



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

PLANS PANEL CITY CENTRE

Date: 12th JANUARY 2011

Subject: Application 10/04813/FU - Alterations and fourth and fifth floor extension to offices, 21 Queen Street, Leeds 1

APPLICANT

Arianda Property Holdings
Ltd

DATE VALID

22 October 2010

TARGET DATE

21 January 2011

Electoral Wards Affected:

City & Hunslet

No

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

RECOMMENDATION:

DEFER and DELEGATE to the Chief Planning Officer for approval subject to the specified conditions (and any others which he might consider appropriate) and the completion of a Section 106 agreement, to include the following obligations; travel plan and monitoring fee £3120; management and accessibility to public areas; employment and training initiatives, management fee. In the circumstances where the Section 106 has not been completed within 3 months of the resolution to grant planning permission the final determination of the application shall be delegated to the Chief Planning Officer.

Application 10/04813/FU Conditions

- 1 3 Year Time Limit
- 2 Notification of Commencement
- 3 1:20 details.
- 4 Details and sample panel of all external facing and surfacing materials, including glass manifestations.
- 5 Plant screen to be no more than 1800mm high.
- 6 Details of contractor's storage and parking.

- 7 Details of methods to control dirt, dust and noise during construction.
- 8 Cycle, motorcycle and disabled person's parking to be provided.
- 9 Showers, lockers and changing facilities to be provided.
- 10 Details of hard and soft landscaping including external lighting.
- 11 Implementation of landscaping scheme.
- 12 Details of method, storage and disposal of refuse.
- 13 BREEAM "Very Good" to be achieved.
- 14 Development to be in accordance with approved plans.

Reasons for approval:

The application is considered to comply with policies GP5, GP7, GP11, GP12, N12, N13, N19, T2, T5, T6, A4, CC3, BD4, BD5 and BD6 of the UDP Review; RSS policies , YH7, E2, E3 and ENV5 as well as guidance contained within PPS1, PPS4, PPS5 and PPG13 and having regard to all other material considerations the application is recommended for approval.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application is brought to Plans Panel due to the innovative approach to the addition of two floors to the roof of the building which is in close proximity to the city centre conservation area.
- 1.2 The proposal was considered in accordance with the pre-application advice charter for major developments. As part of this process the emerging scheme was considered by the Design Review Panel which supported the approach to the extension of the building.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The four storey building was constructed in 1983. Although conceived in two parts, with two separate entrances, plant rooms and cores, externally the building appears as a single form. Hard red engineering brick with bull nose specials create elegant 4 storey arches along both the Queen Street and Little Queen Street elevations. Deeply recessed brown glazing and panelling emphasise the 3 dimensional arrangement of the elevations. The entrance canopies and plant room screens disrupt the strong form.
- 2.2 The red brickwork is used for the planters which form the boundary to the surface car parking area to the rear. The car park is in two parts; the larger car park to the north is in a separate ownership and use and does not form part of the application. There is an area of open land directly to the north of the building containing trees and overgrown vegetation. A footpath linking Queen Street and Little Queen Street runs immediately north of this area alongside the boundary to 25 Queen Street.
- 2.3 The property is located in a visible location at the junction of Queen Street and Park Place. Queen Street acts a general transition zone between the Georgian streets to the east, which are located in the conservation area, and the typically larger scale development to the west side. The architecture of much of the nearby building stock is of little merit. The former International Swimming Pool to the west of Little Queen Street was demolished earlier this year and the site is cleared with no current proposals for development. The area is otherwise predominantly in office use.

3.0 PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The applicant's brief was to breathe new life into what is considered a strong but tired aesthetic; to provide contemporary Grade A office accommodation with improved environmental efficiency; and to make the building DDA compliant.
- 3.2 The proposals involve the addition of two storeys of office accommodation over the existing third floor of the building creating 1432sqm. of additional floorspace. The fourth floor would be recessed 1.1m behind the existing red brick elevations to front and rear. A stainless steel handrail would sit in front of the double glazed curtain walling.
- 3.3 The fifth floor would appear to "float" above the fourth. Glazing would be aligned with the brickwork of the original building. It would be supported by aluminium cased columns extending from brickwork between the arches below. The fifth floor would have curved ends forming a lozenge form that would be reinforced by casing and trim. Plant and 30 square metres of photovoltaic panels will be added to the roof of the extension behind a 1800mm high screen.
- 3.4 The existing entrance canopies and plant screens would be removed. A single entrance would be retained opposite Park Place. The entrance would have level access and be fitted with electrically operated bi-parting sliding doors. The original dark brown tinted glazing used throughout the building would be replaced with neutral glazing matching that on the proposed extension.
- 3.5 The reconfiguration of the entrance and removal of the plant screen above would lead to the removal of one of the existing arches. A new vertical glazed plane would extend from ground level up to the new fifth floor. Glazing in this area and in the neighbouring arch would have a subtle manifestation applied to screen the stairtower and toilets immediately to the rear. The same treatment would be applied to the arch head to the south where the removal of the plant screen would reveal the concrete building structure.
- 3.6 The existing 16 car parking spaces are to be retained. 1 of the car parking spaces is to be marked out for disabled persons use. An electric car charging point and two motorcycle spaces will be provided within the car park. 10 secure, covered cycle parking spaces would be provided beneath a shelter to the rear of the building. 6 Sheffield stands would be installed directly to the north of the building. These facilities will be supported by showers and changing facilities on every floor of the building.
- 3.7 A new substation is required with direct access from the street. The substation would be located in the southwest corner of the car park, replacing part of the existing planter. New tree planting is proposed to replace existing overgrown vegetation in the space north of the building. Existing hedges will also be trimmed back. New York stone paving will be introduced to the front, side and rear of the building.

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

81/20/407 4 storey office block with 42 car parking spaces and landscaping to vacant site. Approved 17.6.82

06/07641/FU 7 storey office block with 2 level basement car park. The proposed, unimplemented, development covered both the existing building and car parks and much of the open space to the north. Approved 22.3.07 PREAPP/10/00636 Pre-application discussion regarding evolution of the design and including consideration at Design Review Panel which supported the approach.

5.0 PUBLIC/LOCAL RESPONSE

- 5.1 Site notices were erected on 12th November 2010 and the application was advertised in the Leeds Weekly News on 18th November 2010. No representations have been received.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES

Statutory:

- 6.1 Highways (15.11.10) – no objection in principle subject to conditions regarding the provision of motorcycle spaces, cycling facilities, contractor's facilities and cleaning of the highway; and revisions to the position of the vehicular barrier and the entrance arrangements.
- 6.2 Yorkshire Water (5.11.10) – no comment.

Non-statutory

- 6.3 Transport Policy (17.12.10) – The revised travel plan is acceptable.
- 6.4 Access (15.12.10) – no objections.
- 6.5 Public Rights of Way (9.11.10) – no objection.
- 6.6 Flood risk management (22.11.10) – no objections.
- 6.7 Environmental Protection Team (5.11.10) – no adverse comments.

7.0 PLANNING POLICY

Regional Spatial Strategy:

The RSS for Yorkshire and Humber was adopted in May 2008. The vision of the RSS is to create a world-class region, where the economic, environmental and social well-being of all people is advancing more rapidly and more sustainably than its competitors. Particular emphasis is placed on the Leeds City Region.

YH7 Location of development

This identifies the need for a sequential approach giving first priority to the re-use of previously developed land and buildings and making effective use of existing transport infrastructure and capacity.

E2 Town centres and major facilities

- B Development, environmental enhancements and accessibility improvements should take place to create a distinctive, attractive and vibrant sense of place and identity for each centre.

E3 Land and premises for economic development.

Plans and investment decisions should make use of appropriately located previously developed land.

ENV 5 Maximise improvements to energy efficiency and increases in renewable energy capacity.

7.2 Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review 2006)

The site is located in the Prime Office Quarter as defined by the Leeds City Council Unitary Development Plan Review 2006.

7.2.1 Relevant policies include:

- GP5 All planning considerations to be resolved
GP7 Planning obligations
GP11 & 12 Sustainable Design
BD4 Mechanical plant should be contained within the building
BD5 Ensure a satisfactory level of amenity for occupants and surroundings.
BD6 All extensions and alterations should respect the scale and form of the host building
N12 Fundamental priorities for urban form
N13 Requires all new buildings to be of high quality and have regard to character and appearance of surroundings
N19 All new buildings and extensions within or adjacent to conservation areas should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area
CC3 The identity and distinctive character of the city centre will be maintained by:
a) Protecting the building fabric and style
b) Encouraging good innovative design, and
c) Upgrading the environment where necessary.
T2 Development shall be; a) served adequately by existing or programmed highways or by improvements to the highway network; and b) Adequately served by public transport c) Adequate cycle facilities.
T5 Satisfactory provision for pedestrians and cyclists.
T6 Satisfactory access and provision for disabled people and other people with mobility problems will be required within highway and paving schemes, and within new development.
A4 Development and refurbishment proposals should be designed to secure a safe and secure environment, including proper consideration of access arrangements.
SA9, SP8: Promote development of City Centre role and status

7.3 Supplementary Planning Guidance

City Centre Urban Design Strategy September 2000 seeks to reinforce the positive qualities of character areas, re-establish urban grain, provide enclosure to streets, create visual interest, encourage excellent design, improve pedestrian connections,

develop a mixture of land uses, promote active frontages and promote sustainable development.

7.4 National Planning Guidance

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development and Climate Change Supplement
PPS4 Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth
PPS5 Planning and the Historic Environment
PPG13 Transport

8.0 **MAIN ISSUES**

- (i) Principle of the development
- (ii) Design
- (iii) Landscape and public realm
- (iv) Impact on neighbours
- (v) Transport
- (vi) Diversity and equality
- (vii) Sustainability
- (viii) Section 106

9.0 **APPRAISAL**

9.1 Principle of the development

- 9.1.1 The property is located within the Prime Office Quarter within the defined city centre boundary. The proposals therefore accord with UDP policy CC27 and guidance contained within PPS4. Additional office space in this location also supports strategic aims within the UDP and the RSS regarding the development of the city centre. The principle of development is therefore acceptable.

9.2 Design

- 9.2.1 The previously approved proposals (reference 06/07641/FU) entailed demolition of the existing building and its replacement with a significantly larger building than now proposed and would have had a greater visual impact on the neighbouring conservation area. The current proposals for the two additional floors developed from a series of design studies and better respect the scale of neighbouring buildings. The final design floats the top, fifth, floor over the existing building, utilising the strong form of the arches as a base. The intervening fourth floor is recessed to respect the parapet line of the existing building and to emphasise the floating nature of the fifth floor.
- 9.2.2 The curved ends to the fifth floor respond to the arched form of the base. The curves have the same radius as the brick arches thereby respecting the proportions of the existing structure. A slim frame helps to define the “lozenge” form and also provides access for window cleaning. A series of vertical coloured panels are incorporated at fifth floor to reflect the rhythm of the brick arches.
- 9.2.3 The fifth floor is positioned eccentrically to the existing building, overhanging the building at the northern end. The positioning helps to express the lozenge form and to visually terminate the building.

9.2.4 Several solutions have been employed to reduce the impact of the plant area above the fifth floor of the building including:

- the use of floor by floor air intake and extract removing the need for large external air handling units on the roof
- setting down the plant room area from general roof level
- locating the plant area 4 metres back from the roof edge
- screening the plant and photovoltaic panels behind a screen a maximum of 1800mm high

As a result, the uppermost edge of the plant screen only comes into view when at a distance of 45 metres from the building, and only the top 1 metre of the screen is visible when close to the junction of Park Place and Central Street. Whilst the need for the addition of the roof top plant is unfortunate, and the plant screen would be visible in longer distance views, it is accepted that its impact would not unacceptably affect the design integrity of the building.

9.2.5 The combination of the existing cores into a single main core and the provision of a single entrance creates a more efficient and flexible building. The reconfiguration of the entrance and the associated removal of the existing plant screens provides the opportunity to visually tie the new floors into the existing structure. This is achieved through the insertion of a new vertical glazing plane, framed in the same material as the lozenge, extending from ground level up to the fifth floor.

9.2.6 As noted, the building is visible and has an impact upon the setting of the neighbouring conservation area. The proposed alterations and rooftop extensions design would breathe new life into the building and help to add visual interest to the Queen Street/Park Place streetscene, responding to both the architecture of the original building and also the scale of its neighbours. Consequently, the proposals would not adversely affect the character or appearance of the conservation area.

9.2.7 In conclusion, it is considered that the proposed development is an appropriate response to the retention and extension of the building.

9.3 Landscape and public realm

9.3.1 The area to the north of the building has experienced anti-social behaviour, in part, due to a lack of maintenance. The removal of existing planting and its replacement with new hard landscaping and tree planting will create a more open and safe environment. The trees will provide vertical structure and greenery to the space. New york stone paving will improve the setting of the building.

9.3.2 Vegetation in the planters to the rear will be managed leading to the reduction in hedge height and the removal of some trees. The proposed substation in the corner of the car park will be designed to reflect the existing refuse store and although undesirable is necessary and would have limited impact.

9.3.3 The potential introduction of a route through the building was discussed at pre-application stage. However, given the impact upon the building layout, the separate ownership of the larger car park, and the presence of existing routes to the north and south of the building, this was not considered viable and was not pursued.

9.4 Impact on neighbours

9.4.1 Elizabeth House to the south of the premises is a 4-5 storey building with a similar alignment to Queen Street but with a wing projecting back to Little Queen Street. A gable end to the roof of Elizabeth House presents a blank end to the building such that the proposed extension would have a negligible impact upon that premises. Windows in the rear of the roof extension would have a similar relationship with the projecting wing to Elizabeth House as existing windows at lower level.

9.4.2 At the northern end the proposed extension would project towards 25 Queen Street. However, whilst some additional overlooking would arise a separation of 8 metres is maintained which is adequate for office functions. Similarly, the mass of the extension, although to the south of 25 Queen Street, would not have an unacceptable impact upon daylight and working conditions. It should also be noted that the earlier approval of a 7 storey building would have had a far greater impact than the current proposals.

9.5 Transport

9.5.1 The application was accompanied by a Transport Statement and a Travel Plan for the whole building. Whereas an additional 1432sq.m. of floorspace is intended no additional car parking is proposed. Car parking provision for the building as a whole would be 10 below the maximum supported by UDP guidelines. The area is subject to extensive on-street parking controls. Consequently, it is not considered that the development would give rise to any adverse impact on traffic conditions.

9.5.2 The site is located within an accessible location within the city centre. A sustainable approach to travel is promoted through the introduction of long and short stay cycle parking spaces, together with showers and changing facilities. Other Travel Plan measures include motorcycle parking, a travel notice board and the identification of a Travel Plan coordinator to manage the process. Implementation of the Travel Plan will deliver benefits not just for the extension but for the entire building.

9.5.3 The development, involving an appropriate city centre use, would through the implementation of the travel plan and promotion of sustainable transport modes deliver a minor beneficial impact on traffic movement.

9.6 Diversity and equality

9.6.1 The extended building will be fully DDA compliant. The new lifts would have centre opening doors and be fully DDA compliant. One of the lifts would be specified for disabled evacuation in the case of fire. Each floor would have a fully accessible WC and the second floor would have a combined fully accessible WC and shower. The proposed disabled persons car parking space would have suitable access to the entrance on Queen Street.

9.7 Sustainability

9.7.1 The site is located in a highly sustainable city centre location and would help to make more efficient use of the land. The scheme also involves the following sustainable measures:

- Reuse of the existing building structure
- Upgrades to the building fabric and mechanical and engineering equipment will result in a dramatic reduction in energy use.
- Water reduction devices.

- Waste recycling at construction and operation phases.
- An electric car charging point and cycle storage facilities will be provided within the car park.
- The provision of 30 square metres of photovoltaic cells on the roof. A wall display indicating the sustainable energy production of the building would be provided in the entrance foyer.

9.7.2 A “Very Good” BREEAM rating is currently expected. Studies are ongoing to assess the possibility of achieving “Excellent”.

9.8 Section 106

A draft Section 106 Agreement has been prepared. The S106 includes the following:

- Travel Plan with monitoring fee of £3120.
- Standard employment and training initiatives.
- Management and accessibility to public areas.
- £600 monitoring fee for clauses that require administration / management / monitoring.

The Section 106 obligations are compliant with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 Statutory Tests.

10.0 CONCLUSION

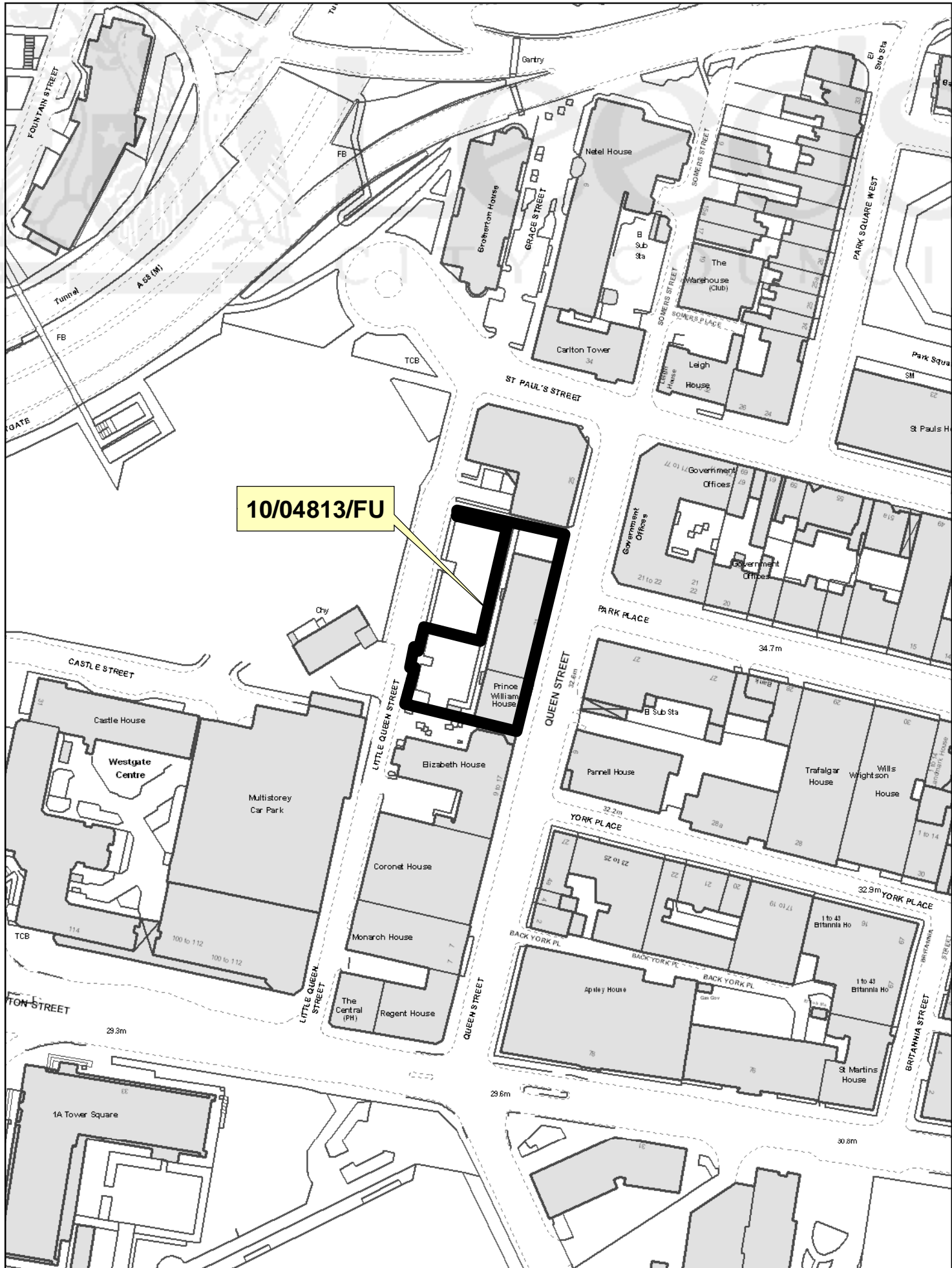
10.1 The proposed design of the rooftop extension responds innovatively to the original strong form of the building rather than adopting the standard approach of adding a series of lightweight boxes. The design is supported by the Design Review Panel, including the Civic Architect. Ultimately, the success of the extension will be dependent upon the detailed design and quality of construction. At the same time, the refurbishment proposals and alterations will enliven the building and add interest to the streetscene and the neighbouring conservation area. The alterations and future management arrangements will result in a building which is far more sustainable than the existing premises. At the same time proposed hard and soft landscaping works will deliver a safer and higher quality environment thereby also promoting pedestrian movement around the site. As a result the application is recommended for approval subject to appropriate conditions and the completion of a Section 106 agreement.

Background Papers:

Application File - 10/04813/FU

Historic Files – 81/20/407, 06/07641/FU

Certificate of ownership – signed on behalf of applicants.



10/04813/FU

CITY CENTRE PANEL