

# Representations received regarding CAT request from Dunbeath & District Centre

Updated 02.12.2021

Identifying personal information redacted by Highland Council.

## Representation 1

We are writing in support of the Asset Transfer Request by Dunbeath and District centre for the land adjacent to Neil Gunn road in Dunbeath. This is a grassy area which would be most suitable for community use as a new Dunbeath and District Centre.

We hope their request is successful.

This development would be of huge benefit to the community and I think it would bring in more people to the village and that they in turn would use other facilities Dunbeath village has to offer, i.e. Post Office, Heritage Centre, Spar Shop, The Bay and Dunbeath Community Hall.

## Representation 2

Can Dunbeath District centre purchase the land in question S W of Neil Gunn Road? It's the unused grass at back of the car park. So we can have a Bigger centre - can you please help us?

## Representation 3

Dear sir,

I am writing to offer my support for the possibility of the purchase of land (20mtrs SW of 9 Neil Gunn Road Dunbeath) to be used for a new leisure/community centre.

My wife and I have been using the present centre for the past four years and feel it is a thriving part of our lives here, plus it has been a godsend through the last eighteen months which would have been much more challenging for us all, particularly for me as my wife has a disability, the help and understanding we have received has really been an asset.

The opportunity therefore to have a larger facility with more space and facilities definitely appeals.

## Representation 4

I believe that the proposal of a new centre would be instrumental to the community.

I personally use the variety of services provided by the Hub on a weekly basis. I find it extremely beneficial to my mental health and a fantastic incentive to get me out and about. This is a mutual feeling amongst many of my peers.

Being within the 65+ aged group, the services within the hub are perfect for getting the elderly within my community together, especially with many of us having recently undergone months of social isolation.

Providing this asset transfer would allow the hub to expand their services and open up to a variety of additional activities that are unavailable at the moment due to the current buildings' limitations. Denying this transfer, however, would be detrimental to the current users health and wellbeing who currently utilise the facilities.

## Representation 5

I am writing to express my interest in moving forward with a new facility and centre in Dunbeath. I live in Lybster however, my family attends Dunbeath medical practice, my son attends Dunbeath Primary School and I work in Dunbeath.

I write on behalf of my family (2adults and 1 child, 1 teenager and an OAP).

We all use the centre weekly and would be lost without it, the staff go above and beyond to make every feel welcome no matter who they are.

The library is fantastic for my teenager as there is no book shops up here in Caithness. The sharing shack has helped me out when I was furloughed from work. We had the weekly family meal which was thoroughly enjoyable and a weekly treat as we did not go out anywhere. I enjoy the Pilates class which is great for my mental and physical health.

My elderly mum enjoys the centre and attends regularly as it is the only opportunity she has to see other people.

If a new facility is built it will be fully supported by myself and my family and we will all look forward to attending more events to improve our health and well-being.

Thank you.

## Representation 6

POLICY & REFORM  
THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL  
INVERNESS

27<sup>th</sup> OCT. 2021.

DEAR SIR,

DUNBEATH & DISTRICT CENTRE.  
THE COMMITTEE OF THE ABOVE CENTRE IS WORKING IS WORKING TO FULL CAPACITY. IT IS AN EXCELLENT PLACE FOR PEOPLE TO MEET FOR COFFEE, LUNCHEON, & ENTERTAINMENT WITH DEMONSTRATORS.

BEFORE "COVID" WHIST DRIVES, BINGO & SPEAKERS WERE HELD. THE PROBLEM WITH THESE EVENINGS IS LACK OF SPACE TO ENCOURAGE PUBLIC TO COME.

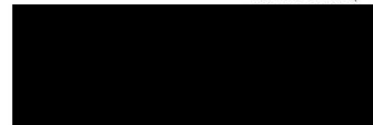
THE MAJORITY OF USERS SUPPORT THE PURCHASE OF THIS LAND AT 20MTRS S.W. OF OUR CENTRE & WOULD BE AN IDEAL SITE FOR A REPLACEMENT.

I AM A USER & WAS INVOLVED IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE PRESENT CENTRE & HAVE SEEN THE SUCCESS IT HAS BEEN & I ENDORSE THE REQUEST FROM THE DUN. & DIST. CENTRE.

YOURS FAITHFULLY

## Representation 7

Latheronwheel,  
Caithness,



14 th November, 2021

To Whom It May Concern.

Dear Sir / Madam,

### **Dunbeath and District Wellbeing Hub – Jigsaw Project**

I am writing to lend support to the Dunbeath and District Centre's plans to establish a new-build Wellbeing Hub in Dunbeath. This new provision is urgently required to fulfil a need which has already been proved to exist within our community.

As a user and supporter, I am fully aware of the range of services currently provided by Dunbeath and District Centre, from excellent home cooked meals to indoor and outdoor activities which help with both mental and physical health and wellbeing, particularly supporting the needs of the elderly and vulnerable in our community.

Yours faithfully,



**Personal details and signature redacted for publication by Highland Council**

## Representation 8

As a regular user of the Dunbeath and District Centre I would like to give my support to the Asset Transfer Request by the centre for the land adjacent to Neil Gunn Road in Dunbeath.

This piece of grass land is currently unused and would provide an excellent area to expand the centre which in turn would benefit everyone in the area in many ways including continuing to supply very affordable meals and also as a meeting place for people who have been isolated for a great deal of the past 18 months due to COVID restrictions.

I hope the request is successful in order for the centre to continue the marvellous service it provides to the community.

## Representation 9

As a regular user of the Dunbeath and District Centre I would like to give my support to the Asset Transfer Request by the centre for the land adjacent to Neil Gunn Road in Dunbeath.

This piece of grass land is currently unused and would provide an excellent area to expand the centre which in turn would benefit everyone in the area in many ways including continuing to supply very affordable meals and also as a meeting place for people who have been isolated for a great deal of the past 18 months due to COVID restrictions.

I hope the request is successful in order for the centre to continue the marvellous service it provides to the community

(Berriedale)

### Representation 10

I am writing in support of the asset transfer of land to Dunbeath & District Centre.

The Centre plays a vital role in the health and wellbeing of the Community and surrounding area, offering events for all ages from lunches and dinners to exercise classes, arranging transportation to clinics and days out, plus much more.

The Centre is currently restricted to a small building with one small event space, restricting the number of people that can attend events and the number of events that can be held as the event space has to be continually turned around and furniture moved for the different needs of each event.

A new plot of land to build a bigger Centre would mean the Centre could carry on the great work they do and so much more for members of the Community, which in an isolated rural area like Dunbeath is an essential life line.

(Latheronwheel)

### Representation 11

*On behalf of my husband and myself, I would like to record our strong objection to the transfer of land in Dunbeath to the Dunbeath & District Centre. We had no knowledge that such a building was intended having heard nothing about it in the community before the Asset Transfer Request only recently appeared in a local shop window. As senior citizens, with one of us having mobility issues we are puzzled as to why this is the case – perhaps there were many others who don't use the internet who were unaware of the plans. We never saw or got the opportunity to fill in the questionnaire that was evidently made available to some.*

*We have now had the opportunity to read a paper copy of the business plan and we think that the accommodation, activities and services proposed are not what our community needs with its ageing population.*

### Representation 12

To Whom it May Concern

I write to add my support to the application made by Dunbeath & District Centre (D&DC) to obtain the piece of ground at Achorn Road Dunbeath.

Upon retirement I moved from the South to settle in Dunbeath and have been a User of D&DC for over 11 years. Without D&DC my social life would be virtually non-existent as it is the only place in South East Caithness where I can meet and socialise with other members of the community through various activities.

The activities I participated in prior to Lockdown included

- Weekly singing group
- Weekly walking group
- Monthly Bingo evenings
- Monthly Whist drives
- Weekly Board game evenings (Chess, Scrabble, Ludo etc.)
- Computer classes for beginners (6 week course)
- Daytrips & Sightseeing Tours (3 or 4 annually)
- Weekly Reflexology Session (One on one treatment )
- Daily lunches (available 5 days per week. I attended 2 per week)
- Weekly Dinner night

I also know that D&DC provide the following activities to other Users

- Cookery Classes ( both for adults and teenagers)
- Craft classes
- Art classes
- Yoga Sessions
- Pilates Sessions
- Mindfulness Sessions
- Hairdressing
- Hearing and Sight Clinic (Quarterly)
- Breakout room for Dunbeath Primary School
- Hairdressing (weekly)
- Laundry Service
- Well Stocked Library (books, Cd's DVD's)

Although D&DC activities ceased during Covid, the Centre rose to the challenge of providing outreach services to the frail, elderly and under privileged in the community through their directors, staff and a team of volunteers. Services included

- Preparing and delivering cooked meals
- Delivering Medical Prescriptions from Dunbeath and Lybster medical Centres
- Delivering Newspapers
- Grocery shopping and delivery
- Delivering bulk supplies of hand sanitiser to locations throughout Caithness
- Transporting folk to the Medical Centre for Covid inoculation
- Transporting people for Local GP and Hospital appointments
- Check in and Chat ( telephone calls to vulnerable persons in community)

- Setting up a “Sharing Shack” This shack was stocked up with food and other essentials received from Wick Food Bank and C-Fine Aberdeen for use by those who were experiencing financial difficulties during Lockdown
- D&DC also obtained and handed out to under privileged families and children 25 Apple I-pads to mitigate isolation and ensure children were not disadvantaged with school work

I apologise to all for the length of this communication but I strongly feel that it is right for the decision makers in the Asset Transfer process to fully understand the work that is carried out by D&DC to benefit the citizens of South East Caithness and it is my sincere hope that they will support their application

(Dunbeath)

### Representation 13

I would like to submit my objection on the basis that;

- \*Dunbeath is a quiet residential village.
- \*The construction/ aesthetic on the building is not in keeping with its surroundings.
- \*It will create privacy issues in the area.
- \*It will make the area busier.
- \*It will make the area noisier
- \*It will negatively affect property prices in the immediate vicinity.
- \*The existing car park is often used by visitors to the area.
- \*The access road is not suitable for increased traffic.
- \*The amount of groundworks needed to level the site is excessive.
- \*There is room to extend the current building.
- \*There is already a community centre that could much of the proposed services.

(Aberdeen)

### Representation 14

I am writing to state that I do **not** support the purchase of land SW of 9 Neil Gunn Road, by Dunbeath and District Centre.

I believe this development would destroy the character of the village. The area will, in my opinion, become congested due to the size of the building and the amount of parking. The access road is also used by pedestrians and their interest and safety must be paramount.

Highland Council pre-planning application advice specifically states that key issues such as **sighting, design**, and the **related impact on adjacent housing** needs to be fully addressed. This includes **adverse overlooking, loss of privacy** and **parking strategy**. It is obvious to me from the application details that this advice has been totally ignored.

I was not informed by the centre of their plans to purchase said land or of the intended use and it was not well advertised. It appears that a survey was also carried out but, despite owning one of the houses which would be most affected by the proposed development, I

received no information about this survey either.

In the application the trustees would appear to be evading responsibility for the impact this development would have on any of the actual residents who would be affected by it. I hope that an alternative site or solution can be found which will have a less damaging effect on the lives of the people who actually live in the vicinity.

(Dunbeath)

### Representation 15

Dunbeath and District Centre, Business Plan Proposals

I write to lend my support to the Dunbeath and District Centre's Plans to establish a new-build Wellbeing Hub in Dunbeath, situated on land behind the current Centre.

Having experienced first-hand as a member and a user of the Centre, I can see how it is a vital and most respected facility for our community. Using the take away service, classes and more recently the 'Sharing Shack' both in past years and more recently during Covid restrictions, I have observed how the Centre is a lifeline to many people and increasingly so on a monthly basis. As needs change then the Centre adapts.

It is adept and successful at gaining funding for projects such as transport, healthy fruit schemes, health and wellbeing classes and staffing to ensure that the Centre thrives and grows, responding to the needs of the local community.

It promotes inter-generational collaborations, working closely with other groups within the Community such as the school and surgery, having a positive impact and reaching out to vulnerable people within the community. It offers a range of services that it continually strives to expand but due to the size of the current Centre, this is now restricting the ever-increasing numbers and the services the Centre can provide.

I am fully in support of the land asset transfer that would allow DDC to continue to develop and expand the already excellent service they already provide. It would enable more people within the community to access the facilities and more opportunities going forward as well as a sustainable future. It would have a positive impact on the community.

(Dunbeath)

### Representation 16

Dunbeath and District Centre, Business Plan Proposals

I write to lend my support to the Dunbeath and District Centre's Plans to establish a new-build Wellbeing Hub in Dunbeath, situated on land behind the current Centre.

I am a member and user of the Centre. It provides a vital lifeline for many within our Community, especially during the pandemic when the staff and Trustees went beyond to help those most vulnerable. It may have been collecting prescriptions, shopping or just having a chat.

The Centre provides many facilities for our community from meals, classes, health and well-being need, food supplies for the needs, check ins on the vulnerable, hairdressing, a meeting place, a listening ear, a safe place, an emergency Centre and most recently it has organized with funding and voluntary contributions a memorial garden. It continually strives to seek to see what the needs of the Community are and meets them by seeking funding and achieving its aims.

The current need is for a bigger Centre to allow more people to access the facilities the Centre provides as numbers continue year on year to increase and more opportunities are provide. Simple the Centre has run out of space.

I fully support the land asset transfer that would allow DDC to continue to thrive and grow. It would enable it to expand the services it provides and meet the needs of more people within the community. It would have a positive impact on the community.

(Dunbeath)



Representation 16

To Whom it may Concern

I am a resident of Donboam + have seen the plans for the Proposed re development of the Donbeath Centre.

Whilst I believe it is a wonderful idea + positive for the Community I am concerned at what appears to be a lack of provision for parking especially as the amount of users is bound to increase.

I would be grateful if Highland Council could address this.

Thank you for your attention.

Representation 17

I write in support of the transfer of ownership of land, south west of Neil Gunn Road, to Dunbeath & District Centre.

I moved back to Dunbeath, from Aberdeen, to retire and enjoy country living in my home village. A large part of the enjoyment of living here is the community spirit and the willingness to help one another.

The Dunbeath & District Centre has become a large part of my life since lockdown. I now appreciate all that they do and how much they contribute to the village and the larger community out with Dunbeath. I have been volunteering at the Centre since the beginning of Lockdown. I alongside other volunteers, have delivered meals to the elderly and vulnerable regularly since then. The need for meals to be delivered was in high demand from the start of Lockdown. We not only delivered meals, we also delivered prescriptions and shopping to those who could not leave their houses in the Pandemic. Not only was this a delivery service it was a 'keep in touch' service too. We checked up on people and made sure they had what they needed. It was harder in the winter when visitors were not allowed, families of the elderly and vulnerable were reassured that their loved ones were being checked on at regular intervals.

I also took the people without transport, or who had disabilities, to their Covid vaccinations. This was only doable because of Dunbeath Centre. There is a Caithness Rural Transport bus available to the Centre and this was used as transport. This was achievable because there was a donation given to the Centre to pay for the use of the bus.

I fully support the request for the transfer of the land, mentioned in the first sentence, to be put in to the name of Dunbeath & District Centre. There is a growing requirement for help, for the elderly and vulnerable in the area, that can only be met with the expansion of the services provided by the Centre.

## Representation 18

### **Re: Notice of Asset Transfer Request Dunbeath & District Centre**

Dear Mr McIntosh

I was somewhat surprised recently when I saw the NOTICE OF ASSET TRANSFER REQUEST just a few weeks ago. Despite being in the community every day I was completely unaware that such an elaborate plan and building were being considered in the vicinity. Following seeing the notice I found the business plan for the proposed development and read it to find out what was going on. I base my objections on the following.

- In the plan it refers to a survey based on a questionnaire which 'used online and offline' methods. My question is how were the public supposed to know where this questionnaire was available? It certainly did not seem to be circulated widely as these things should be. I believe there may have been some in the medical centre which, given the premises had restricted access would not be available to many people. It is easy to get a survey to show the desired results if it is targeted selectively rather than circulated generally.
- The secrecy that has shrouded this proposal leaves me somewhat disturbed. Particularly as I have since learned that a new employee has been appointed as an Operation Growth Manager which would indicate that the NOTICE OF ASSET TRANSFER REQUEST may be just a paper exercise. Surely not a fait accompli? In the advert for this post it states the candidate will 'support the board, staff and volunteers to make the community's dream a reality'. Whose dream? What community? This seems a sweeping claim when many people in the community were not even aware these plans were afoot.
- Many of the claims in all the documentation and spin would give the impression that the current centre is bursting at the seams and a hive of activity. In reality this is not the case – it is very seldom open in the evenings unless there is a special function (currently on Tuesday's there is an evening meal open to all). The same can be said for the weekends when it has mainly been completely unused. Who caters for the needy and isolated then? I can understand that there may be a requirement to extend the catering space in the centre as it stands but does this justify a massive investment in a new building and all the associated upkeep costs. Given the site in question, the groundworks alone will be a major expense.

- If I remember correctly some time ago the local community council made a request to the Dunbeath Centre (or whatever its moniker was at that time) to look at acquiring the ground to increase the sheltered housing that is already there which has been very successful. As far as I am aware this was not progressed by the centre and yet in my opinion would be much more suited to the area of ground under consideration. The minutes of the community council could probably corroborate this.
- The business plan seems to suggest that the social activities they mention could not be held except with larger premises at the 'centre'. The villages of Latheron, Berriedale and Dunbeath have well-appointed community halls which seem to have been largely ignored. Our local medical centre has rooms for physiotherapists and chiropodists – the space to offer these services does not seem to be the problem but rather a shortage of qualified personnel – this problem will not be overcome by extra space.
- In conclusion I believe the proposed development is completely excessive and out of place in the space available. Alas the sketch in the business plan did not give a good representation of the footprint and was not much help.

Given that this has all been such a secretive and covert plan that many people in the locality had no idea about, I would suggest that a survey be carried out by an independent agency to truly assess the views of those for whom the centre is targeted – myself being one of them. It is easy to increase usage and swell numbers in the short term when some very attractive subsidised activities and services are offered.

(Dunbeath)

### Representation 19

I write regarding the request for ownership of the land south-west of Neil Gunn Road, Dunbeath from Dunbeath and District Centre for the site of a new Health and Well Being Centre and wish to oppose the transfer.

There is little support for the project in the community and the feeling is that the current management have strayed from the original purpose of the Centre, which has been an asset to the community for many years and is still more than adequate for community needs. There is also concern that approximately £40,000 has been spent refurbishing the Centre recently which will have been a total waste of money.

A major concern in the public is that a survey which was conducted on behalf of the Centre, very few local residents knew about and the only place where survey forms were available was in the local medical centre and this at a time where attendance at the medical centre was limited due the Covid epidemic! It is therefore evident that the majority of the returned survey forms were completed by day centre users, many of whom live outside the village. It would seem that the survey mainly reflected the views of the Centre users thus giving the result the management desired.

Apart from the foregoing reasons, I consider that the location of the proposed Centre is entirely unsuitable given the terrain of the site and the limited parking space available as the area is already congested. The height and size of the proposed building is completely out of character with the surrounding housing and will stick out like the proverbial "sore thumb" in that location, further much needed sheltered housing would be a better use of the site.

It is obvious from representations already published on your site that the management of the Centre have been canvassing neighbouring and local organisations for their support.

In conclusion I feel the whole project has been a covert operation, deliberately keeping the local population in ignorance of their plan.

### Representation 20

I'm sending this email to give my support to Dunbeath Centre for purchasing the land at the back of the centre with the view to build a health and wellbeing hub I think this would be great for the village.

### Representation 21

I wish to record my support for the proposal to build a new Dunbeath and District Centre.

The existing Centre has been used to capacity over many years and, with the added requirements caused by Covid, the space available has proved to be inadequate, especially in relation to the preparation of meals in the small kitchen. In the past the many activities which take place in the Centre have had to be restricted due to lack of space.

A larger lounge and dedicated dining room, together with a separate activity room and a confidential space for health and well-being issues will provide many more people with the opportunity to enjoy the amenities offered. Improved kitchen facilities are essential and office space requires to be increased.

The Centre allows people to meet friends, make new friends, learn new skills, do exercises, play games, join groups for craft, singing, etc. Such social interaction can only be beneficial for the whole community.

The New Centre will ensure that the needs and wishes of all interested people can be accommodated.

### Representation 22

#### Dunbeath & District Wellbeing Hub

I fully support the proposal for a new Wellbeing Hub at Achorn Road, Dunbeath. The current centre is a strong community hub and an invaluable resource, acting as an emergency centre when called on and providing community resilience during the covid pandemic.

It provides freshly cooked meals - in-house, take-away and delivered daily to the wider community, It also offers a delivery service for groceries, medications, games, books etc. The centre has a wide range of activities and services including yoga, pilates, arts & crafts, walking groups, hairdresser and much more, all of which help to support positive physical and mental health in a rural area which lacks amenities.

The centre is also an important employer in the area with 1 full-time and 3 part time positions.

However, the current centre, built almost 30 years ago is too small, seating less than 20 people and doesn't have enough space for all the current activities especially with the restrictions imposed due to covid. The proposed new hub will allow the centre to expand to provide all age groups with a meeting place, to offer more services and activities and to continue as a very important asset for the area.

(Dunbeath)

### Representation 23

#### **DUNBEATH AND DISTRICT CENTRE CAT REQUEST**

I was engaged by Dunbeath and District Centre to provide fundraising support to access resources to enable the directors to appoint a full time Operational Growth Manager. A position which the board of directors has now filled.

Having worked in the field of community development for more than 25 years I find the Dunbeath and District Centre directors to be extremely competent, hard working and committed to those they serve. To be honest, I was surprised that they were only now seeking to appoint someone for the management position, a position and duties which the board of directors had been expediting themselves in an extremely professional manner.

During the initial piece of work the directors intimated their vision for a new centre. I could fully understand this desire as they are "bulging at the seams" with not even a proper office from which the team can carry out their administrative and often confidential duties.

The demand for their current services is significant and throughout the pandemic I am sure, they were responsible for keeping many people out of hospital and indeed alive. With a growing aging population in South East Caithness the need for more locally delivered services will increase. A new purpose-built centre will ensure that there will be the capacity to deliver further services. The availability of new services locally delivered will also help towards Scotland's Net Zero Transition aspirations.

Given my extensive experience of delivering community capital projects, such as, in recent years Falls of Shin Visitor Centre and the Ardgay Regeneration project I have been able to provide support and give direction to the directors resulting in this request for a CAT.

I am confident that the national award winning teams which the directors have sought initial design and business proposals from will ensure that this will be a project the whole of Caithness will be proud.

I would therefore commend this request for the CAT of the land SW of 9 Neil Gunn Road, Dunbeath to the Caithness Area Committee.

Helen Houston Consulting

### Representation 24

I would like to express my support for the above project.

Dunbeath is a small community, urgently in need of more local resources and facilities. This project would help to bring isolated people together and would help people to learn more about health and well being.

(Berriedale)

### Representation 25

This email is to show support for the Dunbeath day centre to purchase the land for the new health and well being centre to be erected, I live in Dunbeath and see this new centre as a positive to our village, and an asset to help everyone, I have no negatives about this purchase nor do I object.

(Dunbeath)

### Representation 26

I am writing this letter to say I fully support the Dunbeath and District Centre in their plans to build a larger Health and Wellbeing Centre on the land at the rear of the Neil Gunn Road car park.

I am both a user and a volunteer at the current Centre and due to the amazing services it offers it is very popular, therefore requiring a larger space to accommodate the increasing volume of individuals wishing to access these services.

I have used The Centre to access cookery classes, 1<sup>st</sup> Aid course, pilates and participate in the walking group, all of benefit socially which is important to mental health as well as the 1<sup>st</sup> Aid being of use to me in the Community.

As a volunteer I can see what benefit The Centre has to individuals who come in to use the services, be that visits for lunch, after lunch activities, singing group, coffee etc. Being in a rural setting some of the individuals find this social get togethers a huge benefit to them mentally and being served a nutritious, wholesome, hot meal benefits their physical health as if living alone may find the time and effort to cook for one a little arduous. During the lockdown phase of the pandemic The Centre stepped up a gear and delivered a super service to many by delivering meals, collecting and delivering prescriptions and shopping, offering books and jigsaws to those shielding as well as a "check in and chat" service. I am certain that this may well have saved a few people from deterioration in mental health due to loneliness, fear etc.

A larger Centre would allow them to have better facilities, office space for Centre Manager, larger dining room to increase meal capacity, wider range of services etc.

(Latheronwheel)

### Representation 27

As residents who have lived in the area for many years, we fully support the Dunbeath and District Centre in their request to obtain the land south west of 9 Neil Gunn Road, Dunbeath to develop a new health and wellbeing centre.

We know many people who attend the current centre as it is. It has been and continues to be a lifeline for many for various reasons. The activities and groups held are always well organised and enjoyed by those who attend. More and more people are using the services offered and bigger premises are now required to allow everyone to enjoy the benefits of this essential community hub.

The centre provides a welcoming, friendly atmosphere for folk and the staff all happily go above and beyond to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for all.

(Dunbeath)

### Representation 28

LAND OWNERSHIP SOUTH-WEST OF 9 NEIL GUNN ROAD, DUNBEATH

I wish to object to this proposed large expansion of the DDC. I was aware of this only very recently, purely by chance, during the second week of November.

I believe that the asset transfer should not go ahead until there is a full survey of the whole community, not just the 'users' and selected organisations who are likely to give their support. This should have been done at the outset, during August. A new survey should be undertaken by a totally independent group/organisation and the results made public.

I understand that the demographic of the questionnaire is not available. DDC's business plan has some debatable statements such as '...to make the community's dream a reality ...' since the whole community hasn't been consulted.

For transparency, a full breakdown of the figures of the individual activities should be provided, rather than just the overall totals of those attending the DDC. It also states that the DDC works with local businesses but by providing ever more meals at cheap and subsidised prices this will inevitably impact upon them.

(Berriedale)

### Representation 29

I would like to show my support for the Dunbeath Centre for its request for ownership of land to build a health & well being centre.

With all they do for the community esp in the last 2 years they have become a vital part of the community & I'd love to see what more they could bring with the new centre.

### Representation 30

I have found it concerning that our local council have not supported the application for a land asset transfer in relation to Dunbeath and District Centre. I am therefore writing this email as a local resident and want to show my full support on this application due to the centre now requiring a larger premises to ensure they can deliver a larger support to our community.

(Dunbeath)



## Representation 31

I am writing to object about the proposed asset transfer of land to the Dunbeath & District Centre.

There are several reasons for this:-

1. Proposed location is wholly unsuitable for such a development. The elevated position is far too imposing over the sheltered housing below and I would expect significant groundworks to support such a structure, again with a detrimental effect to the neighbouring housing.
2. The present road set up, with the bus stop turning area around the war memorial coupled with proximity to the doctors and Post office is confusing and dangerous enough with the present traffic volume. The additional traffic coupled with elderly pedestrians and school children is a recipe for disaster.
3. The Dunbeath & District Centers purpose has changed considerably from the initial concept. While this is inevitable and change in general is a good thing, it has now gotten to the point that it's starting to impact other organisations in the area. i.e. Local cafes, eateries, Community Centre. These resources already exist and have to stand on their own, it is neither fair or right that they should face competition from a heavily subsidised charity.

In short, even if there was a requirement for such a facility over and above what already exists, which the majority of locals seem to disagree with, this would not be the location for it.

(Dunbeath)

## Representation 32

### **Re: Land SW of 9 Neil Gunn Road, Dunbeath - Dunbeath & District Centre**

The prime reason for the request for the land use is for the construction of an improved Health and Well Being centre for Dunbeath and the surrounding area.

However, in the application there is also mention of residential plots and a change in use of the current centre for future residential use or as respite accommodation.

In the documentation provided there are illustrations of the centre but not of the planned residential use. Indeed, I noted that while the priority is for the construction of a new centre, the preferred option is to have 2-4 residential units in addition. There is no detail on this and this needs to be clarified.

There is clearly support from users of the current centre who rightly highlight the hard work, dedication and support given by the centre staff, and other important parts of the community have also voiced support for a new centre. All that said, I remain disappointed that I, as a resident of Dunbeath, do not appear to have been given an opportunity to voice support or concerns nor to ask questions of the proposal. The questions that are not meant to be negative, but are there to clarify in detail what is being proposed.

In the representation by the chairman of the Berridale and Dunbeath Community Council, I agree that there appears to have been little communication of this submission to the wider local community and that is a concern. My property is around 50m from this proposal, but I did not receive any information nor was I invited to any representation on this matter. For example, why was there no Public Notice placed in the the nearby Post Office. This application/proposal therefore may not completely meet the guidance of requirements

given within the **Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015: asset transfer**, paragraphs 8.27, 8.28 and 8.29.

Finally ,what Environmental Impact Assessment has been carried out? This will be a building project near to current sheltered housing. What mitigations will be need to be put in place by the contractor(s)?

(Dunbeath)

### Representation 33

As they fully deserve to expand in the work they do for the local community.

The staff have worked tirelessly, through the pandemic providing meals for everybody that requested them.

And I wish them all the luck in the world on their new venture.

### Representation 34

**I am writing to object to the proposed asset transfer of land to the Dunbeath & District Centre.**

**I was surprised to learn of the proposal had gone this far as apart from a couple of idle conversations there has been next to nothing heard about the proposal in the local area.**

**There has been no concerted effort to canvas and quantify the views of people living in the area, quite an unusual stance to take for an organisation supposedly looking for support for something which now struggles to meet the needs of the community it purportedly serves?**

**I feel the proposed site unsuitable for such a development, it would be much too overbearing and dominant over the housing below and would require significant groundworks, all to the detriment of the houses below.**

**The area around the Post Office, Doctors Surgery and the Bus Stop is already far from ideal for pedestrians. The prospect of increasing through traffic significantly, past an area with elderly pedestrians, school children etc worries me greatly.**

**This is not a suitable site for such a development and as such the transfer should not go ahead.**

(Dunbeath)

### Representation 35

I write to express my support for the ownership of land south-west of 9 Neil Gunn Road, Dunbeath, to develop a new health and wellbeing centre for Dunbeath & District Centre.

This would be an excellent addition to the local community.

(Thurso)

### Representation 36

Dunbeath and District Centre

Latheron Parish extends from the county boundary on The Ord of Caithness to Bruan in the north and includes Dunbeath.

The proposal for a significant development of the Dunbeath and District Centre was discussed at our meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> November 2021. I was instructed to write in support of the transfer request.

Many of our congregation are involved with the Centre as volunteers and as users. We see the benefit of social interactions for our community. Before the Covid pandemic the activities were an important part of many lives in Dunbeath and beyond.

During the Covid pandemic the staff and volunteers were an invaluable support to many who were shielding or fearful. The Centre supplied necessities and cooked meals throughout those hard times. This made a great difference to the quality of life for many. All of the elders at our meeting had personal knowledge of people who would have been isolated and vulnerable without the support the Centre gave.

The Centre also acted as a point where those wishing to support others could have their time and talents directed to people in need.

In the future the need for the services of the Centre is expected to increase. We recognise that the Centre is now limited in what it can offer by the building and facilities it has. The transfer of this land and development of the site offer a suitable way forward for our community.

Session Clerk For Latheron Parish

### Representation 37

It's my pleasure to write a letter of full support, in regards to the land asset transfer for the purpose of a new Health & Wellbeing Centre – on the land south-west of 9 Neil Gunn Road, Dunbeath.

As the recently appointed Operational Growth Manager for Dunbeath & District Centre, it gives me great delight to be part of a thriving and devoted organisation, that has passion to see such an amazing project into fruition.

The existing Dunbeath & District Centre has a huge positive impact, offering a range of services and benefits not only to the local community, but also to the communities beyond. Responding to emergency status events and pandemics, providing a high-quality standard throughout - it is seen to be one of the best examples of its sort.

Having a modern community friendly Health & Wellbeing Hub, would accommodate the needs and increasing demand for such services with the ability to adapt and offer more. With growth of the community and inclusivity, not just for older people, but for everyone attitude – the urgency is paramount to its future development.

(Dunbeath)

### Representation 38

I wish to oppose the transfer of land to Dunbeath Centre at this time. I do not think that the community at large was aware of the proposal before the asset transfer notice appeared and was therefore not really included in the consultation process.

(Inver)

### Representation 39

I write in support of the Dunbeath & District Centre's plans to acquire the above land to develop the Day Centre into a larger Community Hub.

The current Dunbeath & District Centre plays a pivotal role within the local community and their business plan for expanding the centre will only help to benefit all ages of the community.

The current committee are very proactive in ensuring that the Centre caters for as many members of the community as possible and it is a huge asset to the local area.

(Berriedale)

### Representation 40

I write to offer my support to the Dunbeath & District Centre in their application for a community asset transfer.

If the community asset transfer is approved, it will provide much needed additional space for the Centre to expand and develop.

We are very fortunate to have such a Centre within the local community and the current committee's plans to develop the Centre will only help to enhance the services on offer for all ages of the local community. Their track record speaks for itself and the difference they make in the community is massive.

(Berriedale)

### Representation 41

I am sending this letter in support of the Dunbeath centre transfer of land, as I am an elderly gent who uses the centre always, and think this is a positive.

(Dunbeath)

### Representation 42

We write in support of the proposed plans for a new Wellbeing Hub in Dunbeath.

Dunbeath and District Centre at present provide an excellent range of services for the community.

The new provision would enable them to further expand their range of services to support the community especially the needs of the elderly and vulnerable.

(Wick)

### Representation 43

To whom it may concern,

I myself use the centre sporadically , but during the pandemic they helped many local families, especially with the difficulties of furlough, they have come out the other side fighting fit and with many new users.

I think this unused land could be put to far better use and a new purpose built centre would be a great asset to the whole of Caithness. There is a lack of such facilities in the area and I can see why a bigger centre is much needed.

Having 3 children in the local primary school and my family living in the village, it would be good to see the future of our village being looked at in a positive way, they are trying to and succeeding in building in resilience in the community.

I myself am a fire fighter and can say the chat in the station is positive in the work the centre is doing and looks to continue

(Dunbeath)

### Representation 44

I have lived in the Berridale area for many years and brought up my family.

I fully support the Dunbeath and District centre and me and my family attend the centre on a weekly basis .

The idea to build a larger centre on the ground at the back of Neil Gunn car park is a good one, this land is laying empty and could be put to better use.

The centre runs lots of activities and plays a huge part in our community, as the elderly population ages it is essential to have community activities to help with mental health, no matter what age .

The new bigger centre will allow them to welcome more people and hold more activities – this would benefit the whole community, not just the elderly, but would of course be of great benefit to them as we are in such a rural area it can be very isolating.

The sharing shack was a welcome help during furlough and the hearing and sight clinics held quarterly are always so busy, so having more space to hold clinics would be ideal.

As well as the new centre, the idea of sheltered type housing would be great also, that way more care could be given to those in need in the local area, being right next to the doctors they have the ideal location.

(Borgue)

## Representation 45

As a resident of Berriedale I rely greatly on the services the centre provide, the idea of a new bigger and improved centre is fantastic .

I am unable to attend the centre very often at the moment, but hopefully as my mobility improves I will get back into their lunches.

I would like to put forward my enthusiastic support for the centres land purchase and the possible new build.

I feel this would be used by many people, old and young and be a real asset to the area.

(Berriedale)

## Representation 46

I am writing to you to say that I fully support the Dunbeath and District centre, there plan to rebuild a larger centre on the ground at the back of Neil Gunn car park.

I have attended the centre a many times, and look forward to many more.

I was involved for many years in the Lybster day centre and know how difficult these things can be, we struggled for years to get our hard work off the ground, it is amazing what the Dunbeath centre has achieved and continues to do, the numbers have increased so much over the last few years and I can understand that the bigger centre will be a huge benefit to so many in the community.

I would highly recommend all the centre does and fully support the land acquisition request.

(Lybster)

## Representation 47

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you to say that I fully support the Dunbeath and District centre and I support the land acquisition request.

I think this unused land could be put to far better use and a new purpose built centre would be a great asset to the whole of Caithness, I have recently moved to the area and are astounded at the good work this group does, I understand that at the moment the centre is simply not big enough to accommodate all the users.

(Berriedale)

Representation 48

As a resident of Berriedale I rely greatly on the services of the centre. I regularly get meals and when my elderly mother was still with us, this was a treat and they were always there to help if they could.

I would like to put forward my support for the centres land purchase.

I feel this would be used by many people, old and young and be a real asset to the area.

(Berriedale)

Representation 49

As a resident of Berriedale I rely greatly on the services of the centre. I regularly use the book swap service as often the mobile library does not stop at me.

Having looked through their proposal the idea of a new bigger and improved centre is great.

I would like to put forward my support for the centres land purchase..

I feel this would be used by many people, old and young and be a real asset to the area.

(Berriedale)

## Representation 50

I have been involved with the centre as a volunteer for a few years before taking on a job there - which I started during the pandemic, providing many different outreach services.

My mother in law used the centre many days a week, it really was a savour to our family that she was able to get out locally.

I think the plans for the new centre and possible housing will be a great asset.

We are attracting so many new people, from a large catchment area that the need for more space is becoming increasingly evident.

We are the only Health and Wellbeing Hub in Caithness , if we cannot accommodate people and the activities they would like, they will be forced to travel a long distance- which most wont, in turn this will lead to many of the community missing out on what is regarded locally as a life line in our rural community.

(Dunbeath)

## Representation 51

As a resident who has lived in the area for many years and brought up my family I fully support the Dunbeath and District centre.

I have family members who attend the centre and all the staff are always happy to help.

The idea to build a larger centre on the ground at the back of Neil Gunn car park is a good one, this land is laying empty and could be put to better use.

The centre runs lots of activities and plays a huge part in our community, as the elderly population ages, I notice more and more how many rely but also enjoy the company they get at the day centre, I myself work in a children's home and can not recommend enough the impact that community activities have on mental health, no matter what age .

They are a real community affair, everyone is welcome, they regularly hold events for fundraising which are always well attended.

I myself attend the centre on a Tuesday evening most weeks.

The new bigger centre will allow them to welcome more people and hold more activities - this would benefit the whole community, not just the elderly, but would of course be of great benefit to them as we are in such a rural area it can be very isolating.

(Dunbeath)



## Representation 52

### Asset Transfer Request – Land 20 metres south-west of 9 Neil Gunn Road, Dunbeath

I have been involved with Dunbeath & District Centre for several years and have seen user numbers increase year on year to the extent that the current premises is now too small to accommodate the requirements and expectations of the centre users.

There is no possible way of extending the existing premises and I fully support the plan to erect a new purpose built Health & Wellbeing Hub on the area of land detailed above.

The services provided by the Dunbeath & District Centre is second to none and the Board of Trustees, staff and volunteers should be commended for all their effort in providing this community facility.

(Latheronwheel)