March 2025

# Glen Earrach Pumped Storage Hydro

## Pre-Application Consultation Report

Glen Earrach Energy Ltd

Glen Earrach AECOM

## Quality information

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## Issue History

| Issue | Issue date | Details | Authorized | Name | Position |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | March 2025 | Submission | JD | John Daly | Associate Director |

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# 1. Overview

## 1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This Pre-application Consultation (PAC) Report has been prepared by AECOM on behalf of Glen Earrach Energy Limited ('the Applicant'), to support an application under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 ('the Electricity Act') for consent, together with deemed planning permission under Section 57(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 ('the Planning Act') to:

*'Construct and operate the proposed Glen Earrach Pumped Storage Hydro (PSH) scheme'* (hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development').

## 1.2 The Proposed Development

1.2.1 It is proposed to construct the Proposed Development using the existing Loch nam Breac Dearga located on the Northwest side of Loch Ness, approximately 9.5 km to the south of Drumnadrochit, and 6.5 km north of Invermoriston within The Highland Council area.

1.2.2 The Proposed Development will have a storage capacity of up to 30,000 megawatt hours with up to 2,000 megawatts installed electrical generation capacity. Water will be pumped, via proposed tunnels, into and from turbines located between Loch Ness and Loch nam Breac Dearga. It will provide a flexible energy 'battery' that will help balance energy supply and demand on the national grid system.

1.2.3 A detailed description of the Proposed Development's design and the design development is provided in **Chapter 2 Project and Site Description (Volume 2: Main Report)** of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) which has also been submitted as part of the Section 36 Application.

## 1.3 Regulatory Framework

1.3.1 Due to the regulatory consenting process for Section 36 applications under the Electricity Act, the Planning Act is not fully engaged beyond Section 57(2) and therefore PAC is not a statutory requirement. However, it is considered good practice and applicants are encouraged by the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit (ECU) Good Practice Guidance (2022) ('the Guidance') to conduct meaningful engagement at the earliest possible stage with communities or groups who may be affected by or interested in Section 36 and Section 37 applications.

1.3.2 In 2022, the Scottish Government updated the Guidance on the minimum expectation for pre-application consultation[1]. The approach to pre-application consultation for the Proposed Development has been designed to exceed the minimum expectation.

## 1.4 PAC Report Requirements

1.4.1 This PAC Report has been prepared in accordance with the guidance in the Scottish Government's 'Good Practice Guidance', specifically the guidance embedded in 'Table 1: Pre-application consultation' relating to 'Content of public event and pre-application consultation report'

1.4.2 **Table 1-1 Requirements of the PAC Report** below sets out where the required information can be found within this PAC Report.

[1] Scottish Government good practice guidance on applications under sections 36 and 37 of Electricity Act 1989 https://www.gov.scot/publications/good-practice-guidance-applications-under-sections-36-37-electricity-act-1989/pages/3/

### Table 1-1 Requirements of the PAC Report

| Content of public event and pre-application consultation report | Location within this PAC Report |
|---|---|
| The applicant is expected to prepare a pre-application consultation report (PAC Report) setting out what has been done to accord with the guidance set out above. The PAC Report should be submitted with the application. The PAC Report should contain the following information: | |
| • the dates on which and places where public events were held; | Section 2.2 ‘Early Engagement’<br>Section 2.3 ‘Pre-application Consultation’, ‘Details of the Events’ |
| • a description of any additional steps taken by the applicant to consult with members of the public regarding the development; | Section 2.2 ‘Early Engagement’, ‘Details of the Events’<br>Section 2.3 ‘Pre-application Consultation’, ‘Notice of the PAC Events’<br>Section 3.1 ‘Engagement on Local Socio-Economic Benefits’ |
| • a list of bodies, groups and organisations who were consulted by the applicant and a description of how they were consulted; | Section 3.1 ‘Engagement on Local Socio-Economic Benefits’<br>Section 3.2 ‘Stakeholder Consultations’<br>Appendix C ‘Stakeholder Register’ |
| • a description of any materials sent to consultees and materials provided to those attending public events; | Section 2.3 ‘Pre-application Consultation’, ‘Consultation Materials’<br>Appendix D ‘Consultation Materials’ |
| • copies of any visual presentation shown or displayed at a public event, and photographs of any display boards or models at public events; | Appendix D ‘Consultation Materials’ |
| • confirmation as to whether consultees and attendees at public events were informed that pre-application consultation does not remove the right or the potential need to comment on the final application once it is made to the Scottish Ministers; | Section 2.3 ‘Pre-application Consultation’, ‘Consultation Materials’<br>Appendix A ‘Advertising Material’ |
| • a summary of the written responses to consultations and views raised at public events, including an indication of the number of written responses received and the number of persons who attended the public events; | Section 2.2 ‘Early Engagement’, ‘Details of the Events’<br>Section 2.3 ‘Pre-application Consultation’, ‘Notice of the PAC Events’ |
| • an explanation of how the applicant took account of views raised during the pre-application consultation process; and | Section 2.2 ‘Early Engagement’, ‘Key Feedback Received and Actions Taken’<br>Section 2.3 ‘Pre-application Consultation’, ‘Key Feedback Received and Actions Taken’<br>Section 2.4 ‘Consultation Feedback’ |
| • an explanation of how members of the public were given feedback on the applicant's consideration of the views raised during the pre-application consultation process. | Section 2.2 ‘Early Engagement’, ‘Key Feedback Received and Actions Taken’<br>Section 2.3 ‘Pre-application Consultation’, ‘Key Feedback Received and Actions Taken’<br>Section 2.4 ‘Additional Consultation’ |

*Source: Scottish Government (2022) Energy Consents Unit: Good Practice Guidance for Applications*

# 2. Public Consultation

## 2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The Applicant has engaged meaningfully with the local community and community councils from an early stage. Engagement on the Proposed Development has involved the following three key stages in addition to ongoing consultation:

1. Early engagement;
2. Pre-application consultation; and,
3. Community benefits workshop.

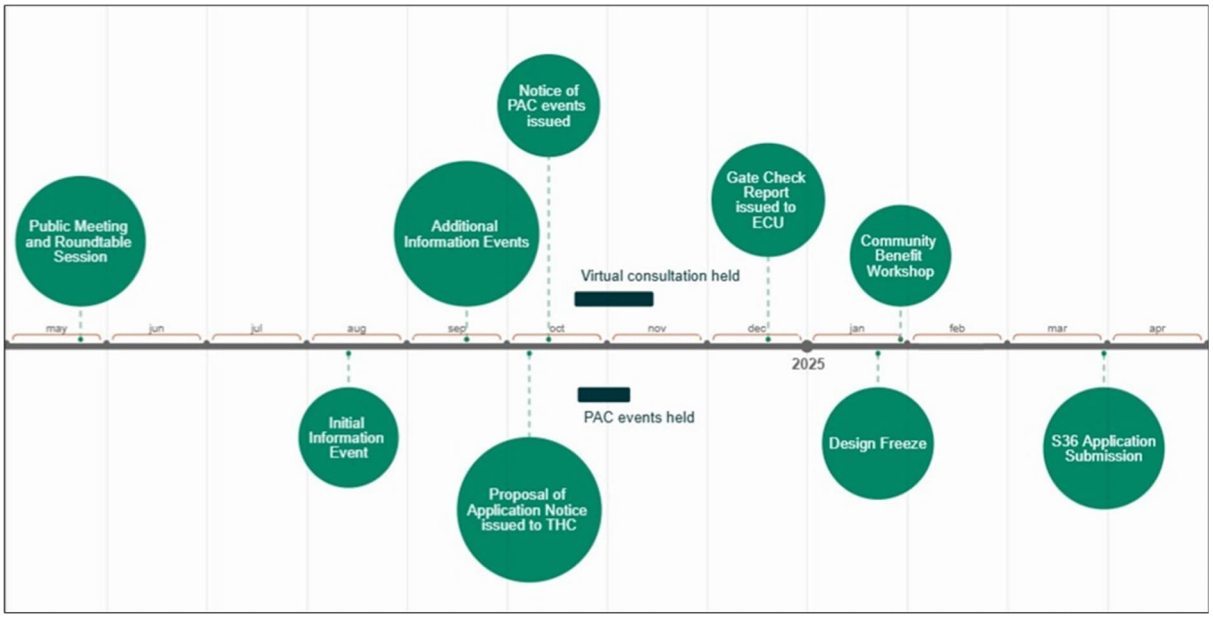
2.1.2 The feedback from the early engagement and pre-application consultation events have been used to inform the design process, the EIAR assessments and the mitigation measures.

2.1.3 Ongoing engagement with statutory and non-statutory consultees has been carried out throughout the design development and environmental assessment processes. Consultation with consultees will continue, as appropriate, at the different stages of the project lifecycle.

2.1.4 Additional engagement has also been undertaken with The Highland Council, key stakeholders, the local community and community councils in relation to maximising the net economic impact of the Proposed Development and on the socio-economic benefits it can deliver.

2.1.5 **Image 1 Timeline of Events** below sets out the timeline of public consultation events and other opportunities for feedback from the public and other key stakeholders.

**Image 1. Timeline of Events**



# 2.2 Early Engagement

## Details of the Events

2.2.1 Five community events were held between May and September 2024 to introduce the Proposed Development and provide an opportunity for the community to give early feedback.

2.2.2 The first two events were held to introduce the Proposed Development:

- Thursday 23 May 2024 at MacDonald Drumossie Hotel, Inverness. A roundtable session with invited business and community representatives.
- Friday 24 May 2024 at Glenurquhart public hall, Drumnadrochit. A public meeting with a presentation from the Applicant and a Q&A session.

2.2.3 A drop-in style event was organised in Balnain to give people closest to the Proposed Development Site an opportunity to see the proposals and give early feedback. Following feedback from the wider community around the Loch Ness area, further drop-in events were organised in neighbouring villages:

- Thursday 14 August 2024, Village Hall, Balnain.
- Wednesday 18 September 2024, Millennium Hall, Invermoriston.
- Thursday 19 September 2024, Wildside Centre, Foyers.

2.2.4 The events were publicised through the local community councils[2], and a flyer (Appendix A) were distributed by a third-party provider to addresses in the IV63 postcode. The events were also shared on the Applicant's website, social media and through the local press. Information about the events were also distributed via an online mailing-list.

## Key Feedback Received and Actions Taken

2.2.5 During the early engagement discussions, there were several themes and topics raised by individuals, businesses and organisations in the local community. These included:

- Environmental impacts of infrastructure on wildlife and of changing water levels on aquatic ecosystems and local water supplies;
- Impact on local roads and walking trails;
- Concerns about noise during construction;
- Concerns about traffic and worker management during construction;
- Concerns about the cumulative impact of various energy projects in the area;
- Requests for additional details and visualisations of the Proposed Development; and
- Requests for community benefits.

2.2.6 Information was shared on how the EIAR would respond to some of the topics raised, with additional information and mitigations identified.

2.2.7 Based on the feedback received, some changes were made to the design of the Proposed Development, or additional engagement was planned. This is set out in **Table 2-1 Key Feedback Received at Early Engagement Events** below.

[2] Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Council, Stratherrick and Foyers Community Council, Glen Urquhart Community Council

**Table 2-1 Key Feedback Received at Early Engagement Events**

| | Action(s) taken |
|---|---|
| Visual impact of the Proposed Development (including temporary construction structures) on residents | At the early engagement events, feedback noted that the proposed location of construction compounds was too close to existing communities. The compounds were relocated to the northwest of the site to reduce these potential impacts on local communities. |
| Impact on private water supplies | The feedback received suggested there may be private water supplies around the Proposed Development site that were not on The Highland Council's register, and these should be considered in the EIAR. To inform the EIAR a questionnaire was developed to gather information on private water supplies in the area.<br>In October 2024, the questionnaire was sent to 150 addresses in proximity to the site and the questionnaires were also taken to the public consultation events.<br>The information that was collected on private water supplies informed the design process and the assessment of impacts on private water supplies in **Chapter 10: Water Environment** (**EIAR Volume 2: Main Report**). |
| Impacts on local traffic and transport during construction | Options for connection points from the Proposed Development Site to the local road network were taken to the early public engagement events. Feedback from the events was used to narrow down the options for site access. |
| Benefits provided to the local community (e.g. Community Benefit Fund) | A **Socio-Economic Statement** has been prepared to demonstrate how the Proposed Development will meet NPF4 Policy 11 (c). This has been informed by engagement with The Highland Council, community councils other stakeholders and public feedback about community benefits. |

# 2.3 Pre-Application Consultation

## Proposal of Application Notice

2.3.1 Although not a statutory requirement under Section 36 of the Electricity Act, the Applicant submitted a Proposal of Application Notice (24/04410/PAN) to The Highland Council on 8th October 2024. This provided a formal opportunity to comment on the consultation approach (**Appendix B: Proposal of Application Notice**). The Applicant has subsequently undertaken a comprehensive programme of pre-application consultation in accordance with the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit Good Practice Guidance (2022). This approach reflects the expectation of meaningful public engagement at an early stage and broadly aligns with the statutory requirements for major developments under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

2.3.2 At the meeting of The Highland Council's South Planning Applications Committee on 19th November 2024, they noted the Proposal of Application Notice but had no specific comments on the consultation approach. Feedback was received on the Proposed Development as part of the committee discussion, which is outlined in **Section 2.4 Consultation Feedback** in **Table 2-2 Key Feedback Received from the South Planning Application Committee**.

## Details of the Events

2.3.3 Four in-person consultation events were held as part of the consultation in locations around the Proposed Development to provide an opportunity for the community to discuss the proposals with members of the project team, ask questions and provide feedback. The events were held at different times in all locations to maximise the opportunity for people to be able to attend at least one.

2.3.4 The four in-person pre-application consultation (PAC) events were:

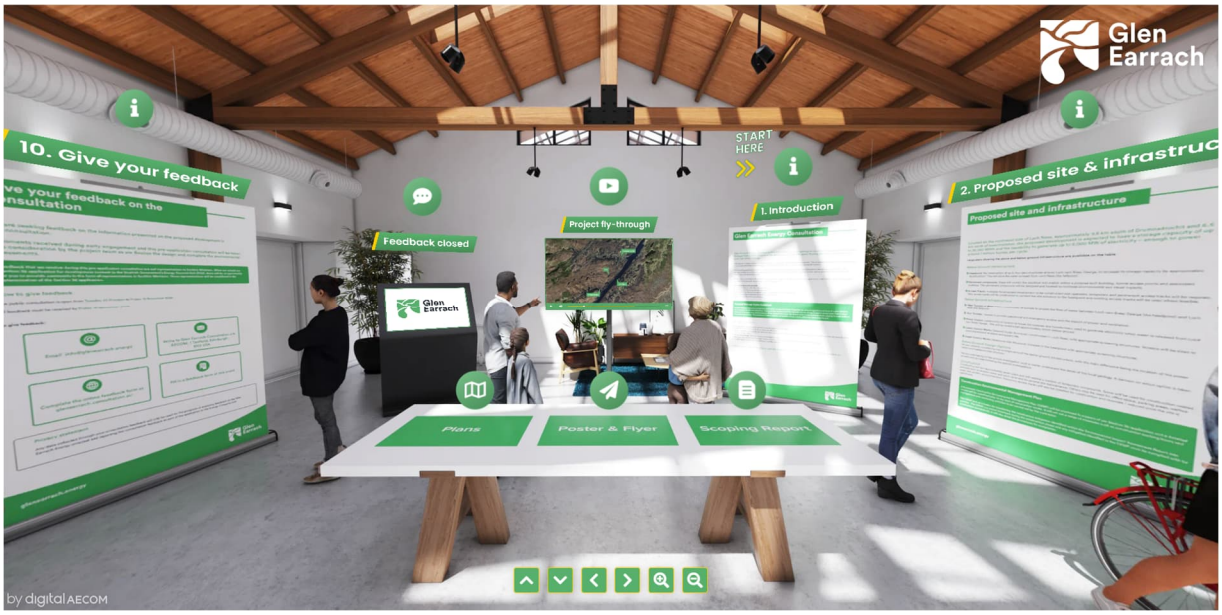
- 23 October 2024, Craigmonie Centre, Glen Urquhart High School, Drumnadrochit, 16:00-20:00;

- 24 October 2024, Wildside Centre, Foyers, 15:00-19:00;
- 7 November 2024, Glenmoriston Millennium Hall, Invermoriston, 10:00-14:00; and
- 8 November 2024, Balnain Hall, Balnain, 14:00-18:00.

2.3.5 A total of 85 people attended the four events. The attendance breakdown for each event was: 31 at Drumnadrochit; 15 at Whitebridge/ Foyers; 9 at Invermoriston and 30 at the Balnain event.

2.3.6 A virtual consultation room, shown in Image 2 below, was also made available at glenearrach.consultation.ai and ran from the 22 October to 15 November 2024 to provide an opportunity to exhibit the Proposed Development to a wider audience.

**Image 2. Virtual Consultation Room**




2.3.7 Over the four-week consultation period the virtual room had:

- 239 unique visitors;
- 2,269 page views; and
- An average dwell time of 5 minutes.

2.3.8 Feedback received on the Proposed Development is outlined in Section 2 Pre-Application Consultation, Table 2-3 Key Feedback Received at Community Engagement Events.

## Notice of the PAC Events

**2.3.9** A variety of digital and non-digital methods were used to raise awareness of the consultation and how feedback could be provided.

**Mailshot**

2.3.10 A mailshot (**Appendix A: Advertising Material**) with information about the Proposed Development and the consultation was sent via first class post to the 2,146 addresses in the consultation zone on 10 October 2024, to start arriving at the target addresses from the 15 October 2024. The consultation zone was determined using a combination of geographic proximity to the Proposed Development Site and existing community council boundaries.

**2.3.11** The mailshot consisted of a double-sided A4 flyer with an overview of the proposals, the locations and dates of the events, and the details of how to find out more information online once the consultation had launched on 22 October.

**Advertising**

2.3.12 A half page advert (**Appendix A: Advertising Material**) was placed in the 15 October 2024 edition of The Inverness Courier, which is a bi-weekly paper and has a circulation of around 5,543[3] per issue and is the main local paper for the area. This was a week before the consultation opened and a week before the first event to give people enough notice to be able to attend the first event.

2.3.13 A second half page advert (Appendix A) was placed in the 29 October 2024 edition of the Inverness Courier with a reminder on the remaining two consultation event dates, a week before these events.

**Email**

2.3.14 Emails were sent to elected officials and the local community councils. A list of these stakeholders is provided in **Appendix C: Stakeholder Register**.

2.3.15 An email was also sent to 120 people on the Applicant's mailing list, which had been built through the early engagement phase.

**Posters**

2.3.16 Posters (**Appendix A: Advertising Material**) were delivered and displayed in the following public venues in Foyers, Invermoriston, Drumnadrochit, and Balnain from 17 October 2024:

- Foyers Stores, Post Office and Café, Foyers.
- Cameron's Tea Room and Farm Shop, Foyers.
- Loch Ness East and Strathnairn Medical Practice, Lower Foyers.
- Wildside Centre, Foyers.
- Glenmoriston Millennium Hall, Invermoriston.
- Glenmoriston Millennium Hall car park, Invermoriston.
- Invermoriston Community Shop, Invermoriston.
- Clog and Craft Shop, Invermoriston.
- Glenrowan Coffee Shop, Invermoriston.
- Craigmonie Centre, Drumnadrochit (2 posters left here at request of venue – one for the local library and one for the Craigmonie Centre notice board).
- Glenurquhart Childcare Centre, Drumnadrochit.
- Drumnadrochit Post Office, Drumnadrochit.
- Scotmid Coop outside notice board, Drumnadrochit.
- Glenurquhart Public Hall, Drumnadrochit.
- Loch Ness Hub and Tourist Information Centre, Drumnadrochit.
- Balnain Hall, Balnain.
- Balnain community notice board, Balnain.

**Website and social media**

2.3.17 Information on the Proposed Development, the consultation and how to provide feedback was added to the Applicant's website at https://www.glenearrach.energy/post/glen-earrach-pumped-storage-hydro-facility-consultation.

2.3.18 Posts were also made on the Applicant's LinkedIn and Facebook channels throughout the consultation period, with information on the in-person events and a link to the page on the website where people could find consultation information online.

## Consultation Materials

2.3.19 Both the in-person and virtual consultation rooms showed eleven (A0-sized) consultation boards around the perimeter of the room and the following documents (A0-sized) were provided on a central table:

- Indicative Site Layout Plan – Underground Infrastructure;
- Indicative Site Layout Plan – Overground Infrastructure (Tunnel Route Option A);
- Indicative Site Layout Plan – Overground Infrastructure (Tunnel Route Option B);
- Indicative Site Layout Plan – Upper Control Works;

[3] Inverness Courier Group circulation figure, ABC https://www.abc.org.uk/product/85-inverness-courier-group

- Sections Drawings - Tunnel Route Option A;
- Sections Drawings - Tunnel Route Option B; and
- Indicative 3D Design – Lower Control Works.

2.3.20 The consultation boards provided the following:

1. An introduction to the Proposed Development and Pumped Storage Hydro;
2. Information on the Proposed Development Site and the required infrastructure;
3. A Site Location Plan;
4. General details of the Environmental Impact Assessment;
5. Information about the landscape and visual context and design considerations;
6. Information about the traffic and transport context and design considerations;
7. Information about the ecology, ornithology and Biodiversity Net Gain context and design considerations;
8. Information about the flood risk and water environment context and design considerations;
9. Information on the potential economic impact and socio-economic community benefits;
10. Details on the consenting process and timescales; and
11. Opportunities to give feedback.

2.3.21 Consultation board 11 included a statement that comments made to the applicant are not representations to the Scottish Ministers and if the applicant submits an application there will be an opportunity to make representations on that application to the Scottish Ministers.

2.3.22 The events held on 7 and 8 November 2024 were used to give people an update on how feedback received had been considered by the Applicant. A table containing this feedback information was produced. The table of information was printed and displayed at both events.

2.3.23 A dedicated email address (info@glenearrach.energy) was set up so that respondents could email comments directly to the project team. The email address was included on consultation materials.

2.3.24 Hard-copy feedback forms were also available, which people could either complete on the day or take away and return to the project team by post. The events were attended by members of the project team to give the public access to a variety of technical experts working on the project.

2.3.25 These documents have been provided in **Appendix D: Consultation Materials**.

## 2.4 Consultation Feedback

2.4.1 **Table 2-2 Key Feedback Received from the South Planning Application Committee** sets out the feedback received from Councillors on the South Planning Application Committee as part of the committee discussion.

**Table 2-2 Key Feedback Received from the South Planning Application Committee**

| Key Topic | Actions |
|---|---|
| Cllr David Fraser noted that the Section 36 applications/EIA needs to consider the cumulative impacts of Foyers, Red John, Loch Kemp, which are at different stages in the planning process/an existing development.<br>Impacts on the Ness Weir also need to be taken account of. | The cumulative impacts of Foyers PSH (existing), Loch na Cathrach PSH (consented) and Loch Kemp PSH (submitted Section 36 application) are considered within the EIAR.<br>To mitigate the effects on salmon within Loch Ness, upgrades to the Dochfour Weir will be required improve fish passage, prevent smolts travelling down the Caledonian Canal, and to control water levels flowing into the River Ness.<br>The Dochfour Weir Upgrade will be subject to its own separate planning application. It does not form part of this Section 36 Application and will be progressed by Scottish Canals in due course. |

| Key Topic | Actions |
|---|---|
| Cllr Ken Gowans requested more information on community benefits. David Mudie (The Highland Council Planning Manager) noted that community benefits should not be reported on by The Highland Council in relation to the material planning merits of a scheme. | It is recognised that any commitments in relation to the charter are not a material planning consideration; however it should be noted that the Applicant is engaging with The Highland Council in relation to their Social Value Charter[4].<br>A **Socio-Economic Statement** has been prepared to demonstrate how the application will meet NPF4 Policy 11 (c). This has been informed by engagement with The Highland Council, community councils, other stakeholders and public feedback about community benefits. |

2.4.2 **Table 2-3 Key Feedback Received at Community Engagement Events** sets out the key topics raised at the PAC events and feedback submitted online or received between the consultation period (22 October to 15 November 2024).

**Table 2-3 Key Feedback Received at Community Engagement Events**

| Key Topic | Response |
|---|---|
| Water level of Loch Ness and related biodiversity impacts.<br>Impacts on commercial and recreational operators on Loch Ness. | The impacts of any changes to the water levels resulting from the Proposed Development and cumulatively are assessed within **EIAR Chapter 10: Water Environment, Chapter 11 Flood Risk and Water Resources, Chapter 9 Aquatic & Marine Ecology** and **Chapter 16 Socio-Economic, Recreation and Tourism (Volume 2: Main Report).**<br>As part of the EIAR the cumulative impact of other schemes on Loch Ness have been assessed. |
| Impacts on the environment and wildlife during construction and operation | Ecology specialists have provided advice that has informed the design of the scheme and the embedded mitigation. Impacts on the environment and wildlife are assessed within the EIAR. |
| Impacts on walking routes from construction works. | The impacts on walking routes have been assessed in **Chapter 16 Socio-Economic, Recreation and Tourism (Volume 2: Main Report),** and an Outline Access Management Plan (OAMP) has been submitted with the application (**Appendix 16.1 Outline Access Management Plan (Volume 5: Appendices).** |
| Visual impact of the Proposed Development (including temporary construction structures) on residents, visitors and local landscape character (at Meall Fuar-Mhonaidh, Loch Ness and Foyers) during construction. | At the early engagement events, feedback was received that the proposed location of construction compounds was too close to existing communities. The compounds have been relocated to the northwest of the site to move to reduce the potential impacts on the local communities.<br>The visual impact of the Development has been assessed within the EIAR as part of the **Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual (Volume 2: Main Report**) assessment. |
| Visual impact of the Proposed Development on residents, visitors and local landscape character (of Meall Fuar-Mhonaidh and Loch Ness) during operation. | The visual impact of the Proposed Development has been assessed within the EIAR as part of the **Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual assessment (Volume 2: Main Report**), which will recommend mitigation measures to minimise and manage the impacts of the construction works and of permanent above ground infrastructure. This will include the preparation of a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (**Appendix 6.4: Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan) (Volume 5: Appendices).**<br>The Proposed Development has been designed, as far as possible, to integrate into the surrounding landscape and views. Much of the infrastructure will be located underground with any above ground features designed and sited sensitively. Vegetation reinstatement and earthwork profiling will further blend the headpond and aboveground features into the existing landscape. |
| Impacts on local traffic and transport during construction. | The impact of the Proposed Development on local traffic and transport, particularly at Drumnadrochit where the entrance to the site will be located, has been assessed within the EIAR as part of |

[4] Highland Council's Social Values Charter for Renewables Investment (2024. [Online] Available at: https://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/83522/item_10_social_values_charter_for_renewables_investment

| Key Topic | Response |
|---|---|
| | the **Chapter 13: Access, Traffic & Transport assessment (Volume 2: Main Report).**<br>To minimise impacts, accommodation and services for workers will be provided on site to minimise the number of people travelling to and from the site. In addition, the Applicant is seeking to reuse as much material on site as possible to minimise waste requiring removal from the site.<br>A Framework Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) has been submitted with the application (**Appendix 13.1: Transport Assessment (Volume 5: Appendices).** |
| Benefits provided to the local community (e.g. Community Benefit Fund). | A **Socio-Economic Statement** has been prepared to demonstrate how the application will meet NPF 11 (c). This has been informed by engagement with The Highland Council, community councils other stakeholders and public feedback about community benefits. |
| Impact on local housing stock and services, during construction, due to an influx of workers. | A workers' accommodation compound with the facilities and amenities to support the workforce on site form part of the Proposed Development. Adverse impacts on housing stock and services are therefore largely avoided. |
| Consideration of the impact of the transmission infrastructure required to connect the Development to the grid network. | SSEN is responsible for ensuring that the Development can connect into the electricity network once planning consent is received. The transmission infrastructure associated with the Development will therefore be designed and separately consented under Section 37 of the Electricity Act by SSEN.<br>The impacts of transmission lines will, however, be assessed on a worst-case basis as part of the cumulative assessment in the EIAR in **Chapter 6 Landscape and Visual Effects (Volume 2: Main Report**). |
| Impact of noise generated during construction and operation on residents and guests staying in visitor accommodation. | The EIAR noise specialists have provided advice that has informed the design of the Proposed Development, and noise impacts have been assessed in **Chapter 14 Noise and Vibration (Volume 2: Main Report**). The chapter outlines the measures that will be required to mitigate noise impacts.<br>A Community Liaison Group is proposed which will provide opportunities for the local community to provide feedback on the construction works, including on noise impacts. |
| Private Water Supplies | The impacts of the Proposed Development on Private Water Supplies have been assessed as part of EIAR **Chapter 10: Water Environment (Volume 2: Main Report**) assessment. |

# 3. Additional Engagement

## 3.1 Engagement on Local Socio-Economic Benefits

3.1.1 The applicant has engaged with the community and stakeholders on socio-economic benefits that will be delivered by the Proposed Development. The engagement has included discussions with The Highland Council on aligning the Proposed Development with The Highland Council's Social Values Charter, and two round table discussions.

3.1.2 Attendees at the first roundtable (23 May 2024) at MacDonald Drumossie Hotel, Inverness included Angus MacDonald MP and representatives from:

- Glenurquhart Rural Community Association;
- Bunloit Estate Steering Group;
- Bunloit Community;
- Soirbheas;
- Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Council;
- Glen Urquhart Community Council;
- NatureScot; and
- Foundation Scotland.

3.1.3 Attendees at the second roundtable (24 May 2024) at Glenurquhart Public Hall, Drumnadrochit included Angus MacDonald MP and representatives from:

- Scottish Land Commission;
- Foundation Scotland;
- Royal Society of Edinburgh; and
- Community Energy Scotland.

3.1.4 The key themes from the workshops related to:

- Community priorities;
- Infrastructure and housing;
- Capacity building;
- Environmental and biodiversity opportunities; and
- Governance of community benefits.

3.1.5 The feedback from the workshop has informed the **Socio-Economic Statement** submitted with the Section 36 Application which has been developed to demonstrate how the Proposed Development will maximise the net economic impact, including local and community socio-economic benefits of the Proposed Development, as per by NPF4 Policy 11 c).

3.1.6 The feedback is also informing the ongoing discussions with The Highland Council in relation to community benefits brought forward in alignment with the Social Value Charter. The Charter notes that it is "*highly desirable for companies to have identified their commitment to the charter in place prior to the start of the formal planning process, which as Members are aware, is entirely separate from any discussion on community benefit*". Discussions in relation to the Social Value Charter are therefore not detailed further in this PAC Report.

## 3.2 Stakeholder Consultations

3.2.1 In addition to the early engagement and pre-application consultation periods, key stakeholders have been engaged through the EIA scoping process, the submission of a pre-application advice request to The Highland Council and up to the submission of the Section 36 application.

3.2.2 The EIA Scoping Report was submitted to the ECU on the 26 April 2024 and key stakeholders were consulted on the conclusion of this Scoping Report. The scoping consultees have been identified in Appendix C of this Report.

3.2.3 A Major Pre-Application Meeting was then held on the 14 August 2024 with officers from The Highland and other key statutory consultees to discuss the design and assessment of the Proposed Development.

3.2.4 **Table 3-1 Stakeholder Consultation Meetings** provides a list of key meetings which have been undertaken with statutory consultees in addition to the scoping consultation and Major Pre-Application Meetings.

**Table 3-1 Stakeholder Consultation Meetings**

| Date | Consultees in Attendance | Discussion |
|---|---|---|
| 22/01/2024 | Transport Scotland and BEAR | Introductory meeting to the Proposed Development and the Applicant. Transport Scotland and BEAR will be further consulted as the transport assessment progresses. |
| 05/02/2024<br>19/09/2024<br>12/11/2024<br>09/01/2025<br>18/02/2025<br>4/03/2025 | NatureScot | Meeting to discuss the Proposed Development, the Aquatic, Marine, Ornithology and Terrestrial Assessment and the Peatland impacts and approach to enhancements. |
| 22/01/2024<br>19/03/2024 | Forestry and Land Scotland | Introductory meeting to the Proposed Development and the Applicant. The subsequent meeting was to discuss the main access to the site, which is an existing commercial forestry road, and recreation routes on or adjacent to Forestry and Land Scotland land. |
| 06/06/2024,<br>14/08/2024,<br>12/09/2024,<br>21/10/2024,<br>16/12/2024,<br>04/02/2025,<br>19/02/2025 | Ness District Salmon Fishery Board (NDSFB) | Discussions regarding proposed smolt tracking studies on Loch Ness, including input to the scope of the study. A site visit to look at trapping and tagging locations took place on the 19/02/2025. |
| 24/10/2024<br>05/02/2025 | Historic Environment Scotland | Meetings to discuss and agree heritage viewpoints as well as potential impacts to heritage, including from water level changes on Cherry Island (crannog) and Urquhart Castle. |
| 04/11/2024 | The Highland Council (Landscape Officer) | Meeting to discuss the viewpoints and walking routes to be considered in the Landscape and Visual Assessment. |
| 04/11/2024<br>09/01/2025<br>18/02/2025<br>04/03/2025 | SEPA | Meetings to discuss the CAR licence application including the impoundment and abstraction licences, and water levels.<br>Meetings to discuss the completed Phase 2 peatland survey, impacts and enhancement requirement. |
| 10/09/2024 | Transport Scotland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Caledonian Canal and various canal stakeholders | A workshop facilitated by HIE titled 'Integrated Transport Strategy for Pumped Storage Hydro Developments in the Great Glen'. The meeting focused on managing transport impacts, utilising the canal for PSH schemes and legacy outcomes from potential upgrades to the canal. |

| Date | Consultees in Attendance | Discussion |
|---|---|---|
| 06/11/2024<br>15/01/2025 | The Highland Council (Access Officers) | Meeting regarding access management on recreational routes with the Proposed Development and surrounding area. |
| 06/11/2024<br>12/12/2024<br>15/01/2025<br>29/01/2025<br>18/02/2025<br>04/03/2025 | The Highland Council Planning Officer | Meetings to provide an update on the feedback from the PAC events and consultee feedback, including discussions with NatureScot, SEPA and NDSFB.<br>An update following the submission of the Gate Check 1 Report to the Energy Consent Unit.<br>The Highland Council Planning Officer also attended key meetings with The Highland Council's Access Officer, SEPA and NatureScot. |

# Appendix A Advertising Material

## A.1 Early Engagement – Leaflet


Glen Earrach Energy, founded by Balmac Forest Ltd, is developing the UK's most efficient Pumped Storage Hydro (PSH) facility at the Balmacaan Estate near Loch Ness.

Our mission is to harness clean energy while preserving the environment, and we've made significant investments in restoring the estate's natural beauty. We value community engagement and are actively seeking local input on integrating this project into the area.

### Project Background

International experts have identified Glen Earrach Energy's PSH project as the most efficient in the UK, possibly even Europe. It will move water between Loch Breac Dearga and Loch Ness, functioning like a giant water battery. It stores excess energy when plentiful and releases it when generation is low.

Balmac Forest Ltd is a family-run business and has a history of renewable energy projects, including a wind energy development with StatKraft and a run-of-river hydro with Green Highland. We're now working with top international experts to bring this project forward.

## Why Glen Earrach?

GEE's PSH project is the most efficient of its type in the UK due to its topography, scale, and location.

- **Optimal Design:** The significant elevation difference of over 480 meters between the upper and lower lochs maximises power generation with minimal impact on Loch Ness water levels. This design ensures unparalleled water efficiency among UK pumped storage projects.
- **Energy Capacity:** The facility will generate over 30 gigawatt-hours of clean energy, enough to power over a million homes for more than 30 hours during low wind periods.
- **Location:** Proximity to wind generation sources enhances the project's efficiency, integrating seamlessly with the national grid.

## GEE's PSH project will:

- **Create Jobs:** Up to 600 on-site jobs in Scotland and supporting thousands more in the local supply chain.
- **Boost local economy:** Increased demand for local services and supplies.
- **Environment:** Minimise or avoid visual and environmental impacts where practicable and implement mitigation and enhancement measures.
- **Ensure Efficient Use of Water:** Generates more energy with less water than any other PSH facility on Loch Ness, contributing significantly to renewable energy storage.
- **Reduce Carbon Footprint:** Expected to cut the grid's carbon emissions by 10% post-2030 and save £2 billion in electricity grid costs.
- **Support the Community:** Offer significant tangible community benefits as well as ensuring local participation in the transition to sustainable, home-grown energy for future generations.

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At Glen Earrach Energy, we believe in the power of community. Your input and involvement are crucial to the success of our project. Together, we can build a sustainable future for Loch Ness and beyond.

## How You Can Get Involved

We are dedicated to engaging with the local community throughout the development of this project. Here's how you can get involved:

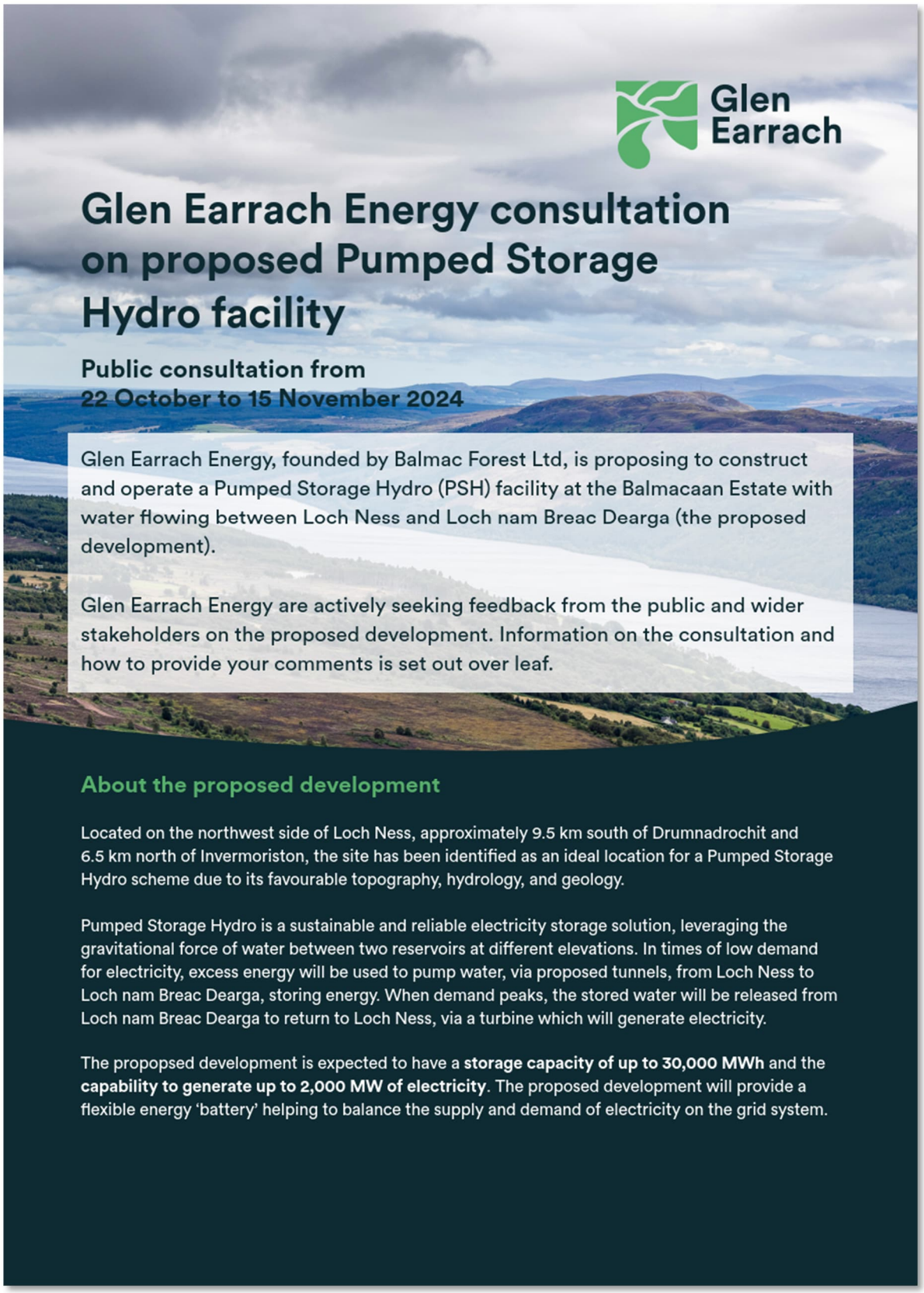
- **Community Meetings:** Attend our local engagement events to share your views and learn more about the project. These meetings are an excellent opportunity for us to hear your thoughts and incorporate them into our plans.
- **Consultation events:** Keep an eye out for our upcoming consultation events where we will gather more specific feedback.
- **Feedback:** Visit our website to provide feedback and stay updated on the project's progress. Your insights are invaluable to us.

We are here to listen and collaborate with you. Reach out to us through and keep updated through the following channels:

info@glenearrach.energy
Glen Earrach Energy @GlenEarrach Glen Earrach Energy

Scan the QR code to visit our website, where you can find more information, provide feedback, and stay updated on our progress.

## A.2 PAC Events – Mailshot



## Have your say

Following our early engagement with the community in the summer of 2024, we have further developed the design of the proposed development and advanced the Environmental Impact Assessment work. We are returning to the local community to inform them of how the proposed development is evolving and the findings from the environmental work which has been done to date.

**The public consultation runs from Tuesday 22 October to Friday 15 November 2024.**

The consultation will be available online or you can attend one of our information events.

## Consultation information

- **Online:** Visit www.glenearrach.energy to access the virtual consultation room from 22 October which contains all the consultation information.
- **In-person:** We are hosting four information events where you can view the consultation information and speak to members of the project team. These events are open to all. Please drop in at a time to suit you.

- **Wednesday 23 October, 4:00pm-8:00pm**, Craigmonie Centre, Glen Urquhart High School, Drumnadrochit, IV63 6XA
- **Thursday 24 October, 3:00pm-7:00pm**, Wildside Centre, Foyers, IV2 6UN
- **Thursday 7 November, 10:00am-2:00pm**, Glenmoriston Millenium Hall, Invermoriston, IV63 7YA
- **Friday 8 November, 2:00pm-6:00pm**, Balnain Hall, Balnain, IV63 6TJ

To request a hard copy of the consultation documents, email info@glenearrach.energy or write to **Glen Earrach Consultation c/o AECOM, 1 Tanfield, Edinburgh, EH3 5DA**.

## Giving Feedback

- Complete the online feedback form via the Virtual Consultation Room
- Write to Glen Earrach Consultation c/o AECOM, 1 Tanfield, Edinburgh, EH3 5DA
- Fill in a feedback form at an event
- Email feedback to info@glenearrach.energy

Feedback that we receive during this public consultation will be reviewed and taken into consideration by the project team as we finalise the proposals prior to submission of our application to the Scottish Government's Energy Consents Unit to seek consent for the proposed development.
Feedback received during this consultation are not representations to Scottish Ministers. When we submit our application for consent to the Energy Consent Unit, there will be an opportunity for you to provide comments in the form of representations to Scottish Ministers. These representations will be considered in the determination of the S36 application.

Glen Earrach Energy @GlenEarrach Glen Earrach Energy

## A.3 PAC Events – Newspaper Advert

Tuesday, October 15, 2024 www.inverness-courier.co.uk The Inverness Courier 9

# Babies to be remembered

By Annabelle Gauntlett
annabelle.gauntlett@hnmedia.co.uk

A GRIEVING mother is determined to shine some light for her "angel above" after an unexpected tragedy robbed her family of a son and much-loved brother.

Inverness mum Daisy McKenzie and husband Eoin were delighted to welcome Albie into the world on April 13, 2022.

Daisy said: "Every time I think about him I just smile as he was the happiest little boy.

"He couldn't walk so we would just crawl everywhere and he smiled whenever someone said his name or looked at him.

"He loved playing with his brothers and really enjoyed being outside regardless of the weather.

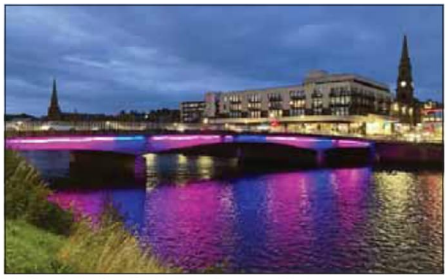
"He was just so full of joy and was the cutest little baby."

On April 27 last year Daisy put her "happy little boy" to bed.

Tragically it was to find the following morning that he had died in his sleep, a victim of sudden unexpected infant death.

"Our world was immediately broken," Daisy said.

"Our whole world stopped, I had no idea about anything anymore.



The Ness Bridge lit up for Baby Loss Awareness Week.

Why did this happen? What happens now? How do I carry on?

"I still feel all those things even though it was last year, but I was lucky, I found Held in our Hearts who have been by my side making me feel less alone and have proved to me that I can survive and my love for Albie will carry on forever."

Since Albie's passing Daisy has dedicated herself to fundraising for Held In Our Hearts, which provides counselling support for those who have suffered the loss of a baby.

Supporting them, she says, is a way of raising awareness of the support available and keeping Albie's memory alive.

She said: "I feel so passionately about fundraising and raising awareness for the charity as no one should go through the very worst time of their life alone, it would be too hard.

"Plus planning events sort of gives me a way of still parenting and doing things for my little boy, which I need to do."

Daisy Mackenzie with baby son Albie who is remembered every day as a vital and much-loved member of the family.

Daisy is now urging those in and around Inverness to unite in remembrance of all the babies lost this year and before.

In aid of Baby Loss Awareness week, which commenced last Wednesday, Daisy has made it her mission to see Inverness's standout landmarks lit up as a visible reminder of baby loss and the support available, and this week both Falcon Square and Ness Bridge will be lit up in blue and pink for the first time.

Daisy said: "The week brings a lot of emotions, but for me I remember this week as not the loss of Albie, but the life of Albie.

"I really don't need a week as I think of him every week and every hour of every day, but this week is special because everyone is coming together and everyone is remembering the babies we have lost.

"The week in itself does so much good, not just for us bereaved parents, but for the people supporting us as well.

"It's just so nice to see everyone pull together."

To commemorate the occasion, a wave of light walk is set to go ahead this evening to remember all the babies lost and offer a safe place for families to console one another.

The walk will take place along the River Ness side of the and will start at the Glen Mhor, Waterside Suite at 6pm.

## Glen Earrach Energy consultation on Pumped Storage Hydro facility

Glen Earrach

**22 October to 15 November 2024**

Glen Earrach Energy, founded by Balmac Forest Ltd, is proposing to construct and operate a pumped storage hydro (PSH) facility at the Balmacaan Estate (the proposed development).

The proposed development involves moving water between Loch nam Breac Dearga and Loch Ness, providing a reliable and flexible energy 'battery' that helps balance supply and demand on the national grid.

The proposed development will be located on the northwest side of Loch Ness, approximately 9.5 km south of Drumnadrochit and 6.5 km north of Invermoriston.

### Consultation Information

Glen Earrach Energy is seeking feedback from the public and other stakeholders on the proposed development.

**The public consultation runs from Tuesday 22 October to Friday 15 November 2024.**

Information on the proposed development can be found in the virtual consultation room on the website at www.glenearrach.energy

You can request a hard copy of the consultation information by emailing info@ glenearrach.energy or write to Glen Earrach Consultation c/o AECOM, 1 Tanfield, Edinburgh EH3 5DA.

There are four events where you can view the consultation information in person and speak to members of the project team. These events are open to all. Please drop in at a time to suit you.

- **Wednesday 23 October, 4:00pm-8:00pm, Craigmonie Centre, Glen Urquhart High School, Drumnadrochit, IV63 6XA**
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- **Friday 8 November, 2:00pm-6:00pm, Balnain Hall, Balnain, IV63 6TJ**

Comments made to Glen Earrach Energy as part of this consultation are not representations to Scottish Ministers. Once the application is submitted to the Energy Consents Unit, there will be an opportunity to make representations on that application to the Scottish Ministers national grid.

# winner at Ness Factor '24

"But if you can hold a tune go for it. It's such an amazing experience and you meet amazing people.

"Every one of those contestants are phenomenal and I'd have been delighted with any of them winning. They are just fab."

Rua Nicole Connell.

Above, Halde and Grant perform.

## Glen Earrach Energy consultation on Pumped Storage Hydro facility

Glen Earrach

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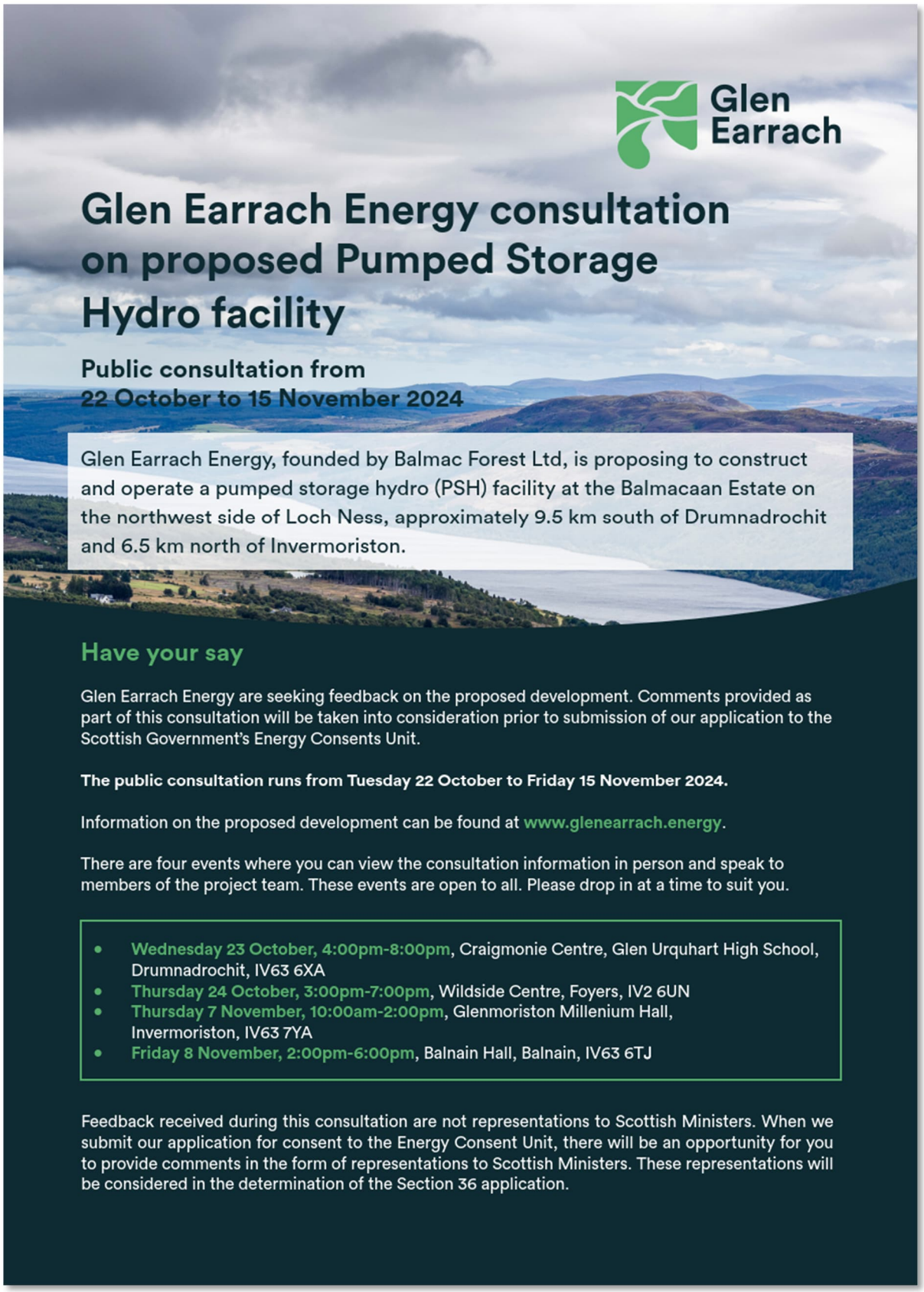
You can request a hard copy of the consultation information by emailing info@ glenearrach.energy or write to Glen Earrach Consultation c/o AECOM, 1 Tanfield, Edinburgh EH3 5DA.

There are two more events where you can view the consultation information in person, speak to members of the project team and find out how feedback has been taken into consideration. These events are open to all. Please drop in at a time to suit you.

- **Thursday 7 November, 10:00am-2:00pm, Glenmoriston Millenium Hall, Invermoriston, IV63 7YA**
- **Friday 8 November, 2:00pm-6:00pm, Balnain Hall, Balnain, IV63 6TJ**

Comments made to Glen Earrach Energy as part of this consultation are not representations to Scottish Ministers. Once the application is submitted to the Energy Consents Unit, there will be an opportunity to make representations on that application to the Scottish Ministers national grid.

## A.4 PAC Events – Poster



# Appendix B Proposal of Application Notice

The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

# PROPOSAL OF APPLICATION NOTICE
# MOLADH BRATH IARRTAIS

**The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended by the Planning Etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 and Planning (Scotland) Act 2019**

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

The Council will respond within 21 days of validation the Notice. It will advise whether the proposed Pre-application Consultation is satisfactory or if additional notification and consultation above the statutory minimum is required.

Please note that a planning application for this proposed development cannot be submitted less than 12 weeks from the date the Proposal of Application Notice is received by the Council and without the statutory consultation requirements having been undertaken. The planning application must be accompanied by a Pre-application consultation report.

The Proposal of Application Notice will be valid for a period of 18 months from the date of validation of the notice by the Council.

| **Data Protection** |
|---|
| Your personal data will be managed in compliance with the Data Protection legislation. You can read our privacy notice for planning related certificates on the Council's website at: https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/1052173/planning_applications_consents_and_notice_of_review<br><br>☒I have read and understood the privacy notice. |

| **Contact Details** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Applicant | Glen Earrach Energy Ltd. | Agent | John Daly |
| Address | 50 Lothian Road<br>Festival Square<br>Edinburgh<br>EH3 9WJ | Address | AECOM<br>1 Tanfield<br>Inverleith Row<br>Edinburgh<br>EH3 5DA |
| Phone | | Phone | 07392353834 |
| Email | roderick@glenearrach.energy | Email | john.daly1@aecom.com |

| **Address or Location of Proposed Development**<br>Please state the postal address of the prospective development site. If there is no postal address, please describe its location. Please outline the site in red on a base plan to a recognised metric scale and attach it to this completed Notice. |
|---|
| The Development is on the Northwest side of Loch Ness, approximately 9.5 km to the south of Drumnadrochit, and 6.5 km north of Invermoriston within The Highland Council area. The Development site is shown on the attached 'Location Plan'. |

| **Description of Development**<br>Please include detail where appropriate – eg the number of residential units; the gross floorspace in $m^2$ of any buildings not for residential use; the capacity of any electricity generation or waste management facility; and the length of any infrastructure project. Please attach any additional supporting information. |
|---|
| The Development will have a storage capacity of up to 30,000 megawatt hours with up to 2,000 megawatts installed electrical generation capacity. Water will be pumped, via proposed tunnels, into and from turbines located between Loch Ness and Loch nam Breac Dearga. It will provide a flexible energy 'battery' that helps balance supply and demand on the grid system. |

| **Pre-application Screening Notice**<br>Has a Screening Opinion been issued on the need for a Proposal of Application notice by the Highland Council in respect of the proposed development?<br>If yes, please provide a copy of this Opinion. | |
|---|---|
| ☒Yes | ☐No |

| **Community Consultation**<br>State which other parties have received a copy of this Proposal of Application Notice. | |
|---|---|
| **Community Council/s** | **Date Notice Served** |
| Glenurquhart<br>Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston<br>Stratherrick and Foyers | 09/10/2024 |
| **Local Elected Members** | **Date Notice Served** |
| Cllr. Chris Balance<br>Cllr. Helen Crawford<br>Cllr. David Fraser<br>Cllr. Emma Knox | 09/10/2024 |
| **Members of Scottish Parliament and Members of Parliament** | **Date Notice Served** |
| Kate Forbes MSP<br>Ariane Burgess MSP<br>Tim Eagle MSP<br>Rhoda Grant MSP<br>Jamie Halcro Johnston MSP<br>Edward Mountain MSP<br>Emma Roddick MSP<br>Douglas Ross MSP<br>Angus MacDonald MP | 09/10/2024 |
| **Names / details of other parties** | **Date Notice Served** |

| | |
|---|---|
| Details of the consultation will be mailed to landowners within a 10 km radius. | 14/10/2024 |

| Details of Proposed Consultation | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Proposed Public Event 1** | **Venue** | **Date and Time** |
| | Craigmonie Centre Glen Urquhart High School, Drumnadrochit, IV63 6XA<br>Wildside Centre, Whitebridge, IV2 6UN | Wednesday 23 October, 4:00pm-8:00pm<br><br>Thursday 24 October, 3:00pm-7:00pm |
| **Proposed Public Event 2**<br>*(at least 14 days after Public Event 1)* | **Venue** | **Date and Time** |
| | Glenmoriston Millenium Hall, Invermoriston, Inverness, IV63 7YA<br>Balnain Hall, Balnain, Drumnadrochit, IV63 6UG | Thursday 7 November, 10:00am-2:00pm<br><br>Friday 8 November, 2:00pm-6:00pm |

| Publication of Event | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Newspaper Advert** | **Name of Newspaper** | **Advert Date** |
| | Inverness Courier | 15 October 2024<br>29 October 2024 |
| **Details of any other consultation methods (date, time and with whom)** | | |
| An online consultation room (www.glenearrach.energy) will be live for comments between 22 October to 15 November 2024. | | |

| Signed |  | Date | 08/10/2024 |
|---|---|---|---|

# Appendix C Stakeholder Register

| Consultee | EIA Scoping Consultee | EIA Scoping Response | PAC Event Consultee | Further Ad-hoc Engagement |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Statutory Consultees** | | | | |
| The Highland Council | Yes | Yes | - | Yes |
| Historic Environment Scotland | Yes | Yes | - | Yes |
| NatureScot | Yes | Yes | - | Yes |
| SEPA | Yes | Yes | - | Yes |
| **Scottish Government** | | | | |
| Energy Consents Unit | Yes | Yes | - | - |
| Transport Scotland | Yes | Yes | - | Yes |
| **Non-statutory Consultees** | | | | |
| BEAR Scotland | Yes | - | - | Yes |
| Beastie Boats | Yes | - | - | - |
| Buglife | Yes | Yes | - | - |
| BT | Yes | Yes | - | - |
| Caley Cruisers | Yes | Yes | - | - |
| Civil Aviation Authority | Yes | - | - | - |
| Communities Inshore Fisheries Alliance | Yes | - | - | - |
| Crown Estate Scotland | Yes | Yes | - | - |
| Cruise Loch Ness | Yes | - | - | - |
| Defence Infrastructure Organisations | Yes | - | - | - |
| Fisheries Management Scotland | Yes | - | - | - |
| Forestry and Land Scotland | - | - | - | Yes |
| Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Council | Yes | - | Yes | - |
| Glenurquhart Community Council | Yes | Yes | Yes | - |
| Health and Safety Executive | Yes | Yes | - | - |
| Highland and Islands Airports Limited (HIAL) | Yes | Yes | - | - |
| Highlands and Islands Enterprises | - | - | - | Yes |
| John Muir Trust | Yes | - | - | - |
| Joint Radio Company | Yes | Yes | - | - |
| Loch Ness by Jacobite | Yes | - | - | - |

| Consultee | EIA Scoping Consultee | EIA Scoping Response | PAC Event Consultee | Further Ad-hoc Engagement |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Marine Harvest Ltd – MOWI | Yes | Yes | - | - |
| Mountaineering Scotland | Yes | - | - | - |
| National Grid | Yes | - | - | - |
| NATS Safeguarding | Yes | Yes | - | - |
| Ness and Beauly Fisheries Trust | Yes | - | - | - |
| Ness District Salmon Fisheries Board | Yes | Yes | - | Yes |
| Office for Nuclear Regulation | Yes | Yes | - | - |
| Royal Yachting Association | Yes | Yes | - | - |
| RSPB Scotland | Yes | Yes | - | - |
| Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks | Yes | - | - | - |
| Scottish Canals | Yes | Yes | - | Yes |
| Scottish Canals 2 – Caledonian Canal | Yes | - | - | - |
| Scottish Canoe Associations | Yes | - | - | - |
| Scottish Fishermen's Federation | Yes | - | - | - |
| Scottish Fishermen's Organisation | Yes | - | - | - |
| Scottish Forestry | Yes | - | - | - |
| Scottish Gas Networks | Yes | Yes | - | - |
| Scottish Water | Yes | Yes | - | - |
| Scottish Wild Land Group | Yes | - | - | - |
| Scottish Wildlife Trust | Yes | - | - | - |
| ScotWays | Yes | Yes | - | - |
| Stratherrick and Foyers Community Council | Yes | Yes | Yes | - |
| The Loch Ness Centre | Yes | - | - | - |
| Visit Scotland | Yes | - | - | - |

# Appendix D Consultation Materials

# D.1 Early Engagement Information Boards

## About the scheme

### What is Pumped Storage Hydro (PSH)?

Pumped Storage Hydro is a sustainable method for storing electricity. It operates by using the gravitational force of water stored in two reservoirs at different elevations. During periods of low electricity demand, excess energy is used to pump water from a lower reservoir to an upper one, storing energy. When demand increases, the stored water is released back down, passing through turbines to generate electricity. This process provides a reliable and flexible energy supply, efficiently balancing the grid.

### About Glen Earrach Energy

Glen Earrach Energy, founded by Balmac Forest Ltd, aims to develop the UK's most efficient Pumped Storage Hydro (PSH) facility on the Balmacaan Estate near Loch Ness. With a track record in renewable energy, including wind development with Statkraft, we bring extensive experience to this project.

We are committed to harnessing clean energy while preserving the environment. Significant investments have been made in restoring and enhancing the estate's natural beauty. We prioritise minimising the impact on the local ecosystem and are actively seeking community input on how best to integrate this project into the local environment.

### About the Project

The Glen Earrach Energy PSH project has been recognised by international experts as one of the most efficient in the UK, possibly in Europe. The scheme involves moving water between Loch nam Breac Dearga and Loch Ness, providing a reliable and flexible energy 'battery' that helps balance supply and demand on the national grid.

Located on the northwest side of Loch Ness, approximately 9.5 km south of Drumnadrochit and 6.5 km north of Invermoriston, the project site has been identified as ideal for PSH due to its favourable topography, hydrology, and geology. The scheme is expected to have a storage capacity of up to 30,000 MWh and the capability to generate up to 2,000 MW of electricity.

We are committed to:

- Clean energy;
- Environmental protection;
- Community engagement; and
- Enhancing natural and social environments.

### Why Glen Earrach?

- **Topography:** Efficient water use with minimal impact on Loch Ness.
- **Location:** Proximity to wind farms enhances efficiency.
- **Scale:** Capable of storing 30,000 MWh of clean energy, with the potential to reduce grid carbon emissions by 10% and save £2 billion in grid running costs.
- **Sustainable Design:** Minimal visual and ecological impact.
- **Geology:** Ideal for Pumped Storage Hydro, providing high energy output with low environmental impact.
- **Conservation:** Committed to investing in wildlife habitats.

### Powering Local Prosperity

This large-scale, water-efficient project offers substantial benefits to the local economy and environment while minimising visual impact and water level changes.

- **Economic Boost:** A £3 billion investment.
- **Job Creation:** Up-to 600 on-site jobs during construction, with 20-50 local jobs and 100-200 jobs in the wider UK supply chain remaining during the project's operation.
- **Local Businesses:** Increased demand stimulates the local economy.
- **Education and Training:** New skills and career opportunities in renewable energy.

**Approximately 2,000 MW (2.0 GW) installed electrical generation capacity**
*(subject to further investigation)*

**Storage capacity approximately 30,000 megawatt hours (MWh) (30GWh) per cycle**

**Potential to power c. 1 million homes per cycle**

glenearrach.energy

Glen Earrach

## Community Benefit Package

Larger-scale, water-efficient projects – like Glen Earrach Energy's – can deliver greater value for residents, the local economy and environment, while minimising visual impact and water level changes.

How could a community benefit package support your community and what's most important to you?

- Community infrastructure & facilities
- Education & youth development
- Health & wellbeing
- Community cohesion & projects
- Environmental sustainability
- Economic development

glenearrach.energy

Glen Earrach

# Proposed infrastructure

The proposed development has been designed to use water efficiently whilst preserving the natural landscape and minimising visual impact.

The scheme will require both above and below ground infrastructure illustrated on the plan opposite. This includes:

## Above ground

- **Permanent and Temporary Compounds:** the development of a number of new permanent and temporary compounds to enable the construction and operation of the scheme;
- **Access Tracks:** Creation of new and upgraded access tracks;
- **Switching Station:** construction of a switching station to house the electrical equipment necessary for operation; and
- **Portals:** creation of three portals to provide access to the underground infrastructure.

## Below ground

- **Water Tunnels:** construction of tunnels to enable the water to flow between Loch nam Breac Dearga and Loch Ness;
- **Turbine Cavern:** construction of a cavern to house the turbines used to generate electricity when water is released from Loch nam Breac Dearga;
- **Tunnels:** construction of a number of additional tunnels to provide operational and emergency access and for power cables; and
- **Inlet and Outlet Valves:** installed in Loch Ness to manage water flow.

### Construction

Construction will last approximately six years and will require temporary and permanent compounds. Some will be used for construction related activities such as laydown areas and work yards and for general site maintenance. Others may be used for office space, parking areas, welfare areas, and accommodation.

### The consenting process

As the proposed development will comprise an electricity generating plant with a gross electrical output in excess of 50 MW, consent to construct and operate the scheme is required from the Scottish Ministers under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989.

A Section 36 application will be submitted to the Energy Consents Unit (ECU) of the Scottish Government. The Scottish Ministers will also be requested to give a direction for planning permission to be deemed granted under Section 57(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

### Assessing the potential impacts

The Electricity Works (EIA) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 apply to applications under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989. The proposed development constitutes a Schedule 2 development under Regulation 2(1) of the Electricity Works (EIA) (Scotland) Regulations 2017; meaning an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is not mandatory.

However, as there is potential for the proposed development to have significant effects on the environment, we consider it appropriate to undertake an EIA. The findings will be summarised in an EIA Report which will be submitted as part of our Section 36 application.

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# Environmental Impact Assessment

An extensive programme of survey work is being undertaken as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process to assess the potential impact of the proposed scheme and help identify the ways that any potential impacts can be avoided, minimised or mitigated.

The EIA assessments and surveys summarised below are currently underway. Further details will be presented during the pre-application consultation, which is being planned for the Autumn. A report setting out the findings of the environmental survey and assessment work (the EIA Report) will be submitted as part of the Section 36 application to the Scottish Ministers.

| Topic | Assessments and Surveys |
|---|---|
| Landscape and visual assessment | Assessment of the effect of construction and operation of the proposed development on landscape character and visual amenity. |
| Terrestrial ecology | Survey and assessment of:<br>- habitats, including classification of vegetation types;<br>- terrestrial and riparian invasive non-native species; and<br>- protected mammals. |
| Aquatic ecology inc marine ecology | Fish habitat assessment; fish eDNA survey; aquatic insect and plant surveys and assessment of freshwater invasive non-native species. |
| Ornithology | Habitats and breeding birds including raptor survey (including eagles), diver and grebe surveys, black grouse surveys, moorland bird survey and vantage point surveys. |
| Geology and ground conditions | Assessment of geology and hydrogeology including ground investigations and peat assessments. |
| Water environment | Assessment of water quality and water resource; hydrological assessment and a Water Framework Directive (WFD) assessment |
| Flood risk and water resources | Flood risk assessment and hydrological assessment. |
| Cultural heritage | Assessment of the potential effects on cultural heritage assets within 1km of the proposed development, and their setting that are within the zone of theoretical visibility up to 3 km from the site boundary. |
| Access, traffic and transport | Assessment of the proposed access routes from the principal road network, the point(s) of access to the development site and an indication of the likely number of vehicle movements and traffic management plans required during construction. |
| Noise and vibration | Assessment of construction and operation noise and vibration. |
| Socio-economics, recreation and tourism | Assessment of the effects on the local community, local economy, recreation and tourism in the area. |
| Climate | Lifecycle greenhouse gas impact assessment; climate change risk assessment and in-combination climate change impact assessment. |
| Forestry | Identification of trees to be removed and consideration of any impacts to retained trees including how they can be protected. |

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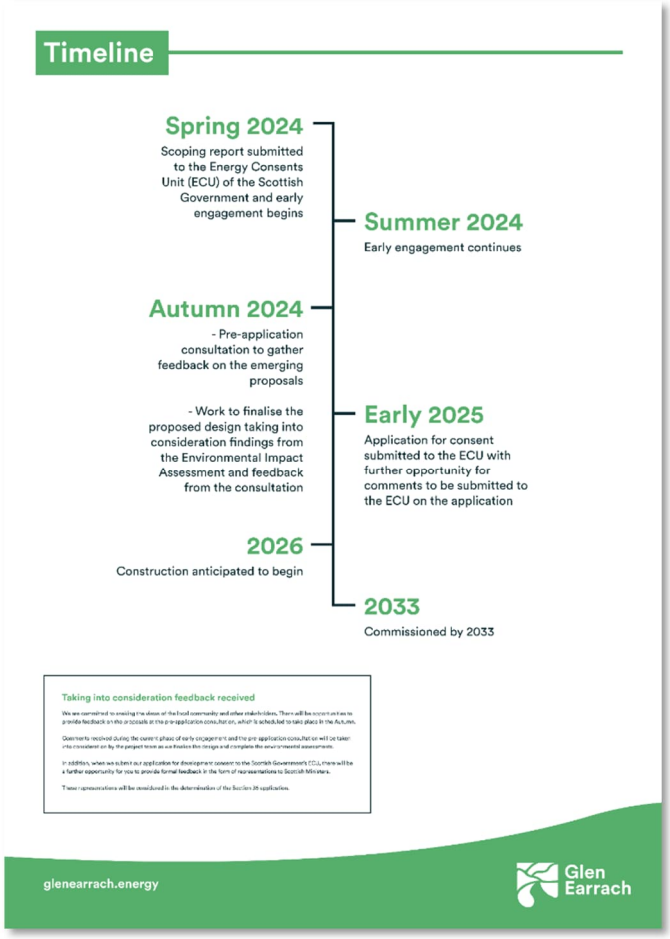
Timeline
Spring 2024
Scoping report submitted to the Energy Consents Unit (ECU) of the Scottish Government and early engagement begins
Summer 2024
Early engagement continues
Autumn 2024
- Pre-application consultation to gather feedback on the emerging proposals
- Work to finalise the proposed design taking into consideration findings from the Environmental Impact Assessment and feedback from the consultation
Early 2025
Application for consent submitted to the ECU with further opportunity for comments to be submitted to the ECU on the application
2026
Construction anticipated to begin
2033
Commissioned by 2033
Taking into consideration feedback received
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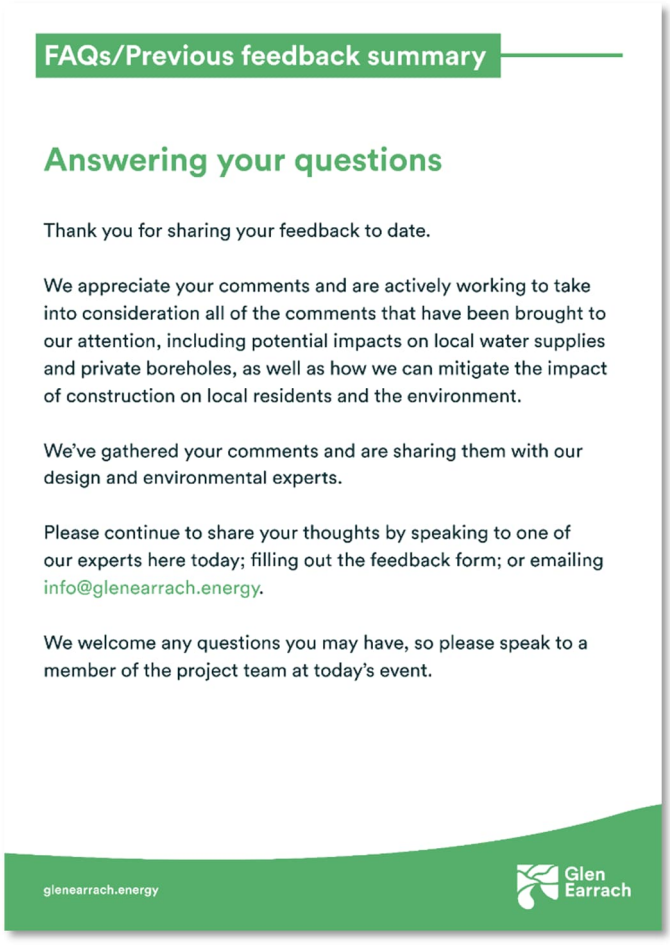
FAQs/Previous feedback summary
Answering your questions
Thank you for sharing your feedback to date.
We appreciate your comments and are actively working to take into consideration all of the comments that have been brought to our attention, including potential impacts on local water supplies and private boreholes, as well as how we can mitigate the impact of construction on local residents and the environment.
We've gathered your comments and are sharing them with our design and environmental experts.
Please continue to share your thoughts by speaking to one of our experts here today; filling out the feedback form; or emailing info@glenearrach.energy.
We welcome any questions you may have, so please speak to a member of the project team at today's event.
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# D.2 PAC Event – Consultation Boards

## Glen Earrach Energy Consultation

**Glen Earrach Energy, founded by Balmac Forest Ltd, is proposing to construct and operate a Pumped Storage Hydro (PSH) scheme at the Balmacaan Estate with water flowing between Loch Ness and Loch nam Breac Dearga.**

Glen Earrach Energy's mission is to harness clean energy while preserving the environment. The proposed development is being designed to use water efficiently whilst respecting the natural landscape and minimising environmental impacts.

Following engagement with the local community and other stakeholders over summer 2024 and further design development work, we have moved most of the above ground infrastructure to the north of the site, to help further reduce potential impacts on the local community and the environment.

We are now consulting on the proposed development in advance of the submission of an application under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 to the Scottish Government's Energy Consent Unit.

**The following boards provide:**

- an introduction to the Glen Earrach project;
- a summary of the proposed development;
- information on the environmental impact assessment we are undertaking;
- the process and timescales for seeking consent; and
- how to respond to this consultation.

### Pumped Storage Hydro Explained

Pumped Storage Hydro is a sustainable method for storing electricity. It operates by using the gravitational force of water stored in two reservoirs at different elevations. During periods of low electricity demand, excess energy is used to pump water from a lower reservoir to an upper one, storing energy. When demand increases, the stored water is released back down, passing through turbines to generate electricity. This process provides a reliable and flexible energy supply, efficiently balancing the grid.

### Why Glen Earrach?

- **Topography**: Efficient water use with minimal impact on Loch Ness.
- **Location**: Proximity to wind farms enhances efficiency.
- **Scale**: Capable of storing 30,000 MWh of clean energy, with the potential to reduce grid carbon emissions by 10% and save £2 billion in grid running costs.
- **Sustainable design**: Minimal visual and ecological impact.
- **Geology**: Ideal for Pumped Storage Hydro, providing high energy output with low environmental impact.
- **Conservation**: Committed to investing in wildlife habitats.

**Thank you for taking the time to visit this event. If you have any questions, please speak to members of the team here today.**

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# Proposed site and infrastructure

**Located on the northwest side of Loch Ness, approximately 9.5 km south of Drumnadrochit and 6.5 km north of Invermoriston, the proposed development is expected to have a storage capacity of up to 30,000 MWh and the capability to generate up to 2,000 MW of electricity – enough to power around 1 million homes per cycle.**

**Large plans showing the above and below ground infrastructure are available on the table at today's event.**

## Above Ground Infrastructure

- **Headpond**: the construction of up to four dam structures around Loch nam Breac Dearga, to increase its storage capacity by approximately 26,000,000m³. This will store the water pumped from Loch Ness (the tailpond).
- **Permanent compounds**: these will contain the electrical sub-station within a purpose built building, tunnel access points and associated buildings. The permanent compounds will be designed and located to minimise environmental and visual impacts.
- **Access Tracks**: to enable the proposed development to be constructed and operated, temporary and permanent access tracks will be required. New access tracks will be constructed to connect the site entrance to the headpond and existing access tracks will be used where feasible.

## Below Ground Infrastructure

- **'Wet' Tunnels or Waterways**: construction of tunnels to enable the flow of water between Loch nam Breac Dearga (the headpond) and Loch Ness (the tailpond).
- **'Dry' Tunnels**: tunnels to provide operational and emergency access and the export of power and ventilation.
- **Power Cavern**: construction of caverns to house the turbines and transformers used to generate electricity when water is released from Loch nam Breac Dearga. This will be constructed approximately 500m below ground.
- **Lower Control Works** (Tailpond Outlet Structure): constructed in Loch Ness, with appropriate screening structures. Screens will be sized to avoid entrainment of debris and aquatic life.
- **Upper Control Works** (Headpond Inlet Structure): installed in the headpond with appropriate screening structures.

## Below Ground Design Options

We are currently considering two arrangements of the below ground infrastructure, with the main difference being the location of the power cavern and headpond inlet structure.

We are undertaking further ground investigation work to better understand the detail of the local geology. A decision on which option is taken forward will be made following the ground investigations.

## Construction

Construction will last approximately seven years and will require a number of temporary compounds. Some will be used for construction related activities such as laydown areas and work yards and for general site maintenance. Others may be used for office space, parking areas, welfare areas, and workers accommodation. Temporary access tracks will also be installed for construction and removed / reduced once the site is operational.

### Construction Environmental Management Plan

A framework Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be produced in support of our Section 36 application and a detailed version will be submitted prior to the start of construction works. It will set out a range of measures such as construction working hours and management and monitoring activities to be carried out by the contractor.

The CEMP acts as a means for transferring the construction mitigation identified within the Environmental Impact Assessment Report into practice. The CEMP is a crucial document during the construction phase and any mitigation identified in the CEMP must be complied with by construction contractor(s). It will also detail the procedures for complaints.

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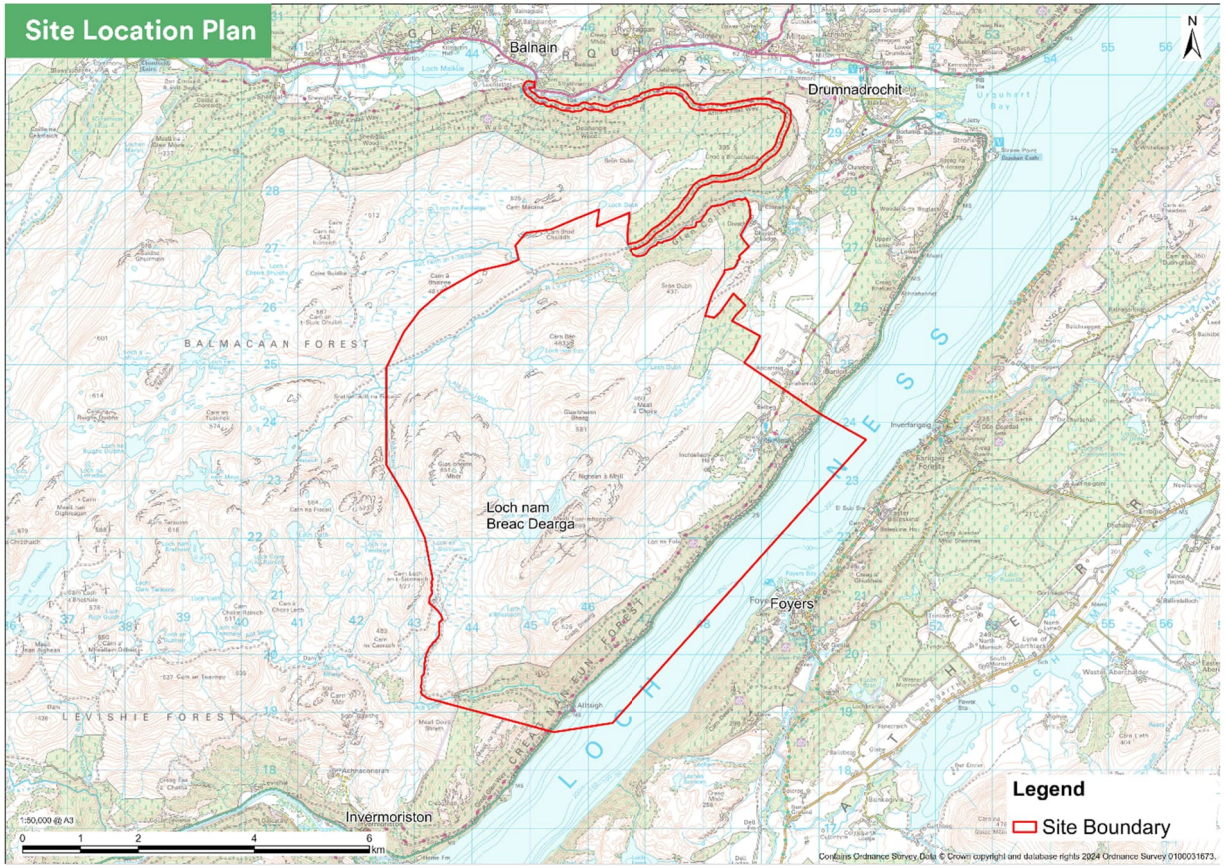
# Red Line Boundary

## Site Location Plan




The proposed development site is identified by the red line boundary shown in the plan opposite.

It is approximately 9.5 km south of Drumnadrochit and 6.5 km north of Invermoriston.

**The location of the above and below ground infrastructure within the red line boundary can be seen on the layout plans of the scheme.**

**These are available on the table at today's event**

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# Protecting the environment - Environmental Impact Assessment

**An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is not mandatory for the proposed development. However, as there is potential for significant effects on the environment we consider it appropriate to undertake an EIA. The findings will be summarised in an EIA Report which will be submitted as part of our application for development consent.**

Environmental experts are conducting a range of studies to assess the potential effects of the proposed development. They will provide advice to help avoid environmental impacts, where practical, or recommend mitigation measures to reduce and/or manage impacts, where these cannot be avoided.

The table below summarises the environmental topics considered for the EIA for this proposal. Additional information on some of these topics is available on the following boards to respond to questions and feedback received during our early engagement.

| Topic | Assessments and Surveys |
|---|---|
| Landscape and visual assessment | Assessment of the effect of construction and operation of the proposed development on landscape character and visual amenity. |
| Terrestrial ecology | Survey and assessment of:<br>- habitats, including classification of vegetation types;<br>- terrestrial and riparian invasive non-native species; and<br>- protected mammals. |
| Aquatic ecology including marine ecology | Fish habitat assessment; fish eDNA survey; aquatic insect and plant surveys and assessment of freshwater invasive non-native species. |
| Ornithology | Habitats and breeding birds including raptor survey (including eagles), diver and grebe surveys, black grouse surveys, moorland bird survey and vantage point surveys. |
| Geology and ground conditions | Assessment of geology and hydrogeology including ground investigations and peat assessments. |
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| Noise and vibration | Assessment of construction and operation noise and vibration. |
| Socio-economics, recreation and tourism | Assessment of the effects on the local community, local economy, recreation and tourism in the area. |
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| Forestry | Identification of trees to be removed and consideration of any impacts to retained trees including how they can be protected. |

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# Landscape and Visual

**The proposed scheme is in a landscape characterised by open, gently rolling and undulating moorland plateaux. The proposed headpond is an existing loch situated within the rocky moorland plateau landscape whilst the proposed tailpond inlet / outlet is situated on the shore of Loch Ness.**

As part of the assessment, representative viewpoints are identified, and visualisations produced, including the proposed development, to help people understand the likely change in the existing landscape. These viewpoints are discussed and agreed with The Highland Council and NatureScot.

Visualisations of the proposed development within the existing landscape will be included in the EIA Report.

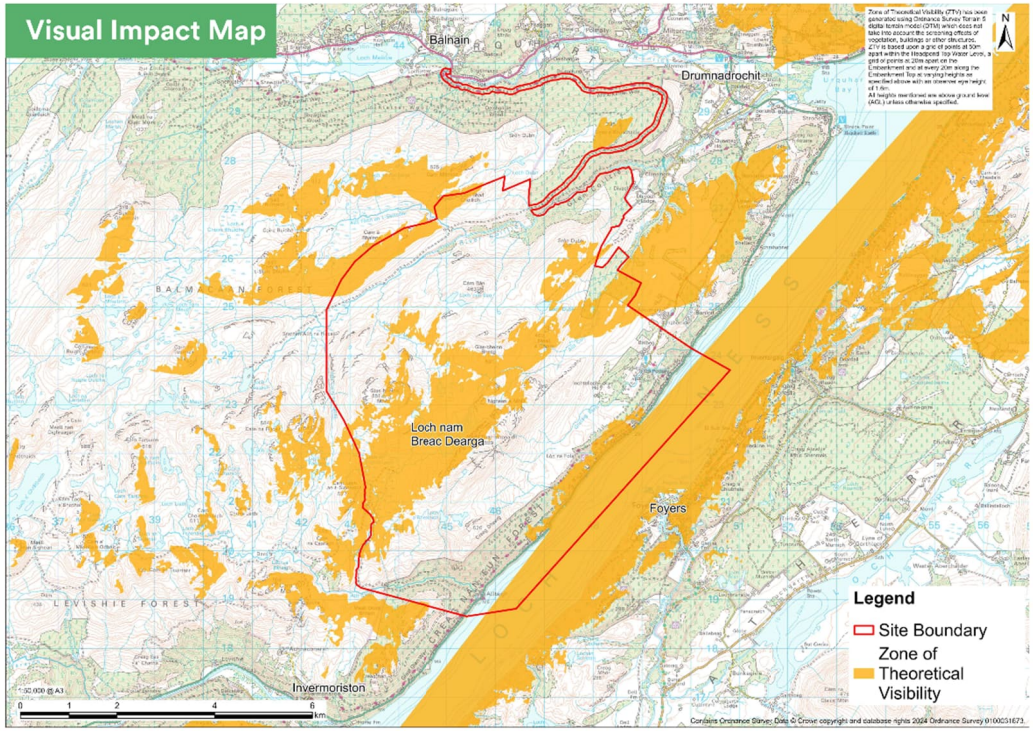
The landscape and visual assessment influences the design of the scheme ensuring it is responsive and sympathetic to the local context. Design considerations will include:

- Careful consideration of the siting of above ground infrastructure;
- Sensitive design of the embankment profiles;
- Use of native tree planting;
- Collaborative approach to landscape and ecological mitigation design.

## Landscape and Ecology Management Plan

Landscape and Ecology impacts will be minimised and managed through a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan. It will also outline the measures to conserve, restore, and enhance biodiversity and integrate the development into the surrounding landscape.

## Visual Impact Map

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# Traffic and Transport

**The traffic and transport study will assess and quantify the traffic likely to be generated by the proposed development during the construction phase and will determine the most appropriate route(s) to the site.**

Road access to the proposed development is currently anticipated via the A82 and the A831.

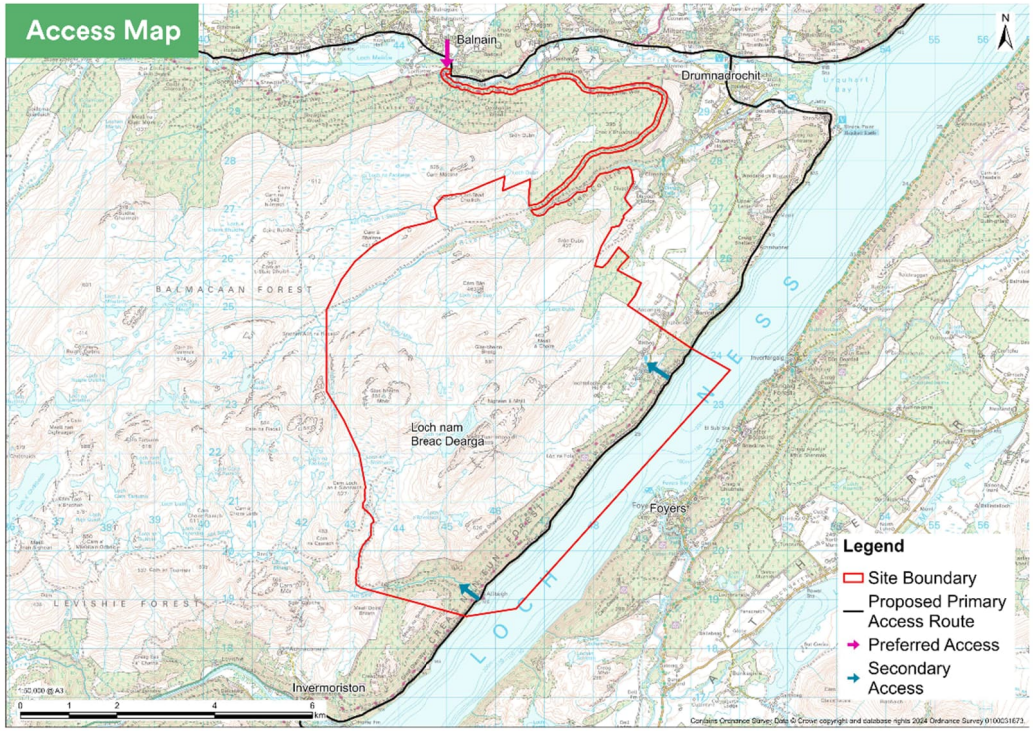
The inlet / outlet structure, required to allow water to move between Loch Ness and Loch nam Breac Dearga, will be located on the western side of Loch Ness. We are investigating the potential of accessing the site via the water to minimise disruption to the A82 during construction. However, some vehicle access will be required from the A82 during construction and temporary changes to the layout and operation of the road will be required to enable safe and efficient traffic movement. As we finalise our design for the inlet / outlet structure we will continue to investigate ways in which we can minimise disruption to traffic using the A82.

## Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)

Traffic and transport impacts will be minimised and managed through a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP). The CTMP will outline how construction traffic will be managed, identify road improvements, arrangements for road maintenance and protocols for public notification and community and emergency service liaison.

This will take local feedback into account and be developed in consultation with the Highland Council, Transport Scotland and Police Scotland.

## Access Map

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# Ecology, Ornithology and Biodiversity Net Gain

There are four Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) within 10 km of the development site and two Sites of Special Scientific Interest located (SSSI) within 2 km. These include the River Moriston SAC, Ness Woods SAC and Urquhart Bay Wood SAC and Eastern Ness SSSI and Levishie Wood SSSI. These have been designated for the protection of habitats and species including:

- upland mixed ash;
- upland birch;
- freshwater pearl mussel;
- atlantic salmon;
- otter.

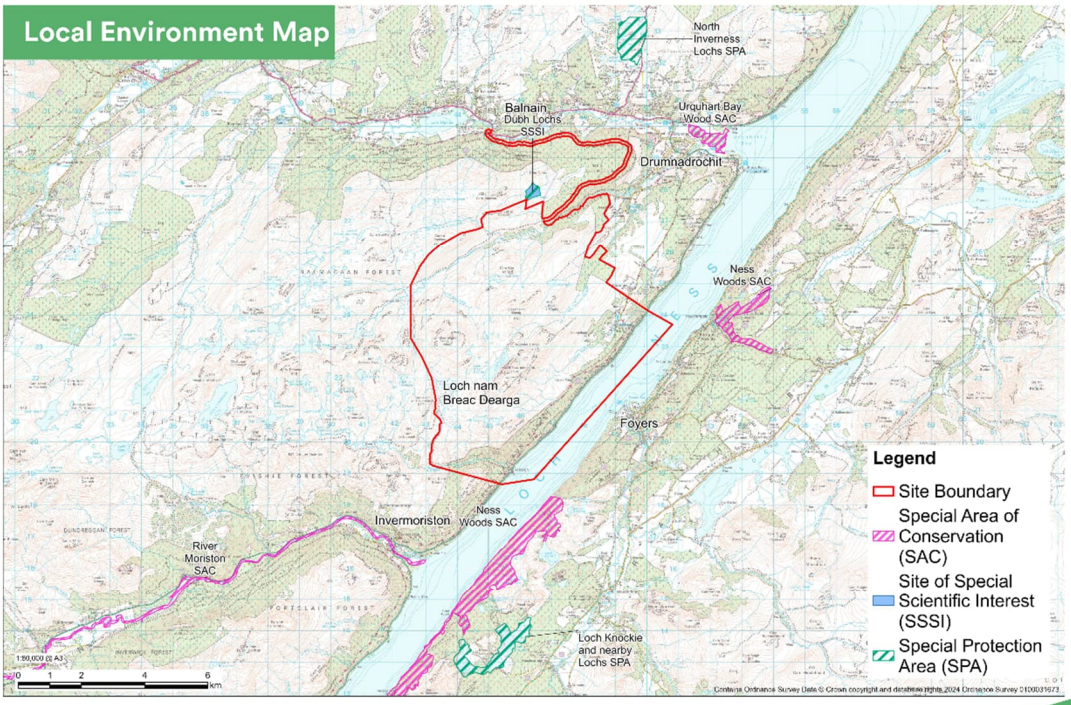
Ecological surveys looking at the habitats, plants and wildlife around the proposed development are currently underway. Surveys for the area have been selected based on what the local habitat can support, and the scope has been developed in consultation with the Highland Council, NatureScot and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency.

The surveys are conducted by qualified experts in line with statutory requirements and the methodologies provided in national guidelines and established best practice. The results from the surveys will inform the design of the proposed development and influence the construction programme to minimise effects on ecology and make sure appropriate mitigation is in place.

## Biodiversity Net Gain

National Planning Policy in Scotland requires developments to contribute to the enhancement of biodiversity and demonstrate significant biodiversity enhancements. The project's ecology team is currently identifying opportunities for biodiversity enhancement and will prepare a biodiversity net gain assessment to support the application.

## Local Environment Map

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# Flood Risk and Water Environment

**The site is predominantly located within the catchment of the Allt Saigh watercourse and will use Loch Ness as a tailpond. The Allt Saigh is located at the south-western edge of the site and is fed by several smaller streams and lochans in the mountains to the west of Loch Ness. Flow in the upper reaches of the catchment is diverted at a dam to the Livishie power station.**

There are existing hydro-schemes such as Foyers and Glendoe which may already affect the region's water resources, as well as two additional hydro-schemes in development.

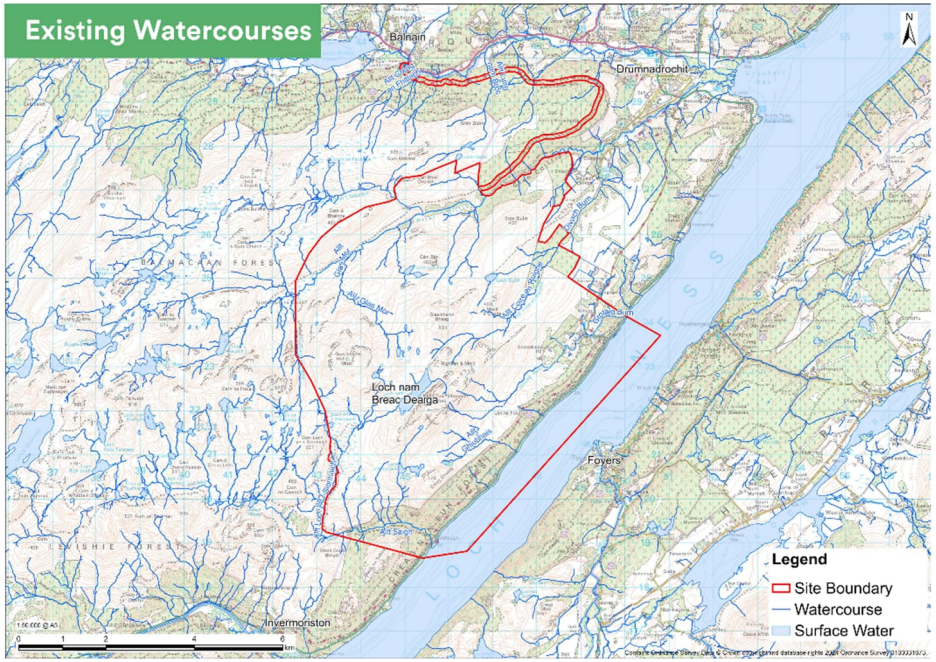
The hydrological assessments within the EIA will include:

- **Water resources** – the potential changes in water levels and flows in surface water features and groundwater.
- **Hydromorphology** – the physical effects on surface water features.
- **Water quality** – how the scheme may alter the chemical composition and ecological status of receiving and surrounding water features and groundwater.
- **Water supply** – identifying licenced and unlicenced private water supplies (particularly drinking water) and assessing how the scheme may impact these.
- **Flood risk** – modelling peak flood flows within Loch Ness and the wider catchment, in addition to the operation of the scheme and effects on flood risk at flood receptors.

A separate Flood Risk Assessment and Water Framework Directive Assessment will be carried out and included in the EIA report.

The outcome of these assessments will help inform the design and operation of the proposed development. This includes appropriate siting of new infrastructure to avoid water bodies where possible, the design of the watercourse crossings, surface water management and construction management to avoid issues with any sensitive water bodies or drinking water supplies.

## Existing Watercourses




## Do you have a Private Water Supply?

To help us better understand the use of private water supplies in the area, we have a questionnaire which can be completed at today's event or online using the QR code below.

If you use a private water supply, please complete the questionnaire. This will inform our assessments and add to the information we have from Highland Council on known private water supplies.

PWS Questionnaire
Glen Earrach PSH

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# Economic Impact and Socio-Economic Community Benefits

**National Planning Policy in Scotland requires developments to maximise their net economic impact, including local and community socio-economic benefits such as employment, associated business and supply chain opportunities.**

## Powering Local Prosperity

This large-scale, water-efficient project offers substantial benefits to the local economy and environment while minimising visual impact and water level changes.

- **Economic Boost**: A significant investment in infrastructure to support the transition to a net zero economy.
- **Job Creation**: Up to 600 on-site jobs during construction, with 20-50 local jobs and 100-200 jobs in the wider UK supply chain remaining during the project's operation.
- **Local Businesses**: Increased demand stimulates the local economy.
- **Education and Training**: New skills and career opportunities in renewable energy.

## Community Benefits

As part of its strategy on community benefits, Glen Earrach Energy is seeking feedback from the community on the community benefit package.

**Community infrastructure & facilities**

**Education & youth development**

**Health & wellbeing**

**Community cohesion & projects**

**Environmental sustainability**

**Economic development**

Glen Earrach Energy will be running a specific community engagement process to understand how to most sensitively create a Community benefits package.This will be a substantial package due to the scale of this project.

Workshops and a roundtable are planned for November 2024 and early in 2025.

If you would like to participate, email **info@glenearrach.energy**.

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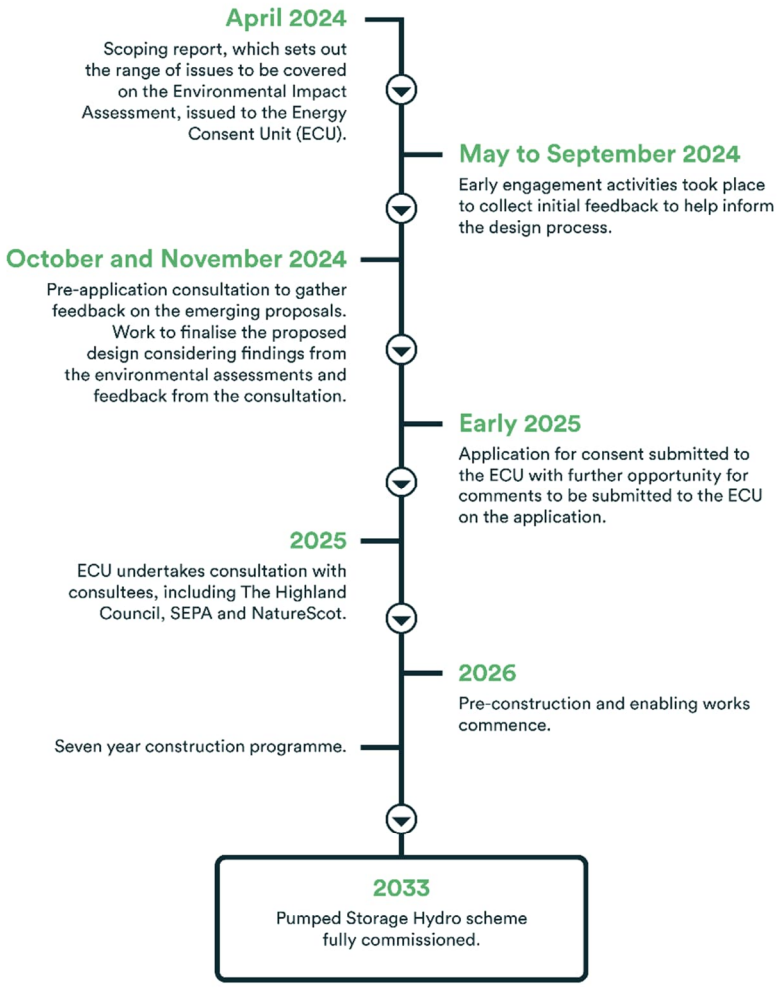
# Consenting process and timescales

**As the proposed development will comprise an electricity generating plant with a gross electrical output in excess of 50 MW, consent to construct and operate the scheme is required from the Scottish Ministers under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989.**

A Section 36 application will be submitted to the Energy Consents Unit (ECU) of the Scottish Government. The Scottish Ministers will also be requested to give a direction for planning permission to be deemed granted under Section 57(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

## Anticipated timeline

The anticipated timeline for the submission of our Section 36 application and subsequent stages are outline below:

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# Give your feedback on the consultation

**We are seeking feedback on the information presented on the proposed development in this consultation.**

**Comments received during early engagement and this pre-application consultation will be taken into consideration by the project team as we finalise the design and complete the environmental assessments.**

Feedback that we receive during this pre-application consultation are not representations to Scottish Ministers. When we submit our Section 36 application for development consent to the Scottish Government's Energy Consent Unit (ECU), there will be an opportunity for you to provide comments in the form of representations to Scottish Ministers. These representations will be considered in the determination of the Section 36 application.

## How to give feedback

The public consultation is open from Tuesday 22 October to Friday 15 November 2024.

All feedback must be received by Friday 15 November 2024.

**To give feedback:**

Email info@glenearrach.energy

Write to Glen Earrach Consultation c/o AECOM, 1 Tanfield, Edinburgh , EH3 5DA

Complete the online feedback form at glenearrach.consultation.ai/

Fill in a feedback form at this event

### Privacy statement

Any data collected through your consultation feedback will only be used for the purposes of analysing feedback on the Glen Earrach Energy proposal and reporting the consultation feedback as part of the application to the Energy Consents Unit.

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# D.3 Summary of Feedback Received

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**Glen Earrach Energy Consultation Feedback**

The table below summarises the main themes and matters raised in the feedback we have received to date and how this is being taken into consideration by the project team.

| Theme | Matters raised | Glen Earrach Energy response |
|---|---|---|
| Design / Layout (general) | Impact of the design on the shoreline of Loch Ness | We are continuing to develop the design of the inlet / outlet structure on the shore of Loch Ness with the aim of minimising its visual impact and to support its integration with the surrounding environment. |
| | Compounds are located too close to local communities. | At the early engagement events we received feedback that the proposed location of construction compounds was too close to existing communities. The compounds have been relocated to the north west of the site to move to reduce the potential impacts on the local communities. |
| Social and Economic | Approach to housing for construction workers | We are proposing a workers' accommodation compound with the facilities and amenities to support the workforce on site. The general compound locations can be seen on the above ground infrastructure layout plans. |
| | Will the workforce be recruited from the local area? | We are seeking to maximise the socio-economic benefits of the scheme and will seek to attract local workers for both the construction and operational stages. However, given the scale of the construction works, it is likely that we will have to also recruit workers from outside the local area. |

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | What are the opportunities to increase skills and training for workers from the local area? | The scheme will support education and training to support career opportunities in construction and renewable energy. Specific opportunities will be identified for both the construction and operational stages of the project. |
| | Impacts on popular walking routes such as Meall Fuar-mhonaidh and Glen Affric Way during construction | We are seeking to minimise the impacts on walking routes across the site. An Access Management Plan will be prepared to manage construction impacts on walking routes. |
| | Community benefits should benefit the local community | We are committed to delivering community benefits and are actively engaging with stakeholders, including the Highland Council, to develop a tailored Community Benefit Package.<br>Ongoing conversations about community benefits are taking place with workshops planned for later in 2024 and early 2025. |
| Environment | Impact of changes to water levels in Loch Ness on fish and other aquatic life | Our team of water and ecology specialists are currently assessing the potential impacts of the scheme on Loch Ness. Details of these assessments and any required mitigation will be detailed in the Environmental Impact Assessment which will be submitted alongside our application for consent to the Energy Consents Unit. As part of the Environmental Impact Assessment, we will also consider the cumulative impact of other schemes on Loch Ness water levels. |
| | Impacts on the environment and wildlife during construction and operation | Our ecology specialists have provided advice that has informed the design of the scheme. Ecological assessments are currently being prepared, which will recommend mitigation measure to minimise and manage the impacts of the |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | scheme. This will include the preparation of Habitat Management Plan and Landscape and Ecological Management Plan.<br><br>A Construction Environmental Management Plan will be prepared to minimise and manage the construction impacts of the project. |
| | Potential impacts on private water supplies | We are currently carrying out a survey to understand the location of private water supplies in the vicinity of the site. We will use this information to inform our hydrology assessment and construction management approaches. |
| Landscape and Visual | Consideration of infrastructure visibility | We have sought to minimise the amount of above ground infrastructure to limit the visual impact of the scheme. Landscape mitigation is also proposed which will be detailed as part of Landscape and Ecological Management Plan to screen / integrate above ground infrastructure, where practical. |
| | Impact on the views from Foyers, and on the views from/of Meall Fuar-mhonaidh | Our landscape specialists have provided advice that has informed the design of the scheme. A landscape assessment is currently being prepared, which will recommend mitigation measures to minimise and manage the impacts of the construction works and of permanent above ground infrastructure. This will include the preparation of Landscape and Ecological Management Plan. |
| | Concerns about the impact of pylons used for transmission lines and where these will be located | Transmission lines do not form part of the proposals for the scheme, however the impacts of transmission lines will be assessed as part of the cumulative assessment in the Environmental Impact Assessment. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Unclear what the permanent structures will look like | Plans of the scheme are on display at the consultation events and online. Further details of the scheme are being prepared and will be included within the Environmental Impact Assessment that will be submitted alongside our application for consent to the Energy Consents Unit. |
| Transport and Traffic | Impact of construction traffic on the A82 | The proposed inlet / outlet structure and associated tunnels have been designed to minimise impacts on the A82.<br><br>A transport assessment is currently being prepared, which will recommend mitigation measures to minimise and manage the impacts of the scheme on the A82. This will include the preparation of a construction traffic management plan.<br><br>We are also investigating the potential of accessing the site via the Caledonian Canal / Loch Ness to minimise disruption to the A82 during construction. |
| | Safety implications of construction traffic on the A831 and turning into the site entrance | A transport assessment is currently underway to assess the impacts of the scheme on the A831. This will include an assessment of road safety and will include mitigation measures to ensure road safety is maintained. |
| Noise | Impact of noise generated during construction and operation | Our noise specialists have provided advice that has informed the design of the scheme.<br><br>A noise assessment is currently being prepared, which will recommend mitigation measures to minimise and manage the noise impacts of the construction works. These measures will be detailed in a Construction Environmental Management Plan. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | A Community Liaison Group will also be established which will provide opportunities for the local community to discuss and provide feedback on the construction works, including on noise impacts.<br><br>Operational noise impacts have been considered in the positioning of above ground infrastructure and compounds to minimise, as far as practicable, the potential for impacts on noise sensitive properties. Operational noise will also be assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment. |
| Cumulative Impacts | Concerns about the number of energy projects happening in the Loch Ness area | The cumulative impacts of existing and planned energy projects will be considered in the Environmental Impact Assessment. |

## D.4 Feedback Form

### Glen Earrach Energy Pumped Storage Hydro facility consultation feedback form

We want to understand your views on the proposed Pumped Storage Hydro facility. Please read our consultation materials to help inform your responses to the questions in this form.

### About this form

The feedback form will ask for your views on the proposals. You can respond to all the questions, or just those you feel are relevant to you. Your responses will only be used for the purposes of analysing feedback to this consultation.

If you need additional space to complete your answers to any of the questions, please enclose additional sheets and include references to make it clear which questions the additional sheets relate to.

### The proposals

1. What do you think of the proposal for the Glen Earrach Energy Pumped Storage Hydro facility?

2. Do you have any comments on the layout and design of the Glen Earrach Pumped Storage Hydro facility, or have suggestions that we should consider?

3.Do you have any comments on the potential impacts of the Glen Earrach Pumped Storage Hydro facility, or the proposed mitigation measures?

4. Are there any social, economic or community benefits you think we should consider as part of this project?

## Consultation

5.Please provide your postcode. This information helps us to understand which areas of the community have responded.

Postcode: _____

6.How did you find out about this consultation?

- ☐ Information sent in the post
- ☐ Advert in the Inverness Courier
- ☐ Through the community council
- ☐ Word of mouth
- ☐ Social media
- ☐ Other

7.If you would like to be added to the Glen Earrach Energy email mailing list to be kept up to date on the project, please provide your email address.

Email address: _____

You can submit this form by putting it in the Feedback Box or post it to **Glen Earrach Consultation, c/o AECOM, 1 Tanfield, Edinburgh EH3 5DA.**

**Thank you for completing this feedback form.**

Comments received during early engagement and this pre-application consultation will be taken into consideration by the project team as we finalise the design and complete the environmental assessments.

Feedback that we receive during the public consultation period are not representations to Scottish Ministers. When we submit our Section 36 application for development consent to the Scottish Government's Energy Consent Unit (ECU), there will be an opportunity for you to provide comments in the form of representations to Scottish Ministers. These representations will be considered in the determination of the Section 36 application.

**Privacy statement**

Any data collected through your consultation feedback will only be used for the purposes of analysing feedback on the Glen Earrach Energy proposal and reporting the consultation feedback as part of the application to the Energy Consents Unit.

To view our full privacy policy please visit https://www.glenearrach.energy/privacy-policy

Glen Earrach AECOM