

AGENDA ITEM 5

APPENDIX 5

2016/0158/DET

SUPPORTING
INFORMATION
PROPOSAL



CONTENTS / 001
 PROPOSAL / SAWMILL CO-OPERATIVE / 22-01-2016

Contents

Introduction	-	The Saw Mill Co-operative	-	002
Who we are	-	A local collective	-	003
Our Vision	-	A sustainable community	-	004
Location	-	A brownfield site	-	006
Environment	-	Environmental Impact Assessment	-	010
Woodland	-	A considered layout	-	011
Architecture	-	A National Park Perspective	-	012
Construction	-	A considered approach	-	014
Site overview	-	A look at the site and the houses	-	015
The Members	-	Further information of the Co-operative members	-	017
Appendix	-	Further supporting documents	-	021
001	-	SawmillCoOp-doc002-Brownfield.docx	-	
002	-	SawmillCoOp-doc003-HSCHAT-Cross Subsidy Affordable Housing Model-Rothiemurchus.pdf	-	
003	-	SawmillCoOp-doc004-Abriocultural Report-PotterTreeConsultancy..pdf	-	
004	-	SawmillCoOp-doc005-Tree Constraints Plan-PotterTreeConsultancy.pdf	-	
005	-	SawmillCoOp-doc006-Tree Protection Plan-PotterTreeConsultancy.pdf	-	
006	-	SawmillCoOp-doc007-Tree Amenity Plan-PotterTreeConsultancy.pdf	-	
007	-	SawmillCoOp-doc008-Planting-plan-HIGHLANDScapeDesign.pdf	-	
008	-	SawmillCoOp-doc009-Landscape-plan-HIGHLANDScapeDesign.pdf	-	
009	-	SawmillCoOp-doc010-Landscape-report-HIGHLANDScapeDesign.pdf	-	
010	-	SawmillCoOp-doc011-Ecological-survey-ErnestEEEmmentt.pdf	-	
011	-	SawmillCoOp-doc012-Fungus Survey - Liz appendix 1.doc	-	
012	-	SawmillCoOp-doc013-SITE_INVESTIGATION_REPORT-100103429.pdf	-	
013	-	SawmillCoOp-doc014-Sustainable Design Checklist.pdf	-	
014	-	SawmillCoOp-doc015-The Sawmill Co-Operative - an Innovative Local Solution to the sustainable community challenge.docx	-	
015	-	Environmental Impact Assessment letter as printed on page 9	-	
016	-	CNPA-Layout-Response-Frances Initial thoughts Aug 2012.pdf	-	
017	-	Rural Designs - Design and Access Statement	-	



INTRODUCTION

The Rothiemurchus Sawmill

An affordable housing co-operative

The Rothiemurchus Sawmill is a partnership of local, like minded people looking to create a low cost sustainable community to live in. The co-op is formed by people local to the Spey Valley whom are living and working in the area and want to continue doing so.

The aim of the project is to construct four homes keeping within the means of the landscape and the means of the group. The group all have roots in the area and want to establish an environment whereby they can live adequately and sustainably without excessive burden on the land or resources.



WHO WE ARE

Local People

The Cairngorms National Park is not only a place of phenomenal natural beauty, but a place of inspiration, adventure, and a deep history of innovative creativity. The unique landscape and local climate have moulded a tradition of forward thinking yet considerate views on land-management while also fostering a rich culture of art, ecology, adventure, sport and sustainable community living.

The members of the group are true children of the Cairngorms National Park. Brought up surrounded by the mountains, and infused with local tradition and the adventurous spirit of the area, all members epitomize the adventurous and forward thinking spirit of the Cairngorms National Park.

Group members include a local mountain rescue team member, a graphic designer specializing in contemporary Scottish design, Cairngorm Ski Patrol members, outdoor sports experts and a former Olympic athlete. The co-operative aim to invest their energy and shared visions into both the Saw Mill project and the general spirit of the Cairngorms National Park.



OUR VISION

A Sustainable Community

The co-operative has worked alongside the Cairngorms National Park, Rothiemurchus Estate and the Highland Small Communities Housing Trust to develop and create a modern alternative to meet high quality sustainable affordable rural housing need. This process has taken a number of years with the group pulling together to tackle the many aspects that the multiple stakeholders of this project require.

The use of sustainable design in all areas of the project is a priority. Not only will the design of the housing compliment and reflect the local traditional pattern and character of the surrounding area, the buildings will consider the land and compliment one another, sharing resources where possible. While the effects of the development on climate change and the minimizing of energy usage during the construction phase will be a top priority.

The co-operative aims to minimize the effects to natural heritage on the site and the surrounding area and have worked actively to promote the natural environment of the site with open spaces and the minimal removal of trees and vegetation. The Co-op has thoroughly explored and put together extensive Environmental Impact Assessments, landscape designs and Abriocultural assessment to carefully manage the site and build.

Traditional skills, materials and knowledge of the micro-climate are also a focus as well as considering a wide choice of modern sustainable materials and construction techniques to help reflect the special qualities of the park and situate the project firmly within the local milieu.



The final project will realize the exemplar vision of shared spaces, community and sustainable living, and affordability for local people on modest income while complimenting the surrounding environment with minimal adverse effects to the natural heritage. The Saw Mill co-operative aims to raise the sustainability of the project by growing fruit and vegetables and having composting facilities.

Our model is the placement of six homes; four of which form the co-operatives affordable homes, the other two houses are open-market to cross-subsidise the release of land by the estate.

Pro-active in our vision to address our housing needs we hope to inspire other groups to form partnerships and explore creative solutions towards overcoming the lack of affordable housing in rural communities across Scotland.

For further information please see -

SawmillCoOp-doc015-The Sawmill Co-Operative - an innovative Local Solution to the sustainable community challenge
SawmillCoOp-doc003-HSCHT-Cross Subsidy Affordable Housing Model--Rothiemurchus.pdf



OUR GOALS / 005
PROPOSAL / SAWMILL CO-OPERATIVE / 22-01-2016

Sustainability / Affordability / Efficient / Vernacular

We will strive wherever possible to:

- Use materials that are sourced locally which maximise the efficient use of natural resources.
- Use resources and design that directly reduce the impact of climate change
- Reduce the need for travel as all occupants work locally to the site
- Conserve and enhance the distinctive character of the Park by creating a small contained community that respects the landscape using contemporary design and innovation
- Ensure the landscaping considers natural heritage in particular aiming to enhance biodiversity and sustain the current habitat of local ecology
- Ensure energy efficiency by use of modern design and construction

Time the build in consideration of sensitive periods of the wildlife and the estate

Recycle and ensure organic materials are composted appropriately with the hope of maintaining a low carbon footprint

Ensure we meet and subsequently exceed the sustainable design standards set out by the CNIPA

Maintain public access through our site

Promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities by partnership with the HSCHT and employing their rural burden system

Utilise this project to create a true Cairngorm sustainable community with all houses locked for future generations

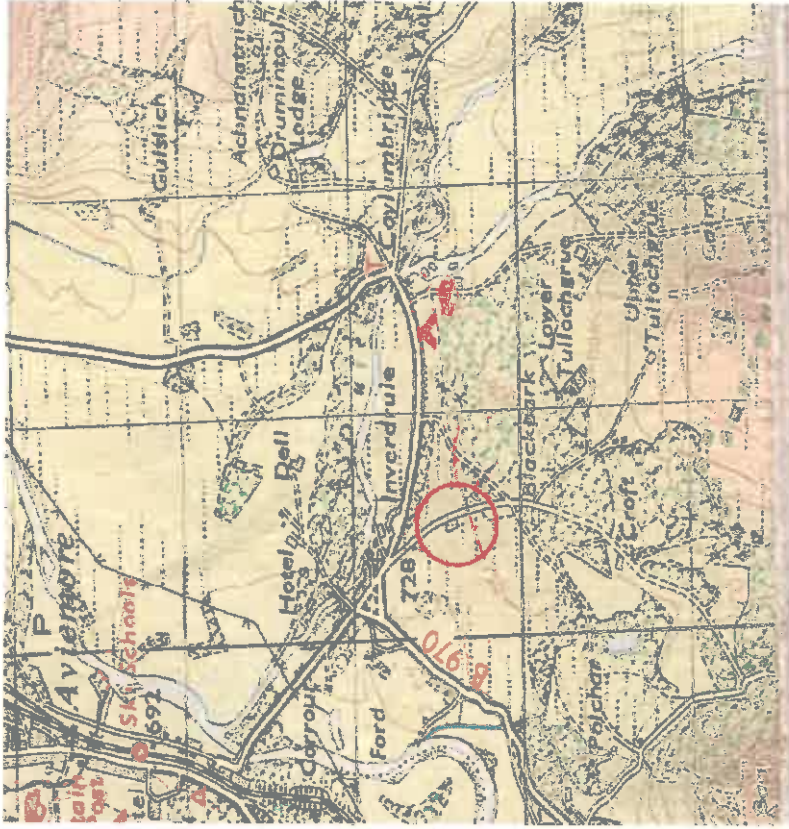
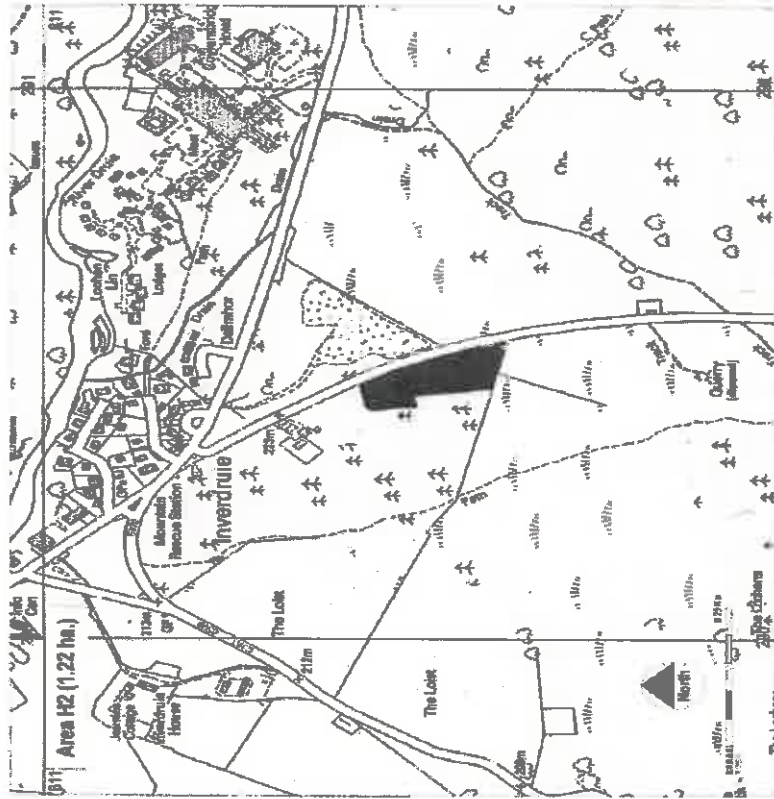
For further information see -

SawmillCoOp-doc014-Sustainable Design Checklist.pdf

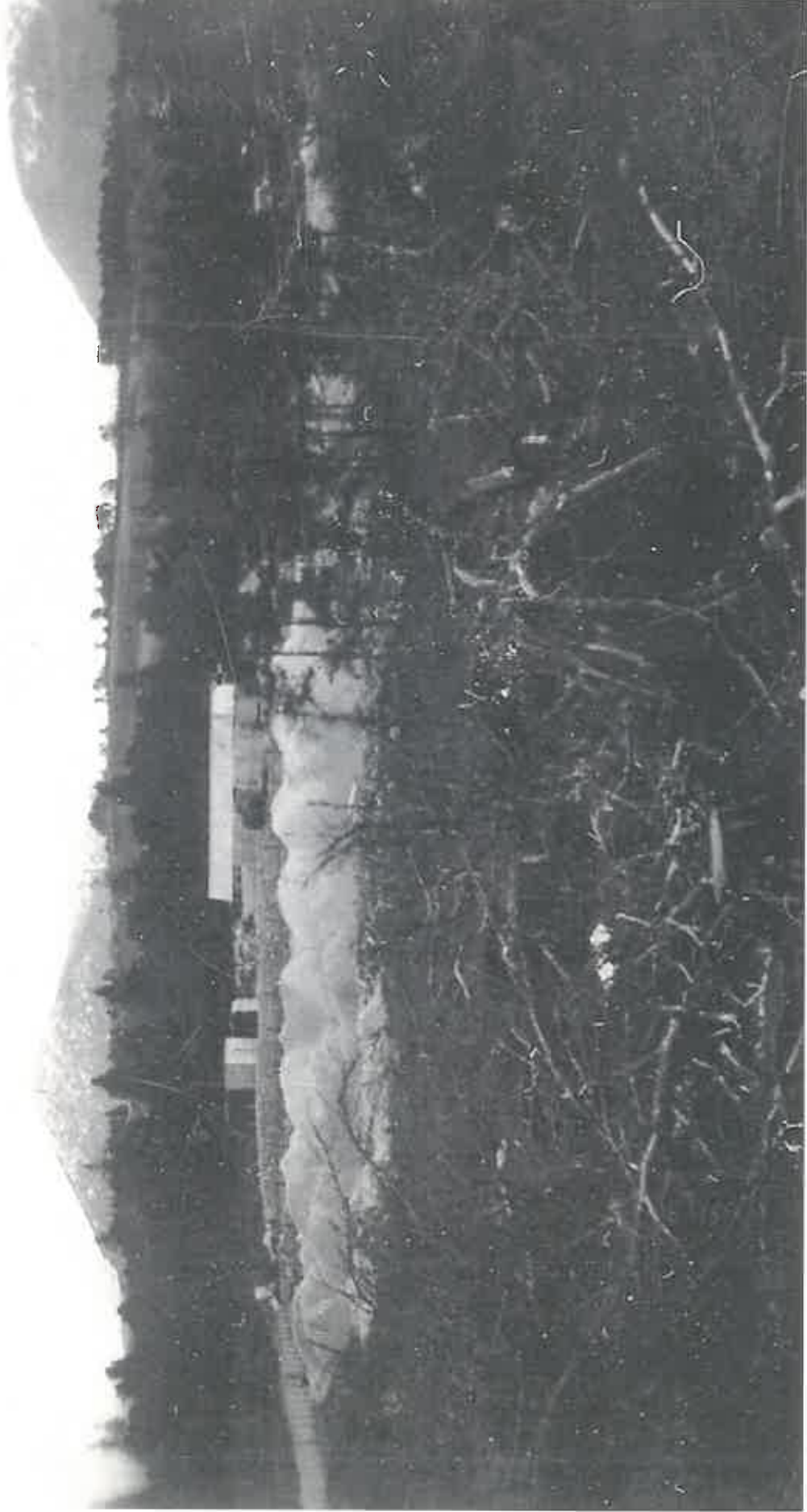


A brownfield site

The Saw Mill site as it names suggests was home to a working Mill for many years. People worked and lived there only a generation ago, in fact some where born and grew up on this site as recent as the mid 1950's. This former industrial setting is now a brown field site.



THE MILL / 007
PROPOSAL / SAWMILL CO-OPERATIVE / 22-01-2016



SAWMILL FROM NORTH LOOKING TOWARD
TOLLOCHGRUE PERSPECTIVE CIRCA 1960



THE MILL / 008
PROPOSAL / SAWMILL CO-OPERATIVE / 22-01-2016



SAWMILL FROM SOUTH EAST LOOKING TOWARD
MEALL A BHUICHALLIE CIRCA 1960



ALLT DRUIDH
INVERDRUIE
AVEMORE
INVERNESS-SHIRE
PH22 1QH
01479 810998

Friday, 28th. November, 2014.

Dear Sir/Madam,

The attached photograph was taken on Sunday, 28th December, 1958, from a point on the footpath over the moor between Inverdrue and Lochan More. In the background are the Kincardine Hills.

On the left in the photograph are the cabins which were erected on the road from Inverdrue to Blackpark for the workers in the sawmill and these cabins are still there, two occupied. On the right are the sawmill and its ancillary buildings. This sawmill was one of those operated on Rothiemurchus by the Anderson Brothers of Boat of Garten after the Second World War. Evidence of the foundations can still be seen on the site.

A butcher friend went to the mill regularly to get sawdust to spread on the shop floor as was the custom in those days.
The photograph is conclusive proof of the existence of buildings on that site.



Walter Dempster.



Environment Impact Assessment

For over two years the Sawmill Cooperative has commissioned an Environmental Impact Assessment for the Sawmill site incorporating surveys for Fungi, Mammal (+50m buffer), botany, invertebrates and lichens as per David Hetherington's - CNPA Ecology Advisor - recommendation following a site visit on 7th September 2012.

Following this recommendation, the CNPA suggested a number of ecologists who could undertake the work, as they have submitted work to the CNPA previously. Liz Holden and Ern Emmett were two of the suggested. The Fungi survey was conducted in the autumn of 2012 by Liz Holden (see appendix 11). Ern Emmett continued and worked on the remaining surveys undertaking undertaking various requested surveys: botany and lichens (including vascular plants and Bryophytes), invertebrates and a mammal survey, using camera traps, encompassing a 50m buffer zone to the site boundary (see appendix 10).

In order to establish exactly what the CNPA were seeking within the recommended surveys, over 28 emails were sent back and forth from August 2011 to April 2013 between the Heritage Officer, the Ecology Advisor and senior Planning Officer and Scottish Natural Heritage. The cooperative sought to ensure that every step was taken to conduct a comprehensive ecological assessment of the Sawmill site. The surveys paid close attention to the

Cairngorms Local Biodiversity Action Plan, the UK and Scottish Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and the Scottish Species Framework which had been flagged up to us on numerous occasions from persons within the CNPA. We ensured that each question, or issues raised by each department within the CNPA were robustly addressed within the report.

The Sawmill Cooperative have worked very closely with the national park, ecologists, land owners and Rural Design architects at all stages of this process so that we could be sure that our proposed development would have a positive impact on the site. It was encouraging to know that disturbance of some areas, will result in improved conditions for natural establishment of common vascular plants which are lacking on the site at present and thus restore associated invertebrate fauna. During any development the Cooperative would act diligently to adhere to the recommendations by the ecologists.

Rural design architects have worked meticulously to ensure that the proposed design, of living within the trees minimises both the environmental and aesthetic impact any development should have on the area.

After the visit to the site by Matthew Hawkins -CNPA Heritage Officer and Keith Duncan of SNH, they did not see any major issues arising from the development. A second site meeting followed which was attended by Mary Grier, Matthew Hawkins, Di Alexander, Alan

Dickson of Rural Design and Ronnie MacRae of HSCHT. When David Hetherington visited the site with Frances Thin (landscape officer) and in discussions with Mary Grier, they suggested that development of the site may be possible if the ecological surveys supported this. This positive response from both CNPA Landscape Officer and Senior Planning Officer gave us the confidence to move forward with the project and begin incurring greater costs as a result.

With the joint site visits and the recommendations made by Frances Thin, Rural Designs altered their initial proposal to reflect the thoughts of the various departments within with the CNPA. The Sawmill Cooperative along with Rural designs are committed to maintaining the corridor for mammal passage as endorsed by the ecologist and are aware of the recommendation that sensitive thinning of the trees will increase light values to assist the recovery of natural flora.

The Sawmill Cooperative has invested large amounts of time and finances in to ensuring that we have a robust Environmental Impact Assessment which will underpin all aspects of the proposed development.

For further information see -

SawmillCoOp-doc011-Ecological-survey
ErnestEEmmentt.pdf

SawmillCoOp-doc012-Fungus Survey
- Liz appendix 1.doc



WOODLAND

Considered Layout

Lengths have been taken to assess and map out the woodland on the site with consideration of both the site itself and the buildings. The topography of the site has played a large part in informing this process due to the natural contours of the landscape. This has encouraged what on the face of it would be considered a typical line of houses but is in fact the most effective use of the terrain in consideration of build method.

Further aims of the layout is the consideration of the sites natural heritage. Our arbiocultural assessments and landscape scheme looks in particular to avoid and minimise loss of old growth trees, habitats and anything of a sensitive nature which is considered special to the land and the park as a whole.

The build aims to take advantage of the brownfield nature of the site in its siting as much of the area has had previous use and is occupied by young scrub growth that can be utilised to avoid large impacts on the more defined natural heritage.

The layout aims to take advantage of and reinforce natural screening to compliment the local landscape and character.

For further information see -

- Rural Designs - *Design and Access Statement*
- CNPA-Layout-Response-Frances initial thoughts Aug 2012.pdf
- SawmillCoOp-doc004-Abriocultural Report PotterTreeConsultancy..pdf
- SawmillCoOp-doc005-Tree Constraints Plan-PotterTreeConsultancy.pdf
- SawmillCoOp-doc006-Tree Protection Plan-PotterTreeConsultancy.pdf
- SawmillCoOp-doc007-Tree Amenity Plan-PotterTreeConsultancy.pdf
- SawmillCoOp-doc008-Planting-plan-HIGHlandScapeDesign.pdf
- SawmillCoOp-doc009-Landscape-plan-HIGHlandScapeDesign.pdf
- SawmillCoOp-doc010-Landscape-report-HIGHlandScapeDesign.pdf



LOCAL ARCHITECTURE

A National Park Perspective

The site design reflects the traditional vernacular of homes throughout park and Rothiemurchus specifically whilst considering design and innovation to build and live sustainably and look to the future



CONSIDERATE BUILDING

A consideration of the land

The Co-op aims to be as sensitive as possible to the site by use of modern building techniques and working together on logisitos to minimise damage or wear to the land. Site servicing is planned to effect minimal use of excavation. Site deliveries and building stages can be timed to spread the burden. The kit homes can be wind and watertight in a week minimising onsite building times.



RURAL DESIGNS ARCHITECTS



THE SITE / 014
PROPOSAL / SAWMILL CO-OPERATIVE / 22-01-2016



RURAL DESIGNS ARCHITECTS



Who we are

Donald Hall

Growing up in Aviemore allowed me to explore the park as a young child and discover many of the things that make it so special. This passion for an outdoor lifestyle and sense of adventure has continued into my adult life and helped shape my career. Over the last decade I have spent time studying in Glasgow and working in Canada but I have always appreciated just how special the Cairngorms area is and how fortunate I am to call this place home.

To date my career has involved passing on this passion for sport and the outdoor environment to others. I am currently working as a Community Sports Hub officer for High Life Highland and as part of that I work closely with the communities of Badenoch & Strathspey and beyond. Prior to this, I have worked as a development officer for two national governing bodies of sport, developing two of the most prominent sports in the area (snowsports and cycling) on a local and regional level. Outside of that I am an active member the community and sit on various sporting committees as a volunteer, such as the sports council and Cairngorm Adventure

Triathlon committee. I work out of Aviemore Community Centre for part of the week so lift sharing and greener commuting options are important considerations for me..

I have worked and lived on Rothiemurchus estate and have close family ties to Tullochghru. My aging parents are now retired and live only 2km from the Sawmill site.

I have been involved with this project for 6 years. Like the rest of the cooperative, I am hoping to build an affordable house that will meet my housing needs and allow me to raise a family in this special area. I am only too aware of how difficult it is for my generation to get on the property ladder or even find suitable rented accommodation in the Aviemore area. I have aspirations to project manage the construction of a modest timber frame house which will be in keeping with its surroundings. I will call on the continued support from family, friends and other members of cooperative to achieve this. Energy efficiency and building an appropriate, sustainable development are key priorities. This is a very unique opportunity and innovative solution to meet my housing needs, I am grateful and excited to be a part of the Sawmill Cooperative project.



Who we are

Martin & Susan

Having lived within the Cairngorm National Park area all of our lives, we have a strong desire to give our children a similar upbringing where they can enjoy the amazing outdoor opportunities on offer within our local area. We are keen skiers, mountain bikers and generally enjoy outdoor living, therefore consider ourselves extremely fortunate to be based in an area where we can appreciate the natural beauty of our surroundings. As such, we are unable to think of a more desirable location for us to raise our family.

Building an eco friendly house has been a long standing ambition, however it has been unachievable due to the high cost of land in the local area. Additionally, it is extremely rare to identify a site in which it would be viable to build a house which embraces natural resources and building materials.

Becoming part of a cooperative with likeminded friends and colleagues has opened our eyes to the many possibilities that are available in terms of living in an environmentally friendly way. The vision of what we, as a cooperative hope to achieve on the Sawmill site at Rothiemurchus would allow a once in a lifetime opportunity, enabling us to tailor our house to the eco-conscious way in which we wish to live, whilst incorporating energy efficient concepts and sustainability.

Martin

I have had my own electrical business for over 6 years and have a strong network of repeat business in the local area. In addition, I have been a member of the Cairngorm Ski Patrol team for the last 13 years and I am involved in various other outdoor pursuits all within close reach of Rothiemurchus Estate. Living in the same area as my winter colleagues would enable us to travel together instead of independently commuting to the mountain. This would be one of a catalogue of possibilities that would enable us to have a lifestyle which is more sympathetic to the environment.

Susan

I have worked for the Highland Council for the last 10 years. In my current post, I work part-time as a Community Children's Worker, working with children and families at home, in schools and within the community. I enjoy spending time with family and exploring life with my son. He is a keen member of the Rothiemurchus tennis club and enjoys a variety of sports including skiing and mountain biking. Living in the countryside, but having local amenities within cycling/walking distance is something which would benefit our family tremendously. Having the opportunity to build an affordable eco house that would accommodate our three children is imperative to improving our current circumstances.

After studying many ingenious concepts to creating eco conscious living, it is our opinion that Rothiemurchus, and in particular the Sawmill site is the perfect location to achieve this design, hence our enthusiasm for the project.



Who we are

Iain & Justine

Iain grew up at Loch an Eilein, Rothiemurchus less than two miles from the proposed development site, so has many connections to the immediate area around the sawmill site. Iain is the Chairman and senior member of the Cairngorm Mountain Rescue Team, which is based 500m from the Sawmill site. Living so close to the rescue team base would greatly enhance Iain's response time to mountain rescues thus providing a better service to the local community and visitors to the mountains around the Cairngorm National Park. Iain is also Head of Cairngorm Ski Patrol which provides medical and safety cover for snow sports enthusiasts on Cairngorm Mountain.

Iain and Justine have also set up a business, Avium Ltd, which specialises in providing bespoke medical cover for outdoor events within the national park and beyond. They also provide first aid courses for local businesses and employ up to ten local people through their business.

Justine is a teacher at Alvie Primary School, Kinncraig, and is currently undertaking a MSc through Aberdeen University. Justine also works as a part of the Cairngorm Ski Patrol during the winter months.

What the project means to us -

We both have a desire to live in Rothiemurchus where Iain grew up. However, due to the inflated house prices in this area it has been - up until this project - a dream. We hope to live in a community of like-minded people, where our need for a home is fulfilled, while embracing our natural environment around us. As we are not seeking any public funding for the project, we hope that the sawmill co-operative can set a precedent for affordable homes being delivered in the National Park by other local communities, similar to ourselves.

Although the houses that are being proposed are affordable, we hope that with clever design and solid ecological ethos we will demonstrate that the term 'affordable' is not synonymous with 'unimaginative'. We hope to further reduce the cost of our home by utilising our 'sweat equity' alongside local tradesmen.



Who we are

Lesley & Euan

Lesley

I was brought up living on Rothiemurchus and would very much like to provide our new daughter with the same upbringing. We would like to be in Rothiemurchus, close to my parents and my 8 other family members where I grew up. We both want to remain working in the area and believe have found an environmentally and community minded solution to live believing this way of living will benefit the Cairngorms area in the future. We are very keen to build a community based housing project using modern sustainable technologies and as many shared resources as possible. We very much are looking forward to the learning experience of making this project come to life.

Euan

I was brought up in NethyBridge and after working abroad for many years then studying in Dundee I found myself returning to Spey Valley looking to be closer to my family and return to the tight knit community aspect of highland living that I was brought up in. I am self employed with a startup business and rely on the local community as my source of income.

We would like to be in Rothiemurchus to bring up our daughter close to Lesley's parents and not too far from mine. We both want to remain working in the area and are keen to find an environmentally and community minded way to live, as we believe this is a way of living that would help the Cairngorms area in the future and a way of living that we would be comfortable with.

The idea that we can create our own community and live in a sustainable low impact manner is something to aspire to.

Talking to Johnie Grant, the laird of Rothiemurchus, more than 6 years ago we started our vision to build a small forest community of modern eco houses using sustainable and renewable technologies and factoring in some community living ideas. This would allow us to build a modern eco and sustainable small family home with the added aspects of community we think are important.



APPENDIX

FURTHER DOCUMENTS AND APPENDIX

- 001 - SawmillCoOp-doc002-Brownfield.docx
- 002 - SawmillCoOp-doc003-HSCHAT-Cross Subsidy Affordable Housing Model-Rothiemurchus.pdf
- 003 --SawmillCoOp-doc004-Abriocultural Report-Potter-TreeConsultancy..pdf
- 004 - SawmillCoOp-doc005-Tree Constraints Plan-PotterTreeConsultancy.pdf
- 005 - SawmillCoOp-doc006-Tree Protection Plan-PotterTreeConsultancy.pdf
- 006 - SawmillCoOp-doc007-Tree Amenity Plan-PotterTreeConsultancy.pdf
- 007 - SawmillCoOp-doc008-Planting-plan-HIGHlandScapeDesign.pdf
- 008 - SawmillCoOp-doc009-Landscape-plan-HIGHlandScapeDesign.pdf
- 009 - SawmillCoOp-doc010-Landscape-report-HIGHlandScapeDesign.pdf
- 010 - SawmillCoOp-doc011-Ecological-survey-ErnestEEmmentt.pdf
- 011 - SawmillCoOp-doc012-Fungus Survey - Liz appendix 1.doc
- 012 - SawmillCoOp-doc013-SITE_INVESTIGATION_REPORT-100103429.pdf
- 013 - SawmillCoOp-doc014-Sustainable Design Checklist.pdf
- 014 - SawmillCoOp-doc015-The Sawmill Co-Operative - an Innovative Local Solution to the sustainable community challenge
- 015 - Environmental Impact Assessment letter as printed on page 9
- 016 - CNPA-Layout-Response-Frances initial thoughts Aug 2012.pdf
- 017 - Rural Designs - *Design and Access Statement*

