



**Leeds**  
CITY COUNCIL

Originator: Paul Kendall

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**Report of the Chief Planning Officer**

***PLANS PANEL CENTRAL***

**Date: 16<sup>th</sup> September 2010**

**Subject: APPLICATION 10/02973/RM/C - 5 Storey office building at Wellington Place (Building 10) – Adjacent Grade II Listed Lifting Tower**

**APPLICANT**

Wellington PI General  
Partner Ltd

**DATE VALID**

28<sup>th</sup> June 2010

**TARGET DATE**

27th September 2010

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**Electoral Wards Affected:**  
City and Hunslet

NO

Ward Members consulted  
(referred to in report)

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

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**RECOMMENDATION:**  
**GRANT PERMISSION**

**The site will be subject to compliance with the conditions attached to the outline consent**

**Reasons for approval:** The application is considered to comply with policies BD2, BD5, N12, N13, LD1 GP5, of the UDPR, as well as guidance contained within Supplementary Planning Documents: Sustainable Design and Construction and Central Government advice set out in PPS4, and having regard to all other material considerations, as such the application is recommended for approval:

**1.0 INTRODUCTION:**

This application is being brought to Panel as it is a significant new building which is part of a much larger development site in the City Centre. The overall site has the benefit of outline planning permission and 2 previous reserved matters applications

have already been approved by Members at Panel on 2009. In addition, the project architects have presented the temporary site works and landscaping proposals to Members to keep them informed of progress and many of these have now been introduced to the site. There is a parallel application for the neighbouring Building 3 (10/02974/RM/C) which is also before Members for determination and therefore reference to this will be made in this report.

## **2.0 PROPOSAL:**

### Background - Outline Approval

The outline consent for this site was for the layout of and means of access to the buildings and therefore the matters for consideration as part of this application are the scale of the building, its external appearance/design and landscaping. The outline also has attached to it a range of conditions which will have to be discharged and will therefore control the development of each individual building including the one under consideration here, Building 10.

The outline scheme set a maximum height of development using a design code statement and for this site the maximum height achievable was considered to be 8/9 storeys which related to the heights of the neighbouring building to the north east - Building 3. All of the buildings in the outline scheme have roofs which slope downward toward the centre of the site to allow greater penetration of natural light to the open spaces and pedestrian routes at it's heart.

### Building Footprint and Layout

This proposal approximates very closely to the footprint approved as part of the outline scheme and follows the principles set by that scheme in respect of orientation of building lines, most notably in respect of its relationship to the service road to the north, the listed lifting tower to the south and the formation of the northern side of the main central square at the heart of the Wellington Place scheme focused on the lifting tower.

The ground floor is split in to 2 unequal sized units and it is possible, under the outline approval, for these to have uses other than offices. Whilst this cannot be insisted upon there is the ability to provide restaurant and bar uses on the site and the potential to achieve this is certainly not precluded by the proposed design.

The original outline also indicated that the underground vehicular access route would pass directly beneath this building. However, now that the details have been worked through it is clear that this would be both difficult to achieve and impractical and therefore the route has been realigned to avoid passing beneath any of the buildings (this matter is set out in detail as part of the report on Building 3). There is no car parking on this site due to the restricted width which any basement would possess, and therefore its allocation is to be provided beneath subsequent phases of development. At this time the dedicated spaces (16 no. which is 65% of the UDPR maximum) are to be located in the on site multi-storey car park at the western end of Wellington Place.

### Scale

This reserved matters application is for a 5 storey office building providing 4,350sqm of office space. The scheme is therefore of a much reduced scale to the approved maximum of 8/9 storeys. However, this means that the feature roof slope down towards the south and the main square now aligns with the height of the lifting tower. Officers consider this to be a more comfortable and more respectful relationship than was originally approved.

The combination of the sloping roof and the splayed ends means that, at the eastern end of the building, the slope is continued from Building 3 to the east and it therefore performs its required function in respect of the overall master plan by providing continuity of form between buildings.

#### Elevational treatment

At an early point in the design process it was established that this building needed to provide a calm backdrop to the lifting tower rather than compete with it or use its design features and materials as a reference. Therefore, the southern elevation is to be entirely glazed and this will act as a foil to the robust stone structure. A stone surround has been introduced and this will act to frame views of the tower from the south and visually contain the main glazed elevation which itself contains a subtle change in plane around its edge. The glazing will give reflections of the tower's elevations when viewed obliquely.

The glazed façade is broken at the entrance which is set in to a double storey height angled recess, the top of which aligns with the heaviest stone band on the lifting tower. The shorter side of this recess is to be inset with a feature steel wall to act as an entrance marker. This will offer additional synergy between the two buildings and variations in its reflections. The glazing system will be frameless to produce as close to an unfettered reflective surface as possible and the glazing will be a mix of tinted and opaque panels to reduce solar gain to acceptable levels and conceal the building structure.

The roof is a south facing slope which is given over entirely to a green roof which, due to the slope, will be visible, at distance, from ground level. The plant room is contained entirely within the building and this is made possible because of the space created beneath the higher northern side of the roof.

Both of the splayed end elevations and the rear (northern) elevation are of stone with large window openings. The eastern splay will act as a transition between the totally glazed facade of Building 10 and the sloping and more robust stone character of Building 3.

The materials established by the Design Philosophy Document attached to the original outline permission & recent reserved matters applications is therefore maintained across the building as the proposal is for a simple palette of stone and glazing. Window cleaning will be by monopole from the ground given that the building is less than 20m in height.

#### Public Realm and Landscaping

The major area of public space which sits to the south of this building was included as part of one of the previous reserved matters approvals and the only area which is to be considered as part of this application is the apron of surfacing immediately around the building where it interfaces with the surrounding streets and pedestrian walkways. This will be carried out in matching materials which here will mean granite.

#### Sustainability

The design has focussed on the following low carbon approaches:

- Minimum 50% glazing to maximise natural daylight (minimise overheating)
- Highly efficient building services systems
- Sustainable Urban Drainage System

The building will also be constructed with the ability to be linked to the site wide energy network when this is eventually constructed as part of a later phase. The submitted sustainability report provides a more detailed commentary on the applicant's approach to the design. As a result of the BREEAM assessment carried out it was determined that a rating of Excellent could be achieved

#### S106 matters agreed as part of outline permission

As part of the outline scheme the development has an associated S106 agreement which covers

- (i) Public access 24hr to squares, routes, riverside walkway and bridges
- (ii) Provision of low level river bridge
- (iii) Provision of connection to listed viaduct
- (iv) Maintenance of public space
- (v) Affordable housing provision
- (vi) Local employment opportunities
- (vii) Provision of a Travel Plan Co-ordinator and Travel Plan Monitoring Fee
- (viii) £200,000 funding for a metro card scheme
- (ix) Provision of real time bus information system within the development.
- (x) £150,000 Public Transport and Infrastructure contribution.
- (xi) £250,000 off site highways contribution
- (xii) £60,000 contribution towards a 'super bus shelter on Whitehall Rd.

For information, a Framework Travel Plan was approved as part of the outline permission and a condition attached to this requires that a further detailed Travel Plan be submitted prior to the occupation of whichever is the first phase of development. As set out above, the Section 106 already makes provision for a number of Travel Plan and public transport related measures which have already been considered acceptable and are not for consideration as part of this application.

### **3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:**

The 0.16 Hectare site for 10 Wellington Place is located within the wider Wellington Place layout situated immediately to the north of the GII listed lifting tower which sits at the heart of the development. The Northern Boundary is formed by the rear servicing road for Benson house and the access to the basement car parking for the entire scheme, to the east will be the main pedestrian walkway through to the Northern Street Wellington St junction. To the south will be located the major area of open space centred around the lifting tower and to the west will be a walkway through to the Holiday Inn and the main vehicular junction with Wellington St.

Wellington Place itself is occupied by a number of existing buildings comprising Hotel, Office and Multi Storey Car Park. The character is of mixed architectural styles, with the predominant materials being red brick and glass. The scale of the existing buildings vary from 4 to 7 office floors. Located in close proximity to the application site is the Grade II listed former railway lifting tower, constructed of natural grit-stone laid in a coursing pattern which reflects its industrial use. The lifting tower possesses a visual strength which is unique to Wellington Place and provides one of the few visible clues as to the site's previous railway heritage.

Much of the Wellington Place site is hard surfacing which remains after the demolition of the retail buildings although coloured gravel banks and a large area of grass have now been introduced to break this down. The owner/applicant has also introduced a number of temporary uses (both public and private) in order to encourage the use of the site and these include a 5-a-side football pitch and

allotments. Pedestrian routes proposed within the outline plan have been introduced in a temporary state to encourage movement through the site. The application site itself is occupied by a combination of soft planting, some semi-mature trees and simple paving. The site has a small slope down from the north which is taken up by a small retaining wall.

#### **4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:**

The most recent and relevant permission relating to the application site is the outline planning permission ref. no. 06/06824/OT. This was approved in principle by Members at Panel on 1st March 2007 and was subsequently approved in March 2008. This comprised 15 individual buildings containing:

- Use Class B1 (offices) - 162,800m<sup>2</sup>
- Use Class C3 (residential) - 43,650m<sup>2</sup> (approx. 700 units)
- Use Class C1 (hotel) - 18,950m<sup>2</sup>
- Use Class D1 (cultural and community uses) - 4,900m<sup>2</sup>
- Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5 (shops, cafes, bars, restaurants etc.) - 10,930m<sup>2</sup> [A1 floor space restricted to 1,000m<sup>2</sup> by condition]
- Basement Car Park - 48,599m<sup>2</sup> (1,700 spaces)
- Total - 241,230m<sup>2</sup>

In addition Members have also approved reserved matters applications for the building at the western end of Whitehall Rd fronting the river which also included the details of 'The Beach' open space area (app. ref. 08/01695/RM/C) and at a site mid-way along Whitehall Rd for a 5-10 storey office building (app. ref. 08/04314/RM). To date therefore 2 buildings have received such approvals.

In recognition of the phased approach to the development on the site, the applicant received approval from Members for a number of separate planning applications for temporary works designed to engage the community and announce the arrival of Wellington Place as a scheme whilst the development progresses. The Marketing Suite/City Room has been open for 3 years and the 5-a-side football pitch was completed last year. Landscaping has recently been improved in the area around the listed tower.

#### **5.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS:**

Officers have been involved in a series of meetings concerning the design of not only this proposal but the neighbouring building to the east, Building 3 Wellington Place. These two buildings are very much seen as related in scale and form and, along with Benson House, would constitute one city block if they were both to be completed. Principle points of discussion have addressed the treatment of the southern elevation which forms the backdrop to the lifting tower.

#### **6.0 PUBLIC/LOCAL RESPONSE:**

The proposal was advertised as a major application affecting the setting of a listed building and the character of the conservation area, on site by notice dated 7th July (expiring 28<sup>th</sup> August) 2010 and in the press by notice dated 22<sup>nd</sup> July (expiring 12<sup>th</sup> August) 2010.

A letter of representation has been received from the **Leeds Civic Trust (LCT)** and this relates to both this building and its neighbour Building 3. This states that while

they welcome the potential restart of development they consider that the scheme “lacks ambition” and is now just “standard developer architecture”. Also believe that the landscaping has now been “dumbed down”. However, go on to make the point that the final quality will depend largely on the finishes of the masonry panels and the fixing of the curtain glazing. They welcome the green features and the long term commitment to the integrated energy system. Conclude by saying that they hope these building go forward as soon as possible but would like to see a little more excitement in the design. Response: The design of this building is intentionally calm for the reasons stated above and the reliance on an entirely glazed façade is something which officers consider is appropriate next to a structure such as the lifting tower which has great strength. The building relates well in terms of form and materials to the design and quality of the other buildings already approved on Wellington Place and will therefore provide the quality requested by LCT.

## 7.0 CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES:

### Statutory:

**Environment Agency:** No further comments from those attached to the outline.

**British Waterways:** No comments to make

**Yorkshire Water:** No objection as in line with previous outline permission FRA

### Non-statutory:

**Highways:** Have advised that 16 spaces need to be provided as part of this proposal but accept that these cannot be permanently provided until the scheme has been completed and therefore their provision in the on-site MSCP is acceptable. The number of trips generated by this proposal does not bring in to force the requirement to carry out any of the off-site highway works agreed as part of the outline. Cycle and motorcycle spaces are to be provided as part of the overall scheme. Travel Plan measures were approved as part of the outline approval.

**Main Drainage:** The site remains acceptable in respect of it’s ability to deal with surface water run off subject to conditions.

**Access:** The plans indicate that the access is flat and level.

**Contaminated Land:** No objection subject to original conditions.

**Police Counter Terrorism Unit:** Have advised the applicant directly in respect of this aspect of the proposal the points raised largely covering the use of materials and construction techniques to limit flying debris in the event of an explosion.

**Street Cleansing:** Advise that this aspect has been adequately dealt with.

## 8.0 PLANNING POLICIES:

UDP Proposal Area Statement 2 identifies the site as a major opportunity for the expansion of the Prime Office Quarter, principally through offices, but with other essential uses, such as major public space, pedestrian linkages, leisure, entertainment and catering uses. Catering and leisure uses are listed as other appropriate uses. The proposed use therefore remains consistent with the site-specific allocation in the adopted Development Plan.

The adopted UDPR sets out guidelines for the development and design of new buildings. Urban Design and Building Design are addressed by policies BD2, N12 and N13 and require that development respects certain fundamentals of urban design. Spaces between buildings are important as they create a series of linked and varied spaces. Movement on foot and on bicycle should be encouraged and new developments should respect the character and scale of buildings and the routes that connect them. Buildings should be of high quality and have regard to the character and appearance of their surroundings.

**Government Planning Policy Guidance/Statements – PPS4 Planning for Sustainable Communities** advocated the location of office use in defined centres where they enjoy the benefits of good transportation links and access.

## **9.0 MAIN ISSUES**

Accordance with the outline permission  
The scale of the proposal  
The design quality of building  
Access to the building for vehicles and pedestrians  
Quality of the landscaping design  
Ability to meet sustainability targets

## **10.0 APPRAISAL**

### Conformity with Outline Approval

The use of this site primarily as offices but with ancillary ground floor commercial uses has already been established by the outline permission and is acceptable. This building is part of a much larger overall scheme which will be developed over time on a phased basis. There is an overall quantum of floor space for each of the uses proposed and this is set out within this report. As each building attains an approval this 'running total' can be monitored to ensure that the maximum levels are not exceeded and therefore the overall principles of the Transport Statement, to which it is related, are not compromised. In this case, where the quantum of floor space is being reduced from that permitted as part of the outline, it means that the upper limit is less likely to be reached which is a positive factor when considering the impact on the local highway network. The building footprint conforms with the approved outline layout and is therefore acceptable.

### Scale

The reduction in overall size and the resultant reduction in height can be accommodated without any detriment to the buildings to be located on the neighbouring sites. Indeed the neighbouring building to the east Building 3 has been designed to relate to this building to form a coherent piece of townscape and continue the architectural language of the remainder of the Wellington Place scheme. It is considered that this application upholds the principles set out in the outline approval and to a certain degree improves upon it by reducing the height of the building to be closer to that of the lifting tower. This scheme also brings the height of the building down to a level closer to the existing building to the west and therefore this relationship is also improved and is acceptable.

### Design

This building has been designed to respect its location immediately adjacent the lifting tower and to emphasise it by offering a relatively plain backdrop which offers reflected views. This will provide an impressive northern side to the main square

and this approach was agreed as part of the negotiations with officers and is fully supported. The other elevations revert to the masonry and window design principle of the other buildings approved on this site and this is considered to be the correct treatment to continue the Wellington Place theme and is acceptable.

The sloping green roof will provide an element of colour and will also act as an urban wildlife habitat providing interest both from distant views and from the other buildings within the scheme. It also encloses the plant area which means that the continuous slope of the roof form will not be fettered by the addition of mechanical plant and equipment.

#### Pedestrian and Vehicular Access

This scheme benefits considerably from the realignment of the basement service road on its northern side and this is supported. The provision of off-site parking in the interim period is acceptable and the number of spaces is also in line with the approved Transport Assessment and will result in a reduction in the overall number which is to be welcomed.

#### Landscaping and Open Space Area

As described above, the main areas of open space around this building have either been approved, or are set out, as part of other applications and are therefore not for consideration here. The applicant may therefore construct them at a time which is appropriate to the phasing of the buildings, although it is clear that when the building is constructed it will require a certain quality of setting in order to make it attractive to potential occupiers. The materials to be used around the apron of this building are clearly designed to match those of the main scheme, are of high quality and are acceptable.

#### Sustainability

The achievement of a BREEAM 'excellent' rating is very much welcomed by officers and this simply continues the high level of development which the applicant is intending to roll out across the whole of this site. The inclusion of the green roof will also provide additional habitat at high level and this is supported by officers.

The site will be subject to compliance with the conditions attached to the outline consent

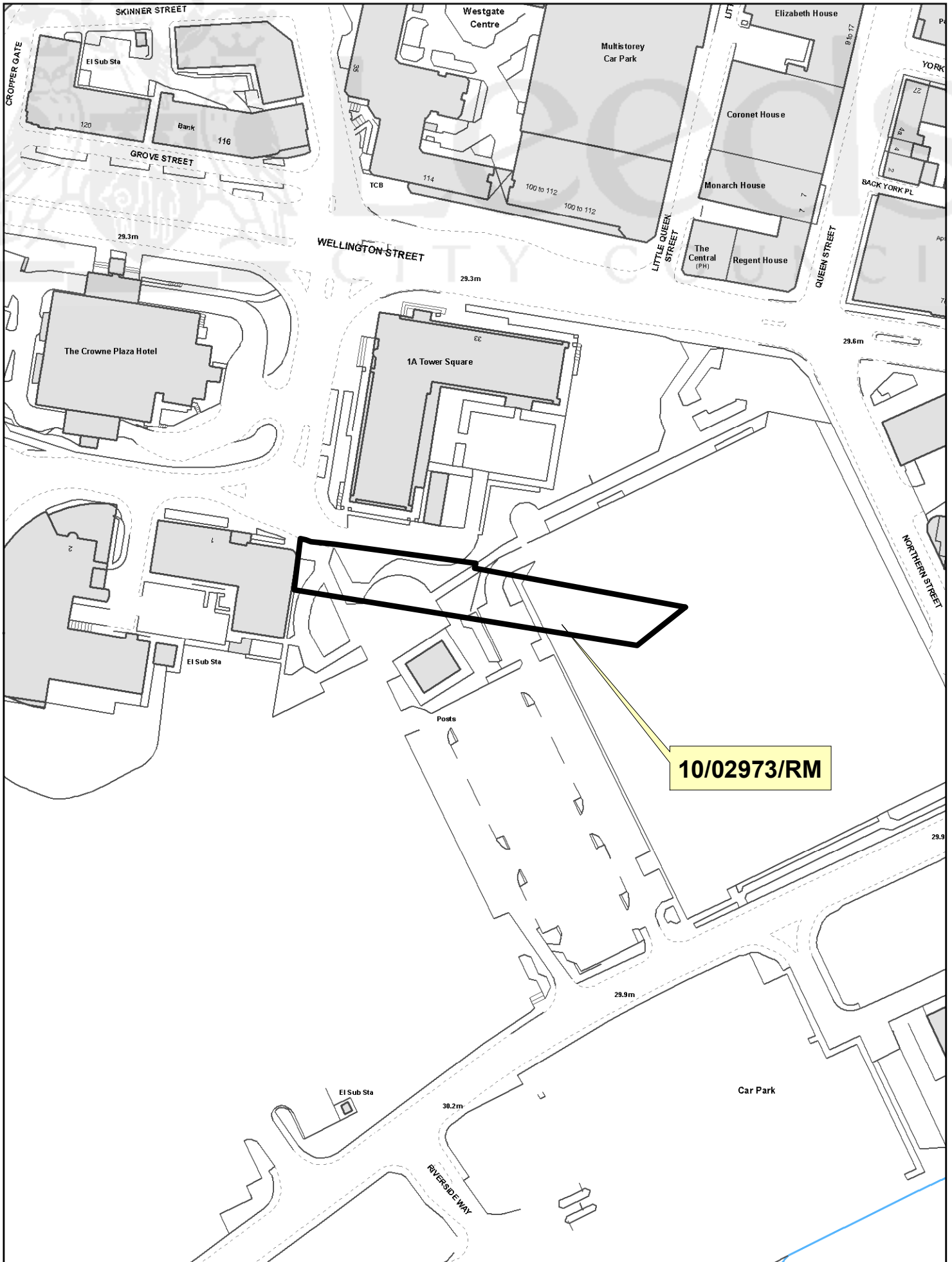
## **11.0 CONCLUSION**

This building creates a successful backdrop to the listed lifting tower and will visually contain the northern side of the main square at the centre of the Wellington Place development. It will be a high quality building and conforms to the objectives of the approved masterplan.

#### **Background Papers:**

Original Outline Planning Permission: P/06/06824/OT.  
Reserve Matter Application Building 3: 10/02974/RM/C  
LCT letter 21<sup>st</sup> July 2010





# CITY CENTRE PANEL

