

COMMITTEE REPORT

Application Number	PL/2022/09258
Site Address	Minety Substation, Minety, Wiltshire, SN16 9DX
Proposal	Extension of existing substation comprising installation of 400/132kV transformer, 3no. 400/33kV transformers, circuit breakers, construction of retaining wall and 33kV switchroom, formation of access road, culverting of watercourse, erection of fencing and associated works.
Applicant	National Grid Electricity Transmission plc
Town/Parish Council	CHARLTON AND HANKERTON
Electoral Division	Brinkworth – Councillor Elizabeth Threlfall
Grid Ref	400081 189923
Type of application	Full Planning Permission
Case Officer	Adrian Walker

Reason for the application being considered by Committee

The application has been called-in by the Division Member (Brinkworth Division) Elizabeth Threlfall (on the 16th January 2023) for the following reasons - 'scale of the development', 'design' and 'environmental/highway impact'. It was also stated that the "Long term implications for the intensive development of the area with massed BESSs and solar farms. Also issues with construction traffic" need to be fully considered.

The application was heard at Northern Area Planning Committee on the 31st January.

The Committee voted to defer the application for up to three cycles pending the submission of further documentation and information to be provided by the applicant that Members felt was necessary to consider in order to make an informed decision.

The following documentation was to include;

- Fully justified needs report that sets out the gap in capacity in the network the extension to the substation seeks to address.
- Details of local groups that have been contacted for local biodiversity gain.
- Justification for why alternative sites would have a greater impact.
- Agreement of a Unilateral Undertaking for a contribution to biodiversity mitigation.

The applicants have provided the following documentation;

- Needs Case Dated 02/02/2024
- Minety BNG Letter Dated 15/02/2024

A Unilateral Undertaking is also being prepared for a contribution to biodiversity mitigation.

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is to assess the merits of the proposal against the policies of the development plan and other material considerations and to consider the recommendation to grant planning permission subject to conditions.

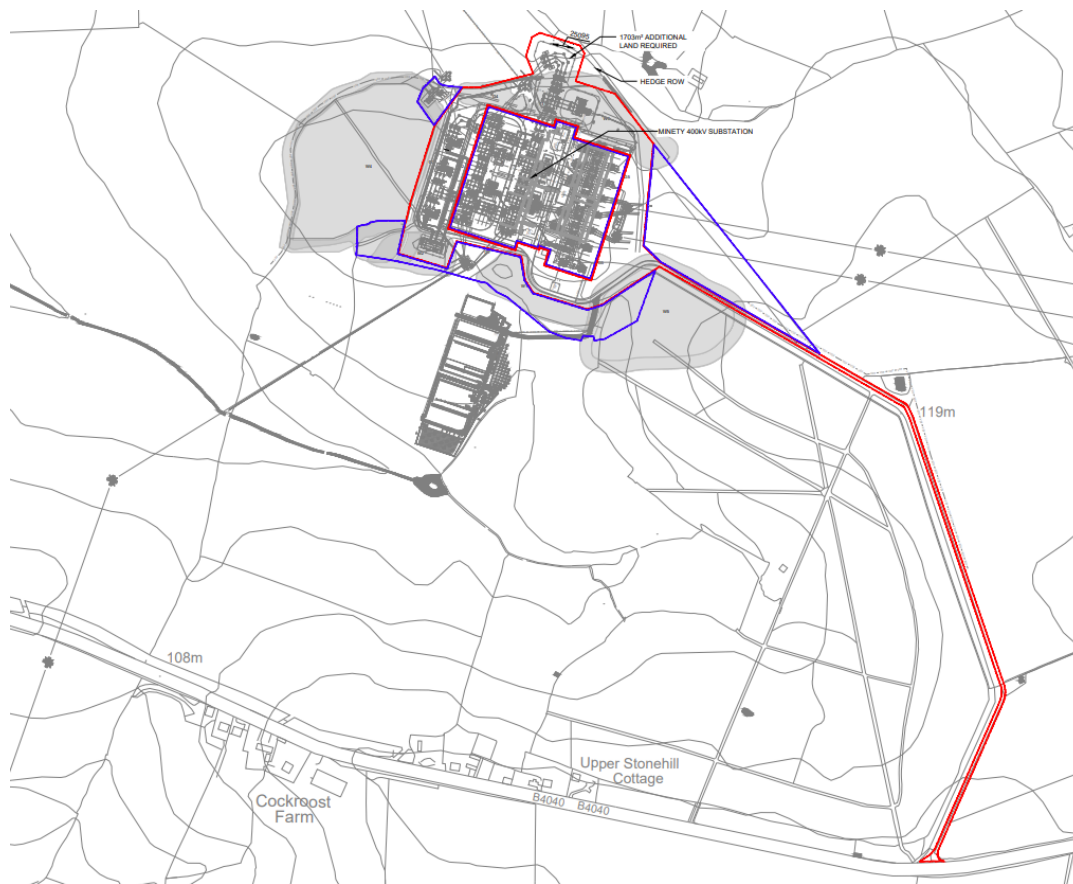
2. Report Summary

The main issues for consideration are:

- a) Whether the proposal is acceptable in principle;
- b) Whether the proposal would result in the loss of agricultural land;
- c) Whether the proposal would result in the loss of trees and ancient woodland;
- d) Whether the proposal would be harmful in terms of its landscape and visual impact;
- e) Whether the scheme would give rise to an adverse impact on residential amenity;
- f) Whether the proposal would have an adverse impact upon highway safety or public rights of way;
- g) Whether the scheme would cause harm to protected species and/or their habitats;
- h) Whether the scheme would cause harm to areas of archaeological interest or to heritage assets; and
- i) Whether the proposal would result in any other adverse environmental impacts.

3. Site Description

The site comprises the existing Minety substation which is located to the north of the B4040 between Minety and Charlton, and north of Stonehill Wood. The Planning, Design & Access Statement (November 2022) by National Grid explains that the Minety Substation is an outdoor 400kV four switch mesh air insulated switchgear (AIS) substation consisting of four super-grid transformers (SGTs) which are connected to an SSE-owned 132kV substation. Minety Substation also has four incoming overhead line feeder circuits. The site is accessed from an access road off the B4040, which wraps around the eastern edge of Stonehill Wood, as shown on the extract from the submitted Location Plan below:-

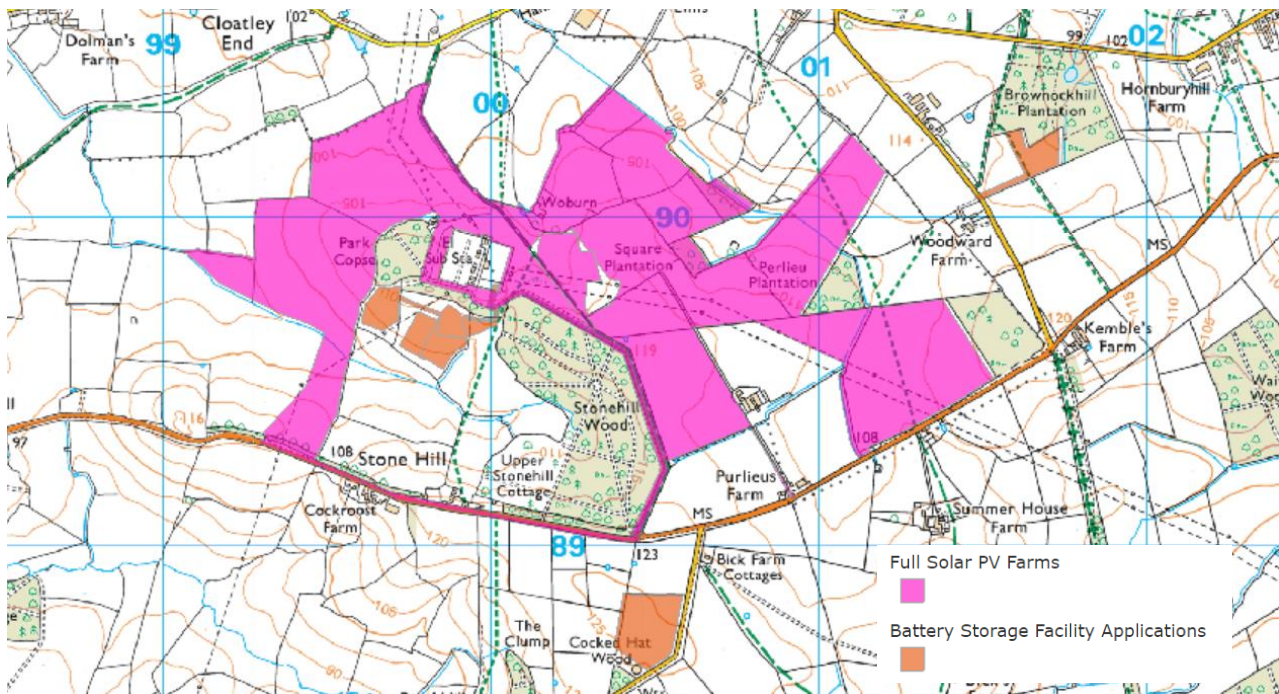


Site Location Plan

4. Relevant Planning History

The Minety Substation has been the subject of previous planning applications and there are current applications before the Council that are linked to the site. These are all material to the assessment of the proposed development in particular when considering the principle of the development and the consideration of the cumulative impacts. The ones adjacent and within the immediate vicinity of the Minety substation are listed, and shown on a map, below. The list includes permitted schemes, some of which have been implemented and others replaced by subsequent permissions, and applications currently before the Council and Planning Inspectorate to be determined:-

- Planning Application 20/03528/FUL - Installation of a renewable led energy scheme comprising ground mounted photovoltaic solar arrays and battery-based electricity storage containers together with transformer stations; access; internal access track; landscaping; security fencing; security measures; access gate; and ancillary infrastructure - Approved with Conditions 20/08/2021 (*north / east and west of the substation*)
- Planning Application PL/2023/03501 - Variation of condition 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11 & 20 of 20/03528/FUL - To allow modifications to the approved layout, increase from 12 battery units with 16 localised inverters to 22 battery units and 19 containerised inverters, alterations to location of vehicular access – Under Consideration



- Planning Application 17/03936/FUL - Development of a 49.99 MW Battery Storage Facility with associated ancillary equipment, providing services to National Grid, formation of access track - Approved with Conditions 20/07/2017 (*north of the substation*)
- Planning Application 17/03941/FUL - Development of a 49.99 MW Battery Storage Facility with associated ancillary equipment, providing services to National Grid, formation of access track - Approved with Conditions 19/07/2017 (*north of the substation*)
- Planning Application 17/05526/FUL - Energy Storage System, comprising battery storage containers, ancillary buildings, security fencing, CCTV, landscaping and substation - Land adjacent to electricity sub station - Approved with Conditions 21/09/2017 (*south of the substation*)
- Planning Application 18/04718/FUL - Energy Storage System, Comprising Battery Storage Containers, Ancillary Buildings, Security Fencing, CCTV and Landscaping - Land Adjacent to Electricity Sub Station - Approved with Conditions 19/07/2018 (*south of the substation*)
- Planning Application 19/11460/FUL - Energy Storage System, comprising battery storage containers, ancillary buildings, security fencing, CCTV and landscaping - Approved with Conditions 06/02/2020 (*north-east of the substation*)
- Planning Application 20/07390/FUL - Installation of a battery storage facility and ancillary development on land adjacent to National Grid's Minety Substation - National Grid Minety Substation Approved with Conditions 25/01/2001 (*east of the substation*)
- Planning Application PL/2021/09101 - Variation of conditions 2 and 10 for application 17/03941/FUL - Development of a 49.99 MW Battery Storage Facility with associated ancillary equipment, providing services to National Grid, formation of access track - Approved with Conditions 28/06/2022
- Planning Application PL/2021/04151 - Construction of a 2 hour duration containerised Battery Storage Facility with the ability to store and export up to 49.99 MW of electricity. The development will comprise 58 single storey steel cabins, known as E - Houses which are 12m long, 2.4m wide and 2.9m high, which house banks of lithium-ion batteries. 12 MV Blocks, also known as the transformers and control gear sit alongside E - Houses. The compound is protected with a 2.5 m high steel mesh fence. The proposed development would replace the approved Minety North substation (Minety North, 17/03936/FUL) – Approved with Conditions 08/11/2021 (*north-east of the substation*)
- Planning Application PL/2022/05504 - Installation of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) together with associated ancillary infrastructure, equipment and access arrangements - Land at Stonehill, Minety, Wiltshire, SN16 9DX – Under Consideration
- Planning Application PL/2022/05412 - Proposed Development is for a battery storage facility and ancillary infrastructure Revision of PL/2022/00404 - Land off Dog Trap Lane, Minety (PL/2022/00404 was withdrawn) – Under Consideration
- Planning Application PL/2022/00664 - Proposed Development is for a battery storage facility. The use of the site would change from agricultural to energy infrastructure - Land off Pond Lane, Minety – Under Consideration via Appeal ref APP/Y3940/W/23/3319392

5. The Proposal

The application is submitted by National Grid (National Grid Electricity Transmission plc) who owns the high voltage electricity transmission system in England and Wales and operates the electricity transmission system across Great Britain. The company is responsible for operating the high voltage electricity network, carrying power between power stations and the local electricity supply networks of the Distribution Network Operators (DNOs).

This application seeks full planning permission for the extension of National Grid's existing Minety substation to include the installation of four transformers (SGTs) and associated works. The proposals would upgrade the existing substation to connect additional power generation as well as meeting increasing demands on the existing network.

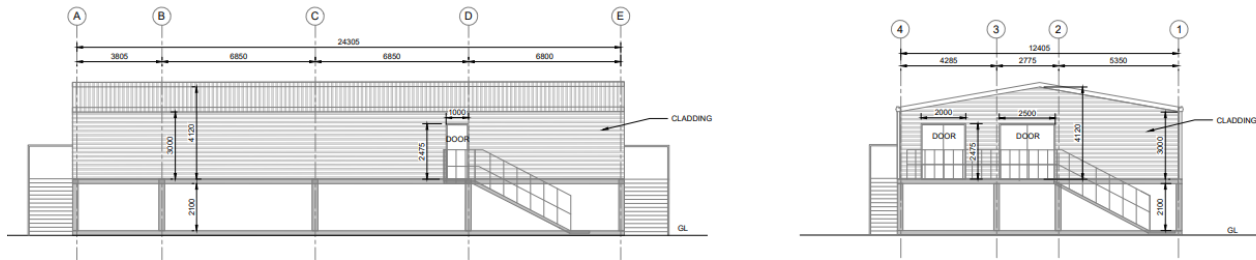
The proposed development is required to ensure the security and quality of future energy supply. It is advised that the alternative would be the construction of a new substation site, which would require significant infrastructure and carry considerable cost. An extension to the existing substation, as proposed, is the most efficient and economical solution for end consumers, and has the least environmental impact.

The works can be summarised as follows:-

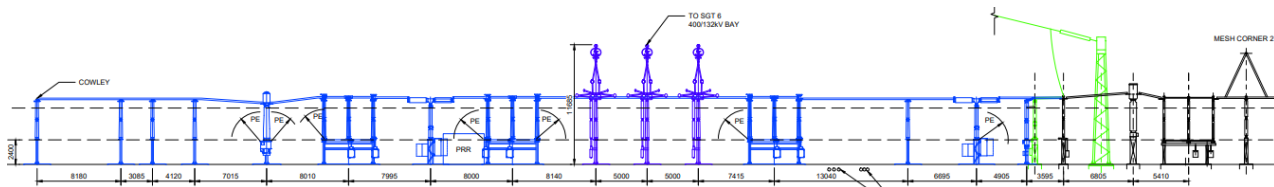
- Installation of one 400/132kV transformer on land to the north of the existing substation
- Installation of three 400/33kV transformers on land to the west of the existing substation
- Installation of busbars, circuit breakers, disconnectors and switches
- Erection of 33kV switch room and retaining wall
- Formation of access road
- Culverting of watercourse
- Erection of fencing and associated works



Proposed Site Plan



Proposed Elevations – Switchgear Building



Proposed Section Plan – Proposed Infrastructure

The application explains that “National Grid has a statutory duty to offer a customer a connection and to be economic and efficient in developing and operating the transmission system whilst also having regard to the preservation of amenity when developing the network. In developing the scheme at Minety, National Grid has sought to balance these requirements and meet its statutory duties.

The works are required to facilitate connection of 450MVA of battery / solar generation, achieve greater reliability of the existing substation to enable the increase in embedded generation within the local Distribution Network Operator (DNO) and 240MVA of additional capacity for the DNO to enable meet increased energy demand in the wider region. All of these aspects will enable the decarbonisation of the electricity supply network”.

The application is supported by the following plans and documents: -

- Document. Planning, Design & Access Statement (November 2022) by National Grid
- Drawing. Location Plan PDD-101488-LAY-300 Rev 5
- Drawing. Proposed Layout Plan PDD-101488-LAY-302 Rev 5
- Drawing. Proposed Sections PDD-101488-ELE-303 Rev 3 Sheet 1 of 2
- Drawing. Proposed Sections PDD-101488-ELE-303 Rev 3 Sheet 2 of 2
- Drawing. Proposed Switchgear Room Plan and Elevation PDD-101488-ELE-304
- Document. Ecological Appraisal (ref. 9236.003)
- Document. Dormouse Survey Report (ref. 9236.004)
- Document. Biodiversity Net Gain and Condition Assessment (ref. 9236)
- Document. Flood Risk Assessment (ref. PDD-100598-101391-101488-REP-004)
- Document. Geotechnical and Geoenvironmental Desk Study (ref. PDD- 100598-101391-101488-REP-001)
- Document. Noise Impact Assessment (ref. EEN/485/NOTE202)
- Document. Construction Traffic Management Plan (ref. PDD-101488-REP-007)

- Document. Abnormal Loads Report (ref. 22-1089)
- Document. Heritage Desk Based Assessment
- Document. Arboricultural Impact Assessment

The application was updated on the 11th July 2023 through the submission of the following:

- Drawing. Location Plan PDD-101488-LAY-300 Rev 9
- Drawing. Ancient Woodland Buffer Zone Layout PDD-101488-LAY-315-REV-0
- Document. Construction Traffic Management Plan (Rev.4 / May 2023)
- Document. Highways Technical Note
- Document. Ecology Assessment – Addendum (June 2023) by The Environment Partnership
- Document. Dormouse Habitat Creation Strategy (July 2023) by the Environment Partnership
- Document. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Report (July 2023) by the Environment Partnership
- Document. Great Crested Newt District Level Licensing Impact Assessment & Conservation Payment Certificate

6. Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Wiltshire Core Strategy 2006 – 2026, with particular regard to:

- Core Policy 3 Infrastructure Requirements
- Core Policy 42 Standalone Renewable Energy Installations
- Core Policy 50 Biodiversity and Geodiversity;
- Core Policy 51 Landscape
- Core Policy 52 Green Infrastructure
- Core Policy 57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping;
- Core Policy 58 Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment;
- Core Policy 60 Sustainable Transport
- Core Policy 61 Transport & Development
- Core Policy 62 Development impacts on the transport network
- Core Policy 67 Flood Risk;

North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 (Saved Policies)

- Policy NE12 Woodland (saved North Wiltshire Local Plan policy);
- Policy NE14 Trees and the control of new development (saved North Wiltshire Local Plan policy);
- Policy NE18 Noise and pollution (saved North Wiltshire Local Plan policy).

Planning Practice Guidance for Renewable and Low Carbon Energy (published 18 June 2015 / updated 14 August 2023).

National Policy Statements for Energy Infrastructure (sets out the government’s policy for delivery of major energy infrastructure).

7. Consultations

The application has been subject to two formal periods of consultation and publicity; the latter period due to the receipt of amended plans, drawings and documents. The most recent response from each consultee is summarised below:

Charlton Parish Council – No objection

Hankerton Parish Council – No objection

Cricklade Town Council – objection; *“Cricklade Town Council is extremely concerned regarding the amount of additional Heavy Goods Vehicle traffic that will be generated by this project. Cricklade High Street is already overburdened by the amount of HGV traffic originating from other sources, and the anticipated additional traffic flow is well beyond the capacity of the roads through Cricklade town centre. Residents already suffer from an unacceptable level of noise, vibration and risk to pedestrians, and it is unreasonable to ask the town of Cricklade to endure the additional traffic levels that have been suggested.*

We note that the additional construction traffic has been discussed with regard to routing and the report identifies predefined routes. Four points of entry have been identified. We are pleased to see that three of the routes avoid Cricklade, but we are concerned that the A419 access (Route 2), passes through the centre of Cricklade and is likely to add significantly to the noise, vibration and pedestrian safety concerns that already exist. It is noted that the routes identified are the most direct routes which are deemed suitable for HGV traffic, but we note also that the primary considerations in selecting these routes include a requirement to avoid settlements and any other sensitive receptors to reduce congestion and minimise effects in cities, towns, and villages. This is clearly not the case in the consideration of traffic from the A419 using Route 2. We consider this route to be unnecessary as traffic using the A419 in either direction could exit at the Spine Road Junction following Route 1.

We ask therefore, that should this application be approved, a condition be imposed on the applicant that heavy traffic servicing this project is prohibited from using the A419 Route 2, and is Only to use Route 1”.

Natural England – Originally replied requesting further information to determine the significance of the impact on dormice and drew attention to its published Standing Advice on protected species (letter dated 03 February 2023). No further observations following the submission of further ecological surveys and reports, which included a Dormouse Mitigation/Habitat Creation Strategy.

Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service – No observations

Council Archaeology – No objection.

Council Highways Department – No objection following the submission of further information, subject to informative to protect the Public Right of Way during the construction period.

Council Ecologist – Objection because the development will result in significant harm to biodiversity, and does not include sufficient mitigation or compensation to ensure no net loss of biodiversity.

Council Landscape Officer – Objection due to the loss of a significant number of trees and impact on landscape character.

Council Arboricultural Officer – No observations

Council Drainage Officer – No objection subject to a condition to secure a full and final surface water drainage scheme.

Council Rights of Way Officer – No observations

Council Public Protection Officer – No objection subject to conditions in relation to noise pollution and land contamination to ensure no adverse impact result from the proposed development.

8. Publicity

As a result of publicity, representations have been received from two people raising concerns with the impact of construction traffic:

- There is concern about the number of HGV movement identified in the "Construction Traffic Management Plan".
- There is concern about the routes suggested; in particular the route labelled as "A419 (Route 2)". This route would take the HGVs through the middle of Cricklade - a most unsuitable route for HGVs.
- The traffic management measures will need to be properly applied and enforced - and there are effective means to address any infringements or shortfalls in their application.
- Consideration should also be given to further measures to alleviate the affect and consequences of the large number of vehicle movements.

The residents acknowledge the need and justification for the proposed development and recognise that Wiltshire Council is under pressure from central government to consider applications for solar arrays and BESS units to further its chimeric and uncostered ambition for net zero. It is however questioned whether the additional transformer capacity proposed by National Grid (NG) is solely to cater for the adjacent solar array and BESS units or are more planned in the area to be connected subsequently to the (enlarged) Upper Stonehill substation, whether additional supporting infrastructure would be required and connections to offsite infrastructure, and whether Wiltshire Council has a strategic plan for development associated with energy generation on storage.

9. Planning Considerations

a) Environmental Impact Assessment

The Planning, Design and Access Statement by National Grid outlines that "National Grid projects do not require Section 36 consent under the Electricity Act 1989 and the proposed installation does not produce electricity. It is not considered that the proposed development falls within any of the specific descriptions set out in Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 of the Town and Country (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017" (par 2.1.2).

The definition of 'Schedule 2 development' does however include 'Energy Infrastructure'. While it is recognised section 3(a) applies to "Industrial installations for the production of electricity, steam and hot water" the proposed development is clearly linked to the management and distribution of electricity. The application clarifies that "National Grid is responsible for operating the high voltage electricity network, carrying power between power stations and the local electricity supply networks of the Distribution Network Operators (DNOs). At substations, this primary transmission voltage of 400kV or 275kV and is transformed-down to lower voltages to supply both the DNOs who take supplies and distribute electricity at lower voltages to factories, offices and homes" (par 2.1.2).

The proposed development has therefore been considered against the selection criteria for screening Schedule 2 development set out at Schedule 3 of the Regulations i.e. characteristics of development, location of development, and type and characteristics of potential impact. It is

concluded that while there would be unavoidable environmental impacts associated with the development as outlined within this report, it is considered that that the effects of the proposal, alone and in combination with other existing, planned and permitted developments within the area, will not be so significant as to warrant an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The proposed development is therefore not EIA development but all key issues are considered in turn below.

b) Whether the proposal is acceptable in principle

The Department for Energy Security & Net Zero highlights within its National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure that the security and reliability of the UK's current and future energy supply is highly dependent on having an electricity network which will enable the new electricity generation, storage, and interconnection infrastructure that our country needs to meet the rapid increase in electricity demand required to transition to net zero, while maintaining energy security (par 1.1.1).

The NPPF advises that the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure (par 157).

The proposed development is required to ensure the security and quality of future energy supply within the area and directly responds to meeting a local need and contributes towards the Government's objective to strengthen the electricity network and help transition to net zero. The planning application explains that National Grid has identified the need to extend the existing operational Minety 400kV Substation for a combination of the following reasons:

- Demand growth on the SSE network.
- Connection of embedded generation to SSE network;
- Connection of generation to National Grid network;

National Grid provided further information regarding the need for the proposed development during the application process advising that it is aware of nine customers connecting directly into the expanded Minety 400kV substation. It is possible that other developments are connecting via the local Distribution Network Operator (DNO). The DNO apply to National Grid for additional capacity which enables an assessment of available and required capacity. National Grid advises that at Minety, this assessment has generated the need for a further SuperGrid Transformer which forms part of this application. Other than the nine customers connecting directly to National Grid whose grid capacity is dependent upon this application, National Grid cannot comment on other planning applications and whether they have secured grid capacity as this would be via the DNO.

There is a clear need for the proposed development based on the strategic overview provided by National Grid who also advises that extending the existing substation is the most efficient, economical and environmentally friendly option (the alternative would be the construction of a new substation site). While the development is therefore considered acceptable in principle, the following sections consider the site specific impacts of the proposed development and impacts on the wider environment to determine its acceptability.

c) Whether the proposal would result in the loss of agricultural land

The NPPF requires planning policies and decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by "...recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland" (paragraph 180). The application site relates to area of land in and around the existing substation compound which includes large areas of woodland. The development will not however result in the loss of agricultural land.

d) Whether the proposal would result in the loss of trees and ancient woodland

e) Whether the proposal would be harmful in terms of its landscape and visual impact

Core Policy 51 'Landscape' of the WCS outlines that new development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character, while any negative impacts must be mitigated as far as possible through sensitive design and landscape measures. Proposals should be informed by and sympathetic to the distinctive character areas identified in the relevant Landscape Character Assessment(s) and any other relevant assessments and studies.

Core Policies 51, 52 'Green Infrastructure' and 57 'Design' (i & ii) of the WCS also require development proposals to conserve and enhance natural features including trees, hedges and woodland. Saved Policy NE12 of the North Wiltshire Local Plan supports the creation, conservation, enhancement and positive management of woodland. It also seeks to protect areas of ancient and semi-natural woodland. Saved Policy NE14 of the North Wiltshire Local Plan seeks to prevent the loss of trees, hedges and other important landscape or ecological features that could be successfully and appropriately incorporated into the design of a development.

The application site includes a large area of woodland and therefore the application is supported by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report (December 2022) by AECOM, which includes a Tree Protection Plan and an Outline Arboricultural Method Statement. The report states that the proposed development would require the removal of forty-two individual trees, five groups, two woodland groups, part of four woodland groups and one unsurveyed tree group. No trees within the ancient woodland boundary are to be removed or significantly impacted however tree clearance is unavoidable within the minimum 15m buffer to the woodland. A new access route will be installed within the ancient woodland buffer zone but outside of the ancient woodland itself. It is stated that this impact is unavoidable due to site constraints but will be achieved without excavation or compaction with the use of a 3D cellular confinement system installed using no dig techniques.

The Council's Landscape Officer highlights that the location of Minety Substation is sensitive to industrial expansion in landscape and visual terms, especially to the southwest and northeast site corners. Hundreds of native broadleaf trees, which provide valuable woodland habitat, green infrastructure connections, buffers to adjoining semi natural ancient woodland and SSSI's and which also help provide a dense characteristic and effective screening function from countryside to the existing sub-station facility at this visually sensitive elevated hilltop location would be lost and/or physically and functionally reduced. The Officer is of the opinion that proposed development has not been sensitively located or designed; "In summary there are still a number of unknown issues for the proposed extension into the existing agricultural land to the northeast of the site, including proposed levels, unknown impacts on trees, and no explanation why the applicant feels it is unnecessary to provide any landscaping proposals fronting open field areas for this permanent industrial extension at this elevated countryside location".

The Landscape Officer recommends that "a proper joined up mitigating and enhancing landscape scheme should improve and repair the declining rural character of this area of countryside,

demonstrate green infrastructure links are maintained and enhanced as a minimum requirement for this harmful expansion of electricity transmission infrastructure linked to adjoining renewable energy generation and storage/release schemes (as they are all inextricably linked and connected). Any such scheme should ensure the wooded hilltop skyline character is retained and that views to new and existing industrialising features are minimised as far as possible from surrounding countryside and provide effective landscaping to reinstate removed and weakened Green Infrastructure links and connections”.

National Grid issued a response to the Landscape Officer’s consultation response which provides further justification for the need for the development and site selection process. It was also highlighted that National Grid will not remove trees unless absolutely necessary and will aim to retain any trees possible. It was also mentioned that the updated substation layout plan submitted shows the southern equipment has been moved slightly north to allow retention of trees to the south boundary. These southern trees will maintain screening and a habitat corridor.

It is evident that the proposed development will result in the loss of a significant amount of trees to accommodate the development, although there will be no direct impacts on the ancient woodlands to the east and west of the site as shown on the drawing below.



Ancient Woodland Buffer Zone Layout (Drawing. PDD-101488-LAY-315-REV-0)

The proposed extension to the substation will result in the overall substation becoming more prominent within the landscape, in particular from the north due to the loss of tree cover and the encroachment of the substation infrastructure into the countryside. National Grid is unable to deliver any mitigation or enhancement measures on site in the form of replacement tree planting or a landscape scheme to help soften and screen the impact of the development due to restricted land within their ownership.

The visual impact of the proposed development must be considered alongside the impact of other energy related developments within the area, in particular those surrounding the substation. A Battery Energy Storage System has been installed to the south-west side of the substation and another one on the north-east side. These are not individually prominent within the landscape but add to the overall mass of industrial/infrastructure development in the area, which would be further compounded if the permitted photovoltaic solar arrays development surrounding the substation is implemented. The development currently proposed would be seen amongst these developments and would be well integrated with the existing substation, it is therefore considered that the proposed development would not result in any particularly adverse cumulative visual effects above the existing baseline position.

It is clear that the proposed development will conflict with the certain objectives of Core Policies 51, 52 and 57 of the WCS and Policies NE12 and NE14 of the North Wiltshire Local Plan due to the loss of tree and impact on the proposal on landscape character and visual amenity. The conflict with the development plan will need to be considered within the overall planning balance, and should permission be granted the impact should be mitigated and reduced as much as possible through conditions to secure a full and final Arboricultural Method Statement, details of groundworks, and the proposed slab level of the proposed buildings and infrastructure.

f) Whether the scheme would give rise to an adverse impact on residential amenity

The NPPF advises that the planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability (par 180). This aim is also reflected within Core Policy 57 'Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping' of the WCS seeks to secure a high standard of design in all new development with one key element being the need for consideration be given to the compatibility with adjoining land uses and the impact on the amenities of existing occupants as a result of noise or air pollution etc.

The site lies within the countryside with no nearby neighbouring properties, however due to the nature of the proposed development the application is supported by various technical documents to consider relevant impacts on the surrounding environment. The documents have been reviewed by the Council's Public Protection Officer who confirms that the Noise Impact Assessment (October 2022) is detailed and predicts under worst case operating scenarios that the Rating Level will be +2dB at residential property allowing for the reported tonality of the transformers. The night time background levels in the area are very low reflecting the rural location not significantly affected by traffic noise etc. This falls within the No Observed Adverse Effect Level range and therefore is acceptable without further mitigation. The addition of these noise sources will result in a creeping background in what is a very quiet area. As the predictions are dependent on the modelling, a post installation validation report is recommended to validate the model and installed plant, which will be secured via condition.

It is recognised that there may be some disturbance created during the construction phase, however the Council's Public Protection Officer confirms that the site is remote enough that impacts due to noise and dust from its construction is unlikely to significantly impact on local residents. The Construction Traffic Management Plan relates to mainly highway issues and states hours which are acceptable. It was also confirmed that the Public Protection department has no recorded complaints from earlier phases.

On this basis, it is considered that the proposed development will not conflict with the relevant policies of the plan, including Core Policy 57 of the WCS, or with relevant provisions of the NPPF.

g) Whether the proposal would have an adverse impact upon highway safety or public rights of way

The NPPF advises that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals but ultimately it advises that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe (par 115). Core Policy 62 'Development Impacts on the Transport Network' however advises that developments should provide appropriate mitigating measures to offset any adverse impacts on the transport network at both the construction and operational stages.

The proposed development does not propose to alter the existing access with the public highway, however due to the volume of traffic associated with the construction phase the application is supported by a Construction Traffic Management Plan (Rev.4 / May 2023). A Highways Technical Note was submitted during the assessment of the application to address comments made by the Highway Authority. The documents consider the site access arrangements, construction traffic flows and routes etc.

It is recognised that the route of construction traffic (Route 2 through Cricklade) is a concern to the local community which is understood. The routes have however been discussed and agreed with the Highway Authority to ensure the most appropriate routes for the number and type of vehicular movements, while also considering the layout and type of local roads, are utilised. The Highway Authority confirms that "construction traffic has been discussed with regard to routing and the report identifies pre-defined routes, there are 4 points of entry identified onto the B4040, from the north utilising the A419 exit through Cricklade, to the east from the A419, from the southeast on the M4 at Junction 16, through the A3102 and the B4696 and to the southwest from the M4 junction 17 on the A429. The routes identified are the most direct routes which are deemed suitable for HGV traffic".

The construction is split into 3 phases as follows:

- Phase 1 (vegetation removal) - 13-week construction period
- Phase 2 (Grid Park and Circuit Breaker Replacement) - 113-week construction period
- Phase 3 (Substation Extension for SGT) – 82-week construction period

The Highway Authority confirms that "the traffic generation of the site has been calculated and clarified satisfactorily, the number of movements whilst proportionately high in terms of two-way HGV movements are still considered to be of a temporary nature and therefore not significant or severe enough to represent a highways refusal, considering that the main access roads are deemed suitable for the type of vehicle and larger temporary volumes of traffic".

In light of the above, it is considered that the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or public rights of way and that it would accord with Core Policy 62 of the WCS.

h) Whether the scheme would cause harm to protected species and/or their habitats

Core Policy 50 of the WCS requires all development proposals to incorporate appropriate measures to avoid and reduce disturbance to sensitive wildlife species and habitats throughout the lifetime of the development. Major development is also required to include measures that will deliver biodiversity gains.

Natural England originally replied requesting further information to determine the significance of the impact on dormice but provided no final observations following the submission of further ecological surveys and reports, which included a Dormouse Mitigation/Habitat Creation Strategy.

The Council's Ecologist objects to the development in principle commenting that "although an Ecological Assessment has been submitted in support of this application it contains insufficient information to determine potential impacts on protected sites, habitats of conservation concern and protected/ notable species, including but not exclusively:

- Cloatley Farm SSSI (direct loss and notable invertebrate species)
- Emmett Hill Meadows SSSI (invertebrate interest)
- Stonehill Wood LWS (deterioration of habitat, severance of working connections etc)
- Park Copse – Charlton LWS (loss and deterioration of habitat, severance of working connections etc.)
- Ancient woodland (loss and deterioration of habitat, severance of working connections etc.)
- Priority habitats woodland and grassland (loss and deterioration of habitat).
- Dormice (harm, loss of habitat, loss of dispersal corridors).
- Bats (roosting and foraging, loss of dispersal corridors).
- Reptiles (harm, loss of habitat, loss of dispersal corridors).
- Birds.
- Invertebrates (harm, loss of habitat, loss of dispersal corridors).
- Bryophytes.

The application was updated following the above consultation response through the submission of a Ecology Assessment – Addendum (June 2023) by The Environment Partnership, Dormouse Habitat Creation Strategy (July 2023) by the Environment Partnership, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Report (July 2023) by the Environment Partnership, , Great Crested Newt District Level Licensing Impact Assessment & Conservation Payment Certificate, an Extended Phase 1 Habitat survey, and further surveys to assess bat roosting suitability included within the updated EA addendum.

The Council's Ecologist welcomes the additional surveys and updates to the application, however there remains an objection to the proposed development unless the significant losses resulting from the current scheme are compensated for. The Ecologist acknowledges that the current development offers some mitigation and compensation measures however it is advised that "these are wholly inadequate and significant adverse impacts will still arise from the development. A compensation strategy that demonstrates no net loss of the local biodiversity resource and secures the integrity of local ecological networks would be required to achieve this".

It was highlighted that both local and national policy requires that only where it has been demonstrated that such anticipated impacts have been mitigated as far as possible and as a last resort compensatory measures provided would such a development be acceptable in ecology terms. National Grid's position is that everything has been done to reduce the ecological impacts associated with the proposed development through the design of the proposal and the mitigation measures proposed. The submitted Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Report (July 2023) by the Environment Partnership quantifies the change in biodiversity units for the planning application area between the pre-development baseline and post-development retained, enhanced, and created habitats. It confirms that there will still be an overall area-based unit net loss of -3.87 Biodiversity Units (-17.89%) which cannot be compensated for. The BNG Report advises that National Grid are committed to attaining a 10% net gain on all development but in order to achieve this an additional 6.04 Biodiversity Units will be required.

In terms of the requirement to secure 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), it will soon [anticipated early 2024] become mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) for 'major schemes' and April 2024 for 'small sites'. The 10% requirement will not become mandated across England until statutory

instruments and regulations have been agreed and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 has been amended. However, in line with the requirements of the NPPF and Core Policy 50 'Biodiversity' of the WCS the Council's Ecologist advises that the Council expects all major applications, such as this one the subject of this application, to deliver a minimum of 10% BNG. However, no net loss of functional habitat on-site must be demonstrated before considering the amount of BNG that should be secured.

It is evidence that the proposed development will result in a net loss of functional habitat on site as a result of the development albeit National Grid has designed and revised the scheme, and mitigated the ecological impacts as best as possible within the constraints of the application site. However, the proposed development will result in harm to biodiversity and therefore falls short of the requirements of Core Policy 50 of the WCS. The level of harm will have to be assessed within the overall planning balance against the need for the development and should it be determined that planning permission be granted all recommendations, mitigation and enhancement measures detailed within the submitted ecological reports will need to be secured via condition, along with the need for a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), and a restriction on external lighting. It is recognised that National Grid has its own duty to deliver 10% BNG on all of its development projects.

i) Whether the scheme would cause harm to areas of archaeological interest or to heritage assets

Core Policies 57(i & iv) and 58 of the WCS deal with conservation of the historic environment. The supporting text states that heritage assets include listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled ancient monuments, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields, world heritage sites, and non-designated heritage assets such as buildings and archaeological sites of regional and local interest (paragraph 6.136). The policy seeks to ensure that developments protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment. Designated heritage assets and their settings are to be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance.

The application is supported by a Heritage Desk-Based Assessment (December 2022) by AECOM which considers the potential impact of the proposed development on the 11 heritage assets were recorded within the 1km study, including two listed buildings; Cloatley End Farm (1022246) is located approximately 800m north-west of the site and the Milestone at NGR SU 00652 89063 (1284939) is located approximately 910m south-east of the Site.

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority, in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. The Heritage Desk Based Assessment concludes that there would be no change to the setting of the listed buildings, due to their distance and lack of intervisibility with the site. There would be no physical impacts to any of the non-designated heritage assets.

There is also limited potential for previously unrecorded archaeology to be recorded within the site due to the previous ground disturbance of the existing substation and the results of the previous archaeological surveys carried out in the land adjacent to the site. The County Archaeologist is satisfied that the archaeological potential of the application area has been sufficiently characterised and that no further archaeological mitigation is necessary. Therefore, the proposed development accords with Core Policies 57 & 58 of the WCS.

j) Whether the development would result in any other adverse environmental impacts

Core Policy 67 'Flood Risk' of the WCS requires all new development to include measures to reduce the rate of rainwater run-off and improve rainwater infiltration to the soil and ground (sustainable drainage system) unless site or environmental conditions make these measures unsuitable. The application is supported a Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy (September 2022) by Atkins which confirms that the site is wholly within Flood Zone 1 so the risk of flooding is low, and presents a surface water drainage scheme.

The Lead Local Flood Authority has provided the following observations on the information presented within the report – "It is noted that as part of the development the applicant intends to limit all discharge from the site (for flows up to an including the 1 in 100yr + climate change event) to 1.0l/s. It is acknowledged through conversation with Hydro International that this represents the lowest practicable level of restriction in order to prevent an increased blockage risk, and that a value of 1.0l/s represents a worst-case scenario (as bunds have been assumed to be 100% impermeable). It is noted that the nature of the development means that the proposals (when considering the proposed mitigations) will result in minimal impact to surrounding land / receptors.

It is noted, at this stage that outline source-control calculations have been provided to inform sizing of attenuation features.

It is noted that the drainage will remain private and in the ownership of National Grid.

It is noted that as part of the development, the applicant intends to culvert the existing watercourse, and that the culvert has been preliminarily sized to ensure that flows through the culvert can be maintained without detriment, when considering a 50% blockage".

The Lead Local Flood Authority has no objection to the development subject to the submission of a full and final surface water drainage scheme which will be secured via condition.

Core Policy 56 'Contaminated Land' of the WCS advises that development proposals which are likely to be on or adjacent to land which may have been subject to contamination will need to demonstrate that measures can be taken to effectively mitigate the impacts of land contamination on public health, environmental quality, the built environment and amenity. The application is supported by a Geotechnical & Geo-Environmental Desk Study (November 2022) by Atkins. The Council's Public Protection Officer confirms that the report indicates the possibility of historic contamination from the existing development and proposes further site investigation. The risk is confined to the site users and therefore a condition is recommended which requires a scheme to deal with contaminations that may be identified or encountered at any time when carrying out the approved development.

10. Conclusion

The application is submitted by National Grid (National Grid Electricity Transmission plc) who seek full planning permission to extend their existing substation at Minety through the installation of four super-grid transformers and associated works.

National Grid has a statutory duty to offer a customer a connection and to be economic and efficient in developing and operating the transmission system whilst also having regard to the preservation of amenity when developing the network. It is advised that in developing the scheme at Minety, National Grid has sought to balance these requirements and meet its statutory duties.

The works are required to facilitate connection of 450MVA of battery / solar generation, achieve greater reliability of the existing substation to enable the increase in embedded generation within

the local Distribution Network Operator (DNO) and 240MVA of additional capacity for the DNO to enable meet increased energy demand in the wider region. All of these aspects will enable the decarbonisation of the electricity supply network.

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Planning policies and decisions must also reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements (NPPF, par 2). For the purpose of determining this application, the development plan comprises the Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted January 2015) and the Saved Policies of the former North Wiltshire Local Plan (2011).

The application is supported by a range of technical reports and surveys which consider the environmental impacts of the proposed development. While the majority of impacts can be mitigated through appropriate conditions, such as securing the implementation of a Construction Traffic Management Plan, the assessment of the application finds significant harm to the natural and local environment due to the loss of trees and natural habitat thus leading to a net loss of biodiversity and localised landscape harm. The proposed development therefore conflicts with certain elements of the development plan, however when considering the benefits in terms of upgrading and reinforcing key energy infrastructure and the specific locational requirement of the development, including National Grid's policy commitment to drive a net gain (in excess of 10% where possible) in environmental value (including biodiversity) in their construction projects, it is considered that the very significant benefits of the proposal outweighs the localised harm caused by its conflict with the development plan. On balance, it is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to conditions to mitigate the impacts of the development as best as possible.

RECOMMENDATION

The recommendation is to grant planning permission subject a Unilateral Undertaking for a contribution to biodiversity mitigation and the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the details shown in the following approved plans:

- Drawing. Location Plan PDD-101488-LAY-300 Rev 9
- Drawing. Proposed Layout Plan PDD-101488-LAY-302 Rev 5
- Drawing. Proposed Sections PDD-101488-ELE-303 Rev 3 Sheet 1 of 2
- Drawing. Proposed Sections PDD-101488-ELE-303 Rev 3 Sheet 2 of 2
- Drawing. Proposed Switchgear Room Plan and Elevation PDD-101488-ELE-304
- Drawing. Ancient Woodland Buffer Zone Layout PDD-101488-LAY-315-REV-0

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. No demolition, site clearance or development shall commence on site, and; no equipment, machinery or materials shall be brought on to site for the purpose of development, until the trees to be protected and retained, as shown on the Tree Protection Plan within the Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report (December 2022) by AECOM, have been enclosed

by protective fencing, in accordance with British Standard 5837 (2005): Trees in Relation to Construction.

The protective fencing shall remain in place for the entire development phase and until all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been removed from the site. Such fencing shall not be removed or breached during construction operations and no vehicle, plant, temporary building or materials, including raising and or, lowering of ground levels, shall be allowed within the protected areas.

No retained tree/s shall be cut down, uprooted or destroyed, nor shall any retained tree/s be topped or lopped other than in accordance with the approved plans and particulars. Any topping or lopping approval shall be carried out in accordance British Standard 3998: 2010 "Tree Work – Recommendations" or arboricultural techniques where it can be demonstrated to be in the interest of good arboricultural practise.

If any retained tree is removed, uprooted, destroyed or dies, another tree shall be planted at the same place, at a size and species and planted at such time, that must be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

[In this condition "retained tree" means an existing tree which is to be retained in accordance with the approved plans and particulars; and paragraphs above shall have effect until the expiration of five years from the first occupation or the completion of the development, whichever is the later].

REASON: To enable the Local Planning Authority to ensure the retention of trees on the site in the interests of visual amenity.

4. No demolition, site clearance or development shall commence on site until an Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS), in accordance with the recommendations of the Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report (December 2022) by AECOM, prepared by an arboricultural consultant providing comprehensive details of construction works in relation to trees has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. All works shall subsequently be carried out in strict accordance with the approved details. In particular, the method statement must provide the following:

- A specification for protective fencing to trees during both demolition and construction phases which complies with BS5837:2013 and a plan indicating the alignment of the protective fencing;
- A specification for scaffolding and ground protection within tree protection zones in accordance with British Standard 5837: 2013;
- A schedule of tree works conforming to British Standard 3998: 2010;
- Details of general arboricultural matters such as the area for storage of materials, concrete mixing and use of fires;
- Plans and particulars showing the siting of the service and piping infrastructure;
- A full specification for the construction of any arboriculturally sensitive structures and sections through them, including the installation of boundary treatment works;
- Details of the works requiring arboricultural supervision to be carried out by the developer's arboricultural consultant, including details of the frequency of supervisory visits and procedure for notifying the Local Planning Authority of the findings of the supervisory visits; and
- Details of all other activities, which have implications for trees on or adjacent to the site.
- In order that trees to be retained on-site are not damaged during the construction works and to ensure that as far as possible the work is carried no demolition, site clearance or

development should commence on site until a pre-commencement site meeting has been held, attended by the developer's arboricultural consultant, the designated site foreman and a representative from the Local Planning Authority, to discuss details of the proposed work and working procedures.

- Subsequently and until the completion of all site works, site visits should be carried out in accordance with a timetable to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority by the developer's arboricultural consultant. A report detailing the results of site supervision and any necessary remedial works undertaken or required should then be submitted to the Local Planning Authority. Any approved remedial works shall subsequently be carried out under strict supervision by the arboricultural consultant following that approval.

REASON: In to secure a full and final record of the trees to be removed and in order that the Local Planning Authority may be satisfied that the trees to be retained on and adjacent to the site will not be damaged during the construction works and to ensure that as far as possible the work is carried out in accordance with current best practice and section 197 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.

5. No demolition, site clearance, vegetation clearance, or development shall commence on site until a Site Clearance Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Site Clearance Management Plan shall provide details of the avoidance, mitigation and protective measures to be implemented before and during any site clearance, including but not necessarily limited to, the following

- *Details of all mitigation measures and identification of ecological protection areas/buffer zones and tree root protection areas as well as details and specification of physical means of protection, e.g. temporary fencing to demarcate buffer zones*
- *Details of specific measures such as gaps in fencing to avoid causing harm to biodiversity features should also be stipulated. Measures should be illustrated on a plan.*
- *Details and timing of any update surveys required pre-commencement of works on site such as for badgers.*
- *Precautionary working method statements, including the restrictions to the timing of such works, such as sensitive vegetation clearance method in respect of birds.*
- *Mitigation strategies already agreed with the local planning authority prior to determination, such as for great crested newts and bats; this should comprise the pre-construction/construction related elements of strategies only.*

REASON: To ensure adequate protection and mitigation for ecological receptors prior to and during construction.

6. No development other than site clearance or vegetation clearance, shall commence on site until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP shall provide details of the avoidance, mitigation and protective measures to be implemented before and during the construction phase, including but not necessarily limited to, the following:

- *Details of all mitigation measures and identification of ecological protection areas/buffer zones and tree root protection areas as well as details and specification of physical means of protection, e.g. temporary fencing to demarcate buffer zones*
- *Details of specific measures such as gaps in fencing to avoid causing harm to biodiversity features should also be stipulated. Measures should be illustrated on a plan.*

- *Details and timing of any update surveys required pre-commencement of works on site such as for badgers.*
- *Precautionary working method statements, including the restrictions to the timing of such works, such as sensitive vegetation clearance method in respect of birds.*
- *Mitigation strategies already agreed with the local planning authority prior to determination, such as for great crested newts and bats; this should comprise the pre-construction/construction related elements of strategies only.*
- *Work schedules for activities with specific timing requirements in order to avoid/reduce potential harm to ecological receptors, and stipulation of work activities to be overseen by a licensed ecologist and/or ecological clerk of works (ECoW).*
- *Key personnel, responsibilities and contact details (including Site Manager and ecologist/ECoW).*
- *Schedule for compliance checks to be completed by a competent person(s), likely the ecologist/ECoW, prior to, during and post-completion of construction works.*
- *A compliance report must be provided to the local planning authority within four weeks of the end of construction and the report shall include photographic evidence.*

Development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved CEMP unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure adequate protection and mitigation for ecological receptors prior to and during construction.

7. No development shall commence on site until details of all earthworks have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include the proposed grading and mounding of land areas including the levels and contours to be formed, and the nature and source of the material, showing the relationship of proposed mounding to existing vegetation and surrounding landform. The details shall also include details of the proposed slab and ground levels of the retaining wall, building and infrastructure hereby approved. The development shall not be first brought into use until such time as the earthworks have been carried out in accordance with the details approved under this condition.

REASON: To enable the Local Planning Authority to ensure the retention of trees on the site and consider and approve the precise scope of earthworks and infrastructure levels in the interests of visual amenity.

8. No development shall commence on site until a full 'No-Dig' specification for works within the root protection area/canopies of protected and retained trees, in particular the new internal access route, has been submitted and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The construction of the surface shall be carried out in accordance with approved details and thereafter retained.

REASON: In order to protect trees on and adjacent to the site which are to be retained with surfacing placed near to or over the trees root system.

9. Notwithstanding the contents of the Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy (September 2022) by Atkins, no development shall commence on site until a full and final scheme for the discharge of surface water from the site, incorporating sustainable drainage details, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be first brought into use until surface water drainage has been constructed in accordance with the approved scheme.

REASON: To comply with Core Policy 67: Flood Risk of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted January 2015) and to ensure that the development can be adequately drained without increasing flood risk to others.

NOTE: The Lead Local Flood Authority advises the following updates will be required to the scheme presented within the aforementioned assessment:-

- The applicant shall provide supplementary justification as to why attenuation has been proposed in tanks instead of in a natural feature such as a swale or detention basin.
- The applicant shall submit detailed calculations to demonstrate that the proposed positive drainage system:
 - a. Calculations and drawings for the drainage system design showing conveyance routes are designed to convey without flooding the critical 1 in 30 year + climate change rainfall event.
 - b. Calculations and drawings for the drainage system design showing attenuation features are designed to attenuate without flooding the critical 1 in 100 year rainfall event + climate change.
 - c. Hydraulic Models should set the MADD factor / additional storage volume factor to 0m³ / ha in order to prevent an overestimation of storage capacity in the proposed drainage network.
- The applicant shall provide plans which demonstrate how overland exceedance flows in excess of the 1 in 100yr + climate change storm event are wholly and safely managed on site.
- The applicant shall submit details for the proposed inspection and ongoing maintenance (including activities, and frequency) of the proposed drainage system, including SuDS features and the proposed culvert.
- The applicant shall provide a Construction Phase Management Plan to clearly demonstrate how surface water will be managed throughout the construction phase in order to prevent an increase in local flood risk / local pollution risk.

10. In the event that contamination is identified or encountered at any time when carrying out the approved development, the Local Planning Authority must be advised of the steps that will be taken by an appropriate contractor; to deal with contamination and provide a written remedial statement to be followed by a written verification report that confirms what works that have been undertaken to render the development suitable for use.

REASON: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors.

11. No external artificial lighting shall be used or installed on site until lux contour plots/lighting contour plans for all proposed lighting have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plots/plans must demonstrate that bat habitat to be retained will be maintained as 'dark corridors'. Details of mitigation measures that would be implemented where necessary, to minimise light spill shall also be provided. Lighting proposals shall be in accordance with the appropriate Environmental Zone standards set out by the Institution of Lighting Professionals in their Guidance Note GN01/21 'The Reduction of Obtrusive Light' and their Guidance Note GN08-18 'Bats and artificial lighting in the UK', issued jointly with the Bat Conservation Trust.

Lighting at the site shall be in strict accordance with the approved details and no additional external lighting shall be installed either during construction or operation unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To minimise light spill and to minimise potential for adverse effects on bats and other wildlife.

12. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with approved Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) (Rev.4 / May 2023), its measures shall be complied with in full throughout the construction period. The development shall not be carried out otherwise than in accordance with the approved CTMP.

REASON: To minimise detrimental effects to the neighbouring amenities, the amenities of the area in general, detriment to the natural environment through the risks of pollution and dangers to highway safety, during the construction phase.

13. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with recommendations and proposed mitigations and enhancement measures detailed within the Ecological Assessment (ref. 9236.003) (August 2022), Ecology Assessment – Addendum (ref 9236.015) (June 2023), and Dormouse Habitat Creation Strategy (ref 9236.005) (July 2023) by the Environment Partnership.

REASON: To mitigate against the loss of existing biodiversity and nature habitats.

14. A post installation noise assessment shall be carried out within 3 months of completion of the development to confirm compliance with the submitted noise report and submitted to the local planning authority. Any additional steps required to achieve compliance shall be taken. The details as submitted and approved shall be implemented and thereafter be permanently retained.

Reason: Core policy 57, Ensuring high design and place shaping such that appropriate levels of amenity are achievable.

INFORMATIVE

The applicant should note that under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and the Habitats Regulations (2010) it is an offence to disturb or harm any protected species, or to damage or disturb their habitat or resting place. Please note that this consent does not override the statutory protection afforded to any such species. In the event that your proposals could potentially affect a protected species you should seek the advice of a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist and consider the need for a licence from Natural England prior to commencing works. Please see Natural England's website for further information on protected species.

INFORMATIVE

No construction / demolition vehicle access may be taken along CHAR9, HANK15, CHAR16 without prior consultation with the Wiltshire Council Rights of Way Warden. Where appropriate any safety/mitigation/reinstatement measures must be approved by the Wiltshire Council Rights of Way Warden.

INFORMATIVE

No materials, plant, temporary structures or excavations of any kind should be deposited / undertaken which obstruct or adversely affect the public right of way whilst development takes place.

INFORMATIVE

It is noted that as part of the development, the applicant intends to culvert the existing watercourse. As noted in the applicant's submission a Land Drainage Consent should be applied for from the LLFA.