

From: Nash Community <nashcommunitycouncil@gmail.com>

Sent: 04 August 2025 13:57

To: NCC - Planning <Planning@newport.gov.uk>

Subject: Planning application 25/0488

Dear Sir/Madam

Nash Community Council wishes to formally object to planning application 25/0488, which seeks to vary Condition 1 (approved plans) and Condition 2 (site investigation and risk assessment) of permission 22/0823, concerning the proposed 230MW Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at the Uskmouth Power Station site.

The Council acknowledges the importance of renewable energy initiatives but has serious concerns regarding the nature, scale, and implications of the proposed amendments, which we believe are substantial and warrant close scrutiny.

1. Safety and fire risk

The addition of fire water tanks in this revised plan underscores the inherent fire risk associated with large-scale battery systems. Thermal runaway events are well-documented in similar facilities, posing serious risks to health, the environment, and nearby residential and agricultural land.

We are concerned that there is no clear public safety plan or emergency protocol for residents in the event of a fire, explosion, or chemical release. The lack of community reassurance on this issue is unacceptable given the site's proximity to homes, farms, and ecological areas.

2. Increased scale, overdevelopment and visual impact

The proposal seeks to significantly increase the amount of battery infrastructure and reconfigure the site layout. This effectively represents a much larger industrial installation than previously approved.

In addition, the proposed raising of site levels is of great concern. Increasing the ground height risks making the battery infrastructure and associated equipment more visible from nearby roads, public paths, and private properties, significantly increasing the visual intrusion into what is currently an open, low-lying landscape.

This change will intensify the site's industrial appearance and further undermine the rural character of the area. The original planning approval was granted on the basis of a certain landscape profile. Any change to this should be reassessed for its landscape and visual impact through updated photomontages or verified views.

3. Environmental and ecological concerns

The amendments involve changes to the landscaping, site levels, repositioning of the attenuation pond, and alterations to the red line boundary. These changes have potential consequences for local drainage, flooding, and ecological balance.

Nash lies in an ecologically sensitive area, including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and marshland habitats. The Council is concerned that no updated ecological impact assessment has been provided to demonstrate how these changes will affect local flora and fauna.

4. Drainage and flood risk

The repositioning of the attenuation pond and raising of site levels could significantly alter water run-off and drainage, increasing the risk of surface water flooding in the surrounding low-lying area.

There is no evidence in the application documentation that a revised flood risk assessment has been undertaken to address the implications of these alterations.

5. Light, noise and operational disturbance

The expansion of the facility may result in increased operational noise and lighting, particularly at night, disrupting local amenity and tranquillity. This is particularly relevant in a quiet rural setting such as Nash, where any increase in ambient noise or light is noticeable and impactful.

6. Traffic and construction disruption

An expanded facility is likely to result in increased construction traffic and ongoing maintenance vehicle movements. West Nash Road is not suited to high volumes of industrial traffic, and the Council is concerned about potential damage to road infrastructure and danger to other road users, including cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders.

7. Procedural concerns

The scope of the changes, including increased infrastructure, adjusted boundaries, raised land levels, and repositioning of critical components, is far beyond minor amendments. The Council strongly questions whether this application should have been submitted as a completely new application, subject to full public scrutiny, rather than as a variation of conditions under Section 73.

Conclusion

In light of the above, Nash Community Council objects to this planning application and urges Newport City Council to refuse the proposed variations until:

- A full safety and emergency response plan is made public and assessed
- Updated flood risk and ecological impact assessments are submitted

- Clear evidence is provided that the expanded development will not adversely affect the character, safety, and wellbeing of the local community

We also request that any future applications of this scale be subject to full consultation and transparency, given the significant implications for Nash residents.

Yours sincerely,
Nash Community Council