

****** Business Plan ******

Inverfarigaig Forest Community Classroom and Field Revitalisation Project 2023 /2024 /2025



Prepared by



Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust Limited.

A Company Limited by Guarantee without a Share Capital

Registered in Scotland SC270423

7 AUGUST 2023

1 Proposal

The proposal is to purchase the land and building at Inverfarigaig for revitalisation and community use.

2 Entity

It is proposed to purchase the land from Scottish Ministers and hold the land in the name of **Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust Limited**. Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust Limited is a company limited by guarantee without a share capital, incorporated in July 2004. The Trust has existed for over 19 years and is governed by a Board of ten Directors drawn from the membership. Membership is open to all residents and further amendments to the Memo and Articles have been made in November 2022 to ensure the widest possible membership eligibility. The Trust employs a chief executive officer and support staff. It owns land and buildings at Whitebridge, Errogie and at Riverside, Foyers and Units 1 and 2 at Lower Foyers. It operates the Wildside Community Centre and leases a building in Foyers to Boleskine Community Care (SCIO) at peppercorn rent. The Trust owns the newly developed public toilets at Foyers and employs an attendant.

The Trust has a recurring annual income from the agreements with renewable energy development operators in Stratherrick. It also has investments designed to produce an income in perpetuity once these agreements expire.

The land proposed for purchase at Inverfarigaig includes a small building with toilets, a car park and picnic area. The whole area was valued independently in Nov 2021, by joint instruction by FCS and the Trust at £45,000.

The Trust does not have formal charitable status but has charitable aims and objectives. [articles-of-association.pdf](https://www.stratherrickcommunity.org.uk/articles-of-association.pdf) ([stratherrickcommunity.org.uk](https://www.stratherrickcommunity.org.uk))

3 Executive Summary

The business plan includes information about the project. In short, the project is to obtain the land and building and revitalise them for local community use under the direction and for the benefit of the residents of Stratherrick and Foyers and visitors to the area. The plan shows the costs and actions required, the expenditure needed and the source of the finance required.

The business proposal relating to Inverfarigaig represents an expansion of the Trust's existing and core activity of the provision, maintenance and development of community facilities for the use of community groups within the Trust's area.

The business plan outcomes are

- Securing the asset of the building and land for the community in perpetuity under local community control
- Revitalising the site and making it a 'home' for local volunteer led community environmental projects by July 2024
- Providing the site and building as the base and hub for at least three environmental projects for Stratherrick and Foyers by 30 June 2025.

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust has acquired, refurbished and successfully operates high quality community meeting facilities at Whitebridge, Stratherrick.

JOIN THE TRUST
If you would like to become a member of the Trust then please click the link.
<https://www.stratherrickcommunity.org.uk/join-the-trust/>

HIRE THE WILDSIDE CENTRE FOR YOUR SPECIAL EVENTS & GROUP MEETINGS

2 EVENT ROOMS
Each can hold up to 84 people, one with kitchen access

1 MEETING/TRAINING ROOM
For up to 29 people

CONTACT admin@sfcstrust.org.uk

4 The Business

The current business of the Trust is focused exclusively on the application of community benefit resources in accordance with the aims and objectives of the Community Trust, within the prescribed area of benefit, which includes Inverfarigaig and all of the site proposed for purchase and revitalisation. (Map - Appendix 2)

The project proposed accords directly with the **objects** of the Trust as detailed in the Memorandum and Articles as shown below. The project is an excellent match for these objects and powers.

“(1) To prevent or relieve poverty particularly among the residents of the Stratherrick and Foyers Community Council area

(2) The advancement of education, training or retraining, particularly among unemployed people, and providing unemployed people with work experience.

(3) To advance heritage and/or preserve, for the benefit of the general public, the historical, architectural and constructional heritage that may exist in and around the Stratherrick and Foyers Community Council area in buildings (including any structure or erection, and any part of a building as so defined) of particular beauty or historical, architectural or constructional interest.

(4) To advance environmental protection and improvement in the Stratherrick and Foyers Community Council area through the provision, maintenance and/or improvement of public open space and other public amenities and other environmental and regeneration projects (but subject to appropriate safeguards to ensure that the public benefits so arising clearly outweigh any private benefit thereby conferred on private landowners).

(5) To advance citizenship and/or community development (including the promotion of civic responsibility and the promotion of the voluntary sector and/or the effectiveness or efficiency of charities).

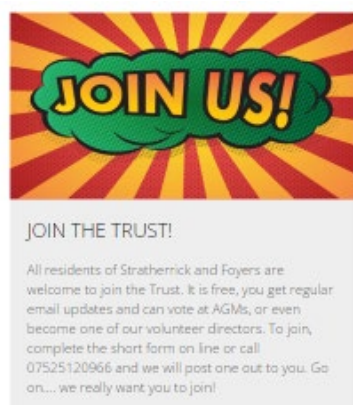
(6) the provision or assistance in the provision of recreational facilities for the public at large and/or those who, by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, poverty or social and economic circumstances, have need of such facilities.”

The above information demonstrates the proposal accords with the aims of the Trust in multiple ways and is therefore within the constitutional competence of the Trust to consider undertaking.

Further the following are the first two listed paragraphs within the powers of the Trust, which follow the objects. Like Objects 3,4,5 and 6 above, these powers are also particularly relevant to this project.

“(a) To manage community land and associated assets for the benefit of the Community and the public in general as an important part of the protection and sustainable development of Scotland's natural environment.

(b) To establish, maintain, develop and/or operate a centre or centres providing facilities for childcare, community learning, healthy living initiatives, educational and cultural activities, training activities, leisure pursuits and accommodation for community groups, and for public sector agencies which provide services of benefit to the community, and which may include refreshment facilities.”



‘All residents of Stratherrick and Foyers are welcome to join the Trust’ www.stratherrickcommunity.org.uk

The business of the Trust currently includes the ownership, operation and maintenance of community land and buildings. In addition, the Trust provides

- A lease of land and a building to a charitable group
- The provision of grants for projects by community groups and individuals
- The organisation and delivery of community events
- The provision of facilities and funds for local community groups to undertake projects at their own hand – for example childcare, heritage building work, elderly care, recreational activities and educational tuition.
- and the Trust maintains a register of members, provides information to Companies House and produces publicly available annual accounts. It maintains a website, social media presence and produces regular printed and on line newsletters and a twice yearly local news magazine. (Example - Appendix 1)

The business proposal relating to Inverfarigaig represents an expansion of the Trust’s existing and core activity of the provision maintenance and development of community facilities for the use of community groups within the Trust’s beneficial area.



Further development at the Wildside Centre, owned and operated by the Trust and the new raised beds and the erection of new polycrumb for the Community Growing Project there (2023).

5 Reasoning for the Asset Transfer and Support

The reasoning for the business proposal is that the opportunity exists for the acquisition of the building and land at Inverfarigaig for revitalisation and increased community use within the district, with a specific focus on environmental volunteering and natural history education. Some evidence of this is shown below.

There is an unmet local demand for facilities to act as a base for environmental activism. There are local groups and individuals who currently have strong interests in a range of local matters including a biodiversity group, food growing group, people wishing to eradicate the invasive plant species at Foyers and Loch Farraline, in recording the local flora and fauna including red squirrels, in remedial action to address litter and to provide information about individual species to visitors. Inverfarigaig Woods SSSI adjoins the site which also has geological interest at Dun Deardil. Loch Ness has also a worldwide following relating to the cryptozoological interest and access to the loch at the mouth of the river and pier is possible close by. The site proposed for purchase acts as a gateway to paths and trails and access to the Wade bridge at Inverfarigaig below the public road. There are a number of other environmental projects underway in Stratherrick and Foyers which have little profile currently, including peat reinstatement at Corriegarh and Dunmaglass, raptor work funded by SSE relating to their windfarms and an interest in bats. There may be bat roosts within the Inverfarigaig building.

‘Market research’ in the form of local consultations for the development and place plans since 2020 has shown a strong local desire to revitalise the centre in community ownership. The site is particularly suitable for these activities as it is at the side of the quieter public road and has a car parking area (not just a layby or passing place), which includes metal rings for tying up horses, hardstanding for motor bikes and cycles and access to the viewing paths above Loch Ness on the Spital of Boleskine. The business proposal is strengthened by the current provision of mains electricity and water to the site and the reasonable condition of the metal roof and hedges.

In addition, the small size of the building and limited extent of the land results in lower costs than would apply for the purchase and maintenance of a larger building or area, whilst still delivering many benefits.

The proposal has the support of local people as demonstrated by input to the Community Development Plan and subsequent Place Plan for Inverfarigaig, as submitted to Highland Council in 2023.



There is a strong tradition of community volunteering and community effort in Stratherrick and Foyers.

The proposed asset transfer has the specific minuted support of the Stratherrick and Foyers Community Council and from our senior Highland councillor Mr David Fraser, Drumnadrochit. The purchase and revitalisation of the asset builds on the recent asset transfer of the nearby open spaces for the use of the Inverfarigaig residents around Hillhead which has been a success and is the main project of the Inverfarigaig Residents Group (www.inverfarigaig.org). This group also supports this application for the asset transfer.

6 Financial and resource requirements

For this business plan to proceed, the Trust will utilise the following finance and resources. The Trust is unable to reclaim VAT. All costs are shown inclusive of VAT. The trust is in-funds at its own hand as the project is encompassed by the recent Community Development Plan.

Phase 1 - Pre-Asset Transfer / Asset Transfer

The Trust will incur a staff requirement supported by directors to develop the Community Asset Transfer Request (CATS) which will need to be finalised and signed by two of the Trust's directors. The CATS request form will be supported with indicative budgets showing the financial and staff costs which will arise and the stages at which these resources will be expended and employed.

Assuming a successful request for the asset transfer, the Trust will be required to meet purchase costs (the consideration or purchase price) and the costs relating to solicitors and recording. There will be staff time required at this stage to manage the process and to inform the residents of progress. These show a likely cash requirement of £49,000.

Phase 2 - Costs on Acquisition

One-off costs on acquisition are detailed on the attached spreadsheet. These indicate a requirement for £2,167 which will be required immediately after transfer of the asset. They include services testing and a bat survey.

Phase 3 - Full Year Recurring Running Costs

This table details the likely annual and recurring 'bare bones' costs to maintain the centre without any project activity. These costs are estimated at £3,108 for the first full year of operation and refer to the basic standing charges and safety inspections for the building and for maintaining the area. These costs include the allocation of time for the Trust's Facilities Officer who is currently employed on a part time basis and who will have expanded hours to undertake maintenance at the new property for one day a month. These figures exclude any project costs which would be the subject of further funding breakdowns. An example of how such projects might look like are shown below.

Phase 4 - Operation

With the core (bare bones) costs met by the Trust, the facilities of the building and field are then available to local people and groups to run projects and events using the asset. These activities are in turn funded by applications for project funds which include the money available for such projects from the funds contributed to the Trust by the renewable energy generators under our contracts. Groups and individuals using the building and fields make a contribution to the Trust for the additional costs incurred by the use of the centre which meets these increased financial burdens.

The Inverfarigaig property is therefore accounted for in the Trust's finances as a cost centre in respect to the basic (mainly fixed) costs and also as an income centre for the contributions returned to the Trust to meet the increased costs of use by those projects for such variable items as heat and light.

This system ensures that the additional projects are linked to outcomes and that the true additional costs of increased use of the building and land are met. (See Page 8).

Examples of notional projects run through the property at Inverfarigaig.

An example of a notional community project based at the centre could have financials as follows.

Farigaig River Study Local Group

Electric fishing equipment hire and specialist leader for volunteers	1000
Invertebrate recording and specialist leader	500
Volunteers protective clothing	250
Open Day / Children's Day and leaflet / interpretation	1000
Additional use of Centre heat and power etc. (contribution)	250
Total Costs	£3,000

Funded by

Grant from Community Trust	1,500
Highland Council Ward Budget	1,500
Total Funding	£3,000

An example of a notional community project based at the field could have financials as follows.

Cultie and Balnaberran Native Tree Nursery Project (Environmental and Biodiversity Group)

Wild seed collection and specialist leader for volunteers	400
Germination equipment and pots	400
Stakes, tubes etc. for field trial	250
Additional use of Centre heat and power etc. (contribution)	250
Total Costs	£1300

Funded by

Grant from Community Trust	900
Grant from Supermarket Fund (e.g. Tesco)	400
Total Funding	£1,300

7 Finance and Projected Costs (see .xlsx files for detail)

The Annual Accounts of the Trust are unredacted and available at this link

[Annual Accounts | Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust \(stratherrickcommunity.org.uk\)](https://stratherrickcommunity.org.uk/Annual%20Accounts%20Stratherrick%20Foyers%20Community%20Trust)

These accounts show sufficient reserves and income to meet the financial costs of purchase, costs on acquisition and operating costs. The funds shown as provided to Grants demonstrates the track record of making such awards to local groups and individuals. The Trust's financial year runs to 30 June with AGMs in Nov/Dec. For information, grants to organisations and individuals are listed here [Grants Awarded | Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust \(stratherrickcommunity.org.uk\)](https://stratherrickcommunity.org.uk/Grants%20Awarded%20Stratherrick%20Foyers%20Community%20Trust)

Target date for Asset Transfer 1 June 2024.

Please refer to the attached .xlsx file which shows the breakdown of the following costs.

Cost	Year 1 Year to June 30 2024	Year 2 Year to June 30 2025	Year 3..... Y2*120%
Pre-asset transfer	49,000		
On acquisition		2,167	
Annual running costs *		3,108	3,730
Total	49,000	5,275	3,730

*excludes the additional costs of running projects e.g. increased heat and light

Anticipated contributions from projects which will be used to meet additional variable / operating costs (e.g. Heat and Light) resulting therefrom. (Additional income would meet additional expenditure in the budget line)

Income	Year 1 Year to June 30 2024	Year 2 Year to June 30 2025	Year 3..... Y2*120%
Project 1	-	250	0
Project 2	-	250	250
Project 3	-	-	250
Total	0	500	500

8 Comment on the Stratherrick and Foyers Grant model for Community groups

Stratherrick and Foyers has a history of enabling community groups and volunteers to plan, undertake and complete impressive projects if they are provided with the resource to allow them to employ their time and skills on projects of local benefit. Here are two recent examples –

South Loch Ness Heritage Group

In 2022 The South Loch Ness Heritage Group planned and executed a major repair to a listed Wade Bridge at Whitebridge. Local residents provided expertise and labour. The Trust provided the cash costs including building materials. The project was very successful in securing the bridge for future generations and as a local visitor attraction. The project resulted in increased community connectivity and well-being and has maintained a sense of pride and ownership in the bridge. The bridge is one of the most valued structures in Stratherrick.

This example shows that given the necessary resources community groups can undertake and deliver meaningful outcomes in our area.

Soup to Go

A group of volunteers runs a weekly soup event at Whitebridge. This helps address loneliness and increases contacts between residents summer and winter. For this to happen, the Trust renovated the building, car park and kitchen at the formerly derelict outdoor centre and provided heat and power to the group at no charge. The volunteers maintain this service unassisted and serve soup in the centre, to frail people in their cars (during and after COVID) and also now deliver soup to isolated housebound individuals.

This example shows that with the fuel costs covered and the building provided, considerable sustained voluntary effort is activated and results in a valuable service to local people not provided by any public sector body.

Common outcome – Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust has unlocked community benefit by supporting voluntary groups with the funds and buildings to allow them to succeed.

The asset transfer proposed and the provision of the field and building on a similar basis is expected to support volunteering in environmental and growing projects at Inverfarigaig.

9 Conclusion

The business plan outcomes are

- Securing the asset of the building and land for the community in perpetuity under local community control
- Revitalising the site and making it a ‘home’ for local volunteer led community environmental projects by July 2024
- Providing the site and building as the base and hub for at least three community-led environmental projects for Stratherrick and Foyers by 30 June 2025

Appendix 1 - Other info

Cover – Example for Info - Stratherrick and Foyers News March 2022 – Repairs Whitebridge’s Wade Bridge

Photo – Example of competence - Trust contractors Capstone secure the external fabric of the former church at Errogie now in Trust ownership

Plan – Example of competence - Consented Playpark proposal for the Wildside Centre 2023

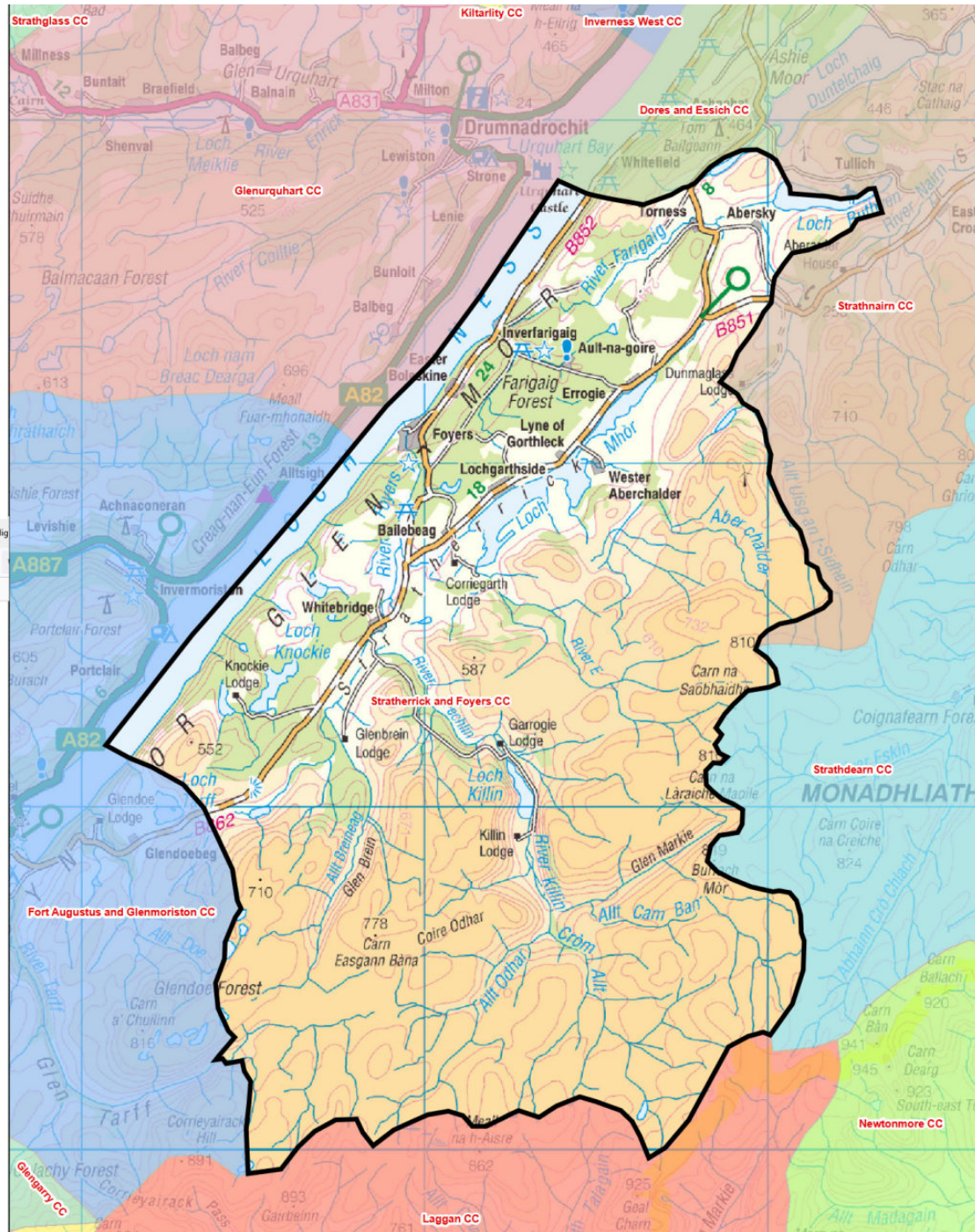


The play equipment presented on this drawing is representative of the style of the industrial park setting that the applicant wishes to create. Final play equipment selection will be undertaken following receipt of a Planning Consent where procurement can be more meaningfully undertaken.

Item	Description	Age Range	Activities
ITEM 1	NETS: 10' Age range 3+ years, Robbio Hardware Climb to the top of the tree house and view the world below then slide the net to lower and swing down the slide - backwards and/or full length. Play features: Climbing (4 elements), sliding, crawling, coordination, interactive, balancing, agility, social.	3+ years	Climbing, sliding, crawling, coordination, interactive, balancing, agility, social.
ITEM 2	NETS: 10' Age range 3+ years, Robbio Hardware Climb to the top of the tree house, engaging your way across the bridge - up and over the other challenge, through and fall back into the play area, you'll find a different way to go. Play features: Rock play, social, crawling, climbing, balancing, agility.	3+ years	Climbing, crawling, balancing, coordination, social, rock play.
ITEM 3	NETS: 10' Age range 3+ years, Robbio Hardware Rock with your friends on the natural hardwood bridge exercise. How high can you go! Play features: Rocking, balancing, coordination, social, rock play.	3+ years	Rocking, balancing, coordination, social, rock play.
ITEM 4	NETS: 10' Age range 3+ years, Robbio Hardware This roundabout is compact enough to fit into most spaces. Multi users can enjoy spinning around and interacting with their friends. Play features: Rotating, spinning, social, interactive, coordination.	3+ years	Rotating, spinning, social, interactive, coordination.
ITEM 5	NETS: 10' Age range 3+ years, Robbio Hardware The 17' x 20' net is a great way for children who require additional body support. The use of the basket and allows multi users to play together at the same time experiencing a swinging motion, like a hammock between them. Play features: Swinging, social, coordination, interactive.	3+ years	Swinging, social, coordination, interactive.

Appendix 2 - Map

Trust – Beneficial Area showing Inverfarigaig



End of Business Plan sw 7AUG2023