**Parkway Energy Storage - FAQs**

**​Q. What is the purpose of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)?**

**​A.** Battery Energy Storage Systems store energy from the grid at times of lower demand and release it back to the grid when it is needed most. It will make an essential contribution to ensuring reliable, secure and affordable electricity for the country as it moves away from using coal and gas for electricity generation.

Parkway Energy Storage will support the use of renewable energy technologies, such as wind and solar power, by reducing supply issues associated with their intermittency. It will store excess electricity generated when the sun is shining and the wind is blowing and release it at times when that renewable electricity isn’t being generated.

National Grid states that BESSs are: *“essential to speeding up the replacement of fossil fuels with renewable energy.”*

**​**Parkway Energy Storage would provide a flexible back-up power source to the electricity transmission network (or National Grid), responding rapidly to variations that result from local and national energy demand and reactive power services.

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These services will be increasingly vital to the National Grid as the transmission network becomes more constrained when renewable energy schemes connect into the system.

​Accordingly, the BESS would contribute towards ensuring that there is a reliable and constant supply of electricity across the National Grid in a cleaner and more cost-effective manner.

**​Q**. **How can BESS technology reduce the burden of curtailment payments to windfarm operators, which currently lead to higher electricity bills?**

**​A.** Currently, electricity producers are paid to stop generating when there is an oversupply – these are called curtailment payments. Battery storage could help reduce these costs by 80%.

Between 2015 and 2019, curtailment costs rose in line with wind output from £90 to £145 million per year. This cost doubled in 2020 as the National Energy System Operator (NESO) faced a bill of £282 million linked to reduced demand associated with the pandemic (around £10 per household). Put another way, curtailment costs added £4 to each MW hour of wind energy generated.

​This is important as electricity generated from wind increased to more than a quarter of the UK’s electricity in 2023, and renewable generation represented a record share of 47.3 %. Clearly, if curtailment costs can be reduced and more ‘green’ energy can be harnessed there are significant sustainable benefits.

**​Q. How will Parkway Energy Storage System connect to the National Grid?**

**​A.** The grid connection from the proposed development would be to the Didcot Substation. The connection will be established via a buried cable between the Didcot Substation and the Parkway BESS onsite substation.

**​Q. How long will construction take?**

**​A.** Construction is anticipated to take up to 18 months, with 5.5 construction days per week. Construction hours are anticipated to be between 08:00 – 18:00 weekdays and 08:00 – 13:00 on Saturday. No construction activities would take place on a Sunday or Bank Holiday. However, it is requested that a degree of flexibility is applied should it be necessary to transport a piece of infrastructure to the site outside of this time.

**Q. When will the application for planning permission be submitted?**

**A.** The planning application for Parkway Energy Storage was submitted to Oxfordshire County Council in June 2025. It is anticipated that a decision will be made in early 2026. The application was made to the County Council, rather than the District Council, because it proposes a significant amendment to the restoration strategy of an existing waste management site. As the minerals and waste planning authority, the County Council is responsible for determining applications related to the long-term use and restoration of such sites.

**​Q. What impact will there be will on local roads?**

**​A.** A Transport Statement has been submitted with the planning application and is publicly available. This considers the vehicle movements associated with the construction and operation of the BESS and ensures that there is no potential highway capacity or safety issue. Peak construction activity (in terms of vehicle numbers) would occur during enabling works phase and HGV traffic would not be maintained over any lengthy period of time. During the operational phase, the proposed development would be operated remotely, and it would only be necessary for an operative to undertake a site visit on a monthly basis. This would be undertaken using a small van, pickup or equivalent vehicle.

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The construction phase will be controlled through a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), via a suitably worded planning condition to any forthcoming planning permission.

**​Q. How big will the Parkway BESS site be?**

**​A.** The BESS compound would occupy an area of circa of 6.1 hectares, including a 2.7-hectare battery storage compound.  The additional area will be used for drainage and biodiversity enhancement.

**​Q. What will the visual and landscape impact of the site be?**

**A.** A Landscape and Visual Assessment has been submitted with the planning application and is publicly available. This includes a Zone of Theoretical Visibility showing where the BESS could potentially be seen. The assessment concludes that, because the site sits within an industrial context already shaped by human activity, its impact on the wider landscape would be limited.

The Proposed Development would have only a minor adverse effect on a small part of the local landscape, and a negligible effect on most views, as the site is visually contained by existing trees, landform, and surrounding infrastructure.

**​Q. What will the noise impact of the site be?**

**​A.** A Noise Assessment has been submitted with the planning application and is publicly available. It shows that, with built-in mitigation, the development will operate in compliance with all relevant noise standards and guidance

**​Q. Will there be any impact on heritage or archaeological assets?**

**​A.** A Heritage Assessment has been submitted with the planning application and is publicly available. It confirms that the BESS would not impact surrounding heritage assets and indicates that the potential for buried archaeology is low.

**​Q. Could this land be used for agricultural purposes?**

**​A.** The site is part of a long-standing non-hazardous landfill and former mineral workings, and as such, it is not currently suitable for agricultural use. The ground conditions, subsurface infrastructure, and restoration requirements limit the potential for productive farming in the short to medium term.

After the BESS reaches the end of its operational life, the land will be returned in line with the agreed restoration plan, which could include ecological, amenity, or agricultural use, depending on what is deemed most appropriate at that time.

**​Q. How long will the Parkway Energy Storage site be in place?**

**​A.** Permission is being sought on a temporary basis of 40 years. Following this timeframe, and the cessation of energy operations, the land will be returned in line with the agreed restoration plan.

**​Q. Will the BESS be safe?**

**​A.** Battery Energy Storage Systems use well-established technology found in everyday devices like phones and electric vehicles. Modern designs incorporate multiple safety layers, including fire suppression systems, self-contained units, and sustainable drainage systems, reducing fire and contamination risks to extremely low levels.

The project has been developed in line with national and local regulations, referencing National Fire Chiefs Council guidance and the Health and Safety in Grid Scale Electrical Energy Storage Systems guidance. We also work closely with fire safety experts, local authorities, and emergency services through site visits, risk assessments, and training exercises.

**Q: Why are you proposing this site?**

**A:** The site has been selected based on a combination of practical, environmental, and strategic factors. Most critically, its close proximity to the National Grid infrastructure makes it highly suitable for a BESS. The Parkway Energy Storage facility will be connected via an underground cable to the Didcot Substation, located just south of the site – minimising both cost and disruption associated with transmission.
In many ways, this site functions as a brownfield location. The Sutton Courtenay Waste Management Site is an active, non-hazardous landfill extending across approximately 260 hectares of former mineral workings. The land is already heavily altered and is set within a wider industrial landscape, reducing the potential for additional visual or ecological impact.
The site is well-contained, bordered by woodland to the north, and surrounded by infrastructure including landfill (active and restored), rail sidings, the existing substation, and Corridor Road. Overhead power lines already cross the area, further reinforcing its suitability for energy infrastructure. Given these characteristics, the location offers a practical and environmentally responsible setting for a project of this nature.

**Q: What about the agreed and consulted on restoration plan?**
**A:** We acknowledge that the proposal represents a variation from the original restoration strategy. This is why it has been submitted to Oxfordshire County Council. The revised approach reflects both the changing national and local priorities around renewable energy and the unique potential of this large, industrialised site to support such infrastructure.
The scale of the site and its existing industrial character present an opportunity to accommodate renewable energy infrastructure that will sit alongside wider restoration efforts. Importantly, it will complement the restoration strategy by delivering long-term environmental benefits, including clean energy generation, enhanced biodiversity, and community value, while respecting the site's landscape setting.
Additionally, the landowner remains committed to the long-term vision for the site. The proposed renewable energy use is temporary, with a planned operational lifespan of 40 years. At the end of this period, the site will be fully restored in line with the original restoration plan, ensuring that long-term environmental and landscape goals are still met.

**Q: How are you engaging with the public on your proposals for Parkway Energy storage.**

**A:** Public engagement on the proposals for Parkway Energy Storage was launched on Friday 11 April 2025. A consultation newsletter was sent by post to 1,535 households and 36 businesses in the surrounding area, including Sutton Courtney and Appleford. It provided brief details of the proposed development; an invitation and sign-up details for a webinar to be hosted on Thursday 17 April 2025; and instructions for how recipients could provide feedback by phone, email, or online using a feedback forum. Local political representatives were also contacted with details of the proposed development. Articles have also appeared in local media. Information can be found project website: <https://www.brockwellenergy.com/projects/parkway-bess/>

**Q:** **Why is there a number of similar applications in the same area and how does it fit into the council’s wider energy policy?**

**A:** While this proposal is a standalone application, we are fully aware of other energy infrastructure projects coming forward in the area. The site’s suitability due to its size, location, and grid connectivity makes it naturally attractive for low-carbon energy development, which explains the growing cluster of related proposals nearby. This trend reflects national and regional ambitions to decarbonise the energy system.

Brockwell Energy is open and willing to engage with the Council to ensure the proposal aligns with the aims of Oxfordshire’s Energy Strategy, particularly in relation to enabling a smarter, more flexible grid and increasing local resilience.

**Q:** **What will you do to compensate the local environment?**

**A:** An Ecological Assessment has been submitted as part of the planning application and is publicly available. This involves a record search and 'walk over' survey of the site to determine the habitats and potential presence of species. A biodiversity net gain assessment has also been carried out to demonstrate the BESS would result in enhancements to the site.

**Q: Parts of this site is prone to flooding. Is there potentially a flood risk?**

**A:** The site is in Flood Zone 1, meaning it has a very low probability of flooding (less than 1 in 1,000 chance per year), and there are no historic records of flooding. A detailed Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment has been submitted with the planning application and is publicly available. This assessment informs a drainage strategy designed to ensure that surface water runoff does not exceed pre-development levels, so the development will not increase flood risk on-site or in surrounding areas.

**Q:** **Are you going to share a risk assessment for fire/noise/etc?**

**A:** Yes, a number of expert studies, including noise and fire risk assessments have been submitted as part of the planning application and are publicly available.

**Q:** **In case of fire, what precautions will be taken to reduce the spread of fire between battery units?**

**A:** Battery Energy Storage Systems use well-established technology found in everyday devices like phones and electric vehicles.   Modern designs incorporate multiple safety layers, including fire suppression systems, self-contained units, and sustainable drainage systems, reducing fire and contamination risks to extremely low levels.

The project has been developed in line with national and local regulations, referencing National Fire Chiefs Council guidance and the Health and Safety in Grid Scale Electrical Energy Storage Systems guidance. We also work closely with fire safety experts, local authorities, and emergency services through site visits, risk assessments, and training exercises.

**Q:** **Batteries tend to have a lifespan of 10-15 years so these will need to be changed several times during the lifespan, so surely that will be virtually a construction phase all over again with more large loads on the roads and so on, is this not the case?**

**A:** The proposed development would be operational for 40 years and it is anticipated that the batteries would be replaced twice during that period. Battery replacement will not require the same level of work as construction.

**Q:** **How will you ensure that long-term jobs will go to the local workforce?**

**A:** While there are limited opportunities for long-term employment due to the nature of Battery Energy Storage System operation, we welcome expressions of interest from local contractors who may be able to work on behalf of Brockwell Energy during the construction phase.

**Q:** **Where is the power coming from that would be stored in the proposed BESS site?**

**A:** The proposed development would store excess electricity available from the National Grid, including renewable energy, and release it for use at times when there is a requirement.

**Q: Will there be a community benefit fund to support projects in the local community?**

**A:** Yes. Brockwell Energy is committed to supporting local communities by establishing a Community Benefit Fund for the Parkway Energy Storage BESS project. The fund will be set up in line with industry guidelines, with a strong focus on early engagement with the community to ensure that local funds are allocated by local people.​

We welcome input from the local community on potential projects and beneficiaries.​

Brockwell Energy has a proven track record of delivering meaningful community support throughout the lifespan of its projects.

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