

27 August 2024



To whom it may concern,

I am writing to as the MSP for Kyle and Lochalsh to express my full support for the Kyle and Lochalsh Community Trust's community asset transfer application.

I understand that the Trust are looking to purchase two areas of land at Ratagan and Saraig with the aim of building affordable homes to retain local individual and families in the Loch Duich and wider Lochalsh area. The project would see the construction of six affordable homes on the site as well as another two to four affordable plots for self-builds and provision for at least five crofts.

In addition to affordable homes, the Trust are looking to build two business units for rent and also create spaces for shared working. A community plot for growing produce and a community-owned camping site to provide employment and tourist services are also planned.

The Loch Duich area in particular has suffered from depopulation with the local school now at risk of closure as a result of falling numbers. The project offers a key opportunity to address local need and that demographic imbalance, and I am pleased to give my full support to the Trust's application.

Yours faithfully,

Kate Forbes MSP

Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch

The Old School House,
GlenShiel,
By Kyle,
Ross-Shire,
IV40 8HW
31/08/24

Dear Sir/Madam,

I Isabelle Campbell Councillor for Ward 5, Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh hereby fully support Kyle & Lochalsh Community Trust in their plans to acquire two areas of forestry land in Ratagan and in Saraig from Forestry and Land Scotland through a community Asset Transfer, and then apply to the Scottish Land Fund and other funders to bring the project to reality. I know that Loch Duich Community Council and many local people support the proposals as we see it as a way of strengthening our community and keeping families and children in the area.

The aims of the project are to retain people and families in the Loch Duich and wider Lochalsh area through the provision of housing, support for business and access to land.

The demographics of Loch Duich are particularly stark with Lochalsh, which is an area that is losing families and has a demographic pattern that is heavily weighted to the older generations, particularly in the communities outwith Kyle. The Loch Duich school roll shows clear evidence of this demographic imbalance, as it has dropped from 16 in 2020 to 9 in 2024 which puts the school in danger of becoming unviable.

The project will provide

6 affordable homes

2-4 affordable house plots for self-build

2 business units for rent and additional land or space in homes for home working or home based businesses

Access to land for croft homes and land-based businesses with the provision of 5 crofts

Community access to land for food growing through a community growing area which KLCT will donate one or two polytunnels.

A community owned campervan or camping site providing services to tourists and supporting local employment.

I fully endorse this project and wish it every success in succeeding in the CATs request in securing the funding it needs to make it happen.

Yours faithfully,

Councillor Isabelle Campbell.

Letter of Support from Loch Duich Community Council

All members of the above Community Council are in favour of the developments proposed by Kyle and Lochalsh Community Trust at the Saraig and Ratagan sites which are being sold by FLS :

- The recent local area survey highlighted that the demographics for the LDCC area show one of the highest ageing populations in Lochalsh. There is an urgent need for affordable housing to try and reverse this trend. There has been no social housing built in the area since 1995, almost 30 years ago. As a result of this families have had to leave the area due to lack of affordable accommodation and the local primary school numbers have drastically declined. As a result, pupils aged from 5 to 11 years are all educated in the one classroom. This reduces opportunities for team sports, other events and limits social skills.

When properties or land come on the market, young people cannot compete with the inflated prices caused by the properties being sold as second homes for holiday letting.

The development may also provide much-needed accommodation for key workers, especially in health and home-care.

- Historically, summer holiday jobs in the tourist season were taken up by local teenagers and students but now local businesses struggle to find staff because there are very few youngsters living locally. As a result local businesses have to restrict their opening hours due to staff shortages. Graduates from the local area are unable to return after completing their studies as there is no available accommodation for them.

- In our opinion the planned crofts will be very popular with young people who are well aware of the importance of sustainability and climate change. They are also keen to become more self-sufficient and the planned crofts and community growing areas will provide ideal opportunities for them to do this. Working outdoors will also be good for mental health and well-being.

- We are aware that there are a number of local people who are interested in workshop type space to run their small business in this area rather than having to travel to Kyle or Skye to secure premises.

- We would welcome the provision of a serviced space for camper vans and think that a scenic spot such as Saraig would be very popular. We have all witnessed the problems caused by the number that already park in lay-bys and car parks.

In conclusion, all Community Council Members would support the proposals.



Susan Walker
Community Development Officer
Lochalsh Collaboration
Kyle & Lochalsh Community Trust
Toll Office
Kyle of Lochalsh
IV40 8AZ

10 September 2024

Dear Susan,

I am writing to express the Scottish Crofting Federation's support for the Kyle & Localsh Community Trust proposals for the Ratagan and Saraig areas.

As you know, the SCF has long campaigned for the creation of new crofts wherever possible as we believe crofting brings huge value both to rural communities and to land management in rural areas.

The proposals being put forward to include 5 woodland crofts and land for both homes and businesses on these would provide excellent opportunities to bring new families to the area, particularly alongside the other elements of your proposal such as affordable housing and the community growing area.

We know from our own records, and from those of the Scottish Land Matching Service, that there continues to be substantial demand for croft land, particularly from young people looking to bring up families in an area whilst also contributing to community life so any opportunity to support this is very welcome as access to such land is often difficult, particularly for new entrants.

We wish you the best of luck and sincerely hope that this project goes ahead and if we can be of any help in the future with this, please do let us know.

Yours sincerely,

Donna Smith
Chief Executive

Unit 26, Kyle Industrial Estate, Kyle of Lochalsh IV40 8AX
01599 530 005 - hq@crofting.org - www.crofting.org

SCF is dedicated to campaigning for crofters and fighting for the future of crofting.

Registered in Scotland as a limited company No SC218658. Registered office as above. Recognised as a Scottish Charity No. SC 031919



 Mowi letter of support Kyle a...
106 KB

Good morning Iain,

We have been passed on your email by Cameron Jones so thank you for summarising where the project is to date and setting out the positive plans the Community Trust have for future development. We understand you are on a tight deadline for the 8th of December so initially Mowi could initially offer a letter of support (attached) to help with the grant application and in due course we would be happy to meet with you and find out more about the project plans themselves and how we can best become involved moving forward.

regards

Jayne



Jayne MacKay
Community Engagement Officer

Mowi Scotland Limited

Mobile: +44 07717802370

DDI: +44 01397715061

Mail: jayne.mackay@mowi.com

Office: Mowi

Farms Office

Glen Nevis Business Park

Fort William

PH33 6RX



December 5, 2025

Dear Sir/Madam

Letter of support for Kyle and Lochalsh Community Trust – construction of micro-ecovillage at Ratagan and Saraig, West side of Loch Duich.

Mowi welcomes the opportunity to confirm our support for Kyle and Lochalsh Community Trust's project to construct a micro-ecovillage at Ratagan and Saraig, West side of Loch Duich. Mowi has farming operations within this area and employs around 20 people in the Loch Duich & Lochalsh area. As a local employer we recognise that the shortage of affordable housing is a significant issue preventing people from staying and working in their local area but also discourages anyone new to move into the area to help keep the communities viable. We very much support the Community Trusts application and hope they receive a favourable positive outcome.

Yours Sincerely,



Ben Hadfield
Managing Director Mowi Scotland
Chief Operating Officer Scotland, Ireland, Faroes & Atlantic Canada

Sarah Byrne

Kyle & Lochalsh Community Trust

01.12.2025

Letter of support, Micro-ecovillage at Ratagan and Saraig

We are writing this to express our strongest support of the proposed development of a micro-ecovillage at Ratagan and Saraig, at the west side of Loch Duich.

Since our establishment in Kyleakin and commissioning of the site in 2019, we have had a rapid development, from a greenfield site to a business with an annual turnover in the range of 200 million GBP, providing around 70 all year jobs. We are in many ways a competence industry, with challenging and well paid jobs, requiring a combination of formal education and long internal training, to be able to master many different tasks. Our operations are run 24/7 all year round. Finding and developing the right competences are essential to our success and future growth.

Today more or less all of our employees are living locally and many of them origin from the region. We work closely together with local schools to present the variety of jobs and development opportunities we can offer. The possibility to recruit locally is very closely connected to young people having the possibility to stay in the area. To be able to do that they need more than just jobs, they also need affordable places to live and establish a family. They need schools and activities for families in the future.

For us the proposed development at Ratagan and Saraig is something we are very supportive of. It offers a type of development in the local area that we need for our possibility to develop our site in Kyleakin long term.

Best regards

Claes Jonermark

Operations Director

Mowi Feed

Norway	Scotland
Valsnesveien 260	Kyleakin
7165 Oksvoll	Isle of Skye
	IV41 8PQ

Mobile Norway +47 414 97 947

Mobile UK +44 (0)7811 687489

Mail claes.jonermark@mowi.com





FAO - Crown Estate Coastal Communities Fund
Crown Estate Scotland
Quartermile Two
2nd Floor, 2 Lister Square
Edinburgh EH3 9GL

2 December 2025

LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR KLCT

Dear Sir/Madam

On behalf of my Community Interest Company - Eco Cascade – I am writing to support the application by Kyle and Lochalsh Community Trust for their Micro-ecovillage project in Ratagan and Saraig. We are a seaweed processing company based in Kyle, and we witness the lack of affordable housing in the Lochalsh area as having a significant constraint to the area's economic development. It impacts on our enterprise too by contributing to the difficulty in finding and retaining staff for our business, including during the busy seaweed processing season. This project, which offers both affordable housing for rental and affordable house sites to buy, could therefore bring real benefits for our company's future success, the wider seaweed cultivation industry in the Highlands and for the economic development of the Lochalsh area in general.

The creation of so many affordable homes in this coastal location may also have the benefit of bringing in more potential seaweed cultivators which would also support our business.

For these reasons I warmly commend the KLCT's application to CES and hope that it will find favour with your funding panel.

Kind regards

Alison Baker
Co-Founder & Managing Director
For and on behalf of Eco Cascade CIC



+44 (0) 7946 528 755 / kelp@eco-cascade.com / www.eco-cascade.com

Registered office: 2 Stewart Street, Milngavie, Glasgow, G62 6BW. Eco Cascade CIC is a Community Interest Company. Company number SC726701



Misty Isle Boat Trips

Ault Mhor

Ratagan

IV40 8HP

contact@mistyisleboattrips.co.uk

2nd December 2025

To whom it may concern

My name is Sandy MacKinnon. I am a resident of Ratagan and owner of 'Misty Isle Boat Trips' which is based in the village of Elgol in south Skye. I am writing to offer my support to the Kyle and Lochalsh Community Trust's plans for a Micro-ecovillage at Ratagan and Saraig which, if successful, will create six affordable homes, two affordable house sites, two business units, five woodland crofts and a community horticultural area.

There is a strong need for affordable housing in our area and also for premises for existing and potential business ventures. I believe KLCT's project will be of great benefit to the area as a whole, and to the marine sector in particular.

By providing affordable housing it may support employment opportunities for my own business. But I believe it has other potential benefits. For example, my son has recently begun an apprenticeship in marine engineering in Skye. He is keen not only to set up his own business in the future, but also to stay in the area where he was raised. For this reason the provision of affordable housing and of business units at Ratagan could be very beneficial to his future plans.

I urge you to support this project which has the potential to bring beneficial changes to a part of the west coast that requires economic development to support younger people to remain in our community as well as housing that is affordable so that those young people can have a place to live independently.

Kind regards,

Sandy MacKinnon

Background to development of proposals for Saraig and Ratagan

Community survey in 2021

- It had 600 responses
- It was clear that housing is the top priority for the community.
- 86% agree that we need to keep or attract more young people
- 75% are concerned that their community is increasingly elderly.
- 37% (162 people) knew of a family member who would like to live in Lochalsh but couldn't find housing, or housing they could afford.
- The need for affordable housing solutions was identified as the top priority in the Lochalsh Community Action Plan, launched in September 2022.
- Green spaces + community growing: 299 (50%) respondents want access to land for community food growing. 220 (37%) want improved green spaces in their community.
- Business: 67% of business owners out of 104 business responses wanted facilities for tourism to help keep tourists in the area.
- The second most important support that business owners want is access to business units or land to build business units

Loch Duich area profile compiled in 2021

- 42% of the population was over 60,
- Under 30s made up only 20% of the population.
- The largest decile was the 60-69 age group, representing 24% of the population,
- whereas the smallest decile was the under 10s, accounting for only 6% of the population.
- The primary school roll was only 16. **NOTE: the school roll is now 9**
- 28% of the population was retired.
- 38% of the working population own their own company or are self employed, which includes a number of housebuilding trades.
- Social housing makes up only 12% of the housing stock with 8 council homes and 1 Communities Housing Trust self-build home.

Lochalsh Housing Needs Survey

- Undertaken and analysed by the Communities Housing Trust
- 155 responses, 131 from local residents, 16 from non-residents, 8 from business owners
- 78% support the proposals for Saraig and Ratagan
- 44 local residents are looking for housing now
- 70% of those who are looking for housing have already tried to find alternative housing
- 20% of those will leave the area if they cannot find any suitable and affordable housing
- Respondents knew of 69 people who have already left the area due to a lack of housing
- Of those, 66 would return if they could find suitable housing
- 17 of the 44 are looking for low cost ownership, 11 for a site for a self-build and 8 for low cost rent

- 33 of the 44 looking for housing are also looking for workspace – either a room in their house, land for a business premises, or a business unit to rent
- 27 respondents want a woodland croft and of those 10 are interested in a self-build on the croft
- 29 respondents are interested in a community growing space

Other community consultation

- 40 people attended the open evening on 30th October '23 who were positive
- Susan attended the Loch Duich Community Council meeting on 16th May. Those present were very supportive of the plans and see it as a chance to make a big contribution to the very worrying demographics of their area.