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THE MERRYBURN HOTEL, STATION ROAD, BIRNAM, PERTH AND KINROSS, PH8 ODS

NEW PHASE OF WORKS TO RECONFIGURE REMAINDER OF THE HOTEL TO CREATE SELF CONTAINED APARTMENTS AND ONE SEPARATE DWELLING

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1st December 2020

Outline of proposal:

To make a new phase of works now that the earlier phases relating to previous permissions have all been completed. This is due to changing circumstances and would be to reconfigure the remainder of the existing hotel to become all self-catering with a new owners studio and also to complete the separation of the mews house at Garraidh Uisdean as a separate dwelling.

Background:

The existing structure is a small hotel that has been reconfigured over the last 5 years to renovate it and consolidate the business. Previously the public bar and restaurant have been removed to create a new mews at number 1A at the start of Birnam Terrace and a new studio flat at the lower ground. The remainder of the hotel was largely retained as it was with modest refurbishments of the mostly en-suited bedrooms and residents lounge plus breakfasting facilities. These parts continue to function in much the same way as they have always done. There is now a need to move away from shared facilities and bedroom-only type accommodation. This is due to the fact that the current business model is now struggling to be financially viable after recent changes in the market for tourist accommodation due to the corona-crisis and a general move towards self-catering.

The case for the project including financial and operational reasons:

The proposal provides a new dwelling in an area where there is a shortage of housing. This would be a high-quality mews conversion providing flexible accommodation at Garraidh Uisdean mews off Station Road. It also helps the ongoing renovation of the remaining parts of the building, which is needed and is not feasible in its present financial position. It creates 3 new small self-catering units within the hotel that meet the demands of the current market. It has been moving in this direction for years but now demands it urgently due to the corona-crisis and guests desire to have accommodation that is fully self-contained. The same is true of the shared areas of the hotel in that these have become to some extent redundant as guests no longer use the shared lounge and breakfast area in the same way that they did. These areas are therefore redeveloped into an owner's studio flat as linked accommodation. It is worth noting that the loss of the full bed and breakfast offer of the hotel is much mitigated by the large offering of pubs, cafes, larger hotels and restaurants in the town of Birnam and Dunkeld.

The owners are also looking to step back from the day to day machinations of providing breakfasts and room cleans every day as they move into semi-retirement. These changes provide a viable plan for that and also secure the future of the building as a sustainable going concern for the next few difficult years ahead.

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Proposals:

The proposal consists of sympathetic minor adjustments to the existing internal spaces with very minimal changes to from the new accommodation as per the description of works. Much of the external works have been completed in the previous phase but the re-roofing is still outstanding and the mews and upper floor of the hotel will get new double glazed sash and case (fully functioning) timber windows to match existing as per the attached details. The interior is modestly modified to make the new self-catering units and owner's studio, the intervention required to make the separation of the mews dwelling is minimal. The primary apartments and spaces are all retained, largely in the original layouts, with cornicing and original details preserved or reinstated where affected so rooms will all look complete once the works are finished. The proposal overall allows the valuable original features and character of the building to be retained while allowing the necessary re-organisation to allow the new type of accommodation needed to be put in place.

Parking:

The property currently has a parking area to the front of the building at Station Road. This would be re-used to provide circa 8 spaces for the existing units and the reconfigured hotel and mews. The overall usage is less intense as we go from 5 hotel rooms plus owners accommodation down to 3 self-catering rooms, owners apartment and a small, separate, one bed mews.

Conclusion:

The project allows the building to adapt to the recent changes in demand for a certain type of holiday accommodation and the owners' desires for how the building can best be run in the coming years. The proposal involves relatively minimal internal and external change and has been carefully considered through discussion between client, architect and the local authority to reach this conclusion.