

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL**  
**SOUTH PLANNING APPLICATIONS**  
**COMMITTEE**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, HQ, 27 JUNE, 10.30AM**

**MINUTE / ACTION NOTE**

Listed below are the decisions taken by Committee at their recent 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 C Aitken (remote)	Mr B Lobban
Mr C Ballance	Mr A MacDonald (remote)
Mr M Cameron (remote)	Mrs I MacKenzie
Mr D Fraser	Mr A MacKintosh (except 7.6 and 8.1)
Mr L Fraser (except 7.5, 7.6 and 8.1)	Mr T MacLennan (remote)
Mr K Gowans (except 7.1 to 7.4)	Mr P Oldham ( <b>in the Chair</b> )
Mr A Graham (7.1 onwards)	Ms M Reid
Mr R Jones	Ms L Siggers

**Non-Committee Members Present:**

Mrs T Robertson, Mr D Macpherson

**Officers participating:**

Mr D Mudie, Area Planning Manager – South (DM)  
 Mr B Robertson, Team Leader (BR)  
 Mr P Wheelan, Strategic Projects Team Leader (PW)  
 Ms L Prins, Principal Planner (LP)  
 Ms C Millard, Planner (CM)  
 Mr R Dowell, Planner (RD)  
 Mr M Clough, Senior Engineer, Transport Planning (MC)  
 Mr I Meredith, Acting Principal Solicitor  
 Ms F MacBain, Senior Committee Officer

ITEM NO	DECISION	ACTION
	<p><b>Preliminaries</b></p> <p>The Committee <b>AGREED</b> to consider Item 7.7 immediately following Item 6.1, to facilitate a local Committee Member’s participation.</p>	
1	<p><b>Apologies for Absence</b>  <b>Leisgeulan</b></p>	

	There were none.	
		<b>n/a</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt</b>	
	There were none.	<b>n/a</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Confirmation of Minutes Dearbhadh a' Gheàrr-chunntais</b>	
	There had been submitted for confirmation as a correct record the action note and minute of the meeting of the Committee held on 3 May 2023 which was <b>APPROVED</b> .	<b>n/a</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Major Development Update Iartasan Mòra</b>	<b>PW</b>
	There had been circulated Report No PLS/029/23 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.  The Committee <b>NOTED</b> the current position with the applications.	
<b>5</b>	<b>Major Developments – Pre-application consultations Leasachaidhean Mòra – Co-chomhairle Ro-iarrtais</b>	<b>PW/DM</b>
5.1	<b>Description:</b> Corran Ferry Crossing infrastructure and accommodation improvements (23/01201/PAN) (PLS/030/23) <b>Ward:</b> 21 <b>Applicant:</b> The Highland Council <b>Site Address:</b> Corran Jetty, Fort William.	
	<b>NOTED</b> the application.	
5.2	<b>Description:</b> Proposed new switching station to connect the Coire Glas Pumped Storage Scheme with platform, access, laydown area(s), landscaping and ancillary works (National Development) (23/01651/PAN) (PLS/031/23) <b>Ward:</b> 11 <b>Applicant:</b> Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc <b>Site Address:</b> Land 2230m NE of Forest Gate Cottage, Mandally, Invergarry.	
	<b>NOTED</b> the application.	
5.3	<b>Description:</b> Proposed new substation and platform with control building, access, laydown area(s), associated landscaping and ancillary works - National Development. (23/01736/PAN) (PLS/032/23) <b>Ward:</b> 11 <b>Applicant:</b> Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc <b>Site Address:</b> Land 2240M NW Of Invergarry Power Station, Invergarry.	
	<b>NOTED</b> the application.	
5.4	<b>Description:</b> Proposed residential development of circa 150 units including associated infrastructure, roads and drainage (23/02234/PAN) (PLS/033/23)	

	<p><b>Ward:</b> 13  <b>Applicant:</b> The Highland Council  <b>Site Address:</b> Former Golf Course, General Booth Road, Torvean North, Inverness.</p>	
	<b>NOTED</b> the application.	
5.5	<p><b>Description:</b> Planning Permission in Principle for commercial development. Phase 1 - erection of approximately 3251sqm retail unit (Home Bargains), with 929sqm outdoor sales area, 464sqm retail parade of four smaller units, parking, landscaping and access (23/02714/PAN) (PLS/034/23)  <b>Ward:</b> 17  <b>Applicant:</b> TJ Morris Ltd  <b>Site Address:</b> Land 55M NW Of 115 Cranmore Drive, Cranmore Drive, Smithton, Inverness.</p>	
	<b>NOTED</b> the application.	
<b>6</b>	<p><b>Continued Item</b>  <b>Cuspairean a' Leantainn</b></p>	
	<p><b>Applicant:</b> Springfield Properties PLC (22/02691/MSC) (PLS/035/23)  <b>Location:</b> Drakies House, Culcabock Avenue, Inverness IV2 3RQ (Ward 16).  <b>Nature of Development:</b> Submission of Matters Specified in Conditions 1 (Siting, Layout and Design), 2 (Construction Environmental Management), 3 (Protected Species), 4 (Drainage), 5 (Access Management), 6 (Plant and Machinery), 7 (Waste Management), 8 (Construction Traffic Management), 9 (Car Parking), 10 (Cycle Parking), 11 (Green space design), 12 (Maintenance), 13 (Archaeological Investigations), 14 (Tree Protection and Management), 15 (Above Ground Infrastructure), 16 (Electric Vehicle Charging) and 17 (Relocation of Gateposts) of Planning Permission in Principle 19/00990/PIP - Erection of 24 Residential units and associated infrastructure.  <b>Recommendation: Approve.</b></p>	
	<p>i. <b>APPROVED</b> the application as recommended in the report;  ii. <b>AGREED</b> to ask the developer to come back to officers with further details on the affordable housing provision secured by s.75 agreement, in terms of location, design, and timescale; and  iii. <b>AGREED</b> to ask the developer to ascertain appropriate access arrangements taking into account potential land ownership and traffic issues.</p>	<b>DM</b>
<b>7</b>	<p><b>Planning Applications to be Determined</b>  <b>Iarrtasan Dealbhaidh rin Dearbhadh</b></p>	
7.7	<p><b>Applicant:</b> The Highland Council (23/01361/S42) (PLS/042/23)  <b>Location:</b> Ness Castle Primary School, Brodie Road, Inverness, IV2 6FW. (Ward 15)  <b>Nature of Development:</b> Section 42 application to remove conditions 18 (management of playing fields), 19 (noise), and 26 (flood lighting) of planning permission 19/05203/FUL.  <b>Recommendation: Grant.</b></p>	
	<b>Agreed:</b> to <b>APPROVE</b> the application as recommended in the report.	<b>RD</b>

7.1	<p><b>Applicant:</b> Mr James Barnes (22/02553/FUL) (PLS/036/23)  <b>Location:</b> Land 40m NW of Bay View, Ardtoe, Acharacle. (Ward 21)  <b>Nature of Development:</b> Erection of house.  <b>Recommendation:</b> Grant.</p>	
	<p><b>Agreed:</b> to <b>GRANT</b> planning permission subject to the conditions recommended in the report, and a further condition as follows:</p> <p>Condition 9. Protected species mitigation measures during the construction phase shall be implemented in accordance with Section 7 of the Habitat and Protected Species Survey, produced by Highland Ecology and dated December 2022; unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the Planning Authority.</p> <p>Reason: To minimise disturbance to nature conservation interests within the application site during construction.</p>	<b>CM</b>
7.2	<p><b>Applicant:</b> Mr and Mrs M MacDonald (22/06147/FUL) (PLS/037/23)  <b>Location:</b> 6 High Street, Lochaline, Oban, PA80 5XR. (Ward 21)  <b>Nature of Development:</b> Demolition and erection of extension.  <b>Recommendation:</b> Grant.</p>	
	<p><b>Agreed:</b> to <b>GRANT</b> planning permission subject to the conditions recommended in the report.</p>	<b>LP</b>
7.3	<p><b>Applicant:</b> Mr and Mrs M MacDonald (22/06150/LBC) (PLS/038/23)  <b>Location:</b> 6 High Street, Lochaline, Oban, PA80 5XR. (Ward 21)  <b>Nature of Development:</b> Demolition and erection of extension.  <b>Recommendation:</b> Grant.</p>	
	<p><b>Agreed:</b> to <b>GRANT</b> Listed Building Consent subject to the conditions recommended in the report.</p>	<b>LP</b>
7.4	<p><b>Applicant:</b> The Highland Council (22/03816/FUL) (PLS/039/23)  <b>Location:</b> Land 40m NE of Links Kiosk, Marine Road, Nairn. (Ward 18)  <b>Nature of Development:</b> Formation of tiered seating, footpaths.  <b>Recommendation:</b> Grant</p>	
	<p><b>Agreed:</b> to <b>GRANT</b> planning permission subject to the conditions recommended in the report.</p>	<b>BR</b>
7.5	<p><b>Applicant:</b> MGL Contractors (22/01638/FUL) (PLS/040/23)  <b>Location:</b> Land 230m East of Lairgandour, Daviot, Inverness. (Ward 12)  <b>Nature of Development:</b> Development of recycling facility for inert materials (in retrospect).  <b>Recommendation:</b> Grant</p> <p>Mr B Lobban indicated his unhappiness at the number of retrospective applications relating to this site.</p>	
	<p><b>Agreed</b> to <b>GRANT</b> planning permission subject to the conditions recommended in the report.</p>	<b>BR</b>
7.6	<p><b>Applicant:</b> Mrs Bernadette Church (21/02982/FUL) (PLS/041/23)  <b>Location:</b> Land 60M NW Of Foresters Cottage, Newtonhill, Lentrán, Inverness. (Ward 12)</p>	

	<p><b>Nature of Development:</b> Erection of hut. <b>Recommendation: Refuse.</b></p> <p><b>Motion:</b> Mr C Ballance, seconded by Mr D Fraser, to grant the application given the low levels of traffic, low number of vehicle movements and low speeds on the public road as justification for disregarding the guidance on minimum visibility splays.</p> <p><b>Amendment:</b> Mr T MacLennan, seconded by Mrs M Reid, to refuse the application as recommended in the report, excluding the reasons related to parking provision.</p> <p><b>Motion:</b> Mr K Gowans, Mr B Lobban, Mr D Fraser, Mr R Jones, Mr C Ballance, Mr A Graham (6) <b>Amendment:</b> Mr C Aitken, Mr M Cameron, Mr T MacLennan, Mrs M Reid, Mrs L Siggers, Mrs I MacKenzie, Mr P Oldham (7) <b>Abstention:</b> Mr A MacDonald</p>	
	<b>Agreed:</b> to <b>REFUSE</b> planning permission for the reasons detailed in the report, excluding the reasons related to parking provision.	<b>BR</b>
<b>8</b>	<p><b>Decision of Appeals to the Scottish Government Planning and Environmental Appeals Division</b> <b>Co-dhùnadh mu lartas do Bhuidheann-stiùiridh Riaghaltas na h-Alba airson Lùth agus Atharrachadh Aimsir</b></p>	
8.1	<p><b>Applicant:</b> Mrs Catherine Hood (NA-270-007) (21/00514/FUL) <b>Location:</b> Land 25 Metres South East of Crimond, Cannich, Beauly, Highland (Ward 12) <b>Nature of Development:</b> Erection of Dwellinghouse, Site Works, Services and New Access onto Public Road.</p> <p>Members were reminded that the Committee had approved the application contrary to officer recommendation and, as there had been a statutory consultee who had objected to the application, the case had been referred to Scottish Ministers.</p>	
	<b>NOTED</b> the decision of the Scottish Ministers to agree with the Reporter's recommendation that planning permission in principle should be refused.	
	<b>The meeting ended at 2.35pm.</b>	

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL**  
**NORTH PLANNING APPLICATIONS**  
**COMMITTEE**

**9 August 2023, 10.30AM**

**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>

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**Committee Members Present:**

Ms S Atkin  
Mr M Baird  
Mrs B Campbell  
Ms T Collier  
Mr R Gale  
Ms L Kraft  
Mrs A MacLean  
Ms J MacEwan  
Mr D Millar – Except item 6.6  
Mr M Reiss  
Mr A Rhind  
Mr K Rosie  
Mr R Stewart  
Ms M Smith

**Non-Committee Members Present:**

Mr J Finlayson  
Mr D Fraser  
Mr P Oldham

**Apologies:**

Mrs M Paterson  
Mr R Bremner

**Officers participating:**

Mr D Jones, Area Planning Manager – North (DJ)  
Ms G Pearson, Principal Planner (GP)  
Mr P Wheelan, Principal Planner (PW)  
Mr G Sharp, Planner (GS)  
Ms E Forbes, Planning Team Leader (EF)  
Mr M Clough, Senior Engineer, Transport Planning (MC)  
Ms R Banfro, Solicitor (Planning) and Clerk  
Ms R, Ross, Committee Officer

ITEM NO	DECISION	ACTION
1	<p><b>Apologies for Absence</b> <b>Leisgeulan</b></p> <p>Apologies were intimated on behalf of Ms M Paterson and Mr R Bremner.</p>	
2	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b> <b>Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt</b></p> <p>Item 6.6 – Mr D Millar</p>	n/a
3	<p><b>Confirmation of Minutes</b> <b>Dearbhadh a' Gheàrr-chunntais</b></p>	n/a
	<p>There had been submitted for confirmation as a correct record the action note and minute of the meeting of the Committee held on 7 June 2023 which was <b>APPROVED.</b></p>	n/a
4	<p><b>Major Development Update</b> <b>Iarrtasan Mòra</b></p>	
	<p>There had been circulated Report No PLN/049/23 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 main points were raised:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• information was sought and provided on why an Environmental ImpThe act Assessment had not been required for the Acorn Bioenergy anaerobic digester at Fearn; and</li> <li>• it was queried whether Members would receive training on the topic of anaerobic digesters.</li> </ul> <p>The Committee <b>NOTED</b> the current position with the applications.</p>	DJ
5	<p><b>Major Developments – Pre-application consultations</b> <b>Leasachaidhean Mòra – Co-chomhairle Ro-iarrtais</b></p>	
5.1	<p><b>Description:</b> 37MW Battery Energy Storage System (23/02826/PAN) (PLN/050/23) <b>Ward:</b> 2 – Thurso and Northwest Caithness <b>Applicant:</b> Ylem Energy Ltd <b>Site Address:</b> Land 590M NE of Isauld Cottage, Reay.</p>	DJ
	<p>The Committee <b>NOTED</b> the application.</p>	
6	<p><b>Planning Applications to be Determined</b> <b>Iarrtasan Dealbhaidh rin Dearbhadh</b></p>	
	<p>In respect of Standing Order 9 the Committee agreed to consider item 6.1 immediately following item 6.5</p>	

6.2	<p><b>Applicant:</b> Seaboard Memorial Hall Ltd. (23/02242/FUL) (PLN/052/23)  <b>Location:</b> Seaboard Hall and Community Centre, East Street, Balintore IV20 1UA (Ward 07).  <b>Nature of Development:</b> Extension to Coastal Sculpture Park.  <b>Recommendation:</b> GRANT</p>	<b>GP</b>
	The Committee <b>AGREED</b> to <b>GRANT</b> the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report.	
6.3	<p><b>Applicant:</b> Gresham House (23/02726/S42) (PLN/053/23)  <b>Location:</b> Land at Wathegar, Bilbster, Wick (Ward 03).  <b>Nature of Development:</b> Application for non-compliance with Condition 2 (duration of temporary wind farm operational period) of planning permission 10/00042/FULCA (Wathegar Wind Farm Erection of 5 wind turbines with a maximum height of 101m to blade tip, associated infrastructure, and formation of vehicle access).  <b>Recommendation:</b> GRANT</p>	<b>MK</b>
	The Committee <b>AGREED</b> to <b>GRANT</b> the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report.	
6.4	<p><b>Applicant:</b> Creag Riabhach Wind Farm Limited (23/01517/S36) (PLN/054/23)  <b>Location:</b> Creag Riabhach, Lairg (Ward 01).  <b>Nature of Development:</b> S36 Variation to extend operational life from 25 years to 40 years (14/00004/S36).  <b>Recommendation:</b> RAISE NO OBJECTION</p>	<b>MF</b>
	The Committee <b>AGREED</b> to <b>RAISE NO OBJECTION</b> to the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report.	
6.5	<p><b>Applicant:</b> Mr Dan Corrigan (23/00805/FUL) (PLN/055/23)  <b>Location:</b> Land 10M NE Of Shop, 1 Douglas Row, Quay Street, Portree (Ward 10).  <b>Nature of Development:</b> Temporary siting of cabin.  <b>Recommendation:</b> REFUSE</p>	<b>GS</b>
	The Committee <b>AGREED</b> to <b>REFUSE</b> the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report.	
6.1	<p><b>Applicant:</b> Mr and Mrs Innes (22/02645/FUL) (PLN/051/23)  <b>Location:</b> Land 75m SW of Heights of Kilcoy, Muir of Ord (Ward 08).  <b>Nature of Development:</b> Erection of three holiday lodges and associated shared facilities for short term let (tourist) holiday accommodation.  <b>Recommendation:</b> GRANT</p>	<b>EF</b>
	The Committee <b>AGREED</b> to <b>GRANT</b> the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report and subject to an additional condition concerning restricting the footprint of the shop, the final wording of the additional condition to be delegated to officers.	
6.6	<p><b>Declaration of Interest – Mr D Millar declared an interest in this item due to his involvement with Portree Community Council and left the meeting for this item.</b></p> <p><b>Mr K Rosie in the Chair.</b></p> <p><b>Applicant:</b> Campbell Dickson (23/01144/FUL) (PLN/056/23)  <b>Location:</b> Portree Hotel, Somerled Square, Portree IV51 9EH (Ward 10).  <b>Nature of Development:</b> Retention of outdoor seating area (previous permission 20/02709/FUL).</p>	<b>MH</b>



	<p><b>Recommendation: REFUSE</b></p> <p><b>Motion:</b> Mr K Rosie seconded by Ms A Maclean to <b>REFUSE</b> the application for the reasons set out in the report.</p> <p><b>Amendment:</b> Mr R Stewart seconded by Ms S Atkin, as follows:</p> <p>In my assessment of this application and the supporting information it is clear that this proposal can be supported by Policy 7 of The National Planning Framework 4, as well and Policy 57 of the Highland Wide Local Development Plan subject to the conditions and reasons outlined below:</p> <p>Although it is acknowledged that various issues relating to pedestrian and road safety have been raised, it is felt that the broader economic benefits of the development outweigh these concerns. In my assessment Developments in conservation areas will be supported if it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that they will not have an unacceptable impact on the conservation area, in the absence of objection from the historic environment team and subject to the following proposed condition:</p> <p>Condition 1: that the principal elevation of the structure which faces (Northwest) towards the square is to be finished in either black or grey.</p> <p>In my assessment of this proposed application, this will ensure the character and appearance of the Conservation Area is preserved in accordance with Policy 7 of NPF4, Policy 57 of HwLDP and section 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997</p> <p>On a vote being taken, the <b>MOTION</b> received 8 and the <b>AMENDMENT</b> received 5 votes, with 0 abstentions, the votes having been cast as follows:</p> <p><b>For the Motion:</b> Ms B Campbell, Mr R Gale, Ms L Kraft, Ms A MacLean, Ms J MacEwan, Mr M Reiss, Mr K Rosie, Ms M Smith</p> <p><b>For the Amendment:</b> Ms S Atkin, Mr M Baird, Ms T Collier, Mr A Rhind, Mr R Stewart.</p> <p><b>Abstention:</b> None</p>	
	<p>The Committee <b>AGREED</b> to <b>REFUSE</b> the application for the reasons detailed in the report.</p>	
7	<p><b>Decisions by Scottish Ministers and Reporters appointed by the Scottish Government</b>  <b>Co-dhùnaidhean le Ministearan na h-Alba agus Luchd-aithisg air an cur an dreuchd le Riaghaltas na h-Alba</b></p>	
7.1	<p><b>Applicant:</b> Mr Colin Smith (21/05563/FUL) (PLN/056/23)  <b>Location:</b> Land 30M SW Of Ocala, Oldwick, Wick (Ward 03)  <b>Nature of Development:</b> Erection of a block of single storey semi-detached houses</p>	<b>MF</b>
	<p>The Committee <b>NOTED</b> the decision of the Reporter to dismiss the appeal and refuse planning permission for the reasons given in the decision letter.</p>	

7.2	<p><b>Applicant:</b> Mr T Campbell (22/02879/FUL) (PLN/057/23)  <b>Location:</b> Windrill, Drumsittal, North Kessock, Inverness, IV1 3XF (Ward 09)  <b>Nature of Development:</b> erection of extension, formation of integral self-contained unit, erection of shed and retrospective installation of skate park (ancillary use to main dwelling)</p>	<b>DJ</b>
	<p>The Committee <b>NOTED</b> the decision of the Reporter appointed by the Scottish Ministers to allow the appeal and grant planning permission subject to the nine conditions listed in the notice.</p>	
7.3	<p><b>Applicant:</b> Meall Buidhe Renewables LLP (20/02659/FUL) (PLN/058/23)  <b>Location:</b> Meall Buidhe Wind Farm, Land 4420M NW of Croick Estate, Ardgay, IV27 (Ward 01)  <b>Nature of Development:</b> Erection of And Operation Of A Wind Farm For A Period Of 25 Years Comprising Of 8 Wind Turbines Access Tracks, Substation, Control Building, And Ancillary Infrastructure With A Maximum Output Of 40 Megawatts</p> <p>During the discussion disappointment was expressed that the Report did not meet with local people prior to making her decision.</p>	<b>CFM</b>
	<p>The Committee <b>NOTED</b> the Reporter's decision to allow the appeal and grant planning permission subject to the conditions listed in the decision notice.</p>	
7.4	<p><b>Applicant:</b> Kirkan Wind Farm Limited (19/01861/S36) (PLN/059/23)  <b>Location:</b> Land 3015M SE Of Aultguish Inn Garve (Ward 05)  <b>Nature of Development:</b> Kirkan Wind Farm - Construction of wind farm comprising of 17 turbines (height to hub 104m, height to blade tip 175m), associated access tracks, borrow pits, compounds, substation and 104m high met mast.</p>	<b>DJ</b>
	<p>The Committee: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <b>NOTED</b> the decision of the Scottish Ministers to grant consent under s36 of the Electricity Act 1989 and grant deemed planning permission subject to the conditions listed in the decision notice; and</li> <li>ii. <b>AGREED</b> that the Planning Committees to engage with Scottish and UK Governments to consider how local community wealth, arising from renewable energy developments, can be secured for local communities.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>The meeting ended at 2.15pm</b></p>	

**The Highland Council**  
**South Planning Applications**  
**Committee**

**Council Chamber, HQ, 23 August 2023, 10.30am**

**Minute / Action Note**

Listed below are the decisions taken by Committee at their recent 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>

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**Committee Members Present:**

Mr C Aitken (remote)	Mr A MacDonald (remote) (except 6.7 to end)
Mr C Ballance	Mrs I MacKenzie (except 6.7 to end)
Mr M Cameron (except 6.7 to end)	Mr A MacKintosh
Mr D Fraser	Mr T MacLennan
Mr L Fraser (remote) (except 6.2 to 6.3)	Mr P Oldham
Mr A Graham (remote)	Ms M Reid (except 6.7 to end)
Mr R Jones	Ms L Saggars
Mr B Lobban	

**Non-Committee Members Present:**

Mr D Macpherson, Mrs T Robertson

**Officers participating:**

Mr D Mudie, Area Planning Manager – South (DM)  
 Mr P Wheelan, Strategic Projects Team Leader (PW)  
 Mr B Robertson, Team Leader (BR)  
 Mr J Kelly, Principal Planner (JK)  
 Mr R Dowell, Planner (RD)  
 Mr N Brockie, Planner (NB)  
 Ms L Neil, Planner (LN)  
 Mr M Clough, Senior Engineer, Transport Planning (MC)  
 Ms K Lyons, Principal Solicitor  
 Ms F MacBain, Senior Committee Officer

ITEM NO	DECISION	ACTION
1	<b>Apologies for Absence</b> <b>Leisgeulan</b>  Mr K Gowans	
		n/a
2	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	

	<b>Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt</b>	
	None.	<b>n/a</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Confirmation of Minutes Dearbhadh a' Gheàrr-chunntais</b>	
	There had been submitted for confirmation as a correct record the action note and minute of the meeting of the Committee held on 27 June 2023 which was <b>APPROVED</b> .	<b>n/a</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Major Development Update Iarrtasan Mòra</b>	
	There had been circulated Report No PLS/043/23 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.  The Committee <b>NOTED</b> the current position with the applications.	<b>DM</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Major Developments – Pre-application consultations Leasachaidhean Mòra – Co-chomhairle Ro-iarrtais</b>	<b>DM</b>
5.1	<b>Description:</b> Construction of a pumped storage hydroelectric scheme of up to 1500 megawatts generation capacity and 40 gigawatt hours storage capacity (23/03118/PAN) (PLS/044/23) <b>Wards:</b> 20 & 11 (access) <b>Applicant:</b> Earba Ltd <b>Site Address:</b> Land 4200m SE of Moy Lodge, Tulloch, Roy Bridge.	
	<b>NOTED</b> the application.	
5.2	<b>Description:</b> Residential development, associated infrastructure and open space (23/03163/PAN) (PLS/045/23) <b>Ward:</b> 15 <b>Applicant:</b> Ness Valley Leisure Ltd <b>Site Address:</b> Land at Ness-Side Fields, Dores Road, Inverness.	
	<b>NOTED</b> the application.	
<b>6</b>	<b>Planning Applications to be Determined Iarrtasan Dealbhaidh rin Dearbhadh</b>	
6.1	<b>Applicant:</b> Fred Olsen Renewables (21/05946/S36) (PLS/046/23) <b>Location:</b> Land 4700M NW Of Gamekeepers Cottage, Nairn. (Ward 18) <b>Nature of Development:</b> Lethen Wind Farm - Erection and Operation of a Wind Farm for a period of 35 years, comprising of 17 Wind Turbines with a maximum blade tip height 185m, access tracks, borrow pits, substation, energy storage facility, control building, meteorological mast and ancillary infrastructure.  An error in the report was corrected, as follows, in italics: 'It is considered that the proposal <i>does not</i> accord with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is <i>not</i> acceptable in terms of all other applicable material considerations.'	

	<b>Recommendation:</b> Raise an Objection.	
	<b>Agreed:</b> to <b>RAISE AN OBJECTION</b> as recommended in the report.	<b>PW</b>
6.2	<p><b>Applicant:</b> The Sweeney Group (22/05497/FUL) (PLS/047/23)  <b>Location:</b> Dunroamin Guest House, Craig Na Gower Avenue, Aviemore, PH22 1RW (Ward 20)  <b>Nature of Development:</b> Change of use from Guest House to form 10 serviced apartments.  <b>Recommendation:</b> Grant.</p> <p><b>Motion:</b> Mr T MacLennan moved to grant planning permission as recommended in the report.</p> <p>Mr MacLennan's motion failed to find a seconder and fell.</p> <p><b>Motion:</b> Mr B Lobban, seconded by Mr R Jones, moved to refuse the application for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whilst it is recognised that this is an existing tourism facility, the cumulative impact of this development on the residential street is not considered acceptable;</li> <li>• the development is not located in an area identified for commercial development in the local development plan and is not considered to be compatible with the residential nature of the street. In terms of the nature and scale of the development the proposal is considered to be contrary to NPF4 Policy 30 b) ii; and</li> <li>• the external alterations, the intensification of commercial use, loss of garden to car park and lack of on-site management will all change the character of the area and will have adverse impacts on residential amenity. Therefore it is considered to be contrary to CNPA LDP Policy 2.2A</li> </ul>	
	<b>Agreed:</b> to <b>REFUSE</b> planning permission for the reasons provided by Mr B Lobban.	<b>RD</b>
6.3	<p><b>Applicant:</b> James McQueen Building (23/01219/FUL) (PLS/048/23)  <b>Location:</b> Land NW of 33 Island Bank Road, Inverness. (Ward 15)  <b>Nature of Development:</b> Erection of 2 semi-detached houses.  <b>Recommendation:</b> Grant.</p>	
	<b>Agreed:</b> to <b>GRANT</b> planning permission subject to the conditions recommended in the report.	<b>JK</b>
	<p><b>Preamble for Items 6.4, 6.5 and 6.5</b></p> <p>Network Rail was required to provide step-free access to platforms and has submitted three related applications for Listed Building Consent, as detailed.</p>	
6.4	<p><b>Applicant:</b> Network Rail (23/01606/LBC) (PLS/049/23)  <b>Location:</b> Railway Station, Cawdor Street, Nairn IV12 4QS. (Ward 18)  <b>Nature of Development:</b> Installation of footbridge with associated lifts and removal of existing footbridge.  <b>Recommendation:</b> Grant.</p>	

	An error in the report was clarified as follows: the distance from the proposed new bridge to the housing was approximately 32m on one side and 37m on the other side.	
	<b>Agreed:</b> to <b>GRANT</b> planning permission subject to the conditions recommended in the report - condition 2 to be amended to require the existing footbridge to remain available for pedestrian use and appropriately maintained in recognition of its listed status.	<b>NB</b>
6.5	<b>Applicant:</b> Network Rail (23/01607/LBC) (PLS/050/23) <b>Location:</b> Kingussie Railway Station, Ruthven Road, Kingussie PH21 1EN. (Ward 20) <b>Nature of Development:</b> Installation of footbridge with associated lifts and removal of existing footbridge. <b>Recommendation:</b> Refuse.	
	<b>Agreed:</b> to <b>REFUSE</b> planning permission as recommended in the report and to contact Network Rail, either directly or via Historic Environment Scotland, to encourage appropriate maintenance of their heritage/listed footbridges.	<b>NB</b>
6.6	<b>Applicant:</b> Network Rail (23/03010/LBC) (PLS/051/23) <b>Location:</b> Kingussie Railway Station, Ruthven Road, Kingussie PH21 1EN. (Ward 20) <b>Nature of Development:</b> Erection of accessible footbridge, with associated lifts, and removal of existing footbridge. <b>Recommendation:</b> Grant.	
	<b>Agreed:</b> to <b>GRANT</b> planning permission subject to the conditions recommended in the report – condition 2 to be amended to require the existing footbridge to remain available for pedestrian use and appropriately maintained in recognition of its listed status.	<b>NB</b>
6.7	<b>Applicant:</b> Montagu Evans (23/02918/S42) (PLS/052/23) <b>Location:</b> Unit 6 Aviemore Retail Park, Santa Claus Drive, Aviemore, PH22 1AF. (Ward 20) Nature of Development: s42 application Variation of Condition 1 (17/00659/FUL) for Unit 6 as Class 3 (Restaurant / Cafe), with ancillary hot food takeaway use. <b>Recommendation:</b> Grant.	
	<b>Agreed:</b> to <b>GRANT</b> planning permission subject to the conditions recommended in the report.	<b>LN</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Decision of Appeals to the Scottish Government Planning and Environmental Appeals Division</b> <b>Co-dhùnadh mu Iarrtas do Bhuidheann-stiùiridh Riaghaltas na h-Alba airson Lùth agus Atharrachadh Aimsir</b>	
7.1	<b>Applicant:</b> Timothy Palmer (LBA-270-2014) (22/02462/LBC) <b>Location:</b> The Cart Barn and Smiddy, Glenuig, Lochailort, PH38 4NB (Ward 21) <b>Nature of Development:</b> Extensions to Cart Barn and Smiddy.	
	<b>NOTED</b> the decision of the Reporter appointed by the Scottish Ministers to dismiss the appeal and refuse listed building consent.	

7.2	<p><b>Applicant:</b> Mr R MacGregor (PPA-270-2286) (22/02939/FUL)  <b>Location:</b> Land 230 metres North-West of Sealladh Na Coille, Achnabobane, Spean Bridge, PH34 4EX (Ward 11)  <b>Nature of Development:</b> Erect new dwelling and garage.</p> <p>The Area Planning Manager (South) highlighted the significance of this outcome for future decisions about rural housing.</p>	
	<p><b>NOTED</b> the decision of the Reporter appointed by the Scottish Ministers to dismiss the appeal and refuse planning permission.</p>	
	<p><b>The meeting ended at 1.40pm.</b></p>	

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL**  
**NORTH PLANNING APPLICATIONS**  
**COMMITTEE**

**12 September 2023, 10.30AM**

**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 – remote (except item 6.2 to 7.1)  
Mr M Baird  
Mrs B Campbell  
Ms T Collier - remote  
Ms L Kraft  
Ms J MacEwan – remote (except for items 6.5 to 7.1)  
Mr D Millar (Chair)  
Mr M Reiss  
Mr A Rhind – (except for items 6.4 to 7.1)  
Mr K Rosie – remote  
Ms M Smith – from item 6.2 onwards  
Mr R Stewart - remote

**Non-Committee Members Present:**

Ms M Hutchison  
Mr J MacGillivray (present for item 6.3 only)  
Mr W MacKay

**Substitutes:**

Mr S Kennedy (except item 6.1)  
Ms L Niven – from item 6.1 onwards

**Apologies:**

Mr R Bremner  
Mr R Gale  
Ms M Paterson

**Officers participating:**

Mr D Jones, Area Planning Manager – North (DJ)  
Ms E McArthur, Principal Planner (EM)  
Ms G Pearson, Principal Planner (GP)  
Mr M Fitzpatrick, Planner (MF)  
Mr M Kordas, Planner (MK)  
Mr L Burnside, Graduate Planner (LB)  
Mr A Fraser, Principal Engineer (AF)  
Mr M Clough, Senior Engineer, Transport Planning (MC)  
Mr A Puls, Acting Environment Manager / Conservation Officer  
Ms R Banfro, Solicitor (Planning) and Clerk



ITEM NO	DECISION	ACTION
1	<p><b>Apologies for Absence</b> <b>Leisgeulan</b></p> <p>Apologies were intimated on behalf of Mr R Bremner, Mr R Gale and Ms M Paterson.</p>	n/a
2	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b> <b>Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt</b></p> <p>There were no Declarations of Interest</p>	n/a
3	<p><b>Confirmation of Minutes</b> <b>Dearbhadh a' Gheàrr-chunntais</b></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 9 August 2023 which was <b>APPROVED</b>.</p>	n/a
4	<p><b>Major Development Update</b> <b>Iarrtas Mòra</b></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>In response to a question it was clarified that a number of the developments were dated as "Autumn/Winter" or "later in the year" due to exact dates not being known at the time and that these would be updated once more accurate dates were available.</p> <p>The Committee <b>NOTED</b> the current position with the applications.</p>	DJ
5	<p><b>Major Developments – Pre-application consultations</b> <b>Leasachaidhean Mòra – Co-chomhairle Ro-iarrtais</b></p> <p>5.1 <b>Description:</b> The proposed development comprises the siting of approximately 64 battery storage enclosures, associated power conversion units and transformers, substations, hardstanding area, telecommunications equipment, fencing, vehicular access, grid connection and ancillary works (23/03641/PAN) (PLN/061/23) <b>Ward:</b> 06 – Cromarty Firth <b>Applicant:</b> Res Group <b>Site Address:</b> Land 410M NE Of the Smithy Alness.</p> <p>The Committee <b>NOTED</b> the application.</p>	MS
5.2	<p><b>Description:</b> Provision of circa 80 no dwelling houses with associated services and outdoor recreation areas (23/03896/PAN) (PLN/062/23) <b>Ward:</b> 06 – Cromarty Firth <b>Applicant:</b> Capstone Connect and Highland Council <b>Site Address:</b> Land 190M East of House of Rosskeen, Invergordon.</p> <p>During discussion the following points were raised:-</p> <p>this land was no longer a development site and there could be issues with capacity and with the ancient woodland; and</p>	CF

	<p>this development was not included in the updated Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan.</p> <p>The Committee <b>NOTED</b> the application.</p>	
<b>6</b>	<p><b>Planning Applications to be Determined</b> <b>Iarrtasan Dealbhaidh rin Dearbhadh</b></p>	
6.1	<p><b>Applicant:</b> Gledfield Highland Estate Ltd (21/05786/FUL) (PLN/063/23) <b>Location:</b> Land 150M NE Of Gledfield Farm Cottage, Ardgay (Ward 01). <b>Nature of Development:</b> Development of 47 holiday lodges, conversion and extension of existing building to form spa, gym, offices, restaurant and ancillary facilities, car parking and access. <b>Recommendation: GRANT</b></p> <p>Members attention was drawn to the following corrections to the report:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. paragraph 1.1 should have said that customers would buy their caravans directly from the owners and operators of the facility; and</li> <li>ii. condition 17 for road improvements should have referenced the C1140 and not the A838.</li> </ul> <p>The Committee <b>AGREED</b> to <b>GRANT</b> the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report.</p>	<b>MF</b>
6.2	<p><b>Applicant:</b> Mr Roddy Mackenzie (22/05563/FUL) (PLN/064/23) <b>Location:</b> Land 100M SW Of 27 Melvaig (Ward 05). <b>Nature of Development:</b> Erection of house and two short term holiday letting units and the formation of the access track <b>Recommendation: GRANT</b></p> <p>The Committee <b>AGREED</b> to <b>GRANT</b> the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report.</p>	<b>EM</b>
6.3	<p><b>Applicant:</b> Dornoch Distillery Company Ltd (22/06107/FUL) (PLN/065/23) <b>Location:</b> Land 40M SW Of Dornoch Health Centre, Shore Road, Dornoch (Ward 04). <b>Nature of Development:</b> Erection of distillery and associated warehousing and visitor centre (as amended). <b>Recommendation: RECOMMEND APPROVAL</b></p> <p>The Committee <b>AGREED</b> to <b>GRANT</b> the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report and subject to the two additional conditions relating to (1) the duration of planning permission and (2) the use of the bar, seating area and shop to be ancillary to the application site the final wording of which to be delegated to officers.</p>	<b>GP</b>
6.6	<p>In terms of Standing Order 9 the Committee <b>AGREED</b> to take item 6.6 at this stage.</p> <p><b>Applicant:</b> Springfield Properties PLC (23/01749/FUL) (PLN/068/23) <b>Location:</b> Land 120M North of Glenburn, Station Road, Dornoch (Ward 04). <b>Nature of Development:</b> Remix of House Types in Phase 4. <b>Recommendation: GRANT</b></p> <p>The Committee <b>AGREED</b> to <b>GRANT</b> the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report.</p>	<b>GP</b>

6.4	<p><b>Applicant:</b> WildLand Limited (22/06112/FUL) (PLN/066/23)  <b>Location:</b> Land 130NE Of St Andrew's Church, Tongue (Ward 01).  <b>Nature of Development:</b> Health and Social Care Hub including a 15 bed care home, integrated care team administrative base, GP surgery and associated roads, landscaping, garden, paths and infrastructure with relocated junction to A838 and alterations to the access road, parking, yard and landscaping at Tongue Fire Station.  <b>Recommendation: GRANT</b></p> <p>The Committee <b>AGREED</b> to <b>GRANT</b> the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report and the following additional condition:</p> <p>Samples of all facing-materials (sizes to be agreed), along with typical details of the building's external features (at scale 1:5) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority, prior to the commencement of above-foundation development. Thereafter, work shall progress in accordance with these approved details.</p> <p><b>Reason:</b> To ensure that the standard of detail-design and materiality of the development is of an acceptable quality, sensitive to and compatible with its context.</p>	<b>LB</b>
6.5	<p><b>Applicant:</b> Renewable Energy Transmission Ltd (23/01446/FUL) (PLN/0067/23)  <b>Location:</b> Land 1570M East of Collie Mhuiridh, Applecross (Ward 05).  <b>Nature of Development:</b> Installation and operation of approximately 26km of underground 33kv electricity cable and associated infrastructure between the Allt na Moine hydro scheme powerhouse at Lonbain, Applecross and the fish farm at Kishorn base.  <b>Recommendation: GRANT</b></p> <p>The Committee <b>AGREED</b> to <b>GRANT</b> the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report.</p>	<b>MK</b>
7	<p><b>Decision of Appeals to the Scottish Government Planning and Environmental Appeals Division</b>  <b>Co-dhùnadh mu Iarrtas do Bhuidheann-stiùiridh Riaghaltas na h-Alba airson Lùth agus Atharrachadh Aimsir</b></p> <p>7.1 <b>Applicant:</b> Energikontor UK Limited (22/02442/FUL) (PLN/069/23)  <b>Location:</b> Land at Torr Leathann, Strathrory, Ardross, Alness, IV17 (Ward 06)  <b>Nature of Development:</b> Erection and operation of a wind farm for a period of 35 years comprising a total of 7 wind turbines with turbines 1, 2, 3 and 5 having a max blade tip height of 180m, turbine 4 max 160m, and turbines 6 and 7 max 149.9m; battery storage system, access tracks, borrow pit, substation, control building and ancillary infrastructure.</p> <p>During discussion disappointment was expressed that the Scottish Government had overridden a local decision.</p> <p>The Committee <b>NOTED</b> the decision.</p>	<b>DJ</b>
	<p><b>The meeting ended at 13:00pm.</b></p>	

## The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport Monitoring Group** held in Committee Room 1, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Friday 18 August 2023 at 10:30 am.

### **Present:-**

Mrs H Crawford  
Mr K Gowans  
Mr S Kennedy  
Mr P Logue

Mr D Louden  
Mr G MacKenzie  
Mrs P Munro  
Mrs T Robertson

### **Non Members also in attendance:-**

Dr C Birt  
Mr J Hendry  
Mr R MacKintosh  
Mrs A MacLean

### **In attendance:-**

Mr M MacLeod, Interim Depute Chief Executive  
Mr S Dalgarno, Development Plans Manager  
Mr B Porter, Head of Corporate Finance and Commercialism  
Mr D Chisholm, Tourism & Inward Investment Team Leader  
Miss J MacLennan, Joint Democratic Services Manager

#### **1. Appointment of Chair**

Mr K Gowans, having been duly nominated and seconded, was unanimously appointed as Chair.

The Chair indicated that he intended to appoint a Vice Chair and invited nominations. Having been duly nominated and seconded, Mr D Louden was unanimously appointed as Vice Chair.

#### **2. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr M Green and Ms M Nolan.

#### **3. Declarations of Interest**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

#### **4. Remit**

Members were reminded that the remit of the Monitoring Group had been agreed at the Highland Council meeting on 11 May 2023. To refresh Members' memory a copy of the Terms of Reference would be circulated.

#### **5. Tax Sites**

Officers, by means of illustrations, outlined the configuration of the latest suite of tax sites being put forward as part of the Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport (ICF). These included a number of sites in Invergordon, the Nigg Energy Park and Pitcalzean Farm, Invergordon, a number of locations in Inverness and, most recently, Ardersier Port and Deephaven. However, these sites were not yet confirmed as the decision ultimately lay with HMRC and this was required before a Final Business Case could be agreed. There was some urgency with this as, once the boundaries were known, they could be highlighted to the Government Reporter currently carrying out the Examination on the emerging review of the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan.

Members **NOTED** the current position.

## **6. Updates Progress Update and Feedback from Main Workstreams**

Officers provided an overview of the stage reached so far. Work was progressing at pace towards completing a final Outline Business Case (OBC) but there remained some unknown factors. Advice was still awaited so, at this point in time, it was uncertain if the OBC would be ready in time for consideration by the Highland Council on 14 September. It was important a strong bid was submitted detailing the ideal proposition. However, as Highland Council was the Accountable Body, it was important to carefully monitor the implications for all aspects of our work. A Delegated Authority Group had been established which was effectively carrying out the work of preparing the OBC, with the Council's ongoing membership and role confirmed in various reports to Council over the last few months/years.

Meantime, the next engagement events were being finalised and public meetings were taking place. A successful webinar had taken place in March and support was being provided to the preparation of Area Place Plans. In terms of governance, it was hoped that at the next ICF Board meeting it would agree to have the Council's S95 officer as an observer, given the Council's accountable body duties.

Turning to Non Domestic Rates and Subsidy Control, clarity on the triggers and tax relief was still awaited. A note of caution was expressed that, in relation to Subsidy Control, the onus was on individual businesses and organisations to carry out their own checks. There needed to be a clear line drawn so that there were no implications further down the line.

The Group were then provided with updates on the following workstreams:-

- Skills, Education and Fair Work – Led by Skills Development Scotland (with Council representatives including the Economy and Regeneration Lead and the Senior Lead for Skills, Employability and Prosperity, Education and Learning)
- Net Zero – Led by the University of the Highlands and Islands
- Trade and Investment – Led by Highland and Islands Enterprise's Inward Invest Team
- Planning and Environment – led by the Highland Council

Members expressed interest in hearing more detail about these work areas at future meetings. In relation to the latter, Planning and Environment, it was important this delivered the core principles from the Council's Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy and the new National Planning Framework 4. Initial planning advice had been provided regarding all sites and preparation was underway towards a 30 year vision on issues such as biodiversity and transport.

During general discussion, Members made the following comments:-

- creating an apprenticeship route was key to provide opportunities for young people;
- Members sought sight, where possible, of the Plans being prepared for these workstreams, recognising their confidential nature;
- it was prudent to monitor the resource requirements the Inverness Cromarty Firth Green Freeport placed on the Planning Service and any others, and that the Highland Council's costs were covered; and
- creating a Place Based Plan for Inverness would cover a considerable area and there was merit in considering one for Ardersier and Nairn instead.

Having **NOTED** the position, the Group also **AGREED** that an organisational chart explaining the relationship of each of the Groups involved and the Council's connection be provided. It was also requested to have a presentation from an officer leading the Council's input on skills and workforce – suggested to be the Economy and Regeneration Lead.

(Post-Meeting Note – To provide Members with a tailored overview of the emerging OBC the ICF Chief Executive has agreed in principle to provide a presentation to a future meeting).

## 7. Seed Funding Update

An Independent Panel had met and had made initial recommendation but Subsidy Control checks needed to be carried out and a Full Outline Business Case would need to be prepared. Funding had been provided for initial set-up costs but there was an expectation that Highland Council and its partners would be offering help in-kind. Non Domestic Rates meantime would cover the Council's on-going costs.

Members recognised the importance of these proposals as a whole and it was vital that the Council gave it full and detailed consideration.

The meeting ended at 11.45 am

## The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport Monitoring Group** held in Committee Room 1, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Friday 22 September 2023 at 2pm.

### Present:-

Mr K Gowans (remote)  
Mr S Kennedy  
Mr P Logue (remote)

Mr D Louden (remote)  
Mr G MacKenzie  
Mrs T Robertson (remote)

### Non Members in attendance:-

Dr C Birt (remote)  
Mr J Bruce (remote)  
Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair (remote)  
Mr A Christie (remote)  
Ms S Fanet (remote)  
Mr R Gale (remote)

Mrs J Hendry (remote)  
Mrs B Jarvie (remote)  
Mr J McGillivray (remote)  
Ms M MacCallum (remote)  
Mr R MacKintosh  
Mrs M Paterson

### Officials in attendance:-

Mr A Maguire, Head of Economic Development and Regeneration  
Mr S Dalgarno, Development Plans Manager  
Mr D Chisholm, Tourism & Inward Investment Team Leader  
Ms M Garson, Senior Education Lead Skills, Employability and Prosperity  
Ms F MacBain, Senior Committee Officer

### Also in attendance:-

Mr C MacPherson, Chief Executive, ICF Green Freeport

### Mr K Gowans in the Chair

#### Preliminaries

The Chair drew attention to the confidential nature of the meeting, and that all future papers for the group would be issued as confidential, and the public excluded from the meeting, in accordance with Section 50(A) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, on the grounds that they would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 6 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

#### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Group members Mrs H Crawford, Mr M Green, Ms M Nolan, and Mrs P Munro.

## 2. **Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statement**

There were none.

## 3. **Progress on Outline Business Case**

A confidential presentation was given to the Group by Calum MacPherson Chief Executive, ICF Green Freeport, covering the market and opportunity, the reasons to pursue a FreePort, the bid process, key sections of the outline business case, governance, the organisation chart, the financial model, including the economic impact, and key activity going forward, which included the Outline Business Case being submitted to the Council on 3 October 2023.

During discussion, the Group considered the following issues:

- the importance of the project to the retention of population in the Highlands;
- the need to move at pace to meet challenging deadlines;
- the need for investment in housing to meet future staffing needs, including essential peripheral workers, such as medical, leisure, and teaching staff;
- the importance of engaging with schools in the immediate vicinity of Inverness and the Moray Firth, but also across the Highlands, to attract young people into jobs and training;
- the benefits of green hydrogen and pump storage hydropower;
- appropriate engagement should be undertaken with local communities to ensure they were kept informed of progress;
- information was sought and provided on some of the key costs, including the cost to the Council of being the accountable body, and the situation with regard to non-domestic rates; and
- information was sought and provided on the position with regard to the net zero and biodiversity strategies, with further information available outwith the meeting.

The Group **NOTED** progress and next steps.

## 4. **Full Council Reports – update from Council officers**

A briefing was provided to the Group on the proposed approach to the Outline Business Case (OBC) being presented to a Special Council meeting on 3 October, which would have a preliminary public session, followed by a confidential session from which the public would be excluded, and some information redacted, due to its commercially sensitive nature. The OBC was around 300 pages, but an executive summary of 3-4 pages would be produced. Comments from Members would be taken into account prior to the OBC's submission to the Scottish and UK Governments.

The officers were thanked for their work on the OBC and the Group **NOTED** intended approach.



The meeting ended at 3.20pm.

## The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **City Region Deal Monitoring Group** held remotely on Tuesday 5 September 2023 at 3.00 pm.

**Present:**

Mr I Brown

Mr P Logue

Mr D Fraser

Ms J McEwan

Mr K Gowans (Chair)

Mrs T Robertson

**Officials in attendance:**

Mr M MacLeod, Executive Chief Officer, Infrastructure, Environment and Economy

Mr A Maguire, Head of Development and Regeneration

Mr A McCann, Economy and Regeneration Manager

Mr M Bailey, Programme Manager

Ms M Murray, Principal Committee Officer

### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr J Bruce, Mr M Green, Ms L Niven and Mrs M Reid.

### 2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statements

There were no Declarations of Interest or Transparency Statements.

### 3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

There had been circulated, and were **NOTED**, the Minutes of the City Region Deal Monitoring Group held on 18 April 2023, which had been approved by the Economy and Infrastructure Committee on 17 August 2023.

### 4. UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

There had been circulated Report No CRD/03/23 dated 29 August 2023 by the Depute Chief Executive.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- the clear report was welcomed;
- information was sought, and provided, as to whether the announced job losses at UHI would have any impact on employability; and
- information having been sought on the funding position in respect of the regeneration of Wick town centre, the Executive Chief Officer, Infrastructure, Environment and Economy undertook to follow this up and revert to Councillor McEwan.

The Committee otherwise **NOTED** progress achieved with the delivery of the UKSPF in 2022/23, planned delivery in 2023/24 and outline proposals for the 2024/25 period.

## 6. Inverness and Highland City Region Deal Programme Report

There had been circulated Report No CRD/04/23 dated 29 August 2023 by the Depute Chief Executive.

During discussion, the following points were made:-

- the Inverness Castle project was progressing well and on budget, and the feedback from the public and the media had been very positive;
- in relation to the East Link and other big transport projects, an assurance was provided that officers continued to raise the need for firm timescales with colleagues in Transport Scotland. Members looked forward to a further update in due course; and
- an update was sought, and provided, on air connectivity, specifically the Wick Public Service Obligation. Members added that passenger numbers were up and people would like to see more connectivity, eg to Edinburgh Airport for onward flights elsewhere.

The Group otherwise **NOTED** the position as set out in the report.

## 7. Inverness and Highland City Region Deal Key Risks

The Head of Development and Regeneration provided a verbal update on the key risks associated with projects within the Inverness and Highland City Region Deal Programme, specifically the Longman Land Remediation Programme and the associated Badger Mitigation Plan, the two Transport Scotland projects, and the Digital project.

The Group **NOTED** the position.

The meeting concluded at 3.20 pm.

**Economy and Infrastructure Committee**

Minutes of Meeting of the **Education Transport Entitlement Review Sub Committee** held **Remotely** on Monday 18 September 2023 at 2.00 pm.

**Present:**

Mr W MacKay  
Mr D Millar

Mr R Stewart

**Local Member also present:**

Mr K Gowans

**Officials in attendance:**

Mr D Summers, Principal Transport Officer, Infrastructure, Environment & Economy  
Mrs K Giles, Senior Transport Officer, Infrastructure, Environment & Economy  
Ms L MacKellaich, Road Safety Officer, Infrastructure, Environment & Economy  
Miss J MacLennan, Joint Democratic Services Manager, Performance and Governance

**Business**

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr R Jones and Mrs J MacEwan.

**2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statements**

There were no Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statement

**3. Appointment of Chair**

Having been duly proposed and seconded, the Sub Committee **AGREED** to appoint Mr D Millar as Chair.

**3. Education Transport Review**

**The Review Sub Committee RESOLVED that under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government Scotland Act 1973 the public be excluded for discussion of this item on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.**

(i) Transport Review No 1/23

There had been circulated Report No 1/23 by the Senior Transport Officer providing information relating to a request to review a walking route to access home to school transport. The report gave details of the distances involved, the previous transport provision, entitlement arrangements and the risk assessments carried out. In conclusion the recommendation was that the route was considered suitable for walking.

Members having been shown film footage of the route, there then followed a period of questioning of officers by both the Members of the Sub Committee and the Local Member present. At the conclusion of this, the Local Member then put forward his view.

Following discussion, Mr D Millar, seconded by Mr W MacKay, **MOVED** that the Appeal be dismissed. Mr R Stewart moved that the Appeal be upheld but failed to find a Seconder. In accordance with Standing Order 23 he asked that his dissent be recorded.

### **Decision**

The Sub Committee **AGREED** to dismiss the Appeal.

The meeting concluded at 2.40 pm.

## The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Wildfires Working Group** held in **Committee Room 2**, in **the Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness** on Thursday 5 October 2023 at 2:15 pm.

### Present:-

Mr M Baird

Dr C Birt

Ms S Fanet (Remote)

Mr D Fraser (Remote)

Mr R Jones

Mr S Kennedy

### Other Members in attendance:-

Mr C Balance (Remote)

Ms S Fanet (Remote)

Mrs B Jarvie (Remote)

Mr R Mackintosh

Mr D Macpherson

Ms M MacCallum (Remote)

Ms K Willis

### In attendance:-

Ms N Wallace, Service Lead, Environment, Development and Active Travel

Mr P Waite, Principal Planner, Environment, Development and Active Travel

Mr B Stout, Principal Engineer 2, Roads & Infrastructure, Infrastructure, Environment & Economy

Mr J Taylor, Roads Operational Manager, Roads & Infrastructure, Infrastructure Environment & Economy

Miss J MacLennan, Joint Democratic Services Manager, Performance & Governance

Mrs O Bayon, Committee Officer, Performance and Governance Service

### Also in attendance:-

Mr N MacLennan, Group Commander - Training, Safety & Assurance, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

## 1. Appointment of Chair

Having been duly proposed and seconded, the Working Group **AGREED** to appoint Mr R Jones as Chair.

## 2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Ms K McLean, Ms T Robertson, Mr R Stewart, and Mr P Logue.

## 3. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statements

There were no declarations of interest/transparency statements.

#### **4. Remit**

Members were referred to the Highland Council meeting held on the 29 June 2023 taking into consideration the Motion agreed on how best to address the issue of Wildfires in Highland, with a report back to the Economy and Infrastructure Committee.

#### **5. Presentation on Wildfires**

Mr MacLennan, Group Commander, gave a presentation covering the current situation regarding potential wildfires in Highland, the perceived risks going forward, what mitigation was already in place and what mitigation still required implementation. Reference was made to the role of Wildfire Forum and other key partners involved in Wildfire management and need to focus on prevention where possible.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- it was confirmed that wildfire warning notifications were only issued as and when they were required in response to any high risk;
- it was prudent for landowners/managers to obtain land-fire insurance cover;
- it was queried if Forestry and Land Scotland formed part of the partnership working;
- it was queried what the cause of the Moy/Daviot fire had been especially as there had been a risk of evacuation from the nearby residential care home;
- the root cause of the wildfire at Cannich appeared to be a result of wild camping;
- regarding moor burning, there should be a competent person in charge, sufficient personnel, equipment and water to manage the controlled fires, in line with the muirburn code;
- persons arranging a controlled burn of any kind should notify Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS). Further information regarding this was found on the SFRS website;
- it was queried if there were any lessons to be learned from the Cannich wildfire in terms of landscaping or with cases involving fires at battery storage locations;
- information was sought, and provided, on how cooperative landowners were being with the SFRS in terms of implementing wildfire prevention measures; and
- it was queried if costs associated with wildfires due to muirburn were applied to the relevant landowners. In addition, it was also queried why some landowners carried out fires outside of the muirburn season with no apparent consequences (October 1 to mid-April).

#### **6. Access Rangers & Wildfire Prevention**

Mr P Waite explained the role of Access Rangers in the prevention of wildfires and their application of the standard operating procedures along with the Scottish outdoor access code.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- Members expressed their appreciation for the ranger service;
- it was felt that promotion of the Scottish outdoor access code should be more than the Highland Council website and Facebook to reach as many visitors as possible; and
- clarification was provided that the ranger service was externally funded by NatureScot, not the Highland Council. In this regard, Members felt the need to push towards retaining the ranger service as they were essential.

## 7. Road Signs

The Principal Engineer and the Roads Operational Manager gave an explanation regarding the road signs procedures and options for temporary or permanent road signage to assist with notification of high fire risk. The need to keep messaging on signs to a minimum and the important role of Variable Message Signs (VMS) was stressed.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-;

- Members welcomed the magnetic signage on Council vehicles was an effective measure to inform the public about preventing wildfires;
- it was felt that educating about wildfire risks should happen at school, when persons hired camper vans and displayed on disposable barbeques. In this regard it was suggested that local retailers be restricted from selling barbeques during wildfire season;
- regarding popular Highland walks such as Affric to Kintail, or the Great Glen Way, it was suggested that signage with QR codes be displayed to point walkers to a specific website to highlight wildfire dangers; and
- it was suggested that posters for buses, trains, fuel stations and hire companies be distributed to inform the public.

## 8. Discussion

The Working Group's main aim was to explore suggestions about what the Highland Council could do in association with other services in the prevention of wildfires. In addition, wildfire risks should be added to the agenda for discussion with all 157 community councils, including potential signage for them to display locally.

The Working Group **AGREED** that actions from the next meeting would be put forward to Economy and Infrastructure Committee and that the date for the next meeting would be agreed and circulated in due course.

The meeting concluded at 4:05pm.



## The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Harbours Management Board** held in **Lochinver Harbour Office**, on Friday 3 November 2023 at 1:00 pm.

### **Present:-**

Mr I Brown

Mr M Green (Chair)

Mr H Morrison

Ms L Niven

### **Non-members also present:**

Mrs M Hutchison

### **In attendance:-**

Ms T Urry, Interim Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure & Environment

Mr T Usher, Harbours Manager, Community Services

Mr A MacIver, Principal Engineer, Project Design Unit

Ms F MacBain, Senior Committee Officer, Performance and Governance Service

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr K Rosie, Ms J McEwan, Mr R Stewart, and Mrs T Robertson.

The Chair asked that Members submit apologies as early as possible to ensure meetings were quorate.

### **2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statement**

There were no declarations of interests/transparency statements.

### **3. Minutes of Last Meeting**

There had been circulated, and were **NOTED**, minutes of the Harbours Management Board held on the 29 March 2023.

### **4. Uig Harbour Redevelopment Update**

There had been circulated Report No HMB/6/23 dated 11 October 2023 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy.

A presentation was provided covering the new terminal building, new vessels, the second outage period, the new linkspan, the concrete repairs to pierhead, electrical infrastructure for new vessels, the roundhead, the fishermen's dry berth, the boatsteps, the marshalling area, and overall project communication,

During discussion, the following issues were considered:

- assurance was sought and provided that the planned schedules were on track, with completion of the new terminal building programmed for 8 November 2024, and delivery of the new vessels programmed for June and October 2025;
- in relation to the community liaison meetings, which were being scheduled during the construction period on a six-weekly basis with THC officials, the contractor and local community representatives, additional meetings would be held if necessary during the second outage period, which was due to end on 11 December 2023;
- the Little Minch Steering Group was being led by Transport Scotland and CMAL, with the Highland Council and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar providing regular reports, which updated risk registers and addressed any issues. The meetings had been useful for coordination, especially at the start of the project, and 6-monthly community consultation events were being held, with another planned for January 2024;
- progress with the project was welcomed and in response to a query about community feedback, there were ongoing weekly liaison group meetings and a WhatsApp group for anyone to raise concerns. Strict noise levels restrictions and schedules were being maintained;
- accommodation for workers had been challenging at times, with rates being high for some second home rentals. Some accommodation had been provided within the compound and at local caravan parks; and
- the new ferries would be hybrid - marine gas oil and electric - with overnight charging facilities.

The Board **NOTED** the position.

## 5. Fish Landing Statistics 2022

There had been circulated Report No HMB/7/23 dated 16 October 2023 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy.

Following a summary of the report, Members raised the following issues:-

- Tony Mackay, who had produced the appended reports, was thanked;
- the loss of 3 large French vessels, due to the French Government introducing a scrappage compensation scheme, was likely to impact figures for the second half of 2023, but it was not yet known if the remaining vessels might compensate by landing higher value fish; and
- attention was drawn to the significant value of the income from fish landings for the Council.

The Board **NOTED** the contents of the report in relation to Highland Council owned and operated harbours.

## 6. Electric Bus Charging Terminal at Uig Harbour

There had been circulated Report No HMB/8/23 dated 16 October 2023 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy.

During discussion Members raised the following comments:-

- Members welcomed the development, and expressed their support for the initiative; and
- in relation to electric HGVs using the charging points, it was important to bear in mind that if the vehicles had reached their statutory nine hours in operation, they might not be able to move immediately after charging. It was suggested lorries were more likely to move to hydrogen rather than electric energy.

The Board:-

- i. **AGREED** to support the creation of an electric bus terminal at Uig; and
- ii. **NOTED** the options available in providing the coach charging service at Uig.

## 7. **Financial Performance 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023**

There had been circulated Report No HMB/9/23 dated 16 October 2023 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy.

The Board **NOTED** the financial position to 30 September 2023.

The meeting ended at 2.15pm