



4th February 2026

Cllr Raymond Bremner, Leader
Highland Council
[by email]

cc. South Planning Committee

Fanellan and Bingally substation consents are critical for Highland jobs, investment and growth

As Highland-based employers delivering major infrastructure across the north of Scotland, we are writing jointly to express our strong support for the proposed Fanellan and Bingally substations, both expected to be determined this month including an imminent decision on Fanellan. We urge the Council to grant consent at these forthcoming determinations.

Our businesses – Murphy, RJ McLeod, BAM, John Gunn & Sons, and Global Infrastructure – have an established presence in the Highlands. We employ local people, invest in local facilities, train apprentices and work with local subcontractors and businesses across the region. Much of that activity is already happening on the ground today as part of SSEN Transmission's wider network upgrade programme, of which Fanellan and Bingally are both critical components, supporting the same supply chain, workforce and investment plans in the Highlands.

Across our five companies alone, hundreds of people are currently employed in the region as a direct result of transmission investment, with numbers expected to rise significantly over the coming years. At peak delivery, thousands of jobs across the wider supply chain – from engineering and construction to accommodation, transport, catering and services – will depend on the timely delivery of this programme.

Fanellan and Bingally matter because they provide certainty which allows Highland businesses to invest with confidence: to open offices and depots, to recruit locally, to take on apprentices, and to commit to a long-term presence rather than short-term project teams. All of our companies have already made those commitments in reliance on the network upgrades progressing as planned.

Delay or refusal would have real economic consequences. It would not simply pause an individual project; it would undermine confidence across the supply chain, disrupt workforce planning, and compound uncertainty across multiple linked projects, risking the slowing or displacement of investment that is currently flowing into Highland communities. At a time when the region is working hard to retain population, grow skilled employment and maximise the benefits of energy investment, that would be a significant setback.

We recognise and respect the responsibility of elected members to scrutinise major infrastructure proposals carefully. However, we also believe it is important that decisions fully reflect the economic reality on the ground: that projects like Fanellan are enabling infrastructure, essential to sustaining jobs, supporting local businesses and securing long-term economic benefit for the Highlands.

Our companies stand ready to continue working constructively with the Council and local communities to deliver lasting value, in line with the principles of the Highland Social Value Charter. We therefore strongly encourage Highland Council to grant consent for the Fanellan and Bingally substations, recognising the importance of timely and aligned decision-making in allowing this investment – and the jobs and opportunities it supports – to proceed without further delay.

These projects, alongside wider transmission upgrades, represent a major economic prize for the Highlands – one that can deliver long-term jobs, growth and prosperity which the region should seize.

Signed,

Adrian Collins, Director of Energy Networks Scotland, BAM

Iain Henderson, CEO, Global Infrastructure

Liam Corr, Energy Managing Director, Murphy

Hamish Seaton, North of Scotland Director, RJ McLeod

Ian Gunn, Managing Director, John Gunn & Sons

