



Pictured at the site of the proposed UHI Centre for History at the Burghfield House Hotel in Dornoch are (left to right) Highland Council convener Sandy Park, Professor Jim Hunter, Highland Council chief executive Alistair Dodds and college representatives Elizabeth Ritchie (lecturer in North American history), Iain MacInnes (lecturer in medieval Scottish history) and centre administrator Steven Mackay.

Council backs history centre move

THE HIGHLAND Council is backing the proposed relocation of the UHI Centre for History in Dornoch to new premises in the town.

The council has pledged a £200,000 grant towards the cost of establishing a new centre headquarters in a redeveloped stable block at the Burghfield House Hotel, which was recently purchased by North Highland College UHI and transformed into a major training centre for the hospitality and tourism industries. First Minister Alex Salmond opened the training centre last week.

The proposed UHI Centre for History would feature a library – open to local residents – video conferencing-equipped lecture theatre, study space and office

accommodation. Currently the centre is housed in cramped temporary accommodation elsewhere in Dornoch.

The conversion of the stable block is part of the college's redevelopment plans for the six-acre site in Dornoch. Also planned is new student accommodation with 30 bedrooms and en-suite facilities.

Councillor Sandy Park, convener of the Highland Council, said the new headquarters would allow the history centre to meet the growing demand for its degree courses.

He said: "We are delighted to support this project, which is an integral part of the redevelopment of the Burghfield House Hotel. It has the potential to create high-quality jobs in Dornoch

and attract undergraduate and postgraduate students to the royal burgh. Summer and short courses could attract students from across the UK and overseas and there is an opportunity for researchers to gain experience and add value to the Highland archive service.

"I wish the UHI Centre for History every success in securing the funds required to fulfil their ambitions."

Director of the centre, Professor Jim Hunter, said: "This is a tremendous vote of confidence by the Highland Council in what we're looking to deliver both for Dornoch and the wider Highlands and Islands. We're hugely grateful to Sandy Park and his colleagues for their backing."