

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
NORTH PLANNING APPLICATIONS
COMMITTEE

11 March 2026, 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:

Mr M Baird
Mr R Bremner (except item 7.1)
Ms B Campbell
Ms T Collier (from item 4 until item 7.4)
Ms L Dundas
Mr J Edmondson
Mr R Gale
Ms C Gillies
Ms L Kraft
Mrs A MacLean
Ms J McEwan (except 7.1 to item 9)
Mr D Millar
Mr K Rosie

Non-Committee Members Present:

Mr P Oldham

Apologies:

Ms S Atkin
Mr S Mackie
Mrs M Paterson

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 L Burnside, Principal Planner (LB)
Mr M Fitzpatrick, Principal Planner (MF)
Mr M Kordas, Principal Planner (MK)
Mr C Simms, Planner (CS)
Ms K Slotwinska, Planner (KS)
Ms K Tolley, Graduate Planner (KT)
Ms J Bridge, Principal Engineer (JB)
Ms R Banfro, Solicitor (Planning) and Clerk
Ms R Ross, Committee Officer

Also in attendance:

Ian Kelly, on behalf of Stuart Mills – Halkirk Community Council, and Kathrin Haltiner – Third Party Objector

Maryanne Paterson – Onshore Consents Manager, Thistle Wind Partners

Euan Walker – Project Director, Thistle Wind Partners

ITEM NO	DECISION	ACTION
1	<p>Mr D Millar in the Chair</p> <p>Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan</p> <p>Apologies were intimated on behalf of Ms S Atkin, Mr S Mackie and Mrs M Paterson.</p>	n/a
2	<p>Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt</p> <p>Mr D Millar – Items 6, 7.1 and 7.3 Ms C Gillies – Item 7.5</p>	n/a
3	<p>Confirmation of Minutes Dearbhadh a’ Gheàrr-chunntais</p> <p>There had been submitted for confirmation as a correct record the action note and minute of the meeting of the Committee held on 21 January 2026 which was APPROVED, with the addition of Ms J Bridge, Principal Engineer to the participating officers.</p>	n/a
4	<p>Major Development Update Iartasan Mòra</p> <p>There had been circulated Report No PLN/001/23 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.</p> <p>During discussion the following points were raised:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an update was sought on application 23/05466/FUL, Rosskeen, Invergordon and it was confirmed that the petition that was raised had been dismissed by the Court of Session; • it was queried whether the Highland Council Planning Authority had reconsidered any decisions as a result of the recent Raeshaw decision, and it was suggested that the Council waited to react to the decision until the process had concluded; • concern was expressed over the Energy Consents Unit (ECU) no longer accepting representations by email and it was confirmed that the Committee could write to the ECU to express its concerns, • disappointment was expressed at the Scottish Government’s response regarding the Coull Links application, and 	PW

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> concerns were raised as to the wording of item 8 and 9 of the agenda on the point being raised, it was clarified that officers were content with the wording of the agenda issued to Members. <p>The Committee NOTED the current position with the applications.</p>	
5	<p>Major Developments – Pre-application consultations Leasachaidhean Mòra – Co-chomhairle Ro-iarrtais</p> <p>There had been circulated Report No PLN/011/26 by the Area Planning Manager – North.</p> <p>The Committee NOTED the applications.</p>	PW
6	<p>Pre Determination Hearing and Determination of Planning Application Èisteachd Ro-dhearbhaidh is Dearbhadh airson Iartas Dealbhachaidh</p> <p>Declaration of Interest – Mr D Millar, having reflected on remarks made during the Committee meeting on 21 January, had considered the objective test and was of the view that a reasonable person could conclude there was a risk that he may be perceived as having a predetermined position in relation to renewable energy proposals. In accordance with paragraph 5.6 of the revised Code of Conduct, and in order to protect public confidence in the integrity of the decision-making process, he left the meeting for this item.</p> <p>Mr K Rosie in the Chair</p> <p>Applicant: Thistle Wind Partners Joint Venture (25/02964/PIP) (PLN/012/26) Location: Land 1500M East Of Old Free Church Manse Bower (Ward 02). Nature of Development: Construction of onshore transmission infrastructure comprising cable landfall, substation, cable circuits, temporary construction areas, access, drainage, landscaping and associated infrastructure. Recommendation: GRANT</p> <p>A pre-determination hearing was held in respect of this item at which the applicant and a representative of the local Community Council and a third-party objector, 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.</p> <p>During discussion the following points were raised:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> it was proposed that the decision be deferred for a site visit to allow members to better assess the cumulative impacts on the local area, the cumulative impacts resulting from Banniskirk, impacts on the road network, impacts on road users and affected residents by the proposed development; and it was suggested that a site visit was not needed as all the relevant information was contained within the report, the fly-over video and visualisations gave a good impression of the development. <p>Following further discussion and a vote the Committee AGREED not to defer the application, the votes having been cast as follows:-</p>	MK

	<p>To Defer: Ms L Dundas, Mr J Edmondson, Mr R Gale, Mrs J McEwan.</p> <p>Not to Defer: Mr M Baird, Mr R Bremner, Mrs I Campbell, Ms T Collier, Ms C Gillies, Ms L Kraft, Mrs A MacLean, Mr K Rosie.</p> <p>Motion – Mr R Bremner seconded by Mr K Rosie</p> <p>To GRANT planning permission subject to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. the conditions detailed in the report ii. the amendments in relation to conditions 3, 15, 18 and 33 and iii. the additional condition that no development would commence until the Ayre Offshore Windfarm had been consented. <p>Mr R Gale proposed an amendment to REFUSE planning permission, but following discussion with officers the amendment was withdrawn.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to GRANT planning permission subject to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) the amendments in relation to condition 3 (development zones), condition 15 (CTMP), condition 18 (Abnormal Loads) and condition 33 (decommissioning); and (2) the additional condition that no development would commence until such time as the Scottish Ministers had issued a decision notice granting consent under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 for the connecting Ayre Offshore Wind Farm <p>with delegated powers granted to officers to finalise the wording of the conditions in consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair of NPAC and NPAC Ward Members.</p>	
7	<p>Planning Applications to be Determined Iartasan Dealbhaidh rin Dearbhadh</p>	
7.1	<p>Declaration of Interest – Mr D Millar, having reflected on remarks made during the Committee meeting on 21 January, had considered the objective test and was of the view that a reasonable person could conclude there was a risk that he may be perceived as having a predetermined position in relation to renewable energy proposals. In accordance with paragraph 5.6 of the revised Code of Conduct, and in order to protect public confidence in the integrity of the decision-making process, he left the meeting for this item.</p> <p>Applicant: Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc. (24/05153/S37) (PLN/013/26)</p> <p>Location: Land Between Strathy North And South Wind Farms, Strathy (Ward 01).</p> <p>Nature of Development: Strathy Wood Wind Farm Grid Connection installation and operation of approximately 4.5 km of 132 kV overhead line (OHL) on double circuit steel structure towers and the installation and operation of 2 No. trident wood H poles each with downlead spans of up to 18m from each pole for connection onto an existing trident H wood pole 132 kV OHL.</p> <p>Recommendation: RAISE AN OBJECTION</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to RAISE AN OBJECTION for the reasons detailed in the report.</p>	MF

7.3	<p>In terms of Standing Order 9 the Committee AGREED to consider item 7.3 at this stage.</p> <p>Declaration of Interest – Mr D Millar, having reflected on remarks made during the Committee meeting on 21 January, had considered the objective test and was of the view that a reasonable person could conclude there was a risk that he may be perceived as having a predetermined position in relation to renewable energy proposals. In accordance with paragraph 5.6 of the revised Code of Conduct, and in order to protect public confidence in the integrity of the decision making process, he left the meeting for this item.</p> <p>Applicant: Boralex Ltd (25/02861/S36) (PLN/015/26) Location: Land 1500M SE Of Borlum House Reay (Ward 02). Nature of Development: Limekiln Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Construction and operation of a proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) (over 50 MW) and an extension to the existing Limekiln Wind Farm Substation, associated infrastructure, access and ancillary works. Recommendation: RAISE NO OBJECTION</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to RAISE NO OBJECTION and to grant delegated powers to Officers to finalise the wording of conditions, in consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair and NPAC Local Ward Members.</p>	LB
7.2	<p>Mr D Millar in the Chair</p> <p>Applicant: Global Energy Nigg/Sumitomo Electric UK Cable Ltd (25/02492/S42) (PLN/014/26) Location: Sumitomo Electric UK Power Cables LTD, Nigg, Tain (Ward 07). Nature of Development: Section 42 application to vary Condition 9 on 23/04662/FUL to amend construction working hours and days. Recommendation: GRANT</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to GRANT the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report.</p>	KT
7.4	<p>Applicant: A. & D. Sutherland Ltd (24/02943/FUL) (PLN/016/26) Location: Caithness Flagstone Limited, Spittal Quarry, Spittal, Wick (Ward 03). Nature of Development: Extension to Spittal Quarry for the extraction of flagstone. Recommendation: GRANT</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to GRANT subject to the conclusion of a Section 75 Agreement and subject to the conditions detailed in the report.</p>	CS
7.5	<p>Declaration of Interest – Ms C Gillies, as a close friend is one of the Objectors to the application.</p> <p>Applicant: Highland Heart Ltd (25/00282/FUL) (PLN/017/26) Location: Land 45M SE Of Sandbank, Broadford, Isle of Skye (Ward 10). Nature of Development: Erection of 8 short-term letting units, 1 staff facilities unit and 1 service/office unit Recommendation: GRANT</p>	KS

	The Committee AGREED to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report.	
7.6	<p>Applicant: Helen and Dennis Connell (25/01280/FUL) (PLN/018/26) Location: Helden, 16 Waterloo, Breakish, Isle Of Skye (Ward 10). Nature of Development: Erection of decking, formation of parking hard standing and gate (retrospective) Recommendation: GRANT</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report, subject to the amended condition 1 and an additional condition concerning the reinstatement of the stone wall with the final wording of conditions delegated to Officers in consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair and NPAC Local Ward Members.</p>	LM
8	Decision of Appeals to the Scottish Government Planning and Environmental Appeals Division in respect of Applications made under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989	
8.1	<p>Applicant: Mey Energy Storage Limited (24/02621/S36) (ECU00004838) Location Land 700M East Of Woodlands Mey (Ward 3) Nature of Development: Installation of a battery energy storage system and associated infrastructure with a generating capacity of up 300mw located on land at Phillips Mains Farm</p> <p>The Committee NOTED the decision of the Reporter to grant planning permission for the reasons given in the decision notice.</p>	
8.2	<p>Applicant: Kirkton Wind Farm Limited (22/05533/S36) (WIN-270-21) Location: Kirkton Energy Park, 2.1km South of Melvich, Sutherland, IV24 Nature of Development: Kirkton Energy Park - Erection and operation of a wind farm comprising of 11 wind turbines of up to 149.9m blade tip height, battery energy storage system, access tracks, substation, control building, 2 borrow pits, temporary construction compound and associated development for a period of 30 years</p> <p>The Committee NOTED the decision of the Reporter to refuse planning permission for the reasons given in the decision notice.</p>	
9	<p>Appeals to Planning and Environmental Appeals Division (DPEA) under Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997</p> <p>Applicant: Ms Marlene Lipka (25/01063/FUL) (PPA-270-2317) Location: 15 Riverside Place Thurso KW14 8BZ Nature of Development: Extension and change of use from house to paint & decoration supply business (in retrospect)</p> <p>The Committee NOTED the decision of the Reporter to dismiss the appeal and refuse planning permission.</p>	
	The meeting ended at 3.30 pm.	