

Application Ref: NP/12/0027

Application Type	Listed Building
Grid Ref:	SN13140569
Applicant	Mr D Lewis, The Hean Castle Estate
Agent	Mr P Holden, Acanthus Holden Ltd
Proposal	Change of use & conversion of vacant private school buildings to hotel use, including extensions to existing buildings, part and full demolition of classrooms, erection of new plant room building & associated car parking and landscaping
Site Location	Netherwood School, Saundersfoot, Pembrokeshire, SA69 9BE
Case Officer	Julia Evans

Summary

This is a Listed Building application for the change of use and conversion of a vacant public school to a fifteen bedroomed hotel, with associated function rooms and facilities, at Netherwood School, Saundersfoot. The application proposes extensions and alterations to the existing buildings, and part and full demolition of the modern extensions and classrooms to the building. The planning application NP/12/0025 in addition to these works for Listed Building consent propose the erection of a new storage / boiler room, plus construction of a new car park and associated landscaping for the scheme.

This application has been brought before the Committee because the planning application is a major scheme.

The proposal would restore a use to a vacant Listed Building, and the proposed extensions, alterations and demolition raise no objection from the Authority's Conservation Officer. The proposal is considered to preserve the Listed Building and its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. The application is therefore recommended for consent subject to approval by CADW.

Consultee Response

Saundersfoot Community Council: Supporting

Public Response

The application has been advertised. At the time of writing the report no responses had been received.

Policies considered

As this application is for listed building consent, section 16 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building,

its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest. There is, therefore, no statutory requirement to determine the application in accordance with the policies of the development plan.

Welsh Office Circular 61/96 (Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas) and Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment of Wales (Cadw, 2011) are material considerations.

Officer's Appraisal

This is a Listed Building Consent application for the change of use and conversion of a vacant private school to a fifteen bedroomed hotel with function rooms, at Netherwood School, Saundersfoot. The school is a Grade II Listed Building and a full planning application has also been submitted to the Authority for consideration (NP/12/0025).

Netherwood School is part of the Hean Castle Estate. The site is located to the north of Saundersfoot in the open countryside, on the southern side of the B4316 road. It is elevated above the level of the road, and the buildings and playing fields are surrounded by trees. It was originally constructed in circa 1840 as a private house with associated outbuildings. From 1946 it was used as a public school until its closure in 2009, since when it has been vacant. Vehicular access to the property lies to the north-western corner of the property, with a driveway leading to the area of hardstanding to the front (northern elevation) of the buildings. The house is constructed of white render walls under a slate roof, and has both two and single storey side extensions on its western side and to the rear. A detached outbuilding lies to the south of the internal courtyard and tennis courts, which is constructed of coursed rubble stone under a slate roof. Modern school buildings lie to the south of the main house, including a detached sports hall, and a number of prefabricated classrooms and store buildings. To the south of the school buildings lie two areas of grass meadows, which run gently downhill towards the south. Beyond the hardstanding to the front of the house lies an area of woodland that runs down to the road.

Constraints

The site lies within the open countryside, and the historic buildings are Grade II listed. The whole site lies over a Coal Referral Area. The south-eastern edge of the site is bordered by a public right of way.

Relevant Planning History

There have been a number of applications on the site regarding its use as a school.

The applicant has also received pre-application advice from this Authority last year supporting the change of use of the school to a hotel, and its associated extensions and alterations.

Current Proposal

This Listed Building Consent application proposes the extensions, demolition and alterations to the Listed Building to allow its conversion and change of use to a fifteen bedroomed hotel, with attached function rooms and facilities. The main house would be converted and extended to provide 3 bedrooms on its ground floor, along with a dining room, lounge, reception area and kitchen, with a further six bedrooms on the first floor. The existing main staircase would be replaced with one leading up from the reception area. A new link to the existing sports hall would allow the change of use of this building as a function room, with its own toilet and kitchen facilities. The stone outbuilding to the west of the site would be converted into another six bedrooms, and linked to the main house and its extensions on the first floor. A new sun terrace would be provided leading out from the dining room and function room, with the existing prefab classrooms being demolished to allow for the provision of a lawned garden area to the south of the building.

The Listed Building Consent application has been supported with the following information:

- A Design and Access Statement;
- A Schedule of Alterations to the Listed Building; and
- A Demolition Statement.

Key Issues

This application raises the following Listed Building matters:-

- Impact of the proposed works on this Grade II Listed Building and its setting.

This application and the associated planning one have been submitted to the Authority after extensive pre-application discussions which agreed the principle of the change of use and the proposed alterations and extensions to the Listed Building.

The proposal involves the removal of the school's prefabricated classrooms which are predominantly located to the rear of the main building, and modern extensions to the building. This improves the setting of the Listed Building by allowing an area of grass and garden to be provided, thereby providing a more sensitive and appropriate setting for the Listed Building, and removes insensitive additions and extensions. The removal of the modern buildings and extensions on the site is therefore considered to be an enhancement to the site in terms of its visual improvement to the setting of the Listed Building and the special qualities of the National Park.

The application proposes a number of internal alterations to the building, including the loss of the main staircase and its replacement. Major works such as this are not usually acceptable because of the loss of the historic fabric and the integrity of the building, but in this instance the Conservation Officer states "Whilst the removal of original fabric is not be advocated, this

staircase is frankly disappointing for a house of this status – just a straight and plain flight without the usual Regency detail as found in local examples. The new staircase has been carefully designed and is acceptable in principle”. The applicant has now provided detailed drawings of the staircase, and the Conservation Officer has raised no objection to their provisions.

As regards the other internal works, the Conservation Officer has raised no objection to any of the proposals. However, it is suggested that a condition requiring details of internal joinery is attached, as insufficient detail of these works has been provided in the application.

A number of external alterations are also proposed to the Listed Building, and again the Conservation Officer has supported them. This includes the realignment of the western ground floor window to what is probably its original position, and the removal of the western porch and its replacement with a proposed Regency portico.

To allow the change of use the main building is to be extended and linked to both the existing sports hall and the outbuildings to the west of the site. The extensions are necessary to link these buildings to the main structure. It is considered that they are sympathetic and subservient to the architectural character of the Listed Building. The alterations to the listed outbuildings are also considered acceptable, particularly in view of the changes that have occurred to them over the years of use as classrooms. In order to control materials, conditions have been suggested concerning sample provision, a render sample panel, and roof materials.

The planning application also proposes a new building, car parking and associated landscaping for the scheme, and conditions have been suggested with it to ensure that the setting of the Listed Building is not harmed.

Conclusion

The proposal is considered to bring back into use a vacant Listed Building in a way that minimises harm to its special historic and architectural qualities. No objections are raised and subject to conditions, it is recommended that the application be referred to CADW with a consent recommendation.

Recommendation

The application is recommended for consent subject to approval by CADW. Suggested conditions are:-

- Timescale;
- Adherence to plans;
- External materials samples;
- Render sample panel;
- Roof materials; and
- Internal joinery.