



# Business Plan: Campsie High Kirk

May 2024



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## 1. Introduction and background

This document sets out a plan for the ruined High Kirk of Campsie to be taken into community ownership, preserved and developed into an open-air sanctuary for the community and visitors.

The Kirk formed part of the King and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer (KLTR)'s Ownerless Property Transfer Scheme (OPTS) Pilot. The OPTS aims to provide opportunities for ownerless land to be brought back into productive use by transferring it to public bodies or eligible community groups.

The building was made known to the KLTR in May 2022. It was last owned by Lennoxtown Initiative, a charity which dissolved in 2018 without provisions for transfer of its property, resulting in the building becoming ownerless. The window for this company to reform ended in January 2024.

East Dunbartonshire Council prepared an Options Summary on the building, and states that it undertook initial consultation with the community and heritage regeneration partners. The council concluded at that time that there was no interest from a community organisation or charitable third party in leading or partnering on further studies or in owning and managing the High Kirk. EDC has confirmed that it has no intention of taking on ownership of the building itself.

More recently, members of the community came forward to query the status of the building. This group has grown into Friends of Campsie High Kirk (FOCHK), now registered as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO - SC053341). FOCHK is now working towards transfer of the building through the OPTS.

### History and condition of the High Kirk

The High Kirk of Campsie is a Grade 1-listed gothic revival building standing on a hill overlooking the village of Lennoxtown, about 13 miles north of Glasgow and 4 miles from Kirkintilloch, just off the Main Street of the village. It is currently ruined and on the buildings at risk register. It has no roof, and trees and vegetation have grown inside it. It is connected to the electrical grid, although the status of other utilities is unknown. The site has an approximate area of 0.42 acres (0.17 hectares) and is surrounded by an active burial ground.

Planning began for a new church to accommodate the growing population of the Campsie district in 1821, as the Industrial Revolution brought dye and alum works, mills, textiles and railways to the area. The High Kirk was built to plans by Glasgow architect David Hamilton, known for the Gallery of Modern Art (GOMA) and Nelson Monument in Glasgow as well as Lennox Castle locally, and regarded as the "father of architecture in the west of Scotland".

The church hosted its first sermon in 1829. Among the ministers who served there was Rev. Norman Macleod, a prolific author and social reformer who extended the local school, began evening classes for adults, set up a savings bank, a clothing society and

'refreshment rooms' to provide good-value food for his parishioners. Macleod also served as Moderator of the General Assembly of the church and as chaplain to Queen Victoria in Scotland. He is buried alongside his family in the churchyard. Other notable graves include those of Lt General David Macfarlane and his son Captain William Macfarlane, killed in the Second Boer War, and a number of Commonwealth War Graves Commission graves from both World Wars. The churchyard has cholera graves and is the resting place of poor souls from Lennox Castle when it was used as an asylum and hospital, not to mention the numerous family graves that record child mortality before the days of more advanced medicine and vaccines.

Services ceased and the High Kirk was sold off in 1976 after the Church of Scotland congregation merged with that of Trinity Church on Main Street. In 1984, the High Kirk suffered a devastating fire, causing shock and bewilderment in the community. Despite efforts by now-dissolved charity the Lennoxtown Initiative to stabilise the building and restore the clock, the High Kirk has been on the [Buildings at Risk Register](#) since 1990, and is classed as ruined. A valuation report prepared for the KLTR and EDC in 2022, and provided by EDC, describes its condition as follows:

*“Upon inspection, the property was found to be in ruinous and derelict condition with significant vegetation growth within the stonework and several areas of damaged stonework. Furthermore, the structure does not have a roof, and although access to the internal area of the building footprint was not possible, it appeared from our inspection that dense mature trees and vegetation covered the majority of the space between the external walls.”*

There is no recent feasibility study available for the building. The Buildings at Risk Register entry for the High Kirk mentions a feasibility study carried out in the 1990s by Strathclyde Building Preservation Trust, and discussions by local planners with Glasgow Buildings Preservation Trust dating back to 2004 regarding further feasibility research into reuse or consolidation as a ruin. Glasgow Building Preservation Trust has no record of the latter study having been commissioned and does not hold records from Strathclyde Building Preservation Trust. A feasibility study will be required before the transfer of ownership is complete. FOCHK is in the process of a Stage 1 application to the Scottish Land Fund to cover this cost.

### **Friends of Campsie High Kirk**

This project is being taken forward by the Friends of Campsie High Kirk, which is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO). The organisation was set up specifically for the purpose of benefiting the Lennoxtown community by stabilising and restoring Campsie High Kirk. The group have set up a charity Bank Account with the Bank Of Scotland.

FOCHK is currently made up of 23 ordinary members (with a membership campaign ongoing), led by 4 trustees. Most of the members are Lennoxtown residents, although some have other connections to the area or to the High Kirk itself: many have family buried in the cemetery, some married in the church and one sang in the choir. Many

represent other local groups with an interest in the project, such as the local history group. The FOCHK group came together late in 2023 as awareness of the High Kirk's situation grew on social media and via a community survey (see below) and has grown through additional community engagement in 2024.

The group is meeting regularly, and meetings are minuted. A Chairperson (Craig Brooks, retired Police Officer), Vice-Chair (James Carr, Builder) and Secretary (Michelle Haswell, Teacher) are in place and role descriptions for office bearers have been prepared. Additionally, the fourth trustee (Linda McIntosh, Business Support Consultant) has taken on the role of Community Engagement Coordinator. Many of the members are active volunteers: for example, one is compiling a 'history bank' of stories and images linked to the High Kirk.

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## 2. Our proposal

### Vision

Our vision is to create a place of sanctuary and peace for our community within the historic walls of the High Kirk, hosting appropriate community and cultural events that will help with the upkeep and maintenance of the building and make Lennoxton a place to visit.

### Aims

The overall aims of FOCHK are:

- A. Take ownership of CHK as a SCIO, with a curtilage area around the church but not extending into the grave sites.
- B. Renovation and development for use of the vestibule and floors below the clock in the clock tower for potential habitable use, displays, meetings, and the likes.
- C. Development of the Narthex area between the vestibule / tower and the nave of the church.
- D. Development of the Nave, the main body of the church, as a courtyard for multiple uses but primarily as a space for recreation and enjoyment; considering the uses mentioned in the vision statement and E.
- E. Our vision for CHK is to further develop the vestibule, clock tower, narthex, alter and nave as habitable for social use with the nave as an open air courtyard. It is not intended to restore the building as a church but instead a non-denominational sanctuary. The building will provide social benefits to the community by the creation of specific services including education history and architecture tours, gardening in the serenity gardens, art, yoga, dance, plays and music that will benefit mental health benefits for all ages. The Kirk will become an inclusive local resource for meeting, friendship and community bonding and will host small commercial events such as weddings, corporate events, religious and secular services, remembrance and exhibitions. The local schools, nurseries and other groups could utilise the building to hold performances their families can enjoy. The Kirk will ensure the inclusion of people with neurodiversity, supporting projects such as the Forest School initiative which provides child-centred inspirational learning.

The economic benefits will be from a variety of events and workshops such as art and Yoga classes and local produce and goods markets facilitated by local businesses. The facilities and activities at the Kirk will attract visitors and the increased footfall will generate income for a large number of local businesses. The Campsie High Kirk can act as a beacon to attract people to the area as a destination as opposed to a thoroughfare and can become a

place where signposting to the local area can be centralised. There is potential to create local employment and volunteering opportunities which will provide training and upskilling.

Hosting a variety of events will assist in raising general running and maintenance funds. This vision for the Kirk is not exhaustive or fixed but simply a framework that we hope to develop in consultation with the local community for whose benefit it is intended.

F. Our vision requires the willing participation and support of the Lennoxton community and businesses whose support, either passive or proactive, is essential in establishing the case for raising the main funds that will enable the building to be reconstituted.

G. We aim to collaborate, on an ongoing basis, with local businesses in the greater Campsie area rather than compromising them. Our goal is to repurpose the building to attract visitors and contribute to the social, economic, and environmental well-being of Lennoxton and the broader Campsie community.

H. Central to our vision will be respecting the solemnity and dignity of the surrounding graveyard and the heritage of the Kirk, while restoring the ruin to a place and focus of community life as it was originally intended, and indeed fulfilled, until its demise. We will maintain that dignity while restoring the reflective balance of life as the heart of the local community in a setting that is both architectural and spiritually important to Lennoxton, Greater Campsie and Scotland.

I. Reinstatement, re-connection of public utilities namely electricity, water, local on-sight toilet facilities and security lighting / cameras.

J. Fire detection-prevention / Fire / Intruder Alarm / CCTV system for the clock tower, narthex, nave, and curtilage as appropriate.

K. All the above to promote the retention and prevention of demolition. Should no action be taken, we risk losing a spectacular and prominent focus of architectural, local, cultural, and spiritual history.

L. We will continue to work in partnership with KLTR The King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer, Community Enterprise, East Dunbartonshire Voluntary Action, Development Trusts Association Scotland (DTAS), East Dunbartonshire Council, Historic Scotland local heritage / history groups, the local community and elected representatives. We will take into consideration the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, (due to significant numbers of war graves from WW1 & WW2) to advance the feasibility and business plan case for funding to carry out the restoration and preservation work in the Church. We commit to reviewing and amending plans in keeping with the constitution and approval of trustees, members, and the local community interest and in line with

the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR)'s requirements of a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

Conclusion – FoCHK will initiate ownership through partnership strategies within a legal framework and observance of Charity Law and tests to facilitate the architectural feasibility assessment, funding requirement for restoration, project-managed build and restoration, resilience cost and sustainability planning projection to advance the regeneration and positive future of the Campsie High Kirk as described in E; for the retention of a historically and architecturally important building for the near future and long term betterment of the Lennoxton community and to review all matters timeously and regularly to ensure compliance, best practice and positive outcomes to ensure that A – M is pragmatically achieved. FOCHK believes that with all stakeholder's assistance and the support of the local community, we can work together to put Lennoxton and Campsie back on the 'great places to go' map.

## Services

The following services are proposed as part of the initial phase after taking ownership and are compatible with the preservation of the High Kirk as a mostly open-air venue within a stabilised and managed ruin. The operational cash flow projection included in section 3 is based on these services, although there is scope for further development in future, as set out in the next section.

- *Heritage Centre and visitor information.* A longer History and Vision document outlines historical developments which shaped Lennoxton and Campsie, encompassing the Britons and Picts, the outer fringes of the Roman empire, competing clans and livestock trading, the Highland regiments, the Jacobite uprising and the Industrial Revolution. The High Kirk also has spectacular views over the Campsie Hills and could offer information on walking and cycling routes (including the John Muir Way and Strathkelvin Railway Path), the natural environment and other historic sites in the area. This was the top suggestion on the community survey (see below).
- *Cemetery facilities.* The cemetery around the church remains in active use and EDC's Options Summary identifies the possibility of a reception facility, with a waiting area and toilet for funerals. This could be explored further with EDC.
- *Serenity garden.* As a stable open-air ruin, the High Kirk could offer space for community growing, which has well-documented positive effects on people's mental and physical wellbeing, as well as on biodiversity.
- *Hospitality and events.* This might include performances and open-air markets, yoga and fitness sessions and art/craft workshops. Hire for wedding ceremonies and photography could generate income – see last section.

## Future development



As part of the Feasibility Study, we will explore the potential to restore the vestibule, clock tower, narthex, altar and nave as indoor spaces to complement the open-air sanctuary. We will also investigate the potential for some or all areas of the sanctuary to be under cover of a roof or canopy to allow events to take place outdoors in bad weather.

There is a Tree Preservation Order applied which overlaps the outer edge of the boundary of the property, shown coloured yellow on the title plan, however there is no tree in situ currently at this location, or anywhere within the boundary indicated on the plan.

## Comparators

In considering the potential to conserve and open up the High Kirk, FOCHK have been inspired by:

- St Louis Spring Church in the United States. This building, which also fell into ruin after a fire, has been reinforced from within leaving the historic façade, and returned to life as an open-air pavilion used for markets, art installations, musical performances and more (photograph, right, by Virginia Harold, from [Pullitzerarts.org](https://pullitzerarts.org)).
- St Luke's Bombed Out Church in Liverpool. This grade II-listed church was catastrophically damaged during the Blitz, leaving only the external walls. It became overgrown and inaccessible but has been cleared and reopened as an open-air arts venue, community space and garden hosting regular makers markets. Moveable clear roof coverings and temporary flooring provided by a marquee supplier enable the use of the open-air venue for events even in wet weather. (photograph bottom right from St Lukes Bombed Out Church's website)
- St Paul's, a former city-centre church in Perth which closed in 1988. It is grade-II listed and, like the High Kirk, was on the buildings at risk register. After various proposals for reuse failed, the building was purchased by the council, which opted to take down the roof but preserve the building's footprint as an accessible outdoor public space, St Paul's Square. The



church's clock tower has been conserved, its bell mechanism has been replaced and the original bell restored. The Square opened for public use in 2021, and has been used for performances, markets and events. The project has been popular with neighbouring businesses, giving the area a more welcoming feel and better access (Photo: RDA Architects).

### **Evidence of need**

Lennoxtown has a population of around 4,200 across 1963 households. Part of the village is among the 10% most deprived areas in Scotland, according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 2020. This area has particularly high levels of deprivation in terms of income, employment and health.



EDC's Options Summary for the High Kirk notes that if nothing is done, the risks to the building are further decay and becoming derelict. Risks affecting the wider community are heritage loss, limited public access, potential risk to public safety, and potential for anti-social activity.

In recent consultation for the Main Street Improvement Project by EDC, 77% of consultees thought that it was moderately to very important to create more outdoor public spaces in the village centre for outdoor community events and activities. People wanted to see the High Kirk reflected in nearby developments on Main Street, along with the village's heritage and its surrounding geography and views<sup>1</sup>.

In recent EDC consultation, it has been highlighted that Lennoxtown is a place people pass through, not a destination in itself. East Dunbartonshire overall ranks 24<sup>th</sup> out of the 32 Local Authority areas in the Royal Society of Arts (RSA)'s Heritage Index 2020, which looks at the presence of different heritage assets such as historic buildings, parks and open spaces and museums in each area. This means that it is one of the parts of Scotland with fewer such heritage assets.

Lennoxtown has a Community Hub for Council services and Campsie Memorial Hall, which is a venue for events and performances, has recently been awarded funding for refurbishment. Developing the High Kirk as an open-air sanctuary will ensure that plans will complement and not duplicate what is already available elsewhere in the town.

### **Evidence of support**

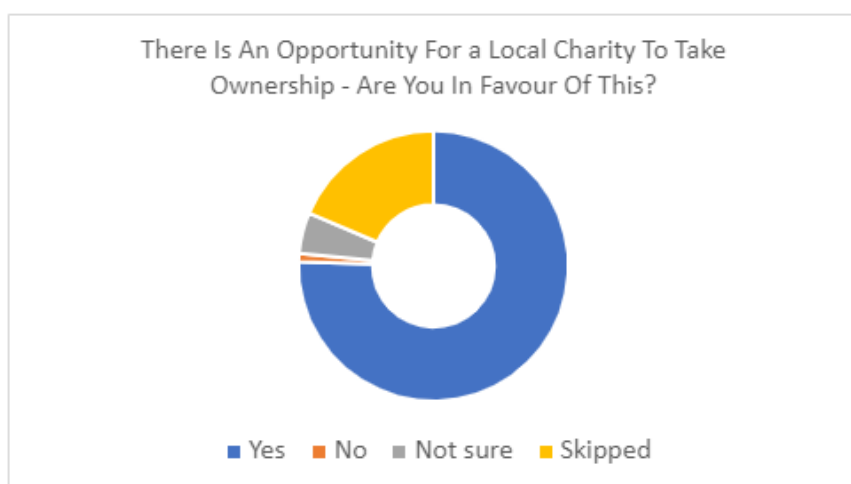
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<sup>1</sup> [eastdunbarton.gov.uk/lennoxtown-main-street-improvement-project-consultation-findings](http://eastdunbarton.gov.uk/lennoxtown-main-street-improvement-project-consultation-findings)

The deteriorating condition of the High Kirk of Campsie has been a concern in Lennoxton for some time. The 2018-2023 Lennoxton Place Plan<sup>2</sup> includes an action point to “Investigate the ownership of High Church and scope out restoration possibilities” – neglected/overgrown places in the village were one of the top concerns highlighted in consultation.

In December 2023, a community survey took place driven by one of the founding members of FOCHK – EDVA provided support with this. This asked about people’s interest in the building, ideas for its development and support for community ownership. 102 people took part in the survey, although because questions were optional, not all of them completed every question. Of these:

- 75.5% were immediately in favour of a local charity taking ownership.



- 4.9% answered that they were ‘not sure’ about a local charity taking ownership, and 18.6% skipped this question. Only 1% answered ‘no’ (not in favour). The relatively high number of people that skipped this question or answered ‘not sure’ is unsurprising given that the survey was the first information circulated publicly about the High Kirk in several years and was carried out at an early stage to gain an indication of local support.
- People were asked to write in ideas on use of the building. Common themes in the responses included:

Theme	Number of mentions
A museum or heritage space, including permanent or temporary exhibitions	35
A hub or general community space	21

<sup>2</sup> Available in draft form (close to final version) via [East Dunbartonshire Council's website](#). EDC have confirmed that, although communities have been invited to produce a new Place Plan, there are currently no plans to replace this plan for Lennoxton.

Any or all use (some respondents simply wanted to see the building maintained and said that they didn't mind how it was used)	17
A café	6

- Other suggestions from the responses were:
  - Use as a venue for music and arts
  - Space for local artists to display/sell work (which could be incorporated into community markets, as hosted at the open-air venues which have inspired us)
  - Access to bikes
  - Providing visitor facilities and information on local walks
  - Partnership with a commercial enterprise, e.g. a restaurant
- Three people expressed concern about the cost and viability of rebuilding the High Kirk, or about its suitability for community use, two of these specifically regarding full refurbishment: “Finance would be a massive issue, hard to see £million+ being available in today’s climate. Perhaps best to stabilise the building, even allowing some internal access if made safe”; “Unfortunately it is beyond economical means to fix...the only way this project would be semi viable would be to ensure the structure is safe and secure them then building a single storey structure within its walls”. Communicating with the community about the scope of plans for the building will help to address such concerns. Another person noted access concerns: “hilly road and car parking is minimal”.
- Despite the building’s prominent place within the village, it has been unused for so long that many people didn’t have knowledge or memories of it before it burned down and became derelict. One said: “sadly my only memory of it is the night it went on fire” and another specified that they “moved to the village after it was derelict”, while another had “only ever known it as a ruin”. For some people, their recollection of the building was as a derelict site, somewhere they were forbidden from going as children, or went in secret as teenagers.
- Other respondents – presumably those who had lived in Lennoxton longest – did have personal connections with the building, including having attended Sunday services, weddings, christenings Boys Brigade and school choirs, or having relatives buried in the surrounding burial ground – “the grounds are home to many graves of relatives of most people in the village”. One person specified “many generations of my family have worshipped there”. Two respondents had got married at the church, and another remembered their grandmother’s delight watching newlywed couples come out.

- Some interesting features of the High Kirk that people identified in the comments included:
  - The clock tower, which two respondents specifically wanted to see restored.
  - Graves of 2 Luftwaffe airmen killed in WWII in the burial ground.
  - A “green lady”, who one respondent was afraid of when taking a shortcut through the graveyard as a child.
- 49% - almost half of the respondents – were interested in either getting involved in the project or hearing more about it as it progresses.
- 27 people – over a quarter of the respondents – came forward with an interest in joining the committee. These individuals were invited to join an online meeting in early January, and many of them have become active members.

Since the time of the initial survey, community engagement has been a continued focus:

- Friends of Campsie High Kirk SCIO has grown to 23 members, with four stepping forward to be the founding trustees of the charity. The membership campaign is ongoing.
- A community engagement coordinator has been named within the group and is taking responsibility for raising community awareness, with support from other members.
- A public Facebook group was set up in February 2024 and currently has 483 members: this is an active forum where photos and stories are shared.
- [An online survey](#) was launched in April 2024 via the Facebook page to give more people a chance to have a say. The survey was set up using Google Forms linked to Google Sheets where the information collected automatically populates a spreadsheet. There has been a good response to the survey with a rise in numbers anticipated following the leaflet drop to 1963 Lennoxton postcodes (w/c 3rd June) and the public meeting to be held on 11th June. The responses are being collated and verified and total entries will be submitted to demonstrate support by the extended deadline agreed with the KLTR.
- Contact has made, both by email and in person with the area’s active churches - FOCHK gave two talks to the congregation at St Machan’s and Campsie Parish Church in April and May with Trustees and members of the FOCHK group present to collect signatures of support from those attending.
- The group are working closely with Campsie Community Council and the new Hive project (a charity which provides a food pantry and wellness classes).

- Main Street businesses and companies with a major presence in the area have been contacted by email and in-person, together with community organisations, schools and care homes. The Group has also had a physical presence on Lennoxton Main Street speaking to locals and successfully collecting signatures of support.
- So far, letters of support have come from Police Scotland, Campsie Local History Group, Kirkintilloch Antiquarian Society, The Black Watch Association, Cannon Jeremy Bath (St Machan's), East Dunbartonshire Culture & Leisure, The Lord Provost (Gillian Renwick), Sir Archibald Edmonstone, Campsie Community Council, Highland Spring and Councillor Susan Murray.

### **Acquiring the High Kirk**

The KLTR has set out key dates which the project must meet to proceed with the transfer to community ownership, and other activities have been planned around this.

- **May-June 2024:** Application to the KLTR.
- **June-September 2024:** Review of application by KLTR; any additional information needed requested by KLTR and submitted. Within this time, the following other activities also need to take place:
  - Recruitment of Ordinary Members. FOCHK has already met the minimum 20 included in the membership database (Membership T&Cs and Data Protection Policy are in place). Further recruitment of members will continue with a number of local residents having expressed interest in the project, who still need to formalise their status as members.
  - Application to the Scottish Land Fund (SLF) at Stage 1 for funding for technical fees, and with a view to a Stage 2 application to cover legal fees. The Scottish Land Fund advisor covering East Dunbartonshire is aware of the project. Evidence of community support gathered in this document will support a Stage 1 application.
  - With Scottish Land Fund Stage 1 funding, commission feasibility research into the building and options for restoration, including costings. This must include a structural survey to determine whether the ruin can be made safe. Architect designs would also be beneficial at this stage.
  - Discussion with East Dunbartonshire Council regarding parking and status of the access road shared with the cemetery and responsibility for maintenance costs.
  - Application to the Scottish Land Fund at Stage 2, for funding to cover legal fees and other costs associated with the transfer of ownership (SLF may fund a limited amount of work to make the building safe, and/or short-term salary costs for a project manager)

- **September 2024-February 2025:** Conveyancing and transfer. During this period, FOCHK will also be working on:
  - Applications to capital funds, such as the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Historic Environment Scotland and the Scottish Government’s Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF), plus local fundraising – see final section for detail.
- **March 2025:** expected date of transfer by KLTR
- **29<sup>th</sup> May 2025:** The three-year window for the Crown to disclaim its interest in the Church expires<sup>3</sup>. If transfer to community ownership does not progress according to the above timeline, the KLTR is likely to disclaim the building ahead of this date.

### **Managing the High Kirk**

Upon transfer of ownership, the Friends of Campsie High Kirk will require public liability insurance. Security measures will be put in place and regularly tested.

The steering group will also develop policies and procedures as needed, including:

- Volunteer policy and induction process
- Safeguarding policy
- Health and safety procedures and risk assessment templates for events and activities
- Financial management policies

We will seek help to develop these, including from EDVA, and will make use of resources published for the third sector, such as [SCVO’s facilities management materials](#) and the [Charity Excellence resources](#). (One of the Founding Trustees is a Business Support Consultant who has extensive knowledge and experience in supporting third sector organisations to develop these policies and procedures).

### **Public interest and benefits**

Benefits of bringing the site into community ownership and developing it as set out above include:

- Increasing understanding of Lennoxton and Campsie’s history among the local community and visitors. Already, the potential for community ownership of the High Kirk has encouraged people to share their photos and discuss historic personalities and events linked to the building in our Facebook group. After taking ownership, interpretation material will be designed that is suitable for the site,

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<sup>3</sup> The KLTR has three years to disclaim the Crown’s interest in a property, which in the case of the High Kirk of Campsie, began in May 2022 when East Dunbartonshire Council initiated the process.

working in partnership with the Local History Group. The High Kirk will be open for people to visit, and events will draw attention to interesting aspects of its history.

- Increasing local pride in Lennoxton and putting it on the map as a visitor destination. People miss the High Kirk being a landmark, lit up at night, and they especially miss the clock and the clock chimes. In time, developing the High Kirk could support other local businesses through maker's markets and by increasing the number of visitors stopping and spending their time and money in the town. It will also avoid the negative impact of further deterioration, which carries a risk of attracting antisocial behaviour and would make the main street feel less safe and attractive, discouraging people from stopping and spending money there.
- Improving physical and mental wellbeing by creating a community garden and a safe and sheltered outdoor space for people of all ages to spend time outdoors. There is also potential to link with and promote longer distance walking and cycling routes which pass through Lennoxton such as the John Muir Way and Strathkelvin Railway Path.
- Conserve a ruined building in a less energy intensive way. Consultation with Zero Waste Scotland will be sought to ensure all aspects of the project are as environmentally friendly as is practicable, including the use of reclaimed materials where possible during construction and fitting and incorporating as many other Circular initiatives as identified in Scotland's Circular Economy Bill as possible. We will pursue advice and prioritise the implementation of energy efficiency measures to minimise the carbon footprint. There is also potential to restore quality green space and biodiversity through sensitive planting and a community growing programme. This aligns with Historic Environment Scotland's priority of using the historic environment as a catalyst for climate action.

### **Partnership working**

FOCHK is taking full advantage of opportunities for support and partnership working:

- East Dunbartonshire Voluntary Action (EDVA) have helped to set up a suitable legal structure for the new charity and have supported members in facilitating early meetings and carrying out community consultation.
- Support with this early-stage plan was provided through the Accelerate programme, a Scottish Government funded initiative delivered by Community Enterprise. The programme provides free business support and capacity building to non-trading third sector organisations in Scotland.
- The Community Ownership Support Service (COSS) has advised FOCHK on its governing documents and provided support with the OPTS process.
- East Dunbartonshire Council have provided relevant documents and enabled access inside the High Kirk for site visits. The Council will be a key partner going forward, although it has confirmed that it has no interest in taking on the High



Kirk itself. Glasgow Building Preservation Trust have also helped to check records relating to the building.

- Discussions with potential funders such as the Scottish Land Fund and Architectural Heritage Fund have begun.
- FOCHK has also begun building local partnerships by reaching out to businesses, elected representatives, churches and other community groups, as detailed in section 2.

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### **3.Finance and funding**

FOCHK has identified the following funding towards its aims:

#### **Site investigations**

- Scottish Land Fund at Stage 1, generally around £13,000 towards technical fees.
- Architectural Heritage Fund Project viability grants, up to £10,000 but generally around £6000 towards technical fees. After completion of a project viability report, a further Project Development Grant of up to £40,000, average £15,000 is available.
- East Dunbartonshire Community Grant Fund can support feasibility work, up to £10,000.

Both funders are aware of the project and open to an application, although Architectural Heritage Fund is under high demand due to a large number of churches becoming vacant.

#### **Purchase**

The site has been independently valued at £nil, in view of the fact that repair costs will outweigh any future commercial value.

Funding will be needed to cover legal fees associated with the transfer of ownership (estimated at £5-8K).

On advice from COSS, a title indemnity policy may also be needed to cover the lack of information on specific rights of access in the title sheet for the building, given that there is no owner to clarify information with.

Potential sources of funding for legal fees and associated costs are:

- Scottish Land Fund at Stage 2 (minimum £5K – this project would be at the lower end of applications). Requires at least 5% match funding. Funding for purchase is not relevant to this project, but the Scottish Land Fund can pay for legal fees and

will sometimes provide revenue funding within the first year of ownership, e.g. salary costs for a development officer or project manager. The Scottish Land Fund officer with responsibility for East Dunbartonshire is aware of the project.

- Local fundraising to match the Scottish Land Fund. One member of FOCHK is experienced in fundraising through events, raffles and similar.

### **Capital development**

No information is currently available on the cost of repair work to the High Kirk. The valuation report prepared for the KLTR and EDC notes that these works:

*“would include, but are not limited to; removal of vegetation and mature trees from within the building footprint, removal of vegetation growth from within the stonework, assessment of the structural integrity of the building, potential remedial work to the stonework and structure, the installation of a new roof, and internal fit out works including connection to mains services”*

As noted above, plans for the building do not currently involve restoring a roof over the whole building and making the original shell habitable in line with current environmental standards. Plans currently centre on stabilising the largest part of the building as an open-air, managed ruin. Even so, significant amounts of capital funding will need to be raised for clearing the site, for structural reinforcement and for refurbishing smaller spaces within the clock tower and vestibule.

Potential sources for this funding are below. Once the steering group has obtained costings for repair and redevelopment works, a full funding strategy will be developed.

- National Lottery Heritage Fund (minimum £10K, maximum £10M). Applications from 2024 will come under the new Heritage 2033 Strategy: overall vision is for heritage to be valued, cared for and sustained for everyone, now and in the future. Equal emphasis is placed on saving heritage (which includes reducing ‘heritage at risk’, protecting the environment, organisational sustainability and inclusion, access & participation.
- Historic Environment Scotland (up to £500K for large grants). One of the priorities is to enhance communities’ use of the historic environment in place making – the High Kirk would tie in well with this given it is a priority in the Place Plan. Another is Net Zero, which use of the ruin as a green space may help to achieve.
- Regeneration funding from the Council through the Place-Based Investment Programme or the Shared Prosperity Fund – to be discussed.
- Garfield Weston Foundation (generally no more than 10% of project costs). Will fund capital costs of heritage projects. Must be a registered charity with a year’s annual accounts.

- Wolfson Foundation: funding for historic buildings and landscapes, usually £15,000 to £100,000. Will fund conservation and restoration work to sites of outstanding historic, architectural and cultural significance.
- Corporate donors, including two large businesses operating in Lennoxton, and local fundraising.

## Financial projections

Early-stage financial projections show that our vision for the High Kirk can work as a volunteer-led project with little ongoing external funding. A summary is below and full projections are in the Appendix.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Income			
Expenditure			
Surplus/deficit			
Balance			

## Running costs

This section discusses ongoing costs of the High Kirk.

Estimates are based on comparison to other sites, published pricing (where available) and assumptions about the type of facility that could be put in place at the High Kirk. These will all need to be reviewed in detail prior to transfer of ownership.

- Insurance for the site, which will be needed from transfer of ownership.
- Security costs including CCTV and alarms.
- Routine maintenance. At the moment, it is uncertain whether owning the High Kirk would mean that the steering group would be partially responsible for maintenance costs of the access road, which is shared with the cemetery (owned by East Dunbartonshire Council). Aside from this, we will need a maintenance budget covering the original building and any new structures, with provision for PAT testing of any electronics and testing of security systems.
- Administration costs of the organisation, including accountancy.
- Utilities for the heritage centre, once developed, and any external lighting. This is highly variable depending on the options for redevelopment to be identified in the feasibility study.
- Staffing costs, if applicable. At present, our plans are for a volunteer-run model in the long term, with local keyholders.
- Marketing and communications costs for the heritage centre, once developed. This would include maintaining a website, subscribing to partnership initiatives to promote tourism in the area, etc.
- Temporary licences if required for events.
- Volunteer and training expenses.

## Income generation

Potential sources of income identified at this stage include:

- *Wedding ceremonies and photography.* The site offers excellent views over the Campsie hills. There is interest in scenic ruins as destinations for wedding ceremonies and for photography. As a point of comparison, Historic Environment Scotland promotes both at various ruined sites, including [Melrose Abbey](#) and [Arbroath Abbey](#) – at both, hire specifically for photography is mentioned. [Dundonald Castle](#) and St Luke's Bombed Out Church, mentioned above as inspiration, also host weddings.

There are local venues that the High Kirk could partner with to host the reception afterwards. The Glazert Country House Hotel in Lennoxton is a wedding reception destination with capacity for up to 120 people. Its all-inclusive package appears primarily aimed at couples holding their ceremony elsewhere – there is a £300 additional charge for ceremonies when held at the hotel. Campsie Memorial Hall is another local function venue seating up to 220, although it does not advertise weddings specifically. In terms of competition, the main ceremony venues in Lennoxton are the active churches – the High Kirk would offer a different choice of ceremony and a unique backdrop for photos.

- *Fundraising events.* These could include makers markets, where exhibitors pay per table, and open-air performances.
- *Donations.* A physical or digital donation box could be installed once the site is open to visitors. Income from donation boxes varies: in [studies by the Association of Independent Museums](#), amounts ranged from 1p to £2 per visitor, with most reporting less than 50p. If 4000 visitors donate on average 20p, £800 would be generated. With charitable status, the steering group may also be able to claim Gift Aid under the Small Donations Scheme.
- *Gift sales.* Assuming space can be provided, a visitor/heritage centre could include a small gift shop. Assuming spend of £1 per visitor, with the same visitor numbers (in reality, many will spend nothing, and some will spend more), and cost of sale of 50%, this would generate £2000 a year. Alternatively, pop-up outdoor markets could be hosted.

## 4. Risk and mitigation

We have identified potential risks which could impact on the success of the project, along with actions required to mitigate these.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Probability</b>	<b>Action required</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
KLTR disclaims building before May 2025 deadline	High	Low	Continued progress accorded the expected timeline.  Updates to KLTR team	FOCHK board
Sufficient funding for repair works not secured	Medium	Medium	Flexibility regarding design plans and phasing.  Progress applications to funders prior to the expected February 2025 transfer date.  VAT assessment following more detailed business planning to determine whether VAT on construction can be reclaimed	FOCHK board
Action by EDC to reverse non-compliant work on listed building	High	Low	Commission accredited conservation architect for design plans  Liaise closely with EDC during planning process (support has been offered)	FOCHK board
High ongoing maintenance costs	High	Low	Detailed condition survey  Discussion with EDC regarding access road.	FOCHK board
Vandalism and security concerns	Medium	Low	Installation of security system; regular maintenance and testing	FOCHK board

## ● Appendix 1: Financial Projections

YEAR 1	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
<b>Visitor numbers</b>													
<b>Income</b>													
Grants													
Hire (e.g. wedding ceremony, photography/filming, outdoor market)													
Donations													
Fundraising events													
Gift sales													
<b>Total income</b>													
Cost of sales (gift sales at 55%)													
<b>Running costs</b>													
Self-empld project mgr (Year 1 only)													
Volunteer expenses													
Utilities													
Insurance													
Security system maintenance													
Routine maintenance													
Accountancy													
Web hosting & subscriptions													
<b>Total running costs</b>													
<b>Opening balance</b>													
<b>Surplus/deficit</b>													

**Closing balance**

**Year 2**

**Visitor numbers**

**Income**

**Grants**

**Hire**

**Donations**

**Fundraising events**

**Gift sales**

**Total income**

**Cost of sales (gift sales  
at 55%)**

**Running costs**

**Volunteer expenses**

**Utilities**

**Insurance**

**Security system  
maintenance**

**Routine maintenance**

**Accountancy**

**Web hosting &  
subscriptions**

**Total running costs**

**Opening balance**

**Surplus/deficit**

**Closing balance**

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
<b>Closing balance</b>													
<b>Year 2</b>													
<b>Visitor numbers</b>													
<b>Income</b>													
<b>Grants</b>													
<b>Hire</b>													
<b>Donations</b>													
<b>Fundraising events</b>													
<b>Gift sales</b>													
<b>Total income</b>													
<b>Cost of sales (gift sales at 55%)</b>													
<b>Running costs</b>													
<b>Volunteer expenses</b>													
<b>Utilities</b>													
<b>Insurance</b>													
<b>Security system maintenance</b>													
<b>Routine maintenance</b>													
<b>Accountancy</b>													
<b>Web hosting &amp; subscriptions</b>													
<b>Total running costs</b>													
<b>Opening balance</b>													
<b>Surplus/deficit</b>													
<b>Closing balance</b>													



Year 3	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
<b>Visitor numbers</b>													
<b>Income</b>													
Grants													
Hire													
Donations													
Fundraising events													
Gift sales													
<b>Total income</b>													
Cost of sales (gift sales at 55%)													
<b>Running costs</b>													
Volunteer expenses													
Utilities													
Insurance													
Security system maintenance													
Routine maintenance													
Accountancy													
Web hosting & subscriptions													
<b>Total running costs</b>													
<b>Opening balance</b>													
<b>Surplus/deficit</b>													
<b>Closing balance</b>													

