

Understanding the problem



**University of
Sheffield**

**Implamenting multistage constant-current charging
methods in lithium based batterys to reduce
degredation**

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November 15, 2025

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1 Introduction

There are currently over 7 billion people with access to electricity [1], the global consumption of energy is rising by 4.5×10^{16} Joules every year; 77% of which is from utilising non-renewable sources. With the affects of non-renewables on the environment still not fully realised, coupled with the concern of their finite-life nature, poses a constant need to increase usage of renewable sources. However, a large set of renewable generation methods fall under the category of variable renewable energy (VRE) sources [2], thus requiring a robust form of energy storage to solve the intermittent availability - methods of storage do exist and suitable solutions depend on the specifics and locations; as battery technology increases, the use of battery as a storage medium for the energy sector are ever more increasing. There is also the rapid increase in electric vehicle production, with a push to increase the adoption of EV's, 17.3 million cars were produced in 2024 [3] alone with a recent 20% average year-on increase. Lithium Ion batteries (LIB's) are the most common currently used batteries due to their desirable characteristics in energy density, aging properties, cost and more.

EV's and the energy sector account now account for 90% of the total lithium ion battery demand since 2016, the total lithium-ion battery demand is 10-times larger [4] since 2016. Different resources predict different forecasts of total battery growth [5, 6], regardless, it appears the rate of demand will not be decreasing in the near future.

LIB's, like all batteries and decrease in performance and capacity [7] until they are deemed unsuitable for their current use. This means eventually, all current batteries in use today will need to be disposed of, given that over 660,000 tonnes of earth metals were mined in 2023 alone, a strong case for slowing down the need for mining new materials is made, whilst keeping up with the demand (cite the IEA thing). It's noted that battery chemistry is still a developing field, thus newer batteries may use less scarce materials, thus hard to truly predict the sustainability of mining these materials, for example, some reports (cite Faraday) say cobalt supplies could be used entirely by 2040. Solutions do exist, recycling methods have been developed in order to extract the materials, termed battery metal recycling (BMR), however there are widely different sources suggesting how much of current batteries actually are recycled (one showing 5%), (other showing 90%), and the technology to do so is still a developing field, there are many different methods (cite ISSUES), since most of the rare earth elements are within the batteries cathode, methods such as hydrometallurgical process can extract these, but at the cost of severe reduction in lithium yield (cite ENJI) - although there are

promising methods with some proposing a lithium recovery needing less than 40% the energy compared to mining the virgin material (cite enji yoo) whilst still recovering nickel and cobalt. There is also the rising interest in reusing the batteries before recycling, these batteries are referred to as second-life batteries (SLB's); in the EV use-case, the majority of the batteries are deemed finished once their usable capacity drops below 80% (cite), but often, due to the other parameters of the batteries needing to be of high standards for EV use, the 'dead' batteries can still provide a very useful service in less demanding applications, a common one being energy storage systems (ESS) [8], with claims reusing can reduce CO2 emissions by 56% as opposed to using natural fuel gas in situ. However there are again challenges associated, for safety there is the need for robust testing, sorting the batteries based on their current health states, non automated methods of extracting cells from their original pack. These additional steps mean the price of SLB's could become at a point where they are not much cheaper than new batteries, making the solution less attractive to many sectors [8].

In summary, there are methods that are developing to reduce the need for mining new materials and decreasing recycling energy, but ultimately, providing methods to increase the usable life of the current batteries serves as a direct way to reduce the impacts of batteries themselves and to meet their growing demand. If just 1 extra life cycle could be added to all EV's currently on the road (60 million (cite)), this could power all of the UK's energy needs for one day (cite gov.uk); as most batteries cycle life are well over 1000, any increment in cycle life can be greatly beneficial.

Much research has been done into both modeling LIB's and optimising their usage from both an energy and aging perspective.

What is this project? the general approach

1.1 Project Aims

1.1.1 Objectives

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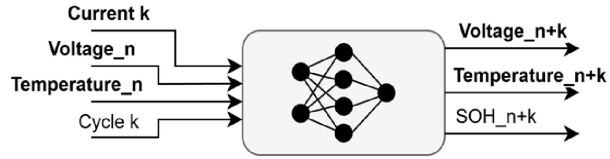


Figure 1: Initial end objective: Black Box Battery

2 Project progress

3 Literature Review

3.1 Lithium based batteries

Whiney well ¹

3.2 Charging methods

3.3 Optimal control

3.4 Neural networking

4 Plans for Remaining Work

5 Self Review

¹Yep soooo

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