

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE NEED FOR A 4 BEDROOMED HOUSE AND DETAILS OF HOW THIS PROPOSED PROPERTY WOULD RELATE TO THE HOTEL BUSINESS.

INTRODUCTION

Five years ago we intended to build a 6 bedroom house which could have supported the hotel business but this was rejected. We reduced the scale of the undertaking several times in response to such advice as we actually had. One of the 'meetings' referred to ended when the Planning Officer (PO) referred to our proposal as "A Dogs Breakfast". Another 'meeting' ended when the same PO said "I just don't like it!" which was the essential limit of his input despite a series of reductions in size, profile and alleged impact. To say 'that some changes were made' is culpably misleading. We made very large changes in both size and consequence. To say that we failed to heed advice is untrue as both personal witness and Affidavit will testify. We substantially reduced the plan from 6 to 5 and finally to 4 bedrooms, thus losing any commercial use at a time when we needed to invest and increase capacity to secure jobs and the commercial future of the business at a desperately difficult time.

The only remaining option is to eliminate our families regular and occasional dependence upon the hotel. Capacity within the hotel would be released if we are able to build our own home. The need for a four bed roomed house is based on the size of the family. The applicant has 3 children one of whom is in the army and resides with the applicant when on leave. One is married with 2 grandchildren and the third works away as required but regards the area as home. Mrs MacLeod has three dependent nieces (estranged father and mother living in USA) still in education. Children from different marriages increase the accommodation need. Members of the immediate families also visit. Thus, it was considered that a total of four bedrooms would be the minimum which the applicant would need.

It should be noted that most of the period properties in the area have a minimum of 4 bedrooms.

The PO's present grounds for rejection appear largely based on the grounds for rejecting the earlier, irrelevant application. There is repetition of references and text of which some is inaccurate at best and repetitively refers to irrelevant historic material. This insidious repetition creates an entirely false view of our intentions. Again, some current passages are reworked text taken from the first rejection although in general it is difficult to identify where references to one end and those to the current application begin. These characteristic run through the entire submission. There is cross referencing of objections to features not present and some that never were. Although previously acknowledged by the PO to be out with the conservation area no mention is made of this.

However, there is also unwitting testimony. Concrete roof tiles or UPVc windows have never been part of any plan and were never mentioned or stipulated. This is pure invention. Proposals were for slate and timber, random stone panels and rendering as in the Hotel. Steel elements will be clad in timber. There is of course no double integral garage within the submission although we wanted to include one, but were denied. Why is it mentioned? .

No mention whatever is made of consultations with Ms Jennifer Carlisle who was the Conservation Officer when we began our design process. Helpful and encouraging, she

suggested the scaled approach from the castle down to the hotel and down to the proposed dwelling and finally to the very modern bungalows. Instead, the comments rehearsed are those of Mr Thorndyke only. Our first application was poorly drafted instead depending heavily upon the accompanying statutory design statement for clarification; clearly this was never read.

It is untrue to say "The proposed building would sit in front of the main elevation of the listed building." The fact that the footprint has been deemed acceptable by a senior planning officer is not reflected and nor is his acceptance that the cardinal architectural feature has merit.

PRECEDENTS

In Cove, in the heart of the conservation area, is a new, very large 4 bedroomed house of traditional style with, significantly, two attached garages, a feature denied out of hand to us. The house is also substantially larger than its neighbours and covers much of its plot.

In Rosneath, built within the curtilage of The Ferry Inn which is an 'A' listed building by Lutjens is a new build which is very much larger in a more modern style. Significantly taller, it overlooks The Ferry Inn and dominates the shoreline and the approach from landward. Even from Helensburgh side this is so. There is also a new development immediately adjacent to the Ferry Inn to the westward. There appears to be a double standard.

CONCLUSION

We will do nothing that detracts from the value and setting and viability of the Hotel either architecturally or commercially. Dilapidated when we arrived, there were no jobs where there are now 18. Knockderry has been restored, improved and extended.

We have turned it into a 'visitor destination' and a centre of local excellence through determination and hard work. To protect the future and be able to afford to maintain this expensive heritage asset we have to move forward. We need a dwelling which offers us a personal life and to do this whilst delivering service to the community and to the broader tourist market which now visits the area. Our wedding programme brings substantial collateral benefit to the local community and residential businesses in Helensburgh and the Peninsular Area.

We have no intention of prejudicing our achievement and that of our staff by creating a discordant setting as is alleged. We have the temerity to believe that we are reasonable judges of this, that the building will as completed augment the setting just as our extension to the hotel has done. We have a track record and we ask you to trust that our execution in detail would be a credit to the setting and not detract from the building that we have saved for posterity.

To describe our preferred design as suburban is simply insulting. Images of the original house design are included below and they reflect the changes in the application currently under review.