

Gleneagles – a little bit of country may come to town

Gleneagles Hotel lodged a planning application in August to develop two buildings on the east side of St Andrew Square into a luxury hotel.

In what will soon be a hotel saturated area, the plans come before the Development Management Committee on Wednesday with a recommendation for approval.

Both buildings are A listed, one built by David Bryce in 1846 and the other by John Young in 1781. They are both three storeys high with a basement at number 37 and they lie next to Register Lane which itself is becoming a more important thoroughfare. This is the lane which will give access to the area where the new £45 million Concert Hall will be built and all roads will eventually lead to the new Edinburgh St James development where there are now seven cranes building a massive retail and entertainment playground.

At number 37 a modern extension to the rear will be demolished and replaced, and a new panelled doorway will be formed from two ground floor windows on the frontage looking towards the square.



An artist's impression of the new Gleneagles on St Andrew Square

The entrance will have steps and also an accessible entrance. It sounds like this will be one of the more innovative entrances in the city. The report explains that this will comprise "a stone-faced stair that automatically recesses to enable entrance via a platform lift". We have only seen one other like this in the New Town.

And at numbers 38-39 there will be a roof terrace looking out to the square, perhaps the only part of this development which has proved only a little controversial. The size of the roof terrace has been scaled back following comment from Historic Environment Scotland. But the main feature of this building is the Corinthian columns outside.

Even noise worries with regard to the residential building at 41-42 have been accepted, as 'significant soundproofing measures will be required to obtain a building warrant for residential flats'.

Edinburgh World Heritage welcomed the

application by saying : “The buildings site in an extraordinary setting – part of a range of classical buildings spanning a 170-year period of the development of the idiom. We welcome the reuse of the buildings.”

Public transport is right outside the front door, shopping nearby and the city centre on its doorstep, making it the perfect site for a city expansion for the luxury country hotel, Gleneagles. There will be no car parking provided for any Bentleys or Range Rovers, although there will be room for three bikes in under pavement cellars, and a bus tracker for information about buses and trams will be displayed in the reception area.

Any deliveries will be made to the rear of the building on Register Place as part of the permission.

These are listed buildings in a conservation area, and this is an important site. The interiors will be formed with minimal intervention and retaining the detailed banking hall at 38-39 in its original form.



The buildings on St Andrew Square which may become home to the new city Gleneagles Photo ©2018TheEdinburghReporter

Council Leader Adam McVey said : “Gleneagles is a fantastic Scottish business and their expansion into Edinburgh is a sign of the continued strength of the hospitality market in the capital.

“Having visited the development, the proposals being put forward are a strong addition to the city’s offering and bring a vibrant use back to another building on St Andrew Square which is the focus of a number of exciting ongoing developments.

“While we won’t know the final decision of the planning application until the planning committee considers the application in full on Wednesday, it’s encouraging to see Edinburgh continuing to attract major investments of this calibre.”