

Highlands & Islands Skills CIC

Kintail House
Beechwood Business Park
Inverness
IV2 3BW

Date: 28/01/2026

FAO: Callum Mackintosh

Re: Support for HI-Skills National Infrastructure Skills Centre

Dear Callum,

We are writing to support your proposal to develop a Centre of Excellence for Skills, Safety and Innovation in Inverness. From our perspective in plant hire, crushing and demolition, the case for such a facility is obvious, the skills gap is growing, the work ahead is vast, and the industry cannot keep relying on sending people to South East England to train.

Our business covers projects across the Highlands, Islands and central Scotland, supplying operated plant to forestry, construction, civil engineering, infrastructure and energy schemes. Every week we see the pressure to find competent operators and skilled trades. Demand is only going one way, with hundreds of projects planned across the Highlands and Islands worth over £100bn. Unless we grow our own workforce, companies like ours will face shortages that hold back delivery.

Your proposal would bring something Scotland has long been missing, a proper, industry-led training base offering apprenticeships, upskilling and safety programmes in Scotland. It means our own people could access careers without leaving the area, employers can truly trust the quality of training, and businesses like ours could plan ahead knowing the talent pipeline is there.

We can see practical ways our business could work with Hi-Skills:

- Using the Centre for the ongoing training and CPD our own operators need.
- Offering work placements to learners so they get real experience on live sites.
- Helping shape training so it matches the skills we actually need on the ground.
- Supporting the creation of realistic training environments, sharing equipment or expertise where possible.

We want to support building a workforce culture that values safety, innovation and resilience. The benefits go beyond our company, they strengthen the whole supply chain and keep opportunity and investment in Scotland.

We fully endorse your proposal for the National Infrastructure Skills Centre in what looks to be an ideal location for everyone in Scotland so we encourage all stakeholders, policy makers, authorities and industry leaders to get behind this initiative. The scale of future work in Scotland demands action now and this project is the right solution at the right time.

Yours sincerely,

John-Robert Brown