

Scott Hobbs Planning

CWBP on behalf of:

Harmony FL Ltd.

Date:

23 July 2025

Community Wealth Building Plan

Proposed BESS, Flushing



Illustration – may change, dependant on final equipment selection

Info

Proposed BESS and associated infrastructure:

Land north of Flushing,
Longside, Aberdeenshire

Summary

Harmony FL Ltd. is proposing a battery energy storage system (BESS), with associated infrastructure and development. The application is submitted for determination by the Energy Consents Unit of the Scottish Government, which has already issued its Screening Opinion that an EIA is not required for the proposed development. The site is located within the countryside, lies outside any specifically designated site in terms of heritage and the environment (landscape, visual and ecological) and will be situated in close proximity to a major sub-station. This is a Planning, Design and Access Statement is one of a suite of interlinked documents supporting the application and which consider the merits of the proposal in relation to relevant material considerations. The application documentation concludes, subject to mitigation, which is proposed as part of the application, that the development will not cause any significant adverse impact to matters which should be protected. Accordingly, the proposed development is consistent with NPF4 and ACLDP, which support renewable energy developments to facilitate net zero emission targets in light of the global climate and nature crises.



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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Community Wealth Building Plan (CWBP) is prepared and submitted on behalf of Harmony FL Ltd. ('the Applicant') and in support of an application for consent under S36 of the Electricity Act 1989 ('the application') and also comprises a request that Scottish Ministers give a direction under section 57(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 that planning permission for the development be deemed to be granted. It addresses matters referred to in Schedule 9 to the Electricity Act, to development plan and policy guidance and to consideration of material matters.
- 1.2 The application comprises land within Aberdeenshire Council Area – 20.72ha ('Application Site').

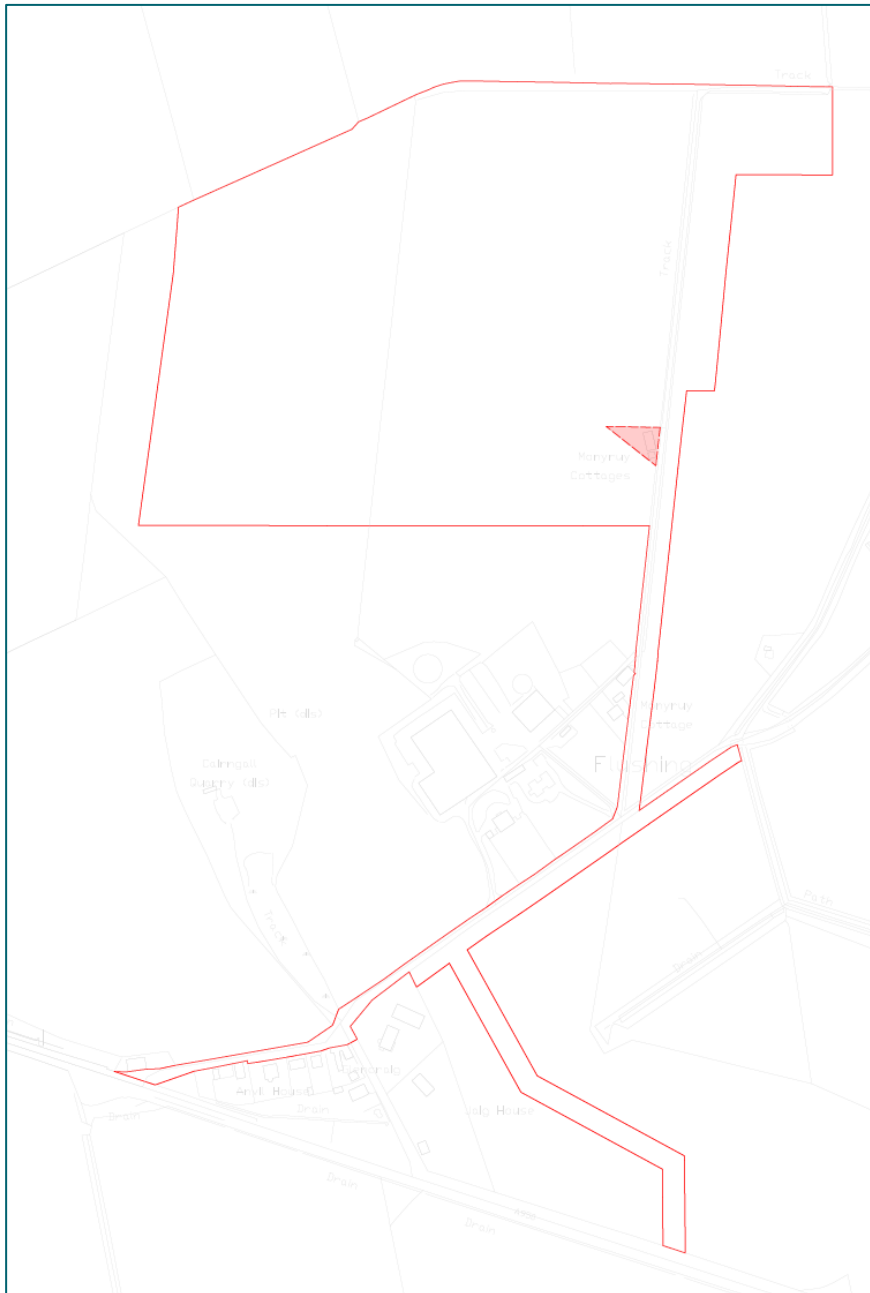


Figure 1 Site Location- Extract of Location Plan

- 1.3 The description of the proposed development which is the subject of this application is as follows:
- 'Construction and operation of a 400MW Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) with associated infrastructure including, access roads, sub-station buildings, supporting equipment, fencing, drainage infrastructure, landscaping, earth works and associated work.'* at Land North of Longside Road, Flushing, Peterhead (GR: 405524, 847560).
- 1.4 This CWBP is part of a suite of documents submitted with the application, as outlined below. These supporting documents are in addition to the formal application documents comprising the accompanying plans, sections, and elevations. The full suite of supporting documents is as follows:
- Planning Design and Access Statement (PDAS)
 - **Community Wealth Building Plan (CWBP)**
 - Pre-Application Consultation Report (PACR)
 - Confidential Ecological Survey Report [note, contains sensitive information]
 - Confidential Protected Species Report [note, contains sensitive information]
 - Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (ADBA)
 - Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and Landscape Strategy
 - Noise Impact Assessment (NIA)
 - Flood Risk & Drainage Assessment Report (FRDAR)
 - Fire Water Management Plan (FWMP)
 - Topographical Surveys
 - Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)
 - Transport Statement
 - Battery Safety Management Plan (OBSMP)
- 1.5 The Electricity Works Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 2017 are also relevant to the proposal as the proposal comprises development falling within Schedule 2 of those Regulations. A Screening request has been submitted to the ECU and the Decision was received on 17th March 2025. It confirmed that, **"Scottish Ministers adopt the opinion that the proposal does not constitute EIA development and that the application submitted for this development does not require to be accompanied by an EIA report."** (Emphasis Added)

Structure of CMBP

- 1.6 The CMBP will, following this introduction section, describe the means within which the proposed development will address CWB intentions, as identified in the Aberdeenshire Draft Community Wealth Building Strategy (CWBS). It is noted that this strategy is not formerly adopted but has been through public consultation and is due to go to Planning Committee for a decision on whether it should be adopted in June 2025. Whilst a material consideration, full weight cannot be ascribed to the CWBS at this stage.

Background

- 1.7 The Applicant has an agreed connection date with National Energy System Operator (NESO) to begin transmission from the site in 2033, however, it is anticipated that this could be brought forward 2029. The site's development is dependent on the development of the Netherton Hub sub-station that is currently within planning. Given this, there the construction of the proposed development would be unlikely to commence prior to 2029.
- 1.8 Given that construction will be unlikely to start for approx. 4 years, it would be the intent of the Applicant that any consent granted to this application would have attached an appropriately worded condition that would seek an updated and more detailed CWBP, to be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development.
- 1.9 It is considered that such an approach would allow the development to respond to the latest local and regional market opportunities and thus comply with NPF4 policy 25.

2.0 The Community Wealth Building Strategy Policy Context

2.1 The policy context relating to Community Wealth Building is set out in this section.

National Planning Framework (NPF4) Policy 25 refers to Community Wealth Building and sets out the policy intent:

“To encourage, promote and facilitate a new strategic approach to economic development that also provides a practical model for building a wellbeing economy at local, regional and national levels.”

2.2 The outcomes of the policy are:

- *“local economic development that focuses on community and place benefits as a central and primary consideration – to support local employment and supply chains.*
- *support community ownership and management of buildings and land.”*

2.3 The policy wording itself states:

“Development proposals which contribute to local or regional community wealth building strategies and are consistent with local economic priorities will be supported. This could include for example improving community resilience and reducing inequalities; increasing spending within communities; ensuring the use of local supply chains and services; local job creation; supporting community led proposals, including creation of new local firms and enabling community led ownership of buildings and assets.”

2.4 Assessment of this policy is addressed in the Planning Supporting and Policy Compliance Statement and which considers the weight which should be attached to this Guidance note. For the purposes of completeness, and to avoid unnecessary delay, the following information is provided in relation to CWB to demonstrate the benefits associated with this development at this local and regional location, which as a starting point must be recognised as the generation of renewable energy to the benefit of the environment and population over the supply area. A proportional approach to the assessment of the proposed development must be taken on that basis.

Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan - Community Wealth Building Strategy (CWBS)

2.5 The emerging CWBS and appended Energy Charter remains in draft and is not adopted. As discussed already in this Statement, it would be the intent that a Planning Condition be applied to any consent to update this CWBP to reflect latest guidance and economic scenario and direct engagement on a CWBP to direct socio-economic activity prior to the commencement of development.

2.6 The CWBS states, *“Community Wealth Building provides a practical response that aims to create more and keep wealth within a local area. It is often described as a people centred approach to economic development and aims to ensure every area and community can participate in, and benefit from, economic activity”*. Of course, in relation to considering development proposals, this can only be required in accordance with the overarching requirement of the Electricity Acts and Planning Acts, as amended, and must be proportional and relevant in requirement to the type, form and scale of development proposed.

2.7 The CWBS sets out five key objectives including:

- “OBJECTIVE 1: Spending. Through our public spending we will work to maximise our spend within Aberdeenshire, build strong, sustainable local supply chains, deliver community benefit and fair work opportunities.
- OBJECTIVE 2: Fair Employment and Just labour Markets. Ensure that the workforce are in well paid jobs that benefit from an effective voice, security and flexibility.
- OBJECTIVE 3: Socially Just use of Land and Property. We will work to maximise opportunities directly, and with other anchor organisations, to ensure communities across Aberdeenshire can get the most benefit from and generate wealth from local land and property.
- OBJECTIVE 4: Financial Power. We will make use of investments to keep money flowing within our places and grow local economies.
- OBJECTIVE 5: Shared Ownership of the Local Economy. Encouraging shared and democratic models of business ownership to build wealth that stays in local communities e.g. cooperative, employee-owned businesses, municipally owned companies”

2.8 The CWBS also contains a Charter for Energy Development in Aberdeenshire at Appendix 1 which builds on the objectives set out in the CWBS. The Charter states, *“This Charter for Energy development sets out the community wealth building expectations and principles to ensure alignment with policies 11 and 25 contained within NPF4 for energy development in Aberdeenshire.”* This is directly relevant to the proposed development and is considered carefully by this application.

2.9 To achieve this the Energy Charter sets out 7 collaboration principles that aim to maximise socio – economic benefit. These are set out below and are identified as high-level themes for partnership working.

- **Principle 1: Provide a long-term and collaborative programme on skills development.** Sets out that partnership with appropriate organisations such as Aberdeen Science Centre, Macduff Marine Aquarium, Developing the Young Workforce, colleges, universities and Employability Partnerships should be explored to maximise local job creation and retain talent in the area.
- **Principle 2: Community Capacity.** Relating to community funds the principle seeks that developers acknowledge the importance of communities being able to generate income / wealth through the management of assets and that any community benefit funds take cognisance of the models and various capacities to do this.
- **Principle 3: Fuel Poverty.** Developers are encouraged to consider how they can support the communities impacted by their infrastructure to develop long term solutions to fuel poverty.
- **Principle 4: Supply Chain.** The principle seeks that community funds develop opportunities for local Aberdeenshire companies to supply goods and services to the developments during construction and operation. It suggests ‘supply chain events’, and frameworks for potential contracts to facilitate this and they should be advertised and marketed in sufficient time to elicit appropriate responses and adequate lead in times.

- **Principle 5: Inward Investment**, states “Where local content is unavailable, and contract is of sufficient length, consider promoting and negotiating with supply chains their inward investment into Aberdeenshire.”
- **Principle 6: Adopt a town centre first approach.** The principle seeks that consideration of utilisation of existing built assets is given which will. It identifies that local and town centres are best placed to provide project offices and welfare units.
- **Principle 7: Place.** Place Plans are being co-designed in every town with an academy. Developers are encouraged to take a lead from these plans in terms of legacy community benefits.

2.10 Whilst the above principles are themes, applications are to be assessed on the framework below which details a series of objectives.

- Fair Employment: Promote jobs locally and develop long term and collaborative skills pathways
- Proactive Procurement: Providing support and opportunity for local business to participate in the supply chain to increase local and regional spend.
- Socially Just use of land and property: more vibrant, safe and resilient communities.
- Equality: Addressing rural inequalities and ensuring equality of opportunity for all

2.11 The CWBPG identifies a number of headings and targets, against which the proposal should be measures and monitored. Accordingly, this assessment considers the proposed development in relation to the identified matters, as much as is possible at this early stage in the overall project management and financial planning of the proposal. Specific detail is not available at the planning process stage as there are so many uncertainties associated with the proposed development, until such time that consent is granted under the requirements of the Electricity Acts and Planning acts, as amended.

Aberdeenshire Community Wealth Building Strategy Objectives/Outcomes and Outputs for socio – economic benefits

Objectives	Outcomes	Outputs	Response
Fair Employment: Promote jobs locally and develop long term and collaborative skills pathways	More local people in sector employment and reduction in claimant rate across Aberdeenshire	Face to face job interviews held within local communities	Achievable
		Guaranteed interviews for applicants from specified postcodes who meet minimum job specification criteria	<p>It is confirmed here that the proposed development includes highly specialised qualifications. It is highlighted that not all jobs will be sourced in the local area.</p> <p>However, applicants will be assessed on an application basis and applicants in the local area will be given interviews where they meet the job specifications.</p> <p>Where suitable employees are not identified in the local area the search will then be expanded to a regional scale, and then national scale sequentially. Local contractors will be employed where possible.</p> <p>Applicants will be sought within the AB41, 42, 43 and 53 Postcode areas in the first instance.</p>
		Developed bespoke training and employment packages targeted to the characteristics of the local labour market and linked with other local initiatives.	<p>The proposed development is a unique form of development which will generate specific job opportunities including those relating to:</p>



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • construction workers, • electrical contractors • fencing contractors • landscapers, • plant operators, • administrators, • drivers; • construction materials provision, • groundworks, • landscaping, • haulage, • plant hire, • site offices, • security; fencing, lighting, CCTV. <p>Some of these jobs, particularly in relation to HV equipment require highly skilled staff and labour.</p>
	More opportunities for everyone.	Guaranteed interviews for applicants facing barriers to employment who meet minimum job specification criteria	It is not possible to guarantee job interviews for all applicants who meet the minimum criteria. However, efforts will be made to ensure job advertisement is inclusive, interview are arranged flexibly and

			accessibly, and appointments are given to the most appropriate candidate. Where qualified and appropriate individuals who face access limitations to the site (e.g. vehicle ownership), the applicant will seek opportunities to provide transport if possible. Opportunities for lift sharing will also be explored that might alleviate such barriers.
		Internships and work experience placements for people facing barriers to employment	It would be proposed to notify universities and other higher and further education facilities within the local and regional area (e.g. Aberdeen and Robert Gordon Universities) of work experience placements available during the construction of the proposed development.
	Attraction and retention of a working age population	Locally based graduate and undergraduate placement programmes	As above
	Improved skills for local people	New apprenticeship opportunities at all levels of the pathway	Apprenticeships will be supported by the developer, where possible. The precise mechanism for their delivery is not known at this stage, but engagement with contractors and engagement with entities such as Developing the Young Workforce and Skills Development Scotland.
		Retraining opportunities to enable existing workforce to transition from carbon intensive industries	It is recognised that the established Oil and Gas industry in the region and associated workforce does have cross over in terms of skills. Whilst a different form of technology, opportunity may exist in the region to retrain experienced employees.
Proactive Procurement: Providing support and opportunity for local business to participate in the supply chain to increase local and regional spend.	Maximise uptake of local sub-contract opportunities	Coordination of a series of local Meet the Buyer events which are promoted sufficiently and with sufficient notice	These can be readily achieved and drop in events that can be hosted in the local area, if required. Public consultation methodologies utilised for the proposed development, including publication in Buchan Observer, Fraserburgh Herald, Ellon Times and Press & Journal can be used to advertise such events.
		Target percentage of local sub-contract content with credible plan to increase	TBC
		Simplifying sub-contract registration and application process	Onboarding of staff will need to be effective, but it is noted that making this a simple process will aid sub-contractors.
		Creation of opportunity for new local business start-ups	Opportunities for new startup will be supported through employment in the local area where possible. The Applicant may look to assist local businesses to form or expand in order to deliver the required services. Again, engagement for this would be coordinated through and follow on from a meet the buyer

			event and any assistance would be considered on a case-by-case basis for genuine proposals.
		Delivery of a local supplier development programme to upskill supply chain in tendering for contracts	Apprenticeship programmes / opportunities will be explored where possible.
		Prompt payment (30 days) of invoices for sub-contract goods and services.	There would be a commitment to this timeframe.
	Social Value embedded in the supply chain	Participation of social enterprises within supply chain contracts	A project summary and briefing note of the type of employment likely to be generated can be issued to local Social Enterprises to facilitate referral for possible employees.
		Development and delivery of local community benefits programme that encourages genuine public participation and offers opportunities for community ownership of energy assets where appropriate and viable. Community Benefit amounts are encouraged to be aligned with nationally accepted limits adjusted for inflation since these guidelines were set. These voluntary payments will not be directly assessed in this process, rather the efforts of the developer to engage meaningfully with the communities, using appropriate consultation methodologies and their understanding of the relevant community structures, and strategic understanding of the places impacted by investment.	<p>Harmony FL Ltd. are seeking to operate the proposed development. As such there is limited remit for community ownership of the development itself.</p> <p>Harmony FL Ltd. has committed to the provision of £20,000 per annum community fund. The application process for access to this pot of will be given over to an appropriate controlling party who will assess allocations for use of the fund. Uses could include maintenance and financial support for local assets, establishing local assets, funding training and skills creation for local residents.</p> <p>It is stressed here that there is no requirement for financial contributions other than what might normally be agreed as part of a section 75 agreement. As this criterion outlines, voluntary payments will not be directly assessed.</p>
Socially Just use of land and property: more vibrant, safe and resilient communities.	Improving the vitality of local places and developing social and environmental capital	Proactive engagement with relevant community groups to understand local priorities and aspirations	It is proposed to engage with the Community Council (despite current efforts), including Longside and Peterhead in particularly as well as Aberdeenshire Council, and other local groups and social enterprises.
		Provide evidence of offering community shared ownership models as a route to finance	N/A
		Support for the development of new community woodland initiatives	Community funds could be identified for such projects were they to exist in area and it was identified as a community / local priority.
		Providing opportunity for shared community ownership of any land parcels acquired which are surplus to the requirements of the development	Land removed from the development site will be given back to the agricultural operation of the site following decommission. The application site is leased from the land owner, not purchased.

		Support for local public realm enhancements	As with woodland initiatives, support for public realm can be made were it a local priority.
	Preserving access to leisure and recreational amenity	Capacity building investments within affected communities, in particular for those that lack cohesive community action	The applicant has sought to engage directly with the Community Council and whilst direct meetings have not been accepted, it is identified that there is capacity / organisation within the local area to
		Providing leisure and recreational access to any new forest roads of mountain tracks constructed in the development of new energy infrastructure and maintaining and enhancing the paths network	The woodland proposed as part of the development would not be appropriate to provide additional public access. Support can be secured for the improvement / maintenance of the Formatine and Buchan Way in proximity to the site or other paths as identified as local priorities.
		Creation of new parks and green spaces to mitigate any which are lost in the construction of new energy developments	No green spaces or parks are to be lost as a result of the development.
		Supporting the creation or enhancement of active travel and leisure routes	Please see comments relating to Formatine and Buchan Way above. Were other local priorities to be identified, these can be supported.
	Improving the local housing stock where the scale of development requires a transient workforce.	Collaboration with Council services to agree the delivery of legacy housing to assist in meeting the need for accommodation for transient workforce and beyond to address local housing need	The workforce may require accommodation locally on a short-term basis and so accommodation in short stay facilities locally will be promoted and will directly invest funds into the local economy, supporting existing businesses.
		Repurposing local existing vacant premises for transient workforce, taking recognition of embedded carbon and with a view beyond the lifetime of the construction phase	Monyrui Cottages are within the site area which will be vacant at the time of development. There is the option of re-purposing these for either accommodation or site office. In either event it will be sought to retain these and their embodied carbon.
Equality: Addressing rural inequalities and ensuring equality of opportunity for all	Closing the Gender Pay Gap	Targeted promotion of employment and skills opportunities	Pay equality will be supported. Opportunities will be promoted regardless of gender.
		Specified target to work towards gender parity in newly recruited workforce	As above
	Tackling digital exclusion	Provision of work equipment and connectivity where required to mitigate digital barriers to employment	A significant portion of the proposed jobs to be created are construction related. Were it necessary for offsite digital support to be given to employees this can be arranged.
	Access to employment for parents	Provision of support and flexible working for parents where required to mitigate childcare barriers to employment	Any arrangements for child care and flexible working opportunities will be arranged on a case-by-case basis or in line with employer practice.
		Support for development of new childcare facilities in communities where transient workforce will be housed	N/A

	Improved transport connectivity	Provision of support and flexible working to transport to alleviate childcare barriers to employment	As above
		Support for enhancement of existing transport services in communities where transient workforce will be housed	It is possible that designated shuttles from higher density population centres and accommodation can be secured to minimise site traffic. However, a CTMP and Transport Statement is submitted with the application that sets out roads are capable to handling associated construction traffic.

3.0 Investment to Date

- 3.1 Prior to the submission of an application to the Energy Consents Unit, circa £210,000 has been invested into the project. Harmony FL Ltd. has sought to ensure that consultants appointed to the project are based in Scotland and to date this includes:
- Brindley Associates, Edinburgh conducting ecological site survey and assessments
 - Gondolin Land and Water, Edinburgh – Civil Engineering
 - Guard Archaeology, Midlothian - conducted a Heritage Impact Assessment
 - Hermitage Environmental Planning and Landscape Architecture (HEPLA) Edinburgh – LVIA and Landscape Design.
 - Robert McKenzie Partnership (RMP), Edinburgh – Providing Noise Assessment
 - Scott Hobbs Planning, Edinburgh - Provided planning application support
- 3.2 Post planning, whilst these figures are not fixed, the following indicate possible investment into the area as a result of the project:
- £240,000,000 million is estimated for the construction phase of the development.
 - £6.3 million is estimated to be spent in annual running costs of the proposed development (this figure covers costs of security, landscaping, optimisation costs, rent, insurance, metering etc).
- 3.3 Local facilities have also already been used by staff working on the project, including local shop in Longside and Peterhead and local accommodation.
- 3.4 As detailed in the PACR report and PDAS, the site has gone through several design iterations, one of the considerations was reducing the land take of the project. This involved removing large areas at the south and west of the site that can be retained for farming This in total has given back approximately 20.72 hectares of land back to farming use.
- 3.5 Tenders will be advertised locally. Engagement with local bodies including community councils, Aberdeenshire Council (inc. and ‘Employment Connect, Aberdeenshire employability partnership’ will be undertaken to ascertain the most appropriate methods for advertising tenders and engaging with local work force. This can allow a significant amount of job creation within and wealth to be retained in the region.
- 3.6 The land will be leased from a local Aberdeenshire farmer who will importantly get a new income from their land.
- 3.7 Whilst it is hard at this early stage to commit to spending quantities and specific frameworks / practices, The Applicant, however, is willing to continue discussion with Aberdeenshire Council regarding developing the CWBS and seek updates to the proposed engagement and practices outlined by this document.
- 3.8 At the stage the project has reached its end of life, there will be additional jobs created locally in respect of the decommissioning of the proposed development. However, this will be in the longer term (40 years or more)

- 3.9 During the construction phase of the proposed 400MW BESS site it is anticipated that approximately one hundred temporary employment opportunities will be created and up to four permanent positions will be required during the operation. The construction phase is expected to last 18-24 months. The site has an expected operational life of between 25 to 40 years before being returned to agricultural and farming use. The site will be restored to equivalent agricultural grade and farmed for future generations.
- 3.10 Whilst highly skilled jobs will be required, given the transition to renewable infrastructure in the north east region, more companies are becoming located here, which this project will continue to support. Despite this, jobs across the following sectors will also be supported:
- construction workers,
 - electrical contractors
 - fencing contractors
 - landscapers,
 - plant operators,
 - administrators,
 - drivers;
 - construction materials provision,
 - groundworks,
 - landscaping,
 - haulage,
 - plant hire,
 - site offices,
 - security; fencing, lighting, CCTV.
- 3.11 Once operational the site will be unmanned, with site visits required for operation and maintenance purposes. During this phase the following, non-exhaustive list, of services are likely to be sought;
- landscaping,
 - equipment maintenance
 - passive trade
- 3.12 It is the Applicant's intention to engage with the parties already mentioned, and further, the council's Economic Development Team, Developing the Young Workforce, Business Gateway, Inward Investment Team and Strategic Development Delivery for further information into this process.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 This Community Wealth Building Plan (CWBP) is prepared and submitted on behalf of Harmony FL Ltd. ('the Applicant') and in support of an application for consent under S36 of the Electricity Act 1989 ('the application') and also comprises a request that Scottish Ministers give a direction under section 57(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 that planning permission for the development be deemed to be granted.
- 4.2 The site's development is dependent on the development of the Netherton Hub sub-station that is currently within planning. Given this, there the construction of the proposed development would be unlikely to commence prior to 2029.
- 4.3 Given that construction will be unlikely to start for approx. 4 years, it would be the intent of the Applicant that any consent granted to this application would have attached an appropriately worded condition that would seek an updated and more detailed CWBP, to be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development.
- 4.4 It is considered that such an approach would allow the development to respond to the latest local and regional market opportunities and thus comply with NPF4 policy 25.
- 4.5 The CWBP has set out how the proposed development responds to the Charter for Energy Development in Aberdeenshire as set out in their draft Community Wealth Building Strategy. The proposed development construction could see an investment of £240,000,000. It is considered, that the CWMP and the measures set out respond positively to the principles sought from the Charter for Energy Development and that the proposed development would therefore comply with Local and National Planning Policy.



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