



Applecross Community Company
Filling Station
Applecross
Strathcarron
IV54 8LR

10 February 2025

Re: Correspondence to follow up from 28th January 2025 evidence hearing on Land Reform (Scotland) Bill

Dear Convenor and Members of the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee,

Thank you again for the opportunity to give evidence at the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee Meeting on 28th January 2025 on the Land Reform (Scotland) Bill.

You asked for further information of our experience in relation to the resources and financial costs associated with undertaking community consultation and engagement activities.

As I described during the Committee Meeting, the Applecross Community Company (ACC) is a community-led development trust and therefore undertakes community consultation and engagement activities on a very regular basis.

The financial and resources costs involved depends very much on the type of the activity, for example:

- Our approach to community engagement is ongoing – we regularly issue newsletters, provide updates on social media and post updates locally. As our staff and volunteer Directors are resident on the peninsula, they are easily accessible should anyone have any questions or concerns. These activities are considered core parts of staff and Director roles.
- Regular public meetings – through our annual general meetings and participation in the Applecross Forum (a quarterly meeting of local organisations) we provide updates on projects and respond to feedback and questions from community members.
- Specific consultation events – ACC regularly holds community consultation exercises on specific projects. Costs of recent examples range from simply staff and volunteer time, refreshments and printing costs, to £6,000 - £30,000 for more substantial consultation exercises involving external technical input and taking place over a number of months.

One further point I wanted to make is about the relationship between Land Management Plans (LMPs) and Local Place Plans (LPPs). Whilst we support the inclusion of LPPs as one way in which local needs and ambitions could be recognised within an LMP, we do not think it would be helpful if local input was limited to an LPP. There are a number of communities, including our own, who have not yet completed an LPP and the Bill would not achieve its stated aim were these communities excluded from having their views reflected in the LMP.

For example, the Applecross Community Company, Applecross Trust and Applecross Community Council worked together (alongside Highland Council and Communities Housing Trust) to develop a Community Land Use Plan in 2019. The three local organisations intend to continue to work together to develop an LPP in the coming years, but only in-line with our own long-term planning timeframes rather than external deadlines.

With kind regards

Megan MacInnes
Local Development Manager
Applecross Community Company