Appendix 4

WELCOME TO LOCH TOFTINGALL WIND FARM COMMUNITY OPEN DAY

Welcome to the first round of public consultation for the Loch Toftingall Wind Farm.

Utilising the natural environment to harness clean, zero-carbon energy, this project will, if consented, support local construction jobs along with local supply chains during construction and operation and offer community benefit, supporting the long-term future of local communities.

Here you will find a selection of information banners outlining the proposal.

Please take your time to study the information and please do not hesitate to speak with any of the project team members who are here to answer your questions.

If you would like to leave a written comment, please help yourself to a 'Voice Your Opinion' comment form, available from the reception desk.

Site Description

The proposed development site is located in a commercial forestry plantation to the west of Loch of Toftingall and directly north of the operational Halsary Wind Farm, adjacent to the A9, just south of Spittal in Caithness.

Development

Infinergy is a UK based renewable energy company with a strong focus on the development of onshore wind energy in Scotland and Wales. Infinergy develops wind energy projects from inception through to construction and operation.

In July 2022 Boralex acquired 100% of Infinergy's interests in the UK. Boralex is a Canadian based independent power provider. Boralex has developed, and now operates, a large portfolio of wind farms as well as a number of solar parks, primarily in Canada and France. The company also owns and operates large hydro-electricity projects in Canada.

There are several ways to obtain further information and to contact us:

- Our website **www.lochtoftingallwindfarm.co.uk** will be updated regularly to provide you with the latest information. We will publish the planning application documents, including the Environmental Impact Assessment Report, on the website once the application has been submitted.
- Ring the freephone number **0800 980 4299**
- Email us at **info@lochtoftingallwindfarm.co.uk**
- Write to us using **Freepost Infinergy Ltd**

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THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Infinergy is currently designing a proposal for up to two wind turbines and a battery energy storage facility on land located to the north of Halsary Wind Farm, south of Spittal in Caithness.

At this stage, turbine tip heights of up to 149.9 metres are being proposed with an installed capacity of up to 7.2 Megawatts (MW). In addition, a 40MW Battery Energy Storage Facility will be located in the south western part of the site.

The Battery Energy Storage facility would store electricity from the two wind turbines and feed this into the electricity network when it is most needed. It would also be able to take renewable electricity from the network, store it, and then feed it back when it it is most needed, thereby making the electricity system more efficient and flexible.

Land within the site that is currently plantation will be felled and over a period of years carefully restored to peatland. This is effectively the same restoration proposal as within the neighbouring Halsary wind farm site. The peatland restoration proposals would provide important biodiversity enhancement.

Environmental, technical and commercial considerations throughout the assessment process will continue to inform the turbine positions as well as their dimensions and the design of the Battery Energy Storage Facility.

Submission of the planning application for Loch Toftingall Wind Farm is expected to be Summer 2023.

Construction and Access

Should Loch Toftingall Wind Farm be consented, construction would not be expected to commence until approximately autumn 2024.

Along with the wind turbines and battery energy storage facility, the proposed development will consist of a temporary construction compound; access tracks; crane hardstanding areas; and a substation to allow the green electricity generated to feed into the electricity network.

Route to Site and Access

The potential effects of construction traffic will be assessed throughout the design and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process, and in consultation with The Highland Council (THC) and Transport Scotland.

At present, turbine deliveries are expected to arrive at Wick Harbour. The turbines would exit the harbour and continue along the A99 to Latheron and then northwards along the A9.

Access into the site would be from the south off the A9 either via the northern access into the Halsary Wind Farm, initially using the existing wind farm track and then using a new stretch of track northwards or alternatively an access track from the north using the existing forestry track from the B870.

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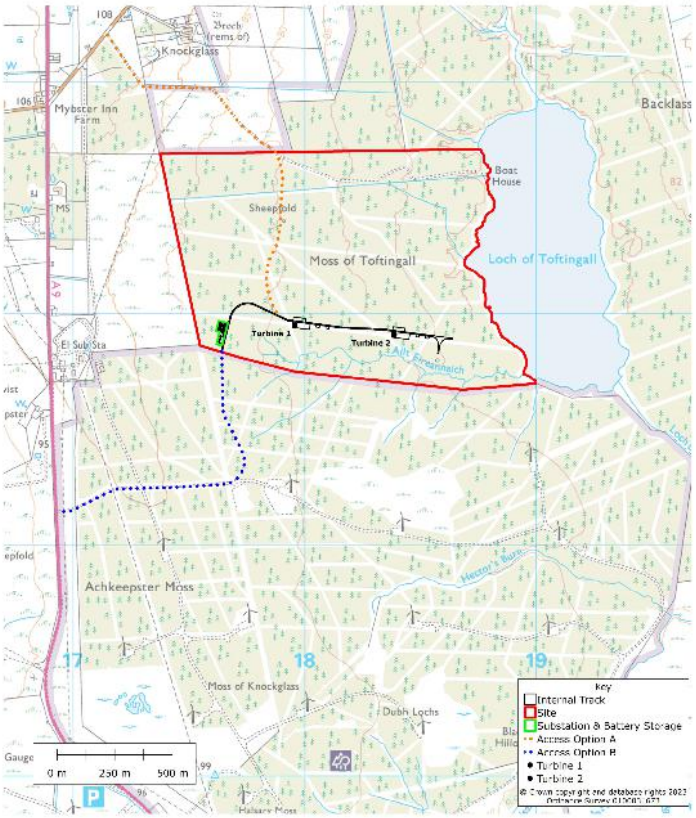
THE PROPOSED LAYOUT



How have our studies influenced the layout?

The layout has gone through a number of design iterations. In May 2019 a scoping opinion was requested from Highland Council with input from a range of other consultees. At this stage the site area was larger and the layout consisted of six wind turbines, four located on the eastern side of the loch and two on the western side.

This has been amended largely as a result of pre-application consultation with Highland Council with a reduction in the turbine numbers from six to two and the alignment of the two turbines has been changed so that they are closer to Halsary wind farm.

The main environmental constraints which have defined the layout are as follows:

Landscape and Visual: complex cumulative situation with operational turbines of differing dimensions.

Peat: based on surveys carried out on site, the peat depth ranges from 4m+ in depth to less than 0.5m deep. The turbines and other infrastructure have been positioned to avoid the areas of deeper peat.

Noise: Following the completion of a 'background noise assessment', the turbines have been positioned to ensure they remain within strict national and local guidelines for noise limits.

Cultural Heritage: both the turbines and related infrastructure have been positioned to minimise impacts on known cultural heritage assets.

Water Environment: the layout has maintained standard separation distances from watercourses and private water supplies.

Telecommunications: there are two telecommunications links that pass through the site and the turbine positions have been selected to avoid interference.

In addition, the layout has been influenced by a detailed wind measurement campaign.

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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A full EIA has been commissioned for the Loch Toftingall Wind Farm project. This extensive study will form part of the formal application to be made to The Highland Council.

The environmental impact assessment process includes:

- Consultation with the local planning authority, various organisations and the public to identify specific concerns and issues;
- Determining the existing conditions at and around the proposed wind farm site by reviewing the available data and undertaking specialist field surveys;
- Assessing the potential impacts on the existing environment; and
- Mitigation proposals to alleviate any significant impacts identified.

To date we have carried out extensive surveys in line with planning policy and guidance to gather data on the following:

- Ornithology;
- Protected species;
- Priority habitats;
- Carbon rich soils and priority peatland habitats;
- Hydrology;
- Noise;
- Landscape and visual impact;
- Traffic and Transport;
- Archaeology/cultural heritage;
- Aviation;
- Telecommunications; and
- Forestry.

Other desk-based assessments, critical to the planning application will include appraising the impacts of the proposed development on socio-economics and climate change.

Field studies in progress

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ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEYS

Ornithology surveys

In consultation with NatureScot, a comprehensive bird survey programme has been completed to ensure the latest data is collected. This includes breeding bird surveys and flight activity surveys. Overall, the aim is to ensure all present bird species are accurately accounted for and any impacts on them is correctly assessed.

Ecology surveys

The ecology surveys include:

- A Phase 1 habitat survey;
- A National Vegetation Classification survey;
- Protected species surveys (otter, water vole, red squirrel, pine marten and badger); and
- Bat surveys (remote monitoring).

Peat

A Phase 1 Peat Survey has been undertaken to establish the peat depth across the Site. There are parts of the site where the peat is 4m+ in depth and other areas where it is less than 0.5m deep. Following the results of this survey, the proposed layout has been designed to minimise the amount of infrastructure in deeper peat areas.

Land within the site that is currently plantation will be felled and over a period of years carefully restored to peatland. This is effectively the same restoration proposal as within the neighbouring Halsary wind farm site. The peatland restoration proposals would provide important biodiversity enhancement.

Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

The effects of the proposed development on the historic environment, including cultural heritage and archaeology, has been assessed.

There are no known archaeological features within the site. There are several cultural heritage features within the wider vicinity. The effects of the proposals on the settings of these features have been carefully assessed and the position of the turbines was adjusted to reduce impact.

Noise

There are two potential sources of noise:

1. The turbine blades passing through the air as they rotate
2. The rotation of the gearbox and generator in the hub of the turbine

Standing next to a turbine, it is possible to hear a swishing sound as the blades rotate.

Wind turbine technology, year-on-year has continued to improve around the world. As a result the industry has seen improvements not only in electrical output but also importantly reducing noise levels even further.

Generally wind turbine noise levels increase as wind speeds increase, however, so does the background noise level as the wind blows around the local area.

How is noise assessed and measured?

Noise is measured in decibels - dB(A).

Wind farm noise is assessed based on guidance provided by ETSU-R-97 "The Assessment & Rating of Noise from Wind Farms".

Appropriate noise assessments will ensure that the proposed development would comply with the regulations. As part of the application process, The Highland Council's Environmental Health Officer will continue to be consulted.

Telecommunications, Utilities, Aviation and Radar

The design process ensures that wherever possible, turbines are located in areas where there would be no effects on telecommunications, utilities, aviation and radar. There are two telecommunications links that run north south on the western edge of the loch. The turbines have been positioned so that the link operator has no objection.

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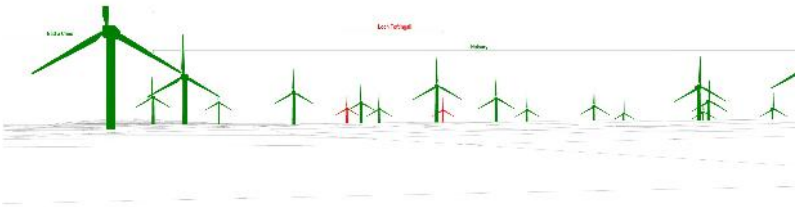
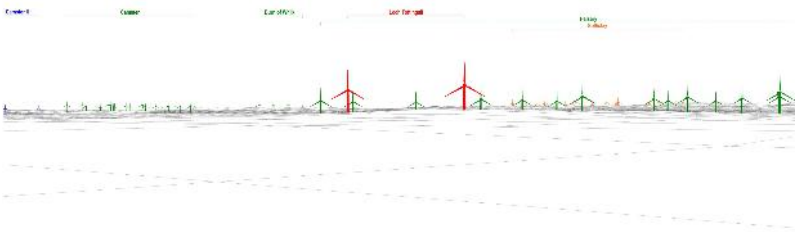
PHOTOMONTAGES



Viewpoint 1 (3.47 km): View from A9 memorial. Photomontage and wireline of the proposed Loch Toftingall Wind Farm. Photomontage photography taken from Grid Reference 317327, 948533 set up with a 53.5 degree field of view.



Viewpoint 3 (2.06 km): View from A9 at Spittal. Photomontage and wireline of the proposed Loch Toftingall Wind Farm. Photomontage photography taken from Grid Reference 316885, 953713 set up with a 53.5 degree field of view.

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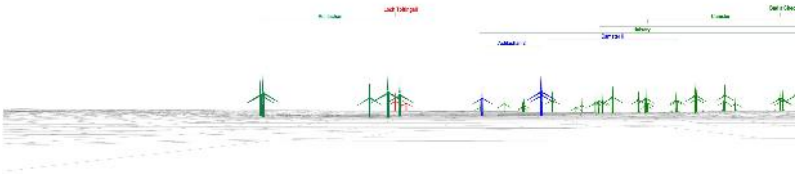
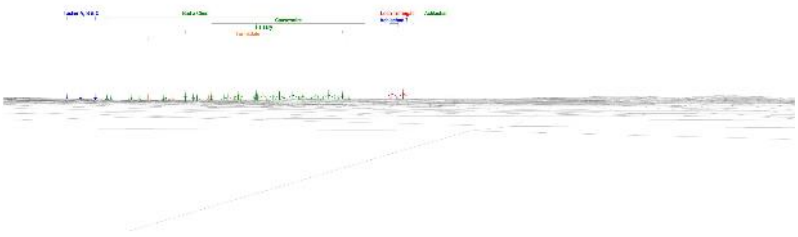
PHOTOMONTAGES



Viewpoint 5 (5.28 km): View from Westerdale Photomontage and wireline of the proposed Loch Toftingall Wind Farm. Photomontage photography taken from Grid Reference 312698, 951487 set up with a 53.5 degree field of view.



Viewpoint 7 (8.59 km): View from A882, east of Watten. Photomontage and wireline of the proposed Loch Toftingall Wind Farm. Photomontage photography taken from Grid Reference 326797, 953655 set up with a 53.5 degree field of view.

THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Loch Toftingall Wind Farm will work closely with local communities, businesses and residents in seeking to ensure that the project will bring tangible benefits to local people and help meet the national climate change and energy security need.

Business, Jobs and Investment

We would like to hear from local businesses to ensure that we can fully consider the skills and services of local people and suppliers if the Loch Toftingall Wind Farm receives approval.

The opportunities available would include:

- An engineering, procurement and construction contractor;
- Construction material suppliers: concrete, aggregate and building materials;
- Electrical contractors: supply and installation of plant, cabling, earthing, etc.;
- Plant and equipment hire contractors: excavation earthworks, cranage, welfare units, etc.;
- Labour hire companies: engineers, plant operatives and general labourers; and
- Transport: taxis and minibuses for local labourers.

Local Accommodation Providers

Construction projects of this nature typically require some specialist technicians who may have to come from outside the area, so they will require local accommodation and catering facilities.

Community Benefit

Community Benefit is something that comes as part and parcel of renewable energy developments these days and whilst it is not considered in terms of the planning application, the Scottish Government has set the bar in terms of the amount a project is expected to contribute. This amount is £5,000 per MW of operational capacity.

With Loch Toftingall Wind Farm, this would mean up to £36,000 per year for the lifetime of the scheme depending on the final capacity of wind turbines.

We want to try to ensure that the funds help the surrounding communities become more resilient and sustainable in the long term. Following initial feedback, we will work with the local community funding bodies to ensure the proposed funds are able to address the needs of your community.

There are many options open to the community on how to use this community benefit to generate additional income. The Scottish Government would like to see communities maximising the potential a project such as this wind farm can bring through investment, and increased shared ownership is one of its primary aims going forwards.

Please feel free to write any ideas that you have on how community benefit could make a positive contribution to your local community on a 'Voice Your Opinion' comment form, which is available from the reception desk.

WHAT NEXT?

We hope to submit the planning application for Loch Toftingall Wind Farm to The Highland Council in the summer of 2023.

An EIA Report including all the results from the surveys will be submitted with the planning application. All the submitted documents will be uploaded to our website:
www.lochtoftingallwindfarm.co.uk
under 'Downloads'.

If you would like to receive a CD/USB stick containing all the planning application documents or a hard copy of the Non-Technical Summary (NTS) (a summary of the EIA Report), please request this in the 'Voice your opinion' comment form available at the reception desk. The CDs/USB sticks and the NTS are provided free of charge for as long as stock last.

Consultees

Professional bodies in the fields of ecology, aviation, noise, landscape, cultural heritage, transport etc will all be consulted. To help the council assess the proposal, not only do they listen to you, the local residents, but also the following consultees:

- Ministry of Defence
- Historic Environment Scotland
- Ofcom
- NatureScot
- RSPB
- Local Community Councils
- VisitScotland
- National Air Traffic Services
- SEPA

The timeline shown below has been updated to give an indication of possible timescales should the proposal be deemed acceptable and is subject to change depending on the planning process.

Contact points:

Email: info@lochtoftingallwindfarm.co.uk

Freephone: 0800 980 4299

Post: FREEPOST INFINERGY

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WELCOME TO LOCH TOFTINGALL COMMUNITY OPEN DAY

View towards the site and Halsary Wind Farm

Welcome to the second round of public consultation for the Loch Toftingall proposal.

At the first community consultation events held at the end of January, the proposal consisted of two 149.9m to tip wind turbines and a 40MW battery energy storage facility.

The majority of the local residents who attended and/or sent in feedback forms raised objections to the two wind turbines. This was primarily due to cumulative effects as a consequence of the large number of existing turbines nearby.

We have listened, and have responded by deleting the two wind turbines from the proposal. The project now consists only of a battery energy storage system in the same location as previously indicated, with an access track to the facility through the northern part of the Halsary wind farm.

Here you will find a selection of information banners outlining the amended proposal. Please take your time to study the information and do not hesitate to speak with any of the project team members who are here to answer your questions. If you would like to leave a written comment, please help yourself to a 'Voice Your Opinion' comment form available from the reception desk.

Site Description

The proposed development site is located in a commercial forestry plantation to the west of Loch of Toftingall and directly north of the operational Halsary Wind Farm, adjacent to the A9, just south of Spittal in Caithness.

As a result of deleting the two wind turbines, the site area has been reduced so that it now covers only the south western part of the land west of the Loch. The access track route through the northern part of Halsary has now also been included within the site area.

Development

Infinergy is a UK based renewable energy company with a focus on the development of renewable energy in the UK. Infinergy develops renewables projects from inception through to construction and operation.

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THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Infinergy is currently designing a proposal for a battery energy storage facility on land located to the north of Halsary Wind Farm, south of Spittal in Caithnesss.

The Battery Energy Storage Facility will be located in the south western part of the Loch Toftingall Plantation land.

The Battery Facility would import and store electricity from the electricity network when there is a surplus of generation, and then export this again when there is a deficit. This balancing function reduces the amount of time that renewable generation needs to be curtailed (switched off) reducing the need to create electricity from fossil fuels. The facility would also help make the electricity network more resilient to outages. The project would have a maximum storage capacity of 49.9 megawatts (MW).

The Battery Energy Storage Facility would be located within a compound in the same position as that shown at the first round of consultation events. The dimensions of the compound would be approximately 100m by 65m which is the same length but 25m wider than the battery facility and substation platform shown previously.

The compound would be formed of crushed rock laid on permeable membranes. The main part of the facility is likely to consist of 80 battery storage units which would be installed in 40 paired sets. Each unit could be approximately 7.8m long, 1.7m wide and 3.4m high and is likely to be dark green in colour. The battery unit technology is likely to be lithium-ion.

There would be invertors and transformers serving each set of four units. Fire detection and suppression systems would be installed within the facility.

There would also be a small control building and a store unit within the facility. The compound is likely to be enclosed by a 2.8m high wooden palisade fence and there would be 3m high CCTV cameras at each corner of the compound. The maximum height of any structure within the facility is likely to be approximately 4m. The only lighting would be motion sensor activated lighting on containers and units within the facility.

The Battery Energy Storage Facility would be set within an area of landscaping which is likely to consist of native species, that will provide screening and biodiversity benefits.

The access to the Battery Facility would initially be along the existing northern access track into the Halsary wind farm site and then along a 590m long section of new track into the Loch Toftingall land.

Other land within the revised red line boundary of the site that is currently plantation is likely to be felled, and over a period of years, carefully restored to peatland. This would effectively be the same peatland restoration approach as within the neighbouring Halsary wind farm site. There might also be native species riparian planting along the corridor of the Allt Eireannaich. The peatland restoration and riparian planting proposals would provide important net biodiversity enhancement.

Environmental, technical and commercial considerations throughout the assessment process will continue to inform the design of the Battery Energy Storage Facility and access track.

Submission of the planning application for the Loch Toftingall Battery Energy Storage Proposal is expected to be early Summer 2023.

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THE PROPOSED LAYOUT

How have our studies influenced the layout?

The proposed development has gone through a number of design iterations. In May 2019 a scoping opinion was requested from Highland Council with input from a range of other consultees. At this stage the site area was much larger and the proposal consisted of six wind turbines and a battery energy storage facility.

This was amended largely as a result of pre-application consultation with The Highland Council so that it included only two wind turbines instead of six, together with the retention of the Battery Energy Storage Facility, which was sized at a capacity of 40MW and located in the south western part of the site area.

At the first round of community open days at the end of January, the majority of local residents who attended and/or responded using feedback forms made it clear that they objected to the two wind turbines. This was primarily due to potential cumulative effects as a consequence of the large number of existing turbines nearby. In response to the feedback, it was decided to remove the two turbines from the project.

The proposal therefore now only consists of a battery energy storage system in the same location as previously indicated.

There would also be an access track to the facility through the northern part of the Halsary wind farm.

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THE PROPOSED LAYOUT

Vallée de l'Arce Battery Storage Facility

The main environmental constraints which have defined the layout are as follows:

Grid Connection: the Battery Facility has been located in the south western part of the Loch Toftingall landholding to reduce the distance for the grid connection to the Mybster Substation.

Landscape and Visual: the Battery Facility is well separated (approximately 700m) from the A9 and the terrain slopes gently away towards the Loch so that the compound lies at a lower level (by approximately 10m). The Battery Facility is situated within the south western part of the Loch Toftingall plantation. Whilst the felling and replanting of the blocks near the facility will change over the lifetime of the development, the forestry will provide some important landscape screening.

Peat: The facility needs to be located near the connection point. The facility has been located in an area where the peat depth is shallower relative to other land within the south western part of the Loch Toftingall plantation. The peat depth at the Battery Facility location ranges from 2.0m in depth to 0.5m deep, whilst the peat along the new access track through Halsary ranges from 1.5m in depth to less than 0.5m. Peatland restoration rather than forestry restocking is likely to be undertaken on deeper areas of peat nearby.

Residential Amenity: the Battery Facility is well separated from the nearest properties. The closest property lies next to the A9, approximately 730m away to the north west.

Cultural Heritage: there are no known cultural heritage features near the Battery Facility.

Water Environment: the facility would be sufficiently separated from the upper parts of the Allt Eireannaich watercourse which flows into the Loch.

Construction and Access

Should the Loch Toftingall Proposal be granted planning permission, construction would not be expected to commence until approximately autumn 2024.

The battery containers can be transported to the site on standard articulated lorries, and therefore there is no need for a particular abnormal indivisible load route to be established as there was with the previously proposed wind turbines.

The potential effects of construction traffic is being assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process, and in consultation with The Highland Council and Transport Scotland.

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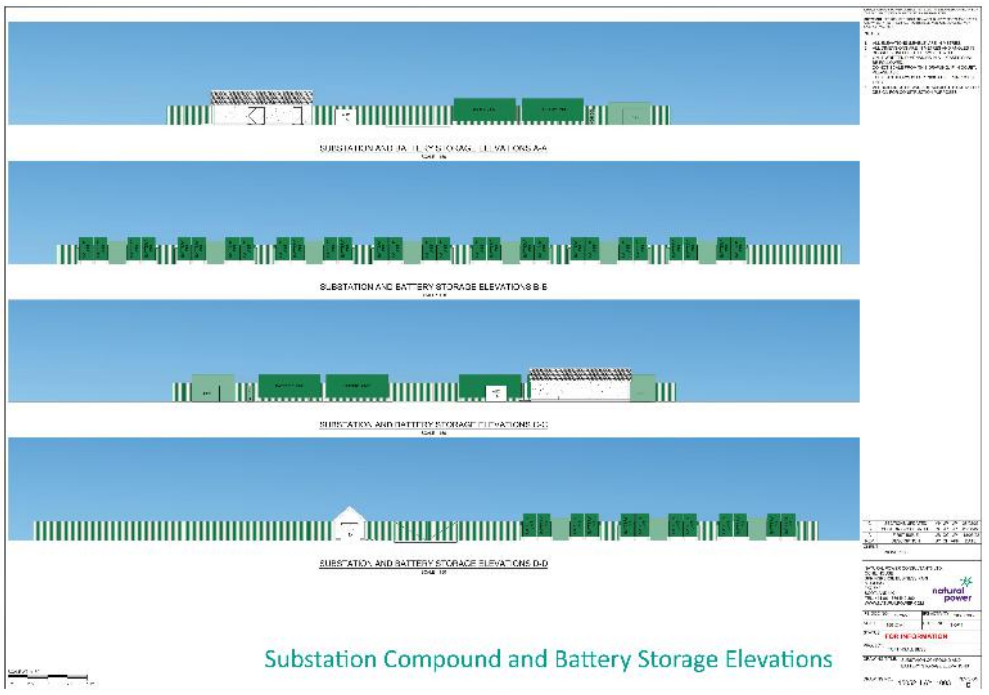
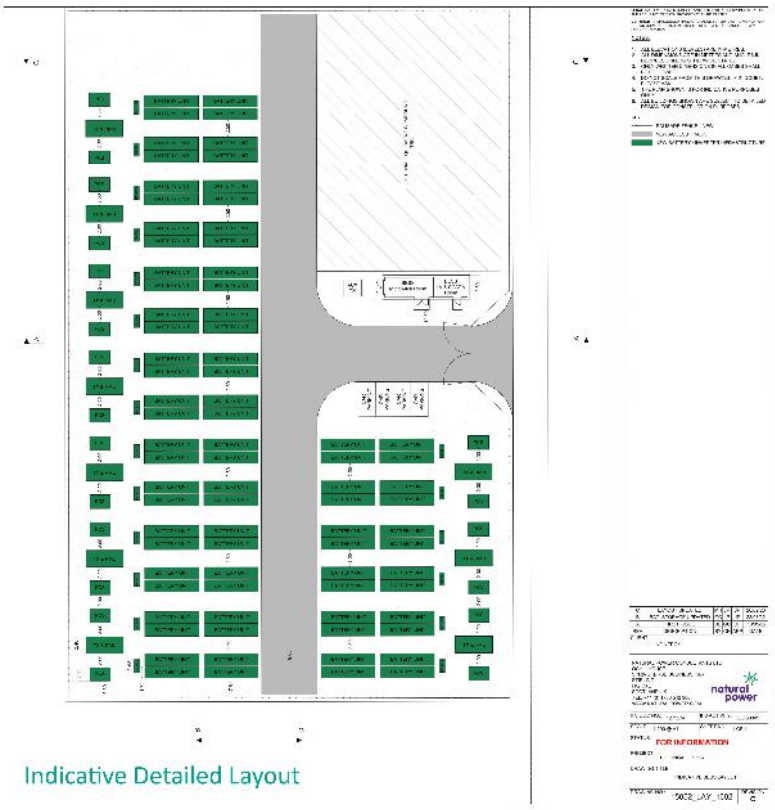
THE INDICATIVE DESIGN



Substation Compound and Battery Storage Elevations



Indicative Detailed Layout

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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A full EIA has been commissioned for the Loch Toftingall Project. This extensive study will form part of the formal application to be made to The Highland Council.

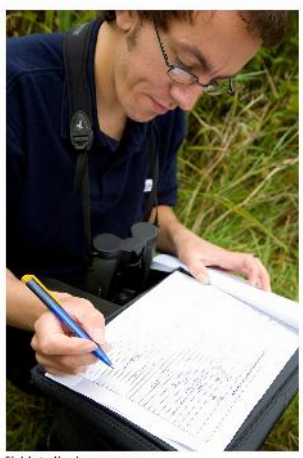
The environmental impact assessment process includes:

- Consultation with the local planning authority, various organisations and the public to identify specific concerns and issues;
- Determining the existing conditions at and around the proposed site by reviewing the available data and undertaking specialist field surveys;
- Assessing the potential impacts on the existing environment; and
- Mitigation proposals to alleviate any significant impacts identified.

The EIA work is on-going, and, to date we have carried out extensive surveys to gather data on the following:

- Carbon rich soils and priority peatland habitats;
- Ecology;
- Hydrology;
- Noise;
- Landscape and visual impact;
- Traffic and Transport;
- Archaeology/cultural heritage; and
- Forestry.

Other desk-based assessments will include appraising the impacts of the proposed development on Health and safety (including fire risk and mitigation), socio-economics and climate change.



Field studies in progress

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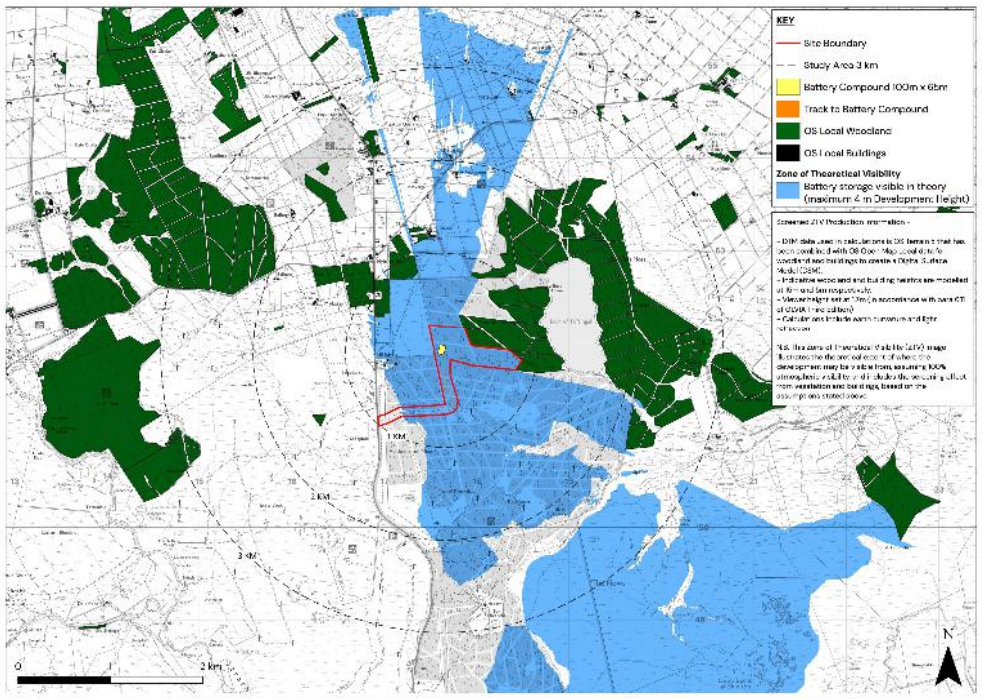
LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT



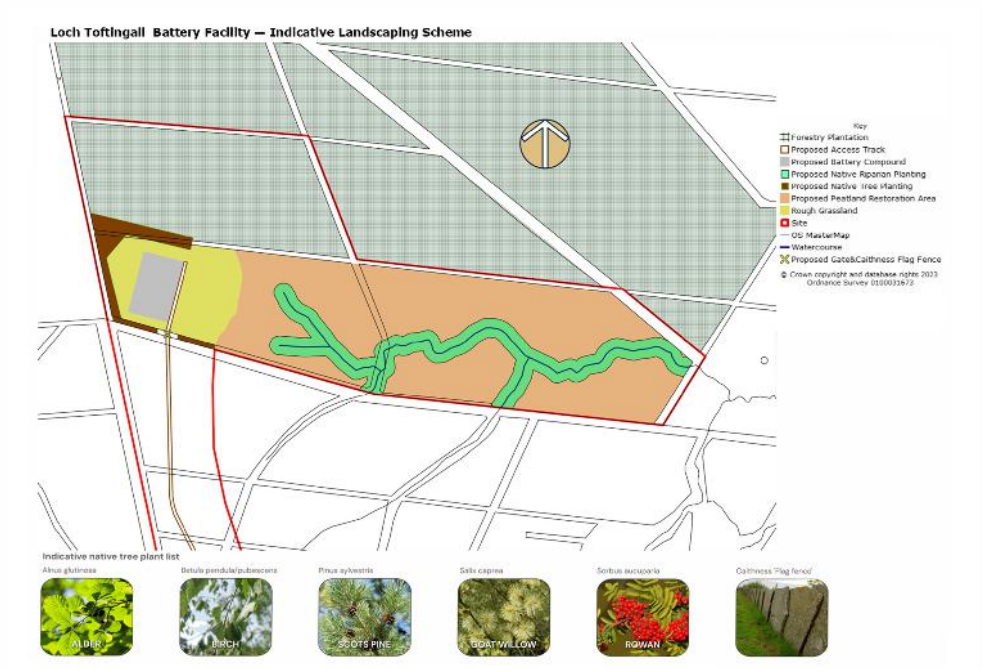
A landscape and visual impact assessment establishes the potential effects of the proposed development on the surrounding landscape. The current design consists of a Battery Facility compound which is 100m by 65m with the maximum building or equipment height of 4m.

The preliminary Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) shown above is a computer-generated tool that establishes the likely extent of the visibility of a proposed development and key visual receptors. This ZTV is based on the relief of the surrounding area and also takes into account the screening effect of vegetation and buildings.

The assessment provided in the EIA report will include a number of photomontages from several agreed viewpoints near the site. The viewpoints are in the process of being agreed and site photography for the amended scheme which only includes the Battery Facility is due to be undertaken shortly.

The Battery Facility will be set within an area of landscaping. An indicative landscaping scheme is shown in the figure below. The area will be planted with native tree and shrub species common to Caithness such as Birch, Rowan and Ash. The landscaping area will provide effective visual screening and biodiversity enhancement.

The final EIA Report will include a number of local viewpoints and provide further detail on each one. Once sumitted to The Highland Council these photomontages will be available to view/download from the Project website.



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ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEYS

Ornithology surveys

As part of the work on the previous project iterations which included wind turbines, a comprehensive bird survey programme has been completed. This has included breeding bird surveys and flight activity surveys.

Ecology surveys

The ecology surveys include:

- A Phase 1 habitat survey;
- A National Vegetation Classification survey; and
- Protected species surveys (otter, water vole, red squirrel, pine marten and badger).

Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

There are no known archaeological features within or close to the Battery Facility site. There are some cultural heritage features within the wider vicinity. The effects of the proposals on the settings of these features have been assessed.

Peat

A Phase I survey has been undertaken to establish the peat depth across the Battery Facility site. There are parts of the wider site where the peat is 4m in depth and other areas where it is less than 0.5m deep. Following the results of this survey, the proposed layout has been designed to minimise the amount of infrastructure in deeper peat areas and a phase II survey focussing on the infrastructure footprint has now been undertaken.

The majority of the Battery Facility site that is currently plantation will be felled and over a period of years carefully restored to peatland. This is effectively the same restoration proposal as within the neighbouring Halsary wind farm site. The peatland restoration proposals would provide important biodiversity enhancement.

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THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

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Business, Jobs and Investment

We would like to hear from local businesses to ensure that we can fully consider the skills and services of local people and suppliers if the Loch Toftingall proposal receives approval.

The opportunities available would include those for:

- An engineering, procurement and construction contractor;
- Construction material suppliers: concrete, aggregate and building materials;
- Electrical contractors: supply and installation of plant, cabling, earthing, etc.;
- Plant and equipment hire contractors: excavation earthworks, cranage, welfare units, etc.;
- Labour hire companies: engineers, plant operatives and general labourers;
- Landscaping and peat restoration specialists; and
- Transport: taxis and minibuses for local labourers.

Local Accommodation Providers

Construction projects of this nature typically require some specialist technicians who may have to come from outside the area, so they will require local accommodation and catering facilities.

Community Benefit

Community Benefit is based on the generation of renewable energy. The community benefit sum of £36,000 per year indicated at the first stage consultation events was based on the standard £5,000 per MW per annum of wind turbine generation.

Battery facilities manage renewable energy, but they do not generate it, therefore, community benefit is not part of battery energy storage projects. It is therefore not intended to provide any community benefit funding now that the wind turbines have been removed from the proposals.

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WHAT NEXT?

We hope to submit the planning application for this Loch Toftingall proposal to The Highland Council in the summer of 2023.

An EIA Report including all the results from the surveys will be submitted with the planning application. All the submitted documents will be uploaded to our website: www.lochtoftingallwindfarm.co.uk under 'Downloads'.

If you would like to receive a CD/USB stick containing all the planning application documents or a hard copy of the Non-Technical Summary (NTS) (a summary of the EIA Report), please request this in the 'Voice your opinion' comment form available at the reception desk. The CDs/USB sticks and the NTS are provided free of charge for as long as stock last.

Consultees

Professional bodies in the fields of ecology, noise, landscape, cultural heritage, transport etc will all be consulted. To help the council assess the proposal, not only do they listen to you, the local residents, but also the following consultees:

- Historic Environment Scotland
- Transport Scotland
- NatureScot
- RSPB
- Local Community Councils
- SEPA

The timeline shown below has been updated to give an indication of possible timescales should the proposal be deemed acceptable and is subject to change depending on the planning process.

Contact points:

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