



Back Battery Storage

Overcoming the challenges facing the UK's Battery Energy Systems Storage sector

Without Battery Energy Systems Storage (BESS), the UK will not meet its 2030 clean power target. BESS is the key to unlocking renewables, balancing the grid, and driving decarbonisation — but the sector faces a unique set of challenges.

Why back battery storage?

BESS is essential to meet the 2030 clean power target.

It will play a pivotal role managing fluctuations caused by variable weather conditions as more renewable energy comes into the grid.

Simply put, more BESS = more renewable potential.

Expanding storage unlocks the potential for more clean energy, helping the UK hit its ambitious goals.

Scaling up BESS will boost UK energy security.

Investing in domestic renewables will enhance the UK's energy supply and lessen the reliance on foreign imports.

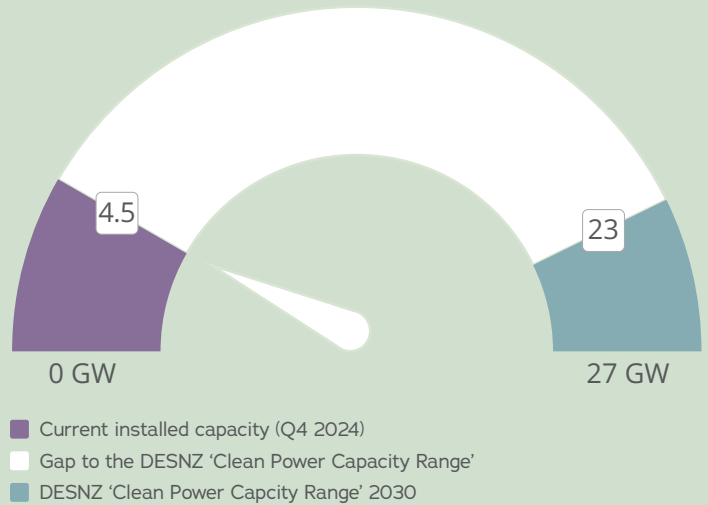
The unique challenges facing the sector

- The role and importance of BESS is too often overlooked. At a local level, decision makers don't always recognise the critical importance of BESS projects when deciding on them.
- There is a lack of consistency around fire safety (and perceptions around safety) and best practice, which threatens development:
- **Planning hurdles:** Fire safety concerns are frequently raised at planning committee. Projects that have been recommended for approval by Officers, have been refused on these grounds. This is despite developers following industry best practices, and taking expert advice.
- **Public perceptions:** Misinformation and differing understandings of fire risk can lead to uncertainty and hesitation. This can sometimes be magnified by those who are simply looking to stop development of renewables.
- **Inconsistent requirements:** developers face varying expectations at different planning hearings in terms of the information they are required to produce. There is no standardised approach in place.



Battery storage

Current installed capacity compared to the DESNZ 'Clean Power Capacity Range' in 2030 (GW)



- This, alongside further planning challenges such as lack of grid connections, creates further pressure on the BESS sector's ability to help deliver the Government's ambitious policy agenda.

The solution

The importance of BESS needs to be recognised in the policy debate. In particular, there are three practical steps the government can take:



Update the NPPF to make the role of BESS clearer

The National Planning Policy Framework does not clearly namecheck BESS projects in its definition of critical infrastructure. Making this wording clearer will help outline the need for BESS to local authorities and underline their criticality during planning applications.



Create consistency for applications

The government and other bodies should seek to provide developers and local authorities with more consistency. The National Fire Chiefs Council are currently updating guidance related to fire safety and BESS projects. The government should look to promote this guidance and other tools to provide developers with more consistency and also communities more reassurance.



Recognise the BESS sector as a potential growth sector

The BESS sector can unlock growth for UK PLC through its role in driving the clean power revolution. There is also an opportunity to grow and develop the supply chain and technology providers to support BESS project developers.