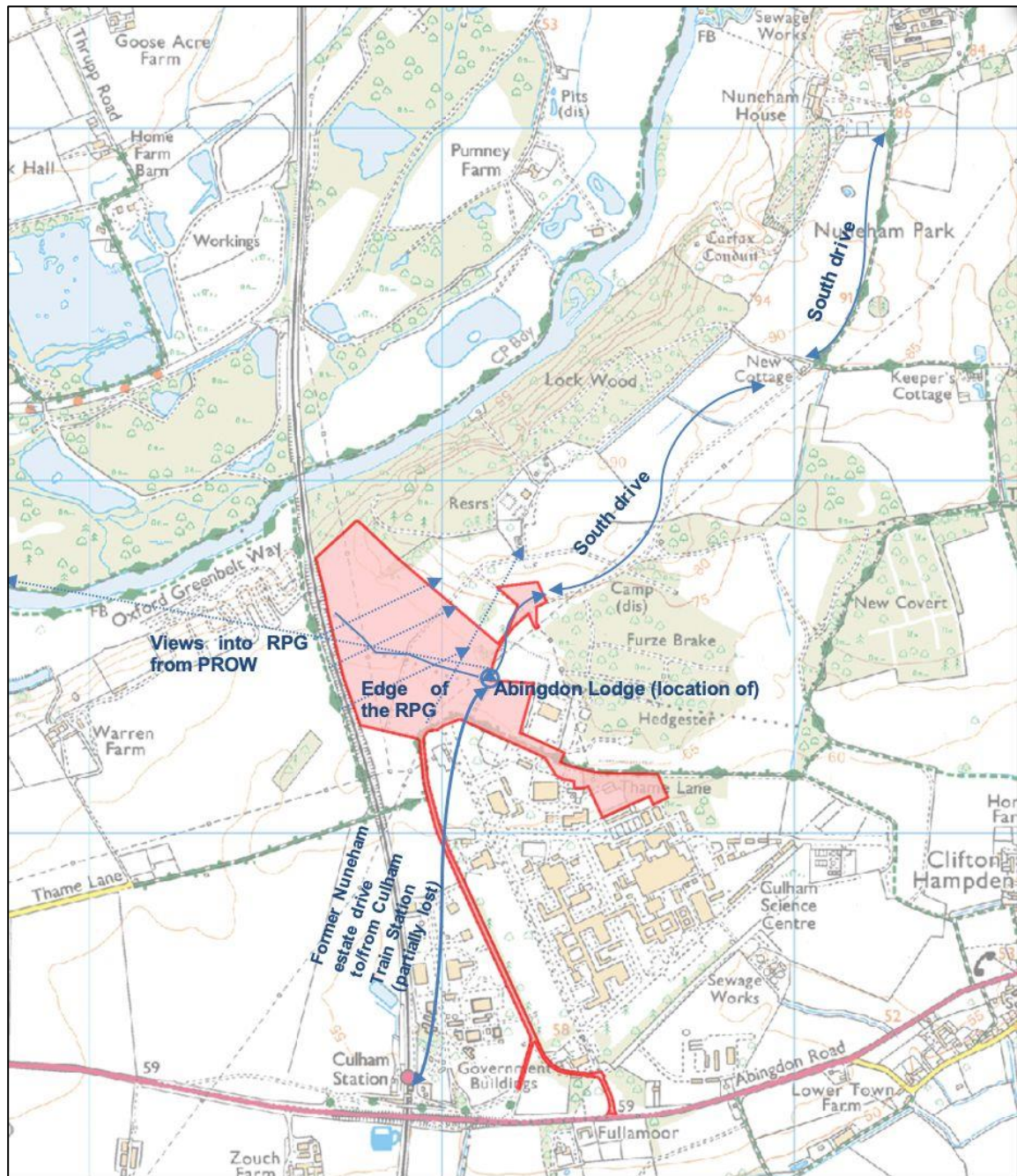
**Figure X1: Site Visit suggested Tour Route**





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Figure X2: Cultural Heritage Contextual Information



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### Viewpoint 1: Arrival at Culham Station



- x11. View of the Grade II\* LB Culham ticket office facing the remnants of the tree lined driveway to Nuneham Park and House (right hand side).
- x12. Then walk north along the route of the avenue through Culham industrial area towards Viewpoint 2.



**Viewpoint 2: Looking south-west towards the train station from within the industrial part of the STRAT8**



- x14. This is the remaining physical evidence of the former estate drive at the train station end of the route. The trees align with those on early C20 maps and aerials. Won't be directly impacted by the appeal scheme but this provides indication of the historic route and sets the southern access into a wider setting context.
- x15. Then walk north along the route of the avenue through Culham 1 towards Viewpoint 3.

**Viewpoint 3: Looking north towards the site from the edge of the STRAT 8 area on the edge of the Green Belt**



- x17. From about this position in the landscape the undeveloped and open character of the Green Belt becomes apparent. The Appeal Site would be in the middle-distance to the north. ES Viewpoint 8 represents this direction and distance of view. The undeveloped open character of the Green Belt would very evidently be eroded in views looking north from this location.
- x18. The relationship of the viewer at this point in the landscape to the Appeal Site becomes stronger, the parkland character becomes evident as one walks between points 3 and 4, and here the walker picks up the route of the Oxfordshire Green Belt Way. The view is evidently open, rural and the Culham Campus to the right of the viewer is perceptually separate from the open land beyond. The STRAT 9 development will become obvious in the view, substantially impacting on the view to the left. If the Appeal Site was

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developed the land straight ahead would become the battery storage part of the scheme and the view substantially changed.

- x19. If the Appeal Scheme were to be allowed the perception of the landscape would change from rural, pastoral and influenced by parkland to industrialised through the addition of storage containers in a vast compound surrounded by industrial-scale fencing. The views of the parkland character would be masked by the proposed development. The maturing of the proposed mitigation planting would mask the valued landscape patterns in perpetuity.
- x20. No impact upon heritage assets here. This section of the industrial estate road very approximately follows the line of the C19 estate road.
- x21. Then walk north along the route of the Oxfordshire Green Belt Way on the concrete track towards Viewpoint 4.



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**Viewpoint 4: Looking north towards the parkland surrounding the site from the edge of the STRAT 8 area on the edge of and into the Green Belt**



- x23. The viewer can readily observe the Culham Campus to the right of the view. The STRAT 9 new settlement would be visible to the left of the view. The role the site plays in creating spatial separation between the two is apparent and important. The pasture and parkland create the rural interface. If the Appeal Site was developed the perception would change to one of an industrialised landscape being located between the adjacent settlement and the Science Campus, creating substantial and adverse landscape and visual impacts.
- x24. The undeveloped open character of the Green Belt would be eroded to the point of being lost should the proposed development be constructed in the foreground of the view. The change would also bring about the loss of the continuity of the open pasture crossing the slope in the foreground to the parkland.

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- x25. View to the RPG from perimeter road at the north edge of CSC with the appeal site in the foreground. It is difficult to distinguish where the RPG stops and the countryside begins.
- x26. Then walk north along the concrete track route of the Oxfordshire Green Belt Way towards Viewpoint 5.

**Viewpoint 5: Looking east towards the site from the edge of the STRAT 9 area on the edge of the Green Belt from the Oxfordshire Green Belt Way**



- x28. The viewer is walking along the Oxfordshire Green Belt Way on the edge of the new settlement location overlooking the railway line that, by being set down into the landscape in cutting, permits uninterrupted views of the parkland ahead on the rising ground.
- x29. The landscape character is readily observed and highly valued parkland features are easily discerned in the view. There is depth to the view and the perception of openness of the Green Belt is a strong feature. If developed the land would become enclosed, new industrial elements from the BESS storage containers and surrounding 4m high fence would be dominant until the proposed mitigation planting matures. On maturity and post-40 year development the loss of openness would remain and the clarity of the view would remain lost.
- x30. The view from Oxford Green Belt Way reveals the edge of the park and its planting composition in a spectacular open manner allowing appreciation of the remnants of the internal tree belt planting within the Park. These opportunistic views as part of the



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evolution of the Park better revealing its significance. Central to this view is the open swathe of land with groups of trees. Mound indicating former location of Abingdon Lodge is on the right, under the power lines.

- x31. Then walk north along the gravel track route of the Oxfordshire Green Belt Way towards Viewpoint 6.

**Viewpoint 6: Looking south-east towards the site from the Oxfordshire Green Belt  
Way over the railway line that is in cut**



- x33. This is the first view of the parkland character as a walker heads south along the Oxfordshire Green Belt Way. The walker is afforded views of open undeveloped land on the walk south. A view of the proposed development opens up south of this viewing position.
- x34. Then walk north along the route of the Oxfordshire Green Belt Way towards the River Thames and observe the Brunell bridge before turning around and walking back along the Oxfordshire Green Belt Walk towards the Appeal Site and cross over the brick bridge and back to Viewpoint 4. Follow the concrete road around the edge of the former airfield towards Viewpoint 7.

**Viewpoint 7: Looking north towards the site from within the Green Belt on the Appeal  
Site edge and into the parkland**



- x36. The viewer is walking along the Oxfordshire Green Belt Way on the edge of the Campus and the open aspect permits uninterrupted views of the parkland ahead on the rising ground.
- x37. The landscape character is readily observed and highly valued parkland features are easily discerned in the view.
- x38. There is depth to the view and the perception of openness of the Green Belt is a strong feature.
- x39. If developed the land would become enclosed, new industrial elements from the BESS storage containers and surrounding 4m high fence would be dominant in the foreground of the view, with minimal mitigation planting. On maturity and post-40 year



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development the loss of openness would remain and the clarity of the view of the parkland would remain lost.

- x40. Again, the view from Oxford Green Belt Way reveals the edge of the park and its planting composition in a spectacular open manner allowing appreciation of the remnants of the internal tree belt planting within the Park.
- x41. Such opportunistic views as part of the evolution of the Park better revealing its significance. Central to this view is the open swathe of land with groups of trees. The mound indicating the former location of Abingdon Lodge is on the right, under the power lines.
- x42. Then walk back to the concrete road and head east along the route of the Oxfordshire Green Belt Way towards Viewpoint 8.

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**Viewpoint 8: Looking north towards the site from the edge of the STRAT 8 area on the edge of the Green Belt from the Oxfordshire Green Belt Walk alongside Site Selection areas IS1 (left) and IS3 (right)**



- x44. This view shows the location of the alternative sites in the Site Selection document (**CD 1.1.47**).
- x45. From this location there would be no harmful impacts on landscape or heritage.
- x46. Then walk north along the route of the Oxfordshire Green Belt Way towards Viewpoint 9, turning off the concrete road and heading parallel to the woodland edge following the PROW signposts.

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**Viewpoint 9: Looking south from the edge of the STRAT 8 area on the edge of the Green Belt and parkland and into Site Selection area SL1**



- x48. This view shows the location of the alternative sites in the Site Selection document (**CD 1.1.47**).
- x49. From this location there would be no harmful impacts on landscape or heritage.
- x50. Then continue to walk north along the route of the Oxfordshire Green Belt Way towards Viewpoint 10.



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**Viewpoint 10: Waymarking purposes - within the parkland heading north along the public right of way through New Covert (Oxfordshire Green Belt Way and Thame Lane)**



x52. Then head off Thame Lane and walk north along the route of the Oxfordshire Green Belt Way towards Keeper's Cottage and Venison House at Viewpoint 11.



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**Viewpoint 11: Venison House - photo for waymarking purposes only**

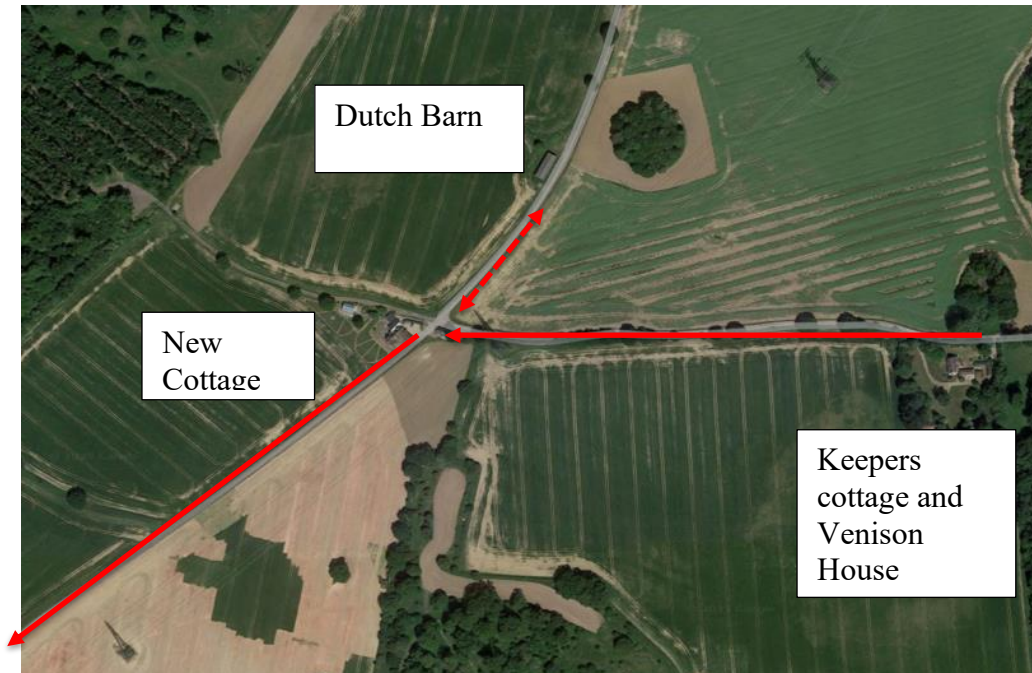


x54. Then walk west (left) along the route of the Oxfordshire Green Belt Way towards Viewpoint 12 at New Cottage.



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### Viewpoint 12a: Dutch Barn on Abingdon Drive



### Viewpoint 12b: Continue West to New Cottage/Abingdon Drive





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- x55. Walk north-east for 200m towards Dutch Barn and Nuneham House along the main track and observe the parkland character. There is no need to walk all the way to the house. Turn around and walk back along this route towards the west.
- x56. Then walk north along the route of the Abingdon Drive back towards New Cottage and towards Viewpoint 13

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**Viewpoint 13: Within the estate looking north along the Abingdon Drive route that is still in active use within the estate**



x58. Then walk north along the route of the Abingdon Drive towards Viewpoint 14

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**Viewpoint 14: Looking south-west towards the site along the Abingdon drive at New Cottage**



x60. Then walk south-west along the route of the Abingdon Drive towards Viewpoint 15.



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**Viewpoint 15: Looking south-west towards the parkland compartments along the Abingdon Drive**



- x62. This is the remnants of the internal tree belt (shown on Brown's plan). Past that belt there will be first long view reveal.
- x63. Then walk south along the route of the Abingdon Drive towards Viewpoint 16.

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**Viewpoint 16: Looking south towards the site from the edge of the Nuneham Estate  
land on the edge of the Appeal Site red line**



x65. Then walk north along the route of the Abingdon Drive, climbing through the gates, towards Viewpoint 17.



**Viewpoint 17: Looking south-west towards the site from Abingdon Drive, past the inner tree belt area on the edge of the Green Belt and within the parkland**



- x67. This is one of the series of dynamic views and experiences along Abingdon Drive where the road goes through the bend and trees and reveals long views of the open parkland and Abingdon in the distance.
- x68. The open character of the landscape on which the site is proposed forms an important transitional parcel of land between the parkland in the Green Belt and the allocation. The presence of the allocation will make the remaining parkland and Green Belt between the new housing and the viewer more important and a more highly valued south-landscape from multiple perspectives.
- x69. Then walk north along the route of the Abingdon Drive towards Viewpoint 18.



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**Viewpoint 18: Looking south-west along the route of Abingdon Drive from the junction with Thame Lane estate road towards the site from the beginning of the 'reveal' on the route of the Abingdon Drive**



- x71. This is another and final gentle bend in the drive leading to the location of the appeal site before leaving the RPG.
- x72. Then walk south-west along the route of the Abingdon Drive through the Appeal Site towards Viewpoint 19.

**Viewpoint 19a: Looking west towards St Helen's Church Spire in Abingdon from within the parkland and the Green Belt**



- x74. This is another and final gentle bend in the drive within the parkland leading to the location of the appeal site before leaving the RPG.
- x75. The viewer is walking along the Abingdon Drive within the parkland and Green Belt. The new settlement location is beyond the railway line that, by being set down into the landscape in cutting, permits uninterrupted views of the parkland ahead towards the far distance with Abingdon on the rising ground. The allocation will not remove all of the view and some visual connections would remain to the south-west.
- x76. The landscape character is readily observed, and highly valued parkland features are easily discerned in the view. There is depth to the view and the perception of openness of the Green Belt is a strong feature. If developed the land would become enclosed, new industrial elements from the BESS storage containers and surrounding 4m high

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fence would be dominant until the proposed mitigation planting matures. On maturity and post-40 year development the loss of openness would remain and the clarity of the view would remain lost.

- x77. The view from Abingdon Drive reveals the edge of the park and its planting composition in a spectacular open manner allowing appreciation of the remnants of the internal tree belt planting within the Park. These opportunistic views as part of the evolution of the Park better revealing its significance. Central to this view is the open swathe of land with groups of trees. The mound indicating former location of Abingdon Lodge is under the power lines.



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**Viewpoint 19b: Looking north towards the site from within the Green Belt on the Appeal Site edge along the route of the Abingdon Drive towards the site of the lodge, identified as a mound**



x78. This looks back to the final gentle bend in the drive leading to the location of the appeal site before leaving the RPG. The site of the former Abingdon Lodge is indicated by the mound in the foreground of this view.

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**Viewpoint 19c: Looking north towards the site from within the Green Belt on the Appeal Site edge along the route of the Abingdon Drive towards the site of the lodge, identified as a very distinctive mound**



- x79. This location, the site of the Abingdon Lodge, is described in the Council's Cultural heritage proof. The track will be flanked with development on both sides. Principal access into the compound will be placed on the west corner of the mound. The location of the former principal entrance will become illegible.
- x80. Then walk north along the route of the Oxfordshire Green Belt Way towards Viewpoint 7. Return to Culham Station.
- x81. This completes the site visit route.

Sasha Berezina & Anne Priscott  
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