



P-14-041

Bell Rock Hotel

Chief Planning Officer

Planning and Development Department

Old Wesleyan Chapel

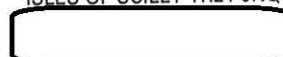
Garrison Lane

St Mary's

Isles of Scilly

TR21 0JD

MR C. M. & MRS J. M. JONES
AMARYLLIS
Buzza Hill, St Mary's
ISLES OF SCILLY TR21 0NQ



Friday 26th September, 2014

Dear Planning Officer,

We wish to apply for a variation of Condition 3 of planning permission P5225 5/12/02 to allow use of staff accommodation as a holiday letting unit at Bell Rock Hotel, Church Street, St Mary's.

There would be no external alterations to the flat. It would be used by 1 or 2 guests (maximum) at Bell Rock Hotel. We do not consider the use would have any adverse impact on the surrounding conservation area.

There have been considerable changes in recent years to the holiday market on Scilly – the demand is increasingly for self catering accommodation, of high quality which the flat will be. The hotel has 6 existing staff rooms, 3 of which have not been used for the last 3 years. We have a policy of prioritising employment of local people and following the departure of one of our chefs who lived in the flat, we no longer need it for staff use.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to survive in the full service hotel sector. The season is short and costs of everything are high. The Island Hotel on Tresco has been demolished and replaced by self catering units. Tregarthen's Hotel is for sale. The Atlantic Hotel and pub are now almost the same having had major changes internally and food offering changes. St Martin's Hotel has been empty for 3 years until the Karma time share and hotel group bought it earlier this year.

The most Southerly Hotel in England . . .

St Mary's, Isles of Scilly TR21 0JS

Tel - 01720 422575 Fax - 01720 423093 E-mail - bellrock.hotel@btclick.com

Resident Manager: Daniel Lawson Proprietors: C.M. Jones J.M. Jones B.Phil. (Ed.)

www.bellrockhotel.co.uk www.bellrockhotel.blogspot.com



Our guest numbers have fallen considerably since 2010, together with visitor numbers generally to the Islands. High transport costs to Scilly by comparison with the low cost airlines to routes in the EU are increasingly mentioned by guests. This year the season was particularly poor in March and April and even into May following the nightly TV Somerset flooding pictures and the rail line being washed away at Dawlish. Uncertainty and delays over the hard surfacing at Lands End also added to guests being concerned over whether they should make the effort to come. Resistance to Sunday flying, no winter boat service and threatened Tourist Information Centre closure are not helping either.

We are finding more and more guests only want to have bed and breakfast and are eating out from the mobile catering vans (3), fish and chip shop, cafes or pubs – there is a lot of competition and even a new 90 seat restaurant on the quay next year.

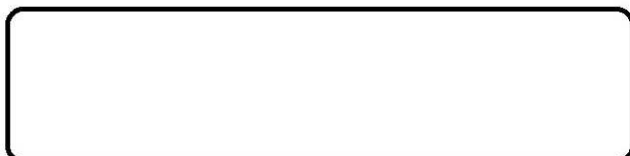
So, we need to change to go forward. We have 22 rooms over 4 floors in a 150 year old listed building. Some of our smaller rooms are not large enough for Visit Britain 3 star rating despite our indoor swimming pool and 52 seat restaurant. The market is going against us (see enclosed article) as people want newly built branded budget hotels.

We have no plans to convert the hotel into flats – it wouldn't be worth it at our age – and a new generation will probably take it on in the next couple of years. However, it has to make a profit to continue and the seasonal income commercial building has to adapt to survive – hence this application to satisfy Policy 4 – Economic Development of the 2005 Local plan.

Policy 4 Economic Development which states (a) “where such development contributes to the further diversification and essential modernisation of the Islands Economy”, (b) “where it demonstrably improves the quality of existing tourist accommodation” and 34, “the intention of this plan is therefore to support business development that will benefit the overall community and facilitate employment opportunities for those who wish to live within it. This includes supporting businesses based in the traditional sectors”. Also 10 Economy “the future of tourism, the Islands primary sector, is dependant on responding to niche markets with a view to raising the value and quality of the tourism product”.

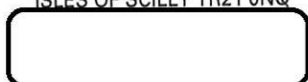
If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours Faithfully,



Chris and June Jones.

MR C. M. & MRS J. M. JONES
AMARYLLIS
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ISLES OF SCILLY TR21 0NQ



Less room for the small hotel

Dominic Walsh

More than 2,000 hotels have closed over the past decade amid a decline in small independent properties in coastal resorts, according to research being published today.

The greatest number of closures was in Cornwall, which lost 117 hotels with an average of 17 rooms, while Blackpool, Torbay and the Channel Islands all recorded more than 50 hotel closures.

However, the area hit hardest, measured by the number of bedrooms lost — at just over 2,000 — was the London Borough of Westminster, thanks to the closure in 2006 of the 1,028-room Regent Palace Hotel, off Piccadilly Circus.

The research, by Melvin Gold Consulting, suggests that the closure since 1993 of 2,139 hotels with almost 40,000 rooms is part of a big change in hotel supply, as small independents are replaced by newly built branded budget hotels.

Melvin Gold, the firm's principal, said: "We have found hotels changing use to residential accommodation, care homes and student accommodation or being demolished to facilitate new development."

He said that while unbranded independent hotels still accounted for about 52 per cent of Britain's total supply of 730,000 rooms, he expected the proportion to fall to as low as 40 per cent in future.

The closure rate over the past decade was more than offset by the 104,000 new rooms that came on stream over the same period and Mr Gold predicted that, even after taking into account continuing closures, the total supply would rise to 850,000 by 2030.

"This process of change reflects the requirements of the 21st-century consumer and also creates increased employment opportunities as the supply-base moves towards larger, branded hotels," he said.