

£1.5m complex for Scotland

Clark Sorley, former owner of Sirocco Studios in Scotland, is aiming to transform the Scottish music scene with ambitious plans to build a recording and music production centre in the heart of Glasgow.

The project will cost around £1.5 million and Sorley plans to raise this through grants, venture capital and sponsorship. If everything goes to plan – including the purchase of a suitable building, which has already been found – the music production facilities house could be open within the next 18 months.

A full report into the feasibility of the project has now been produced by Sorley, who recently sold his own studio in order to give more time to the project. The report states that what Scotland lacks are the facilities which would allow local musicians and companies to enter the music business on their own terms, providing multinational companies with product and services. In return local producers would retain ownership of musical rights and properties.

By having a centralised location – for example a music production facilities house as suggested in the report – Sorley believes Scottish talent could be harnessed and small companies could help each other by providing all the necessary resources under one roof.

He says: "The idea is to have a place where people can spark off each other and make the most of all of the services each company offers. What we intend to do is buy a large building and divide it into small sections which will be leased to individual companies providing a variety of services such as accountants, band managers, tour managers, recording studios, rehearsal facilities etc. Everything will be available in one place."

Sorley has already established KIK Productions, a production label and publishing company which will control the ownership and license of music rights. The company has now signed three artists and plans to increase its roster.

In order to make the project viable, income would be generated through publishing and production rights and advances against royalties based on sales. Other income would be raised through the rental of the House's facilities to the music industry at large. By doing this the House – as it is currently being termed – would be able to offer grass roots support to up and coming musicians by providing low cost rehearsal and demo facilities.

In order to put the House in a healthy financial position it would only need to nurture one successful act within its first two years of operation. This act, along with any other signings, would be signed to the House where an album or single would be recorded before moving on to a multinational record company which would handle manufacturing, distribution and any further marketing.

by Sue Sillitoe

Sorley envisages a wide range of facilities including a main recording studio, demo studios, a programming and pre-production suite, tape duplication facilities, rehearsal rooms, administration and management offices, a performing area for showcases and a cafe and bar.

Sorley adds: "We are hoping to persuade some existing companies and recording facilities to move into the House. KIK Productions doesn't plan on owning a recording studio or programming suite at this stage, but what we may have to do is provide the acoustic environment for someone else to equip."

The report and its suggestions has been greeted with enthusiasm by both Scottish musicians and music based companies.

Sorley is now concentrating on raising the capital for the venture. He anticipates that about £300,000 will come from grants and he is also hoping to raise some cash through sponsorship. He says: "I'm talking to Tennents Caledonian Breweries to see if we can do anything with them. It might be possible to interest Tennents in sponsoring the bar/restaurant and live venue because they would get a return on the bar takings."

As for the actual venue, Sorley says: "I've seen just the place – it's right in the centre of Glasgow, it has about 30,000 sq ft and it's perfect. We have put in an offer and now it's just a matter of waiting to see if we get it."



Clark Sorley: Scottish initiative

Scots' seek sponsors for the capital complex

Edinburgh could soon be the home of Scotland's first recording and music production centre if Clark Sorley, former owner of Sirocco Studios, can raise sponsorship for the project.

Sorley is planning to raise the £1.5m needed for the project through grants, venture capital and sponsorship. He is also looking for an interested party to set up and run the complex's recording facility. He says: "My initial idea was to set up the centre in Glasgow, but I am now looking at Edinburgh as a possible site because it is Scotland's capital and it is beginning to wake up to all sorts of potential for business."

Sorley has commissioned a full report into the feasibility of the complex and its find-

ings are that Scotland currently lacks facilities for local musicians and companies to enter the music business. His aim is to build a complex which will house live playing areas, bars, cafes, rehearsal rooms, demo facilities, a full recording studio and office space for local music production companies and artist managers.

Sorley says: "If you put enough people together in one place they are bound to spark each other off. That's the idea. What I intend to do is find large enough premises to house all these facilities and then lease space to individual companies. The overall complex will be run by KIK Productions which will also be a publishing company and production label looking after artists in its own right."

Part of the money for the facility is already available in the form of grants but in order to get the project off the ground Sorley needs to raise the rest of the cash.

He adds: "It's a bit of a chicken and egg situation. We can't get the grants without the sponsorship and until we have sorted out the finances we can't go about finding premises."

"I am also keen to find someone who wants to come in on the project and run the recording studio. We will be able to build the studio to their specifications but what they will have to provide is the necessary equipment and staff to run it."

Anyone who would like more information should contact Sorley on +44 (0) 31 346 0647.