



Alvie and Dalraddy Estates

Location

Alvie & Dalraddy are adjoining Estates that are run as one land holding located 4 miles south of Aviemore near the village of Kincaig within the district of Badenoch. Badenoch is approximately the geographic centre of Scotland. The Estates extend from the River Spey, between Loch Insh and Loch Alvie, North West into the Monadhliath hills. Most of the properties on the Estates face South East many with spectacular views of the Cairngorm Mountains.

A stone circle at Delfour on Alvie Estate which is thought to date from around 2,000 BC is evidence that this land has been inhabited, managed & fought over by humans for at least the last 4,000 years.

39% of the land area of the two Estates is within the Cairngorms National Park. This includes all the low ground. The Estates are entirely within the Highland Region and the Kincaig & Vicinity Community Council area.

Facts & Figures

Area

The geographical area is based on traditional land ownership patterns when the primary use of land was to produce food. In the 17th and 18th century farms required a proportion of low ground that could be both cultivated for food and winter livestock. Upland pastures were required for summer grazing. As a result, land holdings tend to be strips of land extending from the valley floor into the hills. (See map)

The land use by area is:

| Land Use | | hectares | acres | % | % |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| Stocked woodland | conifer | 720 | 1,780 | 13% | |
| | broadleaf | 93 | 230 | 2% | |
| Unstocked woodland | bare ground | 137 | 339 | 2% | |
| | unplatable /open | 89 | 230 | 2% | 19% |
| Farmland | ploughable | 175 | 432 | 3% | |
| | permanent pasture | 158 | 390 | 3% | 6% |
| Hill ground / other | | 4,031 | 9,960 | 75% | 75% |
| Total area | | 5,402 | 13,350 | 100% | 100% |

| Elevations | metres | feet |
|----------------------------|--------|-------|
| Lowest point (River Spey) | 212 | 695 |
| Loch Insh | 214 | 702 |
| Loch Alvie | 215 | 705 |
| Highest in bye fields | 250 | 820 |
| Highest woodlands | 570 | 1,870 |
| Highest point (Geal Charn) | 824 | 2,703 |

| Climate | Minimum | Maximum | Minimum | Maximum |
|-----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Annual rainfall | 810 mm | 890 mm | 32" | 35" |
| Temperature | -27.0 C | 28.0 C | -17.0 F | 82.0 F |



There are 31 houses/flats plus 4 farm steadings 146 static caravans/chalets with 45 touring & 50 tents pitches.

In addition there are 2 quarries, gardens (poly tunnels owned by tenant), sawmill, hydro-electric scheme, a building used for storing and drying wood chips, larder, a shop, toilet block and laundrette at Dalraddy Holiday Park plus various other ancillary buildings and storage sheds.

Current Owners

Alvie Estate has been in the ownership of the Williamson family since 1927, the adjoining property Dalraddy was purchased in 1929. Alvie Manse & Glebe was purchased in 1936 and Invereshie Farm was purchased in 1957.

- Alvie Estate is currently owned by Alvie Trust which is a settled Trust the main beneficiary being Ruaraidh Williamson.
- Dalraddy Estate, Dalraddy Holiday Park and Alvie House are owned by his father Jamie Williamson, the current Laird. Alvie Manse and Glebe is owned by Ruaraidh Williamson.
- Farming is carried out by Alvie Farm Partnership, a limited partnership where Jamie Williamson is the general partner and Alvie Trust is the limited partner.
- Field sports over Dalraddy Estate are leased by Alvie Trust. The Trust's field sport interests are managed by the Game Keeper Graeme Macdonald.
- Badenoch Land Management Ltd. manages the properties and carries out forestry consultancy, management and contracting on several other estates. Jamie Williamson is the Managing Director.
- Alvie Gardens is a limited partnership run by the general partner John Christie.
- Alvie Stables is tenanted by Ingrid Kendall.
- Delfour granite quarry and Alvie Moor sand and gravel quarry are managed by G.F. Job Ltd.

| Property | Owner | Hectares |
|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Alvie Estate | Alvie Trust | 3,384.1 |
| Dalraddy Estate | Jamie Williamson | 2,015.7 |
| Alvie House | Jamie Williamson | 3.0 |
| Total | | 5,402.8 |



Objectives of Owners

To retain the property as a family home and means of making a living within the control of the Williamson family.

To retain ownership, the land must not only provide a net income for the owners but also accumulate sufficient funds to reinvest in economic opportunities and pay for inheritance tax on the land holding.

Currently the main sources of income are from the provision of tourist accommodation and farming (including farm subsidies). Capital growth is from forestry and the increase in the value of houses and land for housing. A large proportion of the value of the land holding is still based on its value for field sports. The value of hill ground and moorland for field sports currently exceeds its value for farming or forestry.

Taxes, government regulations and incentives are the main factors determining how the land is both owned and managed.

Alvie & Dalraddy Estates is run as a family business. The current Laird is Jamie Williamson, a forestry consultant, who resides in Alvie House.

Badenoch Land Management Ltd. manages the properties on behalf of the owners.

History of the Estate

In the early nineteenth century Alvie Estate was owned by the Duke of Gordon who sold the property to James Evan Baillie in 1835. Around 1865 Alvie Estate was purchased by Sir John Ramsden, an industrialist from northern England who planted up around 2,000 acres (800 hectares) of what was described as moor land to forestry for timber production. He later purchased and moved to Ardverikie Estate which his descendants still own.

In 1905 Alvie was purchased by Sir Robert Boville (Bertie) Whitehead who owned Alvie until 1923. Sir Robert was the grandson of Robert Whitehead who invented the torpedo. The Whitehead family married into some of the most influential in Europe with Bertie's cousin Marguerite marrying Herbert von Bismark, son of the German chancellor Otto von Bismark, whilst another cousin Agathe Whitehead, married an Austrian Kapitanleutnant Georg Von Trapp. Agathe died of scarlet fever in 1922 leaving Georg to bring up their 5 children with the help of a governess from the nearby Benedictine Nunnery, who taught them music. The musical the Sound of Music is based on the story of von Trapp and the governess Maria Augusta Kutschera who he later married.

The Whitehead family had a factory in Weybridge in England and another on the Baltic run by Georg von Trapp. During the First World War the Baltic factory supplied the German navy with torpedoes whilst the factory at Weybridge supplied the British navy.



Robert Whitehead deer fenced much of the Estate and invested large sums in extending Alvie House and improving the stock of red deer. The remains of the deer fence erected around 1908 can still be seen.

The Estate was sold in 1923 to Lady Carnarvon shortly after the untimely death of her husband, Lord Carnarvon, 5th Earl of Carnarvon. Lord Carnarvon broke into the Tutankhamun tombs in Egypt. He and his son died within a year of each other (the Tutankhamun curse). Lady Carnarvon set up Balchurn (Home Farm) on Alvie Estate as a model dairy farm. She and her 2nd husband, Lt Colonel Ian Onslow Dennistoun also invested in grouse shooting.

Alvie Estate was purchased by the Williamson family in 1927 primarily for its field sports. The family had previously been Liberal MPs for Moray and Nairn since 1906 and had land holdings in Angus. Alexander Williamson, who purchased Alvie Estate in 1927 and Dalraddy Estate in 1929, was a younger son of the MP. Around the time of his death in

1930 the Estates were put into a limited liability company Alvie Estate Ltd. His nephew Gerald Williamson managed the Estates for his widow until her death in 1956. He organised the replanting of most of the woodland areas felled during the 2 world wars. He purchased Invereshie Farm in 1957 and later Blackmill, Balnespick and part of Ballintean Farms at the bottom end of Glenfeshie. These farms were owned and farmed by his youngest daughter Jane Williamson who died in February 2015. Gerald Williamson died in 1966.

In 1966 Gerald's son Fergus Williamson transferred the Estates out of Alvie Estate Ltd. and into his ownership following advice that any sale of the assets would result in double taxation. In January 1972 Alvie and Dalraddy Estates were transferred into a Discretionary Trust but retaining Alvie House and policies in the ownership of Fergus Williamson. The class of beneficiaries were his children and grandchildren.

Fergus Williamson was part of a consortium who invested in downhill skiing in the Cairngorms. He helped build Glenfeshie gliding club on land now owned by Jane Williamson and in 1968 opened Dalraddy Caravan Park (now Dalraddy Holiday Park). He also turned parts of Alvie House into self-catering holiday accommodation and rented out the grouse shooting and deer stalking on a commercial basis.

In 1983 Dalraddy Estate was transferred into the ownership of Jamie Williamson, the eldest son of Fergus Williamson. Alvie Farm was transferred into a limited partnership with Jamie Williamson being the general partner and Alvie Trust the limited partner. Following the death of Fergus Williamson in 1987 the widow of Fergus transferred ownership of Alvie House and policies to their eldest son Jamie Williamson in 1991.

Woodlands

History

By around 1800 most of Badenoch was devoid of trees. Lady Grant of Rothiemurchus wrote of going over the weary moor of Alvie to the Loch of the same name. Over most of the nineteenth century more tree planting took place in the north east of Scotland than anywhere else in Europe. Seafield Estates alone planted over 18,000 hectares in the 19th century including much of Abernethy and Kinveachy, woodlands we now regard as semi natural and natural ancient Scots pine woodlands.

Sir John Ramsden established the conifer woodlands on Alvie between 1869 and 1877. Some 800 hectares (2,000 acres) in total were deer fenced and planted. Much of Alvie's forests were felled for the war efforts during both world wars. Replanting took place in the 1950's up to an elevation of 430m above sea level. The original plantings were around 80% Scots pine, 10% European larch and another 10% Norway spruce in wetter areas. It is understood that the Scots pine seedlings came from some of the best trees of the original Caledonian pine woodlands.

Between 1945 and 1960 almost all the areas felled during the war were replanted by Gerald Williamson, the grandfather of the current Laird. Small areas of lodgepole pine and sitka spruce were added to the restock areas planted in the 1950-60's. Broadleaves are for the most part the result of natural regeneration in areas where livestock have been excluded.

Objective of Woodland Management

The main purpose of planting trees is to provide a source of capital that can be realised as and when required without reducing the land holding. There is no capital gains tax on the sale of timber in contrast to the sale of land which can result in capital gains tax of up to 30% of the value of the asset sold plus stamp duty. Deaths of owners normally result in an inheritance tax charge of up to 40% of the value of the assets held. Divorces, weddings and requirements to reinvest to maintain the financial viability of the holding also create demands for capital that otherwise would have to come from outside the estate.

Tree planting has continued to be primarily for timber production although some plantations have also been planted to provide shelter and / or screening or take advantage of establishment grants.

Current Management

In response to the fall in timber prices, harvesting operations were suspended in 1996. Most of the plantations planted since 1950 had by then had a first thin and it was felt that subsequent thinnings could be delayed without serious silvicultural consequences.



Management policy since 1996 has been to maximise the financial support supplied by the Forestry Commission for environmental improvements where this does not conflict with timber production in the long term, and the Estates' sporting/farming enterprises.

In 2006/7, the Estate invested in equipment and storage to convert wood into chips for bio-fuel. The Estate is now the main producer of wood chips for bio-fuel in Badenoch. Alvie House is heated with wood chips produced on the Estate. The Estate currently supplies wood chips for boilers within a 40 mile radius of the Estate.. Suitable timber is supplied by Alvie & Dalraddy as well as purchased locally providing a local demand for low quality round wood.

As far as practical, a continuous cover system of silviculture is being adopted, bearing in mind that the two dominant species (Scots pine and birch) are shade intolerant pioneer species. Where feasible mature trees are being group felled leaving seed to trees to naturally regenerate wherever there is sufficient light for Scots pine and birch to re-establish. Planting is often used to augment natural regeneration and produce the desired species balance.

Native Scots pine and birch remain the main species with larch and Norway spruce added where the soil is suitable to provide species diversity, visual amenity and to augment wildlife habitat.

Our in-house forest management company provides forestry consultancy, management and contracting services to a number of other land holdings primarily in Badenoch.

Alvie & Dalraddy Estates remain committed to maintaining viable livestock farming, tourism and timber production.

Alvie Farm Partnership

Alvie Farm Partnership farms ground owned by both Alvie and Dalraddy Estates.

In addition, it rents grazing on land owned by Balcraggan Farming Company Ltd. and elsewhere.

Alvie Farm is typical of most farms in this area where the climate and land type greatly influence how the land is managed and the type of farming that can be carried out. There are 4 farm steadings; the farm is an amalgamation of what were previously 6 holdings. On the farm, there is around 300 acres that can be considered "arable" although in this area it more accurately means "can be ploughed". This ground is used to grow silage, hay and turnips for winter feed and for grazing cattle and sheep. The bulk of the ground, of around 9000 acres, is unfenced heather hill which is only suitable for extensive sheep grazing.



The farm livestock consist of a herd of 117 suckler cows, a small herd of 11 pedigree shorthorns and a flock of around 760 ewes. The farm is “farm assured” which means we are independently assessed annually to make sure that our animals are treated and cared for to certain standards.

The cows are mainly cross-bred between traditional hardy Scottish breeds, like the shorthorn, and quicker growing continental breeds, like the limousin. The best pedigree shorthorn calves are kept or sold for breeding. In an effort to improve the quality of the pedigree herd some of the calves are the product of embryo transfers sourced from Canada. The farm is a member of the Hi-health scheme which monitors the cattle for four major cattle diseases and helps to ensure that the herd remains of high health status.

The sheep are mainly Scottish blackfaces (600) but there are also 160 cross bred ewes. The Blackface ewes are put to either Blackface tups or to Blue face Leicester tups with the cross ewes being put to Beltex cross or Texel tups. This allows replacement ewe lambs to be home bred and cross bred lambs to be sold for breeding or fat. Most Blackface ewe lambs are kept for breeding; the rejects sold. Blackface hogs, yelled ewes, caste ewes and Blackface ewes with single lambs are put on the hill between May and October. They are treated approximately every 6 weeks with Dysect in an effort to reduce ticks and improve grouse numbers.

The farm is a member of the Highlands and Islands Sheep Health Association (HISHA) which annually monitors participating flocks for the highly contagious enzootic abortion. This helps to ensure that we stay free from this disease and hopefully help to sell breeding stock at a premium.

A small number of cattle and sheep are now being slaughtered and butchered locally and sold through Dalraddy Holiday Park Shop. The Farm sublets grazing for horses plus part of Delfour steading to Alvie Stables.

Alvie Field Sports

Although field sports produce less than 5% of the financial turnover of the Estate it makes up 18% of the property’s capital value. Grouse shooting and stag stalking is the main attraction for potential purchasers of Estates in the area. Shooting parties often stay in Alvie House on a fully catered basis thereby increasing the income to the Estate generated by this activity.

Grouse Shooting

Grouse shooting makes the biggest contribution to the game department and takes place from 12th August to early September each year. In normal years, the Estate would shoot 9 driven days and 5 walked-up days. On a good year, the Estate could expect to shoot up to 400 brace.



Red Deer Stalking

Alvie woodlands provide some of the best shelter in the Monadhliath Mountains. The Estate gained prominence during the early part of the last century because of experimental deer management techniques carried out by Robert Whitehead. Between 1906 & 1908 approximately 5,600 acres (2,300 hectares) of woodland and hill ground were enclosed within a deer fence and red deer selectively culled. The results were spectacular and Alvie has produced many of Scotland's finest red deer.

The Estate currently culls in the region of 35 stags and 60 hinds & calves per season. Red deer numbers have declined over the last 30 years although deer culls have increased.

Deer stalking provides an income from deer stalking clients, venison sales and accommodation for stalking clients. Alvie venison can be purchased from Dalraddy Holiday Park shop.

Stags are fed in the winter; this is now being used as a visitor attraction.

Roe Deer Stalking

Between 2 and 8 roe buck and a similar number of does are culled annually, roe buck stalking normally take place between the beginning of June & mid July.

Fishing

In the 1960's more than 60 salmon were caught annually mainly on Loch Insh. Since then there has been a steady decline. The river Spey is still noted for its salmon fishing and salmon, sea and brown trout can still be caught by boat on Loch Insh or by fishing along the banks of the River Spey.

The Estate provides boats for hire on both Loch Alvie and Loch Insh. Loch Alvie provides trout and pike fishing. Scotland's largest pike is claimed to have been caught on Loch Alvie by Col. Thornton in the 1790s.

There is a put and take fish pond stocked with brown trout at Jock of the Bog. The facility provides an added attraction for those primarily interested in other sporting activities and staying in holiday cottages.

The loch in front of Alvie House is also stocked from the fish hatchery primarily for Alvie House guests.

Falconry

Falconry takes place from 12th August through to early September each season on the estate.

Blue Hare Shooting

The Estate has not shot blue hare commercially for 5 years since the decline of hare numbers throughout the area.

Clay Pigeon Shooting

This facility is used by grouse shooting guests, groups coming for corporate entertainment as well as members of the general public.

Dalraddy Holiday Park

Dalraddy Holiday Park was established in 1968. It covers 39 hectares (97 acres) of what was originally heather moor land. The Park currently contains

- 73 fully serviced traditional static holiday caravans,
- 73 fully serviced wooden chalet style caravans,
- 45 pitches for touring caravans and
- facilities for up to 50 tents.

Almost all the caravans and chalets are owned by clients, Dalraddy Holiday Park receiving a ground rent for the services provided.

Services include a licensed shop, launderette children's play park and a central toilet block. The Park also sells static caravans and provides a letting service for caravan owners that includes cleaning and maintenance. The Park shop provides a retail outlet for estate produce and a booking point for activities such as fishing, quad bike tours, clay pigeon shooting and archery.

There is a symbiotic relationship between visitor accommodation provided by Dalraddy Holiday Park and local visitor attractions such as horse riding (Alvie Stables), quad biking, water sports (Loch Insh Watersports), the Highland Wildlife Park, fishing, zip wire park, bushcraft survival techniques, clay pigeon shooting and archery.

The website for Dalraddy Holiday Park can be viewed here: www.campinginaviemore.co.uk

Alvie House

Alvie House is a traditional shooting lodge. Parts of the building date from 1858 when the lodge was rebuilt. In 1909/10 Robert Whitehead substantially enlarged the house to its present size. The house was last renovated when Alec Williamson purchased the Estate in 1927. It has been used as the main residence for subsequent Lairds and their families since 1958.



Although primarily a family home the house is also used as catered accommodation for shooting parties, weddings and other gatherings, including seminars, conferences, business meetings, photo shoots and functions. It also contains self-catering holiday accommodation.

The website for Alvie Estates holiday accommodation can be viewed here www.highlandsselfcatering.co.uk.

Alvie Gardens

Alvie Gardens is a 2 acre walled garden that was originally set up to provide the estate with fresh fruit, vegetables and flowers which could not otherwise be obtained locally.

The Gardens were closed around 1990 and re-opened in 1995 in partnership with John Christie under a farm diversification scheme. The objective was to grow soft fruit (primarily strawberries) in polytunnels for sale in shops and restaurants locally during the tourist season.

In 1998, the business expanded by building three larger tunnels to produce strawberries for the July market as customers were disappointed that there was no fruit available during this period.

Harvesting strawberries now starts in the first week of June and continues into October depending on weather conditions. 60% of the strawberries are now harvested in July to meet the seasonal demand. The gardens currently produce up to 10 tonnes of strawberries per year.

Raspberries are also grown in polytunnels and harvested from the beginning of July to October. Some of this produce is frozen to provide an income once the crop has finished.

All the fruit is packed at Alvie and delivered by John Christie as he feels it is important for the customers to meet the producer.

Alvie Stables

The stables were started by Ingrid Kendall as a farm diversification scheme in 1994. She now operates Alvie Stables as a tenant of Alvie Farm Partnership. Outside facilities include an all-weather arena, jumping paddock and ride out opportunities. Several fields are used on a non-exclusive basis for grazing.

The main business is trekking for beginners, intermediate rides, hacking for experienced riders and lessons. The business also offers livery and takes horses for breaking and schooling.



The stables are open for business throughout the year. During the summer holidays the Stables takes out 4 rides per day each ride being made up of 9 to 11 riders. Clients range from 4 years upwards which allows families to be included as well as children from local schools and tourists. Riders with disabilities are catered for. There is a saddle club for local children every Saturday from Easter to October which involves teaching horse care and riding.

Alvie Stables has established some good rides around the Estate where there is opportunity to observe a variety of wildlife including deer, squirrels, rabbits and birds. There are sufficient paths to allow paths on softer ground to be avoided in wet weather and to allow paths churned up by horses time to recover.

Baldow Smithy

There has been a blacksmith workshop on Alvie Estate at least as far back as the mid nineteenth century when the smithy was moved from the area of Lower Milehead to its present position at Baldow in 1868.

The business was inherited by Thomas Mackenzie who operated his business from Rothiemurchus and later the engine yard in Aviemore before moving back to Baldow in 1981 and building the present building.

The business was passed to David Dingwall in February 1993 and the lease assigned to him. The building was built by the previous tenant but became the property of the Landlord in November 1996. David Dingwall relinquished lease of the premises in 2008. The premises has now been leased to Ross's Garage who operate a vehicle recovery business.

Mineral Extraction

The quarries on Alvie and Dalraddy Estates supply a wide range of aggregates, soils and recycled products throughout the Badenoch & Strathspey area and for civil engineering projects elsewhere in the Highlands. These mineral workings ensure that developments in the area have a source of local stone and quarry products.

There are currently two active quarries that are operated by GF Job Ltd who are civil engineers based in Nairn.

Examples of projects which have depended on Alvie & Dalraddy Estates quarries over the last few years include:

- Cairngorm funicular railway
- The re-development of the Aviemore Centre
- A9 trunk road improvements

- The railway
- Mountain Access Paths – improving access for all under controlled routes
- Waste water treatment works improvements
- Landfill facility upgrading and extensions
- Many local housing development projects providing both high value and affordable homes to allow people to live and work in the area.

G.F. Job Ltd. who operate the quarries seek to further extend its already wide range of aggregates and decorative landscaping stone based on indigenous materials that compliment the aesthetics of the area while at the same avoiding the need to import materials long distances by road.

Delfour Granite Quarry

Delfour granite quarry is on land owned by Alvie Trust.

Granite rock behind Delfour was extracted in the 19th century for use locally. It is believed it was used in the building of the railway in 1863 and in the construction of buildings such as Dalraddy steading. The present quarry was opened in 1980 by John Mackay of Muir of Ord to provide rock infill when constructing the new A9 trunk road. Approximately 60,000 m³ of rock was extracted before the quarry was closed in 1982. Between 1982 and 1995 stone from the quarry was used by the Cairngorm Chairlift Company for walkways and landscaping.

The quarry was reopened under the management of G.F. Job Ltd. in 1996 primarily for sawing and splitting to provide dimension (building) stone for Granit Union Ltd. Alvie Estate built the building adjoining the quarry and rented it to Granit Union Ltd. Between 1996 and 1999 stone from the quarry was used for building stone, cubes and setts (there are examples of Alvie cubes and setts in Wick, Newcastle, Glasgow, Edinburgh and Ben Alder), dyking stone (almost all the pink stone walls in Aviemore and elsewhere locally are from Delfour quarry), rock armour for river works and aggregate.

Granit Union Ltd. relocated to Caithness around 1999. Since then the quarry has been developed by G.F. Job Ltd. to produce aggregate, rock armour and dyking stone. The rock has also been used on an occasional basis for headstones and feature stones.

Alvie Moor Sand & Gravel Quarry

Alvie Moor Quarry is on land owned by Dalraddy Estate (Jamie Williamson).

A sand and gravel quarry was opened on glacial moraine by G.F. Job Ltd. on Alvie moor in 2002. This is a green field site surrounded by woodland with access off the B9152. The setting up of this quarry, which is accessed off the B9152 was done with due regard being given to reducing the environmental impact of the operation on the surrounding area. Key



factors that were considered to reduce the environmental impact of this operation included screening of the quarry using tree plantations, curved access road to hide quarry workings and noise reducing earth bunds around the perimeter of the site.

Alvie Slate Workings

There is evidence of extensive slate workings on Alvie Estate which it is believed supplied slate for houses locally in the 18th and 19th century. More recently this slate has been used for paths, walls and other features around the estate and in the redevelopment of the Aviemore Mountain Resort.

Ballourie Schist Workings

There are schist workings on Alvie Estate at Ballourie. The origins of these workings are unknown. More recently schist from these workings has been used by G.F. Job Ltd. for rebuilding a pier at Lochaline and on smaller schemes locally. .

Badenoch Land Management Ltd.

Badenoch Land Management Ltd. was originally set up by Jamie Williamson of Alvie and Allan W. Macpherson-Fletcher of Balavil in 1976 with the intention of managing Balavil, Alvie and Dalraddy Estates and to use these Estates as a base from which to develop a land management contracting and management service. Jamie Williamson has a B.Sc. and PhD in forestry management, Allan a BSc in agriculture. The objective was to provide a business that would hopefully both manage the Directors interests in Balavil, Alvie and Dalraddy Estates and to build up a business that utilised the training and experience of the Directors. The intention was to run or direct the business from the Estates being managed and make the properties financially viable.

The agricultural side of the business did not develop leaving the forestry consultancy, management and contracting side to expand under Jamie Williamson. During the 1980s and early 90s Badenoch Land Management Ltd. carried out forestry contracting work and management work throughout the Scottish Highlands. It also constructed some of the first deer farms in Scotland.

In the 1980s Jamie developed computer software for the forest industry which was launched in 1988 and sold under the name of WoodPlan. It assessed timber volumes, predicted growth and assisted timber valuations. It was based on the assumption that trees were primarily grown for timber production. Unfortunately, 1988 was the year the UK government removed tax incentives for investments in forestry. After 1988, further investment in forestry in the UK for timber production declined rapidly.

In 2002 WoodPlan was sold under a management buyout. Using WoodPlan, Badenoch Land Management Ltd. carried out many timber surveys throughout the UK including



Windsor Great Park. They also carried out computer related consultancy for forestry elsewhere including for the Bahama Government, Shell in Chile and Zaffico in Zambia. Badenoch Land Management Ltd. provides management services to Alvie and Dalraddy Estates. It also carries out forestry consultancy, management and contracting work on other properties locally.

Renewable Energy

Alvie & Dalraddy Estates is endeavouring to become self-sufficient in electricity and heat. It is already a local supplier of woodchips for biomass boilers and has the potential to be a net exporter of energy in the form of electricity.

Hydro-electric

Alvie Estate has an existing hydro-electric scheme on the Allt an Fhearna burn that was erected around 1906 and closed around 1962. It is proposed to again generate electricity from the burns on Alvie Estate either by refurbishing the existing scheme or by constructing a new scheme.

Alvie Wood Fuels

In 1999, the cost of oil to heat Alvie House was £4,400 per annum. By 2005 the cost had increased to around £20,000 per annum. In 2004, a feasibility study identified wood chips as the most cost effective alternative fuel.

A 250 KW wood chip boiler including underground woodchip silo and feed mechanism was installed in 2006 and commissioned at the end of August 2006. Financial support for this investment has been received from the Forestry Commission and the Local Enterprise Company.

To provide wood chips Alvie Farm successfully applied for grant aid from the Forestry Commission to purchase a chipper and convert an 80' x 40' (12m x 24m) shed to store and dry wood chips. Within the shed a drying floor has been constructed and a fan installed to blow air through the chips. Batches of around 80 m³ can be dried at a time. A chipper specifically designed to produce chips for bio-fuel was purchased that is capable of producing up to 10 m³ of wood chips per hour.

Alvie House and the toilet block at Dalraddy Holiday Park are now heated with wood chips. The Estate currently supplies wood chips for other boilers locally.

Suitable timber is sourced from Alvie & Dalraddy Estate and elsewhere providing a local demand for low quality round wood. Round timber is air dried and chipped when its moisture content drops to between 25 & 30%. This can normally be achieved within 18 months from felling. Timber above 30% moisture content is dried using hot air with heat coming from a woodchip fuelled boiler. The Estate also sells wood pellets by the bag.



Housing

The Estate contains 26 houses, including Alvie House. 3 houses are used for self catering holiday lets, 4 are tied properties and 18 are on long term tenancies. Most of these houses were built to house Estate staff in the days when staff were more numerous and less able to travel to their place or work.

There is a shortage of accommodation within the Cairngorms National Park area which is perceived to be exacerbated by the high proportion of properties that are used as second homes and holiday lets. 30 – 40% of houses in the Kincaig area are let as holiday homes or used as 2nd homes. The private sector currently provides 53% of rented accommodation in rural Scotland. This is 11 times the number of rented houses provided in rural Scotland by Housing Associations. However, due in part to fiscal disincentives, the number of private sector rented homes is not expanding to meet the demand.

In the Kincaig & Vicinity Community Council area, where Alvie & Dalraddy Estates is located, more than a third of the population live in rented accommodation nearly three quarters of which are provided by the private sector including Alvie & Dalraddy Estates.

Employment

Within the Kincaig & Vicinity Community Council area the Community Council has estimated there are 148.5 full time job equivalents (FTE). Of these 37 (25%) are provided by Alvie & Dalraddy Estates and its tenants.

Sustainability / Self Sufficiency

By around 1950 the estate was largely self sufficient with its own water supply. Electricity was supplied by a dam and water turbine which is still in existence but no longer in use. Public electricity supply did not reach most of the estate until around 1962. Balchurn (Alvie Home Farm) retained a small dairy herd which provided milk and butter until around 1960. The kitchen gardens supplied the estate with fruit and vegetables; beef cattle, sheep, venison and grouse provided meat and the estate sawmill provided sawn timber. Both hens and turkeys were kept for eggs and meat.

Since the 1950s the self sufficiency of the estate has gradually been dismantled as taxes, regulations, economies of scale, cheaper transport and imports has eroded the economics of local production.

Highland estates have traditionally been purchased primarily for field sports and entertainment. The value of a "sporting estate" is largely determined by the number of stags, grouse and salmon harvested from the property. Seclusion, exclusivity and aesthetics has also contributed to the value of the holding, often more than income earning

activities. Owning a Highland sporting estate is not dissimilar from owning a holiday home or yacht. When the owner dies, or can no longer afford to enjoy or upkeep the asset, the property is sold. Most highland sporting estates run at a net financial deficit.

To meet the objectives of the owners of Alvie & Dalraddy Estates it is important that the estate is financially self supporting. Although hill farming and forestry are subsidised, only a relatively few hill farm and forestry landholdings provide an annual net income. Income has had to be generated from other activities. Over the last 40 years the nation has increased its dependency on imported goods, the value of our currency has remained high despite an increasing balance of payments deficit, it has become cheaper to import our consumables rather than produce them in this country. The estate has therefore concentrated on service industries. specifically, tourism and land management services, together with government subsidies to remain financially viable.

Over the next 20 years the owners have speculated on the following changes to their business environment

- The UK government will need to address its growing balance of payments deficit. The value of our currency will decline making imported goods and services less competitive. This will favour home production and increase tourists from overseas.
- The present level of government making up around 60% of the nation's gross domestic product is unsustainable over the long term. Government subsidies and support will be squeezed.
- The world's human population will continue to grow faster than food production. Self sufficiency in food will become more important.
- Timber production in the UK will peak around 2020 and decline steadily thereafter.
- The cost of energy will increase.

In anticipation of these trends the owners intend to concentrate on producing food, renewable energy and forest products whilst at the same time providing facilities for tourism and maintaining a diversified portfolio of economic activities.



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