

## Views of the Applicant/Agent

### 07 November 2024

I understand from our conversation last week that you are now working on your committee report for this application.

I wanted to share one final item of information in light of the Community Council's comments dated 07 October which the applicant's team received on 04 November. You may have seen it already but if not it will do no harm to share it.

In his email to you on Tuesday 05 November Point and Sandwick Trust project manager Calum MacDonald referred to the battery project in Lerwick, Shetland, which was consented earlier this year. The file can be viewed [here](#). On the question of safety the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit concluded in their decision notice:

*"52. Lerwick Community Council and multiple representations from the public raised their concerns about the risk of a fire and / or the potential impacts of wind-blown smoke and gases. Scottish Ministers recognise the importance of fire safety and note that the Company will be required to comply with various laws and regulations regarding fire safety. Fire precautions and matters relating to health and safety are covered by other legislation, are regulated by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), and such considerations are not material to the application."*

Nevertheless, for the Stornoway project the applicant and The Greenspan Agency have provided the report 'Battery Health and Safety Statement' dated 06 Sept 2024, and expressed a commitment to work closely with the Fire Service in the long term. On 30 October and 04 November I was in contact with the local Western Isles team of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. The applicant will work with the Fire Service during the detailed design, construction, and operational phases to share all relevant information with them and is committed to accepting the recommendations made by the Fire Service.

The applicant will also continue to work with the Newton Residents Association in the design of the project, including the offer to provide the Newton community part ownership of the project at no cost.

Obviously, I hope the application will be recommended for approval at the planning board meeting of Tuesday 03 December. The many great benefits of the project have been set out in reports previously submitted with the application. The project is appropriately sited on brownfield, marginal land adjacent to the energy infrastructure of Battery Point diesel generating station and electricity substation; it will play a crucial role in supporting the stability and security of electricity supply to the Western Isles; it will increase the utilisation of renewable electricity during islanded periods, and; it will remain in community ownership with profits being reinvested locally for the benefit of the people of the Western Isles.

Thank you for your expert and courteous advice on this application which I am sure all those involved appreciate whatever their views on the project itself.

### 05 November 2024

We are grateful for your patience in dealing with our battery application over the past months and we would like to make some final comments if possible.

Perhaps the best way of explaining the purpose and location of our proposed battery is that it is very similar to the battery in Lerwick in Shetland which was consented recently. That is, it will provide stability services to the island grid, enable more output from all the community wind farms, and provide a 'blackstart' service that will work with the power station to restore the grid in microseconds if there are any unplanned outages.

Like the Lerwick battery, our battery is also located beside the power station as that will enable it to provide these services more effectively. The objection that was made by Lerwick Community Council to the Lerwick battery is also similar to our situation, of course, and we accept that the questions posed by Stornoway Community Council are reasonable ones for community councils to put forward and we would be happy to comply with the various planning conditions that they have proposed.

We would like to stress that our application is not "speculative", however. On the contrary, it has been worked on since the failure of the cable to Skye in 2020 which shut down all the community wind farms on the island for 11 months. The insurance companies, which came to the rescue then, no longer provide cover for such events so our proposed battery is the only protection that local community wind farms will have in the future. We would also like to point out that the battery cannot be moved to an alternative location without a new grid connection being obtained and, as the Council knows, there is now no space left on the grid to allow that.

Finally, it is worth saying that our battery proposal does differ from Lerwick in two significant ways. First, ours is substantially smaller (25MW versus 75MW) and, second, our battery is community-owned and therefore the benefit will be retained in the community. For example, we have offered to pay the Newton Residents Association an annual 'rent' equivalent to the rent we will be paying to the landlord and we have also proposed a share in the ownership of the battery at no cost, should they wish to do so.