

# GENERAL APPROACH

## Promotion

# SHERWOOD

## (United Kingdom)

12 % of the total EU energy consumption will by the year 2010, be covered by renewable energy sources. This is the objective that the Community agreed on in its White Paper on "renewable energies". At the same time, an European-wide action plan has been set up. In order to achieve these goals, local communities do need to actively contribute to this. In Sherwood – member of Energie-Cités - a private company, "Sherwood Environmental Village Ltd.", has been set up on the initiative of Sherwood and Newark District Council to redevelop a former British Coal land.

## THE CITY

Sherwood is an area in Nottinghamshire that has about 21,000 inhabitants. Industries include agriculture, pine manufacture, food production etc. carried out by mostly small to medium sized companies. There is a growing interest in the area from the environmental industry sector.

Sherwood also attracts visitors, as it is the home of the legendary Robin Hood and the famous Sherwood Forest.

### Climatic data:

Degree days (Basis 15.5 °C): 2590

Annual mean temperature: 8.0 °C



## CONTEXT

There had been a very high dependency on both the coal-mining and textile industries in Ollerton and the other coalfield areas of Nottinghamshire in the East Midlands region. When Ollerton Colliery closed in 1994, unemployment in some parts of the town went up 35%. Economic difficulties can often translate themselves into an immediate rise in social problems social problems rising up immediately.

At Ollerton, people recognised that social problems would be barriers to the kind of inward investment that was needed. They agreed that the colliery site should be cleaned up and then put to use for a more sustainable development. It was also agreed that any future use should encourage diversity in the local economic base. In the Sherwood area, a co-operative business, known as Sherwood Energy Village, has been established by community activists within the Newark & Sherwood district to redevelop the former colliery site.

## EXPERIENCE OF SHERWOOD

The important issues for local people, of economic diversity, jobs for the future generations, more housing and clean industry were developed to form the concept of “Sherwood Energy Village”.

By finding an innovative re-use of a derelict brown site, the Society is providing an opportunity for ethical inward investors to build without cutting into valuable green belt land. The development is incorporated into the local planning scheme.

Sherwood Energy Village will include:

- Biomass power generation, renewable energy utilisation
- Sustainable development, ethical business.
- Clean industry, energy efficiency best practice.
- Exhibition and convention centre, showcasing clean technology.
- Energy efficient, self built and autonomous housing.
- Eco-demonstrator houses.
- Gentle recreation and leisure.
- Energy Trail through site.
- Permaculture, organic produce outlets.



Sherwood Energy Village will be built on environmental, economically ethical and sustainable principles the initiative will create jobs from the energy and environmental agenda.

The **Biomass Power Plant** will utilise renewable energy sources and have the capacity to provide heat and power to the on-site buildings and the surrounding community.

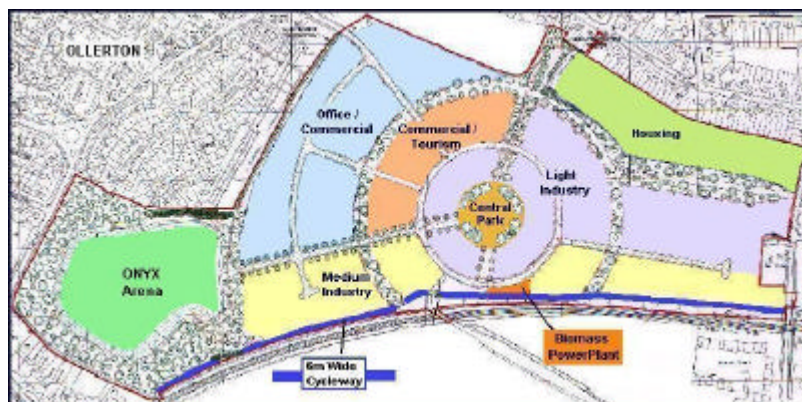
**Housing** on site will comprise 100 energy efficient houses, some to autonomous standards. There are also plans for 25 Live/Work units. Eco-Demonstrator houses will be a visitor attraction and will demonstrate the latest building technologies. With the domestic sector responsible for 30% of UK CO<sub>2</sub>-emissions, the impact of sustainable housing would, in time, be considerable. If houses were built to the autonomous standard there would be additional benefits in terms of reduced developmental pressures on existing infrastructure and treatment systems. A house built to the autonomous standard is likely to use about 2,100 kWh per year, and will need a 2.8 kW<sub>p</sub> photovoltaic array to satisfy this demand. Similarly, water use in a conventional UK household is 145-180 litres per head per day, whereas in an autonomous house it is 34 litres per head per day. Even allowing for the water used for toilet flushing, consumption in an autonomous house is less than a third of that of a conventional household. Further benefits relate to the minimal running costs of the house - no water or sewage charges and no, or low, fuel bills, along with a protection from future price increases in servicing costs, thereby promoting a greater sense of security.

**Industrial and Commercial** units will be built to best environmental standards. There is the capacity to provide the locally needed 450 m<sup>2</sup> units. The industrial sector of the site is close

to the railway line that runs through the site. There is plenty of scope for ethical inward investment. The industrial sector of the site will be generously landscaped and will be an attractive place to work. The Sherwood Energy Village will encourage community start up businesses, small craft workshops and incubator units for fledgling innovative industries to start trading from Sherwood Energy Village. There is scope for the development of community businesses based on a partnership with local farmers prepared to produce fruit and vegetables organically for sale directly to the public via a “good food box” distribution scheme. The potential development of the existing mineral railway through Ollerton, including the opening of a passenger station on the site, fits in with the campaign to have rail services on the Robin Hood line between Nottingham and Worksop extended to serve Ollerton. Transport is an important factor in economic regeneration of Ollerton, which is 10 miles from the nearest large town.

An **Exhibition/Convention Centre** will be linked to research and development institutes, will promote renewable energies and will act as an Environmental Technology showcase. Conference facilities with accommodation will facilitate international events. The centre will have educational visitor attractions.

The **Energy Trail** will take visitors on a gentle stroll around the site. It will show examples of stand-alone renewable energy features such as illuminated interpretation boards and lamps. Landscaping will include plants that can withstand drought conditions plus, plants grown as fuel crops and others that attract bird and insect life. The Energy Trail will link to other trails across the former colliery tips, already reclaimed and planted. Ongoing work will examine wind turbine development, an electric minibus service on site, development of a water strategy and which will look for partnerships with local organic growers and farmers.



**Sherwood Environmental Village Ltd.** was initiated by local people in the area. This initiative is a good example on what local communities can do to regenerate their towns and villages. Sherwood Environmental Village Ltd. was founded as an Industrial & Provident Society (IPS). Members of Sherwood Energy Village can have a say in the initiatives policy making process, through the annual meetings that take place with a one member one vote policy, to ensure a democratically run organisation. Members also receive a share certificate and newsletters.

## EVALUATION AND OUTLOOK

The land reclamation works are now complete and the infrastructure works have bought in roads, pedestrian routes and cycle routes. Sherwood Energy Village now has the UK's biggest system of Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS). During the course of this work, 100,000 tonnes of concrete debris has been crushed for use as aggregates on site, rather than going to landfill.

*The current situation can be summed up as follows<sup>1</sup>:*

- An Industrial & Provident Society, "Sherwood Environmental Village Ltd.", owns the land.
- Land reclamation is complete
- Reclamation, landscaping and planting of surrounding tips has already been undertaken in a scheme in keeping with the master plan for the main development site.
- Sherwood Energy Village has outline planning consent
- Significant investments by private sector partners.
- Significant public consultation and community backing.
- Clear vision and a pragmatic approach are keywords.
- Best practice use of brown field sites.
- Largest sustainable urban drainage system in the UK

## FURTHER INFORMATION

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<sup>1</sup> The 1<sup>st</sup> August 2002