

Richmond Wight bringing Rutherford Castle golf course back to life

RICHMOND WIGHT ESTATES TO BREATHE NEW LIFE INTO FINANCIALLY UNVIABLE GOLF COURSE

– New use for 200 acres near West Linton will create luxury lodge development along with full leisure offer as park operator extends leisure remit and secures a park near Edinburgh

Richmond Wight Estates, owners and operators of three residential and holiday parks in Scotland, has added to its leisure portfolio by purchasing a 200 acre golf course at Rutherford Castle, West Linton, just eighteen miles to the south of Edinburgh.

Richmond Wight plans to create a luxury lodge development on the land, which was placed into administration, as well as retaining nine holes of the existing eighteen hole golf course for exclusive use by the lodge residents. The lodge development will offer luxury lodges for sale, with prices from £75,000 up to £500,000. A full leisure offer will be available on the site, offering a restaurant, clubhouse, spa with swimming pool, Victorian farm and Equestrian Centre. A children's outdoor activity centre will also be created, with a range of activities including a zip wire and a sensory exploration garden for younger children, making the most of the natural environment.



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The park operator, which has parks at Glendevon in Perthshire, Forres in Morayshire and at Beattock, Dumfries and Galloway, will also tie up with nearby West Linton Golf Club to cater for purchasers at Rutherford Castle.

Commenting on the purchase and business plan, Chek Whyte, Managing Director of Richmond Wight Estates, said: "We are very pleased to have concluded this deal to buy the land here at Rutherford Castle and expand our leisure portfolio in a fantastic location well placed for both Edinburgh and Glasgow."

"We are currently in discussion with local council planners regarding our plans for the site, which already has permission for a 150 bedroom hotel. We feel that the market is not right for this at the moment but that a full leisure and holiday residential offer of the type we plan to create, will be well received by our target market sectors, creating a viable use for this land," he said. "We estimate that the project will create around 100 full time jobs and another 100 part time jobs when completed."

Mr Whyte outlined that the owners of Rutherford Castle, the housebuilder Bett Homes, had been financially supporting the club, which had been running at a loss with just 56 members in 2014, for some time.

He said: "We recognise and appreciate that the club owners had tried to keep the business going. We know that many golf clubs north and south of the Border were severely affected by the last recession, and are still suffering the after effects. We hope that former club members can still enjoy their golf at nearby West Linton which is a very strong, well run club with an excellent reputation."

“We are delighted to cross promote one another in this venture,” added Chek Whyte. “We thank West Linton Golf Club for their support and look forward to building a positive working relationship in the coming months which will be mutually beneficial to both parties.”

“The land here at Rutherford Castle enjoys a very picturesque situation beneath the Pentland Hills. It will make a wonderful location for our luxury lodge and leisure development, bringing new visitors to the area to enjoy this part of Scotland. We believe this to be a huge positive.”

“A park near Edinburgh was our next chosen location and we had been looking at suitable opportunities for some time now. We are delighted to bring the Richmond Wight name to a new part of Scotland. We are all about creating communities,” finished Mr Whyte.

Richmond Wight Estates operates a business model where value is put back into bankrupt sites. The Nottingham based firm has successfully applied this principle to a number of parks in Scotland, including Silversands at Lossiemouth which was brought up to a five star standard with a new swimming pool and leisure centre, and then sold. Last year Richmond Wight purchased Moffat Manor Country Park at Beattock, another formerly bankrupt site which is now the subject of huge investment. Millions have been pumped into Glendevon Country Park and Riverview, Forres.

The company frequently ties up with many industry leading names including Hoseasons to manage its holiday lettings business and McEwan Fraser Legal to assist with residential lodge sales.

Further details at www.richmondwight.com.