

Agenda Item	5.2
Report No	PLS-03-22

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: South Planning Applications Committee
Date: 08 February 2022
Report Title: 21/06018/PAN: Whirlwind Energy Storage Ltd
Land 300M SE Of Househill House, Househill Nairn
Report By: Area Planning Manager – South

Purpose/Executive Summary

Description: Battery Energy Storage Facility comprising up to 50 energy storage containers with a total storage capacity of up to 49.9MW, control building, transformers, switchgear and ancillary infrastructure
Ward: 18 – Nairn and Cawdor

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the submission of the PAN and highlight any material issues they wish to be brought to the attention of the applicant before the submission of an application for planning permission.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report informs the Planning Applications Committee of the submission of the attached Proposal of Application Notice (PAN).
- 1.2 The submission of the PAN accords with the provisions of the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 and was made valid on 21 December 2021. The PAN is a statutory requirement for planning applications for major or national developments and must be lodged at least 12 weeks prior to the submission of a planning application. Members are asked to note this may form the basis of a subsequent planning application.
- 1.3 The submitted information attached includes:
- Proposal of Application Notice (Application Form)
 - Location Plan
- 1.4 In line with Covid-19 public health advice and temporary modifications made to the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013, the applicant proposes to undertake an online public consultation. This will take place on Tuesday the 25th of January 2022 between 4:00 pm and 7:00pm.
- 1.5 The consultation will take the form of a 'drop in' pre-application consultation event presentation using the 'Zoom' application and will be accessible via the following link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2272520580>
- 1.6 The online consultation will be publicised and advertised in accordance with the appropriate statutory requirements with adverts to be placed within the Inverness Courier (Nairnshire Edition) at least seven days before the consultation. A written event invitation maildrop will also be undertaken by the applicant to make people aware of the proposed development. The Planning Authority have also requested that a maildrop be undertaken by the applicant to make people aware of the proposed development. This should cover a minimum radius of 1km from the proposed site. The PAN form also indicates that Nairn River Community Council as well as the relevant MP, MSP and Ward Members will be notified in line with statutory requirements.
- 1.7 The forthcoming application will be accompanied by a Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report explaining the consultation undertaken, feedback received, and any resultant amendments made to the planning application.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1 The PAN provides notice of the developer's intention to submit a planning application classified as a major development. The proposal comprises the creation of an electrical energy storage consisting of a compound containing up to 50 energy storage containers with an electrical control building, transformers and switchgear.

- 2.2 The project would store electrical energy when there is an excess of generation on the network, and then export this when required either by peaks in demand, or to cover generation outages. This balancing role which energy storage schemes provide on the electrical network is becoming important as generation from renewable wind and solar power increases in line with the delivery of Scottish decarbonisation and renewable energy targets and such projects have a very important role in delivering this decarbonisation agenda.
- 2.3 The wider overhead line proposals are to be the subject of a separate application to the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit, under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989, the determination process for which requires further consultation with The Highland Council.
- 2.4 Prior to lodging the PAN the developer has sought formal pre-application advice from the Planning Authority through the Pre-Application Advice Service for Major Developments.

3.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The PAN boundary comprises 1.43ha of arable land located west of A939 trunk road, around 200m to the southeast of the Househill and to the south of Nairn. However, it is expected the developed area would occupy an area of circa 0.6 ha.
- 3.2 To the north, the site is bound by A939 and beyond that is an open agricultural field related to Househill Farm. Approximately 300m to the north west of the site boundary, lies the Househill housing cluster. The site is defined on the south and west sides by mixed woodland. To the east lies a series of overhead electricity lines running northeast-southwest. The site would be accessed from the A939 via a new access track. The proposed access track follows a line of mixed broadleaf and conifer trees. The topography of the site gently rises to the west.
- 3.3 There are three Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within 5km distance of the proposed application boundary. Approximately 2km south west of the site lies the Kildrummie Kames Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which is protected for its fen, loch and juniper habitats and geological interest. The Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) of Culbin sands is located approximately 3.7km to the north east of the site. In addition, within 5km radius there is the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) of Whiteness Head which is protected for its coastal geomorphology, birds, intertidal marine habitats, saltmarsh, sand dunes and shingle. The site is about 2km south-west of the Moray and Nairn Coast Special Protection Area (SPA). The SPA is protected for a range of wintering birds and breeding osprey.
- 3.4 The Inventory Battlefield of Auldearn (BTL01) lies within 1.3km to the east of the site. Some historic environment features are identified on the Council's Historic Environment Record in proximity of the site including Category C listed buildings of the Househill House, Stables and Walled Gardens which are around 150m to the north west of the site.

3.5 The site is identified as being free from medium to high risk of fluvial flooding on the indicative flood maps produced by SEPA.

3.6 The site lies within Coastal Farmlands Landscape Character Area as identified by NatureScot. It is not within any designated landscapes.

4.0 DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The following policies are relevant to the assessment of the proposal:

4.1 Highland Wide Local Development Plan (2012)

- 28 - Sustainable Design
- 29 - Design Quality & Place-making
- 30 - Physical Constraints
- 31- Developer Contributions
- 36 - Development in the Wider Countryside
- 51 - Trees and Development
- 52 - Principle of Development in Woodland
- 55 - Peat and Soils
- 56 - Travel
- 57 - Natural, Built & Cultural Heritage
- 58 - Protected Species
- 59 - Other Important Species
- 60 - Other Important Habitats
- 61 - Landscape
- 63 - Water Environment
- 64 - Flood Risk
- 66 - Surface Water Drainage
- 67 - Renewable Energy Developments
- 69 - Electricity Transmission Infrastructure
- 72 - Pollution
- 74 - Green Networks
- 77 - Public Access

4.2 Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan (IMFLDP) (2015)

The site is not covered by any specific development allocation or safeguarding notation within the adopted Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan.

The IMFLDP is currently under review. Main Issues Report consultation has been undertaken. The Council has been working through the issues and key decisions have recently been made by its Committees on the content for the Proposed Plan, which is expected to be published in March 2022.

4.3 Highland Council Supplementary Guidance

- Developer Contributions (Nov 2018)
- Flood Risk & Drainage Impact Assessment (Jan 2013)
- Green Networks (Jan 2013)
- Highland Historic Environment Strategy (Jan 2013)
- Highland's Statutorily Protected Species (Mar 2013)

- Physical Constraints (Mar 2013)
- Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments (May 2013)
- Standards for Archaeological Work (Mar 2012)
- Sustainable Design Guide (Jan 2013)
- Trees, Woodlands and Development (Jan 2013)

4.4 **Scottish Government Policy and Guidance**

- Scottish Planning Policy (Jun 2014 and as amended Dec 2020)
- National Planning Framework 3, NPF3 (Jun 2014) and consultive draft NPF4 (Nov 2021)
- Scotland's Energy Strategy Position Statement (Mar 2021)
- Scottish Energy Strategy (Dec 2017)
- 2020 Routemap for Renewable Energy (Jun 2011)
- Energy Efficient Scotland Route Map (May 2018)
- PAN 1/2013 – Environmental Impact Assessment (Aug 2013)
- PAN 1/2011 – Planning and Noise (Mar 2011)
- PAN 60 – Planning for Natural Heritage (Jan 2008)
- PAN 68 – Design Statements (Aug 2003)
- Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (Apr 2019)
- Highland Forest and Woodland Strategy (Nov 2018/2006)

5.0 **POTENTIAL MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- a) Development Plan and other planning policy
- b) Planning History;
- c) Noise;
- d) Design, Landscape and Visual Impact (including cumulative impacts);
- e) Roads and Transport;
- f) Trees and Woodland;
- g) Natural Heritage including protected species, ornithology and designated sites;
- h) Built and Cultural Heritage;
- i) Soils and Peat;
- j) Economic Impact and Tourism;
- k) Outdoor Access and Recreation;
- l) Construction Impacts;
- m) Pollution;
- n) Decommissioning;
- o) Any Other Material Considerations Raised within Representations.

6.0 **CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 The report presents the information submitted to date as part of the PAN. The policy considerations against which any future planning application will be considered have been summarised as well as the potential material planning considerations and key issues based on the information available to date. The list is not exhaustive and further matters may arise as and when a planning application is received and in the light of public representations and consultation responses.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Not applicable.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 It is recommended the Committee notes the submission of the PAN and advises of any material issues it wishes to be brought to the applicant's attention.

Signature: David Mudie

Designation: Area Planning Manager – South

Author: Negar Maydanchi

Background Papers: Documents referred to in report and in case file.

Relevant Plans: Plan 1 – Proposal of Application Notice

Plan 2 - Location Plan

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended by the Planning Etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2008

The Council will respond within 21 days of receiving the Notice. It will advise whether the proposed Pre-application Consultation is satisfactory or if additional notification and consultation above the statutory minimum is required. Please note that a planning application for this proposed development cannot be submitted less than 12 weeks from the date the Proposal of Application Notice is received by the Council and without the statutory consultation requirements having been undertaken. The planning application must be accompanied by a Pre-application consultation report.

Applicant	Whirlwind Energy Storage Ltd	Agent	Dan Grierson
Address.	The Media Centre, 7 Northumberland Street, Huddersfield, HD1 1RL	Address.	The Energy Workshop The Media Centre 7 Northumberland Street Huddersfield, HD1 1RL
Phone		Phone:	07545336960
E-mail		E-mail:	dan@theenergyworkshop.co.uk

Address or Location of Proposed Development

Land immediately to the west of the A939, 200m to the southeast of Househill, Nairn.

Description of Development

The creation of an electrical energy storage facility consisting of a compound containing up to 50 energy storage containers. The site would also include an electrical control building, transformers and switchgear. The site would have an inner enclosure consisting of 3m tall acoustic fencing, with a significant area of planted native tree belts and bunding outwith this fence. On the open elevations to the north, east and west. The site is screened by existing woodland to the south. The landscaping would be designed to complement the existing landscape character and would utilise appropriate native species. Habitat enhancements will also be undertaken in all other undeveloped parts of the site with the aim of delivering a net biodiversity gain.

The site would be equipped with motion-sensitive lighting to serve visitors and would have no permanent lighting,

The project would occupy an area not exceeding 1.5 hectares and the developed part of the site would, it is envisaged, occupy an area of circa 0.6ha.

The site would be accessed from the A939 via a new access track. Once operational the site would be operated remotely and would generate very low levels of traffic, consisting of weekly visits by a light van.

Site plans are appended.

Pre-application Screening Notice

The Highland Council has confirmed that a Pre-application notice will be required.

Community Consultation [See checklist of Statutory minimum consultation attached]

State which other parties have received a copy of this Proposal of Application Notice.

Community Council/s <i>Nairn River Community Council</i>	Date Notice Served <i>05/01/22</i>
---	---------------------------------------

Names/details of any other parties <i>The relevant MP, MSP and Ward Members</i>	Date Notice Served <i>05/01/22</i>
--	---------------------------------------

Please give details of proposed consultation

Proposed public event <i>Online drop-in video consultation.</i>	Venue <i>Online (Zoom)</i>	Date and time <i>25/01/22 (TBC)</i>
--	-------------------------------	--


Newspaper Advert – name of newspaper <i>Inverness Courier -</i>	Advert date(where known) <i>by 07/01/22 (TBC)</i>
--	--

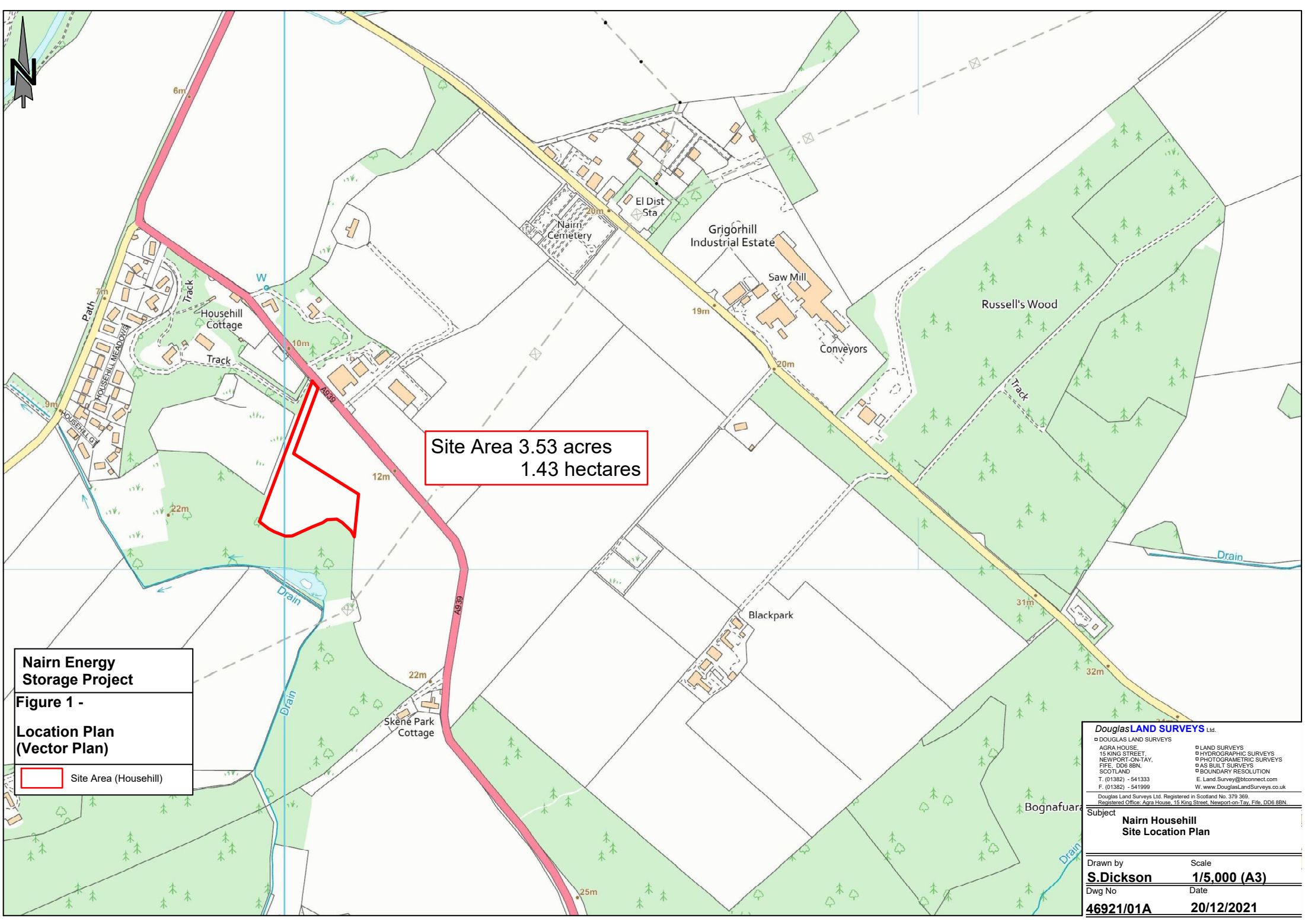
Details of any other consultation methods (date, time and with whom)

A letter describing the proposal, providing details of the drop-in video consultation event and inviting feedback will be sent to all addresses within 500m of the project (Or as advised by the LPA). This will be posted by recorded delivery by the 05/01/22.

Contact details (phone and email) for the developer’s agent will be provided in all correspondence so that interested parties can make direct representations and request further information.

A project website will be set up and will be live by the 07/01/22.

Signed  . Date...21/12/21.....



Site Area 3.53 acres
1.43 hectares

Nairn Energy Storage Project

Figure 1 -

Location Plan (Vector Plan)

Site Area (Househill)

DouglasLAND SURVEYS Ltd.
 DOUGLAS LAND SURVEYS
 AGRA HOUSE
 15 KING STREET,
 NEWPORT-ON-TAY,
 FIFE, DD6 8BN,
 SCOTLAND
 T. (01382) - 541333
 F. (01382) - 541999
 LAND SURVEYS
 HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEYS
 PHOTOGRAMMETRIC SURVEYS
 AS BUILT SURVEYS
 BOUNDARY RESOLUTION
 E. Land.Survey@btconnect.com
 W. www.DouglasLandSurveys.co.uk
 Douglas Land Surveys Ltd. Registered in Scotland No. 379 369.
 Registered Office: Agra House, 15 King Street, Newport-on-Tay, Fife, DD6 8BN.

Subject	
Nairn Househill Site Location Plan	
Drawn by	Scale
S.Dickson	1/5,000 (A3)
Dwg No	Date
46921/01A	20/12/2021