

HELIPAD UPDATE

SEPTEMBER 2019

The need for a formal landing site for emergency extractions has been highlighted by members of the public who previously approached the Community Council to investigate how it could be managed. The C.C. asked the Healthcare Association to look into it and this work continues as a joint project.

Other parties who are enthusiastic supporters are
The Coastguard, SAR/Bristow Helicopters
Air Ambulance/Babcock Air
NHS Highland
HELP Appeal (helicopter emergency landing pad)
Applecross Trust
Milton crofters

The site would be designated as a secondary landing site i.e. a safe area that will be entered into emergency services computers to give Air Ambulance and SAR a reliable area to land.

Potential sites were discussed by a small representative group and an area opposite the Village Hall was agreed as a good prospect.

Advantages are:

- Relatively close proximity to the surgery and emergency services
- No overhead cable restrictions
- No local housing or school
- Good road access
- Reduced tourist traffic

A full site survey has been carried out by Alex Knight of Helideck Surveys Ltd, who were recommended by NHS, Babcock and Bristow.

His comprehensive report includes approach, landing and take off patterns and a site assessment. It is available if anybody wishes to view.

The area required is a 32metre square.

The proposed construction method is:

Excavate top soil and peat to a firm base.

Infill with quarry hardcore establishing high quality drainage.

Finished surface to be robust plastic mesh filled with top soil/grass mix.

There will be concrete flags defining the letter H centrally and an intermittent border of similar flags.

Road access will be via a gated entrance opposite the Village Hall gateway.

A small illuminated wind sock is ideal and permission is being sought from the Hall Committee to mount this on the Hall gable end.

The next step is to carry out small exploratory digs to survey the volume of hardcore required.

We can then make a reasonable assessment of costs.

These would then be passed on to our fundraisers and potential contributing bodies.

We also await provision of a dedicated bank account for fund raising which currently is beyond the capabilities of the large banks!

Kath Fraser, treasurer, and myself continue to pursue this.

Chris Ward

Applecross Healthcare Association