



Knocknagael
a GREEN HUB
for our communities

**Community Asset Transfer of
the Smiddy Field**

Maria de la Torre and Gordon MacDonald

Knocknagael Ltd is a community not-for-profit organisation looking to secure a Community Asset Transfer for the smiddy field part of the Scottish Government owned Knocknagael Bull Farm.

The aim is to develop it into a green hub including:

- Allotment site
- Community growing areas, including a community orchard, to provide a greater social and cohesive spirit
- An outdoor area for walking and outdoor activities in a safe environment, and proving wildlife habitat in an increasingly urbanised area
- Growing and training space, available for different organisations and for schools
- Community growing area to develop a Community Supported Agriculture project

The vision for the site is:

A green hub that will get more people in our community spending time outdoors and growing and enjoying local produce.



Site Location



Site Photographs



Background

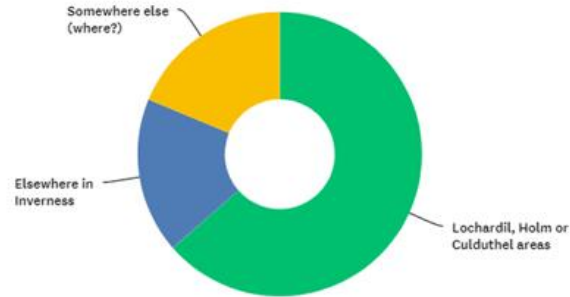
- 2013 - Fields at Knocknagael Bull Stud Farm earmarked for disposal by Scottish Government
- Local opposition to housing development on prime agricultural land, in response to loss of farmland and growing awareness of climate change. Community Campaign
- 2015 - Proposal for housing use rejected
Knocknagael Allotment Association established -
 - 2017 Feasibility Study
- 2018-19 Work with Development Trusts Association Scotland (DTAS) and Highland and Islands Enterprise
- 2019 - first ATR
- **2020 - Knocknagael Ltd. established** to take ownership of site
- SLF Stage 1 Funds secured and Community Enterprise appointed
- Community Consultation, feasibility study & landscape report
- **2021** Contact with RPID



Community Consultation

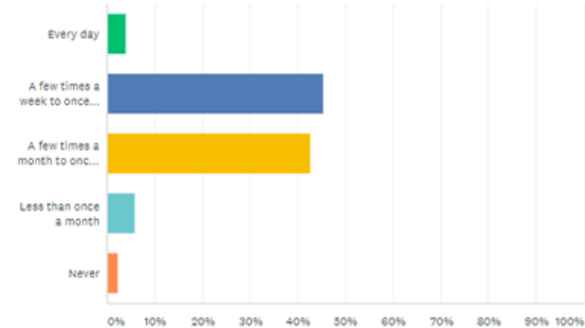
Please tell us where you live

Answered: 310 Skipped: 29



How frequently do you think you would visit the growing space at Knocknagael Farm?

Answered: 310 Skipped: 1



Two community engagement and events

Outdoor drop-in at the Knocknagael site
Zoom event

Large coverage - Posters, 900 Flyers, posts on Facebook pages reach over 8,000 people, story published in BBC Scotland, the Inverness Courier, Feature on BBC Alba

What the community said: *“A very exciting opportunity for Inverness”; “this is what Inverness desperately needs!” “This is a great time to secure this land for generations to come and really create a strong community project” “we have a lot of wildlife in the area that is being pushed out by all the building” “now more than ever we need countryside spaces on our doorstep.”*

Community buyout plans at 'bulls-for-hire' farm

By Steven McKenzie
BBC Scotland Highlands and Islands reporter
15 November 2020



Strategies

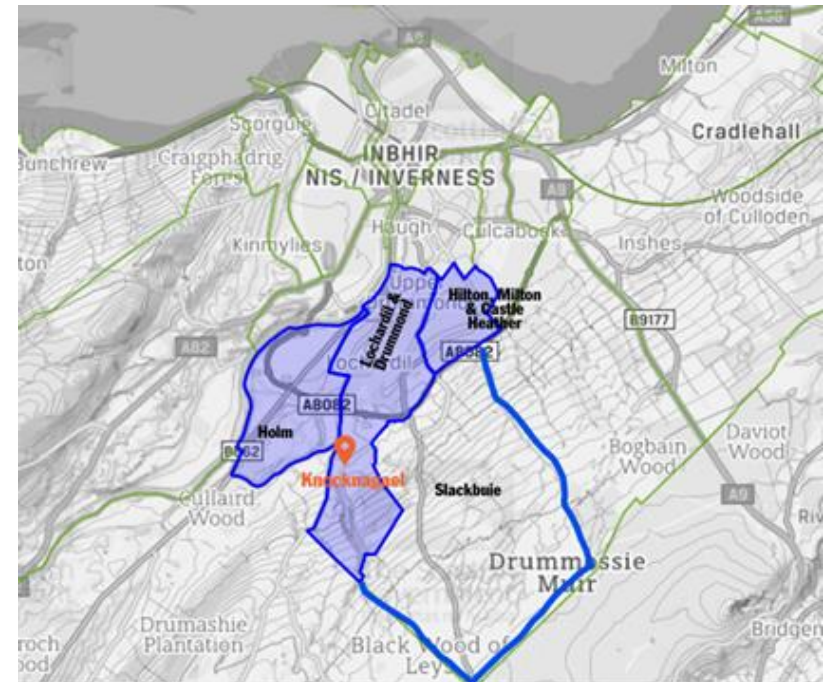
National

Place Making Principle
Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act
Fairer Scotland Action Plan
Scotland's Public Health Priorities
A connected Scotland
Climate Change Action Plan
Good Food Nation
The Environment Strategy for Scotland
Our Natural Health Service
Curriculum for Excellence for Outdoor Learning

- **Communities covered** - site is accessible from all Inverness core area four Community Councils -15,000 residents
- Areas around include both areas of extreme deprivation and least deprived community areas.

Local

Highland Outcomes Improvement Plan
Hilton Locality Plan
Active Highland Strategy
Highland Council Draft Community Food Growing Strategy
Highland Council's Policy on Allotments



Progress with the Asset Transfer Request - key dates

ATR submitted	20th October 2021
Scottish Government (SG) acknowledges the request	23rd December 2021
SG officials refuse request	20th June 2022
Knocknagael Ltd requests formal review of the decision	15th July 2022
SG acknowledges review request	18th July 2022
SG appoints review panel	30 November 2022
Process starts	February 2023
Hearing and Site Visit	March 2023
Report and Decision	June - September 2023

Publication - Correspondence

Community Asset Transfer: request from Knocknagael Ltd

Last updated: 10 August 2022 - [see all updates](#)
Part of: [Communities and third sector, Farming and rural](#)

Documentation concerning Community Asset Transfer for a field at the SG Bull Stud, Knocknagael Farm, Inverness.

Community Asset Transfer Request under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015: Request Received from Knocknagael Limited

A Community Asset Transfer Request has been received from Knocknagael Limited in order to purchase the 8.28 hectare field known as the Smiddy Field, Essich Road, Inverness OS Grid Reference NH660415 being one of the fields which is part of the Scottish Government's Bull Stud at Knocknagael



Highlights

- Members Visits Torbreck Orchard and Hawthorn allotments, etc
- Social Cycle and Walk
- Apple Grafting
- Ceilidh



Landscape designs

Opportunities

The qualities of the site and the existing context have been considered. The key characters of the site inform the allotment framework proposals which include:

- Landscape connections to existing informal paths and beyond into the core path and national cycle network
- The north boundary and it's potential to expand into the existing under-used open space and adjacent developments
- Using links from the north through the site and into the countryside, helping to structure the proposals
- Introduction of an integrated landscape structure which reinforces the allotment boundary forming a green edge to the townless urban edge, repairing the urban fracture in the existing landscape structure



Illustrative Masterplan



Landscape designs

Allotment Allocation

Scale and use

- Large 20 m x 10 m (22)
- Medium 10 m x 10 m (28)
- Small 10 m x 5 m (20)
- Training various size allotments (14)
- Polytunnels 18 m x 3 m (4)
*size can vary over the phases

Buildings and structures

- Shipping container style 8 m x 4 m
- Hub / classroom 16 m x 8 m
- Shelter / gazebo 10 m x 10 m

Parking

- Standard 39
- Disabled 2
- Bus / coach 3
- Cycle stands 8
- Summer overflow car park



Layout and Phasing

1. Composting toilet
2. Shipping containers storage
3. Shelter / canopy / pergola
4. Community hub
5. Green courtyard / central green / lawn
6. Training / classroom
7. Cycle stands
8. Allotments for vulnerable groups
9. Picnic tables



Phase	Infrastructure required	Function	Specification
Phase 1	Toilet 2/3 shipping containers for portacabin	Toilet Tool shed container Basic meeting room To gather out of rain and wind Tables & benches to sit	Unisex and one toilet outside (compost toilet) Shipping container x1 or 2 and possibly cladding Portacabin/shipping container x1 possibly cladding (no water & electricity) Roof
Phase 1a	Shelter Green courtyard		
Phase 2	Community hub	For people to meet and have training classes	
Phase 3	Training / classroom	Kitchen	

Thank you



'Momentous' decision as Inverness land earmarked for housing to become 'green hub'

By John Davidson - john.davidson@hnmedia.co.uk

Published: 12:00, 11 September 2023

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Learn more



Knocknagael Ltd committee members Ronald Macvicar, Sandie Craig, Alastair Simmons, Maria de la Torre and Gordon MacDonald at the Smiddy Field.

