

## **Nairn Bowling Club Planning Application – supporting letter (213 names) 7<sup>th</sup> Aug 2025**

Lawn bowls is one of Scotland's top three most-played sports and continues to be a cornerstone of community life across the country. Nairn Bowling Club, a long-standing and valued organisation in the town, plays a key role in supporting health and well-being, fostering community spirit, and addressing social isolation—particularly among older residents.

The Club provides an inclusive, welcoming environment that encourages physical activity and social engagement. In doing so, it contributes to the Council's objectives for preventative health, active ageing, and community inclusion, while helping to reduce demand on local health and social care services.

### **Need for Year-Round Provision**

Currently, our outdoor grass green limits us to a playing season from mid-April to mid-September. As a result, the health and social benefits the Club offers are restricted to just five months each year. The proposed development will overcome this limitation through the installation of an outdoor synthetic green and indoor short carpet bowls facilities—allowing for year-round participation regardless of weather or season.

This will extend opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to remain active and connected throughout the year. Importantly, the synthetic surface will enable older members to continue playing even as physical mobility declines, supporting lifelong participation. The reintroduction of indoor short carpet bowling is also a key aspect of the proposed facilities. Bring back a much played winter activity for the Nairn/Nairnshire community.

### **Improving Accessibility and Broadening Participation**

The proposed synthetic green will be more accessible for children and young people, who often find grass surfaces difficult to play on. The development is also designed with full inclusivity in mind, including wheelchair access without requiring specialist adaptations.

A crèche is also proposed to support parents and carers who wish to play or volunteer, removing a key barrier to participation and further widening the Club's reach within the community.

Beyond bowls, the new facility will serve as a multipurpose space for local groups, clubs, and societies—providing a warm and welcoming venue for year-round use. This aligns with the Scottish Governments and Council's ambitions for vibrant, resilient communities and the "20 minute Neighbourhood"

### **Impact on the Local Area**

We have commissioned a traffic survey to capture real time information, to augment currently available statistical data, this data has been invaluable to help ensure that the proposed design will meet or exceed all local authority transport requirements.

### **Environmental Responsibility**

This development has been designed according to Net Zero principles, ensuring that it is one of the most sustainable sports and community facilities in the North of Scotland. This

demonstrates the Club's commitment to environmental responsibility and supports national and local sustainability goals.

### **Strategic Importance for Sport and Tourism**

The project has the full backing of Bowls Scotland, whose CEO has described the proposed facility as the most advanced in the country. It is expected to attract national and international events, helping to raise Nairn's profile and boost the local economy through increased visitor numbers and tourism spending.

### **Conclusion**

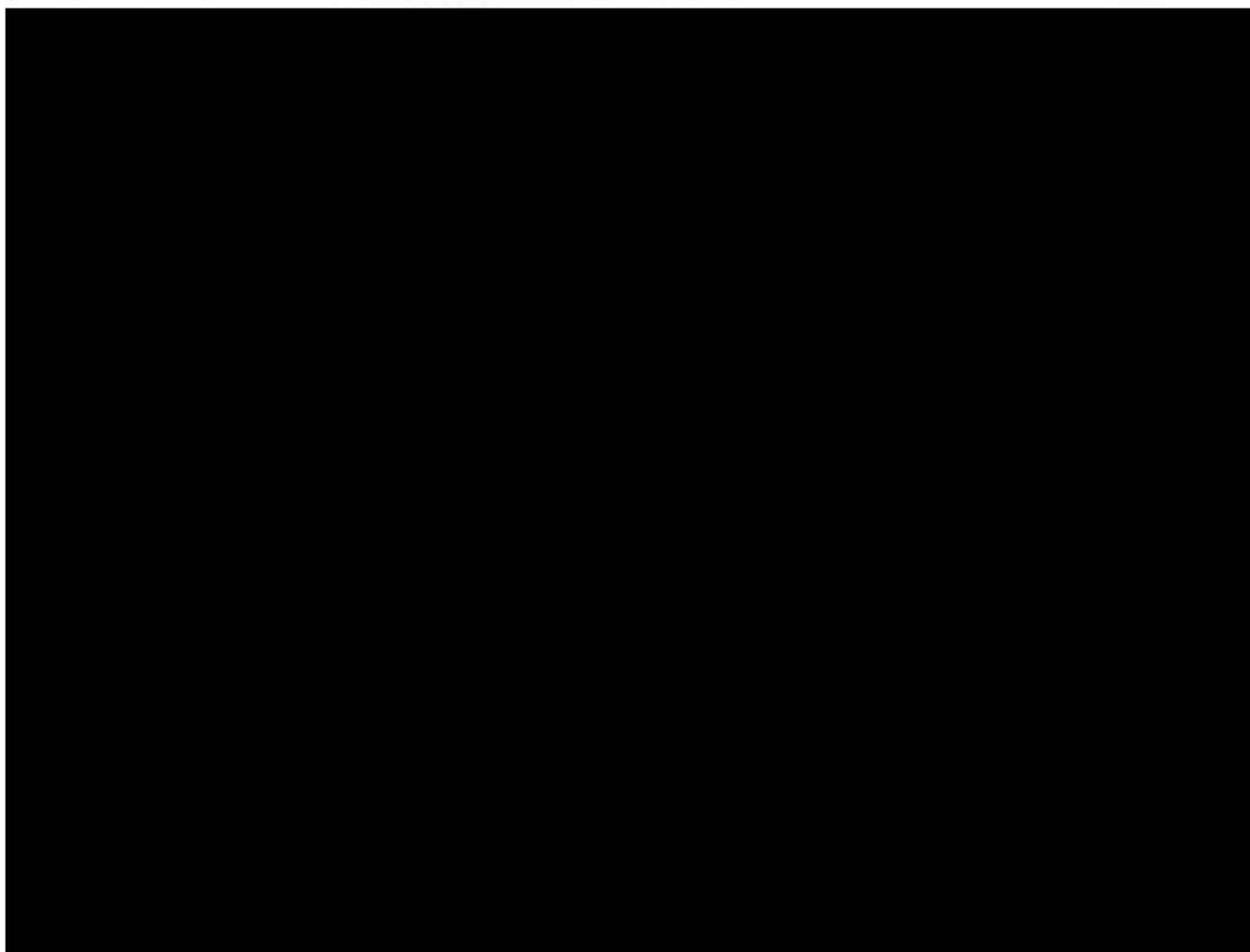
The proposed development will transform Nairn Bowling Club into a modern, accessible, and environmentally sustainable community hub. It will deliver measurable benefits in health, inclusion, and social cohesion, while also enhancing Nairn's reputation as a forward-looking destination for sport and tourism.

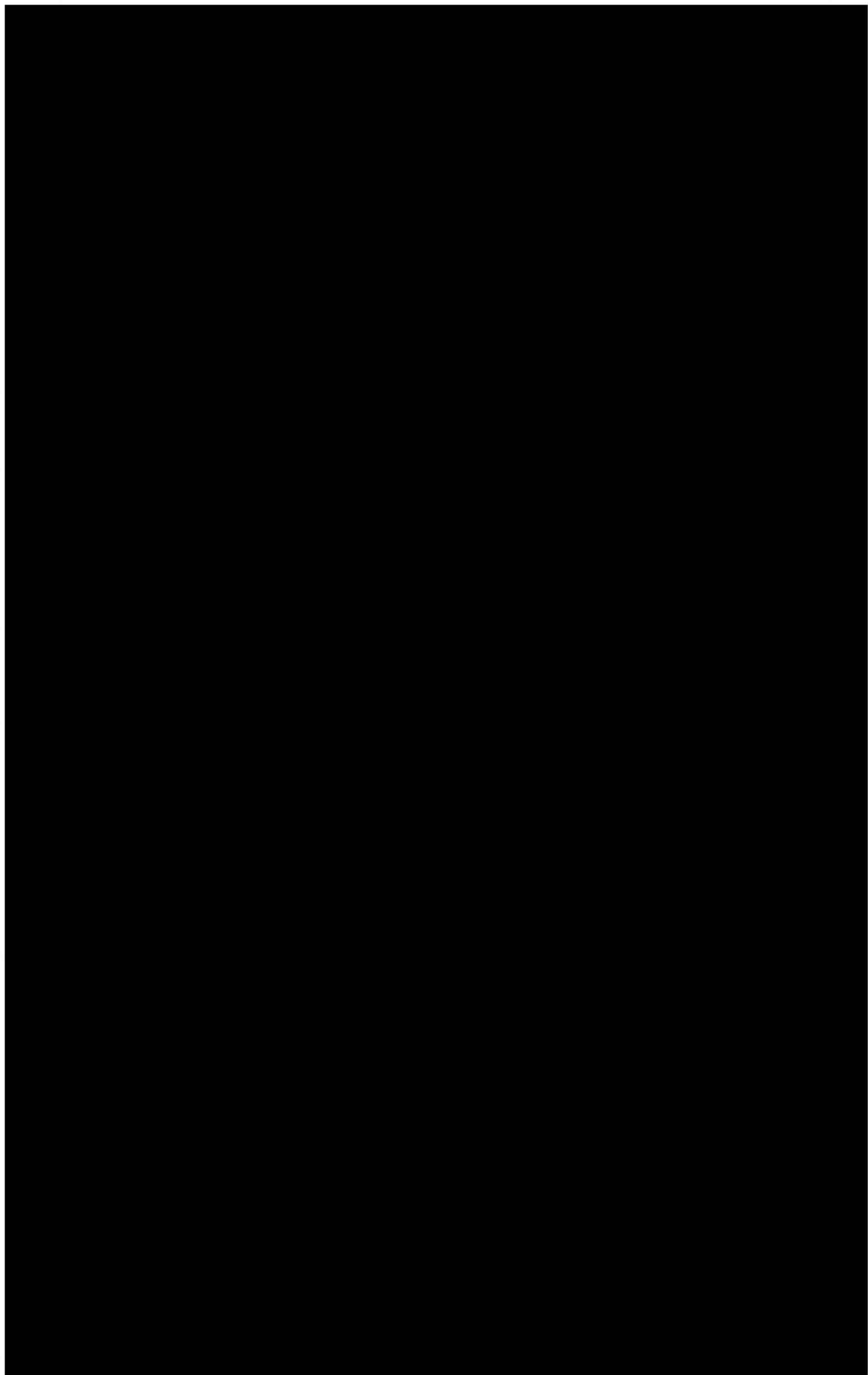
We respectfully request that the Planning Authority support this application, recognising the long-term social, environmental, and economic value it will bring to the town and its residents.

Kindest regards

Bob Ferenth

Nairn Bowling Club – Development Officer and Honorary President





The first part of the paper discusses the importance of the research and the objectives of the study. It then moves on to a literature review, which provides a background on the topic and identifies the gaps in the existing research. The methodology section describes the research design, data collection, and analysis. The results section presents the findings of the study, and the conclusion summarizes the main points and offers suggestions for future research.

The research was conducted in a systematic and rigorous manner, following the principles of good research practice. The data was collected from a representative sample of the population, and the analysis was carried out using appropriate statistical methods. The results of the study are presented in a clear and concise manner, and the conclusions are based on the evidence gathered.

The study has several strengths, including a large sample size, a well-defined research design, and the use of appropriate statistical methods. However, there are also some limitations, such as the potential for bias in the sample and the fact that the study is a cross-sectional design. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights into the topic and contributes to the existing knowledge in the field.

The findings of the study have important implications for practice and policy. They suggest that there is a need for further research in this area, and that the results can be used to inform decision-making and the development of interventions. The study also highlights the importance of considering the context and the needs of the population when conducting research.

In conclusion, the study provides a comprehensive and detailed analysis of the topic, and its findings are of significant value to the research community. The study is well-structured and easy to read, and it provides a clear and concise summary of the main points. The research is a valuable contribution to the field and is worth reading for anyone interested in the topic.



The above table provides names and postcodes of members of the community that have come forward to support the proposed project. There is a total of 213 people that have asked to be included, rather than submitting an individual letters of support.

We would also like to take this opportunity to provide factual answers to the many questions that have been posted on social media. This will provide the community with relevant information and hopefully dispel the many inaccuracies that are circulating:

1. **Land Ownership**

The land is owned by the Nairnshire Farming Society. They are a local charitable organisation established in 1937. Their reasons for selling and how they intend to reinvest proceeds are matters for them to state directly.

2. **Area Of Land That Is Being Proposed For The Facility**

The Showfield has a total area of approximately 8.5 acres. The area included in the planning application is approximately 1.5 acres. However, this area also includes a public carpark (already used for parking). The proposed building takes up only a very small portion of this 1.5 acres. It is just over 400 square meters (approximately 0.1 acres or 0.041 hectares). The majority of the area will remain as green space for outdoor sporting use by the community.

3. **Building Design**

The two-storey design is essential. Without it, the facility could not meet accessibility standards, provide the necessary space, or accommodate a truly multi-functional role within the community. Concerns about shading, biodiversity, and visual impact will be considered by the planning authority as part of the statutory process. These matters cannot be determined by speculation alone but require proper technical assessment.

4. **Playing Surfaces**

The combination of one natural and one synthetic green is deliberate: the synthetic surface ensures year-round play, even in poor weather, and is particularly important for our more senior members and those with mobility challenges, who benefit from a safer and more reliable surface. This mix also supports disability participation and extends the playing season, helping to make the sport accessible to all. In addition, the indoor space will allow for short mat bowls, further broadening opportunities for the community during the winter months.

5. **Relocation**

Our current Albert Street site cannot meet the future needs of a modern, accessible club. Relocation is the only way to secure the club's long-term future and expand its role in the community. This is not just about bowling — it is about creating a flexible, welcoming space that many different groups can use at affordable rates. The proposal has been through extensive consultation and is embedded within the Nairn & Nairnshire Place Plan, which was endorsed by the community, NICE, and both Nairn Community Councils.

6. **Community Facilities**

The project includes a **multi-function room**, designed to meet unmet community demand for flexible, affordable venues. Potential uses include meetings for local groups, fitness and wellbeing classes, social activities for seniors, youth sessions, charity fundraising events, and educational workshops. The emphasis is on inclusivity and community benefit, not competition with existing local businesses. All aspects of the proposed facility will be available to members and non-members.

7. **Noise**

Noise, hours of use, and any licensing requirements will all be managed under

established regulations. We have no intention of making the proposed bar a focus of activities — it is simply a continuation of a facility that has existed at Albert Street for many years, primarily used during competitions and club social events. It will NOT operate as a public bar. We have operated from Albert Street for almost 150 years and have never had any complaints about noise nuisance from within the Clubhouse.

8. **Light pollution**

Floodlights are currently on the site and being used by the football clubs, therefore there will be no additional impact.

9. **Creche**

The crèche proposal remains exploratory and would only proceed if it meets all professional and safeguarding requirements. If we do include this, it will be used by parents/carers/grandparents that wish to take part in one of the focused activities at the facility. This will provide respite and enable participation in a sport to improve social, physical and mental wellbeing.

10. **Competitions**

Hosting occasional regional or national competitions offers Nairn an opportunity to attract visitors, boost the local economy, and raise the town's profile. These will be occasional events, not everyday occurrences, and will be subject to appropriate planning, traffic, and infrastructure oversight. Similar to those held by our excellent local Golf Clubs. The main focus remains on supporting local players and providing wider community use. Hosting a regular international competition is a suggestion from Bowls Scotland. Many questions would need to be explored and answered before this could be a consideration

11. **Traffic and Drainage**

Traffic and road safety are valid concerns. Independent surveys have been commissioned in line with Highland Council requirements, and the Council may commission further studies if needed. Approval will only be granted if robust evidence confirms that any impacts can be managed. Similarly, drainage solutions must meet Highland Council standards before any development can proceed, and any existing issues on Lodgehill Road are fully considered as part of that process.

12. **In conclusion**, while we understand residents will have questions, the Showfield relocation represents the best way to safeguard the future of Nairn Bowling Club while creating a facility that serves the whole community. The proposals are designed to provide year-round, inclusive sporting opportunities for people of all ages and abilities, alongside a flexible, multi-use community space. Importantly, it also secures this area of the field for ongoing community activity and sport. All the facilities will be open to the public.