

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
NORTH PLANNING APPLICATIONS
COMMITTEE

11 June 2025, 9.30AM

MINUTE / ACTION NOTE

Listed below are the decisions taken by Committee at their meeting and the actions that now require to be taken. The webcast of the meeting will be available within 48 hours of broadcast and will remain online for 12 months: <https://highland.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

A separate memorandum will be issued if detailed or further instructions are required, or where the contents of the memorandum are confidential. Please arrange to take the required action based on this action note.

Committee Members Present:

Ms S Atkin
Mr R Bremner
Ms B Campbell
Mr J Edmondson
Mr R Gale
Ms L Kraft
Mrs A MacLean
Ms J McEwan
Mr D Millar
Mr M Reiss
Mr K Rosie

Non-Committee Members Present:

Substitutes:

Mr S Kennedy
Mr H Morrison
Mrs M Ross

Apologies:

Ms T Collier
Ms L Dundas
Mrs M Paterson
Mr K Rosie

Officers participating:

Mr D Jones, Area Planning Manager – North (DJ)
Mr P Wheelan, Planning Team Leader (PW)
Ms C Farmer-McEwan, Principal Planner (CF)
Mr D Borland, Planner (DB)
Ms L MacDonald, Planner (LM)
Mr C Simms, Planner (CS)

Ms J Bridge, Senior Engineer (JB)
Ms R Banfro, Solicitor (Planning) and Clerk
Ms R Ross, Committee Officer

ITEM NO	DECISION	ACTION
1	Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan	n/a
2	Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt Mr M Reiss – item 6.3 Ms J McEwan-item 6.4 Ms S Atkin-item 6.4	n/a
3	Confirmation of Minutes Dearbhadh a’ Gheàrr-chunntais There had been submitted for confirmation as a correct record the action note and minute of the meeting of the Committee held on 23 April 2025 which was APPROVED .	n/a
4	Major Development Update Iarrtasan Mòra There had been circulated Report No PLN/035/25 by the Area Planning Manager - providing an update on progress of all cases within the “Major” development category currently with the Infrastructure and Environment Service for determination. An update was sought and provided on the status of the Novar I windfarm extension. The Committee NOTED the current position with the applications.	PW
5	Major Developments – Pre-application consultations Leasachaidhean Mòra – Co-chomhairle Ro-iarrtais There had been circulated Report No PLN/036/25 by the Area Planning Manager – North. The Committee is invited NOTED the current pre-application notices.	PW
6	Planning Applications to be Determined Iarrtasan Dealbhaidh rin Dearbhadh	
6.1	Applicant: GAA per Mr Gary Hull (24/03390/FUL) (PLN/037/25) Location: Land 115M NE Of Fuaran, 9 Columba Court, Laide (Ward 01).	LM

	Nature of Development: Siting of 3 glamping pods (as amended) Recommendation: GRANT Motion from Cllr Kraft seconded by Cllr Gale, to refuse planning permission for the following reasons:- While the revised layout mitigates the identified flood-risk issue, the proposed development is considered to represent a clear over-development of this severely constrained plot: the combined pod footprints and parking bays would blanket almost the entire site, producing a visually dominant enclave of built form and hard surfacing that is wholly out of keeping with the scale and character of the adjoining dwellinghouses. Consequently, the proposal is contrary to Policy 14 (a) and Policy 29(b). Attention was drawn to a correction to the report which should have stated that the application was in ward 5 rather than ward 1. Amendment from Cllr Bremner seconded by Cllr Millar to grant planning permission subject to the conditions in the report. There were 3 votes for the motion and 9 votes for the amendment, and 1 abstention, the votes having been cast as follows: For the motion:- Mr R Gale, Ms L Kraft, Mr M Reiss For the amendment:- Ms S Atkin, Mr R Bremner, Mrs I Campbell, Mr J Edmondson, Mrs A MacLean, Ms J McEwan, Mr D Millar, Mr H Morrison, Mrs M Ross Abstentions:- Mr S Kennedy The Committee AGREED to GRANT planning permission for the reasons detailed in the report.	
6.2	Applicant: Mr C Parrino (24/02000/FUL) (PLN/038/25) Location: Land 165M East Of Northern Lights Caravan Park, Badcaul, Dundonnell (Ward 05). Nature of Development: Erection of house, erection of wind turbine, formation of access, siting of 2no. cabins for holiday letting and erection of kayak shed and dock Recommendation: GRANT The Committee AGREED to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions laid out in the report.	LM
6.3	Applicant: Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc (25/00106/S37) (PLN/039/25) Location: Chleansaid Wind Farm, Dalnessie, Rogart (Ward 01). Nature of Development: Erection and operation of a 10.5km 132kV overhead electricity line, approximately 3 km to the north of Lairg between Chleansaid Wind Farm and Dalchork Substation.	PW

	Recommendation: Raise No Objection Declaration of Interest – Mr M Reiss, as he had previously publicly expressed his views on continued renewable energy production, left the meeting for this item. The Committee to RAISE NO OBJECTION planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report.	
6.4	Applicant: The Highland Council - Housing (23/05598/MSC) (PLN/040/25) Location: Land 370M NE Of Cromlet House, Cromlet Drive, Invergordon (Ward 06). Nature of Development: Phase 02 erection of 57 dwellings and associated infrastructure at Cromlet Drive, Invergordon (application for matters specified in conditions 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 11, 13, 14, 16, 23, 24 and 25 of 21/03683/PIP) Recommendation: APPROVE Declaration of Interest – Ms J McEwan, as the presenting officer was a close family member. Ms S Atkin as the Vice-Chair of the Housing and Property Committee. Both Members left the meeting for this item. The Committee AGREED to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report.	CF
6.5	Applicant: Three UK (24/01014/FUL) (PLN/041/25) Location: Land 3935M SE Of Tigh Annag, Glencalvie, Ardgay (Ward 01). Nature of Development: Installation of 25m high tower with ancillary development, formation of access track. Recommendation: GRANT The Committee AGREED to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report.	LB
6.6	Applicant: Mr D and Mrs W McConnachie (25/00778/FUL and 25/00785/CON) (PLN/042/25) Location: An Cardach, Gilchrist Square, Dornoch, IV25 3HG (Ward 04). Nature of Development: Demolition of house and erection of replacement house. Recommendation: GRANT The Committee AGREED to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report.	DB
6.7	Applicant: Mr Marcus MacKay (25/00235/FUL) (PLN/043/25) Location: Land 60M South Of Helmie Autoshine Glebe Terrace Helmsdale (Ward 04). Nature of Development: Establishment of a Commercial Garage Workshop. Recommendation: GRANT	Aiden Brennan

	The Committee AGREED to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report.	
6.8	Applicant: Cairngorm Properties Ltd (24/00865/PIP) (PLN/044/25) Location: Land At Knockbreck Farm And Burgage Farm Knockbreck Road, Tain (Ward 07). Nature of Development: Erection of up to 250 houses, associated community uses, open space and business/tourist related uses. Recommendation: GRANT The Committee AGREED to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report.	CS
7	Decision of Appeals to the Scottish Government Planning and Environmental Appeals Division Co-dhùnadh mu Iartras do Bhuidheann-stiùiridh Riaghaltas na h-Alba airson Lùth agus Atharrachadh Aimsir Applicant: Acorn Bioenergy Location: land 350m south of Fearn Aerodrome, Fearn IV20 1XY Nature of Development: Erection and operation of an anaerobic digestion plant and ancillary infrastructure The Committee is NOTED the decision of the Scottish Ministers to allow the appeal and grant planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the Decision Notice.	
8.	Additional Urgent Item - Skye Reinforcement Section 37 Determination The additional urgent item had been added to advise the Committee of the decision of the Scottish Ministers which was of regional interest and issued to the planning authority following the publication of the agenda. During discussion the following main points were raised:- • disappointment was expressed at the decision not to go to a public enquiry; • information was sought and provided regarding the possibility of a judicial review; • on the point being raised, it was explained that the recent update to the Scheme of Delegation would allow timeous holding objections to be submitted going forward; • it was queried what implications this decision would have on the community in Skye; • a summary of the decision to help Members explain it to the public was requested; and • the need to accept the decision and not undermine the Councils planning service was emphasised. The Committee NOTED the decision of the Scottish Ministers to allow the appeal and grant planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the Decision Notice.	

	The meeting ended at 1.20 pm.	

**The Highland Council
South Planning Applications
Committee**

**Council Chamber, HQ, Wednesday 18 June 2025, 9.30am
Minute / Action Note**

Listed below are the decisions taken by Committee at their recent meeting and the actions that now require to be taken. The webcast of the meeting will be available within 48 hours of broadcast and will remain online for 12 months: <https://highland.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

A separate memorandum will be issued if detailed or further instructions are required, or where the contents of the memorandum are confidential. Please arrange to take the required action based on this action note.

Meeting on 18 June 2025

Committee Members Present:

Mr C Ballance	Mrs I MacKenzie (Remote)
Mr D Fraser	Mr T MacLennan (Remote)
Mr L Fraser	Mr D Macpherson (Remote)
Mr A Graham	Mr P Oldham
Mr M Gregson	Ms M Reid
Mr R Jones	Ms L Saggars
Mr B Lobban	Ms K Willis

Officers participating:

Mr B Robertson, Acting Area Planning Manager – South (BR)
 Mr P Wheelan, Strategic Projects Team Leader (PW)
 Ms L Prins, Principal Planner (LP)
 Mr K Gibson, Principal Planner (KG)
 Mr J Kelly, Planner (JK)
 Mr M Fitzpatrick, Planner (MF)
 Ms E Watt, Planner (EW)
 Ms JA Bain (JAB)
 Mr M Clough, Senior Engineer, Transport Planning (MC)
 Ms A Gibbs, Principal Solicitor
 Ms K Arnott, Committee Officer

In attendance:

Lauren Riach – Consents & Environment Strategy Manager, SSEN
 Callum Petrie – Senior Consents & Environment Manager, SSEN
 Patrick McGarrigle – Senior Project Manager (Delivery), SSEN
 Adam Porter – Lead Engineer, SSEN

Meeting on 19 June 2025

Committee Members Present:

Mr C Ballance	Mr B Lobban
Mr D Fraser	Mr T MacLennan (Remote)
Mr L Fraser (left during item 6.10)	Mr P Oldham
Mr A Graham	Ms M Reid (left during item 6.10)
Mr M Gregson	Ms L Saggars (Remote)
Mr R Jones	Ms K Willis (Remote)

Officers participating:

Mr B Robertson, Acting Area Planning Manager – South (BR)

Mr R Dowell, Planner (RD)

Mr M Clough, Senior Engineer, Transport Planning (MC)

Ms A Gibbs, Principal Solicitor

Ms K Arnott, Committee Officer

ITEM NO	DECISION	ACTION
	In terms of Standing Order 9 the Committee agreed to consider Item 7.1 after Item 4, and that Item 6.10 would be taken as the first item on Thursday 19 June 2025.	
1	Calling of the Roll and Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan Apologies were intimated on behalf of Mr K Gowans and Mr A Mackintosh on 18 June 2025 and Mr K Gowans, Mrs I MacKenzie, Mr A Mackintosh and Mr D MacPherson on 19 June 2025.	n/a
2	Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt None.	n/a
3	Confirmation of Minutes Dearbhadh a' Gheàrr-chunntais	
	There had been submitted for confirmation as a correct record the action note and minute of the meeting of the Committee held on 14 May 2025 which was APPROVED .	n/a
4	Major Development Update Iarrtasan Mòra	
	There had been circulated Report No PLS/30/25 by the Area Planning Manager - providing an update on progress of all cases within the "Major" development category currently with the Infrastructure and Environment Service for determination. The Committee NOTED the current position with the applications.	PW
7	In terms of Standing Order 9 the Committee agreed to consider item 7.1 at this stage. Decision of the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit	
7.1	Additional Urgent Item - Skye Reinforcement Section 37 Determination The Committee NOTED the decision of the Scottish Ministers to grant energy consent and deemed planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the Decision Notice.	
5	Major Developments – Pre-application consultations	

	Leasachaidhean Mòra – Co-chomhairle Ro-iarrtais	
	There had been circulated report No PLS/31/25 by the Area Planning Manager – South.	
	The Committee NOTED the current pre-application notices.	
6	Planning Applications to be Determined Iarrtasan Dealbhaidh rin Dearbhadh	
6.1	Applicant: Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc (24/01235/FUL) (PLS/32/25) Location: Land 380M SW Of Deanie Power Station, Deanie, Strathfarrar, Kiltarlity (Ward 12) Nature of Development: Deanie Substation - construction and operation of a 132kV replacement substation, platform, plant and machinery, access, laydown/work compound area(s), drainage, landscaping, and other ancillary works. Recommendation: GRANT The application was subject to a pre-determination hearing, the procedure for which had been circulated prior to the meeting. As part of the Hearing process, the applicant's¹ representatives summarised their application during their allotted ten-minute slot, then responded to questions from Members on the following topics: - the pro-active management of traffic and noise in the area during the construction period had been undertaken, including adjustments to the hours of operation following feedback from Environmental Health; - a suggestion had been made to create a regularly updated flow chart to illustrate all projects and predicted traffic movements, enabling the monitoring of the total number of vehicles passing through the area; - it had been confirmed that road requirements stipulated by Planning to ensure safety would not be influenced by cost considerations; - assurances had been provided that woodland management would be monitored for the first 5–10 years, including the erection of deer fencing; - Condition 18, relating to the private water supply, had been addressed to ensure the maintenance of both quantity and quality, and it was envisaged that this would become a standard condition for all future projects; and - a liaison group had been proposed to facilitate local feedback and to ensure that funding from the Community Benefit Fund would be directed towards initiatives that benefit the local community. The Chair sought and received confirmation from the applicant's representatives that they were satisfied with the manner in which the Hearing had been conducted. Thereafter, the Planning Officer- presented the application, he advised Committee of minor errors contained within the report which he corrected, and Members asked further questions on the following: - attention had been given to road-related issues, including the section of the A31 from Cannich to Balblair, which was frequently closed due to fallen trees. It was noted that local villagers had been efficient in clearing	MF

	these obstructions. There was a recognised need to raise awareness of the frequency of such incidents and their potential impact; - the requirement to examine potential traffic issues and identify appropriate mitigation measures had been acknowledged; - it had been proposed that a traffic model be developed for the entire Aird area to enable planners to visualise changes in project timescales; - consideration had been given to the available proposals and the capacity to manage the project effectively; and - overall, Members had expressed satisfaction with the proposal.	
	Agreed: to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report with the amendment of Condition 11(i) to require the Construction Traffic Management Plan to take account of all base line traffic flows and concurrent construction traffic impacts from other consented traffic generating proposals, including logging activity, on all publicly adopted roads within the transport study area identified within the Environmental Impact Assessment, with final wording of the conditions to be completed being delegated to the Area Planning Manager (South).	
6.2	Applicant: Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc (24/01234/FUL) (PLS/33/25) Location: Culligran Power Station, Strathfarrar, Kiltarlity (Ward 12). Nature of Development: Culligran Substation - construction and operation of a 132kV replacement substation, platform, plant and machinery, access, laydown/work compound area(s), drainage, landscaping, and other. Recommendation: GRANT The application was subject to a pre-determination hearing, the procedure for which had been circulated prior to the meeting. As part of the Hearing process, the applicant's representatives summarised their application during their allotted ten-minute slot, then responded to questions from Members on the following topics: - the pro-active management of traffic and noise in the area during the construction period had been undertaken, including adjustments to the hours of operation following feedback from Environmental Health; - a suggestion had been made to create a regularly updated flow chart to illustrate all projects and predicted traffic movements, enabling the monitoring of the total number of vehicles passing through the area; - it had been confirmed that road requirements stipulated by Planning to ensure safety would not be influenced by cost considerations; - assurances had been provided that woodland management would be monitored for the first 5–10 years, including the erection of deer fencing; - Condition 18, relating to the private water supply, had been addressed to ensure the maintenance of both quantity and quality, and it was envisaged that this would become a standard condition for all future projects; and - a liaison group had been proposed to facilitate local feedback and to ensure that funding from the Community Benefit Fund would be directed towards initiatives that benefit the local community regarding the size of the construction area outside the site, confirmation had been sought as to whether this area could still be used for recreational purposes; - clarification had been requested on the volume of mature trees that would be lost as a result of the project; - questions had been raised regarding the compound and the holding area	MF

	for HGV traffic, specifically whether this would be a single designated area rather than a combination of multiple sites; • it was confirmed that the Deanie and Culligan projects would proceed in parallel, with the Kilmorack project commencing on a staggered basis; • confirmation had been requested on the residual effects on water, and whether these could be mitigated through an alternative design that retained the natural waterbed and, consequently, the natural watercourse; • it had been noted that the footprint of the new site was larger than that of the original plan, and a query had been raised as to whether this could be reduced; and • a request had been made to consider whether the biodiversity net gain could be implemented sooner than 18 months following the completion of the development. The Chair sought and received confirmation from the applicant's representatives that they were satisfied with the manner in which the Hearing had been conducted. Thereafter, the Planning Officer presented the application, and Members asked further questions on the following: • Members confirmed the amendments agreed to the condition covering Construction Traffic Management Plan for the Deanie Power Station could be included in this application; • it had been encouraged that projects be designed to be as small as possible, with a minimal footprint; and • the wording of paragraph 8.27 had been proposed to be revised and formalised as a condition, to ensure that residual effects on the watercourse were minimised.	
	Agreed: to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report with the amendment to the wording of Condition 13.i to take account of all baseline traffic flows and concurrent construction traffic impacts from other consented traffic generating proposals, including logging activity, on all publicly adopted roads within the transport study area identified within the Environmental Impact Assessment, and an additional condition to ensure the applicant reduces the residual effect on the water course, with final wording of the conditions delegated to the Area Planning Manager (South).	
6.3	Applicant: Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission (24/02831/FUL) (PLS/34/25) Location: Land 100M NE of Caulternich, Kilmorack, Beaully (Ward 12). Nature of Development: Kilmorack Substation - construction and operation of a 132kV replacement substation, platform, plant and machinery, access, laydown/work compound area(s), drainage, landscaping, and other ancillary works. Recommendation: GRANT The application was subject to a pre-determination hearing, the procedure for which had been circulated prior to the meeting. As part of the Hearing process, the applicant's representatives summarised their application during their allotted ten-minute slot, then responded to questions from Members on the following topics:	MF

	- concerns had been raised regarding traffic through Wester Balblair, noting that a shorter alternative route was available. It was queried whether restrictions could be placed on construction staff to prevent use of this route; - the pro-active management of traffic and noise monitoring during the construction period had been highlighted, with emphasis on establishing a clear baseline to address any issues that might arise. This included monitoring hours of operation and ensuring a prompt resolution to any breaches; - enquiries had been made regarding the current Kilmorack substation, specifically whether it would be decommissioned or operate concurrently with a new facility, and if so, for what duration; Thereafter, the Clerk read out a statement from residents who had objected to the planning application, which had been submitted in accordance with the pre-determination hearing procedure, and this statement was acknowledged by Members. The Chair sought and received confirmation from the applicant's representatives that they were satisfied with the manner in which the Hearing had been conducted. Thereafter, the Planning Officer presented the application, and Members asked further questions on the following: - it had been suggested that the trees on the southern boundary could be strengthened through a planning condition to provide additional screening of the site; - clarification had been sought as to whether the use of a temporary road would allow adequate visibility for other vehicles using the route; - questions had been raised regarding the working hours and whether any strengthening of the conditions was required; - it had been queried why a contribution to public art had not been included as part of the project; and - the need for improvements relating to active travel had been highlighted.	
	Agreed: to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report and an amended Condition 11(i) to require the Construction Traffic Management Plan to take account of all base line traffic flows and concurrent construction traffic impacts from other consented traffic generating proposals, including logging activity, on all publicly adopted roads within the transport study area; a additional condition relating to a public artwork strategy as identified within the Environmental Statement; and the inclusion of an advisory note relating to construction working hours with final wording of the conditions and the advisory to be delegated to the Area Planning Manager (South).	
6.4	Applicant: Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc (24/01732/S37) (PLS/35/25) Location: Land 10KM NW Of Coul Farm House, Laggan (Ward 20). Nature of Development: Melgarve cluster project - Section 37 application under the Electricity Act for the installation and operation of approximately 7 km of 132 kV overhead line on double circuit steel structure towers, and ancillary development comprising 2 no. cable sealing end compounds,	PW

	approximately 9.9 km of underground cable (7.3 km from the Dell Wind Farm on site substation, 1.8 km from the Cloiche Wind Farm on site substation and 0.8 km on approach into Melgarve substation), upgrades to existing access tracks, new permanent and temporary access tracks, and temporary working areas. Recommendation: RAISE NO OBJECTION The Planning Officer introduced the application, for which the Council was a consultee. He explained that this application had previously been deferred from an earlier meeting of the Committee to allow for the NatureScot objection to be resolved. He also confirmed that there was an error in the front page of the report and clarified that the proposal did accord with the principles and policies of the Development Plan and it was acceptable in terms of material considerations. During discussion of the application Members had been content to agree with the conditions laid out in the report. Disappointment was expressed in the consultation response by Transport Scotland regarding the impact of the development, and others, on the A86 and A89 and the mitigation the Committee considered was required.	
	Agreed: to RAISE NO OBJECTION to the application and the conditions listed in the report be submitted to the Energy Consents Unit, and that the Area Planning Manager (South) write to Transport Scotland highlighting the concerns raised by the Committee regarding the A86 and A89.	
6.5	Applicant: Robertson Homes Limited (24/01297/PIP) (PLS/36/25) Location: Westercraigs 9 and 10, Land South of Kirkwall Brae, Inverness (Ward 13). Nature of Development: Erection of 380 residential units with access, landscaping, public open space, drainage, infrastructure and associated works. Recommendation: GRANT The Planning Officer introduced the application. He advised that amendments were required to condition 7 and 8 within the report, and that two additional conditions were required. These amendments and additions are as follows: Amended Condition 7: Leachkin Road/Kirkwall Brae Junction 7. No development shall start on site until a Road Design Scheme for the junction of Leachkin Road with Kirkwall Brae is submitted and agreed in writing with the Planning Authority in consultation with the Roads Authority. This Scheme will include the following; • a Community Engagement Process to confirm the consultation process with local residents and stakeholders. • a Road Safety Audit process for the proposed road scheme (Stages 1 through 4) and any required remedial works agreed and implemented • A post-implementation monitoring plan to assess the performance of the road scheme for a minimum of 12 months following occupation of any dwelling in each phase or sub-phase of the development, with provisions for remedial measures if adverse impacts are identified. The approved road scheme shall be constructed and operational to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority in consultation with the Roads Authority prior to the first occupation of any part of the development.	KG

Reason: In the interests of road traffic safety

Amended Condition 8: Telford Street Corridor

8. No development shall start on site until a scheme of mitigation shall have been submitted for the approval in writing of the Planning Authority in consultation with the Roads Authority detailing measures to mitigate the anticipated increase in traffic resulting from this development on Telford Street. These measures shall include:

- The conversion of Carsegate Road/Telford Street roundabout into a signalised four-way junction as per the Muirtown and South Kessock Development Brief
- The installation of green wave technology along the Telford Street Corridor to manage peak traffic
- Changes to Telford Road junction to permit two continuous traffic lanes inbound into Inverness and a single outbound lane
- Changes to the Canal Road junction to alter slip lanes and reconfigure the junction
- Provide measures such as a Low Traffic Neighbourhood in Merkinch to prevent an increase in rat running

The agreed scheme shall be implemented by the developer to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority in consultation with the Roads Authority prior to the first occupation of any part of the development.

Reason: In the interests of road traffic safety as these options are intended to ensure that the Telford Street corridor and wider network remains safe and efficient as the development progresses.

Additional Conditions:

A82 Roundabout at Telford Street

30. No development shall start on site until a detailed design for the modifications to the existing roundabout at A82 on Telford Street has been submitted to, and approved in writing, by the Planning Authority in consultation with the Roads Authority and Transport Scotland. The approved scheme shall be subject to a full Road Safety Audit (Stages 1 and 2) and the agreed scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of any dwelling in each phase or sub-phase of the development.

Reason: In the interests of road traffic safety

31. Upon completion of the works in relation to the approved scheme, a Stage 3 Road Safety Audit shall be undertaken to monitor the performance of the modified roundabout at A82 on Telford Street for a period of 12 months following first occupation of any dwelling in each phase or sub-phase of the development, including traffic flow, queue lengths and safety performance. A Monitoring Report shall be submitted to the Planning Authority, in consultation with the Roads Authority and Transport Scotland, within 14 months of first occupation of any dwelling in each phase or sub-phase of the development and the developer shall submit a scheme of mitigation for approval and implement the agreed measures within a timescale to be agreed with the Planning Authority.

Reason: To monitor the proposed new road markings and signing on Telford Street and changes to the circulatory road markings on the Trunk Road

	During discussion, information had been sought and provided regarding the proposed addition of the bus gate to the development. Discussion had taken place around the bus gate usage and whether it would be available to the emergency services, which had been confirmed. Concern had been expressed about this route being used as a shortcut through the housing estate by local people; however, it had been confirmed that a control barrier would be in place to mitigate this. Concerns had also been expressed about the lack of green play spaces for children. Members had sought assurances that the public art would be more than just a bench, stipulating that a percentage of the cost could be allocated to public art or ensuring that the public art would be something more substantial. Motion: Mr Graham, seconded by Mr Gregson, moved to grant planning permission in principle subject to the conclusion of a Section 75 Agreement in line with officer recommendations subject to amending the words of condition 10 to read “an access for emergency services, details of which shall be agreed to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority in consultation with the Roads Authority” and the inclusion of the amended condition 7 & 8, and additional conditions 30 and 31 as stated by the Planner. Amendment: Mr Oldham, seconded by Mr Lobban, moved an amendment to grant planning permission in principle to the conclusion of a Section 75 Agreement in line with officer recommendations as set out in the report, and the inclusion of the amended condition 7 & 8, and the additional conditions 30 and 31 as stated by the Planner. On the vote being taken there were 3 votes for the motion and 11 votes for the amendment with no abstention. The amendment was therefore carried; the votes having been cast as follows:- For the Motion: - Mr A Graham, Mr M Gregson, Ms M Reid. For the Amendment: - Mr C Ballance, Mr D Fraser, Mr L Fraser, Mr R Jones, Mr B Lobban, Mrs I MacKenzie, Mr T MacLennan, Mr D Macpherson, Mr P Oldham, Ms L Saggars, and Ms K Willis.	
	Agreed: to GRANT planning permission in principle subject to the conditions detailed in the report and the conclusion of a Section 75 Agreement in line with officer recommendations as set out in the report, and the inclusion of the amended condition 7 & 8, and the additional conditions 30 and 31 as stated by the Planner.	
6.6	Applicant: West Fraser Europe Ltd (24/05253/FUL) (PLS/37/25) Location: Land 870M NE Of Norbord Europe Ltd, Dalcross (Ward 17) Nature of Development: Construction of a rail sidings yard including new rail sidings and connection to the main line, associated gantry crane (and/or reach-stackers), areas of hard standing, access road, vehicle parking, fencing, drainage, landscaping and associated infrastructure works and facilities. Recommendation: GRANT The Planning Officer introduce the application. He explained that additional conditions to those in the report were requested by Environmental Health.	JK

	These were: a) Operations associated with this development for which noise is audible at the curtilage of any noise sensitive property shall be restricted to the following times unless otherwise agreed by the Planning Authority • Mon-Sat; 07:00-19:00 for train movements. • Mon-Sat; 08:00-20:00 for loading and unloading of containers and all other operations b) Revised Noise Impact Assessment – demonstrating that noise arising from this development will not have an adverse impact on existing noise sensitive properties. Information was sought and provided regarding the loading and unloading of containers. It was confirmed only one train would be arriving and departing daily; however, it was noted this may increase to a maximum of two trains per day in future. Discussion took place concerning the proposed operating hours. There had been general support that the proposed operating hours be reduced given the proximity of noise sensitive receptors. Members welcomed the shift from road-based operations using heavy goods vehicles to rail-based transport, recognising the associated environmental and logistical benefits. Clarification had been requested regarding the felling of woodland in relation to biodiversity net gain. It was explained any tree removal would be compensated on a like-for-like basis, with replanting to take place within the boundaries of the approved landscaping plan.	
	Agreed: to GRANT planning permission subject to conditions detailed in the report with amendments to Conditions 6 (CEMP to include construction noise mitigation scheme) and 7 (lighting scheme to include a revised lighting impact assessment) and the two additional conditions 18 and 19, with an amended time for both train movements and loading and unloading of containers and all other operations on Saturdays, being 0800 – 1300 hours.	
6.7	Applicant: JLC Estates Ltd (23/02189/FUL) (PLS/38/25) Location: Land 50M NW of Mehalah Tirindrish, Spean Bridge (Ward 11). Nature of Development: Erection of 12 houses (including 4 affordable cottage flats), improvement of existing access and erection of farm shop. Recommendation: GRANT Members questioned whether the farm shop currently had a tenant or whether the building would remain unoccupied upon completion. Clarification had been sought regarding the provision of covered bicycle storage and electric vehicle (EV) charging facilities. It was confirmed covered bicycle storage had been included in the plans. Motion: - Ms L Saggars, seconded by Mr P Oldham, moved to grant planning permission subject to the conclusion of a Section 75 Agreement and the conditions as laid out in the report. Amendment: - Ms K Willis, seconded by Mr C Ballance, moved an amendment to grant planning permission subject to the conclusion of a Section 75 Agreement and the conditions laid out in the report with an	LP

	additional condition requiring the installation of an electric vehicle (EV) charger for the farm shop. On the vote being taken there were 7 votes for the motion and 7 votes for the amendment with no abstentions, the Chair using his casting vote in favour of the Motion. The motion was therefore carried, the votes having been cast as follows:- For the Motion: - Mr L Fraser, Mr R Jones, Mr B Lobban, Mrs I MacKenzie, Mr T MacLennan, Mr P Oldham, and Ms L Saggars. For the Amendment: - Mr C Ballance, Mr D Fraser, Mr A Graham, Mr M Gregson, Mr D MacPherson, Ms M Reid, and Ms K Willis.	
	Agreed: to GRANT planning permission subject to the conclusion of a Section 75 Agreement and the conditions as laid out in the report.	
6.8	Applicant: Community Sauna Highland (25/00574/FUL) (PLS/39/25) Location: Land 75M SE of Tennis Pavilion, Bellfield Park, Island Bank Road, Inverness (Ward 14). Nature of Development: Erection of sauna and office. Recommendation: GRANT Following discussion, Members were content with the conditions as laid out in the report, which included staff being present during operating hours, toilet facilities being made available, tree protection measures, and a requirement for the operators to include appropriate cycling provision to encourage people to cycle rather than drive to the facility.	EW
	Agreed: to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report with the additional condition on cycle parking provisions with the final wording of the conditions delegated to the Area Planning Manager (South).	
6.9	Applicant: Mr H Malik (25/00684/FUL) (PLS/40/25) Location: Unit 1, Culduthel Avenue, Inverness, IV2 6JG (Ward 15) Nature of Development: Change of use from Class 3 (food and drink) to Class 3 (food and drink) and hot food take away, installation of extract flue. Recommendation: GRANT Following the discussion, the operating hours were queried, and Members were advised the operating hours would be to 11.00pm. Assurances were sought to ensure these did not preclude the takeaway hours; however, it was advised Condition 2 had been included to ensure hot food takeaway could not continue after the café had closed. The availability of waste facilities was discussed, and Members were advised of commercial bins situated to the rear of the property, with public bins available to the side within the car park of the facility. Members agreed this was an acceptable use of an existing facility.	JAB
	Agreed: to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report.	
	The meeting ended at 4.45pm on 18 June 2025 and continued at 9.30am on Thursday 19 June 2025.	

6.10	Applicant: Loch Kemp Storage Ltd (23/06025/S36) (PLS/41/25) Location: Land 1300m SW of Dell Lodge, Whitebridge. (Ward 12). Nature of Development: Construction and operation of pumped hydro storage; dam, raise, and utilise Loch Kemp, as its upper reservoir, and connect by underground waterway systems and tunnels to a powerhouse and tailrace structure on the shores of Loch Ness. Recommendation: RAISE NO OBJECTIONS The Planner introduced the report and explained since the report had been published the following updates were required: • three late representations had been received; • there had been an objection from the Strathnairn Community Council; and • a number of minor or technical adjustments to the Report of Handling had been required as a result. Information was sought and provided on the following: • traffic and road volumes and impact; • noise pollution; • environmental impacts during construction phase • monitoring of pumping rates • flood prevention • thermal instability of Loch Ness • decommissioning • private water supplies Motion: Mr C Ballance seconded by Mr D Fraser moved to RAISE AN OBJECTION to this application because it does not accord with the provisions of s36 of the Electricity Act 1989 by not demonstrating sufficient regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest and of protecting sites of interest, and neither does it reasonably mitigate against the detrimental effects of the proposal. The proposed development would have significant adverse effects on the special qualities of the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA and the underlying LCTs which make up its special qualities; and it has a significant adverse impact on recreational receptors on Loch Ness and the Great Glen. This is contrary to NPF4 Policies 11 (Energy) and 4 (Natural Places) and HwLDP Policies 57 (Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage) and 67 (Renewable Energy Developments) The location, siting, scale, massing and design of the powerhouse is not appropriate for development on the shore of Loch Ness, contrary to HwLDP Policy 29 (Design Quality and Place Making). The loss of ancient woodland is not acceptable, and the proposed compensatory planting is not suitable mitigation for the loss. The significant adverse effects of the proposed development on the qualities of the Ness Wood SAC, the Easter Ness Forest SSSI, and the Urquhart Bay Woods SSSI are not clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits contrary to NPF4 Policy 4 (Natural Places) and Policy 6 (Forestry, woodland and trees) and HwLDP Policy 52 (Principle of Development in Woodland). The development proposal and the creation of 25 jobs does not demonstrate that it maximises net economic impact or socio-economic benefits due to a lack of analysis on the impact of tourism and surrounding businesses on Loch Ness contrary to NPF4 Policy 11 (c) (Energy) and Inner Moray Firth LDP2 given the suitability of Loch Ness for tourism growth.	RD
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	The proposed development will have an adverse impact on the local road infrastructure, including the B851 and B862, and the mitigation proposed does not adequately address these impacts, contrary to NPF4 Policy 18 (b) (Infrastructure First) and HwLDP Policy 28 (Sustainable Design). None of these concerns are outweighed by the economic benefits of this development or the contribution it will make to the country's net zero targets and it fails to strengthen nature networks and the connections between them as required by NPF4 Policy 3 (Biodiversity) Amendment: Mr B Lobban, seconded by Mr T MacLennan, raised no objection in line with officer recommendations subject to an amendment to condition 42(a) to include the word "hydro" between the words "pumped" and "storage". On a vote being taken there were 8 votes for the motion and 2 votes for the amendment with no abstentions. The motion was therefore carried, the votes having been cast as follows:- For the Motion:- Mr C Ballance, Mr D Fraser, Mr A Graham, Mr M Gregson, Mr R Jones, Mr P Oldham, Ms L Saggars, and Ms K Willis. For the Amendment:- Mr B Lobban, and Mr T MacLennan.	
	Agreed: to RAISE AN OBJECTION to this application because it does not accord with the provisions of s36 of the Electricity Act 1989 by not demonstrating sufficient regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest and of protecting sites of interest, and neither does it reasonably mitigate against the detrimental effects of the proposal. The proposed development would have significant adverse effects on the special qualities of the Loch Ness and Duntelchaig SLA and the underlying LCTs which make up its special qualities; and it has a significant adverse impact on recreational receptors on Loch Ness and the Great Glen. This is contrary to NPF4 Policies 11 (Energy) and 4 (Natural Places) and HwLDP Policies 57 (Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage) and 67 (Renewable Energy Developments) The location, siting, scale, massing and design of the powerhouse is not appropriate for development on the shore of Loch Ness, contrary to HwLDP Policy 29 (Design Quality and Place Making). The loss of ancient woodland is not acceptable, and the proposed compensatory planting is not suitable mitigation for the loss. The significant adverse effects of the proposed development on the qualities of the Ness Wood SAC, the Easter Ness Forest SSSI, and the Urquhart Bay Woods SSSI are not clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits contrary to NPF4 Policy 4 (Natural Places) and Policy 6 (Forestry, woodland and trees) and HwLDP Policy 52 (Principle of Development in Woodland). The development proposal and the creation of 25 jobs does not demonstrate that it maximises net economic impact or socio-economic benefits due to a lack of analysis on the impact of tourism and surrounding businesses on Loch Ness contrary to NPF4 Policy 11 (c) (Energy) and Inner Moray Firth LDP2 given the suitability of Loch Ness for tourism growth. The proposed development will have an adverse impact on the local road infrastructure, including the B851 and B862, and the mitigation proposed does not adequately address these impacts, contrary to NPF4 Policy 18 (b) (Infrastructure First) and HwLDP Policy 28 (Sustainable Design).	

	None of these concerns are outweighed by the economic benefits of this development or the contribution it will make to the country's net zero targets and it fails to strengthen nature networks and the connections between them as required by NPF4 Policy 3 (Biodiversity).	
	The meeting ended at 3.30pm on 19 June 2025.	

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**NORTH PLANNING APPLICATIONS
COMMITTEE**

6 August 2025, 9.30AM

MINUTE / ACTION NOTE

Listed below are the decisions taken by Committee at their meeting and the actions that now require to be taken. The webcast of the meeting will be available within 48 hours of broadcast and will remain online for 12 months: <https://highland.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

A separate memorandum will be issued if detailed or further instructions are required, or where the contents of the memorandum are confidential. Please arrange to take the required action based on this action note.

Committee Members Present:

Ms S Atkin
Mr M Baird
Mr R Bremner (Remote)
Ms B Campbell
Ms C Collier (remote)
Ms L Dundas
Mr J Edmondson
Mr R Gale
Ms C Gillies
Ms L Kraft
Mrs A MacLean
Ms J McEwan
Mr D Millar
Mr M Reiss
Mr K Rosie (remote)

Non-Committee Members Present:

Mr S Coghill
Mr R Cross
Mr R Gunn
Ms M Hutchison

Substitutes:

Apologies:

Officers participating:

Mr D Jones, Area Planning Manager – North (DJ)
Mr P Wheelan, Planning Team Leader (PW)
Mr G Baxter, Principal Planner (GB)
Ms C Farmer-McEwan, Principal Planner (CF)
Mr M Fitzpatrick, Principal Planner (MF)
Mr A Brennan, Planner (AB)

Ms S Hadfield, Planner (SH)
 Ms L MacDonald, Planner (LM)
 Mr C Simms, Planner (CS)
 Ms J Bridge, Senior Engineer (JB)
 Mr I Meredith, Solicitor and Clerk
 Ms R Ross, Committee Officer

ITEM NO	DECISION	ACTION
1	Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan	n/a
2	Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt Ms J McEwan – items 6.3 and 6.4 Mr M Reiss – items 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3	n/a
3	Confirmation of Minutes Dearbhadh a’ Gheàrr-chunntais There had been submitted for confirmation as a correct record the action note and minute of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 June 2025 which was APPROVED .	n/a
4	Major Development Update Iarrtasan Mòra There had been circulated Report No PLN/045/25 by the Area Planning Manager - providing an update on progress of all cases within the “Major” development category currently with the Infrastructure and Environment Service for determination. During discussion, updates were sought and provided on the planning application from Ross Estates Company for 100 houses at Barbaraville, the application from Springfield Properties plc for a business park at Tore, the public local enquiry for Ben Aketil Windfarm and the judicial review for Strath Oykel Windfarm. The Committee NOTED the current position with the applications.	PW

5	Major Developments – Pre-application consultations Leasachaidhean Mòra – Co-chomhairle Ro-iarrtais There had been circulated Report No PLN/046/25 by the Area Planning Manager – North. During discussion, it was asked that consideration be given to the height of the turbines, the lighting and the significance of the historic landscape. The Committee is invited NOTED the current pre-application notices.	PW
6	Planning Applications to be Determined Iarrtasan Dealbhaidh rin Dearbhadh	
6.1	Applicant: Caledonia North Offshore Ltd. (24/05124//S36) (PLN/047/25) Location: Land 50 KM SE of Wick Harbour, Harbour Road, Wick (Ward 03). Nature of Development: Caledonia North Offshore Wind Farm – construction and operation of an offshore wind farm comprising up to 77 turbines with a maximum blade tip height of 355m, subsea interconnector and export cabling and associated infrastructure. Recommendation: Raise No Objection Declaration of Interest – Mr M Reiss, as he had previously publicly expressed his views on continued energy production, left the meeting for this item. Member’s attention was drawn to the following correction to the report: - Paragraph 1.2 should have read –The current application for the Caledonia North development for 77 x 355m turbines (24/05124/S36, MS-00011014 / MS-00011015) forms one of two standalone applications, the other being for Caledonia South for 78 x 355m and 325m turbines (24/05129/S36, MS-00011012/MS-00011013), which collectively make up the Caledonia Offshore Wind. Paragraph 9.1 should have read - National and THC planning policy are supportive of renewable energy development and in particular for offshore wind. The anticipated 2GW maximum generating capacity of the Caledonia Offshore Wind Farm would significantly contribute to Scottish and UK Government policy targets, British energy security, and the international commitments for renewable energy and electricity generation to facilitate net zero by 2045. Motion – Mr R Bremner seconded by Mr D Millar to:- i. RAISE NO OBJECTION subject to the following; ii. GRANT delegated authority to the Area Planning Manager – North to respond to the Marine Directorate regarding any future Further / Supplementary Environmental Impact Assessment, where that does not: i) materially increase the scale of the proposed development; ii) and result in any additional significant adverse environmental effects;	MF

- iii) and does not undermine or remove mitigation which was secured within the Council previous consultation response on the application;
- iii. **GRANT** delegated authority to the Area Planning Manager- North to agree the finished condition wording, with any substantive amendments to be subject to prior consultation with the Chair of the North Planning Applications Committee

Amendment – Mrs J McEwan seconded by Mrs M Paterson to **RAISE AN OBJECTION** for the following reasons:-

With regard to the impact on visual amenity, the proposal is considered to result in significant adverse visual effects on a number of sensitive visual receptors. The assessment identifies that significant visual impacts will occur along the coastal fringe of Caithness, including nearby elevated locations such as the Yarrows Archaeological Trail, between the Hill of Harley (approximately 5km north of Keiss) and the Whaligoe Steps.

Specifically, Viewpoints 4 to 8 – representing residents Keiss, Wick (path south of South View), Sarclet, Yarrows Archaeological Trail, and Whaligoe Steps – are all identified as experiencing significant visual effects. These locations are up to approximately 34km from the nearest turbine with outward views over the North Sea. From these publicly accessible and valued viewpoints, the proposed development would:

- Result in a substantial horizontal extension of offshore turbine development,
- Introduce upscaled turbine heights that create visual dissonance when viewed behind or in combination with existing, smaller turbines,
- Disrupt the existing seascape character, particularly when assessed cumulatively with other offshore developments.

In line with Policy 67 of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan, the Council will only support proposals where it is satisfied that they are located, sited, and designed such that they will not be significantly detrimental overall, either individually or cumulatively, taking account of any mitigation proposed. In this instance, the proposal is not considered to meet this policy test. The extent and prominence of the development, when viewed from key coastal and elevated receptors, is judged to result in unacceptable individual and cumulative visual impacts. Accordingly, the proposal is contrary to Policy 67 of the HwLDP.

In this instance, the proposal is not considered to meet this policy test. The extent and prominence of the development, when viewed from key coastal areas and by receptors at viewpoints 4 to 8, is judged to result in unacceptable individual and cumulative visual impacts. Accordingly, the proposal is contrary to Policy 67 of the HwLDP.

There were **10** votes for the motion and **4** votes for the amendment, with no abstentions, the votes having been cast as follows:

For the Motion:-

Ms S Atkin, Mr M Baird, Mr R Bremner, Ms I Campbell, Ms T Collier, Ms L Dundas, Ms C Gillies, Ms L Kraft, Ms A MacLean, Mr D Millar

	For the Amendment: - Mr J Edmondson, Mr R Gale, Ms J McEwan, Mrs M Paterson The Committee AGREED to: i. RAISE NO OBJECTION officers informing the Marine Directorate of the conditions detailed in the report if the application is granted; ii. GRANT delegated authority to the Area Planning Manager – North to respond to the Marine Directorate regarding any future Further / Supplementary Environmental Impact Assessment, where that does not: a. Materially increase the scale of the proposed development; and b. result in any additional significant adverse environmental effects; and c. does not undermine or remove mitigation which was secured within the Council previous consultation response on the application; iii. GRANT delegated authority to the Area Planning Manager- North to agree the finished condition wording, with any substantive amendments to be subject to prior consultation with the Chair of the North Planning Applications Committee	
6.2	Applicant: Whirlwind Energy Storage Limited (24/03500/FUL) (PLN/048/25) Location: Land 530M South of Geiselittle Farm, Thurso (Ward 02). Nature of Development: Construction and operation of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), accommodating 64 battery storage cabinets, landscaping and ancillary infrastructure. Recommendation: GRANT Declaration of Interest – Mr M Reiss, as he had previously publicly expressed his views on continued energy production, left the meeting for this item. Motion – Mr K Rosie seconded by Mr R Bremner to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions laid out in the report. Amendment – Mr R Gale seconded by Mrs J McEwan to REFUSE planning permission for the following reasons:- Given that the application site is in close proximity to the Thurso River which is a Special Site of Scientific Interest and also a Special Area of Conservation it is considered that the site is not appropriate in respect of mitigation of the risk of contamination and the likely significant detrimental effect on the Atlantic Salmon. Therefore, it is also considered that this proposal is not compliant with HwLDP Policy 28 Sustainable Design as it is not considered that this is the Right development in the right place. There were 8 votes for the motion and 7 votes for the amendment, with no abstentions, the votes having been cast as follows: For the Motion:- Ms S Atkin, Mr R Bremner, Ms I Campbell, Ms T Collier, Ms L Kraft, Ms A	GB

	MacLean, Mr D Millar, Mr K Rosie For the Amendment:- Mr M Baird, Ms L Dundas, Mr J Edmondson, Mr R Gale, Ms C Gillies, Mrs J McEwan, Mrs M Paterson The Committee AGREED to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions laid out in the report.	
6.3	Applicant: Forss Energy Storage Limited (24/04585/FUL) (PLN/049/25) Location: Land 190M West Of Lythmore House South Wing, 21 Forss Business And Technology Park, Forss, Thurso (Ward 02). Nature of Development: Construction and operation of a Battery Energy Storage System with a capacity of 49.9MW consisting of battery storage modules and associated infrastructure including fencing, control buildings, substations and CCTV Recommendation: GRANT Declaration of Interest – Mr M Reiss, as he had previously publicly expressed his views on continued energy production, left the meeting for this item. Mrs J McEwan, as the reporting officer is a close family member. The Committee AGREED to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report.	CF
6.4	Applicant: Albryn Housing Society (24/02782/FUL) (PLN/050/25) Location: Land 70M SE of 26 Seaforth Road, Tain (Ward 07). Nature of Development: Erection of 16no. houses Recommendation: GRANT Declaration of Interest – Ms J McEwan, as the presenting officer was a close family member. The Committee AGREED to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report and the additional condition that prior to the commencement of development, an updated and revised dimensioned plan of the access junction onto Seaforth Road shall be submitted and approved by the Planning Authority. These Plans shall show Seaforth Road widened at the location of the junction to allow a 26-tonne refuse vehicle to enter and exist the new development whilst cars are parked opposite to the junction. The amended plan shall fully detail any traffic regulation and traffic calming proposals required to facilitate safe use of the junction and the parking opposite. Reason: In order to ensure the safety and free flow of traffic on Seaforth Road. In the interests of pedestrian safety.	CF
6.5	Applicant: Albryn Housing Society (24/04124/FUL) (PLN/051/25) Location: Land 60m West of 44 David Ross Street, Alness. (Ward 06). Nature of Development: Erection of 36no. houses Recommendation: APPROVE The Committee AGREED to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report with the additional condition that no development shall commence until plans to show the stand of trees enclosed	SH

	by a stockproof post and wire fence outwith tree fall distance, with gated access to include warning signs to caution on the safety issues, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Thereafter the fencing and gates shall be erected in full before the first occupation of any of the residential units and shall thereafter be maintained and retained, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority; Reason: In the interests of safety	
6.6	Applicant: Barry Property Ltd (24/02439/FUL) (PLN/052/25) Location: Former Bridgend Building Supplies Yard, Bridgend, Thurso (Ward 02). Nature of Development: Change of use of land to form holiday park. Recommendation: REFUSE Motion – Mr K Rosie seconded by Mr M Reiss to GRANT planning permission for the following reasons:- While it is acknowledged that the development is contrary to NPF4 Policies 22, 10, 13, and 18(b), and HwLDP Policies 64 and 56, the broader benefits of the proposal are considered to outweigh the objections raised along with the conditions to offset the detrimental impacts raised by the statutory consultees, SEPA and Transport Scotland. The site is a long-derelict brownfield location within the Thurso Settlement Development Area and allocated for mixed use in the CaSPlan. The redevelopment of this site is considered to improve the existing site and the wider environment to the betterment of the local area. Its redevelopment aligns with NPF4 Policy 9 and HwLDP Policy 42 and supports the local economy and tourism sector in line with NPF4 Policy 30 and HwLDP Policy 43. In relation to biodiversity and landscaping issues, these can be resolved by conditions requiring a Biodiversity Enhancement Plan, Tree Protection Plan, and Landscape Strategy, meeting the requirements of NPF4 Policy 3 and HwLDP Policy 51. Amendment – Mr D Millar seconded by Mr R Bremner to REFUSE planning permission for the reasons detailed in the report. There were 10 votes for the motion and 5 votes for the amendment, with no abstentions, the votes having been cast as follows: For the Motion:- Ms S Atkin, Mr M Baird, Ms I Campbell, Ms L Dundas, Mr R Gale, Ms L Kraft, Ms J McEwan, Mrs M Paterson, Mr M Reiss, Mr K Rosie For the Amendment:- Mr R Bremner, Ms T Collier, Mr J Edmondson, Ms C Gillies, Mr D Millar The Committee AGREED to GRANT planning permission for the reasons detailed above subject to conditions, the drafting of the final wording of the conditions being delegated to officers.	CS
6.7	Applicant: Mr & Mrs William & Marlene Lipka (25/01063/FUL) (PLN/053/25) Location: 15 Riverside Place, Thurso, KW14 8BZ (Ward 02). Nature of Development: Extension and change of use from house to paint & decoration supply business (in retrospect). Recommendation: REFUSE	CS

Motion – Mr D Millar seconded by Mr R Bremner to **REFUSE** planning permission for the reasons detailed in the report.

Amendment – Mr M Reiss seconded by Mr R Gale to **GRANT** planning permission for the following reasons:-

The constructed extension's exterior has been finished entirely in Cedral (fibre cement) cladding, a non-traditional material is appropriate to the historic character of the Category 'C' listed building. Both the choice and extent of this material does preserve the building's special architectural or historic interest and depart from the provisions of its Listed Building Consent. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to comply with NPF4 Policy 7, HwLDP Policies 28, 29 and 57, and to the statutory duty under Section 14 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 to have "special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its features of special architectural or historic interest".

The external appearance of the constructed extension has not resulted in an adverse impact on a Category 'C' listed building, by incorporating a series of large uPVC-framed windows. The form of these windows is acceptable, as they take the existing listed building's windows into account. Their design preserves the building's special architectural or historic interest and complies with the approved Listed Building Consent is Accordingly. It is also considered to comply with NPF4 Policy 7, HwLDP Policies 28, 29 and 57, and to the statutory duty under Section 14 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 to have "special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its features of special architectural or historic interest".

The external appearance of the constructed extension will not result in an adverse impact on a Category 'C' listed building, by unlawfully incorporating an additional storey in a departure from granted Listed Building Consent. The height of the constructed extension does not breach the eaves of the existing listed building, conveying an unbalanced and awkward appearance. Its scale and massing are considered to preserve the listed building's special architectural or historic interest. It is considered to comply with NPF4 Policy 7, HwLDP Policies 28, 29 and 57 and section 14 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997.

There were **10** votes for the motion and **4** votes for the amendment, with **1** abstention, the votes having been cast as follows:

For the Motion – Ms S Atkin, Mr R Bremner, Ms I Campbell, Ms T Collier, Ms L Dundas, Mr J Edmondson, Mr C Gillies, Mr L Kraft, Mr D Millar, Mr K Rosie

For the Amendment – Mr M Baird, Mr R Gale, Mrs M Paterson, Mr M Reiss

Abstentions – Mrs J McEwan

The Committee **AGREED** to **REFUSE** planning permission for the reasons detailed in the report.

6.8	Applicant: Mr & Mrs William & Marlene Lipka (25/01210/LBC) (PLN/054/25) Location: 15 Riverside Place, Thurso, KW14 8BZ (Ward 02). Nature of Development: Extension and change of use from house to paint & decoration supply business (in retrospect). Recommendation: REFUSE Motion – Mr D Millar seconded by Mr R Bremner to REFUSE planning permission for the reasons detailed in the report. Amendment – Mr M Reiss seconded by Mr R Gale to GRANT planning permission for the following reasons:- The constructed extension's exterior has been finished entirely in Cedral (fibre cement) cladding, a non-traditional material is appropriate to the historic character of the Category 'C' listed building. Both the choice and extent of this material does preserve the building's special architectural or historic interest and depart from the provisions of its Listed Building Consent. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to comply with NPF4 Policy 7, HwLDP Policies 28, 29 and 57, and to the statutory duty under Section 14 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 to have "special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its features of special architectural or historic interest". The external appearance of the constructed extension has not resulted in an adverse impact on a Category 'C' listed building, by incorporating a series of large uPVC-framed windows. The form of these windows is acceptable, as they take the existing listed building's windows into account. Their design preserves the building's special architectural or historic interest and complies with the approved Listed Building Consent is Accordingly. It is also considered to comply with NPF4 Policy 7, HwLDP Policies 28, 29 and 57, and to the statutory duty under Section 14 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 to have "special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its features of special architectural or historic interest". The external appearance of the constructed extension will not result in an adverse impact on a Category 'C' listed building, by unlawfully incorporating an additional storey in a departure from granted Listed Building Consent. The height of the constructed extension does not breach the eaves of the existing listed building, conveying an unbalanced and awkward appearance. Its scale and massing are considered to preserve the listed building's special architectural or historic interest. It is considered to comply with NPF4 Policy 7, HwLDP Policies 28, 29 and 57 and section 14 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997. There were 10 votes for the motion and 4 votes for the amendment, with 1 abstention, the votes having been cast as follows: For the Motion – Ms S Atkin, Mr R Bremner, Ms I Campbell, Ms T Collier, Ms L Dundas, Mr J Edmondson, Mr C Gillies, Mr L Kraft, Mr D Millar, Mr K Rosie For the Amendment – Mr M Baird, Mr R Gale, Mrs M Paterson, Mr M Reiss	CS
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	Abstentions – Mrs J McEwan The Committee AGREED to REFUSE planning permission for the reasons detailed in the report.	
6.9	Applicant: Mrs Catherine Prentice (24/03163/PIP) (PLN/055/25) Location: Land 65M NE Of 4 Dunan, Broadford, Isle Of Skye (Ward 10). Nature of Development: Erection of house. Recommendation: REFUSE Motion – Mr D Millar seconded by Ms I Campbell to GRANT planning permission for the following reasons:- The proposed development is considered to comply with Policy 17(c) and Policy 29 of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), and Policies 28, 29, and 36 of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP). While the proposal results in a form of tandem development, the existing house is considered beyond repair and uninhabitable. The proposed dwelling is sufficiently set back from both the public road and the existing building, allowing it to integrate within the existing, loosely clustered settlement pattern without resulting in an adverse impact on local amenity or the visual landscape character of the area. In addition, matters relating to scale, design, landscaping, and access can be adequately controlled by planning conditions, ensuring a high standard of development Amendment – Cllr Rosie seconded by Cllr Reiss to REFUSE planning permission for the reasons detailed in the report. There were 3 votes for the motion and 9 votes for the amendment, with no abstentions, the votes having been cast as follows: For the motion: - Ms I Campbell, Ms L Dundas, Mr D Millar For the amendment – Ms S Atkin, Mr M Baird, Mr J Edmondson, Mr R Gale, Ms C Gillies, Ms L Kraft, Mrs J McEwan, Mrs M Paterson, Mr M Reiss The Committee AGREED to REFUSE planning permission for the reasons detailed in the report.	LM
6.10	Applicant: Mrs Iwona Gawin (25/00812/FUL) (PLN/056/25) Location: Land 130M NW Of Heatherlea, Brough (Ward 02). Nature of Development: Siting of 3no. glamping pods for short-term letting. Recommendation: GRANT The Committee AGREED to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report.	AB
7	Decision under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 by Scottish Ministers Applicant: Offshore Wind Power Limited (23/04930/S36) Location: 28 kilometres West of Hoy, Orkney and 23 km North of the Caithness Coast Nature of Development: Construction and Operation of Offshore Generating Station and Offshore Transmission Infrastructure (West Orkney Windfarm)	

	The Committee NOTED the decision by Scottish Ministers to grant consent for the reasons given in the Decision Notice	
	The meeting ended at 5.20 pm.	

The Highland Council
South Planning Applications
Committee

Council Chamber, HQ, Friday 22 August 2025, 9.30am

Minute / Action Note

Listed below are the decisions taken by Committee at their recent meeting and the actions that now require to be taken. The webcast of the meeting will be available within 48 hours of broadcast and will remain online for 12 months: <https://highland.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

A separate memorandum will be issued if detailed or further instructions are required, or where the contents of the memorandum are confidential. Please arrange to take the required action based on this action note.

Committee Members Present:

Mr D Fraser
Mr L Fraser (**absent for item 1-Item 6.7**)
Mr A Graham
Mr R Jones (**in the Chair for item 6.10**)
Mr B Lobban
Mrs I MacKenzie
Mr A MacKintosh

Mr T MacLennan
Mr D Macpherson
Mr P Oldham (**in the Chair except item 6.10**)
Ms M Reid
Ms L Saggars
Ms K Willis

Substitutes:

Mr D McDonald for Mr K Gowans

Officers participating:

Mr B Robertson, Acting Area Planning Manager – South (BR)
Mr P Wheelan, Strategic Projects Team Leader (PW)
Mr M Fitzpatrick, Principal Planner (MF)
Mr K Gibson, Principal Planner (KG)
Mr R Dowell, Planner (RD)
Ms C MacLeod, Planner (CMacL)
Mr R Cubey, Graduate Planner (RC)
Mr J Kelly, Planning Team Leader (JK)
Mr G Baxter, Principal Planner (GB)
Ms E Watt, Principal Planner (EW)
Ms S MacMillan, Planning Team Leader (SMacM)
Mr M Clough, Senior Engineer, Transport Planning (MC)
Ms A Gibbs, Principal Solicitor
Ms K Arnott, Committee Officer

ITEM NO	DECISION	ACTION
1	Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan	n/a

	Mr C Ballance and Mr K Gowans	
2	Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt	n/a
	Item 6.6 – Mr B Lobban Item 6.10 – Mr P Oldham	n/a
3	Confirmation of Minutes Dearbhadh a’ Gheàrr-chunntais	
	There had been submitted for confirmation as a correct record the action note/minute of the meeting of the Committee held on 18 June 2025 which was APPROVED .	n/a
4.	Major Development Update Iarrtasan Mòra There had been circulated Report No PLS/42/25 by the Area Planning Manager - South providing an update on progress of all cases within the “Major” development category currently with the Infrastructure and Environment Service for determination. The Committee NOTED the current position with the applications detailed in the report.	
5.	Major Developments – Pre-application consultations Leasachaidhean Mòra – Co-chomhairle Ro-iarrtais There had been circulated Report No PLS/43/25 by the Area Planning Manager South. The Committee NOTED the current pre-application notices detailed in the report.	
6.	Planning Applications to be Determined Iarrtasan Dealbhaidh rin Dearbhadh	
6.1	Applicant: SSEN Transmission (24/02830/FUL) (PLS/45/25) Location: Land 290M SW Of Teanacoil, 2 Leanassie, Beaully (Ward 12). Nature of Development: Aigas Substation - Construction of 132kV replacement substation, platform, plant and machinery, access, laydown/work compound area(s), drainage, landscaping, and other ancillary works. Recommendation: GRANT.	MF
	Agreed: to GRANT planning permission in line with the officer recommendation, with authority delegated to the Area Planning Manager to finalise the wording of the conditions.	
6.2	Applicant: Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc (24/03323/S37) (PLS/46/25) Location: Land 680M NE of SSE Power Station, Invergarry (Ward 11). Nature of Development: Replacement of 1.1km section of 132kV OHL	RD

	between Quoich Power Station and Quoich Tee Switching Station comprising six steel lattice towers, new substation platform, diverted track, associated works and infrastructure. Recommendation: RAISE NO OBJECTION.	
	Agreed: NO OBJECTION be lodged by the Council to the Energy Consents Unit in respect of this application, all as detailed in Section 10 and 11 of the report with the condition relating to the species protection plan including reference to the common scoter and black throated diver.	
6.3	Applicant: Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc (24/04767/S37) (PLS/48/25) Location: Land 835m SE of Dunmaglass Mains, Dunmaglass, Inverness (Ward 12). Nature of Development: Aberarder Wind Farm Grid Connection - Installation and operation of approximately 5.1km of new 132kV overhead transmission line between Aberarder Wind Farm Substation and the existing Dunmaglass to Farigaig 132 kV overhead transmission line, including ancillary works. The ancillary development will include the installation of temporary and permanent access tracks, vegetation clearance, temporary working areas and construction compounds, a borrow pit for the extraction of stone and upgrades to existing access tracks and existing access points. Recommendation: RAISE NO OBJECTION.	RD
	Agreed: NO OBJECTION be lodged by the Council to the Energy Consents Unit in respect of this application, subject to the conclusion of a legal agreement relating to local road network mitigation, all as detailed in Section 10 of the report.	
6.4	Applicant: Field Knocknagael Limited (24/05097/S36) (PLS/49/25) Location: Land 500m southeast of Essich Farm Cottages, Inverness (Ward 15). Nature of Development: Knocknagael BESS - Construction and operation of a 200MW Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) comprising two BESS and one substation compounds, associated infrastructure, site access, and landscaping. Recommendation: RAISE NO OBJECTION.	RD
	Agreed: NO OBJECTION be lodged by the Council to the Energy Consents Unit in respect of this application, all as detailed in Section 11 of the report, with delegated authority granted to the Area Manager South to finalise the wording of the conditions, with the inclusion of the standard informative relating to construction hours from 8am, with any substantive amendments requiring prior consultation with the Chair.	
6.5	Applicant: Fasnakyle Battery Storage Limited (23/04100/FUL) (PLS/44/25) Location: Land 500M NE of Fasnakyle, Cannich (Ward 12). Nature of Development: Battery energy storage facility comprising access track, compound of battery and electrical equipment, stores, meter building, water tank, ancillary structures, fencing, security cameras, landscaping bunds, new trees. Recommendation: GRANT. As part of the introductions to the application, the Case Officer explained that there were a number of corrections required to the conditions listed in the report. These were:	GB

	Condition 2 – 76m should be 7.6m; Condition 19 – where “<i>Flare 180052/ZS02136</i>” have been included in error and should be deleted; and Condition 9F – add the word “<i>unless otherwise approved in writing by the Council as Planning Authority</i>” after the last word “unit”. Following the Case Officer’s presentation, it was proposed that the Committee defer the determination of the application for a site visit because there was a need to see the site on the ground to appreciate the wider area, its historic setting, proximity to the River Glass, and the pedestrian access to the site.	
	Agreed: to DEFER the application pending a Site Visit being undertaken.	
6.6	Mr B Lobban declared an interest in relation to item 6.6 due to his work as Commissioner, Northern Lighthouse Board and Director, Northern Lighthouse Heritage Trust. He left the meeting and took no part in the determination of this application Applicant: Highland Council (25/00769/FUL) (PLS/52/25) Location: Corran Ferry, Corran Narrows, Fort William (Ward 21) Nature of Development: Formation of 2no. slipways and access, overnight berthing area, breakwater and alignment structure, marshalling areas, parking, bicycle and pedestrian shelters, toilet block, junction and localised road improvements, EV charging infrastructure, purser's kiosk, services (power lighting, water and drainage), electrical infrastructure, temporary diesel infrastructure, extensions to shared use paths and associated construction compounds. Recommendation: GRANT.	EW/ SMacM
	Agreed: to GRANT planning permission in line with the officer recommendation and the conditions as set out in Section 10 of the report with an additional condition requiring the full details of the proposed car parking to be submitted for approval prior to development commencing at the Ardgour side.	
6.7	Applicant: Balfour Beatty (25/00993/FUL) (PLS/55/25) Location: Land 350M North of Newtown, Invergarry (Ward 12). Nature of Development: Formation of temporary workers residential accommodation, including welfare facilities, associated infrastructure and other ancillary development. Recommendation: GRANT. As part of the introductions to the application, the Case Officer explained that an amendment was required to Condition 12 regarding tree planting, as follows: Condition 12 - All planting shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the commencement of the development.	JK
	Agreed: to GRANT planning permission in line with the officer recommendation and the conditions as set out in Section 10 of the report with an amendment to Condition 12 (tree planting).	
6.8	Applicant: Highland Council (25/00437/FUL) (PLS/50/25) Location: Land 110M East of Kamara, 23 Torr Gardens, Dores (Ward 12).	KG

	Nature of Development: Erection of 17no. residential units and associated infrastructure Recommendation: GRANT.	
	Agreed: to DEFER the application pending a Site Visit being undertaken.	
6.9	Applicant: Scotlog Ltd (24/04623/FUL) (PLS/47/25) Location: Drakies House, Culcabock Avenue, Inverness, IV2 3RQ (Ward 16). Nature of Development: Subdivision to 2 No. houses, conversion of annex to 1 No. house. Recommendation: GRANT. As part of the introductions to the application, the Case Officer explained that there was a typographical error within the report and that there had been two public comments and one objection relating to the listed building consent. As such there was no requirement for the listed building consent application to be reported to Committee for determination. There was extensive discussion about the historical and proposed entrances into the property and the impact the proposed development would have on a perceived saturated road system and on traffic volume. Motion: Mr Graham seconded by Mr A Mackintosh that determination of the application be deferred so that the Committee could undertake a site visit to get clarity on the proposed access arrangements. Amendment: Mr Oldham, seconded by Mr Lobban, moved an amendment not to undertake a site visit. On the vote being taken there were 4 votes for the motion and 9 votes for the amendment with 1 abstention. The amendment was therefore carried; the votes having been cast as follows: For the Motion:- Mr Graham, Mr D McDonald, Mr A Mackintosh, and Mr M Gregson. For the Amendment:- Mr P Oldham, Mr D Fraser, Mr L Fraser, Mr R Jones, Mr B Lobban, Mr T MacLennan, Ms M Reid, Ms L Saggars, and Ms K Willis. Abstention:- Ms I Mackenzie Thereafter the Committee moved to determine the application.	CMacL
	Agreed: to GRANT planning permission in line with the officer recommendation and the conditions as set out in Section 10 of the report subject to the payment of development contributions and an additional condition prohibiting vehicular access from the proposed development on to Culcabock Avenue.	
6.10	Mr P Oldham declared an interest in relation to Item 6.10 due to knowing objectors to application. He left the meeting and took no part in the determination of this application. Mr R Jones was in the Chair for Item 6.10.	CMacL

	Applicant: Mr & Mrs R Clark (25/00825/FUL) (PLS/53/25) Location: Land 60m West of Cruachan, Wester Lochloy, Nairn (Ward 18). Nature of Development: Erection of house and garage/annex. Recommendation: GRANT. As part of the introductions to the application, the Case Officer explained that there were a number of corrections required to the conditions listed in the report. These were: Amendment to condition 5 – the annex/garage hereby approved shall be used solely for purposes ancillary to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse, and for no other purpose or use including holiday letting purposes. Reason: In order to clarify the terms of the permission. Additional condition 7 - The mitigation measures set out in the Preliminary Ecological Statement (ROAVR June 2025) and Badger Survey (ROAVR June 2025) shall be carried out in full and in accordance with the timescales contained within. Reason: To minimise disturbance to nature conservation interests and ensure the protection of protected species and habitats.	
	Agreed: to GRANT planning permission in line with the officer recommendations and the conditions as set out in Section 11 of the report including an amendment to condition 5 and the addition of condition 7.	
6.11	Applicant: Highland Council (25/00566/FUL) (PLS/51/25) Location: Land 210M NE of 42 Seafiel Road, Inverness (Ward 16). Nature of Development: Platforming construction including formation of access road and outfall to firth. Recommendation: GRANT.	RMca
	Agreed: to GRANT planning permission in line with the officer recommendation and the conditions as set out in Section 11 of the report.	
6.12	Applicant: Pat Munro Homes (25/00992/S4) (PLS/54/25) Location: Land 300M NW of Invereen, Dalmagarry Wood, Tomatin (Ward 19). Nature of Development: Dalmagarry Quarry - Application under Section 42 to vary Condition 2, Part 1 (mineral output limit) of planning permission 22/02323/S42. Recommendation: GRANT.	RC
	Agreed: to GRANT planning permission in line with the officer recommendation and the conditions as set out in Section 11 of the report.	
6.13	Applicant: Energiekontor UK Ltd (25/01011/FUL) (PLS/56/25) Location: Land 3KM NW of 2 Farley Beaully (Ward 12). Nature of Development: Erection of two temporary meteorological masts up to 80m in height. Recommendation: GRANT.	RMca
	Agreed: to GRANT planning permission in line with the officer recommendation and the conditions as set out in Section 11 of the report including a condition requiring advice to be sought from the Highland Raptor	

	Group regarding the Golden Eagles, that an Environmental Clerk of Works be present when works are ongoing, and that the details of staging area be submitted in writing to the planning authority for approval.	
7	Decision of Appeals to the Scottish Government Planning and Environmental Appeals Division Co-dhùnadh mu larrtas do Bhuidheann-stiùiridh Riaghaltas na h-Alba airson Lùth agus Atharrachadh Aimsir	
7.1	Applicant: Nicholas Sneddon (CLUD-270-2010) (20/04278/FUL) Location: land 40 metres north of 54 Riverside Park, Lochyside, Fort William F Nature of Development: the laying and compacting of sub base hardstone or Decision: Appeal Dismissed	
7.2	Applicant: Kirkwood Homes (PPA-270-2312) (22/03432/FUL) Location: Land 255 metres south of Drumossie Hotel, Inshes, Inverness, IV2 5BB (Ward 19) Nature of Development: Erection of 80 residential units with associated access, landscaping and infrastructure. Decision: Appeal Dismissed	
7.3	Applicant: Caulterich Battery Storage Ltd (PPA-270-2310) (23/03113/FUL) Location: land 410M SW of Platchaig House, Kilmorack, Beauly, IV4 7AL (Ward 12) Nature of Development: construction and operation of an energy storage facility with capacity of up to 49.9MW comprising up to 36 energy storage modules, control building, electrical equipment, access, landscaping and fencing. Decision: Appeal Upheld	
7.4	Applicant: Koosii Hideaways Ltd (PN-270-001) (23/05616/FUL) Location: land 280M NW of Rigsden, Achnabobane, Spean Bridge (Ward 11) Nature of Development: Section 88 Purchase Notice Decision: Intention Not to Confirm Notice	
7.4a	Applicant: Alexander Ross MacGregor (PN-270-001) (23/05616/FUL) Location: land at Achnabobane 120M north of Fern Cottage, Spean Bridge, PH34 4EX (Ward 11) Nature of Development: siting of 4 cabins for holiday accommodation and associated infrastructure Decision: Enforcement Notice Appeal Dismissed The Committee NOTED the current position with the Decision Appeals to the Scottish Government Planning and Environmental Appeals as detailed.	
	The meeting ended at 4.00pm.	

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport Monitoring Group** held in **Committee Room 1, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness** on **Tuesday, 2 September 2025** at **2.30pm**.

Present:-

Mr K Gowans	Mrs A MacLean
Mr M Green	Mrs M Reid
Mr S Kennedy	Mrs T Roberston (Remote)
Mr G MacKenzie (Remote)	Mr R Stewart (Remote)

Non-Member also present:

Mr J Edmonson

In attendance:-

Ms S Armstrong, Chief Officer – Revenues and Commercialisation
Mr A Maguire, Head of Economic Development and Regeneration
Mr N Osborne, Climate Change Manager
Mr A Webster, Economy and Regeneration Manager
Mr D Chisholm, Tourism & Inward Investment Team Leader
Mrs O Bayon, Committee Officer

Also in attendance:-

Mr C MacPherson, Chief Executive, ICF Green Freeport

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr I Brown (Non Member).

2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statement

There were no Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statements.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting

The Group **NOTED** the Minutes of Meeting of the Inverness Cromarty Firth Green Freeport Monitoring Group held on 12 June 2025, which had been approved by the Economy and Infrastructure Committee at its meeting on 21 August 2025.

Matters Raised Prior to Formal Business

Prior to commencement of Item 4, the Chair addressed concerns regarding a recent article published in the Inverness Courier, which had followed the release of a research paper by the Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research. The article and report had been considered by Members to contain speculative and inaccurate claims about criminal activity in the Highlands, particularly in relation to port operations. Mr MacPherson provided context, explaining that the report had been compiled without engagement with local or national authorities and had misrepresented the regulatory environment and security arrangements in place. It was confirmed that correspondence was being prepared to seek clarification and address the inaccuracies.

Members expressed disappointment that such material had been circulated, particularly given the collaborative efforts to support investment and economic development in the Highlands. Assurance was provided that appropriate risk mitigation measures were embedded within the Freeport business case, developed in partnership with relevant agencies. It was explained that certain operational details could not be published due to their sensitive nature, and that standard practices may have been misinterpreted. The Chair thanked Members for their attention and engagement on the matter.

4. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

A verbal update was provided by Mr MacPherson, Chief Executive, ICF Green Freeport, supplemented by contributions from attending officers where appropriate.

During discussion the following main points were raised:-

- the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was described as a symbolic but important document, reflecting the contents of the approved Full Business Case. Although not a legal agreement, it served to formalise shared commitments. A draft had been received and was under review, with the expectation that the final version would not introduce new elements beyond those already agreed;
- plans were underway for a signing event in Inverness towards the end of September, involving senior representatives from both governments, the Council and the Freeport Board. Final arrangements remained subject to confirmation;
- a request was made for appropriate representation from the Council at the signing, including consideration of the Chair of the Monitoring Group, given the significant contribution made to the process;
- officers had identified a small number of queries within the draft MoU, including a revision to the cash flow profile for seed capital projects due to a delay in Treasury processes. These queries were to be raised with both governments following the meeting;
- it was highlighted that substantial work would be required to support the annual assurance statement to governments, confirming compliance with the business case. This would involve coordination between the Council and the Freeport on governance, procurement, financial controls and legal matters;

- the importance of resourcing was emphasised, with recognition that funding streams associated with Freeport status could be used to support the necessary capacity within both organisations; and
- it was confirmed that no major concerns had been identified within the draft MoU, but that further operational arrangements would need to be developed in the coming months to ensure full compliance and delivery of expected benefits.

The Group **NOTED** the status of the Memorandum of Understanding.

5. Update Seed Capital

A verbal update was provided by Mr MacPherson, Chief Executive, ICF Green Freeport, supplemented by contributions from attending officers where appropriate.

During discussion, the following main points were raised:–

- the original project propositions, developed under the governance arrangements, had been reviewed by the Board of the ICFGF following the two year since their initial recommendation. The full business case approval had been delayed by approximately nine to twelve months, which had impacted the progression of projects. Officers had worked closely to advance the outline business cases to full business case stage, with due diligence and cost certainty undertaken by the Council as the accountable body;
- the company Highland Deephaven had returned with a revised proposal for a slightly reduced project, due to the possibility of direct financial contributions from interested parties at the location. This development was welcomed and would be subject to further investigation;
- the total grant awards currently stood at £24.749m, approximately £250k short of the £25m allocation. The ICFGF Board had agreed that this remaining amount, along with any other shortfalls arising from cost escalations, could be reallocated to projects with lower intervention rates. The A9 Tomich Junction improvements had been identified as a priority for additional support, having originally received a low intervention rate and now facing increased costs due to the nature of the civil engineering works. Although Transport Scotland had not prioritised the project, the Council had recognised its importance as a community led initiative and agreed to forward fund any shortfall, with the intention of recovering costs through future developer contributions linked to developments benefiting from the junction. The Planning and Development Unit (PDU) team had commenced work on the project, with consultants engaged to progress it to the planning stage; and
- some projects had been expected to commence in 2024 to 2025 and might face challenges in spending the allocated funding within the original timeframe. In response, the Council had formally requested an extension from the Scottish Government for the drawdown period of the funding; and

- a dedicated Project Manager was due to commence at the end of the month to support delivery of the Seed Capital programme.

The Group **NOTED** the status of seed capital arrangements.

6. Retained Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) Investment Plan

A verbal update was provided by Mr C MacPherson, Chief Executive, ICF Green Freeport, supplemented by contributions from attending officers where appropriate.

During discussion, the following main points were raised:–

- the retained Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) mechanism was identified as one of the key benefits of Freeport designation. When new infrastructure was developed, such as by companies like Sumitomo Electric UK Power Cables Ltd (SEUK-CL), the rates relief granted would be reimbursed to the Highland area by the Scottish Government, based on the value of the new asset. Existing infrastructure continued to pay rates as normal;
- over the next 25 years, the retained NDR income was expected to generate a substantial fund, with independent assessments suggesting a potential total of up to £400 million over the next 15 years. This fund would be administered by Highland Council as the accountable body;
- the first calls on the NDR income would be the operational costs of the Freeport and the Council. Net proceeds thereafter would be subject to strategic allocation;
- a robust governance framework was being developed, including an investment plan, investment manual and associated legal documentation. External consultants had been commissioned to support this work, funded entirely by a Scottish Government resource;
- the ICFGF Board, which included Council representation, would set priorities and targets in collaboration with the Council. The Council retained a veto over any proposals not aligned with agreed purposes and funding would not be released without Council approval;
- the investment plan would be reviewed annually, with a likely three-year planning horizon, to ensure alignment with changing regional needs. The first funding was not expected for at least another year;
- the Council's early and ongoing involvement in the development of the strategic framework was considered essential to streamline the process and ensure alignment with community priorities;
- clarification was provided that the proposals under discussion related to net proceeds, after deduction of Freeport and Council costs; and
- updates were provided on recent changes to the Freeport Board, including new representation from Mitsui & Co. Ltd and Port of Ardersier.

The Group **NOTED** the status of the NDR Investment Plan and **AGREED** that the draft strategy, once prepared, would be submitted to this Group for initial feedback prior to consideration by the Economy and Infrastructure Committee and onward submission to the Scottish Government.

The meeting ended at 15:05pm.