



Strategic Planning Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee held at The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester, NN12 6AD on Tuesday 18 June 2024 at 2.00 pm.

Present:

Councillor Phil Bignell (Chair)
Councillor Kevin Parker (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Ann Addison
Councillor Alan Chantler
Councillor Paul Clark
Councillor Keith Holland-Delamere
Councillor Rosie Humphreys
Councillor David James
Councillor Ken Pritchard
Councillor Bob Purser

Also Present:

Robert Chamberlain, Applicant

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor André González De Savage
Councillor Charles Manners
Councillor Cathrine Russell

Officers:

Katherine Hall, Head of Legal Services - Place
Simon Ellis, Head of Development Management
Nisar Mogul, Senior Planning Officer
Diana Davies, Democratic Services Officer

10. **Declarations of Interest**

None declared.

11. **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 21 May 2024 would be presented at the next Committee meeting.

12. **Chair's Announcements**

There was none.

13. **WND/2022/1084 Land North of Field View Cottage, Watling Street, Kilsby, Daventry, CV23 8UW**

The Committee considered the application for the installation and operation of a renewable energy generating station comprising ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays, inverter/transformer units, control house, substations, grid connection equipment, storage containers, site access, access gates and tracks, security measures, ancillary infrastructure, landscaping and biodiversity.

The Major Projects Officer outlined the application which included location maps, site plans, site layout, building elevations, highways access and photographs from various viewpoints to provide contextual information.

The Major Projects Officer referred to the Committee Update (previously circulated) recommending amendments for the Committees consideration, the inclusion of an additional Landscaping Condition (new Condition 11), the Numbering of subsequent Conditions revised accordingly.

The Major Projects Officer recommended the application be approved.

Robert Chamberlain, Applicant, attended the meeting, was permitted to speak and spoke in support of the application outlining the applicant's business experience and commitment to the community. He outlined the plans and the environmental and economic benefits of the application; addressed highways concerns to improve the access and safety of egress and ingress of vehicles for the site; provided a biodiversity net gain, with improved hedgerows, planting of a wild meadow and provision of habitat boxes for wildlife.

During the Committee, members gave consideration to:

- The new access to Parcel A and whether it should be restricted for use by smaller vehicles.
- Access to Parcel B was not considered by members entirely suitable for the larger vehicles that would be transporting construction materials and taking a right turn into site across the traffic flow.
- Concern was raised regarding the current speed limits on the A5 and Kilsby Road, and the safety of road users with large construction vehicles that would be joining the A5 from Kilsby Road and taking a right turn off Kilsby Road on to the site.
- How the Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) regulated vehicle movement; the application of a reduced speed limit on Kilsby Road; installation of temporary signage to advise of construction traffic.
- Whether there was the potential to request that National Highways consider a reduction in speed limit on the A5 or provision of temporary traffic lights on the Kilsby Road, to reduce risk and facilitate HGV access to the site during operating hours.
- That a grid connection had been agreed Western Power and the National Grid. That any infrastructure upgrades required by the project would be incorporated within the Grid Connection Agreement. There was a 6-9 month build, up to the grid connection date, connection was anticipated to be made by 2027.
- Retention of pasture for sheep grazing.

- 40 year period for biodiversity net gain.
- The requirement for and benefits of renewal energy sources.

The Committee summed up the discussions and drew the conclusion that mitigation of their concerns regarding highways safety for the site could be addressed through the Construction Traffic Management Plan, these included:

- Reduction of the speed limit on the A5 from 60mph to 50mph, for the period of construction.
- Temporary reduction of the speed limit on the Kilsby Road from 60mp to 40mph
- Provision of temporary traffic lights on Kilsby Road, manually operating during construction hours only, to allow safe transition of the largest HGVs on to the site.
- Provision of a point of contact number to facilitate communication on local issues arising.
- Access to Parcel A to exclude HGVs.

The Development Management Manager advised that Condition 7 covered the themes raised by Committee, that the applicant could resubmit the Construction Traffic Management Plan including the additional measures. The CTMP would be approved prior to commencement. He added that a request could be made for National Highways to reduce the speed restriction on the trunk road.

The Head of Legal – Place advised that National Highways and Local Highways had their own distinct powers. A request could be made of National Highways but the Local Authority could not require National Highways to concur with a particular position, and that discussions could form part of Condition 7.

Councillor Parker proposed the application be approved, subject to additional clauses being included the Construction Management Plan, the proposal was seconded by Councillor Chantler and on being put to the meeting was declared carried unanimously.

In reaching its decision, the Committee considered the officer's report, presentation, public representations and the Committee updates.

Resolved:

That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director – Planning and Development to grant permission subject to:

1. Condition 7, Construction Traffic Management Plan to include:
 - Consultation with National Highways with to request a Temporary Road Order to reduce the speed limit on the A5 from 60mph to 50mph, for the period of construction on site.
 - A temporary reduction of the speed limit on the Kilsby Road from 60mp to 40mph
 - Provision of temporary traffic lights on Kilsby Road, manually operating during construction hours only, to allow safe transition of the largest HGVs on to the site.

- Provision of a point of contact number to facilitate communication on local issues arising.
 - That HGVs would not use the proposed new access to Parcel A.
2. The addition of a Condition (new Condition 11):
- Landscaping
Notwithstanding the requirements of Condition 2, and the approved Landscape Strategy Plan – 1294/11 Rev D, no development shall take place (including demolition, ground works or vegetation clearance) until a detailed scheme for landscaping the site has been provided to and approved in writing by the local planning authority which shall include:-
 - a) Further details of the proposed tree and shrub planting including their species, number, sizes and positions, together with grass seeded/turfed areas and written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment i.e. depth of topsoil, mulch etc). All species used in the planting proposals associated with the development shall be native species of UK provenance;
 - b) Further details of the existing trees and hedgerows to be retained or felled, including existing and proposed soil levels at the base of each tree/hedgerow and the minimum distance between the base of the tree and the nearest edge of any excavation; and
 - c) Details of the hard landscaping including access tracks within the development.Such details shall be provided prior to the development commencing.
The approved scheme shall be implemented by the end of the first planting season following commencement of the development.
3. The remaining conditions set out in the Case Officer's report (and any amendments to those conditions as deemed necessary).

14. **Urgent Business**

There was none.

The meeting closed at 2.55 pm

Chair: _____

Date: _____