

FLOATING HOTEL PROPOSED FOR OAMARU HARBOUR

The Oamaru Licensing Trust is looking at the possibility of establishing a floating luxury hotel for Oamaru Harbour.

Trust General Manager, Cathy Maaka say if the proposal goes ahead, it would be a first floating hotel for New Zealand and a massive boost for tourism in the area — they are increasingly popular internationally.

“The Trust is looking at a proposal from a private developer to build a four and a half star hotel with 25 rooms over three levels,” says Mrs Maaka.

“The developer already owns the accommodation barge which measures approximately forty by nine metres which would be ideal for the project. If the proposal goes ahead, the vessel would be towed to Oamaru, moored and the hotel constructed and fitted out locally, if contractors were available” she says.

“The lower accommodation deck would be located within the hull, with two decks on top of that, so the profile and the visual

impact would be low. There will be a “half” level on top with lounges and an open seating area.

“There will be no bar or dining facilities on board, but there are plenty of drinking and eating establishments within easy walking distance,” says Mrs Maaka.

“Suitable mooring places have been looked at and our initial location would be on the southern side of the harbour, between the woolsheds and the Esplanade.

“Specialist engineers have carried out site inspections and are happy with the proposed location.

“The rooms on the two upper decks will have decks facing out across the harbour with sun all day long from sunrise to sunset, as well as spectacular views.

“The hotel will be permanently moored and connected to the shore, by a short walkway which would also carry power, water and sewage connections.”

“The developer would be the owner of the hotel and the Oamaru Licensing Trust would lease it from him,” says Mrs Maaka.

“Both parties are presently working on a

financial plan to ensure this is a viable proposition.

“We are aiming this at the upper end of the market and are confident that it will have strong appeal to the established tourist markets, such as A20 cyclists as well as encouraging greater interest because of its unique nature,” she says. “There will be no impact on wildlife.”

“The trust and the developer have discussed the proposal with the relevant authorities and while there is still some way to go we are confident we can produce a good case.

“We believe the size of the hotel compared to the area of the harbour will mean the visual impact is minimal and the benefits to Oamaru will be substantial.”

Christchurch based architects Stufkens and Chambers have been engaged for the design of the hotel.



VIEW FROM NORTH WEST