

Outline business plan in support of the Community Asset Transfer of Raddery House Campus and Raddery Woods



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1.0 Executive Summary

The directors of Raddery House Limited ('RHL') have prepared the following outline business plan in support of their proposal to the Highland Council for the community asset transfer of the Raddery House Campus and Woods.

The plan details the group's vision to develop the derelict Raddery House into fully adapted respite holiday accommodation for families with children with cancer and life-shortening illnesses, and to develop the buildings and grounds within the remainder of the seven-acre campus into a vibrant community hub.

The report demonstrates the support for the proposal within the immediate Raddery community, and more widely in the Black Isle, and amongst stakeholder organisations.

The campus will provide a base for a wide range of projects and activities delivered by RHL and community partner organisations, services that address the health and social needs of local people, from young carers to those suffering from dementia. In addition, it will provide office accommodation and co-working space for local businesses and freelancers and a venue for local events.

Activities and projects will provide employment and volunteering opportunities for local people and the site's amenities and facilities will be available to local people and community groups, creating a ripple effect of community benefit.

The development proposed will be undertaken in such a way as to ensure the energy-efficiency of the buildings for the long term and a respect for the environment that reflects the values of the organisation and the concerns of the wider community. These are values also reflected in the plans for Raddery Woods and in the Growing Project.

Under the stewardship of RHL, Raddery Woods will be protected and maintained as an amenity to be enjoyed for generations to come.

The report reflects on the company's proposed business model and plans to raise the purchase price and fund the extensive capital works proposed. Financial projections are appended. These will be revised when RHL has a clearer picture of costs. In the meantime, RHL has not flinched from projecting the likely capital costs of what is a very ambitious project. The organisation has also researched at length how these costs could be met.

A phased plan of capital works is described. Work will begin with the buildings that can be put quickly to work in service of the group's projects and activities, and a focus fundraising campaign begun to raise the funds stage by stage for the remainder of the development.

The company's income-generation plans to support the operational costs of the campus and its long-term financial sustainability are an integral part of the development plans proposed and include holiday cottages for commercial let and a café and shop. These are considered in detail.

Finally, the report reviews the risks involved in progressing with this proposal. The directors are aware of the scale of the project they are proposing, and the risks involved, and the report considers where these can be mitigated.

The directors hope the report makes the case that the Raddery House Campus and Woods have the makings of a significant community asset, and for the multiple benefits that the proposed development of the Raddery House Campus will bring to the Black Isle.

The plans are undeniably ambitious, but the directors believe that the risks involved can be managed and that the community benefits, arising will be hugely significant for the Black Isle. The spaciousness and scale of the project offers a level of futureproofing that will enable the development of projects and services beyond those currently envisaged. Further developments will not be curtailed owing to lack of space. This is another reason - among many - why Raddery House Campus and Raddery Woods should not be lost to the community of the Black Isle.

2.0 Background to the Community Asset Transfer Proposal

The site is situated in Raddery in the geographical heart of the Black Isle.

It is currently owned by The Highland Council and has been marketed for sale in two lots - the Raddery School Campus and Raddery Woods.

The campus comprises a number of buildings and grounds that stretch to just over seven acres.

2.1 The site is sadly neglected and overgrown, the buildings are in various stages of disrepair, some derelict and all have suffered from extensive vandalism.

Raddery House itself was in existence along with the stable building in 1800's. The original building was further developed in 1900 to form a small country house with a walled garden.

In addition to the main house, the site includes a sports hall, two classroom blocks, a workshop, two cottages, and a stable block, all in varying states of repair. These will be described in greater detail in the sections in relation to RHL's phased development plans.

Raddery Woods comprise just under 20 acres of mainly beech woodland in the form of a ragged T shape which steeply slopes to a burn. The lack of intervention in the woods for many years and respectful use by the local community has allowed a plethora of diverse life and special biodiversity and is home to several protected species.

A basic site plan is appended (Appendix 1)

2.2 History of the site and the Salvesen bequest

Raddery House, grounds and woods were gifted to the Borough of Ross and Cromarty in 1952 by General Noel Salvesen of Teaninich. Ownership of the property transferred from Ross and Cromarty to the Highland Council in 1975.

For twenty years, the house provided residential education and care for the purpose of educating and caring residentially for children whose 'minimal mental handicap' required specialist provision. The school which was subsequently set up by the Council fulfilled this role for twenty years until its closure.

Since then, the campus has been variously a boarding school, a day school for children who struggled in mainstream school, and as a therapeutic community for children and young people.

Use of the site ceased in 2017, and, as noted above, the buildings are now derelict, and the site has recently been a regular focus of vandalism.

David Dean, the headmaster of the second school to occupy Raddery House noted that when it opened its doors in 1979, the press at the time referred to purposes attached to the bequest in relation to children and education. This is also the understanding of Noel Salvesen's descendants who have expressed strong support for a repurposing of the site that brings benefit to the community.

The Highland Council has checked with their solicitors and can find no mention of any conditions attached to the bequest.

That said, the site has always been used to support and educate children facing challenging circumstances. The site has over many years been a local employer and, as one respondent to the consultation described it, 'the heart of Raddery, physically and emotionally'. In the course of RHL's consultation, many local residents expressed the hope that the site would continue to be used 'for good purposes.

Supporting letters from the Salvesen family and David Dean – Appendix 2 & Appendix 3

3.0 Raddery House Limited

Raddery House Limited is a company limited by guarantee incorporated on 16th November 2022. The company is currently working with the local TSI on securing charitable status with OSCR.

The eight directors, who are the prospective trustees of the charity, bring a wide and complementary range of skills to the RHL, together with shared values and a commitment to the local community and the wider beneficiaries of the proposed plans for the Raddery Campus and Woods.

Their professional backgrounds include architecture, business, project and third sector management, holiday letting management, and catering.

All directors have experience as trustees or committee members of charities or constituted community groups, or in third sector or commercial management roles, and have a full understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

Directors are committed to being hands-on in their involvement. A number are currently involved in regular checks of the site and challenging and reporting vandalism.

One of the directors has already set up a website at www.radderyhouse.com

They will regularly review the balance of skills and experience required to steer the organisation as it develops and recruit the requisite skills to the Board.

The Board will develop and ensure policies and procedures covering all aspects of the organisation's activities are in place, and a risk register, encompassing governance, health and safety and business risk.

The directors are aware of the need to seek external support when required. In the case of this report, Community Enterprise have supported the directors in its preparation and in the preparation of the accompanying projections.

The Board has developed from among a steering group of local people which has worked tirelessly since May this year, exploring options for a sustainable future for the site and consulting widely with stakeholders ahead of this application for a community asset transfer.

The biographies of the directors, steering group members, and advisers are provided as Appendix 4.

4.0 Support for the proposal

The steering group spent the last six months consulting widely on their plans for the Raddery House Campus and Raddery Woods.

The decision was made to engage with the community face to face rather than via an online survey as the group believed that the complexity of the project was best explained this way, would be the best way to get the most meaningful feedback and to hear the ideas and views of residents. They were conscious of the demographic of the Black Isle and the above average % of people over 65 years of age and felt this method would be most inclusive at this stage. They believe that they engaged with a broad cross-section of the Black Isle community but intend to undertake further and more comprehensive consultation as their plans develop.

4.1 Direct local consultation on the proposal

The group was conscious of the need at the inception of the project to inform and consult the immediate neighbours of Raddery House and Woods. This was done by visiting each neighbouring household and landowners. The group understood that the proposal had no future without the strong backing of the immediate area.

At engagement, the project and the group's intentions were explained. Conversations with residents covered the needs of the area and how the project would or would not help address these. The question was asked do you think this is a good idea and would you support this.

35 of 37 households (representing just under 100 people) in Raddery, the area in the immediate vicinity of the campus, were consulted between May and July 2022. All, but two respondents, were supportive of RHL's plans.

All but 2 were very supportive and signed a sheet with their names and contact details. At this point the project was in its infancy.

A couple of neighbours expressed interest in working at the respite unit, another offered to host corporate fundraising. Others offered to help fundraise.

The general feeling particularly amongst the residents representing several generations of supporting the House and campus, was that our plans were very fitting for the intended use, and they would be delighted to see it put to good once again. They also expressed great concern that the Woods should be preserved.

Subsequently Raddery House steering group and Board have engaged directly with in excess of 300 residents of the Black Isle, appraising them of the project and seeking comments on the proposals.

The vast majority were excited by and supported the project recognising the need for such a facility on the Black Isle and the opportunity to make something good happen for the community and beyond.

4.2 Wider consultation on local issues

The Chair of RHL stood as an independent candidate for The Black Isle in May 2022. During her campaign, she knocked on around 70% of the doors in the area, and leafleted the whole area, inviting feedback directly or through her campaign website and social media channels. She attended hustings and community council meetings.

There were several recurrent themes and concerns brought to her attention.

These included the lack of day centres and help for families and carers looking after a loved one, especially those with dementia where support needs were significant and fell substantially to the family. The case to address this to avoid family support systems breaking down, resulting in further pressure on statutory health and social care services was compelling.

Another frequently raised issue was the lack of provision for young people starting out and the need to keep young people and young families living on the Black Isle. Limited work opportunities locally mean expensive and lengthy commutes, and a lack of imagination in providing affordable rental spaces is a discouragement to new business start-ups and young entrepreneurs looking to generate employment opportunities for themselves and others.

The plans and projects proposed for the Raddery House Campus offer a creative way forward on both these issues, giving the group further confidence that they will be widely welcomed by the community.

4.3 Consultation with other stakeholders

A range of additional stakeholders were identified and consulted – these included local GPs and organisations who have an interest in signposting to the organisation’s services. These included the Black Isle Cares and Cromarty Care Project, both of whom consulted their boards on our behalf. All responses were supportive and reflected the concern around the pressure on services throughout the area.

Organisations working in areas specific to services and project work planned, for example CHAS in relation to the respite holiday accommodation, Kirrie Connections in relation to our plans for dementia support, and Young Carers, in connection with RHL’s plans to support young people, gave generously of their time to offer views and advice in relation to the proposals. These are discussed more fully and referenced in the relevant sections of this report.

Again, the response was overwhelmingly supportive. The message was that services in all areas are stretched and under significant pressure. Plans that help the situation and seek to address community needs in creative ways are very welcome.

Other local organisations and significant individuals who were contacted or visited and gave their support include:

The Black Isle Men`s shed
The Rosemarkie Allotment association
Broomhill Riding Centre (riding for disabled and horse therapy)
Elsie of Elsie Normington Foundation (lives on BI)
Representative of the Black Isle GP`s
Representative of Children’s Oncology (lives on BI)
Members of the walking group
Fortrose Friendship Club members.

4.4 Support from within local and national government

RHL has discussed its plans with Dr Chris Birt, a Highland Councillor and Young People’s Champion and he has offered his full support for the plans.

Approaches were made to other councillors but due to a perceived conflict of interest at that stage they deemed it inappropriate to comment.

Assistance to progress the bid was forthcoming from Glynis Sinclair, the provost of Inverness. Emma Roddick MSP was both helpful and supportive of the proposal.

5.0 Development proposed

RHL proposes a phased redevelopment of the Raddery House Campus into a thriving community hub and, in due course, the conversion of Raddery House itself into self-contained respite holiday accommodation and further office and community space.

The campus contains a diverse range of buildings, all of which are capable of adaptation, refurbishment, and improvement to meet diverse needs and perform a range of functions. These include:

- Raddery House, the former Raddery School
- The former classroom blocks or huts, two in number, described as Office and Classroom Block, and Classroom Block
- Cottages
- The Coach House/Stables Flat
- The Sports Hall
- The Workshop

The buildings are identified on the site layout appended and are considered in detail in the next section.

5.1 The buildings

Raddery House

This is a historic building, having been erected in the 1800's and 1900's, and remains largely intact, although in a very poor state of repair, partly due to deterioration since becoming vacant, and partly due to wanton vandalism, which is ongoing at the present time. The main elements, external walls, roof structure, floor joists and partitions are largely in sound condition and capable of being reused or adapted.

It is believed that Planning Permission to convert this building into a respite center (a general description, intended to encompass the varied uses which will be established) will be readily obtained, as there is already an assumption that the campus would be suitable for mixed use.

Raddery House is the centerpiece of the proposals, and will provide the following accommodation and facilities:

- Three Family Respite Holiday Units – self-contained, self-catering units, with external access, all located at ground floor. These will consist of one or two bedrooms, kitchen, sitting/dining area, and wet room bathroom/shower facility.

The adapted properties for holiday rental at Homelands in Fife give an idea of what RHL hope to achieve at Raddery House, in terms both of arrangement and quality.

<https://www.homelands-fife.co.uk/>

- Multi-purpose meeting room/ recreational space/ activities room at ground floor for respite guests and their families and users of the campus (particularly young carers, and those with dementia and their families.)
- Office/meeting room / training room/ function room

- Toilets
- At first floor, a meeting room/office, studios (available for rent), and up to four bedsits for staff and carers

Access and movement within the building will be designed so that all areas are fully accessible.

Please see indicative plans (existing, ground floor, and first floor) appended (*Appendix 5*), showing one example of how the building can be redeveloped to provide these facilities.

Office and classroom block

This is a timber framed and clad building, comprising a central office and toilet area, with a classroom either side. Some vandalism has occurred, but the building is generally sound and watertight. Restoration works are required in conjunction with adaptation to meet new uses, but a local builder has advised that the work required is largely cosmetic.

It is intended that it should be the first building to come into use, to provide facilities for volunteers and those working on the site, with an office/meeting room, two classrooms, and refurbished toilets, including accessible facilities. Accessibility throughout including entry, in the form of a ramp, will be installed.

Classroom block

This is a timber framed and clad building located in an area which enjoys south facing panoramic views of the surrounding countryside. As such, it is considered as an ideal location for the café and is capable of adaptation to this purpose. Renovations in due course may include the installation of a glass frontage, to capitalize on the views. Accessibility is again of prime importance, with ramped access and accessible toilets for public use. RHL intend also to incorporate a charity shop and produce shop in this building.

Cottages

There are two semi-detached cottages. The building is of masonry construction with slated roof. Having been used partly as a store, the interior is in a state of disrepair. But restoration to habitable accommodation is feasible and affordable.

It is proposed that two self-catering rental holiday units should be established. Careful consideration will be given to ensure that layout and accessibility are designed to facilitate use by wheelchair users and those with poor mobility.

A figure not exceeding £100,000 has been suggested as adequate for works incorporated in restoration and adaptation.

Stables Building

This building dates from the 1800's and is of traditional construction. Vandalism has occurred to a degree. It is believed that some asbestos based building materials are present and will have to be removed in accordance with legislation.

The proposed use after renovation includes facilities for young carers, and for the Kirrie project (further details of both are provided later in the report).

The Sports Hall

A large freestanding purpose-built facility, with a floor area of 253 sq.m. It is of modern 'industrial' construction, and as it has been well secured, has not suffered attacks from vandals. It is heated, with an LPG fired system.

This facility can be brought back into use readily and will provide an opportunity for use by campus users, for recreation, sports, and wellbeing, guests, and community groups on a rental basis.

The Workshop

A free-standing stone building with modern roof and Velux windows. It appears to have accommodation or office space upstairs. The building appears in good order and should be available at an early stage. It is hoped that its usage will be split in due course between providing office space for rental and providing an educational space linked to activities planned in relation to Raddery Woods.

5.2 Preliminary assessment

If RHL's CAT application is successful, the directors will apply for Stage 1 funds from SLF to carry out a full structural survey of the buildings. This will enable a clearer picture of the work involved, and for a realistic estimate of full costs and a working timeline to be established.

The next sections offer a broad outline of the schedule of works envisaged.

5.3 Phase 1

RHL's has established its priorities for the first 18 months of ownership:

Carry out works to enable early use of revenue-earning buildings – the Sports Hall, the café and shop, and the first offices for rent.

Focus on developments which will encourage the community to engage with the project and make use of the facilities – again, bringing the Sports Hall into use and developing the café/shop will be important.

Alongside these developments, RHL will carry out all remedial works identified in preliminary surveys and address security and access issues. The company will:

Ensure the removal of asbestos from the site, following professional advice.

Carry out all work required to safeguard the structure and fabric of Raddery House to prevent further decay, and to minimise unnecessary expenditure on repairs.

Ensure the necessary security measures are taken to protect the site as it is developed and avoid further episodes of vandalism.

Secure the necessary warrants and planning permissions for the work proposed.

Clear all debris and overgrowth from the site and carry out all repairs required on all paths and walkways to ensure easy access and safe movement around the site.

5.4 Phase 2

The next stage of the project will involve the refurbishment of the two holiday cottages on the campus, and the development of the stable block. This work is a more expensive undertaking, but the cottage rental will generate a long-term income stream for the project. The refurbished stable block will provide an ideal space for the Kirrie Project and other key projects.

5.5 Phase 3

It is likely to be year four in RHL's timeline before the project moves into Phase 3 and a year after that before the Raddery House conversion is complete. At that stage, RHL will be ready to welcome its first respite holiday guests to the campus. While the timeline is frustrating, RHL believes it is realistic, allowing time both to raise the necessary funds, and to establish the campus as a community amenity.

There are advantages too; when respite visitors do come to stay, they will be arriving at a friendly, community space with the café, shop, growing project and a range of facilities already established on the campus. Guests will be assured of a warm welcome with activities that children and families can become involved in, but will equally find quiet, contemplative spaces in the woods and therapeutic garden.

5.6 Heating, Ventilation and Energy Conservation

Given that renovations will be required to varying degrees in all the buildings, the opportunity exists throughout the campus to address issues such as climate change, energy conservation, renewable energy, and 'future-proofing'.

These goals can be achieved in a variety of ways, including:

- High levels of insulation to walls, floors, roofs, and glazing
- Heating systems utilising heat pumps, either ground or air source
- Mechanical ventilation and heat recovery systems (MVHR)
- Solar panels to provide hot water, and also electricity through photovoltaic (PV) panels

Planning permission was granted 2011 for the installation of a wind turbine, but this has not been installed. The output would have been 5kw from a 12m high mast. It is debatable whether the cost of such an installation could be justified owing to the relatively low output.

Detailed consideration will be given to all available technologies and their costs, and it is RHL's intention to take a coordinated approach to the entire campus, for example weighing up the benefits of a district heating scheme against that of individual solutions for each building.

6.0 Respite holiday accommodation

As noted, RHL intends to convert the lower floor of Raddery House into three self-contained units to provide high quality respite accommodation for families with children and young people with cancer and life shortening illnesses. The units will typically offer accommodation for 2-6 people and be fully adapted and wheelchair accessible with hoist tracks throughout. The aim is to allow all the family to physically come together without barriers.

Aware of the economic as well as the social and emotional impact that the serious illness of a child can have on families, the respite holiday accommodation at Raddery House will be offered free of charge to visiting families with the costs met via RHL's fundraising and trading activities.

6.1 Services and support provided

Raddery House and its surrounds will provide a supportive space for families to have good times together, to make memories. It will be an opportunity to have time away from the physical and emotional exhaustion that are an inescapable feature of the daily routine for families in this situation, many of whom will be juggling work with caring responsibilities.

RHL envisages a flexible approach to applications to stay at Raddery House and intends to be as responsive as possible to individual scenarios as they present themselves: families of young carers who have a family member with cancer or life limiting illness will be welcome; the accommodation could also be used to fill a short-term gap for a family with a child receiving treatment whilst awaiting suitable accommodation from the Highland Council and also bringing families together for spells where one parent is supporting a child receiving treatment at Raigmore and the rest of the family live a distance away.

Bedsit accommodation will be provided on campus for specialist carers accompanying families – CHAS supports this model. RHL can help families who may want to source a degree of care pre-arrange this through a local care company serving on the Black Isle.

6.2 Evidence of demand

The group carried out a scoping exercise to ensure that they were not duplicating provision already available in the region.

They found a variety of organisations within the Highland Council region supporting children and families in a range of challenging situations.

These include *The Pines* in Inverness which offers respite for young people with autism and neurodevelopmental conditions; *Badaguish* in Cairngorm National Park which offers structured short break activity holidays for children with learning disabilities; *Abbie Sparkles* in Aviemore which provides a caravan for families with children with cancer but which is not disability adapted; *The Haven* in Inverness which is currently under construction and will offer respite for young people with autism and neurodevelopmental conditions. There is also The Highland Hospice in Inverness which very rarely accepts children for respite.

RHL's research found no comparable offering to the holiday respite accommodation which the organisation plans for Raddery House.

6.3 Comparative models

RHL identified three organisations elsewhere in Scotland where the provision is similar, or at least has elements in common with the Board's vision for Raddery House:

Whiteleys Retreat in Ayrshire offers therapeutic breaks for young people with life altering illnesses and their families. It operates on a similar model to that proposed by RHL.

Calum's Cabins, which manages properties on the Isle of Bute and Ayrshire, offer holiday accommodation for families with children with cancer; and *The Homelands Trust* in Fife, which provides high quality, fully adapted, holiday accommodation, but which operates on a commercial basis.

6.4 Support for provision of holiday respite accommodation at Raddery House

Organisations who support children and their families in these circumstances were asked for their comments on RHL's proposals. These included CHAS, Outreach Scotland, Archie Foundation, Dream Makers, and the Highland Hospice. All were very supportive of our plans. Emailed statements of support are appended (*Appendix 6*)

6.5 Other considerations

It is critical to visiting families that, while they holiday in a setting that is rural and tranquil, they can be reassured that medical help is close at hand if required.

The Black Isle is well served by GP practices. Raddery comes under the care of Fortrose Medical Practice which is ten minutes' drive from the campus. The nearest major hospital is Raigmore in Inverness, which is the largest in the Highlands and twenty minutes' drive from Raddery House by blue light ambulance. The air ambulance serves the Black Isle and is based at Inverness Airport, minutes away across the firth. While it is hoped that these services will never be needed,

their proximity will be a key consideration for visitors with poorly children, holidaying at Raddery House.

7.0 Supporting those living with dementia in the community

The directors believe that the beautiful setting and spaciousness that Raddery House Campus affords lends itself to a broad range of community projects and activities, addressing a wide range of needs.

One of the plans that they are most passionate about is that of locating a Kirrie Meeting Centre on the Black Isle.

7.1 The Kirrie Meeting Centre Dementia Model

This is an innovative, evidenced based model of person-centred support in the community for those living with dementia. It was developed in Sweden, trialled in Cambridge, and now has many sites across UK and increasing numbers in Scotland. It has gained popularity as a forward thinking, enlightened way to engage with and support individuals with dementia and their families.

Further information on the approach and links to the evidence of its efficacy can be found via the links below:

The collated evidence base for the Model:

<https://www.meetingdem.eu/publications/publicatons-non-mcsp/>

The guidebook to establishing a Meeting Centre:

https://reshare.ukdataservice.ac.uk/852791/98/MCSP_Guidebook_V1.pdf

There is no “us and them” at Meeting Centres. People living with dementia who use the Meeting Centre are called members, not service users or patients. Everyone uses the same facilities, enjoys eating together, and joins in with activities that please them. Everyone (people living with dementia, staff, volunteers, and visitors) contributes to the Meeting Centre in their unique way. There are no uniforms, staff badges or lanyards to mark people out. Everyone wears a visible name badge that helps get everyone’s name ‘right.’

Typically, a ‘Meeting Room’ hosts up to 15 members at any time and is staffed by activities coordinators who are trained in working with dementia and can offer sound advice and signpost. Volunteers are encouraged to become involved and, in other areas, have been readily forthcoming from the community.

There are no carers employed in the operation of the Model and hence no drain on the paid carers ‘pool’ in a rural area like the Black Isle where provision is already under pressure. The knowledge and experience of staff mean that Meeting Centres become hubs for information about dementia and for carers, with staff very available to guide and signpost.

A small charge is made to cover lunch. Some members elsewhere use their self-directed support (SDS) funding to cover this.

Funding to date for other Kirrie Meeting Centres in Scotland has been through National Lottery grants to cover staff costs, with local health and social care partnerships contributing core funding.

7.2 Alignment with health and social care policy

Evidence suggests that this approach delays the need for people with dementia to enter the formal care system by at least two years and that they live happier and more fulfilled lives during that time. At the same time, there are benefits for the carer, who is able to continue caring longer without `burn out` and enjoys more quality time with their loved one.

This aligns with health and social care policy in relation to early-stage dementia care.

The Kirrie Meeting Centre Model helps reduce the strain on the paid carers `pool`, and on the formal care system. Keeping people living at home, in better health and wellbeing and with family carers is key to reducing hospital admissions and delayed discharges. It brings with it the potential of significant financial savings to the Highland Council and NHS Highland.

The informal nature of the Meeting Centre and the fact that there is no need for a formal diagnosis or referral has been shown to increase engagement of the target group and at an earlier stage in the condition, enabling members to learn skills to help with symptoms of their condition in the early stages, and make clear their wishes in relation to the later management of their illness.

7.3 Evidence of need

The directors understand that there is currently only one person from the Black Isle attending a specialist dementia centre. This out of an estimated 200 people with the condition on the Black Isle. The group spoke to Age Scotland as part of their research into provision for Black Isle residents. While there is a day centre and activities-based project based in Inverness, it does not service the Black Isle, there is also limited provision in Dingwall, but this has a waiting list and serves a large area. Attendance is also limited by the lack of transport and travelling time from the Black Isle. The group were advised that the NHS is looking to find affordable alternatives to its own provision.

Given the aging demographic of the country, and particularly of this area, and the significant shortage of unpaid carers, the need for a robust response to the needs of those living with dementia and those of struggling, unpaid carers, often elderly themselves, has never been more pressing.

RHL's proposal introduces another option, with a creative approach to support for those living with dementia and their carers that recognises their place and value within the community.

7.4 A Kirrie Meeting Centre at Raddery House

Kirrie Connections has tested and replicated the model in several places across Scotland.

RHL have had extensive discussions with the CEO of the organisation and believe that the model can be readily adapted to meet local needs in the Black Isle. They believe that the setting of the Raddery House Campus, its spaciousness, and the facilities and community activities planned, make the campus an ideal place to host an enlightened and forward-thinking approach to dementia care.

The project would have shared access to the facilities and activities on the campus, including the raised bed polytunnels and allotments of the Growing Project, the planned `cinema` and Sports Hall. RHL envisages small inclusive groups as part of the project, supported by activity coordinators, such as a `slow walkers` group, knit and natter, woodland rambles, and dementia diners evening. It will also be a pleasant place just `to be`, enjoy some company and a cup of tea or spend time in the woods.

Carers can join in or `do their own thing`, spend the time with other carers, access the café and shop, or use any of the facilities themselves. For many it will be an opportunity to spend time with old friends from the community.

Key to a Kirrie Meeting Centre project is that members guide what is offered and how the project it is run. The spaciousness and facilities at the campus will mean they have a range of options to choose from.

7.5 Next steps

With a view to setting the groundwork for the project so that the next steps are in place if RHL's CAT application was to be successful and funding for a formal purchase bid secured, the Board has researched funding options to support a Meeting Centre project.

RHL, with the support of Kirrie Connections, has applied for seed funding from Age Scotland from a fund specifically intended for setting up Meeting Centres. This will be used to scope and conduct a feasibility study on the Black Isle. A meeting is planned with interested parties in January 2023.

8.0 Supporting young carers

It was clear from early conversations with Highland Hospice that RHL should extend `holiday respite` at Raddery to families where children and young people are involved with caring for family members with cancer or life shortening illness.

This led to discussion with Connecting Carers and Connecting Young Carers as to what kind of support would be beneficial to young carers on the Black Isle.

Family holiday respite was seen as much needed. The low income that families coping with long term ill health often struggle with means that family holidays are not possible. There is great benefit to all the family and, importantly, it gives opportunity for young people to make good memories for the future.

RHL is very keen to find additional ways that the Raddery House Campus might offer support to young carers.

8.1 Evidence of need

There are 32 young carers on the Black Isle known to Connecting Young Carers ('CYC'). Currently they have no base. This, together with a lack of transport are significant barriers to meeting with others in a similar situation.

It is imperative that young carers have the chance to socialise with their peers, have down-time to de-stress, and to feel supported. This helps combat the isolation and emotional strain that can impact on children and young people managing caring responsibilities.

8.2 Young carers at Raddery

RHL's plan involves a partnership with CYC. The charity has very much welcomed the opportunity to be part of the Board's plans to develop the campus.

Without their own base, the availability of affordable venues and activities greatly hamper the work of CYC, and the campus will provide the space needed to host young carers' events and activities.

RHL's plans to raise funds for the purchase an electric campus minibus (*see section 16.5*) will enable the young people of CYC get together on a regular basis.

Under discussion, too, are plans for an annual event in the form of a Highland Wide Young Carers Festival, which would take place over a couple of days at Raddery, providing not only respite for young carers from their caring role, but allowing the opportunity for new friendships to be formed.

8.3 Alignment with social care policy

The role of young carers is recognised in government policy, and they have rights under the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016. It is hoped that they will shortly be able to access SDS via Highland Council. This would enable more activities and wellbeing opportunities to be provided in partnership between RHL and CYC. RHL will also look to grant provision for small projects to support the activities of CYC at Raddery.

9.0 Raddery Woods

Raddery Woods is an area of Ancient Woodland appearing on the register and in the first edition of the ordnance survey map in the 1860's. It is believed that it may be the most Northerly Beech Woodland in the UK.

The woodland forms part of the original gift by the Salvesen family to Ross and Cromarty. The Highland Council's forestry officer, Nick Richards, has commented that it is clearly an important site.

The lack of intervention in the woods for many years and respectful use by the local community has allowed the development of a plethora of diverse wildlife, encouraged biodiversity and is home to several protected species. It is a natural cathedral of trees, a special place.

9.1 Preliminary survey

RHL noted the strong desire expressed by local people during the community consultation that the woods be preserved for future generations. The directors engaged an ecologist to conduct a preliminary survey of the woodland and he continues to advise the Board. He has been invaluable in sharing his knowledge and experience.

There are a range of documents appended to the report in relation to the woodland habitat, but the following summary points are worth noting in the body of this report:

The woods are a natural wildlife haven, a peaceful, tranquil place. Its appeal is nature getting on with things, managing its own environment without interference. With some modest help, this could be enhanced, and its long-term future secured.

There are very few young trees, and virtually no understorey, even in the areas where the canopy is open. The beechwood is dying, albeit very slowly, without younger trees coming through, and if a beech specific disease arrives in the UK, such as Beech Leaf Disease, then the impact on the wood could be catastrophic.

Climate change is already resulting in more violent and more frequent storms, and a raise in temperature and extended periods of drought will add to the uncertainties.

Conserving the woods requires that their custodians give thought to this situation. It also requires that the developments planned for the Raddery House Campus do not impinge on the woodland and damage the balance of its eco-system.

RHL's ecologist advises that a small tree nursery is set up, either in the wood or nearby on the Campus. Trees would be grown from the mast collected from the wood to maintain the current gene pool and used to replace windblown or dead trees. Other species could also be grown to add to the diversity where appropriate. He has also made recommendations in relation to supporting the microclimate of the woods, attracting birds, bats, and pollinating insects.

These recommendations lend themselves to a range of non-invasive educational activities for young people, including siting bird and bat boxes and constructing insect hotels. Nature-based mental health and wellbeing, forest bathing and nature walks, fungi/foraging courses and could all be part of visitors learning about and enjoying the woods with very little disturbance.

RHL has based its plans for Raddery Woods on the advice of their ecologist who has agreed to advise on an ongoing basis. These are detailed in the next sections.

9.2 Woodland management

RHL will conserve the special habitat of the woodland, recognising the importance of nature-based solutions to climate change.

They will undertake full survey over the first year with view to establishing a management plan to keep the woods healthy for coming generations, preserving its biodiversity and gene pool including the range of wildlife already identified, including badgers, bats and red kites, red squirrels, pine martens and a barn owl.

Plans will be made to eradicate invasive species identified including rhododendrons.

Areas of boundary fence which need repairing – there is evidence of damage to woodland caused by straying sheep and deer - and an ongoing programme of boundary fence renewal undertaken over the next ten years alongside the planting and establishing of native hedgerows.

9.3 Maintaining community access and improving access for disabled visitors

The woods have been open to anyone who wishes to use them respectfully, and this would continue but with improved access for those who are mobility impaired and wheelchair users. Parking for those arriving by car will be on the campus nearby alongside disabled WC facilities. There will be no tree felling to create car parking and no permanent structures erected in the woods which might encourage anti-social behaviour. A temporary canvas shelter can be erected as need be for outside activity in rainy weather.

9.4 Creating a classroom space on the campus

Linking woodland activities to a workshop or classroom base on the campus ensures that activities related to the woodland benefit from facilities and space and avoids any adverse impact of development on the woods themselves.

It enables considerable possibilities for educational and interest projects. conservation, biodiversity etc. for groups pre-school to adult groups as well as wellbeing activities and foraging groups etc. Linking forest cams to the workshop would allow study of the animal life without disturbance. Guests, campus users and community groups would be welcomed.

9.5 The Sapling Project

RHL intends to use the space offered by the campus to carry out a larger sapling growing project. Groups and individuals will be able to plant and grow saplings from seed collected in the forest which will then be used to regenerate the woods and establish new areas of woodland.

One local landowner has already indicated their willingness to participate by allowing the establishment of an important linking habitat on their land.

The project will enable RHL to maintain the gene pool from this unique wood and increase its biodiversity, in addition to the benefits for carbon capture from new plantations. It will also enable the replanting of Raddery Drive.

Hedging plants native to the area will also be grown in a similar way and used to establish new and repair old stretches of hedges, a habitat for wildlife.

9.6 Wellbeing activities

Guests at Raddery House and local visitors to the campus will benefit from the use of the woods for wellbeing and health-enhancing activities.

The benefit of outdoor activities to health and wellbeing is well-established. The woods offer quiet and peace for those wishing it, and contemplation spots and memory walks will be established.

Individuals can enjoy the green cathedral on their own or join volunteer-led groups undertaking mindfulness or forest bathing.

RHL envisage a range of small groups - foraging and nature groups, art, reading and morning coffee groups - enjoying the woods. There will be scope too for woodland craft projects.

RHL will actively seek to engage with individuals who would like to volunteer with tasks and activities in the woods.

9.7 Revenue and costs

RHL believe that there are opportunities to defray the costs of managing the woodland through the sale of saplings (the Woodland Trust sell these at £10.95 each) and adopt a tree/sponsor a bird box schemes. Other organisations have used similar strategies successfully, with charges typically around £10-100 per tree. The sale of bare root natural hedging plants raised on site is also planned.

Benches and memorial plaques will also be available for purchase with the monies supporting the preservation of the woodland in perpetuity.

Volunteer-led nature walks, and forest-based wellbeing and foraging sessions are also being consider as fundraisers to support the conservation of the woodland.

Grants will be sought from funders supportive of environmental projects and commercial sponsorship linked to net zero sought from local businesses involved in the timber industry.

Costs incurred will include fencing, stakes, protective tubing, tools and, on occasion, expert advice. Reuse and recycling will be central to RHL's approach with plant pots coming via a recycling initiative.

10. The Growing Project

There is an increased understanding of the value of growing as much food locally as possible, and the soil at Raddery is some of the best in the country, productive and easy to work with.

RHL has consulted with the local allotment association and a local small holder/grower huge on the potential of a growing/food project. They believe there is considerable opportunity at Raddery for a growing project on the campus that will have benefits for

guests, those attending activities and projects on the campus, those stopping by for a bowl of soup at the café, and for the wider community.

10.1 Producing healthy food

Moo Food, based in the Highlands is an excellent model for Raddery. It not only grows and shares its produce but is also very active in healthy cooking projects. RHL believes that elements of their very successful initiative could be replicated on the campus.

The Kirrie project attendees would greatly benefit from a mid-day meal of `home grown` ingredients, and vegetables grown on site would provide ingredients for the café and could be sold in the shop. The project would also provide vegetable boxes for guests at Raddery House, with any surplus shared with other community groups such as meals on wheels provision.

10.2 Lack of allotment space

There is a long waiting list for local allotments. The waiting list is closed at ten people. There are no community raised bed allotments or growing areas on the Black Isle. This excludes people with mobility impairment/ wheelchair users from the joy and benefits of growing. RHL will aim to address this through its growing project. Dedicated `growing boxes` are proving popular in other areas.

10.3 Initial plans

RHL wishes to develop a mixture of ground allotments and raised beds. They will install two polytunnels with raised beds, one with hydroponics.

Initiatives to be environmentally friendly such as collecting rain water off of the extensive sports hall roof would be key.

They envisage volunteers mixing with experienced growers who have already identified themselves and want to be involved growing and guiding others.

Visitors and users of the campus will be able to join in informally if they wish and have opportunities to learn basic gardening skills alongside the growers.

RHL would make modest charges for allotment and raised bed rental.

10.4 Other development ideas

RHL can see a number of opportunities to build on the growing/food project once it has been established.

Directors are keen to develop social and therapeutic horticultural activities on site for people with disabilities. *Badenoch and Strathspey Therapy Gardens* is a model of interest to them, and this will be explored further.

RHL are keen to look at other longer-term possibilities in relation to growing and healthy cooking projects that would blend with activities already planned for the campus.

They are aware, for example, that the popular local luncheon club for the elderly on the Black Isle has ceased due to difficulty finding a venue.

They are keen to explore the possibility of creative, intergenerational projects, partnering with the local catering college (UHI) and high school.

One very well received initiative piloted elsewhere and which sits well with the ethos of the Kirrie Project is the 'Dining Club' experience for couples who live with dementia. These are events held in restaurant type settings with table service and menu choice where people can enjoy a meal out in each other's company as they would have done in the past, in a comfortable non-judgemental environment.

11. Community Benefit

A range projects and initiatives with direct community benefit have already been detailed in this report.

In addition, the development will bring economic benefit to the community in terms of employment and training opportunities to the local area and work for local tradesmen.

It will bring social benefits with the café providing a meeting space and a whole host of volunteering opportunities which will bring people together.

RHL's proposal for the woods and the wellbeing and educational activities planned will support the community in addressing climate change and its impacts and secure the woods for the benefit of the community for many years to come.

11.1 Shared recreational facilities

As already referenced, there are plans to develop a range of community facilities at the campus. Recreational activities will centre on the Sports Hall which will be available for community events and for private rental.

There would be a soft play area and a `cinema` indoors games room and IT /games room

In the grounds, the developments will include playground facilities for children, together with a green gym, both encouraging health and wellbeing. A mini golf area and mini assault course.

Local sports and walking groups have suggested that the availability of lockable storage space would be welcome on the campus. RHL aim to put this in place quickly. This will encourage the use of the campus as a meeting point.

Within the walled garden at Raddery House, RHL plan, in due course, to develop a fully accessible, and contained, therapeutic garden for the use of families visiting for holiday

respite. A sensory room will be developed within the main house for the use of the visiting children. Otherwise, all facilities will be available to the community and their use encouraged.

12. Resourcing initial technical assistance and the asset acquisition

RHL has been in conversations with the Scottish Land Fund since the beginning of the CAT application process. SLF expressed concerns, based on the initial plans outlined, that the proposals benefited a community of interest (families and children with life-limiting illnesses) rather than the community of the Black Isle.

The Board has now been working up more detailed plans for several months. It believes that the benefits to the community of the Black Isle are clearly demonstrated, and if this CAT application is successful, it plans to submit a robust application to SLF which fully meets all their eligibility criteria.

At Stage 1, organisations can apply for technical assistance funding. This would enable RHL to undertake the necessary structural survey, feasibility study and valuation to support a Stage 2 bid.

If RHL's application progresses to stage 2, the directors would then apply for funding for asset acquisition. At Stage 2, SLF will fund up to 95% of eligible project costs.

SLF believe that levels of locally generated investment are an important indicator of local support and capacity and take this into account in their assessment and decision making. As a minimum, 5% of the funding should come from other sources.

A negotiated discount on the purchase of Raddery House Campus and Raddery Woods would count towards RHL's contribution.

The Highland Council has provided an indicative valuation of the site at £300,000-500,000, and £90,000 for Raddery Woods. RHL has not been in the position to commission an independent valuation. RHL's offer of £390,000 therefore represents the lower end of the indicative valuation, reflecting the community benefit that the proposal brings.

The directors understand that, if the CAT application is successful, the organisation is likely to have a relatively brief window to carry out the necessary preparatory work ahead of a Stage 2 bid to SLF.

They have, therefore, been in touch with the SLF to confirm that, while tight, it is indeed possible for the organisation to make and conclude the Stage 1 and Stage 2 application processes within the likely time period granted between a successful CAT application and the deadline for making a formal purchase offer.

13.0 Funding the capital costs

As already noted, if RHL is successful in their CAT transfer application, their plan is for a phased development of the site with the most capital-intensive phase, the redevelopment of Raddery House as respite holiday accommodation, expected in years 4-5, allowing for an extended capital fundraising campaign.

Capital costs for the full development proposed amount to £1,711,500, although the Board believes that donations in kind will offset an element of the capital build costs.

Directors believe that setting their plans for the site in the context of a phased development and fundraising process, will allow grant funders to see the Board as credible and realistic in its expectations.

The Board will ensure that they demonstrate value for money to funders by showing how they will keep costs down, from using local volunteers and those working under community payback to clear the grounds, to sourcing second hand catering equipment.

RHL will set up a working group/Board subcommittee to focus energy on fundraising. This will involve identifying and building relationships with potential funders, developing applications in support of their plans, networking on behalf of RHL and setting targets and timelines. The group will work with the Friends of Raddery, the project's fundraising volunteers, to kickstart activities. The Friends will act as ambassadors in the community, using their networks to seek support and sponsorship from local businesses, professional associations, and community groups.

Fundraising events and crowdfunding are other options being considered. RHL have been offered a shop space in Fortrose on a rent-free basis and this will be used to raise funds from the sale of donated goods. Further information on RHL's fundraising plans is detailed in Section 14.1

The directors have investigated a range of grant funders where the directors believe the project meets application criteria. These are listed in section 14.2.

14.0 Revenue-generation

The company is pragmatic that a hybrid approach to income generation will be necessary, particularly in the early years and that services and activities on the Campus will be funded through a mix of grants, fundraising, and trading income.

However, their business model is designed to become sustainable in the long term with minimal reliance on grant funding. They aim to do this by generating income from holiday lets and office rental to help defray the running costs of the site, enabling children and families to come for respite holidays at Raddery House at no cost to themselves.

RHL's sources of revenue are explored in detail below:

14.1 Fundraising and sponsorship

Focused fundraising activity has been touched upon already in relation to generating funds for the capital works.

The intention is that the activities of the Friends of Raddery House will continue beyond the completion of the capital works. The Friends will host and promote regular fundraising events on behalf of the organisation and continue to be ambassadors for the campus within the community and beyond.

The cause of supporting children and families at one of the most challenging times any family can imagine is an emotive one and one that is easy to get behind.

We have reviewed the business model of Whiteleys Retreat in Ayr, where the bulk of their running costs are met from grants, donations, and their fundraising efforts, with local businesses, community groups and individuals putting on events on their behalf, Ladies Lunches, Charity Balls etc – and taking part in cycling and running challenges, The Kiltwalk and other sponsored activities. Their 'Friends' scheme equivalent, the Whiteley Warriors, is highly active.

RHL hope to develop an equally active team of fundraising volunteers. The directors believe that everyone has something to give and there are any number of ways to contribute.

The potential value to the capital development project of in-kind support has already been mentioned and we have had offers already from individuals volunteering to raise funds for us in a variety of different ways.

A local author, for instance, has pledged to write children's stories relating to the 'Red Kites who came from Sweden and made their home in Raddery Woods'. The intention would be to use this as part of educational workshops at Raddery and to raise funds for the ongoing maintenance of the woods from its sales.

Links to Games industry would also be taken forward both to produce educational and interest models for the organisation and possibly commercially.

The option for businesses and professional organisations (Rotary Clubs, Round Tables) to sponsor 'respite weeks' is a powerful fundraising model adopted by a number of charities, one that enables donors to appreciate the direct value of their gift. RHL intends to adopt this approach in seeking sponsorship from the corporate community. One Rotary club has already expressed their commitment.

14.2 Grant funding

RHL's approach to the development of the site and the projects and activities that the site aim to support are likely to lend themselves to securing grants from funders supporting charities that work with children, older people, but also community, the environment, health and wellbeing, volunteering, and employability.

The directors have carried out a scoping exercise on potential funders – both capital and revenue, informed by research into those who have recently, or are currently funding comparable organisations, and their funding criteria.

These include, but are not limited to:

THC Community Generation Funds
THC Nature restoration fund
Highland Coastal Communities fund
THC Highland Comfort scheme
The Robertson Trust
The National Lottery – the Community Fund, Awards for All, and the Climate Action Fund
Spifox
Children in Need
Garfield Weston
The Hugh Fraser Foundation
AEH Salvesen's 1985 Charitable Trust
Scottish Children's Lottery Trust
Wooden Spoon
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
FCC Scottish Action Funds
Tesco Community Grants
Gardening grants for the disabled
Dobbie's in the community
Gardeningfordisabledtrust.org.uk
Variety
BA Better World Community fund
Mathew Good foundation
Alpkit Foundation
NAGT
Liebreich Foundation
The Steel Charitable Trust
William Grant Foundation
The Tudor Trust

The Board also contacted the National Lottery Heritage Enterprise Fund which funds the capital work involved in repurposing of historic buildings. While priority is with buildings which are listed and at risk, they also fund buildings which do not meet these criteria but which are important locally. Directors will pursue this further as a possible source of funding in due course.

Assumptions in relation to grant income reflected in our financial projections are detailed in the accompanying notes.

We expect that partner organisations based at the site and reliant on grant funding will factor a contribution to RH for use of the site into their own bids.

14.3 Holiday let income

The directors' plans include the development of two cottages on the campus as commercial lets to support the costs of hosting children and families at Raddery House. The cottages would be designed to be fully accessible.

It is envisaged that the cottages will be let to tourists visiting the Black Isle. The campus is close to the route of the North Coast 500 and current lets in the area are regularly booked out for at least 80% of the year.

Whiteleys Retreat find that families who have spent time with children at their Retreat, like to come back, finding comfort in bereavement a place of which they have good memories. RHL aims to make the cottages on the Raddery House Campus available for a few weeks a year for this purpose.

14.4 Office rentals

As noted, the lack of affordable working space to rent for start-up businesses was raised during the May Local Council Election hustings.

RHL is keen to offer space to meet this need. They envisage initial availability within the outlying buildings and, after the development of Raddery House is complete, further space in the upper floor of the main house. Directors believe that by the time works are complete, there will be space for 5/6 small businesses on site with potential for more if the demand is there.

RHL has looked at space for office rental. The Stables at Cromarty is an interesting model with a variety of options available in terms of office rental and flexible venue hire, with studio bays available to artists at affordable month on month rents.

14.5 Co-working space

In addition to office rentals, RHL intends to offer a low-cost co-working space on campus, addressing a community need, and at the same time generating contribution to running costs.

Directors have researched models in other rural areas which are operating successfully. Greenbrae Steading outside Elgin (www.greenbraesteading.co.uk) is a good example of what we aim to create at the Raddery Campus.

Coworking space allows freelancers, small business owners, and remote workers the opportunity to work alongside each other, providing networking opportunities and combatting social isolation. This is of special value in rural areas like the Black Isle.

An affordable and flexible membership model is planned with a bookings app to reserve space. The space looking out onto the wooded grounds of the campus will be an attractive place to work. Those using the space will add to the sense of the Raddery Campus as a hub for the community, they will increase footfall to the café and be customers for meeting room rentals.

14.6 Café income

RHL plans to open a café on site providing coffee, soup, cakes, and breakfast rolls in the first instance. Until full kitchen facilities are in place, a local baker has offered to supply soup and baking at low cost to support the project. In due course, all food will be prepared on site with The Growing Project supplying the café.

Local people have already volunteered their time to work in the café, helping to keep running costs low.

Footfall will build as projects and activities develop, walkers and cyclists become aware of the café, and the campus welcomes the first visitors to the holiday cottages. The café is well positioned on the local tourist route. RHL will listen to feedback on the café's menu and respond.

The café will be well-established by the time the first guests arrive at Raddery House and, while full self-catering facilities will be provided, it will offer a catering option on the campus.

The campus sits not far from the route of the North Coast 500 and we believe that a coffee and comfort stop at the campus, possibly alongside an EV charging point, will be an income generator for the campus in the summer season.

Assumptions in relation to the costs of running the café are included in the projections appended.

14.7 Shop Income

The pop-up charity shop in Fortrose has already been mentioned above in relation to RHL's strategy for generating funds towards capital works.

The shop on site will again offer a mix of thrift items, donated goods and in due course, fresh produce from the Growing Project, and preserves and baking made by RHL's volunteers. It is also hoped that it will also be a place where local artists and makers can sell their work to locals, guests and passing tourists with a commission to the campus running costs.

The shop would again be staffed by volunteers, keeping costs to the minimum. Revenue assumptions are detailed in the appended projections.

14.8 Other income

The sapling project, the adopt a tree/bird box scheme, and training and recreation sessions within Raddery Woods are intended to help defray the costs of woodland management. Likewise, income from memorial benches and plaques.

Other income streams will suggest themselves as the development takes shape and RHL will examine them in terms of feasibility and appropriateness.

15.0 Running costs

As already noted, the costs of the development phase of the site are dependent on factors yet to be fully established and the costs of remedial and capital works are necessarily best estimates.

Likewise, working assumptions have been made in relation to operational costs in order to prepare the income and expenditure projections appended. RHL has drawn on publicly available data on the operational costs of comparable organisations in its estimations.

These assumptions are detailed in the projections. The figures will be revised as plans crystallise, and operational requirements become clearer.

15.1 Staff and volunteers

While the directors will be hands-on in their involvement in the development, their intention is to appoint a development manager at the earliest opportunity, funding dependent. We envisage a hybrid role - the postholder will be based on site, coordinating the work of volunteers and contractors and acting as a contact point for enquiries and supported by the fundraising sub-committee, prepare grant applications on behalf of the organisation.

When the development work on the campus is complete, the directors envisage that there will be four paid staff members working on the campus, including the site/development manager, a maintenance officer and two further staff members who will provide assist the manager in coordinating services on site and offer support to visitors to the campus.

Staffing requirements are necessarily estimates at this stage and based on staffing arrangements in comparable organisations. The operational needs of RHL as the site develops will determine staffing requirements and directors will ensure that these are met.

These numbers do not include the staffing of the Kirrie Project which are included under 'Kirrie Project running costs' in the income and expenditure projections.

RHL anticipates the significant involvement of volunteers in all aspects of life at Raddery House Campus. As noted elsewhere in the report, they have already received offers of support from local people wishing to fundraise on RHL's behalf, get involved in the gardening and growing project and work in the café and shop. It is the Board's intention to create a wide range of volunteering options and to encourage the community to engage with the project and the opportunities it will generate.

They hope, in due course, is that established projects on site, will be able to offer supported work placement and training opportunities for local young people.

15.2 Overheads

As already indicated the extent of the renovation work proposed will allow RHL to plan for as an energy-efficient approach to development and this should have a positive impact on the energy costs of the site.

A clearer idea of these and other overhead costs will be established when RHL has detailed refurbishment plans in place.

16.0 Risks and mitigations

Directors are aware that there are significant risks involved in the proposed development for the organisation. These are reviewed below.

16.1 Issues noted in Section 5

Directors are mindful of the need to address as a priority the issues noted in relation to making good the site. These include securing Raddery House and arranging for the removal of asbestos.

Plans for the security of the site, both during its development and operational phases will be integral to development plans, in order to safeguard the asset.

16.2 Securing funds for technical assistance and asset acquisition

Obviously, securing the funds, first, to commission the structural surveys necessary ahead of a formal purchase offer, and second, for the purchase itself, is critical.

As described, the first port of call in the event of a successful CAT application would be to seek funding from the Scottish Land Fund.

RHL believe that all initial concerns have been addressed, that they make a strong case for the benefits the development will deliver for the community of the Black Isle, and that they will be in a position, if the CAT application is successful, to make a robust application to SLF that meets all eligibility criteria.

In the meantime, RHL continues to research all alternative sources of funding. These include the UK-wide Community Ownership Fund.

16.3 Uncertainty in relation to capital costs

While projections are appended, the company does not have a costed specification of the capital works required at this stage and the extent of any structural works and the related costs will not be apparent until a structural survey has been undertaken.

As noted above, there was insufficient time ahead of the CAT application deadline for the group to raise the funding necessary to commission the structural surveys and valuations that would

enable them to include firmer estimates of capital refurbishment costs in the projections appended to this report.

RHL has worked on the basis of input from an architect and local builder. Both have professional backgrounds in the construction industry but very limited access to the site and no structural surveys to inform their advice.

With these caveats, RHL believe the estimates of capital costs included in their projections are not unreasonable; but require full surveys and costings to be undertaken to provide confirmation.

16.4 Securing funding for the capital development works proposed

RHL has ambitions for the site that they believe will bring great benefit to the Black Isle community well into the future and meet a range of health and social care needs. The capital costs involved carry a significant price tag and RHL is aware that securing funding on this scale will be challenging.

RHL is addressing this through the development of the focused fundraising strategy detailed.

The directors believe that by setting their longer-term ambitions in the context of a phased development and fundraising process, this will allow funders to see that the Board are realistic in its expectations and understanding of the current funding climate.

16.5 Geographical location of the site

The rural setting lends the area its charm and tranquillity. However, it is one of the reasons that the directors wish to address the perception that the Raddery House Campus may be 'too far out' to be a suitable location for the activities and services proposed.

The campus is, in fact, geographically central to the Black Isle community it seeks to serve. According to Google distance finder, the Raddery House Campus is 10 minutes' drive from Cromarty, 6 minutes from Fortrose, 5 minutes from Rosemarkie, 10 minutes from Avoch, 12 minutes from Munlochy and 12 minutes from Culbokie. It provides more than ample parking for visitors arriving by car.

The Inverness to Cromarty bus runs every two hours stops enroute a 5 minute-walk from the Raddery Campus.

However, one of the big bars to dementia sufferers and those with mobility issues attending activities is the lack of transport from their home. Lack of transport is also an issue that stops young carers attending support activities and social events.

As part of its fundraising drive, RHL intends to raise funds to purchase an electric minibus, fully adapted for wheelchair users and those with mobility impairments. This will be used as a 'campus bus', transporting those attending activities from their homes and villages to the

campus. It would be available to the respite visitors staying at Raddery House to enhance their stay and could also provide transport for volunteers.

The directors' intention is that other community group such as the walking group, will benefit from the availability of the bus in the local communities. They believe the bus will in part fill the gap left by the cessation of the Dial a bus service, enhancing the independence and quality life of users, and addressing an identified community need.

A suitable vehicle would cost around £32k. The Robertson Trust and The Highland Cross have both indicated that RHL, when it has achieved charitable status, will meet their criteria for assistance in purchasing the vehicle. Commercial sponsorship would be sought for the ongoing running costs. Passengers would have the option of making a nominal donation for the use of the service.

16.6 Board capacity

The Board is aware that the development envisaged will generate significant work for members. This will include oversight of the project at each stage, including full risk assessment and the management of external consultants. Further trustees will be recruited to fill any skills gaps identified as RHL moves into the development stage of the project. However, current members have significant experience in project oversight and RHL intends to seek funding for the post of project manager at the earliest opportunity.

16.7 Lack of demand

A significant risk factor in all projects of this nature is that the organisation's directors are mistaken about demand for what they are proposing, or that demand and interest take more time to build than envisaged.

RHL has addressed and intends to address this in their planning in a range of different ways.

Further feasibility work is planned to test its assumptions including the strength of its income generation plans. Plans will be adjusted as necessary to take account of the results.

Directors believe that the low running costs that will result from an energy efficient development will be a protective factor if demand takes time to build.

The charity also believes that their planned activities on site are likely to attract support from grant funders as they build a pipeline of regular trading income.

In terms of the three respite holiday accommodation units at Raddery House, RHL has the option of renting any unused capacity in the early stages to disabled adults looking for adapted holiday accommodation. Homelands in Fife charges commercial rates for similar accommodation. This would enable RHL to cover its costs in the event of slow or uneven demand.

Directors and staff will monitor uptake closely and respond appropriately.

16.8 Organisational structure

Directors are aware that once RHL gains charitable status, if their plans are successful in generating significant non-charitable trading income relative to grants and other non-trading income, RHL will need to rethink its organisational structure. Directors cannot see this being an issue in the short or medium-term, but it has been noted as a potential risk in the long-term.

The most straightforward option for RHL in these circumstances is likely to involve setting up a subsidiary trading company. The subsidiary, as a separate legal entity, would require its own directors and its own bank account. The directors would review all options in the event of this scenario appearing likely, and factor in all costs involved in their projections.

