

Agenda Item	5.2
Report No	PLN/079/23

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: North Planning Applications Committee

Date: 6 December 2023

Report Title: 22/06244/PAN: Ecocel Energy (Storage) Ltd
Land 500M east of Glengolly Farmhouse,
Thurso

Report By: Area Planning Manager – North

Purpose/Executive Summary

Description: Development of a Battery Energy Storage System with a capacity of 49.9MW consisting of battery storage containers, electrical control building, transformers, security fencing, CCTV, access, landscaping and associated works.

Ward: 02 – Thurso and North West Caithness

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 September 2023. 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)
 - Site Layout Plan
- 1.4 There will be two in-person consultation events, the first is due to take place on Monday 20 November 2023 between 3pm and 7pm at Pentland Hotel, Thurso, and the second on 11 December 2023 between 3pm and 7pm at Pentland Hotel, Thurso. Both events will be advertised in The John O’Groats Journal and The Caithness Courier at least 7 days prior to each event.
- 1.5 Details of all notified parties are contained / appended to the PAN form and include Caithness West Community Councils, as well as local Members and councillors. The applicant will set up a dedicated project website: www.Glengolly-bess.com. The URL will also be published in the newspaper adverts.
- 1.6 Any 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 proposal is for the development of a Battery Energy Storage System with a capacity of 49.9MW consisting of battery storage containers, electrical control building, transformers, security fencing, CCTV, access, landscaping and associated works.
- 2.2 The developer has not 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 covers approximately of 4.5 hectares and is located approximately 2km south of Thurso and immediately west of the far north rail line and the River Thurso. The access track will run directly past three residential properties (Greenacres, The Krae, and Glengolly Farmhouse) to join the public road, whilst the main site area will be located approximately 0.3km east from the nearest dwelling (The Krae). There is a further cluster of residential properties to the west of the site on the west side of the public road (B874), from which the site is accessed.

- 3.2 There are no other natural heritage designations within the site boundary nor is the site within connectivity distance of any Special Protection Area (SPA). The site does however border the River Thurso Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and is approximately 0.1km west of the River Thurso Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The site falls wholly within the Farmed lowland Landscape Character Type as defined by NatureScot's Landscape Character Assessment. A Core Path runs along part of the B874 whereby the site access is proposed. Thurso to Glengolly Roadside Link (CA13.21) is approximately 1.4km in length where members of the public may reasonably exercise their rights to public access. There are no Listed Buildings or Scheduled Monuments in the vicinity of the site however the wider area is known for archaeological interests, especially within Thurso. Part of the site is identified on SEPA's Flood Risk Mapping as being susceptible to pluvial flood risk.

4.0 DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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

4.1 National Planning Framework 4 (2023)

National Development 3 (NAD3) – Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure

- 1 – Tackling the climate and nature crises
- 2 – Climate mitigation and adaptation
- 3 – Biodiversity
- 4 – Natural places
- 5 – Soils
- 11 – Energy
- 13 – Sustainable transport
- 23 – Health and safety
- 25 – Community wealth building
- 33 – Minerals

4.2 Highland Wide Local Development Plan (2012) (HwLDP)

- 28 - Sustainable Design
- 29 - Design Quality and Placemaking
- 30 - Physical Constraints
- 31 - Developer Contributions
- 36 - Development in the Wider Countryside
- 56 - Travel
- 57 - Natural, Built and 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

4.3 **Highland Wide Local Development Plan (2012) (HwLDP)**

28 - Sustainable Design
29 - Design Quality and Placemaking
30 - Physical Constraints
31 - Developer Contributions
36 - Development in the Wider Countryside
51 - Trees and Development
52 - Principle of Development in Woodland
56 - Travel
57 - Natural, Built and 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

4.4 **Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan (CaSPlan)**

No site specific policies or allocations, application will be assessed against the general policies of the HwLDP.

4.5 **Highland Council Supplementary Guidance**

- Developer Contributions (November 2018)
- Flood Risk & Drainage Impact Assessment (Jan 2013)
- Green Networks (Jan 2013)
- Highland Historic Environment Strategy (Jan 2013)
- Highland's Statutorily Protected Species (March 2013)
- Highland Renewable Energy Strategy and Planning Guidelines (May 2006)
- Physical Constraints (Mar 2013)
- Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments (May 2013)
- Standards for Archaeological Work (Mar 2012)
- Sustainable Design Guide (Jan 2013)

4.6 **Highland Council Supplementary Guidance**

- Developer Contributions (November 2018)
- Flood Risk & Drainage Impact Assessment (Jan 2013)
- Green Networks (Jan 2013)
- Highland Historic Environment Strategy (Jan 2013)
- Highland's Statutorily Protected Species (March 2013)
- Highland Renewable Energy Strategy & Planning Guidelines (May 2006)

- Construction Environmental Management Process for Large Scale Projects (Aug 2010)
- Managing Waste in New Developments (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 Other Guidance**

- Draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan (2023)
- Scottish Energy Strategy (Dec 2017)
- 2020 Routemap for Renewable Energy (2011)
- Energy Efficient Scotland Route Map, Scottish Government (2018)
- Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS, 2019)
- Historic Environment Policy for Scotland, HES (2019)
- PAN 1/2011 - Planning and Noise (2011)
- PAN 60 – Planning for Natural Heritage (2008)
- Circular 1/2017: Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (2017)

5.0 **POTENTIAL MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- a) Development Plan and other planning policy;
- b) Community amenity including operational noise impacts;
- c) Construction impacts;
- d) Roads and transport;
- e) Flood risk and drainage impacts;
- f) Design, landscape, and visual impact (including cumulative impacts);
- g) Natural heritage including protected species and habitats;
- h) Built and cultural heritage;
- i) Economic impact and tourism;
- j) Pollution;
- k) Decommissioning and restoration;
- l) Outdoor access; and,
- m) 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.

Designation: Area Planning Manager – North

Author(s): Harry Goacher

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

Relevant Plans: Plan 1 – Proposal of Application Notice (Application Form)
Plan 2 – Site Layout Plan

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended by the Planning Etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 and Planning (Scotland) Act 2019

Town and Country Planning (Pre-Application Consultation) (Scotland) Regulations 2021

The Council will respond within 21 days of validation 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.

The Proposal of Application Notice will be valid for a period of 18 months from the date of validation of the notice by the Council.

Data Protection

Your personal data will be managed in compliance with the Data Protection legislation. You can read our privacy notice for planning related certificates on the Council's website at: https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/1052173/planning_applications_consents_and_notice_of_review

I have read and understood the privacy notice.

Contact Details

Applicant	Ecocel Energy (Storage) Ltd	Agent	Maria Francké Planning
Address	Ecocel House 44 Milton Road East Kilbride G74 5BU	Address	PO Box 7658 Glasgow G42 2JA
Phone	01698 281546	Phone	07539 389078
Email	jamie@imecocel.co.uk	Email	maria@mfplanning.co.uk

Address or Location of Proposed Development

Please state the postal address of the prospective development site. If there is no postal address, please describe its location. Please outline the site in red on a base plan to a recognised metric scale and attach it to this completed Notice.

Field east of Glengolly Farmhouse, Thurso, KW17 7XL

Description of Development

Please include detail where appropriate – eg the number of residential units; the gross floorspace in m² of any buildings not for residential use; the capacity of any electricity generation or waste management facility; and the length of any infrastructure project. Please attach any additional supporting information.

Development of a Battery Energy Storage System with a capacity of 49.9MW consisting of battery storage containers, electrical control building, transformers, security fencing, CCTV, access, landscaping and associated works.

Pre-application Screening Notice

Has a Screening Opinion been issued on the need for a Proposal of Application notice by the Highland Council in respect of the proposed development?
If yes, please provide a copy of this Opinion.

 Yes

 No
Community Consultation

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

Community Council/s**Date Notice Served**

Caithness West Community Council -
secretary@caithnesswestcc.co.uk

21.9.23

Local Elected Members**Date Notice Served**

Ron Gunn -
Ron.Gunn.cllr@highland.gov.uk
Struan Mackie -
struan.mackie.cllr@highland.gov.uk
Matthew Reiss -
Matthew.Reiss.cllr@highland.gov.uk
Karl Rosie -
karl.rosie.cllr@highland.gov.uk

21.9.23

Members of Scottish Parliament and Members of Parliament**Date Notice Served**


Jamie Stone, MP -
jamie.stone.mp@parliament.uk
Maree Todd MSP -
Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot

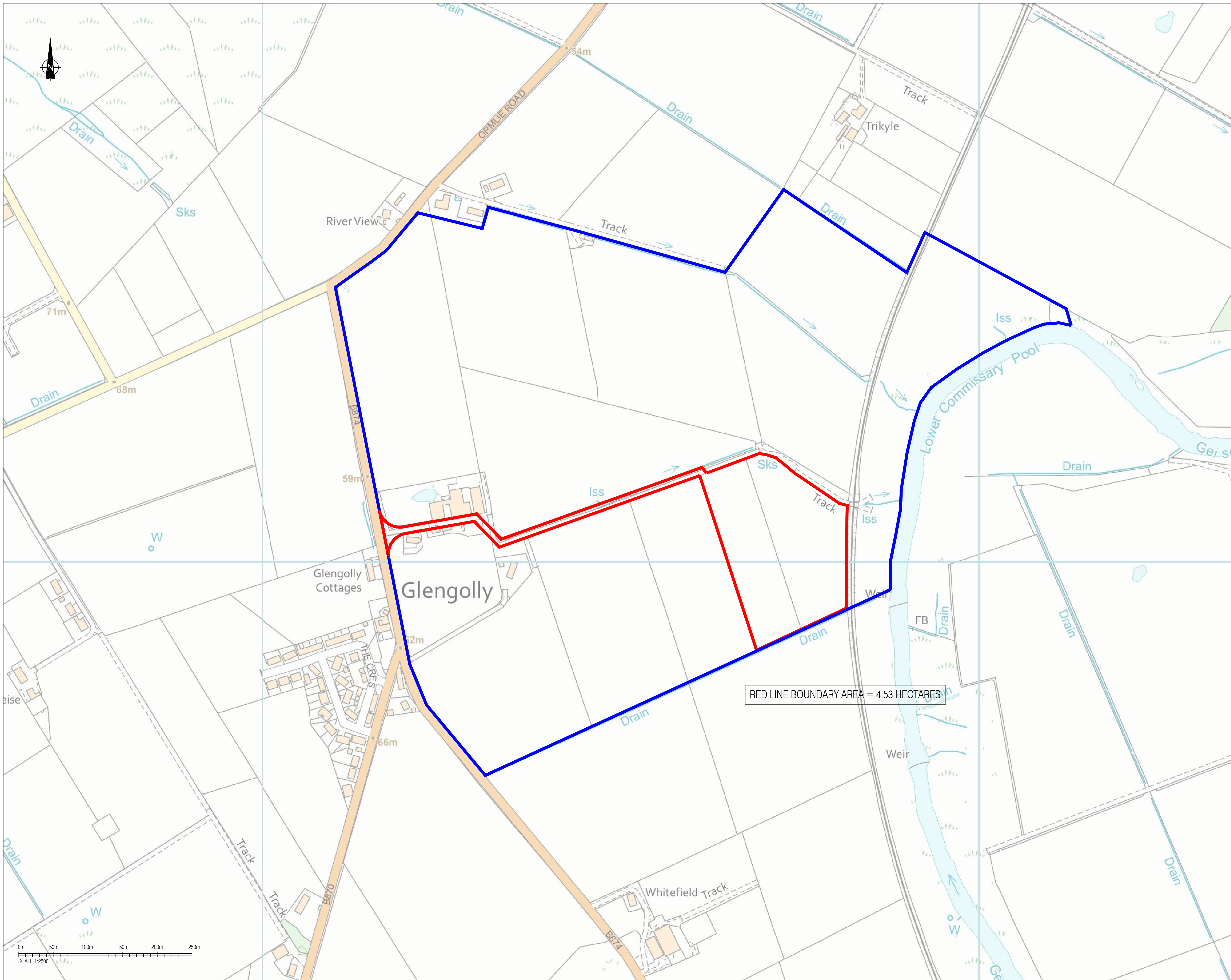
21.9.23

Names / details of other parties**Date Notice Served**

Details of Proposed Consultation		
Proposed Public Event 1	Venue	Date and Time
Community Consultation Event	Pentland Hotel Princes Street Thurso KW14 7AA	20 November 2023 16:00 to 19:00 hours
Proposed Public Event 2 <i>(at least 14 days after Public Event 1)</i>	Venue	Date and Time
Community Consultation Event	Pentland Hotel Princes Street Thurso KW14 7AA	11 December 2023 16:00 to 19:00 hours

Publication of Event		
Newspaper Advert	Name of Newspaper	Advert Date
Public Notice	The John O’Groat Journal and Caithness Courier	Friday 10 November 2023 Friday 1 December 2023
Details of any other consultation methods (date, time and with whom)		
A project website will also be set up and the URL for the website will be www.Glengolly-bess.com		

Signed		Date	21 September 2023
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This drawing should not be scaled. Dimensions to be verified on site. Any discrepancies should be referred to the Engineer prior to work being put in hand.

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LEGEND:

- LAND OWNERSHIP ——— Blue line
- RED LINE BOUNDARY ——— Red line

OS LICENSE REFERENCE:
AC0000854266

00	18/09/23	ISSUED FOR INFORMATION	JB	MG
Rev	Date	Description	Drn	Chd

Project
**BATTERY STORAGE
GLENGOLLY FARM**

Title
LOCATION PLAN

Client
IMECOCEL



Kiloh Associates
Local Engineering for Local Clients
Unit 6, Pitreavie Court,
Pitreavie Business Park,
Dunfermline, Fife,
KY11 8JU
t: 0131 629 3434
e: enquiries@kiloh.co.uk
www.kiloh.co.uk

Drawn by: JB Date: SEPTEMBER 2023 Designed by: MG Checked by: MG

Scales (if A1 work to signed dimensions only): 1:2500 Project No: KIL2242

Drawing No: KIL2242_102_0002 Rev: 00

RED LINE BOUNDARY AREA = 4.53 HECTARES