

**1. Introduction**

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Purpose of this Environmental Report

- 1.1.1. This Environmental Report has been prepared to accompany the application by Boralex ('the Applicant') to construct and operate a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) with an output of up to 36 megawatts (MW) on land west of Corriemoillie Substation, Lochluichart, Garve, Highlands (hereafter referred to as the 'Site'). The project is known as Lochluichart East Battery Energy Storage System (hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development').
- 1.1.2. As the Proposed Development exceeds 20 MW, the Applicant has submitted a 'major development' planning application to The Highland Council, which will be determined under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended).
- 1.1.3. In March 2025, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening request was submitted to Highland Council to establish whether a formal EIA was required for the scheme. In April 2025, the planning authority issued a formal EIA screening opinion which confirmed that an EIA was not required.
- 1.1.4. This Environmental Report addresses several topics typically included in an EIA Report. However, the assessment methodology used differs from that required for an EIA, and importantly this report and the application is not subject to the EIA regulations.

### 1.2. The Applicant

- 1.2.1. Boralex has been providing renewable energy for over 30 years as a developer, builder, owner and operator of hydro, onshore wind, solar PV and battery storage. A market leader in Canada and the largest independent producer of onshore wind power in France, Boralex also has an active presence in the United States and the United Kingdom (UK). In the UK, Boralex is progressing towards the delivery of a wind and battery storage asset portfolio of 1 GW by 2030, i.e. ready-to-build and operational. This ambition represents inward investment of approximately £ 1bn, mainly in Scotland.
- 1.2.2. Over the past five years, Boralex's total installed capacity has more than doubled to over 3 GW worldwide. The development portfolio comprises over 6 GW in wind, solar projects and storage projects. Boralex's shares are listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange under the ticker symbol BLX. Further information can be found at [www.boralex.com](http://www.boralex.com).

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### 1.3. Site Description

- 1.3.1. The Site is located north of the A832 at Lochluichart, approximately 5 kilometres (km) northwest of Garve in the Highlands. The overall Site area comprises approximately 19.5 hectares (ha) of planted forestry, semi-natural woodland, an existing forestry track and areas of open ground.
- 1.3.2. The Application Site includes an existing forestry track, which runs adjacent to the western Site boundary and this will be utilised for access from the A832. Within the Site, a short stretch of new track (approximately 400 m) is proposed to connect the existing forestry track to the BESS platform. An underground cable is also proposed to connect the BESS to Corriemoillie Substation.
- 1.3.3. The Site is rural in nature with a small number of neighbouring residential properties within the local area. The nearest of these dwellings exist along the A832, approximately 0.8 km to the southeast and 0.9 km to the west of the Proposed Development. There are no designated ecological sites present within the Site boundary. There are no National, European and International designated sites for nature conservation within the vicinity of the Site. Close to the Site access junction are a number of warehouse buildings that are used by the nearby shooting estate and some of the land close by is used for game shooting, target practice and the rearing of pheasants.
- 1.3.4. The surrounding landscape consists of various grasslands, both planted forestry and semi-natural woodland in addition to the remote upland landscape typical of the Highlands. The Site is located on a pronounced slope, where elevation ranges from 123 m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) at the Site entrance in the south to 190 m AOD in the north. The BESS compound is positioned at approximately 167 m AOD. Corriemoillie Substation lies approximately 250 m to the east at an elevation of 142 m AOD and Loch Luichart lies approximately 300 m to the south of the site at 87 m AOD.

### 1.4. Overview of the Proposed Development

- 1.4.1. The main components of the Proposed Development are:
- Up to 55 battery storage containers approximately 6.0 m long, 2.5 m wide and 3.0 m high;
  - Power Conversion Units (PCS's) service each group of battery units, typically 6.1 m long, 2.5 m wide and 2.9 m high;
  - Control and switchgear building;
  - MV / LV auxiliary transformer;
  - Underground cable connection to Corriemoillie 132 kV Substation;
  - Spare parts containers;

- Office / welfare facilities;
- Fire suppression systems / water storage tanks comprising 2 x 230,000 litre tanks and one additional empty tank to serve as containment for any water runoff from bunded areas;
- Back-up generator;
- Palisade fencing typically 3 m high;
- CCTV cameras, motion activated lighting and fencing;
- Site access and internal access tracks;
- Biodiversity mitigation and enhancement;
- Drainage (including SuDS);
- Access track approximately 400 m in length and watercourse crossing;
- Temporary construction compound; and
- Maintenance vehicle parking.

1.4.2. The battery storage units would be located within a compound measuring approximately 115 m by 70 m which would be formed of crushed rock laid on permeable membranes. This area includes a potential future augmentation area which will be formed from crushed rock measuring approximately 50 m by 30 m.

1.4.3. The compound would be enclosed by a 3 m high palisade fencing. The CCTV cameras would be installed on the 3 m high palisade security fencing at each corner and at strategic intervals along the compound perimeter.

1.4.4. The maximum height of any structure within the BESS compound would be approximately 4 m. Lighting would be provided onsite including lighting to 4 m CCTV columns and units within the facility. The lighting would be motion sensor activated. Fire detection and suppression systems would also be installed within the facility.

## **1.5. Need for the Development**

1.5.1. The UK's energy network is undergoing a significant transition, comprising a reduced reliance on fossil fuel power plants as they reach the end of their operational lifecycles and an increasing reliance on renewable energy sources. National and international legislation and policies are in place and set an ambitious target to reduce Scotland's emissions of all greenhouse gases to net zero by 2045.

1.5.2. Battery projects located in areas where there is a large amount of renewable energy generators, play a vital role in decarbonising the energy sector whilst maintaining reliable energy security for consumers. Our current national grid has

located key generation assets (coal, gas, nuclear) and transmission cables to serve areas of high energy demand with commensurate supply. In contrast, renewable generation is located to maximise optimal weather conditions such as high wind locations in northern Scotland or in the North Sea.

- 1.5.3. As a result, we cannot get the power where we need it or maximise the use of our own renewable electricity generation. National Grid Electricity System Operator ('NGESO') currently pays renewable generators to turn off supply in Scotland, to prevent an overload of the system, and simultaneously instructs fast response generators (normally gas power plants) in areas of high consumption to switch on to balance supply and demand.
- 1.5.4. Batteries are essential in overcoming this challenge and play a vital role in ensuring the full benefits of existing and future renewable energy generation and the successful transition to a net-zero future. Batteries import large amounts of renewable energy from surrounding wind or solar farms when supply is typically at its highest and in excess of demand, storing it, and then exporting it back into the grid when demand is high, but supply is low. Given the direct connection to Corriemoillie Substation this provides stability to grid fluctuations in supply and demand.
- 1.5.5. In relation to energy security, the Proposed Development also has the potential to supply the grid with voltage support services during low voltage periods or blackouts by supplying the network with quickly dischargeable energy. As with periods of low renewable energy supply, these scenarios have typically been managed by reliance on dispatchable fossil fuel energy generators (typically gas peaking plants).
- 1.5.6. The operation of batteries such as the Proposed Development offers a sustainable alternative to carbon-intensive energy sources to supply and maintain the grid, which reduces the energy network's reliance on fossil fuels and ultimately contributes to achieving the UK and Scottish Governments' greenhouse gas emissions targets, whilst enabling enhanced energy security and reduced energy costs for consumers.

## 1.6. Structure of the Environmental Report

- 1.6.1. The Environmental Report comprises three parts:

- Volume 1 – Written Statement;
- Volume 2 – Figures and Visualisations; and
- Volume 3 – Technical Appendices.

- 1.6.2. The chapters of the report are organised as follows:

- **Chapter 1:** Introduction – provides background information about the applicant and an overview of the proposed Lochluichart East Battery Energy Storage System;
- **Chapter 2:** Site Description – provides a general description of the Application Site itself and its local environment. Further detail on the Site can also be found in the baseline sections of each topic chapter;
- **Chapter 3:** Description of the Proposed Development – provides details of each element of the Proposed Development and information on how the project will be constructed and operated;
- **Chapters 4 – 14:** Technical Chapters – each of these chapters provides a description of the baseline environmental receptors, a description of the proposed mitigation and enhancement measures and an account of the predicted residual effects;

## 1.7. The Environmental Consultancy Team

1.7.1. **Table 1.6** below sets out the chapters in this report and sets out consultancy responsible for topic.

**Table 1.6 Environmental Topics and Contributors**

Chapter	Assessment Topic	Contributor
1	Introduction	Pegasus Group
2	Site Description	Pegasus Group
3	Description of the Proposed Development	Pegasus Group
4	Forestry	Mckayforestry
5	Landscape and Visual Appraisal	SLR Consulting Limited
6	Ecology	Atmos Consulting Limited
7	Ornithology	Arthian
8	Cultural Heritage	Headland Archaeology
9	Geology and Peat	Atmos Consulting Limited
10	Hydrology and Hydrogeology	Wardell Armstrong
11	Noise	The Northern Energy Initiative (TNEI)

12	Transport Statement & Construction Traffic Management Plan	Pell Frischmann
13	Socioeconomics	BiGGAR Economics
14	Outline Battery Safety Management Plan (OBSMP)	Abbott Risk Consulting Limited (ARC)

## 1.8. Obtaining Further Information

- 1.8.1. The Environmental Report and accompanying documentation are available online; please visit the project website for the Lochluichart East Battery Energy Storage System at [www.lochluicharteastbess.co.uk](http://www.lochluicharteastbess.co.uk). A copy of the report and all the application documents can also be obtained on a memory stick, free of charge, while stocks last.
- 1.8.2. A paper copy of the Environmental Report may be obtained at a cost of £200 + P&P. Please email the applicant at [lochluicharteastbess@boralex.com](mailto:lochluicharteastbess@boralex.com) or write to Freepost Boralex Limited (no further details or stamps required) to request a copy or alternatively call our freephone number on 0800 980 4299.