

Baskerville Hall Hotel, Clyro. HR3 5LE

Location

Baskerville Hall is situated on the edge of the village of Clyro, adjacent to the A438 Hereford to Brecon Road. Hay-On-Wye is approximately 2 miles to the south. The Hall overlooks the Wye Valley and Hay Bluff and is ideally situated for exploring the Back Mountains, the Brecon Beacons and the Marches. The hotel estate comprises 130 acres of land, 90 acres being woodland on the slopes behind the hotel.

Proposals

Since being converted to use as a hotel the owner David Hodby has strived to maintain viability of the hotel with extra curricular events and festivals. The hotel was given permission for a camping and caravan site of 250 pitches some of which have service connections. Planning had been received for a toilet block but this was not implemented at that time due to a change in concept. The hotel supports the Hay Book Festival, several music festivals, multiple shows, auctions, weddings, U3A and other events through out the year.

Additional facilities are brought in to cater for larger events. At present the shower & toilet facilities, located in mobile units on the edge of the car park, are out dated and in any event not usable in the winter. These proposals will enable the removal of the existing toilet and shower container units thereby improving the visual amenity of the site and the comfort of users.

This proposal is for a heated amenity block to provide showers and toilet facilities for campers all year round. A small kitchen & bar will help reduce the pressure on the already busy hotel facilities during festival times & a small social area would be available for individuals, groups and local societies.

Since the closure of the local public house "The Baskerville Arms" in Clyro the local community have relied increasingly on the hotels facilities, in particular the gymnasium fit used by the table tennis club and the swimming pool attracts residents from across the surrounding area. The hotel hosts the international Lions Club and other local businesses and community organisations. The proposals would allow for a wider and flexible use of the site for those groups not requiring the formal setting of the hotel.

Design

It is proposed that the location of the amenity building be on the northern part of the carpark (formally the tennis courts) and entrance to the caravan/camping grounds. This position would allow better monitoring of the comings and goings into the camping grounds than at present (the hotel reception).

The landscape to the south of the hotel building steps down in grassed terraces separated by banked shrub and flower beds. Each terrace is accessed by a series of steps. To delineate the extent of the immediate grassed terraces is a mature high hedge which forms the curtilage around the hotel and separates it from the camping grounds beyond. The car park is on a further level down from the lower lawn.

The proposals take advantage of these level changes and the hedge mentioned above to substantially reduce any visual impact that the proposals may have.

The orientation is south east and a colonnaded undercover sitting area next to the outside bar and kitchen would provide snacks, pizzas and drinks. An internal link would allow the club room to be used for social events in the winter months.

The washing facilities are small rooms contain a shower, basin and toilet. Although these washing rooms will be accessible for ambulant disabled there will be a separate wheelchair accessible room and a drying, washing room with sinks. This allows greater flexibility for the hotel by extending its range of services.

A small glazed pod or festival hub would be the administrative centre during festivals, but in between times campers signing in would go to the kitchen.

Materials and Sustainability

It is intended that the cladding material will be Douglas fir boards sourced from the hotels own woods and cut into boards by the on site saw mill. Structural timbers will also be sourced the same way. (The applicant does maintain a policy of replacing cut down trees with new saplings on the 90 acres of woodland within the estate).

The cladding boards will be fixed to timber frame panels set between steel main structural elements. The roof will be sedum laid over a water resistant membrane. All the external walls & roof will be insulated to a high level exceeding current Building Regulations. Under floor heating will keep the building warm for all year round use and heat recovery to maintain levels of humidity and to regulate ventilation levels.

The hotel is heated with biomass boilers fuelled by wood chip largely sourced from the hotel's woodland. There is sufficient capacity to extend this heat to the amenity building. The hotel also has a large solar array, and it is proposed to extend this with PV panels on the proposed roof of provide a minimum of 30Kv which will be stored in batteries located in the hotel cellar. At certain times of the year the hotel will be fully sufficient in energy.

The proposals show the Pv panels at their most optimum orientation, that is to the south and tilted to 35deg. The panels are laid horizontally as commercial Pv panels are 2x1m approximately and it was felt to be too intrusive to position them vertically. Any variation to the optimal eg. laying them flat or at a different angle would mean that an increase in the number of panels would be required to make up the short fall in output.

The hotel has its own spring water supply.

Biodiversity

The proposed site is located on the existing hardstanding of the car park. To enhance the level of biodiversity the proposal includes a sedum roof under and between the solar array to encourage invertebrates, butterflies and moths.

Accessibility

The proposals will meet part M of the Building Regulations.

The site is fully accessible with alternative routes in lieu of stairs to progress up or down the different levels

Drainage

The hotel has its own treatment plant. The amenity building would be connect to the existing drainage system with surface water absorbed within the estate. Rain water from the roof will be filtered and harvested in the toilet cisterns.

History

Listed as Grade 2*

Baskerville Hall was built in 1839 by Thomas Mynors Baskerville for his second wife Elizabeth. Built in an imposing Neo-Jacobean style by the architect E Haycock of Shrewsbury the building was sold after the second world war to Radnorshire District Council becoming a school and sold again in 1976 as a health farm. The present owner bought the building and converted it to a hotel in 1984.

The listing describes the exterior as follows

....Large square plan with lower service range to the north west. Ashlar, pronounced vermiculated quoins, string courses, ornate gables with ball finials. Colonnaded porch to north-east front, stone balconies with bulbous balusters to south elevation. Drop cill sash windows, some tripartite in shallow bays. Pitched slate roof.

And the interior

....Main block retains fine original detailing throughout. Large entrance hall with panelled archways, imperial cantilevered stone staircase with ironwork balustrading, colonnaded gallery landing; over the stairs a coved ceiling and lantern. Principle ground floor rooms have decorative plaster ceilings, cornice mouldings, marble chimney pieces, panelled shutters. Former library largely panelled with glass fronted and open bookshelves.

Reason for listing

....Grade 2*as a well-designed Jacobean country house by an eminent architect and retaining impressive original interiors, most notably the staircase hall.