

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Address: Bennet Court, Bennet Road, Reading, RG2 0QX

Application No: PL/26/0441

Proposal: Non-material amendments to permission PL/22/1936 (granted on 05/12/2023 for demolition of existing buildings and erection of one industrial building) to alter the wording of conditions 2 (approved plans), 7 (outside storage), 13 (parking) and 14 (vehicle access) to alter the vehicular access point, reconfigure the on-site parking layout, omit one door and relocate one door on the east elevation, window changes and provision of a roof level access ladder on the north elevation and associated works (amended description).

Applicant: DV5 Coltham (Reading) Ltd

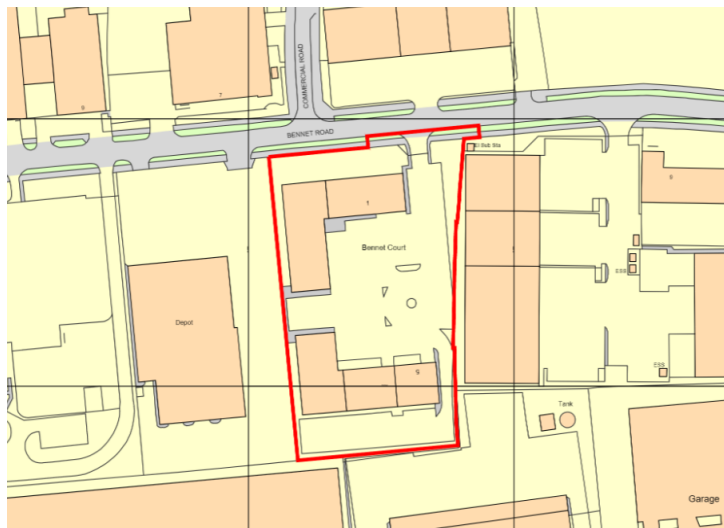
Date received (valid from): 15/04/2026

Target Decision date: 13/05/2026

Case officer: Jonathan Markwell

1. Site Description and Surrounding Area

- 1.1 The application site is 0.76 hectares in size and roughly rectangular in shape. It is located on the south side of Bennet Road, opposite the junction with Commercial Road (to the north) and is known as Bennet Court. The site is presently under construction, with two red-brick 'r' shaped office buildings having recently been demolished. Access is solely possible from Bennet Road, with the remainder of the existing site enclosed by fencing. The red line site boundary includes part of the Bennet Road pavement and verge.



- 1.2 The surrounding area is solely commercial in nature. A variety of premises surrounding the site, such as a Select Environmental Services centre to the north, a series of occupiers within a large warehouse to the east, the Smith News publishing centre to the south (fronting onto Acre Road) and a Renault truck dealership to the west. The site is within the designated Bennet Road Core Employment Area, as per Policy designation EM2d (Location of New Employment Development – Bennet Road). The site is also identified as having potential to contain contaminated land and is within a smoke control zone. The site is located within the outer consultation zone associated with AWE Burghfield, as per Policy OU2 (Hazardous Installations). There is no requirement to consult the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) on the original application as the development was unlikely to lead to an increase of 500 people at the site. The application site is located within Flood Zone 1. There are no listed buildings or any heritage assets on site, with none in the immediate vicinity either. The site is also located outside of any designated conservation area.
- 1.3 The site is located within the Secondary Core Area (Zone 3) of the Council's adopted Parking SPD. The site is accessible via public transport with the closest bus stops located on the B3031 Basingstoke Road, around 300 metres away, which provide frequent services

towards Reading Town Centre and Whitley Wood. The site is strategically well located with the main A33 located west of the site, providing wider access to the M4, town centre and wider road network. Bennet Road is a cycle route in the Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plan (LCWIP).

2. The Proposal

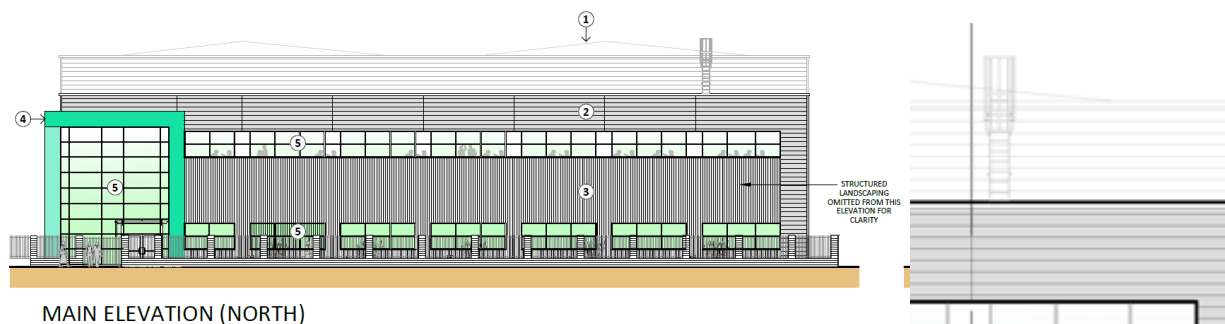
2.1 Non-material amendments to planning permission 221936 granted on 05/12/2023 are proposed. More specifically, the proposal seeks to:

- alter the wording of conditions 2 (approved plans), 7 (outside storage), 13 (parking) and 14 (vehicle access) to accommodate the following changes:
 - a.alter the vehicular access point – more specifically swing gates are proposed to be introduced to replace the approved barrier system
 - b.reconfigure the on-site parking layout,
 - c.omit one door (specified to be a personnel door) and relocate one entrance door on the east (side) elevation,
 - d.window changes on the north (front) elevation
 - e.provision of a roof level access ladder on the north elevation (set back from the frontage, at the point where the ancillary office space meets the higher level roof associated with the industrial building.
 - f. Amend the floor to ceiling height of the first floor office floorspace.
- More specifically, condition 2 is sought to be amended to list the relevant revised plans to accommodate these changes.
- Given that the layout plan is also referenced in conditions 7 and 13, these conditions are sought to be updated too to reflect the latest plan.
- Given that the site access drawing presently referenced in condition 14 is also changing as a result of these proposals, this plan has been updated too and the condition is therefore sought to be update this to accommodate the latest plan.

2.2 These changes have arisen through design development and to meet the requirements of the anticipated future occupier.

2.3 Prior to the registration of the application the manner of the application was confirmed with the agent, with it decided to explicitly reference individual conditions, rather than simply seeking altered plans to be considered.

2.4 During the course of the application the applicant clarified that the originally specified flue on the north elevation is in-fact an access ladder to the roof and no flue is proposed. The description of development was updated accordingly, while no further comments were required by RBC Environmental Protection.



3. Public Consultation

- i. Neighbour Consultation
No statutory requirement for any for this type of application.

No responses received.

4. Internal / External Consultations

- i. **RBC Transport Planning** – This application consists of non-material amendments to permission PL/22/1936 (approved 05/12/2023) to revise conditions 2 (approved plans), 7 (outside storage), 13 (parking) and 14 (vehicle access). Changes include relocation of the vehicular access, reconfigured parking layout, minor alterations to the east elevation (door omissions/relocations and window changes), and installation of a roof-level flue on the north elevation.

Car parking is proposed along the eastern boundary of the site, with additional provision within the service yard to the rear. The amended layout shows no reduction in the overall number of marked parking spaces compared to the approved plans, which is considered acceptable.

With regard to vehicular access arrangements, the originally approved scheme incorporated a liftable barrier positioned approximately 14 metres back from the highway boundary. This setback distance would allow larger vehicles, including HGVs, to fully clear the highway while waiting for the barrier to be operated, thereby avoiding any obstruction or interference with the free flow of traffic.

The proposed amendment seeks to replace the liftable barrier with manually operated swing gates that open outwards towards the highway. To facilitate this change, the setback distance has been reduced to approximately 10 metres (when the gates are open). This arrangement raises concerns in highway safety terms, as the reduced depth is unlikely to provide sufficient space for larger vehicles to stand clear of the highway while the gates are being opened. As a result, vehicles—particularly HGVs—may be required to wait partially within the carriageway, leading to potential obstruction or conflict with passing traffic.

For these reasons, the amended access arrangement is not considered acceptable. Swing gates can be acceptable, but they must open inwards and retain the previously approved set back distance. Please ask the applicant to address this point.

Planning Officer comments: Revised plans were received which showed inward (into the site) opening gates, rather than outwards (which was originally reducing the distance from 14m to 10m, as the position of the gates themselves - when closed - is the same as previous). A Planning Officer assessment of this change meant it did not necessitate further input from the Transport Officer.

- ii. **RBC Environmental Protection** – Originally commented that more information was required on the flue, such as what it is extracting and whether there would be any odour or noise impacts. The applicant then clarified that no flue is proposed, with the structure in question actually being an external ladder to access the roof level. On this basis, no further comments were required by RBC Environmental Protection.

5. Plans Considered

- i. The Council, in reaching its recommendation, has taken into consideration the application form submitted by the applicant, together with the following plans:

22-024-PL-03 Rev U – Site Layout Plan – As Proposed (OS Based)
22-024-PL-04 Rev G – Floor Plans & Roof Plan – As Proposed
22-024-PL-05 Rev K – Elevations & Sections – As Proposed

~~22-024-PL-06 Rev E – Site Sections~~
~~22-024-PL-11 Rev C – Street Scene – As Existing & As Proposed~~
~~22-024-PL-14 – Typical Double Leaf Gate Details~~
As received 15/04/2026

~~J32-6748-PS-004 Rev A – Proposed Site Access~~
As received 21/04/2026

22-024-PL-03 Rev V – Site Layout Plan – As Proposed (OS Based)
22-024-PL-06 Rev F – Site Sections
22-024-PL-14 Rev A – Typical Double Leaf Gate Details
As received 11/05/2026

J32-6748-PS-004 Rev B – Proposed Site Access
As received 12/05/2026

6. Relevant Planning History

221936/FUL - Demolition of existing buildings and erection of one industrial building for flexible industrial processes (Use Class E (g)(iii)), general industrial (Class B2) or storage or distribution (Class B8) uses with ancillary offices, and all other ancillary and enabling works including altered access, on-site parking, landscaping, drainage, engineering and boundary treatment works. Granted following completion of s106 legal agreement 05/12/2023.

240021/NMA - Non-material amendments to permission 221936 (granted on 05/12/2023 for demolition of existing buildings and erection of one industrial building) to alter the wording of conditions 2 (approved plans), 7 (outside storage) and 13 (parking) to provide a canopy above the entrance, and separately alter the wording of condition 8 (BREEAM Interim Certificate) to alter the time trigger for approval from pre- commencement (barring demolition) to pre-occupation. Agreed 14/02/2024.

240150/APPCON - Discharge of conditions 3 (Materials), 12 (Demolition and Construction Method Statement), 24 (Sustainable Drainage Strategy), 25 (Landscaping) and 26 (Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan) of planning permission 221936. Granted 18/07/2024.

PL/24/1011 (NMA) - Non-material amendments to permission 221936 (granted on 05/12/2023 for demolition of existing buildings and erection of one industrial building) to alter the wording of conditions 2 (approved plans), 7 (outside storage) and 13 (parking) to provide a transformer structure in the north-east of the site, a louvre on the east elevation and additional photovoltaics at roof level (amended description). Agreed 03/10/2024.

PL/25/1311 (NMA) - Non-material amendments to permission 221936 (granted on 05/12/2023 for demolition of existing buildings and erection of one industrial building) to alter the wording of conditions 2 (approved plans), 7 (outside storage) and 13 (parking) to alter the alignment of the entrance boundary wall and reconfigure the on-site parking layout. Agreed 18/09/2025.

7. Equality Act 2010:

In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

8. Relevant Planning Guidance

- i. Whilst there is no statutory definition of what constitutes a ‘non-material’ amendment, Section 96A, part 2 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) states that, *"In deciding whether a change is material, a local planning authority must have regard to the effect of the change, together with any previous changes made under this section, on the planning permission as originally granted."*

9. Relevant Policies

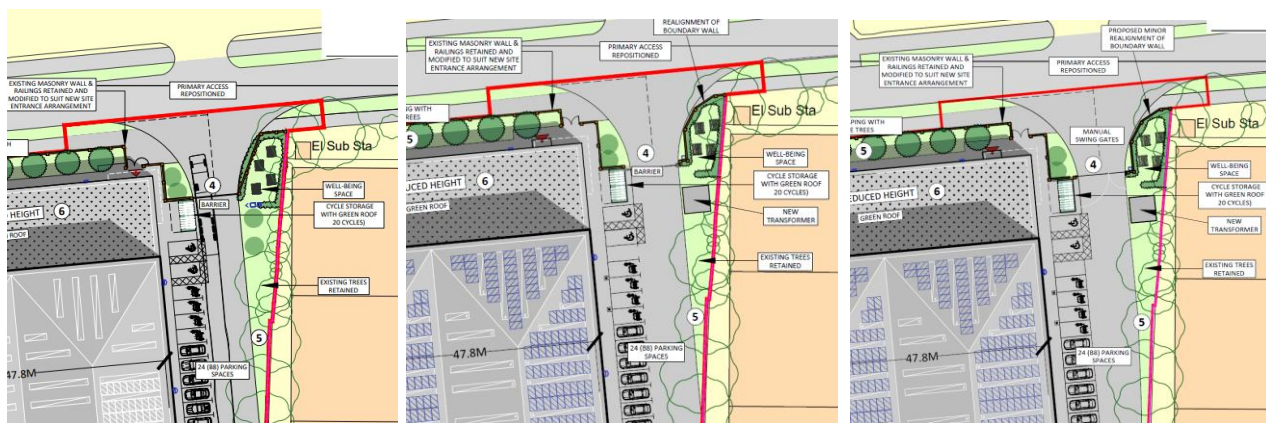
- i. The proposed amendments are assessed for materiality – not on the basis of their planning merits. Planning policies therefore do not apply.

10. Appraisal

A number of changes are proposed as part of this application. It is therefore most appropriate to consider each in turn, in the context of the conditions proposed to be altered:

- a. alter the vehicular access point – more specifically swing gates are proposed to be introduced to replace the approved barrier system

As per the RBC Transport comments above, following revisions to the opening direction of the gates, these changes (as shown below, also accounting for the previous NMA application at the site raise no highway concerns. No amenity or design concerns are envisaged as a result of these changes either.

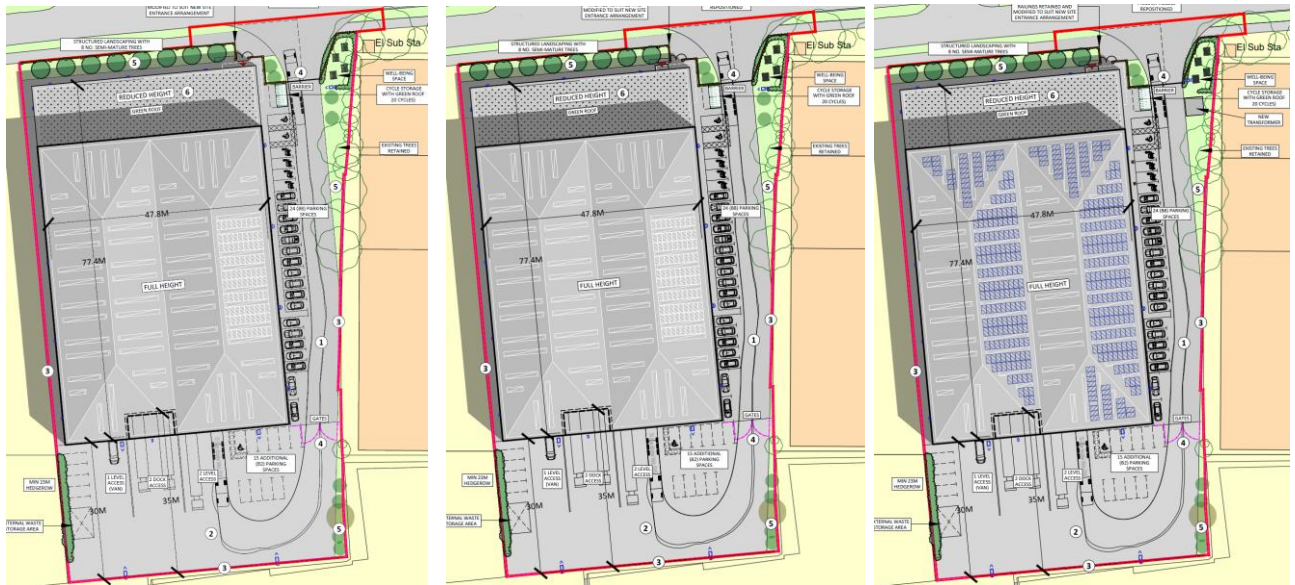


Left: Extract of Rev J – PL/22/1936 Centre: Rev T – PL/25/1311. Right: Rev U – as now proposed

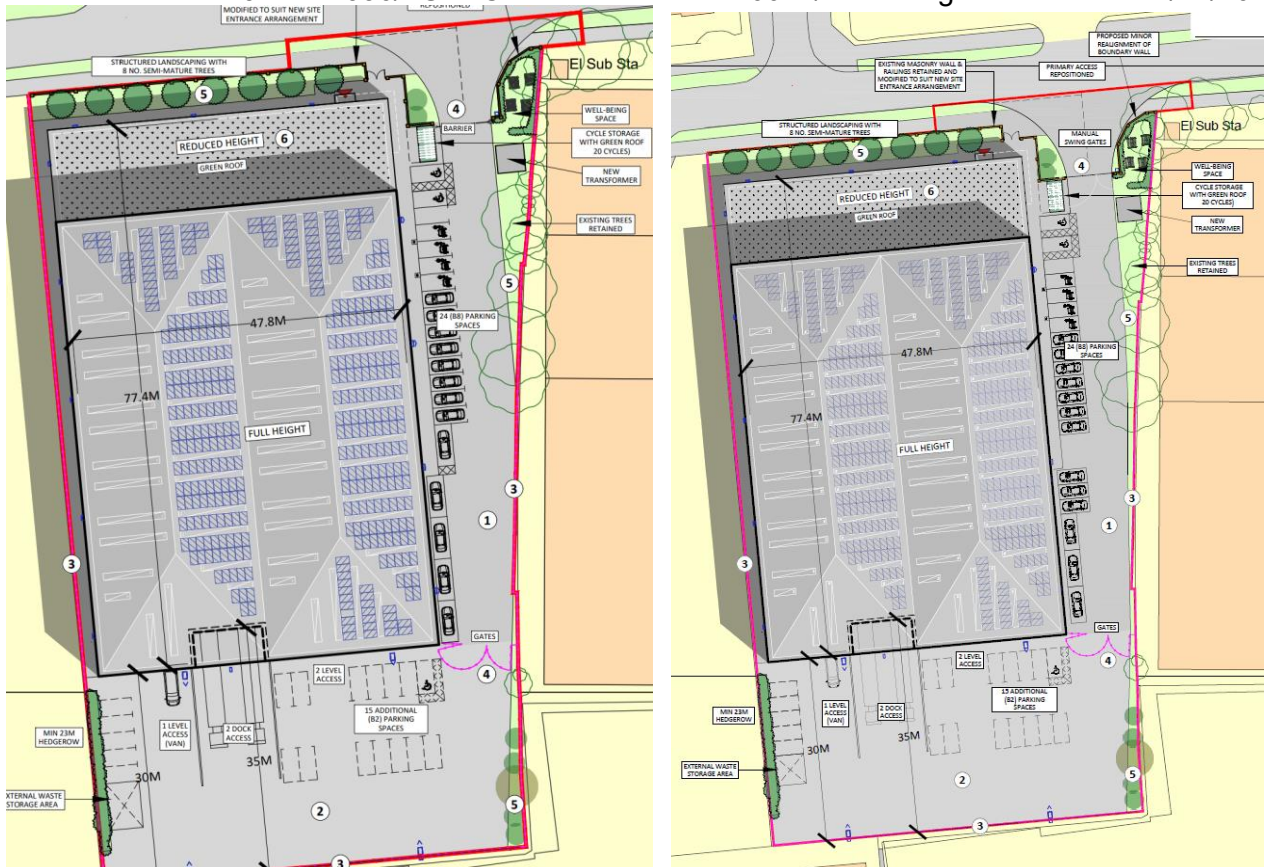
- b. reconfigure the on-site parking layout

The changes to the parking layout does not alter the overall number of spaces provided and are said to be proposed to suit the requirements of a future operator. No concerns are raised by RBC Transport. The alterations are a result of further design development, as can be expected on a scheme of this nature. The amendments are considered to be non-material changes and the relevant appropriate plans have been submitted to show the proposed changes within the context of the wording of condition 2. In all regards they are considered to be satisfactory.

It is acknowledged that as well as the proposed changes, the plans also include previous amendments already approved since the original permission. Accordingly, extracts of the relevant plan from the original approval, two previous NMA applications (see relevant history) and the current application are all detailed below (where applicable) to illustrate the ‘journey’ of the proposals to this point.



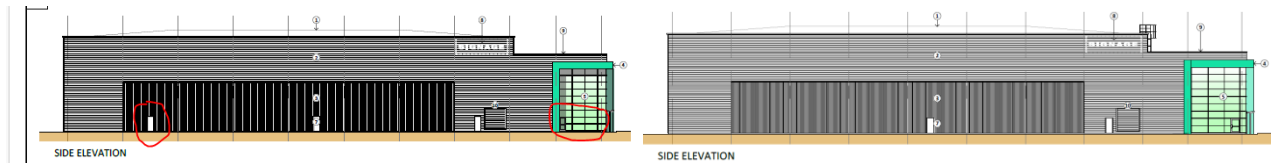
Above Left: Rev J - 221936/FUL. Centre: Rev K - 240021/NMA. Right: Rev P – PL/24/1011.



Above Left: Rev T, approved as per PL/25/1311 Right: Rev U, as now proposed.

c. omit one door (specified to be a personnel door) and relocate one entrance door on the east (side) elevation

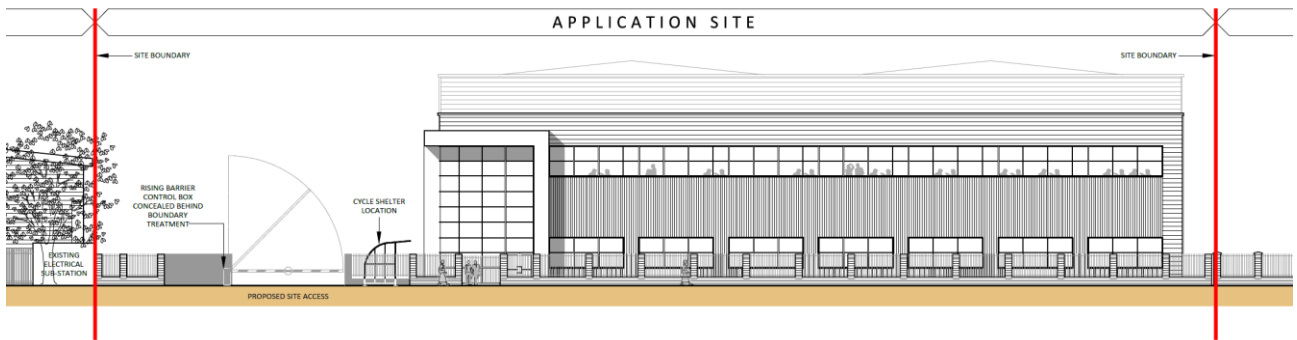
As can be seen below, there are some minor fenestration alterations on the front elevation. None of these changes alter the design idiom of the scheme and are non-material changes in the context of the original permission.



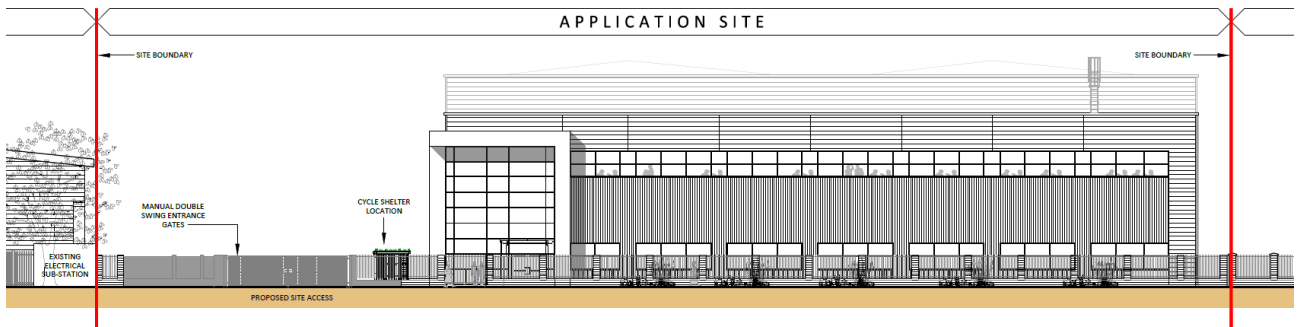
Left: originally approved side elevation. Right: as now proposed side elevation.

d. window changes on the north (front) elevation

As can be seen below, there are some minor fenestration alterations on the front elevation. None of these changes alter the design idiom of the scheme and are non-material changes in the context of the original permission.

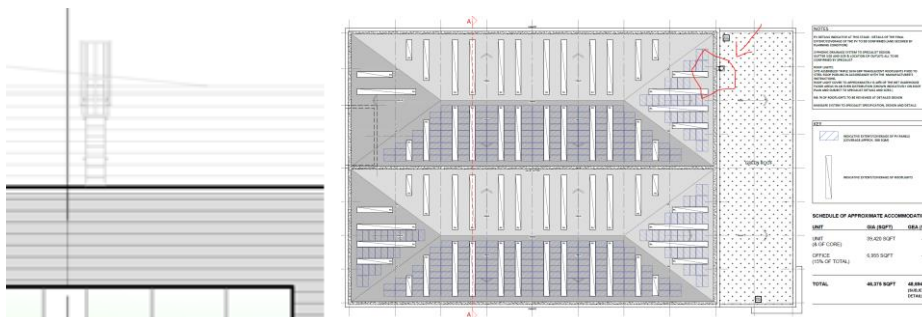


Above: originally approved streetscene elevation. Below: as now proposed streetscene.



e. provision of a roof level access ladder on the north elevation (set back from the frontage, at the point where the ancillary office space meets the higher level roof associated with the industrial building).

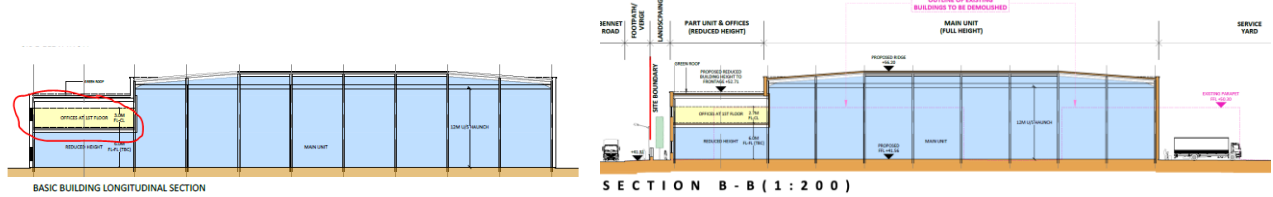
This is considered to be a modest addition, as required from a practical and safety perspective to gain access to the roof, for maintenance purposes (noting the large array of PV). Hence, no design concerns are raised and its inclusion will improve the quality of the space provided at the site.



f. Amend the floor to ceiling height of the first floor office floorspace.

As can be seen below, the floor to ceiling height of the ancillary first floor office floorspace is proposed to decrease from 3m to 2.7m. As this is an internal change, planning permission is not

required for such a change. Nevertheless, it is not considered to compromise the overall quality of the space for future users.



a) Alter the wording of condition 2 (approved plans)

To facilitate the above changes, condition 2 is required to be updated to reflect the amended plans now proposed. As per the procedure of s96a applications, the originally approved documents are referenced again (where they are not proposed to be altered), alongside the now proposed iterations of the relevant plans submitted.

b) Alter the wording of condition 7 (outside storage)

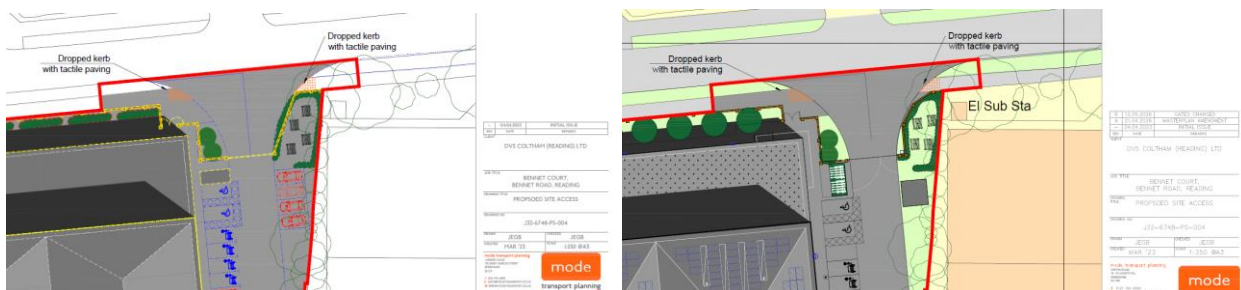
As referenced at section 2.1 above, one of the plans proposed to be updated in respect of condition 2 is already referenced in condition 7. To ensure consistency, it is therefore sought for the wording of condition 7 to be updated too. It must be noted that the proposed changes themselves do not seek to alter the outside storage intentions, meaning there is no consequential impact on the condition except to update the reference to the latest proposed plan.

c) Alter the wording of condition 13 (parking)

As referenced at section 2.1 above, one of the plans proposed to be updated in respect of condition 2 is already referenced in condition 13. To ensure consistency, it is therefore sought for the wording of condition 13 to be updated too. Given this condition specifically refers to the parking and this is proposed to be updated, it also follows that the condition is updated too. The altered parking arrangements are considered to be appropriate and therefore the condition can simply be updated to reference the latest proposed plan.

d) Alter the wording of condition 14 (site access)

As referenced at section 2.1 above, the proposals involve altering the site access by providing swing gates instead of the approved barrier system. Accordingly, the plan referenced in condition 14 is being altered too to reflect this change. The altered access arrangements are considered to be appropriate and therefore the condition can simply be updated to reference the latest proposed plan.



Left: Extract of J32-6748-PS-004 Site Access Plan – PL/22/1936 Right: Rev B, as now proposed.

Overall comments

In overall terms, officers are content that the proposed changes are acceptable, both in themselves and collectively as part of the original planning permission. In light of this being the fourth separate s96a application associated with the original permission, the cumulative impacts need to be taken into account too. In summary, it is not considered that this application and previous NMAs (Refs

240021/NMA, PL/24/1011 and PL/25/1311 – see section 6) and this proposal, when considered together, amount to tipping the balance of what is considered to go beyond what are non-material changes in the context of the original permission.

The proposed changes, as per both the three previous NMA and this proposal, will practically assist the development being implemented in full, with these changes relating to relatively minor (in-fact, non-material) components in the context of the scheme as a whole. The changes are a result of design development, which can and often do arise as part of major projects of this nature.

Officers also consider that these changes can be made through the non-material amendment procedure. More specifically, it is not considered that the amendments, either individually or cumulatively, will have any material impact on the overall design idiom, neighbour amenities, transport, highway safety or any other consideration, set within the context of the original permission. This is primarily owing to the context of the overall original scheme and the nature of the surrounding environment, with the proposed changes being of a minor scale and nature in this specific context.

All changes proposed as part of this application are therefore considered appropriate by officers and are suitable to progress through the non-material amendment procedure.

An informative is recommended which states that this agreed NMA relates only to the changes highlighted. It will also be acknowledged that the agreed NMA shall only be read in the context of the substantive full permission, and is bound by all the conditions and obligations attached to the substantive permission. A further informative is recommended which states: *In reaching this decision, the local planning authority is satisfied that the changes proposed by this application do not constitute material changes to the approved planning permission.*

11. Conclusion

- i. The local planning authority is satisfied that the changes proposed by this application do not constitute material changes to the approved original planning permission.

Recommendation

Grant Non-material amendments

12. Conditions:

REPLACEMENT CONDITION 2

The development hereby permitted shall ONLY be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

22-024-PL-08 - Typical Paladin Fence Details
As received 28/12/2022

22-024-PL-02 Rev B – Site Layout Plan – As Existing (Topographical Survey Based)
Geo-environmental Assessment Bennet Court, Bennet Road Reading by Delta Simons Ref 22-0819.03/87565.544807 Issue 03 dated 21/12/2022
As received 11/01/2023

22-024-PL-12 – Existing Floor Plans (to be demolished)
22-024-PL-13 – Existing Elevations (to be demolished)
22-024-PL-15 – Typical Barrier Details
1870-ESC-00-ZZ-DR-E-2100 Rev P3 – External Lighting Layout
As received 27/01/2023

Email from Barton Willmore now Stantec 'RE: Bennet Court, Reading', dated and received 28/06/2023

22-024-PL-04 Rev G – Floor Plans & Roof Plan – As Proposed
22-024-PL-05 Rev K – Elevations & Sections – As Proposed
22-024-PL-11 Rev C – Street Scene – As Existing & As Proposed
As received 15/04/2026

22-024-PL-03 Rev V – Site Layout Plan – As Proposed (OS Based)
22-024-PL-06 Rev F – Site Sections
22-024-PL-14 Rev A – Typical Double Leaf Gate Details
As received 11/05/2026

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out and adhered to in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

REPLACEMENT CONDITION 7

No further goods, materials, products, machinery or equipment, beyond the external waste storage area shown on approved Site Plan Layout – as proposed (OS based) 22-024-PL-03 Rev **V**, as received **11/05/2026**, shall be permanently stored outside of the building hereby approved.

Reason: In the interests of protecting the appearance, safety and function of the site and surrounding area from potential harm caused by the unmanaged and unrestricted use of external areas for storage purposes, in accordance with Policies CC7, CC8 and TR3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

REPLACEMENT CONDITION 13

The building hereby permitted shall not be occupied until all vehicle parking spaces have been provided in accordance with the plan hereby approved - 22-024-PL-03 Rev **V** Site Layout Plan – As Proposed (OS Based) as received **11/05/2026**. The spaces shall be kept available for parking at all times thereafter.

Reason: To ensure that the development is provided with adequate parking facilities to meet the needs of future occupiers and reduce the likelihood of roadside parking which could be a danger to other road users, in accordance with Policies TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

REPLACEMENT CONDITION 14

The building hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the vehicle access serving it has been constructed in accordance with the plan hereby approved - J32-6748-PS-004 **Rev B** – Proposed Site Access as received **12/05/2026**.

Reason: In the interests of road safety, in accordance with Policies TR1 and TR3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Informatives:

1. This permission relates only to the non-material amendments sought and described above. Furthermore, it shall only be read in the context of the substantive planning permission granted on 05/12/2023 under reference number 221936, and is bound by all the conditions and obligations attached to that permission. That permission still stands and this notice (and any other notices issued under section 96a, such as 240021/NMA, as agreed on 14/02/2024, PL/24/1011 as agreed on 03/10/2024 and PL/25/1311 as agreed on 18/09/2025) for this development should be read together.
2. In reaching this decision, the local planning authority is satisfied that the changes proposed by this application do not constitute material changes to the approved planning permission.
3. The Local Planning Authority has worked positively and proactively with the applicant to determine the application under the non-material amendment procedure within the statutory timeframes.