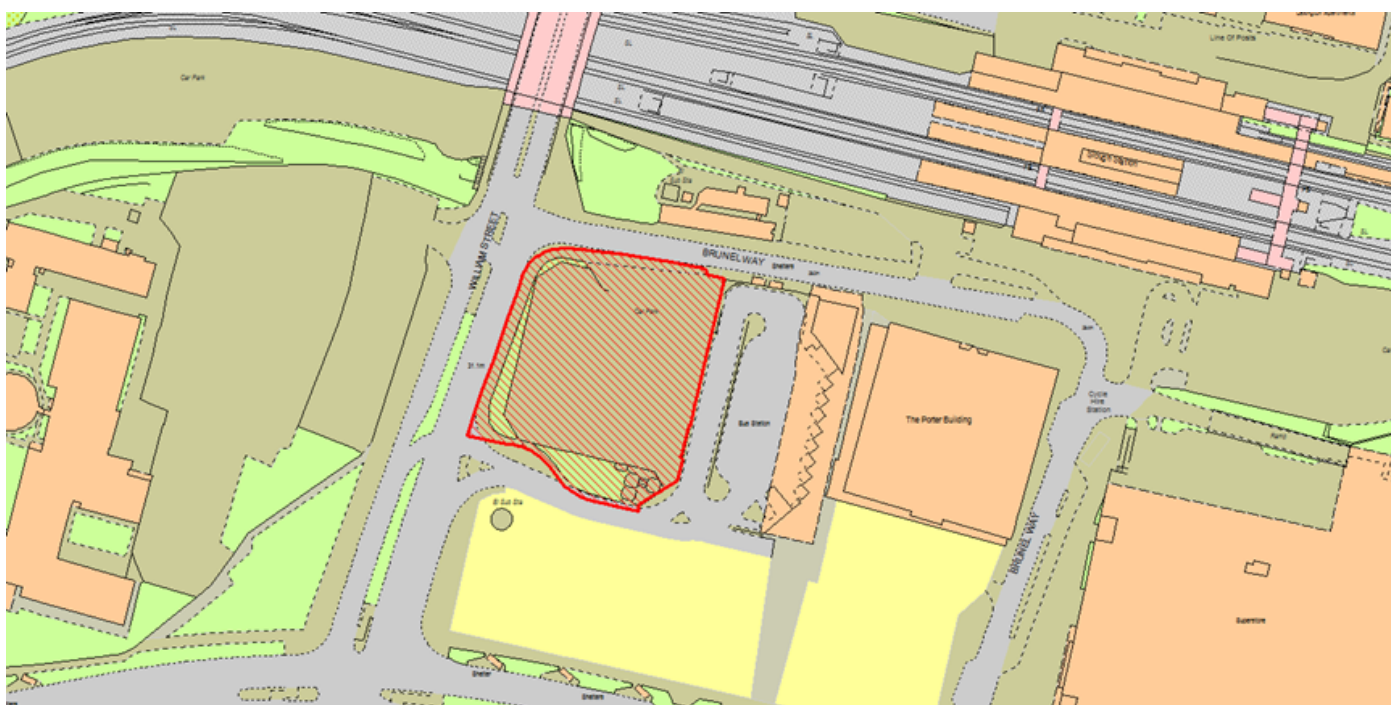


Registration Date:	N/A	Application No:	N/A
Officer:	Neil Button	Ward:	Central
Applicant:	Slough Borough Council	Application Type:	Major
Agent:	Fuller Long	13 Week Date:	N/A
Location:	Former Octagon Site, Station Square, Slough, SL1 1QY		
Proposal:	Construction of new office building with cafe use at ground floor level including two level car park with access from Stoke Road, landscaping and new lay-by .		



PRE-APPLICATION PRESENTATION

Introduction:

The applicant, Exton Estates/Aberdeen Standard Investments has commenced pre-application discussions with the Local Planning Authority for the re-development of the former Octagon Site on Brunel Way in Slough Town Centre. The site adjoins the Heart of Slough (Core Strategy) Allocation Site which is envisaged for comprehensive and significant redevelopment and regeneration.

The pre-application scheme follows the withdrawal of two planning applications for mixed use development. The 2017 hotel/residential scheme obtained a resolution to grant permission from the Planning Committee (October 2018) for:

“Ref: P/04888/019: Mixed use regeneration scheme comprising: new area of public realm/pedestrian link, build to rent (BTR) residential accommodation (343 units), a hotel (170 beds) with ancillary leisure and business facilities, retail uses (use class A1-A3), and associated basement parking)”.

The applicant opted not to pursue this scheme due to the hotel operator pulling out. The application was withdrawn by the applicant on 7th October 2019.

A subsequent full planning application was submitted in May 2019 for:

“Ref: P/04888/021: Redevelopment of temporary car park comprising the erection of a new 21 storey residential building to provide 180 residential units (Class C3), and new 7 storey office building to provide 9,570 sqm (Class B1 floorspace) including ancillary co-working space, ground floor retail uses (Use Class A1/A3), new area of public realm with landscaping, associated basement car parking, servicing areas and relocation of vehicular access from Brunel Way to Wellington Street”.

The application was withdrawn by the applicant on 7th October 2019 citing that the development was not financially viable and could not support the levels of planning obligations and affordable housing that were being sought by officers.

The Site and Surroundings:

The site is a 0.41 hectare site currently used as a temporary surface-level car park. It was formerly occupied by an office building known as The Octagon (arising from its rather unusual octagonal design) which was demolished several years ago. The site is within the Town Centre Boundary, but is not allocated within the Council's Site Allocations DPD. The site adjoins, but does not formally form part of, Slough Borough Council's Heart of Slough regeneration proposals. The site is bounded to the north by Brunel Way, Slough railway station and the railway lines.

To the south of the site is Brunel Place which comprises two office buildings of approximately 12,000m² and 22,000m² that are currently under construction. To the south, William Street joins the Wellington Street (A4) at a new a-grade interchange that has been delivered as part of the Heart of Slough masterplan.

Slough bus station is located to the east of the site. Beyond the bus station is the Porter Building, a new five-storey office development.

To the west is Stoke Road and beyond that the former Thames Valley University site which is part of the Heart of Slough proposals and is earmarked for mixed-use development including housing and offices.

The site is not within a Conservation Area, nor does it contain any listed buildings, but it is close to and visible from several Grade 2 listed buildings – the rail station

(three separate list entries) and St Ethelbert's Church and Presbytery (two list entries). Windsor Castle is a Grade 1 listed building and a Scheduled Ancient Monument; the Castle features in long distance views of the application proposal.

Site History:

The relevant planning history for the site is set out below (planning history that has been excluded involves details to discharge conditions and adverts).

P/04888/021 - Redevelopment of temporary car park comprising the erection of a new 21 storey residential building to provide 180 residential units (Class C3), and new 7 storey office building to provide 9,570 sqm (Class B1 floorspace) including ancillary co-working space, ground floor retail uses (Use Class A1/A3), new area of public realm with landscaping, associated basement car parking, servicing areas and relocation of vehicular access from Brunel Way to Wellington Street. – Withdrawn by applicant on 7-October 2019

P/04888/019 - Mixed use regeneration scheme comprising: new area of public realm/pedestrian link, build to rent (BTR) residential accommodation (343 units), a hotel (170 beds) with ancillary leisure and business facilities, retail uses (use class A1-A3), and associated basement parking. Withdrawn by applicant on 7-October 2019

P/04888/018 - Screening opinion for redevelopment of former Octagon for a mixed use regeneration scheme comprising; a new area of public links, build to rent accommodation and a hotel with leisure and business facilities. (343 Build to Rent units, a hotel (170 beds) and ground floor A1/A3 uses. Environmental Impact Assessment not required 28 Sept 2017.

P/04888/017 - Retention of surface public car park for a further temporary period of two years (The use of the site as a temporary car park with 124 parking spaces was initially allowed on appeal on 13 November 2012 under appeal reference APP/J0530/C/12/2181980). Approved 14 April 2015.

P/04888/016 - Erection of 2 no linked office buildings (10 no floors and 8 no floors) 27,000m² of internal office floor space (Class B1a) together with access, parking and servicing. This application was reported to the Planning Committee on 17 October 2013 and it was resolved that the application be delegated to be approved following completion of s106 agreement (S106 not completed). No decision issued

P/04888/012 - Demolition of existing building and erection of two linked office buildings (10 no. floors and 8 no. floors) comprising 29,417square metres of gross external office floor space (Class B1a) together with access, parking and servicing. Approved 17 June 2008

P/04888/000 - Construction of a building of 106,399 sq. ft. (gross) comprising of 70,000 sq. ft. of offices, 1,500 sq. ft. of gymnasium and clinic, 7000 sq. ft. of plant space and 28,000 sq. ft. of car parking. Approved 01 February 1979.

The Proposal:

The current proposals comprise the erection of a 7 storey office building to provide 12,401 sqm B1 floorspace including the provision of two ground floor cafes, a two level car park to provide 120 car spaces, landscaping around the building edges and provision of a new vehicular access and lay-by area on Stoke Road.

The architecture of the building reflects the principles proposed for the office building in the previous 2019 scheme but the elevations and façade treatment have been amended at the lower levels to respond to the changes to the ground floor level.

The offices are to be designed flexibly so they could accommodate a single occupier, or a series of individual occupiers. Roof terraces are proposed at 6th floor and roof level.

EXTRACT FROM SBC CONSTITUTION: PART 5.2: CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS IN RELATION TO PLANNING AND LICENSING MATTERS

Developer's briefings to Planning Committee Protocol

Early member engagement in the planning process is encouraged and supported by the NPPF. Enabling a developer to brief and seek the views of elected Members about planning proposals at an early stage (usually pre-application or where this is not possible, very early in the formal application period) is important in ensuring that new development is responsive to and reflects local interests/concerns where possible.

Slough Borough Council proposes to achieve this objective through formal presentations to the Planning Committee in accordance with procedures set out in this Protocol. No decision will be taken at these meetings and if the pre-application submission is followed by a formal planning application, the application will be subject to the normal procedure of a report to a future meeting of the Planning Committee.

1. The purpose of briefings is:

- To enable Members to provide feedback that supports the development of high quality development through the pre- application process, and avoid potential delays at later stages;
- To ensure Members are aware of significant applications prior to them being formally considered by the Planning Committee;
- To make subsequent Planning Committee consideration more informed and effective;
- To ensure issues are identified early in the application process, and improve the quality of applications; and
- To ensure Members are aware when applications raise issues of corporate or strategic importance.

2. What sort of presentations would be covered in the briefings?

Presentations on proposed large-scale developments of more than 50 dwellings, or 5,000m² of commercial or other floorspace or which includes significant social, community, health or education facilities, or where the Planning Manager considers early discussion of the issues would be useful; and

Presentations on other significant applications, such as those critical to the Council's regeneration programmes, significant Council developments, or those requested by the Chair of the Committee or deemed appropriate by the Planning Manager.

3. Frequency and timings of meetings

The presentation will coincide with the monthly Planning Committee meetings.

4. Format of the presentations

- The meeting will be chaired by the Chair of the Planning Committee who will ask Members attending to disclose any relevant interests;
 - The Developer will supply all presentation materials including any models, and these will be displayed in the meeting room;
 - Officers to introduce the proposal (5 minutes);
 - The developer and/or agents will be invited to make a presentation (10 minutes);
 - Ward Members will have the opportunity to address the Committee (4 minutes each, subject to the discretion of the Chair);
 - Question and answer session: Members of the Planning Committee and Ward Members will be able to ask questions to the Developer and officers (15 minutes) Supplementary questions from Ward members to be at the discretion of the Chair);
-
- A short note of the meeting summarising Members' comments would be made.

5. Other matters

Members questions will be restricted to points of fact or clarification and must be structured in a way that would not lead to a member being perceived as taking a fixed position on the proposals. Members should ensure that they are not seen to pre-determine or close their mind to any such proposal as otherwise they may then be precluded from participating in determining the application.