

Application No:	2005/0282	Application Type:	FULL
Case Officer:	Richard Stone	Ward:	Long Ditton
Expiry Date:	10/05/2005		
Location:	Kingston House Portsmouth Road Surbiton Surrey		
Proposal:	Ground floor/first floor/second floor extension, redesign of elevations and change of use from office building (Class B1) to 92 bedroom hotel (Class C1) -		
Applicant:	Sun Hotel Ltd The Bell Slater Partnership Cambridge House		
Agent:	180 Upper Richmond Road Putney SW15 2SH		
Decision Level:	If permit – Sub Committee If refuse – Planning Committee		
Recommendation:	Permit		

REPRESENTATIONS: Elmbridge Access Group draws attention to the needs of the disabled.

REPORT

Consideration of this application was previously deferred by the Sub Committee to take account of the comments of the **South East Regional Design Panel**. The applicants have discussed the scheme with SERDP and revisions have been made in the light of those discussions (**see explanatory letter attached**). Those revisions have been referred to **Historic Royal Palaces (Hampton Court)** who consider the use of terracotta buff tiles to be more acceptable than the metallic cladding and the proposals represent an enhancement of the previous scheme. The revised scheme also reduces bedroom numbers to 88 that would go some way to addressing the imbalance with parking spaces that concerned Surrey Police.

DESCRIPTION

1. This site is part of a 1.65ha area of Strategic Employment Land, known as Kingston House Estate, on the south of Portsmouth Road. It is close to the eastern boundary of the Borough with R.B. Kingston upon Thames. Opposite is Thames Ditton Marina, beyond which is the River Thames and the Home Park to Hampton Court Palace. The other side of the river is within the L.B. of Richmond.
2. This property, formerly known as Dairy Crest House, is one of two multi-storey office buildings located either side of the access to Kingston House Estate. The other was previously Kingston House and is now occupied by Shurgard Ltd. A one-way system operates within the site and exits on the west side of Kingston House. Car parking for the Estate is dispersed throughout but the two office blocks had a specific allocation on the original layout.
3. The application site forms a roughly rectangular piece of land 0.2m in area containing an "L" shaped building two-storeys high fronting Portsmouth Road and five storeys high facing the access road. The remainder of the site is given over to car parking for 58 cars.

HISTORY

4. The estate has been developed over the past 40 years. Dairy Crest House was permitted in 1963.

5. Whilst a number of applications have followed, the most relevant to this proposal are considered to be those relating to the property and the Shurgard building.
6. 2002/1183 sought permission for the demolition of both buildings and the erection of a four-storey office block having a floor area of 6628m². A building of that size would have necessitated the removal of the former caretakers house and part of two of the industrial units. Concern was expressed that a building of the width and depth proposed, at one fairly uniform high level, would appear bulky, adversely impacting on the views from the River Thames, Hampton Court Palace and Home Park. The application was withdrawn prior to any decision being made.
7. Permission was granted for the use of the former Kingston House for storage purposes under 2003/1743. More recently, permission was sought for an extension to the rear of that building and the appeal lodged against non-determination (2004/0248) was dismissed. A replacement building on that site was also refused under 2004/0296 but no appeal was lodged. A further application to extend the premises was refused and an appeal is outstanding.
8. Application 2004/0793 was to add a second floor to the front elevation of Kingston House with a full height extension on the end to provide a new staircase. To the rear of that extension it was proposed to erect an extension at first floor level over the existing car park supported on columns. The majority of the building was then to be used as a hotel with 64 bedrooms, a restaurant and bar and function rooms. The second floor addition was to be retained as offices, entranced by the new staircase. The entrance to the hotel was to be improved with a ramped access and canopy over. The design of the new work was to match that existing and the proposal incorporated a scheme of refurbishment and recladding to improve the overall appearance of the whole building, including the extensions.
9. 61 car parking spaces were to be provided throughout the site in similar locations to those existing.
10. The scheme was considered acceptable and permission was to be granted subject to a Section 106 Agreement to provide improved highway facilities. However, the agreement was not signed, the permission not issued and the application withdrawn.

PROPOSAL

11. The previous proposal was not pursued as the applicant decided to apply for the use of the entire building for hotel purposes, complete with further extensions. This is that scheme and shows a front extension similar to that first proposed but a larger extension to the rear, occupying most of the depth of the site on the west side. That extension, on two floors, would be supported on columns above an area of car parking. The total number of spaces provided would be 66, 17 of which are provided by stacker units below the proposed rear extension.
12. The scheme of refurbishment and recladding, as originally proposed, is repeated and enlarged to include a relocated hotel entrance, adopting a more central position further from the estate access road, and glazed screens and balconies to bedrooms in the Portsmouth Road elevation of five-storey tower block.
13. The number of bedrooms provided in the converted and extended building would total 92 and those rooms would be supported by a restaurant on the ground floor with bar and lounge areas and a meeting room. Two further meeting rooms would be located on the first floor. The usual ancillary hotel accommodation would be provided throughout the building.

CONSULTATIONS

14. *Surrey County Council (Highways)* – recommend the imposition of conditions regarding parking provision and construction statement subject to securing, by Section 106 Agreement, a contribution of £18,000 towards highway improvements for bus passenger waiting facilities, pedestrians and cyclists in the locality. The Agreement should also cover the implementation of a Travel Plan, on occupation of the building, in accordance with the aims and objectives of

PPG13 (March 2001) and the Government White Paper (July 1998). The details of the Travel Plan and future monitoring shall be submitted to and approved by the Borough Council after consultation with the Highway Authority.

15. *Historic Royal Palaces* have yet to respond but their comments on the previous scheme noted the high visibility from Barge Walk and the need to reinforce and restore the historic rural nature of Barge Walk in keeping with the surviving character of Home Park. The impact of the existing building on views from Home Park and expressed concern that a further intrusion would be caused by the proposal. However, the treatment of the elevations and general exterior of the building, together with landscaping, met with the approval of Historic Royal Palaces. Informal indications are that that opinion has not changed.
16. *English Heritage* notes the proximity of the building to the River Thames and the inter-visibility with Hampton Court Palace and the Home Park. Whilst no objections are raised, it is recommended that conditions be imposed to agree details of both materials and landscaping.
17. *CABE* are consulted on more applications than they are able to respond to. Their "no comment" should not be taken as tacit endorsement. *L.B. Richmond* do not raise objections but recommend details of materials should be a reserved matter. *R.B. Kingston* objected to the lack of safe and convenient cycle parking facilities. The applicants point out that the existing facilities are to be provided with a roof and the area lit and covered by CCTV.
18. *SERDP* acknowledged the wonderful potential for a hotel on this site with its waterfront setting. However, it considered the scheme to be a missed opportunity to redesign the existing unattractive development in that it added little to the appearance of the area.
19. *Head of Environmental Health* raises no objections but suggest conditions regarding noise, lighting and deliveries and collections.
20. *Surrey Police* consider the parking provision to be disproportionate to the bedrooms provided, access to the rear parking should be secure and non-residents should have restricted internal access. CCTV should be considered and effective site security introduced. It is suggested that the comments be drawn to the attention of the applicant by an informative.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

21. The proposal falls to be considered in the light of a number of Replacement Local Plan policies due to its location and use. Those policies are within the general headings of Employment, The Environment and Movement. The policies seek to ensure that all new development is appropriate and would be compatible with the existing land uses and infrastructure, would not detract from the appearance and character of the neighbouring area, including the River Thames, and would not result in adverse traffic conditions.

Employment

22. The site is within an area of strategic employment and is recognised as an area for its existing use as offices. Policy ELE9 seeks to protect Strategic Employment Land and ELE2 encourages small and medium businesses that would meet the needs of the economy. Policy LER14 recognises the importance to tourism, of hotels and encourages their provision within the urban area. Although the proposed use would not generally be associated with Employment Land it would, nevertheless, generate employment at a level compatible with the industrial and storage uses on the remainder of the site. As such, it is considered that the proposal would not compromise the aims of Policy ELE9. This was the view taken on the previous proposal.

Environment

23. Policy ENV1 seeks to protect and enhance the Borough's character and environment and ENV2 requires proposals to achieve a standard of design that is sensitive to the character of the surrounding area. That area would include the River Thames, Barge Walk and the Home

Park to Hampton Court Palace. Given the height of the existing building and its position on the site frontage, it is clearly visible from the riverside and general views beyond. The area is also identified in the Thames Landscape Strategy that has been adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance. Policies affecting the River Thames are therefore applicable.

24. Policy RTT1 requires proposals conspicuous from the River Thames to maintain and enhance the unique character of the river. The site is within the Thames Policy Area and Policy RTT2 is relevant in that any riverside development must be carefully designed in terms of its scale, quality and relationship to other buildings, open land and the river itself.
25. Policies RTT4 and RTT7 are also relevant, together with the Council's Planning Guideline No 12 – Waterside Development and the wider view from the registered park and its setting as reinforced in PPG15 (Planning and the Historic Environment).
26. This is the tallest building on the estate and in the vicinity. It is recognised as a fairly undistinguished building that intrudes on views from across the River Thames and beyond and its existence should not be taken as a precedent for further intrusive development. In the previous scheme it was considered that the scale of the proposals would not have been significantly more conspicuous in those views and would form a satisfactory relationship with the existing building and those adjoining. The proposed front elevation is similar to that on the previous scheme.
27. As before, it is considered that the appearance of the building as a whole could be improved by some cosmetic treatment to relieve it of its rather tired appearance. This was the view of Historic Royal Palaces (H.R.P.) and the applicants intend, as before, to introduce cladding to the concrete banded panels at high level and the replacement of all the existing fenestration with colour coated aluminium to match the cladding. In addition, this scheme shows further improvements to the appearance of the tower block. This found favour with H.R.P. who wished, previously, to be involved in the final choice of colour and detailing. Whilst an official response has yet to be received from Hampton Court Palace, the indications are that they have the same concerns as before.
28. In addition to that "facelift" the proposals also include the provision of six specimen trees along the site frontage between and at the end of those parking spaces at the front of the site. Such planting, when established would further enhance the visual amenities of the area and soften the appearance of the lower element of the building.
29. It is also relevant to assess the impact of the proposed extensions, particularly that to the rear, on the amenities of adjoining residents. However, those most affected, on part of the former waterworks land, would be over 30m from the building and would not, it is considered, suffer any unreasonable loss of privacy or overlooking, particularly as a row of pollarded lime trees form a reasonable screen along the western boundary.

Movement

30. The *Traffic and Parking Transport Report* provided by the applicants indicates that the hotel would generate comparable vehicle movements in the peak hours to the existing office use but would, over the whole day, generate approximately 150 additional movements. It should be noted that whilst the estimated existing potential traffic generation of the site is accepted, the 'TravL' database used in the report is not within Surrey and therefore the County Council cannot confirm the appropriateness of the trip generation derived from the use of this database. Nevertheless, it is the Highway Authority's view that the reduced on-site parking provision and the limited opportunity to parking on-street in the vicinity of the site, will restrict the traffic generation of the proposals.
31. The parking proposals comprise 49 ground level spaces and an additional 17 hydraulic stacker spaces. Whilst car stackers are generally not desirable, it is considered that they can be accepted in this instance as there are now waiting restrictions on Portsmouth Road. The parking demand assessment is based on surveys of hotel parking demands that were undertaken outside the peak hotel season in the South-East (June-Sept). The sample also

includes some outlying examples that lower the "average" parking demand. Notwithstanding this, the limited opportunity to park in the vicinity of the site, due to waiting restrictions, will restrain the demand for parking. The site enjoys reasonable non-car accessibility and would warrant a parking reduction in accordance with a parking area level 3, as outlined in *A Parking Strategy for Surrey – March 2003* i.e. 50-75% of full standard of 1.5 spaces per hotel bedroom. Although the parking provision of 66 spaces is marginally below, at 48%, and Surrey Police have reservations, in view of the previously referred to waiting restrictions, the Highway Authority has no objection to the provision.

32. The transport statement sets out an outline travel plan that includes, amongst other measures, the provision of a shuttle bus between the site and the rail station. This is acceptable to the Highway Authority but should be operated on a demand basis and not on a timetabled basis as that is not considered to be sustainable over a long period. Given the proximity of the site to Surbiton town centre, the existing public transport services and the parking restraint, the Highway Authority is of the view that the proposal is acceptable. The applicants have agreed to make a contribution towards highway improvements for bus passenger waiting facilities, pedestrians and cyclists, in the locality. The Highway Authority recommends that a contribution of £18,000 be secured by an appropriate legal agreement prior to the grant of planning permission. In addition, it is recommended that the Travel Plan also be secured by this agreement.

CONCLUSION

33. Having assessed the proposal against the numerous policies of the Replacement Local Plan that are relevant to this proposal, it is concluded that it would be acceptable. It would generate employment and vitality in a building that, whilst not vacant, is not being used to its capacity. It is acknowledged that the building is undistinguished and to extend it could make it more intrusive in the environment and, in particular, the views from River Thames and beyond. However, the proposal includes improvements to the overall appearance of the building and that, together with landscaping, is considered sufficient to mitigate any serious harm to the visual amenities of the area. The design, scale and position of the extensions would be in keeping with the existing building and would not detract from the reasonable amenities enjoyed by adjoining residents.
34. The Highway Authority is satisfied with the traffic implications of the proposal. The traffic movements generated by the use, whilst perceivably more than for the existing building, would be dispersed throughout the day and would not therefore, have adverse implications for the existing infrastructure. Given the waiting restrictions, the amount of parking proposed is considered acceptable, subject to the measures in an approved Travel Plan being undertaken.
35. The use of the building as a hotel has previously been accepted. This seeks permission for additional enlargement of the existing building and the design of those extensions and the improvements to the appearance of the existing building are considered, after careful assessment, to not have a significant adverse impact on the street scene, views from across the River Thames and the environment generally. It has been considered against policies of the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000 and other material considerations, including third party representations and it is concluded that the development would not result in any harm that would justify refusal in the public interest.

RECOMMENDATION: Permit subject to the negotiation and execution within six months of the date of this decision, of an Agreement under Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 to secure the following planning obligation and subject to any conditions set out below

Obligation:

- (i) the applicant shall contribute the sum of £18,000 towards highway improvements for bus passenger waiting facilities, pedestrians and cyclists in the locality of the site

- (ii) the implementation of a Travel Plan, the details of which shall have previously been agreed by Surrey County Council, and subsequently monitored by the Highway Authority
- (iii) the following conditions

Conditions/Reasons

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of five years from the date of this permission.
- Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in strict accordance with the following list of approved plans: 1746/201E, 202E, 203H, 204H, 205H, 206J, 207B and 208N received on 17 June 2005.
- Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in a satisfactory manner.
- 3 **No development shall take place until samples of the materials to be used on the external faces and windows of the existing building and the proposed extensions have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Borough Council. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.**
- Reason: To ensure that a satisfactory external appearance is achieved of the development in accordance with Policy ENV1 of the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000.
- 4 The extensions and use hereby permitted shall be carried out only in conjunction with the scheme of refurbishment and recladding shown on the approved drawings.
- Reason: To ensure that a satisfactory external appearance is achieved of the development in accordance with Policy ENV1 of the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000.
- 5 **No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscaping works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Borough Council and these works shall be carried out as approved. This scheme shall include indications of all hard surfaces, walls, fences, access features, the existing trees and hedges to be retained, together with the new planting to be carried out, and details of the measures to be taken to protect existing features during the construction of the development.**
- Reason: To preserve and enhance the visual amenities of the locality in accordance with Policy ENV11 of the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000.
- 6 **All hard and soft landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. Arboricultural work to existing trees shall be carried out prior to the commencement of any other development, otherwise all remaining landscaping work and new planting shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance to the timetable agreed with the Borough Council. Any trees or plants, which within a period of five years of the commencement of any works in pursuance of the development die, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced as soon as practicable with others of similar size and species, following consultation with the Borough Council, unless the Borough Council gives written consent to any variation.**
- Reason: To preserve and enhance the visual amenities of the locality in accordance with Policy ENV11 of the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000.

- 7 No new development shall be occupied until space has been laid out within the site in accordance with the approved plans for only those cars/cycles associated with the use as a hotel to be parked and for the loading and unloading of vehicles to turn so that they may enter and leave the site in forward gear. The parking/turning area shall be used and retained exclusively for its designated use as a hotel.

Reason: In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety, the free flow of traffic nor cause inconvenience to other highway users in accordance with Policies MOV3 and MOV4 of the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000.

- 8 **No development shall take place until a method of construction statement, to include details of: (a) parking for vehicles of site personnel, operatives and visitors (b) loading and unloading of plant and materials (c) storage of plant and materials (d) programme of works (including measures for traffic management) (e) provision of boundary hoarding has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Only the approved details shall be implemented during the construction period.**

Reason: In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety, the free flow of traffic nor cause inconvenience to other highway users in accordance with Policies MOV3 and MOV4 of the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000.

- 9 Deliveries and collections in connection with the use hereby permitted shall be restricted to those hours between 07.00 and 20.00 on Mondays to Fridays and 08.00 and 18.00 on Sundays and Public Holidays and "bottling up" shall be carried out only between the hours of 08.00 and 18.00.

Reason: In order to safeguard against the emission of noise and protect the amenities of the locality in accordance with Policy ENV19 of the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000.

- 10 Details of any floodlighting, street lighting or car park lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Borough Council before the development hereby permitted is first occupied or brought into use. The lighting shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and shall not subsequently be altered without the prior written approval of the Borough Council.

Reason: In order to minimise light pollution in accordance with Policy ENV21 of the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000.

Informatives

- 1 Your attention is drawn to the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Acts, 1970 and 1976 and the Code of Practice for Access for the Disabled to Buildings (British Standard 5810: 1979) regarding the provision of means of access, parking facilities and sanitary conveniences for the needs of persons visiting, using or employed at the building or premises who are disabled. In addition and in accordance with The Building Regulations 1991, Part M - Access and Facilities for Disabled People (as supported by Approved Document M - 1992 Edition), the principal entrance doorway(s) to the development hereby permitted shall have a minimum width of 900mm (1800mm for a double door) with the threshold thereto being a flush surface. A pedestrian access 1.2m wide incorporating flush dropped kerbs as appropriate from the public highway and the car park serving the development shall be provided. Such access route shall be unimpeded by steps and with any access ramps involved having a maximum gradient of 1 in 20. Where new vehicular accesses are formed to sites from the highway, the requirements as appropriate of Department of Transport Circular 1/91 shall be observed.

- 2 .Notwithstanding any permission granted under the Planning Acts, no signs, devices or other apparatus may be erected within the limits of the highway without the expressed approval of the County Highway Authority. It is not the policy of the County Highway Authority to approve the erection of signs or other devices of a non-statutory nature within the limits of the highway.
- 3 The permission hereby granted shall not be construed as authority to obstruct the public highway by the erection of scaffolding, hoarding or any other device or apparatus for which a licence must be sought from the County Highway Authority or its agent.
- 4 Your attention is drawn to the comments of Surrey Police in the light of the principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design. Implementation of the measures suggested are commended to you.
- 5 You are advised that measures should be put in place to ensure that any amplified music produced on the premises would not unreasonably impact on the amenities enjoyed by the occupiers of the residential properties adjoining the site.
- 6 Summary of reasons for grant of permission: This application is for the enlargement of an existing office building and its use as a hotel. That use, the design of the extensions, the improvements to the existing building and the traffic implications are considered, after careful assessment, to not have a significant adverse impact on the street scene, views across the River Thames, the conditions of safety on the highway and the environment generally. The application has been considered against Policies ELE2, ELE9, ENV1, ENV2, ENV3, RTT1, RTT2, RTT4, RTT7, MOV3, MOV4 and MOV6 of the Replacement Elmbridge Borough Local Plan 2000 and other material considerations, including third party representations. It has been concluded that the development would not result in any significant harm that would justify refusal in the public interest.