

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: F/23/94457

Site Address: Land at Misslebrook, North Baddesley, SO52 9LY

Case Officer: Gary Osmond

Description: Proposed battery electrical storage system (BESS), together with substation, transformer stations, site accesses, internal access tracks, security measures, access gates, other ancillary infrastructure and landscaping and biodiversity enhancements (routing of cable only within Eastleigh LPA boundary)

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☐	No ☒
- Within the urban edge		

Planning History?	Yes ☐	No ☒
n/a		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☒	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	One representation received from Chillworth Parish Council objecting to the application and that it is being dealt with under delegated powers. Mention was also made of the proposed cable route having to cross gas mains.		
Chandler's Ford Parish Council:	No comment received.		
Hampshire Highways:	No objection subject to conditions in relation to submission of a Construction Traffic Management Plan; details to prevent mud on the highway; details of road signage; and details of the intended cable routes.		
Test Valley Borough Council:	No comments received.		

Site Visit:	Yes ☐	No ☒
The site is well known to the case officer. Plus, all works would be underground.		

Policy:
National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance
Development Plan: The <u>Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036</u> The most relevant policies are Strategic policies S1 and S2; and Development Management policies DM1, DM2, DM3, DM4, DM9, DM11 and DM13.
Supplementary Planning Documents: Quality Places; Character Area Appraisals.

Assessment:
Proposal: The application is part of a larger scheme for a battery storage facility to serve the National Grid. The main facility would be outside the Borough within the jurisdiction of Test Valley Borough Council, who are dealing with a separate planning application for this main element. This application seeks consent for the laying of electrical cables, which is the only part within the boundaries of Eastleigh Borough, so that the main facility can link to

the National Grid via the main substation off Bournemouth Road. All works within Eastleigh's boundaries would be buried underground and not visible.

Policy & Principle:

The application site lies within the urban edge where the basic principle of development is considered to be acceptable, with any final approval being based upon the impact of that proposed and how well it accords with the relevant policies of the adopted Local Plan. In this instance the most relevant policies are: DM1, which requires all development to take appropriate account of the locality and neighbouring uses, as well as achieve a good standard of design; DM2, DM3 and DM4, which relate to sustainable development, adapting to climate change and provision of zero or low carbon energy; and DM9, which supports the provision of necessary public utility services and infrastructure.

The proposed development forms part of a larger scheme which would support the change from fossil fuelled power generation to more sustainable forms, such as wind and solar, by providing electrical storage capacity which can be used to support and balance the grid. As such it is supported in principle.

Street Scene & Area Character:

As mentioned above, all works within Eastleigh will be buried underground within the highway verge. As such there will be no impact upon the street scene or the character of the locality.

Amenity:

Once installed, there would be no impact upon the amenity of adjacent uses or occupiers.

Highways:

Hampshire Highways have requested a number of conditions to be attached to any planning approval (see above). Whilst these are not unreasonable points in themselves, all of these issues would be dealt with by way of the separate consents which would need to be obtained from Hampshire Highways themselves for the applicant to undertake the works. That being the case, it is not considered necessary or reasonable in planning terms to duplicate matters which would be required, and which can be secured via separate legislation and consents. As such, these requested conditions will not be included within the LPA's planning decision.

Nature Conservation & Trees:

Given the works are all within the highway verge, there should be very limited localised impact upon trees or biodiversity habitat. The wider benefits of moving to a low carbon electrical system are considered to be a positive in respect of nature conservation.

Climate Change:

In July 2019, the Council declared a Climate Change and Environmental Emergency. In doing so it agreed, among other things, to: (a) put in place measures to ensure the Council's own operations and functions achieve carbon neutrality by 2025; (b) work with partners to aim for all projects and services delivered in the Borough to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030; (c) ensure that the Council's procurement policy recognises carbon neutrality as one of its primary considerations; and (d) recognise the urgency of action to mitigate and adapt to climate change in every decision taken by the Council. This is underpinned by the Climate and Environment Emergency Strategy 2020–2030 and the supporting Climate and Environment Emergency Action Plan – Update June 2020.

The declaration of the Climate Change and Environmental Emergency demonstrates a strong commitment from the Council to achieve net zero. The NPPF, development plan and adopted local plan policy do not set this as a specific target, but it is a material consideration to be considered alongside all other material considerations. In any case addressing climate change is a core part of the NPPF and local plan policy. The need to support the economy is part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the adopted local plan, as is an assessment of climate impacts.

The NPPF aims for the need for housing to be met, and policy S2 of the Local Plan sets a target for 14,580 dwellings to be provided by 2036. The NPPF, Policies S1, DM2 and DM3 of the Local Plan and energy and water elements of the adopted Environmentally Sustainable Development SPD require development to be sustainable in terms of resource use, climate change and energy use. When considering the impact of climate change, the proposed development is expected to be resilient to the potential effects of climate change and is expected to reduce/limit impacts on climate emissions as a result of the development or its use.

As discussed above, the move to more sustainable and renewable forms of electrical generation and power storage is welcome and necessary.

Equalities Implications:

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 created the public sector equality duty. Section 149 states:

- A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

When making policy decisions, the Council must take account of the equality duty and in particular any potential impact on protected groups. It is considered that this application does not raise any equality implications

Conclusion:

Recommendation:

PERMIT ☒

REFUSE ☐

For the reasons set out above the application is recommended for approval subject to the following conditions:

- Approved drawings; and
- Commencement within three years.