

Development Management Sub Committee

Wednesday 23 August 2023

Report for forthcoming application by

**Kaimes Renewable Energy Park for Proposal of
Application Notice**

23/01765/PAN

**At West Of Existing Kaimes Substation, Old Burdiehouse
Road, Edinburgh**

**Proposed renewable energy development comprising
Installation of BESS (Battery Storage) with associated
infrastructure and access.**

Item number

Report number

Wards

B16 - Liberton/Gilmerton

Summary

The purpose of this report is to inform the Development Management Sub-Committee of a forthcoming detailed application for the proposed renewable energy development comprising installation of BESS (Battery Storage) with associated infrastructure and access on Land West of Existing Kaimes Substation, Old Burdiehouse Road, Edinburgh. In accordance with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended, the applicant submitted a Proposal of Application Notice on 24 April 2023 (23/01765/PAN).

Links

Coalition pledges

Council outcomes

Single Outcome Agreement

Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the key issues at this stage and advises of any other issues.

Background

2.1 Site description

The site consists of an almost rectangular parcel of land, located on the northern side of the City of Edinburgh Bypass (A720), with a total site area of approximately 19 hectares.

Agricultural fields border the site to the north and west. Immediately to the east, lies the existing Kaimes substation and its associated infrastructure. To the south is the A720 City Bypass and agricultural fields and Straiton Park and Ride and Retail Park within the Midlothian Council area.

To the north-east across Burdiehouse Road there is established residential development, and to the north of the site, there are a total of 633 houses under construction by Barratt Homes (application number: 14/04860/FUL) as HSG21 in the LDP.

The site lies within an area designated as Green Belt. The north-west part of the site is also an Area of Importance for Flood Management. The boundaries to the north and west overlap with the Burdiehouse Burn Local Nature Conservation Area site. Further to the west of the site is part of a Special Landscape Area. The Morton Mains Conservation Area also lies to the west.

2.2 Site History

28 July 2020 - Proposed renewable energy development comprising solar panels/photovoltaics, battery storage, flexible gas generation and associated infrastructure. Application number: 20/02823/PAN Pre-application Consultation approved.

Main report

3.1 Description Of The Proposal

The proposal is for BESS (Battery Storage) with associated infrastructure and access for 49.9MW electricity storage. A major planning application would be submitted.

BESS systems are a series of large batteries that can be charged via a connection to the public electricity supply to enable power to be imported and exported. It is likely that the actual batteries would be situated within containers similar to shipping containers 12.2m long and may require air conditioning units on top or in the vicinity to regulate heat as well as inverters/transformer skid, backup generators, auxiliary transformers, low voltage and control containers and high voltage switch gear.

The site would be surrounded by security fencing approx. 2.4m in height and may require acoustic fencing up to 4m in height. Access would be required for construction and maintenance. The associated equipment can be coloured to suit its location and environment.

3.2 Key Issues

The key considerations against which the eventual application will be assessed include whether:

a) The principle of the proposed development is acceptable in this location

This site is within the green belt of Edinburgh and as such both the NPF4 and the Edinburgh Local Development Plan policies including both NPF4 policy 8 (Green belts) and LDP policy Env 10 (Development in the Green Belt and Countryside) must be considered. The site will also be assessed against all other relevant policies within NPF4, LDP and the Edinburgh Design Guidance. Therefore, a clear and justified rationale for this development within the greenbelt should be included with the application. This should also explain how the proposal impacts on the green belt's stated aims. The justification submitted with the application needs to explain why a green belt location is essential and why it cannot be located on an alternative site out with the green belt. Therefore, other sites should also be considered.

b) The impact on climate mitigation and the nature crises

The proposals would also need to be assessed against NPF4 policy 1 (Tackling the climate and nature crises), alongside policy 2 (Climate mitigation and adaption), policy 3 (Biodiversity), Policy 4 (Natural Places), Policy 5 (Soils), Policy 11 (Energy) and Policy 18 (Infrastructure). Whilst there is weight given to the climate emergency in NPF4, this needs to be balanced against the impact on the Green Belt, Soils and use of prime agricultural land and wider environmental impacts and safety.

c) The impact of the proposal on the landscape and visual impact, including the impact on the Conservation Area

NPF4 policy 7 (Historic assets and places) would be relevant to consider whether the proposals affect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. NPF4 Policy 14 Design, quality and place is also relevant. The LDP Policies in relation to caring for the environment: Env 10, Env 12, Env 15, and Env 22 would also be relevant. The proposal would need to be assessed for the landscape and visual impact and therefore a comprehensive and robust Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment from a number of viewpoints, both local and more strategic, is essential. An assessment of the impact of the proposal on the character, setting and appearance of the Conservation Area, of views into and from the Conservation Area should be also assessed. An archaeology assessment would be required due to the findings on the adjacent Broomhill's site during construction.

d) The design, scale and layout and cumulative impact of the proposed development and compliance with the design policies of the Local Development Plan.

NPF4 Policy 14 (Design, Quality and Place) and the LDP Des Policies 1-9 (Design Principles for New Development) would also need to be considered. A design and access statement will be required for support the application. Any forthcoming application should highlight the size, height and massing of the proposed development including ancillary infrastructure and access arrangements.

(e) The impact on ecology, and public access into and around the site.

NPF4 Policy 4 (Natural Places) and LDP policies Env 15, and NPF4 policy 4f in relation to sites of local importance and species protection should also be considered as part of site is within and close to a Local Nature Reserve. The applicant is encouraged to integrate biodiversity enhancements within their proposals as well as mitigate any impact on the Local Nature Reserve.

(f) The impact on flooding:

The implications of the site being in an area of flood management, under NPF4 policy 22 (Flood risk and water management) and LDP policy Env 21 (Flood Protection) will also need to be considered. The applicant will need to mitigate any impact on the Burdiehouse Burn.

(g) Transport, fire risk and public safety

The transport impacts including public safety of the proposals should be assessed as well as access and connections to and from the site. There are a number of pedestrian and cycle routes in the vicinity and therefore the impact from this site to these users' needs to be considered. There is also a risk of fire with battery storage developments, and therefore suitable access for fire appliances is essential. The Fire Services are likely to be consulted on this application.

(h) Environmental Impact Assessment and any other environmental factors that require consideration

An Environmental Impact Assessment screening opinion should be submitted prior to the submission of the full application. The applicant will be required to submit sufficient information to demonstrate that the site can be developed without having an unacceptable detrimental impact on the environment. As batteries have a finite life, the decommissioning of the site and end of life site restoration plans should also be set out within the application.

In order to support the application, the following documents are anticipated:

- Pre-application consultation report.
- Planning Statement including assessment of other sites and justification why a green belt location is essential.
- Design and Access Statement:
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment:
- Sustainability Statement.
- Transport Information.
- Ecology Information including a Habitats Regulations Appraisal.

- Energy rationale information.
- Archaeology Information.
- Flooding risk and drainage information
- Comprehensive risk management plan for Fire Risk and Emergency Response; and
- Decommissioning of Site Plan and end of life site restoration.

This report highlights the main issues that are likely to arise in relation to the various key considerations. This list is not exhaustive and further matters may arise when the new application is received, and consultees and the public have the opportunity to comment.

3.3 Assessment

This report highlights the main issues that are likely to arise in relation to the various key considerations. This list is not exhaustive and further matters may arise when the new application is received, and consultees and the public have the opportunity to comment.

Financial impact

4.1 The forthcoming application may be subject to a legal agreement.

Risk, Policy, compliance, and governance impact

5.1 Provided planning applications are determined in accordance with statutory legislation, the level of risk is low.

Equalities impact

6.1 This is a pre-application report. When a planning application is submitted it will be assessed in terms of equalities and human rights.

Sustainability impact

7.1 A sustainability statement will need to be submitted with the application.

Consultation and engagement

8.1 Pre-Application Process

Pre-application discussions took place on this application.

8.2 Publicity summary of representations and Community Council comments

Public engagement will be undertaken via two public events held at Gracemount Leisure Centre, 22 Gracemount Drive, Edinburgh, EH16 6RN. The first event will take place on 18th May 2023 from 3.30 - 7.30pm. The second event will take place on 31st August from 3.30 - 7.30pm.

Publicity - An advertisement of the events will be published in Edinburgh Evening News on 11th May and 24th August 2023.

The Fairmilehead Community Council, Liberton Community Council and Gilmerton/Inch Community Council were served notice on 21 April 2023. The Ward Councillors, MSP and MP and Friends of Burdiehouse Burn Valley Park and Edinburgh and Lothians Greenspace Trust and Midlothian Council were also notified on 21st April 2023.

The results of community consultation will be submitted with the application as part of the Pre-application Consultation Report.

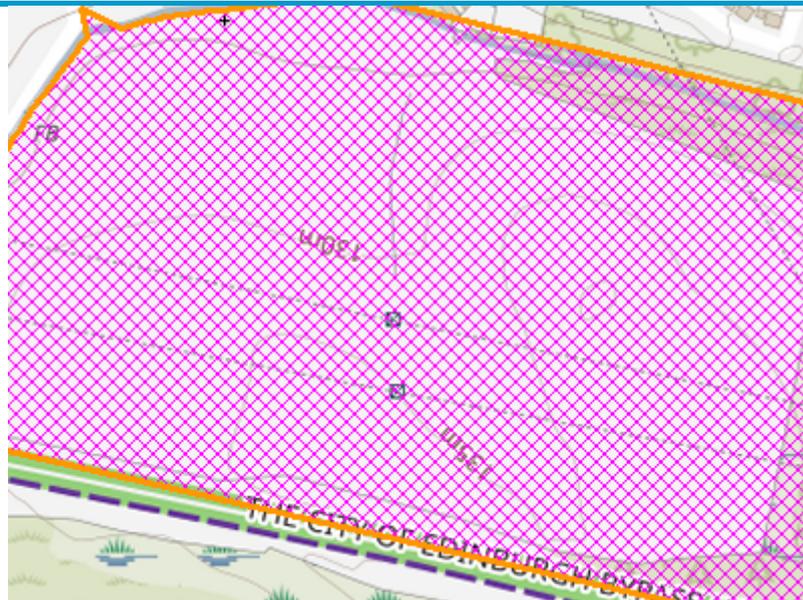
Background reading / external references

- To view details of the proposal of Application Notice go to
- [Planning and Building Standards online services](#)
- [Planning guidelines](#)
- [Conservation Area Character Appraisals](#)
- [Edinburgh Local Development Plan](#)

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Location Plan



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