

"[Ref] | **Installation of a battery storage facility and ancillary development | Land east of Dog Trap Lane, Minety, Wiltshire**

Having carefully considered the above application, it is the **decision of Minety Parish Council to OBJECT** to this application and respectfully request that it is **refused** at determination.

I/ we request that the Application be **called-in** if the case officer recommendation were for approval, for the following reasons/ justifiable planning considerations:

1. Scale of Development

The scale of the proposed 50MW battery storage development is industrial in nature and inappropriate in size and scale for in a completely rural location.

2. Cumulative Impact/ Development Creep

There are multipls 'renewable energy' related applications consented (and as yet some are not fully or even partially developed) and currently in the planning process in and around Minety's electricity substation. The proposed site on Dog Trap Lane is remote from the substation (which itself would be a more appropriate 'brownfield' location) and further disruption will be caused as a result of the need to install cabling some distance along the busy B4040 road. The Dog Trap Lane site appears to have been selected fairly randomly without due regard to suitability of that location; the Applicant is peppering Local Authorities around the country with similar applications and the Applicant has another similar 100MW site in planning (neighbouring Charlton Parish) which would also connect to Minety substation. In addition the Applicant has a 3rd consented but undeveloped/ unconstructed battery storage site immediately adjacent to the substation. There is a clear and obvious negative cumulative impact of continual development of this nature in rural locations (especially a location east of Dog trap Lane, near to Minety itself with nearby residential properties).

3. Impact on the character of landscape

Minety, per above, is already contributing more than its fair share towards the renewable energy agenda. There are several residential properties on Dog Trap Lane which will be directly impacted (visual impact as well as noise impact) from the development – strong objections have been made by all nearby residents and adjoining landowners. The land on which the proposed development would be sited has for many years been pasture and is surrounded on three sides by unspoilt woodland with multiple public footpaths through the woodland all leading directly to the Applicant site. This would be a serious negative impact for local walkers. Land nearer to the substation would be more suitable for industrial developments such as the storage scheme proposed. The development near Dog Trap Lane detracts from both the amenity and environmental qualities of the area and negatively impacts local residents and would amount to permanent change of use of the land from farming to industrial (regardless of comments made about returning the site to

pasture in 40 years – in reality this would be unlikely to occur). This proposal **does not meet the needs of the community** and representations from parishioners at a public meeting have shown it does not have their support.

The development would be contrary to following sections of the Local Plan:

Strategy 7 – Development in the Countryside

'Development in the countryside will only be permitted where it is in accordance with a specific Local or Neighbourhood Plan policy that explicitly permits such development and where it would not harm the distinctive landscape, amenity and environmental qualities within which it is located'

15. Smaller Towns, Villages and Countryside

15.1 '... we aim to secure a vibrant and dynamic future with emphasis on community led development to meet local needs.'

15.2c 'The character of the countryside should be conserved and enhanced and new development should not detract from this.'

Impact on community

Contrary to the applicant's statements **there is a significant risk of a major accident, risk to the local population, impact on water resources, and/or risk of pollution.**

All battery storage facilities carry fire risk. While the probability of a fire is low, the hazard can be rated as critical or catastrophic leading to a medium to high risk rating overall. Lithium batteries are prone to thermal runaway and there are many documented cases of battery storage units that have led to serious fires and, in some cases, explosions and/or injury to firefighters. Battery fires are difficult to extinguish and can re-ignite some considerable time later. As well as the **direct hazard from fire near to substantial woodland**, there are also hazards from the release of flammable and toxic gases, such as carbon monoxide, hydrogen chloride, hydrogen fluoride, hydrogen cyanide, benzene and toluene impacting local Dog Trap Lane residents 200 meters away and (due to the prevailing South West wind) into **Minety itself just 500 meters** away .

Has there been engagement with relevant Fire Services? Access for fire vehicles could be constrained.

Strategy 39 – Renewable and Low Carbon Projects

Battery storage facilities such as this are not in themselves a 'renewable energy' or 'low carbon' development. The Applicant has confirmed that the battery storage will not directly connect to nearby Solar PV farms. **It will store energy primarily from fossil fuel sources. Battery storage units have been shown to have a high carbon footprint.**

The proposal cites the National Grid's Future Energy Scenarios (FES) Report in justification for large scale increase in battery storage units to support renewable energy sources. This is somewhat misleading, as closer reading of the FES document shows that battery storage has a relatively small role in the future of energy storage due to the **significant limitations on the length of time energy can be stored in batteries**. More appropriate (truly) 'renewable energy' strategies – especially in 'brown field' locations - should be considered in preference to battery storage. Accordingly, the negative impact of the development on the community is **not justified on 'sustainability grounds' albeit the Parish Council recognises that further battery storage and other renewable energy development is likely (and ultimately should be encouraged where appropriate in nature, scale, etc) nearer to the Minety electricity substation.**

Minety Parish Council