

Agenda Item	9.
Report No	CC/17/23

The Highland Council

Committee: Caithness Committee

Date: 21 August 2023

Report Title: Community Regeneration Fund Assessment of Applications

Report By: Interim Depute Chief Executive

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 Community Regeneration Funding is an umbrella term for a number of funds that are available for communities/organisations to access in Highland. It comprises the Highland Coastal Communities Fund, the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, and the Place Based Investment Programme, both of which are Scottish Government Funding streams to support economic regeneration and sustainable development in Highland. Area Committees are awarded devolved allocations according to approved formulae and decision making on which projects should receive funding sits with elected Members.

Within Caithness the following allocations are available for distribution in 2023/24:-

- Highland Coastal Communities Fund (capital/revenue) - £355,351;
- Place Based Investment Programme (capital) - £107,660; and
- UKSP (capital/revenue) % allocations for interventions to be confirmed

Total funds available - £463,011

1.2 Broad eligibility criteria for the fund is as follows:-

All projects are expected to be able to meet at least one of the following priorities:-

- economic recovery;
- community resilience;
- mitigating the impact of the climate/ecological emergency; or
- addressing the challenges of rural depopulation

Projects should be able to demonstrate that they are:-

- sustainable/viable;
- providing value for money;
- providing additionality;
- able to evidence local support/local benefit; and
- able to evidence positive impacts for coastal communities and/or the coastal economy;

1.3 In summary the position in Caithness at Area Committee on 21 August is as follows:-

- available Funding – £463,011;
- number of applications for consideration – 1; and
- total value of grant requests - £90,000

1.4 To aid Members in their decision making, the following appendices are provided to this report:-

- **Appendix 1** – Project Application Form; and
- **Appendix 2** – Project Technical Assessment

Technical assessment and the RAG status are based on the application form and supplementary information provided during the application process.

2 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:-

- Consider** the application presented for funding and agree whether to approve, defer or reject the application. An approval of funding should detail the amount approved and outline any conditions of funding that Members wish to attach to the approval over and above the required technical conditions. A deferral would allow an applicant to resubmit the current application at a future date with updated information or for the project to be approved subject to further funding becoming available. A rejection would mean that the application will not proceed and any future application to the fund should be brought forward initially as a new expression of interest; and
- Agree** whether the application should receive a funding award from CRF up to the value of the available area allocation.

3 Implications

3.1 **Resource** – Caithness have available funding of £463,011. Applications under consideration total £90,000 therefore there are no resource implications in approving the funding award as requested

3.2 **Legal** – When managing external funding it is imperative that the risks to The Highland Council are assessed/mitigated and any back-to-back grant award letters with third parties, and financial claims management protect The Highland Council financial and reputational interests.

3.3 **Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island)** – The focus of the funding is economic recovery, regeneration and community resilience. Consideration on issues relating to equalities, poverty and rural issues are dealt with on an individual basis for applications and covered in the technical assessments of projects.

3.4 **Climate Change / Carbon Clever** – Mitigation of the climate/ecological emergency is a specific aim of the HCCF funding. All applicants are required to evidence environmental sustainability as referenced in the technical assessments

- 3.5 **Risk** – A balanced approach to risk is necessary when disbursing grant funds as sometimes it is necessary if a community led project is to proceed, to forward grant payment. Factors such as past knowledge of and project experience of the grant recipient, release of funds related to invoices/works completion certificates etc are considered in such assessments
- 3.6 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** – No risks arising directly from this report. Risks within projects are identified and managed on a project-by-project basis by the applicant organisation.
- 3.7 **Gaelic** – Consideration given within individual project applications in line with the Council's policy.

Designation: Interim Depute Chief Executive

Date: 3 August 2023

Author: Fiona Cameron, Programme Manager Community Regeneration
Mark Crowe, Project Officer Community Regeneration

Background Papers: None

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Project Application Form
Appendix 2 – Project Technical Assessment



Community Regeneration Funding (CRF) Application Form

Please refer to the **Guidance Notes** to complete the application form.
Supporting documentation must be submitted with the application (see section 8.2).
Projects must not incur expenditure until they have been advised in writing by the CRF Team.

SECTION 1: PROJECT SUMMARY

1.1 Project reference number	CRF2119	
1.2 Organisation	Wick Development Trust	
1.3 Project title	Wick River Campsite – Phase 2 Toilet Block & Facilities Building	
1.4 Project costs	Total cost of project	£450,837.64
	Match funding	£360,837.64
	Grant requested	£90,000.00
1.5 Start date	15/9/2023	
1.6 End date	22/4/2024	

1.7 Which of the following themes will the project meet? Please choose ONE theme.	
People	
Place	
Economy	Yes
Environment	

1.8 Privacy Notice
Please confirm you have read and understood the Community Regeneration Funding privacy notice: Privacy Notice
YES

SECTION 2: CONTACT DETAILS

2.1 Main contact name	Sarah Lamb
Contact number	
Alternative contact number	
2.2 Position	Project Officer
2.3 Address	Wick Development Trust c/o NorCAD Design George Street Wick Caithness KW1 4DG
Postcode	
2.4 Email address	
2.5 Website address	www.wickdt.co.uk/ & www.wickcampsite.co.uk

SECTION 3: ORGANISATION DETAILS

3.1 Organisation type	Please indicate (x)	Organisation number
Company limited by guarantee	X	SC647148
Constituted group		
Public body		
Charity	X	SC051307
SCIO		
Other (please specify)		

3.2 Are you applying on behalf of a partnership and is your organisation the lead applicant? <i>Please provide partnership agreement with the application.</i>	NO
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3.3 Is the organisation VAT registered? By ticking this, you are declaring the organisation VAT status as per HMRC. If this changes at any time during the project, you <u>must</u> notify the CRF Team as this may affect the offer of grant.	NO
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3.4 If the organisation is VAT registered, please quote number.							
3.5 Is the VAT related to the project being reclaimed from HMRC? <i>Provide relevant details i.e. details of exemptions.</i>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Whole</th> <th>Partial</th> <th>None</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>X</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Whole	Partial	None			X
Whole	Partial	None					
		X					

Details: N/A

3.6 Project delivery team	
Name	Job title/area of work
Sarah Lamb	Project Officer - 3 year post funded by HIE to deliver WDT Business Plan to modernise Wick River Campsite. Over 9 years' experience in community-led local development funding programmes
Jonathan Miller	WDT Chairperson – Qualified architect with over 20 years' experience and knowledge in his field, from the design stage through to construction & project management as well as the construction industry in general and civil engineering practices
Alastair Jack	Caithness Voluntary Group Development Trust Officer - A qualified engineer and former senior manager in the transport and oil and gas industries bringing a wealth of experience and knowledge relating to transport, engineering, and project management
Martin Kelly	Wick River Campsite Warden Supervisor – Oversees the day to day running of the campsite
Ellie Lamont	WDT Treasurer - a Chartered Management Accountant with extensive experience in HR and customer service as hotel owner, as well as hospitality, tourism, and retail sectors, and is also a Founder Director of Venture North

SECTION 4: PROJECT DETAILS

Please refer to the **Guidance Notes** to complete this section. It provides important information, definitions, and examples to ensure you answer each section correctly.

4.1 Project location - Please include postcode.
Wick River Campsite Riverside Drive Wick KW1 5SP
4.2 Do you own the land/building or have a lease agreement in place? Please provide evidence of ownership/lease with the application. If not in place, what are the arrangements to obtain this and by when?
There is a 10-year lease in place with Highland Council with the option within the lease agreement to increase this to 20 years

4.3 The Project

(a) Please summarise the project, explaining how it will achieve the funds' themes as noted in 1.7, and list which outcomes it hopes to achieve.

Wick Development Trust was set up in 2019 with the long-term goal to support and enable the regeneration of the Town of Wick. The Board of Trustees are a group of local, passionate people who volunteer their expertise to WDT as a vehicle to stimulate economic recovery and growth in the town, where current and future businesses can thrive and expand, lowering unemployment and reduce poverty in the area. The Trust have delivered and are currently involved in several projects within the area, working closely in collaboration with many other organisations either as a strategic partner or major stakeholder. Most notably the Trust were successful in their bid to take over the running of the Wick River Campsite as a not-for-profit enterprise, with profits initially being reinvested into bringing the site up to a modern fit for purpose visitor facility, once complete, all profit will then be invested into community regeneration and community projects in the Wick area.

The campsite officially opened under the Trust's management in June 2022, marking an exciting new chapter. However, it is acknowledged that the campsite has suffered from a lack of substantial investment in recent years, resulting in outdated and inadequate facilities. Recognising the immense potential of the site, the Trust created a three-phase business plan with the primary objective being to bring the sites facilities up to a modern standard and to maximise income revenue.

Phase 1 was completed in the 22/23 offseason which saw improvements to the site such as increasing the number of hard standing pitches, doubling the electric hook up capacity, improving the internal road layout of the site, and new entrance fencing.

The focus of this application is to deliver Phase 2 - to build a new toilet & facilities building that will include toilets, showers, accessible toilet/shower room, family shower room, laundry and wash-up area, all with energy efficiency and net zero ambitions at the forefront of design.

The current toilet block is a 1980s prefabricated building, it is no longer fit for purpose and is not meeting visitor expectations. While the campsite receives many positive reviews, any negative comments we receive are typically towards the toilet block and its need to be updated (see annex 1 of Business plan for examples of visitor feedback comments)

Existing toilet block issues:

- Poor structural condition
- Not viable for improvements to be made to existing structure
- Requires continual maintenance (in July two cubicles had to remain out of use)
- No disabled access
- Toilet cubicles only meet the minimum size requirements, not the recommended standard size
- Poor energy efficiency (EPC rated F)
- Shower cubicles are small and outdated
- Industrial, outdated looking building

At this moment in time we are unsure if the existing toilet block will be serviceable for another season, the critical need for its immediate replacement cannot be understated.



Fig 1. Existing toilet block



Fig 2. Proposed new toilet & facilities block



Fig 3. External view with solar panels



Fig.4 Internal example of ladies toilet & shower block

The proposed new facilities will include:

- Male & Female toilets, showers & wash hand basins inc. hair dryers and shaver points.
- Fully accessible shower room inc. toilet and wash hand basins
- Fully accessible toilet room inc. wash hand basin
- Family shower room inc. toilet, wash hand basin and baby changing facilities
- A Laundry room with washers & dryers
- Wash-up room with sinks and access to fridge & freezer facilities
- Private Plant Room & cleaners' cupboards/storage etc.



Fig 5. Internal layout

(b) How will the project benefit local communities or the local economy?

Sustainable tourism is one of Scotland's key growth sectors identified in the Scottish Government's Economic Strategy and is one of Highlands' most important industries generating significant economic benefits for all areas of Highland. Prior to the pandemic, tourism in Highland saw consistent growth and post pandemic figures are showing positive signs of recovery. 2019 figures estimated 7.4 million visitors to Highland with an estimated visitor spend of £1.4Bn to which Caithness contributed 332k visitors and £42.5m spend.

To get a sense of the economic contribution of the campsite to the wider economy in Caithness, the Trust created a Post Visit Survey that included questions around visitor expenditure in the local area (full survey provided as supporting document). Visitors were asked how much their group spend was in the area across various categories, this was then averaged out against number of respondents to put an average spend against each.

As of 10/7/2023 a total of 111 visitors have provided a response.

Category	Average spend per category
Restaurants	£37.38
Bars	£21.62
Take-away food	£22.60
Gifts, souvenirs, crafts	£28.09
Visitor Attractions/Centre	£23.33
Petrol Station	£43.33
Supermarket	£32.38
Average spend per travel group	£136.69

As of 20/7/2023 the campsite has taken 3771 bookings, we expect this may rise to 4,700 by the end of the season. If we use the average spend per travel group (£136.69) against this figure we can estimate that those staying at the campsite are contributing over £600k to the local economy. While this was an informal survey, the results on visitor spend are comparable to other visitor expenditure surveys commissioned by Highland Council.

This demonstrates that tourism (and the campsite) plays an important role in the Caithness economy and is a vital source of employment. Having high quality visitor facilities on site will encourage more visitors to the area/longer stays with a knock-on effect to all that benefit from the tourism and hospitality sector including shops, bars, restaurants, visitor attractions, fuel stations etc. The Trust actively engages with local businesses and tourism bodies to promote the campsite and tourism provision in the area, including Venture North, North Highland Initiative and the Scottish Community Tourism Network.

(c) What need or opportunity will the project address? How do you know there is local support for the project? *Please provide evidence of community support with the application i.e. letters of support/consultation reports.*

The benefits of the project will go beyond local visitors as the campsite is in a unique position operating as an income generating community asset that has the potential to be a significant financial contributor to the local community through making funds available to support community-led developments that will improve Wick as an attractive place to live, work and invest.

Online community consultation carried out by the WDT attracted 408 responses with 99% of people (404) supporting the idea of improving infrastructure on site as a means to generate income to be put back into the local economy.

The need for a new toilet and facilities building is clear from the issues with the existing building listed above, and from feedback given from visitors and the local community. The Post Visit survey included asking visitors opinion on the importance of campsites having modern, fit for purpose toilets, showers and facilities. 98% of respondents said having modern facilities were either extremely important or important to them, and is an important consideration on choosing where to stay

As part of a series of community engagement around Phase 2 developments, WDT attended the Caithness County Show to get community feedback on the proposed plans for the new toilet & facilities building. Feedback was extremely positive and garnered 223 signatures of support (Provided as supporting document)

WDT attend monthly community council meetings to provide updates on progress, any significant milestones are then reported in the local newspaper (copies can be provided). Social media is also utilised - a Facebook post relating to the completion of Phase 1 had post reach of over 19k through various shares and likes, showing that the local community are behind the campsite and are proud to see the positive changes happening under the management of the Trust.

Letters of support have been provided from: Caithness Chamber of Commerce, HIE, Mackays Hotel, Norseman Hotel, Venture North, Wick Society, Morag's Café, Puldegon and Staxigoe & Papigoe Community Group

(d) List the main activities to deliver the project including timescales – this will be the project delivery plan.

Activity name	Achieve by (date)
Contaminated land assessment & report	15/9/2023
Groundwork preparation	1/11/2023
Groundwork installation & UFH & concrete floor	10/12/2023
Erect building timber framework	20/12/2023
Make wind & watertight	20/12/2023
Install PV array & roof sheeting	15/01/2024
Cladding & Rainwater goods	5/2/2024
Perimeter path	19/2/2024
1 st Fix electrical works	22/1/2024
1 st Fix plumbing	20/01/2024
Internal plasterboard/partitions/wall finishes incl. decorating	19/2/2024
Install ASHP & HWC's and battery storage	26/02/2024
2 nd Fix electrical	18/3/2024
2 nd Fix plumbing	1/4/2024
Joinery Finishings	25/3/2024
Paint walls in wash up room, laundry and accessible toilet	1/4/2024
Install flooring	8/4/2024
Commissioning	15/4/2024
Snagging	22/4/2024
Install signage	22/4/2024

In developing the project, please detail how you have considered the following:

Environmental impact – describe how you intend to mitigate negative environmental impacts that may arise in delivering the project. It may also be that the project specifically seeks to address climate change issues or implement net zero ambitions/solutions.

The existing toilet block will be disassembled with all materials that can be re-cycled, re-used or sold identified to minimise volume going to land fill.

As the prior history of the site was landfill, it is a condition of planning that a contamination assessment is carried out to ensure there are no issues with gassing. As the areas use as landfill ceased in 1966 and has operated as a campsite for over 50 years without issue, we expect this report to be protocol however we will follow any recommendations made within the report.

The replacement facilities building is a bespoke design with the following design targets: -

Sustainable – The new building has been designed to utilise sustainable materials with low embodied carbon properties to contribute to the long-term Net Zero vision for the site.

Energy Efficient – The new building has been designed to include renewable energy technology including Air Source Heat Pumps & Photovoltaic Panels along with on-site battery storage for excess power generated. The building will consume less energy than it produces and contribute to the power demand of the rest of the site.

Further details of energy efficiency measures:

- Heating – Air source heat pump
- Hot water – Air source heat pump with 6000L hot water storage system (removing dependency on LPG/fossil fuel)
- Heat Recovery Ventilation System
- 54 panel 19.7kW photovoltaic array
- 23.2kW lithium battery storage system
- Highly insulated building envelope

Architectural Integrity – The new Building is a high-quality design which reflects the surrounding natural environment of the site. Special consideration has been given to a low-impact solution which integrates with the mature surroundings on site and the adjacent riverside.

Equalities impact – *explain how you have taken groups with protected characteristics into account in the development/delivery of the project. How will you ensure that no one is excluded or disadvantaged from benefitting from the project? Will the project target specific groups for example?*

The existing toilet block lacks accessible facilities. The proposed toilet & facilities building will be built with access all abilities at the forefront, including a fully accessible toilet room, and a fully accessible shower room (also contains toilet facilities). There will be a separate family shower room which will contain baby changing facilities (also not currently available within existing toilet block). It is with extreme disappointment that the Trust cannot currently promote the campsite as having accessible facilities, on completion of this project we look forward to being able to offer a modern facility that is inclusive and welcoming facility for all visitors.

Fair Work Policy

Wick Development Trust is a Real Living Wage employer and meets the criteria set within the Fair Work Policy. We have completed the Fair Work Assessment and Action Plan and have appropriate channels for 'Effective workers' Voice as demonstrated by Confirmation of Regular 1:1 Dialogue and Effective Worker-Manager Relationships (copy provided signed by a worker's representative). Wick Development Trust has Real Living Wage accreditation. Sub-contractors will be asked to confirm they are Real Living Wage employers prior to entering into contracts.

WDT has an equal opportunities policy in place

(e) How will the project be supported after CRF funding and what will be the lasting benefits/legacy?

The construction of this new building on site will ensure the long-term viability of the campsite for years to come and be the single biggest investment the site has had to date.

Our annual accounts and cashflow forecast (provided) shows that the campsite is a viable and profitable community enterprise. Within our cashflow forecast we have allocated a portion of our revenue towards a maintenance budget what will cover any repairs and servicing to ensure all facilities remain in optimal condition.

The new toilet facilities will greatly enhance the comfort and convenience of visitors to the campsite. They will no longer have to contend with inadequate or outdated facilities, thereby improving their overall camping experience. The upgraded amenities will also attract more visitors staying for longer benefiting the local economy.

The campsite currently employs 2.75FTE's in the local area. This project along with future planned developments will allow the Trust to unlock the full potential of the campsite, with increased businesses resulting in increased employment opportunities. It is expected that the project will create a further 1.75 FTE's, bringing a total employment of 4.5 FTEs. This figure will increase again with future developments.

The improved facilities align with our commitment to environmental sustainability. We have incorporated eco-friendly features such as water-saving fixtures, energy efficiency measures and environmentally conscious waste management practices. This not only reduces our carbon footprint, but it will also reduce our energy bills significantly. Reducing the overheads of the campsite will result in more profit available to be put forward towards town centre regeneration projects.

(f) Please outline how the project fits with other relevant local plans and strategies.

Caithness & Sutherland Local Development Plan (2018)

Meets with the vision outcomes of 'Growing Communities' and 'Employment' – promoting and supporting tourism is specifically mentioned under the Employment vision

Highland Council Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan (2022)

This project meets several of the aims of the plan including delivering an enhanced visitor experience - "through the provision of improved visitor facilities and infrastructure, particularly in areas that have experienced pressure from increased visitor numbers, leading to a positive impact on the local landscape and visitor economy and improving access for all." Further to this, encouraging people to stay at a designated campsite also reduces the number of people using inappropriate overnight camping places that have potential to cause disturbance.

Scottish Government National Tourism Strategy – Scotland Outlook 2030

This strategy sets out Scotland's vision for a 21st Century tourism industry. This project aligns with the vision that we should maximise the benefits that tourism can bring to local communities and that growth should be sustainable, socially responsible and community driven

Venture North's Caithness & Sutherland Tourism Destination Recovery Strategy 2021-2024

This strategy focuses on the post-COVID recovery of the industry, the project aligns with the strategic aim for Effective Capacity Building for the tourism sector including supporting the region's ambitions for a Green Tourism Recovery and contribution to Net Zero Target and raising the profile of Caithness as a high quality sustainable and responsible year-round tourism destination.

The project also aligns with Focus North's (Previously known as Caithness & North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership) stated goals for economic growth, people & communities & sustainability

4.4 Does the project require planning permission or other statutory regulatory consents?		YES
If YES, please detail below - provide evidence with the application if granted.		
Type	Applied – Yes/No (include date)	Granted – Yes/No (include date)
Planning Permission	Yes – 22 nd June 2023	Decision expected before 28 th August 2023 (likely earlier)
Building Warrant	Drawing have been complete. To be applied for once planning confirmed	Process takes approx. 4 weeks

SECTION 5: BUDGET

This can be provided in a separate excel spreadsheet if preferred. Delete the example below before completing this section.

5.1 Main project expenditure – these should be as accurate and current as possible from recent quotations, price comparisons or advice from professionals.			
Budget Heading	Detailed costs	Revenue/Capital	Amount
Groundwork, foundations and building	Groundwork	Capital	£66,585.00
	Foundations & perimeter path	Capital	£11,563.20
	Timber frame kit	Capital	£46,908.00
	Erection of timber frame kit, external walls, insulation etc.	Capital	£21,480.00
	Cladding	Capital	£13,355.74
	Roof sheeting	Capital	£5,279.70
Internal Fixtures & Fittings	Plumbing & cubicles & sanitary ware etc.	Capital	£89,807.17
	Electrical	Capital	£14,887.58
	Internal walls - Plasterboard/timber materials etc.	Capital	£4,238.08
	Washing Machine & Drier	Capital	£7,920.00
Heating & Renewables	Underfloor heating	Capital	£9,724.95
	Mechanical heat recovery ventilation	Capital	£19,357.34
	Air source heat pump & buffer tank	Capital	£43,360.05
	Photovoltaic solar system	Capital	£19,828.11
	Battery Storage	Capital	£19,357.34
Contingency	10% contingency	Capital	£40,985.40

Total capital expenditure	£450,837.64
Total revenue expenditure	£0.00
TOTAL PROJECT COST	£450,837.64
Is VAT included in these costs?	Yes
Project expenditure before March 2023	£350k approx

5.2 Reasonableness of cost – project expenditure as detailed in 5.1 should be from recent price quotations. If you have been unable to seek current quotations, please explain how you have obtained project costs whilst developing the project?

We have made approaches for quotes in line and in most instances over and above the minimum requirements of the CRF procurement guidelines for capital works. Below summarises the quotes received to date, we have at least one quote for each cost category to deliver the project. Quotes have been compared and preferred suppliers identified with consideration made towards for value for money, detail/quality of submission and ability to work to timescales. Further quotes received will still be considered

SECTION 6 – MATCH FUNDING

6.1 Please give details of confirmed or pending match funding:

If match funding is confirmed, please provide letters of awards with the application.

Name of funder	Applied YES / NO <i>(include date)</i>	Granted YES / NO <i>(include date)</i>	Amount £
HIE – Green Fund	Yes – Submitted	Decision expected August 2023	£150,000.00
Dounreay Socio-Economic Fund	Yes – Submitted	Decision expected August 2023	£80,000.00
Community & Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES)	Yes - Submitted	Decision expected early Sept 2023	£71,331.99
Highland Council Community Loan Fund	No	6 weeks to process and approve request	£9,505.65
Wick Development Trust	N/A	Yes	£50,000.00
Total match funding			£360,837.64
CRF requested			£90,000.00
Total project cost			£450,837.64

6.2 Will the project involve “in kind” support?

This should not form part of the overall budget or counted as confirmed match funding for the project.

YES

Please detail:

We encourage people to volunteer at the campsite and with the Trust knowing that outdoor activities improve on mental health and volunteering strengthens the connection that people have with their community and the people who live in it.

Volunteers will be used to dismantle the old building and any useful materials salvaged will be recycled or reused where possible, potentially helping other charities where in the area if there are items that could be re-used by them.

6.3 Please explain why public funding is required to deliver the project. Will the project happen without funding support?

Without public funding the project will not be able to go ahead, it is not a project that the Trust is able to self-finance. The existing toilets are no longer fit for purpose and are in such poor structural condition that there is concern that they may not last another season. The Trust view the delivery of this project as a matter of urgency

SECTION 7 – REVENUE GENERATION PROJECTS

*To be completed by **revenue generation** projects ONLY. If the project does not generate revenue, please go to SECTION 8. Please submit a business plan with the application.*

7.1 Will the project generate revenue? *Please provide a copy of the budget forecast with the application.*

YES

If yes, how will the revenue benefit the organisation? Will it be re-invested to help with the long-term sustainability of the project – if so, how?

Wick River Campsite is under the management of the Trust as a not-for-profit community enterprise, with profits initially being reinvested into bringing the site up to a modern fit for purpose visitor facility, once complete, all profit will then be invested into community regeneration and community projects in the Wick area. Once Phase 2 is complete, the Trust will work towards the delivery of Phase 3 – the replacement of the existing reception building & storage facilities with a new visitor reception building to include reception, shop, workshop, and café with community space. Upon completion of phase 3 all profits generated thereafter will be invested into community and regeneration projects within Wick for many years to come. This would likely take the form of fully funding stand-alone Wick Development Trust projects or being used towards match funding for projects either as stand-alone or in partnership with other community organisations or the local authority, or possibly even creating a community fund where local organisations can apply for funding. The Trust will be self-sustaining without a reliance on public funding to meet core costs/running costs

7.2 How will you ensure that local organisations/businesses are not disadvantaged as a result of the project?

Wick River Campsite is the only campsite in Wick and has been running for over 40 years. The only alternative option for those wishing to stay with a campervan in Wick would be to use car parks or laybys, as both options lack visitor facilities this can lead to disturbance including littering and noise.

It is not considered that this project will disadvantage any local business but will continue to support them by providing facilities for visitors to stay within the town, close to the town centre where they can access shops, restaurants, and bars all within 10 minutes walk from the campsite. The campsite itself has an information booth that promotes local business, strengthening the connection between the tourism economy and local business is something the Trust will be continuing to work on so that we can maximise the benefits tourism brings to the town.

7.3 Have you considered taking out a loan for the project?

NO

Please state your reasons:

If a loan has to be taken out, all profits for the next 8-10 years would have to be channelled towards the re-payment of the loan, this would significantly hold back WDTs commitment to re-investing profits into Wick Town centre regeneration projects to the detriment of the local community. It has always been the intention that once the campsite is modernised it will fulfil its purpose as a not-for-profit community enterprise with profits to be used to progress the Trusts main objective of regeneration of the Wick town centre.

The Trust are considering a loan from the Highland Council Community Loan Fund to assist with cashflow if required as other match funder pay claims retrospectively, the loan fund can also be used to assist with contingency if required.

7.4 Have you had support from other organisations in developing the project?

For example:	Details
Business Gateway	
HIE	WDT Project Officer 3-year post is funded by HIE
Other	

7.5 Have you previously received public funds for the organisation?

YES

If yes, please provide details of awards for the last 3 fiscal years:

Funding	Year of award	Amount £
Community Regeneration Fund	2022	£39,000
Caithness & North Sutherland Fund	2023	£16,000
SPR Caithness Communities Fund	2023	£2,487
SSE Beatrice Fund	2020	£7,462

SECTION 8 – SIGNATURE

I declare that the information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I have read the guidance notes and understand and accept the terms and conditions noted within them.

The data you have provided in the application (and claim) forms are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004.

8.1 Main applicant, chairperson or equivalent – <i>the person signing this application has the authority within the organisation to apply for grant funding</i>		
Signature:	Print: Sarah Lamb	Date 31/7/2023

8.2 Supporting documents checklist. <i>You must enclose the following documents (where applicable) with the application. If they are not available, please state why. Please refer to the guidance note on how to name/label the documentation.</i>		YES / NO or Not applicable
1	Constitution or articles and memorandum	Yes
2	Committee Members or Directors List	Yes (shown within annual accounts)
3	Permissions – i.e. planning, building warrants, marine licences	To be provided when available
4	Policies – i.e. child protection, health and safety, equal opportunities	Yes
5	Confirmation of match funding letters	No
6	Bank statement – latest available * <i>please provide a statement below declaring what the remaining bank balances are for.</i>	Yes
7	Annual financial accounts – latest available	Yes
8	Evidence of need and demand i.e. letters of support, community consultation reports, photos	Yes
9	Business plan (revenue generation projects only)	Yes
10	Relevant insurance policies	Yes
11	Job descriptions (CRF funded posts only)	N/A
12	Evidence of control/ownership of asset – i.e. lease, title deeds	Yes
13	Partnership agreement	N/A
Reason for missing documentation: Copy of planning permission and building warrant to follow once available		
Declaration what the remaining bank balances are for: Reserves are required to cover on-going running costs, and to provided match funding for this project and other projects initiated by the Trust		

Completed forms and supporting documentation should be emailed to the following email address quoting your unique project reference number:
communityregenerationfund@highland.gov.uk

Community Regeneration Funding - application technical assessment



Project Ref:	CRF2119	Applicant Organisation	Wick Development Trust	Area	Caithness
Organisation Type:	Community Trust	Project Title:	Wick River Campsite – Phase 2 Toilet Block & Facilities Building	Decision meeting date	

Project Summary					Strategic objectives (delete as appropriate)
Total project costs	£450,837.64	HCCF Y/N	PBIP Y/N	CLLD Y/N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helping economic recovery and sustaining growth
Total CRF funding sought	£90,000.00	Estimated start date		15/09/2023	
CRF intervention rate	20.0%	Estimated completion date		22/04/2024	

Assessment Criteria	RAG Status	Comments
Application has demonstrated:		
Project Robustness	A	Drawings have been prepared and a planning application submitted, which should have a decision within 4 weeks of this application. There is also a comprehensive set of quotes relating to the works which comply with the principles of HC procurement rules. The applicant has added a 10% contingency to their budget, which is sensible in the current climate of price fluctuations. The risks relate to securing planning permission and building warrant, and presently there is a consultee comment requesting a contaminated land study prior to commencement. The applicant is aware of the likely condition and has already sought quotes to deal with it which the contingency should adequately cover. The applicant is also seeking match funding from 3 other funding programmes, which all need to be approved to meet the total budget for the development.
Engagement & Support	G	Well demonstrated with both community survey, campsite users survey and letters of support from local businesses and organisations. Supporting documents to back up application form.
Meeting a Need of Demand/Market Demand	G	The campsite appears to be meeting a growing demand in the area which can be demonstrated by both tourism surveys and visitor feedback. Historical trend data is scant due to the Trust only taking over the campsite in June 2022
Legacy & Exit Strategy	G	The replacement of the ageing toilet block will ensure a more positive visitor experience and reduce year on year maintenance costs, especially in the earlier years of it's use. The Trust see the new block as improving reviews and thus increasing visitor numbers and revenues. This should lead to increased employment and revenue for ongoing maintenance.

Consideration of equalities issues/impacts	G	The existing toilets do not provide purpose designed accessible facilities; however, the new block will include a fully accessible toilet, shower and family shower room with baby change facility, which the Trust will promote through their advertising. The applicant has provided an equalities statement, and documentation demonstrating compliance with Fair Work First.
Environmental sustainability	G	Subject to comment from Planning & Building Standards, the development appears to embrace several energy efficient interventions in the design which are listed on page 8 of the application, including air source heat pump, heat recovery, PV solar panels with battery storage.
Value for Money	G	The CRF intervention is just below 20% which for a project of this scale, impact and legacy would appear to provide good VFM. This capital project will also help increase revenues into the Trust and seek to increase local employment from 2.75 FTE to 4.5 FTE. The increase in overnight stays and positive visitor feedback, should increase visitor spend in the local area and have a positive impact on local business income.
Match funding	A	The project is seeking to source funding from 4 funding schemes including CRF each with interventions of 33.3%; 17.7%; 15.8%. They are proposing to use 11.1% from their own reserves and an HC Community Loan totalling 2.1% of the overall budget. All funding has been applied for and decision are expected within the next 4 – 8 weeks.
Meets Local Priorities	G	In the absence of any specific local priorities or area based local plan, The local elected members have been supportive of the project aims, and the project fits in with more than one of the strategic objectives of the CRF scheme.
Additionality CRF funding is required to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow the project to proceed • Increase the scope of quality of the project • Accelerate the implementation of the project 	G	Due to the costs of the overall project, the CRF funding intervention is essential to the project proceeding, if the aim of completion over the 23/24 off season is to be achieved.

Application Technical Check			
1	Project summary	Yes / No N/A	Comments
A	Is CRF grant requested within the area thresholds?	Y	
B	Has the Privacy Notice been acknowledged?	Y	
C	Are project timescales within CRF programme timescales?	Y	Planned completion end of April 23, so plenty of float
2	Contact details	Yes / No N/A	Comments
A	Is the organisation's details on OSCR or Company's House as per registered number?	Y	Different address on OSCR
B	Does the organisation address match the bank statement?	N	Given as Mackays Hotel, Union Street, Wick

3	Organisation details	Yes / No N/A	Comments
A	Is project activity being proposed by a public sector statutory duty?	N	
B	Is the project being proposed by a private business?	N	
C	Is it a partnership project and is there a partnership agreement in place? Is the CRF applicant the lead organisation?	N	
D	Is applicant organisation VAT registered? If yes, has number been provided? Is the VAT being reclaimed from HMRC? <i>(Note: question about whether VAT is included/excluded in the project costs in section 5 below)</i>	N	
4	Project details	Yes / No N/A	Comments
A	Is the proposed activity/project within eligible area?	Y	
B	Does the applicant own or lease the land or building? If not, has the ownership transfer/lease agreement been applied for/pending? When will this be in place?	Y	Lease until 16 th June 2032, option to increase the term by 10 years by giving between 12 – 18 months' notice.
C	Is the project activity plan achievable within the timeframe? Are there any notable potential delays?	Y	There are risks to the project timescales and costs, however the applicant has made extensive efforts to seek consents and obtain quotations. Risks include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing match funding (3 other funders), • Securing planning consent and building warrant (see D), • Firmness of quotes from a range of contractors – price fluctuation and availability to start. • Works require to be undertaken during the winter, therefore potential weather delays until wind & watertight.

D	Does the project have to comply with any Statutory Regulatory Requirements? i.e. planning, building warrants, SEPA consents, marine licences? Are these in place, pending decision, or not applied for? If pending or not applied for, when are they likely to be in place?	Y	Planning consent has been applied for with decision expected by 28 th August Building warrant needs an application following decision on the planning consent. There is no indication that there will be any issues with either application however, this is out with the hands of the applicant and depends on the Planning & Building Standards Authorities pressures.
4.3 (e)	Fair Work First (FWF)	Yes / No N/A	Comments
A	Has the applicant provided a statement on advancing FWF requirements? If the answer is no, the application cannot be progressed.	Y	Whilst there is no separate document, there is a copy of an assessment undertaken for HIE, an Equalities Policy, and a document signed by a workers representative confirming that regular 1:1 dialogue takes place alongside effective worker – manager relations. The only specific statement is on page 8 of the application which confirms that"..... <i>Wick Development Trust is a Real Living Wage employer and meets the criteria set within the Fair Work Policy</i> "
B	Has the statement been signed off by a representative of the employer and a workers' representative? If the answer is no, the application cannot be progressed	Y	The document entitled "Confirmation of Regular 1:1 Dialogue and Effective Worker – Manager Relationships" is signed by a worker's representative as the site Warden Supervisor
C	Do they have or will they work towards the Living Wage Accreditation?	Y	Email confirming accreditation
D	Is the applicant compliant with the requirements around FWF? Confirmation that applicant meets Real Living Wage criteria. If no, document on the assessment any action required or whether an exception can be made. Exceptions can be agreed by the Programme Manager Confirmation that the organisation meets the Effective Voice Criteria. If no, document on the assessment any action required or whether an exception can be made. Exceptions can be agreed by the Programme Manager	Y Y Y	Supporting documentation satisfies compliance with FWF

5	Budget	Yes / No N/A	Comments
A	Have project costs been sufficiently broken down and itemised? For salaries/wages, have they provided an hourly rate?	Y N/A	Extensive breakdown of item costs, with all quotes provided as supporting documents. The applicant has added a 10% contingency which is a sensible approach in the current inflationary climate.
B	Are project costs eligible/essential?	Y	
C	Have the recommended CRF procurement requirements been met, where required? If not, are steps taken to obtain project costs reasonable?	Y	Highland Council procurement thresholds have so far been used for triggering single quotes or seeking 3 quotes and this has been demonstrated.
D	Has VAT been removed or included in the project costs? As per section 2 above?	Y	The applicant has stated that VAT has been included
6	Match funding	Yes / No N/A	Comments
A	Is match funding confirmed? If not confirmed, has it been applied for or pending decision?	N Y	Three other funders applied to with decisions expected in August to September. Smaller proportion allocated from WDT funds
B	Will there be in-kind support? How does this add value to the project?	Y	Volunteers use to help dismantle and partially salvage from the current toilet block
C	Has any work already started/costs been incurred prior to the application?	N	Only separately funded PO costs from HIE
7	Revenue/income generation projects ONLY	Yes / No N/A	Comments
A	Will the project generate revenue? If yes, how will the revenue be utilised?	Y	Income from the development and thus the campsite will be used to fund Phase three which includes a new reception, shop, café & workshop. The organisation is not-for-profit and ultimately will invest surplus income into community projects
B	Has a business plan and budget forecast been provided?	Y	Extensive plan and financial forecast to 2025 with presumption of Phase 1 – 3 developments taking place. Forecast assumes for increased occupation through an improved visitor experience. Majority of negative feedback relates to the condition of the current prefab toilet block.
C	Has loan finance been considered? Yes or no answer, has explanation been provided?	N	Concern over the loan repayments reducing the ability to push forward with further stages of development, and taking away funding from other WDT projects
D	Has the applicant received previous funding from public sources in the last three fiscal years?	Y	Detailed in application

8	Signature	Yes / No N/A	Comments
A	Is the application form signed and dated by chairperson or equivalent (authorised signatory)?	Y	By the Project Officer
Supporting Document checklist:		Yes/No N/A	Comments
	Expression of Interest	Y	
	Constitution or articles and memorandum	Y	
	Committee members or directors' list	N	They can be viewed on WDT website
	Permissions – such as planning, building warrant, SEPA	N	Confirm that planning application is in ref 23/02977/FUL with a target decision date of 28/08/23. There is presently a comment from the contaminated land team that the site is on a former tip, and therefore needs a contaminated land investigation and a scheme to deal with any contamination prior to development commencing. The applicant is aware of this likely condition and has already sought quotes for a survey.
	Policies – such as equal opportunity, environmental, child protection (if working with young or vulnerable people), Fair Work First	Y / N	Equalities and Flexible Working. Statement on Worker – Manager relationships given
	Confirmation/evidence of match funding	N	Statement that it has been applied for, but not that it has been secured
	Most recent bank statement provided	Y	July 2023
	Statement demonstrating why public funding is required	Y	In application
	Statement declaring what the remaining bank balances are for	N	3 years of accounts, up to September 2022. Balances broken down into restricted and unrestricted funds but no statement on what funds are for.
	Latest annual accounts	Y	To Sept 2022
	Research/evidence of need and demand i.e. letters of support, consultation reports, photos	Y	
	Business plan (revenue generation projects only)	Y	
	Relevant insurance policy	Y	
	Job descriptions for any post which funding is sought towards	N/A	
	Evidence of control/ownership of asset – i.e. lease, title deeds	Y	
	Partnership agreement	N/A	

Recommended grant conditions	
Pre- approval conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
Pre - start conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
Specific conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •

<i>I confirm that I have completed the technical assessment for this project as set out above.</i>	Name:	Mark Crowe
	Date:	02/08/2023

Decision meeting outcome LAG Community Local Led Development	Decision	Approved / Deferred / Rejected / Decision not required from this group	
	Grant amount awarded:	Community Local Led Development	
	Date:	£	

Decision meeting outcome Area Committee Highland Coastal Communities Fund/ Placed Based Investment Programme	Decision	Approved / Deferred / Rejected / Decision not required from this group	
	Grant amount awarded	Highland Coastal Communities Fund	Placed Based Investment Programme
	Date:	£	£