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Jackson Carlaw MSP,
Convenor
Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee
Scottish Parliament
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19 March 2025

Dear Convenor,

PE2157 – Update planning advice for energy storage issues and ensure that it includes clear guidance for the location of battery energy storage systems near residences and communities

Thank you for your letter of 17 February 2026 calling for updated advice for planning authorities considering applications for energy storage, including guidance on the location of battery energy storage systems.

I am pleased to inform you that the Scottish Government will later this morning publish new [Planning Guidance: Battery Energy Storage Systems](#). The guidance has been prepared by independent consultants Ironside Farrar, on behalf of the Scottish Government with input from industry, planning authorities, NatureScot, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS).

The guidance offers practical advice to support consistent, well-informed planning decisions and encourage constructive engagement between applicants, decision-makers, and local communities. It sets out how the planning process can ensure development is properly sited, well designed and responsive to its context, and includes advice on distances between BESS cabinets/enclosures and occupied buildings. It also summarises wider regulatory requirements relevant to BESS.

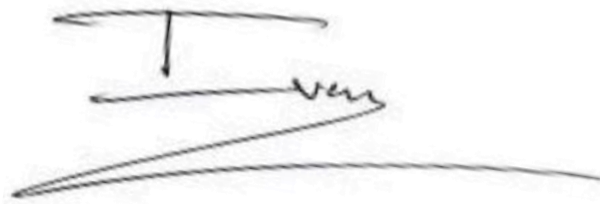
The guidance is part of a wider package of work on battery storage. This includes research commissioned by the Scottish Government and undertaken by the James Hutton Institute on [understanding the potential environmental impacts of operating BESS in Scotland](#), and a call for evidence on BESS later in 2026 as set out by the Cabinet Secretary for Climate Action in Energy in the chamber on 11 December 2025. The webpage on BESS linking to

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the planning guidance and environmental research can be found at: [Battery Energy Storage Systems](#).

I hope that the Committee finds this response helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ivan McKee', written over a horizontal line.

Ivan McKee MSP
Minister for Public Finance

Copy to:

Presiding Officer, Alison Johnstone MSP

Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans, Graeme Dey MSP

Convenor of the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee, Ariane Burgess MSP

Convenor of the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee, Edward Mountain MSP

Party Business Mangers: Tim Eagle MSP; Martin Whitfield MSP; Lorna Slater MSP; and Willie Rennie MSP

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