

The Highland Council

Agenda Item	6.
Report No	CCC/5/25

Committee: Climate Change

Date: 29 January 2025

Report Title: Solar PV Non-Domestic Estate Update

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive – Place

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to update Members of the work undertaken in relation to optimising and expanding Solar PV electricity generation assets on the Council's non-domestic estate.
- 1.2 The paper includes reference and commentary for existing, new and proposed Solar PV assets.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
- i. **Note** the current status of Solar PV generation assets on the Council's non-domestic estate; and
 - ii. **Agree** the proposed development of new and proposed installations.

3 Implications

- 3.1 **Resource** - there are no ongoing additional resource implications, delivery of future work will be met from existing resources. However due to long term illness the associated staff resource requirement is being met from elsewhere from within the team, which has a subsequent detrimental impact to delivery of other workstreams.
- 3.2 **Legal** - there are no legal implications arising from this report
- 3.3 **Risk** - There is no risk directly relating to this paper.
- 3.4 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** – An inspection programme of existing PV assets has been underway to check that systems are operational safe to operate, thereby improving H&S compliance.
- 3.5 **Gaelic** - There are no Gaelic implications arising from this workstream.

4 Impacts

- 4.1 In Highland, all policies, strategies or service changes are subject to an integrated screening for impact for Equalities, Poverty and Human Rights, Children's Rights and Wellbeing, Climate Change, Islands and Mainland Rural Communities, and Data Protection. Where identified as required, a full impact assessment will be undertaken.
- 4.2 Considering impacts is a core part of the decision-making process and needs to inform the decision-making process. When taking any decision, Members must give due regard to the findings of any assessment.
- 4.3 This is an update report and therefore an impact assessment is not required.

5 Existing Assets

- 5.1 There are currently 114 Solar PV assets installed, individually ranging from 4kW to over 230kW. Combined the total generation capacity amounts to 2.63MW, with **78%** of total installed generation operational as of January 2025.
- 5.2 An inspection programme of assets, assessing operational and electrical safety, has been underway since October 2024 with completion expected in March 2025. In summary the inspection programme is on track to complete on time and current progress is as follows:

Systems inspected	54
Systems re-initialised and operational	32
Systems requiring remedial works prior to re-initialisation	18
Systems with PVs found removed	4

It should be noted that the inspection programme was limited to accessible systems and areas, which excluded inspection of panels and cabling on roofs. These aspects will be inspected during 2025/26 financial year as part of the ongoing maintenance, inspection and servicing programme currently under development.

- 5.3 Minor remedial works, where identified, were predominately a mix of availability of associated operational guidance and documentation, signage and metalwork not bonded.
- 5.4 Signage aspects were addressed at the time of the inspection, with other works planning to be progressed upon appointment of a framework maintenance contractor managed through Property Services.

6 New Installations

- 6.1 As part of the Inverness Zero Carbon Cultural Regeneration Project, Solar PV has been installed at the Bught and Northern Meeting Parks, respectively with installed capacities of 88kW and 36kW.
- 6.2 In alignment with the project programme these systems are expected to come online in March 2025 and May 2025 respectively.

7 Proposed Installations

7.1 Sixteen evaluations for Solar PV suitability on non-domestic buildings have been completed as of January 2025, with results as summarised below:-

No potential	1
Yes, with major additional facilitation	4
Yes, with minor additional facilitation	3
Yes, subject to structural assessment	7

7.2 Further sites have been identified for evaluation and a schedule is in place for remainder of calendar year. All Educational properties have been assessed for strategic and operational suitability, with Leisure and other buildings to be completed in January 25.

7.3 The following six sites have been approved to progress to detailed design stage with work currently ongoing in this regard:-

- Grant House Resource Centre;
- Highland Folk Museum;
- Deshar PS;
- Waste Transfer Station – Longman;
- Waste Transfer Station – Portree; and
- Waste Transfer Station – Fort William

Upon completion of the design phase, business cases will be developed and submitted for consideration and approval.

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

Date: 6 January 2025

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Background Papers: None

Appendices: None