Highland Council Asset Transfer Request Approach
Asset Transfer Request Form

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 (CTB) making the request

1.1 Name of the CTB making the asset transfer request

Lairg & District Community Initiatives

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

Postal address: Schoolhouse Main Street Lairg Sutherland Postcode: IV27 4DD

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: Miranda Jones Postal address: Schoolhouse Main Street Lairg Sutherland

Postcode: IV27 4DD

Email: developmentmanager@lairginitiative.co.uk

Telephone: 07961 372427

✓ 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 relevant authority to stop sending correspondence by email, or change the email address, by telling them at any time, as long as 5 working days' notice is given.

1.4 Please mark an "X" in the relevant box to confirm the type of CTB and its official number, if it has one.

X	Company, and its company number is SC033349	
X	Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), and its charity number is SC230960	
	Community Benefit Society (BenCom), and its registered number is	
	Unincorporated organisation (no number)	

Please attach a copy of the CTB's constitution, articles of association or registered rules.

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

No X

Yes ☐

Please give the title and date of the designation order:

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

No X

Yes ☐

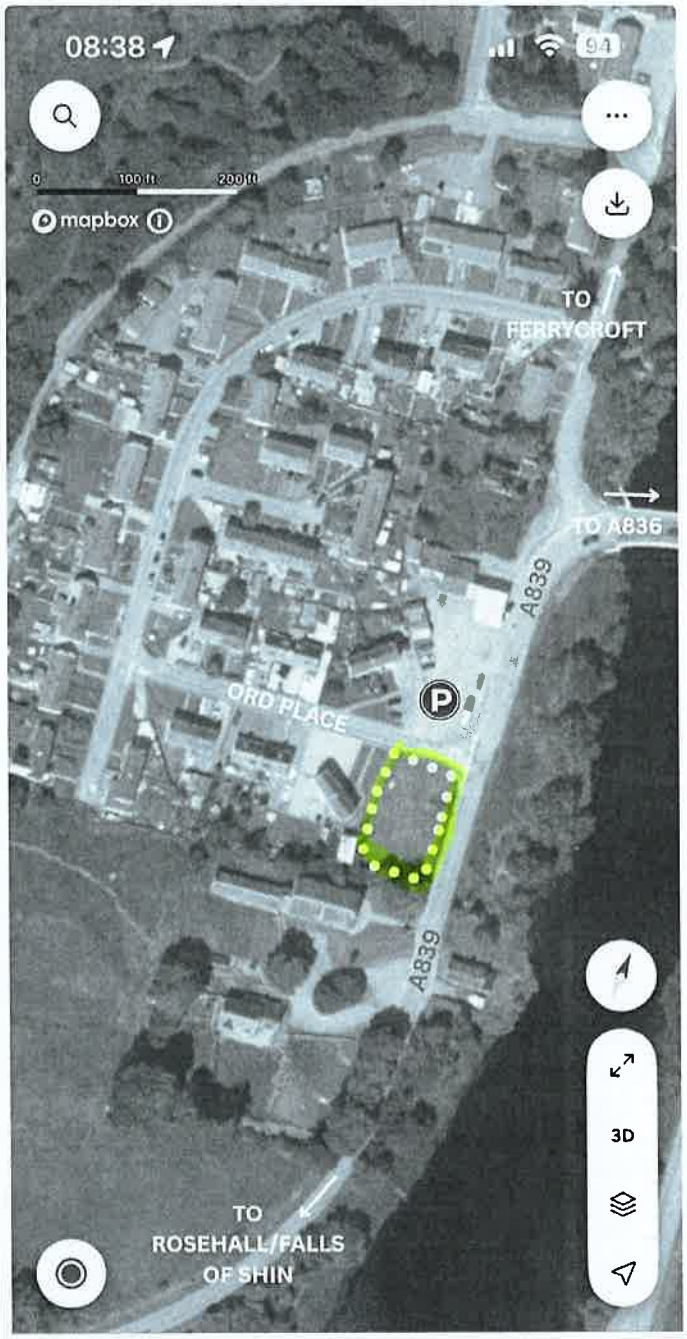
If yes what class of bodies does it fall within?

Section 2: Information about the asset requested

2.1 Please identify the asset - land or building(s) - which this asset transfer request relates.

You should provide a street address or grid reference and any name by which the land or building is known. If you have identified the land on the relevant authority's register of land, please enter the details listed there.

Ord Place Play Area, Lairg – boundary yellow dotted area



2.2 Please provide the UPRN (Unique Property Reference Number), if known.

This should be given in the relevant authority's register of land

UPRN: 130113002

Section 3: Type of request, payment and conditions

3.1 Please tick what type of request is being made:

☐	for ownership (under section 79(2)(a)) - go to section 3A
x	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 asset requested? :

Proposed price:

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

3B – Request for lease

What is the length of lease you are requesting?

25 years

How much rent are you prepared to pay? Please make clear whether this is per year or per month.

Proposed rent: £ 1 per year

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

What are the rights you are requesting?

Request to landscape, cultivate, manage Install seating and covered vegetable collection shelter/shed

Do you propose to make any payment for these rights?

Yes ☐

No X

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

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.

LDCI is working on delivering the outcomes of Lairg's Local Place Plan. Community growing was an emergent priority from the consultations held ahead of writing Lairg's Local Plan and there is a desire for more disused spaces in Lairg to be turned over to community growing and green spaces. We are working in partnership with Veg on the Edge, a growing group based in Lairg, and would like to transform the unused piece of land into a community garden and outdoor third space. Our main objective is to provide a social growing area where members of the community can volunteer and work together to produce fresh herbs and veg for free distribution to the local community via a 'Veg Shed' on site. The site will be

complemented by growing activities in the nearby polytunnel where more fruit, veg and herbs are being grown.

The land will be considerately landscaped to include raised growing beds, seating areas and herb gardens. Perennial herbs and low maintenance planting will be added.

The garden will also provide an outdoor social area, or 'third space' (see section 4.2 below for more detail on this).

Benefits of the proposal

4.2 Please set out the benefits to the community that you consider will arise if the request is agreed to. This should include:- economic, regeneration, health, social wellbeing, environmental benefits; or how this will tackle inequalities.

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.

In Lairg we have two local shops offering a minimal range of fresh fruit and vegetables at a significantly higher cost point than the supermarkets. Supermarkets are a 54-mile round journey from Lairg (a significant local inequality). We hope to be able to provide households in need with supplementary vegetables for their weekly shopping, potentially increasing a household's available budget. Our produce, grown locally, will have no food miles, reducing transportation emissions, and reducing in a little way, reliance on energy intensive commercial farming. Our polytunnel and the planned garden at Ord Place will build food security and climate resilience. We plan for our activities to serve as educational opportunities, breaking down the barriers to local food production, and teaching sustainable gardening practices. We hope to build connections and empower people to take positive action for the climate, fostering a sense of community cohesion, working together and improving social connections.

A current priority for LDCI is to work on establishing 'third spaces' within the village. Third spaces are defined as social environments outside of the home (first place) and work (second place). Historically this role was taken by churches and pubs, for example. With the decline in church attendance and number of public houses (Lairg has none) there is now a lack of places where people can socialise and interact in a free or low-cost environment.

Key characteristics of third spaces are:

Neutrality: You have no obligation to be there or perform a specific role.

Accessibility: They are welcoming, inexpensive (or free), and usually open to anyone.

Conversation focus: The primary activity is socializing and connecting with others, both known and unknown.

"Regulars": They foster a sense of belonging through familiar faces and connections.

Third spaces help with community building, tackling social isolation, and supporting civic engagement by providing spaces for free association.

Local GP Dr Marshall has reported to LDCI that young mothers in Lairg are bemoaning the lack of communal meeting spaces in the village. It is hoped that the Ord Place Community Garden could be an ideal outdoor third space. A free, welcoming, and peaceful place to meet and socialise.

Community support for additional green spaces and gardens in Lairg was highlighted as an environmental priority within Lairg's Local Place Plan as evidenced at the community workshops and consultations ahead of drafting the plan.

"Alongside our natural environment are community green spaces including play parks, playing fields and land for community events. These should be protected and enhanced to deliver health, wellbeing, and physical benefits. Opportunities for community gardens at Ord Place and Laundry Road should be explored to allow for community food production" **Lairg Local Place Plan 2025-2030**

After LDCI raised the funds and project managed the Ferrycroft Play Park build, Ord Place play park is no longer used by the community as they now favour the new play park at Ferrycroft. It is now a visually unappealing area in a prominent position at the village entrance. Additionally, the Highland Council will no longer maintain the amenities within the play park as their maintenance services have transferred to the park at Ferrycroft. Creating a community garden and third space here will enhance the area providing a well-kempt, useful, and productive space where people can come together and benefit from fresh produce grown within the village.

Restrictions on use of the land

4.3 If there are any restrictions on the use or development of the land, please explain how your project will comply with these.

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

n/a

Negative consequences

4.4 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.

As with any community development there may be differing opinions as to the best use of an area of land. Whilst the proposal for a community garden already has community support as evidenced in Lairg's Local Place Plan, should LDCI be successful in obtaining an asset transfer, we would undertake community engagement opportunities and activities, promoting the plans and inviting the wider community to be part of the development and work to be carried out.

Negative impacts on the two local shops by providing vegetables and herbs for the community would be minimal. We would consult with the two businesses. Our produce will be very seasonal and will broaden the variety of vegetables and herbs available to Lairg residents. For example we can grow heritage varieties of kale, items not found in the shops such as squashes. Fresh herbs are rarely found in the stores and we can grow a wide variety.

Capacity to deliver

4.5 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.

Project Management of the Ord Place Community Garden development will be overseen by LDCI's Development Manager, Miranda Jones, who has abundant project management experience and previously managed the community gardens in Ardgay and Bonar Bridge for the Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust (KoSDT).

Justi Carey, LDCI board member and Veg on the Edge group lead will oversee the design, planning, and on-going care of the garden growing areas. Justi has significant experience over decades of growing vegetables in several different countries in her own gardens, as well as for community vegetable production.

LDCI has a proven track record of successfully fund-raising and managing community development projects. The most recent project delivery was the creation and installation of the new play area at the Ferrycroft Visitor Centre in Lairg

The level of professional experience and expertise within the organisation negates the need for, and cost of, additional professional advisors.

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.

This could 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.

As recorded in section 4.2, support for the creation of additional green spaces and community gardens in Lairg was an outcome of the community consultations and surveys carried out ahead of drafting the Local Place Plan for Lairg.

LDCI recognises that partnership working is integral to successful and sustainable community development and has gained support from the following organisations for the proposed community garden.

Veg on the Edge

Veg on the Edge are a community growing group in Lairg based at the polytunnel on Laundry Road. The proposed community garden will form part of their growing areas, complementing and increasing the amount of produce that will be able to be distributed to Lairg residents. Group members number crofters and experienced gardeners within their ranks and they will be tending and maintaining the growing areas within the garden.

Seed to Supper

LDCI Development Manager, Miranda Jones, is a founding director of Sutherland-based community interest company Seed to Supper CIC. Seed to Supper was founded to tackle the issues around food insecurity by helping to increase food production, support local food producers, and improve accessibility for consumers. Seed to Supper have offered practical support and expertise to the project. Fellow board member Marieke de Jong is a Project Gardener at KoSDT, and manages Seed Shed

Sutherland – a project to grow, harvest, and distribute free of charge local climate adaptive and adapted seeds for use by local community groups (climate resilient seeds with a greater likelihood of successful germination and output) and we will use these seeds for the community garden.

Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust

In 2023/4 KoSDT turned a piece of unused land in Bonar Bridge into a community garden and their community gardener will advise on landscaping to ensure the area is wholly accessible, inclusive, safe, and practical.

Lairg in Bloom

Local group Lairg in Bloom manage the flower baskets and planters around the village and will advise on suitable planting in the garden areas

Planet Sutherland

Planet Sutherland are pleased to support the project; most Veg on the Edge members are also Planet Sutherland members. The community garden would provide a suitable outdoor meeting space for Planet Sutherland meetings and workshops

Lairg Community Council & Village Officer

Lairg Community Council support the plans for a community garden at the Ord Place site and have awarded funding to LDCI for a village improvement officer to mow and strim areas around the village during the growing season. This is an annual award and the community garden grass areas will be included in the areas he tends. The garden will, however, include a no-mow area to encourage pollinators.

Community Involvement

Effort will be taken to engage with the residents in the homes around the garden and it is planned that new volunteers will be recruited to help maintain the area.

Section 6: Funding

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

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.

We have been advised that the costs for a community asset transfer with Highland Council are approximately £2000

We estimate that landscaping, installing raised beds and seating in the area will cost an additional £5000 and have identified the following relevant funding opportunities where we meet eligibility criteria:

Highlands & Islands Climate Hub Climate Action Fund– awards up to £1,000

Creating long-term change; increasing capacity of groups or organisations and communities; support and encourage collaborative working across groups or organisations, communities and areas; encourage climate action and a just transition; help communities adapt to and build resilience to climate change;

North Highlands Initiative CISP– awards up to £2,000

Environmental improvements, incl. public toilets/motorhome waste management/tree planting, community gardens or woodlands. • Public seating, path creation, sport or play facilities. • Supporting volunteers through learning and development of skills or training. • Supporting community led efforts that support socio economic development or cost of living services, including food security, provided through the community to boost self-sufficiency and resilience.

Highland Council Ward Discretionary Fund - £1,000+

Any reasonable applications, normally from community groups and organisations will be considered.

Lairg Wind Farm Fund – up to £5,000

This fund supports charitable activities of benefit to those living within the Lairg Community Council area. Projects are eligible if they enhance the quality of life for local residents. Contribute to vibrant, healthy, successful, and sustainable communities, and promote community spirit and encourage community activity.

Rosehall Achany Wind Farm Fund – up to £25,000

Eligible projects: optimise local resources and assets through support for coordinated community activity. Support environmental improvements which give a physical, social or educational benefit.

Signature

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.

Name Robert Johnstone

Address [redacted]

Date 08/06/2026

Position Chair of LDCI

Signature [redacted]

Name Justi Carey

Address [redacted]

Date 09/06/2026

Position LDCI Board Member

Signature [redacted]

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:
✓ LDCI CRTB Model Articles of Association 2026

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

Documents attached:
✓ Ord Place Aerial View Close Up
✓ Ord Place Aerial View
✓ Ord Place Play Park, LAIRG

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

Documents attached:
n/a

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

Documents attached:
n/a

Section 5 – evidence of community support

Documents attached:
✓ Lairg Local Place Plan 2025-2023

Section 6 – funding

Documents attached: n/a

Search "Privacy Notices" on the Highland Council website to read our Privacy Statement in regards to Asset Transfer Request forms.