

We refer to the forthcoming Oxfordshire County Council Extraordinary meeting of 27 September to discuss the timetabled HIF call-in inquiry in December 2023.

RWE are the owners of the Didcot Power station site and its immediate hinterland. Part of the existing power station's operational land was formerly occupied by Didcot A Power Station and is included in the proposed alignment of the new Science Bridge Road which forms part of the HIF1 scheme. In this regard we wish to place on the public record the following points:

1. For a number of years RWE has been working in good faith with OCC officers to develop a data centre proposal on the site of the former Power Station A site. This joint working has been undertaken in parallel with the evolution and design of the HIF1 scheme. Indeed, the data centre proposals are designed to be entirely compatible with and complementary to HIF1 and are capable of being delivered with, or without, the Science Bridge Road element of the HIF1 scheme.
2. On 22 March 2023 RWE formally submitted representations to The Side Roads Order and The Compulsory Purchase Order relating to the HIF1 scheme. In RWE's view, the compulsory purchase of RWE's operational land in the absence of a more detailed agreement is not the appropriate approach to securing the parts of RWE's operational land required for HIF1 and as such the proposed compulsory purchase is detrimental to RWE's undertaking. RWE are seeking to negotiate a S106 obligation with officers, associated with the data centre application, which will deliver the land necessary to develop OCC's HIF1 scheme in a way that is compatible with RWE's operational requirements and the data centre proposals. RWE supports the principle of the HIF1 development and is happy to further its engagement with OCC to agree suitable obligations to support and enable HIF1 as needed through a voluntary agreement.
3. RWE is progressing the previously well-established positive dialogue with officers and OCC's land agent to resolve and agree the requirements under S106 which will provide for a more efficient and effective mechanism to deliver works as needed on the RWE's operational land.

In conclusion RWE is supportive of OCC's aspirations to deliver the Science Bridge Road, will follow the determination of the HIF1 scheme with interest, and will continue to support officers as appropriate / needed through the inquiry process.

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