

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Address: 400 Longwater Avenue, Reading, RG2 6GF

Application 211522 / FUL

Proposal: Removal of link bridge

Target Decision date: 09/11/21

Case officer: Beatrice Malama

1. Site description and Surrounding Area

The application site is a five - storey commercial office building located at 400 Longwater Avenue, Green Park Business Park. Located north of the site are two large carpark and a multi-story office building; west of the site across the road is a large undeveloped land and to the east is Foundry Brook stream and beyond which are various office buildings and large open car parks. Predominant in the area are multi story office buildings of different types and sizes.

The application site comprises of two five-story office blocks of the same design and height; one to the north and another to the south and car parks west and south of the site. The property was recently constructed and yet to be occupied.

2. The Proposal

A retrospective planning permission is sought to formalise the removal of a bridge linking the northern and southern buildings at 400 Longwater Avenue. Planning permission for the property was granted in 2017 and construction of the buildings was completed in August 2021. Figure 1 shows the two office buildings and the link bridge as approved under planning permission 160569; whereas figure 2 shows the existing west facing elevation of the two buildings without the link bridge.

Figure 1: Plan as approved with link bridge highlighted in red

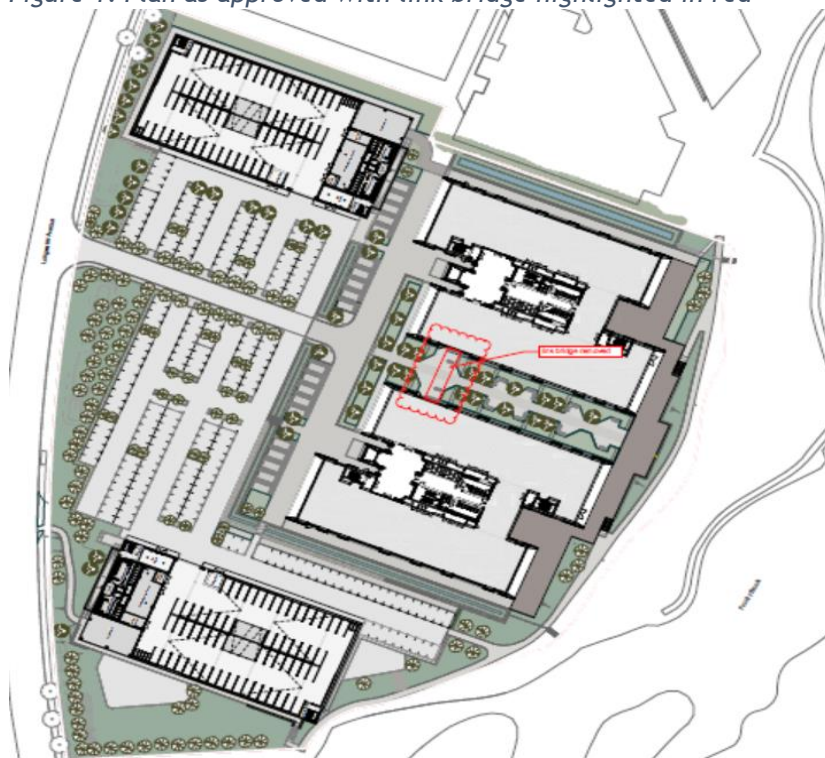


Figure 2: Existing West facing elevation



3. Consultation

Internal Consultation - not required for this application.

External Consultation

A site notice was sent to the agent on 05/10/2021. There are no adjoining neighbours likely to be affected by this proposal and therefore there was no neighbour consultation for this application.

No responses have been received.

4. Plans and Documents Considered:

Existing Drawings

- A_PL_020_R02 Alternative Scheme, Site Plan
- A_PL_110_R02 Alternative Scheme, General Arrangement Plan, Level 00
- A_PL_111_R02 Alternative Scheme, General Arrangement Plan, Level 01
- A_PL_112_R02 Alternative Scheme, General Arrangement Plan, Level 02
- A_PL_113_R02 Alternative Scheme, General Arrangement Plan, Level 03
- A_PL_114_R02 Alternative Scheme, General Arrangement Plan, Level 04
- A_PL_115_R02 Alternative Scheme, General Arrangement Plan, Roof

- A_PL_220_R01 Alternative Scheme, General Arrangement Sections, East/West & North/South
- A_PL_310_R01 Alternative Scheme, General Arrangement Elevations, North Building, North & South
- A_PL_311_R01 Alternative Scheme, General Arrangement Elevations, North & South Buildings, East & West
- A_PL_312_R01 Alternative Scheme, General Arrangement Elevations, South Building, North & South

Proposed Drawings

- A_PL_021_R00 Bridge Omission, Site Plan
- A_PL_120_R00 Bridge Omission, General Arrangement Plan, Level 00
- A_PL_121_R00 Bridge Omission, General Arrangement Plan, Level 01
- A_PL_122_R00 Bridge Omission, General Arrangement Plan, Level 02
- A_PL_123_R00 Bridge Omission, General Arrangement Plan, Level 03
- A_PL_124_R00 Bridge Omission, General Arrangement Plan, Level 04
- A_PL_125_R00 Bridge Omission, General Arrangement Plan, Roof
- A_PL_230_R00 Bridge Omission, General Arrangement Sections, East/West & North/South
- A_PL_320_R00 Bridge Omission, General Arrangement Elevations, North Building, North & South
- A_PL_321_R00 Bridge Omission, General Arrangement Elevations, North & South Buildings, East & West
- A_PL_322_R00 Bridge Omission, General Arrangement Elevations, South Building, North & South

Received 14th September 2021

5. Relevant Planning History

Application Ref	Description	Decision	Date
110699	Discharge of conditions of planning permission 01/01151/REM	Determination made	4/10/2011
110700	Discharge of conditions of planning permission 08/00261/REM	Determination made	4/10/2011
160569	Development of commercial office buildings (B1 Use Class), access, decked and surface car parking, cycle parking, landscaping, servicing, associated engineering and ancillary works	Permitted	23/ 1/2017
181184	Discharge of condition 19 of planning permission 160569	Discharged	23/ 8/2018
181185	Discharge of condition 5 for planning permission 160569.	Discharged	19/ 9/2018
181406	Application for discharge of condition 23 of planning permission 160569.	Discharged	17/ 9/2018
181608	Non Material Amendment for changes to the approved plans under Condition 2 of the Planning Permission Ref. 160569 (as amended by 180639)	Permitted	29/10/2018
181718	Discharge of conditions 3, 4, 12 & 13 of planning permission 160569	Discharged	1/ 4/2019
181723	Non material amendment related to planning permission 160569 including minor alterations to building elevations, footprint and height, cycle spaces, parking structures (footprint and height), and surface car park.	Permitted	13/12/2018
182216	Discharge of conditions 16 & 17 of planning permission 160569	Discharged	11/ 2/2019
191034	Application for approval of details reserved by condition 12 part c of application 160569	Discharged	6/ 9/2019
191483	Non-Material Amendment to planning permission 160569 including minor external appearance changes to buildings and car park structures (amended)	Permitted	3/ 2/2020
201235	Discharge of Conditions 6, 20, 22 and 24 of application 160569	Discharged	12/ 1/2021
210629	Discharge of condition 6 (cycle storage) & condition 21 (BREEAM post- construction review) of application 160569	Discharged	14/ 5/2021
211092	Non Material Amendment to permitted application 160569 to remove the link bridge between buildings	Withdrawn	23/ 8/2021

6. Discussion with applicant/ agent

The Local Planning Authority has worked positively and proactively with the applicant to resolve relevant matters to allow permission to be granted within the prescribed target or agreed extended timescale for the decision to be issued.

7. Relevant Planning Guidance

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for Reading relevant to the application site comprises the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

The ‘*National Planning Policy framework*’ (‘NPPF’) 2021 states clearly that its content is to be a material consideration in the determination of applications. The ‘NPPF’ states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Development Framework (LDF) (Reading Borough Local Plan, 2019) according to their degree of consistency with the ‘NPPF’ (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the ‘NPPF’, the greater the weight that may be given). Accordingly, the ‘NPPF’ and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

8. Relevant Policies

The application has been assessed against the following policies:

National

National Planning Policy Framework;
National Planning Policy Guidance;

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7 Design and the Public Realm

9. Appraisal

a) Character, Appearance and Accessibility

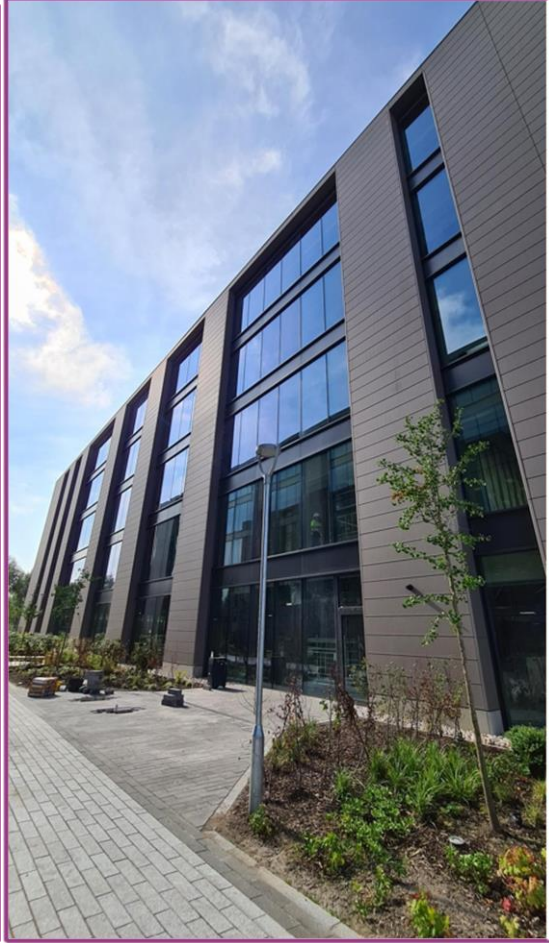
Policy CC7 requires that “developments address the needs of all in society and are accessible, usable and easy to understand by them, including providing suitable access to, into and within, its facilities, for all potential users, including disabled people, so that they can use them safely and easily; and that they are visually attractive as a result of good high quality built forms and spaces, the inclusion of public art and appropriate materials and landscaping”.

The proposal has been assessed in terms of impact of the works on the character and appearance of the building and surrounding area as well as on accessibility. The works to remove the link bridge have been completed and the façades on both buildings made good with finishing materials of high quality to match the rest of the buildings. No other works to both buildings have been done or proposed as part of this application. It is considered therefore that the removal of the link bridge connecting the two office buildings (north and south) does not materially change the character of the buildings nor does it harm the appearance of the buildings as shown in figures 3 and 4.

Figure 3: Existing Northern Office Block



Figure 4: Existing Southern Office Block



Additionally, accessibility to and within individual buildings is not affected as there is direct access to each building from the carpark and easy connectivity within each building.

In light of the above, the proposal is not considered to conflict with Design and the Public Realm Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

10. Recommendation

Grant planning permission, subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

1. Approved Plans AP1

Informatives

1. Terms
2. Building Control
3. Positive and Proactive