

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Highlands & Islands Skills (HI-SKILLS) CIC Community Asset Transfer

I am writing to give my support to the proposed Community Asset Transfer of land at Torvean Quarry to the HI-Skills Community Interest Company.

There is going to be a considerable amount of infrastructure development across the Highlands in the next few decades, and if we are to maximise the benefits of these, it's important that we have the skilled construction staff here in the Highlands, rather than having to import them. This requires training local residents to a high level of competency, in order to provide pathways to well-paid careers based in the Highlands. I am confident that the leadership team of HI-Skills CIC is capable of delivering this – all it needs is a brownfield site for the development. It has identified Torvean Quarry as being ideal for its purposes.

Currently Highland residents wishing to develop high level construction skills go to southern England to learn – and as often as not don't return. This will fill an important gap in skills development in Highland, in an area which is going to be of key importance in the near future.

The proposed Centre of Excellence for Skills, Safety and Innovation is planned to complement the work of UHI and Inverness College.

I am happy to support the proposed community asset transfer of this land to HI-Skills CIC.

Chris Ballance,

Green Councillor, Aird and Loch Ness

Deputy Leader City of Inverness Area Committee

Chair, Inverness Community Partnership