FIELD

PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION REPORT

BTGBSPI01 Spittal

DECEMBER 2024

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Contents

Executive Summary

Field Spittal Ltd (Field) has undertaken extensive pre-application consultation activities to inform an application for consent under section 36 of the **Electricity Act 1989** for a 300 MW battery energy storage system (BESS) and associated infrastructure at Spittal Mains, Spittal, Wick KW1 5XR (the Proposed Development).

The primary objective of the public consultation has been to work with local residents from an early stage, raise awareness about the Proposed Development, gain an understanding of key issues and concerns, and incorporate this feedback into the final design where possible.

Pre-application public consultation activities were undertaken in accordance with the Scottish Government's **Good Practice Guidance for Applications under Section 36 and 37 of the Electricity Act 1989** (the ECU Guidance), including two public consultation events, held at least 14 days apart (2 May 2024 and 30 May 2024). The events were advertised via letter drops to surrounding residents, in a local newspaper, and on a website for the Proposed Development.

Key issues raised by the local community during the consultation included concerns about fire risk and emergency management, the cumulative impact of energy developments in the area, the impact of construction traffic, and the lack of long-term operational jobs. Field has responded to these concerns as follows:

- Preparing a Battery Safety Management Plan to address fire risk mitigation;
- Developing an Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan;
- Quantifying socioeconomic benefits, including construction and operational jobs; and
- Ensuring cumulative and combined effects have been appropriately considered.

Additional stakeholder engagement was undertaken with a range of government stakeholders including The Highland Council, Transport Scotland, Historic Environment Scotland, and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency. Feedback from these consultees has also been incorporated into the planning application, including landscape and visual impact mitigation measures, flood risk assessments, and further archaeological investigations to address concerns about impacts to the nearby scheduled monument.

In summary, Field has engaged with all consultees in accordance with the ECU Guidance to ensure that the local community and relevant government stakeholders have had appropriate opportunities to inform the design of the Proposed Development. As a result, Field has been able to prepare a comprehensive planning application that has been informed by feedback from the community and relevant government stakeholders.

1 Introduction

This Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Report has been prepared by Field Spittal Ltd, in consultation with Alpaca Communications to accompany the application for consent under section 36 of the **Electricity Act 1989** for a battery energy storage system (BESS) with a capacity of up to 300 megawatts (MW) and associated infrastructure at Spittal Mains, Spittal, Wick KW1 5XR (the Proposed Development).

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to:

- Summarise the pre-application consultation activities undertaken by Field in relation to the Proposed Development, including the method and extent of consultation;
- Summarise the responses received during the pre-application consultation period;
- Describe how pre-application feedback has been considered and addressed, including how the feedback has informed the design of the Proposed Development;

1.2 The Applicant

1.2.1 Field

Field is a leading renewable energy developer, owner and operator of grid-scale BESS across the UK and Europe. Field's aim is to develop, manage and operate BESS that reduce climate change emissions, support stable grid operation, increase energy security and bring down electricity prices for consumers.

Field has an extensive portfolio of BESS across the UK and Europe. In the UK, Field currently owns and operates three BESS, with two more projects in construction (one of which is in Scotland, close to the Fort Augustus substation) and a further 1.4 GW of projects progressing through the pre-construction and design stage. By 2030, Field plans to own and operate 3.1 GW of batteries and emerging storage technologies.

Field is responsible for all stages of project delivery, from initial site identification and landowner engagement through design, planning, construction and operation. As long-term operators, Field is committed to developing projects that are safe, environmentally sustainable and have minimal impacts on local communities; achieved through careful site design and stakeholder engagement.

Field recognises the importance of early and meaningful public and stakeholder consultation to ensure stakeholder perspectives are considered from the initial stages of project planning and design. By proactively seeking feedback in the pre-application stage, Field has been able to adapt its proposal to address the concerns of, and feedback from, the local community and other relevant stakeholders where possible.

1.2.2 Alpaca Communications

Alpaca Communications is a specialist public consultation advisory agency with broad expertise in the implementation of public and community consultation programmes for private and public sector clients across the UK.

Field has appointed Alpaca Communications to assist with and advise on pre-application public consultation and community engagement matters in relation to the Proposed Development.

1.3 Proposed Development

The Proposed Development is located on existing agricultural land at Spittal Mains, Spittal, Wick KW1 5XR, directly south of the existing Spittal converter station, and directly west of the A9.

The Proposed Development principally comprises a battery energy storage system (BESS) with a capacity of up to 300 megawatts (MW) which will charge and discharge electricity from the adjacent Spittal 275 kV substation. The principal components of the Proposed Development include:

- Battery storage units arranged into pairs;
- Medium-voltage (MV) skids and ancillary low-voltage (LV) equipment;
- High-voltage (HV) grid transformers;
- Air insulated switchgear;
- A substation building comprising welfare facilities, a switch room and control room;
- An underground 275 kV grid connection cable;
- A new access road onto the A9; and
- Site-wide supporting infrastructure including cabling, access tracks, fencing, attenuation basins, and landscaping measures.

Whilst the exact specifications are subject to detailed design, the principal components described form the basis of the planning application to allow environmental assessments and mitigation to be appropriately scoped.

The indicative site layout for the Proposed Development which informs this application for consent is included in Figure 1.

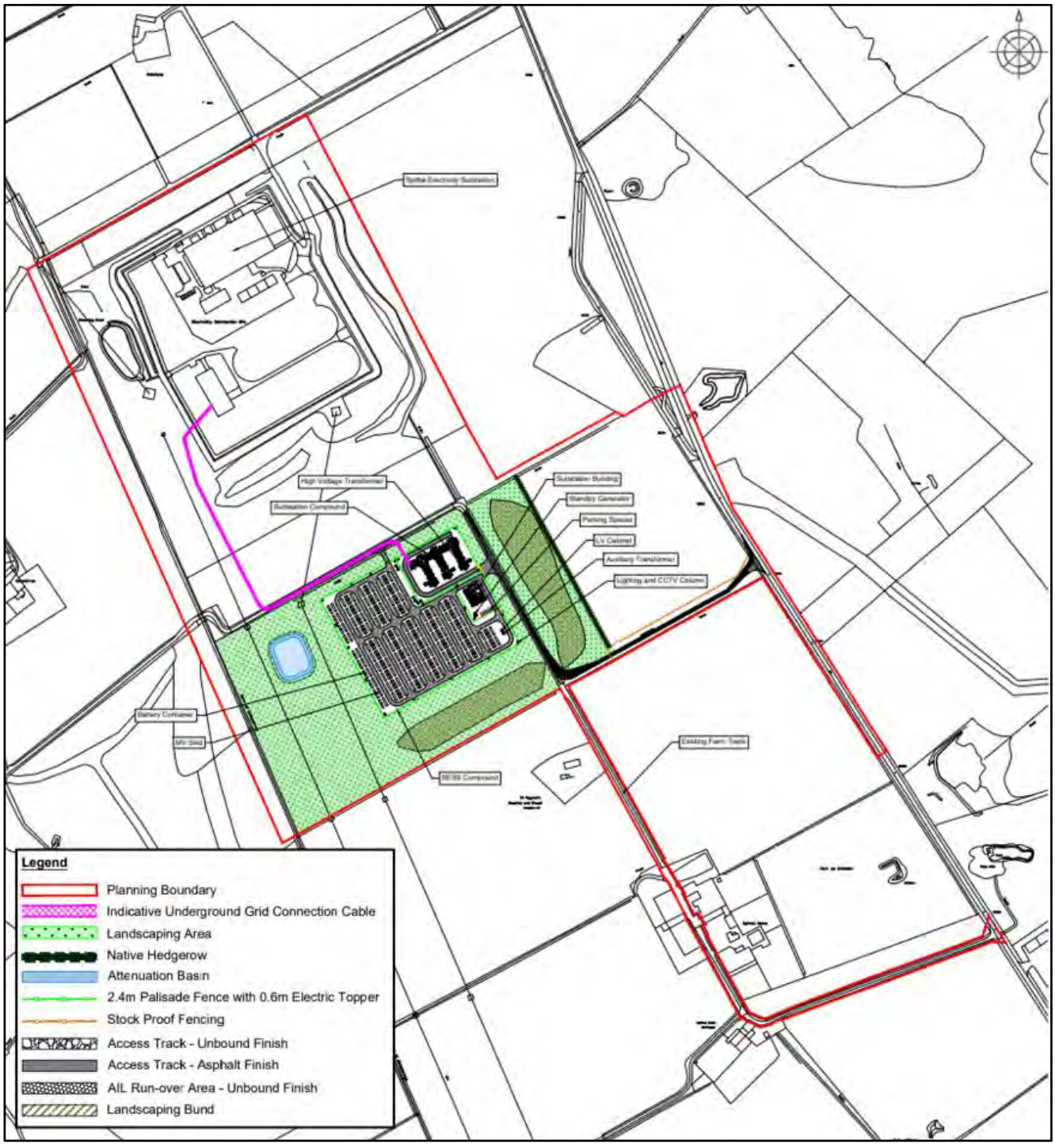


Figure 1: Indicative site layout for the Proposed Development

2 Legislation and Policy

2.1 Electricity Act 1989

There are no statutory requirements for pre-application consultation for applications under section 36 of The **Electricity Act 1989**. The processes and expectations for pre-application consultation is instead described under relevant Scottish Government policies and guidance, as discussed in section 2.1.1.

2.1.1 Good Practice Guidance for Applications under Section 36 and 37 of the Electricity Act 1989 (Scottish Government, 2022)

Whilst not a statutory requirement, the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit (ECU) does encourage applicants to undertake meaningful engagement at the earliest possible stage with communities or groups affected by an application. Section 3.2.2 of the Scottish Government's **Good Practice Guidance for Applications under Section 36 and 37 of the Electricity Act 1989** (the ECU Guidance) outlines the minimum amount of pre-application consultation expected to be undertaken for section 36 applications. This is summarised in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1: Minimum expected pre-application consultation outlined in the ECU Guidance

Stage	Consultation
Pre-application consultation events	The applicant is expected to hold at least two public consultation events prior to submitting the application. The final public event should be held at least 14 days after the first public event. The public events are to give members of the public the opportunity to make comments to the applicant as regards the proposed development. At the final public event, the applicant should provide feedback to members of the public in respect of comments received by the applicant as regards the proposed development.
Notice of the pre-application consultation events	At least seven days before holding a public event, the applicant should publish on the applicant's website and in a local newspaper circulating in the locality in which the proposed development is situated a notice containing: • A description of, and the location of, the proposed development; • Details as to where further information may be obtained concerning the proposed development; • The date and place of the public event; A statement explaining how, and by when, persons wishing to make comments to the applicant relating to the proposal may do so; and • A statement that comments made to the applicant are not representations to the Scottish Ministers and if the applicant submits an application there will be an opportunity to make representations on that application to the Scottish Ministers.

Stage	Consultation
Details of the pre-application consultation events	The applicant should provide the following details at the public event and publish these details on the applicant's website: • A description of the development to be carried out; • A plan showing the outline of the site at which the development is to be carried out and sufficient to identify that site; and • Details as to how the applicant may be contacted and corresponded with.
Content of public event and pre-application consultation report	The applicant is expected to prepare a pre-application consultation report ("PAC Report") setting out what has been done to accord with the guidance set out above. The PAC Report should be submitted with the application. The PAC Report should contain the following information: • The dates on which and places where public events were held; • A description of any additional steps taken by the applicant to consult with members of the public regarding the development; • A list of bodies, groups and organisations who were consulted by the applicant and a description of how they were consulted; • A description of any materials sent to consultees and materials provided to those attending public events; • Copies of any visual presentation shown or displayed at a public event, and photographs of any display boards or models at public events; • Confirmation as to whether consultees and attendees at public events were informed that pre-application consultation does not remove the right or the potential need to comment on the final application once it is made to the Scottish Ministers; • A summary of the written responses to consultations and views raised at public events, including an indication of the number of written responses received and the number of persons who attended the public events; • An explanation of how the applicant took account of views raised during the pre-application consultation process; and • An explanation of how members of the public were given feedback on the applicant's consideration of the views raised during the pre-application consultation process.

2.2 Planning Advice Note 3/2010: Community Engagement

The Scottish Government's **Planning Advice Note 3/2010: community engagement** provides advice and information on the processes for effective community engagement. In accordance with this Planning Advice Note, community engagement should align with the following key aims:

- Be meaningful and proportionate;
- Occur at an early stage to influence the shape of plans and proposals; and

- It is essential for people or interest groups to get involved in the preparation of development plans as this is where decisions on the strategy, for growth or protection, are made.

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

The **Town and Country Planning (Pre-Application Consultation) (Scotland) Regulations 2021** applies to applications for planning permission made under the **Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997** (TCP(S)A) and establishes the statutory requirements and procedures relating to consultation on applications made under the TCP(S)A. These statutory requirements do not apply to applications under section 36 of the **Electricity Act 1989**.

Whilst not a statutory requirement, The Highland Council (THC) has advised that their preference is that the formal TCP(S)A PAN procedure should be followed for section 36 applications to ensure that THC officers, members and other interested parties are formally notified and consulted upon within the consultation process.

Whilst Field has adhered to THC's procedural preference by submitting a TCP(S)A PAN for the Proposed Development, it is acknowledged that this is not a statutory requirement and the application is not subject to any associated statutory timeframes, obligations or activities.

3 Community / Public Consultation

3.1 Aims of Consultation

The primary aims of the consultation activities were to:

- Work with local stakeholders and local residents from an early stage of the Project design to provide them the opportunity to comment on the Proposed Development;
- Raise awareness of the Proposed Development within the local community and to gain their valuable insight based on their local knowledge;
- Gain a firm understanding of the key issues and areas of concern affecting the local community and other key stakeholders;
- Work with key stakeholders to agree key topic areas and associated scopes and methodologies of assessments;
- Ensure the local community and key stakeholders had the opportunity to give feedback on the Proposed Development;
- Provide feedback to the local community based on their comments and concerns;
- Include their feedback within the final Project design, as far as reasonably practicable; and
- Provide a robust planning application including comprehensive assessments and reporting.

3.2 Timeline of Consultation

Pre-application consultation activities generally ran from April 2024 until June 2024 and comprised the delivery of letters to local residents, the publication of a website, in-person consultation events and invitations to provide feedback.

A timeline of consultation events is described in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Timeline of public consultation activities for Field Spittal

Date	Consultation
17 April 2024 Outreach to political stakeholders	An email was sent to relevant local political stakeholders, including local councillors, Members of Parliament, Members of Scottish Parliament, and community councils. A full list of the recipients of this email are provided in **Appendix A**. In summary, the email included an overview of the Proposed Development including a copy of an information brochure (**Appendix B**), as well as offering an individual briefing on the Proposed Development, or alternatively, an invitation to the first public consultation event.
17 April 2024 Website go-live	A website for the Proposed Development was created and went live (fieldspittal.co.uk). The website includes an overview of the Proposed Development, copies of information brochures that were sent to local residents, and details of consultation events (including information boards for those that could not attend).

Date	Consultation
	The website also includes a feedback form and contact email address. A copy of the website is included in **Appendix C**.
17 April 2024 Outreach to local residents	A hardcopy information brochure (**Appendix B**) was sent to 758 surrounding addresses. This included an overview of the Proposed Development and an invitation to both public consultation events which were being hosted at Spittal Village Hall, Caithness, KW1 5XR on the following dates: • 2:00PM – 7:00PM, Thursday 2 May 2024; and • 2:00PM – 7:00PM, Thursday 30 May 2024. The postal distribution area for this outreach is included in **Appendix D**.
19 April 2024 Proposal of Application Notice (PAN)	A PAN was submitted to THC in accordance with THC's preference that the TCP(S)A process is followed for section 36 applications. A copy of the submitted PAN is included in **Appendix E**.
19 April 2024 First newspaper advertisement	Both public consultation events were advertised in the *John O'Groat Journal*. This included a brief overview of the Proposed Development, the time and location of each event. A copy of the newspaper advertisement is included in **Appendix F**.
2 May 2024 First public consultation event	The first public consultation event occurred from 2:00PM – 7:00PM on Thursday 2 May 2024 at Spittal Village Hall, as advertised in all outreach material. A total of nine display boards were presented at the first event, including an indicative site layout, proposed timeline for the Proposed Development, information about Field, how batteries work and frequently asked questions about battery projects. Copies of these display boards are included in **Appendix G**. A total of 21 people attended the first event. Feedback at the event can be summarised as follows: • Concerns about fire risk and emergency management; • Concerns about the quantity of energy projects in the local area, leading to the industrialisation of the area; • Concerns about the impact of construction traffic on local roads; and • Concerns that the minimal positive economic impact of the Proposed Development does not warrant its impact.
17 May 2024 Second newspaper advertisement	The second public consultation event was advertised in the *John O'Groat Journal*. As with the first newspaper advertisement, this included a brief overview of the Proposed Development, the time and location of the event. A copy of the newspaper advertisement is included in **Appendix F**.
30 May 2024 Second public consultation event	The second public consultation event occurred from 2:00PM – 7:00PM on Thursday 30 May 2024 at Spittal Village Hall, as advertised in all outreach material, and at least 14 days after the first event in accordance with the ECU Guidance.

Date	Consultation
	A total of 15 display boards were presented at the second event, including the boards that were presented at the first event, but also including an updated site layout, information about traffic management, fire safety, and visual impacts and Field's experience / other projects across the UK and in the Highlands. These boards were included to respond to concerns raised at the first consultation event. A total of 13 people attended the second event. Copies of these display boards are included in **Appendix H**. Feedback at the event can be summaries as follows: • Remaining concerns about fire risk and emergency management; • Remaining concerns about the quantity of energy projects in the local area, leading to the industrialisation of the area; • Remaining concerns about the impact of construction traffic on local roads; • Concerns about flood risk and drainage; • Concerns about Field's schools programme.

7 June 2024
End of pre-application consultation period
	All consultation material requested that feedback forms be provided by 7 June 2024 to ensure it can be given appropriate consideration in the final planning application.
	
	A total of eight feedback forms were received at the end of the consultation period. The answers received to multiple choice questions on each feedback form are included below:
	
	• **Has this brochure been helpful in understanding the proposal?**
	  ○ Yes (6), No (1), No Answer (1).
	• **With regards to the proposal, are you:**
	  ○ In favour (0), In objection (7), Of no opinion (1).
	
	All feedback forms received included additional commentary, which can be summarised as follows:
	
	• Concerns about fire risk and emergency management;
	• Concerns about the quantity of energy projects in the local area, leading to the industrialisation of the area;
	• Concerns about the impact of construction traffic on local roads; and
	• Concerns about the lack of long term operational jobs.
	
	Consultation material also noted that comments made to Field during the pre-application consultation period are not representations to the Scottish Ministers and would not be considered as representations during the planning process, and that there would be an opportunity for consultees to make representations on the application to the Scottish Ministers if a planning application is submitted.

3.3 Response to Public Consultation

Feedback received during the pre-application public consultation period has provided an overview of the key concerns of the local community. The key issues raised and a summary of how Field has addressed or intends to address these issues is provided in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Summary of Field's response to key issues raised at public consultation events

Key issue	Written response	Design response
Fire risk and emergency management	In response to concerns about fire safety, Field prepared an additional information board for the second consultation event that explains how fire risks are mitigated and the various safety measures that are implemented to reduce risk to life and the environment. Field has also commissioned the preparation of an Outline Battery Safety Management Plan (OBSMP) to support the planning application, which describes how the Proposed Development will effectively manage fire risks and emergency management procedures in line with relevant policies and guidance.	• The Proposed Development has been designed in with relevant UK and international standards and guidance in mind, with a particular focus on the National Fire Chiefs Council's fire safety guidance for BESS schemes, as discussed in the submitted OBSMP. • Prior to construction, consultation would be carried out with the local fire and rescue service to further ensure appropriate fire safety responses are in place and understood by all relevant parties..
Quantity of energy projects in the local area, leading to the industrialisation of the area	Field acknowledges the community's concerns about the potential for cumulative effects arising from the development of multiple energy projects in the local area. In response to these concerns, Field has ensured that all technical assessments consider potential cumulative impacts, as relevant to each discipline. This ensures that cumulative impacts are considered and appropriate mitigation measures are applied.	• Earth / landscape bunds have been introduced along the site's southern and eastern boundaries to reduce the visibility of the Proposed Development from surrounding viewpoints. • Proposed landscaping has been carefully considered to adhere to the surrounding rural character of the area, including the planting of a Highland grass mix and the avoidance of trees or bushes, with the exception of low-level hedgerows along farm boundaries, as is consistent with the existing landscape character.
Impact of construction traffic on local roads	In response to concerns about construction traffic, Field prepared an additional information board for the second consultation event that explains how construction traffic would be managed during the construction phase of the Proposed Development. Field has also prepared a Transport Statement and Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (OCTMP) to support the planning application, which describes estimated traffic types, volumes and required mitigation measures to ensure traffic impacts are appropriately managed. These technical	• A new access road onto the A9 has been designed with sufficient width and finish to accommodate all required construction and operational traffic, including abnormal indivisible load (AIL) deliveries and emergency vehicles. • Providing access to the Proposed Development directly from the A9 aims to reduce disruption to surrounding local roads by

Key issue	Written response	Design response
	documents also consider potential cumulative traffic impacts. The final CTMP would also require that traffic management activities be coordinated alongside other developments in the area to ensure cumulative traffic management impacts are reduced as far as practicable.	utilising only the trunk road network as much as possible. • Automatic traffic counter surveys were carried out along the A9 which has confirmed that the trunk road has ample capacity to accommodate all construction traffic required for the Proposed Development, including in cumulative scenarios.
Lack of long term operational jobs	Field acknowledges that once operational, the Proposed Development would be largely unmanned and the creation of long term employment opportunities would be less than that created by other energy developments (e.g. wind or solar farms). Field has commissioned the preparation of a Socioeconomic Impact Assessment which concludes that the Proposed Development would still lead to significant socioeconomic benefits, including 50 jobs over a two year construction period in Highlands, and 10 jobs during operation. The Proposed Development would also support the delivery of local services through the annual payment of £200,000 in non-domestic rates.	• N/A – not a design matter.
Flood risk and drainage	Flood risk was a key consideration during site selection and the proposed site was selected on the basis that it is at a very low risk of flooding, either from heavy rainfall events or nearby water course. Field has commissioned the preparation of a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy to support the planning application for the Proposed Development to ensure that it does not lead to increased risk of flooding.	• The drainage design for the Proposed Development includes underground drainage infrastructure and an on-site attenuation basin which will ensure any surface water run-off is released at its pre-development greenfield rate. • Drainage infrastructure will also be fitted with penstock valves to prevent any contaminated water from entering the broader water environment.

4 Stakeholder Consultation

In addition to the public consultation described in section 3, Field has carried out extensive consultation with other relevant stakeholders and government agencies to inform the development of the planning application. This engagement is summarised in Table 4.1, and additional information is available within each relevant technical assessment.

Table 4.1 Summary of consultation with key stakeholders

Consultee	Summary	Field's response
The Highland Council, Planning Officers	On 15 May 2024, the Applicant engaged with THC via their Pre-Application Advice Service for Major Developments. This included a 1.5-hour meeting which comprised an introduction to the Proposed Development, an overview of the technical assessments proposed to support the planning application and their underpinning methodologies, and an opportunity for THC to ask questions and provide initial advice. On 12 June 2024, THC provided written pre-application advice which summarised their assessment of the key issues associated with the Proposed Development and identified the information and assessments they expect to be supplied to support the final planning application to the ECU. The written advice included inputs from various internal departments within THC and external bodies including Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA), NatureScot and Historic Environment Scotland (HES). Key issues raised by THC in their feedback included: • Concerns about the number of energy developments forming clusters around grid substations; • The need to ensure that landscape bunds are consistent with the local landscape and do not detract from its rural character; and • Potential impacts on heritage matters, including feedback from HES.	All technical assessments and planning drawings have been informed by the feedback received in THC's pre-application advice. In response to THC's concerns about cumulative impacts, Field has ensured that all technical documents appropriately consider any potential cumulative impacts within their assessment. In response to THC's concerns about visual impacts and heritage, the proposed landscape plan and the use of earth bunds has been carefully considered to ensure the final design is consistent with the surrounding rural character of the area, whilst also mitigating impacts on the setting of the nearby scheduled monument.
The Highland Council, Environmental Health Officer (EHO) (North)	On 21 May 2024, Field engaged with THC's relevant EHO in relation to potential noise impacts associated with the Proposed Development. This included a technical memorandum outlining the proposed assessment methodology that would inform the noise impact assessment. On 24 May 2024, the EHO provided written feedback identifying the expected assessment methodology, and noted that 'creeping / increasing' background noise levels are a key concern in Caithness, particularly in areas where several developments are proposed. The EHO also provided a list of	The written feedback provided by THC's EHO has informed the preparation of the submitted Noise Impact Assessment (WSP, 2024), including the consideration of cumulative substation noise.

Consultee	Summary	Field's response
	the noise-related planning conditions that would typically be recommended for inclusion on a planning permission for this type of development.	
The Highland Council, Landscape Officer	On 12 June 2024, THC's written pre-application advice included commentary from THC's Landscape Officer about the Proposed Development. In this feedback it was noted that landscape and visual impacts are key issues that will inform their position in relation to the Proposed Development. Key comments included: • The establishment of tree and shrub planting can be challenging in the Caithness area; • The use of bunding would only be acceptable where such earthworks can be designed to fit in with the landscape character of the area; and • Visualisations are expected to accord with THC's latest Visualisation Standards for Wind Energy Developments. On 8 August 2024, Field attempted to carry out further engagement with THC's Landscape Officer to agree the scope of the overall Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, including the study area, relevant viewpoints, zones of theoretical visibility and cumulative schemes. No response was received to this engagement.	Comments provided by THC have informed the preparation of the submitted Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Stephenson Halliday, 2024) and supporting landscape plan. This includes ensuring that earthworks and landscape bunds are consistent with the local character of the area, and the use of tree and shrub planting has been limited. Visualisations have also been prepared to accord with THC's Visualisation Standards for Wind Energy Developments.
The Highland Council, Transport Planning	In response to the pre-application meeting with THC held on 15 May 2024, THC's Transport Planning team provided separate written advice on 27 June 2024. The written advice included information on the typical scope of a Transport Statement that should be submitted alongside a planning application. The feedback included a list of assessments to be submitted alongside the application, including a CTMP, swept path analysis, transport assessment and abnormal load assessment.	The feedback received by THC's Transport Planning department has informed the content of the Transport Statement and OCTMP (RHDHV, 2024), including the provision of supporting swept path analyses and an abnormal load assessment.
Transport Scotland	On 29 February 2024, a meeting was held with Transport Scotland in relation to the proposed creation of a new permanent access onto the A9 to provide construction and operational access to the Proposed Development. In the meeting, Transport Scotland noted that creation of additional points of access should only occur once other alternatives have been exhausted, in line with their policy to limit new access points off trunk roads. In this instance Transport Scotland acknowledged that a new access could be acceptable, provided it can be demonstrated that alternatives have been explored but were not deliverable. Transport	Feedback received by Transport Scotland has informed the design of the Proposed Development and the preparation of the supporting Transport Statement and OCTMP (RHDHV, 2024). The Transport Statement includes an assessment of other access options and

Consultee	Summary	Field's response
	Scotland also identified key design requirements for any new access point.	why these have been discounted.
Historic Environment Scotland (HES)	On 14 February 2024, a pre-application engagement meeting was held with Field, HES and Royal HaskoningDHV (Field's archaeological consultant) to understand their views on potential impacts to the nearby scheduled monument (St Magnus' church, burial ground and hospital – SM5413). On 20 February 2024, HES provided a letter of response which advised that based on the presented layout, HES would likely object to an application submitted on the basis that the Proposed Development would potentially dominate key views from the chapel and overwhelm the scheduled monument's presence as a lone structure in an otherwise featureless surroundings. Following this meeting, the site design was revised to introduce landscape bunds south and east of the site to screen views toward the site from key viewpoints associated with the scheduled monument. On 18 April 2024, an on-site meeting was conducted with HES, Field and Royal HaskoningDHV to discuss the changes made to the design and to allow for the consideration of potential impacts within its context. On 30 July 2024, Royal HaskoningDHV issued a technical note to HES which further outlined the design changes made to address HES' concerns, including visualisations demonstrating the effectiveness of the landscape bunds in screening views towards the Proposed Development. On 5 August 2024, a follow-up meeting was held to discuss the design changes. HES also responded via email advising that the visualisations are useful, however also requested a change to the projections provided in the visualisations, as well as an additional visualisation from a new viewpoint. Following this meeting, further design changes were made to reduce the overall footprint of the site by implementing a later generation of battery technology. On 2 October 2024, Royal HaskoningDHV issued an updated technical note that described these additional design changes and included the additional requested visualisations. On 9 October 2024, HES responded to confirm that they would still be likely to object to the application. On 1 November 2024, HES confirmed that whilst the proposed bunding is welcome, on the basis of the information available	Pre-application engagement with HES has been a key driver behind the overall design evolution of the Proposed Development, including the introduction of landscape bunds, the avoidance of tree and shrub planting, and a reduction in the overall development footprint to increase the setback from the scheduled monument. The pre-application engagement carried out with HES is provided in more detail in the Archaeological Impact Assessment (Royal HaskoningDHV, 2024).

Consultee	Summary	Field's response
	at the moment, they remain concerned about impacts to the setting of the scheduled monument. On 20 November 2024, HES attended site to consider the visualisations in context. On 17 December 2024, HES provided written feedback confirming that the design changes have reduced the likely impact of the Proposed Development on the scheduled monument and that whilst adverse impacts are likely to occur, these would not warrant an objection.	
NatureScot	On 14 November 2024, a meeting was held with NatureScot to agree the proposed methods to assessing potential impacts upon designated sites, protected and notable species, biodiversity enhancement and the proposed landscaping associated with the project.	Feedback received by NatureScot has been considered and have informed the preparation of the submitted Ecological Impact Assessment.
Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)	On 12 June 2024, SEPA included written feedback in THC's pre-application advice. This included advice that potential flood risks associated with the adjacent Achanarras Burn should be considered as part of any submitted flood risk assessment, in line with relevant SEPA policies.	SEPA's written feedback and relevant policies have been considered and have informed the preparation of the submitted Flood Risk Assessment (Haydn Evans, 2024) and Drainage Impact Assessment (Haydn Evans, 2024).

5 Conclusion

Pre-application public consultation activities for the Proposed Development have been undertaken in accordance with the Scottish Government's ECU Guidance, including two public consultation events, held at least 14 days apart (2 May 2024 and 30 May 2024). Pre-application feedback was accepted until 7 June 2024.

A total of 34 people attended across the two events. Key issues raised included concerns about fire risk and emergency management, the cumulative impact of energy developments in the area, the impact of construction traffic, and the lack of long-term operational jobs.

Field has addressed these concerns by:

- Providing additional information about these matters at the second consultation event;
- Design changes to reduce impacts raised by members of the community; and
- Ensuring all concerns have been appropriately considered in the technical assessments that will support the planning application.

In addition to the public consultation undertaken, Field has carried out extensive pre-application engagement with relevant stakeholders including THC, Transport Scotland, HES and SEPA. This engagement has informed the final design being submitted for planning and all relevant supporting technical assessments.

Field has engaged with all consultees in accordance with the ECU Guidance to ensure that the local community and relevant government stakeholders have had appropriate opportunities to inform the design of the Proposed Development. As a result, Field has been able to prepare a comprehensive planning application that has been appropriately informed by the feedback of the community and relevant government stakeholders.

Appendix A – Outreach to political stakeholders

Name	Position
Cllr Raymond Bremner	Leader of the Council
Cllr Ken Gowans	Chair, Economy and Infrastructure Committee
Cllr Karl Rosie	Chair, Climate Change Committee
Cllr Andrew Jarvie	Site Ward Councillor (Wick and East Caithness)
Cllr Willie Mackay	Site Ward Councillor (Wick and East Caithness)
Cllr Jan McEwan	Site Ward Councillor (Wick and East Caithness)
Cllr Ron Gunn	Neighbouring Ward Councillor (Thurso and Northwest Caithness)
Cllr Matthew Reiss	Neighbouring Ward Councillor (Thurso and Northwest Caithness)
Cllr Struan Mackie	Neighbouring Ward Councillor (Thurso and Northwest Caithness)
Jamie Stone	Site MP (Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross)
Maree Todd	Site MSP (Caithness, Sutherland and Ross
Douglas Ross	Regional List MSP (Highlands and Islands)
Edward Mountain	Regional List MSP (Highlands and Islands)
Rhoda Grant	Regional List MSP (Highlands and Islands)
Tim Eagle	Regional List MSP (Highlands and Islands)
Ariane Burgess	Regional List MSP (Highlands and Islands)
Jamie Halcro Johnston	Regional List MSP (Highlands and Islands)
Emma Roddick	Regional List MSP (Highlands and Islands)
Halkirk Community Council	Site Community Council
Watten Community Council	Neighbouring Community Council

From: [redacted]
Subject: Introduction to Field Spittal and Offer of Briefing
Date: 17 April 2024 at 10:32
To: [redacted]
Cc: feedback@fieldspittal.co.uk

Dear [redacted],

We recently wrote to you about another of our sites, Field Knocknagael. I am contacting you again by way of courtesy on behalf of Field regarding proposals for a different battery energy storage system (Field Spittal) on land to the south of Spittal Converter Station. This battery will have a capacity of up to 300 MW and will store and provide electricity to create a greener and more stable grid.

We will be holding our first public consultation event on Thursday 2nd May 2pm-7pm, at Spittal Village Hall (Spittal Museum and Community Centre), Spittal, Caithness, KW1 5XR. This will provide the local community with information about the proposal and give them the opportunity to ask any questions they may have.

Please find attached a brochure with further information about our proposal and public consultation events, which will shortly be sent to local households. We also have a project website which may be accessed at www.fieldspittal.co.uk.

Please do let me know if you have any questions or if you would like a briefing on the proposal. Alternatively, we would be glad to welcome you at our events.

Kind regards,

[redacted] | Significant Projects Manager
[redacted] | alpacacommunications.com

Field Spittal Brochure.pdf
298 KB

From: [redacted]
Subject: Re: Introduction to Field Spittal and Offer of Briefing
Date: 22 April 2024 at 09:07
To: [redacted]
Cc: feedback@fieldspittal.co.uk

HW

Dear [redacted],

Following my last email inviting you to our consultation event for Field Spittal, please find enclosed a Proposal of Application Notice and site location plan for the proposed development of a grid-scale battery storage facility in Spittal, Wick KW1 5XR. The application is proposed to be submitted to the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit in Summer 2024.

Applications made to the ECU are not subject to the same statutory requirements set by the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (TCPA). The Highland Council nevertheless recommends that applicants follow the TCPA PAN process to ensure interested parties are given appropriate time and notice to input into the planning process.

Field is glad to provide this PAN in accordance with THC's recommendation, however it should be noted that the application is not subject to the same statutory procedures or timelines that apply to planning applications submitted under the TCPA. Field is nevertheless committed to carrying out meaningful engagement and looks forward to consulting with all relevant parties.

We look forward to consulting with you further on this proposal over the coming weeks and months.

Many thanks,
[redacted]

[redacted] | Significant Projects Manager
[redacted] alpacacommunications.com

From: [redacted]
Date: Wednesday, 17 April 2024 at 10:32
To: [redacted]
Cc: "feedback@fieldspittal.co.uk" <feedback@fieldspittal.co.uk>
Subject: Introduction to Field Spittal and Offer of Briefing

Dear [redacted],

We recently wrote to you about another of our sites, Field Knocknagael. I am contacting you again by way of courtesy on behalf of Field regarding proposals for a different battery energy storage system (Field Spittal) on land to the south of Spittal Converter Station. This battery will have a capacity of up to 300 MW and will store and provide electricity to create a greener and more stable grid.

We will be holding our first public consultation event on Thursday 2nd May 2pm-7pm, at Spittal Village Hall (Spittal Museum and Community Centre), Spittal, Caithness, KW1 5XR. This will provide the local community with information about the proposal and give them the opportunity to ask any questions they may have.

Please find attached a brochure with further information about our proposal and public consultation events, which will shortly be sent to local households. We also have a

project website which may be accessed at www.fieldspittal.co.uk.

Please do let me know if you have any questions or if you would like a briefing on the proposal. Alternatively, we would be glad to welcome you at our events.

Kind regards,

[redacted] | Significant Projects Manager

[redacted] | alpacacommunications.com

BTGBSPI01 THC Proposal of Application Notice 18.04.24.pdf
117 KB

BTGBSPI01 -002.1 - Site Location Plan 180424.pdf

From: [redacted]
Subject: Spittal Public Consultation Event
Date: 24 May 2024 at 16:47
To: [redacted]
Cc: Feedback feedback@alpacacommunications.com, feedback@fieldspittal.co.uk

Dear [redacted],

I am contacting you by way of courtesy on behalf of Field regarding proposals for a battery energy storage system (Field Spittal) on land to the south of Spittal Converter Station. This battery will have a capacity of up to 300 MW and will store and provide electricity to create a greener and more stable grid.

We would like to invite you to our second public consultation event next week, on Thursday 30th May 2pm-7pm, at Spittal Village Hall (Spittal Museum and Community Centre), Spittal, Caithness, KW1 5XR.

This will provide the local community with an update on our proposal following feedback received at the first event on Thursday 2nd May, and give them the opportunity to ask any questions they may have.

Please find attached a brochure with further information about our proposal and public consultation events, which was sent to local households. We also have a project website which may be accessed at www.fieldspittal.co.uk.

Please do let me know if you have any questions or if you would like a briefing on the proposal. Alternatively, we would be glad to welcome you at our events.

Many thanks,

[redacted]

[redacted] Senior Account Manager
[redacted] | alpacacommunications.com

Field Spittal Brochure.pdf

Appendix B – Information brochure shared with the community

FIELD

FIELD SPITTAL BATTERY STORAGE

Providing up to 300 MW of electricity to create a greener and more stable grid

We are holding two public consultation events on **Thursday 2nd May 2pm-7pm** and **Thursday 30th May 2pm-7pm**, at Spittal Village Hall, Spittal, Caithness, KW1 5XR.

WHAT ARE WE PROPOSING TO BUILD AND OPERATE?

Field builds and operates large batteries which store energy to help create a greener, more stable electricity grid.

We'd like to build one of these batteries, Field Spittal, on land to the south of Spittal Converter Station.

Field Spittal would connect directly to Spittal substation, and would be capable of storing up to 300 MW of electricity. This is expected to avoid up to 1.7 million tonnes of CO_2e emissions during the first 20 years of operation. This would be achieved by supplying the grid with electricity stored when renewable energy generation is high, therefore reducing reliance on high carbon energy sources when renewable generation is low.

Our first site was Field Oldham, a 20 MW battery which has been operating since Autumn 2022. Field Spittal would join Field Oldham as part of a nationwide network which, together, will help the UK reach net zero.

WORKING WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Our batteries will provide huge benefits to the UK, and we take great care to make sure this is not to the detriment of the communities that host them.

As a responsible developer and operator, listening to local communities matters to us, as it allows us to understand and respond to local issues, and ultimately build better battery sites.

We engage early with communities throughout the development process, oversee the construction on-site and we're responsible for the project once it's in operation. We're part of communities for the long-term.

WHY DO WE NEED BIG BATTERIES?

To reach net zero, increase energy security and help reduce energy bills, we need to store renewable energy and improve the electricity grid's stability and reliability.

Our batteries are designed to fill gaps in the UK's electricity supply by charging up when renewable energy is being produced (such as on windy or sunny days) and discharging energy back into the grid when needed (e.g. when the wind isn't blowing, the sun isn't shining, or we aren't able to import enough energy from elsewhere). This ensures plenty of energy is available for people to make their morning cuppa, even on a calm, overcast winter's day.

These batteries work a lot like the batteries you use at home, only instead of using our batteries to power a torch or TV remote, we operate large, 'grid scale' batteries. This means we can rely more on renewable energy and less on expensive fossil fuels to provide electricity to thousands of homes and businesses.

Batteries are also very good at keeping the grid stable, by maintaining a constant and predictable supply of electricity to the grid, at the right frequency.

Changes in the supply and demand of electricity on the network create changes in this electrical frequency. This needs to be closely monitored, as if frequency is too high or too low, the network cannot operate properly. Field Spittal will help to keep this frequency at the right level, which in turn helps reduce the chances of network disruptions or blackouts.

STORING ENERGY IN THE HIGHLANDS

Scotland has set a target to become net zero by 2045, with a reduction in greenhouse gases of 75% by 2030 and 90% by 2040*. Batteries enable much greater use of renewable energy, and therefore play an important role in helping Scotland reach net zero.

Batteries are a vital part of how we can make the most of renewable energy, which is why we believe that they can play a part in Highland Council's "Future Highland" Programme. The Highland Council stated in their Net Zero Strategy (2023) that:

"The Council's "Future Highland" Programme sets out a vision of Highland, a centre for global renewable energy, by capitalising on our areas of immense natural capital to deliver alternative energy solutions including developing solar, hydrogen, Hydro, wind and wave solutions."

*https://www.gov.scot/policies/climate-change/

FIELD SPITTAL

Substation. The built infrastructure (batteries, cables, access tracks, etc.) is proposed to cover an area of approximately 3 hectares.

We'll also provide landscaping and biodiversity enhancements to ensure we are having a positive impact on the land we use and its local setting.

Field Spittal will be made up of the following components:

- Battery energy storage units, which will be used to store the energy from the grid.
- Power conversion systems (including inverters and transformers), which convert energy from alternating current to direct current, so that it can be stored by the batteries.
- An on-site substation, which either steps up or steps down the voltage of the energy being stored.

- An underground cable connection to connect the battery to the Spittal substation.
- Site access tracks to allow vehicles (including emergency vehicles) to safely get around the site.
- Drainage arrangements to allow surface water to drain from the site at the same rate as the existing fields.
- Site security, including CCTV, fencing and lighting.
- Landscaping to reduce visual impacts and contribute to biodiversity enhancement.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What makes Field a committed and responsible developer for the long term?

Many developers look to take the project to shovel-ready status - that's securing land, grid connection and planning permission, and then sell the project on.

Field is a developer/owner/operator, which means we are responsible for the project throughout its entire lifecycle. This differentiates us from many developers who look to take the project to shovel-ready status - that's securing land, grid connection and planning permission, and then sell the project on.

We will be working with the community during early design and development, construction, and throughout the operation of the project.

When will Field Spittal be built?

We will be submitting our planning application to the Energy Consents Unit in Summer 2024. If we are granted consent, we would look to start construction in 2027 and it will take about two years to complete.

How will our local community benefit?

We're currently working with the National Schools Partnership* to deliver a community-based programme in local schools to help educate students about the work that Field is undertaking in renewable energy and energy storage, as well as encouraging and equipping young people to explore careers in STEM and renewable energy. The Field team will work with local schools to provide information to students about how to build a career in the renewable energy sector.

*National Schools Partnership is a unique education network (run by the Brand and Social Impact Agency, We Are Futures) providing free teaching resources to schools across the whole of the UK.

Will the project impact local traffic?

Once operational, the battery will have minimal impact on local traffic, with only occasional visits required for maintenance. When the battery is being built, construction traffic is managed through a Construction Traffic Management Plan. This will include details of construction traffic numbers, vehicle routing and working hours. As with all aspects of the development, we welcome input from the local community to help reduce any impact on local roads where possible.

Are battery energy storage sites noisy?

The main noise associated with batteries are the cooling fans, which keep the batteries from overheating. This noise level is low and the batteries are not expected to be audible beyond the site boundary. Noise is measured against existing background noise levels and noise levels are required to meet the relevant British Standards and World Health Organisation Noise Guidelines.
We conduct thorough noise evaluations for each site and implement various noise mitigation measures in our project plans. These measures, such as acoustic fencing and bunding, ensure that noise impacts are acceptable at nearby sensitive locations.

Are the batteries safe and what safety measures will you put in place?

Large batteries are safe facilities. We work hard throughout site design, construction and into operation to ensure the safety of our sites. We would only use batteries that have best-in-class fire safety performance and will be compliant with all relevant fire safety standards.

The batteries will be constantly monitored and in the unlikely event that a fire does occur, the facility will employ automatic fire detection and suppression systems.

We are also working with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to ensure suitable emergency response procedures are in place, including a Battery Fire Safety Management Plan.

To keep our sites secure, all our projects include perimeter fencing and gated access. During operation, our sites are unmanned and CCTV is used to monitor activities.

FEEDBACK FORM

To return your completed feedback form please tear it from the brochure and pop it in the post by **Friday 7th June 2024**. Alternatively, you can return your form via email to **feedback@fieldspittal.com**.

Title: Name:

Address: Postcode:

Email: Telephone:

1. Has this brochure been helpful in understanding our proposal? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ Not sure

2. With regards to the proposals you have read about within this leaflet, are you:
   ❑ In favour ❑ In objection ❑ Of no opinion

3. Please use this space to provide any comments on the proposal. We would welcome your feedback on all aspects of the emerging design shown in the brochure.

Please provide your contact details if you wish to get a response. Any information provided will only be used for the purpose of the planning application to the Local Planning Authority and will not be disclosed with any third parties. Your contact details will not be listed on the planning application documentation. Field is managing this public consultation process in collaboration with Alpaca Communications.

INDICATIVE TIMELINE

Early 2024

Early environmental assessments and design work

2 May 2024

Public consultation event 1

30 May 2024

Public consultation event 2

Summer 2024

Submission of planning application

Early 2025

Determination of planning application

2027 onwards

Construction and operation

FOLD HERE

Freepost
ALPACA COMMUNICATIONS LIMITED

Instructions

To return your feedback form, please fold and put it in the post to us.

If you'd like more space to share your thoughts, send us an email, or just write your comments down and pop them in an envelope with 'FREEPOST ALPACA COMMUNICATIONS LIMITED' written on the front. You don't need any further address or stamp.

Any queries or problems? Get in touch via feedback@alpacacommunications.com.

JOIN US AT OUR PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENTS

We're on a mission to build the renewable energy infrastructure needed to reach net zero, starting with battery storage. Your feedback can help us to improve our proposals for Field Spittal.

For further information, please visit our website at **www.fieldspittal.co.uk**.

We're holding two public consultation events at Spittal Village Hall (Spittal Museum and Community Centre), Spittal, Caithness, KW1 5XR:

Thursday 2nd May 2pm-7pm
Thursday 30th May 2pm-7pm

You can submit your feedback to us or write to us via:

Email: **Feedback@fieldspittal.com**

Freepost: **Alpaca Communications Limited**

Appendix C – Pre-application consultation website

Field builds and operates large batteries which store energy to help create a greener, more stable electricity grid.

We'd like to build one of these batteries, Field Spittal, on land to the south of Spittal Converter Station.

Providing up to 300 MW of electricity to create a greener & more stable grid.

Why do we need big batteries?

To reach net zero, increase energy security and help reduce energy bills, we need to store renewable energy and improve the electricity grid's stability and reliability.

Our batteries are designed to fill gaps in the UK's electricity supply by charging up when renewable energy is being produced (such as on windy or sunny days) and discharging energy back into the grid when needed (e.g. when the wind isn't blowing, the sun isn't shining, or we aren't able to import energy from elsewhere). This ensures plenty of energy is available for people to make their morning cuppa, even on a calm, overcast winter's day.

These batteries work a lot like the batteries you use at home, only instead of using our batteries to power a torch or TV remote, we operate large, 'grid scale' batteries. This means we can rely more on renewable energy and less on expensive fossil fuels to provide electricity to thousands of homes and businesses.

Batteries are also very good at keeping the grid stable, by maintaining a constant and predictable supply of electricity to the grid, at the right frequency.

Changes in the supply and demand of electricity on the network create changes in this electrical frequency. This needs to be closely monitored, as if frequency is too high or too low, the network cannot operate properly. Field Spittal will help to keep this frequency at the right level, which in turn helps reduce the chances of network disruptions or blackouts.

PROPOSAL

Field Spittal would be located to the south of Spittal Converter Station. The built infrastructure (batteries, cables, access tracks etc.) is proposed to cover an area of approximately 9 hectares.

We'll also provide landscaping to reduce visual impacts and biodiversity enhancements so we are having a positive ecological effect on the land we use.

Field Spittal will be made up of the following components:

Battery energy storage units, which will be used to store the energy from the grid.

Power conversion systems (including inverters and transformers), which convert energy from alternating current

An **on-site substation**, which either steps up or steps down the voltage of the energy being stored.

An underground **cable connection** to connect the battery to the existing Knocknagael substation.

	to direct current, so that it can be stored by the batteries.		
Site **access tracks** to allow vehicles (including emergency vehicles) to safely get around the site.	**Drainage arrangements** to allow surface water to drain from the site at the same rate as the existing fields.	**Site security**, including CCTV, fencing and lighting.	**Landscaping** to reduce visual impacts and contribute to biodiversity enhancement.

Working with local

Our batteries will provide huge benefits to the UK, and we take great care to make sure this is not to the detriment of the communities that host them.

communities

As a responsible developer and operator, listening to local communities matters to us, as it allows us to understand and respond to local issues, and ultimately build better battery sites.

We engage early with communities throughout the development process, oversee the construction on-site and we're responsible for the project once it's in operation. We're part of communities for the long-term.

Home

Proposal

Public Consultation

FAQs

Documents

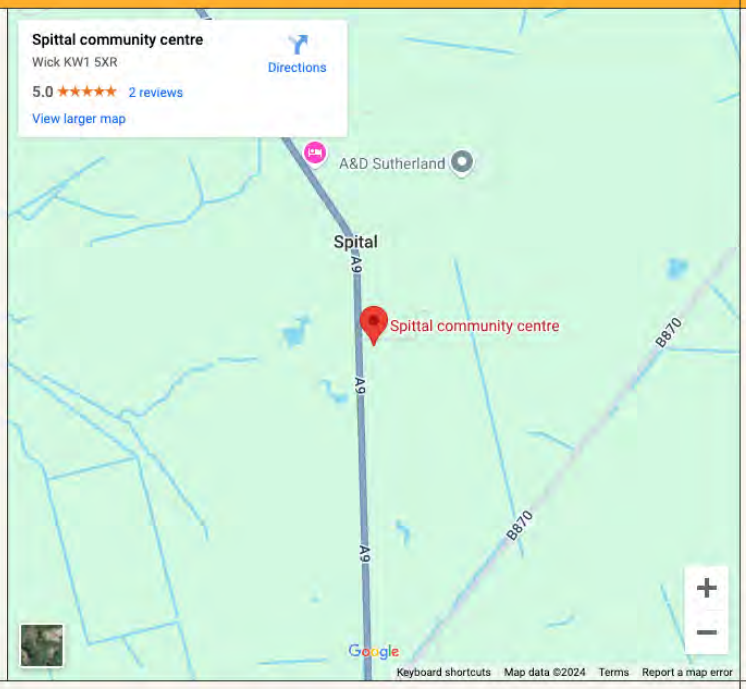
Contact

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

+ What makes Field a committed and responsible developer for the long term?
+ When will Field Spittal be built?
+ How will our local community benefit?
+ Will the project impact local traffic?
+ Are battery energy storage sites noisy?
+ Are the batteries safe and what safety measures will you put in place?

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

We held two public consultation events on Thursday 2nd May and Thursday 30th May, 2pm-7pm, at Spittal Village Hall (Spittal Museum and Community Centre), Spittal, Caithness, KW1 5XR.



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Documents
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Privacy Policy

DOCUMENTS

- Field Spittal Brochure
- Consultation Event 1 Exhibition Boards
- Consultation Event 2 Exhibition Boards

CONTACT

This website forms part of our pre-planning application process.

We would be grateful if you could fill out the feedback form on this page and let us have your contact details for the purpose of informing the project design and our planning application.

For further information or to provide comments, please do not hesitate to email us at feedback@fieldspittal.co.uk

Field is managing this public consultation process in collaboration with Alpaca Communications. Please view Alpaca Communications' privacy policy here.

First name *

Last name *

Email *

Subject *

Message *

protected by reCAPTCHA
Privacy - Terms

SUBMIT

Appendix D – Postal distribution area for local residents

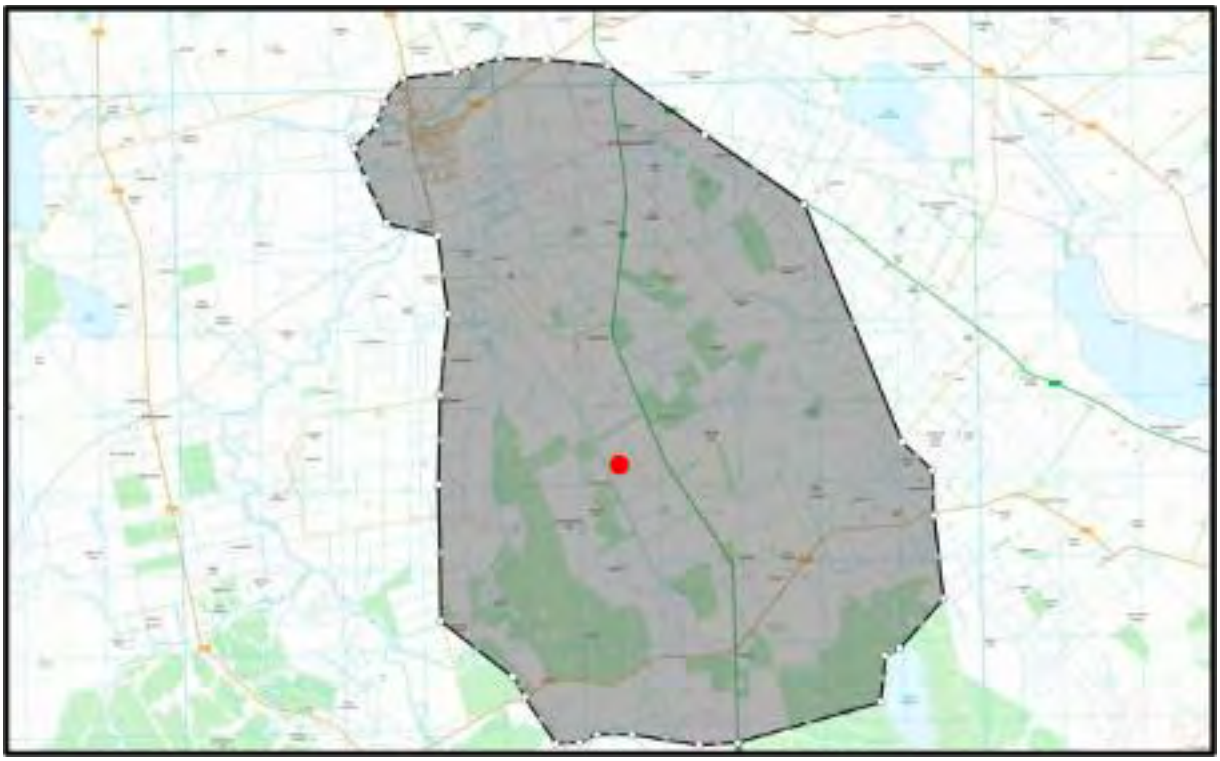


Figure D.1: Postal distribution area for public consultation events, comprising 758 notified addresses (carried out by Alpaca Communications)

Appendix E – Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) submitted to The Highland Council

The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

PROPOSAL OF APPLICATION NOTICE
MOLADH BRATH IARRTAIS

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	Field Spittal Limited	Agent	David Bell Planning Ltd
Address	c/o Agent	Address	[redacted]
Phone	c/o Agent	Phone	[redacted]
Email	c/o Agent	Email	[redacted]

Address or Location of Proposed Development
Land generally at Spittal Mains Spittal, Wick KW1 5XR

Description of Development
Construction and operation of Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) of up to 300 MW with associated infrastructure (including cable route to substation), access and ancillary works (including landscaping and biodiversity enhancement). (Section 36 application to Energy Consents Unit (ECU))

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**
Halkirk Community Council [Neighbouring: Watten Community Council]	Friday 19 April 2024
Local Elected Members	**Date Notice Served**
Cllr Raymond Bremner Cllr Andrew Jarvie Cllr Willie Mackay Cllr Jan McEwan [Neighbouring: Cllr Ross Gunn Cllr Matthew Reiss Cllr Karl Rosie Cllr Struan Mackie]	Friday 19 April 2024
Members of Scottish Parliament and Members of Parliament	**Date Notice Served**
Jamie Stone MP Maree Todd MSP Douglas Ross MSP Edward Mountain MSP Rhoda Grant MSP Tim Eagle MSP Ariane Burgess MSP Jamie Halcro Johnston MSP Emma Roddick MSP	Friday 19 April 2024
Names / details of other parties	**Date Notice Served**

Details of Proposed Consultation		
Proposed Public Event 1	**Venue**	**Date and Time**
	Spittal Village Hall Spittal, Caithness KW1 5XR	14:00 – 19:00 Thursday 2 May 2024
Proposed Public Event 2 *(at least 14 days after Public Event 1)*	**Venue**	**Date and Time**
	Spittal Village Hall Spittal, Caithness KW1 5XR	14:00 – 19:00 Thursday 30 May 2024

Publication of Event		
Newspaper Advert	**Name of Newspaper**	**Advert Date**
	John O'Groats Journal	Friday 19 April 2024
Details of any other consultation methods (date, time and with whom)		
Delivery of consultation brochures to landowners within 2 km vicinity of the proposed site, including an invitation to public events (week commencing 15 April 2024) Project Website (https://fieldspittal.co.uk) Meetings with community councils or other political stakeholders upon request (dates to be confirmed with relevant stakeholders depending on availability).		

Signed	[redacted]	Date	**19/4/2024**

Appendix F – Newspaper advertisements for consultation events

generalnotices

GENERAL NOTICES

Lybster Outdoor Bowling Club

Opening Day ~ 21st April 2024
1pm ~ Lybster Bowling Club

Come and join us for our opening day of the 2024/25 season.

Bowlers of any age and ability are welcome.

Refreshments available.

~ Come Along And Try Day ~
on 28th April 2024 at 1pm
Lybster Bowling Club

If you've always wanted to try bowls now is your opportunity to do so.
Bowls and tuition will be supplied.

SOCIETY OF CAITHNESS ARTISTS

AGM

Monday 29th April 7pm in the Pentland Hotel, Thurso

Everyone welcome.

Amended constitution to be ratified. Constitution is available to view on the Society's website: *https://societyofcaithnessartists.co.uk/rules-and-constitution/*

CHURCH NOTICES

PULTENEYTOWN & THRUMSTER CHURCH

Rev. Linda Broadley
Locum Minister
07867 795792

SUNDAY SERVICES

Morning Service
at 11.30am

More details on Church website and Facebook page

SC001291

Email your advert direct to advertising@nosn.co.uk

classifiednorth

FOR SALE

TREATED SAWMILL PRODUCTS FOR JOINERS, BUILDERS, AND FARMERS.

- Construction, farming, DIY and gardening
- Processed in Strath Halladale, Sutherland from locally grown trees.
- Minimal supply chain miles
- Sawn timber, carcassing, fencing, wood chips, sawdust, bark and shavings
- All milled wood produced treated in state of the art treatment plant
- Soft and hardwood logs dried to 10% humidity
- Biomass scope and supply from 13okW to 6MkW
- Milling to order
- Posts from stock or bespoke

FIND OUT MORE FROM MALCOLM
07387 411 270 • MALCOLM@GMGENERGY.CO.UK
WWW.GMGENERGY.CO.UK
ONLINE SHOP COMING SOON

COMMUNICATION RECEIVER - 'FRG7', £100. Tel. 01955 631325 (Keiss).

HEATING SYSTEM Consisting of Boston boiler; large water tank; double skinned oil tank (2600 litres); 8 Radiators.

All for £1,600 o.n.o.

Tel. 01847 890977
(Thurso)

TUMBLE DRYER 'Hoover', brand new, 9kg bought incorrect size in error, cost £269.99, will sell for £230 or very near offer. Tel. 01847 831476 (Halkirk).

WOODEN PALLETS - wanted, all types and sizes, even broken ones. Cash paid. Tel. 01408 622205 (Brora).

Commited to **our community**

Advertising Deadline **Tuesday 1pm**

publicnotices

FIELD SPITTAL

Field Spittal Ltd (Field) is preparing to submit a planning application to the Highland Council for a Battery Energy Storage System site on land to the south of Spittal Converter Station.

The battery would provide up to 300 MW of electricity to create a greener and more stable grid. This is expected to avoid up to 1.7 million tonnes of CO_2e emissions during the first 20 years of operation.

Please visit **www.fieldspittal.co.uk** where we will provide updates on this project. For further information, please do not hesitate to email the project team at **feedback@fieldspittal.co.uk**.

We will be accepting pre-application submission comments until Friday 7th June 2024.

Comments made to Field are not representations to the Scottish Ministers. If the Applicant submits a planning application there will be an opportunity for consultees to make representations on the application to the Scottish Ministers.

Join us at out public consultation events on
Thursday 2nd and Thursday 30th May 2pm-7pm
Spittal Village Hall, Spittal, Caithness, KW1 5XR

First Registration of a Croft

Valerie Jane Gerrie has registered their croft Knapperfield, Watten on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.
Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 4 June 2024.
Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home.
The croft registration number is C9401.

First Registration of a Croft

Valerie Jane Gerrie has registered their croft Tails of Watten, Watten on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.
Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 4 June 2024.
Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home.
The croft registration number is C9405.

First Registration of a Croft

Valerie Jane Gerrie has registered their croft Tails of Watten, Watten on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.
Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 4 June 2024.
Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home.
The croft registration number is C9406.

First Registration of a Croft

Valeric Jane Gerrie has registered their croft Allans, Wanen on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.
Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 4 June 2024.
Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home.
The croft registration number is C9400.

First Registration of a Croft

Valerie Jane Gerrie has registered their croft Gunns, Watten on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.
Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 4 June 2024.
Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home.
The croft registration number is C9403.

First Registration of a Croft

Valerie Jane Gerrie has registered their croft Lowes, Watten on the Crofting Register held by the Registers of Scotland.
Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 4 June 2024.
Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home.
The croft registration number is C9402.

Advertising Deadline **Tuesday 1pm**

generalnotices

CHURCH NOTICES

PULTENEYTOWN & THRUMSTER CHURCH

Rev. Linda Broadley
Locum Minister
07867 795792

SUNDAY SERVICES

Morning Service
at 11.30am

More details on Church website and Facebook page

SC001291

GENERAL NOTICES

Jamie Stone MP Advice Surgery

Tuesday
28th May
11.00am to 12.00pm
Ross Institute, Halkirk
No Appointment Necessary

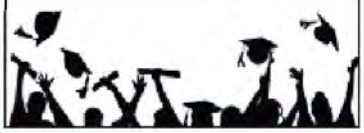
Constituency Offices: George Street, Wick, Caithness, KW1 4DG
Hillview, Market Street, Tain, Ross Shire, IV19 1AR
T: 07721 333946 • email: jamie.stone.mp@parliament.uk

GRADUATION

GRADUATION

JILLIAN GUNN

Former Thurso High School pupil Jillian Gunn graduated from the Open University with a First Class Bachelor of Science with Honours in Natural Science (Biology). The ceremony took place in London on 23rd March 2024. Jillian is the daughter of James & Moira Gunn, Houstry Mains, Halkirk, and is employed by NRS Dounreay.



classifiednorth

FOR SALE

CHILDS BIKE - Mongoose, 20" wheels. perfect condition, £25. Tel. 01862 821477 (Tain).

GLASS TOP TABLE - 76cm x 121cm, good condition, £30 or near offer; solid pine tv corner unit, good condition, £45. Tel. 01862 821477 (Tain).

TUB CHAIRS - two grey check as new, £120 for both. Tel. 07756 998784 (Dornoch).

WARDROBE - polycotton/wooden, good condition, £20. Tel. 01862 821477 (Tain).

QUAD BIKE
'Suzuki', 400cc
Green, only three years old, never been used for work, 500mls only, **£5,000 or near offer**; Plus quad bike trailer **£400**.
Tel. 01320 351286
(Glenmoriston)

Email your advert direct to advertising @nosn .co.uk

publicnotices

FIELD SPITTAL

Field Spittal Ltd (Field) is preparing to submit a planning application to the Highland Council for a Battery Energy Storage System site on land to the south of Spittal Converter Station.

The battery would provide up to 300 MW of electricity to create a greener and more stable grid. This is expected to avoid up to 1.7 million tonnes of CO_2e emissions during the first 20 years of operation.

Please visit **www.fieldspittal.co.uk** where we will provide updates on this project. For further information, please do not hesitate to email the project team at **feedback@fieldspittal.co.uk**.

We will be accepting pre-application submission comments until Friday 7th June 2024.

Comments made to Field are not representations to the Scottish Ministers. If the Applicant submits a planning application there will be an opportunity for consultees to make representations on the application to the Scottish Ministers.

Join us at out public consultation event on
Thursday 30th May | 2pm-7pm
Spittal Village Hall, Spittal, Caithness, KW1 5XR

CROFTING COMMISSION
COIMISEAN NA CROITEARACHD

DECROFTING APPLICATION
R J MacKintosh, 9 & Pt 10 Glengolly & Bleachfield, 0.25ha, Site for a dwelling house (123573). Comments from any member of the crofting community within the locality of the croft and any expressions of demand for the croft (which may be made public), may be sent to the Crofting Commission by 14/06/2024 at info@crofting.gov.scot / Crofting Commission, Great Glen House, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW.

DECROFTING DIRECTION ISSUED
A H A Morgan. Mid Clyth, 0.1565 ha, garden & amenity ground, with fencing and use conditions (127696)
Full details at www.crofting.scotland.gov.uk

Advertising Deadline **Tuesday 1pm**

www.highland.gov.uk

The Highland Council / Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997
PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997

The applications listed below, along with plans and other documents submitted with them, may be examined online at http://wam.highland.gov.uk ; electronically by appointment at the **AREA PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS OFFICE, HIGHLAND COUNCIL, CAITHNESS HOUSE, MARKET PLACE, WICK, KW1 4AB**; or electronically by appointment at your nearest Council Service Point. You can find your nearest Service Point via the following link https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory/16/a_to_z

Written comments should be made to the EPC at the contact details below within the time period indicated from the date of this notice. Anyone making a representation about this proposal should note that their letter or email will be disclosed to any individual or body who requests sight of representations in respect of this proposal.

Reference Number	Development Address	Proposal Description	Alternative locations where application may be inspected & time period for comments
24/01678/FUL	Land 110M SE Of Mooredge Slickly, Lyth Wick	Erection of house	(14 days)
23/05815/FUL	The Engine House Noss Head Wick, KW1 4QT	Erection of an extension	(14 days)
24/01373/FUL	Land 35M NW Of Royston Stemster Halkirk	Siting of cabin for residential purpose, erection of shed, siting of solar PV array and formation of access	(14 days)

ePlanning Centre, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS IV3 5NX
Email: **eplanning@highland.gov.uk**

ACHRUGAN WIND FARM

Statkraft

Statkraft would like to invite local residents to public consultation events for the proposed Achrugan Wind Farm, located 1.6km south of Strathy. The Proposed Development will comprise up to 14 turbines with a maximum tip height of up to 200m and a 50MW Battery Energy Storage System (BESS).

At the public consultation events, you will have the opportunity to view our project plans, ask the Project Team questions, and provide feedback, which will help us refine the project's design.

Our consultation website is live and can be accessed via www.achrugan-windfarm.co.uk

Find out more:
Freephone: **0800 772 0668**
Website: **www.achrugan-windfarm.co.uk**
Email: **UKprojects@statkraft.com**

We will be hosting public consultation events in the following locations:

- Strathy Village Hall
  Wednesday, 29th May 2024: 1.30pm to 7.30pm
- Bettyhill Village Hall
  Thursday, 30th May 2024: 10am to 2pm

Comments should be made to Statkraft UK by 14th June 2024 and do not constitute a formal representation. An opportunity to make formal representation will exist if a subsequent planning application is made.

Appendix G – Public consultation event 1 display boards

WHAT ARE WE PROPOSING TO BUILD AND OPERATE?

Field builds and operates large batteries which store energy to help create a greener, more stable electricity grid.

We'd like to build one of these batteries, Field Spittal, on land south of the existing Spittal converter station.

Field Spittal would connect directly to Spittal converter station via underground cables and would be capable of providing up to 300 MW of electricity to the national grid. This is expected to avoid up to 1.7 million tonnes of CO2e emissions during the first 20 years of operation. This would be achieved by storing electricity when renewable energy generation is high, and supplying the grid with electricity when renewable energy generation is low, thereby reducing reliance on high carbon energy sources.

Field currently operates two sites, Field Oldham, a 20 MW battery which has been operating since Autumn 2022, and Field Gerrards Cross, which started operating in April 2024. Field Spittal would join these sites as part of a nationwide network which, together, will help the UK reach net zero.

FIELD SPITTAL

Field Spittal would be located directly south of the existing Spittal converter station. The built infrastructure (batteries, cables, access tracks, etc.) is proposed to cover an area of approximately 9 hectares.

We'll also provide landscaping to reduce visual impacts and we'll provide biodiversity enhancements to ensure we are having a positive ecological effect on the land we use.

Field Spittal will be made up of the following components:

- **Battery energy storage units**, which will be used to store the energy from the grid.
- **Power conversion systems** (including inverters and transformers), which convert energy from alternating current to direct current, so that it can be stored by the batteries.
- An **on-site substation**, which either steps up or steps down the voltage of the energy being stored, so that it can be transferred to or from the grid.
- An **underground cable connection** to connect the battery to the existing Spittal substation.
- **Site access tracks** to allow vehicles (including emergency vehicles) to safely get around the site.
- **Drainage arrangements** to allow surface water to drain from the site at the same rate as the existing fields.
- **Site security**, including CCTV, fencing and lighting.
- **Landscaping**, including earth bunds and native species mix planting, to reduce visual impacts and contribute to biodiversity enhancement.

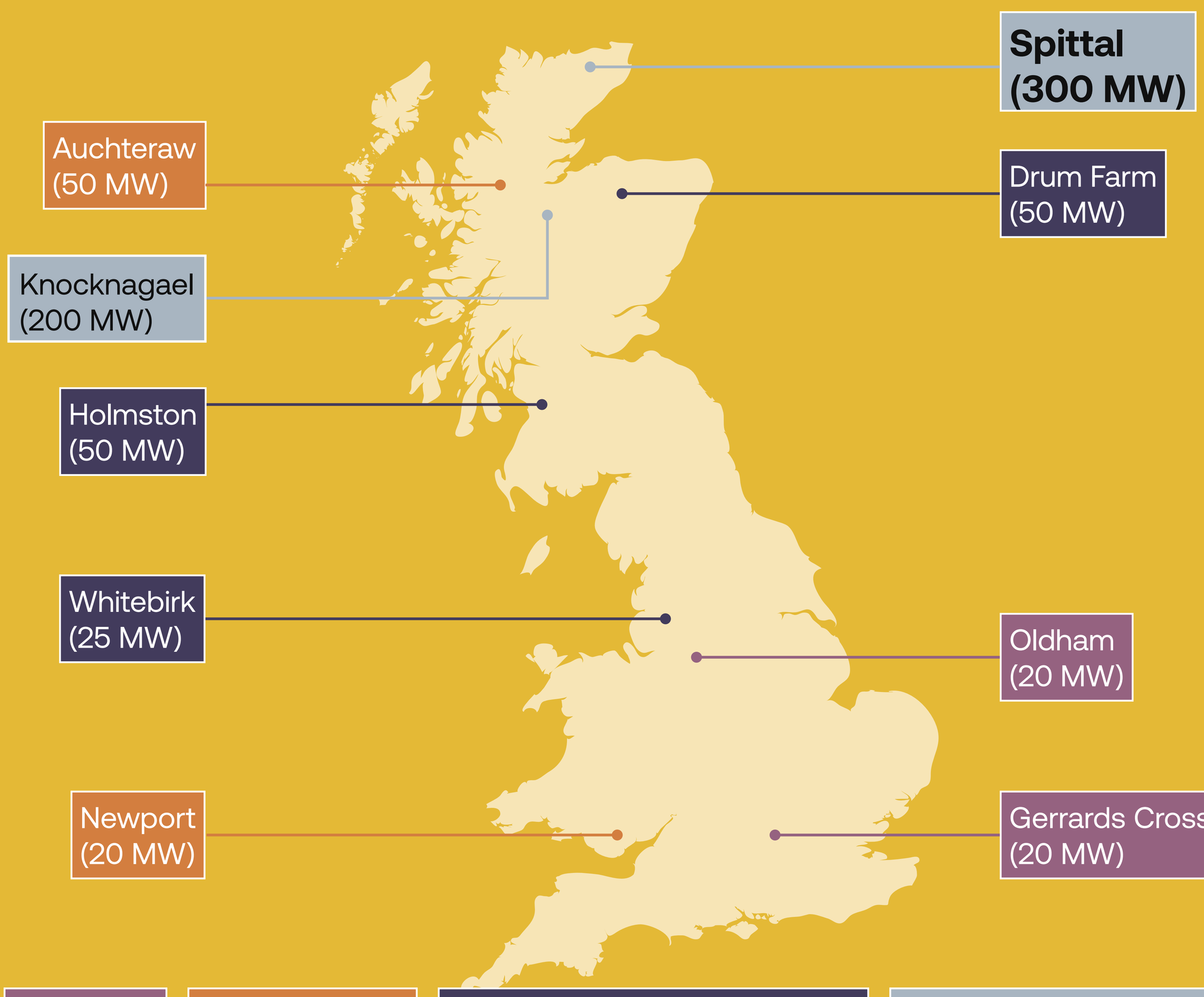
WHO WE ARE

Field is a leading developer, owner and operator of grid-scale batteries across the UK and Europe. Field's aim is to develop battery projects that reduce climate change emissions, support the stable operation of the electricity grid, and bring down energy prices for consumers.

We're responsible for all stages of project development, from initial landowner engagement through to concept design, planning, construction and operation. We're committed to designing, building and operating projects that are environmentally sustainable and have as little impact as possible on the communities around them.

We value ongoing engagement with our communities to understand and respond to local perspectives and concerns and will work with local communities throughout every stage of the project.

Field Spittal would form part of Field's extensive portfolio of battery projects across the UK and Europe. In the UK, we have several projects at varying stages of development:



FIELD

FIELD SPITTAL BATTERY STORAGE

STORING ENERGY IN THE HIGHLANDS

Scotland has set a target to become net zero by 2045.* Batteries enable much greater use of renewable energy, and therefore play an important role in helping Scotland reach net zero.

Batteries are a vital part of how we can make the most of renewable energy, which is why we believe that they can play a part in Highland Council's "Future Highland" Programme. The Highland Council stated in their Net Zero Strategy (2023) that:

"The Council's "Future Highland" Programme sets out a vision of Highland, a centre for global renewable energy, by capitalising on our areas of immense natural capital to deliver alternative energy solutions including developing solar, hydrogen, Hydro, wind and wave solutions."

*https://www.gov.scot/policies/climate-change

INDICATIVE TIMELINE

Early 2024

Early environmental assessments and design work

2 May 2024

Public consultation event 1

May 2024

Ongoing detailed environmental assessments and design updates based on stakeholder feedback

30 May 2024

Public consultation event 2

June 2024

Final design updates based on assessments and stakeholder feedback

Summer 2024

Submission of planning application

Early 2025

Determination of planning application

2027 onwards

Construction and operation

WHY DO WE NEED BIG BATTERIES?

To reach net zero, increase energy security and help reduce energy bills, we need to store renewable energy and improve the electricity grid's stability and reliability.

Our batteries are designed to fill gaps in the UK's electricity supply by charging up when renewable energy is being produced (such as on windy or sunny days) and discharging energy back into the grid when needed (e.g. when the wind isn't blowing, the sun isn't shining, or we aren't able to import enough energy from elsewhere).This ensures plenty of energy is available for people to make their morning cuppa, even on a calm, overcast winter's day.

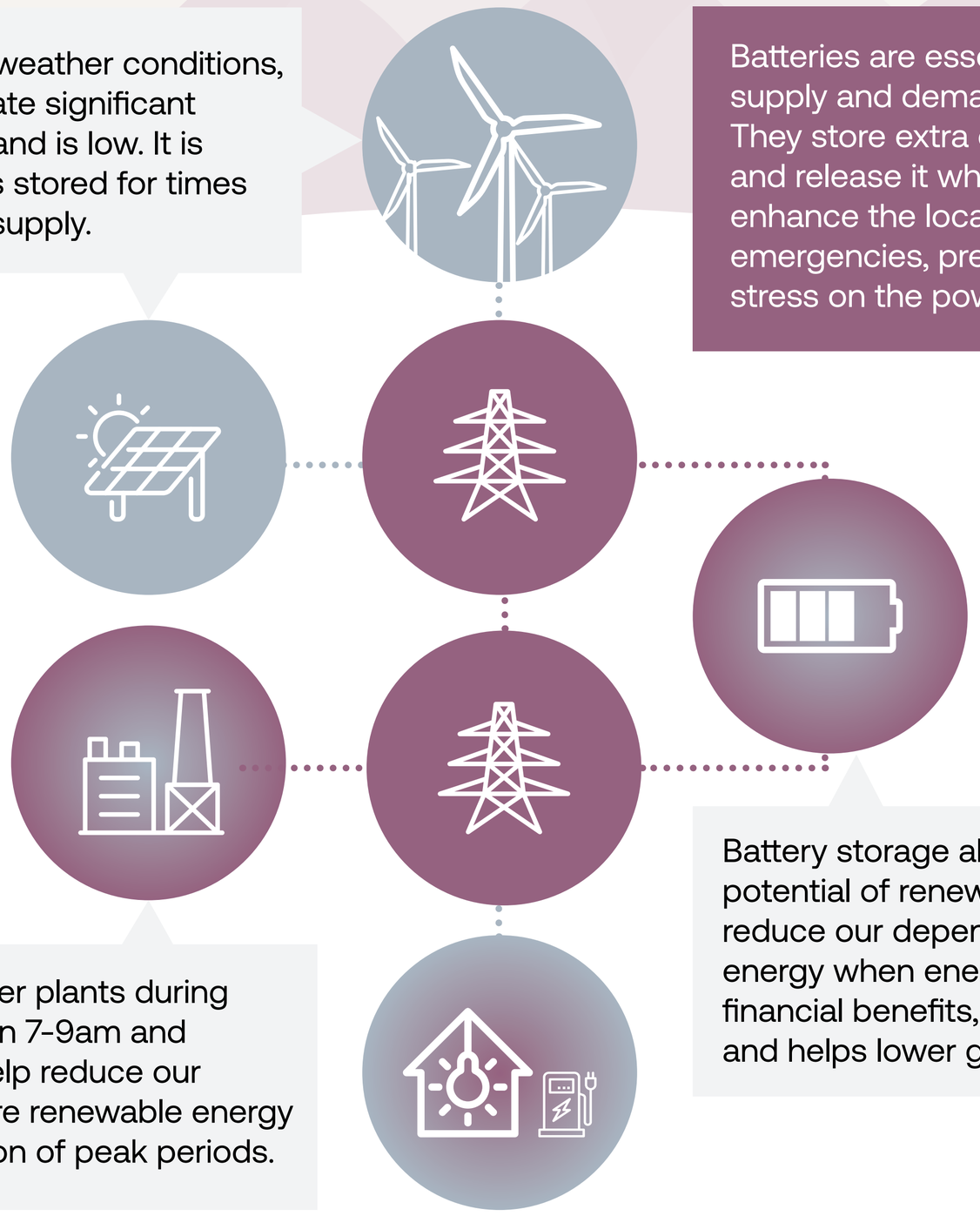
These batteries work a lot like the batteries you use at home, only instead of using our batteries to power a torch or TV remote, we operate large, 'grid scale' batteries.

This means we can rely more on renewable energy and less on expensive fossil fuels to provide electricity to thousands of homes and businesses.

Batteries are also very good at keeping the grid stable, by maintaining a constant and predictable supply of electricity to the grid, at the right frequency.

Changes in the supply and demand of electricity on the network create changes in this electrical frequency. This needs to be closely monitored, as if frequency is too high or too low, the network can't operate properly. Field Spittal will help to keep this frequency at the right level, which in turn helps reduce the chances of network disruptions or blackouts.

Wind and solar energy rely on weather conditions, meaning they can often generate significant amounts of energy when demand is low. It is important this excess energy is stored for times when demand is greater than supply.



Batteries are essential for managing energy supply and demand throughout the day. They store extra energy when demand is low and release it when demand is high. They enhance the local power grid's stability during emergencies, preventing blackouts and reducing stress on the power infrastructure.

We currently turn on gas power plants during peak periods such as between 7-9am and 6-8pm. Battery storage will help reduce our reliance on gas power, as more renewable energy can be stored up in anticipation of peak periods.

Battery storage allows us to maximise the potential of renewable energy sources and reduce our dependence on fossil fuel based energy when energy demand is highest. This has financial benefits, such as reducing energy costs, and helps lower greenhouse gas emissions.

WORKING WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Our batteries will provide huge benefits to the UK, and we take great care to make sure this is not to the detriment of the communities that host them.

As a responsible developer and operator, listening to local communities matters to us, as it allows us to understand and respond to local issues, and ultimately build better battery sites.

We engage early with communities throughout the development process, oversee the construction on-site and we're responsible for the project once it's in operation. We're part of communities for the long-term.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Field is working with the National Schools Partnership (NSP)* to design a community-based education programme which invites and equips young people to explore the diverse range of careers that exist within the renewable energy sector.

The programme is currently in development and will be initially rolled out to local schools surrounding Field Spittal.

WHY WE'RE DOING IT

The Highland Council recognises that the renewable energy industry is a future growth sector for the Highlands and offers significant local employment opportunities.**

With 65% of young people stating that they don't understand the skills employers need***, Field recognises that educators need support to prepare young people for the jobs of the future.

Field aims to support educators by providing key insights about the diverse types of jobs that exist, the education or training required, and the steps that young people can take to pursue local careers in the renewable energy industry.

WHEN WILL IT LAUNCH?

The programme will launch across several pilot catchment areas across the Highlands at the end of August, for the start of the new academic term. Depending on feedback, the programme could be rolled out in other areas.

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* The National Schools Partnership is an education network (run by the Brand and Social Impact Agency, We Are Futures) providing free teaching resources to schools across the UK.

** Developing a Strategy to Enable a Future Workforce – A Strong and Fair Economy for all, The Highland Council (2023)

*** Youth Voice Census Report (2022)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When will Field Spittal be built?
We will be submitting our planning application to the Energy Consents Unit in Summer 2024. If we are granted consent, we would look to start construction in 2027 and it will take about two years to complete.

How will our local community benefit?
We're currently working with the National Schools Partnership* to deliver a community-based programme in local schools to help educate students about the work that Field is undertaking in renewable energy and energy storage, as well as encouraging and equipping young people to explore careers in STEM and renewable energy. The Field team will work with local schools to provide information to students about how to build a career in the renewable energy sector.

Are battery energy storage sites noisy?
The main noise associated with batteries are the cooling fans, which keep the batteries from overheating. This noise level is low and the batteries are not expected to be audible beyond the site boundary. Noise is measured against existing background noise levels and noise levels are required to meet the relevant British Standards and World Health Organisation Noise Guidelines.

We conduct thorough noise evaluations for each site and implement various noise mitigation measures in our project plans. These measures, such as acoustic fencing and bunding, ensure that noise impacts are acceptable at nearby sensitive locations.

Will the project impact nearby heritage assets?
St Magnus' Church, Hospital and Burial Ground is located approximately 130 m south of our proposed batteries. Whilst we won't directly impact the protected site, we're working closely with Historic Environment Scotland to reduce potential impacts on the monument's setting. This includes the use of earth bunds which would match the surrounding topography and reduce visual impacts from the monument and the A9 towards our site.

We appreciate the importance of this heritage asset and we're open to thoughts or suggestions about how its setting can be protected.

Will the project impact trees or ecology?
Tree and hedgerow removal will be avoided where possible. We also carry out full ecological surveys to identify any potential ecological impacts, and we provide biodiversity enhancements to compensate for any impacts that do occur.

This is typically through the planting of native species as part of our landscaping, which will also help to minimise any potential visual impacts.

Will the project impact local traffic?
Once operational, the battery will have minimal impact on local traffic, with only occasional visits required for maintenance.

When the battery is being built, construction traffic is managed through a Construction Traffic Management Plan. This will include details of construction traffic numbers, vehicle routing and working hours. As with all aspects of the development, we welcome input from the local community to help reduce any impact on local roads where possible.

Will the project cause flooding or impact drains?
Because our projects contain electrically sensitive equipment, flood risk is a key consideration during site selection and project design. We carry out detailed flood modelling to ensure equipment is located outside or above any modelled flood depths, which also ensures there is no increase to flood risk on or off-site.

We'll also build appropriate drainage infrastructure to ensure surface water run-off remains at an acceptable level. These will include rural sustainable drainage solutions, such as swales, which can collect and discharge water into existing drains at the right rate.

Are the batteries safe and what safety measures will you put in place?
Large batteries are safe facilities. We work hard throughout site design, construction and into operation to ensure the safety of our sites. We would only use batteries that have best-in-class fire safety performance and will be compliant with all relevant fire safety standards.

The batteries will be constantly monitored and in the unlikely event that a fire does occur, the facility will employ automatic fire detection and suppression systems.

We are also working with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to ensure suitable emergency response procedures are in place, including a Battery Fire Safety Management Plan.

To keep our sites secure, all our projects include perimeter fencing and gated access. During operation, our sites are unmanned and CCTV is used to monitor activities.

*National Schools Partnership is a unique education network (run by the Brand and Social Impact Agency, We Are Futures) providing free teaching resources to schools across the whole of the UK.

PLANNING APPLICATION

To support our planning application, we are proposing to submit the following documents and assessments:

- Ecology Statement
- Ground Condition Risk Assessment
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- Flood Risk Assessment / Drainage Strategy
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Statement
- Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan
- Outline Battery Safety Management Plan
- Socio-Economic Benefits Assessment
- Design Statement
- Planning / Sustainable Place Statement
- Pre-application Consultation Report.

Following submission, these documents will be available to the public via the Energy Consents Unit's website.

Please note that comments made during this pre-application consultation phase are not representations to the Scottish Ministers. Following submission of the planning application to the Energy Consents Unit, there will be an opportunity to make representations directly to the Scottish Ministers.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

We're holding a second consultation event at Spittal Village Hall on 30 May 2024. We'll continue accepting feedback via post or email until 7 June 2024.

We'll then integrate your feedback into the final planning application and submit this to the Energy Consents Unit in Summer 2024.

After it's submitted, you will have the opportunity to make a representation about the application to the Scottish Ministers, via the Energy Consents Unit.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

For more information, please visit our website at **www.fieldspittal.co.uk**

If you have any questions or you'd like to provide comments, please do not hesitate to email us at **feedback@spittal.co.uk**.

Appendix H – Public consultation event 2 display boards

Display boards at the second public consultation event included a range of previous boards from the first event, new boards, and boards that were replaced to reflect updated information. New and replaced boards are highlighted as follows:

- New boards include a **red** border; and
- Replaced boards include a **blue** border.

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FIELD SPITTAL

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We'll also provide landscaping to reduce visual impacts and we'll provide biodiversity enhancements to ensure we are having a positive ecological effect on the land we use.

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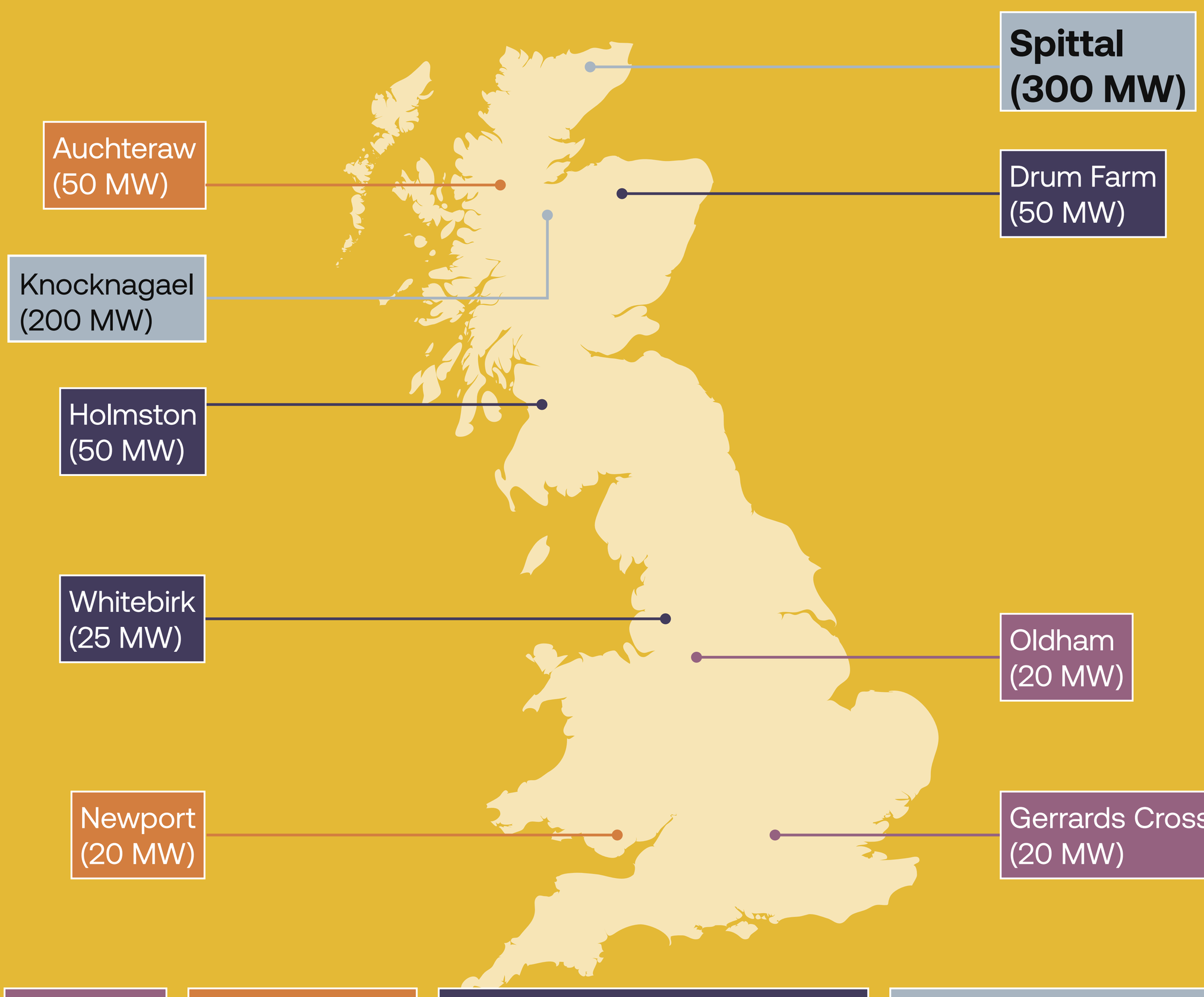
We value ongoing engagement with our communities to understand and respond to local perspectives and concerns and will work with local communities throughout every stage of the project.

Field Spittal would form part of Field's extensive portfolio of battery projects across the UK and Europe. In the UK, we have several projects at varying stages of development:



FIELD

FIELD SPITTAL BATTERY STORAGE

STORING ENERGY IN THE HIGHLANDS

Scotland has set a target to become net zero by 2045.* Batteries enable much greater use of renewable energy, and therefore play an important role in helping Scotland reach net zero.

Batteries are a vital part of how we can make the most of renewable energy, which is why we believe that they can play a part in Highland Council's "Future Highland" Programme. The Highland Council stated in their Net Zero Strategy (2023) that:

"The Council's "Future Highland" Programme sets out a vision of Highland, a centre for global renewable energy, by capitalising on our areas of immense natural capital to deliver alternative energy solutions including developing solar, hydrogen, Hydro, wind and wave solutions."

*https://www.gov.scot/policies/climate-change

OUR OTHER BATTERY SITES

Field's experienced team manages each battery storage project's full lifecycle. With projects going through every stage of development and operation, we apply learnings and best practices across our portfolio to ensure reliable, safe and sustainable facilities. A brief overview of three of these sites is included below:

Field Auchteraw

50 MW, near Fort Augustus

In construction

Field Auchteraw will be capable of producing up to 50 MW of electricity once operational. Located near Fort Augustus, Field is continuing to work closely with The Highland Council, with the project expected to start operating in late-2024.

The project demonstrates Field's expertise in developing battery storage on greenfield sites while prioritising landscaping and biodiversity measures to complement the surrounding environment. We've worked closely with the local community to manage traffic impacts; including implementing a one-way system for construction traffic to half the number of construction vehicles on a sensitive local road in response to concerns raised by the community.

Field Oldham

20 MW, near Manchester

Operational

Field Oldham started operating in 2022 and can produce up to 20 MW of electricity. The site is located in a warehouse in the Greater Manchester region.

Field Gerrards Cross

20 MW, Buckinghamshire

Operational

Field Gerrards Cross started operating in April 2024 and can produce up to 20 MW of electricity. The site occupies an existing industrial site alongside an operating water treatment plant.

With automated systems, industry-leading safety protocols, and 24/7 remote monitoring in place, Field Gerrards Cross and Field Oldham highlight our commitment to safe, responsible operations.

HOW WE'LL MANAGE THE CONSTRUCTION PROCESS

The construction of Field Spittal will involve careful planning and management to minimise disruption to local communities and roads.

Before we start building, we'll develop detailed management plans and agree these with The Highland Council to ensure works are carried out responsibly, and all impacts are reduced as much as possible.

Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP):

Our CEMP will set out procedures and mitigation measures to manage and monitor environmental impacts during construction such as:

- Noise, dust and vibration controls
- Measures to prevent mud on roads
- Waste management and recycling
- Pollution prevention guidance
- Ecological protection.

We'll work closely with The Highland Council and other stakeholders to agree the detailed CEMP requirements.

Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP):

Our CTMP will be implemented to effectively manage all construction traffic to and from the site, including:

- Agreed routes for construction vehicles to avoid sensitive areas;
- Agreed construction working hours;
- Details of any road upgradeor widening works if required;
- A procedure for monitoring road conditions and remediation works if required;
- Measures to encourage worker vehicles to avoid peak times or vehicle share where possible;
- Contact details to raise any road safety issues;
- Liaison with Transport Scotland for connecting the proposed new access onto the A9, minimising disruption to road users while safely constructing the works; and
- Coordination with any other planned developments in the area to manage cumulative traffic impacts

FIRE SAFETY MANAGEMENT

Safety is our top priority. We take a comprehensive approach to fire risk management through careful design, operating procedures, and emergency planning.

Battery Design and Safety Systems

- Batteries must be compliant with all relevant fire codes and safety standards, and we'll only use batteries with the highest fire safety ratings and performance will be used.
- Battery containers are fitted with early fault and fire detection technology, internal fire suppression systems, and reinforced casing to ensure fires do not spread to other units.
- Appropriate separation distances are provided between battery strings, access roads, and surrounding properties to ensure firebreaks are in place.

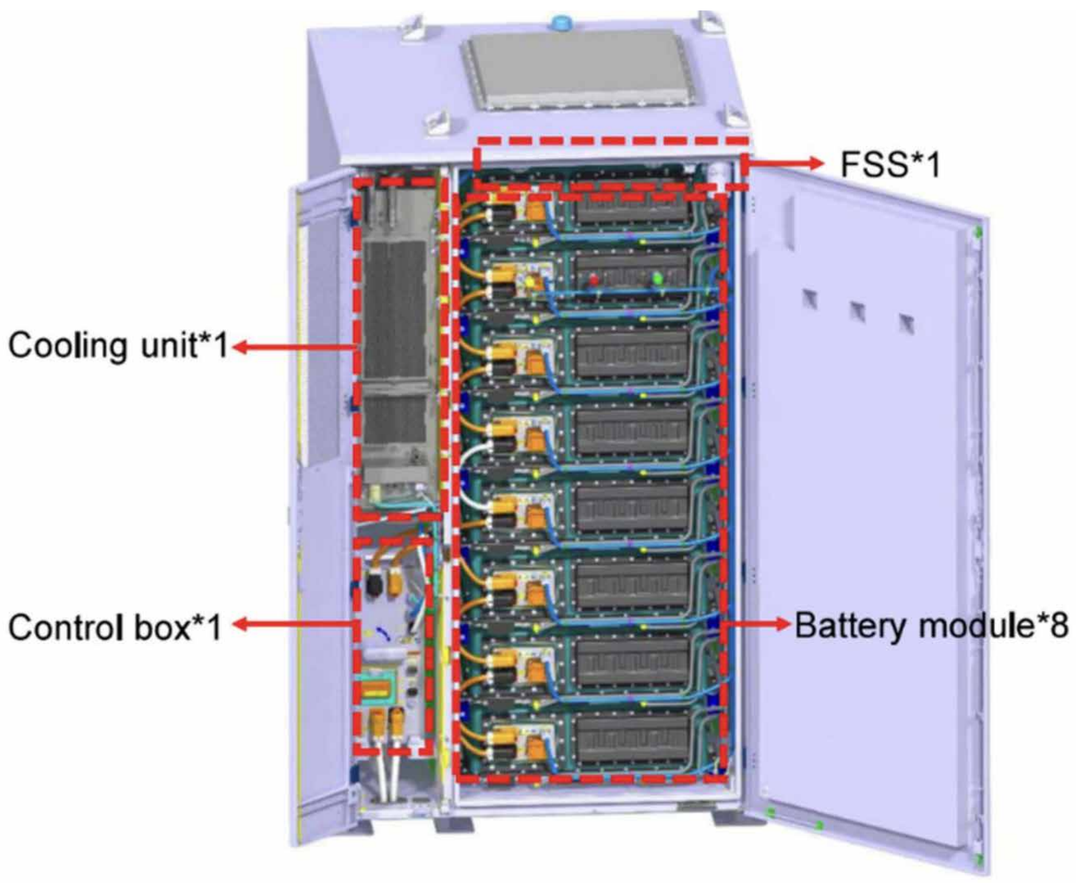
Emergency Planning and Response

- A detailed Battery Safety Management Plan is being developed, which will be agreed with relevant authorities before the project starts operating. This identifies potential hazards and associated safety mechanisms for the long-term operation of the Project.
- Field is continuing to engage with the National Fire Chiefs Council and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service across our portfolio of projects, including regular on-site consultations and site familiarisation visits. An Emergency Response Plan will be prepared in consultation with the Fire and Rescue Service for use in the unlikely event that there is an emergency on site.

Construction & Operation Oversight

- 24-hour surveillance and fault detection systems will ensure any faults are identified, isolated and responded to as quickly as possible, including de-energisation when necessary.
- Field will undertake routine site inspections, maintenance and testing throughout the life of the project.

Field is committed to implementing industry best practices and working closely with fire authorities to ensure the safety of our facilities, our staff, and local communities. We welcome any further inputs as we finalise the fire safety approach for Field Spittal.



WHAT OUR BATTERIES WILL LOOK LIKE

Our battery units will be housed in secure cabinets, similar to those shown in the images below, which were taken at our Field Newport site. These allow for a modular design where individual battery racks can easily accessed during routine inspections and maintenance.

Field Spittal will comprise multiple battery cabinets arranged in rows, known as ‘strings’. These will be connected via underground cables to other important electrical infrastructure like transformers, an on-site substation, and underground cabling to the main grid connection point at the existing Spittal converter station.

To reduce visual impacts of the proposal, the batteries will be set back from the A9 and properties as much as possible. Earthworks and native landscaping will also be incorporated to help screen and soften views of the site.

The visualisation shows how Field Spittal storage could look from surrounding viewpoints, once operational. While the infrastructure will be visible, our design aims to minimise impacts on the local landscape as much as possible.

PHOTOMONTAGES

View looking west from the A9 road heading northbound

Photomontage view looking west from the A9 road heading northbound at Year 1

View looking north from Scheduled Monument St Magnus's Hospital & Chapel

Photomontage view looking north from Scheduled Monument St Magnus's Hospital & Chapel at Year 1

WHY DO WE NEED BIG BATTERIES?

To reach net zero, increase energy security and help reduce energy bills, we need to store renewable energy and improve the electricity grid's stability and reliability.

Our batteries are designed to fill gaps in the UK's electricity supply by charging up when renewable energy is being produced (such as on windy or sunny days) and discharging energy back into the grid when needed (e.g. when the wind isn't blowing, the sun isn't shining, or we aren't able to import enough energy from elsewhere).This ensures plenty of energy is available for people to make their morning cuppa, even on a calm, overcast winter's day.

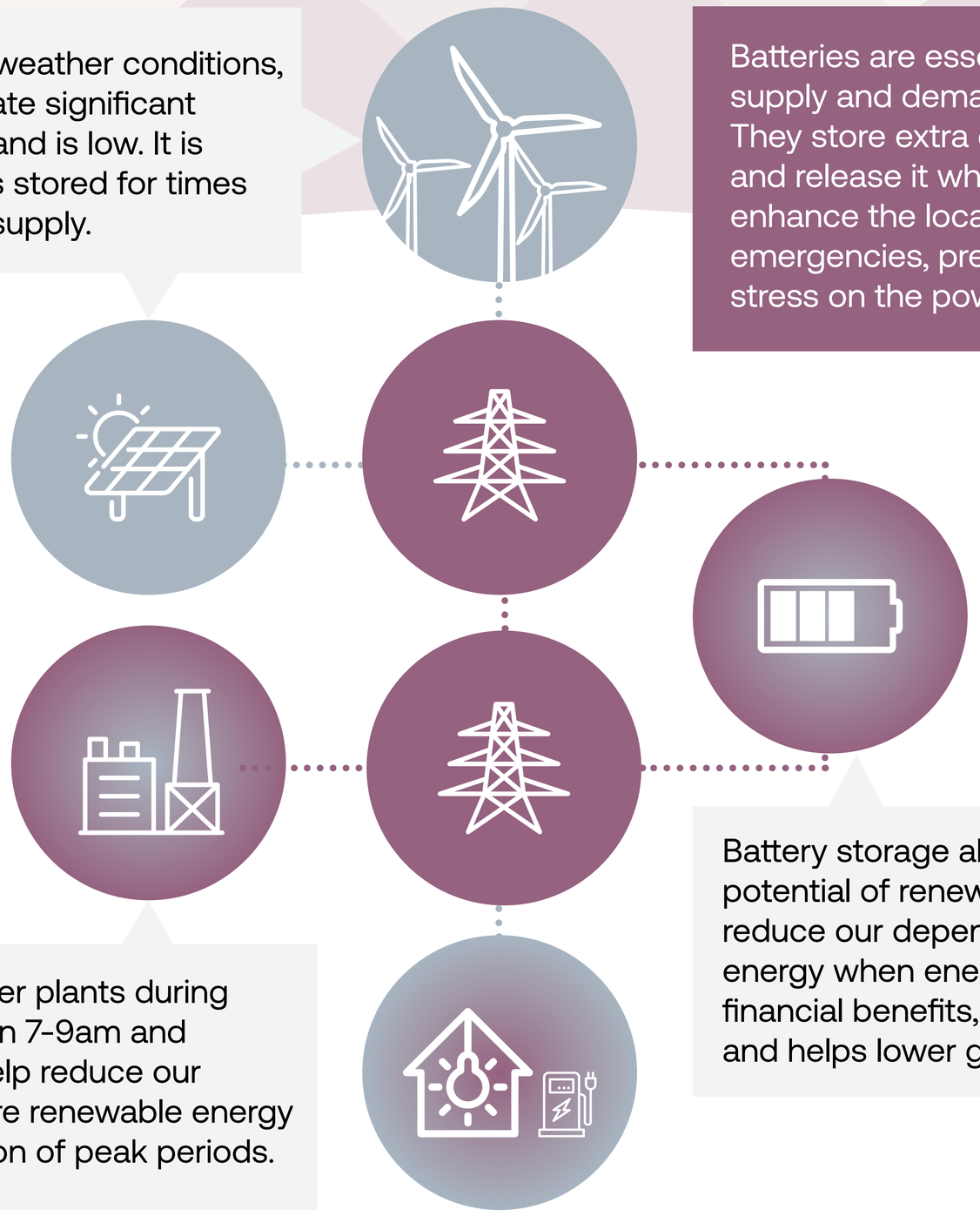
These batteries work a lot like the batteries you use at home, only instead of using our batteries to power a torch or TV remote, we operate large, 'grid scale' batteries.

This means we can rely more on renewable energy and less on expensive fossil fuels to provide electricity to thousands of homes and businesses.

Batteries are also very good at keeping the grid stable, by maintaining a constant and predictable supply of electricity to the grid, at the right frequency.

Changes in the supply and demand of electricity on the network create changes in this electrical frequency. This needs to be closely monitored, as if frequency is too high or too low, the network can't operate properly. Field Spittal will help to keep this frequency at the right level, which in turn helps reduce the chances of network disruptions or blackouts.

Wind and solar energy rely on weather conditions, meaning they can often generate significant amounts of energy when demand is low. It is important this excess energy is stored for times when demand is greater than supply.



Batteries are essential for managing energy supply and demand throughout the day. They store extra energy when demand is low and release it when demand is high. They enhance the local power grid's stability during emergencies, preventing blackouts and reducing stress on the power infrastructure.

We currently turn on gas power plants during peak periods such as between 7-9am and 6-8pm. Battery storage will help reduce our reliance on gas power, as more renewable energy can be stored up in anticipation of peak periods.

Battery storage allows us to maximise the potential of renewable energy sources and reduce our dependence on fossil fuel based energy when energy demand is highest. This has financial benefits, such as reducing energy costs, and helps lower greenhouse gas emissions.

WORKING WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Our batteries will provide huge benefits to the UK, and we take great care to make sure this is not to the detriment of the communities that host them.

As a responsible developer and operator, listening to local communities matters to us, as it allows us to understand and respond to local issues, and ultimately build better battery sites.

We engage early with communities throughout the development process, oversee the construction on-site and we're responsible for the project once it's in operation. We're part of communities for the long-term.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Field is working with the National Schools Partnership (NSP)* to design a community-based education programme which invites and equips young people to explore the diverse range of careers that exist within the renewable energy sector.

The programme is currently in development and will be initially rolled out to local schools surrounding Field Spittal.

WHY WE'RE DOING IT

The Highland Council recognises that the renewable energy industry is a future growth sector for the Highlands and offers significant local employment opportunities.**

With 65% of young people stating that they don't understand the skills employers need***, Field recognises that educators need support to prepare young people for the jobs of the future.

Field aims to support educators by providing key insights about the diverse types of jobs that exist, the education or training required, and the steps that young people can take to pursue local careers in the renewable energy industry.

WHEN WILL IT LAUNCH?

The programme will launch across several pilot catchment areas across the Highlands at the end of August, for the start of the new academic term. Depending on feedback, the programme could be rolled out in other areas.

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* The National Schools Partnership is an education network (run by the Brand and Social Impact Agency, We Are Futures) providing free teaching resources to schools across the UK.

** Developing a Strategy to Enable a Future Workforce – A Strong and Fair Economy for all, The Highland Council (2023)

*** Youth Voice Census Report (2022)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When will Field Spittal be built?
We'll be submitting our planning application to the Energy Consents Unit in Summer 2024. If we are granted consent, we would look to start construction in 2027 and it will take about two years to complete.

How will our local community benefit?
We're currently working with the National Schools Partnership* to deliver a community-based programme in local schools to encourage and equip young people to explore careers in STEM and renewable energy. Field will work with local schools to provide information to students about how to build a career in the renewable energy sector.

Will the project impact nearby heritage assets?
St Magnus' Church, Hospital and Burial Ground is located approximately 130 m south of our proposed batteries. Whilst we won't directly impact the protected site, we're working closely with Historic Environment Scotland to reduce potential impacts on the monument's setting. This includes the use of earth bunds which would match the surrounding topography and reduce visual impacts from the monument and the A9 towards our site.

We appreciate the importance of this heritage asset and we're open to thoughts or suggestions about how its setting can be protected.

Will the project impact trees or ecology?
We carry out full ecological surveys to identify any potential ecological impacts, and we provide biodiversity enhancements to compensate for any impacts that do occur. This is typically through the planting of native species as part of our landscaping, which will also help to minimise any potential visual impacts.

Will the project cause flooding or impact drains?
Because our projects contain electrically sensitive equipment, flood risk is a key consideration during site selection and project design. We carry out detailed flood modelling to ensure equipment is located outside or above any modelled flood depths, which also ensures there is no increase to flood risk on or off-site.

Existing flood risk at this site is low. We design andbuild appropriate drainage infrastructure to ensure surface water run-off remains at an acceptable level and does not increase the risk of flooding. These will include rural sustainable drainage solutions, such as swales, which can collect and discharge water into existing drainsat no greater rate than the current greenfield situation. Our flood risk assessment and drainage strategy will consider any consequential impact On nearby areas prone to flooding to ensure the development does not worsen any areas susceptible to flooding locally.

How are cumulative impacts assessed with other developments in the area?
We are aware of several other developments proposed in the surrounding area. We are working with other developers where possible to ensure that cumulative impacts, particularly in relation to noise, traffic and visual impacts, are appropriately managed. The final details of these mitigation measures will be agreed before construction starts, when the exact timelines for all projects are known. We welcome any feedback or knowledge from the local community about other proposals you are aware of, so that we can ensure these are appropriately considered.

Are the batteries safe?
Grid-scale batteries are safe facilities. We work hard throughout site design, construction and into operation to ensure the safety of our sites. We only use batteries that have best-in-class fire safety performance and will be compliant with all relevant fire safety standards.

The batteries will be constantly monitored and in the unlikely event that a fire does occur, the facility will employ automatic fire detection and suppression systems.

We're also working with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to ensure suitable emergency response procedures are in place, including a Battery Safety Management Plan.

*National Schools Partnership is a unique education network (run by the Brand and Social Impact Agency, We Are Futures) providing free teaching resources to schools across the whole of the UK.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How will the site security be managed?
The security and safety of our battery storage facilities is extremely important. Field Spittal will have robust security measures in place, including:

- Perimeter fencing and secure gated access to prevent unauthorized entry
- 24/7 CCTV monitoring of the site
- Appropriate security lighting to aid CCTV coverage
- Routine inspections and maintenance by Field's operational staff.

How will noise impacts be assessed and managed?
Noise impacts are an important consideration for any new development. For Field Spittal, we have carried out baseline noise surveys to understand the existing background noise conditions around the site. We'll carry out a detailed noise assessment to model the predicted noise levels from the operational battery equipment against existing background levels.

This assessment will identify any potential noise impacts on nearby noise-sensitive receptors like homes. Where potential impacts are identified, we'll incorporate mitigation measures into the design, such as acoustic fencing, earth bunding, and careful orientation of equipment, to ensure operational noise meets relevant regulations.

During construction, noise will also be carefully managed and monitored through our Construction Environmental Management Plan to minimise temporary disturbances to local communities.

How does this help Scotland's energy security?
Scotland has set an ambitious target of becoming net zero by 2045. Achieving this will require a massive increase in renewable energy generation and widespread electrification of transport and heating.

However, this transition also creates challenges around managing Scotland's energy security and resilience as we need more electricity and become more reliant on weather dependent renewable resources like wind and solar power.

Projects like Field Spittal act as giant electric reservoirs, charging up when renewable energy is being produced, ensuring a steady supply of electricity, regardless of the variable renewable conditions. They allow more renewable energy to be used and reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

By storing the abundant Scottish renewable energy for when it's needed, batteries will play a vital role in keeping the lights on across the country as we decarbonise towards a net-zero future.

Why do we need batteries in this area?
The Highlands has an abundance of renewable energy resources like wind, hydro and tidal power.

Locating the batteries in close proximity to the Highlands' renewable assets like wind farms ensures this stored energy can be utilised as efficiently as possible, with minimal transmission losses.

At a local level, we've selected a site as close as possible to the existing Spittal converter station, which prevents the need for unnecessarily long and intrusive grid connection cables or overhead lines.

Will the project impact local traffic?
Once operational, the battery will have minimal impact on local traffic, with only occasional visits required for maintenance.

When the battery is being built, construction traffic is managed through a Construction Traffic Management Plan. This will include details of construction traffic numbers, vehicle routing and working hours.

As with all aspects of the development, we welcome input from the local community to help reduce any impact on local roads where possible.

INDICATIVE TIMELINE

Early 2024

Early environmental assessments and design work

2 May 2024

Public consultation event 1

May 2024

Ongoing detailed environmental assessments and design updates based on stakeholder feedback

30 May 2024

Public consultation event 2

June 2024

Final design updates based on assessments and stakeholder feedback

Summer 2024

Submission of planning application

Early 2025

Determination of planning application

2027 onwards

Construction and operation

PLANNING APPLICATION

To support our planning application, we are proposing to submit the following documents and assessments:

- Ecology Statement
- Ground Condition Risk Assessment
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- Flood Risk Assessment / Drainage Strategy
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Statement
- Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan
- Outline Battery Safety Management Plan
- Socio-Economic Benefits Assessment
- Design Statement
- Planning / Sustainable Place Statement
- Pre-application Consultation Report.

Following submission, these documents will be available to the public via the Energy Consents Unit's website.

Please note that comments made during this pre-application consultation phase are not representations to the Scottish Ministers. Following submission of the planning application to the Energy Consents Unit, there will be an opportunity to make representations directly to the Scottish Ministers.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

We're holding a second consultation event at Spittal Village Hall on 30 May 2024. We'll continue accepting feedback via post or email until 7 June 2024.

We'll then integrate your feedback into the final planning application and submit this to the Energy Consents Unit in Summer 2024.

After it's submitted, you will have the opportunity to make a representation about the application to the Scottish Ministers, via the Energy Consents Unit.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

For more information, please visit our website at **www.fieldspittal.co.uk**

If you have any questions or you'd like to provide comments, please do not hesitate to email us at **feedback@spittal.co.uk**.

Appendix I – Public consultation responses received via feedback forms

Table I.1: Copy of responses received via feedback forms

Feedback form
First consultation
More work to destroy countryside No local jobs Dangerous - no local appropriate fire fighting equipment, fire fighters are retained
No details of battery chemistry has been provided, I assume it is lithium style battery which are notorious for thermal runaway events, which could cause a major fire. I am all for renewable energy in my local area, but only the cheaper and safer variety such as sodium based battery chemistry, described as "ultra-safe" by AMTE Power Thurso, or flow batteries such as ESS Inc Iron Flow or vanadium flow
In the past year I have received several 'battery storage' and 'wind farm' proposal for my surrounding area from different energy firms. Stop using the very north of Scotland as a dumping ground for your battery storage farms and wind farms!!
Does not provide local jobs for local people / long term Does not contribute to local economy / long term Adds more pressure on our crumbling local roads, locals have to look and suffer this development with no benefits, we have the highest electricity charges in the country in Caithness
Second consultation
The fire risk, even with your proposal "safety measures", do not fully remove the chance of this occurring, these projects should not be constructed in close proximity to homes, as per your plan, especially for this reason. This project also does not create local long term employment. Our country is being blighted my all these renewable projects, especially this area with this latest money spinning subsidy of battery storage, to no benefit to the locals, its getting out of hand!
Fire risk is a concern. Very uncertain on traffic plans, whether it will be 200 MW or 300 MW. Pictures of what can be seen was wrong. Too much infrastructure going into this area.
Spittal has plenty of proposals of up and coming more pylons. Windmills and storage sites we need to be left alone and things should go more where its needed. I know its cheaper to get land and people don't count but we live here and want to stay but your all trying to shift us out. So please think about us.
Before reading the brochure I felt that battery storage was, in principle, a good idea. Now I am not so sure. Although it would be temporary, the idea of the increased number of heavy lorries, and their effect on our already crumbling roads, is horrific, judging from what already happens with lorries along our road. The only "benefit" to the community appears to be the brainwashing local school children - and there is no school in Spittal anyway.