

## Unrestricted Report

### ITEM NO: 7

Application No.  
**12/00137/FUL**  
Site Address:

Ward:  
Ascot

Date Registered:  
17 February 2012

Target Decision Date:  
13 April 2012

**Innovation House Kingswood Kings Ride Ascot  
Berkshire SL5 8AD**

Proposal: **Change of use of Building C from office (B1a use) to 86 bed hotel (C1 use) with ancillary cafe and gym, and associated minor alterations to the elevations and landscaping.**

Applicant: UKCP Four Ltd

Agent: Boyer Planning

Case Officer: Margaret McEvit, 01344 352000

[environment@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:environment@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

### Site Location Plan (for identification purposes only, not to scale)



## 1 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY (If Any)

621211

Validation Date: 01.01.1996

Erection three B1 buildings with associated plant/escape stairs and gatehouse, access road and car parking including demolition of existing industrial building at Blackbushe Engineering. Section 106. Part PD removed.

**Approved With A Legal Agreement**

## 2 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

### Key to abbreviations

<i>BFBCS</i>	<i>Core Strategy Development Plan Document</i>
<i>BFBLP</i>	<i>Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan</i>
<i>RMLP</i>	<i>Replacement Minerals Local Plan</i>
<i>WLP</i>	<i>Waste Local Plan for Berkshire</i>
<i>SPG</i>	<i>Supplementary Planning Guidance</i>
<i>SPD</i>	<i>Supplementary Planning Document</i>
<i>MPG</i>	<i>Minerals Planning Guidance</i>
<i>DCLG</i>	<i>Department for Communities and Local Government</i>
<i>NPPF</i>	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i>
<i>SEP</i>	<i>South East Plan</i>

<u>Plan</u>	<u>Policy</u>	<u>Description</u> (May be abbreviated)
BFBLP	EN8L	Dev On Land Outside Settlements
BFBLP	EN9	COU Adaptation etc Outside Settlements GB
BFBLP	EN20	Design Considerations In New Development
BFBLP	GB4	Reuse and COU Of Buildings Within GB
BFBLP	M9	Vehicle And Cycle Parking
BFBCS	CS1	Sustainable Development Principles
BFBCS	CS2	Locational Principles
BFBCS	CS9	Development on Land Outside Settlements
BFBCS	CS24	Transport and New Development
SEP	CC6	Sustainable Comms. & Character of Env.

## 3 CONSULTATIONS

(Comments may be abbreviated)

### Royal Borough Of Windsor And Maidenhead

No objection.

### Transportation Officer

Access and parking details acceptable. Peak hour trips likely to be lower than the current B1 use but information has been provided for budget hotels only rather than for general hotel use. This may result in higher trip levels requiring contributions towards highway measures. Travel plan should be secured site wide. Current Travel Plan was secured by condition and covers site as a whole.

## Environmental Health and Safety

Advised condition restricting construction works associated with the refurbishment is included on any planning permission.

## Planning Policy Section

Sequential assessment and impact assessment have been submitted as a hotel is a major town centre use. This does not cover sites that may be available in Windsor and Maidenhead or Surrey Heath. No policy objection to the change of use of the site in terms of its impact on the Green Belt.

## Winkfield Parish Council

Recommend approval;  
Winkfield Parish Council supports this application.

## **4 REPRESENTATIONS**

2 letters of representation have been received raising the following considerations:

- plans do not show the location of the PHC unit and photovoltaic panels referred to in submitted documents. Units above the roof line could impair the design of the building.
- Outside dining areas would affect the external appearance of the building.
- concerns over how the cafe would be restricted to hotel and business park occupiers
- activity on the site may not increase overall but activity would extend outside the current office hours on the site
- impact of the more intensive use on Englemere nature reserve close by
- outside storage should not be permitted
- increased visitors to the site would increase noise and activity levels

## **5 OFFICER REPORT**

### **i) PROPOSAL**

This application proposes the change of use of Building C from B1 office use to a hotel providing 86 beds together with an ancillary café and gym. Parking provided on site to serve the existing B1 use of the building will be retained to serve the hotel. No changes are proposed to the vehicular access to the site.

### **ii) SITE**

The site comprises three office buildings set within areas of landscaping. A total of 452 car parking spaces are available on site to serve the three buildings. Parking is split into 3 areas, to serve the individual buildings. Vehicular access to the site is provided from one access onto Kings Ride, serving all 3 buildings.

### **iii) PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

#### **(1) Principle of Development**

The site is currently in B1 office use, with the building forming a 3 building office development. The building has been unoccupied since being built. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was approved on 27 March 2012.

The NPPF has at its heart a presumption in favour of sustainable development and advises that planning policies should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. Land allocations should be regularly reviewed. Where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated employment use, applications for alternative uses of land or buildings should be treated on their merits having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses to support sustainable local communities (para 22).

Bracknell Forest Employment Land Review (Dec 2009) concludes that there is a significant oversupply of office sites in both Bracknell and the wider sub-region. In the short and medium term, there appears to be no requirement for new office sites in the Borough, either on quantitative or qualitative grounds. The proposal is not in a defined employment area, as defined by the Proposal Map, therefore in terms of employment planning policy no concern is raised over the loss of B1 floorspace in this location.

The building has been unoccupied since it was constructed, and information in the Bracknell Forest Employment Land Review indicates that there is no requirement for new offices within the Borough. It would not be reasonable to retain the building in office use as there would not appear to be a reasonable prospect of the site being used for office purposes.

The site is within the Green Belt, as defined on the adopted proposals map. The main characteristics of Green Belts are their permanence and their openness. Para 90 of the NPPF explains that certain forms of development are not inappropriate in Green Belt provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within Green Belt. The re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction is not considered to be inappropriate development within the Green Belt.

The reuse of an office building within the Green Belt for use as a hotel would appear to be appropriate in terms of securing sustainable new development. The development represents the conversion of an existing building and would support the provision of tourist and visitor facilities.

Policy CS9 of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) sets out the protection to be given to land outside settlements when considering development proposals.

The Council will protect land outside the settlement for its own sake, particularly from development that would adversely affect the character appearance or function of the land; and

- i) protect the defined gaps within or adjoining the borough from development that would harm the physical and visual separation of settlements either within or adjoining the Borough; or
- ii) maintain the Green Belt boundary within Bracknell Forest and protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development.

The change of use does not involve the extension of buildings already on the site or the significant alteration of the buildings. The use of the building as a hotel instead of an office building is not considered to adversely affect the character, appearance or function of the land, which is currently in a commercial use. The building is one of 3 office buildings on the site, with the other 2 remaining in office use. No changes are proposed to the level of car parking to be provided on the site, and it is considered that the hotel use will not generate higher vehicle trip rates than the currently permitted use.

There are no significant external alterations to the building other than changes to doors and windows therefore it cannot be considered that the proposed development would conflict with the existing open, rural and undeveloped character of the Green Belt. The café would be designed to permit outdoor eating, but this will take place within a defined area close to the building and it is not considered that this represents further intrusion into the Green Belt. The area is in front of the building and contained within the built footprint of the business park.

The NPPF recognises the importance of planning policies seeking to promote competitive town centre environments and set out policies for the management and growth of town centres. Where land uses are proposed for main town centre uses on sites outside of town centres, a sequential test should be applied to planning applications. Main town centre uses should be required to be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations and only if suitable sites are not available should out of centre sites be considered.

A Sequential Assessment has been submitted with the application. It states: "As part of the investigation of potential hotel development sites within Bracknell Town Centre and the wider Borough Area, contact has been made with Bracknell Forest Borough Council and over 15 commercial property agents who cover the area. No potential hotel development sites were identified and there are no sites for hotel use being marketed. In conclusion, there are no sites for budget hotel development that are suitable, available and viable in the town centre or in edge-of-centre locations."

Although sites within Bracknell Forest Borough have been assessed for availability, suitability and viability, other areas outside of Bracknell Forest should also be assessed for suitable, available and viable sites which are in a sequentially preferable location. The application site is located close to the Borough boundary with Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Surrey Heath Borough, therefore an appropriate catchment for the Sequential Assessment should be established and units should be assessed for sequentially preferable sites. The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead have been consulted on the application but have raised no objection to the proposal.

a) Adjacent residential properties

The building is one of 3 office buildings which were constructed as the Kingswood Business Park. The likely vehicular trip rates to the hotel are likely to be lower than to an office building. A Transport Statement was submitted with the application which indicated that the hotel use would generate a lower rate of vehicular trips on a daily basis with trips to the hotel distributed throughout the day and fewer trips during the morning and evening peak rates. Local residents are not likely to experience increased vehicular movements from the site, although trips may take place for greater number of hours each day. However, given the general screening of the site and the distance from the access to the site to nearby properties, this change in pattern of use is not considered likely to disturb local residents.

The café would be provided with doors to allow tables to overflow outside the building. However, this area is some distance from residential properties and it is not considered that the use of this area will result in increased noise level.

**(2) Impact upon the Character and Appearance of the Area**

The site is well screened by trees and it is not considered that the physical changes to the building which involve the insertion of windows on the side elevations and provision

of doors into the café area will impact significantly on the appearance of the building. Internal changes to the building to permit the occupation as a hotel will not detract from the appearance of the building. Some form of signage of the building and entrance to the site will be required but no details have been formally submitted. Any signage will be subject to separate permission under advertisement regulations and are not considered as part of this application.

The submitted Design and Access Statement makes reference to providing a CHP unit and photovoltaic panels on the building. Details have not been included within the application and there is no requirement for an application for the change of use of an existing building to provide such measures. Such measures may require separate planning permission or may be permitted development. These details do not form part of this planning application.

### **(3) Transport Considerations**

#### **a) Access and Visibility**

No alteration is proposed to the existing access which is acceptable. Visibility at the junction and road width into the site are adequate for the proposed use. There are areas to turn larger vehicles on site and although more larger vehicles may be expected, the amount is not considered to be excessive. There is a right turn lane on Kings Ride which can cater for the vehicles when accessing the site.

#### **b) Parking Requirements**

There appears to be in the region of 110 spaces available for the hotel use. This is just under the maximum required. However, the red line covers the whole site and the use of other parking areas on site could take place. The existing B1 uses on site could also use the hotel which would lead to shared parking so customers arrive and park in the business use parking but stay in the hotel. Disabled parking is not shown. This is recommended to be addressed by condition.

#### **c) Vehicle Movements / per day:**

The peak hour trips associated with the hotel would be expected to be lower than for the existing business use and over the day the number of trips may be similar. Information provided by the applicant relates to budget hotels. No restriction on the nature of the hotel would be applied to any planning permission so clarification has been sought on trip rates for unrestricted hotels to establish that there will be no increase in trip rates requiring contributions to be sought towards highway measures in the area.

The site is covered by a Travel Plan which was secured by condition. The site does not meet the threshold for a hotel travel plan but it is located in a non sustainable location where travel to the site by non car modes is very limited. The LID SDP does permit travel plans to be sought for areas which have poor accessibility by non car modes. The existing travel plan for the site should be altered to take account of the proposed hotel use.

#### **iv) CONCLUSIONS**

The change of use of the building from office use to hotel use is considered to be acceptable in principle. The site is located within the Green Belt, but no significant alterations to the building are proposed. Traffic and parking levels should not increase

as a result of the change of use. The building is currently unoccupied and information in the Bracknell Forest Employment Land Review indicates that there is no requirement for new offices within the Borough. A Sequential Assessment was submitted with the application which concluded that there are no sites for budget hotel development that are suitable, available and viable in the town centre or in edge-of-centre locations. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

## **6 RECOMMENDATION**

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:-

01. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.  
REASON: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
02. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the following approved plans and other submitted details received by the Local Planning Authority on 13.2.11:-  
(00)010 P01, (20)AP 01 P03, 25114 (20)AS 001 P01, 25114 (20) AE 001 P03,  
(20) AP 00 P03, (20) AP 050, (20) AP 051 P01, 25114 (20) AE 051 P01, 25114  
(20) AS 051 P01, (20) AP 100 P01, (20) AP 150 P01,  
REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out only as approved by the local Planning Authority.
03. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall;  
a) match those of the existing building, or  
b) shall be as unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.  
REASON: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area.  
[Relevant Policies: SEP CC6, BFBLP EN20, Core Strategy DPD CS7]
04. The hotel shall not be occupied until the associated vehicle parking has been surfaced and marked out in accordance with the approved drawing. The spaces shall thereafter be kept available for parking at all times.  
REASON: To ensure that the development is provided with adequate car parking to prevent the likelihood of on-street car parking which would be a danger to other road users.  
[Relevant Policies: SEP T4, BFBLP M9, Core Strategy DPD CS23]
05. The development hereby permitted shall not be begun until a plan showing 7 car parking spaces shall be designed for the use of people with disabilities. The parking shall be marked out, signed and provided in accordance with the approved plans prior to the first occupation of the building that the parking relates to and shall thereafter be retained, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.  
REASON: To ensure that people with disabilities have adequate access to the development.  
[Relevant Policy BFBLP M7]
06. The gym and cafe shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary to the hotel use.  
REASON: The site is located within the Green Belt where intensification of uses may be harmful to the rural character of the area.  
[Relevant Policies: BFBLP GB4, Core Strategy DPD CS9]

07. Save as  
a) with the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority, and  
b) in accordance with any conditions contained in any such permission  
no goods, materials, plant or machinery shall be stored outside any of the buildings on the site without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority .  
REASON: In the interests of visual amenity.  
[Relevant Policies: SEP CC6, BFBLP EN20]
08. No noisy construction work shall take place outside the hours of 08:00 and 18:00 Monday to Friday, 08:00 and 13:00 Saturday and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays.  
REASON: To safeguard the amenities of the area and the occupiers of neighbouring properties.  
Relevant Policies: SEP NRM10, BFBLP EN25
09. Development shall not be commenced until a travel plan has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The travel plan shall include a programme of implementation and proposals to promote alternative forms of transport to and from the site, other than by the private car, a scheme of monitoring and provide for periodic review. The travel plan shall be implemented as agreed, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.  
REASON: To encourage the use of all travel modes.  
[Relevant Policies: Core Strategy Development Plan Document CS23]

Summary Of Reason(s) For Decision:

The following development plan policies have been taken into account in determining this planning application:

Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan (saved policies).

EN20 – as it would be acceptable in terms of its impact upon the character of the area, and amenity of surrounding properties and adjoining area.

EN8 – which only permits development on land outside settlements where it would not adversely affect the character, appearance or function of the land, and would not damage its landscape quality, or where conspicuous from the Green Belt, would not injure the visual amenities of the Green Belt.

EN9 – which permits change of use and adaptation of non-residential buildings outside settlements (and outside the Green Belt) where they are of permanent construction, in keeping with its surrounding, would not require extensive alteration or rebuilding, would not be detrimental to the character of the building or its landscaped setting, would not result in more than 500 sqm of business floor space, and would not cause significant environmental, road safety, traffic generation or other problems.

GB4 – which permits re-use and change of use of buildings within the Green Belt where it would not impact upon the open, rural and undeveloped character of the Green Belt and not be materially greater than present use, they are of permanent construction, is in keeping with its surrounding, would not result in more than 500 sqm of business floor space, and would not cause significant environmental, road safety, traffic generation or other problems.



M9 – which seeks satisfactory parking provision for vehicles and cycles.

R6 – which permits visitor accommodation where it would not result in environmental problems or inconvenience on the public highway.

#### Core Strategy DPD

CS1 – which seeks to ensure that development makes efficient use of land and buildings, reduces the need for travel, promotes a mix of uses, conserves water and energy use, supports the economic wellbeing of the population, protects and enhances safety, natural resources, character of local landscape and historic and cultural features.

CS2 – which seeks to ensure that land will be allocated for development in the following order: Bracknell Town Centre; previously developed land and buildings in defined settlement; other land within defined settlements where there is no conflict with other policies; extensions to defined settlements with good public transport links.

CS9 – which seeks to protect land outside of settlement for its own sake, particularly from development that would adversely affect the character, appearance or function of the land.

CS23 – which seeks to ensure the Council will use its powers to reduce the need to travel, and promote alternative modes, increase safety of travel and maintain and improve the local road network.

The South East Plan, Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East of England (May 2009).

SP5 - which seeks to protect the Green Belt.

CC6 – which seeks development that will respect and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements and landscapes, and use innovative design to create a high quality built environment which promotes a sense of place.

#### National Planning Policy Framework

(Please note that this is not intended to be an exhaustive list).

The following material considerations have been taken into account:

The proposal is considered to comply with BFBLP Policies EN8, EN9, EN20, GB4, M9, R6 Core Strategy DPD policies CS1, CS2, CS9, CS23 and South East Plan policies SP5 and CC6 and guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework. The proposal will not adversely affect the open, rural and undeveloped character of the Green Belt, significantly affect the amenities of neighbouring or result in any significant increase in traffic to the site. Third party representations have been received raising concerns that the proposal would adversely affect the Green Belt, result in noise and disturbance to residents and increase traffic levels at the site. These comments have been taken into consideration, however it is considered that the proposal would be in accordance with the development plan, and would not result in a form of development out of keeping with the character and appearance of the area, and would be designed and sited so as to avoid an adverse impact upon the residential amenities of neighbouring properties. The planning application is therefore approved.

Doc. Ref: Uniform 7/DC/Agenda

The application file to which this report relates can be viewed at the Council's Time Square office during office hours or online at [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk)