



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

CITY PLANS PANEL

Date: 2nd February 2017

Subject: APPLICATION 16/06523/RM/C - 7/9 Storey office building with basement car park and landscaping at Wellington Place (Buildings 7 and 8) – Whitehall Road

APPLICANT

Hermes Wellington Place
(Site 2) Ltd

DATE VALID

18th October 2016

TARGET DATE

17th January 2017

Electoral Wards Affected: City and Hunslet

Yes

Ward Members consulted

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

RECOMMENDATION:

To approve the reserved matters application

1.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 This site is located on the southern side of Wellington Place fronting Whitehall Rd and is currently occupied by a temporary surface car park. It is the site immediately to the west of the recently completed pair of buildings at 5 and 6 Wellington Place. Adjacent to this is Tower Square which includes the Grade II listed lifting tower and is intended to be the main area of open space at the heart of the Wellington Place scheme. To the north of this is Building 10 and to the east is Building 3 which is currently under construction. The buildings are being designed with a common architectural theme of light coloured stone with a simple pattern of openings and gently sloping parapet roofs, which help to screen the roof top plant areas.
- 1.2 Across the remainder of the site, the applicant has invested in key areas of public realm and has introduced a number of temporary uses (both public and private) in order to encourage site usage ranging from a 5-a-side football pitch to allotments.

Pedestrian routes proposed within the outline plan have been introduced in a temporary state to encourage movement through the site.

2.0 CURRENT PROPOSAL

2.1 This application is for reserved matters approval for Buildings 7 and 8 Wellington Place. The detailed matters sought for approval are appearance, landscaping and scale, with the outline planning permission having approved details on layout (13 buildings) and means of access (two vehicular access points onto Whitehall Road and a third access point to the north off Wellington Street utilising the existing junction). The application has been brought forward as a result of interest from a Government Department. That requirement is for a very large floor-plate of approx. 5,000sqm. This is only capable of being provided on the largest sites in the city, with Wellington Place being one such site. Even then, none of the individual buildings approved as part of the outline are large enough and so the proposal here is to join 2 of the buildings together using a glazed link block which will be described below.

2.2 Quantum of development

The application proposes a building providing 35,044m.sq of B1 office floorspace and 2,055m.sq of ancillary A1 retail A3/4 food and drink and A5 takeaway uses.

The matters sought for approval are:

2.3 Scale

The building is proposed to be 9 storeys in height fronting Whitehall Rd reducing to 7 storeys facing northwards into the main body of Wellington Place. The proposed height is lower than the 10/11 storeys anticipated under the outline planning permission, as well as the building which was originally approved on the site of No. 7 Wellington Place.

2.4 Appearance

The elevations will be of natural stone, like the other buildings on Wellington Place, and follow the established pattern of larger proportioned openings at ground level to give the building a strong base whilst offering active frontage. The mid-section has larger double storey height openings and a top section with narrower vertically oriented openings which is a motif of the Wellington Place site. The two main materials of stone and glazing are complimented by bronze metallic detailing. The gently sloping parapet walls enclose the roof space which conceals plant areas, a photovoltaic array and the potential for open terrace space for the occupiers.

2.5 The primary change to the outline approval is the linking together of the two buildings above ground level, through the use of a glazed infill. This is deliberately kept as simple as possible and would have frameless glazed ends parallel to the building frontages but set 5m in from the main façade. These would terminate just below the height of the parapets to imply a subservient structure. When viewed obliquely the building retains the appearance of being 2 separate buildings due to the recessed nature of the link block. The large glazed entrances provide a focal point to the

building and the ground floor mixed use elements will provide pedestrian activity around the perimeter of the building.

- 2.6 Access to the building is proposed to be from the northern and southern end of the glazed infill where there would be a double height void space. This would provide pedestrian permeability through the building, with activity to the ground floor as a result of the commercial uses which would populate the space.

2.7 Landscaping

The proposal fronts Whitehall Road to its south and, to the north, one of the main pedestrian routes across the centre of Wellington Place linking Tower Square to the River Aire. The routes are to be laid out in the permanent high quality treatment used on other parts of Wellington Place with granite setts and planters. Due to the location of the building, its perimeter access route and the proposed realignment of the footway and cycle lane, the existing trees along the Whitehall Road frontage will be removed. However, in order to provide the continuous line of trees along this frontage, which has always been part of the overall landscape plan for Wellington Place, new trees will be planted in the green verge which will be located in front of both wings of the building.

2.8 Access and servicing considerations

An access / egress ramp is being provided to the combined basement beneath 7 and 8 Wellington Place. The ramp, located on the western elevation to 8 Wellington Place, will be accessed via a new priority junction on Whitehall Road. The location of the ramp is in approximately the same location approved at outline stage. The ramp takes vehicles and cycles beneath the building to the combined basement facility. Whilst the proposal is to join the buildings above ground, the basements were already joined together as part of the outline approval. So, in this respect, the proposal remains unchanged. In addition, this layout retains the ability to connect this basement to the wider subterranean road network to be delivered through future phases, again approved as part of the outline. A roller shutter will be used to control access into the basement. It will provide 182 car parking spaces (including 18 disabled spaces) 10 motor-cycle spaces and 240 cycle spaces. The building will be serviced on the surface in accordance with the outline approved strategy.

2.9 Wind

A wind study has been submitted for this application. The qualitative assessment carried out makes it clear that: the windiest conditions would be expected to occur at the north-western and south-western corners of the building; entrances on the northern and southern elevations should be recessed or incorporate side screens; the roof top terrace will be acceptable in most weather conditions; the wind environment around the building would ultimately benefit from the construction of the proposed buildings to the west and south, which would be of a similar height to the current scheme.

Accordingly, the building has been designed with main entrances that are recessed by 5m from the main facade line, mitigation measures (planting) at the north-western and south-western corners, servicing and vehicular entrances only on the western side of

the building and the roof top terrace detailed to avoid any potential disturbance from wind.

2.10 Sustainability

The design has focussed on reducing energy use and carbon dioxide emissions through the inclusion of large areas of glazing to maximise natural daylight, energy efficient plant including heat recovery systems, LED lighting, photo-voltaic arrays, and reduced CO2 emissions. The applicant has advised that the building will achieve a minimum BREEAM rating of 'Excellent' and has an aspiration of 'Outstanding'.

3.0 **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

3.1 Application ref. P/06/06824/OT: Outline planning permission granted March 2008 for an office-led mixed use development with details of the means of access (two vehicular access points onto Whitehall Road and a third access point to the north off Wellington Street utilising the existing junction) and Layout (for the building plots and routes and open spaces) approved and detailed approval of appearance, landscaping and scale reserved. The proposals comprised 15 individual buildings containing the following quantum of uses:

- Use Class B1 (offices) - 162,800m²
- Use Class C3 (residential) - 43,650m² (approx. 700 units)
- Use Class C1 (hotel) - 18,950m²
- Use Class D1 (cultural and community uses) - 4,900m²
- Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5 (shops, cafes, bars, restaurants etc.) - 10,930m² [A1 floor space restricted to 1,000m² by condition]
- Basement Car Park - 48,599m² (1,700 spaces)
- Total - 241,230m²

3.2 Plots 5 and 6 - reserved matters ref. 13/04059/RM, complete and occupied.

3.3 Plots 7 - reserved matters approval for 7 Wellington Place (previously plot 6b) ref. 08/04314/RM. The applicant has subsequently signed a legal agreement to state that they would not build this scheme because the scale fronting Whitehall Rd and the steep slope to the roof would be out of character with the more gradual slopes of the buildings which have now been completed at the neighbouring Buildings 5 and 6.

4.0 **CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

4.1 **Statutory Consultations**

Canals and Rivers Trust: No objection

Coal Authority: No objection

Environment Agency: No objection. However, make comment on the fact that permission was originally granted in 2008 and that there is now more up to date information available on flooding in this area. They note the levels which the existing outline conditions require the floor levels of the buildings to be set at. Therefore, they recommend that:

1. the flood resilience measures (for the commercial development) are included to a level of 30.5m AOD (in light of the recent flooding in 2015).
2. consideration be given to raising the finished floor levels of commercial uses and car park thresholds by a minimum of 150mm above adjacent ground levels, in order to reduce the probability of flooding from surface water flows
3. defences for the under-croft car park are passive defences which do not require operation in an event.
4. either the level of defence for the car park is set no lower than 300mm above the 1 in 100 year plus climate change allowance level (to prevent water entry) to bring it in line with Leeds Minimum Design Standards, or water entry design for the car park is used as part of flood resilience measures.
5. The applicant should produce a flood evacuation plan

The applicant has been made aware of these points and has made the responses set out at paragraph 7.12.

4.2 Non-Statutory Consultations

Highways: The proposals are acceptable from a highway and transport perspective.

The basement car park layout is acceptable in respect of numbers of car parking spaces, their layout, and the provision of cycle parking and showers. The layout does not preclude the creation of the basement vehicle route which links the basement car parks together approved as part of the outline permission. The junction onto Whitehall Road is able to accommodate the number of vehicles expected to use it both for the basement car park proposed and the use of the wider Wellington Place site for temporary car parking.

It is also proposed to extend the cycle track currently being provided from Northern Street along the frontage of plots 7 and 8 with an on carriageway provision then extending across the site entrance.

The existing vehicular access will be closed and a new access provided to the west. The relocated access requires the existing bus stop on the south side of Whitehall Road to be relocated. The new location is acceptable.

Therefore, off-site highway works will consist of the provision of the new site access, closure of the current access, provision of the cycle track, relocation of the westbound bus stop including raised bus boarder kerbs and removal of the current facility and alterations to the traffic regulation order on Whitehall Road. The details of this can be controlled through the discharge of condition 54 of the outline planning permission.

WYAAS: Make reference to the requirement for an archaeological recording condition. Officers would point out that such a condition was included on the original outline permission and has been complied with as part of the previous phases.

Flood Risk Management: No objection. Understand that the conditions of the outline permission provide sufficient protection in respect of foul and surface water drainage. Finished floor levels are also in line with the approved outline and agree with the comments and recommendations provided by the Environment Agency.

L.C.C. Sustainability Contaminated Land: Matters are covered by conditions attached to original Outline permission

Wind – Peer Review by BRE: The methodology and conclusions of the submitted Wind Study are sound.

The location of planting at the north-western and south-western corners should mitigate the occurrence of distress wind speeds. As the buildings to be located to both the west and south of the site are of similar height to the proposal, these buildings should provide adequate mitigation and could allow the planting to be modified or removed if required.

The use of only service doors on the western elevation and location of the main doors on the northern and southern elevations in recesses allays any concerns over safety.

The 1.8m high screen proposed around the roof top terrace should be air impermeable - this can be controlled by condition 3 attached to the outline permission ref. 06/06824/OT which requires samples of all walling and roofing materials to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority prior to their use.

5.0 REPRESENTATIONS

- 5.1 A letter of representation has been received from Leeds Civic Trust which sets out their full support for the proposal.

6.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

6.1 The Development Plan

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the application to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For the purposes of decision making, the Development Plan for Leeds currently comprises the following documents:

1. The Leeds Core Strategy (Adopted November 2014)
2. Saved UDP Policies (2006), included as Appendix 1 of the Core Strategy
3. The Natural Resources & Waste Local Plan (NRWLP, Adopted January 2013)
4. Any Neighbourhood Plan, once Adopted

These development plan policies are supplemented by supplementary planning guidance and documents.

Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The policy guidance in Annex 1 to the NPPF is that due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF. The closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight they may be given.

6.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied, only to the extent that

it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. It identifies 12 core planning principles (para 17) which include that planning should:

- Proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver homes
- Seek high quality design and a good standard of amenity for existing and future occupants.

The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Section 7 (paras 56-66) states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. It is important that design is inclusive and of high quality. Key principles include:

- Establishing a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;
- Optimising the potential of the site to accommodate development;
- Respond to local character and history;
- Reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;
- Development to be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

Paragraph 64 states that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions

Paragraph 66 states that applicants will be expected to work closely with those directly affected by development to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community.

6.3 The adopted Leeds Core Strategy 2014

This sets out strategic level policies and vision to guide the delivery of development investment decisions and the overall future of the district. The Core Strategy was adopted by the Council on 12th November 2014. This now forms the development plan for Leeds together with the Natural Resources & Waste Development Plan Document 2013 and the Saved Policies from the Leeds Unitary Development Plan Review 2006 (UDPR). Relevant Core Strategy policies include:

- Spatial Policy 1 sets out the broad spatial framework for the location and scale of development. This policy prioritises the redevelopment of previously developed land within Main Urban Areas, in a way that respects and enhances the local character and identity of places and neighbourhoods.
- Policy P10 requires new development to be based on a thorough contextual analysis to provide good design appropriate to its scale and function, delivering high quality innovative design and enhancing existing landscapes and spaces.

- Policies EN1 and EN2 – sustainability policies which seek to reduce total predicted carbon dioxide emissions, provide low carbon energy sources.
- Policy CC1(b) Encourages residential development including new buildings providing that it does not prejudice the centre functions of the City Centre and that it provides a reasonable level of amenity for occupiers.

6.4 Leeds Unitary Development Plan Review 2006 (UDPR) – Saved Policies

Saved Policies GP5 - all relevant planning considerations, BD2 design and siting of new buildings and BD5 Design and amenity of occupiers, are all relevant to this proposal. The Council is keen to promote good standards of daylight and sunlight in the interests of both mental and physical wellbeing, and in order to avoid a wasteful use of energy in providing unnecessary artificial light.

6.5 Leeds Natural Resources and Waste DPD 2013

The Natural Resources and Waste Local Plan was adopted by Leeds City Council on 16th January 2013. The Natural Resources and Waste Development Plan Document (Local Plan) is part of the Local Development Framework. The plan sets out where land is needed to enable the City to manage resources, like minerals, energy, waste and water over the next 15 years, and identifies specific actions which will help use natural resources in a more efficient way.

6.6 Site Allocations Plan (SAP)

The Site Allocations Plan is in the process of preparation. It is tasked with allocating and identifying sufficient housing and employment land to meet requirements set out in the Core Strategy in locations that best accord with policy of the Core Strategy. It is also designating green space for protection and refreshing town centre boundaries and shopping frontages. The Publication Draft was subject to public consultation September – November 2015, and again for the Outer North East area September – November 2016. Development Plan Panel agreed changes for all areas except Outer North East in June and July 2016 and for Outer North East in January 2017, as recommendations to Executive Board. Executive Board and Full Council are expected to approve submission of the plan in April 2017 following advertisement of pre-submission changes. The wider Wellington Place site is allocated as site MX1-8 and is for mixed use offices, residential and a range of supporting commercial uses.

6.7 Supplementary Planning Documents

Sustainable Design and Construction: Advocates the use of a range of measures to ensure that the best possible practices are used to ensure a sustainable environment is created.

7.0 APPRAISAL

7.1 Use

The use of this site for offices with ancillary ground floor commercial uses containing retail, food & drink and takeaway has already been established through the outline permission. The proposals do not exceed the overall quantum of floorspace approved under the outline planning permission and are acceptable.

7.2 Layout

The building footprint broadly falls within the approved design parameters for 7 and 8 Wellington Place secured under the outline planning permission. The key change is the introduction of a set-back glazed central core which still retains public pedestrian access at ground floor level.

7.3 It is considered that the building footprint largely conforms to the approved design parameters and the variation with the glazed link between 7 and 8 Wellington Place can be accommodated without any detriment to the originally established development principles, particularly as public access is proposed to be retained through the building. This aspect of the proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable.

7.4 Scale and appearance

The proposal is for a 9 storey elevation facing Whitehall Road with a parapet sloping down to the north to 7 storeys. The height approved by the parameters attached to the outline permission is for 10 storeys and so the proposal is well within this height. It is also lower than the elevation to Whitehall Road approved by the previous reserved matters for this site, ref. 08/04314/RM.

7.5 Due to the 5m setback, the glazed link is only visible when viewed from the area immediately to the north and south of the link. Street views have been modelled and from an oblique position the link cannot be seen at all and buildings 7 and 8 still look as if they are separated by the originally proposed 12m gap.

7.6 These views also show 7 and 8 in relationship to the now constructed 5 and 6 to the east. Buildings 5 and 6 are also 12m apart and have been designed as a matching pair facing Whitehall Rd in the same way that the 2 stone facades of 7 and 8 have been designed to match. The main difference between the two is that the current proposal is 2 storeys higher.

7.7 There is a subtle bend in Whitehall Road which aligns with the gap between the 2 pairs. This gap is 20m which is 8m wider than spacing between the pairs themselves. This serves to distinguish them as 2 distinct elements but the street views show they sit well side by side. The fact that they are both pairs brings a consistency to the frontage which is reinforced by the similarity in materials and elevational treatment.

7.8 In conclusion it is considered that the impact of the glazed link on the street scene is negligible due to the extent of the set back. As this single building is designed to appear as a pair, it complements the appearance of 5 and 6 and these two 'pairs' work well together in the street scene. The proposed elevational treatment and the scale of the proposal are therefore considered to be acceptable due to the glazed nature of the link block and its recess, 5m behind the main façade line on both the northern and southern elevations

7.9 The use of the signature sloping parapet retains the objective of clean roof lines and discreetly located plant enclosures. This building would also create a significant part of the western side to Tower Square which would assist in the formation of an enclosed square, rather than the open sided space which currently exists.

7.10 Landscaping

The areas of landscaping offer a significant contribution to public amenity space as envisaged by the original outline. In addition, the improvements along Whitehall Road would contribute to the enhancement of the Wellington Place scheme and this important arterial route. In the same way that landscaping has been introduced around previous phases of the scheme, plots 7 and 8 would also benefit from a high quality surface treatment which would tie into Tower Square. Given the nature of the end user and the very high quality landscaping that has already been rolled out across Wellington Place, this proposal will continue this treatment and is acceptable.

7.11 Highways and servicing

The basement layout provides sufficient space for car and cycle parking as well as circulation and plant. It also allows for connection to the wider subterranean road network to be delivered through future phases and therefore accords with the outline permission. The building is proposed to be serviced on the surface in accordance with the strategy approved under the outline planning permission. The junction onto Whitehall Rd is capable of accommodating the anticipated number of trips. Therefore, all highways aspects of the proposal are considered to be acceptable by officers.

7.12 Flood Risk

The applicant has considered the recommendations made by the Environment Agency and has provided the following responses:

Flood resilience

The proposed finished floor level is 30.250m AOD, some 300 mm above the 100 year plus climate change level and 600 mm above the December 2015 extreme event. The further 250 mm flood resilience *requested by the EA* is achievable (e.g. power/data sockets 250 mm above floor level, power/data fed from ceiling level, first layer of plaster board laid horizontal, consideration of floor finishes and decorations for a quick clear up if shallow flooding does occur etc), but given the level already provided above both modelled and recorded flood levels, this seems excessive *given the increased finished floor level*.

Finished floor levels in relation to surrounding floor levels

The main conduits for flood water routing are the local highway network around the periphery of the site. The adjacent Whitehall Road sits at a level of approximately 29.5m AOD. The finished floor level is therefore 750 mm higher and the car park entrance 650 mm higher. Therefore a very high level of protection *is already achieved*.

Defence of the basement car park

The entrance level to the basement car park is proposed at 30.150m AOD so some 245 mm above the 100 year plus climate change modelled level and 512 mm above the December 2015 recorded level. It is also 650 mm above Whitehall Road directly adjacent, which will be the main flood routing conduit. This level of threshold is a fixed passive defence.

Flood evacuation plan

The submitted Flood Risk Statement makes reference to safe egress routes being provided and that staff management and security will ensure this is actioned. This is a site wide policy and would assume that standard flood procedures are already in place which can be extended to this site

- 7.13 The EA does not raise any objection. Although the applicant is not agreeing to all the measures recommended by the EA, it is considered that, on balance, the design offers a high level of flood resilience for the reasons given above, and the proposals are considered acceptable in this respect.

8.0 Conclusion

The proposals will create significant economic and employment benefits to the City and the wider City Region, providing an extremely high quality new piece of townscape at Wellington Place in accordance with Core Strategy Policy P10. The proposal remains consistent with the outline planning permission and in accordance with the Development Plan and overall thrust of the NPPF. Officers are therefore supportive of the proposal.

Background Papers:

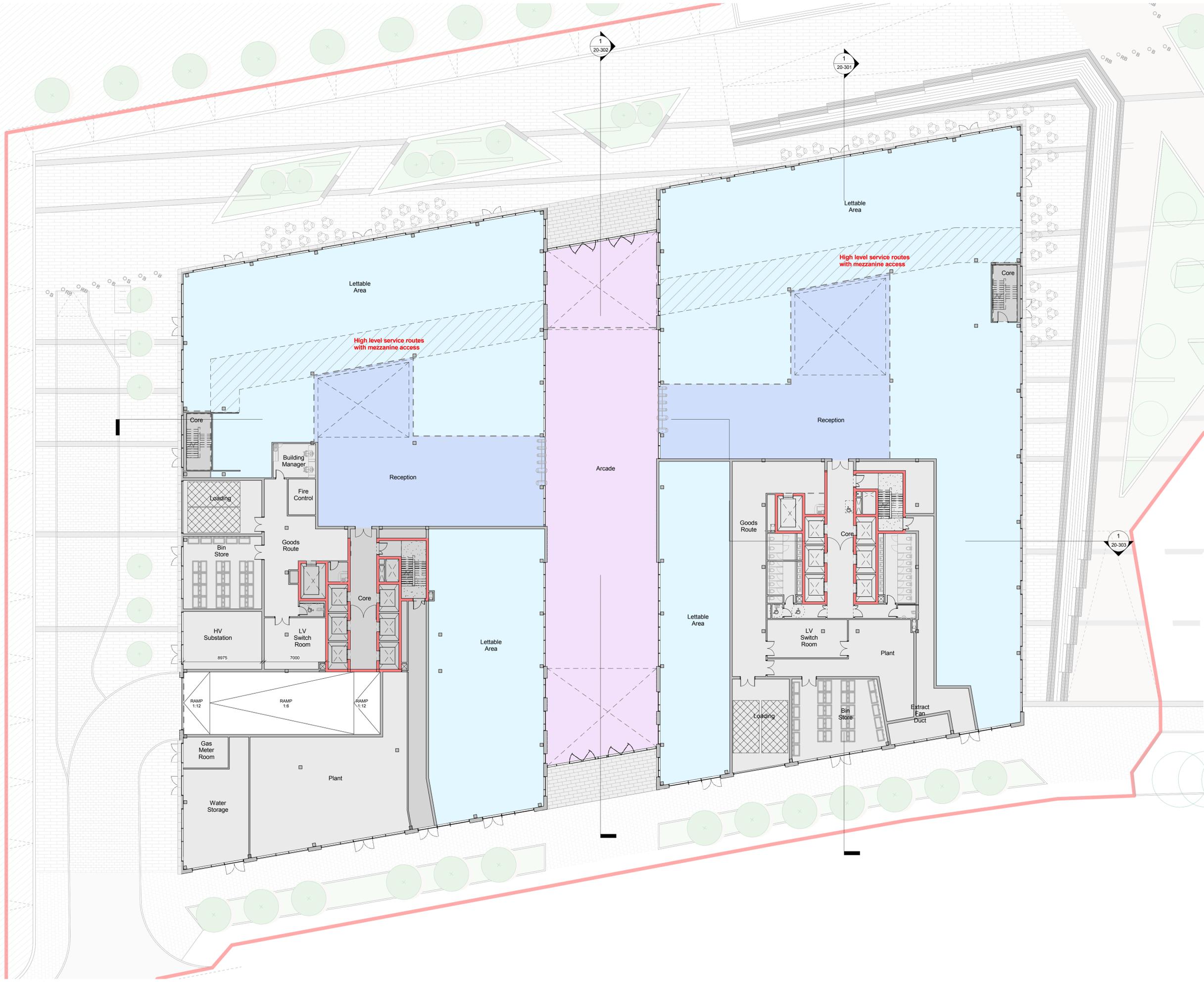
Wellington Place Outline Planning Permission app. ref. P/06/06824/OT

Plots 5 and 6 - reserved matters ref. 13/04059/RM

Plot 10 - reserved matters ref. 10/02973/RM

Plot 3 - reserved matters ref. 10/02974/RM

Plots 7 & 9 - 7 Wellington Place (previously plot 6b) ref. 08/04314/RM; 9 Wellington Place (previously plot 3) ref. 08/01695/RM.



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 Electronic Data / drawings are issued as "read only" and should not be interrogated for measurement. All dimensions and levels should read, only from those values stated in text, on the drawing.

AREA MEASUREMENT
 The areas are approximate and can only be verified by a detailed dimensional survey of the completed building. Any decisions to be made on the basis of these predictions, whether as to project viability, pre-letting, lease agreements or the like, should include due allowance for the increases and decreases inherent in the design development and building processes. Figures relate to the likely areas of the building at the current state of the design and using the Gross External Area (GEA) / Gross Internal Area (GIA) / Net Internal Area (NIA) method of measurement from the Code of Measuring Practice, 6th Edition (RICS Code of Practice). All areas are subject to Town Planning and Conservation Area Consent, and detailed Rights to Light analysis.

REV.	DATE	AMENDMENT
P01	23/09/2016	Work In Progress Issue to Design Team
P02	27/09/2016	Issue for Structural Engineer
P03	30/09/2016	Issued for information.
P04	03/10/2016	Basement & Ground Floor layouts with overlay issued to transport consultant.
P05	11/10/2016	Issued for comment
P06	14/10/2016	Issued for planning
P07	24/10/2016	Updated
P08	25/10/16	Updated
P09	18/11/2016	Spine glazing angle adjusted following planning input.
P10	08/12/2016	Access Junction Updated

KEYPLAN

CLIENT



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PROJECT
7 and 8 Wellington Place

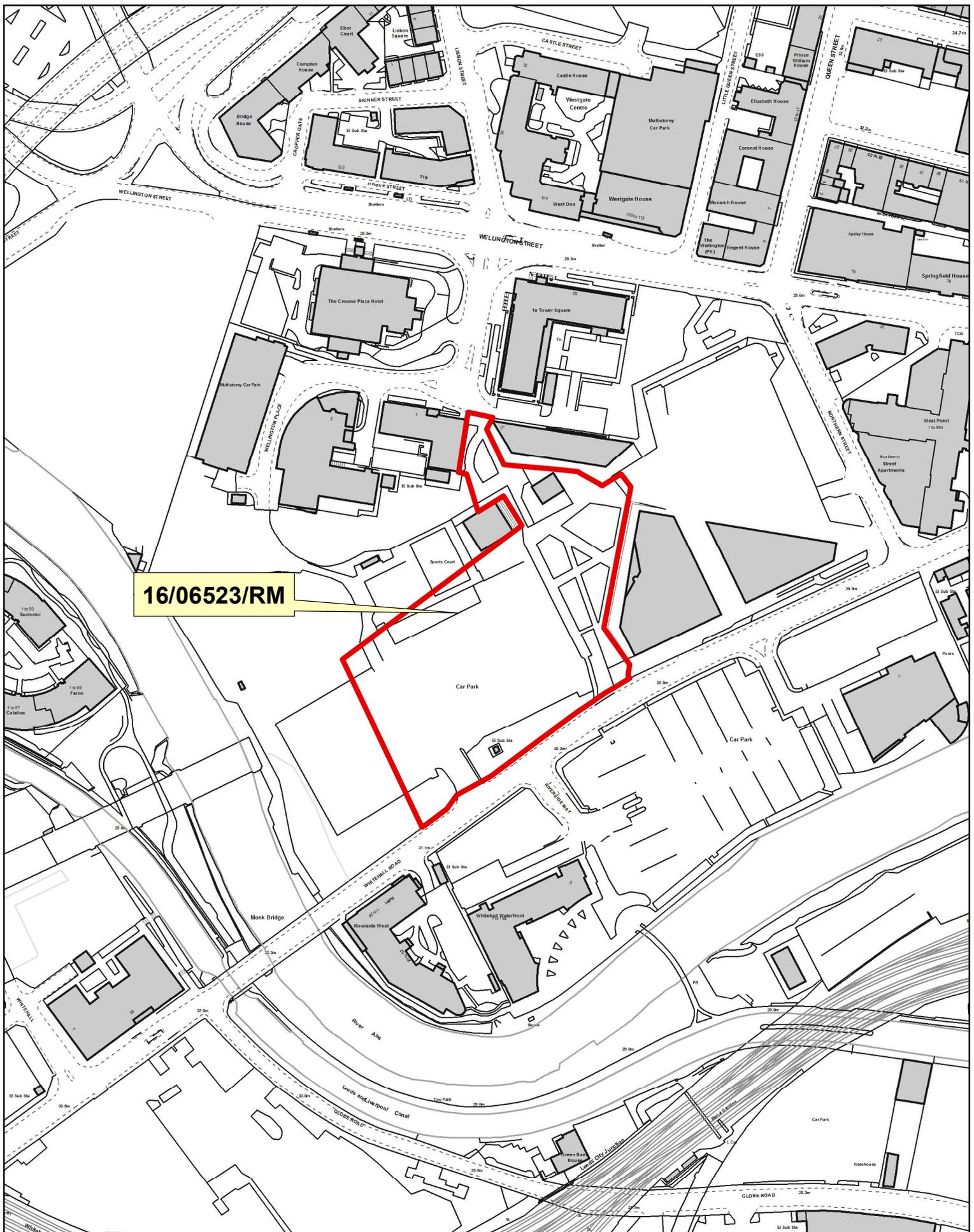
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**Ground Floor
 General Arrangement**

STAGE 2

STATUS	PURPOSE FOR ISSUE	SR NO.
S4	PLANNING	5703
DRAWING NO.		REV.
5703 - SRA - XX - 00 - DR - A - 20-200		P10

06/12/2016 16:41:05



16/06523/RM

CITY PLANS PANEL

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SCALE : 1/2500

