

Report of the Chief Executive

<b>Application Number:</b>	<b>24/00066/FUL</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Southfields Farm, Common Lane, Bramcote, Nottinghamshire, NG9 3DT</b>
<b>Proposal:</b>	<b>Construction and operation of two adjacent Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) facilities operating at different voltages (132kV and 33kV) in order to fully support the local electricity network. Both facilities are adjacent to each other within a single new overall site compound comprising: the erection of battery containers, switchgear containers, inverters, control building, and new substations; installation of new underground cable circuits to connect the new BESS substations; improvements to access from Common Lane; establishing new internal access roads, resurfaced compound, and turning area; installation of perimeter fencing and access gate; associated ground works; and landscaping (revised scheme).</b>

The application is brought to the Committee at request of Councillor H Land. The proposal is also a departure from the Broxtowe Part 2 Local Plan 2019.

1. Purpose of Report

The application seeks full planning permission for the construction and operation of two adjacent Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) facilities operating at different voltages (132kV and 33kV) in order to fully support the local electricity network. Both facilities are adjacent to each other within a single new overall site compound comprising: the erection of battery containers, switchgear containers, inverters, control building, and new substations; installation of new underground cable circuits to connect the new BESS substations; improvements to access from Common Lane; establishing new internal access roads, resurfaced compound, and turning area; installation of perimeter fencing and access gate; associated ground works; and landscaping.

This application is an amended re-submission of previous application 22/00799/FUL which was refused 13 June 2023.

2. Recommendation

**The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that planning permission be granted subject to conditions outlined in the Appendix.**

### 3. Detail

The application seeks full planning permission for the development as outlined in paragraph 1 above.

The application site approximately 4.38 hectares (ha), with approximately 1.9 (ha) of this being dedicated to the BESS facility, 1.93 (ha) for landscaping and tree planting, and the remainder for the subterranean cable routing. The site currently forms agricultural land within the Green Belt.

The main issues relate to whether the principle of the development in the Green Belt is acceptable; the impact on the openness of the Green Belt; the impact on the visual amenity and Prominent Area of Special Protection; the impact on heritage assets and archaeology; the impact on the living conditions of neighbouring properties; the impact on highway safety; the impact on ecology; and the impact on drainage.

What is proposed is considered to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The main issue to assess is whether any of the matters within the report contained within the **Appendix** taken individually or collectively, amount to the Very Special Circumstances (VSC) necessary to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt through inappropriateness. What constitutes VSC will depend on the weight of each of the factors put forward and the degree of weight to be accorded to each is a matter for the decision taker. Firstly, it is to determine whether any individual factor taken by itself outweighs the harm. Secondly, to consider whether a number of factors combine to create VSC.

Substantial weight is afforded to the proposal which contributes to meeting these wider environmental main objectives of energy management, resource conservation, climate protection and cost savings. The benefits of the scheme are that the proposal would support and supplement renewable energy through the storage of energy produced. National government policy is to significantly increase the delivery of all forms of renewable and low carbon energy, and this cannot be achieved without battery storage to support the network at all levels. Battery storage is the critical enabling and supporting technology for renewable energy. This is given significant weight.

It is considered that, the above factors taken collectively do amount to the VSC and are sufficient to clearly outweigh the harm by reason of inappropriateness, the harm to the openness of the Green Belt and the harm to the character and appearance of the area.

### 4. Financial Implications

The comments from the Head of Finance Services were as follows:

There are no additional financial implications for the Council with costs and income being within the normal course of business and contained within existing

budgets. Any separate financial issues associated with Section 106 or similar legal documents are covered elsewhere in the report.

5. Legal Implications

The comments from the Head of Legal Services were as follows:

The Legal implications are set out in the report where relevant, a Legal advisor will also be present at the meeting should legal considerations arise.

6. Data Protection Compliance Implications

Due consideration has been given to keeping the planning process as transparent as possible, whilst ensuring that data protection legislation is complied with.

7. Climate Change Implications

Climate Change implications are considered within the report.

8. Background Papers

There are no background papers.