

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.

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

Arkaig Community Forest (ACF) Group

1.2 Community transfer body address

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

Postal address:

2 Forestry Houses, Clunes, Achnacarry, Spean Bridge, Inverness-shire

Postcode: PH34 4EJ

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: Lorraine Servant

Postcode:

Email: arkaigcommunityforest@gmail.com

Telephone:

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 make 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	<input type="checkbox"/>	and its company number is	<input type="text"/>
or			
a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	and its charity number is	<input type="text" value="SCO45209"/>
or			
a Community Benefit Society (BenCom),	<input type="checkbox"/>	and its registered number is	<input type="text"/>
or			
Unincorporated organisation (no number)	<input type="checkbox"/>		

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. *If you have identified the land on Forest Enterprise Scotland's [Register of Land](#), please enter the details listed there*

Grid Reference: NN 202 886

Name and description of the land:

This application is for the Clunes Forest School Buildings and the adjacent woodland, Tom an Eireannach, which are situated in the community of Clunes on the shores of Loch Lochy. There are currently 2 buildings known as the Forest School at Clunes a workshop and an office/meeting/venue space. The buildings were used as an 'outstation' for Forestry Commission staff for the establishment and management of the surrounding Loch Arkaig and Clunes forests from the 1950's up to the 1990's. There is also a small enclosure containing raised beds designed as a small tree nursery and accessible garden

The woodland adjacent to the Forest School Buildings is known as Tom an Eireannaich and covers an area of 5.75 hectares. This woodland consists largely of ancient semi-natural oak and birch woodland, with two areas of open flat ground, and also including a relatively small enclosure (around 0.5 hectares) which used to house chicken pens and allotments belonging to each of the forestry houses, and which now contains a willow nursery and a maturing community orchard or forest garden.

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: £10,000. The DVS valuation is £15,000 but a £5,000 discount is requested – see section 8.3.1 in Feasibility Study (extract below).

ACF would like to request a discount based on the costs saving to FLS who would demolish the building if it was not being sold to the community. ACF have requested quotes for the cost for demolition and these vary from £8000 + VAT for asbestos removal and demolition to £2,650 + VAT for just demolition. It is likely as part of a later phase that ACF may replace the building with one more fit for purpose therefore they could justifiably request a **discount of £5,000** to cover any future costs of safe demolition that takes into account the presence of asbestos.

ACF would also like to apply for full access rights to the water supply, septic tank and over track contiguous to the site are requested as part of the disposition agreement.

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?

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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
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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?

Do you propose to make any payment for these rights?

Yes **No**

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: £		per
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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.

The ACF group have been managing Clunes Forest School and Tom an Eireannaich wood forest on a lease basis for the last three years. During that time they have been successful in obtaining Scottish Land Fund Stage 1 grant to investigate the feasibility of purchasing the area under the provisions of the Community Empowerment Act (2015) as delivered through Forestry and Land Scotland's Community Asset Transfer Scheme.

ACF have used the Stage 1 funding to commission a Feasibility Study and Business Plan in order to assess the viability and potential options for developing the school buildings and adjacent woodland. Their aim is to achieve a range of long term economic environmental and community benefits. The Feasibility Study has now been completed and is available as a supporting document.

ACF wish to take on the community ownership of this land and the buildings in order to achieve their own aspirations and also those of the wider community. At the start of the feasibility study process the initial ideas of the ACF Group were;

- Formalising and expanding community use
- Opportunities for education, tree nursery and allotments
- A base and admin facility for ACF and their partnership with Woodland Trust Scotland (WTS)
- Enable experiences of Loch Arkaig – e.g. remote cameras, interpretation
- Enhancing and protecting the conservation value of the woodland
- Opportunities for new micro businesses e.g. woodfuel, office rental
- Low key tourism facilities – food and facilities for walkers, cyclists and canoeists

The Feasibility Study looked at these initial aims along with those contributed by the wider community and stakeholders. A range of agreed options, endorsed through the consultation process, were taken forward into the business plan. The Feasibility Study showed that the forest school buildings and land could be used to deliver the following community aspirations and activities:

1. **Social, Community and Partnerships** (social and environmental outcomes)
 - a. Create a new play area.
 - b. Run activities for children and young people.

- c. Create a 'community hub' for social events and meeting space.
- d. Create office space for Arkaig Community Forest and the Woodland Trust Scotland.
- e. Improve parking facilities at Forest School.
- f. Provide community business and IT facilities.
- g. Provide a contribution to the physical and mental wellbeing and quality of life of the community

2. Conservation, Woodland Management and Produce (social, economic and environmental outcomes)

- a. Manage area for wildlife and conservation.
- b. Continuing Management of Community Orchard and Willow Nursery.
- c. Develop community firewood processes.
- d. Improve community workshop and tool storage.
- e. Developing non-timber forest products;
- f. Food Production (Keep chickens, bees or other animals)

3. Tourism and Recreation (economic outcomes)

- a. A public charging point for GPS/phones.
- b. Bird feeding/bird watching station.
- c. Interpretation for Loch Arkaig Pine Forest.
- d. A pop-up coffee station (occasional).
- e. Wildlife watching along the lines of 'Mull Eagle Watch'.

4. Environmental and Outdoor Education (social and environmental outcomes)

- a. Develop environmental resources and programmes for schools and others.

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.

The Feasibility Study highlights the strategic context in section 6.2.1, showing the importance and benefits of community ownership and what policies and support is in place to enable communities to acquire and manage land and buildings. The communities at Achnacarry, Bunarkaig and Clunes are relatively remote and would benefit from shared community ownership of this site through:

- Social cohesion through engagement with conservation work and food growing.
- Increased opportunities for employment.
- Potential to develop new projects that could yield socio-economic benefits.

In particular the community acquisition of this site will deliver the following benefits:

Theme 1 – Social, Community and Partnerships

- Increasing the potential for local employment.
- Enabling activities that add value locally and create economic, social and environmental opportunities.
- Delivering social and cultural objectives including health and wellbeing.
- Enabling mutually beneficial and synergistic growth through partnerships such as with the Woodland Trust Scotland.

Theme 2 – Conservation, Woodland Management and Produce

- Managing the woodland for wildlife and conservation;
- Caring for and developing the Community Orchard and Willow Nursery;
- Developing community woodfuel supply;
- Developing non-timber forest products;
- Providing a contribution to the physical and mental wellbeing and quality of life of the community.

Theme 3 – Tourism and Recreation

- Potential for nature and activity based and wildlife tourism
- Improving infrastructure that supports growth in nature, heritage and activity markets including the potential for developing cycling infrastructure.

- Developing opportunities along designated path networks to enhance their tourism potential.

Theme 4 - Environmental Education

- Providing a venue for high quality outdoor learning for both the local school and visiting schools.
- Potential for activities such as training courses, Forest School programmes, woodland nurseries, craft days, etc.

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.

None known

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.

No negative consequences known of

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.

During 2016 ACF in partnership with Woodland Trust Scotland acquired the Loch Arkaig Pine Forest covering some 1064 hectares and located on the south shore of Loch Arkaig. The land was acquired by ACF from Forestry Commission Scotland in December 2016, under the National Forest Land Scheme and with funding and support provided by largely by Woodland Trust Scotland (the two woodlands having been declared 'Surplus' by FCS and put up for disposal in 2013).

After this successful community acquisition, ACF retained direct ownership of two woodlands totalling around 53 hectares of the site (Loch Arkaig Pine Forest) and then transferred the rest of the forest to the Woodland Trust at zero financial gain. This was on the understanding that the community group would retain significant common rights in the management and utilisation of the whole forest, in perpetuity, and that that the two organisations would work collaboratively towards common aims. ACF has established a strong and successful partnership approach with the Woodland Trust in order to support conservation management and sustainable rural development working towards a shared vision of restoration of native woodland habitats across the site.

In addition to its work in managing the significant area of pine woodland at Loch Arkaig, ACF have been managing the Forest School Buildings and the adjacent woodland Tom an Eireannaich since 2016 under a formal management agreement with FLS. They carry out a range of activities to steward the site on a voluntary basis and so far they have:

- Brought the willow nursery and orchard on the site back into active management on the site of the old allotments.
- Cleaned out, repaired and maintained the water supply reservoir and storage tanks.
- Removed unused obstacles and structures on the site.
- Cleared bracken from neglected areas to create a football/shinty 'pitch'.
- Begun to use the old tree nursery beds for growing herbs and vegetables.
- Reinstated footpaths to the coppice and orchard.
- Consulted further on possible solutions to nuisance camping on land just east of the area; and consulted on possible woodlots and sites for woodfuel processing and small-scale sawmilling at Clunes.
- Repaired the perimeter fence around the willow nursery/allotment.
- Organised and run a number of training courses for locals and visitors

The woodland will continue to be used for practical courses and upgrading/refurbishing the Forest School will provide wet weather and classroom training opportunities.

The ACF Group have significant skills and expertise within its Board and members as is demonstrated by its success in community land management thus far.

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.

Arkaig Community Forest SCIO (ACF) is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation set up in 2014 to acquire and manage woodland for multiple community benefits and for native woodland restoration in the area defined by postcodes PH34 4EJ and 4EL in the vicinity of Loch Arkaig in Lochaber. ACF SCIO currently has 13 Ordinary members and is managed by a Board of five Charity Trustees all of whom live in the area. Details of the current Trustees and their skills and experience is shown in Appendix 3 of the Feasibility Study report.

The key aims and purposes of ACF are:

- to support and promote sustainable community development, where 'sustainable development' means development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

- to own and manage community land and associated assets for the benefit of the community and the public in general.
- to restore and protect the natural environment of the area, and in particular to restore and enhance the native woodland habitats and other semi-natural habitats and associated flora and fauna of the area.
- to support and enhance the understanding and interpretation of the environment, history, culture and heritage of the area.
- to improve the access, amenity and recreational value of the area.
- to encourage the advancement of land-based education, training, and personal development.
- to promote health and wellbeing.
- to provide a naturally safe, clean and welcoming environment at its locations.

The group have recently reviewed and revised their constitution following advice from FLS, HIE and Community Woodlands Association to ensure that it is in line with the Community Right to Buy legislation (Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015) and the FLS Community Asset Transfer scheme.

An important part of the feasibility study involved carrying out a full community and stakeholder consultation on the Options or Ideas that ACF had already identified. The community were also invited to submit new ideas for the site as part of the consultation process. This consultation elicited a response from a significant portion of this small community of Achnacarry, Bunarkaig and Clunes and also from nearly thirty stakeholders from various sectors. The community response was an overwhelming vote of support for ACF to proceed towards purchasing the site on behalf of the community. The Options presented to the community were voted on and ranked and then a long list was presented to the ACF Board who selected those Options to go forward into the business plan. The stakeholders were likewise very supportive however they did urge caution and some raised concerns about more ambitious plans to develop tourism at the site. From this work, and also the site assessment, it was clear that a number of constraints prevented some of the Options being included in the Business Plan at this stage, as more detailed work to develop markets and partnerships, resolve practical issue and address community concerns is required.

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.

Currently there is limited scope for enhanced revenue generation due to the lack of harvestable timber. Therefore the business plan has been developed with a ‘*small and safe*’ approach that still clearly demonstrates the financial viability of the site. The Feasibility Study and Business Plan identified a Strategic Business Direction with a two-phase approach to the development of the options for community benefit:

Phase 1 - these were ideas or options that could be taken forward to form the short list in the business plan that will support acquisition. These are the low risk, achievable and the only currently financially feasible options;

Phase 2 (Development) – these ideas or options that are not feasible as they stand as they require further development work. However, they have great potential and so could become feasible in a post-acquisition development phase.

The resulting practical and achievable business plan identifies costs and forecasts for managing and maintaining the site and for additional carrying out small scale projects. Most importantly the business plan also identifies that there is latent potential for future income to be realised through development of projects and partnerships. Pivotal to the realisation of this potential is the employment by ACF of a Ranger/Development Officer who can not only start to develop and deliver income generating activities but who can also work to address the constraints and work to collaborate with existing and new partnership for joint benefit.

The cashflow forecast and operating costs for the first five years is shown below:

CLUNES FOREST SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND WOODLAND	Phase 1 - Revenue and Costs Forecast				
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
INCOME					
Woodland Trust Scotland - facilities rental (1)	£ 1,500	£ 1,530	£ 1,561	£ 1,592	£ 1,624
Forestry grants - SRDP (2)	£ 150	£ 153	£ 156	£ 159	£ 162
ABC Group contribution (3)	£ 2,000	£ 2,040	£ 2,081	£ 2,122	£ 2,165
	£ 3,650	£ 3,723	£ 3,797	£ 3,873	£ 3,951
SLF - Revenue Funding - Ranger/Development Officer (4)	£ 17,338	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
SLF - Revenue Funding - legal fees (4)	£ 2,850	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
SLF - Capital Funding acquisition (4)	£ 14,250	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
SLF - Capital Funding acquisition - immediate repairs (5)	£ 1,425				
ACF fundraising (6)	£ 1,888	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Total income	£ 41,400	£ 3,723	£ 3,797	£ 3,873	£ 3,951
EXPENDITURE					
Insurances (1)	£ 300	£ 300	£ 306	£ 312	£ 318
Utilities	£ 400	£ 408	£ 416	£ 424	£ 433
Cleaning	£ 180	£ 184	£ 187	£ 191	£ 195
Broadband	£ 400	£ 408	£ 416	£ 424	£ 433
Accountancy	£ 150	£ 153	£ 156	£ 159	£ 162
Subscriptions - CWA etc	£ 100	£ 102	£ 104	£ 106	£ 108
Water supply and waster services	£ 300	£ 306	£ 312	£ 318	£ 325
Building Maintenance (2)	£ -	£ 500	£ 500	£ 500	£ 500
	£ 1,830	£ 2,361	£ 2,398	£ 2,436	£ 2,474
<i>Ranger/Development Officer (3)</i>					
Salary	£ 15,000	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Employer Costs	£ 2,250	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Expenses	£ 1,000	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
	£ 18,250				
CATS land acquisition costs	£ 15,000	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
CATS legal fees	£ 3,000	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
CATS acquisition - immediate repairs	£ 1,500				
	£ 19,500				
Total expenditure	£ 39,580	£ 2,361	£ 2,398	£ 2,436	£ 2,474
Surplus/(Deficit)	£ 1,820	£ 1,362	£ 1,400	£ 1,438	£ 1,476
Accumulated surplus/(deficit)	£ 1,820	£ 3,182	£ 4,582	£ 6,020	£ 7,496

Notes to the Financial Forecast:

The costs and revenues shown above are estimates that are:

- Based on the scenario for 'small and safe' using the guaranteed income from Woodland Trust Scotland.
- Based on annual revenue costs plus one-off capital purchase costs in Year 1
- Based on "present day" assumptions only but incorporating a 2% uplift year on year for inflation.
- Inclusive of VAT as applicable on the assumption that the ACF Group will not be able to reclaim or charge VAT under its current constitutional structure.

Notes on Income

- 1) Woodland Trust Scotland have confirmed an annual contribution of £125 per month assuming provision of suitable furniture/facilities. They have already made a commitment to this contribution.
- 2) An application to SRDP FGS for Sustainable Forest Management – Native Woodlands is likely to be successful following production and approval of a Woodland Management Plan by ACF in due course.
- 3) ABC currently pay a fixed amount of £180pa for a cleaner for the Forest School buildings but an annual income of £2000 from the ABC Hydro Community Benefit Fund will be applied for on an annual recurring basis for 5 years
- 4) Capital and revenue funding requested from SLF at 95% intervention rate.
- 5) These are repairs required on purchase capital funding requested from SLF at 95% intervention rate.
- 6) ACF fundraising for contribution to acquisition costs. This could include a specific application to ABC hydro fund for acquisition and development costs or use in kind contributions through volunteer hours and/or discount.

Notes on Expenditure

- 1) Insurance costs covers; buildings and contents, public liability, employer's liability.
- 2) Building maintenance costs covers such items as redecoration, workshop repairs/security and external parking improvements. There is an initial higher amount in year 1 to cover improvements requested by WTS to justify their contribution to office costs.
- 3) The costs of the Ranger/Development Officer are based a part time post (3 days/week) with a FTE salary of £25,000 with 15% on-costs for employer's NI etc, and £1000pa for expenses, training etc. The total pro rata is £18,250.

The cash flow forecast is based on all expected income forecasts which are either evidenced or expected with a degree of certainty. The community acquisition of this site is still financially viable without revenue funding for a Ranger/Development Officer as there is sufficient volunteer labour to enable the site to operate. However, the potential to expand existing and realise new income streams is greatly enhanced by this post. An allowance has been included for SLF Revenue funding to support the costs of the Ranger/ Development Officer for one year as the current SLF funding programme ends in March 2021, although if the fund is continued then further revenue funding for the post may be forthcoming.

Capital costs that are project-based such as car parking, food production, interpretation and eco-tourism are not included in the cashflow as they would be subject to their own project budget to be submitted alongside any applications for grant funding.

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 Margaret Goudie

Address

Date 1 September 2019

Position Chair

Signature

2. Name Alison Austin

Address

Date 1 September

Position Treasurer

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: Constitution attached

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

Documents attached: maps included in Clunes Forest School Buildings and Woodland Feasibility Study

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

Documents attached: None

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: Clunes Forest School Buildings and Woodland Feasibility Study

Section 5 – evidence of community support

Documents attached: Clunes Forest School Buildings and Woodland Feasibility Study

Section 6 – funding

Documents attached: Clunes Forest School Buildings and Woodland Feasibility Study

