
APPLICATION NO.	<u>P21/V0167/FUL / P21/S0274/FUL</u>
SITE	Land at Former Didcot A Power Station Milton Road Didcot
PARISH	SUTTON COURTENAY / DIDCOT
PROPOSAL	Hybrid planning application consisting of a) Full Planning Application for the erection of a single storey 8,692 m2 Data Centre building (containing data halls, associated electrical and AHU Plant Rooms, loading bay, maintenance and storage space, office administration areas and screened plant at roof level), emergency generators and emission stacks, diesel tanks and filling area, electrical switch room, a water sprinkler pump room and storage tanks, a gate house / security building, MV substation, site access, internal access roads, drainage infrastructure, hard and soft landscaping and b) Outline Planning Application for the erection of a two storey 20,800 m2 Data Centre building (containing data halls, associated electrical and AHU Plant Rooms, loading bay, maintenance and storage space, office administration areas and screened plant at roof level), emergency generators and emission stacks, diesel tanks and filling area, electrical switch room, a water sprinkler pump room and storage tanks; details of appearance will be reserved, along with hard landscaping immediately around the building (as amended by plans and documents received 5th May 2021).
WARD MEMBER(S)	VALE: Richard Webber SODC: Alan Thompson & Ian Snowdon
APPLICANT OFFICER	Mr S Denton Stuart Walker

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that authority to grant planning permission is delegated to the head of planning subject to:

1. The completion of a S106 legal agreement and
2. The following conditions:
 1. Approved Plans
 2. Submission of Reserved Matters for unit 2
 3. Commencement of full permission
 4. Commencement of outline permission
 5. Materials in accordance with approved plans
 6. Energy statement verification – unit 1
 7. Energy statement submission – unit 2
 8. Energy statement verification – unit 2
 9. Foul and surface water drainage scheme for unit 2 to be agreed
 10. Drainage construction compliance report before occupation
 11. Contaminated land remediation strategy prior to occupation
 12. Revised landscape scheme to be agreed prior to occupation
 13. Community Employment Plan to be agreed prior to occupation
 14. Vehicle and cycle parking provision in accordance with approved plans prior to occupation
 15. Construction Traffic Management Plan
 16. Tree Protection
 17. Lighting in accordance with approved plans
 18. Diesel generator testing
 19. Emergency use of generators
 20. Travel plan implementation
 21. Restricted use – Data centre only
 22. No extra office floor space without permission
 23. Informative – land drainage consent
 24. Informative – contaminated land
 25. Informative – planning obligation

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL

1.1 This application comes to planning committee as Sutton Courtenay Parish Council object to the proposal. It has also been called in by Councillor Snowden and is a major cross boundary application.

1.2 The proposal is a hybrid submission that seeks:

- Full permission for the erection of a single storey 8,692 m2 Data Centre building, emergency generators and emission stacks, diesel tanks and filling area, electrical switch room, a water sprinkler pump room and storage tanks, a gate house / security building, substation, site access and internal access roads, drainage infrastructure, and hard and soft landscaping.
- Outline planning permission for the erection of a two storey 20,800 m2 Data Centre building with associated supporting infrastructure with details of appearance and landscaping reserved.

- 1.3 The application site is located within both Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire Districts. Comprising approximately 16 hectares in area (and part of the former Didcot A power station site), it lies between Milton Park and the western edge of Didcot. Most of the site (9.3ha) lies within South Oxfordshire with the remainder (6.74ha) within the Vale of White Horse. To the north lies Didcot B power station, with Sutton Courtenay Village beyond. To the south, the site has a significant frontage on to Milton Road, adjacent to the Great Western main railway line and the A4130. Further to the south lies Great Western Park. A location plan is **attached** at Appendix 1.
- 1.4 The site is situated within an Enterprise Zone, the Didcot Garden Town, the Science Vale and is allocated for redevelopment in the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031, part 1. Access to the site is from the roundabout junction off the A4130 and Milton Road.
- 1.5 The proposal consists of two separate buildings in a secure compound including CCTV and a security gatehouse at the main (Milton Road) entrance. Unit 1 (full application) is located to the east on an east-west axis. Unit 2 (outline application) is in the middle of the site on a north-south orientation. Land to the west of unit 2 is reserved for future development proposals unknown at this time but will be secured by perimeter fencing and laid to grass. The applicant has confirmed any future proposals on this land will be the subject of a separate planning application.
- 1.6 Unit 1 will be 139.2m(l) x 67.4m(w) x 12.2m(h) to the top of the roof parapet. This provides for 8,692m² which is made up of 7,267m² of technical space (Data Hall) and 1,425m² of office and personnel space. Unit 2 will be 155.9m(l) x 67.4m(w) x 22.5m(h) to the top of the roof parapet. This provides for 20,800m² split over two floors, which is made up of 18,400m² of technical space (Data Hall) and 2,400m² of office and personnel space. A site layout plan and the elevations for unit 1 are **attached** at Appendix 2.
- 1.7 Power for the data centres will be supplied from / by the National Grid. The buildings will be served by a direct Medium Voltage (MV) connection routed from the north and distributed via the onsite MV Compound, located to the north of unit 1. Located on the roof of each building will also be various mechanical and electrical infrastructure components supporting the operation of each building. These will include air handling units, pumps and chillers. Roof space is also used for providing photovoltaic panels and the buildings are designed to achieve BREAM excellent.
- 1.8 In the event of a loss of power supply (i.e. temporary grid blackout) diesel-powered emergency back-up generators will be utilised to maintain power supply. These are designed to automatically activate and provide power to the plant pending restoration of mains power. Unit 1 will be served by 10 emergency generators and Unit 2 will be served by 22; each with associated flues (at a height of 15m and 30m respectively). There will also be one smaller (less than 1 MVA) generator to back-up supply to the administrative sections of the Data Centres.

- 1.9 Diesel will be stored on site and it is anticipated that each unit will be served by a main tank holding approximately 40,000 litres. Each of the 3MVA emergency generators will also have an associated 16,000 litre belly tank. The smaller 1MVA emergency generators will each have an associated belly tank with 6,000 litre capacity. The 16,000 litres and 6,000 litres represent the approximate volume of diesel required for 24 hours emergency operation of each engine running at full load. All tanks will be above ground and double skinned. The pipelines from the top-up tank to the belly tanks will also be above ground and include provision for fuel interceptors in the event of a fuel spill.
- 1.10 A significant amount of the works proposed as part of the full planning application will serve both data centre buildings. Although the external appearance and the landscaping surrounding Unit 2 is reserved for future consideration, the access, scale, and layout of the building and associated infrastructure are detailed within the application submission for consideration now.
- 1.11 The proposal is a 24-hour operation and will employ the equivalent of 100 full time people. Parking for 89 cars is proposed (39 spaces for Unit 1 and 50 spaces for Unit 2) of which nine are equipped with electric vehicle charging. 20 covered cycle parking spaces are proposed, and five car parking spaces will be reserved for car share use.
- 1.12 The applicant explains in the submitted planning statement that the data centre units will house *“networks of remote servers hosted to store, manage, and process data in place of local servers and personal computers to support the provision of cloud computing services. Cloud computing is the on-demand delivery of IT resources over the Internet”*. This use falls within Use Class B8 (storage or distribution). The applicant has offered a restriction in the use of the buildings to data centre use only and this can be secured by condition.
- 1.13 The former Didcot A site has Outline planning permission for redevelopment and two Reserved Matters applications falling under the Outline consent which are relevant to this proposal have recently been approved:
- Proposed realignment of below ground unnamed ordinary watercourse & revised connection to the Moor Ditch (P19/V3173/RM and P19/S4426/RM).
 - Construction of Link Road and diversion of Purchas Road (P19/V3168/RM and P19/S4416/RM).
- These are currently under construction and the two data centres have been designed in relation to these developments. The proposal has also been designed to fully coordinate with the site wide biodiversity enhancement strategy.
- 1.14 The proposal is supported by a suite of technical reports and information and has been amended in response to comments from OCC Highways, the countryside and landscape officers and the economic development and energy strategy teams. All plans and supporting documents accompanying

the application are available to view online at www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk / www.southoxon.gov.uk

2.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

2.1 A summary of the responses received is set out below. Comments made can be viewed in full online at www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk / www.southoxon.gov.uk

<p>Sutton Courtenay Parish Council</p>	<p>Amended Plans - Objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council confirms its objections raised in March 2021 remain unchanged. • In relation to the proposed amendments, the council still has concerns over the landscaping in the application. Core Policy 44 of the Local Plan 2031 states that landscaping should protect against intrusion from light pollution, noise, and motion. The bund would therefore need to be high enough to largely obscure the buildings, with mature trees planted to ensure this is the case from the outset. • In addition, Core Policy 35 of the Local Plan 2031 states that applications for development should promote the use of public transport, cycling and walking. The current provision in the application is not deemed adequate. There is no commitment to construction of the cycle path and footpath merely an allocation of land which may result in the lack of provision in the future. • The Council has concerns over the distance from the nearest bus stop and its infrequent services which do not adequately promote the use of public transport to attend the site. <p>Original Plans – Objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are concerns that the application does not comply with Core Policy 35 of the Local Plan 2031, in that it does not promote the use of public transport, cycling or walking. The nearest bus stop is 600 metres away, meaning people travelling solely by bus or by train to Didcot and then bus will still have a fair distance to walk at the start or end of their journey. There is no cycle path linking to the cycle network and although there is provision for an area of land to be made into a footpath, there is no guarantee in the application that this will be forthcoming. • There are also concerns with Core Policy 33 of the Local Plan 2031 in relation to sustainable traffic and accessibility. There will undoubtedly be an increase in traffic both during construction and once in use. The Parish Council is concerned that there will be an impact on the already heavily congested roads through Sutton Courtenay. • It is perceived that the proposed landscaping in the application will not fully comply with Core Policy 44 of
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	<p>the Local Plan in that the proposals for soft landscaping will not protect against light pollution, noise pollution and motion. A more robust landscaping scheme such as planting of mature trees would be required to alleviate these issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are also concerns over the impact which the testing of the emergency generator testing. • The Parish Council would also like to comment on the fact that there is no definitive Section 106 funding information provided and would wish to be made aware of any information on the allocation of the same given that the application covers both the Vale of the White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Councils.
Didcot Town Council	<p>Amended Plans – No objection, reiterate earlier comments.</p> <p>Original Plans – No objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We would encourage the development to be as green and energy efficient as possible and to implement all measures possible to reduce energy usage and its impact on the local environment. • We believe that the use of solar panels on the roofs (or where possible) should be a must and measures to reuse or regenerate the heat produced from the buildings in an environmentally friendly way should be explored.
Vale residents	<p>Amended Plans – No further comments received.</p> <p>Original Plans – Two letters of objection and one letter of comment received. Concerns raised are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of diesel generators as a back-up option is not compatible with reducing use of fossil fuels and emissions of greenhouse gases. An alternative technology such as lithium-ion batteries powered by renewable electricity should be utilised instead. • Removing the diesel generators also has benefits for water quality, as it removes a possible vector for pollution, as well as removing a cause of air pollution. • The height of buildings and flues will have a landscape impact and bunding should be of sufficient height to obscure them. • Lack of community support / community employment plan submitted with application. • Impact of development being constructed in the same time frame as other infrastructure improvements.
SODC residents	<p>Amended Plans – One further letter of objection received stating earlier comments have not been addressed.</p>

	<p>Original Plans – One letter of objection and two letters of comment received. Concerns raised are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to reduce energy consumption. Solar panels should be incorporated into the design. • Need to explore alternatives to diesel back up generators before permission is granted. • Object to use of diesel generators due to associated noise / air pollution. • Traffic impact on A4130. • Visual impact / loss of view / light pollution • Loss of property value (not a material consideration)
Cllr Cooper (SODC)	<p>Original Plans – Comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These buildings are likely to need high levels of electrical input. I therefore strongly recommend that the roofs should be designed to accommodate as many solar panels at an efficient (even adjustable if this is warranted) angle (30-35 degrees if fixed) as possible to help with the district becoming zero carbon by 2030.
Oxfordshire County Council	<p>Amended Plans</p> <p><i>Transport:</i> No objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several key issues that were previously raised as concerns by OCC with this development proposal have now been addressed. The delivery of the pedestrian and cycle route (and connecting bridge) remains the outstanding transport item that is to be agreed. However, this is subject to ongoing negotiations with the applicant and will be secured as part of a future legal agreement if this planning application secures a resolution for planning approval. • On this basis, no objection to the proposed development; subject to the previous recommended conditions being imposed and the necessary highway financial contributions, land and infrastructure requirements being secured by a S106 legal agreement. <p><i>Lead Local Flood Authority:</i> No objection.</p> <p><i>Archaeology:</i> No objection.</p> <p>Original Plans</p> <p><i>Transport:</i> Objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A revised Milton Road access design is required. • Further traffic trip generation evidence required to justify Transport Assessment. • Revised drawings are required to show the Science Bridge construction compound proposals can be accommodated on site. • It is essential that this site provides bus stop infrastructure and pedestrian and cycle permeability between Milton

	<p>Road and Science Bridge to promote sustainable travel patterns for journeys to and from the site.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should the proposal be approved, construction traffic management and a travel plan are required, together with financial contributions. <p><i>Lead Local Flood Authority:</i> Holding objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient information is provided on micro-drainage calculations and exceedance flow paths not demonstrated. <p><i>Archaeology:</i> No objection.</p>
Network Rail	<p>Amended Plans – No objection, reiterate earlier comments.</p> <p>Original Plans – No objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draw applicant's attention to rail asset protection during construction.
Environment Agency	<p>Amended Plans – No additional comments.</p> <p>Original Plans – No objection, subject to contamination land remediation.</p>
Drainage Engineer	<p>Amended Plans – no objection, subject to conditions.</p> <p>Original Plans – No objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject to conditions for further details of foul and surface water drainage design and a compliance report demonstrating surface water drainage is installed in accordance with any approved scheme.
Thames Water	<p>Amended Plans – No objection.</p> <p>Original Plans – No objection.</p>
National Grid	<p>Amended Plans – no further response received.</p> <p>Original Plans – No objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draw attention to National Grid Transmission infrastructure in the vicinity of the site.
Building Control	<p>Amended Plans – no further comment.</p> <p>Original Plans – No objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Energy Statement dated 18.01.2021 has been submitted for the development of the Didcot Data Centre Unit 1. The Energy Statement demonstrates that Unit 1 achieves at least a 40% reduction in carbon emissions compared with a code 2013 Building Regulations

	<p>compliant base case. A copy of the original BRUKL Report demonstrating compliance should be supplied.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No energy Statement has been supplied for Unit 2. A BREEAM design stage review dated 11.01.21 (review and approval date) has been supplied for Unit 1 which demonstrates an excellent target rating. No BREEAM design stage review has been submitted for Unit 2.
Countryside Officer	<p>Amended Plans – No objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject to condition for an updated biodiversity enhancement strategy. <p>Original Plans – Holding objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further information required. Amend landscaping and lighting to address impact on bat foraging.
Landscape Officer	<p>Amended Plans – No objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The application has been amended and many of my concerns addressed either by changes or by explanation. Fence lines and bunding has been realigned to allow for more areas of shrub and tree planting outside the fence line to soften the site boundaries. The approach to fencing on the northern boundary has changed with the Suds area and associated land sitting outside the secure area, allowing much larger areas of planting to soften the built form and screen the proposed security fencing. There are a few minor items that require further clarification, these could be covered by condition. <p>Original Plans – Holding objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While I do not have an objection to the principle of development on this site, I do have concerns that the proposed development does not adequately address Core Policy 37: Design and Local Distinctiveness, Policy 44 Landscape or Core Policy 16b: Didcot Garden Town. While it is accepted that the current site is predominantly a cleared brownfield area, the over dominance of the proposed security fencing and the associated lack of planting means this site does not create an appropriate distinctive sense of place that physically and visually integrates with its surroundings and incorporates appropriate landscape proposals to promote local distinctiveness and diversity and enhance damaged landscape areas. Revisions are required to address concerns raised.
Tree Officer	<p>Amended Plans – no objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject to implementation of tree protection measures.

	<p>Original Plans – No objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to a tree protection condition.
Urban Design Officer	<p>Amended Plans – No further response received.</p> <p>Original Plans – No objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The southern edge of the site requires additional green infrastructure.
Environmental Health – Air Quality	<p>Amended Plans – No objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to conditions suggested previously. <p>Original Plans – No objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to conditions restricting use of backup generators to emergency use only when no alternative power source is available and planned routine testing scheme.
Environmental Health – Contamination	<p>Amended Plans – no objection, subject to condition.</p> <p>Original Plans – No objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works to address land contamination are ongoing and any outstanding matters can be addressed through a pre-occupation condition.
Environmental Health – Protection	<p>Amended Plans – no further comment.</p> <p>Original Plans – No objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some aspects of the operation of the proposed development have the potential to cause a loss of amenity to residents in terms of noise with emergency generators a particular concern. • It is noted that extensive precautions are taken to prevent the need to use the generators, but to protect the amenity of residents, testing shall only take place Monday to Friday between 0700 – 1900 and at no time on Saturdays, Sundays or Public Holidays and in the event of an emergency the operator shall notify the Environmental Protection Team as soon as possible and no later than the end of the current working day.
Enterprise Zone Team	<p>Amended Plans – no further comment received.</p> <p>Original Plans – No objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed developments will be on a Didcot Growth Accelerator Enterprise Zone site. Therefore, if the developments proceed, the growth in business rates income until 2041, from the buildings will be directed towards the development of the Enterprise Zone and thereafter towards the Oxfordshire Local

	<p>Enterprise Partnership's other identified growth priorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We note that it is estimated that the first data centre will sustain approximately 50 FTE jobs in the longer term. We look forward to the operator working with the council's economic development team to prepare and implement the required Community Employment Plan. It is important that this plan encourages local employment and training in the operation supply chain, as well as local employment and training in the construction and operation of the centre. • Data centres require considerable electrical power. Therefore, we would like some reassurance that the operation of the data centres will not unduly constrain the existing local distribution network. A constrained network could increase the risk of local power failures or restrict planned housing and employment development, because of the need to fund the cost of reinforcing the network. • On site renewable energy will help to reduce power demand from the local distribution network and/or supply power to the grid. We welcome the inclusion of VRF (air source heat pump) heating and 200m² of solar photovoltaic and wonder why it is considered that the inclusion of further on-site renewables to meet the power demand of the data centre is not deemed feasible for a project of this type. Also, has there been consideration of batteries to provide the required emergency backup power supply? • We note and welcome that water consumption during operation is being minimised through cooling systems. However, we would be interested to know what consideration has been given to utilising waste heat for community benefit. • We would also be interested to know what consideration has been given to the utilisation of spare operational capacity during times of the day and year when there are troughs in data demand. • Finally, whilst we note that the design and build will be in line with the BREEAM UK Data Centres 2010 document, we would be interested to know if there has been consideration of the Climate Neutral Data Centre Pact which aims to make data centres climate neutral by 2030. The pact was launched in January 2021 and has received over 40 new expressions of interest to join. It now includes 34 companies and 20 associations committed to ensuring the design and operation of data centres across Europe meet ambitious sustainability criteria.
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Economic Development	<p>Amended Plans – no response received.</p> <p>Original Plans – Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal has economic benefits during construction and operation. A Community Employment Plan is required.
Didcot Garden Town Team	<p>Amended Plans – Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The application proposal aligns well with Didcot Garden Town’s vision, principles and priorities that help guide the development of the garden town. <p>Original Plans – no response received.</p>
Crime Prevention Design Adviser	<p>Amended Plans – no further comment received.</p> <p>Original Plans – No objection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prior to application, the applicant sought advice from Thames Valley Police Crime Prevention Design Advisors, and our Counter Terrorism Security Advisors. The security details provided far exceed what is required by Secured by Design, and as such we have no objection to these applications.
Infrastructure and Development	<p>Amended Plans – Comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good to see the incorporation of photovoltaic solar cells and air source heat pump with the desire to be carbon neutral by 2040 and that the build will meet the BREEAM Excellent standard although there is still reliance on diesel generators. Ensure appropriate link (3m wide paths) to existing foot and cycle paths to encourage and allow this mode of transport. Allow within the development to enlarge cycle parking spaces. Current proposal is 10 spaces per data centre with an anticipated workforce when the site is completed of 120; is this sufficient? Space needs to be available onsite to allow for an increase in cycle parking. Water use for planting (shrubs & trees) - once established to rely on rain and manual watering by the building occupier. Is there scope to incorporate water butts for building occupiers to use? <p>Original Plans – Comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should this site generate a S106 or any CIL funding in the future, this will be allocated and spent in line with the council's CIL spending strategy. As the council wants the district to be carbon neutral by 2045 isn't diesel going against this philosophy and should be challenged.

3.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

3.1 [P20/V2663/DIS](#) / [P20/S3711/DIS](#) - Approved (02/02/2021)

Partial discharge of conditions 6 - CEMP and Complaints procedure, 13 - Noise Impact Assessment, 19- Surface Water Drainage and 20 - Foul water Drainage of application P19/V1472/FUL

[P20/V2612/DIS](#) / [P20/S3708/DIS](#) - Approved (02/02/2021)

Partial discharge of conditions 6 - CEMP and Complaints procedure, 13 - Noise Impact Assessment and 19- Surface Water Drainage of application P19/V1472/FUL

[P20/V2691/DIS](#) / [P20/S3890/DIS](#) - Approved (15/01/2021)

Partial discharge of condition 8 (Biodiversity enhancement strategy) on application P19/V1472/FUL.

[P20/V2025/DIS](#) / [P20/S2908/DIS](#) - Approved (26/10/2020)

Discharge of conditions 7 - materials to be used in construction of proposed rerouting of watercourse and 18 - scheme to de-culvert the watercourse on application ref. P19/V1472/FUL

[P19/V3173/RM](#) / [P19/S4426/RM](#) - Approved (26/10/2020)

Reserved Matters application following Outline approval P19/V1472/FUL for the proposed realignment of below ground unnamed ordinary watercourse (a tributary of the Moor Ditch) and revised connection to the Moor Ditch (as amended by plans and information received 23rd March 2020, 15th June 2020, 3rd August 2020 and 24 September 2020).

[P19/V3168/RM](#) / [P19/S4416/RM](#) - Approved (24/09/2020)

Reserved Matters application following Outline approval P19/V1472/FUL for the Construction of link road and the realignment of Purchas Road.(as amended by plans and information received 23 March 2020, 15 June 2020, 18 August 2020 and 16 September 2020).

[P20/V1444/DIS](#) / [P20/S2246/DIS](#) - Approved (27/08/2020)

Discharge of conditions 10 - Phasing Plan, 11 - Arboricultural Method Statement for all phases, 16 - Land Contamination, 21 - Impact Study on Existing Water Supply and 30 - Community Employment Plan on application ref. P19/V1472/FUL

[P19/V1472/FUL](#) / [P19/S1967/FUL](#) - Approved (15/10/2019)

Variation of condition 4 of application P15/V1304/O to substitute approved Parameters Plan (213042_PL02 Rev E) with amended plan (9063 F0011 Rev A).

[P19/V1684/DIS](#) / [P19/S2178/DIS](#) - Approved (24/07/2019)

Discharge of condition 4 - Construction Traffic Management of planning application P19/V0914/FUL

[P19/V0914/FUL](#) / [P19/S1187/FUL](#) - Approved (03/07/2019)

Site Clearance works including removal of trees, landscaping, bunds and spoil heaps. Breaking of concrete and removal of all concrete and structures (above and below ground and). Filling of voids. Day lighting of water course and creation of development plateaus.

[P15/V1304/O](#) / [P15/S1880/O](#) - Approved (21/02/2019)

Mixed use redevelopment comprising up to 400 dwellings (C3), 110,000ms of Class B2/B8 units, 25,000m² of Class B1 units, 13,000m² Class A1 units (includes 1,500m² convenience food store), 150 bed Class C1 hotel and 500m² of Class A3/A4 pub/restaurant, including link road, related open space, landscaping and drainage infrastructure, together with reservation of land for link road and Science Bridge. Cross boundary application Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire.

[P14/V0385/D](#) - Approved (20/03/2014)

Prior notification for proposed demolition of Didcot A Power Station and all associated buildings and structures.

3.2 **Pre-application History**

[P19/V2616/PEJ](#) / [P19/S3359/PEJ](#) - Advice provided (19/12/2019)

Development of new data centre, comprising two new data centre buildings and associated on site infrastructure.

4.0 **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 The scheme comprises industrial estate development on a site exceeding 0.5ha as defined at 10(a) of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. A request for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Opinion of this proposal was received on 16th August 2019 (refs P19/V2028/SCR and P19/S2636/SCR). A negative Screening Opinion was issued on 2nd September 2019, which confirmed the proposal was not EIA development.

5.0 **MAIN ISSUES**

- 5.1 The main issues are:

- The principle of development
- Landscape and visual impact
- Design
- Landscaping and trees
- Amenity
 - Noise
 - Air quality
 - Lighting
- Flood risk and drainage
- Traffic and highway safety
 - Access
 - Traffic generation
 - Pedestrian and cycle connections
 - Bus service infrastructure

- Parking
- Historic environment
 - Archaeology
- Biodiversity
 - Protected species
 - Net gain
- Other considerations
 - Climate Change
 - Historic environment
 - Contaminated land
 - Community employment plan
 - Public art
- Financial contribution requests
 - Community Infrastructure Levy
 - S106 legal agreement

5.2 **The principle of development**

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides that the local planning authority shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations.

5.3 The development plan for this proposal comprises the adopted Vale Local Plan 2031 Part 1 (LPP1), the adopted Vale Local Plan 2031 Part 2 (LPP2) and the adopted SODC Local Plan 2035 (SOLP). There is currently no made or draft neighbourhood plan for Sutton Courtenay or Didcot.

5.4 The site is allocated for redevelopment in LPP1 and through the grant of outline planning permissions, which remain extant, the principle of commercial development here is established. There are no material changes in planning policy. Development of the site for the data centre use (Use Class B8) complies with policies CP6 and CP16 of LPP1 and policies STRAT1 and STRAT3 of the SOLP and is therefore acceptable in principle unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The proposal is assessed against the requirements of the development plan when taken as a whole, below.

5.5 **Landscape and Visual Impact**

Policy CP44 of LPP1 confirms that key features that contribute to the nature and quality of the district's landscape will be protected from harmful development, and where possible enhanced. Where development is acceptable in principle, proposals will need to demonstrate how they have responded to landscape character and incorporate appropriate landscape proposals. Policy ENV1 of the SOLP aims to protect the landscape, countryside, and rural areas against harmful development. Development will only be permitted where it protects and, where possible enhances, features that contribute to the nature and quality of South Oxfordshire's landscapes, in

particular trees (including individual trees, groups of trees and woodlands), hedgerows and field boundaries.

- 5.6 The application site is not within any nationally designated landscape and is previously developed land within the urban area of Didcot with limited landscape value. Its redevelopment is therefore acceptable. Notwithstanding, concern has been raised on the height of buildings and flues and their visual impact on the local area.
- 5.7 The applicant has provided a landscape visual impact assessment which concludes the scheme has a minor adverse effect on its immediate surroundings and any wider views (including those from AONB). However, the perceived level of change to a view is low due to the existing urban context. Officers agree with the assessment's findings and consider that where the new buildings and flues would be visible, this would form part of a view that contains existing views of industry and large-scale buildings (the warehouse building immediately west of the site is 22m high for comparison). Consequently, the scale mass and height of the proposal is considered acceptable for this location and the proposed development would not cause unacceptable landscape and visual harm to result in conflict with policies CP44 and ENV1.

5.8 **Design**

Policy CP37 of LPP1 states that new development must demonstrate high quality design that responds positively to the site and its surroundings, creating a distinctive sense of place through high quality townscape and landscaping that physically and visually integrates with its surroundings. It sets out further design criterion for streets and movement, green infrastructure, social inclusion and safe communities, climate change resilience and that development must be visually attractive, with scale, height, massing, and materials appropriate to the site and surrounding area. Policy CP38 of LPP1 sets out more detailed design criterion required for strategic and major development sites. Policy DES1 of the SOLP aims to ensure that all new development must be of a high-quality design with policy DES2 ensuring that it must respond to and enhance local character. Policy DES4 requires masterplans for all major development.

- 5.9 The proposed development is acceptable. The design of all the elements of the proposal are considered to make a positive contribution to its surroundings, with attractive contemporary design, form, scale, materials and colour, together with the landscape treatment and the relationship of the building within its environment. The proposal is compliant with policies CP37, CP38, DES1, DES2 and DES4.

5.10 **Landscaping and trees**

The landscaping proposals have been devised in consideration of the site context as well as the operator's security requirements on visibility across the site and between the elevation of the building and boundaries and include retained and proposed woodland, informal groups of parkland trees and native shrub and hedgerow planting. Overall, the landscape scheme (as amended) is generally acceptable. The landscape officer raises no objection subject to

minor revisions for pond planting, fence colour and drainage pipe routing to avoid clashes with planting areas. These can be addressed by condition.

- 5.11 Most trees shown to be removed have been previously approved on other consented applications. Further trees that will now require removal are located where the Attenuation Pond is located. The tree officer has confirmed these trees are less prominent from an amenity value and arboricultural perspective than the trees shown to be retained adjacent to Milton Road, whose retention will help to soften the development, and additional planting proposed will help mitigate their loss. The proposal is therefore acceptable and compliant with policies CP44 and ENV1.

5.12 **Amenity**

Policy DP23 of LPP2 requires development proposals to demonstrate they will not result in significant adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring uses. Policies ENV12 and DES6 of the SOLP aim to ensure that development would not have significant adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring uses with respect to loss of light, dominance or visual intrusion, noise, emissions, pollution, or external lighting.

- 5.13 The southern boundary of the development is located within approximately 75 meters of nearby residential properties under construction. At this distance there will be no unreasonable overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing impact for existing and future occupants of dwellings.

5.14 *Noise*

Policy DP25 of LPP2 requires noise generating development to provide an appropriate scheme of mitigation. Chiller units proposed to keep the servers cool and generators (if used) will generate noise. A noise assessment accompanies the application. The noise assessment predicts night-time noise levels for the nearest dwellings would not increase ambient sound levels and generators are to be located within enhanced acoustic enclosures to reduce sound. In the day-time background noise levels at the nearest dwellings are higher than the night-time levels and consequently there will be no unreasonable noise impact. Environmental Health raise no objection on noise matters, subject to conditions on hours of testing and the emergency operation of generators. The proposal accords with policy DP25.

5.15 *Air Quality*

Policy DP26 of LPP2 confirms that development proposals that are likely to have an impact on local air quality, including those within relative proximity to existing air quality management areas (AQMA's) will need to demonstrate measures / mitigation to minimise any impacts associated with air quality. Policy EP1 of the SOLP requires all development proposals to minimise air pollution.

- 5.16 An Air Quality Assessment has been undertaken and reported as part of this application submission. This assesses both construction and operational related activities to adequately consider air quality impacts of the proposed development. Impacts during construction, such as dust generation and plant

vehicle emissions, are predicted to be of short duration and only relevant during the construction phase. The results of the risk assessment undertaken, indicates that before the implementation of mitigation and controls, the overall risk of dust impacts will be acceptable.

- 5.17 Air quality implications due to use of the diesel generators in both testing and in use during any emergency situations, and traffic movements have also been assessed. It is considered emissions will all be well below air quality objectives and will not cause any breaches. Impacts for residents, users of the site and the adjacent public highway will be acceptable.

5.18 *Lighting*

Policy DP21 seeks any external lighting to not have an adverse effect on the character of the area, amenity of neighbours or on local biodiversity. Matters of biodiversity impact is considered elsewhere in this report. In terms of amenity, the lighting proposed is acceptable and there is no direct impact on nearby housing. It has been designed to ensure it is not obtrusive, adhering to the principles of policy DP21 whilst ensuring a safe and secure site, including the safety of movement around the site.

5.19 **Flood Risk and drainage**

Core Policy 42 of Local Plan part 1 seeks to ensure that development provides appropriate measures for the management of surface water as an essential element of reducing future flood risk to both the site and its surroundings. Policy EP4 of the SOLP seeks to minimise the risk of flooding and Policy INF4 relates to water resources and requires that all new development proposals must demonstrate that there is or will be adequate water supply, surface water, foul drainage and sewerage treatment capacity to serve the development.

- 5.20 The Environment Agency flood risk map confirms that the site lies within Flood Zone 1 (the preferred location for development of this type) and is at a low risk of fluvial flooding as well as from other potential sources of flood risk. The drainage strategy for the site (SUDs with attenuation and infiltration basins to convey surface water to the diverted watercourse) accounts for flood risk considerations to ensure surface water management and potential flooding is appropriately managed.

- 5.21 The council's drainage team raise no objection subject to conditions requiring further details based on the FRA to be submitted and approved for unit 2 and implementation and verification of the constructed drainage scheme before occupation. A sustainable drainage scheme can therefore be agreed to accord with policies CP42 , EP4 and INF4 in respect of flood risk and surface water management.

5.22 **Traffic and highway safety**

Policy CP33 of LPP1 actively seeks to ensure that the impacts of new development on the strategic and local road network are minimised, to ensure that developments are designed in a way to promote sustainable transport access and to promote and support improvements to the network that increase safety and improve air quality. Policy CP35 of LPP1 promotes public transport,

cycling and walking and together with policy DP17 of LPP2 (and TRANS4 of the SOLP) requires proposals for major developments to be supported by a Transport Assessment in accordance with OCC guidance. Policy DP16 of LPP2 requires evidence to demonstrate that acceptable off-site improvements to highway infrastructure can be secured where these are not adequate to service the development.

- 5.23 Policy TRANS5 of the SOLP seeks to ensure that development does not harm highway safety and provides for sufficient parking and turning areas and TRANS2 promotes the use of sustainable forms of transport such as walking and cycling. Policy TRANS1b supports strategic transport investment.
- 5.24 The application is supported with a Transport Assessment and addendum technical notes which have been assessed by the Highway Authority.
- 5.25 *Access*
It is proposed to utilise the Milton Road vehicle access arrangement that was approved as part of the outline planning permission for the overall Didcot A site. The principle of using this extant vehicle access as the site's primary access is acceptable, as is the form of access arrangement proposed. A secondary access from the north is also acceptable in terms of highway safety.
- 5.26 *Traffic generation*
The proposed data centre site is to be located within an area of the wider Didcot A site that was granted outline planning permission for a large mixed land use development, that included several commercial uses and 400 residential dwellings. All of these permitted land uses will generate a significant number of peak hour commuter traffic movements on the public highway network.
- 5.27 Due to the unique nature of data centre land uses, traffic generation is low compared to a typical Class B8 warehouse use. Vehicle movements from the proposal are estimated to be 14 two-way movements in AM peak hour and 6 in the PM peak hour, compared to the extant planning permission for the site of 303 two-way in the AM peak hour and 321 in the PM peak. On this basis the impact of the proposal on the local highway network is negligible and the Highway Authority confirm the proposal would provide a significant benefit to the operation of the local and strategic network. The proposal results in a betterment compared to the extant scheme and is therefore, acceptable. In addition, conditions can restrict the use of the site and manage construction traffic.
- 5.28 *Pedestrian and cycle connections*
Pedestrian and cycle permeability between Milton Road and the Science Bridge Link Road is essential to promote sustainable travel patterns for the development proposal, the rest of the Didcot A site and other local destinations. The provision of a connecting link is also supported by policy CP16 of LPP2.
- 5.29 Sutton Courtenay parish council consider the current provision in the application is not deemed adequate. In their view there is no commitment to

construction of the cycle path and footpath, merely the allocation of land which may result in the lack of provision in the future.

- 5.30 A 4m land corridor width along the site frontage of Milton Road is to be secured for a future cycle / pedestrian scheme that will be delivered by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC). Furthermore, a pedestrian / cycle route between Milton Road and the new Science Bridge Link Road through the development site has now been agreed in principle. The total corridor width of this route is to be 7m. This is acceptable and OCC raise no objection. The facility (together with a cycle / pedestrian bridge over the water course) is expected to be delivered by the developer once the Science Bridge works are nearing completion and there is no longer the need for the bridge construction compound within the site. OCC is currently in negotiations with the developer regarding the delivery of this route which will be secured through the legal agreement. Officers consider this overcomes the parish concern.
- 5.31 *Bus service infrastructure*
Sutton Courtenay parish council also has concerns over the distance from the nearest bus stop. A pair of bus stops on each side of Milton Road are to be provided, close to the new Milton Road entrance (within 100m) and will be secured by the S106 legal agreement. The works include hardstanding with appropriate footway / carriageway widening works, pole, flag, information display, shelter with ducting provided for real time information and lighting. Officers consider therefore adequate infrastructure for bus services can be provided to serve the development and a refusal on this ground would not be justified.
- 5.32 *Parking*
The council's parking standards require 1 car parking space per 200 sqm of Class B8 floor space with a threshold set at 1,000 sqm. A total of 89 car parking spaces are proposed on-site via a secure and private gated entrance. 39 spaces are to be provided for Unit 1 and 50 spaces for Unit 2. No HGV parking is to be provided on site, only service yards. All car parking will be provided with passive charging infrastructure, with 9 spaces provided with active charging points. The highway Authority raises no objection to the level of parking provision and officers consider the provision is reasonable to meet the site's operational needs and based on the number of likely employees and the accessibility of the site.
- 5.33 Secure and sheltered cycle parking is proposed on site supported with dedicated lockers and changing areas within the proposed data centre buildings. Such facilities will encourage sustainable travel patterns to the site. The total number of cycle parking spaces proposed is 20. OCC considers this provision to be low, but it is noted the applicant suggests that only four members of staff, on a typical day, will utilise the cycle parking to be provided i.e. 20 cycle parking spaces equating to a provision of 20% provision for the total number of staff is provided. To address this concern the Travel Plan for the site has been revised and as such should the cycle parking capacity exceed 90% consistently over an agreed period of time then 10 additional cycle

parking spaces will be provided as part of the Travel Plan. This proposal is considered acceptable.

5.34 **Historic Environment**

Policies CP39 of LPP1 and DP36 of LPP2 state that proposals for new development that may affect heritage assets must demonstrate that they conserve and enhance the special interest or significance of the heritage asset and its setting. Policies ENV6 and ENV8 of the SOLP seek to ensure that new development is sensitively designed and should not cause harm to the historic environment.

- 5.35 There are no designated assets within the application site. Old Didcot Conservation Area is located 735m to the south-east and contains listed buildings. None of these heritage assets would be affected by this proposal in terms of their setting and the proposal is compliant with policies CP39 and DP36.

5.36 *Archaeology*

DP39 of LPP2 states that development will be permitted where it can be shown that it would not be detrimental to the site or setting of Scheduled Monuments or nationally important designated or non-designated archaeological remains. Policy ENV9 of the SOLP also requires development to protect Scheduled Monuments.

- 5.37 There is a Scheduled Monument approximately 1.1km north-west of the site. The county archaeologist has confirmed the proposals outlined would not have an invasive impact upon any known archaeological sites or features. As such there are no archaeological constraints to this scheme and the proposal is compliant with policy DP39.

5.38 **Biodiversity**

Policies CP46 of LPP1 and ENV3 of the SOLP requires development to avoid losses in biodiversity and actively seeks net gains. The site is not covered by statutory or non-statutory designations.

- 5.39 The application is supported by an Ecological Appraisal which confirms that most habitats on site comprise of bare ground. An area of woodland, in the east of the parcel, currently remains.

5.40 *Protected Species*

The countryside officer advises the southern boundary of the site is a bat commuting and foraging resource. The Environmental Statement, pursuant to the outline planning permission on the wider site (P15/V1304/O), confirmed that high quality structural landscaping along this boundary is required to mitigate and compensate for impacts on bat commuting and foraging behaviour. The amended landscaping plans show that the southern boundary has increased landscaping and significantly improves the potential for the boundary to be used as a linear habitat corridor. Improvements have also been made to the lighting design around the main site access on the southern boundary. Luminaires will have a colour temperature of 3000k and installed on

a 6-metre pole (2m shorter than previously proposed). It is considered that this amended lighting scheme has lowered the potential ecological impact, whilst still meeting the highway safety needs of the access and is considered by officers to be sensitively designed. Any impact on bats is thus acceptable.

5.41 *Net gain*

An approach to biodiversity net gain (BNG) for the wider site has been agreed with the local planning authority under P20/V2691/DIS. This approach involved quantifying the 2014 pre-development biodiversity value of the site, prior to any habitat clearance, and measuring the biodiversity gains that each parcel is likely to deliver. Overall, it is considered the wider site can deliver a net gain for biodiversity and this is actively monitored through the submission of subsequent and cumulative Biodiversity Enhancement Plans.

- 5.42 The submitted BNG assessment with this application deviates from the approach previously agreed as this assessment has taken the baseline as being from post-clearance, instead of the habitats assessed on site under the wider outline permission. Whilst this is a stand-alone application, the biodiversity impacts of this proposal still need to be considered in the wider context of the whole site, but it is acknowledged that this development will deliver a likely net gain for biodiversity and contribute to the net gain goals of the wider site. As such the countryside officer raises no objection subject to an updated site-wide strategy report to ensure that biodiversity losses and gains are recorded appropriately. An updated report can be submitted by the landowner through planning conditions on the extant outline permission for the wider site to accord with policies CP46 and ENV3.

Other considerations

5.43 *Climate Change*

CP40 of LPP1 encourages developers to incorporate climate change adaption and design measures to combat the effects of changing weather patterns in all new development. Policies DES8 and DES10 of the SOLP require sustainable design and that all new build development must achieve at least a 40% reduction in carbon emissions compared with a code 2013 Building Regulations compliant base case. This reduction is to be secured through renewable energy and other low carbon technologies and/ or energy efficiency measures. It goes on to state that an energy statement must be submitted to demonstrate compliance with the policy and how the development will comply with this.

- 5.44 The applicant has provided a sustainability statement and energy statement to support the application. The sustainability statement has evaluated the proposal against principles of sustainability and the relevant national and local planning policies. It demonstrates how all principles of sustainability have been considered during the design of the development and how these will be further embedded throughout its lifecycle. The statement concludes that the proposed site location and the proposed design would enable a sustainable development to be constructed with alignment to the BREEAM UK Data Centres 2010 requirements to achieve BREEAM excellent.

- 5.45 The energy statement summarises the strategy devised for the development of Unit 1 and outlines the development's approach to energy efficiency and renewable energy strategies. A similar assessment will be made with regards to Unit 2 at the appropriate time. The proposal incorporates energy efficient and passive design measures to deliver significant savings on regulated energy use and is likely to achieve an 83% improvement over the Building Regulations Part L 2013 Target Emission Rate. Further detail can be found in the energy statement which is available to view online. The proposal accords with policy DES10.
- 5.46 Concern has also been raised the development does not adapt or provide enough for climate change. As part of the analysis a feasibility study into Low or Zero Carbon Technologies (LZC) has also been carried out. This concludes photovoltaic panels (PV) and VRF (Air source heat pump) as the most appropriate technology for this development. PV was originally proposed on just the roof of the office element of the building, covering 200m². Through negotiation by your officers, this has been increased across the data hall roof to provide a total of 1160m².
- 5.47 In response to the concerns raised, the applicant recognises that human-induced climate change is a real and serious threat and that action is needed and there is a commitment to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2040, ten years ahead of the Paris Agreement. As part of this commitment, the future operator is investing and innovating in efficiency in every aspect of their operations and is on a path to be powered by 100% renewable energy by 2025. However, it is not feasible to provide battery powered backup generators on this site at this stage, as the technology is not advanced enough to give the reliability required in case of National Grid failure.
- 5.48 Officers are also mindful of a 29 April 2021 appeal decision recovered by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government (SoS) in which he rejected Swale Borough Council's request to impose planning conditions seeking to reduce carbon emissions from proposals beyond the requirements of Part L of the Building Regulations. The SoS considered that in the absence of local plan policy and notwithstanding the high level of national commitment to carbon neutrality, and the significant weight attaching to tackling climate change, imposing conditions to reduce carbon emissions would go beyond current and emerging national planning policy and would not be either reasonable or necessary (appeal decision APP/V2255/W/19/3233606). Officers advise that conditions could not be reasonably imposed requiring further carbon emission reductions or the installation of additional renewable energy technology above existing planning policy or building regulation requirements to that currently proposed.
- 5.49 *Contaminated land*
Policy DP27 of LPP2 requires proposals for the development, redevelopment or re-use of land known, or suspected, to be contaminated, to submit a Contaminated Land Preliminary Risk Consultant Report.

5.50 Land contamination was assessed in detail under previous applications and remedial works are ongoing. The contaminated land officer has confirmed no objection to this proposal subject to submission of a validation report confirming completion of these works. This can be managed by a planning condition to accord with policy DP27.

5.51 *Community Employment Plan*

Policy DP11 of LPP2 states all new development should demonstrate how opportunities for local employment, apprenticeships and training can be created. A Community Employment Plan is required and can be secured by condition to accord with policy DP11.

5.52 *Public Art*

Policy DP20 of LPP2 requires proposals for all major development to provide public art that makes a significant contribution towards the appearance of the scheme or character of the area, or which benefits the local community. It is likely public art will be provided off site and contributions can be secured through a S106 legal agreement to accord with policy DP20.

5.53 **Financial contribution requests**

Paragraph 56 of the NPPF advises that planning obligations should only be sought where they meet all of the following tests:

- I. Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- II. Directly related to the development; and
- III. Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

5.54 Policy CP7 of LPP1 provides that development will only be permitted where the necessary physical infrastructure and service requirements to support the development can be secured. Policy INF1 of the SOLP states all new development must be served and supported by appropriate onsite and offsite infrastructure and services.

5.55 *Community Infrastructure Levy*

This proposal is not CIL liable.

5.56 *S106 Legal Agreement*

In accordance with the Developers Contributions SPDs if permission were to be granted, a s106 legal agreement would be required to secure highway infrastructure and financial contributions (all index linked) towards traffic mitigation, public transport, travel plan monitoring, and public art which are considered necessary, related to the development, and fair and proportionate to mitigate the impact of this development:

District Council	Amount (£)	Trigger	Towards (details)
Public art	£280,000 (index linked Oct 2019)	£80,000 on occupation of unit 1 £200,000 on occupation of unit 2	On site or in vicinity

County Council	Amount (£)	Trigger	Towards (details)
Transport			
Highway works	Unit 1. £245,201.32 (Index linked Dec 2020) Unit 2. £586,768 (Index linked Dec 2020)	1 st occupation.	Towards the design and construction of the Science Bridge and associated works
Public transport infrastructure	£17,808 (Index linked Dec 2020)	Commencement	Towards the installation of Real Time Information displays for the required bus stops along Milton Road & future maintenance.
Travel Plan Monitoring	£2,379 (Index linked Dec 2020)	1 st occupation of site.	Monitoring of Travel Plans for a period of 5 years
MONITORING			
Vale	£1,681	Payable on completion of S106	To fund monitoring of agreement
OCC	£TBC	Payable on completion of S106	To fund monitoring of agreement

- 5.57 As part of the Section 106 agreement for this proposal the applicant has agreed to provide OCC with a larger construction compound / licence area on the area known as Parcel A1 with access taken from Milton Road. This larger compound area is to be 75m x 75m and will assist OCC in delivering the Science Bridge as part of the Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) schemes.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 This application has been determined against the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In considering the application, due regard has been given to the representations received from statutory and other consultees. These have been taken in to account in assessing the overall scheme.
- 6.2 The application site is identified in the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031, Part 1 as an allocated site for commercial redevelopment and the proposal accords with the adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan strategy for locating major development such as this in Didcot. The principle of development is therefore acceptable.
- 6.3 The traffic impact of the proposal is acceptable and new public transport and cycle infrastructure will be delivered as part of the scheme. Planning conditions can control light and noise emissions preventing unreasonable impacts for residents. Due to distance there is no unreasonable overbearing, over shadowing or overlooking impacts for residents.

- 6.4 The proposals will be visible. They will be seen in the context of existing large commercial buildings and the power station. Planting proposals have been revised and include tree planting and woodland planting. These will assist in reducing the prominence of the proposals. The visual harm which is not considered adverse needs to be balanced against the benefits of the scheme which are considered to outweigh any visual harm.
- 6.5 Satisfactory drainage schemes can be secured through planning conditions. The proposals provide biodiversity enhancement.
- 6.6 The scheme can be made development plan policy compliant through the addition of conditions and therefore, it is recommended that permission is granted.

The following have been taken account of in assessing this application:

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031, Part 1 (LPP1) policies:

- CP01 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CP03 - Settlement Hierarchy
- CP06 - Meeting Business and Employment Needs
- CP07 - Providing Supporting Infrastructure and Services
- CP15 - Spatial Strategy for South East Vale Sub-Area
- CP16 - Didcot A Power Station
- CP17 - Delivery of Strategic Highway Improvements within the South-East Vale Sub-Area
- CP18 - Safeguarding of Land for Transport Schemes in the South East Vale Sub- Area
- CP33 - Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility
- CP35 - Promoting Public Transport, Cycling and Walking
- CP36 - Electronic communications
- CP37 - Design and Local Distinctiveness
- CP38 - Design Strategies for Strategic and Major Development Sites
- CP39 - The Historic Environment
- CP40 - Sustainable Design and Construction
- CP42 - Flood Risk
- CP43 - Natural Resources
- CP44 - Landscape
- CP45 - Green Infrastructure
- CP46 - Conservation and Improvement of Biodiversity
- CP47 - Delivery and Contingency

Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031, Part 2 (LPP2) policies:

- CP15A - Additional Site Allocations for the South-East Vale Sub-Area
- CP16B - Didcot Garden Town
- CP18A - Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Highway Improvements within the South-East Vale Sub-Area
- DP11 - Community Employment Plans
- DP16 - Access
- DP17 - Transport Assessments and Travel Plans
- DP20 - Public Art

DP21 - External Lighting
DP23 - Impact of Development on Amenity
DP24 - Effect of Neighbouring or Previous Uses on New Developments
DP25 - Noise Pollution
DP26 - Air Quality
DP27 - Land Affected by Contamination
DP28 - Waste Collection and Recycling
DP30 - Watercourses
DP36 - Heritage Assets
DP39 - Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments
CP47A - Delivery and Contingency

South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 (SOLP) Policies:

STRAT1 - The Overall Strategy
STRAT2 - South Oxfordshire Housing and Employment Requirements
STRAT3 - Didcot Garden Town
STRAT4 - Strategic development
INF1 - Infrastructure Provision
INF2 - Electronic Communications
INF4 - Water Resources
ENV2 - Biodiversity - Designated sites, Priority Habitats and Species
ENV3 - Biodiversity
ENV4 - Watercourses
ENV5 - Green Infrastructure in New Developments
ENV6 - Historic Environment
ENV9 - Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments
ENV11 - Pollution - Impact from existing and/ or Previous Land uses on new Development and the Natural Environment (Potential receptors of Pollution)
ENV12 - Pollution - Impact of Development on Human Health, the Natural Environment and/or Local Amenity (Potential Sources of Pollution)
EP1 - Air Quality
EP2 - Hazardous Substances
EP3 - Waste collection and Recycling
EP4 - Flood Risk
DES1 - Delivering High Quality Development
DES2 - Enhancing Local Character
DES3 - Design and Access Statements
DES8 - Promoting Sustainable Design
DES7 - Efficient Use of Resources
DES6 - Residential Amenity
DES10 - Carbon Reduction
TRANS1B - Supporting Strategic Transport Investment
TRANS2 - Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility
TRANS3 - Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Transport Schemes
TRANS4 - Transport Assessments, Transport Statements and Travel Plans
TRANS5 - Consideration of Development Proposals
TRANS7 - Development Generating New Lorry Movements

Neighbourhood Plans

A neighbourhood plan area for Sutton Courtenay Parish was designated in January 2017. The parish council has started the process of gathering evidence and engaging with the local community. This is to give the plan a direction and draft policies that will form the neighbourhood plan (NP). To date a draft NP has not been published and therefore, no weight can be given to any policies that may be emerging. There is no neighbourhood plan for Didcot Town.

Adopted guidance

Vale Design Guide SPD 2015: The Guide was adopted on 10 March 2015 and sets out design principles to guide future development and encourage a design-led approach to development.

South Design Guide SPD 2016: The Guide is intended to assist landowners, developers, applicants, agents, and planners through all stages of the design and planning process to achieve high quality development.

South S106 Planning Obligations SPD 2016: The SPD was adopted in March 2016 and provides guidance on how planning obligations will work alongside CIL to deliver the infrastructure needed to support development in South Oxfordshire.

Vale Developer Contributions – Delivering Infrastructure to Support Development SPD 2017: The SPD was adopted on 30 June 2017 and provides guidance on how planning obligations will work alongside CIL to deliver the infrastructure needed to support development in the Vale.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Other Relevant Legislation

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990
- Community & Infrastructure Levy Legislation
- Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010
- Provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998
- Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010
- Localism Act (including New Homes Bonus)
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
- Environment Act 1995

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