

BORALEX
Beyond
RENEWABLE ENERGY



Pre-Application Consultation Report

Limekiln Battery Energy Storage System

July 2025



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Executive Summary

In line with both the Scottish Government's 'Good Practice Guidance for Applications under Section 36 and 37 of the Electricity Act 1989 - February 2022', alongside Planning Advice Note 3/2010 which includes the National Standards for Community Engagement, and Planning Aid for Scotland's SP=EED framework, Boralex Limited ('Boralex') has undertaken two rounds of public consultation for its Limekiln Battery Energy Storage System proposal ('the Proposed Development').

Consultation activity so far has included:

- a pre-application consultation process with The Highland Council;
- attendance at Caithness West Community Council meetings;
- distribution of information postcards to all local properties;
- a dedicated project website with online consultation tool (www.limekilnwindfarm.co.uk);
- a Freephone telephone number;
- community open day held on 17th April in Reay Village Hall; and
- follow up community open day held on 22nd May in Reay Village Hall.

Whilst over 50 MW in capacity, meaning the Proposed Application is dealt with by Scottish Ministers under Section 36 of the Electricity Act, in March 2025, a Pre-Application Consultation request was submitted to The Highland Council (Appendix 1) followed by a Major Application pre-application meeting involving multiple statutory consultees.

The first round of community consultation was undertaken in April 2025, with a follow up round of consultation undertaken in May 2025. Boralex expects consultation activity to continue throughout the application process.

Local residents and other key stakeholders were invited to attend the open days. The first round was publicised via an information postcard sent out to all addresses (410) within the local area. In addition, advertisements were placed in the Caithness Courier and John O'Groats Journal, as well as being promoted by the Community Council via their minutes. The second round was again publicised via a postcard mailing and newspaper advertising.

At the Community Open Days (CODs) members of the development team were on hand to explain the proposals, discussing the wider issues around battery storage development and energy policy more generally.

Those attending had the opportunity to discuss their views with the project team and complete feedback questionnaires. Local residents also had the opportunity to air their views via the project website, Community Council and Freephone telephone number.

A total of 41 people attended the open days (some to both rounds). Two feedback forms were received, both on the days of the open days. No feedback forms were received via the website.

Consultation is on-going and will continue post submission.

1. Introduction

Boralex embraces community consultation; it is at the heart of its approach to development. This report provides detailed information regarding the Proposed Development pre-application community consultation.

2. Framework for pre-application consultation, Limekiln Battery Energy Storage System

Boralex's public consultation plans for the Proposed Development were influenced by the Scottish Government's 'Good Practice Guidance for Applications under Section 36 and 37 of the Electricity Act 1989 - February 2022' alongside PAN 3/2010 which includes the National Standards for Community Engagement and Planning Aid for Scotland's SP=EED framework (**Appendix 11**).

Both documents outline how applicants of major infrastructure projects should undertake pre-application consultation with the community. The aim of this procedure is to make sure that communities are made aware of, and have an opportunity to comment on, these types of development proposals before a formal application is made. This allows community views to be reflected early in the process and gives the developer the opportunity to incorporate them where appropriate into the proposals before making a formal application.

The Guide outlines the consultation and involvement activities:

- Engagement at the earliest possible stage with any communities or groups who would be affected by the development proposal;
- Public notices on the project website and in local media; and
- Public Events (at least two public consultation events, with the final public event held at least 14 days after the first public event).

3. Boralex's approach to community involvement

Boralex's general approach to community involvement in projects includes the following:

- Early engagement and consultations with community councils and relevant interested community groups;
- Establishment of a dedicated project website;
- Production and circulation of printed information material for local residents;

- Information and dialogue via social media platforms (where available); and
- Hosting of community open days prior to submission of the planning application, when the development is at draft design stage.

4. Consultation

Consultation that has taken place so far in this pre-application stage has enabled Boralex to take forward its commitment to continuing the constructive relationship with residents and local representatives within the local community that it has developed over many years, since the start of the Limekiln Wind Farm developments, as well as make changes to the project in line with feedback received.

To consult on the proposal with the local community, Boralex undertook the following activities:

4.1 Key Stakeholder Engagement

Boralex contacted the Chair of Caithness West Community Council (CWCC) in early March 2025 to arrange to attend the next CWCC meeting (26th March). At that meeting, the Project Manager presented draft proposals for further development on the Limekiln Wind Farm site with a battery energy storage system (BESS).

Following the CWCC meeting a Proposal of Application Notice (PoAN) (**Appendix 1**), was submitted to The Highland Council (THC). Boralex wrote to CWCC with the PoAN and associated documents advising of the first Community Open Day (COD) details and providing contact information for any questions at that stage.

In addition to CWCC, Boralex wrote to each of THC's Ward Members, the local MSP, regional list MSPs and also MP advising of the PoAN and of the consultation events.

This correspondence can be found in **Appendix 2**.

4.2 Information Postcard

In early April 2025, Boralex distributed 410 information postcards (**Appendix 3**) to the local community within CWCC area. The postcards were posted via Royal Mail (1st class). The postcard provided an invitation to the in-person COD as well as details of the online consultation page of the project website, overview/update of the project including site suitability and information promoting other contact methods.

Following the first round of consultation, Boralex sent a further postcard inviting residents to attend the second COD in May where project updates would be presented.

4.3 Freephone

The Freephone telephone number for direct enquiries relating to the proposal continues to be in use (0800 980 4299), enabling residents to speak to members of the project team and receive additional information.

4.4 Online Consultation Website

In April 2025 Boralex updated the project website www.limekilnwindfarm.co.uk to provide information for residents and their representatives about the proposal to further develop the Limekiln Wind Farm site with a BESS and allowed them to give feedback by completing an online questionnaire or asking specific questions via info@limekilnwindfarm.co.uk - the dedicated email facility.

The dedicated project consultation page (**Appendix 4**) provided:

- introduction to the consultation;
- information panels (**Appendix 5**);
- link to feedback form; and
- details of dedicated email address and freephone number.

4.5 In-person Community Open Days

Two rounds of in-person COD presenting the proposals were held. The first round on 17th April in Reay Village Hall between 1.00pm and 7.00pm with follow up community open day held on 22nd May in Reay Village Hall (also 1.00pm – 7.00pm). Copies of the exhibition information panels can be found in **Appendix 5** and an illustrative photograph taken at one of the open days in **Appendix 6**.

As well as being able to discuss the Proposed Development, members of the development team were also able to discuss the wider issues of battery storage, climate change targets, energy security etc.

Publicity

Invitations to the CODs were sent by postcard to all households (410) within a 5/10 km radius of the project, see **Appendix 3**.

In order to publicise the events to the wider community, press advertisements were placed in:

- Caithness Courier – 9th April and 14th May
- John O’Groats Journal – 11th April and 16th May

Posters (as per the newspaper advert) were also distributed to the Caithness West Community Council and to the Reay Village Hall.

Media

Press coverage of the first round of CODs was included in the local paper, the John O’Groat Journal along with paid advertisements for both rounds (**Appendix 7**):

Attendance

Based on the open day register, 27 people attended the first round of CODs, where they had the opportunity to inspect the draft proposal, discuss issues with the project team, provide feedback directly and complete a questionnaire (**Appendix 8**) and/or enquiry request form (**Appendix 9**) for return on the day or via FREEPOST.

14 people (some of whom had attended the first round) attended the second COD where further information on the proposal was presented.

5. Consultation Feedback

Throughout the community consultation programme Boralex received qualitative and quantitative feedback and listed below is a summary of the initial concerns around the project and the updated information delivered as part of round two of consultation.

5.1 Postcard

In addition to inviting recipients to the CODs, the postcard directed them to the dedicated consultation page on the project website and also provided a range of contact methods including Freepost, Freephone and email address.

5.2 Online Consultation Website

The Limekiln BESS online consultation page has been live since April 2025 on the wider Limekiln Wind Farm website, a well-established site in place for over a decade, providing an overview of the project, and hosting an online consultation facility. To date, no online consultation feedback forms have been submitted.

5.3 Community Open Days

Discussion with visitors to the first COD identified key concerns around several issues.

Having taken on board the comments and feedback received, a review of the project information was undertaken and further information on those topics was presented to the community at the second open day.

Open day opinion forms were completed by 2 attendees, one of whom lives within 5 km of the project.

Both opinion forms were completed at the events. These questionnaires are taken into account in the overall results of the public consultation exercise. Copies of all returned open day questionnaires can be found in **Appendix 10**.

The completed forms provided the following results on whether or not respondents support the Proposed Development:

First COD			Second COD		
Very supportive	0	(0%)	Very supportive	0	(0%)
Supportive	0	(0%)	Supportive	0	(0%)
Undecided	0	(0%)	Undecided	1	(100%)
Opposed	1	(100%)	Opposed	0	(0%)
Very opposed	0	(0%)	Very opposed	0	(0%)
Total	2	(100%)			

5.4 Issues

Feedback questionnaires asked respondents if they had any specific issues or concerns about the proposal and a list of possible issues was provided. In addition, the overriding feeling was that the local area had a growing number of BESS proposals being put forward and that there was still a high level of concern around fire risk of projects.

Additionally, concern was raised regarding access to the core path during construction. The team was able to discuss proposed temporary diversion routes.

This initial feedback prompted a review of the project information which was updated, discussed with the relevant statutory consultees and presented to the community at the second open day.

Open day questionnaires

In question 5a respondents of the open day questionnaire were informed that Boralex had conducted a range of surveys that assess the current situation on site and the potential impact of the Proposed Development. Respondents were asked to indicate which of the following elements of the proposal they were interested in and would like to be kept updated about (note: total responses rather than individual respondents):

How the project might look	0
Local wildlife	2
Potential noise	0
Tourism	0
Electricity output	0
Site traffic during construction	1
Local archaeology	0
Other (safety/peat)	1

5.5 Summary of Feedback

Overall feedback for the Proposed Development, taking into account all consultation methods can be summarised as follows:

Proposed Development Overall Results

	Website	Exhibitions	Total	
Very Supportive	0	0	0	0%
Supportive	0	0	0	0%
Undecided	0	1	1	50%
Opposed	0	1	1	50%
Very Opposed	0	0	0	0%
Total	0	2	2	100%

6. Response methods to Consultation Feedback

Further to the consultation process outlined in this statement, the following activities have or are being undertaken in order to respond to feedback received:

Web/email

Everyone who submits a question or query either via the website questionnaire or by email direct will also be responded to electronically and this will continue throughout the planning process.

7. Future Consultation and Community Liaison

Next Steps – Pre and Post Submission

Boralex has built a constructive relationship with local people throughout the many years of developing the Limekiln Wind Farm and is committed to the continued involvement of and consultation with the community and other stakeholders throughout the planning process for this next element of Limekiln development.

Even though the pre-application consultation has been completed, this does not mean that the consultation will end. Boralex is committed to further consultation during the planning determination period, ensuring that local residents and stakeholders continue to be involved in the process and are kept informed of the proposal's progress.

Application information

On submission, Boralex will provide all of the relevant information to the local community in order for them to be able to easily make representations in respect of the application.

Stakeholder/Interest group briefings

Members of the Highland Council engaged with the consultation process by email and members of the Community Council attended the open days and will continue to be updated as the application process progresses

Media relations

Media relations activity will be ongoing. Once the application has been submitted, a news release detailing the submitted proposal and representation contact information will be issued. Boralex will respond to media enquiries and requests for information throughout the determination time period.

Ongoing response to queries

Boralex will continue to respond to queries that are received via the various consultation channels i.e. freephone telephone number, freepost address, dedicated email address, website and newsletter.

Community Liaison

On submission of the application, Boralex will inform the appropriate community groups, along with those individuals who have already engaged with Boralex and offer to attend future meetings in order to keep the community apprised of the project during development.

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