

**Registration Date:** 18-Mar-2016  
**Officer:** Mr. Albertini

**Applic. No:** P/01766/023  
**Ward:** Cippenham Meadows  
**Applic type:** Major  
**13 week date:** 17<sup>th</sup> June 2016

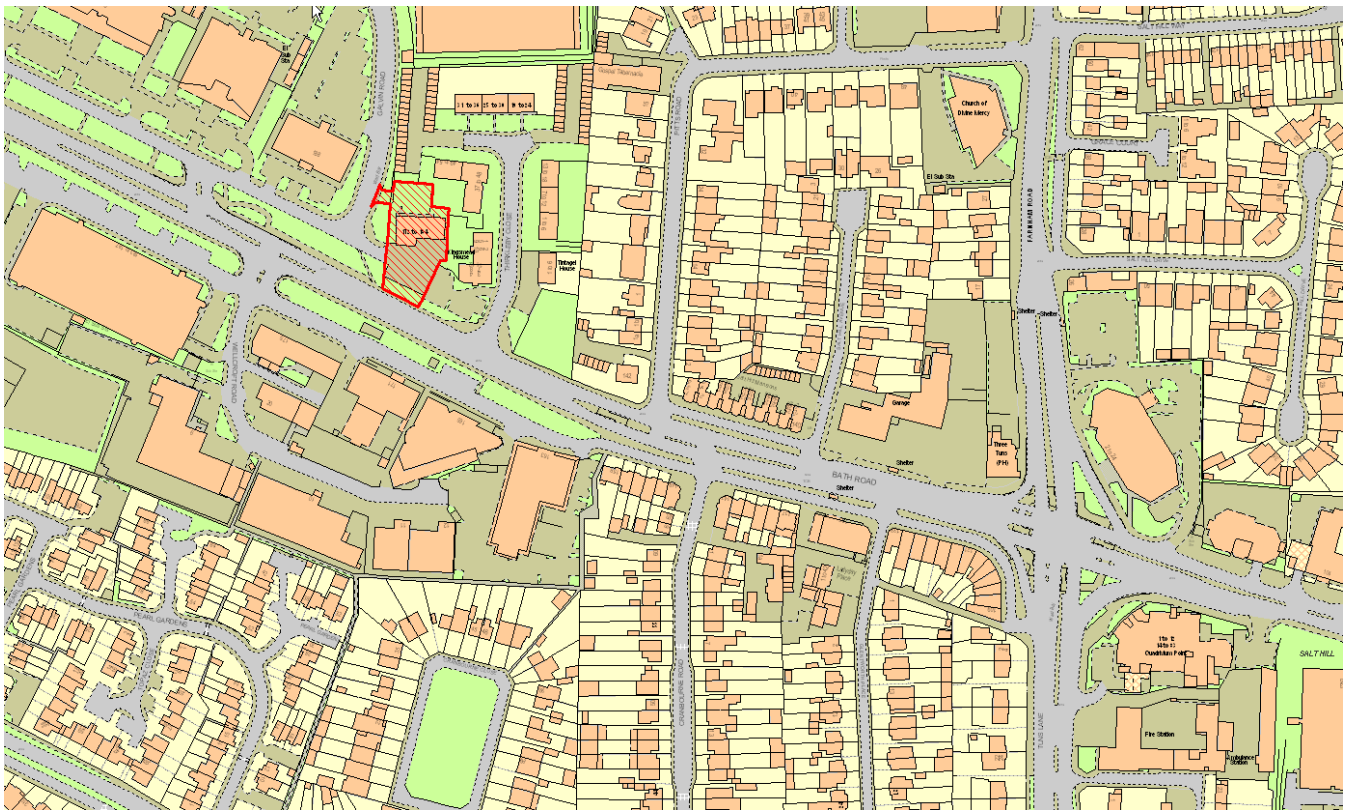
**Applicant:** Millhouse (Slough) Limited

**Agent:** Dyar Lally, 77K Limited 151, Askew Road, London, W12 9AU

**Location:** 172-184, Bath Road, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 3XE

**Proposal:** Demolition of existing buildings (3 storey) & construction of a 7 storey hotel with 99 rooms, restaurant/cafe, gym, conference/function room and basement car parking (access from Galvin Road)

**Recommendation:** Refuse.



## 1.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

Refuse.

## PART A: BACKGROUND

### 2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 This proposal involves construction of a part 5, 6 and 7 storey hotel building for 99 rooms plus a ground floor restaurant/cafe, gym/leisure space and conference/function room. All these uses are linked to the hotel but could be used by non-residents. The gym and conference room together with 5 rooms are in a basement level 1 with a light well on the Galvin Road boundary. Two levels of parking are below.
- 2.2 The scheme proposes 65 car parking spaces. 58 are in a two level basement (level 2 and 3) served by a pair of car lifts from ground level. The remaining 7 spaces are at ground level on the north side of the site served by a new vehicle access to the site off Galvin Road. The car lifts are served by the aisle of the aforementioned surface parking area.
- 2.3 The curved frontage of the building wraps around the south west corner of the site facing the Bath Road and Galvin Road. The reception will be on the west, Galvin Road side of the building. The restaurant will be on the east side of the building and open out onto a courtyard area at the east side of the site.
- 2.4 The rear of the building includes a deep recess such that most of the rear room windows do not face the existing homes to the east and north. The two floors are progressively set back from the side and rear facades.
- 2.5 Trees on the frontage next to Bath Road are not affected by the development. Small trees are proposed for the east side of the site and on the highway verge on the Galvin Road frontage.
- 2.6 Regarding the appearance of the building a mixture of brick, aluminium vertical cladding strips and render arranged in a contemporary style are proposed. Brick will be used at ground floor level. The walls will be a combination of cladding and render with render frames wrapping round the building. Colours suggested are grey brick and grey and white cladding/render in various shades with some red as a feature.
- 2.7 Estimated employment will be 26 full time and 16 part time staff.
- 2.8 Supporting documents submitted cover transport, energy, light and design and access. The light study is referred to below. The energy statement indicates how low or zero carbon technology, including photovoltaic cells, can achieve carbon emissions at least 10% below Building Regulation requirements.
- 2.9 In terms of floorspace (Gross internal measurement) the former office on the site was 838 sqm. The proposal is for 5743 sqm.
- 2.10 The proposal is substantially the same as the approved 81 bed hotel in terms of appearance and width and general internal arrangement from first floor upwards. The main differences are addition of extra storey on part of the building, ground floor layout, extra uses (gym, conference room) and 3 level basement. The extra rooms are in the top storey, ground floor and basement (with narrow light well)

### 3.0 **Application Site**

- 3.1 The 0.16 hectare site lies on the south east corner of the trading estate but it is not part of Segro's estate. It is less than 2 km to the town centre. To the north are garages for Thirkleby Rd flats with a larger data centre building beyond. To the north east and east are 3 storey flats on Thirkleby Rd. On the frontage (Bath Road) is the current site access with large trees in a wide grass verge next to Bath Road. To the west is the wide verge of Galvin Road with large shrubs/small trees on the boundary.
- 3.2 A 3 storey office building on the site was demolished earlier this year. It sat in the middle of the site with windows on each elevation. Parking was on the frontage and at the rear. The east flank was 15 metres away from the nearest flats. The rear façade was 20 metres from the façade of flats to the north.

### 4.0 **Site History**

- 4.1 Extension and addition of fourth storey for existing office building approved January 2001 but permission has now expired.

Application for 54 flats in a six storey building refused 19 July 2005 (P/1766/19)

Application for 53 flats in a six storey building refused 06 June 2007 (P/1766/20)

Application for 50 flats in six storey building agreed subject to Sec 106 agreement 2008. Agreement not signed. Application treated as withdrawn. (P/1766/21)

Application for 81 bedroom hotel in six storey building approved March 2015. (P/01766/022). 65 parking spaces and two level basement.

### 5.0 Neighbour Notification

- 5.1 Thirkleby Close 37 – 54 inclusive, 1 – 12 Kingsmead House.  
Bath Road 171, 175, 188

- 5.2 No observations received.

### 6.0 **Consultation**

#### 6.1 Transport/Traffic /Highways

The application should be refused as the development fails to provide car parking in accordance with adopted Slough Borough Council standards and if permitted is likely to lead to additional on street car parking or to the obstruction of the access to the detriment of highway safety and convenience. The development is contrary to Slough Borough Council Local Plan Policy T2 and Core Strategy Policy 7 Transport.

Detail

Extra trips generated compared to the approved smaller hotel are slightly under estimated but this is not considered significant.

Vehicle and pedestrian access is acceptable in principle.

Car Parking is insufficient. The proposed parking provision is not in line with the standards

set out in the Slough Developers Guide part 3. These state that hotels should be provided with a minimum of one space per bedroom plus extra spaces for bars / restaurants. Whilst a provision of 80% was accepted for the consented 81 bed scheme, a further relaxation of the standard to 65% is not considered acceptable especially given that new floor space for conferencing and on-site gym is also proposed.

It was also stated in pre-application advice that the use of car lifts takes time and is not convenient for non-hotel guests to use and therefore, having only 7 spaces at surface level is likely to mean that guests not staying the night park on-street rather than in the basement car park. This could have an impact on adjoining residents and therefore amendments to parking restrictions are likely to be required.

Cycle Parking is inadequate. It is stated in the Transport Statement that secure cycle storage will be provided within the basement of the development with access provided via the vehicle lifts. Drawings show it at 1<sup>st</sup> basement level, but the car lift does not serve this level and there is no convenient access to the store. Entrance bike stand for visitors is acceptable.

Highway Widening Line.

It is stated in the design and access statement that following pre application discussions, the building outline along the service road will remain the same to ensure that potential future development within the proposed road improvement line can be facilitated. As previously stated the land within this line will need to be dedicated to the Local Highway Authority to be maintained at the public expense.

The proposed building line is very close to the back edge of the public highway boundary and therefore a retaining structure may need to be constructed as part of any S278 agreement.

Travel Plan - due to the scale of the development a Travel Plan will need to be prepared to encourage staff and visitors to travel to the site via sustainable means. The Travel Plan will be secured through a section 106.

Mitigation should the planning application be approved

A highway widening line affects the front (Bath Road) part of the site and therefore any development on this site will need to dedicate this land free of charge for maintenance at the public expense. I understand that this land has already been requested by the local highway authority in relation to the existing Section 106 agreement re the consented scheme but the land has yet to be transferred to the Council. A transport improvement scheme has been approved that involves the highway widening land.

A Travel Plan is required together with a Travel Plan Monitoring Contribution of £6,000 and TRICS SAM monitoring requirements.

A traffic regulation order contribution of £3,000 should be secured to address changes to waiting restrictions in the vicinity of the site.

Require Section 278 highway agreement for access works on Galvin Road which is adopted public highway land.

## 6.2

Drainage – requires drainage strategy to ensure sustainable drainage within the site to stop flooding of the adjacent highway or property. The applicants stated use of combined septic tank and main sewer for waste water is unlikely to be acceptable. Surface water

direct to the main sewer will not be acceptable.

- 6.3 Environmental Protection - Request standard soil quality conditions.
- 6.4 Thames Water – request condition to agree waste water infrastructure needed.

## **PART B: PLANNING APPRAISAL**

### **7.0 Policy Background**

- 7.1 The site is not allocated for development and has no land use restriction in the Local Plan. A hotel use will help support trading estate and local businesses. The proposal complies with strategic and land use Core Strategy policies. The restaurant and gym use, if available to visitors not staying at the hotel, will provide useful small scale facilities for this part of the town provided adequate car parking is provided.
- 7.2 The effect on transport infrastructure is covered below.

### **8.0 Design Matters**

- 8.1 The building will be 4 storeys higher and deeper than the previous office building. It will be one storey higher than the approved hotel scheme. For some nearby flats it will be slightly further away than the old office building. For others it will be closer.
- 8.2 The key design issue is the effect of the extra floor on nearby residential flats to the east and north east in terms of light to habitable rooms and, to a lesser degree, any overbearing effect on the outlook from habitable rooms.
- 8.3 The existing flats are about 10 metres high to eaves level and 13.5 metres to ridge line. The new building will be 15.6 metres high to the top of the fifth storey and 21.2 metres high to top storey which is set back from the edge of the building nearest the existing homes by 9.4 m on the east and 3.4 m on the north side. Compared to the approved scheme the height difference is 2.1 and 2.7 metres.
- 8.4 The five storey element at its closest point to west facing facades of the adjacent 6 flats immediately to the east varies between 13.1 metres and 15.4 metres. For 3 flats to the south east the view from their side windows will be partially obscured by the corner of the new building 14 metres away. The flats to the north will be 26 metres away (window to façade) although closer if measured at 45 degrees from windows. These dimensions are very similar to the approved scheme.
- 8.5 The arrangement of hotel room windows in the east side and rear of the building are distant enough from existing homes not to be a problem - 26 metres at an oblique angle from windows of 3 flats. Corridor windows can be obscure glazed. This arrangement is the same as the approved scheme.
- 8.6 Some flats will see much less sky and receive less light than when the office building was on the site. Compared to the approved hotel building some flats will receive less light. The applicants submitted light study states that “The results show only a negligible difference between the daylight and sunlight results of the approved and proposed designs. Whilst both schemes are not fully compliant with the BRE recommendations, the results confirm that the proposed scheme does not have any greater impact on its surrounding neighbouring properties than that of the approved scheme.” However the light study for

the approved scheme indicated it was only just acceptable, with some instances of non compliance, in terms of adverse effect on some flats. Consequently the conclusion from the new light study seems surprising bearing in mind the extra height of the building.

- 8.7 The change from the previous office building to the approved hotel building will result in the greatest change to light for residents. The additional floor will have an extra impact but it will be important to know if this changes a border line situation (the approved scheme) to an unacceptable situation. The views of the Council's light specialist on the submitted light study will be presented at the Committee meeting. Lack of day and sun light to existing homes may be a reason for refusal of the application. It should be noted that the BRE light standards are not statutory and are for guidance only. In reaching a decision on an application planning authorities can take other material considerations into account when BRE standards are not met.
- 8.8 As the building will be quite close to habitable room windows and higher than the existing building it will appear quite overbearing when seen from those windows. This would not be an issue in a town centre location. It is also not an unusual situation in some parts of the town where there are tower blocks or other large buildings.
- 8.9 In terms of overbearing effect the height and position of the approved hotel was considered borderline but accepted because of the benefit it getting the old unsightly vacant building demolished and a new building in place. The extra height of the new proposal whilst not welcome is not likely to be significantly worse in terms of outlook from homes compared in to the approved scheme
- 8.10 The detail of the eastern edge boundary treatment and planting will be important to help soften the appearance of the building at the ground floor level. These can be controlled by condition.
- 8.11 The appearance of the building and materials to be used are acceptable. It will tie in with the contemporary but varied architecture of commercial buildings on the Bath Road. It will contrast with the domestic brick and tile appearance of adjacent homes however this site is the edge of the trading estate area. The appearance is very similar to the approved hotel building.
- 8.12 Because Bath Road buildings west of the site are set back the site is quite prominent in the view from the west along the A4. Consequently the new building will provide a pleasant landmark block at the end of this view to improve the appearance of the area.
- 8.13 The approved scheme is a substantial increase in building mass compared to previous office for a site close to residential property. It was only just acceptable. The extra floorspace and additional uses (gym and conference room) on this small site create some unacceptable and undesirable features. The unacceptable features are referred to above. The undesirable features, which by themselves may not justify refusal of the proposal, collectively indicate that too much floorspace and variety of uses are proposed. Examples are basement hotel rooms, very narrow light well for those rooms, overbearing nature of the building for some residents adjacent, use of car lifts rather than ramp.
- 8.14 With the exception of light and living conditions of some existing adjacent residents the proposal complies with Core Strategy policy 8, sustainability and environment and 9 natural and built environment plus Local Plan policy EN1 and EN3 design and landscape.
- 9.0 **Access and Transport Matters**
- 9.1 The new access off Galvin Road is acceptable. It will involve the loss of some shrubs but

there is scope to plant small trees on the remainder of the highway verge.

- 9.2 The lift access to the basement rather than a ramp is unusual but it saves space.
- 9.3 Car parking is insufficient as outlined in the Transport/Highway comments above. It is accepted that hotels are not often fully occupied and some guests do not travel by private car. A parking ratio of 80% is reasonable. But 65 %, as proposed, is too low. Furthermore the restaurant, gym and conference room will generate parking demand. This demand may overlap with peak demand for hotel guests particularly early morning and evening. The approved scheme had a ratio of 80% without a gym and conference centre. Even with this ratio there is a risk of on street overflow parking in the area including residential streets nearby.
- 9.4 As use of the car lifts is time consuming and inconvenient for short stay users 7 surface level spaces is insufficient to serve hotel guest arriving, restaurant and gym users plus any other visitor or deliveries.
- 9.5 There is probably space for adequate cycle storage within the development but the store shown is poorly located being in the middle of the conference room and gym accommodation floor and involving taking bikes through the hotel reception and lift.
- 9.6 The frontage of the site is within a highway widening line. The Bath Road service road was once to be extended east many years ago. However the current highway scheme is to use the land for a bus rapid transit scheme. Consequently the frontage cannot be developed or used for car parking and the Council will need the land to be dedicated to the Highway Authority when required.
- 9.7 Because of the size of the development, the varied uses and limited car parking (even at 80% ratio) use of non car modes of travel need to be encouraged. This is in line with Core Policy 7 transport. Consequently a travel plan will be required to try to address this.
- 9.8 Whilst part of the proposal complies with Core Strategy policy 7 Transport and Local Plan transport policies other aspects do not. Car parking (amount and location) and cycle store are not compliant. The following matters are only compliant if a Section 106 agreement is signed to provide for them : dedication of highway widening land on request; right of support (re retaining wall next to proposed highway); approval of retaining wall construction; travel plan, travel plan monitoring contribution, financial contribution for parking restriction changes; agreement to sign a Section 278 highway agreement re access works.
- 9.9 The second reason for refusal, re living conditions, will be reviewed when the Council receives comments from its light consultant. The cycle parking concerns can probably be addressed if revised drawings are submitted such that this element of the reason for refusal could be withdrawn. The application could also be refused on grounds of inadequate drainage proposals. But it is recognised this issue can be probably be addressed by revised drawings and additional information. It is therefore expected that the developer address these issues should the development progress. The infrastructure reason for refusal is a holding reason; the matters of concern can be addressed if a satisfactory planning obligation is signed.

## **PART C: RECOMMENDATION**

10.0 **Recommendation**

10.1 Refuse

11 **PART D: REASONS FOR REFUSAL**

Car and cycle parking

The proposal has insufficient and poorly located car parking spaces for the number of rooms proposed and the variety of uses proposed. The development fails to provide car parking and cycle storage in accordance with adopted Slough Borough Council standards. The proposal will lead to additional on street car parking or to the obstruction of the access to the detriment of highway safety and convenience. The development is therefore contrary to Slough Borough Council Local Plan Policy T2 and Core Strategy 2006 -2026 Development Plan adopted 2008 Policy 7 Transport.

Living Conditions

The proposal is poor design in terms of the adverse effect on the living conditions of some homes adjacent to the site because of lack of adequate day and sun light. The proposal therefore does not comply with Local Plan Policy EN1 Design and Core Strategy 2006 - 2026 Development Plan adopted 2008 Policy 8 Sustainability and the environment. THIS REASON TO BE REVIEWED WHEN INFORMATION ON LIGHT STUDY AVAILABLE.

Transport Infrastructure

The proposal does not incorporate or secure (through planning obligation) land required for an approved highway widening scheme and associated support structures, mitigation of the extra travel impact of the development (travel plan), mitigation of extra on street parking demand (due to hotel and associated uses) and changes to existing on street parking restriction due to the new access. Therefore the proposal does not comply with Core Strategy 2006 -2026 Development Plan adopted 2008 Policy 7 Transport