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Response to Planning application from Hertfordshire County Council (T and CP GDP Order 2015)

Director of Planning

North Hertfordshire Council
Council Offices
Gernon Road
Letchworth Garden City
Hertfordshire
SG6 3JF

District ref: 24/02713/FP
HCC ref: NH/23367/2024
HCC received: 18 December 2024
Area manager: Manjinder Sehmi
Case officer: Senober Khan

Location

Land At Radwell Bury Farm, Newnham Road, Newnham, Hertfordshire,

Application type

Full Application

Proposal

Full Planning Permission : Installation of Battery Storage System with associated infrastructure, earthworks, landscaping and access

Recommendation

Notice is given under article 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 that Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of permission subject to the following conditions:

Conditions:

No development shall commence until detailed technical plans are submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Highway Authority, which show the detailed engineering designs and construction of the vehicle accesses/driveway gradients and associated highway works concerning the visibility splays, etc. These works shall be constructed to the specification of the Highway Authority and Local Planning Authority's satisfaction and completed before occupation of any part of the development.

Reason: To ensure the provision of a vehicle accesses is safe, suitable, and sustainable for all highway users.

Before commencement of the development, a 'Construction Traffic Management Plan' shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the

Highway Authority. Thereafter the construction of the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan. The 'Construction Traffic Management Plan' must set out:

- the phasing of construction and proposed construction programme.
- the methods for accessing the site, including wider construction vehicle routing.
- the numbers of daily construction vehicles including details of their sizes, at each phase of the development.
- the hours of operation and construction vehicle movements.
- details of any highway works necessary to enable construction to take place.
- details of construction vehicle parking, turning and loading/unloading arrangements clear of the public highway.
- details of any hoardings and how visibility splays will be maintained.
- management of traffic to reduce congestion.
- control of dirt and dust on the public highway, including details of the location and methods to wash construction vehicle wheels.
- the provision for addressing any abnormal wear and tear to the highway.
- waste management proposals.
- Provision of sufficient on-site parking prior to commencement of construction activities;
- Post construction restoration/reinstatement of the working areas and temporary access to the public highway;
- where works cannot be contained wholly within the site a plan should be submitted showing the site layout on the highway including extent of hoarding and remaining road width for vehicle movements.

Reason: To minimise the impact of the construction process on the on local environment and local highway network in accordance with Policies 5, 12, 17 and 22 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018).

It should be stressed at this stage of the application that it is the responsibility of the site operator to manage all vehicle and pedestrian movements within the site.

HIGHWAY INFORMATIVES:

The Highway Authority recommends inclusion of the following Advisory Notes (ANs) to ensure that any works as part of this development are carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Highways Act 1980 and other relevant processes.

Storage of materials: The applicant is advised that the storage of materials associated with the construction of this development should be provided within the site on land which is not public highway, and the use of such areas must not interfere with the public highway. If this is not possible, authorisation should be sought from the Highway Authority before construction works commence.

Further information is available via the website

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/highways-roads-and-pavements.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

Obstruction of public highway land: It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/highways-roads-and-pavements.aspx> telephoning 0300 1234047.

Road Deposits: It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit mud or other debris on the public highway, and section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible. Therefore, best practical means shall be taken at all times to ensure that all vehicles leaving the site during construction of the development are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available via the website <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/highways-roads-and-pavements.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

Avoidance of surface water discharge onto the highway: The applicant is advised that the Highway Authority has powers under section 163 of the Highways Act 1980, to take appropriate steps where deemed necessary (serving notice to the occupier of premises adjoining a highway) to prevent water from the roof or other part of the premises falling upon persons using the highway, or to prevent so far as is reasonably practicable, surface water from the premises flowing on to, or over the footway of the highway.

Construction standards for works within the highway. The applicant is advised that in order to comply with this permission it will be necessary for the developer of the site to enter into an agreement with Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the satisfactory completion of the access and associated road improvements. The construction of such works must be undertaken to the satisfaction and specification of the Highway Authority, and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public highway. Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements. Further information is available via the website <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/highways-roads-and-pavements.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

Brief description in support of the proposed development by the applicant:

A Transport Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application to construct and operate a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), associated works and access on land off Newnham Road.

The BESS is only anticipated to give rise to very occasional vehicle movements once operational, as a result of routine maintenance requirements (approximately one visit per month), likely to involve the use of a small van or pickup. Primary transport-related effects would therefore be associated with the construction stages of the Proposed Development, which is anticipated to occur over a relatively short period of time.

Vehicular access into the site is currently obtained from Newnham Road via a gated field access located at the south-eastern corner of the Site. Newnham Road connects to the A507 Great North Road via a simple priority junction, with the A507 connecting to Junction 10 of the A1(M) (Stotfold Interchange) approximately 450m north-west of Newnham Road.

It is proposed that a new purpose-built vehicular access will be constructed to provide access to the Proposed Development from Newnham Road during both the construction and operational phases.

Newnham Road is a two-way, single carriageway road. In the vicinity of the Site the road has a width of approximately 5m, and there are no footways or street lighting present. Newnham Road is subject to the national speed limit (60mph). Vehicular access to the Site during both the construction and operational phases is proposed to be taken from Newnham Road.

Personal Injury Accident (PIA) data for the highway network in the vicinity of the site has been obtained from the online CrashMap. Data was extracted for the most recently available three-year period which is from 2020 to 2022 inclusive.

During this three-year period there have been no accidents along Newnham Road in the vicinity of the Site. Only one accident during this period occurred at the A507 / Newnham Road junction, which resulted in slight injury.

Overall, the accident record along the local highway network in the vicinity of the site is good and does not therefore represent a cause for concern in the context of the Proposed Development.

In the vicinity of the proposed site access junction Newnham Road is subject to the National Speed Limit (60mph), and if a strict interpretation of CD 109 of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) is adopted, the stopping sight distance and junction visibility requirement for roads with a design speed of 62mph (100kph) is 2.4m x 215m.

The ATC survey data collected along Newnham Road included vehicle speed data. The observed 85th percentile speeds are summarised as follows:

- i) ATC 1 (EB) – 47.9mph; and
- ii) ATC 2 (WB) – 49.4mph.

The 85th percentile speeds outlined above provide evidence that vehicle speeds along this stretch of Newnham Road are lower than the prevailing speed limit.

Based on the observed 85th percentile speeds summarised above, this would equate to the following minimum visibility requirements, extrapolated from the stopping sight distances set out in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB):

- i) Visibility to west – 2.4m x 107.5m; and
- ii) Visibility to east – 2.4m x 112.9m.

Drawing 3600-01-D01 demonstrates that the required minimum visibility splays, based on the prevailing vehicle speeds along Newnham Road, of 2.4m x 108m to the west of the access junction and 2.4m x 113m to the east of the junction can be achieved.

Drawing 3600-01-ATR01 demonstrates that the local highway network can satisfactorily cater for construction-related vehicles requiring access to the Site. It also illustrates that there is sufficient space within the Site boundary to allow for provision of a construction compound / HGV turning area, which will allow vehicles to unload, turn round and exit back towards Newnham Road.

It is proposed that further details of the proposed Site access, and/or requirements for construction traffic management, would be outlined in greater detail within any Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) associated with the proposed development, of which a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) would form a part.

The swept path assessment also demonstrates that during the operational phase, the proposed internal access track is suitable to allow a 3.5t panel van to access all areas of the site, turn around, and egress the Site in forward gear without issue.

In addition to the main Site access junction, a secondary Site access would be provided to facilitate access to the Site in the event of an emergency where it is not possible to gain access via the main access track. This would be situated off the main access track.

Given the limited number of daily movements (i.e. a maximum of 16 arrivals and 16 departures per day over the initial 12-week period of enabling works, and much less for the remainder of the 52-week construction period, it is considered that with the implementation of a CTMP, the Proposed Development would not result in any issue in relation to highway capacity or safety.

Highways comments:

The HA has reviewed the Transport Statement (TS) and finds that the proposed increases in traffic flows on the local highway network during both construction and operational periods are not of a scale that would materially impact the relative operation and safety of the local highway network. Furthermore, the HA is satisfied that the visibility splays (based on the 85th percentile speeds) at the vehicle accesses (main and emergency) are acceptable.

In view of the above commitments the HA would raise no objection subject to the listed conditions.

Signed

Senober Khan

8 January 2025