

# **West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS**

## **Pre-application consultation report**

Prepared by McDaid PR, April 2025

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# Executive summary

TRIO West Springfield Solar LLP (the applicant), the project company of Octopus Renewable Infrastructure Trust, (ORIT) and managed by BLC Energy, is applying to the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit (ECU) for West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS (the proposed development) , subject to the consenting procedures outlined in Section 36 of the Electricity Act (1989).

This report details the pre-application consultation activity conducted for the proposed development and outlines how this satisfies the good practice guidance<sup>1</sup> provided by the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit.

The PAC report also describes how the programme has allowed for meaningful engagement from project inception in 2022 until April 2025, as outlined in [SG PAN 3/2010](#), and therefore meets the requirements of the Planning Act and associated regulations.

The document sets out the outcomes of the consultation process and how the applicant responded to the community's feedback.

## Project details

The applicant proposes a solar farm of around 93,000 solar panels with an export capacity of 49.9MW, and a Battery and Energy Storage System (BESS) with a capacity of 35MW, and all associated infrastructure, on land west of Springfield, Fife, KY15 5RE. The proposal lies entirely within the Fife Council area.

The applicant acquired the site and the associated solar energy and BESS proposal from another developer, Elgin Energy, in January 2025. Elgin Energy undertook the first phase of community consultation; the details of associated activities undertaken as part of the initial consultation round are included in this report. The proposed development was known as Peterhead Solar Farm during this first phase. The applicant renamed it West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS on acquisition, and it was made clear to the local community in all materials that the subsequent consultation was for the same project.

We refer to phase one of community consultation (undertaken by Elgin Energy) and phase two (undertaken by TRIO West Springfield Solar LLP and associated consultants) throughout this PAC report to make a clear distinction.

Feedback gathered from Elgin Energy (included in this report) greatly influenced the applicant's updated designs. We have detailed this in the developer's response to the consultation section of this report.

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<https://www.gov.scot/publications/good-practice-guidance-applications-under-sections-36-37-electricity-act-1989/pages/3/>

# Community consultation and engagement programme

The community engagement and consultation programme was designed by Elgin Energy in phase one, and continued and expanded upon by TRIO West Springfield Solar LLP and its consultants in phase two.

The purpose of the community engagement and consultation with local people, political stakeholders and community representatives was to:

- describe and explain the proposal: location, size, scale and output;
- gather and incorporate feedback from stakeholders to finalise the design;
- set out the potential benefits of the community benefit programme (phase two); and
- discuss any concerns the public might have and provide answers to their questions.

While there are no statutory pre-application consultation procedures for section 36 applications under the Electricity Act, the applicant committed to following, and exceeded where feasible, the Scottish Government's good practice guidance as set out on the ECU website.

## Summary of activity: both phases

- Websites were established for both project phases([www.peterheadsolarfarm.co.uk](http://www.peterheadsolarfarm.co.uk) and <https://www.blcenergy.com/projects/west-springfield/>). Both are still live (April 2025).
- Two public exhibitions were held at Springfield Church Hall. Phase one's event was held on Thursday 2 March 2023, and phase two's was held on Friday 4 April 2025
- The events were advertised in the local media at least one week before. Adverts included a description and location of the proposed development; where to find further information; dates and locations of the public events; how and when to submit comments to the applicant and a statement that comments to the applicant were not formal representations to Scottish Ministers.
- Adverts were supplemented with media coverage during phase two: FifeToday.co.uk ran a story that encouraged people to attend and included event details.
- A leaflet invitation was delivered to 569 households within one kilometre of the site at least one week before the events in phase one and phase two.
- Feedback forms were provided at the public events, and people were also invited to give their feedback by completing forms at the event or through an online form (phase one) or by email and/or downloadable form (phase two).

## Additional activity: phase two

- A virtual exhibition was held on Monday 7 April 2025
- The site's community council and adjacent community councils, ward councillors, the constituency MSP, regional MSPs and constituency MP were all informed about the exhibitions by email.

- Springfield Community Council was contacted by email upon the acquisition of the site by the applicant. Neil Lindsay, managing director, attended Springfield Community Council's February 2025 meeting and provided handouts of a presentation about the updated proposal.
- Phase 2: Neil Lindsay has had ongoing email exchanges with Springfield Community Council throughout phase two, on topics such as the community benefit scheme, the evolution of the project's design following initial feedback, maintaining walking routes around the site and appropriate wider habitat enhancements.
- Phase 2: Nine banners, seven viewpoint visualisations, and a 3D model were provided at the public exhibition.

## Phase one activity: conducted by Elgin Energy

Elgin Energy compiled a PAC strategy with consultants RPS. The strategy included:

Item	Aim/ purpose/ action
Creating a stakeholder matrix	Identifying and recording the contact details of consultees
Direct contact with local political representatives	Springfield Community Council, councillors, MSP and MP to be contacted by letter and provided with project information
Holding a public event	<p>The event was held 3-8pm, Thursday 2 March 2023, Springfield Church Hall, KY15 5RY.</p> <p>It was timed to maximise attendance and ensure as many people as possible could engage with the project team.</p> <p>The event provided information about the project and encouraged comments and feedback from local people and stakeholders. The event was advertised seven days or more before in the Courier (21.02.2023), the Glenrothes Gazette (22.02.2023) and the Fife Free Press (23.02.2023). An additional advert ran six days before the event in the Fife Herald (24.02.2023).</p> <p>569 households within one kilometre of the site received an invitation by post, seven days or more before the event.</p> <p>Feedback forms were provided at the event and a digital version was available on the website.</p>
Creation of a project website	<p><a href="http://www.peterheadsolarfarm.co.uk">www.peterheadsolarfarm.co.uk</a></p> <p>Ensured information is available to the public, with routes to provide feedback or ask for clarification, and contact details provided.</p>

Summary of feedback received	Compiled after the public event and updated throughout phase one. This was given to the applicant upon acquiring the site and has been used to inform refinements to the design in phase two. This includes a letter to Springfield Community Council.
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All available material is included in the appendices of this report.

## Phase two activity: conducted by and on behalf of the applicant

The applicant acquired the site in January 2025 and renamed it West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS, to strengthen its connection with the local area and avoid any confusion with Peterhead in north-east Scotland, where another proposed scheme is in development.

### Community council

- The project team made early contact with Springfield Community Council on Tuesday 4 February by email to introduce the new project name and team and offer a meeting.
- Neil Lindsay attended the 5 February 2025 Springfield Community Council meeting and delivered 10 hard copies of a presentation to members. Advice was sought and given on where and when to hold the second public exhibition.
- Neil and the community council continued to exchange emails throughout the second phase of the pre-application consultation activity. Neil provided written clarity on subjects such as the proposed community benefit fund, project design and maintaining local walking routes around the site.

### Elected representatives

- An introductory email was sent to the two community councils adjacent to the site, Ladybank Community Council and Cults Community Council on Tuesday 18 March 2025. The email contained the public and virtual exhibition details, a link to the website and details of the site's previous name and developer. The email made clear BLC Energy would be happy to correspond before the public exhibition.
- An introductory email was also sent to the site's ward councillors, constituency MSP, regional MSPs and constituency MP. These emails also contained the public and virtual exhibition details, a link to the website and details of the site's previous name and developer. The email made clear BLC Energy would be happy to correspond before the public exhibition.
- No elected representatives requested meetings with the applicant, although one community council did confirm they would attend the second public exhibition.

- A further email was sent on 26 March 2025 with a poster for the public exhibition, asking whether elected representatives could use this to advertise the events locally. The email offered to post printed copies, though none were requested.

### **Promotion of second public exhibition**

A second public exhibition was planned for 4-8pm, Friday 4 April 2025, at Springfield Church Hall, KY15 5RY. The applicant maximised attendance by promoting the exhibition via the means below (including elected official activity already described).

### **Website**

A website went live on 3 March 2025: <https://www.blcenergy.com/projects/west-springfield/>. The website included a map showing the site's location, a red line boundary map and a site layout plan; information about the public events and how to provide feedback or request more information; information about the proposed community benefit fund and referred to the first exhibition held by Elgin Energy, so that people understood it was the same site and not a 'new' project. Ahead of the second exhibition, a downloadable feedback form was made available on the site.

### **Invitation to local households**

A C5 invitation flyer inviting local people to the exhibition was delivered by Royal Mail using phase one's distribution list. 569 dwellings within one kilometre of the site received the flyer, which was posted second class on 19 March 2025. The invitation flyer included a description and location of the proposed development; where to find further information; the dates and location of the public event; how and when to submit comments to the applicant; and a statement confirming that comments to the applicant would not constitute formal representations to Scottish Ministers.

### **Advert**

An advert was placed in the Courier and appeared more than seven days before the event (26.03.2025). The advert included a description and location of the proposed development; where to find further information; the dates and location of the public event; how and when to submit comments to the applicant; and a statement confirming that comments provided to the applicant would not constitute formal representations to Scottish Ministers.

### **Press release**

A press release about the public exhibition was issued and covered by FifeToday.co.uk. The story appeared online and on Fife Free Press's Facebook page, which has 47,000 followers. Wendy Chamberlain, MP for the site, shared the article on her Facebook page.

### **Poster**

A poster was designed and emailed to the site's community council, the two adjacent community councils, ward councillors, constituency MSP and constituency MP on 26 March 2025, with an offer to provide printed copies. No printed copies were requested.



**Second public exhibition: 4-8pm, Friday 4 April 2025**

Fifty-one people attended the second public exhibition.

The BLC Energy team included: Neil Lindsay, Andrew Bright, Andrew Ramand, Emma Quinn, Kitty Lindsay and Carolyn Davie.



Andrew Bright and Neil Lindsay at the West Springfield public exhibition

Materials on display at the second exhibition included:

- Pop up banners
- Seven viewpoint photomontages, Zones of Theoretical Visibility Maps, project layout maps
- A range of information sheets and publications, including from the Solar Energy UK

**Virtual exhibition: Monday 7 April**

A virtual exhibition was planned for Monday 7 April at 6pm so that those who couldn't attend in person still had the chance to ask direct questions of the applicant. The virtual exhibition had been advertised on the website and was promoted in the flyer.

Five people attended the virtual exhibition, in which Neil Lindsay presented the exhibition boards, introduced Andrew Ramand and Emma Quinn and then they opened up to questions. Attendees were invited to fill in the feedback form online; some provided comments in the chat.

# Feedback analysis

Fifty-three feedback forms were collected throughout phases one and two: 39 in the first phase and 14 in the second.

As we are unable to tell who submitted forms for both phases, we have combined the quantitative data and present it below.

Qualitative data (comments) from phase one were provided to TRIO West Springfield Solar LLP upon acquiring the site. Those comments were used to inform certain changes to the design and content of the boards for the second exhibition in 2025. We have identified the most common themes from both phases.

Feedback was also provided by the community council and some members of the public by letter, and in person at the public events. Those were reflected in the themes gathered in the feedback forms and are summarised in the second section and discussed in the developer's response section.

Not all respondents provided an answer for every question. Where an answer was unclear (for example, if a comment or qualification was attached to a tick box), we disregarded that answer but considered it in the qualitative section.

## Quantitative findings

- When asked how do you feel about our plans for Peterhead/ West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS, 44% were in support, 20% were undecided and 36% were opposed.
  - Very supportive - 3
  - Supportive - 19
  - Undecided - 10
  - Opposed - 8
  - Very opposed - 10
- When asked if they support the use of solar energy to combat climate change, the majority of respondents were.
  - Yes - 35
  - Undecided - 9
  - No - 3
- Respondents were asked to tick any of the boxes that represented potential benefits of Peterhead/ West Springfield Solar Farm BESS
  - It would produce a clean and safe supply of energy - 30
  - It would raise awareness of solar energy - 11
  - It would help reach renewable energy targets - 10

- It would have a relatively low visual impact - 10
  - Low maintenance and creates little noise - 8
  - Creation of a dedicated community benefit fund for the local community (only asked in phase two) - 3
- Respondents were also asked to tick any of the boxes that represented potential impacts of Peterhead/ West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS
  - Visual -35
  - Ecology - 20
  - Transport - 12
  - Construction - 19
  - No impact - 10

# Developer's response to issues raised during consultation

## Qualitative findings

We identified eight major themes regarding concerns or issues about the proposal, from the different sections of feedback forms (those asking for more information about benefits, impacts and other comments, for example), letters and conversations with local people and representative groups.

This feedback has helped shape and evolve the layout and design of the proposed solar farm and BESS, alongside the various technical surveys undertaken.

Where consultees have raised potentially significant issues, we have adapted the layout where possible and/or provided more information to help allay concerns or address misunderstandings. More information on the evolution of the layout can be found in Chapter 2: Site Description and Design Iteration of the EIA Report, which accompanies this planning application.

The key issues raised are summarised in the table below, with commentary on how BLC Energy has responded to or addressed the concern.

We have included representative qualitative comments from the feedback forms in the appendices.

Issue	Developer's response/ mitigation
Visual impact	A full Landscape and Visual Impact report is included in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The report found no significant impacts. New hedgerows will also help reduce views of panels.
Scale and proximity to the village	Between the first and second exhibitions, the developer reduced the footprint of the solar farm by 14%. The original layout has changed significantly, and panels are now placed further away from Springfield (200-300m).
Access: dog walking and recreational access	The layout has been designed to retain all current walking routes; this was a key consideration

Construction traffic and noise	Construction should take 6-9 months, depending on weather conditions. The developer will work with Fife Council on a construction management plan. All construction traffic will enter and exit the site from the new entry on Main Road, around 60m north of Springfield and will travel to the site entrance off the A91 and then Main Road. No construction traffic will go through Springfield or use the Bow of Fife- Pitlessie road.
Using agricultural land for energy production	The National Planning Framework 4 allows for renewable energy production on prime agricultural land. Sheep will graze on the site, retaining its agricultural use. There is very limited loss in agricultural land (the footprint of the battery storage area, on site substation and supporting infrastructure). The remainder of the land will be left untouched and the agricultural quality of the land will not change. Any utility-scale renewable energy scheme needs a grid connection, ideally less than 8km away, to be viable. Sites like this are necessary for Scotland and the UK to meet renewable energy targets.
The BESS: risk of fire, fumes, safety	We included much more information about the BESS in the boards for the second exhibition to address some questions from local people (see appendices). After the first exhibition the applicant moved the BESS to a less visible part of the site. The BESS will contain various fire suppression measures and follow the guidance produced by the National Fire Chiefs Council.
Impact on wildlife and biodiversity (migrating birds, roe deer, red squirrel were mentioned specifically)	A full ecological impact assessment was conducted and is submitted as part of the EIA.
Community benefit scheme/ ownership opportunities	The original developer had no community benefit offer, and several people asked about a fund for the local community or the opportunity to buy a share in the solar farm. TRIO West Springfield Solar LLP is offering a Community Benefit package worth up to £25,000 per annum. We included information about this in the phase two exhibition boards and asked for suggestions in the phase two feedback form.

Advert: Fife Herald (24 February 2023)

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The Scottish Government gives notice that they have determined that the project for installation and replacement of the Vehicle Restraint System on and approaching the River Forth Bridge on the A9, near Dunfermline, is a relevant project within the meaning of section 15A of the Scotland Act 1988 (the 1988 Act) and will require a determination of the Scottish Government under section 15A of the 1988 Act.

The project is described in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report for the project, which is available for public inspection at the Scottish Government's website: [www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)

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### GENERAL NOTICES



**ELGIN ENERGY**

**Proposed Solar Farm & Battery Storage Facility Project**  
Notice of Pre-Application Consultation  
Dates: 09<sup>th</sup> February 2023 – 03<sup>rd</sup> March 2023

**PROPOSAL:** a 75 megawatt (MW) solar PV farm and a 30 MW battery storage system (BESS), with associated infrastructure including photovoltaic panels, mounting frames, inverters, transformers, substations, fencing, pre-industrial security cameras and associated site access.

**LOCATION:** The site is located on lands to the west of Main Street, Springfield and east of the Bow of Fife in Pleasure Road, with Roskelley House lying to the north and the railway line to the south.

Elgin Energy intend submitting an application to the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit (ECU) in respect of the above proposal.

A dedicated project website has been created for more information and to facilitate online feedback and comments via a digital questionnaire. The project website can be accessed at:

[www.pleasurefarms.com](http://www.pleasurefarms.com)

In addition to the preceding notice a community consultation open day will be held on Thursday 09<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at Springfield Parish Church (between the Springfield 0175 5011) between 3.00pm – 5pm, during which team members and project consultants will be available to discuss the project. Outside of the above, should you wish to speak directly to the team please make a request using the contact details below:

Email: [info@pleasurefarms.com](mailto:info@pleasurefarms.com)  
Tel: 01592 8664 8667 or 01592 7552 0057

Postal Address: Pleasure Farm, 5075, Belmont House, 75 Belmont Road, Perth, 97112 0002

All comments or feedback should be received on or before 03<sup>rd</sup> March 2023 after which the online feedback facility will close.

**Please note:** This consultation is only a day of the community consultation process. All comments will be considered in the consultation process. Comments will not be used to inform the project. Comments will be used to inform the project. Comments will be used to inform the project.

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**Elgin Energy**

**Paterson Road Farm & Battery Storage Facility Project**  
Notice of Pre-Application Consultation  
Dates: 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023 - 27<sup>th</sup> March 2023

**PROPOSAL:** A 75 megawatt (MW) ~~onshore~~ PV farm and 1.95 MWh Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), with associated infrastructure including photovoltaic panels, mounting frames, inverters, transformers, substations, fencing, gate-mounted security barriers and associated site access.

**LOCATION:** The site is located on land to the west of Main Street, Springfield and east of the site of Fife to Pitlochry Road, with Paterson Road being to the north and the railway line to the south. Fife Energy intend submitting an application to the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit (ECU), in respect of the above proposal.

A dedicated project website has been created to share information and to facilitate online feedback and commentary via a digital questionnaire. The project website can be accessed at:  
[www.patersonroadfarm.co.uk](http://www.patersonroadfarm.co.uk)

In addition to the preceding, a community consultation open day will be held on **Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023** at Springfield Parish Church (Main St, Springfield, KY15 5HT) between 2.00pm - 4.00pm. During which local residents and project specialists will be available to discuss the project. Details of the above, should you wish to speak directly to the team, please make a reservation using the contact details below:

Email: [pat@pegroup.co.uk](mailto:pat@pegroup.co.uk)  
Tel: 0141 572 9547 or 0125 7436 8847  
Postal Address: Paterson Road Farm, SPG, Commercial Street, 74 Main Street, Dundee, KY11 2JG

All comments or feedback should be received prior to the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2023 after which the online feedback facility will close.

Please note: Any comments made as part of the community consultation open day, or via correspondence, or via the Community Address Sheet, or via the Community Feedback Form, or via the project website, will be subject to the same requirements as the Community Address Sheet, with regard to any information which may be subject to the same.

**THE FIRE COUNCIL, 60 THORN STREET, BURNHOLME (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF LOBBY GREEN) 2023**

Following the fire at 60 Thorn Street, Burnholme, Dundee, on 14th February 2023, the Fire Council has issued a temporary prohibition of lobby green. The Council is in place to ensure the safety of the public and will be operating from 08:00 to 18:00 on 23rd February 2023. All vehicles must be parked in the designated area. The Council will be in place to ensure the safety of the public and will be operating from 08:00 to 18:00 on 23rd February 2023. All vehicles must be parked in the designated area.

**Kirkcaldy Rotary 200 Club February Draw**

**winning numbers:**  
1, 67, 101, 63, 127 & 77.

**Feel like a fish out of water?**



### PROPERTY

#### ESTATE AGENTS

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## Invitation to local households



Our ref: NI 2584 Peterhead Solar & BESS

Elmwood House  
74 Boucher Road, Belfast  
Co. Antrim BT12 6RZ  
T: +44 2890 967 914

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Dear Owner/Occupier,

**Pre-Application Consultation for a proposed Solar PV Farm and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), with associated infrastructure on lands at to the west of Main Street, Springfield**

On behalf of Eign Energy EsCo Ltd (the applicant, RPS (planning/environmental consultants) cordially invite you to take part in a Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) in respect of the above development. We are preparing a planning application to submit to the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit (ECU), seeking consent for a c.75MW solar PV farm and c.50MW Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), with associated infrastructure including photovoltaic solar panels, mounting frames, inverters, transformers, substations, fencing, pole-mounted security cameras and associated site accesses.

The proposed development is to be located on lands to the west of Main Street, Springfield and east of the Bow of Fife to Fildess Road, with Rankin's House lying to the north and the railway line to the south. At their nearest point the lands are located c.1.2km south of the hamlet Bow of Fife with the south-easterly most parcel of land located adjacent to and west of Springfield village. The southern extents of the site are defined by the existing ScotRail line between Springfield and Ladybank. A Plan showing details of the boundary of the proposed development is enclosed with this letter.

A dedicated project website has been created to share information and to facilitate online feedback and comments via a digital questionnaire. The website will go live on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> February, and the online facility contained therein will be available up to and including **23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023**. The project website can be accessed at:

[www.peterheadsolarfarm.com](http://www.peterheadsolarfarm.com)

In addition a **Community Consultation Open Day** will be held on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023 at Springfield Community Church (Marise Road, Springfield, Fife, KY15 5RY) between 3pm – 6pm, during which team members and project specialists will be available to discuss the project. We would like to invite you to attend the Open Day.

The proposal seeks to contribute to local, regional and national clean energy targets in a resourceful manner and has the capacity to generate enough renewable energy to power approximately 18,100 homes every year. This process represents an opportunity for the community and stakeholders to actively engage, comment and shape the evolution of this project, and we would welcome your feedback.

Outside of the above processes, should you wish to speak directly to the team please make a request using the contact details below:

Email: [enquiries@rpsgroup.com](mailto:enquiries@rpsgroup.com)  
Tel: 028 90 607914

Postal Address: Peterhead Solar Farm c/o RPS, Elmwood House, 74 Boucher Road, Belfast, BT12 6RZ.

All comments or feedback should be received on or before **23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023**.

**Our ref: NQ2591 - Peterhead Solar Farm & BESS**

Please be advised that taking part in this process does not affect your statutory rights to make representations to the Energy Consents Unit in respect of the application when submitted.

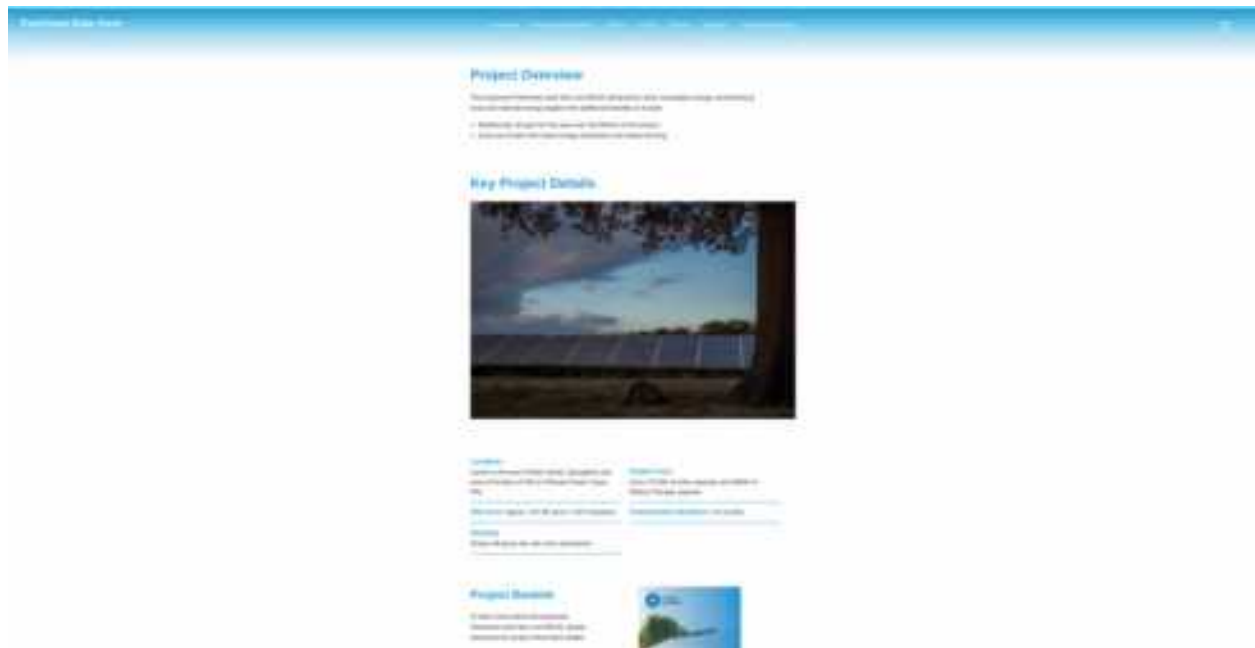
Yours sincerely,  
for RPS:



Chelsea Johnston  
Planner - Planning & Environment





Website assorted screenshots: [www.peterheadsolarfarm.com](http://www.peterheadsolarfarm.com)





## Feedback form





**PROPOSED**  
**SOLAR PV FARM & BESS**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**PETERHEAD**

Elgin Energy are currently preparing a planning application for our proposed Solar PV Farm and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at Lands to the west of Springfield, Fife.

Your views are important to us as they will help shape the development proposal. We would be grateful if you could spare a few minutes to complete this short questionnaire and provide us with any comments you have.

1. Are you concerned about the effects of climate change?

☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Undecided

2. Do you support the use of solar energy to help combat climate change?

☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Undecided

3. How do you feel about our proposed plans for the Peterhead Solar PV Farm & BESS?

☐ Very supportive    ☐ Supportive    ☐ Undecided    ☐ Opposed    ☐ Very opposed

4. What do you think would be the main benefit of the Peterhead Solar PV Farm & BESS? *(Please tick one option)*


<input type="checkbox"/> It would produce a clean and safe supply of energy	<input type="checkbox"/> It would assist in meeting renewable energy targets
<input type="checkbox"/> It would raise awareness of solar energy	<input type="checkbox"/> Low maintenance and creates very little noise
<input type="checkbox"/> Relatively low visual impact	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

If you do not think there would be any benefit, please state why:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





5. Do you have any concerns about how our proposed plans for Peterhead Solar PV Farm & BESS will affect you or the existing environment?

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6. What do you consider to be the main issues or impacts of solar farms?

- ☐ Visual                      ☐ Transport                      ☐ Construction
- ☐ Ecology                      ☐ No impact
- ☐ Other: 

---

7. Please use this space for any further comments, suggestions or questions you may have:

---

---

---

8. Name: 

---

Address: 

---

---

Postcode: 

---

Email: 

---

9. Do you wish to be kept informed of our proposals for Peterhead Solar PV Farm and BESS?

- ☐ Yes                      ☐ No

**Thank you for your feedback.**

Please hand this completed questionnaire in or alternatively send to:

Elgin Energy EsCo Ltd, Dashwood House, 69 Old Broad St, London EC2M 1QS

Email: [office@elgin-energy.com](mailto:office@elgin-energy.com)

**NB. ANY COMMENTS MADE TO THE APPLICANT DURING THIS EXHIBITION DO NOT AFFECT YOUR STATUTORY RIGHTS TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS TO THE PLANNING AUTHORITY ON THE PLANNING APPLICATION ITSELF.**  
Your personal data will not be used for any purpose other than to keep you updated on Elgin Energy's plans for a Solar PV Farm & BESS at Peterhead and will not be provided to any third party.



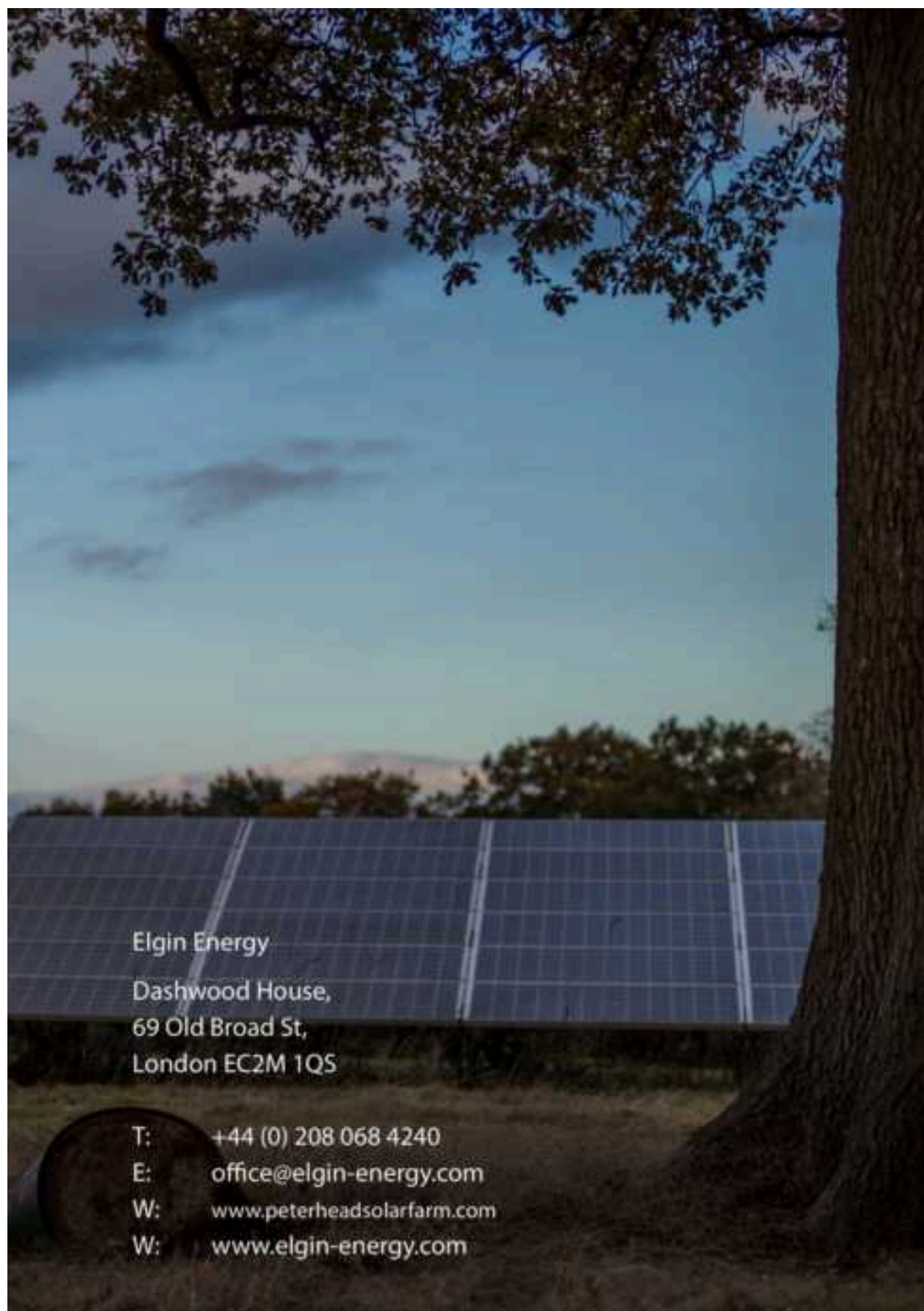
## Exhibition materials

Photomontages were on display along with the project brochure (below)





[www.elgin-energy.com](http://www.elgin-energy.com)



Elgin Energy

Dashwood House,  
69 Old Broad St,  
London EC2M 1QS

T: +44 (0) 208 068 4240  
E: [office@elgin-energy.com](mailto:office@elgin-energy.com)  
W: [www.peterheadsolarfarm.com](http://www.peterheadsolarfarm.com)  
W: [www.elgin-energy.com](http://www.elgin-energy.com)



## About Elgin Energy


The Applicant, Elgin Energy Esco Ltd 'Elgin Energy' is a leading international and independent solar development Company set up in 2009. Elgin Energy has extensive experience in delivering projects from initial landowner engagement to project completion having initially begun development in the UK in 2011, followed by Ireland in 2015 and Australia in 2018.

As of 2021, Elgin Energy has successfully delivered 230MW of solar energy across 21 projects in the UK, providing the equivalent of 75,000 homes with clean energy on an annual basis. This includes Scotland's largest solar farm at Errol Estate. The company has successfully obtained consent for 1,200MW across 63 projects including Scotland's first Energy Consent Unit (ECU) application at Milltown Airfield. A further 5GW solar + 3GW storage projects are at late stages of development across the UK, Ireland and Australia.

Elgin Energy is committed to creating a sustainable future and is working towards this goal with our projects.

To learn more about Elgin Energy and the work we do, please visit our website.





## Physical elements of the development

The following components are proposed for this development:

- Solar panels will be arranged in rows facing southwards at an inclination of typically up to 30 degrees. The distance between the rows will be between 2 - 15 metres (m). The panels are set at 0.8m above ground level and increase to 3.2m approximately.

- A mounting system comprising upright galvanised steel posts which are screwed or pushed into the ground and an aluminium support frame which is bolted together.

- The battery storage facility will consist of approximately 50 No. storage units typically measuring 12.2m (l) x 2.5m (w) x 3m (h) and set side by side generally 3m apart and on top of concrete plinths. Each pair of storage units will have an associated Power Conversion System (PCS) units also typically measuring 12.2m (l) x 2.5m (w) x 3m (h) sat atop concrete plinths.

- Solar inverters typically measuring 12.2m (l) x 2.5m (w) x 3m (h) sat atop concrete plinths. They convert the DC electricity produced by the panels into grid-compatible AC current. They will be located throughout the site.

- A primary substation compound consisting of a Network operator substation and customer substation and associated infrastructure.

- Underground cabling from the panels/inverters to the substation.

- Several permeable stone tracks to facilitate access to the inverters.

- Rural 'timber & post' deer fence measuring 2.4m in height will enclose the site. A gap of 10cm at ground level will allow ecology to freely enter and exit.

- 3m high pole-mounted CCTV cameras inside the site to monitor the solar farm. The solar farm requires no concrete foundations except for the substation bases. It is designed to be reversible and leave no trace when

## Local engagement

Elgin Energy EsCo Ltd is committed to the local communities in which our solar farms operate. We engage with communities on each project through a public consultation and try to identify local initiatives that we can support through a community benefit fund.

Local contractors and businesses will be engaged as far as possible during the installation phase. It is estimated that installation will take approximately 4-6 months. For the operational phase it is envisaged that local contractors and service providers will be engaged to maintain the solar farm. If you would like to obtain further information about a community benefit fund or enquire about providing services for this project, please visit the project website.

## Pre-planning process

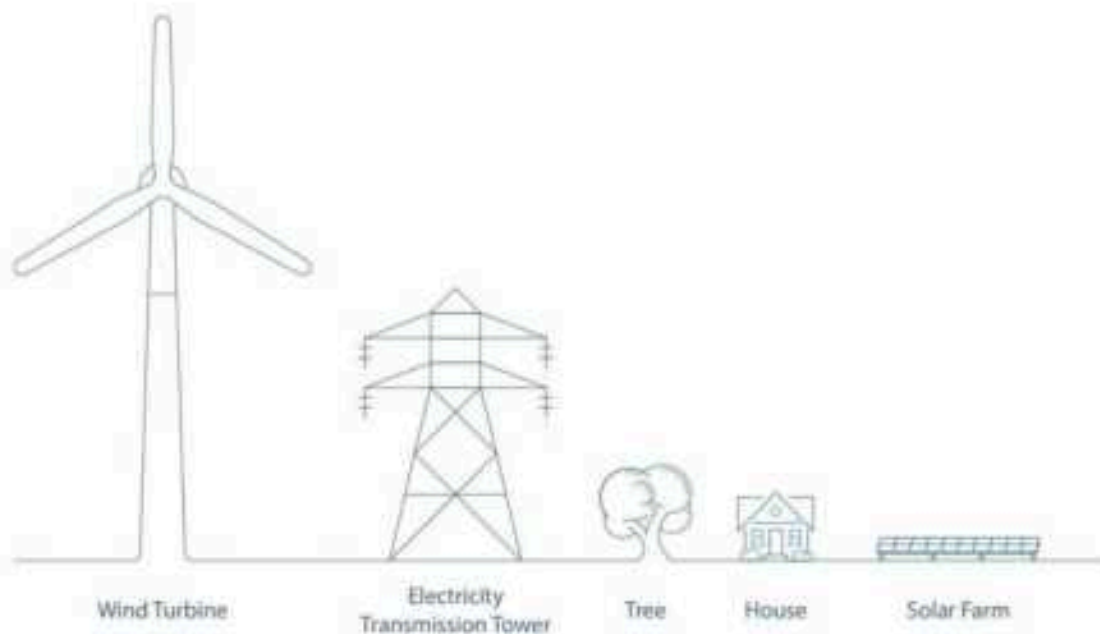
A number of assessments are being conducted to establish any potential affects of the proposed development on the site and surrounding lands. These reports include ongoing ecology work. In addition, archaeology & cultural heritage, construction access & traffic, flood risk together with a landscape and visual impact assessment which will identify any impacts on nearby viewpoints. The current concept of design layout can be viewed on the project website, this will be refined as the assessments and consultation progress. A glint & glare assessment will also be carried out although glint & glare effects from PV panels are rare as they are designed to absorb, not reflect, sunlight. This is evidenced by the installation of PV panels adjacent to the runways at Gatwick airport.

Existing field boundaries, trees, and hedgerows will be retained as far as possible. The provision of bird boxes, insect hotels, and wintering wildflower birdseed mix provide significant opportunities for biodiversity enhancements. Once the solar farm is operational, sheep farming can take place ensuring the land remains in agricultural use.

## Project overview

The proposed site is on lands to the west of Springfield and east of the Bow of Fife to Pitlessie road. It is approximately 2.1 kilometers east of Ladybank and is 1.2km south of the hamlet of Bow of Fife.

The proposed project covers approximately 247.85 acres and will accommodate approximately 75 megawatts (MW) of ground mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) panels and approximately 50MW (100MWh) of Storage capacity. A project lifetime of 40 years is proposed.





## Introduction

Elgin Energy EsCo Ltd is seeking to develop a ground mounted Solar PV farm Lands to the west of Main Street and east of the Bow of Fife to Pitlessie Road, Cupar, Fife. We are seeking your views on this proposal ahead of submitting a planning application to the Energy Consents Unit. The red line on the map below indicates the site boundary.

Due to the lifting of Coronavirus restrictions on public assembly, we are undertaking a public consultation event. Further details will be released via letter and in the press. Elgin have also created a website to share project information and seek feedback on the project proposals.

[peterheadsolarfarm.com](http://peterheadsolarfarm.com)

Please note that partaking in this process does not affect your statutory rights to make representations to Fife Council in respect of the planning application when submitted.





ELGIN  
ENERGY

PROPOSED PETERHEAD SOLAR PV FARM

Main Street,

Cupar,

Fife

"Solar farms typically take up less than 5% of the ground they occupy, leaving huge scope for biodiversity enhancements in a protected space"

BRE National Solar Centre Biodiversity Best Practice Guidelines 2014



## Post-event response to Springfield Community Council

Date: 21 July 2023

Springfield Community Council  
M Curry  
39 Crawley Crescent  
Springfield  
KY15 5SF

Dear Mr Curry,

### **Subject: Peterhead Solar PV Farm and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)**

#### **Location: Lands to the West of Springfield, Fife**

Following on from our public consultation on the 21<sup>st</sup> March, for the above-described development, RPS write to you, on behalf of Elgin Energy, in response to your letter dated 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023, issued on behalf of Springfield Community Council.

This letter comprises a direct response to those matters raised by Springfield Community Council. The matters are addressed sequentially in the order in which they have been raised.

By way of background, due to the nature of the proposal, a planning application will be made to the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit (ECU). Whilst there is no mandatory obligation for pre-consultation, in accordance with Elgin Energy's internal methods of best practice, a programme of pre-application community consultation was undertaken based on the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) 2013, Planning Circular 2013, The Town and Country Planning (Pre-Application Consultation) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2021 and the Energy Consents Unit Good Practice Guidance for Applications (July 2022).

#### **Point 1 – Engagement**

RPS and Elgin Energy acknowledge that pre-application consultation is of benefit to scheme developers and local communities in that it assists communities in understanding the nature of proposals and developers in understanding issues of importance to communities. The consultation activities are timed so that project information is appropriately developed to encourage and facilitate meaningful feedback but still have potential to consider emerging information in developing the final proposals.

The date and timing of the public event was carefully chosen to encourage engagement by different groups of people and to ensure those (especially vulnerable groups) who did not have internet access or did not prefer digital forms of communication, were given the optimal opportunity to liaise with members of the project team.

The public event for this Proposed Development was advertised in the Fife Free Press, the Glenrothes Gazette, Herald and Citizen and on [www.fifetoday.com](http://www.fifetoday.com), during the week commencing 20<sup>th</sup> February 2023, ahead of the public consultation event. Additionally, a project website was set up, a letter drop was made to properties within 1km of the application site (569 dwellings) and project information materials were

circulated to elected representatives and identified stakeholders. Those stakeholders did include Springfield Community Council (see attached) using an email address provided to us by a local councillor ([communitycouncil@springfieldlife.plus.com](mailto:communitycouncil@springfieldlife.plus.com)).

I can reassure you that all of the points you have raised in your letter have already been raised in feedback received from the public consultation event and as explained further below, these matters are under active consideration by the project team

### **Point 3 – Scale and Proximity**

In line with the principle that pre-application consultation should take place when the development proposals are sufficiently developed to allow for meaningful comment to be made although not so detailed that flexibility to amend the proposal has diminished, the layout presented as part of the pre-application consultation process was a preliminary layout to facilitate engagement and is open to amendment prior to any design being finalised.

Following the discussions with a number of residents we have noted concerns that the proposed battery storage area is located close to the village and that the proposed panels are located close to the existing cottages along Makgill Row.

The feedback from the pre-application consultation is being taken into account alongside the outcome of the environmental assessment process and amendments by way of reductions to the overall layout are being developed.

The Pre-Application Consultation Report that will accompany the submission to ECU will document the consultation process, the issues raised and how the feedback received has been taken into account in developing the final design proposals.

An overview of layout iterations will be provided within the Planning Statement which accompanies the planning application submission.

### **Point 4 – Permeability and Land Access**

Elgin Energy and the wider project team understand the vital role the land currently plays within the local community from a recreational perspective. This was made evident through a number of discussions with local residents throughout the public consultation event.

Most people commented that they would like to see the walking paths throughout the site retained and any disruption during construction kept to a minimum.

The revised layouts being developed will take account of your valuable suggestion about access along the headlands of fields and will ensure that the lands will be fully accessible along the field boundaries with security fencing placed around each of the fields to allow for continued access for recreational purposes for Springfield residents.

### **Point 5 – Misleading and Inaccurate Presentation on Use of Land**

Elgin appreciate the importance of prime agricultural land and is completing assessments of the agricultural status of the subject lands. There is no attempt to mislead anyone on this matter.

Initial baseline assessments show that the application site includes some prime agricultural land with other parts of the site on lower quality land.

It is important to acknowledge that prevailing planning policy does not preclude development of renewable energy proposals on such land in that NPF4 states:

*“Development proposals on prime agricultural land, or land of lesser quality that is culturally or locally important for primary use, as identified by the LDP, will only be supported where it is for...The generation of energy from renewable sources or the extraction of minerals and there is secure provision for restoration; and In all of the above exceptions, the layout and design of the proposal minimises the amount of protected land that is required”.*

Our submission to ECU will provide an assessment setting out the benefits of the development, balanced against any temporary loss or reduced agricultural use of the land.

It is also important to note that potential impact of the development on the land within the site will be further mitigated through continued grazing use during operation of the solar farm and appropriate restoration through decommissioning when the development ceases to operate.

### **Point 6 – Loss of Mature Trees**

The proposed indicative layout presented during the public consultation has been underpinned by a series of design principles. These design principles will continue to underpin the design evolution of the project as it is refined further following baseline environmental assessments and comments from residents.

A package of in-built proposals including:

- retention of all trees and hedgerows application of appropriate buffers around ecological features and
- augmenting the existing vegetation through additional native planting across the site

are fundamental principles adopted in the development of project proposals helping to retain ecological features and generate overall ecological benefits. Therefore, it is It is proposed to retain all existing hedgerows and trees on site, unless their removal is absolutely necessary to facilitate the development, in which case they will be replaced by numerous specimens of the same native species

### **Point 7 and 8 – Community Benefit Payment and Community Investment Opportunity**

A community benefit fund is under consideration by Elgin. Elgin welcome opportunities to create benefits and investments for the local community and welcome additional suggestions from the community. All parties are advised that this is a separate matter to the planning process and any suggestions should be formally discussed and raised through official channels by locally elected representatives. Elgin are certainly open to further engagement on this matter.

### **Point 9 – Community Energy Supply**

Unfortunately, it is not possible for Elgin to provide local energy supply to the residents within Springfield. The renewable electricity generated by the facility will be “spilled” directly to the electricity network serving the wider area, contributing significantly to Scotland’s 2045 net-zero emissions targets.

We note a number of representations seeking advice about the potential development of solar panels on local community buildings. Elgin are content to provide whatever advice and assistance we can on this matter.

I trust this addresses the issues the Community Council has raised.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information or clarification.

Yours sincerely,  
for RPS Consulting Services Ltd

[consultant name redacted by McDaid PR]

## Appendices: Phase two consultation materials

Presentation to Springfield Community Council on Wednesday 5 February 2025: printouts were given to members.

# West Springfield Solar and BESS Farm (formerly Peterhead Solar Farm)

Presentation to Springfield CC  
5<sup>th</sup> February 2025



## Agenda

1. Introduction to BLC Energy Ltd & Octopus Renewable Infrastructure Fund
2. Why Solar?
3. Why W Springfield?
4. Project Information
5. Ongoing Activities
6. Timeline
7. Community Engagement
8. Community Benefit
9. Next Steps
10. Questions & Answers



## BLC Energy Ltd & Octopus Renewable Infrastructure Trust (ORIT)



- BLC Energy was set up in 2022 to develop solar and BESS projects in the UK. The 3 partners have over 60 years experience of developing renewable energy projects and have secured planning consent for 3 solar projects in Scotland.
- We are a Scottish company based in Perthshire with offices and team members in Perth and Edinburgh.
- 2 partners also directors in SLR a leading environmental and engineering consultancy with 4000 staff who will be providing specialist input into the planning process
- We are currently developing 11 Solar and Bess projects throughout the UK including 5 in Scotland
- In 2023 we entered into a development partnership agreement with Octopus Energy (via Octopus Renewable Infrastructure Trust- ORIT) and work with them on an exclusive basis.



## BLC Energy Ltd & Octopus Renewable Infrastructure Trust (ORIT)



- Octopus Renewable Infrastructure Trust (ORIT) is one of the funds managed by Octopus Energy Generation dedicated to operating renewable energy projects in the UK, Europe and Australia.
- ORIT has a market capitalisation of £378m and as part of the Octopus Energy Generation group, has £6.7bn assets under management and a total generating capacity of 802MW (47% of which is Solar) This equates to 362,000 homes powered by its renewable energy each year
- Octopus Energy is now the largest domestic energy supplier in the UK.



## Why Solar?

- It is the cheapest and fastest way to create new energy production in the UK.
- Provides Scotland and UK with better energy security from local generation
- Very dependable generation and proven technology
- Does not need any Govt support to build or operate- no follow on cost to consumers
- Has minimum impact on land, environment and neighbours.
- Has potential to significantly improve local biodiversity and soil health



## Why W Springfield?

- No obvious environmental constraints on the site- no designations
- Viable grid connection to Cupar via underground cabling
- Predominantly Grade 3.1 agricultural land classification with some Grade 2
- Opportunity to buffer from neighbouring properties
- Supports Government targets for both Renewable Energy and Solar Generation
- In February 2025 – BLC & ORIT agreed to purchase the project rights from Elgin Energy (the project was previously called Peterhead Solar Farm)



## Project Information

- 49.9MW Solar, 49.9MW Battery grid connection
- Build out to be c65MWdc – final design only once all constraints & mitigation known
- c60k MWh generation or c60m units of electricity each year
- Current design based on 700w panels and 2MWh battery
- Application will go to the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit as is over 50MW

## Project Information







## Ongoing Activities

- Finishing environmental studies Feb 25
- Design Freeze Mar 25
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Exhibition (provisional 3 April 2025)
- Planning Submission to Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit April 2025



## Community Engagement

- 1 Community Councils – Springfield
  - Suggest a liaison group made up of 2 councillors from CC to meet regularly to get updates on project activity .
- As it is a S36 application to Scot Govt, 2 public exhibitions are required at least 14 days apart- these will be advertised in the press, via the website, via the CC & by a local mailshot- suggest a 2km radius from the site centre.
  - 1<sup>st</sup> exhibition held by Elgin in March 2024.
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> exhibition will be once final design is fixed and will show project plans, environmental studies, visualisations, 3D model of the project in the local area etc. Feedback forms will be provided. Suggested date April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2025
- Webpages will be created to provide information on the project, dates of key meetings, etc.
- Will engage with other local interest groups



## Community Benefit

- BLC Energy & ORIT will set up a community benefit fund to support local initiatives in the area.
- The design and value of this fund to be worked on with the CB working group
- These funds are not linked to the planning determination in any way.
- Community Benefit good guidance is being prepared by Solar Energy UK and once published will be forwarded to the CB working group. It is likely to suggest a minimum donation of £400 per Solar MW per annum for the duration of the project life.
- BLC Energy & ORIT would like to offer £500 per MW per annum split into 2 funds. One to support local projects, one to be given as grants to local households struggling with cost of living increases, loss of winter fuel payment etc



## Next Steps

- Formal discussion at next Springfield CC Meeting
- Design Freeze
- Public Exhibition 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2025
- Review of Feedback
- Final Design Freeze
- Submission to Scot Govt ECU April 2025



## Questions & Answers



## Thank you

BLC Energy Ltd  
[www.blcenergy.com](http://www.blcenergy.com)  
[info@blcenergy.com](mailto:info@blcenergy.com)  
Tel: 0131 3804985

[illegible]

Press release: issued by McDaid PR

**Second public exhibition to be held for West Springfield Solar Farm & BESS**

12 March 2025

BLC Energy is holding a second public consultation for the proposed West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS , located west of Springfield and east of the Bow of Fife to Pittlessie Road. It is approximately 2.1 kilometres east of Ladybank and 1.2km south of the Bow of Fife.

The second public exhibition is on Friday 4 April 2025, at Springfield Church Hall, KY15 5RY, from 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM. This follows the initial consultation in March 2023, which was well-attended and generated valuable input from locals.

Attendees will have the opportunity to review the design and see how feedback from the first exhibition has been incorporated into the updated project plans. The exhibition will also reveal the results of environmental assessments and surveys, including visual impact and noise.

BLC Energy will also put forward plans to allocate 50% of the Community Benefit Fund to residents living within 2k

m of the project's centre. The initiative is being designed in partnership with Octopus Renewable Infrastructure Trust.

Neil Lindsay, project lead for West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS and managing director of BLC Energy, commented:

"We are excited to share our progress on the West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS with the community and to showcase how local feedback has helped to shape our plans. This project promises to deliver clean, green energy, helping to achieve Scotland's targets of 4-6 gigawatts of solar deployed by 2030."

"What's more, we're taking a pioneering approach to the Community Benefit Fund, which will see local residents directly benefit from the development, in addition to community initiatives and projects. We look forward to engaging with residents and answering any questions they may have at our upcoming exhibition."

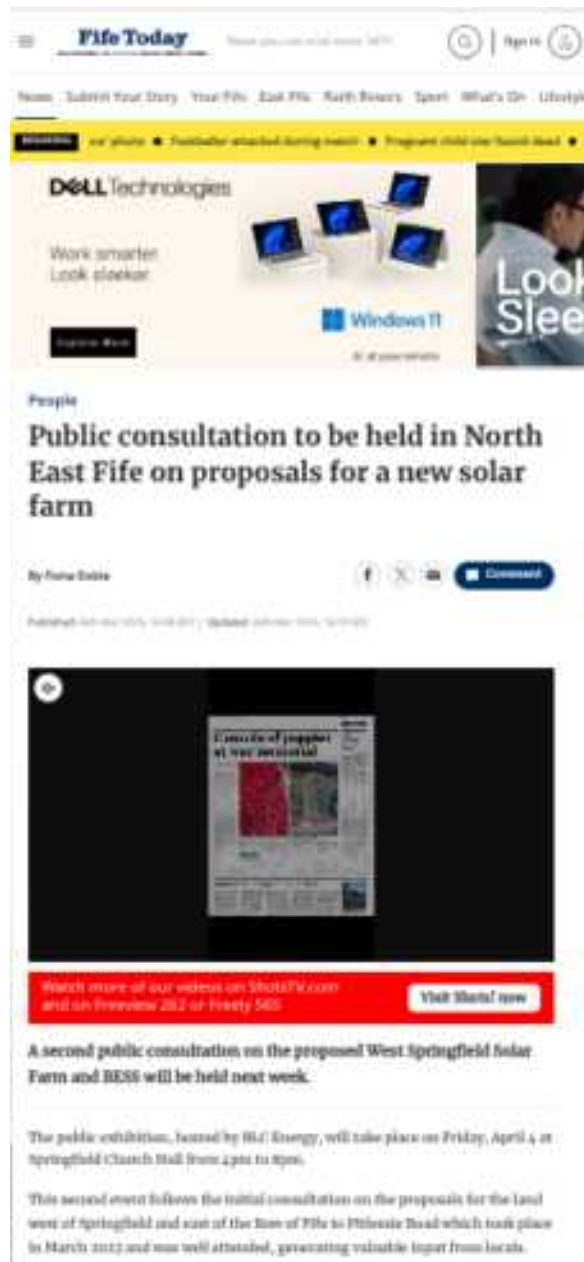
The West Springfield Solar Farm & BESS project will feature approximately 93,000 solar panels and up to 50MW energy storage capacity. If approved, the development will generate enough electricity to power over 12,500 homes annually and reduce carbon emissions by an estimated 740,000 tons of CO2 equivalent over its operational lifespan, compared to traditional fossil fuel-based energy generation.

**ENDS**

Media coverage: FifeToday.co.uk

Read the full article:

<https://www.fifetoday.co.uk/news/people/public-consultation-to-be-held-in-north-east-fife-on-proposals-for-a-new-solar-farm-5053112>



The screenshot shows the FifeToday website. At the top is the FifeToday logo and navigation links. Below the navigation bar is a yellow banner with Dell Technologies and Windows 11 advertisements. The main headline reads: "Public consultation to be held in North East Fife on proposals for a new solar farm". The article is by Fiona Dalziel. Below the headline is a video player showing a newspaper clipping with the headline "Hundreds of people at new consultation". Below the video player is a red banner with the text "Watch more of our videos on ShotOfThe.com and on Facebook 24/7 or Freely 505". Below the banner is the text: "A second public consultation on the proposed West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS will be held next week." The article continues: "The public exhibition, hosted by Biff Energy, will take place on Friday, April 4, at Springfield Church Hall from 4pm to 8pm." and "This second event follows the initial consultation on the proposals for the land west of Springfield and east of the town of Fife to Pitlochry Road which took place in March 2017 and was well attended, generating valuable input from locals."



BE: Energy will also put forward plans to allocate 50 per cent of the Community Benefit Fund to residents living within 3km of the project's centre with the initiative being designed in partnership with Octopus Renewable Infrastructure Trust.

Neil Lindsay, project leader and managing director of BE: Energy, said: "We are excited to share our progress on the West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS with the community and to discover how local feedback has helped to shape our plans. This project promises to deliver clean, green energy, helping to achieve Scotland's targets of 4-6 gigawatts of solar deployed by 2030.



"What's more, we're taking a pioneering approach to the Community Benefit Fund, which will see local residents directly benefit from the development, in addition to community initiatives and projects. We look forward to engaging with residents and answering any questions they may have at our upcoming exhibition."

The West Springfield Solar Farm & BESS project will feature approximately 93,000 solar panels and up to 100MW energy storage capacity. If approved, the development will generate enough electricity to power over 11,500 homes annually and reduce carbon emissions by an estimated 340,000 tons of CO2 equivalent over its operational lifespan, compared to traditional fossil fuel-based energy generation.

Related topics: [Renewable Energy](#)



[Comment](#)

## Invitation to local residents



### West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS public exhibition


We have the pleasure of inviting you to attend the second public exhibition for the proposed West Springfield Solar Farm and Battery and Energy Storage System (BESS) development, previously known as Peterhead Solar Farm, on land west of Springfield, KY15 5RE.

**Join us at the public exhibition:**

Friday 4 April 2025  
4:00 to 8:00pm

Springfield Church Hall, Manse Road, Springfield, KY15 5RY

An online presentation will take place on Monday 7 April at 6pm





### About West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS

West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS will comprise approximately 93,000 individual solar panels with an export capacity of 49.9MW and a Battery and Energy Storage System (BESS) with a capacity of 49.9MW.

The project will generate enough energy to power over 12,500 homes and will supply power to the National

Grid via the Cupar substation. West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS will generate an annual community benefit fund worth £500 for every megawatt (MW) of export capacity on site. This equates to £25,000 per annum for the 40-years project life, to be split between community initiatives and grants to local households.



## We welcome your feedback

This exhibition is an opportunity to see up-to-date plans for the project, including photomontages and a 3D model, ask the project team questions and provide feedback on our proposals.

You can comment on the proposals at the public exhibition or by emailing [info@blcenergy.com](mailto:info@blcenergy.com).

Your comments must be submitted no later than **Friday 11 April 2025**.

The information boards and the availability to provide feedback on the proposal will also be available on the website.

Please note that comments made to BLC Energy at this time are not representations to the Scottish Ministers. Representations to Scottish Ministers can be made once a Section 36 Application has been submitted to the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit.



Further information about the project can be found on the website [www.blcenergy.com](http://www.blcenergy.com)



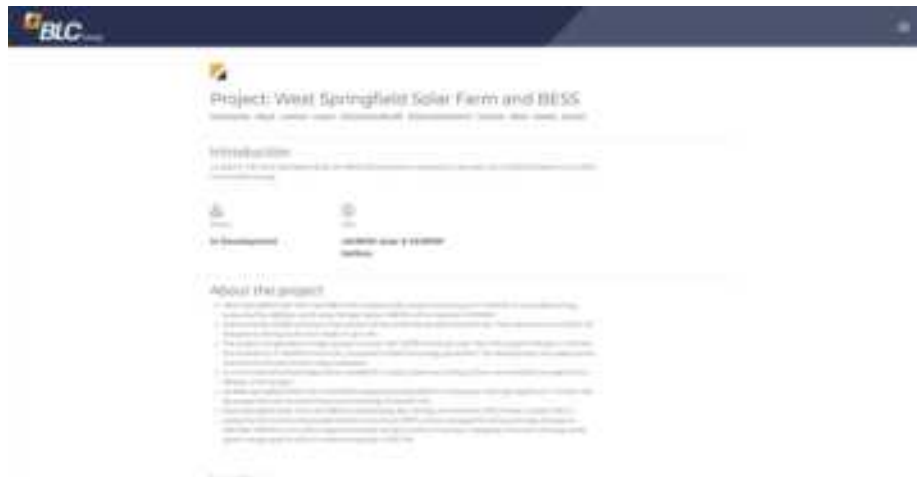
If you have any questions or would like to provide feedback, please email us at [info@blcenergy.com](mailto:info@blcenergy.com)

## About us

West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS is being developed by BLC Energy and owned by TRIO Power Limited. TRIO is owned and funded by the Octopus Renewable Infrastructure Trust (ORIT), a fund managed by Octopus Energy Generation (OEGEN). OEGEN is one of the largest renewable energy investors in Europe, managing more than 230 large-scale green energy projects with a combined capacity of 3.25GW.



Website assorted screenshots: [www.blcenergy.com/westspringfield](http://www.blcenergy.com/westspringfield)



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## Poster



### West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS Public exhibition

BLC Energy is holding a second public exhibition for the proposed West Springfield Solar Farm and Battery and Energy Storage System (BESS) development, previously known as Peterhead Solar Farm, on land west of Springfield, KY15 SRE.

**Join us at the public exhibition:**  
**Friday 4 April 2025**  
**4:00 to 8:00pm**  
Springfield Church Hall, Manse Road, Springfield, KY15 5RY  
An online presentation will take place on **Monday 7 April** at 6pm



### We welcome your feedback

This exhibition is an opportunity to see up-to-date plans for the project, including photomontages and a 3D model, ask the project team questions and provide feedback on our proposals.

You can comment on the proposals at the public exhibition or by emailing [info@blicenergy.com](mailto:info@blicenergy.com).

Please note that comments made to BLC Energy at this time are not representations to the Scottish Ministers. Representations to Scottish Ministers can be made once a Section 56 Application has been submitted to the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit.

## Boards



### Welcome

Welcome to this public exhibition for the proposed West Springfield Solar Farm and Battery and Energy Storage System (BESS) development, previously known as Peterhead Solar Farm, on land west of Springfield, KY15 5RE.



**93,000**  
individual solar panels



**49.9MW**  
export capacity



**12,500**  
batteries equivalent

### The proposal

West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS will comprise approximately 93,000 individual solar panels with an export capacity of 49.9MW and a Battery and Energy Storage System (BESS) with a capacity of 40.5MWh.

### Your feedback

The first public exhibition was held in March 2023 by Elgin Energy, which was then developing the site. We've used the feedback from that event to inform and update our proposal. We've made changes to the layout, added information about the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and community benefit scheme and more.



Sign up to receive more updates on the site and developments. Visit [www.springfield-solar.co.uk](http://www.springfield-solar.co.uk)

### About us

West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS, owned by TNO Power Limited, is being developed by BLC Energy, a Perthshire-based renewable energy developer. TNO Power is owned and funded by the Octopus Renewable Infrastructure Trust (ORIT), a fund managed by Octopus Energy Generation (OEG) and part of the Octopus Energy Group. OEG is one of Europe's largest renewable energy investors, managing more than 200 large-scale green energy projects with a combined capacity of 3,250MW.



If you have any comments or questions about our proposal or the project please visit [www.springfield-solar.co.uk](http://www.springfield-solar.co.uk) or contact us online.



## An updated layout

We have made significant changes to the proposed layout of West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS based on the feedback received at the first public exhibition.

We believe this is an excellent site for a solar farm because



Good solar radiation



Viable National Grid connection

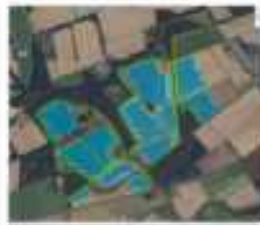


No obvious environmental or technical constraints

We've altered the layout so that the solar farm and BESS has a minimal impact on the landscape while ensuring the development remains viable.

### We have

- Removed part of the site closest to Springfield.
- Moved the BESS component so that it's behind a row of trees, thereby helping to screen it from Springfield.
- Reduced the number of panels by changing our preferred model of solar panel and reducing the overbuild.
- All of this means we have reduced the footprint of the solar farm by 14% since the first exhibition.



Current layout

14%

the reduction of the solar farm footprint since the first exhibition



### Access and recreation

Lots of people enjoy walking around this part of the estate and all walking routes will remain open.

Some fencing will be required, but this will be limited. It will be installed only around the perims and BESS. Grass strips of land will be left between the fence and field margins, along which people can walk on.

If you have any comments or questions about the content of the report please talk to a member of the project team or visit our website.





### Trees, planting and screening

The loss of mature trees and hedgerows, and the visual impact of the solar farm and BESS, were raised as concerns at the first exhibition.

- No trees will be cut down to build and operate this scheme.
- New hedgerows and trees will be added to increase screening of the scheme while enhancing the natural habitat for birds, mammals and insects.
- We will add hedgerow planting alongside the panels to minimise visual impact from Springfield and other nearby properties.
- A habitat management plan will be developed with the Council to ensure the right tree species are used to maximise habitat benefits.

### Agriculture or renewable energy production?

People asked whether building a solar farm in this area could be the best use of agricultural land.

If consented, the solar farm will be used for sheep grazing once constructed, thus allowing continued agricultural use.

Many farming businesses need to diversify in order to remain viable. They use land for many non-food producing purposes: forestry, crops for distilleries, income-generating accommodation and recreational amenities, as well as renewable energy schemes like this one.



#### Solar farms in the UK

Currently solar farms occupy less than 0.1% of the UK's land. To meet the government's net zero target, the Climate Change Committee estimates that we will need 90GW of solar by 2030 (70GW by 2025), which would mean solar farms would at most account for approximately 0.6% of UK land - less than the amount currently occupied by golf courses.

If you have any comments or questions about the impact of the project please talk to a member of the project team or visit our website





## Environmental impact assessment

We have carried out an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), which will be submitted with our application to the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit.

EIAs systematically assess the environmental effects arising from a proposed development.

We commissioned experts to provide detailed assessments in the following areas:

- Transport
- Flood risk and drainage
- Landscape and visual
- Ecology
- Cultural heritage
- Wind and glare
- Noise
- BESS design and safety



These reports are still being finalised, but include mitigation for any significant issues arising.

If you have any comments or questions about any aspect of this project please talk to a member of the project team or visit our website





## Biodiversity net gain

West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS will conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity following national and local guidance.

### Bats

We aim to be bat-friendly. To support bats around the site we will:

- follow the most recent national/local guidance about bats and solar farms;
- create commuting corridors, stand-off distances from woodland and supplement vegetation and hedging to support connectivity with woodland, stands; and
- undertake static bat detector surveys in spring/ summer to determine how bats use the site. We'll submit the results for this after our application, which will allow time for consideration and implementation before construction.



### Fish

We've undertaken fish habitat surveys on the River Great Ouse from up to the River Eden. These are focused on protected fish species. The results of these will be included in our final application.



### Birds

To benefit breeding birds and species like barn owls, we will:

- seed a wildflower and grass mix within the site that is appropriate to the local area;
- create a strip between the solar panels and fencing, ideally around four metres wide, and leave it mostly unmanaged. This will create different heights of grasses, which is good for hunting;
- fit hedgehog gape with appropriate native species; and
- keep existing log piles to provide shelter for reptiles and amphibians.

If you have any comments or questions about the impact of the project please talk to a member of the project team or visit our website





## Battery Energy and Storage Systems

### Why does the site include a BESS?

Battery storage, or battery energy storage systems (BESS), are devices that enable energy from renewables, like solar and wind, to be stored and then released when the power is needed most.

Battery storage technology has a key part to play in ensuring homes and businesses can be powered by green energy, even when the sun isn't shining or the wind has stopped blowing.

#### According to the National Grid

Every day engineers at National Grid and electricity grids worldwide must match supply with demand. Managing these peaks and troughs becomes more challenging when the target is to achieve net zero carbon production. Fossil fuel fired plants have traditionally been used to manage these peaks and troughs, but battery energy storage facilities can replace a portion of these so-called peaking power generators over time.

The UK government estimates technologies like battery storage systems – supporting the integration of more low-carbon power, heat and transport technologies – could save the UK energy system up to £40 billion by 2050, ultimately reducing people's energy bills.

### BESS layout

We moved the BESS to a less visible part of the site and it also meets these safety requirements:

- More than 25-30m front occupied buildings within the battery compound.
- We can clear vegetation within 10m of the units.
- One formal access point to the east, and informal vehicular access from the northern, western and southern boundaries of the site. At least one will be upwind of prevailing wind direction.
- Water tanks that can deliver no less than 1,500 litres per minute for at least two hours are included in our design.
- A site-specific Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) strategy will accompany our Section 36 application. This is crucial for management of water runoff in the event of an emergency and will protect the environment and prevent contamination of water sources.



**£40 billion**  
amount technologies like battery systems could save the UK energy system, reducing bills.

If you have any comments or questions about our report or the project please call us on 01223 333333 or email us on [info@blythenergy.co.uk](mailto:info@blythenergy.co.uk)



## Safety

The safety of the BESS element of our proposal was raised by several people at the last public exhibition.

The scheduled maintenance regime will regularly require:

### Battery system

- **Visual examination:** Periodical visual checks to identify potential damage, leakages or corrosion.
- **Thermal inspection:** Use of infrared thermography to identify potential hotspots, e.g. poor electrical connections.
- **Capacity testing:** Regular discharge tests to check the battery capacity and actual performance, ensuring the system still meets the expected energy output, as per the BS EN 62930 standard.
- **Regular cleaning:** Keeping battery terminals and general connections clean helps avoid poor connections.

### Power Conversion System (PCS)

- **Regular battery inverter testing:** The regular testing and recalibration of the inverters to guarantee the system efficiency and operational safety.
- **Firmware updates:** Regular software updates to ensure new releases or bug fixes are applied.
- **Visual examination:** Undertake inspections to identify potential damage to connectors, cables, connectors, etc.

### Cooling and HVAC

- **Air filters maintenance:** Ensure filters are regularly cleaned or replaced to guarantee optimal cooling performance.
- **Fans and ventilation system inspection:** Inspect ventilation fans and airflow paths for blockages and ensure proper air circulation.
- **Coolant levels:** For liquid cooling systems, verify coolant levels and test for potential system leaks.

### Fire suppression

- **Functional system testing:** This involves periodical fire tests to verify that the system performs as expected.
- **Smoke and gas detectors testing:** This involves periodical tests to verify early detection of any hazardous situations.
- **Alarm system testing:** This involves periodical tests to confirm the alarm notification is triggered under a potential fire event.

Our site has been designed according to the Grid Scale Battery Energy Storage System planning—Guidance for FRS (2022) produced by the National Fire Chiefs Council.



If you have the comments or questions about the content of the proposal please talk to a member of the project team or visit our website



## Community benefit fund

West Springfield Solar Farm and BESG will generate an annual community benefit fund worth £500 for every megawatt (MW) of export capacity on site.

This equates to £25,000 per annum for the 40-year project life, to be split between community initiatives and grants to local households.

We would like to work with the community council and its associated development vehicle, Springfield Community Company, to develop the community benefit fund.



**£500 per MW**  
value of annual community benefit



**£25,000 pa**  
for the 40 year project lifespan

### Tell us your ideas

What are your priorities for the local area? Where do you think this fund could do most good? Please inform a member of the team or fill in one of our feedback forms.



If you have any comments or questions about the support of the project please talk to a member of the project team or visit our website





## Next steps

Today's event is part of the public consultation being undertaken by BLC Energy to provide information and collect feedback about our proposal for West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS.

Your comments will help improve the quality of our planning application and inform related proposals for a community benefit fund.

We anticipate submitting an application to the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit by May 2025.

### We'd like your feedback

Feedback from the local community has shaped our proposal throughout this process. We'll use the thoughts and comments you provide today to further refine our plans. Fill in a feedback form today or use our online form. Please provide all comments by **Friday 11 April**.



## Thank you for coming today

Please note that comments made to BLC Energy at this time are not representations to the Scottish Ministers. There will be an opportunity to make representations to Scottish Ministers when a Section 46 Application has been submitted to the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit.

## Stay in touch



Further information about the project can be found on the website [www.blcenergy.com](http://www.blcenergy.com)



If you have any questions or would like to provide feedback, please email us at [info@blcenergy.com](mailto:info@blcenergy.com)

If you have any comments or questions about the support of the project please talk to a member of the project team or visit our website





## Feedback form



BLC Energy are currently preparing a planning application for our proposed West Springfield Solar Farm and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) to the west of Springfield, Fife. This project was previously being developed by Elgin Energy under the name Peterhead Solar Farm.

Your views are important to us as they will help shape the development proposal. We would be grateful if you could spare a few minutes to complete this short questionnaire and provide us with any comments you have.

1. Do you support the use of solar energy to combat climate change?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Undecided

2. Has the 2<sup>nd</sup> exhibition given clarity on the main aspects of the development that may have been a concern in the 1<sup>st</sup> exhibition?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Possibly ☐ Did not attend 1<sup>st</sup> exhibition

3. How do you feel about our proposed plans for the West Springfield Solar Farm & BESS?

☐ Very supportive ☐ Supportive ☐ Undecided ☐ Opposed ☐ Strongly opposed

4. What do you think would be the main benefit of the West Springfield Solar Farm & BESS? (Please tick one)

☐ It would produce a clean and safe supply of energy ☐ It would assist in meeting renewable energy targets  
☐ It would raise awareness of solar energy ☐ Low maintenance and creates very little noise  
☐ Relatively low visual impact ☐ It would create a dedicated community benefit fund for the local area

If you do not think there would be any benefit, please state why:

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5. Do you have any concerns about how our proposed plans for West Springfield Solar Farm & BESS will affect you or the existing environment?

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6. What do you consider to be the main issues or impacts of solar farms?

- ☐ Visual ☐ Transport ☐ Construction  
☐ Ecology ☐ No impact  
☐ Other:

7. Do you have any suggestions for the Community Benefit Fund:

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8. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Do you wish to be kept informed of our proposals for West Springfield Solar Farm and BESS?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Thank you for your feedback.**

Please hand this completed questionnaire in or alternatively send to:

**BLC Energy Ltd, Unit 4, Mullion House,  
Aberuthven Enterprise Park, Maidenplain Place,  
Aberuthven, Perthshire, PH3 1EL  
Email: [info@blycanenergy.com](mailto:info@blycanenergy.com) Web: [www.blycanenergy.com](http://www.blycanenergy.com)**

**Privacy Statement/Data Protection**

By completing this feedback questionnaire, you are agreeing that we (BLC Energy Ltd) can hold the process data in relation to the current public consultation exercise for the purposes of West Springfield Solar Farm & BESS. We hold all personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (EU) 2016/679 and your personal data will not be transferred outside of the European Economic Area. We will only share your personal data with members of the West Springfield Solar Farm & BESS project team for planning evaluation purposes only. Your identifiable personal data will not be used for any other purposes without your consent.

We will use your data to send you updates about the project where you provide us with contact details and indicate that you would like to receive such updates. In the event a Pre-Application Consultation report is submitted with the planning application, your comments will be anonymised, and we will only identify you in the report or any related documentation with your permission.

**WE, ANY COMMENTS MADE TO THE APPLICANT DURING THIS EXHIBITION DO NOT AFFECT YOUR STATUTORY RIGHTS TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS TO THE PLANNING AUTHORITY IN THE PLANNING APPLICATION ITSELF**