



Tiroran Community Forest

Invitation to Participate in Competitive Dialogue

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNER

Off-Grid Nature-Based Accommodation

Deadline for Submission : 28th August 5pm
via email to srobinsonfrood@swmid.co.uk

Submissions should be no longer than 10 pages and will be assessed by the SWMID Board of Directors, selected partners will then be asked to undertake a meeting with key team members to further understand your approach.



A Partnership to Shape the Future of Tiroran Community Forest

South West Mull & Iona Development (SWMID) invites visionary organisations to participate in a Competitive Dialogue process to identify a long-term Strategic Development Partner for the creation of a unique off-grid accommodation destination within Tiroran Community Forest on the Isle of Mull.

This is not a traditional procurement for holiday cabins. It is an invitation to become part of the long-term transformation of one of Scotland's most inspiring community-owned landscapes.

We are seeking an organisation capable of bringing investment, innovation and operational expertise to deliver an exceptional visitor experience while helping secure the long-term future of Tiroran Community Forest.

The initial development is expected to comprise five to eight high-quality off-grid cabins, however applicants should regard this as the first phase of a wider partnership rather than the entirety of the opportunity.



A landscape where nature, people and enterprise work together to create lasting value.



THE OPPORTUNITY AT A GLANCE

790

hectares

of community-owned forest on the Ardmeanach Peninsula of Mull, combining woodland, moorland, burns and dramatic coastline.

5-8

off-grid cabins

the first phase of a wider partnership, delivered to the highest standards of low-impact design.

1

strategic partner

sought to bring investment, innovation and operational expertise to Tiroran's future.

Our Vision

Tiroran Community Forest represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity. Community ownership has created the opportunity to reimagine what a forest can be — not simply as land, but as a place where nature, people and enterprise work together to create lasting value.

Our ambition is to establish Tiroran as one of Scotland's leading examples of regenerative rural development: a landscape where biodiversity, recreation, education, enterprise and community wellbeing exist in balance.

This vision recognises a simple reality. For the forest to flourish, it must become financially sustainable. Income generated through carefully considered commercial activity will enable continued investment in habitat restoration, woodland management, visitor infrastructure, community facilities and future opportunities for the people of South West Mull and Iona.

The proposed accommodation is therefore not simply a tourism business. It is a catalyst for securing the long-term future of the forest.



About Tiroran Community Forest

Tiroran Community Forest extends to approximately 790 hectares on the Ardmeanach Peninsula of Mull. The landscape combines productive woodland, areas of native woodland restoration, open moorland, burns, lochs and dramatic coastal scenery, creating one of the most remarkable community-owned forests in Scotland.

For many decades the forest was managed primarily as a commercial plantation. Today, following community ownership, it is entering a new chapter. SWMID is developing a long-term vision that will transform Tiroran into a thriving community asset where nature recovery, recreation, education, enterprise and community wellbeing work together to create lasting environmental, social and economic value.

The future of the forest is not defined by a single land use. Instead, it will evolve through the Forest Masterplan and Long Term Forest Management Plan, informed by community aspirations, environmental stewardship and opportunities that strengthen both the landscape and the local economy.

Applicants should recognise that they are not simply investing in visitor accommodation — they are becoming part of a long-term vision for the future of Tiroran Community Forest.



Gateway to Burg

Tiroran occupies a unique position as the principal gateway to the National Trust for Scotland's Burg peninsula — one of Mull's most spectacular and remote landscapes.

Burg is renowned for its dramatic coastline, MacCulloch's Fossil Tree, archaeological heritage and outstanding wildlife. Visitors travel from across Scotland and beyond to experience its sense of wilderness and one of Mull's finest coastal walks.

The surrounding landscape supports iconic species including Golden Eagles, White-tailed Eagles, pine martens, otters, red deer and an exceptional diversity of birdlife and native flora.

SWMID believes Tiroran should become much more than simply the place where visitors leave their cars before walking to Burg. Our ambition is to establish Tiroran as a destination in its own right — a place where people choose to stay, explore, learn and reconnect with nature while supporting the local economy.

04 • VISION IN PRACTICE

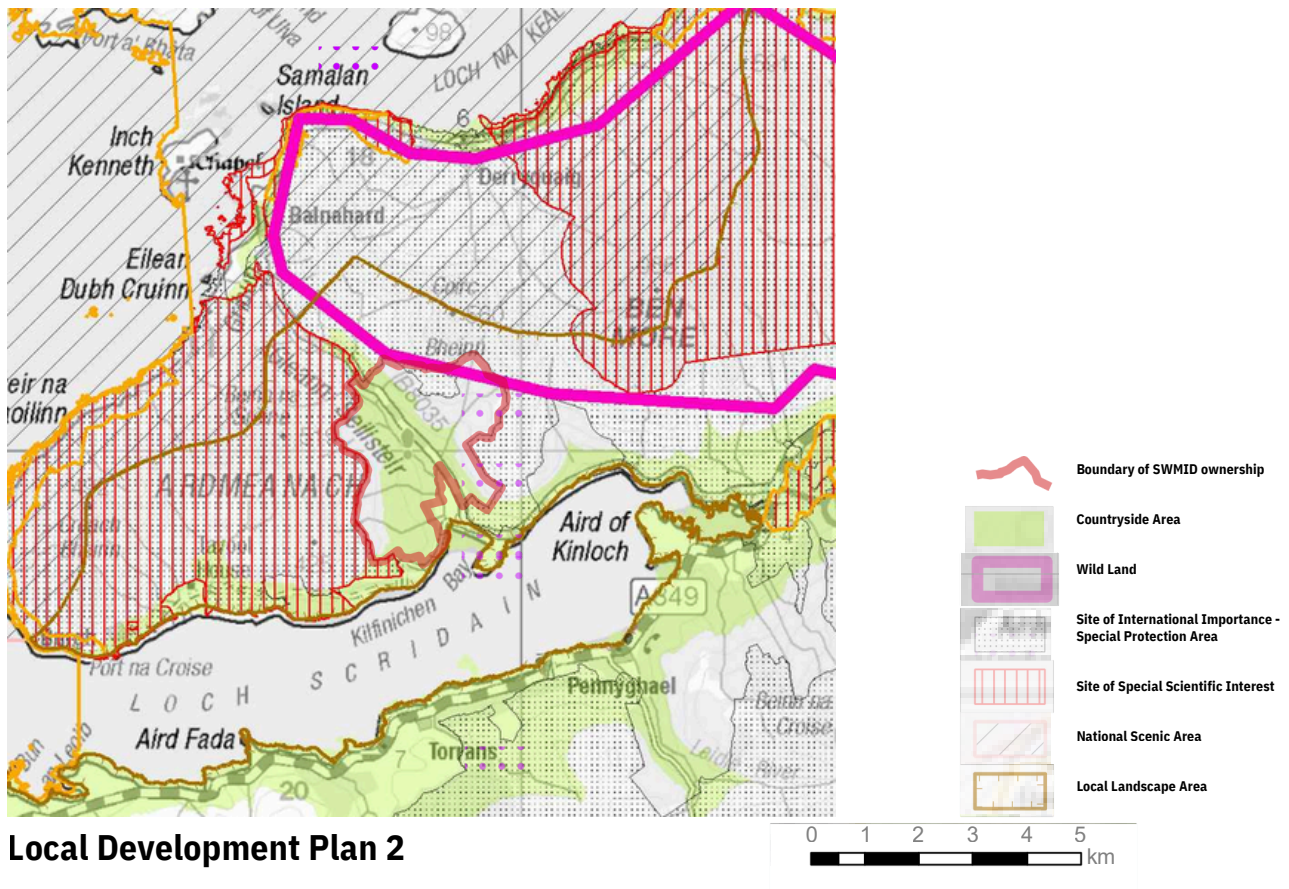
Forest Masterplan

SWMID currently has a comprehensive Forest Masterplan that will guide investment over the coming years. Emerging proposals include:

- Enhanced visitor arrival and parking
- Electric vehicle charging infrastructure
- High-quality welfare facilities
- Improved visitor orientation and interpretation
- Network of walking routes for all abilities
- Woodland huts and shelters for locals and visitors
- Family recreation including a Mountain Bike track
- Outdoor learning spaces
- Nature interpretation and education
- Eagle viewing opportunities
- Pine marten observation hide
- Connections to Burg and the Ross of Mull
- Habitat restoration and biodiversity enhancement
- Research, citizen science and environmental monitoring

Please note that location D on the following map has been identified as a location for the cabins and forms part of a current Planning Pre App discussion with Argyll and Bute Council but other locations can be considered if good justification is provided.

Applicants should demonstrate how their proposals strengthen and complement this wider vision.



Masterplan ideas



Reading resource about settlements features from canmore.org.uk

SWMID are committed to improving access to, and interpretation of, historic sites. The forest management plan and path development proposals will support this commitment.

- Parking**
- Composting toilet**
- Boundary of SWMID ownership**
- Right of way**
- Spruce woodland - existing**
- Spruce woodland - recently felled**
- Broadleaf woodland**
- Track**
- Mountain bike trail - under development**
- Deer fence - under development**
- Existing building group**
- Remains of former townships**

Understanding the local area

The Opportunity

SWMID wishes to appoint a Strategic Development Partner capable of delivering:

- Design
(cabins , access infrastructure and welfare facilities)
- Planning
- Development finance
- Manufacture and construction
- Marketing
- Booking systems
- Visitor operations
- Asset management
- Long-term maintenance

The preferred development will comprise five to eight exceptional off-grid woodland cabins, carefully integrated within the landscape. Applicants are encouraged to challenge our thinking and bring forward innovative solutions that exceed our aspirations.

06 • DESIGN APPROACH

Off-Grid by Design

The accommodation should become a national exemplar of low-impact tourism. Applicants should assume that off-grid or ultra-low-impact operation is the preferred approach, minimising reliance on conventional infrastructure wherever practical. Buildings should appear as though they belong within the forest rather than being imposed upon it. The landscape should always remain the principal attraction.

Proposals should demonstrate excellence in:

- Renewable energy generation and battery storage
- Rainwater harvesting
- Sustainable water management
- Low-impact wastewater treatment
- Low-carbon heating
- Natural ventilation and biodiversity enhancement
- Minimal ground disturbance
- Use of locally sourced timber where appropriate
- Regenerative landscape design
- Buildings that belong to the forest

Investment and Commercial Model

SWMID's objective is to establish a commercially successful development without requiring capital investment from SWMID. SWMID's contribution will be the development opportunity, access to the site, community ownership, strategic leadership, local knowledge and collaborative partnership.

Applicants should demonstrate how they will finance the development, secure investment, deliver the project efficiently, operate the accommodation successfully, maintain the assets, and generate a sustainable revenue stream that supports the future stewardship of Tiroran Community Forest.

SWMID welcomes innovative commercial structures including:

- Long lease
- Joint venture
- Revenue share
- Development agreement
- Concession agreement
- Design-Build-Finance-Operate (DBFO)
- Design-Build-Operate-Maintain (DBOM)
- Impact investment & other innovative models

08 • LOCAL IMPACT

Supporting Mull

The success of this project should be measured not only by occupancy, but by the value it creates for Mull. SWMID therefore has a strong preference for proposals that maximise local benefit:

- Operating from Mull wherever possible
- Partnering with existing Mull businesses
- Employing local people
- Creating apprenticeships and training
- Using local contractors and suppliers
- Supporting local food, artists and activity providers
- Encouraging longer stays in South West Mull
- Retaining wealth within the local economy

Where applicants are not based on Mull they should clearly demonstrate how equivalent or greater local benefit will be achieved.

Beyond Accommodation

We are looking for a partner who sees opportunity beyond cabins. Potential future initiatives may include:

- Wildlife watching experiences
- Eagle safaris
- Pine marten observation
- Forest wellness retreats
- Woodland skills
- Outdoor education
- Schools programmes
- Artist residencies
- Citizen science and biodiversity monitoring
- Natural capital projects
- Dark skies experiences
- Walking festivals
- Local food and foraging
- Low-impact outdoor recreation

The successful partner will help shape these opportunities alongside SWMID.

10 • APPLICATION

Information Required

At this stage we are looking for initial proposals, with the understanding that once preferred partners have been identified we will then enter into a dialogue to refine the approach. This stage will allow you to give us an example of how you could deliver this project but is not expected to be a fully developed proposal.

Applicants should provide:

01 Organisation profile

Lead applicant name, Address, Organisation Name, Organisation history and any other relevant information

02 Vision and Understanding

Explain your understanding of the requirements and how you envision them being delivered

03 Investment Capability and Commercial Model

Please provide an initial approach to how you see the capital investment being raised and how the commercial model could operate once the development is complete.

04 Design Quality and Sustainability

Please provide a statement and any visuals that are relevant on the approach to design and build of the cabins taking into account sustainability, blend of accommodation size, density of site layout

05 Operational Expertise

Please provide a clear statement of expertise and experience in delivering a project such as this sustainably including site development, financing, site management and business development.

06 Local Benefits

Please provide a statement on how your approach would deliver local benefit, you should consider local supply chains, job provision, added benefit to the forest, community benefit etc.

07 Innovation and Contribution to overall Masterplan

Please outline how your approach is innovative and will contribute to the overall Masterplan for Tiroran

08 Deliverability and Timescales

Please provide an indication of how you will deliver this and the timescales in which you would like to be working

Evaluation

CRITERION	WEIGHTING
Vision and understanding	15%
Investment capability and commercial model	25%
Design quality and sustainability	15%
Operational expertise	15%
Community wealth building and local benefit	15%
Innovation and contribution to the Forest Masterplan	10%
Deliverability	5%
TOTAL	100%

12 • PARTNERSHIP

Long-Term Partnership

SWMID intends this appointment to establish a strategic partnership extending well beyond the initial accommodation development. Future opportunities may include visitor infrastructure, recreation, education, environmental enhancement, destination development, nature-based enterprise and other projects arising from the Forest Masterplan.

We are looking for a partner who wishes to grow alongside Tiroran Community Forest for many years to come.

13 • CLOSING

Closing Statement

This is an opportunity to help shape the future of one of Scotland's most remarkable community-owned landscapes. The successful partner will not simply build cabins. They will help create a destination where exceptional visitor experiences support nature recovery, strengthen the local economy, encourage community wellbeing and secure the long-term future of Tiroran Community Forest.

Together we can demonstrate how community ownership, environmental stewardship and commercial innovation can work hand in hand — creating a place that is celebrated not only for the quality of its accommodation, but for the positive legacy it leaves for the landscape, the wildlife and the people of Mull.