CAT Request re Lochhead Avenue (Lochwinnoch Community Development Trust)

Representations Received (13-17th March 2023)

NOTE – Only representations provided with a full name and address have been included. All representations have been reproduced in this format in their entirety, however, personal information has been removed or redacted.

3rd March 2023

	ect that has so many avenues for
community learning and support .	
This has to go ahead .	
So important for Renfrewshire and beyond .	

13th March 2023

#35 I became aware of activities in the Lochhead Gardens area during the pandemic when a group of residents built raised beds and grew vegetables to distribute to the community. There was a Food Committee which was assisting vulnerable people in the village with food and medical supplies. From this grew the Lochwinnoch Community Larder and they acquired a portacabin to house the food etc. I have been volunteering for the project for a year and have found it very worthwhile and quite inspiring. There is a huge amount of time and effort given to the work of the project by a wide variety of volunteers, young and older like myself.

The site is used by other groups including Wildcare which is an outdoor childcare scheme. Our grandson has taken part in it and really loves it. This would continue. There is also quite a large group of Home Educated children with parents who utilise the space. The Lochwinnoch Force for Nature group, to which I am a member, has grown a variety of wild flowers suitable for Insects and birds in winter. This was in two controlled areas in the garden.

I have been to the consultation in the grounds when the plan for the development of the garden was displayed. I was able to ask questions and make comments. I very do like the plans for the garden and see it as very inclusive. It will maintain the present activities and bring in new ones. There will be an area of raised beds for growing plants of choice. There will be a good wildlife pond which can be enjoyed and studies by all ages. There will be market stalls for use throughout the year and a covered area for to be used for activities such as art, crafts, yoga, Tai Chi, Book Clubs, workshops and events such as the Feel Good Festival or Arts Festival. There could be future space for social enterprise or income generating projects. The Garden is well situated within the village and would be potentially wheelchair accessible. It would compliment the present Community Garden and the development in the Playpark area. It would provide different experiences to the people of Lochwinnoch.

I therefore wish to express my support for the CAT application by the Lochwinnoch Community Development Trust.

14th March 2023

#36	I objec	t to the above proposal on the following grounds:
	•	This is a significant site which is overseen by Renfrewshire Council on behalf of the
		village. When a future need arises, for more houses or perhaps start-up business
		premises, there are very few areas available in the village.
	•	Lochwinnoch used to have a superb Care Home on Johnshill and now that people
		are living longer, the village would benefit from a Care Home/sheltered housing in
		order to free up houses. This is an ideal site for such a venture as it is near the
		shops, the activities at the McKillop, the Church, the surgery as well as a park.
	•	It would also be unwise to commit the Community Transfer lease for 10 years
		which would mean the site would be unavailable for what might be a more pressing
		need such as a Care Home.
	•	This site is the equivalent of "money in the bank" for the village's future
		development. It is important that we do not use green field sites for village
		expansion.
	•	The site in commercial terms must be worth more than £200,000 and it would
		seem unwise to give this away to any business organization. This would be deemed
		a significant loss for the village. If the business had financial difficulties, then the
		organization could sell it to cover their losses.
	•	There is plenty of opportunity in the village for such a venture as the Lochwinnoch
		Development Trust. For example, the food bank could be accommodated in any of
		four empty shops and this would bring footfall to the center of the village which
		would help to support the existing shops. Church Street is currently looking
		extremely sad and would benefit from a new enterprise.
	•	The village is also well served with social spaces – Loch Bar Services, Bowling Green,
		Golf Course, the McKillop, the Masonic Hall, the Annexe, the Calder Church spaces,
		the Library, the room above the Brown Bull, Castle Semple café, the Primary School
		as well as a well-furnished play Park. The many activities suggested by the LCDT
		could be carried out in the above social spaces and would help to make these
		spaces financially viable.
	•	I note that they are proposing markets on the site which would be inappropriate.
		There is no space for parking the many cars that normally accompany a market.
		The ideal site for a market would be at Castle Semple or the McKillop where there
		is plenty of parking.
	•	How financially viable is the LCDT likely to be as there does not seem to have been
		any widespread publicity of their audited accounts over the last 10 years? The
		Business Plan seems to rely on grants from many different sources. There is no
		proof that there will be a direct income stream from the activities designed to
		sustain all that is proposed. A number of village shops have closed recently due to
		lack of footfall so this does not bode well for the future of LCDT. Nor do we know
		from where future funding is likely to come in order to sustain the Trust.
	•	Over the last 10 years there have been 27 Directors but 21 of these have resigned
		which is a concerning factor. Given that this is a community effort, there does not
		seem to be any publicity of the Minutes of the various meetings which they suggest
		have taken place.
	•	A few years ago, one of the proposals of the Trust was to create a hydro scheme
		which came to nothing. They also had plans to maximize the potential of the water

	 bore hole used by the former Struthers company and this too has not materialized. It would appear that this is still on their agenda. There is now talk that they wish to buy out the vacant Church to create an art centre as well as all the other activities on the site at Lochhead Avenue. To date we are living in difficult times where a well-established and stable organization will have difficulty surviving. It would be unwise to transfer such a valuable village asset when there is a plethora of opportunities currently available to LCDT in other areas of the village. This organization has still to prove itself.
#37	I would like to add my support to the community asset transfer request by LCDT for the 10 year lease at Lochhead Gardens.
	As a local resident of Lochwinnoch, I frequently use the larder and would be very keen to use the site for recreation/leisure if developed as planned.
#38	This email is support for the long term lease request for Lochwinnoch community larder.
	This project/ initiative is making a massive difference to this rural community. Not only does it serve to provide food for all those with unprecedented financial challenges, and meeting the 'greener' part of the community plan, having the area as a community needs hub is allowing for unlimited additional community led opportunities to be initiated, which meet local and national wellbeing agendas such as mens mental health, community volunteering and involvement, inter generational involving the school children and so on with the potential being limitless. Lochwinnoch is often excluded from opportunities as it may not have high levels of deprivation, but it is rural, excluding the locals from easy access to many community services and the additional costs of fuel for travel for food, vital supplies and work is another challenge.
	Lochwinnoch will not disappoint in making the absolute most of this opportunity. The needs exist, and the community easily have the skills, motivation and support to meet and surpass the Local Authorities outcomes and targets within the scope of this initiative.
	Please grant the long term lease, you will not be disappointed.
#39	I would like to lodge my full support for the cat application above.
	The community larder has been a fantastic asset to the village and provides Dignified Food Provision to the local community.
	Also is a hub for service users to come and have a chat with the staff and volunteers.
	The huge impact of saving the food donations from landfill and the major environmental impact should also be considered.
#40	I am writing to let you know that I am extremely grateful for the service the larder provides the community and nearby community. I have 3 small children and can only work part time and o have greatly benefited from the support the larder has offered. I strongly recommend it become a permanent fixture in the village. It is well organised, friendly and respectful.
#41	I am writing to express my support for the application by Lochwinnoch Community Development Trust for a Community Asset Transfer for Lochhead Gardens in Lochwinnoch on a 10-year lease.
	Lochwinnoch Community Larder operated by a local charity LEAP, which has become a thriving hub of community activity, offering dignified food provision to over 900 people in the area
	This project has become an interracial part of the community and to lose this asset would be a great loss. It has become a great use of Lochhead Gardens off Lochhead Avenue there

	is good access and is easily accessible for people on foot with good pavement access the facility itself is well laid out with a good brick driveway.
	I have limited ability myself and use a walker to support me get about.
	The larder is well managed and organised with a fantastic volunteers the site is kept clean. The team of helpers well trained in the management of the site and larder.
	The garden has become a vital community hub, the LCT have transformed this site into a welcoming green space and community meeting space which actively promotes the wellbeing of the local population, encouraging social engagement and bringing people together through local events, food growing and community led enterprise.
	This is to be applauded and should be sustained and supported.
#42	I am writing in support of the submission for a 10 year lease with an option to buy. in the above application for asset transfer. I have been a volunteer over the last year at the Larder while I work full time so can only help in a limited capacity, I can bear witness to the value and benefit provided along with the unmissable opportunity to found a vibrant community hub for Lochwinnoch and the surrounding area.
	Over the last year the footfall at the larder has grown , along with the number of volunteers and the network of food donors. This in turn has generated a user base as more are using the facilities here in Lochwinnoch but also from surrounding towns/villages.
	This has led to great social interaction as people meet and connect, so the atmosphere has become more stimulating with friendships being made.
	Over time those dropping by have now started to stop and chat, have a cup of tea , share recipes for the produce they are picking up.
	The recent introduction of fridge freezer access on a 24/7 basis gives food support to those in need. In addition to the delivering of food parcels to the most vulnerable in the community within Lochwinnoch
	Seeds and support in growing your own are available, book borrowing, school uniform support exchanges. Involvement in the local craft fairs both in providing sweet stuff but volunteers who have become involved supporting local artisans in the area.
	More recently over the last couple of months the number of people helping to develop the garden land has grown and grown, young and 'older' all joining in. Providing some young people with a focus to use their free time (parents kept informed and supervised at all times) and giving them a good grounding in social and practical skills. This knowledge will only grow as the gardens grow. It is already showing great potential for the brighter months to come to build on the social gatherings that happened last year and an investment in food growing and provision. There have been many occasions over the last year that local growers have shared plants with the larder for people to take and try growing their own , this can only be further strengthened with this ongoing development and community investment in this site. The proposal to have pond life for all to explore and the opportunity to get fruit direct from the gardens is something many will not have had the opportunity to experience before.
	At a time when the economy and everyone's cost of living is a burden these facilities have provided not only facilities for the community but a network of people that give a much needed support net at this so difficult time.
	Lochhead Gardens location has the potential to provide a vibrant focal point for the community with varied provisions to cater for and bring together people.

	The council in deciding any rent levied should consider the amount of community
	investment that is going into the creation of this space, which brings many social,
	environmental and economic benefits to not just Lochwinnoch but the surrounding areas. Which in turn supports other initiatives in the area to increase the use of open
	spaces as part of the short , medium and longer term plans which are also out for
	consultation at this time.
	This is an opportunity not to be missed in generating such a rich community collaboration.
#43	I send this email to show my support with regards to the lease application for the above mentioned situated in Lochhead Gardens, Lochwinnoch, PA12
#44	As a Lochwinnoch resident I am writing to express my support of the lease application on the Lochhead Avenue site .
	I have personally volunteered on the site since we first started growing vegetables there during lockdown and have remained involved with the larder project.
	Not only does this help those in need during some very tough times but also vital social contact for both service users and volunteers. I am aware of other volunteers who have gained the confidence to apply for paid employment as a result of the experience they have gained with the project.
	A long lease will improve access to funding and allow the tremendous work to continue.
#45	I wish to support the application from LCDT to be granted the lease of Lochhead Gardens, Lochwinnoch.
	I personally have found the Lochwinnoch Community Larder, (which also uses this site), to be of great benefit to my some
	My son (16) was one of the first young Duke of Edinburgh volunteers to be given a
	volunteer placement by community larder last January 2022He is still volunteering with
	them over a year later because he really enjoys it. He has gained experience of manning the larder, processing deliveries, delivering food parcels and manual work around Lochhead
	Gdns.My son has autism which makes it more difficult for him to follow instructions and
	interact with other people.
	The community larder has gone out of its way to be supportive and inclusive towards him.
	This has made me feel very happy, and has been great for my son's confidence and sense of
	self worth.I knew nothing about the Community Larder before I asked them if my son could volunteer with them – however over the past year, they have exceded all my expectations.
	I believe this is an excellent project which genuinely improves my quality of life in my local community.
	This project should be supported by RCC to allow it to continue its great work.
L	

16th March 2023

#46	I object to the above proposal:
	There has not been a proper village wide consultation on this. I only found out about this through a friend. Lochwinnoch Community Development Trust have not published Minutes of their meetings nor audited accounts.

-	
	Given the nature of the many proposals which they are suggesting, I do not think this site is appropriate given that it is close to residential property. There are plenty of empty shops and social spaces where they can carry out a wide variety of activities.
	This piece of land is in the heart of the village and we truly need sheltered accommodation for the many elderly in the village. There used to be a first class Care Home in the village which served the elderly well. This would be an ideal site for sheltered accommodation.
	I am also concerned that some of the activities of the LCDT are affecting the viability of our local shops because the Larder is drawing the people away from the centre of the village. It would be better if they used some of the many vacant shops and this would draw people into the heart of the village.
	The site should be held by Renfrewshire Council on behalf of the village so that if there is a future need – we would have this space.
#47	I object to this Community Transfer proposal for the following reasons:
	In terms of good and effective town planning it is important that residential areas are respected. There are many houses in Lochhead Avenue and nearby. Farmers' markets, BBQs, children's parties with bouncy castles, etc as suggested by this Development Trust would be better placed in the village park, by Castle Semple or in front of the Mckillop. Some of their indoor activities could be held in the many social spaces available in Lochwinnoch.
	The former cabinet making factory was on this site and it seems more appropriate to use this space for some form of built environment which would benefit the entire village such as more houses. There are a number of empty sho[s in Lochwinnoch and this does not add to the attraction of the town centre. Some of the Trust's activities could be housed in one of the shops.
#48	I object to the above proposal:
	I live in a residential area and my home is opposite this particular site. The site is inappropriate for many of the activities proposed by the Trust. Foe Example:
	1. Twenty market stalls each Sunday. The place for a full blown market is either outside the Mckillop or down by Castle Semple where there is space and plenty parking. These markets attracts lots of cars so where on Lochhead Avenue are they going to park?
	 A public toilet that can be used by the general public. This is not the correct spot for a public toilet – we used to have one at the Cross which was very handy for all.
	3. Children's parties, BBQs and pizza parties. It is proposed that bouncy castles, trampolines, etc are to be erected for children's parties but the most appropriate site for such events is the lovely park which the village has and is underused. In the case of inclement weather, we have many indoor spaces in the village which are also underused.
	 Village life has taught me that there is an element who will see, if the transfer goes ahead, the potential at this site for rowdy parties, a place to drink and get merry etc. Not ideal in a residential area.
	 It is also suggested that vegetables can be grown on this site. This is the site of a former cabinet-making factory so the ground will be contaminated. This is not a good site for growing vegetable or planting fruit trees.

#49	I object to this Community Transfer Proposal:
	_
	The village does not have many spaces for future building should the need arise.
	Lochwinnoch no longer has a Care Home so this would mean . I understood that the
	idea was to have more care Homes in order to release housing for younger people. This would be a great site for a Care Home.
	There are many appropriate opportunities for something like the Development Trust – empty shops, an abundance of social spaces in the village for their many activities and a lovely park. There is no need whatsoever to commandeer this site for such a long time – 10 years.
	This transfer has ben kept quite secret and we do not seem to have had info about it – I found out about it from one of the residents =in Lochhead Avenue who is truly annoyed because the Trust has not canvassed the opinions of <u>all</u> the residents of Lochhead avenue.
#50	This email is in support of the application by LCDT for the lease at Lochhead Gardens. The proposal by LCDT supports not only the wider community of Lochwinnoch and surrounding areas, but actively supports wildlife, education and sustainability within the area which would otherwise NOT be provided or accessible to all. As
	 - and as a member of the community of Lochwinnoch, I fully support the proposal. Environmental Arguments for the CAT of Lochhead Gardens: The plot has been designed with sustainability and the environment at its very core, providing a low maintenance but high amenity space for the village of Lochwinnoch. Lochwinnoch is well known both locally and nationally as a village the puts environmental values at the heart of what happens there. The space has been designed for the particular needs of the local area and its people - and will help educate and support the villagers and locals to develop behaviours that are environmentally friendly and evidence-based. The space will allow the integration of environmental initiatives such as "Diggin' it", the Community Larder, and the many LEAP projects encouraging sustainability - all at an accessible and welcoming level. This is genuinely inclusive. The village came second in a recent "Healthiest place to live" survey of all the UK due to our natural amenities - but these can be developed further with the CAT of Lochhead Gardens which combines health and wellbeing with environmental sustainability in terms of what if plans to offer to villagers and those from wider afield. The fact that it can be accessed easily from anywhere in the village is essential to "live its values" and encourage visitors to walk or cycle rather than use their cars - if, indeed, they have cars. Personally, I have been involved in gardening, maintenance and environmental education projects at the site and my gardening & environmental knowledge and understanding has grown enormously as a result, along with those working with me.
	 Social, Economic & Wellbeing Arguments for the CAP of Lochhead Gardens: LCDT has already proven how fundamental it is to the local community by their wide range of events, support and education for all sectors of the community - and this has never been more needed than in this current period post-Covid of widespread mental health problems, dislocation from pre-Covid social structures

	1	
		and routines, and economic dislocation and anxiety, made worse by the current cost of living crisis. I would argue that in these straitened times, a cohesive social
		and economic support network has never been more essential to physical and mental wellbeing.
	•	As a volunteer at the Community Larder since its inception, I personally know the
		impact we have on the local community - both economically and socially. I have
		personally experienced people visiting the Larder as they cannot afford to feed
		their families. I've had mothers telling me that without the Larder they would
		have to skip meals to feed their children. One mother said she hadn't eaten a
		proper meal in 4 days as her money had run out - but she was now able to access food at the larder for her and her family.
	•	The Lochhead Gardens space is an essential focal point and "friendly space" for
		those experiencing social isolation or mental health challenges. I know from
		personal experience how many of our Larder users come to the Gardens not just
		to access food, but the social support that goes with it. They know they can
		always get a cup of tea and a chat in the beautiful and calming surroundings of the
		gardens, maybe sitting on one of the benches or sheltering under the roofs of the
		Larder sheds if the weather is poor.
	•	The recent addition of some hard-standing/paving blocks has transformed the site
		into something much more accessible for those in wheelchairs or using walking
		frames. This is critical - we used to have to gather up food for those in wheelchairs
		and mobility scooters, diminishing people's independence - but now we can
		welcome them to the Larder and they can also enjoy the gardens safely and easily
		to get the benefit themselves from this incredible local amenity. I personally know this has had a huge impact on one particular family who no longer has to have
		Larder volunteers or another family member selecting items for the disabled
		mother, but she can now come down herself, have a chat with the volunteers,
		enjoy the gardens and maybe even a cup of tea and a biscuit amongst the trees
		and birdsong.
	•	We want to continue this - and grow it - making the Gardens a space that is
		planned and evolves for the whole community to come, to enjoy, and to get the
		benefit from. With a CAT for a 10 year lease, this could finally be achievable.
	Wider	Access Arguments for the CAT of Lochhead Gardens
	•	The Community Larder that currently occupies the site has a reach of over 1000
		people - and over 300 families - who are members with the facility to use the
		Larder. But we want more people to benefit. With a ten-year lease, this number
		could be expanded and managed in a sensitive, sustainable and organised manner
		 rather than having to make tentative or ad hoc improvements.
	•	The site is currently used as an outdoor base for a local "forest school"
		childminder and her charges. You only need to see the kids enjoying the gardens
		to know the benefits this brings - not just for their social and emotional
		development, but for their learning and resilience in the wider world. A 10-year
		lease would again allow planning and proper, thoughtful integration of these
	_	children with the other activities and facets in the Gardens.
	•	The ability to plan for the longer term would allow other initiatives such as a "Man's Shed" to be established, providing valuable social connections
		"Men's Shed" to be established, providing valuable social connections, companionship and learning to men in the village and wider area - improving their
		health and wellbeing outcomes and also directly contributing their skills to the
		maintenance and development of the Gardens.
	_	As a place of learning - whether about gardening, food waste, wildlife, plant
		identification and social and emotional health, with a 10 year lease, the Gardens
L	I	is characteriant social and chieffortal neuron, with a 10 year rease, the Galdens

-	
	could become a gentle and unthreatening way to engage those who have drifted away from formal learning or who have been unable to access formal learning for any reason.
	 As a place of entertainment, a 10 year lease would allow for a schedule of integrated events to entertain the villagers and those from wider afield, improving social cohesion, improving mental health and further building on the reputation of Lochwinnoch as a jewel in the crown of Renfrewshire's leisure offering. I hope this email convinces you that the amenity value of the Lease of Lochhead Gardens would thrive and grow with the certainty of a 10-year lease, providing the village of Lochwinnoch and those visiting it a fabulous social, economic, wellbeing - and reputational - resource.
#51	I think that this is, by far, the best and most imaginative use of the site i have seen since the old cooperage site was cleared, and most of it used for housing. Lochwinnoch has lost all its industries leaving only negligible employment opportunities in the village, which means it is largely a dormitory location, resulting in heavy road usage. It is incumbent on all of us to do anything possible to reduce car usage, while making our locality a more rewarding place to live. Rewarding in the sense of employment, entertainment, cultural involvement, a caring community.
	Food production in every community is essential, as evidenced in recent months all over the UK as the "perfect storm" of high energy costs, Brexit, bad weather conditions and war, conspire to keep our un-seasonal fruit and vegetables beyond our reach. We need more than turnips, but we may have to get used to eating more of them!
	I would like to see more provision for teenagers. A safe place to "hang out".
#52	I would like to write a letter of support to the community larder in Lochwinnoch. Our household has had so much support from the larder. At times of real economic need, and other times where it has been socially beneficial to meet people there. It has been a real community hub for myself and my children.
#53	I strongly object to the above on the following grounds:
	• This is a significant site that has been overseen by Renfrewshire Council on behalf of the village. Should LCDT gain ownership of the site, when a need arises in the future for sheltered housing or space for business start-up, there are no other sites in the village that would be suitable.
	• There is no care home in or near the village anymore. This site, so close to the village centre and amenities is ideal for such or for sheltered housing. There is a real need in the village for such accommodation and providing smaller homes for the elderly would free up the larger homes that they currently occupy. Many wish to downsize but do not wish to leave the village and they have no options at present.
	• The site is the equivalent of 'money in the bank' for the village. Keeping the site in public ownership means that we can prevent the use of green field sites for any housing.
	• The site is a valuable one, probably worth in excess of £200k. In my opinion it would be very unwise to hand such an asset over to a business organisation which they could sell at anytime for significant profit.
	• The need for a community larder is questionable. The venture grew out of a food bank that was run during the pandemic and which was used by a maximum of 14 households, most of whom were shielding rather than in real need. The original idea of giving away produce grown in the community garden was a good one, but the larder now goes far and wide collecting food from supermarkets as far away as Stevenston. Their activity has contributed in major part to the closure of the Heritage Farmers

nt threat
or social end up
treet. at is
hus
to

17th March 2023

#54	I fully support LCDT to have a 10 year lease of Lochhead Gardens, I'm confident that Lochwinnoch and nearby local residents would gain so much benefit from having LCDT gain a long term lease.
	I have lived in Lochwinnoch for Lochhead Gardens has held a central place where I have met new friends and felt a part of the community. I take my children Lochhead on the site in Permaculture, Bird call recognition, willow weaving and composting. I have collected seeds from the seed library. I visit the community larder Locheat would have gone to waste, also Locheat supermarket surplus food that would have gone to waste, also Locheat and topping up at village shops saves an expensive supermarket trip out of the village.
	Lochhead Gardens makes tapping into the community accessible, and sets an example of ways to help lower our waste and live in ways to help our environment during this climate crisis.
	The future proposed plans of Lochhead gardens is exciting, I've seen similar projects in communities in Glasgow, The Childrens Wood, Kinningpark Complex and Woodlands Community Hub. They have all created spaces that serve and enrich the local communities and beyond. By giving the lease for long term, Lochhead Gardens can become a vibrant, enriching space that brings our local community together.
#55	Just a note of support for the larder in Lochwinnoch. These volunteers give their time to help people with needs
#56	I'd like to register my support for the CAT transfer of the land at Lochhead Avenue to Lochwinnoch Community Development Trust.
	The team do a fantastic job & provide a vital resource to the local (and wider) community, all using surplus food that otherwise would shamefully go to landfill. The LCDT / larder also provide a fantastic social environment for adults & children to meet and undertake green projects that benefit the community, it would be a shame to lose this vital community service.
	The proposals will enable an already fantastic initiative to further increase the benefit to the local community