

Future for City hotel is unclear

By ANNE SHERIDAN

THE fate of Limerick's oldest and most famous hotel—which is currently undergoing renovations—remains unknown.

Hanratty's on Glentworth Street could be up on the market for sale by next summer. And according to one local auctioneer, the building in its present state is believed to be worth in the region of €1m.

One of the many owners in the hotel's long history dating back to 1796, JP Ryan, lamented the closure of the building in early 2005 as he believed the small hotel was no longer viable, especially without adequate car parking facilities.

"Limerick has lost it forever now. It's very sad that the hotel had to close because we put a lot of effort

into keeping it as part of the fabric of Limerick. Car parking was the major issue and we tried to address that but we were turned down," said JP Ryan who has owned the hotel for the past 13 years.

After purchasing the hotel in 1993, Mr Ryan closed the hotel for a period while the interior received a facelift, but it wasn't enough to bring the 22-bed hotel back to life.

However the hotel's old world charm and character will be maintained, complete with the original stonework. "We're trying to be as subtle as we can with the existing structures so there will still be the feel of an old building," said Ronan Howe, project manager, with Weller Building and Maintenance Ltd began construction work at the site last week.

And among all the dilapidated city centre Georgian buildings Hanratty's is somewhat unique.

"I don't think there's an old Georgian building on this street that's usable, rentable and has as much character as this building," he said.

An internal light well in the building will become a usable space when the renovations are complete and a further two storeys will be added to the rear of the building, which overlooks The Mews.

"We're actively seeking tenants even now because it's nice to have their input into the development of the building. The earlier we have someone on board the more time and money is saved for all concerned," said Mr Howe.

At present, Mr Howe said they've been approached by solicitors, auctioneers and a building society with a view to occupying the building, but they are open to all offers and any interested parties should contact Clyde House at 061-314357.



The fate of Hanratty's Hotel on Glentworth Street is yet to be decided

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