



# Strategic and Technical Planning Committee

**Date:** Monday, 29 July 2024  
**Time:** 10.00 am  
**Venue:** Council Chamber, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

**Members (Quorum 6 )**

Duncan Sowry-House (Chair), Dave Bolwell (Vice-Chair), Belinda Bawden, Toni Coombs, Richard Crabb, Spencer Flower, Sherry Jespersen, David Northam, Belinda Ridout, Pete Roper, David Taylor and David Tooke

**Chief Executive:** Matt Prosser, County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1XJ

For more information about this agenda please contact Democratic Services Meeting Contact 01305 224710 - [joshua.kennedy@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:joshua.kennedy@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

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## Agenda

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## Planning Committee – Update Sheet

**Strategic Planning Committee 29 July 2024**

Application Ref.	Address	Agenda ref.	Page no.
P/FUL/2023/04657	East Chickerell Court Farm, Chickerell, Weymouth	Item 5	9 - 91
<p><u>Minor updates</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Amend</b> final sentence of Para. 15.14 to state “On <b>18</b> July Dorset Council declared a Nature Emergency”.</li> <li>- The Labour Government seeks to decarbonise the electricity grid by 2030, five years prior to the previous Government’s target of 2035. <b>Update</b> references to 2030 target at Paras. 3.1, 15.1 and 16.4.</li> </ul> <p><u>Condition 24 Fire Risk Management Strategy</u></p> <p><b>Update</b> Condition 24 to make the requirements of the condition clearer, as follows:</p> <p>“24. Prior to the occupation of the development an Integrated Fire Risk Management Strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>The Integrated Fire Risk Management Strategy shall be informed by Environmental Statement Volume 9: Fire Risk, Appendix 2: Fire Liaison Framework. It shall provide details in relation to potential emergency response implications including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The hazards and risks at and to the facility and their proposed management.</li> <li>ii. Any safety issues for firefighters responding to emergencies at the facility.</li> <li>iii. Safe access to and within the facility for emergency vehicles and responders, including to key site infrastructure and fire <b><u>engineering protection systems, information including structural fire protection and resistance.</u></b></li> <li>iv. The adequacy of proposed <b><u>gas vapour, fire and heat detection monitoring</u></b> and suppression systems <b><u>within the BESS containers.</u></b></li> <li>v. <b><u>Adequate provision of (e.g., water supplies <del>ly</del>) on-site to ensure that firefighting operations and boundary cooling can be achieved.</u></b></li> <li>vi. Natural and built infrastructure and on-site processes that may impact or delay effective emergency response.</li> <li><b><u>vii. Premises information boxes containing an agreed tactical response plan to support the Fire and Rescue Service with site specific risk information.</u></b></li> <li><b><u>viii. Detail of the battery safety management system, including thermal monitoring and automated power reduction and isolation.</u></b></li> </ul>			

Thereafter, the approved Integrated Fire Risk Management Strategy shall be implemented and made available on site for the lifetime of the development at the Emergency Services Information Point identified on the approved Landscape Plan (ref. 521-LP-01-Rev B).

Reason: To assist appropriate emergency planning in accordance with National Fire Chiefs Council guidance 'Grid Scale Battery Energy Storage System Planning – Guidance for FRS' (2023)."

#### Draft NFCC Grid Scale Energy Storage System Planning Guidance

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) has recently [launched](#) a consultation on updated BESS guidance. The consultation is open for comment until 22 August 2024. Once adopted it will replace current guidance published in 2023. Given the draft guidance is at an initial stage of consultation it is afforded very limited weight at this stage.

#### Correspondence with Members

##### *Briefing Note from Applicant*

The applicant issued a Briefing Note to all Members of the Strategic Planning Committee and Cllr Shane Bartlett (Portfolio Holder for Planning and Emergency Planning) on Friday 19 July. The note: provides information about Statera; site selection; the need for BESS; the proposed development; constraints; fire risk; and community engagement.

##### Points of clarification from Officers:

- i. The note states that 44% of land is Grade 3 agricultural land. This is the figure for Grade 3a agricultural land within the site. 72% of the site is Grade 3 broken down as 44% Grade 3a and 28% Grade 3b. See Para. 16.12 of the Committee Report for a full breakdown.
- ii. The Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) figures reported in the note reflect the figures of the original BNG Report submitted with the application (dated August 2023). The figures were superseded by an updated BNG Report dated November 2023. See Para 16.82 of Committee Report.
- iii. The note reports that 21ha of community parkland. Members should note this figure includes areas of woodland, drainage and the site of the proposed cable connection. The proposed publicly accessible space within Fields 5 and 6 is approximately 6ha in size.
- iv. The note mentions potentially setting up a fund with the Dorset Community Foundation Fund which could administer grants across the local area. Details of this potential fund are limited. It is not a planning requirement and is not proposed to be secured. Accordingly, it should be afforded no weight in the planning balance.

The note has been published on the Council's Planning Register.

##### *Letter of Objection from Mr Paton*

Mr Paton has issued a detailed objection letter to Members of the Strategic Planning Committee and the MP for South Dorset. It raises a series of matters which have

been raised by other objectors and are noted in the Committee Report. In summary, the letter:

- i. Raises concerns with the risks and consequences of a fire to residents of Chickerell, Southill, Weymouth and surrounding villages.
- ii. States standards, guidance and codes of practice are not freely available and are unknown or poorly understood by professionals that apply them.
- iii. Concerns with battery recycling. Costs of decommissioning are unknown and not proposed to be secured via planning.
- iv. Sodium battery technology is better suited in proximity to populated areas.
- v. Proposal is 8 times larger than any currently operational in the UK (possibly in Europe).
- vi. The proposed development is the only such facility which has been proposed to be built close to a residential area and major town, or indeed directly upwind.
- vii. A fire would pose an immediate threat to life and require very rapid initiation of safety and evacuation plan.
- viii. Questions raised about what a disaster would look like and what the response would be.
- ix. Concerns with assessment methodology and Hydrock's peer review on behalf of Dorset Council.
- x. The applicant and Dorset Council have not considered more sustainable alternative locations. Former UKAEA nuclear site near Winfrith suggested.
- xi. Officer report does not assess impact upon designated Wildlife Corridor.

The objection letter and covering email has been published on the Council's Planning Register.

*Letter of objection from Mr Findlay*

Mr Findlay has issued a detailed objection letter to the Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee. It raises a series of matters which have been raised by other objectors and are noted in the Committee Report. In summary, and of relevance to the application, the letter:

- i. Raises concern with the mining of raw materials and potential human rights abuses;
- ii. Applicant does not have any connection to Dorset and has not considered any other site;
- iii. There is no national requirement for the number of BESS sites, no guidance, no national policy and limited regulation.
- iv. Former UKAEA nuclear site near Winfrith suggested as a suitable alternative site.
- v. Concerns with proximity of proposed development to existing and planned housing.
- vi. Loss of best and most versatile agricultural land.
- vii. Harm to skylarks.
- viii. Carbon footprint of proposed development and query whether Staterra should be required to plant trees to make development carbon neutral.
- ix. Development is outside DDB.
- x. Noise impacts on humans and animals.

- xi. Fire safety and pollution concerns related to: singular access from Coldharbour; spacing between BESS containers; and contaminated fire water.
- xii. BESS developments fall within Planning (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 2015 and the Control of Major Accidents hazards Regulations 2015.
- xiii. Concerns with highways methodology.
- xiv. Members must be consistent in decision making.

The objection letter has been published on the Council's Planning Register.

P/FUL/2023/06578	Land to the north west of Holt Road Three Legged Cross	Item 6	93 - 149
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Minor updates

- Amend paragraph 6.02, page 96-97; Table 1 – Proposal Summary
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> row; 7 x Inverter/Transformer – Should read: *'Total height including base is 4.3m'*
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> row; 1 x Resistor and Harmonic Filter – Should read: *'Total height including base is 3.2m'*
  - 4<sup>th</sup> row; 1 x BESS Switch Room – Should read: *'Total height including base is 3.3m'*
  - 5<sup>th</sup> row; 1 x Earth Transformer & 1 x Auxiliary Transformer – Should read: *'Total height including base is 3.3m'*
  - 7<sup>th</sup> row; DNO Substation – Should read *'Total height including base is 3m'*
- Paragraph 16.29, page 118, 5<sup>th</sup> row – (*Maximum 4.3m*)
- Paragraph 16.53, page 122, 4<sup>th</sup> row – (*max. 4.3m*)
- Paragraph 16.65, page 124, 4<sup>th</sup> row – (*max. 4.3m*)
- Page 130, 1<sup>st</sup> row, Paragraph 19.101: should read **16.101**
- Section 19 Recommendation, page 140; Officer note: should read: *Officer note: Written agreement to the pre-commencement condition(s) was received from the applicant on 17 July 2024.*
- The Labour Government seeks to decarbonise the electricity grid by 2030, five years prior to the previous Government's target of 2035. **Update** references to 2030 target at Paras. 3.0 (bullet point 3) and 15.1.

Draft NFCC Grid Scale Energy Storage System Planning Guidance

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) has recently [launched](#) a consultation on updated BESS guidance. The consultation is open for comment until 22 August 2024. Once adopted it will replace current guidance published in 2023. Given the draft guidance is at an initial stage of consultation it is afforded very limited weight at this stage.