

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
NORTH PLANNING APPLICATIONS
COMMITTEE

26 November 2025 at 9.30am continuing on 28 November 2025 at 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.

Wednesday 26 November 2025

Committee Members Present:

Ms S Atkin
Mr M Baird
Mr R Bremner
Ms B Campbell
Ms T Collier (online)
Ms L Dundas (online)
Mr J Edmondson
Mr R Gale
Ms C Gilles
Ms L Kraft
Mr S Mackie
Mrs A MacLean
Ms J McEwan
Mr D Millar
Ms M Paterson
Mr K Rosie

Non-Committee Members Present:

Ms H Crawford
Mr R Gunn
Ms M Hutchison
Mrs B Jarvie
Mr P Oldham

Substitutes: None

Apologies: None

Officers participating:

Mr D Jones, Area Planning Manager – North (DJ)
Ms L MacDonald, Planning Team Leader (LM)

Mr P Wheelan, Planning Team Leader (PW)
Mr G Baxter, Principal Planner (GB)
Mr J Wiseman, Principal Planner (JW)
Mr G Sharp, Planner (GS)
Mr P Dent, Senior Environmental Health Officer (PD)
Ms J Bridge, Senior Engineer (JB)
Ms R Banfro, Solicitor (Planning) and Clerk
Ms R Ross, Committee Officer

Also in Attendance:

Grant Allan - Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission PLC
Matthew Atkins - Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission PLC
Charlene Baker - Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission PLC
Colin Earnshaw - Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission PLC
Euan Smith - Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission PLC
Brent Munro - Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission PLC
Kathrin Haltiner – Halkirk District Community Council
Catherine MacKenzie-Third Party Objector
Daniel Burnand- Third Party Objector
Ian Kelly- Third Party Objector
David Martin- Third Party Objector

Friday 28 November 2025

Committee Members Present:

Ms S Atkin
Mr M Baird
Mr R Bremner
Ms B Campbell
Ms T Collier (online)
Ms L Dundas
Mr J Edmondson
Mr R Gale
Ms C Gilles
Ms L Kraft
Mrs A MacLean
Mr S Mackie (from item 8.4)
Ms J McEwan
Mr D Millar
Ms M Paterson (online)
Mr K Rosie

Non-Committee Members Present:

Substitutes: None

Apologies: None

Officers participating:

Mr D Jones, Area Planning Manager – North (DJ)
Ms L MacDonald, Planning Team Leader (LM)
Mr P Wheelan, Planning Team Leader (PW)
Mr M Fitzpatrick, Principal Planner (MF)

Ms G Pearson, Principal Planner (GP)
 Mr D Borland, Planner (DB)
 Mr A Brennan, Planner (AB)
 Mr C Simms, Planner (CS)
 Ms J Bridge, Senior Engineer (JB)
 Ms R Banfro, Solicitor (Planning) and Clerk
 Ms R Ross, Committee Officer

Mr D Millar in the Chair

ITEM NO	DECISION	ACTION
1	Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan There were no apologies for absence	n/a
2	Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt The Committee NOTED the following Declarations of Interest:- Mr D Millar – Item 7 and Item 8.9 Ms S Atkin – Item 8.4 Mr S Mackie – Item 6 Ms J MacEwan – Item 8.14 Mr R Bremner explained that he had recently signed the Social Values Charter on behalf of the Council, however, this had no impact on any decisions taken by Planning Applications Committees. He noted that in June 2024, Full Council had agreed that the Social Values Charter does not form any part of Planning Applications Committee (PAC) considerations, including for renewable energy schemes. Decisions on planning applications remain entirely separate from the Charter and must be taken solely on planning merits, relevant policy, material considerations, and the evidence before the Committee.	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 24 September 2025 which was APPROVED .	n/a
4	Major Development Update Iartasan Mòra There had been circulated Report No PLN/057/25 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.	DJ

An update was provided on the 28 November by the Clerk in respect of the ongoing Planning Enquiry concerning Melvich Windfarm.

- The update clarified that the planning inquiry had been triggered due to unresolved objections from NatureScot and the RSPB.
- During the planning inquiry process, the Applicant lodged Further Environmental Information (FEI). The FEI submitted proposed a development comprising 4 wind turbines, rather than 12 turbines, with a total overall capacity of approximately 26.8MW, supported by additional energy storage provision from an on-site battery storage facility with an indicative output capacity of 27MW.
- This FEI was reviewed by Officers at the Council and was considered to be different from what was originally submitted to the Council as part of the original planning application; therefore, the Applicant should submit a fresh planning application reflecting this new proposal.
- The Council made submissions to the Reporter requesting that the Reporter decide whether the FEI should be accepted as part of the planning inquiry process. The Reporter considered these submissions and made a preliminary ruling on the proposed FEI. The Reporter's preliminary view is that the amended proposal is fundamentally different from the original application.
- The Reporter noted that the proposed FEI would result in a development that would be approximately 20% taller, making the development visually different. The revised scheme would require aviation lighting and would introduce new landscape and visual impacts, particularly at twilight, dusk, and dawn.
- The Reporter's recommendation is now with the Scottish Ministers for their consideration and to determine whether it will be considered as part of the planning inquiry or not.
- Following the submission of the FEI to the Council, ECU, and Interested Parties, the Council agreed with the Developer to extend the PLI timetable to allow for the FEI to be presented to Committee. This extension to the timetable was agreed before the Reporter made a preliminary ruling. The case is now on hold and Officers' view is that no report should be taken to Committee, on the basis that it would be premature and abortive, until such time as the Scottish Ministers issue their decision.
- The Committee sought clarification as to whether the Council's position would be prejudiced in the event that Scottish Ministers accepted the FEI as part of the planning inquiry process.
- The Committee were advised that if the Scottish Ministers decided that the FEI should be accepted as part of the Planning Inquiry, the Scheme of Delegation would allow for a further updated holding objection to be lodged prior to a report being brought to Committee. The Committee would then have the opportunity to consider the Report and the Officer's recommendation.

The Committee **NOTED** the current position with the applications.

5	Major Developments – Pre-application consultations Leasachaidhean Mòra – Co-chomhairle Ro-iarrtais There had been circulated Report No PLN/058/25 by the Area Planning Manager – North. The Committee is NOTED the applications.	PW
6	Pre Determination Hearing and Determination of Planning Application Èisteachd Ro-dhearbhaidh is Dearbhadh airson Iartas Dealbhachaidh Declaration of Interest – Mr S Mackie holds a financial interest as a Non Executive Director of Scrabster Harbour Trust who have made representations to Members regarding this item. Applicant: Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc (24/04898/FUL) (PLN/059/25) Location: Land 360M NE Of Achalone Cottage, Achalone, Halkirk (Ward 03). Nature of Development: Banniskirk Substation - Erection and operation of an Air Insulated Switchgear 400kV substation and HVDC converter station with associated buildings, installation of new platforms, drainage infrastructure, temporary construction compound, landscaping, mounding and other ancillary works. Recommendation: GRANT A pre-determination hearing was held in respect of this item at which the Applicant, 5 objectors and 1 representative of the Halkirk and District Community Council were present. Parties spoke in support of the application and their representations and were asked questions by members. At the conclusion of the hearing, parties confirmed that they were satisfied with the way the hearing had been conducted. The Committee AGREED to GRANT Planning Permission, subject to the conclusion of a section 75 agreement, subject to the conditions detailed in the report with delegated powers granted to officers to amend conditions 22 and 35 to make reference to "in consultation with NPAC Ward Members" and to make reference to an additional condition in respect of FS6 gas.	PW
7	Continued Application Cuspairean a' Leantainn Declaration of Interest – Mr D Millar as the Secretary of Portree Community Council made written representations on behalf of the Community Council at the time the first application was initially considered by the Council as Planning Authority. Mr K Rosie in the Chair Applicant: Lochalsh & Skye Housing Association (21/05962/PIP) (PLN/060/25) Location: Land 380M NE Of Portree NHS Dental Clinic Sraid An Eorna Portree (Ward 10). Nature of Development: Mixed use development comprising up to 248	LM

	residential units, business unit, community shop, care village, landscaping and associated infrastructure. Recommendation: GRANT The Committee AGREED to GRANT Planning Permission subject to the conclusion of the section 75 agreement and subject to the conditions detailed in the report.	
8	Planning Applications to be Determined Iarrtasan Dealbhaidh rin Dearbhadh In terms of Standing Order 9, the Committee AGREED to vary the order of business as follows:	
8.9	Declaration of Interest – Mr D Millar as one of the objectors is a family member Mr K Rosie in the Chair Applicant: Neil and Deborah Bell (25/02768/FUL) (PLN/069/25) Location: Land 60M SW Of Half Of 7 Tote, Skeabost Bridge (Ward 10). Nature of Development: Erection of House. Recommendation: GRANT The Committee AGREED to GRANT Planning Permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report.	GS
8.8	Applicant: Mr Norman MacPherson (25/00064/PIP) (PLN/068/25) Location: Land 60M SW Of Totaig House, Colbost, Dunvegan Isle Of Skye (Ward 10). Nature of Development: Erection of house and formation of access. Recommendation: REFUSE During discussion it was suggested that when traffic survey work is needed it should be undertaken before the submission of an application so that there would be no need for applications to be deferred. Motion from Cllr D Millar, seconded by Cllr S Mackie to defer consideration Of the application to allow for further discussion between the Applicant, the Planning Authority and the Transport Planning to undertake a traffic speed survey and to provide the means, details and extent of any construction works to the Road. Amendment from Cllr R Bremner, seconded by Cllr S Atkin to refuse planning permission for the reasons detailed in the report. There were 10 votes for the motion and 6 votes for the amendment, the votes having been cast as follows: For the motion: - Mr M Baird, Mrs I Campbell, Ms L Dundas, Mr R Gale, Ms C Gillies, Mr S Mackie, Ms J McEwan, Mr D Millar, Ms M Paterson and Mr K Rosie For the amendment: -	GS

	Ms S Atkin, Mr R Bremner, Ms T Collier, Mr J Edmondson Ms L Kraft, Ms A Maclean, The Committee AGREED to DEFER the application to allow for further discussion between the Applicant, the Planning Authority and the Transport Planning to undertake a traffic speed survey and to provide the means, details and extent of any construction works to the Road.	
8.1	Applicant: Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission (25/01906/S37) (PLN/061/25) Location: Land 3200M NE Of Glencassley Castle, Rosehall (Ward 01). Nature of Development: Achany Wind Farm Connection - Install and keep installed 16km of 132kV overhead line (OHL) between the consented Achany Wind Farm Extension on-site substation and the operational Shin substation. Recommendation: RAISE NO OBJECTION The Committee AGREED to RAISE NO OBJECTION to the application thereby withdrawing the Council's previous objection for the reasons detailed in the report.	GB
8.3	Applicant: Field Spittal Limited (25/00498/S36) (PLN/063/25) Location: SSE, DC Site Spittal Substation, Halkirk, (Ward 03). Nature of Development: Spittal BESS - Construction and operation of Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) of up to 300MW with associated infrastructure (including cable route to substation), access and ancillary works (including landscaping and biodiversity enhancement). Recommendation: RAISE NO OBJECTION During discussion, the Leader of the Council agreed to make representations to Scottish Ministers concerning the Committee's concerns with National Planning Framework 4. The Committee AGREED to RAISE NO OBJECTION to the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report together with delegated powers to officers to agree the finalised wording of the conditions including condition 13 as follows: f) confirmation that any extraordinary wear and tear on Highland Council roads identified by part e) shall be repaired by the developer at the developer's expense, with the applicant entering into a section 96 agreement under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 (as amended) with the Council, and to the satisfaction of the Council within three months of the post construction survey being carried out.	JW
	The following items were considered on Friday 28 November.	
8.13	Applicant: Springfield Properties PLC (22/04104/PIP) (PLN/073/25) Location: Land 320M SW Of Tore Roundabout, Tore, Muir of Ord (Ward 08). Nature of Development: Phased construction and operation of a business park with low carbon vehicle hub and Park and Ride facility comprising ancillary Class 1A retail, Class 3 food and drink, Class 4 business (excluding office space development), Class 5 General Industrial (excluding heavy industry), Class 6 Storage and Distribution, and Class 7 Hotel, landscaping	MF

	and biodiversity enhancement, access, roads, SUDS, and associated infrastructure Recommendation: GRANT There was a motion for Cllr S Atkin, seconded by Cllr A Maclean:- The proposed development represents a departure from the Development Plan which cannot be supported and is considered contrary to NPF4 Policies 22, 26(d)(ii), 27(a), 29(b), IMFLDP2 Policy 9, and HwLDP Policy 65. The development lies on unallocated agricultural land outwith the defined Settlement Development Area for Tore and is not supported by any allocation in the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan 2. Its scale and nature constitute a significant and unsustainable outward expansion of the settlement, contrary to the planned, limited growth strategy for Tore. The proposal does not support local living and would be heavily reliant on private car travel due to its separation from the existing settlement, its location between the A835 and A832, and the absence of safe, direct or attractive active travel connections. The development is therefore not suitably scaled, sited or designed for its rural context and does not contribute to local living nor appropriately address transport needs, contrary to NPF4 Policies 15(a) and 29(b). The proposed development is not served by a public foul sewer and relies on a private package treatment plant that remains high-level, unconsented and without confirmed delivery. The committee considers that the applicant has failed to demonstrate that the necessary foul drainage infrastructure required to support the development will be available, deliverable or adequate for its scale. As a result, the proposal fails to demonstrate the necessary infrastructure to enable development and is contrary to NPF4 Policy 18(b), NPF4 Policy 22(c)(ii), IMFLDP2 Policy 9, and Highland-wide Local Development Plan Policy 65. Cllr D Millar proposed an amendment to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report with the final wording of conditions to be delegated to officers but failed to find a seconder. The Committee AGREED to REFUSE Planning Permission for the reasons detailed above.	
8.5	Applicant: Telefonica UK Limited (25/01737/FUL) (PLN/065/25) Location: Land 3.5Km NW of Aultdearg, Lochluichart, Garve (Ward 05). Nature of Development: Installation of 20m tall lattice telecommunications tower, 3no. shared antennas, 2no. transmission dishes and additional equipment at 17.1m above ground level, 3no. equipment cabinets, battery energy storage system, back-up generator with 4000L fuel tank, 2no (8m tall, 3KW output) wind turbines, 24no. (total) solar panels split over 4 arrays and associated ancillary equipment within fenced compound. Recommendation: GRANT The Committee AGREED to GRANT Planning Permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report.	DB
8.7	Applicant: NKT HVC Ltd (25/02512/FUL) (PLN/067/25) Location: Land 210M NE Of Tigh Ard, Gelshfield, Halkirk (Ward 03).	CS

	Nature of Development: Construction of two temporary access points, to provide access to the cable corridor for construction vehicles associated with the LT360 Spittal to Peterhead High Voltage Cable project. Recommendation: GRANT The Committee AGREED to GRANT Planning Permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report.	
8.2	Applicant: Meall Buidhe Renewables LLP (25/02312/S42) (PLN/062/25) Location: Land 4420M NW Of Croick Estate, Ardgay (Ward 01). Nature of Development: Meall Buidhe Wind Farm - Section 42 application to vary condition 1 (time limit on commencement) and condition 6(iv) (turbine blade length) of planning permission 20/02659/FUL (consented at appeal PPA-270-2277) Recommendation: GRANT Motion for Cllr R Gale, seconded by Cllr M Baird to refuse to vary condition 1 for the following reason: The planning committee considers that the removal of the condition requiring the development to commence within the originally stipulated period is unacceptable. The time-limiting condition formed a fundamental component of the planning permission, ensuring that the proposal was assessed against the policy framework, environmental circumstances, and technological assumptions that applied at the time the consent was granted. The planning committee refuses the proposed variation of Condition 1, which seeks to extend the commencement period. The original time-limiting condition formed a fundamental part of the consent, ensuring that the development proceeded within the statutory period of three years and remained aligned with the development plan in place when permission was granted. In determining this application, the committee has had full regard to the Development Plan, including NPF4 (particularly Policies 1 and 11) and the Local Development Plan. Although the committee did not agree with the Reporter's decision to grant the original consent, it recognises that the Reporter placed significant weight on the project's contribution to climate change objectives, renewable energy generation, biodiversity enhancement and economic benefits; however, that emphasis does not justify extending the statutory commencement period. The scale and complexity of the proposal remain such that the original timeframe is adequate; no new phasing requirements have been identified; delays to grid connection represent an inherent commercial risk and, consistent with NPF4 Policy 11(e), are a matter for the developer to resolve with the network operator; and no compelling evidence has been provided that economic or supply-chain conditions now render the original period unreasonable. For these reasons, I am not satisfied that an extension is justified, and the variation of Condition 1 should be refused. Amendment for Cllr R Bremner, seconded by Cllr K Rosie to grant planning permission for the reasons detailed in the report.	PW

	There were 7 votes for the motion and 8 votes for the amendment, the votes having been cast as follows: For the Motion: - Ms S Atkin, Mr M Baird, Ms L Dundas, Ms J Edmondson, Mr R Gale, Ms Margaret Paterson and Ms Jan McEwen For the Amendment: - Mr R Bremner, Ms I Campbell, Ms T Collier, Ms C Gillies, Cllr L Kraft. Cllr A Maclean, Cllr D Millar and Cllr K Rosie. The Committee AGREED to GRANT Planning Permission subject to the conditions detailed in the Report.	
8.4	Declaration of Interest – Ms S Atkin as the Vice-Chair of the Housing And Property Committee. Applicant: The Highland Council (25/01536/FUL) (PLN/064/25) Location: Land 150M SW Of Tesco, Mart Road, Dingwall (Ward 08). Nature of Development: Erection of 34 residential properties and Associated works. Recommendation: GRANT The Committee AGREED to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report, subject to the amendment of condition 11 and subject to an additional condition relating to relating to the traffic management plan of the proposed development with the final wording of the conditions being delegated to officers.	GP
8.6	Applicant: J Murphy And Sons Limited (25/02223/FUL) (PLN/066/25) Location: Land 160m Northwest Of Tigh Ardachu, Mosshill, Brora (Ward 04). Nature of Development: Formation of temporary compound cabins and storage (retrospective). Recommendation: GRANT The Committee AGREED to DEFER this application to obtain further information from the Applicant.	LB
8.10	Applicant: Mr Steve Auckland (25/01888/FUL) (PLN/070/25) Location: Two Fishes, Cooper Street, Plockton (Ward 05). Nature of Development: Erection of domestic garage. Recommendation: GRANT The Committee AGREED to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report and subject to an additional condition relating to the restriction of the use of the proposed development with the final wording of the conditions being delegated to officers.	Jessica Forrester
8.11	Applicant: Mr & Mrs Alan & Hazel Bell (25/01670/FUL) (PLN/071/25) Location: The Sheiling, Old Craigton Road, North Kessock (Ward 09). Nature of Development: Change of use of land to domestic use, demolition of building and erection of extensions Recommendation: GRANT	Emma Thompson

	The Committee AGREED to GRANT Planning Permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report and subject to the following additional condition: The hedge shown on drawing reference site plan 025.262.105C shall be retained in perpetuity. Reason: In order to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring properties and occupants. With the final wording of the conditions being delegated to officers.	
8.12	Applicant: Field Fyrish Ltd (25/01620/S36) (PLN/072/25) Location: Land 650M South Of Fyrish Substation, Alness (Ward 06). Nature of Development: Field Fyrish Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)- Construction and operation of a Battery Energy Storage System along with associated infrastructure and ancillary works, earthworks, access, drainage, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements. Recommendation: RAISE NO OBJECTION The Committee AGREED to RAISE NO OBJECTION to the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report and subject to the revision of condition 15: Replacement Condition 15 - CTMP No development shall commence on site until a finalised Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority in consultation with Transport Scotland. The CTMP shall include: a) Identification of the routes to site for general construction traffic and details of the number, type and timing of vehicle movements during the construction period, with timing to take cognisance of cumulative traffic impact on the local community associated with other consented developments on the local road network; b) A Road Assessment to establish the current condition of Highland Council roads on the proposed HGV routing plan. This shall be carried out by a consulting engineer and will involve an engineering appraisal; c) Mitigation measures to address impacts on locations identified in the Road Assessment. Such road safety measures may include, but not be limited to structural carriageway overlay and edge strengthening; d) d)Pre and post construction surveys of Highland Council roads; e) Confirmation that any extraordinary wear and tear on Highland Council roads identified by part d) shall be repaired by the developer within three months of the post-construction survey being carried out, with the developer entering into a Section 96 agreement under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 (as amended) with the Council; f) A procedure for the regular monitoring of road conditions and implementation of remedial works; g) Provisions for emergency vehicle access; h) A timetable for implementation of the measures detailed in the CTMP; i) i)Identification of a nominated person to whom any road safety issues can be referred and measures for keeping the Community Council	Ross Cubey

	informed and dealing with queries Mr and any complaints regarding construction traffic; j) Thereafter the approved CTMP shall be implemented in full prior to development commencing and remain in with the final wording of condition 15 being delegated to officers.	
8.14	Declaration of interest – Ms J McEwan as she had previously discussed this application with one of the objectors. Applicant: Cruive Ltd (25/02523/FUL) (PLN/074/25) Location: Land To West of Dunroamin, Dunnet (Ward 02). Nature of Development: Glamping retreat with 3 Bothies, and Service Bothy. Recommendation: GRANT The Committee AGREED to GRANT Planning Permission subject to the Conditions detailed in the report. The Committee also agreed to remove condition 2 and condition 3 detailed in the Report on Handling.	AB
	The meeting ended at 2.55 pm on Friday 28 November.	