

Report to Council

26th January 2021

Subject:	Proposed departure from the Development Plan at Land off Painswick Close, Woodruff Way, Walsall
Director:	Tammy Stokes - Interim Director of Regeneration & Growth - Neighbourhoods
Contact Officer:	William Stevens Principal Planning Officer William_stevens@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That approval be given to: an exception to the Development Plan in respect of planning application DC/20/64437 - Proposed construction and operation of a 49.9MW battery storage facility, fencing and site access road.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The proposed development is on green belt land bounded by the M6 motorway, a canal, an electricity distribution site and residential properties. It is considered that the loss of this area of green belt in this instance would not be detrimental to the local area.



3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?



A strong and inclusive economy – The development would bring land back into beneficial use, secure investment in the Borough, and provide employment.

4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 At the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 9th December 2020, consideration was given to planning application DC/20/64437 which sought approval for the construction and operation of a 49.9MW battery storage facility, fencing and site access road.
- 4.2 Planning Committee approved the planning application with conditions (including the replacement of any tree loss as a result of this development) and to the application being referred to Full Council as a departure from the Development Plan.
- 4.3 The site is currently allocated for Green Belt use under the Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Policies Map. It is necessary for the Council to consider whether or not to grant an exception to adopted policy to allow the application to proceed.
- 4.4 The purpose of this report is to discuss this 'departure' from the Development Plan only. It is not the role of Council to reconsider the wider planning merits of the application which have already been considered by Planning Committee.
- 4.5 The application was publicised by neighbour notification letter, and site and press notice. The Council's Highways, Planning Policy, and Environmental Health teams were also consulted on the proposal. No overall objections have been received from consultees which cannot be overcome by appropriate condition.



5 Alternative Options

5.1 Refusing the departure is an option. However, in doing so clear planning justification would have to be provided as any refusal of planning permission could result in an appeal and costs being awarded against the Council.

6 Implications

Resources:	The granting of exceptions to the Development Plan would not have any implications for the resources of the Council.
Legal and Governance:	The Planning Committee has delegated powers to determine planning applications within current Council policy. The decision to grant permission for this proposal would be contrary to the Development Plan. Consequently, the Planning Committee as required has referred the application to Full Council to consider whether or not an exception to the Development Plan should be granted.
Risk:	None Relevant.
Equality:	None Relevant.
Health and Wellbeing:	The proposal will assist with meeting other policy goals such as sustainable transport, low carbon heating, air quality improvements and net zero carbon 2050 that outweigh the loss of this small area of green belt.
Social Value	The proposal could create local jobs.

7. Appendices

7.1 None.

8. Background Papers

8.1 Planning application reference – DC/20/64437

