



Ad Gefrin
DISTILLERY



• Elphicks •

Spirits Set to Revive Wooler

A multi-million-pound distillery and visitor centre to create up to 50 jobs in Wooler, North Northumberland.

Details have today been announced for the development of the former Redpath's Yard into Northumberland's first whisky distillery. Located in the market town of Wooler, and with millions of pounds worth of investment, this is set to become both a major tourism attraction and key local employer. The [Ad Gefrin Distillery](#) will reinvigorate the local economy, help to retain young people in its workforce, and regenerate a site which has been disused for over twenty years.

Ad Gefrin will be developed and operated by the Ferguson family - a well-known and respected local family who have successfully run businesses in Northumberland across four generations for over 100 years. Ad Gefrin takes its name from the Anglo-Saxon palace beneath Yeavering Bell – the Hill of the Goats. Historically a place of gathering and community, the new distillery in Wooler aims to become a similar meeting spot in the 21st Century.



Local people are invited to learn more about the project and to share their views and memories at a public consultation in Wooler between the 23rd and 31st August. This will be followed by the submission of the architect's designs and plans for the development to the County Council Planning Department in October. Subject to the relevant planning consents, it is hoped that the distillery and visitor centre will open its doors by 2020. Such is the length of the process of laying down a fine whisky, the full release of the Ad Gefrin Single Malt is not expected until 2028.



On announcing details of this exciting new development for Wooler and the Glendale area as a whole, Alan Ferguson OBE said: "This is a very bold undertaking for our entire family, involving my wife Eileen, our five children and myself. Our ultimate aim is to develop a unique single malt whisky and a major attraction, as well as opening a new chapter in the cultural developments and traditions of Glendale."

Ad Gefrin is a multi-million pound project which will totally transform this site, and we believe the community, local businesses and local producers

TIMELINE:



will all benefit. Our proposal is probably one of the largest single inward investments ever made in North Northumberland. Ad Gefrin will be a key part of the long term process of much-needed regeneration in this area, and we believe it will enhance our community for generations to come

Today's announcement comes hard on the heels of the findings and recommendations of the Wooler Neighbourhood Plan, which recommends the use of former industrial sites to grow and develop the local economy, and retain and upskill younger people in the workforce. Redpath's Yard has been the focus of attention for some time, and is ideally placed for attracting visitors, as it adjoins the main A697 tourist route to Scotland.

Local feedback on the plans has been extremely positive and The Leader of Northumberland County Council, Coun Peter Jackson said: "This is a really exciting project which has the full support of the County Council. Not only has it the potential to provide a positive future for Wooler but it will be significant as an attraction for visitors to the whole of North Northumberland and I am particularly pleased that it will act as a showcase for the deep cultural past of our county which goes back hundreds of years. I am convinced that the whole county will be proud of this project."

This was reiterated by Jude Leitch, Director of Northumberland Tourism :

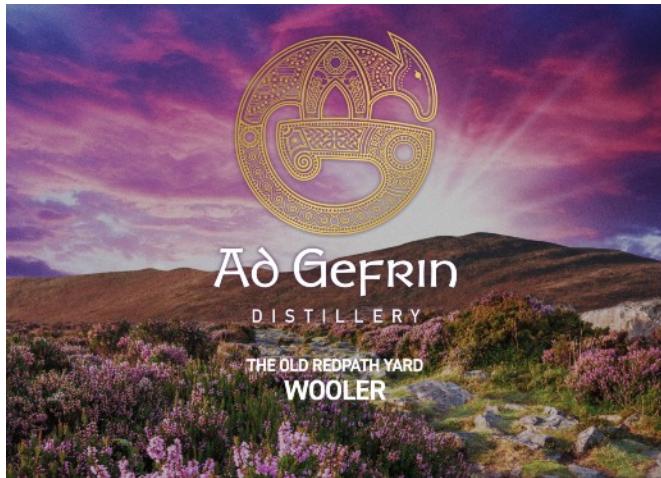
"The Ad Gefrin development is extremely exciting for North Northumberland and the county as a whole. The benefits that tourism provides for our economy are significant, with £686m spent by tourists in Northumberland during 2017, an increase of 8.5% on the previous year. Our long term aim is to encourage visitors to explore all parts of our beautiful county, including our rural

upland areas, and this development will encourage this to happen, providing a focal point for visitors throughout the year, creating significant numbers of new jobs and ensuring the continuation of vibrant and thriving local communities within Wooler and the surrounding area."

Located in an area renowned for the production of some of the finest malting barley in the world, the Ad Gefrin distillery will, of course, use local barley. Indeed, supporting other local businesses, products and producers is part of the Ferguson family's ethos. They have agreed a stringent policy for localisation. They are already employing, where possible, the services of Northumberland-based companies, and the visitor centre will have a focus on featuring local artists and craftspeople.

The launch of Northumberland's first whisky distillery and visitor centre is not based on a whim. Background research, conducted by the Ferguson family, concluded there were two key opportunities. The first was the continuing growth in the global demand for whisky, with sales increasing in value by 4% in 2016, with demand continuing to outstrip supply. The second was the need for a high quality visitor destination in North Northumberland.





satisfy both. This is demonstrated by Wooler's nearest distillery - Glenkinchie, over 50 miles to the north in Lothian, which attracts over 60,000 annual visitors, with an average spend per person benfitting the wider local economy by £12.60.

Chris Ferguson, who has spent more than a decade working in developing and creating major visitor experiences, who will be developing the project along with Eileen Ferguson, said:

"We are incredibly excited to bring whisky distilling back to Northumberland. Working in partnership with the local community, and with the best craftsmen in the industry, we aim to create something truly innovative and distinctively Northumbrian. We want to build a lasting legacy for the town and county that can celebrate the best of Northumberland, our culture and history now, and in the future."

In its heyday, Redpath's Haulage employed many local people. Eileen, nee Redpath, brought the two families together. Thus united, they intend to bring this site back to its former status as a key local employer, as Eileen goes on to explain:

"We are thrilled to have the chance to create something meaningful for everyone on this prominent site. Many people will remember Redpath's Yard over the years, and I would love feedback and memories from local people, especially about Redpath's, to add to my own fond recollections of working and living in Wooler. We want to include as much as we can from the community in our new plans and I particularly look forward to working in Wooler again."

Plans for Ad Gefrin can be viewed and community feedback welcomed at a special exhibition at no. 22 Market Place, Wooler, from Thursday 23rd August to Friday 1st September from 10.00am until



4.00pm. The exhibition will be transferred to Glendale Show on August Bank Holiday Monday. This announcement hopefully heralds a return to prominence of Wooler in the new economics of tourism and consumer-focused production. It is likely to put the town not only on the Northumberland map, but make it the home of a potentially global brand.

