



Forestry and  
Land Scotland  
Coilltearachd agus  
Fearann Alba

## Community Asset Transfer Scheme (CATS) for our national forests and land

# ASSET TRANSFER REQUEST FORM

### Introduction

Please read the relevant parts of the [Community Asset Transfer Scheme](#) (CATS) Guidance before completing this form. You may also wish to refer to the Scottish Government's [Asset Transfer Guidance for Community Bodies](#).

The Request must be submitted in writing, either as a hard copy or by email. Please answer all the questions. You can attach additional information as extra sheets or electronic documents. Please be specific. When answering the questions you do not need to repeat any information you have already given, but simply refer to an earlier answer or attached document.

Please return the completed form and supporting documentation to:

**Community Asset Transfer Scheme Team**  
**Forestry and Land Scotland**  
**231 Corstorphine Road**  
**Edinburgh**  
**EH12 7AT**

E-mail: [fls.communities@forestryandland.gov.scot](mailto:fls.communities@forestryandland.gov.scot)

We will confirm receipt of your Request within 5 working days and you will receive a formal acknowledgement letter within 15 working days to confirm whether your Request is valid or requesting further information. We may also ask you for more information during the assessment and evaluation process.

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**This is an asset transfer request made under Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.**

### SECTION 1: Information about the community transfer body making the request

#### 1.1 Name of the community transfer body making the asset transfer request

Nether Lochaber Community Association (SCIO)

#### 1.2 Community transfer body address

This should be the registered address, if you have one.

Postal address:

Northwinds, 2, Corran Gardens, Onich, Fort William, Inverness-shire

Postcode: PH33 6SJ

#### 1.3 Contact details

Please provide the name and contact address to which correspondence in relation to this asset transfer request should be sent.

Contact name: Iain Jenner

Postal address:

Postcode:

Email:

Telephone:

/ We agree that correspondence in relation to this asset transfer request may be sent by email to the email address given above. *(Please tick to indicate agreement)*

You can ask the Forestry and Land Scotland to stop sending correspondence by email, or change the email address, by telling us at any time, as long as 5 working days' notice is given.

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### 1.4 Type of eligible community transfer body

Please select one option and make with an "X" in the relevant box to confirm the type of community transfer body and its official number, if it has one:

a Company	<input type="checkbox"/>	and its company number is	<input type="text"/>
<b>or</b>			
a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	and its charity number is	<input type="text" value="SCO47546"/>
<b>or</b>			
a Community Benefit Society (BenCom),	<input type="checkbox"/>	and its registered number is	<input type="text"/>
<b>or</b>			
Unincorporated organisation (no number)	<input type="checkbox"/>		

**Please attach a copy of the community transfer body's constitution, articles of association or registered rules.**

- If the organisation is an eligible community transfer body under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 go to **Section 2**.

### 1.5 If the organisation is not an eligible community transfer body under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015:

a) Has the organisation been individually designated as a community transfer body by the Scottish Ministers?

**No**  **Yes**

Please give the title and date of the designation order:

**or** b) Does the organisation fall within a class of bodies which has been designated as community transfer bodies by the Scottish Ministers?

**No**  **Yes**

If yes what class of bodies does it fall within?

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### Section 2: Information about the land and rights requested

(see CATS Guidance Section 1.2)

#### 2.1 Please identify the land to which this asset transfer request relates.

You should provide a **grid reference** and attach a **map** clearly showing the boundaries of the land to which this asset transfer request. You should also provide any name by which the land is known, and you may also wish to provide additional description. You can contact your Forestry and Land Scotland [Region](#) office for assistance in providing a copy of the map. *If you have identified the land on Forest Enterprise Scotland's [Register of Land](#), please enter the details listed there.*

Grid reference: NN 02933 63467

Name and description of the land:

Former agricultural building (barn) used previously as FLS Office/Workshop/Store at Inchree on compact area of unfenced land.

**If your request is for a building**, you should provide a street address and the Unique Property Reference Number ([UPRN](#)) if known.

Address:

The property is located at the north of Righ Crescent in the community of Inchree near Onich, just off the A82 Glasgow to Inverness trunk road, close to the Corran Ferry. Fort William is the nearest town 9 miles to the north. Inverness is 76 miles to the north east. The building is 50m from a FLS carpark for the woodland walks around Inchree Falls.

UPRN (if known):

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### Section 3: Type of request, payment and conditions

(see CATS Guidance Section 1.4)

#### 3.1 Please tick what type of request is being made:

for **ownership** (under section 79(2)(a)) – go to **Section 3A**

for **lease** (under section 79(2)(b)(i)) – go to **Section 3B**

for other **rights** (section 79(2)(b)(ii)) – go to **Section 3C**

#### 3A – Request for ownership

What price are you prepared to pay for the land requested (see CATS Guidance Section 2.2)?

Proposed price: £1

*Please attach a note setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to apply to the request.*

#### 3B – Request for lease

a) What is the length of lease you are requesting?

b) How much rent are you prepared to pay? (see CATS Guidance Section 2.2)  
Please make clear whether this is per year or per month.

Proposed rent: £                      per

*Please attach a note setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to be included in the lease, or to apply to the request in any other way.*

#### 3C – Request for other rights

a) What are the rights you are requesting?

Do you propose to make any payment for these rights?

Yes                       No

If yes, how much are you prepared to pay? Please make clear what period this would cover, for example per week, per month, per day?

Proposed payment: £                      per

*Please attach a note setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to apply to the request.*

### Section 4: Community Proposal

*You may wish to refer to relevant sections in supporting documents.*

#### 4.1 Please set out the reasons for making the request and how the land or building will be used.

This should explain the objectives of your project, why there is a need for it, any development or changes you plan to make to the land or building, and any activities that will take place there.

The objectives of the NLCA project at Inchree are to create a new, community hub that can provide a range of social and economic benefits.

Currently, local residents only have access to one hub space that belongs to the community – NL Village Hall, at the boundary of Onich and North Ballachulish, a few metres from the A82 trunk road. This is a corrugated iron and timber frame structure, and is now a century old, and in such poor condition it is at the end of its useful life. Redevelopment of the hall is a possibility, but fraught with funding challenges and planning concerns, most significantly, its proximity to the A82. Put simply, congregation at the existing hall creates a traffic hazard for the A82, and the proximity of traffic on the A82 creates a serious hazard for hall-users when parking, dropping children off, and so on.

Renovation and redevelopment of the barn at Inchree is therefore an excellent opportunity to create a safer point for congregation for any reason. There will still be forestry traffic, and visitors to the waterfall carpark, but vehicle movements are smaller in number, at slower speeds, and easier to anticipate.

It is NLCAs intention to repair and preserve as much of the original stone structure as possible, by re-roofing, re-pointing and insulating to a modern standard. A new doorway will be constructed between the supporting buttresses on the south-facing wall for visitors to access the hub facility, whilst the existing door on the north wall will become the service access. The derelict lean-to at the western end will be demolished and replaced with a new timber-clad toilet and shower facility, accessible from another new doorway into the barn, and from the road outside. This will be serviced by a modern wastewater/sewage plant, buried in adjacent land to the south-west with a soakaway toward the nearby watercourse.

The eastern or western ground floor area of the barn will become a kitchen and food store area, utilising approximately a quarter of the space with a small extension at the northeast corner for additional storage and for facilities such as LPG cylinders (for cooking). The remainder of the ground floor will become the café/gallery/workshop/produce space with interpretation work on the walls. A mezzanine office space will be created above the kitchen for management of the project businesses, and further storage for water tanks, a heat reclamation system and electrical mains created at the opposite end, above the toilet and shower block.



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Additional consideration is being given to building a conservatory on the south-facing wall as extra visitor seating, and to transform this wall into a thermal store for the building. This would likely involve making a terrace area on the land outside, and would require crown lift work to be carried out on the large Common Beech tree, which we wish to preserve and manage.

The hub space will be used for multiple purposes detailed below (section 4.2).

### 4.2 Benefits of the proposal

Please set out the benefits that you consider will arise if the request is agreed to (see CATS Guidance Section 3.2). This section should explain how the project will benefit your community, and others.

*Please refer to the guidance on how the relevant authority will consider the benefits of a request.*

NLCAs intention is to develop a multi-purpose, community-run hub that serves a number of needs within five years of the CATs process being completed.

The facility would operate as a café, a gallery/workshop space, and events venue for performance, ceilidhs or weddings, and a lecture theatre. It is our intention to utilise the barn's proximity to the waterfall walks, the Inchree forest and to the extensive Special Areas of Conservation in NL, to educate and inform residents and visitors about our local ecology, as well as a facility for all who visit for recreational exercise. It would capitalise on the captive visitor numbers already accessing the local amenity woodland, as recorded by FLS in previous years.

In this regard, we plan to expand the local path network to include a conservation trail to the River Righ basin across adjacent fields, and to formalise a multi-user link to NCN78, 'the Caledonian Way' cyclepath, at the A82.

The FLS buildings that include the barn, pre-date the inception of the Forestry Commission, and are of a particular heritage value to the NL community. These date to a time when our locality was divided into three large farms at Inchree, North Ballachulish and Callart. By restoring and reusing the building, part of its new lease of life will be to celebrate the centuries-old agricultural heritage of the area, and to educate people about how those practices shaped the landscape, local society and settlement patterns, and the ecology that is constantly evolving around us.

Of paramount importance, is to create a facility that could be safely accessed by local schools for these educational purposes.

In parallel to this process of renovation and reuse, NLCA intends to develop a community market garden and orchard on the Inchree fields, and eventually, to graze a community herd of cattle there. A lease agreement is currently under discussion with Lochaber Housing Association, the owners of these fertile, south-facing fields, to devise a position of mutual benefit whereby land they are unable to develop can be used for a new and vibrant community project. Produce from these fields will be utilised by the café facility and also sold as a local produce alongside local arts and crafts from the painting and sowing groups that (until Covid-19 restrictions) used our deteriorating village hall.

We also aspire to a long-term vision (years 5 to 10) of acquiring an area of the Inchree forest to create a visitor pod or cabin site as a community-run business.

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The conjunction of a café/gallery/workshop hub with a market garden and visitor accommodation has the potential to create a number of full-time and seasonal employment opportunities for local young people, and the broader vision of this hub celebrating our heritage and ecology can be a stimulus to reinvigorate a community that has endured the decline of crofting and associated cohesion – the focus of NL in living memory - for the last fifty years.

Nether Lochaber needs the stimulus of a new direction, and the barn at Inchree will give us a strong foothold to both innovate and regrow that sense of self. An outline business plan is attached, detailing the proposed phases of the Inchree project.

There are a number of reasons that NLCA feel it is appropriate that ownership of the barn should be transferred to community ownership for the nominal sum of £1.

1. We have a well-thought out project, put together by consultation with local residents over several years that can deliver a diverse range of socio-economic benefits to NL, as described above. These will create employment, improve creative and social engagement, celebrate our heritage and ecology, and offer a sustainable foothold for the community to progress from. Particularly at this time of a global pandemic, it offers an opportunity for local people to become more empowered, and to improve general wellbeing by working toward common goals – renovating a building, creating a niche business, cultivating a market garden - as we recover from challenging times. None of this opportunity will really exist if the building is demolished.
2. The transfer of ownership from FLS to the NLCA will save the cost of demolition, estimated at around £10K. The building is of no value to FLS as a structure, otherwise there would have been a discussion prior to now about other alternatives to demolition. However, it does have significant heritage value to our community, representing a link between our history and a sustainable future that needs to be built. It is our best chance at a foothold of that kind.
3. There are aspects of the District Valuer's report relating to the provision of services to the building that NLCA will be seeking further clarification on. This is principally due to Covid-19 restrictions having limited the DV to a desk-based analysis, and being unable to attend the site for surveying. However, we do feel the outcome of further analysis is likely to indicate significant costs to NLCA with regard to the reconnection of suitable mains provision for our project aims. Separate written submissions regarding this matter will be forwarded as these become available.
4. A considerable, cumulative effort has already been made by volunteers from NL in recent years to consult on and formulate the plans detailed above. Whilst we acknowledge this investment of voluntary time cannot be taken into account retrospectively in terms of a building valuation, it is a clear indication of NLCAs commitment to date, and of the extensive voluntary hours that will be

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required to progress our plans further. Utilising the many and varied abilities of residents, we anticipate their involvement in fund-raising and project promotion, building restoration and re-development, crop cultivation and pathwork, to name but a few aspects of our project aims. It is also our fervent hope that this involvement acts as a catalyst for community recovery and enhanced wellbeing in these challenging times.

5. Lastly, this project is a unique opportunity for FLS to enable a Highland community in meeting goals of sustainable socio-economic growth, improving visitor infrastructure, providing an educational resource for local ecology and heritage, and creating an outlet for local arts, crafts and food production.

### 4.3 Restrictions on use of the land

If there are any restrictions on the use or development of the land, please explain how your project will comply with these. Your Forestry and Land Scotland [Region](#) office can provide assistance in identifying any restrictions and how to comply with them.

*Restrictions might include, amongst others, environmental designations such as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), heritage designations such as listed building status, controls on contaminated land or planning restrictions.*

The major restrictions on our use of the building and land forming the curtilage is the proximity of access roads to the Glen Righ forest. Ongoing forestry operations, SSE operations, clients of Vertical Descents in the adjacent building, and a low level of residential traffic to two houses in Glen Righ will all need consideration and during restoration and redevelopment work. Residents in Inchree have been involved in project consultation and design, and the proprietors of Vertical Descents have been keen to support the creation of a viable facility that will be of benefit to their clients. These issues can all be addressed during the planning process required to take this work forward. Given the involvement of FLS, Vertical Descents and Inchree residents from the outset of this process, we are confident of a non-conflictual working relationship being maintained. We are not aware of other restrictions at this time.

### 4.4 Negative consequences

What negative consequences (if any) may occur if your request is agreed to? How would you propose to minimise these?

*You should consider any potential negative consequences for the local economy, environment, or any group of people, and explain how you could reduce these.*

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The major concern within the local area is of increasing traffic volumes along the single-track road in Inchree, passing residential property. From the outset, we have been careful to emphasise that the 'hub project' is intended to capitalise on existing vehicle numbers (estimated at 50K per annum by FLS traffic counter) to the waterfalls carpark, and not to increase this. There is a captive market already, and by tapping into this we are creating a gain for the local economy, not denuding the income of other businesses. In this regard, the parallel aspiration to create a direct link to the NCN78 multi-user path, is intended to take visitors out of cars and actually reduce traffic movement. This ties in with the ecological principles underpinning the project. Simple measures to incentivise modes of sustainable travel to the hub will be considered as part of our more detailed business planning.

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### 4.5 Capacity to deliver

Please show how your organisation will be able to manage the project and achieve your objectives.

*This could include the skills and experience of members of the organisation, any track record of previous projects, whether you intend to use professional advisers, etc.*

Within the Nether Lochaber community there is a great diversity of skills and experience that we can draw upon, and amongst those individuals, a wealth of knowledge from involvement with varying business ventures and land management programs. These include,

1. Business owners of the Four Seasons, the Loch Leven Seafood Café and the Clachaig Inn, prepared to assist with a detailed business plan.
2. A professional land surveyor and valuer recently retired from SSE.
3. A professional auditor working in the aquaculture sector.
4. A professional business advisor recently retired from HSBC.
5. A professional building contractor foreman who has already put together costings for restoration and structural re-development.
6. Several members of the active crofting community, and vegetable growers within the community, prepared to assist in developing a community market garden.
7. A professional arborist for appropriate management of large Beech tree forming part of the asset.
8. A civil infrastructure company, based at Inchree, prepared to assist with reinstating services to the building.
9. An employee of HIE, prepared to assist with funding applications.
10. Multiple representatives of our Community Council and Association, and members of NLCA to assist in ongoing engagement and consultation.

Outwith the NL community, we have already been advised and will continue to seek the services of

1. A professional architect, who drew up outline plans (to scale) of the building asset as it is.
2. A professional ecologist, ex-SNH, prepared to advise on wildlife surveying, conservation aspects to the project and educational interpretation work.

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3. A case officer at HIE to assist with a wider application to SLF, and funding for professional services (architectural, legal, business-planning) to progress our project aims.

4. A professional heating engineer, prepared to design a passive building system appropriate for the project.

5. The Head of HC Planning in Lochaber, who has already advised on re-use and re-development, SUDS and traffic flows.

It is our intention to source specific professional advisors and tradespeople whose skills cannot be replicated from within the community, following the CATs process, and as funding applications come to fruition.



### Section 5: Level and nature of support

#### 5.1 Please provide details of the level and nature of support for the request from your community and, if relevant, from others (see CATS Guidance Section 3.2)

You should describe the community your body represents and include information on the proportion of your community who are involved with the request, how you have engaged with your community beyond the members of your organisation and what their response has been.

You should also show how you have engaged with any other communities that may be affected by your proposals.

Nether Lochaber is a linear community, approximately nine miles in length, extending from Corrychurachan burn by the A82 in the North, to Camus na Heiridhe burn by the B863 in the East. It includes the settlements of Corran, Bunree, Inchree, Keppanach, Cuilcheanna, Onich, Old Town, North Ballachulish and Callart, and currently has a population of 467 in 223 houses. The landscape is a mixture of coastline, fields on ancient raised beach, and wooded hills and moorland forming an extensive SAC as well as large tracts of FLS plantation. Historically, residents of this area have been involved with crofting and estate management, aquaculture and forestry, and the tourist industry which is hosted by multiple hotels, pubs and restaurants, guest and bunk houses and self-catering properties throughout the settlement areas.

NLCA has a current membership of 53 residents, including the 10 trustees forming the SCIO committee. The association formation in January 2017 following a 'Memories Weekend' event in NL village hall, at which the advantages of a SCIO to the community were detailed against a backdrop of potential projects (including Inchree) and a celebration of our archaeological, agricultural and societal history.

The association became incorporated by OSCR in July 2017, and has been working toward various projects ever since under a general mission statement '*to make Nether Lochaber a better place to live, work and visit*'. A public meeting to present our Inchree proposals, hosted by NLCA and attended by Kate Forbes MSP, HC Andrew Baxter and Blair Allan from LHA, took place on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2018, and was attended by 60+ residents. The entirety of NL received a hard-copy questionnaire in preparation for this to canvas opinion on these proposals and offer suggestions or raise concerns in their regard. A synopsis of the returned questionnaires was completed by HC Andrew Baxter as an independent, objective, elected community representative, and is attached. This demonstrated an overwhelmingly positive response from the NL community.

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A dedicated Inchree Steering Group was established from within the NLCA membership following this to refine our plans and explore funding avenues, and this led to a second consultation day on 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 during which more specific ideas regarding a café/gallery/events space hub, conservation walks , recreational exercise, education and interpretation, and a market garden could be responded to. Again, the results were predominantly positive, with 44 residents attending, and a visual record of feedback is attached.

Meeting minutes of the NLCA have recorded the development and discussion over assets at Inchree since incorporation, and are available as evidence on request, although 2020 was very limiting for active progress and regular meeting opportunities because of the Covid-19 situation.

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### Section 6: Funding

Please outline how you propose to fund the price or rent you are prepared to pay for the land, and your proposed use of the land

(see CATS Guidance Section 1.5)

*You should show your calculations of the costs associated with the transfer of the land or building and your future use of it, including any redevelopment, ongoing maintenance and the costs of your activities. All proposed income and investment should be identified, including volunteering and donations. If you intend to apply for grants or loans you should demonstrate that your proposals are eligible for the relevant scheme, according to the guidance available for applicants.*

See attached Business Plan, indicative financials spreadsheet, and list of funding bodies we have identified as having specific eligibility to apply for when ownership has passed to the NL community.

**Signature**

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Two office-bearers (board members, charity trustees or committee members) of the community transfer body must sign the form. They must provide their full names and home addresses for the purposes of prevention and detection of fraud.

This form and supporting documents will be made available online for any interested person to read and comment on. Personal information will be redacted before the form is made available.

**We, the undersigned on behalf of the community transfer body as noted at section 1, make an asset transfer request as specified in this form.**

**We declare that the information provided in this form and any accompanying documents is accurate to the best of our knowledge.**

1. Name  
Address  
  
Date  
Position  
Signature
  
2. Name  
Address  
  
Date  
Position  
Signature

### Checklist of accompanying documents

To check that nothing is missed, please list any documents which you are submitting to accompany this form.

#### Section 1 – you **must** attach your organisation’s constitution, articles of association or registered rules

Title of document attached: Nether Lochaber Community Association SCIO Constitution

#### Section 2 – any maps, drawings or description of the land requested

Documents attached: Contained within Business Plan, Architectural drawings and supplementary extracts from Western Highlands Local Development Plan. Also a web-link to a short film made on behalf of NLCA to demonstrate the wider context within which the Inchree Barn sits.

#### Section 3 – note of any terms and conditions that are to apply to the request

Documents attached:

#### Section 4 – about your proposals, their benefits, any restrictions on the land or potential negative consequences, and your organisation’s capacity to deliver.

Documents attached: Contained within the Business Plan

#### Section 5 – evidence of community support

Documents attached: Contained within the Business Plan, and with supporting letters from NLCC, HC Andrew Baxter, and MSP Kate Forbes

#### Section 6 – funding

Documents attached: List of funding bodies we have identified as having specific eligibility to apply for when ownership has passed to the NL community.

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