

Making buildings work better

GLM

GLM is a leading boutique design and project management consultancy. Experts in the sustainable and commercial reuse of remarkable buildings, GLM's core building surveying and architectural teams specialise in historic building conservation and low carbon building design.

First formed in 1985 as the Edinburgh office of Chartered Building Surveyor Povall Worthington, GLM parted ways in 1996, fiercely eager to carve out its own distinctive identity, establishing offices in Edinburgh and Manchester, whilst providing a range of property related services including pre-acquisition surveys, master planning, advice on dilapidations, tourism planning, specialist surveys and design and build services.

Just as no two buildings are the same, GLM believe in delivering bespoke solutions that exceed expectation. Possessing over three decades worth of experience in building surveying, architecture and project management, the company's key competitive advantage lies in the fact that it can deliver from start to finish, consolidating specialist skills into a single manageable service. This cohesive, integrated and interdisciplinary approach underpins each project undertaken. This is especially true of two of the company's most recent projects.

Working on behalf of a joint venture partnership between Natural Retreats and Heritage Great Britain, GLM has drafted an architectural masterplan for John o' Groats,

which will see one-time recipient of the '2010 Carbuncle Award – Most dismal town in Scotland' reinvigorated.

Despite receiving an approximate 120,000 visitors per year, John o' Groats has remained economically inefficient, providing tourists with little incentive to spend. GLM's outline masterplan looks to rectify this, offering 23 self-catering timber-clad luxury holiday residences as well as a completely remodelled Journey's End Cafe.

The £6.5M scheme, which also includes the complete refurbishment and major extension of the previously disused Scottish baronial John o' Groats Hotel, represents the first tangible development in the area in 25 years.

Highly sustainable in nature, the holiday residences, which feature green turf roofs, have been designed to compliment the local ecology. Inside, the residences are highly insulated, requiring little energy to heat while providing much needed respite from the strong coastal winds.

GLM has also made economic sustainability a priority. In an effort to promote local business, the refurbished hotel has been sympathetically designed without a bar or restaurant encouraging visitors to visit John o' Groats' local retailers, eateries and pubs. Acting as Construction Manager, GLM have also involved local contractors, sourcing as much manpower and material as locally as possible.

For Project Manager Ian McKee, the project has echoes of one undertaken by the

practice in Wick some 20 years earlier; the redevelopment of the exclusive celebrity haunt, Ackergill Tower. Ian comments: "Ackergill Tower had fabulous potential but it had fallen into disrepair. At the time the then owner John Banister described the building as a sort of "Marie Celeste". You could well describe John o' Groats today as something of a ghost ship, but with similar potential to create a really brilliant development."

Since undertaking the redevelopment of A Listed Ackergill Tower in the late eighties, GLM has developed a longstanding professional relationship with the building's owners, GLM has again been commissioned by Ackergill Tower's new owners, Amazing Retreats, to provide new facilities which will once again reassert its position as a world class retreat.

Set to commence on site shortly, the Ackergill project will see the inclusion of additional bedroom space, a new banqueting hall and a spa.

The improvements have been sensitively designed to fit the context of this landmark building, while meeting the requirements of the 21st Century.

Although Phase I of John o' Groats' regeneration is due to complete in July and Ackergill Tower is on its way, GLM looks forward to an on-going involvement in the exciting development of this sometimes under-rated part of the highlands of Scotland.



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