THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

NORTH PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

30 September 2026, 9.30AM

MINUTE / ACTION NOTE

Listed below are the decisions taken by Committee at their Microsoft Teams 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 (except item 8.5)
Mr M Baird (except item 7.1)

Ms T Collier (remotely) (except item 8.2)
Ms L Dundas (remotely)
Mr J Edmondson (except items 7.1 and 7.2)
Mr R Gale
Ms C Gillies
Ms L Kraft (except item 7.2)
Mr S Mackie (remotely)
Mrs A MacLean (from item 3 onwards)
Ms J McEwan (except item 8.5)
Mr K Rosie (except item

Officers participating:
Mr B Robertson, Area Planning Manager – South (BR)
Ms E Forbes, Planning Team Leader (EF)
Mr P Wheelan, Planning Team Leader (PW)
Ms C Farmer-McEwan, Principal Planner (CF)
Mr M Fitzpatrick, Principal Planner (MF)
Mr M Kordas, Principal Planner (MK)
Ms R Banfro, Acting Principal Solicitor (Planning) and Clerk
Ms R Ross, Committee Officer

ITEM NO	DECISION	ACTION
1	**Appointment of Chair** **Suidheachadh de Chathraiche** The Committee **NOTED** that Mr Karl Rosie had withdrawn his resignation, therefore there was no need to appoint a new chair.	n/a
2	**Apologies for Absence**	n/a

	Leisgeulan Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr R Bremner, Mr D Millar and Mrs M Paterson.	
3	**Declarations of Interest** **Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt** S Atkin – item 8.5 – involvement in application as a local member J McEwan – item 8.5 – as the presenting officer is a family member	**n/a**
4	**Confirmation of Minutes** **Dearbhadh a' Gheàrr-chunntais** There had been submitted for confirmation as a correct record the Minutes of Meeting of the North Planning Applications Committee held on 5 August 2026, and the joint meeting of the North and South Planning Applications Committees on 9 September 2026 which were **APPROVED.**	**n/a**
5	**Major Development Update** **Iarrtasan Mòra** There had been circulated Report No PLN/047/26 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, the following main points were raised:- • an update was sought and provided on the status of the application for Ross Estates Company; and • in response to a question concerning the response deadlines for Ceislein and Creachan Wind Farms, it was confirmed that deadlines for all applications were tracked and holding objection were submitted where necessary. The Committee **NOTED** the current position with the applications.	**PW**
6	**Major Developments – Pre-application consultations 21 - 51)** **Leasachaidhean Mòra – Co-chomhairle Ro-iarrtais** The Committee **NOTED** that there were no Pre-Application Notices.	**PW**
7	**Continued Items** **Cuspairean a' Leantainn**	
7.1	**Applicant**: Energiekontor UK Ltd. (24/02094/S36) (PLN/048/26) **Location**: Land 1150M SW of Tigh an Alt, Acheilidh, Rogart (Ward 04). **Nature of Development:** Acheilidh Wind Farm - Erection and operation of a wind farm for a period of 35 years, comprising of 12 wind turbines with a maximum blade tip height of between 200m and 230m, battery energy storage system (BESS), access tracks, borrow pits, substation, control building, and ancillary infrastructure. **Recommendation: RAISE NO OBJECTION**	**MF**

	A presentation was provided on application 23/02754/S36, after which, discussion and a vote took place regarding application 24/02094/S36. It being discovered that two items had been combined, the Committee **AGREED** to suspend Standing Order 35 to allow each of these items to be considered separately later in the meeting.	
	In terms or Standing Order 9, the Committee AGREED to alter the order of business as follows.	
8.	**Planning Applications to be Determined** **Iarrtasan Dealbhaidh rin Dearbhadh**	
8.1	**Applicant:** Allt an Tuir Renewable Energy Park Limited (25/00580/S36) (PLN/050/26) **Location:** Land 2335M South of March Cottage, Rosehall (Ward 01). **Nature of Development**: Allt an Tuir Renewable Energy Park - Erection and operation of a generating station for a period of 40 years, comprising 9 wind turbines with a maximum tip height of 200 metres, battery energy storage system, solar PV array and associated infrastructure. **Recommendation: RAISE NO OBJECTION** **Motion** – Mr J Edmondson seconded by Mr R Gale "The Committee objects to the Allt an Tuir Renewable Energy Park on the following grounds:- The proposal would result in significantly detrimental individual and cumulative daytime and night-time effects on WLQ4 of the Reay-Cassley Wild Land Area WLA 34. The Committee agrees with NatureScot that the turbines would constitute a material change in the experience of WLQ4, to the degree that this area would no longer contribute to the wider WLA and would be considered lost. Having regard to the submitted Wild Land Impact Assessment and NatureScot's assessment, the Committee considers that the applicant has not demonstrated that the siting design and other mitigation measures sufficiently minimise the identified significant effects on this wild land quality. The resulting material change to WLQ4 would be unacceptable. The proposal would therefore not meet NPF4 Policy 4(g), Policy 11(e)ii or Policy 11(e)xiii; HWLDP Policy 67 There would be a significant detrimental effect on SLQ-8 of the Assynt Coigach NSA during daytime and at dawn, dusk, darkness and periods of low light. The Committee considers that these effects have not been satisfactorily addressed through siting, design and mitigation and are therefore Contrary to NPF4 11) e) ii); HWLDP Policy 67 Notwithstanding the reduction in height of Turbines T8 and T9, the proposal would result in significantly detrimental visual effects on the communities of Rosehall and Invercassley (Viewpoint 2). The turbines would appear prominent and dominant in views from these settlements, and these effects have not been adequately addressed through siting and design mitigation. The proposal is therefore contrary to NPF4 Policy 11(e)(i) and (ii) and HwLDP Policy 67, having regard to visual impact and amenity at sensitive locations including residential properties. The proposal would also exceed noise limits at noise sensitive receptors, individually at two properties and cumulatively at seven properties (Tigh-a-Rhos, River House, Oape, Ghillies View, Donackgill, Wester Doune Cottage	**MK**

	and Langwell Cottage). In addition, the installation of the grid connection, which forms part of the same project, would result in significant construction noise effects at several receptors, including two properties close to the directional drilling beneath the River Cassley. The proposal would therefore be significantly detrimental overall, individually and cumulatively, to amenity at sensitive locations including residential properties, contrary to HwLDP Policy 67 and NPF4 Policy 11(e)(i). The proposal would result in significantly detrimental landscape effects of Rounded Hills Sutherland and Caithness. It would alter key characteristics within and around the site, reduce perceived remoteness and wildness, and introduce turbines to a previously undeveloped part of the LCT between Glen Cassley and Strath Oykel, without forming a discrete development. It would therefore be significantly detrimental overall, individually and cumulatively, in terms of landscape character, contrary to HwLDP Policy 67 and NPF4 Policy 11(e)(ii). The Council is not satisfied that sufficient environmental information is available to identify, describe and assess the likely significant effects of the off-site works needed to construct the development, including works to roads, junctions and bridges, and the grid connection. The nature and extent of works to the Category B listed Cassley Bridge, which could include its dismantling and reconstruction, have not been established. Their effects on the listed structure have not been assessed. Nor have their effects on the River Oykel Special Area of Conservation, which includes the River Cassley and is designated for freshwater pearl mussel and Atlantic salmon. The Council is therefore unable to conclude that the works would not adversely affect the integrity of the SAC. The grid connection assessment relies on desktop study and does not establish the extent of likely significant effects, including on ancient woodland and the SAC. It has not been demonstrated that these effects cannot be assessed now, or that their assessment should be deferred through multi-stage conditions under Regulation 4(6). There is therefore insufficient information to assess the likely significant effects of the project as a whole, contrary to Regulation 4(2), NPF4 Policies 4, 6, 7 and 11(e), and HwLDP Policies 57 and 67. The indicative grid connection passes through areas recorded on the Ancient Woodland Inventory, and the extent of tree and woodland loss has not been quantified. The Committee is therefore not satisfied that it has been demonstrated that the proposal would avoid any loss of ancient woodland or adverse impact on its ecological condition, as required by NPF4 Policy 6(b)(i).” **Amendment** - Mr K Rosie seconded by Ms L Kraft to Raise no Objection to the application. **For the Motion:-** Ms S Atkin, Mr M Baird, Mrs I Campbell, Ms T Collier, Ms L Dundas, Mr J Edmondson, Mr R Gale, Ms C Gillies, Mr S Mackie, Mrs A MacLean, Ms J McEwan **For the Amendment:** Ms L Kraft, Mr K Rosie There were **11** votes for the motion and **2** votes for the amendment with no abstentions, therefore the motion was carried.	

	The Committee **AGREED** to **RAISE AN OBJECTION** to the application for the reasons stated in the motion.	
7.1	**Applicant**: Energiekontor UK Ltd. (24/02094/S36) (PLN/048/26) **Location**: Land 1150M SW of Tigh an Alt, Acheilidh, Rogart (Ward 04). **Nature of Development:** Acheilidh Wind Farm - Erection and operation of a wind farm for a period of 35 years, comprising of 12 wind turbines with a maximum blade tip height of between 200m and 230m, battery energy storage system (BESS), access tracks, borrow pits, substation, control building, and ancillary infrastructure. **Recommendation: RAISE NO OBJECTION** **Motion** – Mr K Rosie seconded by Mrs I Campbell to Raise NO Objection to the application. **Amendment** – Mr R Gale seconded by Ms J McEwan:- Item 7.1-Regulation 4(2) of the Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 requires the significant environmental effects of the development to be identified, described and assessed in an appropriate manner. The Committee considers that this requirement has not been met on the information presently available. The Committee recognises that Regulation 4(6) allows a multi-stage approach where likely significant environmental effects are not fully identifiable at the time an application is determined. However, the Committee is not satisfied that sufficient assessment has been undertaken at this stage to justify reliance on that provision. Although the Further Environmental Information seeks to assess likely worst-case scenarios, this assessment is high-level and indicative. The final route, form and design of the grid connection remain unresolved, further survey and assessment work is required, and at present the full extent of the likely significant environmental effects cannot presently be known. Accordingly, the Committee is not satisfied that a sufficiently robust worst-case assessment has been undertaken to demonstrate, in accordance with Regulation 4(2), that any new or additional significant environmental effects arising from the grid connection, either alone or cumulatively with the wind farm, have been appropriately identified, described and assessed. **For the Motion:-** Ms S Atkin, Mrs I Campbell, Mrs A MacLean, Mr K Rosie **For the Amendment:-** Ms L Dundas, Mr R Gale, Ms J McEwan There were **4** votes for the Motion and **3** votes for the Amendment with no abstentions, therefore the Motion was carried. The Committee **AGREED** to **RAISE NO OBJECTION** to the application for the reasons detailed in the report.	**MF**
8.2	**Applicant:** Constantine Wind Energy (24/02641/FUL) (PLN/051/26) **Location:** Land 600M NE of 10 Lochend Holding, Barrock (Ward **Nature of Development:** Lochend Wind Farm Extension - Erection and operation of a wind farm for a period of 40 years, comprising 5 Wind Turbines	**MK**

with a maximum blade tip height of 149.9m, Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), access tracks and ancillary infrastructure.
Recommendation: GRANT

Motion – Ms L Kraft seconded by Ms C Gillies to **GRANT** planning permission subject to the conditions detailed in the report.

Amendment – Mr S Mackie seconded by Ms J McEwan:-

I move that planning permission for application 24/02641/FUL, Lochend Wind Farm Extension, be refused, contrary to the officer recommendation, on the following planning grounds:

The proposed development, by reason of the number, scale, height and siting of the turbines, when considered in combination with the existing Lochend Wind Farm and other existing, consented and proposed wind-energy development in the surrounding area, would result in an unacceptable intensification of wind-energy development and a significantly detrimental cumulative landscape and visual impact.

In particular, the development would further reduce the visual separation between wind-energy developments and increase the prominence and influence of large-scale turbines within this part of the Caithness landscape. This cumulative effect would be experienced from settlements, public roads and important recreational and visitor locations, including the Castle and Gardens of Mey and Dunnet Head — the most northerly point of the British mainland — together with the A836/North Coast 500 corridor.

The Committee considers that the resulting cumulative change would adversely affect the experience and appreciation of the wider landscape and the setting of these nationally recognised visitor destinations, including the distinctive open coastal landscape and views associated with the Pentland Firth.

The Committee therefore considers that the proposal would result in significant detrimental cumulative landscape and visual effects, contrary to Policy 67 of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan and the landscape, visual, cumulative and recreational amenity considerations contained within the Council's Onshore Wind Energy Supplementary Guidance.
In reaching this conclusion, the Committee has had regard to the support for renewable-energy development contained within NPF4 Policy 11, but considers that, in this particular location, the identified cumulative landscape and visual effects are not outweighed by the renewable-energy benefits of the proposal when the Development Plan is read as a whole.

For the Motion:- Mr M Baird, Mrs I Campbell, Mr J Edmondson, Ms C Gillies, Ms L Kraft, Mrs A Maclean

For the Amendment:- Ms S Atkin, Ms L Dundas, Mr R Gale, Mr S Mackie, Ms J McEwan

There were **6** votes for the Motion and **5** votes for the Amendment with no abstentions, therefore the Motion was carried.

The Committee **AGREED** to **GRANT** Planning Permission with powers delegated to officers to confirm the final wording of conditions.

8.3	**Applicant:** Green Switch Capital Ltd. (25/03478/S36) (PLN/052/26) **Location:** Land 415M SW Of Shean Cottage, 10 Upper Dounreay, Thurso **Nature of Development:** Titan BESS - Battery Energy Storage Scheme (BESS) capable of exporting up to 500MW. **Recommendation: Raise NO OBJECTION** The Committee **AGREED** to **RAISE NO OBJECTION** to the application with powers delegated to officers to confirm the final wording of conditions and to respond to any further environmental information, should it be provided.	**MK**
7.2	**Applicant**: E Power Ltd. (23/02754/S36) (PLN/049/26) **Location**: Land 3450M North of Kaytoo, Heights of Dochcarty, Dingwall (Ward 06). **Nature of Development:** Abhainn Dubh Wind Farm - Erection and operation of a wind farm for a period of 30 years, comprising of 9 wind turbines (as amended) with a maximum blade tip height of 149.9m, energy storage facility, access tracks, borrow pits, substation, anemometer mast, control building, and ancillary infrastructure. **Recommendation: RAISE NO OBJECTION** The Committee **AGREED** to **RAISE NO OBJECTION** to the application with powers delegated to officers to confirm the final wording of conditions.	**MF**
8.4	**Applicant:** Ian Elliot Ltd (26/02361/FUL) (PLN/053/26) **Location:** Land 150M west of Wyndhill Industrial Estate Muir of Ord. **Nature of Development:** Erection of 49no. residential units and associated infrastructure. **Recommendation: GRANT** The Committee **AGREED** to **GRANT** Planning Permission with powers delegated to officers to confirm the final wording of conditions including the additional condition in relation to the construction environmental document, the amendment of condition 7 and to seek clarity as to whether an additional condition in respect of housing need could be attached to the upcoming consent, in consultation with the chair, vice chair and local planning members.	**EF**
8.5	**Applicant:** The Highland Council (26/02844/FUL) (PLN/054/26) **Location:** Land 55M NW of Rosemarkie Camping and Caravanning Club, Ness Road East, Fortrose (Ward 09). **Nature of Development:** Formation of car park. **Recommendation: GRANT** The Committee **AGREED** to **GRANT** Planning Permission.	**CF**
9	**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** **Applicant:** RES UK & Ireland Ltd **Location:** Land 1580 metres SE of Schoolhouse, Forss, Thurso, KW14 7XX **Nature of Development:** Cairnmore Hill wind farm (re-design) – erection and operation of a wind farm for a period of 35 years, comprising of 5 wind turbines with a maximum blade tip height of 138.5 metres, access tracks,	

	substation, control building, battery energy storage system, and ancillary infrastructure The Committee **AGREED** to **NOTE** the decision in respect of this appeal.	
	The meeting ended at 5.30pm.	