

Seasonality in the Design of the Environment of a Hotel Facility on the Example of the Rest House for Employees of Lublin University of Technology in Kazimierz Dolny

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Abstract: The authors analyse the impact of seasonality on the design of the environment of hotel facilities. As a case study, the Rest House for Employees of Lublin University of Technology in Kazimierz Dolny was chosen. The problem of variability of climatic conditions, and various forms of tourist activities, which require a flexible approach to design, allowing year-round use of space, is addressed. Both examples of space development in Poland and specific seasonal solutions for Kazimierz Dolny were discussed. An analysis of local conditions, including landscape values and cultural heritage of the city, was conducted. Proposals are presented for adapting the space around the rest house, taking into account the organization of spring and summer outdoor events, autumn cultural revival and winter recreational activities. Drawings of solutions for the recreational zones of the space around the Rest House of Lublin University of Technology are an integral part of the study. The article emphasizes that flexible space design can increase interest in the recreational facility and contribute to the development of the year-round offer of Kazimierz Dolny.

Keywords: seasonality, spatial planning for hotel design, year-round tourism, Kazimierz Dolny, recreational infrastructure

Introduction

Seasonality is a phenomenon characterized by the uneven distribution of tourist activity over time and plays a key role in shaping the space around hotel facilities. Seasonality is due to factors such as, changing seasons and weather, the holiday calendar or tourists' preferences.¹ The variability of user needs and dynamic climatic conditions, require designers to take a flexible approach to maximize the potential of a location throughout

¹ Jacek Borzyszkowski, Zjawisko sezonowości w turystyce – istota problemu i działań krajowych podmiotów polityki turystycznej na rzecz jego ograniczania, *Rozprawy Naukowe Akademii Wychowania Fizycznego we Wrocławiu*, 45, 2014, 167–176.

the year. A properly designed space can increase the attractiveness of a facility not only during the season most popular with tourists, but also in other months².

In Poland, where the climate is characterized by a pronounced variability of seasons, adaptation of space to seasonality plays an important role. An example of an object that can benefit from such solutions is the Rest House for Employees of Lublin University of Technology in Kazimierz Dolny. The article takes a closer look at the character of Kazimierz Dolny and gives examples of seasonal attractions in the place. Design recommendations for the surroundings of hotel facilities to optimize the use of these spaces were also cited, and trends in the design of spaces near hotels in the context of seasonality were taken into account based on a review of the literature on the subject.

For the purpose of the article, examples of development of areas near hotels in Poland were analyzed and compared with the local characteristics of Kazimierz Dolny. An analysis of available spatial solutions in the area of the Rest House was carried out and an exemplary solution for its surroundings was proposed.

Tourist character of Kazimierz Dolny

Kazimierz Dolny is a town of high tourist value, whose popularity stems from a combination of rich cultural heritage and scenic attractiveness. The city is distinguished by its historical urban layout, the center of which is the market square surrounded by Renaissance townhouses and the ruins of the castle and the tower, which are spatial dominants. In addition, the Late Gothic parish church of St. John the Baptist and St. Bartholomew, as well as traditional wooden buildings play an important role in the city's landscape³.

The scenic qualities of Kazimierz, including the Vistula River valley, Three Crosses Hill and numerous loess ravines, have been recognized both as a tourist attraction and a source of artistic inspiration. Numerous painting and photographic works documenting these spaces indicate their high aesthetic value. Studies prove that the potential of Kazimierz's landscape is an integral element of its tourist attractiveness. It is a key component of the cultural ecosystem services that constitute the tourist attractiveness of the city⁴.

The development of tourism in Kazimierz Dolny, which began in the 19th century, strengthened in the interwar period, when the city gained the status of one of the leading summer resorts in Poland. Contemporary spatial development plans for Kazimierz take into account the need to protect the historic character of the city while developing infrastructure adapted to the changing seasonality of tourist traffic. Particular attention is paid to the protection of historic buildings and harmonious adjustment of new developments so that they do not disturb the unique cultural landscape of the city⁵.

The role of seasonality in the region

Tourism in Kazimierz Dolny is characterized by a distinct seasonality, with the highest traffic during the summer months, holidays and long weekends. During these periods, the city attracts many visitors, due to favorable weather conditions and the availability of cultural events and outdoor attractions. In winter, however, the number of tourists decreases, mainly due to the lack of infrastructure and fewer attractions adapted to the colder season⁶.

2 Sebastian Dudziak, Jacek Borzyszkowski, *Problem sezonowości popytu w turystyce na przykładzie wykorzystania baz noclegowej w hotelach nadmorskich*, *Studia i Prace Wydziału Nauk Ekonomicznych i Zarządzania*, 43/3, 2016, 79–88.

3 Jerzy Żurawski, *Kazimierz Dolny – uwagi o dziejach rozwoju przestrzennego, problemy ochrony krajobrazu kulturowego: część I, Ochrona Zabytków 31/1 (120)*, 1978, 12–27.

4 Szymon Chmielewski, Tadeusz J. Chmielewski, Marta Samulowska, *Ocena potencjału inspiracji artystycznych krajobrazu Kazimierza Dolnego i jego otoczenia*, *Prace Komisji Krajobrazu Kulturowego*, 36/2017, 2017, 33–46.

5 Jerzy Żurawski, *Kazimierz Dolny – uwagi o dziejach rozwoju przestrzennego, problemy ochrony krajobrazu kulturowego: część II, Ochrona Zabytków 35/1-2 (136–137)*, 1982, 3–27.

6 Gminny Program Rewitalizacji Gminy Kazimierz Dolny na lata 2017–2027, Projekt Zmiany GPR, grudzień 2018.

Analyses indicate that most visits are short-term – usually trips for one or several days. To reduce the negative effects of this seasonality, it is proposed to develop year-round offerings, such as cultural, educational or conference tourism, which are not dependent on weather conditions⁷.

The importance of landscape variability in tourism is also confirmed by scientific research, which indicates that tourists' perception of a place changes according to the seasons. The variety of forms, colors and dynamics of nature can be used as a promotional element, provided an appropriate strategy for tourism development. In the case of Kazimierz Dolny, an important direction of action is to emphasize the qualities of winter landscapes and promote them as an attraction of equal value to summer and autumn landscapes⁸.

Seasonal tourist attractions of Kazimierz Dolny

Kazimierz Dolny strives to provide tourists with attractions, adapted to the seasons. Documents such as the „Program rozwoju Kazimierza”⁶ and „Plan rozwoju turystyki”⁷ present a comprehensive offer of activities that take into account the natural, cultural and infrastructural assets of the region. These proposals include both seasonal activities and year-round initiatives, promoting local tradition, history and various forms of recreation.

In the summer, outdoor events such as open-air cinema screenings, picnics in the meadows, and concerts and festivals held in the Market Square and other public spaces of the city are very popular. Enthusiasts of active recreation can take advantage of bicycle rentals that allow exploration of the surrounding trails, as well as participate in canoe trips down the Vistula, during which they can admire the scenery of the Malopolska Vistula Gorge.

In winter, Kazimierz Dolny offers attractions such as a ski station with trails of varying difficulty. Complementing the winter offer are organized sleigh rides, bonfires and evenings with music, which create an opportunity for integration and relaxation in a unique atmosphere.

A major attraction in spring and autumn are sightseeing walks in the Kazimierski Landscape Park, where one can admire the richness of loess ravines and the diversity of flora and fauna of the Vistula Valley. Also popular are Nordic walking tours along thematic trails that showcase both the natural and cultural values of the region.

Year-round offerings include culinary workshops, where participants can explore the flavors of regional cuisine based on local and seasonal ingredients. The city has also organized questing, or thematic paths and field games, leading through the city's cultural heritage, allowing visitors to explore by solving puzzles and clues. This is complemented by handicraft and local product fairs that promote the region's traditions and arts, as well as an extensive network of hiking trails that include historical sites, loess ravines and other natural attractions.

With such a wide range of attractions, Kazimierz Dolny is a place that offers diverse forms of activities and recreation all year round, harmoniously combining the natural and cultural values of the region with the needs of visitors.

Rules for designing the hotel surroundings considering seasonality

Designing a hotel environment with seasonality in mind requires adapting to changing weather conditions and taking into account the varying needs of users at different times of the year. This includes the use of mobile furnishings such as folding tables and chairs that can be easily moved or stored depending on the prevailing weather. This solution maximizes the use of space in the summer months and protects it in the winter, minimizing the risk of damage to equipment. It is also important that the materials used are resistant to the effects of weather conditions, such as moisture, UV radiation, low temperatures or the varying loads associated with snowfall. With this approach, the equipment components will maintain their functionality and aesthetic appearance.

Another important feature is the creation of universal spaces that can be used regardless of the season. An example is year-round summerhouses featuring heating systems that allow them to be used comfortably on both cold and warm days. Equally important is properly designed lighting, which makes it possible to extend

7 Plan rozwoju turystyki dla subregionu Trójkąta Turystycznego Nałęczów – Kazimierz Dolny – Puławy na lata 2012–2020.

8 Hannes Palang, Helen Sooväli, Anu Printsman, *Seasonal Landscapes*, Springer Nature, 978-1-4020-4990-3, 2007, 103–126.

the use of the space. In winter, when the days are shorter, intense lighting will improve visibility and safety, while in summer decorative lighting, such as lanterns or spotlights, will create a pleasant atmosphere during evening gatherings.

The design of a hotel environment should also include specialized areas that respond to the needs of visitors in different seasons. During the winter season, it is advisable to include areas with fireplaces, which provide a central point for outdoor integration and relaxation, even in colder conditions. In addition, storage areas for winter equipment, such as skis or sleds, should be provided. During the summer, the space can be expanded to include relaxation-friendly elements such as hammocks or picnic areas, as well as fountains or other water features that provide cooling and enhance the aesthetics of the area. Water elements not only increase the attractiveness of the space, but also have a positive effect on the microclimate, lowering the ambient temperature.

This kind of approach to space design allows for maximum use of the site during all seasons and will respond to the diverse needs of visitors. The use of universal solutions, appropriate materials and differentiated zones will improve user comfort and increase the competitiveness of the facility in the tourist market.

Examples of hotel exterior realizations in Poland

Seaside hotels in Poland adapt their offers to a particular time of year, using not only the space inside the hotel, but also its entire surroundings. In summer, outdoor events are organized, such as concerts on the beach, dinners on viewing terraces or outdoor sports activities. During the winter season, the focus shifts to indoor attractions, including wellness zones, culinary workshops and holiday events.

Seaside hotels rely on integration with the natural surroundings – the seascape and proximity to beaches. Large glass windows and viewing terraces emphasize the facilities' ties to nature, while culinary and thematic offerings often draw on fishing traditions and regional cuisine.⁹



Fig. 1. Astor Hotel, Jastrzebia Gora. Source: <https://www.astorhotel.pl/galeria/>

An example of good landscaping is the Astor Hotel in Jastrzebia Gora, which offers a variety of outdoor activities. Guests can use the tennis courts, children's playground, as well as rent bicycles and go on picturesque excursions in the area. The hotel's proximity to the beach encourages walks, and it also organizes sports activities such as Nordic Walking, providing active recreation surrounded by coastal nature¹⁰.

Resorts in Kazimierz Dolny, despite their lack of access to the sea, are adapting similar practices. The Architect's House Hotel uses outdoor spaces for summer events such as concerts, film screenings and art workshops.

⁹ Sebastian Dudziak, Jacek Borzyszkowski, *Problem sezonowości popytu w turystyce na przykładzie wykorzystania bazy noclegowej w hotelach nadmorskich*, *Studia i Prace Wydziału Nauk Ekonomicznych i Zarządzania*, 43/3, 2016, 79–88.

¹⁰ <https://www.astorhotel.pl>, access 12.12.2024.

In other hand, during the winter months, it focuses on intimate indoor attractions, such as wellness areas, fire-place rooms and cooking workshops¹¹.



Fig. 2. The Architect's House Hotel. Source: <https://domarchitekta.com>



Fig. 3. The Architect's House Hotel. Source: <https://domarchitekta.com>

Another good example of the development of space around a hotel facility in Kazimierz Dolny is the Kazimierzowka Hotel. Guests can relax in a spacious garden with a gazebo, sun terraces and a fire place. Children will find a playground, while those who love to exercise can rent bicycles and explore the picturesque surroundings, full of canyons and historical monuments. It is a place that fits well into the character and aesthetics of Kazimierz Dolny. The Materials that are used there harmonize with the surroundings¹².



Fig. 4. Kazimierzowka Hotel, Kazimierz Dolny. Source: <https://kazimierzowka.pl>



Fig. 5. Kazimierzowka Hotel, Kazimierz Dolny. Source: <https://kazimierzowka.pl>

In both cases, the seaside hotels and those in Kazimierz Dolny, localism is an important factor. The seaside establishments draw on fishing and maritime traditions, while those in Kazimierz are inspired by the region's Renaissance heritage. A common element is the promotion of local cooking – in Kazimierz there are tastings of local wines and regional products, which can be compared to themed culinary events at seaside hotels.

¹¹ <https://domarchitekta.com>, access 12.12.2014.

¹² <https://kazimierzowka.pl>, access 12.12.2024.

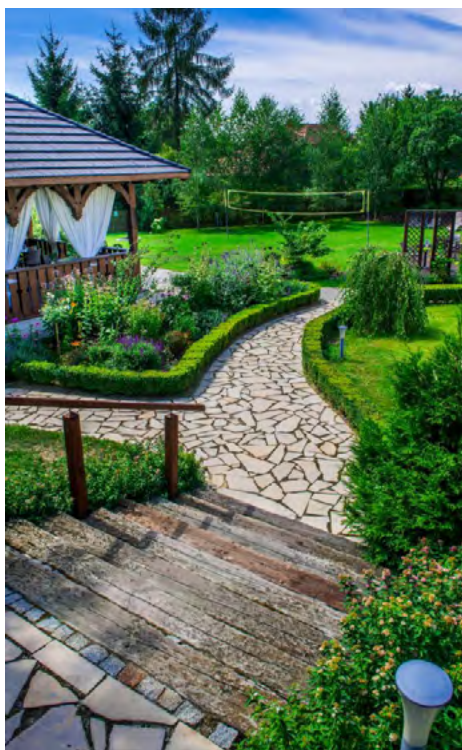


Fig. 6. Kazimierzowka Hotel, Kazimierz Dolny. Source: <https://kazimierzowka.pl>

Another example is the transformation of the Arłamów resort, which could be inspiring for Kazimierz Dolny in terms of tourism development by revitalizing and adapting the facility to modern market requirements. Arłamów, once a closed complex for communist Poland's elite, has been transformed into a modern resort offering luxurious conditions and a variety of attractions. Thanks to investments such as the expansion of SPA zones, the creation of a wide range of sports and conference facilities, the number of guests has increased sixfold, and occupancy rates at peak times reach 85%¹³.



Fig. 7. The resort in Arłamów after expansion. Source: <https://www.arlamow.pl/arlamow/galeria>

¹³ Krzysztof Szpara, Małgorzata Bać, Przemiany ośrodka wypoczynkowego w Arłamowie i ich wpływ na ruch turystyczny, *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego. Ekonomiczne Problemy Turystyki*, 3(35), 2016, 251–261.

Similar to Kazimierz Dolny, Arlamow draws its appeal from a combination of historical and natural assets. In both places, the key element of development is to take advantage of the unique heritage and adapt the offer to the changing needs of tourists. The example of Arlamow shows how revitalization and thoughtful investment can revitalize local tourism and create a place known not only in the country, but also abroad. Kazimierz Dolny, using such experience, could implement similar projects that combine tradition with modernity, attracting visitors all year round.

Seasonal use of space around the Rest House for Employees of Lublin University of Technology in Kazimierz Dolny

The Rest House for Employees of Lublin University of Technology, located in the quiet, green surroundings of Kazimierz Dolny, is a short distance from the city center. The facility has 10 double and quadruple rooms, giving a total of 15 beds. The offer is complemented by common spaces, such as a kitchen with a dining room, a conference room, a terrace with garden furniture, a place for a bonfire, a barbecue, a playground and free parking¹⁴.

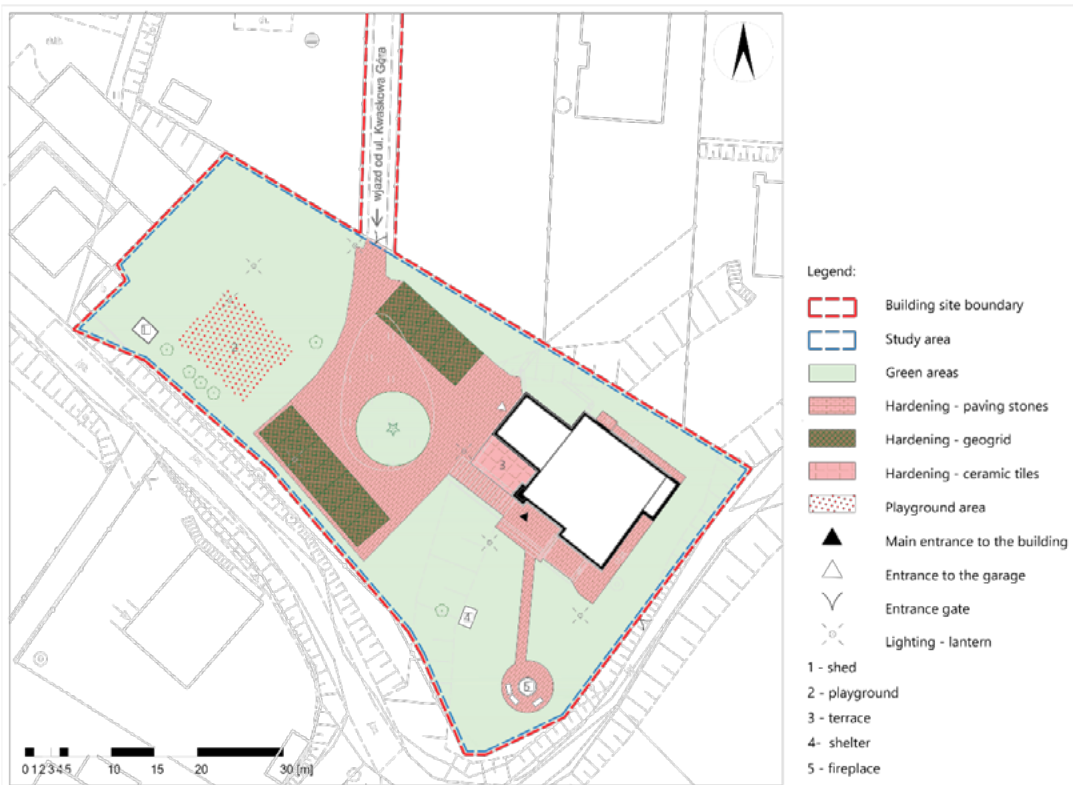


Fig. 8. Rest House for Employees of Lublin University of Technology in Kazimierz Dolny - existing condition. Source own drawing



Fig. 9. View of the playground. Source: own photo



Fig. 10. View of the bonfire pit. Source: own photo



Fig. 11. Parking area of the resort. Source: own photo



Fig. 12. Parking area of the resort. Source: own photo



Fig. 13. Terrace level 0. Source: own photo



Fig. 14. Terrace level +1. Source: own photo

New proposed development of the surroundings area of the Rest House for Employees of Lublin University of Technology

The photos above showing the landscaping around the rest house point to the lack of aesthetic consistency. This can be remedied by replacing the surface of the area with one that in its appearance more closely resembles the material characteristic of Kazimierz Dolny, that is, limestone dope¹⁵. Another important step is to adapt the space for the disabled, by putting a ramp. The current development also indicates an attempt to introduce seasonal solutions, which are terraces, a fire pit and storage spaces in the form of sheds.

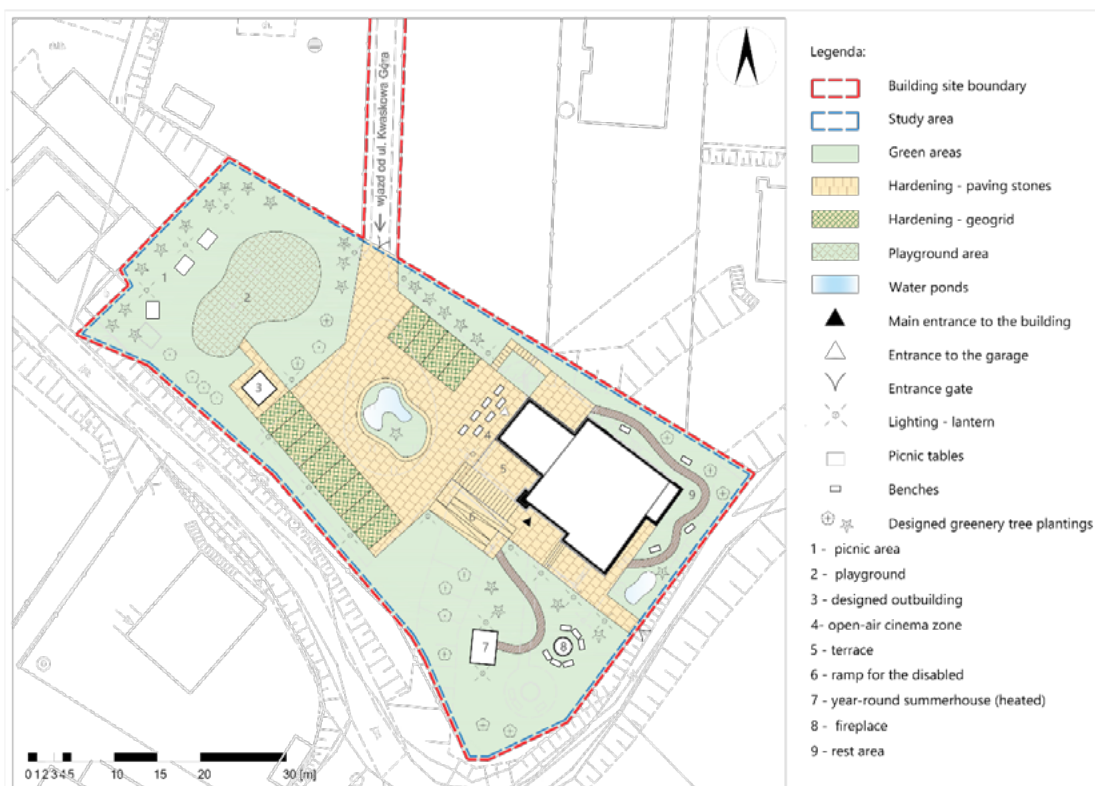


Fig. 15. Rest House for Employees of Lublin University of Technology in Kazimierz Dolny – proposed development of the surroundings. Source: own drawing

Surrounding a rest house allows even better use of the space so that it can be used all year round. For such optimization, a complete change of the development is not required, but only an expansion to include new recreational and leisure areas. The current location of parking spaces allows the creation of a solidified square that can be used for outdoor workshops. In addition, an open air cinema zone can be created, a convenient place for the projector will be the wall where the garage door is currently located, and the paved area around it will allow the placement of loungers and benches. The location of the playground can also remain unchanged, it is currently at an appropriate distance from the windows of the building, an additional advantage of its location is shade in the form of trees planted at the southern border of the plot. A major change, on the other hand, will be the expansion of the playground, introducing new forms of recreation attractive not only to children, such as pin-pong tables or outdoor bowling, and changing its aesthetics. This zone could be expanded to include picnic tables. Another leisure zone, is a fire pit, in the south-eastern part of the site. The site can be enhanced with walking paths and a year-round summerhouse. In addition, there is an opportunity to develop another

¹⁵ Maciej Trochonowicz, Katarzyna Drobek, *Budownictwo z opoki wapiastej na terenie Lubelszczyzny*, TEKA Komisji Architektury, Urbanistyki i Studiów Krajobrazowych, XVII-4 2021, 64–73.

recreational zone in the surrounding area, around the building in the north-eastern part of the site. Thanks to the existing well, a pond can be created there, which will be another attractive feature of the surrounding area.

Dzięki nowemu zagospodarowaniu otoczenie wokół domu wypoczynkowego, przestrzeń zwiększy swoją funkcjonalność i atrakcyjność, co pozwoli na różne sposoby użytkowania podczas każdej pory roku.

Summer will become a period of peak space use. During this time, ensuring the comfort of users, primarily through access to shade, will become a key aspect. During this time, the newly introduced rest and recreation areas will be most popular. Outdoor areas will be available for meetings, workshops, sports activities and movie screenings.

In autumn, the space around the Rest House will change its character. Although the number of visitors will drop, it will still be possible to enjoy this time by organizing themed seasonal events. Art workshops, outdoor competitions or educational activities, such as leaf picking and nature exploration, can encourage visitors to take advantage of the facility's offerings before the winter slowdown. Recreational facilities will be equally important during this time.

Winter brings a reduction in the intensity of space use due to cold temperatures and lingering snow, which limit outdoor activities. However, this time will also have its potential. With the introduction of a heated summerhouse, it will be possible to organize gatherings around a campfire. This form of activity would coordinate with sleigh rides and winter escapades of tourists. At this time, an essential place will be an outbuilding, which will allow the storage of equipment items that require protection during the winter. It will also be a place to store equipment for visitors who intend to use the ski slopes and other sports activities.

In spring, the space around the rest house, will again be used intensively by visitors. Rising temperatures and the lengthening of the day will promote outdoor recreation.

Summary

Seasonality is an important factor affecting the design and use of space around hotel facilities. An analysis of the Rest House for Employees of Lublin University of Technology in Kazimierz Dolny showed that adapting the infrastructure to changing climatic conditions can significantly increase its attractiveness and functionality. The article discusses a variety of design strategies, such as the creation of universal year-round spaces, the introduction of mobile equipment, and the use of local landscape and cultural assets.

Examples of practices used in other Polish hotel facilities show, the essence of a flexible approach that allows adapting the space for both summer outdoor events and winter activities. The analogy with seaside hotels or the transformation of the Arlamow resort underscores the importance of harmoniously combining historical and natural heritage with modern design solutions.

Kazimierz Dolny, with its unique location and rich cultural heritage, has the potential to develop a seasonal tourist offer by adapting the hotel environment to accommodate a variety of leisure activities at any time of the year. Proposed activities, such as the organization of outdoor events in summer, the development of recreational infrastructure in spring and autumn, and winter activities such as bonfires and sleigh rides, can make the facility attractive to a wide range of visitors throughout the year.

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