

Reading Planning.

27th September 2024

Dear Sirs,

Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Address: Former Gas Works Building, Gas Works Road, Reading, RG1 3EE

Application No: 160378

Change of use, conversion, extensions and various associated works to former Gas Works Buildings to create a part 4, 5 and 6 storey building adjacent to the River Kennet and a 3 storey building fronting Gas Works Road, providing 20 (10x1, 9x2 and 1x3- bed) residential units (Class C3).

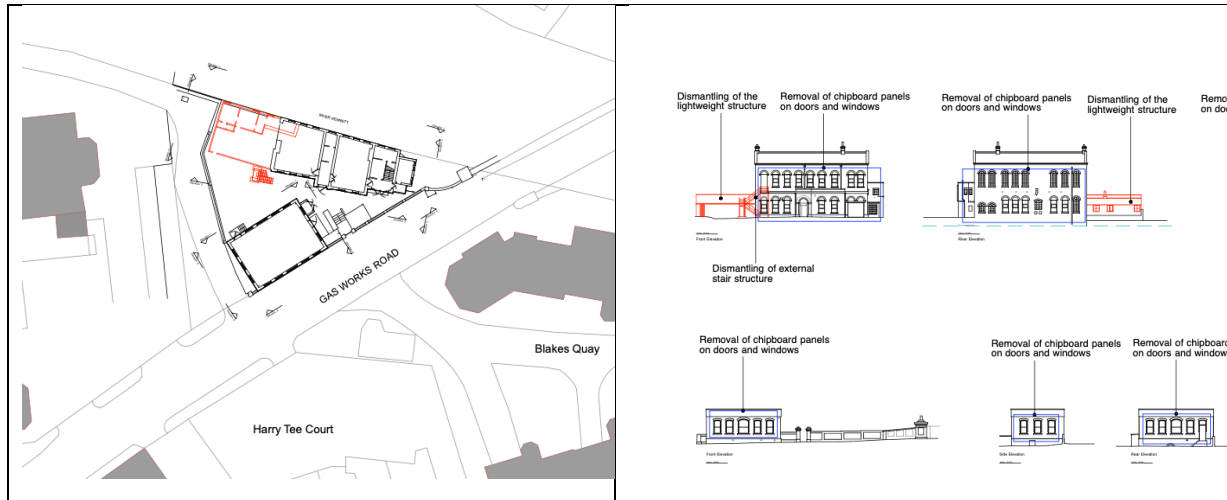
Please find an application for a Certificate of Lawfulness that seeks to determine that the above development has lawfully commenced. The application was permitted on 25th October 2016.

In support is an email from the original case officer (dated 20th January 2021). The email examines in detail whether a material start has been made on site. The officer concludes that in their opinion the development has commenced within 3 years of the date of the permission being granted.

The main reason why the officer believes the development has been implemented relates to the demolition of a side wing.

The officer refers to the demolition of this element as being part of an application that was approved to partially clear the demolition condition (condition 4) attached to the original consent (ref 171160).

Below are extracts from the approved demolition method statement which details the demolition of this element.



According to the case officer's email they took photos of the site on 17th September 2015 which showed the side wing still being present on site and then another photo taken on 4th June 2019 which shows that the side wing has been demolished. They also refer to photos in the original committee report which show this side wing in situ. As can be seen the aerial photo is taken from the committee report and it is possible to see the side wings.

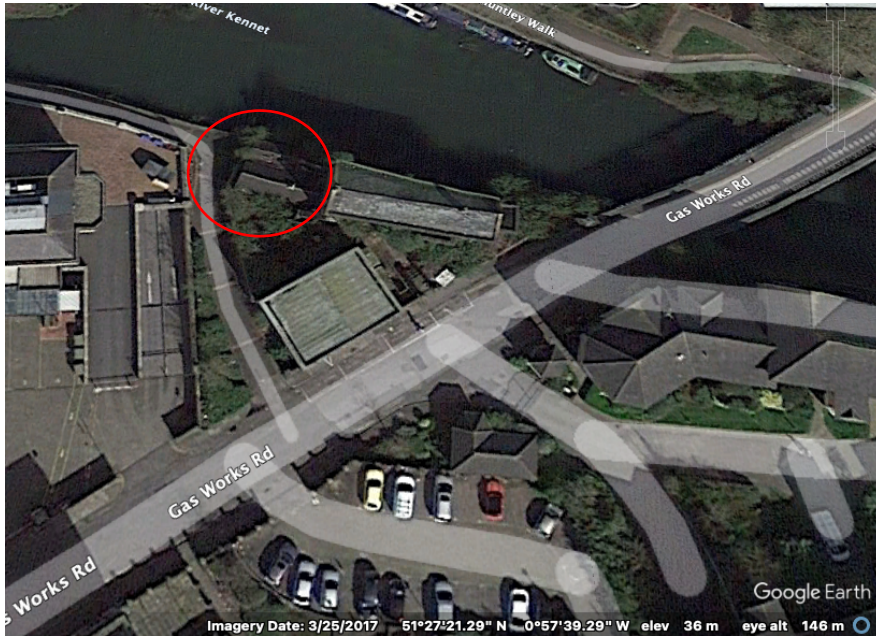


Aerial view looking north

Extract from 2016 committee report (application ref 160378).

In their opinion this constituted a material start.

Copies of these photos taken by the officer are not available. However, the following ariel photos of the site from google earth also support the timelines stated by the officer. The following photo dated 25th March 2017 the roof of the side wing is clearly visible.



However, as the following aerial views from 2018 detail, the side wing extension has been demolished and all that can be seen is the hardstanding.



As detailed in the email, with the exemption of condition six, (contamination) this has been partially discharged and condition 10, (land gas scheme), all of the pre commencement conditions have been cleared.

The case officer state that it may be possible to clear the outstanding conditions retrospectively.

In the context of condition 6 the remediation measures have been cleared, it is just the timetable of work and management procedures that needs to be agreed. Similarly, condition 10 is linked to condition 9 (land gas investigation) and this has been cleared. Elevated levels of methane have been discovered and a remediation scheme needs to be provided. Again, this can be cleared quickly and as per the wording of this condition it can be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupancy of the development.

I hope the council can favourably consider this application and determine that the development has lawfully commenced. However, if you need anything else, or have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours faithfully

Andy Hollins

Consultant Chartered Planner.