

# Blervie House: An Alternative Home?

## FINDHORN FOUNDATION CONSIDER NEW OPTIONS

THE FINDHORN FOUNDATION have disclosed that they are following up an approach from the owner of Blervie House near Forres over the purchase of the striking mansion as a major base for the community.

But a spokesman has strenuously denied that the mansion — owned by Dutch businessman Johannes Hellinga — is planned as a stepping stone to further expansion. He said the possible purchase is just one of several options being considered by the Foundation.

The foundation stress that they are currently going through a process of consolidation and rationalisation and entering into negotiations with the owner of Blervie simply as part of a long-distance objective.

"We have to stress that

we are not looking to expand," the community spokesman told the "Gazette" yesterday. "Any local fears to that end are unfounded, we do expect or intend expanding the Foundation in the foreseeable future.

"The only reason we are

looking at Blervie House is that we want to plan ahead and know what property we could occupy in the future."

It is understood that the house and 20 acres of ground are being offered for sale by its Dutch owner. No price has been dis-

closed.

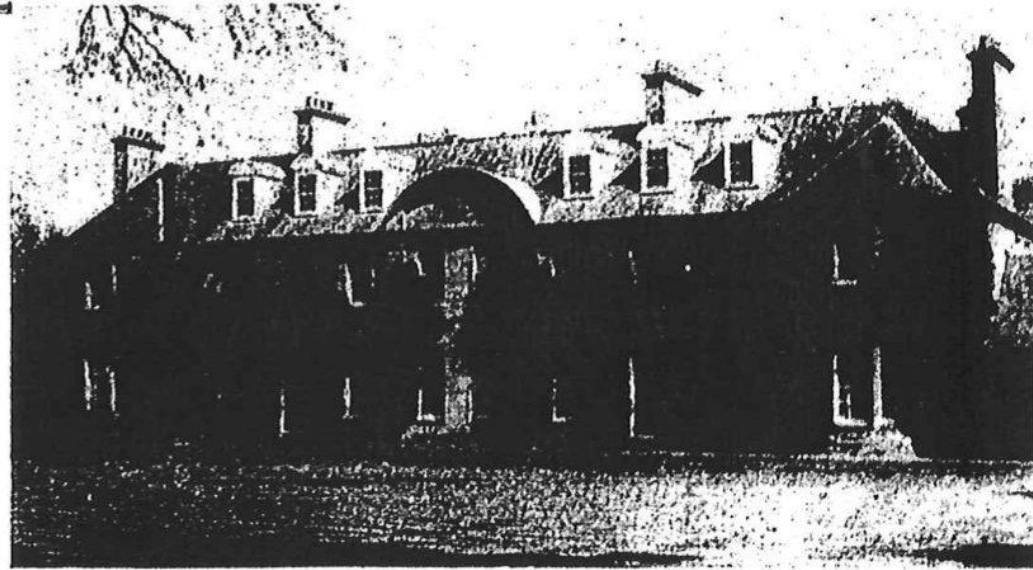
Unoccupied for some time, Blervie has six public rooms, three suites and eleven bedrooms. In addition there is a staff accommodation wing — like the house in good order — offering a further eight bedrooms.

The grounds are rich and wooded and the mansion commands a fine setting three miles south of Forres.

### LEASE

The community spokesman explained that their lease at Findhorn Park Caravan Site expires in 1989 and with little apparent hope of securing a long-term tenure of the caravan site they have been forced to consider several options for their future accommodation needs.

"We would dearly like to stay in the caravan park, after all that's where the foundation started 20 years ago," he said. "But that looks as if it will be unlikely.



Striking Blervie House near Rafford — just one of the options being considered by the Findhorn Foundation as an alternative home.

to move out of the caravan park."

And once again he stressed that the purchase of the house — even if it went ahead — would not signal an expansion or increase in membership.

"At present our membership is around the 200 mark and that's sufficient for us for the time being," he said. "Blervie would simply be a substitute for the caravan park and of course mean that we would be moving into a more permanent structure."

The caravan site currently houses around 120 Findhorn Foundation members and their families.

The spokesman was also able to deny rumours that in connection with their interest in Blervie the large Cluny Hill College was earmarked for sale.

"That's just not true," he said. "We have no intention of disposing of Cluny."

#### CORE GROUP

Yesterday, members of the Foundation's "core group" were meeting representatives of the owner of Blervie to discuss the situation further.

The spokesman underlined that they had no intention of keeping news of their movements secret. He said the Foundation were simply looking to the future and entering into early negotiation with the owner of Blervie to see if the mansion would be suitable.

A sister group of the Foundation — the Newbold Trust — have recently concluded the purchase of Newbold House on St Leonards Road in Forres. The Trust are still aligned with the Foundation but run their own affairs. They have occupied the former Forres hotel for some years.

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