

HERITAGE
STATEMENT

Stone Court House

28 Lower Stone St
Maidstone
ME15 6LX

Application for change of use of a Grade II* Listed Property to a hotel with restaurant and wedding venue.



December 2023

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Heritage statement is prepared to support the Planning Application for Change of Use of Stone Court House , a Grade II* Listed Property located in the town centre of Maidstone, from a private residence with lettable apartments to a hotel and restaurant including a pub.

The property was purchased by the current owner in 2019 after it went through vacant periods and being underused. The property was in the state of under-maintenance, deteriorating condition and included on the Historic England at Risk Register. Restoration works were being carried out over two years between 2019 and 2021 under supervision from both the Maidstone Borough Council and Historic England. No further work, structural or non-structural work, were being undertaken.¹

The restoration was witnessed by Alice Brockway from Historic England.

This document should be read in conjunction with the submitted drawings, Design and Access Statement and previous Heritage Assessments appended.

- 28 Lower Stone St (Grade II*)**
- No's 30+32 - Grade II Listed
- No. 22 - Grade II Listed
- Maidstone Centre Conservation Area



¹ Heritage Statement prepared by James Clague Architects , November 2022 in support of Planning Application ref. 22-505043-FULL

2.0 LISTING

Official list entry

Heritage Category:	Listed Building
Grade:	II*
List Entry Number:	1224677
Date first listed:	30-Jul-1951
Statutory Address 1:	STONE HOUSE OR THE JUDGES LODGINGS, 28, LOWER STONE STREET

Location

Statutory Address:	STONE HOUSE OR THE JUDGES LODGINGS, 28, LOWER STONE STREET
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The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County:	Kent
District:	Maidstone (District Authority)
Parish:	Non Civil Parish

Details

LOWER STONE STREET 1. 5278 (West Side) No 28 (Stone House or the Judge's Lodgings) TQ 7655 NW 2/39 30.7.51.

II* GV

2. A timber-framed house refronted in the early C18. On the south side the timbering is visible with a gable overhanging on brackets, but the east front facing the street is stuccoed. 3 storeys. Tiled roof and heavy moulded wooden modillion eaves cornice with egg and dart moulding below it. Moulded cornice above 1st floor slightly projecting above each window and a curved pediment over the centre 1st floor window. Cornice without projections over the ground floor. Windows in moulded architrave surrounds with glazing bars intact. Doorcase with fluted Corinthian columns, curved pediment, tympanum enriched with pargetting of foliage and the date 1716 and door of 10 fielded panels. The interior contains an early C18 oak staircase with turned balusters to each step and scrolled tread ends with newel post in the form of a Corinthian column. C17 stone fireplace with overmantel. 1st floor has early C18 panelling and pedimented doorcases with strapwork pilasters. Marble fireplace with strapwork motifs and pilasters surmounted by terms. Also an early C19 staircase with scrolled tread ends. This was formerly the Judge's House.

Nos 26 to 36 (even), 40 to 46 (even) and 50 to 70 (even) form a group,

Listing NGR: TQ7620355525

3.0 HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

The historic significance has been described in detail in the previous reports prepared by Heritage Collective in 2014, appended. The heritage significance was also summarised in the recent delegated report from Maidstone Local Authority in response to the Lawful Development Certificate application made by the client earlier in 2023.²

- (1) *The application site is of significance, as an interesting multi-phase building containing parts of a high quality medieval townhouse and major phases of 18th and 19th century work. At its core is a 15th century stone built cross-wing from a once very substantial town-house. Moulded floor joists and evidence of a first floor chamber with attached timber columns beneath principle rafters and the survival of a garderobe all suggest this was a high status building.*
- (2) *The cross-wing was extended to the south in the 17th century (a jettied wing is visible from the side of the building) and then in the early 18th century, the whole was re-fronted in a major campaign of work which makes an important contribution to the architectural character of the building and thus also to its significance.*
- (3) *In the 19th century, a large rear extension was added to the building and this is also of good quality and thus contributes to the building's significance. Historic England has confirmed the building was added to their Heritage at Risk register because of long-term vacancy and structural problems within the medieval core.*

Please refer in conjunction with :

- (4) Heritage Assessment was prepared in 2014 by Heritage Collective, December 2014, appended to this report. ³
- (5) Canterbury Archaeological Trust , *Historic Building Recording and analysis of a cess tank and garderobe chute*, June 2018 ⁴
- (6) Heritage Statement prepared by James Clague Architects , November 2022⁵

² Maidstone Council Delegated Report prepared by Tony Ryan 16 March 2023 , relating to application 23/500388/LAWPRO (refused)

³ Heritage Collective, Heritage Assessment, December 2014, in support of application ref. 15/500334/FULL (approved)

⁴ Canterbury Archaeological Trust , *Historic Building Recording and analysis of a cess tank and garderobe chute*, June 2018

⁵ James Clague Architects HIA, in support of Planning Application ref. 22-505043-FULL

4.0 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) relates to the proposed new works and proposed change of use, assesses the perceived impacts on the site and the wider historic environment.

The previous reports prepared by Heritage Collective provide a very detailed summary of the heritage asset and explain the impact of the previously proposed works. These works were completed between 2019 and 2021, under supervision from Maidstone Borough Council and Alice Brockway from Historic England.

Historic England's 'Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2 – Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (2015)', suggests the following staged approach when undertaking an HIA:

- Understand the significance of the affected assets;
- Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
- Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF;
- Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;
- Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance and the need for change;
- Offset negative impacts on aspects of significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected.

Proposed alterations to the historic building

As described in the Design and Access statement the proposed project involves

1. A new restaurant at the front of the property including outdoor dining to the enclosed courtyard.
2. Existing kitchen converted to a commercial kitchen to serve the restaurant, bar and wedding events.
3. The existing private art studio and cellar will be converted into a pub.
4. The cellar will be renovated to accommodate small-scale brewery equipment and lounge spaces for guests,
5. The existing small lounge used by holiday let guests will be converted to new shared WC's including a disabled WC
6. The existing side entrance and hall will be upgraded with a new glass floor to display the micro-brewery in the cellar.
7. The existing private living room will be converted to a wedding ceremony room (*as per previous pre-application to Maidstone Council 23/501576/ PAMEET*)

8. Temporary marquees to rear courtyard for weddings (*as per previous pre-application to Maidstone Council 23/501576/PAMEET*)
9. Small spa pool, changing room and bar added, including the enclosure of the existing bin store.
10. The number of lettable bedrooms will be increased to 12 x lettable ensuite double bedrooms (existing 7 no holiday lets plus private apartment converted).
11. Repairs and upgrades including signage to street frontage
12. Fire safety upgrades

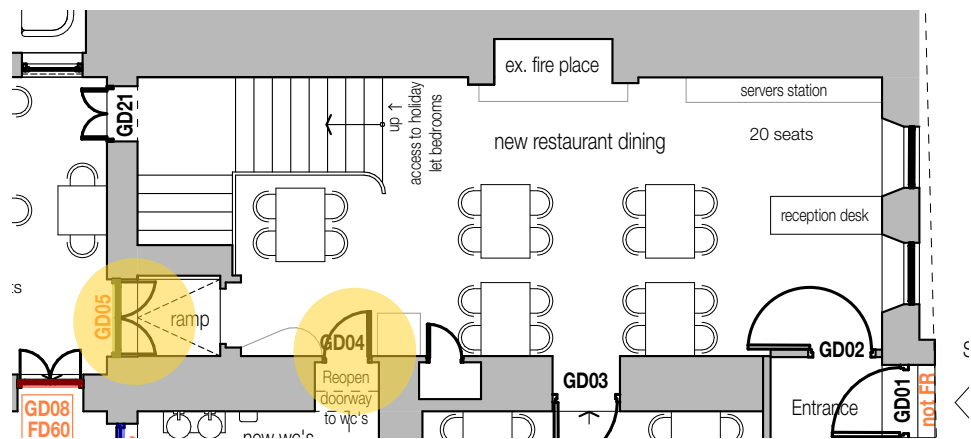
The alterations will be kept to a minimum in order to preserve the historic fabric, and the external additions are temporary and fully reversible. Historic detailing, fixtures and materials are to be retained both internally and externally.

Assessment of Impact

(1) Front rooms converted to Restaurant

The existing front hall and lounge at the front of the house will be retained unchanged with new tables and chairs laid out to accommodate a maximum of 58 diners, as shown on the proposed plans. This includes installation of a new removable ramp and the re-opening of a historic doorway to provide access to new bathroom facilities shown highlighted below. The existing modern glazed doors GD05 will be removed and replaced with 30 minute fire doors (FD30s)

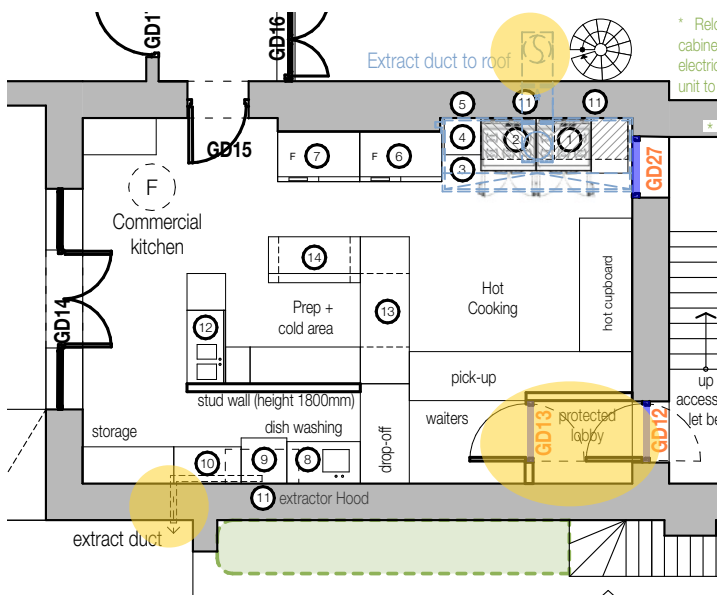
No other alterations to the historic fabric are proposed.



(2) Kitchen

The existing private kitchen at the rear of the house will be converted to a small commercial kitchen serving meals to the restaurant. The cooking equipment is limited to electrical microwave ovens, electrical ovens and induction hobs, with no gas cooking facilities. Two new mechanical extraction fans will be installed, with one penetration in the north and south external walls for ventilation ducts to vent to outside, at the positions shown highlighted below.

A new separation lobby for fire is required as highlighted. New stainless steel splash backs will be installed to specific locations, and the kitchen will be redecorated. All historic plasterwork, architraves, shutters and window frames will be retained. The existing chandelier will be professionally dismantled and stored on site for later re-instatement if required.



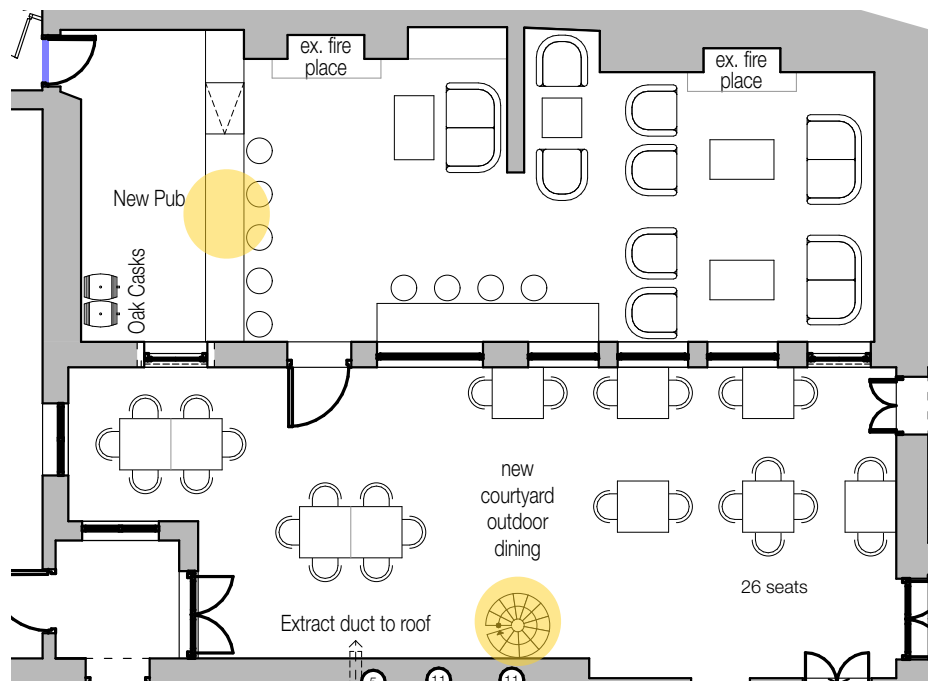
KITCHEN APPLIANCES

1. Falcon One Series E163I 6 Zone Induction Hob Top Range - Three Phase - CK1160
2. Falcon One Series E163I 6 Zone Induction Hob Top Range - Three Phase - CK1160
3. Lincat Silverlink 600 V6/F Fan Assisted Electric Oven
4. Panasonic NE-1880 Commercial 1800W Microwave
5. Panasonic NE-1880 Commercial 1800W Microwave
6. Sterling Pro Cobus - SPR212PV Double Door Gastronorm Refrigerator, 1200 Litres
7. Sterling Pro Cobus - SPR212PV Double Door Gastronorm Refrigerator, 1200 Litres
8. Cater-Wash CKF8096 - Left side of Dishwasher /Right In Sink with Splash Back
9. Cater-Wash CK2555AA DLUX Commercial 500mm Passthrough Dishwasher - Drain Pump - WRAS APPROVED
10. Cater-Wash CK8100 - Inlet/ Outlet tabling Right in
11. QUATTRO 1200MM commercial extractor hood
12. Stainless Steel Sink by Kitchen Solutions
13. Foster HR360 360 Litre Undercounter Double Door Fridge
14. Foster LR360 360 Litre Stainless Steel Undercounter Freezer

(3) Pub and Courtyard

The existing private room is used by the owners as an art studio, which will be converted to a pub. A new fitted bar will be installed with display shelving for drinks and beer kegs to the wall behind the bar as highlighted on the plan below. The existing fireplace will be reinstated. Seating on loose furniture will be provided. All historic fabric will be retained, including exposed brick lintel over the doorway, timber beams and exterior window frames.

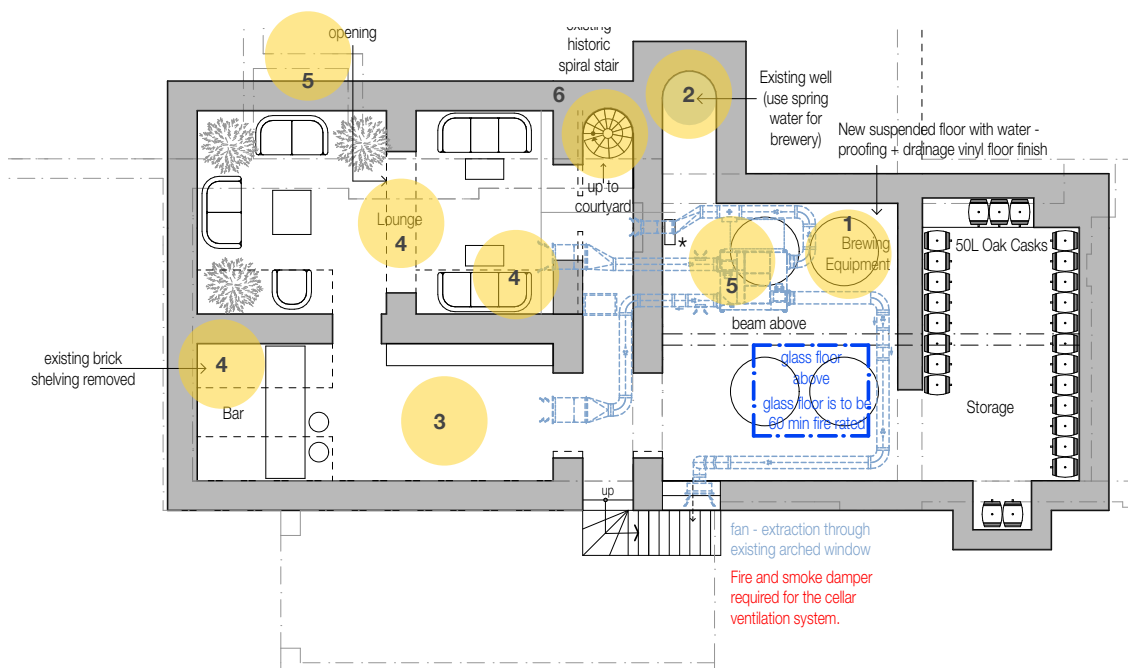
There is a historic spiral staircase below the courtyard, leading to the cellar. As highlighted below, this will be opened up to allow direct access from the new pub to the brewery in the cellar, with cast-iron railing fitted to match existing railings in the south external courtyard.



(4) Cellar

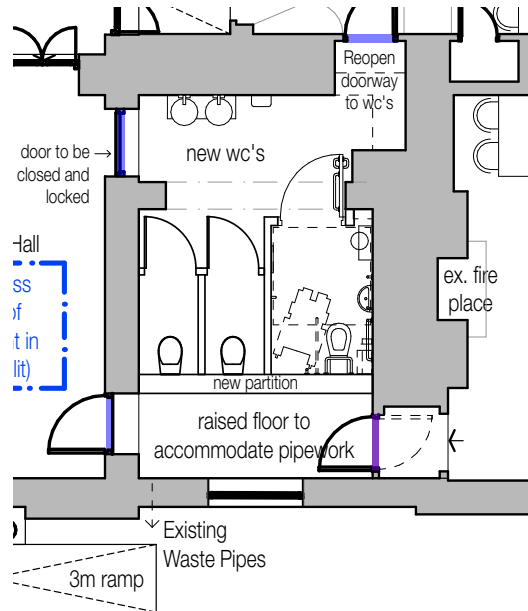
The existing cellar is damp and poorly ventilated, currently underutilised and used for storage only. The proposals involve a full renovation of the cellar, which will allow it to be opened up and used by visitors;

1. Installation of a new micro-brewery, with glass floor above to enable it to be seen from the ground floor.
2. Renovation of the existing well; the spring water will be used in the brewery.
3. Installation of waterproofing and new floor finishes. A cavity-drain waterproofing system will be used to ensure vapour-permeability to avoid the buildup of condensation.
4. Removal of the existing brick and concrete shelves and some internal masonry walls, to reveal the older parts of the original brick arches and improve cross-ventilation within the cellar. This will also enable the existing store rooms to become usable lounge areas.
5. Opening up of vents to the courtyard above to improve natural cross-ventilation, and installation of a heat-recovery ventilation system.
6. Reinstatement of the historic spiral staircase connecting to the courtyard above.



(5) New shared bathrooms

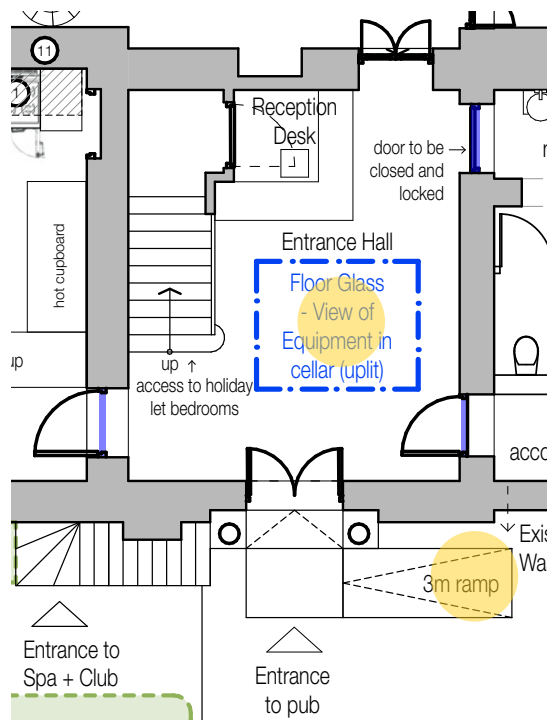
The existing inter-leading lounge will be converted to new WC's , including building new partition walls, tiled floors and the installation of sanitaryware. A new raised suspended floor will be installed to create level access for wheelchair users and to conceal the waste pipework, connecting to an existing external drain.



(6) New entrance upgraded

The existing south entrance door from the side courtyard will be upgraded with the installation of a new ramp to provide wheelchair access to the pub and restaurant. The existing entrance hall will be renovated and re-decorated, with the existing 1990's tiled floor removed and replaced. A new structural glazed floor will be installed, to provide a view of the brewery equipment in the cellar as guests arrive. A new fitted entrance desk will be installed.

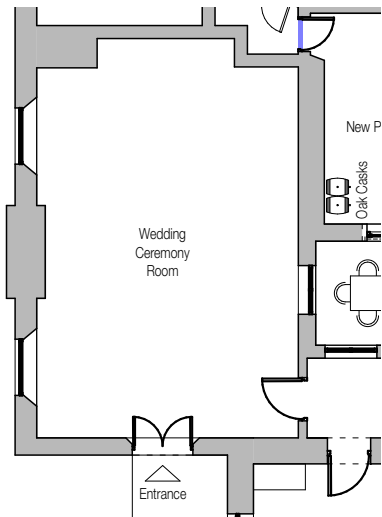
The entrance ramp will be timber, with a cast-iron handrail to match the existing handrail to the cellar stairwell. This will be a fully reversible installation with no damage to the historic fabric.



(7) Wedding Ceremony Room

[As included in the previous pre-planning application 23/501576/PAMEET]

The existing drawing room will be converted to a wedding ceremony room. This will not involve any changes to the physical fabric of the building, only furniture will be replaced.

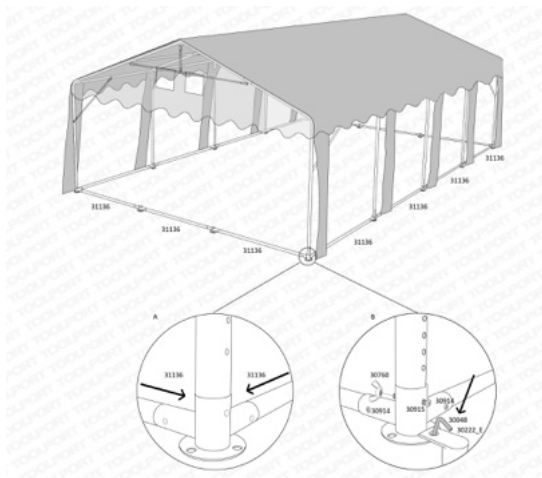
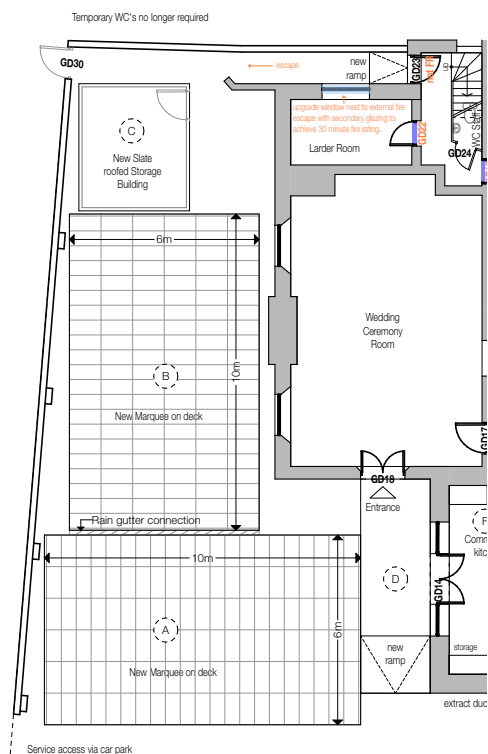


(8) New marquees and store room to rear courtyard

[As included in the previous pre-planning application 23/501576/PAMEET]

At the rear of the property two marquees will be installed, mounted onto a timber deck, catering for a maximum of 80-100 guests. These are 6m wide x 10m long x 2.6m high (eaves) and constructed from an aluminium frame enclosed with PVC panels. They will be secured down onto a plywood deck; No fixings will be required into the existing building. For lighting, electrical cabling will be required from the building's existing consumer unit. This will be a temporary removable connection. The marquees will be used for a sit-down meal for guests after the ceremony.

The temporary marquees are a necessary measure, without which it would not be possible to hold weddings at the property. Whilst they will have a temporary visual impact on the 19th century rear of the property, as can be seen on the elevation drawings, during the times that they are erected. However, due to the temporary nature there is full reversibility and therefore the long-term impact is low. The proposals have also carefully considered the 19th century rear elevation, and covered verandah ; by installing a timber deck over the existing concrete hardstanding allows the aluminium frame marquee to be bolted to down to the timber deck, avoiding the need for any fixings to the building .



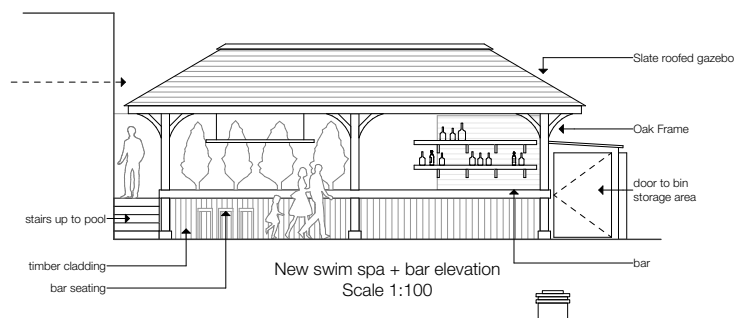
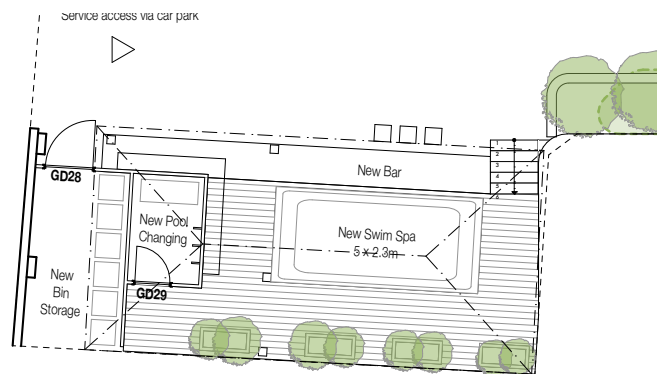
(9) New spa pool, changing and bar to rear courtyard

A small spa pool mounted into an above-ground timber deck, including a small bar and changing room will also be installed in the rear courtyard. The existing open bin area will be enclosed with a permanent timber-framed structure with slate roof, as shown on the drawings.

The new use will greatly improve a currently underutilised area, and hide the currently unsightly bin area in the south-west corner. The structures will be lightweight and fully de-mountable , ensuring that the area can be reverted to open space in the future if required.



Example of similar traditional green-oak framed gazebo with tiled roof

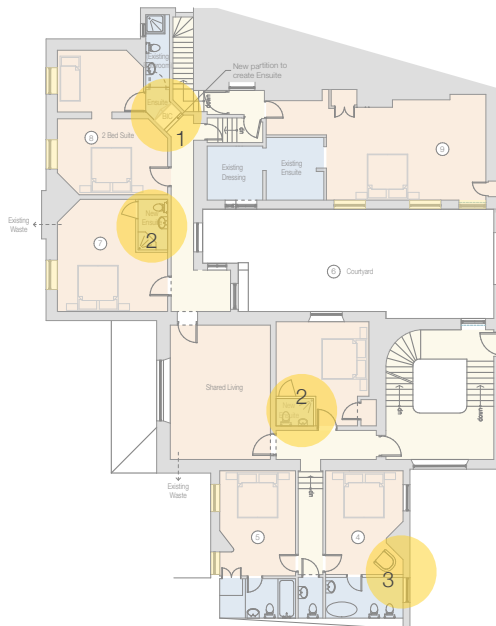


Photographs of existing rear courtyard area

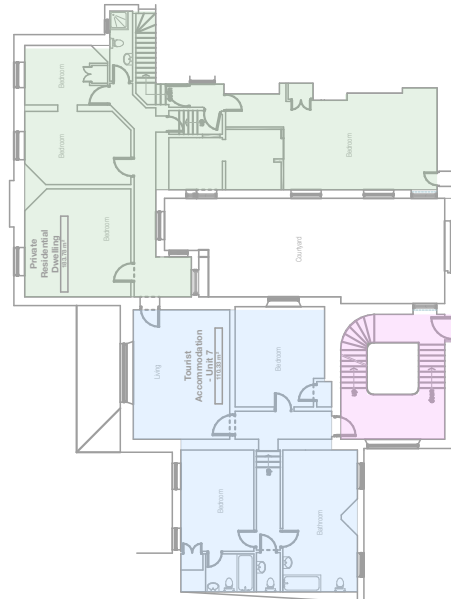
(10) Existing private bedrooms converted to lettable hotel rooms

The number of lettable bedrooms will be increased from the 7 existing holiday lets, to 12 no. lettable ensuite bedrooms. This only affects bedrooms on the first floor; The owner's family apartment will be converted into 3 lettable double ensuite rooms, and existing 2 bedroom holiday let suite will be subdivided into three separate lettable rooms, with a shared living room. The second floor bedrooms remain as existing.

The physical changes are highlighted in yellow below:



First Floor Plan - Proposed



First Floor Plan - Existing

- 1 New partition stud wall in corridor
- 2 New stud partition in bedroom to create ensuite bathroom (re-instated to old position)
- 3 Existing bath relocated and new stud wall installed



Bedroom 7



Bedroom 4