

Meeting	Bingally - Community Liaison Group
Date	15 September 2026
Time	7.00 pm - 9.00 pm
Location	Cannich Hall

Attendees	Position
Cllr David Fraser (DF)	Ward 12 - The Highland Council
William (Bill) Smart (BS)	Glen Urquhart Community Council
Keith Gibson (KG)	Project Manager, BAM
Irfan Ahmad (IA)	Lead Project Manager, SSEN Transmission
Jeff McKenzie (JMck)	Community Liaison Manager, SSEN Transmission
Caroline Mecia (CM)	Tomich Residents Association
Steve Towell (ST)	Resident (Tomich)
Katie Andrews (KA)	Guest speaker, SSEN Transmission
Alex Grigg (AG)	Strathglass Community Council and Strathglass and Affric Community Company
Jeanine Mansell (JM)	Strathglass and Affric Community Company (SACC)
Roddy MacLennan (RM)	Strathglass Community Fund, Strathglass Shinty Club and Cannich Sports and Recreation
Dr Georgina Parker (GP)	Strathglass Community Council
Apologies	Position
Cath Curd (CC)	Resident (Community Energy Scotland)
1.0	Welcome, apologies and confirmation of minutes
1.1	David Fraser welcomed attendees and introductions were made. Apologies were noted from Cath Curd. It was also noted that Jim McAuley has left the group .
1.2	The minutes of the meeting held on 11 August 2026 were reviewed and approved. Alex Grigg asked for the discussion on voice recording meetings to be taken at the start of the meeting. It was agreed that this would be considered under Any Other Business.
2.0	Actions from last meeting
2.1	The procedure for the four-week lookahead and community notifications was reviewed. The action was closed , with the lookahead to become a standing item at future CLG meetings. Action closed
2.2	The approach to traffic management around school times was discussed. The action was closed , although arrangements will continue to be monitored as the Construction Traffic Management Plan is implemented. Action closed
2.3	Cannich car park ownership and possible improvements were discussed. JM provided an Land Register of Scotland map and JMcK agreed to send to John Stewart the Land Manager who is in discussions with SSE Renewables to get an ownership map from them. KG advised that BAM could ask Fairhurst to assess the site, including surfacing and drainage options. JM and RM to provide any material they have already to Jeff so he can forward to Keith at BAM to take forward Action remains open .
2.4	The written clarification on why AIS is SSEN Transmission's starting point for substation design was noted. Action closed .
2.5	The group had not yet received the requested information on wind-speed testing and the threshold applied at Bingally. Members asked for the relevant SSEN Transmission standard, the wind-speed figure used and clarification of how wind conditions informed site selection. SSEN Transmission to provide a written response. AG noted his unhappiness having to wait till the next meeting as construction is starting and wind speeds were the basis on site selection at an early stage. DF Information must be there and can be gotten in 7 days. Jmck I cannot guarantee I can get the answer you want in 7 days but will try and get this as soon as I can BS not credible that you can't get the wind speed results that should be available

	quickly AG what wind speed and determination figure was used for Bingally? Other sites not selected due to wind speeds Action remains open .
2.6	KG advised that the site fire and emergency plan remains under development and that further detail will be available following engagement with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and once they have been out on site Action remains open .
2.7	The group requested confirmation of whether blasting noise had been considered in the Environmental Impact Assessment. JMcK confirmed that the matter would be carried forward and included on the next agenda. AG for clarification the original EIA did not include blasting noise? KG blasting noise was part of the EIA Action remains open .
2.8	Further clarification of comments made at the pre-determination hearing was discussed. Some members considered that unresolved AIS/GIS and consenting questions required a separate forum. AG asked if these questions need removed to another forum going forward DF noted that, if concerns continued beyond the CLG remit, an alternative forum may be more appropriate and chaired by someone outwith the community. AG asked how this would work in terms of a new group to go over a consented development. CM , its important to get this information as we live here and want to be safe. JM , we need to build trust with SSE. GP weight of evidence suggests that the community is in support of another forum to discuss these things. The community representatives will consider and bring forward a proposal for how these matters could be progressed. Existing action closed ;
3.0	Project and Construction Update
3.1	IA provided a project and construction update. He advised that 20 of 21 planning conditions had been discharged and that traffic management activity was due to begin on 16 September, followed by establishment of the temporary compound. The remaining Construction Traffic Management Plan matters included active travel measures, the road condition survey, bridge assessment, section 96 and retaining-wall considerations. KG advised that a small number of plant deliveries were required for the compound. He confirmed that works during the week commencing 21 September related to enabling and compound activity rather than construction of the substation itself. CM referred to the latest email from JMcK stating delivery of construction plant material and asking if this had been agreed by the Highland Council. DF , I can get that confirmed AG asked for confirmation that the works progressing from wc 21 September did not involve any works on the substation itself KG clarified that the works were not on the substation but the access track and temporary compound CM asked to confirm no traffic coming through Tomich KG responded No project construction traffic was planned through Tomich, although some staff may use the route when travelling to local accommodation. Action: confirm the agreed delivery and traffic arrangements with The Highland Council and provide an update to the group.
4.0	Four-week Community Lookahead
4.1	Jeff McKenzie presented the four-week community lookahead and outlined the weekly coordination between SSEN Transmission and BAM. CM asked for as much advance notice as possible, particularly where lorry movements or escorted deliveries may change. IA noted that cancellations can occur if a police escort is unavailable. The lookahead will become a standing item at future CLG meetings.
5.0	How Biodiversity Net Gain is Being Delivered
5.1	KA outlined SSEN Transmission's approach to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), including baseline habitat surveys, mitigation and opportunities for on-site and off-site enhancement. The current assessment indicated a small net loss , subject to further refinement, with woodland and peatland restoration forming part of the proposals. She explained that an Environmental Clerk of Works (ECOW) would oversee compliance during construction and that some restoration would take place as works progressed, with most activity occurring later in the project. In the case of Bingally some off site is needed. CM , when does all this happen? KA – typically once all the construction has happened, with normally 2 years to do this. If an area is not affected in the red line boundary it will be retained. Important area for peatland and ancient woodland. CM will they not come to site for 2 years? KA – As soon as work starts ECOW will be onsite to oversee and that the site is compliant. And once construction is completed the bulk of environmental works will be completed and the ongoing monitoring of how it is establishing. CM , when is the restoration happening? KA – some peatland work will happen as the project progresses but most after. SSE do most of this work at the back end of the project. AG - is that restoration of damage done by the project or ground that has already in need of regeneration. Clarity needed on this area already degraded. How can we have full disclosure of these figures and details? KA – Landscape management plan is there so we can identify areas. We have refined it and identified areas for restoration and avoid as much as possible to restore offsite. DF – That has to be agreed with THC and verified. THC also employs specialists to look at this AG – good to know this is being looked at by THC. Is it really the case you are unsure if this is restoration or not? KA , can check with James regarding this question on peatland restoration. AG – what extent is it taken into account that this would have been restored by Forestry and Land Scotland (FLS) anyway? KA – understanding that this work is additional and will enable FLS to use the funds elsewhere if we are delivering, however, will confirm with James and the land manager at Bingally DF , your concern is double counting RM – What trees are you talking about? KA , Birch, Scotch Pine and AECOM (environmental consultant) have stated some non native species which can be removed. KG explained some ancient woodland affected but by doing so it avoids other areas CM , can we have this map? KA , yes it is publicly accessible so can be sent through KA advised an opportunity for local habitat restoration and asked for assistance from the community if any sites could be identified as close to Bingally as possible. There is opportunities locally. CM , stated previous meeting she was told there had been talks of a site selected. KA advised 18 months post commencement of development to decide but is confidential and can't be shared JM , is this for Bingally nothing finalised and can explore opportunities. GP asked why is there commercial sensitivities? Why can't we know KA – because it's private landowners, charities and we need their consent and a legal agreement in place. There might be changes. AG - why were we told differently at previous meeting? KA – still early stage nothing agreed. CM , disappointed you are asking the community to find these places, not open and honest and why can't you share. JM – why

	are we only being told now? RM – what area of land are you looking to restore and what type KA – large sites normally 30 hectares but can look at smaller sites like 10 hectares if part of a wider nature network . GP - if there are landowners who are receiving benefits from this then it strikes me that it would be in their interest to agree, SSE should be in a position to share this and causes mis-trust. Don't understand why can't access this. DF – people love the area and that's why we want to go away from today knowing that in terms of bio diversity that 10% has been achieved and is being checked and is long term and inspiring the local children in the Schools. KA – long term investment. Some landowners may want to share and others may not Members asked how the proposed restoration would be additional to work that might otherwise be undertaken, including any Forestry and Land Scotland activity, and requested fuller information on the calculations and proposed locations. Katie Andrews advised that off-site opportunities were still being explored, preferably close to Bingally, and that details could not be shared until landowner consent and legal agreements were in place. The group was invited to identify suitable local opportunities if they so wish. Actions: confirm that proposed peatland restoration is additional and does not duplicate other planned work; share the relevant publicly available landscape and habitat map; clarify any licensing requirements for peat storage cells; and provide as much information as possible on off-site BNG opportunities when agreements allow.
6.0	Fire and Other Emergency Procedures
6.1	KG advised that BAM's fire and emergency response plan is a live document that will be updated throughout construction. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service has been notified and will be invited to visit the site when it is established. CCTV and, when required, security personnel will support site monitoring. A familiarisation visit for CLG members remains an option. Action remains open pending the Fire and Rescue Service visit and a further update to the group.
7.0	Traffic Management Plan
7.1	KG advised that the Construction Traffic Management Plan was close to completion. Measures under discussion included signage near Balnain Primary School and a delivery-management system that would restrict movements during school times. Jeff McKenzie will remain the main SSEN Transmission community contact, with BAM's community contact supporting contractor communications. DF roughly 600 timber lorries per year use the A831 BS – Where are we with the speed restrictions at Drumnadrochit? DF-part of discussions with THC. 20mp section then a long section at 50 and discussing if it can go down to 40. Speed limit through Balnain is 40 and prob needs to go down to 30. Some actions around cyclists etc... BS sooner the info gets back the quicker as there have been fatalities RM, on speeding is there trackers on the vehicles? KG, we don't have trackers on the vehicles The group discussed speed limits at Drumnadrochit and Balnain, cyclist safety, drainage and gullies, and how concerns about driver behaviour would be reported. Keith Gibson confirmed that BAM vehicles did not have trackers. The group also discussed the colour of the site cabins and agreed that the community would provide a preference before the next meeting. Actions: provide an update on speed-management discussions with The Highland Council; confirm the process for reporting driver concerns; and ask the community to agree a preferred cabin colour before or at the next meeting.
8.0	Balnain Primary School
8.1	The group discussed traffic-management measures near Balnain Primary School and whether similar measures should be considered at Cannich. AG - Cannich is at the heart of the development and feel the School should be looked at as well as Balnain DF explained that Balnain had been identified because construction traffic would pass the school, whereas Cannich was not expected to be on the main construction route. Members noted that accommodation-related traffic and other nearby project activity could still affect Cannich and Tomich. JMcK invited a CLG representative to join a discussion with the Parent Council but it was agreed that he would speak to the Parent Council with Heather from BAM and report back. RM agreed to share the Local Action Plan with SSEN Transmission. Action: Local Action Plan to be shared with SSE
9.0	Progressing the Cannich Car Park Potholes
9.1	The group returned to the Cannich car park discussion. The updated ownership map and available survey information will be shared, and BAM will consider whether Fairhurst can assess the site and advise on surfacing and drainage options. This item remains open and will be updated at the next meeting.
10.0	Any Other Business and Date of Next Meeting
10.1	CM - Concerns relating to survey work on the C1110 were also noted. JMcK noted that there is a public consultation event at Cannich Hall on Oct 6 and the project team will be there to fully answer and concerns or information you may require. JMcK expressed concerns about voice recordings being publicly available given the sensitivities of these projects, the safety of staff and to foster open conversation. DF offered a solution in that any issues over the minutes that needed clarification David would act as the sole arbitrator keeping circulation issues to a minimum. JMcK, IA and KG were broadly re-assured by David's compromise position but JMcK clarified that we could not make this decision unilaterally and would need to seek counsel on the matter but we were not 100% against the proposal brought forward by DF. If we were to proceed invites would clearly state recording was in place and everyone would have to be comfortable with that or mitigations would need to be discussed. The next CLG meeting is scheduled for 27 October 2026 usual time and venue

Actions.

Number	Action / Update	Owner	Open/Closed
1	Continue the four-week community lookahead as a standing CLG item and provide advance notice of significant deliveries or changes where possible.	SSEN T / BAM	Closed
2	Provide the requested written response on wind-speed testing, including the relevant standard, threshold and figure applied at Bingally.	SSEN T	Open
3	Progress Cannich car park information: share the ownership map and survey, seek confirmation from SSE Renewables and consider a Fairhurst assessment of surfacing and drainage.	JMcK / JM / KG	Open
4	Confirm whether blasting noise was included in the EIA and place the item on the next CLG agenda.	SSEN T	Open
5	Provide a further fire and emergency planning update following engagement with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.	BAM	Open
6	Community representatives to consider and propose an appropriate forum for unresolved AIS/GIS and consenting questions.	CLG community members	Open
7	Confirm agreed delivery and traffic arrangements with The Highland Council and update the CLG.	SSEN T / BAM	Open
8	Confirm that proposed peatland restoration is additional, and clarify any overlap with other planned restoration activity.	SSEN T	Open
9	Share the publicly available landscape and habitat map and provide further information on off-site BNG opportunities when agreements allow.	SSEN T	Closed
10	Clarify whether peat storage cells require a licence and confirm the position to the group.	SSEN T / BAM	Open
11	Update the group on speed-management discussions and the route for reporting driver concerns.	SSEN T / BAM	Open
12	Agree and provide the community preference for the colour of the site cabins.	CLG community members	Open
13	Share the Local Action Plan with SSEN Transmission.	RM	Closed
14	Confirm suitable arrangements for creating an accurate record of future CLG meetings.	JMcK	Closed

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](#)