



2020

Community Needs Analysis for Former Lochmaddy Primary School Development 'Àrainneachd Àlainn'



North Uist Development Company

6/12/2020

Contents

1.	North Uist Development Company	2
2.	Higher level Community Needs Analysis	3
2.1	Demographics of North Uist and Lochmaddy	3
2.2	Resident Perception Mapping.....	5
2.3	Drug and alcohol statistics	6
2.4	SIMD data regarding geographic access and community relevant problems	7
3.	Consultation Based Needs Analysis	9
3.1	Needs identified by previous consultations.....	9
3.2	Feasibility consultation results.....	9
3.3	Comann na Mara survey	14
3.4	Lochmaddy event, 3 rd November 2018.....	15
3.5	Architect design consultation events and survey	18
4.	Community consultation results and feedback to incorporate into the design	21
5.	Conclusions	22

1. North Uist Development Company

North Uist Development Company (NUDC) was set up in 2010 to promote the social, educational, cultural, economic and environmental wellbeing of the people of North Uist. NUDC's main activities are developing community projects and managing and supporting a variety of local groups and projects including an operational 1.8MW wind farm. NUDC is supported by Highlands & Islands Enterprise through the Community Account Management programme and is able to employ one full-time Project Delivery Manager.

The Company's development plan (2018-2023) notes a number of prioritised projects that will assist in delivering its aims and objectives. These have been shaped by earlier work and are designed to assist with achieving the aspirations of the community expressed in the response to regular consultation. The following are three key projects that the Company has identified as a priority moving forward:

- North Uist Renewables Project;
- North Uist Environmental Centre at Lochmaddy School
- Promotion of Affordable Housing on North Uist

Currently, the Company comprises the following volunteer directors:

Dr Jean Archer

For over 20 years Dr Jean Archer was a geologist with the Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI). She devised and organised geological exhibitions for the GSI and worked briefly with the Geological Museum in South Kensington on its proposal for an exhibition on the geology of Ireland. Since moving to North Uist ten years ago she has given numerous public talks on the remarkable geological structure and landscape heritage of the Uists.

Mustapha Hocine

Mustapha Hocine lives in North Uist with his family and is actively involved in a number of community organisations. He has been chair of North Uist Development Company since 2015. Mustapha works for the NHS and for a number of years was Substance Misuse Coordinator for Uist & Barra. This year he has gained a wider remit within the Alcohol & Drugs Partnership for the Health Board. He is also an active crofter.

Peter Keiller

Peter worked as General Practitioner in the North Uist Medical Practice from 1991. After retiring he moved to Grimsay where he has taken on a croft. Peter is currently the Chair of Tagasa Uibhist - a charity delivering care and support to our community especially the elderly and vulnerable. He is also involved with East Camp Trust and Uist Council of Voluntary Organisations in addition to being a director of North Uist Development Company.

Catherine Macleod

Catherine has lived in North Uist for nearly 40 years becoming a director of NUDC 6 years ago as a result of her commitment to developing the economy of the island. She was previously head teacher at Lochmaddy School for 10 years.

Kirsty Macleod

Kirsty Macleod studied at the University of Aberdeen in Gaelic language and Culture. She returned home to work and set up her own business - the Kirkibost Craft Hub, and is committed to the community of North Uist, passionate about the economic development of Uist and the Western Isles.

Pam MacPherson

A graduate of painting and photography from Liverpool College of Art. Pam worked for 28 years in a self-employed partnership as rocking horse makers and restorers of British and European rocking horses and related toys. She has worked on restoring a number of properties, having moved to Scotland in 2007.

Stuart MacPherson

A graduate of sculpture and photography at Liverpool College of Art. Stuart has previously worked as a sculptor and teacher before becoming self-employed in partnership as rocking horse makers and restorers of British and European rocking horses and related toys. He has worked on restoring a number of properties, having moved to Scotland in 2007.

2. Higher level Community Needs Analysis

2.1 Demographics of North Uist and Lochmaddy

North Uist is defined as the area encompassing the islands of Berneray, North Uist, Baleshare and Grimsay, covered by the HS6 postcode. Lochmaddy is the administrative centre for North Uist. The population for North Uist has fallen significantly over the last 50 years and the current population (according to the 2011 census) is 1,619 of which 26.1% are aged 65 and over and 12.2 are aged under 16. There is a significant level of social housing in North Uist. 15% of all houses are socially rented. Statistics show that between 2001 and 2008 there was a decrease of 7.4% in the total number of children and an increase in the number of residents of pensionable age – the highest in the Outer Hebrides.

National Records Household Projections offer a longer-term view to 2026. The population projections show a 5.2% decrease throughout the Outer Hebrides from 27,560 in 2012 to 26,115 in 2026. This represents a 12.9% decrease in the Rural Lewis and Harris area, a 5% increase in Stornoway, Broadbay and Point area, but with the greatest decrease of 16.8% in the Uists and Barra.

The Council's Community Profile notes the following demographic and social statistics:

- Out of the total of 1,235 people in North Uist aged 16-74 a total of 867 (70%) are economically active.
- Of those who are economically active, most people are in full-time employment, although less than the Outer Hebrides average, while 15% were in part-time employment. In island areas, North Uist has the lowest percentage of unemployed.
- The Hebrides including North Uist has a weak economic base which is concentrated on a narrow range of sectors and especially reliant on primary industries and the public sector.
- CnES is the largest employer in the Outer Hebrides, with c.1600 employees (if funding continues to decrease for the Comhairle a funding shortfall of £5.2m is anticipated to 2023; hence the number of employees may drop considerably). The MoD, through its military base and private partnerships, employs c.100 people. These sectors are insufficiently diverse to sustain a young, educated population and, coupled with a lack of well-paid jobs, means those

in the age range 15 – 29 years figure disproportionately among those who choose to leave the island.

- Local businesses suffer from a lack of diversity. An audit of local businesses in North Uist was carried out in 2011. It is estimated that around 54% of the businesses identified are within the tourism and culture sectors (5 hotels; 24 B&Bs; 44 self-catering businesses; 16 arts related businesses; 3 visitor centres; 5 sporting related businesses).
- Of the 791 households in North Uist, 602 (76%) are owned. Of those owned, 415 (52.5%) are owned outright, while 187 (23.6%) are owned with a mortgage or loan. North Uist has the highest percentage of houses which are owned in all island areas. North Uist also has the lowest percentage of social rented houses in all island areas.
- Level 4 qualifications and above are held by 28.3% of the population, higher than the Outer Hebrides average. In island areas North Uist has the highest percentage of those with level 4 and above qualifications. Of the 1,579 people aged 3 and over in North Uist, a total of 1,077 people (68.2%) have some Gaelic ability while 502 (31.8%) have no Gaelic skills.
- The demographic imbalance illustrated by the reducing number of young people and increasing number of people in the upper age bands, along with the reliance on public sector and primary industries and tourism among local businesses, presents a challenge for all the agencies with responsibility for the future sustainability of North Uist.

The 2017 National Statistics indicate the following population breakdown for the Outer Hebrides:

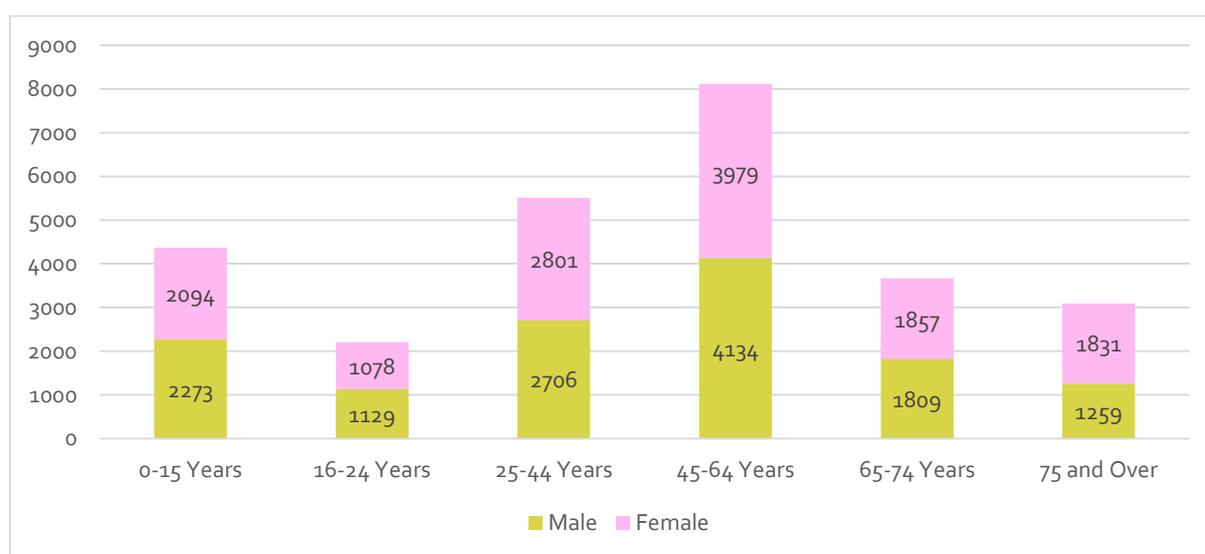


Figure 1: Population Age and Gender Breakdown

CnES with the National Records of Scotland (2017) have determined the following population projections from 2016 to 2026. It is noted that projections are trend based and therefore envisage conditions in the future based on what currently occurs. Issues such as migration and natural change must be factored into these calculations and this brings with it considerable uncertainty

Scotland: The 2016-based projections show the total population of Scotland will increase from 5,404,700 million in 2016 to 5,693,201 million by 2041 and continue to rise into the future. Along with the projected rise in population is the projected increase in the number of people of pensionable age, which is projected to rise in all Council areas. Those of pensionable age and over is estimated to increase by 5% over the ten-year period 2016 to 2026.

Outer Hebrides: In summary, the projections indicate a 4.8% decline in population from 26,900 in 2016 to 25,616 by 2026 (a reduction of 1,284), the largest percentage decline in Scotland.

In the Outer Hebrides the projected population decline is due to more deaths than births (negative natural change). The Outer Hebrides is expected to have a negative natural change of -4.8% over the period 2016 to 2026, while net migration is positive at 0.4%. Therefore, the decline in the population is due to a large negative natural change.

Within this context, significant changes in the age structure of the Outer Hebrides population are also projected:

- 0-15 years: Nationally, the number of children 0-15 is projected to increase by 2% by 2026. The number of children is projected to increase in 16 of the 32 local authorities. The largest percentage decline in this age group is in the Outer Hebrides by -7%.
- Working Age: The working age population is projected to increase in 12 council areas from 2016-2026 and increase nationally by 3% over the period. The Outer Hebrides is projected to have the greatest decline in this age group at -5%.
- Pensionable Age: The population of pensionable age (considering the change in state retirement age) is projected to increase by 2026 in all council areas except Glasgow City, Outer Hebrides and Dundee. In 2016 Dumfries and Galloway, Argyll and Bute and the Outer Hebrides had the highest proportions of people aged 65 and over at 26%. East Lothian will have the highest increase by 2026 at 11%. The Outer Hebrides is projected to see a 2% decrease in this age group from 2016 to 2026. By 2026 the Outer Hebrides is projected to have a 23% increase in those aged 75 and over.

2.2 Resident Perception Mapping

The chart below illustrates the local resident's perception of life in the Outer Hebrides with reference to 14 key aspects of everyday life:

Specifically relating to North Uist (HS6), it is noted that no aspects are rated higher than a score of 5, however the strengths are identified as "Identity and Belonging", "Feeling Safe", "Natural Space", and "Housing and Community". No aspect is rated lower than a score of 3, however the two lowest scoring aspects are "Moving Around" and "Public Transport". "Social interaction" "Work and local economy" "Facilities and amenities" "Play and recreation" "Streets and spaces" "Moving around" and "Influence and sense of control" are all rated low.

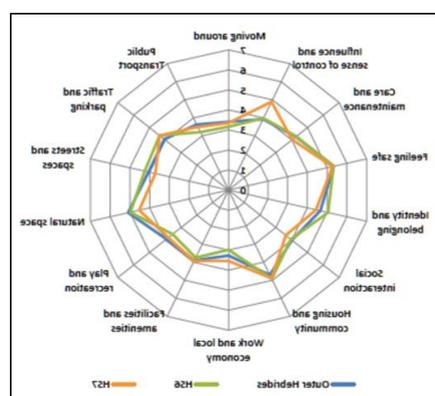


Figure 2. Resident Perception Mapping

2.3 Drug and alcohol statistics

A number of the activities considered through the consultation process, seek to alleviate the challenges faced locally with regards to health and wellbeing. In particular, the activities proposed by Taigh Chearsabhagh in therapeutic services such as art therapy which are targeted at individuals with potential health issues. The following statistics have been provided by the local Drug and Alcohol Partnership.

The chart below illustrates the trend in the number of alcohol related hospital admissions years, comparing Scotland, Shetland, Orkney and The Western Isles, and notes an overall improvement. Although the figures show an overall improvement across the last decade, there has been an increase in the Western Isles from 2014/2015, contrary to overall trend in Scotland.

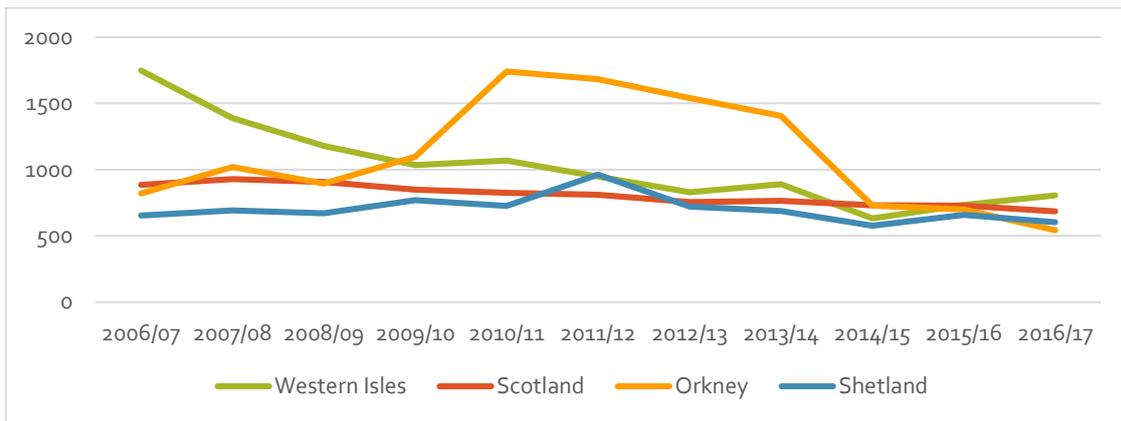


Figure 3: Trends in Alcohol Related Hospital Admissions

As shown in the chart below, the rate of Drunk and Disorderly Offences recorded per 10,000 of population has dropped over the past 10 years, in line with Scotland as a whole.

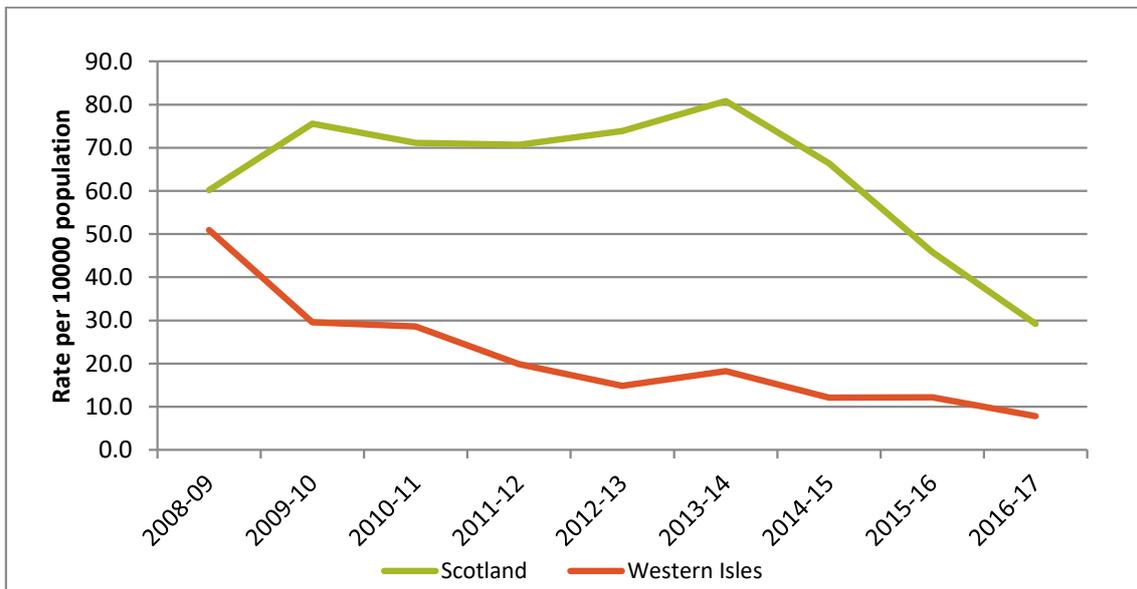


Figure 4: Trends in Drunk and Disorderly Offence Rates

However, as illustrated below, there has been an increase over the last two years in the occurrence of Driving Under the Influence Offences, against an overall downward trend of National figures.

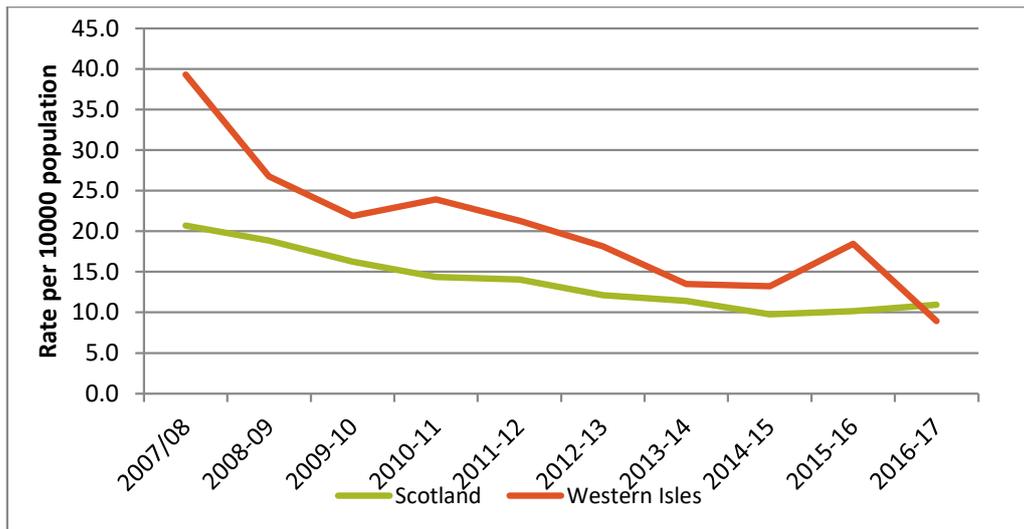


Figure 5: Trends in Driving Under the Influence Offences

2.4 SIMD data regarding geographic access and community relevant problems

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is the government's official tool for assessing smaller population zones (average population 800) with the lowest levels of deprivation in the country. The SIMD is used to focus and inform policies and resources to tackle social inequalities in Scotland.

Datzone So1009022 encompasses Benbecula and North Uist, including Lochmaddy. This datzone is ranked 3,324 sitting around average on overall deprivation nationally. With reference to individual factors, the area shows the lowest levels of deprivation with regards to Crime Rank (top 10%), Housing Domain (top 30%) and Employment and Health Domains (both top 40%).

The domain's geographic access score is 135 placing it in the 2% most deprived in Scotland with regards to accessing services. The datzone information also indicates 3.4% of the population as being employment deprived, and 9.6% as being income deprived.

Additionally, with regards to childhood health, it is noted that Body Mass Index statistics published by National Statistics for Scotland show that the Western Isles Health Board has the highest rate of childhood obesity amongst Primary 1 pupils nationally, with 26.7% of P1 pupils being overweight (5.3% above the national average).

The Scottish Rural Policy Centre (SRUC) published a report in 2014 entitled Rural Scotland in Focus, which looked to monitor how rural Scotland is changing. It focuses on population trends, the lives of young people, the levels and experiences of poverty and disadvantage and how use of our finite rural land resource is negotiated through planning and other means. With specific reference to the project in Lochmaddy, it is important to consider the aspects of rural inequalities, which, as listed below create challenges to living that are not experienced by communities within larger urban areas.

In reviewing employment in rural areas, the SRUC report highlights a significantly larger percentage of those in part time or smaller contract jobs, often with lower hourly rates or salaries than counterparts in urban population centres. Many rural areas have become increasingly reliant on the Tourism Industry, and thus many jobs are seasonal in demand.

Living outwith larger urban areas is likely to increase the costs of goods overall – primarily due to the cost of the supply chain network required. This can be seen in the cost of petrol and diesel with a

predominant market of independent providers, unable to offer the prices of larger national outlets. This issue raises a secondary cost to residents, with rural communities relying more on private transport, and often having to travel further for services. Ultimately, for residents of communities such as those in Lochmaddy, more fuel is required, and that fuel is supplied at a higher cost.

The “Minimum Income Standard for Remote Rural Scotland” report follows on from work and research on the Minimum Income Standard for Scotland. Considering the previously noted inequalities in rural living, the report headlines that the cost of food and consumable goods are between 10-50% higher in rural areas, whilst clothing and household goods are between 30-50% higher than in urban areas.

The Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership predicts a need for a minimum of 1500 jobs for sustainable population to prevent the ongoing decline, with the reversal of population decline and retention of young people being the primary aim of local development plans.

The OHCPP Locality Plan for North Uist & Benbecula shows that North Uist and Benbecula have improved the least compared to other islands and Scottish areas and that this is the second most vulnerable area within the islands. Figure 7 shows that in North Uist & Benbecula, child poverty is predicted to increase significantly, as are emergency admissions to hospital and early mortality, alongside a decreasing population. Additionally, the Scottish Rural Policy Centre report ‘Rural Scotland in Focus’ showed inequalities in rural areas where the cost of food and goods is between 10-50% (50% in the Uists) higher and household goods 30-50% higher than urban areas. With public transport noted as having a lot of room for improvement in the Locality Plan, residents primarily rely on vehicles where fuel is considerably more expensive than on the mainland. The cost of living is increasing throughout the UK, as noted in recent 2018 newspaper reports, and this trend is predicted to increase post-Brexit. North Uist, which is a recognised deprived rural area, is only predicted to improve deprivation levels in coming years if there is significant development.

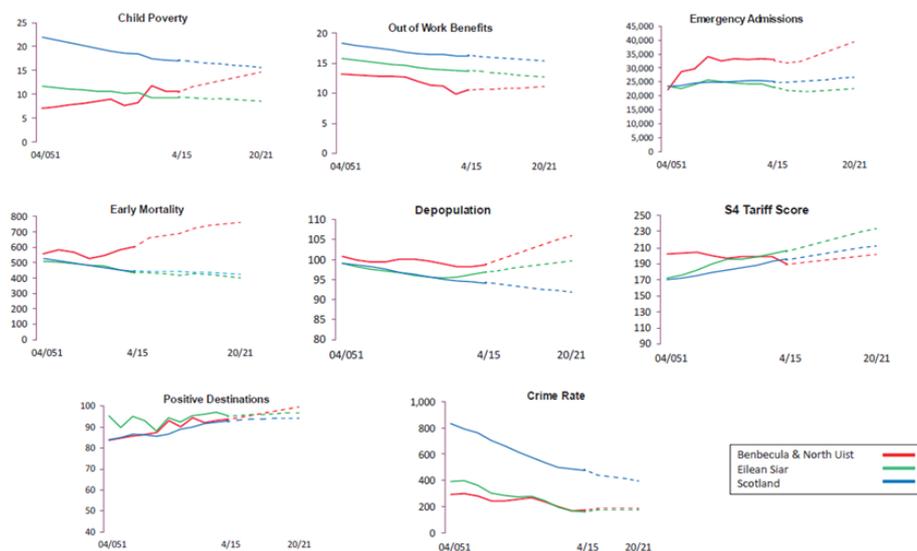


Figure 7. OHCPP North Uist Locality Plan projections of various community relevant problems

Additionally, the Outer Hebrides has a significantly higher number of avoidable deaths, including suicide, when compared to Shetland and Orkney. Shetland recorded 185/100,000 population in 2016, in comparison with 335/100,000 in the Western Isles. Recent suicides in 2018 led to a campaign ‘Let’s Chalk about Mental Health’ in Lewis, kickstarted by young people. In 2015, it emerged that the

number of alcohol-related deaths in the Western Isles was the highest in decades and double the Scottish average. Over 17 million people in the UK are living with either a mental health or long-term health condition, and the number is expected to double by 2030.

3. Consultation Based Needs Analysis

3.1 Needs identified by previous consultations

As part of the wider An Torc project, there was considerable community consultation regarding the Lochmaddy School and its potential future use. In discussions with key stakeholders, two of the key project partners of An Torc – Lews Castle College and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig – confirmed that the School would make ideal teaching space for their respective courses and would be happy to use the facility as soon as it was available. There was considerable community support for student accommodation. However, given the time and developments since these discussions, and in relation to this new project, further stakeholder consultation was required.

There have also been a significant number of consultations with the North Uist community regarding the concept of an environmental centre to highlight the unique environment and geology of the Uists. NUDC was part of a Steering Group exploring the creation a Hebridean Archaeological and Environmental Research Centre (HAERC), which would encompass renowned archaeological evidence collected on the Udal peninsula. A Feasibility Study was carried out by EKOS and completed in 2015. It was clear that there is significant interest in the environment of the Uists by both locals and visitors.

The recent feasibility study included a wide community survey, comprising an online survey, a paper survey distributed at key points around North Uist, and a door-to-door survey. There have also been two events in Lochmaddy community hall: one in combination with the Comann na Mara AGM, and the second a dedicated event to discuss the results of the feasibility study, ask for interactive community input into the proposed business vision and seek community input into how the proposed vision can meet the key needs of the community. There were further consultations in 2019 to discuss the architectural plans and the business plan. Additionally, there have been several emails to NUDC in reference to the proposed development, including 1 from Edinburgh University stating their urgent need to find low cost accommodation in Lochmaddy or else move their annual field trip to another location which will be a loss of income to Uist; 1 from a local community member stating the need for low cost accommodation in Lochmaddy; 1 from a North Uist resident expressing her thoughts on including rainbows in the Environment Centre, 1 from an artist requiring accommodation and studio space in Lochmaddy, 1 asking for continued expansion of electric vehicles and vehicle charging points, 3 looking for business space, several enquiries asking for shared student/co-working space, 2 asking for craft business space and 1 asking for space to run artist retreat workshops for an art based tourism business.

3.2 Feasibility consultation results

In order to determine the level of community support, and to ensure that any design and concept work for the layout suited the desired usage of the building, a community survey was conducted. This survey was distributed electronically through the Development Company's social media channels and mailing lists, with hard copies made available to visitors to the local shops and ferry office.

The following outlines the collated responses from 120 respondents. All attributable data, including online respondent's IP addresses have been removed to anonymise the data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

Questions One and Two asked the respondents to indicate their age and gender, providing the demographic overview below:

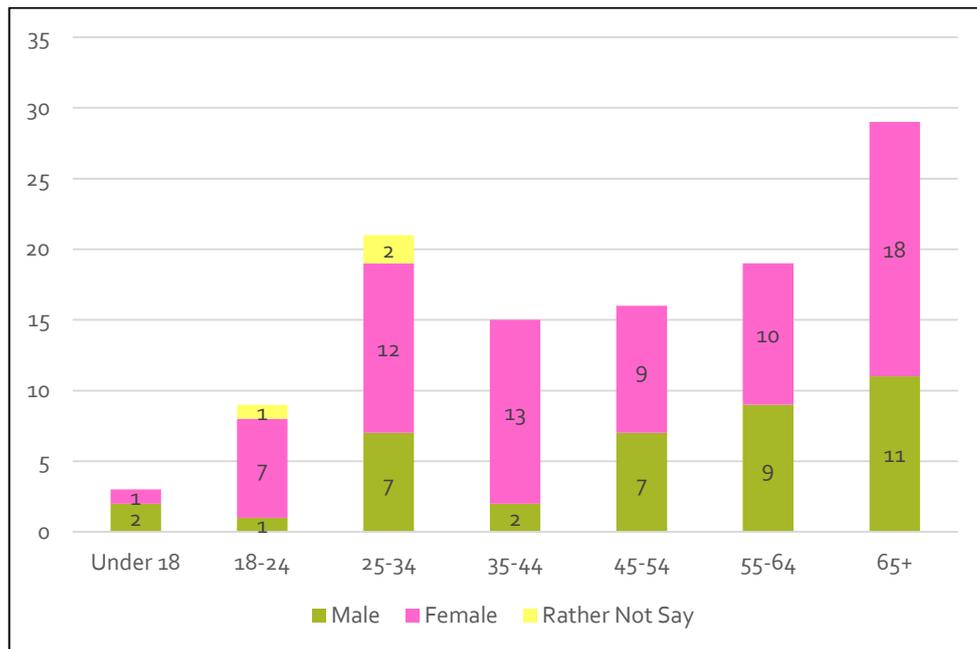


Figure 8: Respondent Demographic Breakdown

Question Three asked the respondents to provide their postcode in order that a geographical assessment of respondents could be carried out. This is illustrated below, showing the clustering and spread of all survey respondents.

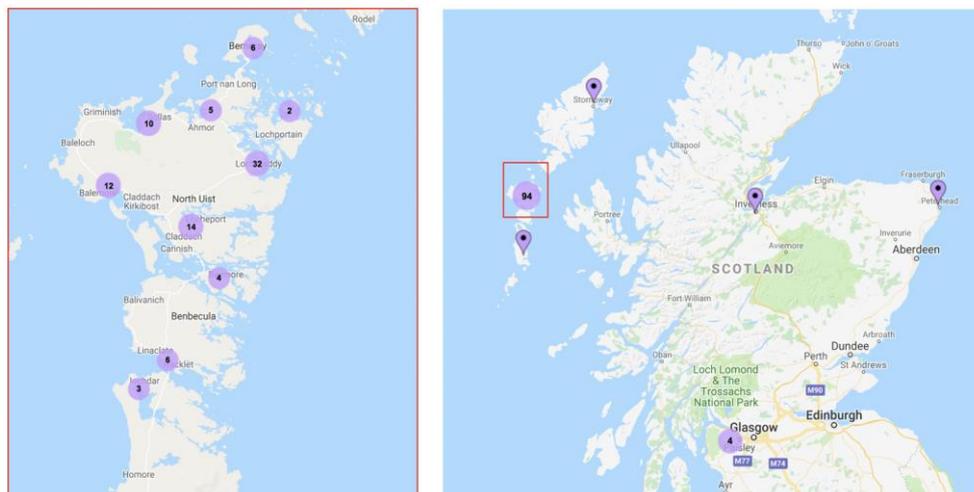


Figure 9: Geographic Spread of Responses

Question Four asked respondents if they were supportive of North Uist Development Company taking ownership of the former Lochmaddy Primary School for wider community use.

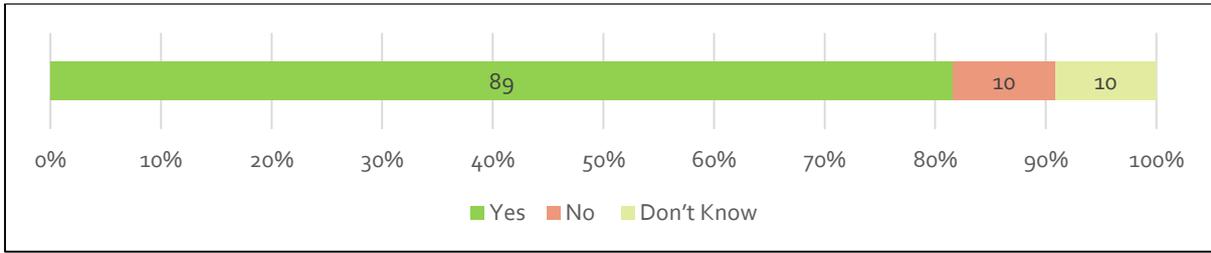


Figure 10: Respondent Support for Redevelopment

For respondent who indicated, "don't know", the opportunity was provided to expand on their reasons or concerns. These were noted as follows:

- Would like to know what the survey shows and how the scheme would develop
- Depends on what is will be used for and if it will have a purpose.
- Depends what they will do with it
- Depends what they want to do. Needs to be for community
- What are the goals of NUDC? If truly for the local community then yes else no.
- Do not know how it will develop and to what ends.
- It would depend on proposed use for building
- Without investment it could become a liability
- Depends on what they plan to do with it
- Depends on its ultimate use

Question Five outlined the three key areas that had previously been identified as possible functions within the refurbished facility. Respondents were then asked to rate the extent to which they supported a number of key elements or options. The results are noted below:

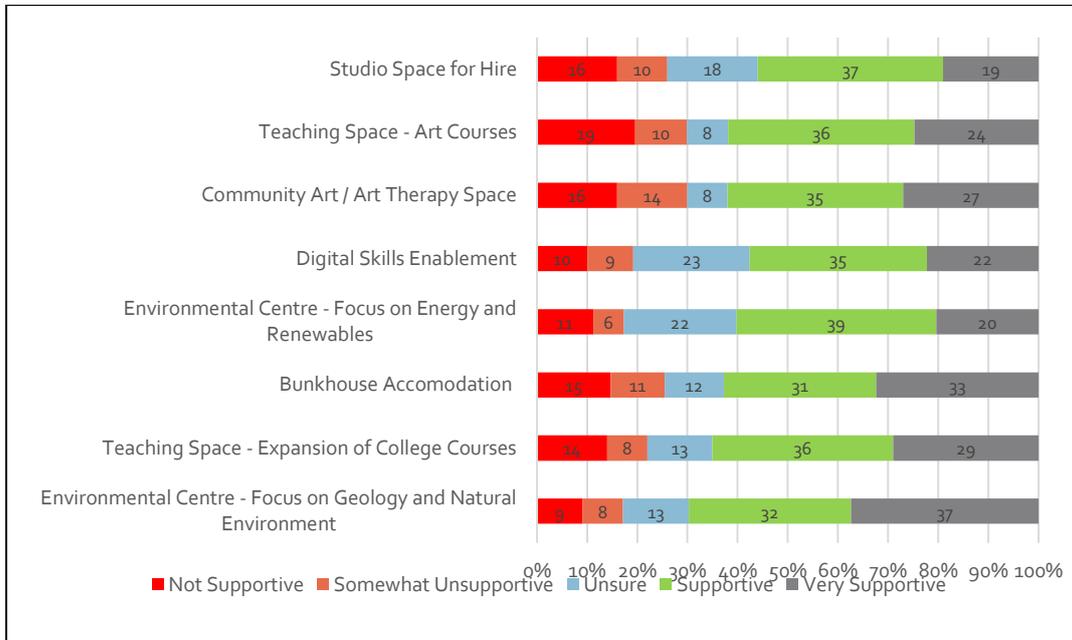


Figure 11: Respondent Support for Proposed Elements

From the chart above, an average score (where 1 is the least supportive and 5 is the most supportive) can be determined. These are listed in order below:

Environmental Centre - Focus on Geology and Natural Environment	3.81	1 st
Teaching Space - Expansion of College Courses	3.58	2 nd
Bunkhouse Accommodation	3.55	3 rd
Environmental Centre - Focus on Energy and Renewables	3.52	4 th
Digital Skills Enablement	3.51	5 th
Community Art / Art Therapy Space	3.43	6 th
Teaching Space - Art Courses	3.37	7 th
Studio Space for Hire	3.33	8 th

Table 1: Ranked Score of Proposed Elements

Question Six then gave respondents the opportunity to provide further comments in support of the above ratings, these are listed by theme in the table below, and noted in full within Appendix One.

Respondents highlighted the need for the project to focus on the local community.	11
Respondents highlighted the potential for supporting the local economy.	10
Respondents highlighted the possible synergy with environmental and local natural heritage initiatives.	7
Respondents noted their concerns around a perceived over provision for the arts in Lochmaddy.	5
Respondents highlighted the possible synergy with successful arts provision, including the potential to expand exiting courses and partnerships.	4
Respondents commented on the project overall, or NUDC as a delivery agent.	2
Respondents noted their difficulty in determining the best options, and the importance of ensuring compatibility within the usable space.	2

Table 2: Respondent's Suggested Inclusions

Question Seven asked the respondents to rank 8 possible considerations for the project, with the results noted below.

This overall table lists the proposed considerations by the average rank score (1st to 8th).

Children's Indoor Activities	3.32	1 st
Skills Development / Community Learning	3.80	2 nd
Children's Outdoor Activities	3.99	3 rd
Cinema	4.21	4 th
Community Art / Art Therapy Space	4.43	5 th
Polycrub / Gardening	4.75	6 th

Digital Skills Enablement	4.91	7 th
Theatre	5.63	8 th

Table 3: Ranked Additional Considerations

The following chart shows the instances in which the elements were ranked first, second, and third by respondents.

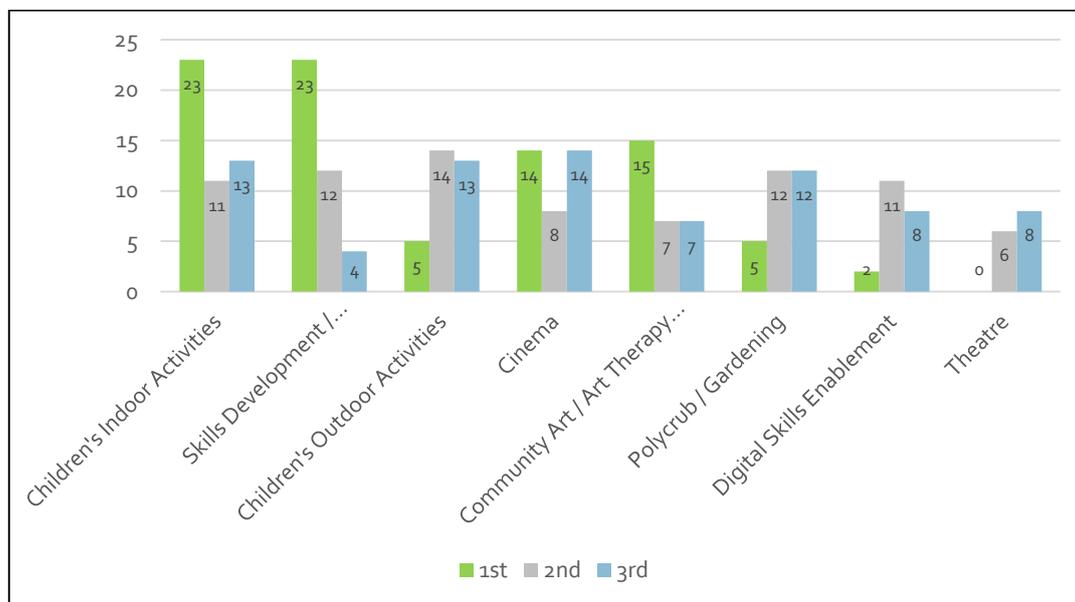


Figure 12: Respondent's Top Three Ranked Inclusions

Question Eight then allowed respondents to indicate any additional uses they felt appropriate for the school. These have been summarised in the table below, with the full verbatim responses listed in Appendix One.

Community Meeting Space	7
Space for the Elderly	5
Youth Club / Provision for Children	5
Café	3
Performance / Arts and Culture Spaces	4
Employment Support / Practical Skills	2
Gym / Exercise Space	3
Accommodation	1
Bunkhouse / Campervan Provision	2
Community Support Groups	2
Display of Local Collections	1
Further Education Space	2

Internet Access	1
Retail Space	1
Tourist Information / Wayfinding	2

Table 4: Additional Considerations

Concluding the survey, **Question Nine** gave the respondents the opportunity to provide any further comments on the project as a whole. These are included in full in Appendix One and summarised by theme in the table below:

Desire for community use as a priority	7
Concerns that focus on arts does not benefit the local economy	4
Considerations of use	6
Concerns over competition with local facilities	2
Improve provision of children's facilities	2
Negative comments towards NUDC	2
Comment of Support for NUDC and the Project	3
Concerns over tourism and education	1
Concerns over use of public money	1
Desire for a focus on employment and retention of young people	1
Desire for arts and cultural elements	1
Support for elderly	1

Table 5: Thematic Assessment of Comments

3.3 Comann na Mara survey

NUDC sought and was given permission to have a presence at the AGM of Comann na Mara, held in Lochmaddy Community Hall on 27 August.

Approximately 15 people were in attendance and NUDC LDOs had the opportunity to address the meeting to provide information about the planned project and answer questions.

An 8-question survey was also handed to participants in the meeting and five were returned.

4 of 5 were in favour of NUDC acquiring the former School. The reasons for this were:

- "Should have somewhere to display the wonderful area we live in"
- "Educational for visitors and children"
- "We need to be aware of environmental problems"

The main aspects that the Centre should focus on are:

Lochmaddy Bay and environment	4
Geology	4
Machair	3
Renewable energy	1
Other	RSPB, RNLI, young people

Free, rather than paid, admission was preferred unanimously

4 of 5 respondents wanted Comann na Mara involved in the project. The ways in which CnM could get involved include:

- A location for the feed from underwater cameras which were donated to CnM by SNH a number of years ago, but have never been used
- The original CnM concepts of education and conservation

Other comments included:

- More accommodation is needed
- A subsea diving event
- Keep number of jobs to a minimum, as it's difficult to find staff
- Youth café/lunch club
- Include information about other local area, such as Sollas, Berneray

3.4 Lochmaddy event, 3rd November 2018

In addition to previous consultation exercises, it was decided to hold an event which would provide an opportunity to update attendees with the latest plans and also solicit the community's views. The event was held in Lochmaddy Community Hall. Although the School itself would have been a more appropriate venue, this was not possible due to the fact that the building is currently being used by a film crew and the Comhairle had previously informed us that they could not arrange insurance cover for an event of the type planned.

Publicity

The event was publicised with posters put up in high profile locations, via social media, the NUDC website and two mailings in the run-up to the event to the NUDC mailing list (nearly 400 email addresses).

The format

The event was planned as a drop-in over two hours. Twenty people were in attendance, including representatives from Lochmaddy itself and most other parts of North Uist.

Most directors of NUDC were also in attendance and the staff members. Those who attended had the opportunity to discuss the project directly with NUDC representatives and also to make their views known in a number of other ways. They could write ideas on Post-It notes, which were

transcribed on to a flipchart. To act as a prompt and encourage ideas, we also had sheets pinned up, reflecting the different areas of the project at that time – Our Creative Environment, Our Community Environment, Our Learning Environment, Our Environment Centre, Living Environment. Participants were shown a selection of images representing different activities which could take place in each of these areas of the project, and they were encouraged to stick the image on to the relevant sheet.



Figure 13. Photographs from the event.

Views were also sought on a project name, although everybody was content with the current working title – Arainneachd Alainn.

The results

Our Environment Centre - people wanted to see a focus on:

- crofting/machair/land management
- geology
- education, especially for younger people
- astronomy/dark skies
- marine flora and fauna
- digital interpretation

Our Creative Environment – people wanted to see:

- a focus on formal learning/teaching/classes
- informal learning in a relaxed environment
- a community space and facilities to create artworks
- the opportunity for older people to develop and express their creative skills.

Our Living Environment – people wanted to see:

- a high quality and comfortable bunkhouse
- sympathetic materials and design

Our Community Environment – people wanted to see:

- a modern facility
- a community garden
- refreshments available
- access to digital technology and communications

- activities for young people/youth club
- community meeting room facilities
- indoor physical activities, eg. climbing wall

Our Learning Environment – people wanted to see:

- opportunities for digital learning/enablement
- adult education classes
- learning about the environment, especially for young people

Ideas/comments that were transcribed on to the flipchart or mentioned in discussions included:

- Community garden/polycrub/mini-allotments
- Digital hub for the community
- Business hub
- Learning for people who don't have digital skills
- Electric vehicles charging point
- Lochmaddy needs this project – this is not primarily about “saving” the building
- Lochmaddy is one of the main population centres in North Uist
- It is the no. 1 port of entry for the Uists
- Taigh Chearsabhaigh is good, but the village needs more attractions, there is not enough going on for visitors and local people
- Great opportunity for the Environmental Centre – Lochmaddy Marine Area of Conservation, machair, geology, flora/fauna, green tourism
- Signposting to other facilities, eg. heritage in Carinish School, Sealladh Hiort (St Kilda project)
- Teaching aspect – the art community in North Uist is now an important element of the community and an economic driver – needs enabling/encouraging
- Bunkhouse – strong need for this sort of provision, due to growth in tourism, especially cycling, long distance walking, projected future popularity of the Hebridean Way, closure of the only similar facility in Lochmaddy in July 2017. The nearest are now ten miles away
- “I support this project. I agree the bunkhouse needs to be a separate building. UHI needs to be realistic about student numbers, which have to be projected several years ahead”
- Flat roof area from upstairs classroom to be used for artists. A viewing gallery with a glass balcony would be ideal to gain access to beautiful views across the Minch.
- Studio spaces to be created for an extension to the BA Fine Art degree in TC, saving students having to finish their degree on the mainland.
- The greenhouse and old garden area could be used by community groups as a community garden.
- Community garden for shared growing opportunities.
- ESSENTIAL – a (compact) tourist information facility, as the Tourist Information Centre in Lochmaddy has recently closed.

- Adult education classes.
- A tool library – linked to a facility which would show people how to use the tools they have borrowed. A small subscription for this local resource, tools obtained by donation and maintained. There are examples of this up and running in Edinburgh and the Black Isle.

3.5 Architect design consultation events and survey

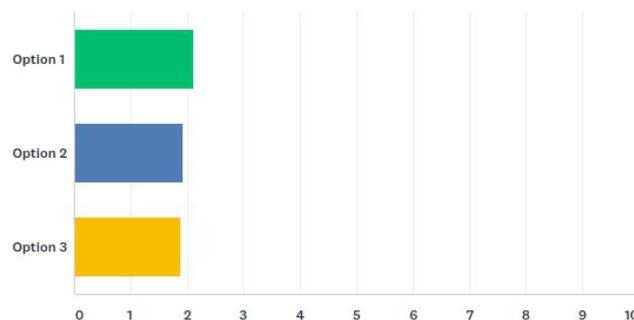
As part of the scope of works, Studio Hebrides Architecture Ltd and the North Uist Development Company carried out community consultation meetings to establish feedback on the Design Options and the redevelopment of the school.

The meetings were held as drop in sessions in Carinish Community Hall (11th July 3.30pm – 7pm) and Lochmaddy Community Hall (12th July 4pm – 8pm). There was also an open session held on 25th July 2019 at the North Uist Agricultural Show, during which all responses were positive, and additional surveys were completed.

An online survey was also completed using Survey Monkey between 6/7/2019 – 25/7/2019 to which there were 52 respondents.

Eleven respondents completed the question within the survey document during the drop-in sessions regarding their preferred design. Option 3 scored the highest with 7 votes. Option 2 second with 3 votes. Option 1 in third place with 1 vote.

Q9 Please rank in order of preference, with 1 being the most preferred and 3 being the least.



45 out of 52 online consultees scored the Options in terms of overall design. The relative scoring was: Option 1 2.12; Option 2 1.93; Option 3 1.88

General feedback received on the design options included the following comments:

- A preference was noted for the inclusion of more natural materials in the new build areas *i.e. more timber and green roofing and perhaps the inclusion of some natural stone.*
- A suggestion was also made for more glazing in the high-end option (Option 3).
- A number of consultees noted that they would like to be able to walk on the green roof areas in Option 3 and Option 2.
- A few responders noted specific concern regarding the use of flat roofs and large areas of glazing.
- It was noted that the designs were sensitive to the scale and materiality of the existing building and also sensitively designed to minimise visual impact to neighbouring properties and the Lochmaddy skyline. The communal spaces in the bunkhouse for each of the options

was well received. The views and the elevated position were seen as positives. The open plan design of the kitchen/dining/living space was also seen as favourable for socialising and providing a welcoming environment.

- It was noted that the development of the former ball court would be favourable for use as soft landscaping or an exterior play space for children. A suggestion was made that astro-turf could be laid for a lower maintenance softer surface.
- The entrance lobby in Option 2 seemed to be the most popular when compared to the entrance in Option 1 and 3.
- A preference was noted for the main entrance lobby to be double height in each option.
- A number of visitors commented that Option 3 had more architectural 'wow' factor.
- A suggestion was made to increase the amount of timber cladding on the Option 3 gable end that faces the shoreline.
- It was noted that the careful consideration should be given to the quality of the acoustics of the teaching/multi-use spaces within the former school.
- A suggestion was also made to over-clad the existing school building in timber cladding on the street elevation.
- A suggestion was made to phase the works to convert the existing school building into the bunkhouse with the use of temporary toilet and shower facilities ie a high end wc and shower cabin. The revenue from the bunkhouse could then help to fund a modern extension to house the Environment Centre and this could be carried out as phase 2 of the development.
- Comments were received from respondents on the car parking capacity at the school and the limited size of the external space. Concern was raised about overspill car parking for larger scale events and if there is sufficient space on the roadside for overspill parking.
- It was appreciated that each design option minimised overlooking neighbouring properties.
- The most favoured design in terms of minimal overlooking was Option 2.
- It was suggested that more built-in storage should be provided within the bunkhouse and the existing building. A lockable store for tenants who are renting an office space or using the space for creative learning would be necessary.
- The location of laundry services for the bunkhouse was queried. It should be established whether or not laundry would be done on site or outsourced. There is currently not a dedicated space for laundry facilities within the plans just now, however Option 3 has two large store room areas on the first floor which would be converted into a dedicated laundry area for use by housekeeping staff and by guests.
- In terms of aesthetics and materials, it was suggested by one respondent that the façades were painted different colours, for example the Environment centre could be blue, the bunkhouse green. Similar examples were cited in rural Ireland and in Scottish villages such as Tobermory.
- Another idea that was discussed was adding a green roof entrance canopy to the former main entrance door to the West elevation.
- It was noted by one respondent that they felt the design proposals were 'banal'.
- It was noted that it would be helpful to have more detailed proposals for the environment centre and what this would incorporate.
- A preference was noted for the incorporation of more outdoor space within the scheme.

Comments on the costs for each design were as follows:

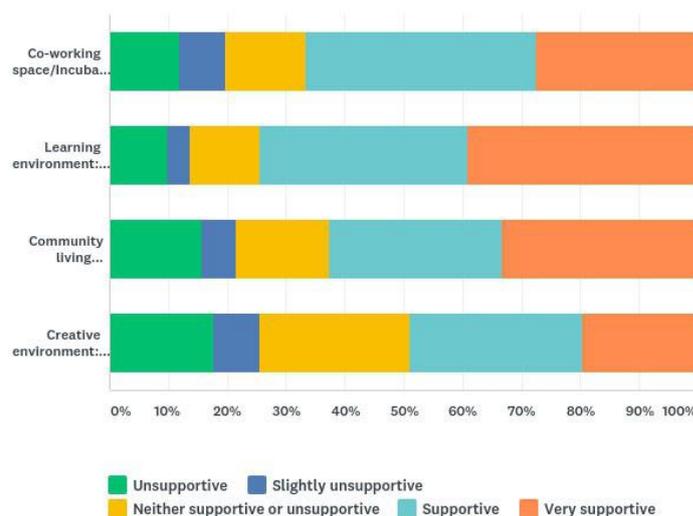
- No negative comments were received in relation to the proposed costs during the drop-in community consultations. Respondents commented that the costs were in line with what they would expect for this size of development and given the current condition of the school.
- Online comment included opinion that the proposals were too expensive when compared to mainland prices. An online comment included concern regarding payback against capital investment.

Proposed Building Use and Function

- Overall support for the proposed uses can be said to be positive, which backs up the brief having been developed in accordance with consultations undertaken during the Feasibility Stage.
- Relative support as illustrated by Online survey results.

Additional feedback was received that was specific to the proposed use of the building:

Q6 The multi-purpose rentable space above currently includes various elements which have been identified from the local community. Please rate the extent to which you support the following elements of this area of the development.



- Respondents that noted a potential rented office space all stressed the need for high speed and reliable internet provision within the building. Video conferencing facilities should also be provided.
- It was noted that there should be some smaller more private office spaces available for rental and that the hot desk/flexible office space shouldn't all be open plan.
- The option to provide additional flexible teaching space for use by UHI either on an ad hoc basis or a long-term agreement was noted as a positive by a number respondents.
- A number of respondents recognised the need for affordable accommodation for tourists. This was seen as a positive in terms of generating revenue for the project and as a way to provide more investment in the islands generally.
- It was also noted a by a number of respondents that the bunkhouse would provide affordable accommodation for students on educational trips to the islands. It was noted that there has already been interest from university course leaders regarding this type of provision.

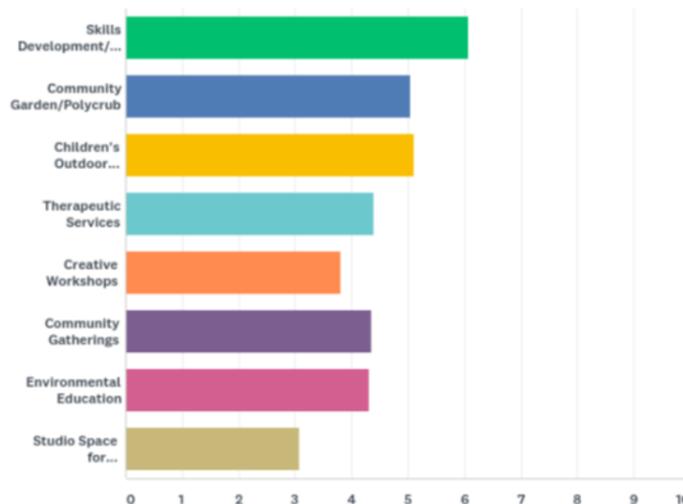
- It was noted by a number of respondents that the provision of the Environment Centre would help to educate visitors and locals about the unique Hebridean Environment and encourage all to protect it.
- It was noted by one respondent that the flexible space could be used by the local elderly homes to provide additional space for activities.

Other uses proposed by the respondents included:

- micro-brewery
- sheltered accommodation for the elderly population
- additional play space provision for children
- Concerns were raised about the revenue and employment opportunities generated by the Environment Centre.

Other uses that were suggested and scored by respondents are as follows:

Q11 What other community uses would you like to see included in a project based at the School? Please rank from 1 to 8 with 1 being the most preferred and, 8 the least.



4. Community consultation results and feedback to incorporate into the design

The overall conclusion of the architectural consultation was the preferred design was in fact Option 1. The architect has taken on board some of the comments and provides some more 'natural' material designs in the final report. As there wasn't a very large swing to Option 1, the final designs before construction should also consider whether of the favoured aspects of 2 and 3 can be incorporated (see Architects Report).

The internal use of the building has evolved with time, with continuing conversations on the island and emergence of new uses. The 'incubator hub' has been identified as a potential key aspect of encouraging the younger generation on the islands to stay and/or to encourage younger generations to move to/return to the islands; whilst nurturing enterprise and economic growth. This is an area Highlands and Islands Enterprise are also interested in, and are currently considering the potential. Discussions with younger people on the island who are interested in this space believe it would cross-over with the learning environment as well as the creative environment, as well as potential business/office space. Therefore, the most favoured option for the building is to merge the different

uses into a Multi-purpose space which is able to accommodate the various needs. This multi-purpose space can therefore incorporate creative use; therapeutic use; the incubator hub for hot-desking and enterprise; learning activities for University of the Highlands and Islands, Taigh Chearsabhagh, adult education including employability skills; office facilities and meeting room facilities; with the Community Environment embedded throughout including community space for meetings, gatherings and facilities such as a tool library and internet access; as well as a tourist information point. A cinema has also been considered but due to community concerns over whether this would remove the need for the Screen Machine that currently visits the islands, a film club may be an alternative, and a flexible space with a large projector screen (which will also be needed for the learning activities) would enable a film club to be established should this continue to be of interest.

In several of the consultations, children's facilities and activities have been mentioned. Working in partnership with other local organisations, it has been agreed that certain aspects will not be included in the development. For example, the Claddach Kirkibost Centre has now developed a soft play facility for younger children, and the Lochmaddy Hall has been donated a few small pool tables from the former School. To meet this need, the outside space and the Environment Centre will be developed with this in mind. A community garden has been mentioned, and it is aimed that this will incorporate a children's area. Additionally, NUDC has been able to acquire bouldering wall equipment from a centre in Glasgow. This will be included into the Environment Centre for visitors and locals, as well as acting as a feature to describe the local geology and why outdoor activities are important to nurture a young mind. This will then link to a trail (to be developed through further consultation with the local council) with information boards highlighting the natural environment and climate change. The Environment Centre will also provide space for numerous local organisations to display their material, display interactive exhibitions for all age groups, highlight the importance of the Lochmaddy Bay area, the importance of conservation and work as a flexible space to be able to be opened up when needed (for example for a film club or event).

The complete development will meet the community needs; fill a major gap on the Uists and the Outer Hebrides as a whole; work in partnership with community groups through the North Uist Development Company's charitable aims, and act as a focal point to attract visitors and stimulate economic growth across the islands. In the shorter term, the Environment Centre, Community Environment and Multi-Purpose Environment will be able to raise the profile of the aims of the development, meet the majority of the aims of the community to establish the business model, and work to acquire the funding to create the full development, including Living Environment in the longer-term to meet visitors and student's needs.

5. Conclusions

There is wide community support for the proposed development in Lochmaddy which will provide a community hub filling the needs of the local community to improve health and wellbeing, provide improved facilities and services and add to the social need of improved play and recreation. There are also the wider needs of helping to sustain the population and maintaining young people on the island, increasing the local economy and providing long-term work opportunities, as well as the need of conserving the local environment for the benefit of all present and future generations. The proposed community business will meet these needs by:

- Providing local employment opportunities by creating a self-sustaining community business
- Increasing the local economy by providing a visitor attraction, helping to sustain increased visitors by providing low cost accommodation, providing tourist information to engage and

direct onwards to other businesses and facilities, and helping to drive local innovation through training in the learning environment.

- Providing a community hub as a local focal point and meeting place with community-based facilities and services, with the community environment fully embedded throughout the development.
- Providing space to nurture therapeutic and learning activities for community benefit
- Providing an incubator hub to nurture innovation and encourage young enterprise to support a younger generation and helping sustain the fragile population.
- Providing an Environment Centre to act as an engagement point to aid conservation of the local environment, an education point for the local community and visitors to the islands.
- Provide cross generational and younger based activities in all aspects of the development.

Potential displacement has been minimised by identification of community need 'gaps', close partnerships with local community and development organisations, relationships with local businesses to ensure there is a close working relationship. For example, local bunkhouses welcome the addition of a different affordable tourist accommodation option due to significant increases in tourism (see letters of support) and NUDC have agreed to remove the large kitchen and not provide food in its business model, directing visitors to nearby catering establishments. Phase 3 of the community hub will also provide single rentable rooms for workers and students which are not currently available to fill a needs gap for longer stays (it is very difficult to get longer term accommodation, especially during peak season). The bunkhouse will also operate year round, when the majority of accommodation providers close. Numerous letters of support are provided to evidence a wide range of organisational and business support. It has also been agreed to provide different services than community centres as shown in the business plan. Claddach Kirkibost Centre would like to work with NUDC, particularly for learning activities, as it doesn't feel it currently meets these aspects of its aims and objectives. The development hasn't included any rentable space for weddings etc, as these needs are currently met by the Lochmaddy Community Hall, and any requests for such would be re-directed.

Community Need	Community Business Area to Meet Need
Improve health and wellbeing	Multi-Purpose Environment; Community Environment
Increase local economy	Multi-Purpose Environment; Living Environment; Environment Centre,
Improve facilities and services	Àrainneachd Àlainn'
Increase job opportunities	Multi-Purpose Environment; Living Environment
Improve conservation & understanding of natural environment	Environment Centre; Multi-Purpose Environment; Community Environment
Increase training opportunities	Multi-Purpose Environment; Community Environment; Living Environment
Help sustain the local population	Àrainneachd Àlainn'