

Background

1. In February 2019 the Council validated a Planning Application for the demolition of the existing buildings and redevelopment to provide a new hotel and retail unit, along with refurbishment of part of the existing car park and service area. The application was supported by a full set of plans/ drawings (see below) and the following documents:-
 - Air Quality Assessment;
 - Contaminated Land Assessment;
 - Design and Access Statement;
 - Drainage Strategy;
 - Energy Strategy/ Sustainability Appraisal;
 - External Lighting Assessment;
 - Heritage Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment;
 - Historical Environment Assessment (Archaeology);
 - Landscaping Details;
 - Planning Statement;
 - Statement of Community Involvement;
 - Travel Plan;
 - Transport Assessment.
2. The application was subject to various discussions with Officers in relation to the principle of the proposed development, the design of the proposed building, access arrangements, heritage considerations, climate change, flood risk/ drainage and transport. This led to the submission of revised plans and drawings in November 2019.
3. Officers requested update reports on Design and Access, Heritage Townscape and Visual Impact as well as Planning. This is the Planning Statement Addendum. It has been further updated to address the adoption of Part 2 of the Hillingdon Local Plan.
4. The original Planning Statement explained the proposed development in terms of the site and its surrounding area, the pre-application discussions for it, the details of the proposed development and the planning policy that related to it.

Subsequent Discussions

The Principle of Development

5. The GLA “*strongly supported*” the location of the development for hotel use, but was concerned about the loss of an existing office building in Uxbridge Town Centre, which is identified as a preferred location for office growth in Policy DME3. It noted that Policy E1 of the draft London Plan seeks the retention of offices where viable and requested supporting evidence to justify the loss of the offices. Hillingdon Policy Officers quantified the need for hotel accommodation as being for 4,947 bedspaces in Hillingdon, but also questioned the loss of office accommodation and requested marketing evidence.

6. It was noted that the Local Plan Part 2 designates Uxbridge Town centre as a whole as a “*Hotel and Office Growth Location*” on the policies map related to, based upon, the need for both uses. Policy E1 clearly envisages that existing office space will be redeveloped for other uses. Policy E2, and Hillingdon’s Policy DME5, similarly directed new hotels to accessible sustainable locations such as Uxbridge Town Centre.
7. We noted that the existing building on the Site is relatively small (1,094sqm) and provided a letter from Rose Williams (a pre-eminent local agent) explaining that the premises are of a poor quality in terms of ceiling heights, windows, toilet provision and M&A. The site had been marketed for 4-5 years until 2017, during which time there was no interest in re-occupying the premises. The landowner considered that the costs of upgrading the premises, which are relatively small in size, would be unviable to undertake.
8. In 2017 a pre-application meeting was held with Hillingdon regarding the proposed redevelopment of the site. The subsequent letter set out the requirements of a planning application. No requirement for marketing evidence was identified. Given the size and quality of the premises, the viability of refurbishing it, as well as the marketing that had been undertaken for 4-5 years in relation to it, it was decided that it was no longer worth marketing the building any longer. Policy Officers stated that “*I would also agree with the statement that the offices are both unattractive and underutilised in their current form.*”
9. The application scheme maximises the use of this part of the island site, to optimise the number of bedrooms that can be delivered. This is important given the accessible sustainable location for a hotel, which is supported by the GLA, within the Hotel and Office Growth Location and the need identified by Hillingdon for an additional 4,947 bedspaces in the borough.
10. We noted that the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 allocates the wider island site for residential-led mixed use development, including other main town centre uses. It was noted that there is no requirement to provide or retain office use within this policy. Policy Officers subsequently accepted the principle of the loss of the existing offices on the application site, and the redevelopment of it for a hotel.

Policy Update

11. On 16 January 2020 the Council Adopted the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2. This comprises the Development Management Policies, Site Allocations and Designations as well as the Policies Map. These documents are intended to help the delivery of the strategic policies set out in the Local Plan Part 1 (2012). Together they will form a comprehensive development strategy for the borough up to 2026.
12. Within this context, Policy E4 of the Local Plan Part 1 aims to strengthen Uxbridge Town Centre as a suitable location for hotels. Policy SA26 concerns the whole block bounded by High Street, Belmont Road, Bakers Road and Cock’s Yard, and allocates it for residential led mixed use development. Other main town centre uses may be acceptable on upper floors. The redevelopment of 25-30 Bakers Road for a hotel accords with this policy as a hotel is a town centre use which will be developed on part of the wider site, leaving a significant area for redevelopment for retail use at ground floor with residential above. The residential capacity of the Site is to be determined by design.

13. In light of this designation we do not consider that Policy DME3 is relevant to the determination of the application. However, and notwithstanding this, we consider that the loss of office use would be acceptable in terms of the criteria of this policy in any event:-
 - i. The site was actively marketed for in excess of two years;
 - ii. The site is agrees to be no longer viable for office use; and
 - iii. The surrounding employment uses will not be undermined by the proposed development.
14. Policy DME5 of the Development Management Policies supports hotel development in accessible, sustainable locations such as the application site, subject to three criteria:-
 - i. High Standard of Design;
 - ii. Provision of an accessible layout in accordance with DME6; and
 - iii. No adverse impact on nearby land uses or the amenity of adjoining occupiers.
15. As noted below, the proposed development will provide a high standard of design that will make a positive contribution to local amenity and the streetscape in accordance with the first criterion.
16. We have separately agreed that the scheme accords with the requirements of Policy DME6.
17. The development will not be unacceptable in terms of noise, lighting, emissions, privacy, overlooking or other potential nuisances, and is acceptable in terms of parking or traffic congestion.
18. We therefore consider that the proposed development accords with this policy.
19. Policy SA26 itself sets out various criteria which comprise:-
 - Provision of upper floor residential units including affordable housing; other main town centre uses may be acceptable on upper floors. The larger part of the allocation is available for residential development; the application scheme is a suitable town centre use in accordance with this criterion.
 - Retention of ground floor retail uses fronting onto the High Street and provision of main town centre uses, providing active frontages onto Bakers Road and Belmont Road. There is a requirement to maintain access to the service area and car park from Bakers Road. The application scheme maintains this, but also incorporates active uses comprising the hotel entrance and a retail unit along the remainder of this frontage.
 - The redevelopment should enhance the pedestrian thoroughfare of Cock's Yard linking Uxbridge Town Centre and the Bus Interchange. The proposed development enhances Cock's Yard alongside the hotel and beyond. Further enhancement can be incorporated into subsequent schemes for a residential led development on the remainder of the Site.
 - Amenity space and car parking should be provided in accordance with the Council's standards. No amenity space is required for hotel occupiers. Parking is provided within part of the existing car park. The remainder of the spaces within that existing car park can be used to serve the redevelopment of the remainder of the wider site.

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- The redevelopment should sustain and enhance the significance of the adjacent Conservation Area and its setting. The proposed development represents a significant enhancement of the appearance of the Site. The effect on Heritage Assets is set out in the Heritage Statement and the Addendum to it. As noted below, this effect will be at a low level.
- The Council will expect redevelopment proposals to reflect the scale and character of the surrounding townscape and have regard to the setting of the Old Uxbridge and Windsor Street Conservation Area and Listed Buildings. The proposed development relates well to the taller buildings on Bakers Road. As noted above, it also relates appropriately to the conservation area and other listed buildings.
- Proposals should provide scope to incorporate the redevelopment of the land to the south of the site. The application scheme does not affect the ability to redevelop the adjoining site.

20. We conclude that the proposed development is acceptable in the context of the criteria of Site Allocation SA26.

Revised Plans

21. In November 2019 we submitted updated revised plans to address the design issues that had been previously discussed. The changes are described in the Design and Access Statement Update. A schedule of the original and updated plans is set out below.

Plan Title	Plan Reference	Original Plan Revision	Updated Plan Revision
Site Development Plan	12024 PL-P 001	C	F
Site Plan	12024 PL-P 002	C	F
Basement Plan Car Park	12024 PL-P 098	D	G
Basement Plan Hotel Lobby	12024 PL-P 099	D	G
Ground Floor Plan	12024 PL-P 100	D	H
First Floor Plan Restaurant	12024 PL-P 101	b	F
Second Floor Plan Hotel Accommodation	12024 PL-P 102	C	G
Third Floor Plan Hotel Accommodation 12024 PL-P 103 B	12024 PL-P 103	B	F
Fourth and Sixth Floor Plan Hotel Accommodation	12024 PL-P 104/6	B	F
Fifth and Seventh Floor Plan Hotel Accommodation	12024 PL-P 105/7	B	F
Eighth Floor Plan Hotel Accommodation	12024 PL-P 108	B	F
Ninth Floor Plan Plant Room	12024 PL-P 109	B	E
Tenth Floor Plan Roof	12024 PL-P 110	B	E
Section A - A	12024 PL-S 300	C	D
Section B - B	12024 PL-S 301	C	D
NW, SW and Long Section Elevations D – D E – E Bakers Road / Cocks Yard	12024 PL-S 390	D	F

Bakers Road Elevation	12024 PL-S 400	C	D
Cocks Yard / South East Elevation	12024 PL-S 401	C	D
Service Yard / South West Elevation	12024 PL-E 402	C	E
North West Elevation	12024 PL-E 403	C	E

22. We consider that the appearance of the hotel scheme will have a high standard of design in accordance with the first criterion of Policy DME5.

Conclusions

23. The wider site within which the application site is situated is now allocated for a residential-led mixed use redevelopment (SA26). This allows for other town centres uses such as a hotel. Accordingly, the application site is not subject of Policy DME 3 which seeks the retention of office uses. Even if it were subject to this policy, it is agreed that the proposed development is acceptable in terms of marketing, viability and the effect of it on the surrounding employment uses. Accordingly, the proposed development is acceptable in terms of Policy DME3 in any event.
24. The proposed development will also have a high standard of building and site design, meet the requirements of DME6 and not have any adverse amenity effects on adjoining users, in accordance with Policy DME5.
25. The alterations to the design in the revised plans, detailed above will enhance the appearance of the development. The scheme will still result in less than substantial harm to heritage assets. However, this will be at a very low level. Furthermore, the other planning benefits clear outweigh such harm:-
- Redeveloping a small, unattractive and poor quality office building with a scheme that makes the most effective use of the application site as a highly accessible and sustainable location;
 - Helping to meet the identified need for hotel accommodation in a preferred location;
 - Providing economic benefits through the provision of a hotel which will provide direct employment and provide soft economic infrastructure to businesses in the local area;
 - Provide social enhancements through the improved design of the building and enhancement to the vitality of this part of the town centre;
 - Making the most effective use of an accessible previously developed urban site with limited environmental constraints.
26. We consider that the proposal accords with the development plan and will facilitate a sustainable development in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF, and should be granted planning permission.