

Balmacara Community Trust
The Square
Balmacara
Kyle of Lochalsh
IV40 8DJ

31 December 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

The importance of restoring Balmacara Old Mill Hall from a community perspective

I am currently facilitating preparation of the Lochalsh Local Place Plan, commissioned by Kyle and Lochalsh Community Trust and funded by the Highland Council.

The Local Place Plan will be a community-led plan based on the recently produced Lochalsh Community Action Plan. Being a Local Place Plan, it will have statutory weight and will be taken into account by the Highland Council in their decision-making, particularly in relation to land-use planning.

Restoration of the Old Mill Hall in Balmacara will be an important element of the Local Place Plan, because it will provide a range of benefits to the local community - as a multi-use space for the community itself to meet and gather, as a place for enterprise and entrepreneurship, as a destination for visitors, and by restoring an important part of the community's local heritage. That combination of uses will greatly strengthen the local community, and forms part of their wider development strategy that includes acquisition of the adjacent former campsite as an income-generating enterprise to further boost visitor numbers and provide economic benefit.

A failure to restore the Old Mill Hall would be a huge lost opportunity for Balmacara. It would mean that this very active community would continue to lack a space to meet and gather, and that the economic benefits associated with space for local enterprise and greater footfall from increased visitor number would fail to materialise. And that is without even considering the important cultural and historical value of the Old Mill Hall for locals and visitors alike.

Please feel free to forward this letter to others as evidence of the importance of refurbishing the Old Mill Hall

Yours faithfully,



Nick Wright BA (Hons), MSc, MRTPI