

The Highland Council
No. 3 2022/2023

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Highland Council held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Wednesday, 29 June 2022 at 10.30 am.

1. Calling of the Roll and Apologies for Absence
A' Gairm a' Chlàir agus Leisgeulan

Present:

Mr C Aitken (remote, not item 3.2)	Ms L Kraft
Ms S Atkin	Mr B Lobban
Dr C Birt	Mr P Logue
Mr B Boyd	Mr D Louden (remote)
Mr R Bremner	Mr A MacKintosh
Mr M Cameron	Mr R MacKintosh
Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair	Mrs A MacLean
Mr A Christie (not item 3.2)	Ms K MacLean
Ms T Collier (remote)	Mr T MacLennan
Ms S Fanet	Mr D Macpherson
Mr D Fraser	Ms M MacCallum
Mr R Gale	Ms J McEwan (remote, not item 3.2)
Mr K Gowans (not item 3.2)	Mr D Millar
Mr A Graham	Mr H Morrison (remote)
Mr M Green (remote, not item 3.2)	Mr C Munro
Mrs J Hendry	Ms L Niven (not item 3.1)
Ms M Hutchison (remote)	Mr P Oldham (remote)
Mr A Jarvie (remote)	Ms M Reid
Mrs B Jarvie	Mrs T Robertson (not item 3.1)
Ms L Johnston (remote)	Mr K Rosie
Mr R Jones	Mr R Stewart
Mr S Kennedy	Ms K Willis

In Attendance:

Mr D Jones, Acting Head of Development Management
Mr S Hindson, Team Leader – Strategic Projects Team
Mr P Wheelan, Planner
Ms C Farmer, Planner
Mr M Clough, Senior Engineer, Transport Planning
Mr G MacCormick, Senior Environmental Health Officer
Ms K Lyons, Principal Solicitor / Clerk
Ms F MacBain, Committee Administrator

Also in Attendance:

Four representatives from Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc, Applicants:
Lauren Riach, Simon Johnstone, Simon Hall and Rob Slaughter.

Mr B Lobban in the Chair

1. Calling of the Roll and Apologies for Absence
Gairm a' Chlàir agus Leisgeulan

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr M Baird, Mr A Baldrey, Mr C Balance, Mr I Brown, Mrs I Campbell, Mrs M Cockburn, Mr J Finlayson, Mr L Fraser, Mr J Grafton, Mr D Gregg, Mr R Gunn, Ms A MacDonald, Mr W MacKay, Mrs I

MacKenzie, Mr J McGillivray, Ms S Rawlings, Mr M Reiss, Mrs L Saggars, Ms M Smith.

2. **Declarations of Interest** **Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt**

The Council **NOTED** the following declarations of interest:-

Item 3.2 – Ms J McEwan

3. **Planning Applications to be Determined** **Iarrtasan Dealbhadh rin Dearbhadh**

3.1

Applicant: Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc (21/04988/FUL) (HC/10/22)

Location: Land West Of Beauly Sub-station, Wester Balblair, Beauly. (Ward 12)

Nature of Development: Beauly Substation - Reinforcement and extension of existing 132kV substation, including decommissioning and replacement of key equipment including provision of 3 new transformers with noise enclosures, associated platform extension and GIS building, access, landscaping and ancillary work.

Recommendation: Grant Planning Permission

As there were no Community Council or third party representatives present, a partial Hearing process was undertaken and the applicants were invited to present their application, making the following key points:

- a summary of the proposal and the two key drivers for it were provided, these being to facilitate a grid connection for the Loch Luichart wind farm extension II by October 2024, and to tackle the sustained increase in generation in the Beauly area which was pushing the Beauly busbar beyond its existing rating;
- operational noise mitigation measures had been undertaken and further measures were proposed as part of a continuous programme of improvements to reduce the overall noise from the substation;
- the proposed package of road mitigation works were outlined, as were developer contributions of £133,000 towards improving road safety;
- the landscape plan was summarised, including screening along the northern perimeter, increased planting along the boundary, and compensatory planting offsite for trees that required to be felled to ensure the development secured a biodiversity net gain; and
- the operation of the well-established community liaison group for Beauly substation.

Clarification was sought and provided on the following issues:

- the operation of the existing Community Liaison Group;
- the management of noise concerns from the local community, including the baseline noise levels;
- the Abnormal Indivisible Load Route Assessment from the Port of Entry to the site, which was to be covered by conditions;
- the use of diesel versus zero emission generators on site;
- whether there would be an impact on residential properties bordering the Beauly-Denny power line; and
- engagement with the community council before and after amendments had been made to the application.

The Hearing process ended, and the Planning Officer presented the report and rationale behind the recommendation to grant planning permission. Additional visualisations were tabled.

No further clarification was sought from Members and, during debate, reference was made to the impact of previous development at the application site experienced by the community over the previous eight years and the further disruption that was likely during the four year construction period. Particular areas of concern included monitoring of noise levels during and post-construction, the monitoring of the traffic management plan implementation, road and verge damage to the local road network, the Saturday start time of 8am, and community benefit issues. Officers responded to the points raised.

The Council **AGREED** to grant planning permission as recommended in the report, subject to conditions being amended to allow the Community Liaison Group to input into any review of the construction working hours related to post completion noise monitoring of the overall site.

3.2

Applicant: Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc (21/05536/FUL) (HC/11/22)

Location: Land 500M West Of Philips Mains, Mey (Ward 03)

Nature of Development: Construct and operate a 132 kilovolt (kV) switching station and associated infrastructure

Recommendation: Grant Planning Permission

Declaration of Interest: Ms J MacEwan declared an interest in this item and left the chamber for the remainder of the meeting.

The Planning Officer presented the report and, during discussion, areas of concern raised by Members included the impact the development was likely to have on the surrounding roads, especially the main access road, which required strengthening and additional passing places, the size of the trees that were to be replanted, with assurance provided that a condition required them to be checked after 3-5 years, and the need for a new Community Liaison group to be established by the Ward Manager for relevant stakeholders.

The Council **AGREED** to grant planning permission as recommended in the report.

The meeting ended at 12.55pm