# North Queensferry renews appeal after Scottish Government blocks Albert Hotel community buyout



In a move to champion local ownership, the North Queensferry Trust has launched an appeal following the Scottish Government's rejection of their bid to buy the historic Albert Hotel—a cornerstone of the community. The decision, which came under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016, has sparked outcry, as the community aims to preserve the hotel not just as a business venture but as a vital social hub for the village.

Melanie Ward MP has taken a vocal stance against the Scottish Ministers' decision, describing it as “short-sighted and deeply disappointing.” Speaking at Westminster, she highlighted the community's resolve to restore the hotel for public use and asserted that community ownership is “incredibly valuable.” Ward's comments resonate with the sentiments of local residents who see the hotel not merely as a building, but as an integral part of their identity and culture.

The Albert Hotel dates back to 1824 and has been closed since 2017, a prolonged absence that has left the village without its only pub. Local councillor David Barratt confirmed that the Scottish Government's decision was influenced by doubts regarding the sustainability of the community's business case. The rejection was compounded by a failed application for the hotel to be converted into flats, a proposition that faced fierce local opposition, with 133 letters of objection filed. The community's fears seemed to echo a broader concern: that conversion would result in a loss of a vital community asset.

In response to the planning debacle, villagers formed The Albert Community Group Ltd, a not-for-profit company aimed at purchasing the hotel. Local support for this initiative has been ringing loud and clear; a recent ballot showed overwhelming backing, with an astonishing 98.6% of voters in favour of the buyout. This robust endorsement will be presented to the Scottish Government's community land team as part of the next phase in their attempt to secure ownership.

Iain Mitchell, Chair of the North Queensferry Community Council, expressed optimism about the community's chances of winning their appeal. He indicated that the Trust has identified several “procedural and substantive errors” in the Scottish Government's initial decision. The community's commitment to saving the Albert Hotel, coupled with the recognition of its potential as a tourism and community asset, presents a compelling case for re-evaluation.

The initial rejection has ignited a wider debate about community rights and the role of local input in decision-making processes. As discussions surrounding the legislation on community right to buy gather momentum, it is clear that North Queensferry's fight to reclaim the Albert Hotel will continue to draw attention not only in local circles but also within the corridors of power.

As the struggle unfolds, the narrative of the Albert Hotel is more than just about a building; it exemplifies a community rallying together, determined to secure its heritage against the backdrop of a changing socio-political landscape. The outcome of the ongoing appeal and subsequent efforts to reverse the Scottish Government's decision will be critical in determining both the future of the Albert Hotel and the community that fights to preserve it.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/25198890.efforts-buy-north-queensferrys-albert-hotel-raised-westminster/?ref=rss), [[2]](https://www.fifetoday.co.uk/news/people/historic-fife-seaside-village-denied-community-buyout-to-reopen-its-only-pub-5066831)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/25198890.efforts-buy-north-queensferrys-albert-hotel-raised-westminster/?ref=rss), [[5]](https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/business-environment/business/4366720/fife-ballot-albert-hotel/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[2]](https://www.fifetoday.co.uk/news/people/historic-fife-seaside-village-denied-community-buyout-to-reopen-its-only-pub-5066831), [[3]](https://www.dunfermlinepress.com/news/23220843.north-queensferry-hotel-owners-appeal-dismissed/), [[6]](https://www.dunfermlinepress.com/news/23508419.north-queensferry-villagers-vote-community-buy-out-albert-hotel/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[4]](https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/fife/3795499/north-queensferry-hotel-appeal/), [[7]](https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/business-environment/business/4322515/fife-community-group-plans-historic-hotel/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/25198890.efforts-buy-north-queensferrys-albert-hotel-raised-westminster/?ref=rss), [[6]](https://www.dunfermlinepress.com/news/23508419.north-queensferry-villagers-vote-community-buy-out-albert-hotel/)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/25198890.efforts-buy-north-queensferrys-albert-hotel-raised-westminster/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.fifetoday.co.uk/news/people/historic-fife-seaside-village-denied-community-buyout-to-reopen-its-only-pub-5066831> - Residents of North Queensferry, a historic Fife seaside village, have been denied a community buyout bid to reopen the Albert Hotel, their only pub. The Scottish Government rejected the application under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016, citing concerns over the sustainability of the business case. Fife councillor David Barratt confirmed the rejection, stating that the decision concluded that the building would continue in its present state without granting consent. The community trust plans to appeal the decision, citing procedural and substantive errors in the process. The Albert Hotel, dating back to 1824, has been closed since 2017. ([fifetoday.co.uk](https://www.fifetoday.co.uk/news/people/historic-fife-seaside-village-denied-community-buyout-to-reopen-its-only-pub-5066831?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.dunfermlinepress.com/news/23220843.north-queensferry-hotel-owners-appeal-dismissed/> - The owners of the Albert Hotel in North Queensferry have been refused permission to convert the building into flats. Fife Council rejected the application, and the subsequent appeal to the Scottish Government was dismissed. This decision opens the possibility for local investors to purchase and reopen the hotel as a pub and restaurant. Local councillor David Barratt welcomed the decision, expressing hope for the building's preservation. Iain Mitchell, chair of North Queensferry Community Council, also welcomed the decision, stating it clears the way for discussions with the owners to secure the future of the Albert Hotel. ([dunfermlinepress.com](https://www.dunfermlinepress.com/news/23220843.north-queensferry-hotel-owners-appeal-dismissed/?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/fife/3795499/north-queensferry-hotel-appeal/> - The owners of the Albert Hotel in North Queensferry have lodged an appeal to convert the historic building into flats. Fife Council had previously refused the application, agreeing with planners that the loss of a potential tourism and community asset could not be justified. The appeal to the Scottish Government seeks to overturn this decision. The hotel, dating back to 1824, has been closed for four years. The proposed flats would offer views of the Forth Bridge, a World Heritage Site. The community has objected to the proposal, aiming to preserve the hotel as a community asset. ([thecourier.co.uk](https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/fife/3795499/north-queensferry-hotel-appeal/?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/business-environment/business/4366720/fife-ballot-albert-hotel/> - A ballot in North Queensferry has shown overwhelming support for a community buyout of the Albert Hotel. The North Queensferry Community Trust nominated The Albert Community Group Ltd, a not-for-profit company formed by local residents, to purchase the hotel. The ballot required over half of the community's electorate to vote, with more than half voting in favour. The results will be shared with the Scottish Government's community land team before proceeding with the next phase of the community right to buy application. The current owner, Kenny Waugh, remains committed to reopening the hotel as a bar and restaurant, investing £400,000 into the premises. ([thecourier.co.uk](https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/business-environment/business/4366720/fife-ballot-albert-hotel/?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.dunfermlinepress.com/news/23508419.north-queensferry-villagers-vote-community-buy-out-albert-hotel/> - A secret ballot in North Queensferry revealed significant local support for a community bid to buy the Albert Hotel. Seventy-eight percent of the electorate voted, with 98.6% in favour of the buy-out. The North Queensferry Community Trust plans to nominate The Albert Community Group Ltd to purchase and restore the hotel as a sustainable development for the community. The current owner, Kenny Waugh, has outlined plans to reopen the hotel as a pub, restaurant, and hotel, investing £400,000 into the premises. ([dunfermlinepress.com](https://www.dunfermlinepress.com/news/23508419.north-queensferry-villagers-vote-community-buy-out-albert-hotel/?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/business-environment/business/4322515/fife-community-group-plans-historic-hotel/> - The North Queensferry Community Trust has outlined plans to take over the historic Albert Hotel, which has been closed for more than five years. The trust has applied for a community buy-out under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016, nominating The Albert Community Group Ltd, a not-for-profit company formed by local residents, to purchase the hotel. The current owner, Kenny Waugh, has outlined plans to reopen the hotel as a bar and reconfigure former hotel rooms to create four luxury suites, investing £400,000 into the premises. ([thecourier.co.uk](https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/business-environment/business/4322515/fife-community-group-plans-historic-hotel/?utm_source=openai))