



Community Asset Transfer Scheme (CATS) for our national forests and land

ASSET TRANSFER REQUEST FORM

Introduction

Please read the relevant parts of the [Community Asset Transfer Scheme](#) (CATS) Guidance before completing this form. You may also wish to refer to the Scottish Government's [Asset Transfer Guidance for Community Bodies](#).

The Request must be submitted in writing, either as a hard copy or by email. Please answer all the questions. You can attach additional information as extra sheets or electronic documents. Please be specific. When answering the questions you do not need to repeat any information you have already given, but simply refer to an earlier answer or attached document.

Please return the completed form and supporting documentation to:

Community Asset Transfer Scheme Team
Forestry and Land Scotland
231 Corstorphine Road
Edinburgh
EH12 7AT

E-mail: fls.communities@forestryandland.gov.scot

We will confirm receipt of your Request within 5 working days and you will receive a formal acknowledgement letter within 15 working days to confirm whether your Request is valid or requesting further information. We may also ask you for more information during the assessment and evaluation process.

CATS: ASSET TRANSFER REQUEST FORM

This is an asset transfer request made under Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

SECTION 1: Information about the community transfer body making the request

1.1 Name of the community transfer body making the asset transfer request

North Sutherland Community Forestry Trust

1.2 Community transfer body address

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

NSCFT, Naver Telservice Centre, Bettyhill, by Thurso

Postcode: KW14 7SS

1.3 Contact details

Please provide the name and contact address to which correspondence in relation to this asset transfer request should be sent.

Contact name: Andreas Herfurt (chair)

Postal address: NSCFT, Naver Telservice Centre, Bettyhill, by Thurso

Postcode: KW14 7SS

Email: admin@nscft.org

Telephone: [REDACTED]

We agree that correspondence in relation to this asset transfer request may be sent by email to the email address given above. *(Please tick to indicate agreement)*

You can ask the Forestry and Land Scotland to stop sending correspondence by email, or change the email address, by telling us at any time, as long as 5 working days' notice is given.

1.4 Type of eligible community transfer body

Please select **one** option and mark with an “X” in the relevant box to confirm the type of community transfer body and its official number, if it has one:

- a Company and its company number is __ SC161610__
- or**
- a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) and its charity number is _____
- or**
- a Community Benefit Society (BenCom), and its registered number is _____
- or**
- Unincorporated organisation (no number)

Please attach a copy of the community transfer body’s constitution, articles of association or registered rules.

- If the organisation is an eligible community transfer body under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 go to **Section 2**.

1.5 If the organisation is **not** an eligible community transfer body under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015:

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

No **Yes**

Please give the title and date of the designation order:

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

No **Yes**

If yes what class of bodies does it fall within?

Section 2: Information about the land and rights requested

(see CATS Guidance Section 1.2)

2.1 Please identify the land to which this asset transfer request relates.

You should provide a **grid reference** and attach a **map** clearly showing the boundaries of the land to which this asset transfer request. You should also provide any name by which the land is known, and you may also wish to provide additional description. You can contact your Forestry and Land Scotland [Region](#) office for assistance in providing a copy of the map.

Grid reference: NC688417

Area in hectares: 40

Name and description of the land: The asset transfer request is for

a) the purchase of the Rosal clearance village site and a small area of adjacent forest land as identified on the accompanying Map A.

b) rights of access along the forest road from NC696439 (junction with B871 opposite Dalvina Lodge) to NC685418 (SW edge of acquisition area)

If your request is for a building, you should provide a street address and the Unique Property Reference Number ([UPRN](#)) if known.

Address:

UPRN (**if known**):

Section 3: Type of request, payment and conditions

(see CATS Guidance Section 1.4)

3.1 Please tick what type of request is being made:

- for **ownership** (under section 79(2)(a)) – go to **Section 3A**
- for **lease** (under section 79(2)(b)(i)) – go to **Section 3B**
- for other **rights** (section 79(2)(b)(ii)) – go to **Section 3C**

3A – Request for ownership

What price are you prepared to pay for the land requested (see CATS Guidance Section 2.2)?

Proposed price: £50,000

This is calculated from an estimated market value of £75,000 and a request for a discount of £25,000 based on the public benefit our project will deliver.

Please see section 9 of the accompanying Rosal Feasibility Study & Business Plan for a fuller explanation of our calculations.

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

3B – Request for lease

a) What is the length of lease you are requesting?

b) How much rent are you prepared to pay? (see CATS Guidance Section 2.2)

Please make clear whether this is per year or per month.

Proposed rent: £ per

Please attach a note setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to be included in the lease, or to apply to the request in any other way.

3C – Request for other rights

a) What are the rights you are requesting?

Rights of access for management purposes along the forest road linking the acquisition area to the B871.

This route is currently used for public vehicle access to the Rosal clearance village and we anticipate that this would continue.

Do you propose to make any payment for these rights?

Yes ✓

If yes, how much are you prepared to pay? Please make clear what period this would cover, for example per week, per month, per day?

Proposed payment: We propose paying a share of maintenance costs on an "as used" basis.

We note that the road is currently in a very poor condition: any shared maintenance cost agreement should accurately reflect the baseline condition.

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

Section 4: Community Proposal

You may wish to refer to relevant sections in supporting documents.

4.1 Please set out the reasons for making the request and how the land or building will be used.

This should explain the objectives of your project, why there is a need for it, any development or changes you plan to make to the land or building, and any activities that will take place there.

North Sutherland Community Forestry Trust (NSCFT) is a well-established, community-led organisation which owns and manages a range of assets for community benefit. Our asset transfer request is for the purchase of the Rosal clearance village site and a small area of adjacent land.

Rosal clearance village is a scheduled ancient monument, comprising the remains of a once thriving Highland township, which was cleared of its inhabitants to make way for sheep in 1814. Rosal is one of the best-known clearance sites thanks to evicted resident Donald MacLeod who wrote extensively about the village and his experience of the clearances in a series of letters to the Edinburgh Chronicle in 1840, later bound together as the book *Gloomy Memories*. The site remains an important component of local cultural history, but despite this high profile, current signage and visitor infrastructure is limited and footfall is very low.

NSCFT's primary objective at Rosal is the preservation, interpretation and promotion of the clearance village and other historic sites for locals and visitors.

We will do this by:

- improving the recreational infrastructure and signage,
- establishing a programme of guided walks and schools visits,
- enhancing interpretation and promotion of the site,
- developing opportunities for community volunteering,
- employing a Community Development Manager to take day-to-day responsibility for the management and development of the site,

Following acquisition, NSCFT will work closely with Strathnaver Museum, Historic Environment Scotland, Highland Council and other stakeholders to develop a comprehensive project to research, preserve and enhance the clearance village. If appropriate, this could include the construction of one or more buildings as replicas of those would have been present in the pre-clearance settlement.

NSCFT will also pursue opportunities for income generation to support community management: this could include letting grazing rights, developing a commemorative tree business and the provision of tourist accommodation: a small bunkhouse or a couple of glamping pods, and/or a simple, unserviced camping area.

Please see sections 6 & 9 of the accompanying Rosal Feasibility Study & Business Plan for more details of our proposals.

4.2 Benefits of the proposal

Please set out the benefits that you consider will arise if the request is agreed to (see CATS Guidance Section 3.2). This section should explain how the project will benefit your community, and others.

Please refer to the guidance on how the relevant authority will consider the benefits of a request.

Community ownership of Rosal will:

- bring an iconic local asset into community ownership and enable NSCFT to develop and manage it to contribute fully to the sustainable development of the area.
- allow NSCFT to attract investment to enhance and promote the clearance village site to increase public enjoyment and understanding of the history of the area.
- allow the community to lead and control the management of the site, bringing new opportunities for volunteering and broadening community use of the forest through school visits, guided walks, family events and arts/musical events.
- enable the community to showcase the breadth of archaeological history and Gaelic heritage within and around Rosal; telling the story of our history and hopes for the future.

Improvements to paths, provision of seating and a shelter, and the installation of a compost toilet will widen access to the site for all abilities, helping to ensure that all of the community can get involved and benefit from Rosal.

Employment of a Community Development Manager will increase the local economic benefit of the forest and build community capacity and resilience.

Income from grazing and commemorative trees, and in the longer term potentially from tourist accommodation and paid-for volunteering opportunities, will support ongoing management costs.

4.3 Restrictions on use of the land

If there are any restrictions on the use or development of the land, please explain how your project will comply with these. Your Forestry and Land Scotland [Region](#) office can provide assistance in identifying any restrictions and how to comply with them.

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

Most of the proposed acquisition area is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SM2510 <https://portal.historicenvironment.scot/designation/SM2510>), the preservation, interpretation and promotion of which is a key driver for community interest in the site. NSCFT will work closely with Historic Environment Scotland in the development and implementation of its plans for the site.

There are no environmental designations on the site itself, although Rosal Forest is adjacent to the River Naver Special Area of Conservation. If harvesting operations are required (e.g. after windblow) control of runoff / siltation will be an important consideration.

The Syre Peatlands Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is approximately 1km away to the west, across the River Naver, whilst the Lon a' Chuil SSSI is approximately 1.5km away to the west. These SSSI are both also part of the Caithness and Sutherland Peatlands SAC and Special Protection Area (SPA). NSCFT's plans are unlikely to have any impact on the peatland SSSIs.

4.4 Negative consequences

What negative consequences (if any) may occur if your request is agreed to? How would you propose to minimise these?

You should consider any potential negative consequences for the local economy, environment, or any group of people, and explain how you could reduce these.

We don't anticipate that our project will result in negative consequences, because we will ensure that potential risks are mitigated. In particular we will work closely with Historic Environment Scotland to ensure that our plans for the Rosal clearance village do not have any negative impact on the scheduled monument.

During the community consultation carried out in July/August 2021 (see Appendix 2 of the accompanying Rosal Feasibility Study & Business Plan for details) a number of respondents raised concerns (often prompted by experience of the impact of the North Coast 500) with respect to the potential impact of mass tourism in terms of increased traffic movements and the impact on the remote nature of the site; however, our plans for the site are expected to produce a relatively modest increase in visitors, without the feared negative impacts.

4.5 Capacity to deliver

Please show how your organisation will be able to manage the project and achieve your objectives.

This could include the skills and experience of members of the organisation, any track record of previous projects, whether you intend to use professional advisers, etc.

NSCFT is a well-established community body which owns and manages a number of community assets: the Borgie cabin, the Drying Sheds at Forsinain and 37ha of the adjacent Forsinain Forest. It has a longstanding management contract with RSPB for the removal of tree crops as part of RSPB's peatland restoration work in the Dyke and Forsinain forests.

We will employ a Community Development Manager to take day-to-day responsibility for the management and development of the site. This will build capacity and provide additional skills and experience, particularly with respect to heritage management, which aren't available within the NSCFT Board.

We will work in partnership with Strathnaver Museum, Historic Environment Scotland, Highland Council and other stakeholders in the development and implementation of our clearance village project.

NSCFT will seek land management and other advice from the Community Woodlands Association, of which it is a member.

Section 5: Level and nature of support

5.1 Please provide details of the level and nature of support for the request from your community and, if relevant, from others (see CATS Guidance Section 3.2)

You should describe the community your body represents and include information on the proportion of your community who are involved with the request, how you have engaged with your community beyond the members of your organisation and what their response has been.

You should also show how you have engaged with any other communities that may be affected by your proposals.

The NSCFT community area is defined by the four community council areas of Tongue; Bettyhill, Strathnaver and Altnaharra; Strathy and Armadale; and Melvich. NSCFT has a membership of almost 300, is managed by a board of 11 directors and employs 2 part-time contractors.

A community consultation was carried out by SKS during July / Aug 2021. The survey was available online, using SurveyMonkey, the link to which was publicised via social media, and paper copies were also delivered to those who lived locally and were known not to have computer access.

A total of 65 surveys were returned, and a full analysis is included as Appendix 2 of the accompanying Rosal Feasibility Study & Business Plan.

The survey showed very strong support for NSCFT/community ownership of the site: 63 respondents supported community ownership (2 abstentions), with 61 supporting NSCFT ownership, with just 1 against (3 abstentions).

NSCFT recognises the need to demonstrate community support for its chosen proposals: this will be done via a simple online survey to be conducted August/September 2022: results will be made available to FLS as soon as possible

Section 6: Funding

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

(see CATS Guidance Section 1.5)

You should show your calculations of the costs associated with the transfer of the land or building and your future use of it, including any redevelopment, ongoing maintenance and the costs of your activities. All proposed income and investment should be identified, including volunteering and donations. If you intend to apply for grants or loans you should

demonstrate that your proposals are eligible for the relevant scheme, according to the guidance available for applicants.

Site acquisition and initial set-up costs are anticipated to be met by grant aid from the Scottish Land Fund, which supports urban and rural communities to become more resilient and sustainable through the ownership and management of land and land assets, and SSE renewables, which makes £225,000 per year from the Strathy North windfarm available for community and charitable projects, in the Bettyhill, Strathnaver and Altnaharra; Melvich; and Strathy and Armadale community council areas.

Post-acquisition funding is anticipated to come from a range of sources, including revenue funding from the Scottish Land Fund and small grants from Awards for All Scotland (for recreation infrastructure) and the Scottish Forestry Community Fund (to set up volunteering). NSCFT will contribute £25,000 over five years from its reserves to support the employment of the Community Development Manager.

After acquisition, NSCFT will work closely with Strathnaver Museum, and other stakeholders to develop a comprehensive project plan to research, preserve and enhance the clearance village (and other historic sites). We anticipate that the key funder for this project will be The National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF), through the National Lottery Grants for Heritage programme.

Please see section 9 of the accompanying Rosal Feasibility Study & Business Plan for more detail on our funding plans.


Signature

Two office-bearers (board members, charity trustees or committee members) of the community transfer body must sign the form. They must provide their full names and home addresses for the purposes of prevention and detection of fraud.

This form and supporting documents will be made available online for any interested person to read and comment on. Personal information will be redacted before the form is made available.

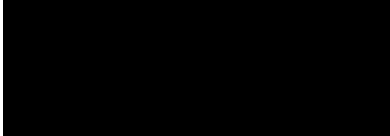
We, the undersigned on behalf of the community transfer body as noted at section 1, make an asset transfer request as specified in this form.


We declare that the information provided in this form and any accompanying documents is accurate to the best of our knowledge.

1. Name Andreas Herfurt
Address 

Date 8th August 2022

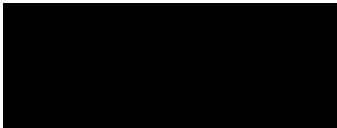
Position NSCFT Chair

Signature 

2. Name Al Whitworth
Address 

Date 8th August 2022

Position NSCFT Vice Chair

Signature 

Checklist of accompanying documents

To check that nothing is missed, please list any documents which you are submitting to accompany this form.

Section 1 – you **must** attach your organisation’s constitution, articles of association or registered rules

Title of document attached:

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

Documents attached: Map A - Rosal Infrastructure, Stand Types & Proposed Community Acquisition Area

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

Documents attached:

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

Documents attached: NSCFT Rosal Feasibility Study & Business Plan

Section 5 – evidence of community support

Documents attached: NSCFT Rosal Feasibility Study & Business Plan (Appendix 2)

Section 6 – funding

Documents attached: NSCFT Rosal Feasibility Study & Business Plan