

 Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks TRANSMISSION		
	Revision	Final
	Function	CLG

Meeting	Bingally - Community Liaison Group
Date	23 June 2026
Time	7pm
Location	Cannich Hall

Attendees	Position
James Elliot (JE)	Environmental Manager, SSEN Transmission
Abbie Mcilgorm (AM)	Assistant Project Manager, SSEN Transmission
Kelly Scott (KS)	Lead Community Liaison Manager, SSEN Transmission
Matthew Boyle (MB)	Civil Project Engineer, SSEN Transmission
Heather Macgillivray (HM)	Stakeholder Engagement & Social Sustainability Coordinator, BAM
Keith Gibson	Project Manager, BAM
Jeannine Mansell (JM)	Strathglass and Affric Community Company (SACC)
Brad Collins (BC)	Resident (Cannich Village Store)
Steve Towell (ST)	Resident (Tomich)
Carolyn Mecia (CM)	Tomich Residents Association
Cath Curd (CC)	Resident (Community Energy Scotland)
Cllr David Fraser (DF)	Ward 12 – The Highland Council
Ryan Bell (RB)	Community Benefit Manager, SSEN Transmission
Apologies	Position
William (Bill) Smart (BS)	Glen Urquhart Community Council
Jim McAuley (JMc)	Resident
Roddie MacLennan (RM)	Strathglass Community Fund (CSF), Strathglass Shinty Club (SSC), Cannich Sports and Recreation (CS&R)
Dr Georgina Parker (GP)	Strathglass Community Council

1.0	Introductions, apologies and approval of mins
1.1	No further comments on meeting 1 mins and TOR approved Reminder from DF that TOR can be re-addressed when/if considered required
2.0	Actions from last meeting
2.1	Transcripts: SSEN T proposed continuing without transcripts with willingness to revisit if the CLG deem necessary but as no issues with first mins suggest not required. (closed – can be reopened if req)
2.2	Cabins: BAM have committed to ensuring long term cabins blend in – further update towards end of meeting (open – further clarification)
2.3	Bellmouth: same as above (closed)
2.4	Approach to CTMP and School Times: Following counsel from DF, BAM will address other local school to pick up detail in CTMP to ensure children at Cannich, Balnain and Drumnadrochit schools are considered. CLM members to send over local knowledge email, including school times. Also discussed Cannich school and need for toolbox talks. CM asked if there will be workers in Tomich and if they come via Cannich. KG advised no minibuses until construction formally commences so probably use both roads at the moment.

2.5	Carpark: Commitment to address potholes but further consideration to 'gold star' service of full tarring and EVs would likely need to commence next year. BC advised EVs now in service at Cannich Shop so may need to revisit requirement for this. CLG members to advise of ownership (open)
2.6	Community Liaison Manager Details: KS advised Jeff will be new CLM for the project starting early July and will be in touch with CLG to introduce himself once settled in and webpage details updated (closed)
2.7	Hybrid meeting feasibility; KS advised spider phone obtained but may need to do trial using EE hot spotting to see if connectivity will hold up. JM suggested mobile internet dongle for hall which SSEN T can look into also. JM to send over 4g dongle proposal to SSEN Transmission DF suggested SACC may apply to Ward Discretionary fund for internet funding. (open)
2.8	Policing support: KS advised following review and further consideration from business, SSEN T nor BAM would be able to commit to resourcing due to this being a public resource. (closed)
3.0	Project Update
3.1	AM advised 11/21 commencement conditions discharged. Summer '26 re start date but still awaiting conditions. SSEN T still awaiting feedback from THC re Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP). DF will check if CCs have been passed on CTMP from THC (planning officer) and SSENT can include link to planning conditions for CLG members awareness (this is located in the helpful link section below).
4.0	Environmental and Consents
4.1	JE described what an Environmental Appraisal (EA) is, confirming it forms part of planning consent before describing the pre-construction ecological surveys recently undertaken . CM asked if these had been submitted to THC. JE confirmed they had been submitted about 3 weeks ago, assessed by their ecology team and NatureScot (one of the pre-commencement conditions). The pre-construction assessments need to be done as close to the works starting as possible so it's accurate as can be but needs time for assessment.
4.2	JE advised during construction there is a team of Project Environmental Resource , listing professionals surveying and assessing the works both office and site based such as contractor ECOWs , independent EnvCOWs (who take on more a monitoring role and produce a weekly report), SSEN Ts Environment & Consents Manager, who acts as the 'third eye' with monthly inspection from the business and subsequent report, and Environmental Specialists who work ad-hoc when needed, an example being archaeologists if required. JE added that there are also SPPs (Species Protection Plans) in place for different species. Black Grouse SPP will be sent to CLG members alongside minutes for information.
	JE finished by advising of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) considerations, explaining that as a substation platform is built, the footprint of the substation will lose biodiversity, but SSEN T committed to deliver 10% BNG ensuring that BNG lost is made up in the vicinity of the site + 10%. Explained 'Biodiversity Units' advising there is a team who identify and work with landowners to secure sites to deliver BNG activities. Habitat creation around boundary of site.
4.3	Additional questions and comments: • DF referenced protocol for if ECOW finds nest. JE confirmed work wont progress until it fledges or the nest fails. All transparency with NatureScot. DF advised that THC take a very strong interest in mitigation. • CM enquired about surveys for black lek and rare birds as RSPB were pleased with increase in numbers, do the team know the sites and what mitigation? JE shared that an environmental appraisal was undertaken a few years ago and none were in the operating sites. Acknowledged that could change so ECOW will be looking for that and it could be a case of adjusting works to outside of lekking period, furthering that NatureScot needs to be content with proposals. Added that a black grouse SPP will be used to protect that particular species for example. • When asked about pre-commencement and disturbance, KG advised the ECOW gives permits so they assess in advance and check it's okay to commence the work. • JM enquired as to how often there are water breaches. JE shared an example of Creag Dhubh substation in Argyll where there has been 1 in 3.5 years. • CM asked if there is involvement from RSPB. DF would expect they would report if saw anything as likely to keep close eye, however the regulator is NatureScot. KG advised BAM have been speaking to

	RSPB and have a relationship with them. AM furthered that RSPB requested they stack trees not fell for example to help mitigate disturbance. • JM asked does Nature Scot only reply on reports rather than having anyone present on site to do checks? DF advised yes but they are professional bodies hired as EnvCOWs. There are industry standards and auditing from professional bodies. • CM queried the BNG asked why the 118 units are not delivered directly on site. JE shared there just is not enough space and the 9km access track contributes a lot to the BUs for the project. JM highlighted discussion taking place with 1 landowner re BNG and queried if just the one estate was proposed. JE advised it is the nature teams' job to find landowners. DF shared it is an issue with planning too, as BNG is always asked where it will take place and the answer is always as near as possible. JE provided an example of Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park where the estate was given funding for a 10yr BNG plan which will result in well of excess of units. JM asked about RSPBs land but it was advised there is an existing agreement with another company and you can't double count if you've existing projects. The CLG asked for transparency around the deal being done and the name of the landowner to ensure trust in the process and DF actioned to report back when SSEN T know where and when. • CC asked about protection of flora and fauna and plant issues and if this was covered in the report. JE answered yes and furthered there are species who have enhanced protection and it is the ecologists' job to recognise plants and suggest mitigations. CM enquired about surveys for black grouse lekking sites and other nesting birds. •
5.0	Fire Safety Considerations
5.1	MB prefaced that the information being provided took recognition of two scenarios; fire from substation spread outside substation and wildfire spread reaching the inside of the substation. MB presented a table to demonstrate the pieces of plant that could potentially pose a fire risk. They are positioned and spaced out to ensure if a piece of plant goes on fire it doesn't spread within the substation. - No fuel sources within orange perimeter - 5m Type A stone within perimeter allows for a fire gap - Weekly regime like glass cutting to minimise risk of it becoming a fuel source Talked of 9.5 km access track and cross section acting as a firebreak, stone to allow as fire break.
	Questions and comments: • DF acknowledged the operation safety measures built into design, however noted it would be interesting to hear how BAM are considering the assumed higher risk period of construction of opposed to long term design – added to next agenda. • The CLG asked if the non-enclosed substation was less safe from a fire risk perspective and noted expectation to see AIS/GIS in regards to the safety included in the agenda item. KS advised there had recently been an email enquiry with the same question, however after consulting SSEN Ts electrical engineering teams was advised there is no difference between AIS and GIS substations from a safety perspective, including in relation to fire, therefore the presentation concentrated on fire safety in general, including consideration of wildfires. • Members clarified they would like more details re differences between AIS and GIS, and raised questions around the rationale for selecting AIS, given the site's peatland characteristics, assumed quicker construction period, and potential for smaller footprint and visual impact associated with GIS. Clarification was sought on whether cost formed part of the decision-making process. It was suggested that a dedicated session on AIS vs GIS would be helpful in providing further information and building confidence in the process. KG advised no not a shorter period of time but can provide a smaller footprint. DF furthered that THC were presented with only an AIS option, acknowledging there as still questions from the community regarding the technology choice. Given the outstanding questions, the Chair/project team agreed to provide more information at the next CLG meeting. • ST referenced the fire from 2023 and if the business were modelling wildfire in response to that? MB not aware of anything can be done in terms of modelling, the teams look to Portugal etc and distances

	to fuel sources in terms of size of substation and that SSENT are confident anything on fire can be managed within that footprint. ST asked what about outside? MB answered yes, he's confident the risk of spread due to the perimeters and distances is mitigated as it works both ways. • CM asked what happens if there was a fire during construction and where provision would be coming from. KG advised there is an emergency response plan during construction to evacuate. BAM engage local fire brigade, acknowledge that's Inverness. MB added if the fire started in substation would be left to burn, we don't intervene with electrical fire. It will burn out itself as the perimeters and distances will ensure it doesn't spread. • Further questions were asked about fumes and lightning which MB agreed to take away*, with suggestion to speak to Fire Rescue Scotland. *Post Meeting Note: - From the fumes from a fire perspective there is no additional risk from fumes against any other equipment containing a crude oil derivative e.g. a car - With regards to the lightning - all our plant is grounded so lightning will be directed to the main earthing system and dissipated through the ground
6.0	BAM Update – Traffic Management
	KG advised that as part of the planning conditions, BAM are not permitted to bring construction traffic through Cannich and Tomich, confirming that would generally include vehicles like buses, however not staff staying locally. KG then noted the A831 bell mouth drawing included in the slide pack, highlighting the grassed area, hardened verge and brown surface which needs to go down. Also shared visuals from the compound to demonstrate how it will be hidden, noting it won't be overly visible from areas included in the modelling such as the car park and advised from one part the temporary ones will be green and orange but long term BAM can take on a colour the community likes. A member advised that their recollection differed from the minutes, specifically regarding the discussion on colour options for the temporary units. It was noted that this matter is subject to further clarification through the associated action point number 2. KG also suggested BAM can look at a screening bund in front of cabins if community do find it quite visual despite colours. JM noted that, during a site walk associated with the AKW diversion attended by representatives from BAM and project team members, it was understood that bunding would be provided in front of the northern compound. The member's understanding was that the bunding would help reduce views of the compound from the village and provide some noise screening. Action added to confirm arrangements. Link to visuals created by BAM: Cannich Shinty Pitch 360° photo
	Questions and Comments: • CM asked about contractors using minibuses/cars to site. KG advised workers generally on site all day, and catering facilities will be there. Minibuses will be mainly used however some staff will take cars, but traffic is expected to be at a minimum. KG furthered the A831 is to be used for all deliveries, there will be instructions, but expect marginal room for error. DF advised contractors will need to watch A833 as there's risk for shortcut. Asked if there was consideration for Balnain School but KG admitted would need to check CTMP • JM proposed that from a noise perspective bunding might help with sound? KS added most likely but would need to check (can be addressed during screening and noise session at next meeting). CLG members preference was to have screening in place at the Northern compound area. • CM asked about logging and cumulative impacts. JE said his understanding is there is no commercial forestry. Was advised beyond Tomich and further up there is. Advised they check for 5 year period.

7.0	Next agenda items and date of next meeting
	Proposed date of next meeting: Last two weeks July commitment for next CLG (likely last week of month)

Actions.

Number	Action / Update	Owner	Open/Closed
1.	Consider request re transcripts of meetings	SSEN T	Closed
2.	Consider use of colours for site cabins to blend with landscape	BAM	Open
3.	Review options to reduce visual impact of bellmouth and entrance	BAM	Open
4.	Confirm approach to managing traffic around school times at Cannich, Balnain and Drumnadrochit	SSEN Transmission / BAM	Open
5.	Review condition and potential improvement of local car park, including EV charging – local CLG members to advise of ownership	SSEN Transmission/CLG	Open
6.	Confirm communication routes and update contact details when CLM changes	SSEN Transmission	Closed
7.	Explore feasibility of improved connectivity at hall (for hybrid meetings / transcription)	SSEN Transmission	Open
8.	Consider request regarding additional policing support	SSEN Transmission	Closed
9.	Bring SPP/independent monitoring report/SSEN report example etc to future meeting to give comfort to community	SSEN Transmission	Open
10.	KS to send out links/copies of BNG images in mins	SSEN Transmission	Closed
11.	Suggested schedule of meetings to end of year to DF (avoiding last week of month bar July)	SSEN Transmission	Open
12.	Project team to confirm the proposed bunding arrangements for the northern compound, including the intended visual and noise mitigation benefits.	BAM	Open
13.	CLG to send timings of school, local knowledge, diary of events	CLG members	Open

Helpful links:

- Visuals of compound from shinty pitch: [Cannich Shinty Pitch | 360° photo](#)
- Landscape and Habitat Management Plan: [RUKKXX](#) (other planning and Environmental Assessment docs available in 'Document' section of the project webpage): [Bingally 400kV Substation - SSEN Transmission](#)
- Link to The Highland Council Planning Portal, Planning Conditions can be found in the decision notice: [25/00592/FUL | Bingally Substation - Construction of a new 400/132kV outdoor Air Insulated Switchgear \(AIS\) substation comprising platform, plant and machinery, control buildings, access, temporary laydown and compound areas, drainage, landscaping and other ancillary works. | Land 1700M SE Of Glasha Tomich Cannich](#)
- Visualisation video for Substation: [SSE - Bingally 132/400kV Substation](#)
- Visualisation video for Access Track: [Bingally Access Track](#)