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Function	Major Projects

Meeting	Banniskirk Hub Community Liaison Group (CLG)
Date	17 June 2026
Time	7.00pm – 9.00pm

Banniskirk Hub CLG Attendees and Apologies:

Attendees	Position
Colin Earnshaw (CE)	SSEN Transmission Project Manager
Connor Kane (CK)	SSEN Transmission Deputy Project Director
Martin Godwin (MG)	SSEN Transmission Community Liaison Manager
Mark Williams (MW)	Murphy – Operational Lead
Tom McGee (TMC)	Murphy – Stakeholder Advisor
Martin Baker (MB)	Murphy – Senior Project Manager
Willie McGillivray (WM)	Thurso Community Council
Dan Burnand (DB)	Local Resident
Edith Budge (EB)	Local Resident
Norma Munro (NM)	Local Resident
Stuart Mills (SM)	Halkirk & District Community Council
David Busby (DBu)	Halkirk & District Community Council
Alasdair Bain (AB)	Local Resident and business owner
Catherine Mackenzie (CM)	Local Resident
Maurice Mackenzie (MM)	Local Resident
Anthony Hawkins (AH)	Local Resident
Heather Hawkins (HH)	Local Resident
Apologies	Position

Minutes

1	Welcome and introductions
1.1	MG welcomed attendees to the inaugural CLG meeting and thanked all participants for attending. All attendees introduced themselves and outlined their roles or interest in the project, including representatives from SSEN Transmission, Murphy, community councils and local residents.
2	Purpose of this Community Liaison Group
2.1	MG explained that SSEN Transmission places strong emphasis on working closely with local communities across all major projects. This includes keeping communities informed of activities and seeking to reduce impacts where possible. It was explained that the CLG provides an open forum for discussion, allowing stakeholders to raise concerns, ask questions, and receive updates directly from the project team. The intention is to maintain a clear and consistent route for communication and issue resolution. It was noted that, while CLGs are standard practice for major projects, the establishment of this group is also a requirement of the planning consent. MG highlighted that the CLG has been set up at an early stage, while work is ongoing to discharge planning conditions. As a result, some details are still being developed. However, early engagement is being prioritised to ensure the community is kept informed as the project progresses.

3.0	Project Update
3.1	CE provided an overview of the Banniskirk Hub project and confirmed that planning consent was granted on 9 April 2026, with 36 conditions attached. CE outlined progress since the determination hearing in November 2025, including the appointment of an independent Planning Monitoring Officer (PMO). It was confirmed that the cost of the PMO will be met by SSEN Transmission as the project developer. A request was made for PMO reports to be shared with the CLG where possible. WM asked whether reporting frequency could be increased during key project stages. CE confirmed that monitoring will be ongoing, with formal reports issued quarterly. DBu asked whether a Terms of Reference would be developed for the PMO role. CM asked whether the project would still be required if the West of Orkney Wind Farm does not proceed. CE confirmed that the Banniskirk Hub would still be required. SM raised the issue of the construction off the hub starting before the overhead line (OHL) had planning consent and this was a major project risk. Project activity and lookahead CE provided a four-month lookahead (June to October 2026), which includes: • Ongoing engagement with The Highland Council to discharge planning conditions • Archaeological investigations • Further surveys relating to water, noise and ecology It was noted that access to parts of the site is currently restricted due to nesting birds, in line with ecological guidance. The contractor is progressing detailed design and delivery planning. Discussions are ongoing with The Highland Council regarding whether enabling works may be undertaken under permitted development rights. Concerns were raised that permitted development is not always well understood by local communities. Attendees requested clear and early communication where this approach is proposed. SM requested a list of contractors and details of CDM arrangements. CE confirmed that Murphy is the Principal Contractor and is responsible for appointing subcontractors. CK advised that F10 forms relating to the works are publicly available. SM also raised concerns about adherence to Construction Traffic Management Plans and emphasised the importance of compliance. Traffic management and local concerns A detailed discussion took place regarding temporary traffic management at Georgemas: • CM raised concerns that the number of signs positioned at eye level may lead to reduced compliance by drivers • Concerns were raised regarding the repositioning of the national speed limit sign, which has extended the 30mph zone • NM explained that this change is creating difficulties when accessing her property, with vehicles accelerating and overtaking after leaving the 30mph zone • SM queried how temporary traffic management arrangements are being approved in the absence of a confirmed Construction Traffic Management Plan Residents also raised concerns regarding litter in the area. MW confirmed that litter picking has been undertaken and agreed to review extending this across both Banniskirk and Georgemas. Surveys, drainage and flood risk DB asked about the timing of water surveys. MB confirmed these relate to water quality monitoring. Residents raised concerns about drainage and flood risk, particularly in the Achalone area. MB advised that Murphy's consultants, Tony Gee, are carrying out flood risk assessments extending beyond the site boundary. MM asked about discharge locations and how water flow routes will be managed. DB queried whether engagement has taken place with the proposed battery storage developer in relation to cumulative impacts. CE confirmed that no contact has been made to date. It was proposed that, once detailed design work has progressed, a dedicated session will be arranged with the CLG to present drainage proposals and discuss flood risk in more detail. CM raised an incident that was reported to SEPA in relation to pollution within the water courses following GI works carried out in March, that was not followed up on. MG advised that we were waiting on images that were never shared. CM advised that these were shared with SEPA and permission granted to send on to us. MG to follow up with SEPA to retrieve the images and investigate. Litter Concerns were raised about an increase in litter in the area. MW confirmed that Murphy has carried out litter picks along the A9 at Banniskirk. It was suggested that coverage should be extended between the Banniskirk site and Georgemas. MW agreed to arrange additional litter picks across this wider area. Blasting, breaking and dust

	MB confirmed that blasting activities are expected to take place approximately three days per week over a 40-week period. Residents expressed concern about potential impacts. It was agreed that advance notice will be provided ahead of blasting activities. MB will provide further detail on noise restrictions at the next meeting. AH raised concerns regarding dust. CE confirmed that dust suppression measures will be implemented, with further information to be shared. SF6 MB confirmed that we would be using an SF6 free switchgear at Banniskirk Hub. Lighting MB advised that site lighting will be inward-facing and designed to be bat-friendly. The site will be dark outside working hours, with the exception of the security post, which will be staffed continuously. DB noted the presence of green lighting at Spittal substation. It was confirmed that this is emergency lighting required for operational safety. Electromagnetic Fields (EMF's) EMF's were raised as a safety concern. There is information available on EMF's and this will be shared with the group. Site Compound layout It was raised that it would be good to be able to see the plans for the site compound, and what will be seen from the A9. CE to provide an update at the next meeting.
3.2	MG provided an overview of the community benefit fund model, which will be split 50/50 between a regional fund and a local fund. It was explained that consultation will take place with local communities ahead of establishing the local fund, with the aim of ensuring it reflects local priorities and delivers long-term benefit.
4	Accommodation
4.1	MW provided an update on proposals for worker accommodation, confirming that a planning application is expected to be submitted in July 2026. WM welcomed the updated proposals and noted that feedback from earlier consultation appears to have been addressed. MW was invited to attend a future Thurso Community Council meeting. Behaviour and safety were discussed. MW confirmed that drug and alcohol testing will be in place. Alcohol will be permitted on site in a controlled and monitored manner, and security will be provided. Travel arrangements were also discussed. MW explained that Murphy aims to minimise traffic impacts by using local transport providers and encouraging travel via rail, bus and air where possible.
5	Terms of Reference
5.1	The draft Terms of Reference were discussed. It was agreed that the Community Liaison Manager will chair future meetings. Amendments are required before formal agreement and may be progressed via email ahead of the next meeting. It was suggested by the group that core agenda items are identified – SM had some ideas regarding the core items and will send to MG for further discussion with the group. NM requested that safety to be included within the core agenda items.
5.2	The absence of ward councillors was noted. Invitations had been extended to councillors in Wards 2 and 3, with one response indicating a prior commitment. The group requested that MPs and MSPs are also invited to future meetings. MG will follow this up.
6	AoB
6.1	The possibility of an attendance fee was discussed. It was confirmed that participation is voluntary. An alternative suggestion was made to provide a donation, with the CLG deciding how funds could be allocated locally. MG will explore this further.
6.2	EB raised the potential presence of historic ammunition at Banniskirk Hub. An update will be provided once this has been further investigated.
6.3	It was asked whether defibrillators on site could be made available to the wider community. This will be considered and an update provided.
6.4	AH raised regarding compensation for people living in close proximity to new infrastructure.
7	Date of next CLG
7.1	16 September 2026, 19:00 – 21:00

Actions.

Number	Action / Update	Owner	Open/Closed
1.	Share PMO reports with the CLG where possible	CE	Open
2.	Confirm PMO reporting visibility and frequency	CE	Open
3.	Provide clear communication on any permitted development activities proposed.	MG	Open
4.	Share list of contractors and CDM arrangements	CE / CK	Open
5.	Extend litter pick coverage between Banniskirk and Georgemas	MW	Open
6.	Arrange drainage and flood risk session for CLG	CE / MB	Open
7.	Provide update on blasting noise restrictions	MB	Open
8.	Share information on dust suppression measures	CE	Open
9.	Provide EMF information to CLG	MG	Open
10.	Share site compound layout and visuals	CE	Open
11.	Invite MPs and MSPs to CLG meetings	MG	Open
12.	Finalise Terms of Reference	MG	Open
13.	Explore feasibility of community donation approach	MG	Open
14.	Provide update on historic ammunition risk	CE / MB	Open
15.	Confirm approach to community access to defibrillators	CE / MW	Open
16.	Provide update on any compensation available for residents in close proximity to new infrastructure.	MG	Open