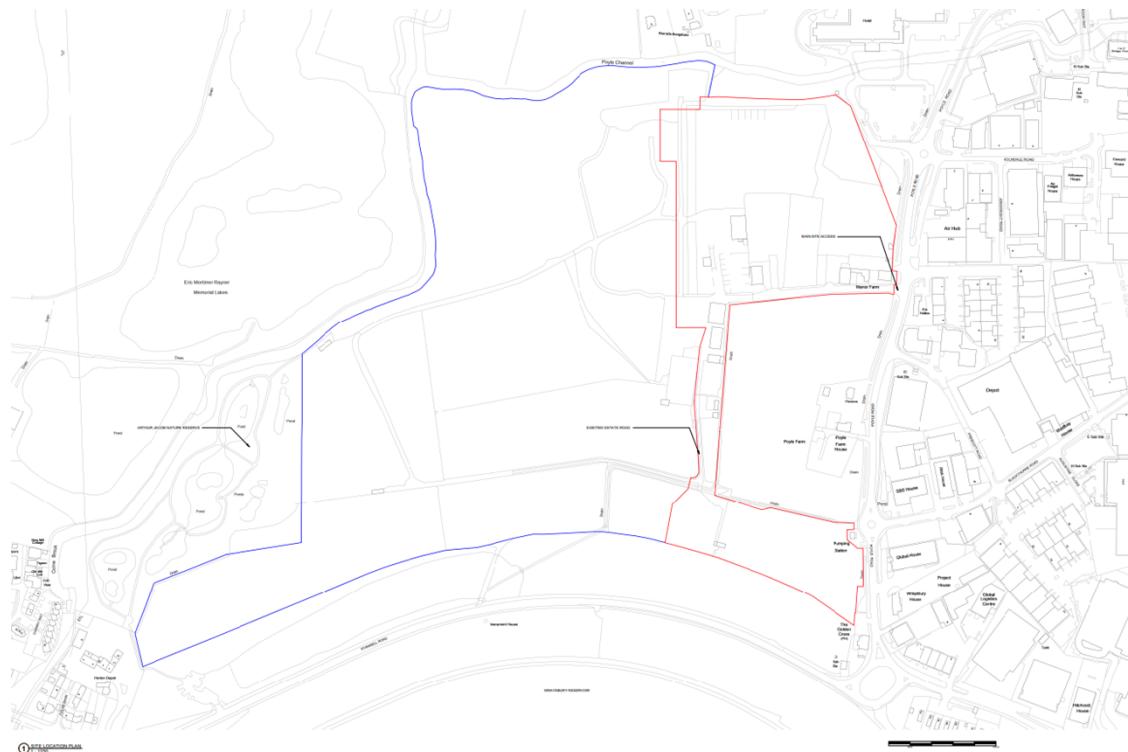


Registration Date:	02-Jan-2025	Application No:	P/10076/013
Officer:	Alex Harrison	Ward:	Colnbrook & Poyle
Applicant:	Manor Farm Propco Limited	Application Type:	Major
13 Week Date:			3 April 2025
Agent:	Philip Murphy, Quod Ltd 21, Soho Square, London, W1D 3QP		
Location:	Land at Manor Farm and land north of Wraysbury Reservoir, Slough		
Proposal:	Demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment to comprise a Data Centre (Use Class B8) and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) with ancillary substation, offices, associated plant, emergency backup generators and associated fuel storage, landscaping, sustainable drainage systems, car and cycle parking, and new and amended vehicular and emergency access from Poyle Road and other associated works.		

Recommendation: Endorse the Statement of Case and to proceed with the appeal.



1.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 Under the current constitution and in line with the scheme of delegation as the proposal is major development and the applicants have appealed non-determination, Officer's require authority by Member of Planning Committee to endorse the Statement of Case and to proceed with the appeal.
- 1.2 Had the Council had the opportunity to determine the proposal, the application would have been refused for the following reasons:
 1. It has not been demonstrated that there is an overriding need for, or sufficient deliverable benefits from, the proposed data Centre and battery storage facility in this location which would constitute the very special circumstances which are necessary to overcome the presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt as set out in National Planning Policy Framework 2024 and Core Policies 1 (Spatial Strategy) and 2 (Green Belt and Open Spaces) of The Slough Local Development Framework, Core Strategy 2006-2026, Development Plan Document, December 2008. It would cause significant harm to this fragmented and vulnerable part of the Green Belt.
 2. The proposed development would result in the further coalescence of Slough and Greater London and the further loss of the separate identity of Slough. It has not been demonstrated that it is essential for the proposed data Centre and battery storage facility to be in this location within the Strategic Gap between Slough and Greater London and so it is contrary to Core Policy 2 (Green Belt and Open Spaces) and Core Policy 1 (Spatial Strategy) of The Slough Local Development Framework, Core Strategy 2006-2026, Development Plan Document, December 2008.
 3. The proposed development would result in the further urbanisation, loss of countryside recreation opportunities and severance of the Colne Valley Regional Park. It has not been demonstrated that it is essential for the proposed data Centre and battery storage facility to be in this location within the Colne Valley Regional Park and so it is contrary to Core Policy 1 (Spatial Strategy) and Core Policy 2 (Green Belt and Open Spaces) of The Slough Local Development Framework, Core Strategy 2006-2026 and Policy CG1 (Colne Valley Park) of The Adopted Local Plan for Slough 2004.
 4. The proposal would, if acceptable in other respects, be required to legally secure obligations and financial contributions provide for necessary infrastructure and mitigation all of which would need to be secured by the completion of a section 106 agreement. No such agreement has been completed, contrary to Policies 4, 9 and 10 of the Slough Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2006 – 2026 and Slough Borough Council's Developers Guide.

5. There is a holding objection to the proposal on the grounds that the applicant has failed to demonstrate that there is sufficient information to show that these proposals will not adversely affect important Government statements on the third runway at Heathrow and the National Policy Statement (NPPF paras 5 and 6).

1.3 The recommendation to Members is to endorse the Officer's position and reasons set out in Para 1.2 above.

PART A: BACKGROUND

2.0 Proposal

2.1 An application was submitted to the Council on 13 December 2024 and sought planning permission for:

"Demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment to comprise a Data Centre (Use Class B8) and Battery Energy Storage System with ancillary substation, offices, associated plant, emergency backup generators and associated fuel storage, landscaping, sustainable drainage systems, car and cycle parking, and new and amended vehicular and emergency access from Poyle Road and other associated works".

2.2 The determination date was 3 April 2025 and as the application was not determined within the 13-week time period, the applicants, Manor Farm Propco Limited submitted an appeal under section 78(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against the non-determination by Slough Borough Council of full planning application, reference: P/10076/013. The appeal reference is: APP/J0350/W/25/3366043.

2.4 There will be a public inquiry, starting on 14 October 2025 and legal Counsel has been instructed by the Local Planning Authority.

2.5 The Local Planning Authority has produced a Statement of Case which is set out below and explains why the Council does not support the development. The statement of case sets out the Council's argument position in respect of the proposal and is appended to this cover statement.

2.6 The appendices for the Statement of Case covers the following:

- Policy Documents
- Appeal Decisions
- Other Data Centre Consents
- Consultee Responses
- Neighbour Letters
- Enforcement Notices at the Site
- Suggested Conditions
- Pre-application Content
- Correspondence from Data Centre Operators

- Information Relating to Heathrow Expansion
- Other Miscellaneous Documents

3.0 Statement of Case and Appendices

3.1 The submitted statement of case is appended to this report which sets out the Council's case in full.

3.2 The appendices are too large in number and size to include in the agenda and have been uploaded to a website for viewing, which can be found at <https://slough.citizenspace.com/planning-policy/manorfarm> and a webpage will also be provided from this page with details as they evolve at <https://www.slough.gov.uk/planning> in due course.