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Main Street, Urquhart, Elgin, Moray, IV30 8LG

PLANNING REFERENCE NUMBER 17/01775/APP

CONVERT PART OF BAR AREA TO 3 NO. FLATS RETAINING SMALL BAR AREA AT THE GOLDEN PHEASANT, NORTH STREET, ELGIN.

CLIENTMR WALTER MELDRUM.

REVIEW STATEMENT.

BACKGROUND.

This is a long established public bar in the Bishopmill area of Elgin for nearly 60 years. In its hey day it boasted a large public bar, lounge bar and cocktail bar all of which were used by locals and some from further afield. The Bars survived on bar sales only and there has not been food served here previously. Over the years there have been various factors which have lead to our client having to do something with this fairly large building. The cost of drinking has soared in a public bar and with cheap alcohol available from supermarkets locals have turned their back on their local in an attempt to save money. The virtual zero tolerance on drink driving has also impacted on trade as no one now drives to the pub and drinks. Extremely high rates based on floor area are crippling this business and change has to happen in order for it to survive.

PROPOSAL.

It is proposed to reduce the size of the bar to around a third of its area at present and form 3 No flats out of the remaining floor area. There would be 2 No one bedroom flats and a 2 bedroom unit for the applicant to live in. At present the gates to the rear car parking area have been closed for some years due to the fact that only locals frequent the bar and they all live within walking distance of the business. It was felt that the one bedroom flats may have appealed to single people who may not even have had vehicles but it is conceded that there can be no control over this.



SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The visibility from the access/exit from the Golden Pheasant is exactly the same visibility which exists at the junction of North Street and Brodie Drive.

We have highlighted this because we feel it is important to make the comparison. The pavement width of North Street either side of Brodie Drive junction is 1.47 meters wide. When you cross the road to the Golden Pheasant side of the street the pavement is exactly the same width. The two junctions are identical yet no improvements are sought to alter this main road junction.

We feel it is important that the Review Panel visit the site to see this for themselves.

It was noted that the planners intimated that this was a busy road. We cannot argue this point but to the right of the access is a set of traffic lights and 100 meters to the left is a further set of traffic lights. What this does is have the effect of slowing traffic down between the points therefore vehicle speed is greatly reduced.

With regards to 2 vehicles meeting one another at the entry/exit point, the chances of this happening are extremely remote. However, should this occur, it would be very simple for the car exiting to reverse back to allow another vehicle entry.

NOISE POLLUTION.

It is accepted that a sound report had not been obtained prior to the determination of this application. However, we have provided evidence that a sound report was requested but as we had already been informed that the likely outcome of the application was to be a refusal, it seemed ridiculous to expose our client to fees in excess of £5,000 at this time. Should this Review be viewed sympathetically, a sound report will be put in place.



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CONCLUSIONS.

To summerise this project is quite simple. Sound tests can and will be provided. The access/exit arrangement has been in situ for around 60 years but not as long as the junction opposite at Brodie Drive. We are not aware of any accidents in this area either at Brodie Drive or at The Golden Pheasant.

If the bar is not reduced in size then rates will close this building down. If the business folds we are effectively saying that there is no other use for it as any change of use will require a parking element and will be automatically refused if Transportation remain consistent with their requirements. This is an existing access and in its day there probably was a lot of traffic movement. This does not happen now. The only person to use the parking is the applicant. By him using one of the flats this means that there is no intensification of the access at all. This means we are off setting the bar usage against 2 one bedroom flats.

Without a common sense approach to this project, this building will close and be left derelict with no alternative use due to an existing access. Our client is trying to keep a business going through difficult trading times for the Public House industry and it will be a sad day if this icon has to close over an existing access.

