

Planning Applications Committee

22 July 2026



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT
Ward	Abbey
Planning Application Reference:	PL/26/0573 - Full planning application
Site Address:	The Oracle, Bridge Street, Reading, RG1 2LR
Proposed Development	Full planning application for the removal of the existing rooftop safety lines and handrails and replacement with rooftop safety rails and installation of fixed ladder
Applicant	The Oracle Limited Partnership
Report author	Matthew Burns
Deadline:	12/08/2026
Recommendations	Grant full planning permission subject to conditions as set out below.
Conditions	1. Time Limit for implementation – 3 years. 2. Approved plans. 3. Materials as proposed
Informatives	1. Positive and Proactive Working – approval 2. Terms and conditions 3. Building Regulations 4. Complaints about construction 5. Community Infrastructure Levy – not liable

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the replacement and upgrading of existing rooftop safety infrastructure at The Oracle, including the installation of new safety railings and a fixed access ladder. The works are required to ensure compliance with current health and safety standards and to facilitate the safe maintenance of rooftop plant and equipment.
- 1.2 The proposed railings would be modest in scale, located at roof level and largely replace existing safety features. Officers consider that the development would have a negligible visual impact on The Oracle, the surrounding townscape including riverside areas and nearby heritage assets. No objections have been raised by the Council's Conservation Officer, and no public representations have been received.
- 1.3 The proposal would support the continued operation of The Oracle as a key retail and leisure destination within Reading town centre and is not considered to result in any unacceptable impacts on heritage assets, residential amenity, biodiversity or flood risk. The development is therefore considered to comply with relevant local and national planning policies, and approval is recommended subject to conditions

2. Introduction and site description

- 2.1. The application site comprises the entirety of the Oracle Shopping Centre and some surrounding buildings, consistent with the red-line application site boundary of the original permission (PL/97/0419) from 1997. This extends from Broad Street in the north, Duke Street, Yield Hall Place and London Street in the east, Mill Lane to the south and Bridge Street to the west. This is shown below in figure 1. The application form submitted with the application confirms that the applicant has served notice on various other landowners on part of land or buildings to which this application relates.

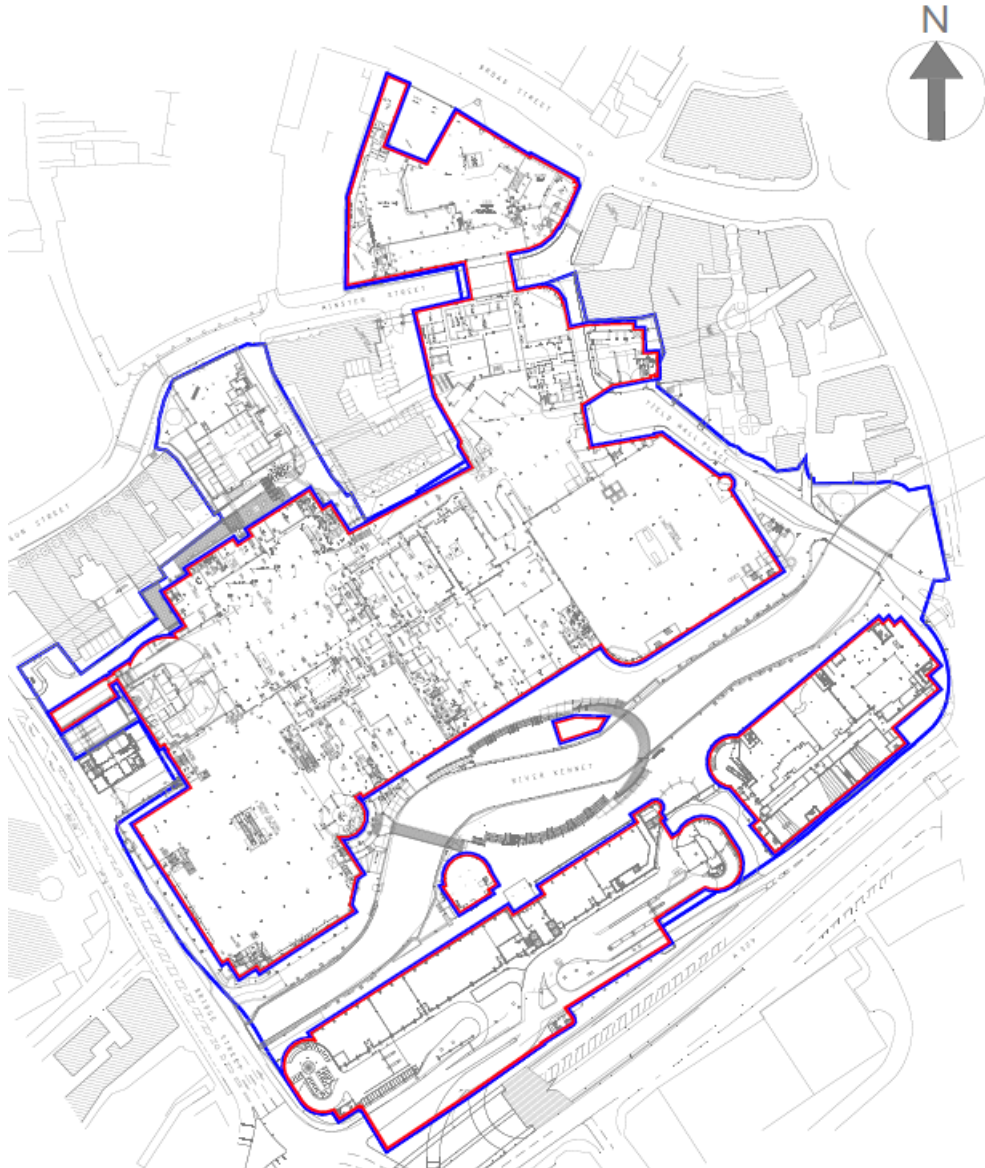


Figure 1 – Site Location Plan

- 2.2 The Oracle opened in September 1999 and comprises a two-level shopping centre, with further uses either side of the River Kennet riverside. The Oracle is managed by Hammerson (the applicant for these proposals) and consists predominantly of national retailers providing a variety of retail, restaurant and leisure uses.
- 2.3 The Local Plan (2019) at paragraph 5.1.4 specifies that the opening of The Oracle helped to establish Reading as one of the leading shopping locations in the UK. The application site is subject to the following site constraints / designations:
- Part of the site is allocated for development under Policy CR14g – The Oracle Extension, Bridge Street and Letcombe Street, which specifies development of the area between the River Kennet and Mill Lane for retail, with use of the site at Letcombe Street for a public car park.
 - Within the boundary of Reading Central Area (Policies CR1-10)
 - Inside the primary shopping area (Policy CR1)

- Inside the central core (Policy CR1)
- Inside the office core (Policy CR1)
- The Riverside frontages are designated primary frontages in Central Reading (Policy CR7)
- The site is partly within two separate conservation areas (Policies EN1 & EN3), namely Market Place / London Street to the east and St Mary's Butts / Castle Street to the west.
- On site Grade II listed buildings, namely 2&4 London Street, Seven Bridges House (19 Bridge Street) and the Telephone Exchange at 41- 47 Minster Street
- On site Grade II* structure, namely the culvert on the Holy Brook to the rear of Gun Street / Castle Street
- High Bridge (Duke Street) is a scheduled ancient monument (Policy EN1)
- Within the viewing corridor of view 2 within Policy EN5 (Protection of Significant Views with Heritage Interest) – the view northwards down Southampton Street from Whitley Street towards St Giles Church, St Mary's Church and Greyfriars Church.
- Includes parts of the classified highway network and a series of cycle routes (e.g. Mill Lane is an orbital route, Bridge Street, Broad Street, Minster Street and Duke Street are local routes, the southern Riverside is a leisure route, all as per the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan)
- The River Kennet is an area of identified biodiversity interest (Policy EN12) and waterspace (Policy EN11)
- A number of parts of the site are subject to potential contaminated land (Policy EN16)
- Within areas of Flood Zone 1, 2 and 3 (Policy EN18)
- Within an area with archaeological potential (Policy EN2)
- Within an air quality management area (Policy EN15)
- Within a British Waterways consultation area
- Within a smoke control area
- Within a licensing cumulative impact area

2.4 In the surrounding area there are a wide mix of uses (both commercial and residential) and building types, including a number of other listed buildings (e.g. fronting Gun Street). As per the aerial view provided at figure 2 below, the site and surrounding area is within the heart of Reading town centre.



Figure 2 – Aerial view looking north of the site and surrounding area

2.5 The application is being considered at Planning Applications Committee as the proposal constitutes a 'major' development, given the red line site area exceeds 1 hectare.

3. The Proposal

- 3.1 Full planning permission is sought to partially remove some of the existing rooftop lines and handrails and replace them with rooftop safety rails. Due to regulatory changes, the proposal is sought to replace the existing safety lines with safety handrails which are compliant with the latest safety regulations.
- 3.2 The Oracle is an operational shopping centre and at roof top level there is a range of ancillary equipment to support the operation of the shopping centre including mechanical plant, lift shafts, stair core overruns and roof top car parking. The existing rooftop lines (see figure 3 below) allow workers safety equipment to be attached by harness when accessing and maintaining rooftop-based equipment.

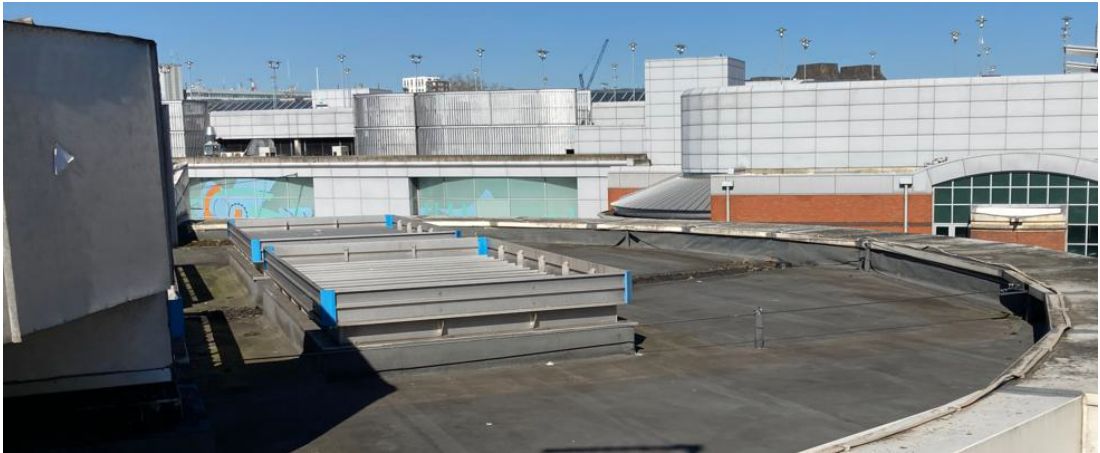


Figure 3 – Photograph of existing rooftop lines

- 3.3 The supporting statement submitted with the application explains that the applicant has undertaken a health and safety assessment and identified that the existing rooftop lines are reaching the end of their operational life and due to regulatory changes (to BS 13700 - the official UK standard for permanent, freestanding roof guardrails and lines), the proposals are sought to partially replace the existing rooftop lines and handrails with equipment that is compliant with the latest safety regulations. The new replacement rails are required to prevent workers and any people moving around on the roof from the risk of falling and minimise the risk of accidental injury. The new rails would create a physical barrier that prevents people from entering hazardous areas of the roof edge to ensure the safety of employees and contractors when accessing rooftop infrastructure.
- 3.4 The proposed replacement rails would be affixed to the roof by a mix of short and long leg counterweight based with a height a maximum height of 1.1m to the top of the rail (see figure 4).

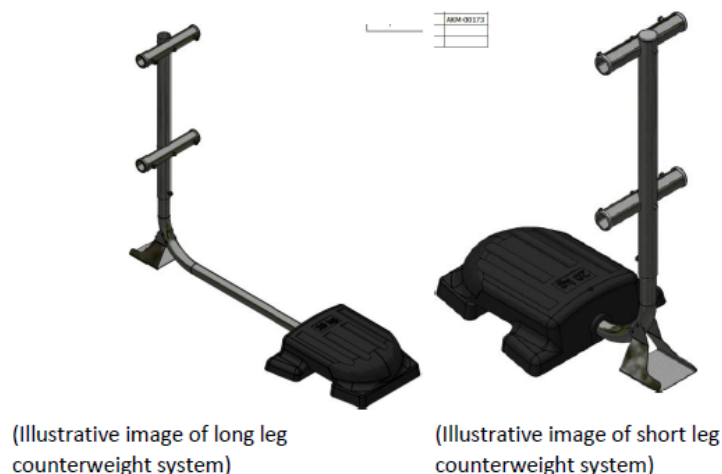


Figure 4 – Proposed rail counterweight bases

- 3.5 The counterweights would be connected by silver metal bars forming rails around the perimeter of the roof of the buildings as shown in figure 5 below.



Figure 5 – Proposed rails

- 3.6 Where existing roof top lines and rails meet latest standards, these are to be retained. The replacement roof top rails are proposed various locations spread across the rooftops of The Oracle complex and adjoining buildings within the application site. The proposed location of new rails is shown delineated and annotated in red on the plan in figure 6 below and on the plans attached at the end of this report. Existing lines and rails to be retained are shown delineated and annotated in green and existing rails and lines to be decommissioned and removed that no longer adhere to latest safety standards are shown delineated and annotated in blue on the same plan.

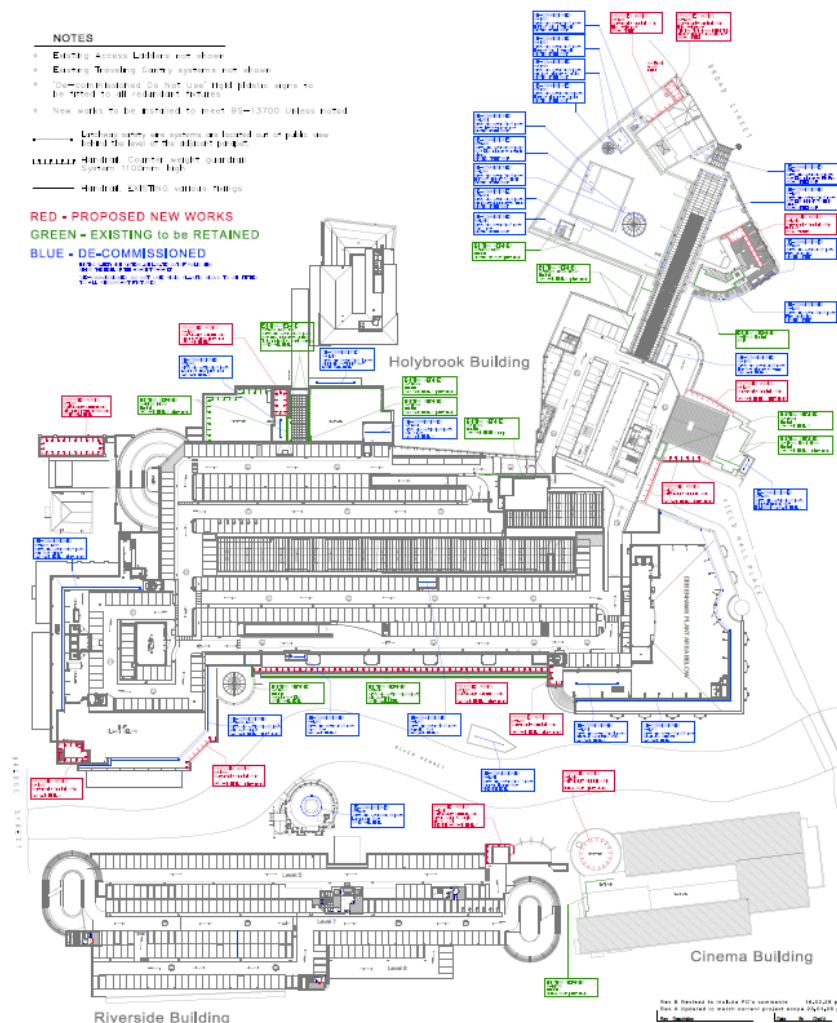


Figure 6 – Location of existing and proposed rails and lines

- 3.7 The proposals also include the additional of a fixed ladder to provide access to the roof top level on the shopping centre roof above the Broad Street entrance to The Oracle.

3.8 Submitted plans and documentation:

Application form, certificates and fee
Turley Planning CIL Form
Turley Planning Covering Letter and Contents ref. HAMS3038
Turley Planning Planning, Heritage, Design and Access Statement ref. HAMS3038
Site Location Plan ref. SITE.LOC.01A JLL
Existing Block Plan ref. EX.BP.08A JLL
Proposed Block Plan ref. PRO.BP.58A
Edge Protection – Existing Roof Plan ref. EP.EX.RP.101.A
Edge Protection – Proposed Roof Plan ref. EP.PRO.RP.100.B
Edge Protection – Existing Elevations (A, B, C) ref. OSC.EP.EX.01A
Edge Protection – Existing Elevations (D) ref. OSC.EP.EX.02.A
Edge Protection – Existing Elevations (F, G, H) ref. OSC.EP.EX.03.A
Edge Protection – Existing Elevations (J, K, L) ref. OSC.EP.EX.04.A
Edge Protection – Existing Elevations (M, N) ref. OSC.EP.EX.05.A
Edge Protection – Existing Elevations (P, Q, R) ref. OSC.EP.EX.06.A
Edge Protection – Existing Elevations (S, T, U) ref. OSC.EP.EX.07.A
Edge Protection – Proposed Elevations (A, B, C) ref. OSC.EP.PRO.51.A
Edge Protection – Proposed Elevations (D) ref. OSC.EP.PRO.52.A
Edge Protection – Proposed Elevations (F, G, H) ref. OSC.EP.PRO.54.A
Edge Protection – Proposed Elevations (M, N) ref. OSC.EP.PRO.55.A
Edge Protection – Proposed Elevations (P, Q, R) ref. OSC.EP.PRO.56.A
Edge Protection – Proposed Elevations (S, T, U) ref. OSC.EP.PRO.57.A JLL
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 29th April 2026.

4 Planning history

- 4.1 There have been numerous planning applications at the wider Oracle site since the original permission to which this application relates.
- 4.2 97/0017/FD / 970419 – Demolition of existing buildings, redevelopment and change of use to provide: shopping centre (Class A1, A2 & A3), 41 residential units, leisure facilities including multi screen cinema (Class D2), car parking (2390 spaces) and community uses together with associated landscaping etc. Granted following the completion of a s106 legal agreement 04/04/1997.
- 4.3 98/00137/VARIAT / 980719 - Relaxation of condition No 3 of consent reference 97/0017/FD to substitute plans relating to House of Fraser lifts, Debenhams lift, Debenhams high level wall, Holy Brook lift, Broad Street canopy. Granted 02/04/1998.
- 4.4 98/00143/FUL - 980127 - Substitution of approved drawings submitted pursuant to condition 75, the South Bank Car Park elevations of consent reference 97/0017/FD. Granted 10/06/1998.
- 4.5 98/00255/VARIAT / 980652 - Relaxation of condition 59 of application 97/0017/FD to allow 24 hour working in specified areas for 6 weeks commencing 27 April 1998. Granted 17/04/1998.
- 4.6 98/00238/VARIAT / 980695 - Variation of condition 75 re cinema elevations. Granted 23/04/1998.
- 4.7 98/0939/VC / 980841 - Relaxation of condition 3 of planning application 97/0017/FD to substitute plans relating to the internal layout and external elevations of phase 3. works. Granted 10/02/1999.
- 4.8 98/00578/FUL / 981047 - Substitution of plans pursuant to condition 3 of app 97/0017/FD re the ground floor of south bank car park which previously showed 3 restaurants the

gallery & disabled parking bays to show 4 restaurants, the gallery & the creche and relocating disabled parking bays on Level 3. Granted 10/07/1999.

- 4.9 98/00808/VARIAT / 981053 - Town & Country Planning Act 1990 - Section 73 Variation of Condition 59. Granted 17/04/1998.
- 4.10 98/00408/VARIAT / 981059 - Application under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to vary condition 3 attached to planning permission 97/0017/FD to allow for changes to the proposed 'circular' restaurant on the South Bank. Granted 10/09/1998.
- 4.11 99/00764/VARIAT / 991435 - Variation of conditions 18 and 19 of planning permission 97/0017/FD to allow obscure glazing of selected windows of the department stores. Granted 22/09/99.
- 4.12 99/00073/VARIAT / 991769 – Vary condition 59 attached to Planning Permission 97/0017/FD to allow for 24hr working to enable internal works only from 6.00pm to 8.00am. Granted 05/10/1999.
- 4.13 05/00222/VARIAT / 050162 - New access and external seating area to House of Fraser Restaurant. Granted 29/04/05.
- 4.13 Current Next unit only: 171726/CLP - Internal alterations associated with amalgamation of units L12 & LX, Yield Hall East Mall internal access space (all at Level 2) and units U16, U17 and U18 (all at Level 4 on Town Mall East) into a single retail unit (Class A1). Certificate of Lawfulness Granted 15/11/2017. This was implemented and combined a number of existing units to create the existing single unit occupied by Next.
- 4.14 Current House of Fraser unit only: 191841/FUL - Subdivision of three-storey retail unit (Class A1) and change of use to form: 1x flexible retail/restaurant/bar unit (Class A1/A3/A4), 1x flexible retail/restaurant unit (Class A1/A3) and 1x assembly and leisure unit (Class D2) at Riverside level; 1x retail unit (Class A1) and 1x assembly and leisure unit (Class D2) at lower ground level; 1x retail unit (Class A1) at upper ground level, together with alterations to the Riverside frontage and associated plant, car parking and external alterations at car park levels. Granted following completion of s106 legal agreement on 31/07/2020. Not implemented and the 3 year period for works to commence expired on 31/07/2023.
- 4.15 Former Debenhams Department Store, West of Yield Hall Place: 221916/FUL - Mixed use development comprising part demolition of former department store and erection of new building comprising up to 202no. build to rent residential dwellings (Class C3) and 1,209 sqm commercial uses within Uses Class E and / or bar (Sui Generis Use). Reconfiguration and change of use of up to 5,866 sqm remaining department store floorspace (Class E) to uses with within Use Class E and / or bar (Sui Generis Use) and / or experiential leisure use (Sui Generis Use). Associated public realm, infrastructure works and external alterations to shopping centre, including creation of new shopping centre entrance. PAC resolution to grant awaiting completion of s106 agreement before planning permission can be issued.
- 4.16 Existing Vue Cinema Complex, Land West of Yield Hall Place / London Road, The Oracle: 221917/FUL - Mixed use development comprising demolition of existing buildings and erection of new building comprising up to 247 no. build-to-rent residential dwellings (Class C3) and up to 3,046 sqm commercial floorspace comprising cinema (Sui Generis) and ground floor commercial uses within Use Class E and /or Bar (Sui Generis Use). Associated public realm. PAC resolution to grant awaiting completion of s106 agreement before planning permission can be issued.

5 Consultations

- 5.1 RBC Conservation Officer – No objection.
- 5.2 RBC Ecology Adviser – No objection.

Public Notification

- 5.3 4 x site notices were displayed at the application site on 20th May 2026. No letters of representation have been received.

6 Legal context

- 6.1 Section 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.
- 6.2 Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
- 6.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF December 2024) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF paragraph 12).
- 6.4 In this regard, the NPPF states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Plan 2019 according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).
- 6.5 Accordingly, the latest NPPF and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

NPPF (December 2024, incorporating changes February 2025)

Section 6 - Building a strong, competitive economy

Section 7 - Ensuring the vitality of town centres

Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places

Section 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

NPPG (2014 onwards)

Reading Borough Local Plan 2019, policies:

CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas

EN5: Protection of Significant Views with Heritage Interest

EN11: Waterspaces

EN18: Flooding and Drainage

RL1: Network and Hierarchy of Centres

CR1: Definition of Central Reading

CR2: Design in Central Reading

CR14g: The Oracle Extension, Bridge Street and Letcombe Street

Other relevant guidance:

Market Place/London Street Conservation Area Appraisal (2007)

St Mary's Butts / Castle Street Conservation Area Appraisal (March 2008)

Local Plan Update

- 6.6 The current version of the Local Plan (adopted in November 2019) turned five years old on Tuesday 5th November 2024. The Local Plan was reviewed in March 2023 and around half of the policies in the plan are considered still up to date. However, the rest need to be considered for updating to reflect changing circumstances and national policy. A pre-submission draft was submitted to the Secretary of State on the 9th of May 2025 and is currently at examination.
- 6.7 Although there is a five-year period for carrying out a review of a plan after it is adopted, nothing in the NPPF or elsewhere says that policies automatically become “out of date” when they are five years old. It is a matter of planning judgement rather than legal fact whether a plan or policies within it are out-of-date. This will depend on whether they have been overtaken by things that have happened since the plan was adopted, either on the ground or through changes in national policy, for example.
- 6.8 Officer advice in respect of the Local Plan policies pertinent to this application listed above is that they remain in accordance with national policy and that the objectives of those policies remain very similar in the draft updated Local Plan. Therefore, they can continue to be afforded weight in the appraisal below and are not considered to be ‘out of date’.

7 Appraisal

- 7.1 The proposed safety rails and fixed ladder would facilitate safe access for employees of The Oracle and contractors to the rooftop parts of the site and rooftop-based plant equipment, ongoing maintenance of which are key to the operation of The Oracle and adjoining buildings within the site containing various shops and restaurants.
- 7.2 Supporting the ongoing operation of The Oracle would align with Policy RL1 (Network and Hierarchy of Centres) which seeks that the vitality and viability of the Reading Central Area as a Regional Centre is maintained and enhanced, noting that as per paragraphs 5.1.1 and 5.1.4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) Reading town centre is one of the UK’s most important centres and that its importance for retail, boosted by the opening of the Oracle in 1999, is long established, but it is also significant for leisure and culture, and, increasingly, as somewhere to live. In this respect the proposals would also align with relevant paragraph 90 of the NPPF (February 2025) which states that planning decisions should promote the long-term vitality and viability of town centres.
- 7.3 The other main considerations considered relevant to the determination of this application are:

- i) Design impact on the character of the host building, surrounding area and heritage assets
- ii) Other Matters

i) Design impact on the character of the host building, surrounding area and heritage assets

- 7.4 The proposed replacement safety rails would either replace or add to the existing safety rails and lines to the rooftop of The Oracle complex. The rails would be of similar appearance and scale and be located in similar locations to the existing rooftop safety rails and lines. The maximum height of the safety rails proposed would be 1.1m on top of the existing flat roof of the various buildings within The Oracle complex. The height and siting of the rails to the roofs of the buildings have been determined in order to adhere to the latest relevant health and safety standards (BS13700) to facilitate safe access and manoeuvrability at roof level.

- 7.7 Existing and proposed elevation drawings of the site have been provided as part of the application showing the proposed new roof top rails. A selection of these plans is shown below, and the full set of elevation drawings are attached at the end of this report.

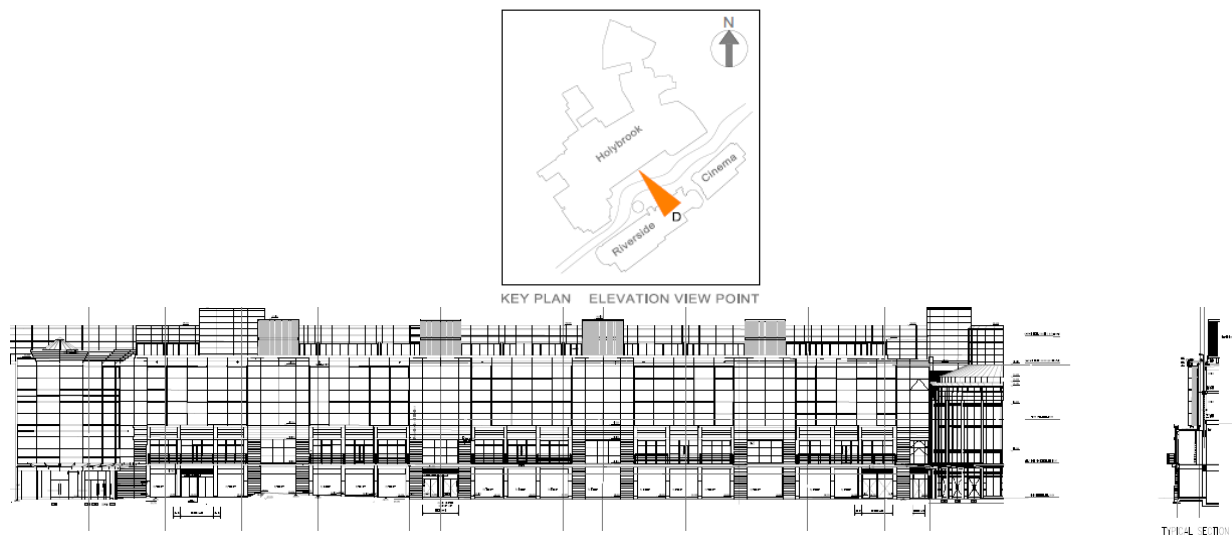


Figure 7 - Existing south elevation of The Oracle building to the north side of the Kennet visible from The Oracle riverside area

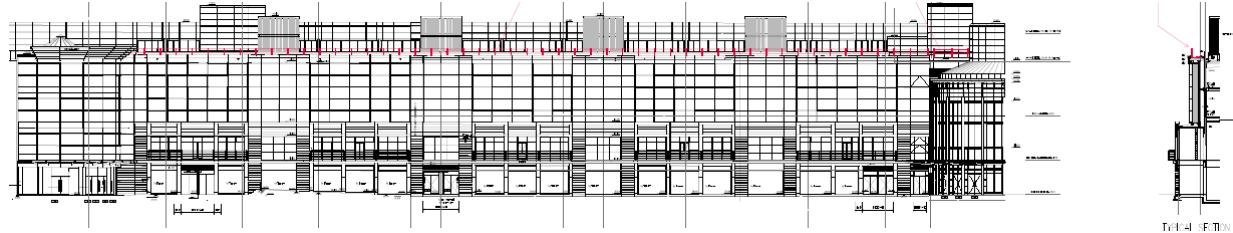


Figure 8 - Proposed south elevation of The Oracle building to the north side of the Kennet visible from The Oracle riverside area (additions shown in red)



Figure 9 – Existing north, south and east elevations of The Oracle Buildings to the north of the Kennet visible from Yield Hall Place (existing rails to be retained shown in green)

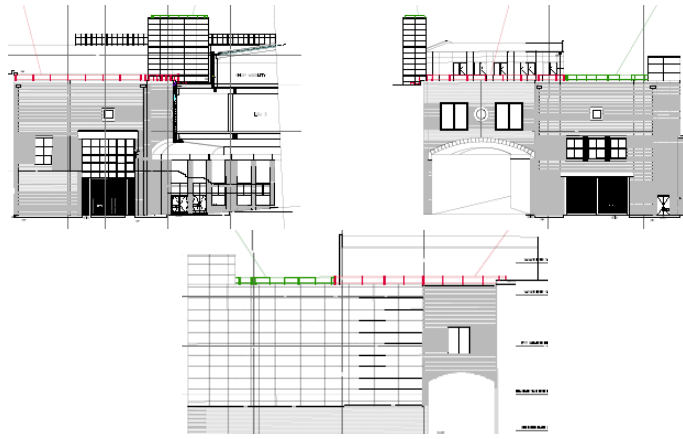


Figure 10 – Proposed north, south and east elevations of The Oracle Buildings to the north of the Kennet visible from Yield Hall Place (proposed additions shown in red)

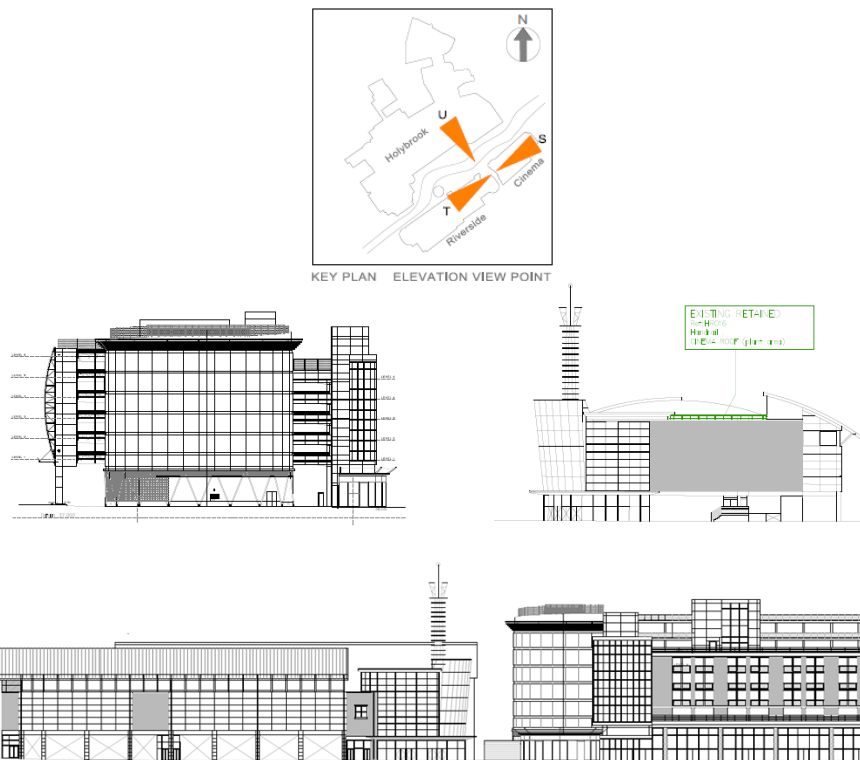


Figure 11 – Existing north, east and west elevations of The Oracle buildings to the south of the Kennet visible from The Oracle riverside area (existing rails to be retained shown in green)

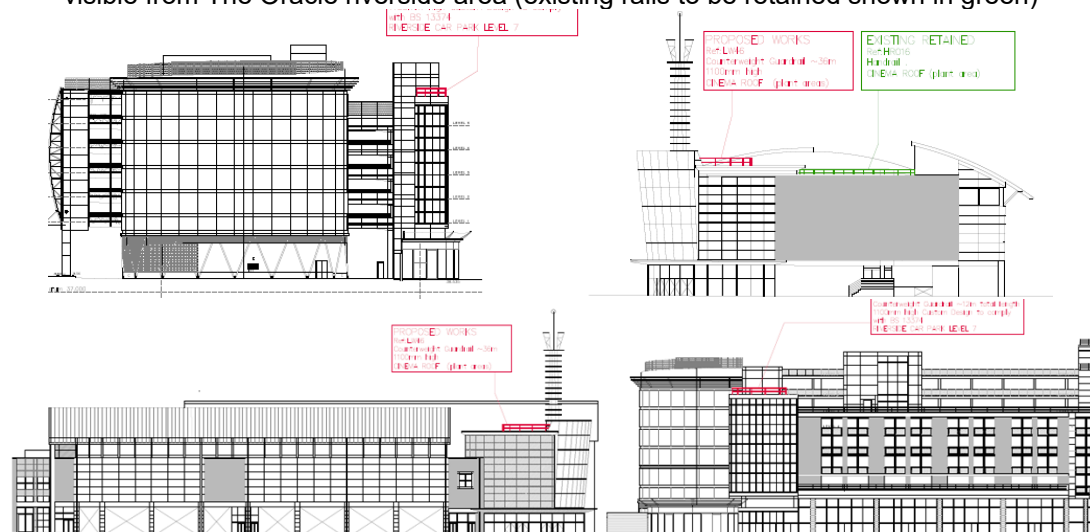


Figure 12 – Proposed north, east and west elevations of The Oracle buildings to the south of the Kennet visible from The Oracle riverside area (proposed additions shown in red)



Figure 13 – Existing north elevations of The Oracle entrance and linked building on Broad Street (existing rails to be retained shown in green)



Figure 14 – Proposed north elevations of The Oracle entrance and linked buildings on Broad Street (additions shown in red)

7.5 As a result of their rooftop location, limited height, set back from the roof edge and in some cases positioning behind parapet roof edges it is not considered that the proposed rails would appear readily visible from street level views within and surrounding The Oracle complex. Furthermore, the nature of the proposed rail structures consisting of thin vertical and horizontal bars means that even when partial views of glimpses of the rails would be obtained, they would not appear obtrusive or prominent. Some of the existing safety rails and lines are visible to certain views when looking towards The Oracle but the grey/silver colour finish of the rails/lines, which is the same as is proposed for the new rails, means that they do not appear prominent within the views and tend to blend into the sky, into views of the taller elements of The Oracle such as roof top plant enclosures and lift overruns or into views of other buildings surrounding The Oracle. For example, figure 15 below shows some of the existing roof top railings adjacent to the roof level of the Holybrook Car Park that are to be retained a part of the proposals when viewed from Gun Street to the north of The Oracle.



Figure 15– view of existing safety rails to roof of The Oracle looking south from Gun Street

- 7.6 The grey/silver material finish of the railings also reflect that of similar infrastructure/equipment to external areas of The Oracle such as the safety rails along the banks of the Kennet within the riverside areas of the site and that to the edges of the upper floor multistorey car parks areas within The Oracle. The proposals also include provision of a fixed ladder to roof no. 120-121 Broad Street which is part of the buildings either side of The Oracle entrance on Boad Street which are under the same ownership as the shopping centre. The proposed fixed ladder is shown in figure 14 above and would be located to the rear of the flat roof of this building such that it would not be visible from street level of public realm areas within the town centre.
- 7.7 The proposed replacement and additional rooftop safety rails (and fixed ladder) are by their nature utilitarian and functional additions but are considered to be sited and have an appearance such that they would integrate with the existing rooftop spaces, equipment and structures at The Oracle. Their siting at roof level as per existing rooftop rails and lines at the site is such that it is not considered the rails would be prominent to views from street-level areas within and surrounding The Oracle. Where glimpses of the rails would be viewed, such as from The Oracle riverside, Yield Hall Place, Bridge Street and Broad Street the visual impact would be minor and would be seen in the context of the variety of roof top plant and structures present to The Oracle and other buildings within the Reading Central Area. The proposals would suitably integrate with and not have a detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of The Oracle, linked buildings and areas surrounding the site, including riverside areas, and in this respect are considered to accord with Policies CC7 (Design and Public Realm), CR2 (Design in Central Reading) and EN11 (Waterspaces).

Heritage Matters

- 7.8 As set out and described under paragraph 2.3 above the application site contains a number of Grade II Listed buildings, a Grade II* Listed culverted section of the Holy Brook to the rear of Gun Street and the very edges of the northeast and southeast corners of the site are located within the Market Place / London Street Conservation Area. The parts of the Conservation Area within the application site are those along Yield Hall Place where both The Oracle and the Conservation Area traverse the Kennet. The Market Place / London Street Conservation Area Appraisal (2007) identified features making a positive contribution to the historic significance of the Conservation Area with the presence of the river being the most relevant feature in relation to the application site whilst also identifying that The Oracle dominates this part of the Conservation Area. Development at the application site also could impact upon the setting of a number of listed buildings surrounding the site including the Grade II Listed no.s 2, 3, 24, 26 and 28 Broad Street, the Telephone Exchange building 41-45 Minster Steet, The George Hotel 8, 9 & 12 King

Street, nos 2 & 4 and the Coroners Court 1 London Street, High Bridge and nos. 7-15 Gun Street.

- 7.9 The western end of The Oracle and application site (closest to Bridge Street) also lies partly within an identified view of heritage interest as defined under Policy EN5 (Protection of Significant Views with Heritage Interest). This relates to view 2 as described under the Policy looking northwards down Southampton Street from Whitley Street towards St Giles Church, St Marys Church and Greyfriars Church.
- 7.10 The application is accompanied by a short heritage statement which describes the presence of the heritage assets surrounding the site and concludes that the proposals would have a neutral impact upon the historic character and appearance of the Conservation Area and setting of listed buildings within and surround the site and does not identify any resulting heritage harm. This conclusion is reached given the small scale of the proposed safety rails which would be similar in scale and appearance to existing rooftop safety rails and lines at The Oracle and given the rails would be viewed in the context of the various existing plant equipment and associated service infrastructure also found to the roof of The Oracle and to surrounding buildings, such that the proposals would integrate with the existing context at the site and have minimal visual impact.
- 7.11 The RBC Conservation Officer concurs with the conclusions of the applicant's heritage statement, raises no objection to the proposals and considers that impacts upon historic character, appearance and setting of heritage assets at and surrounding the application site would be negligible given the minor nature of the proposals. In this respect the proposals are not considered to result in harm to and would protect the historic character and setting of heritage assets at and near the site in accordance with Policy EN1 (Enhancement of the Historic Environment), would conserve the setting of the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area in accordance with Policy EN3 (Enhancement of Conservation Areas) and would not harm the identified significant view of heritage interest northwards down Southampton Street in accordance with Policy EN5.

ii) Other Matters

- 7.12 The closest residential accommodation to the application site are the serviced apartments at Minster Court on Minster Street. The nature of the proposals and small scale, form and rooftop siting of the proposed safety rails is such that no adverse impacts upon the residential amenity of any nearby residential occupiers are considered to result and no conflict with Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) is identified.
- 7.12 The application site is located either side of the river Kennet and partly within both flood zones 2 and 3 which are areas at medium and highest risk of flooding. Policy EN18 (Flooding and Sustainable Drainage Systems) requires that development does not increase the risk of flooding. The proposals are for new and replacement safety rails to the roofs of existing buildings and are not considered to result in any increase in flood risk at the site.
- 7.13 The proposed new and replacement rooftop safety rails would not result in any loss of biodiversity, greenery or vegetation. In this respect the proposals would comply with Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and The Green Network) which requires that development should not result in a net loss of on-site biodiversity. Given this, and the nature of the proposals which are considered acceptable in respect of all relevant matters additional biodiversity or landscaping is not considered to be justified in this instance. The proposals do not impact upon any existing biodiversity and therefore the statutory requirement for planning application to provide a 10% net gain in biodiversity does not apply in this instance with the development being exempt from this requirement under the terms of the relevant legislation. The RBC Ecology adviser raises no objection to the application and advises that given the minor nature of the proposals they would not adversely impact upon protected species such as bats.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 7.14 The proposed development does not result in any change in floorspace and is not CIL liable.

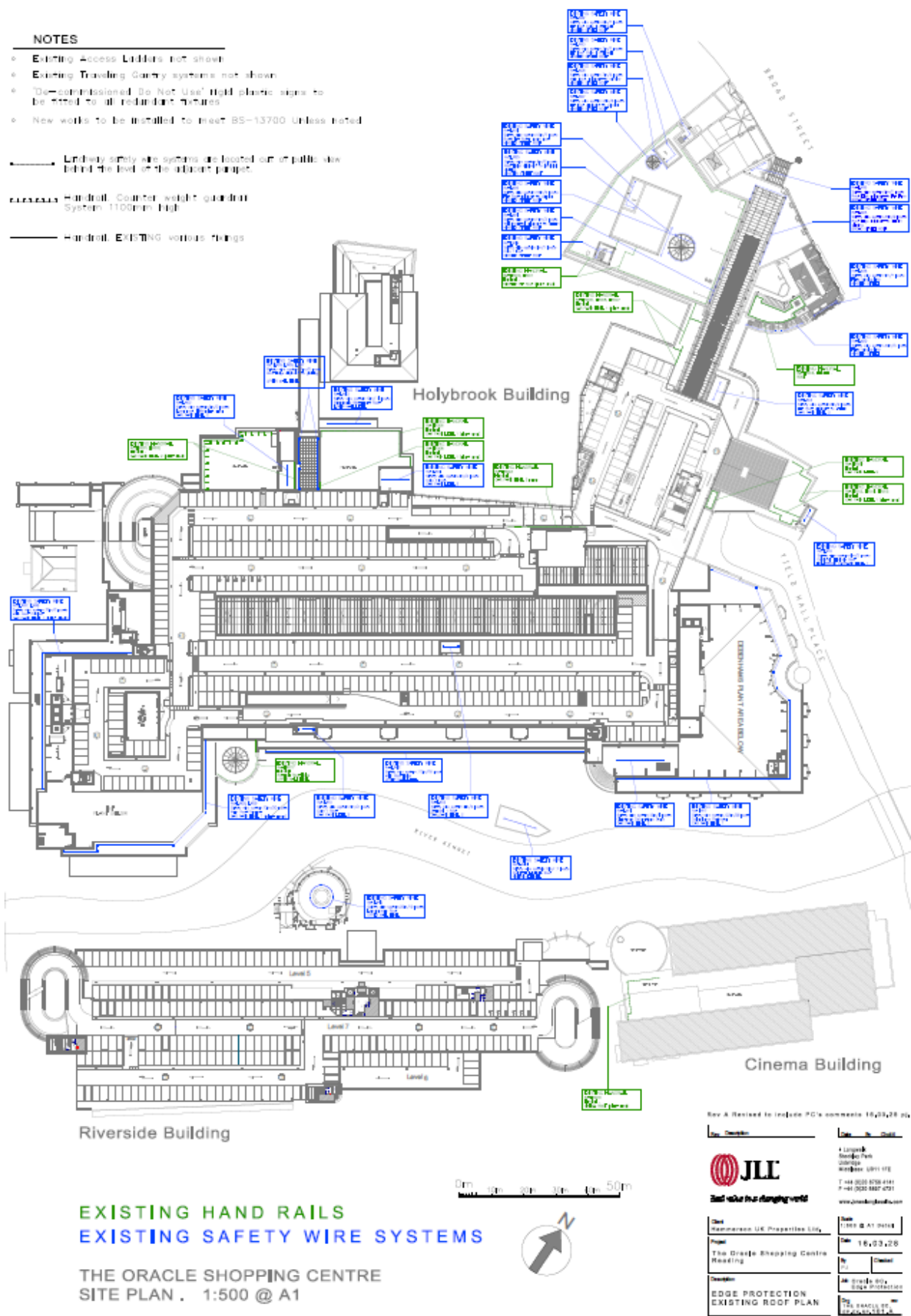
8 Equality implications

- 8.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 8.2 The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues, and priorities in relation to this particular application.

9 Conclusion

- 9.1 The proposed development seeks to replace and upgrade existing rooftop safety infrastructure at The Oracle through the installation of replacement safety rails and a fixed access ladder to facilitate safe maintenance and operation of existing rooftop plant and equipment and to ensure compliance with current health and safety standards. The proposals would support the continued operation and long-term viability of The Oracle shopping centre, an important component of Reading town centre and Regional Centre.
- 9.2 The proposed safety rails and ladder are limited in scale, utilitarian in nature and would be located at roof level where they would have a negligible visual presence to views within The Oracle and from the surrounding area. The development would not adversely affect the character or appearance of The Oracle, the surrounding townscape, riverside environment or nearby heritage assets and no harm to residential amenity, biodiversity, flood risk or in respect of any other material planning considerations has been identified.
- 9.3 The proposals are considered to comply with the relevant policies of the Development Plan as described above and accordingly, it is recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to the conditions set out within the recommendation box at the top of this report.

Plans & Appendices



Existing Roof Plan

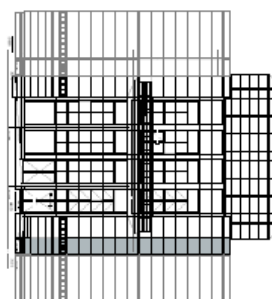
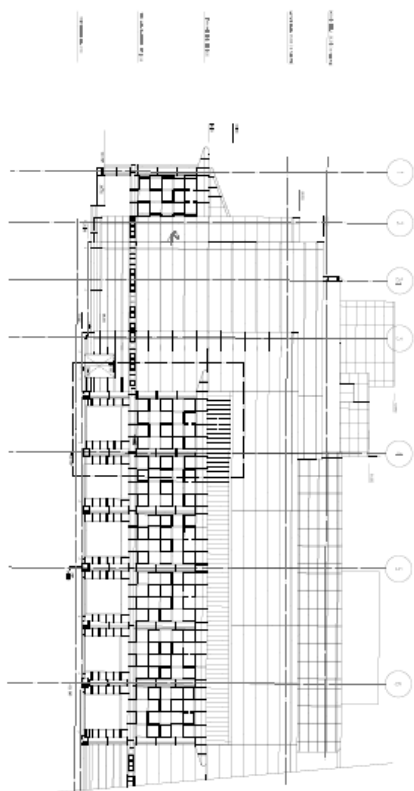
- Existing Access Ladders not shown
- Existing Traveling Gantry systems not shown
- "Do-Compartmented Do Not Use" and plastic signs to be added to all redundant rigures
- New works to be installed to meet BS-13700 Unless noted

—— Handrail, EXISTING various fixings

BLUE - DE-COMMISSIONED

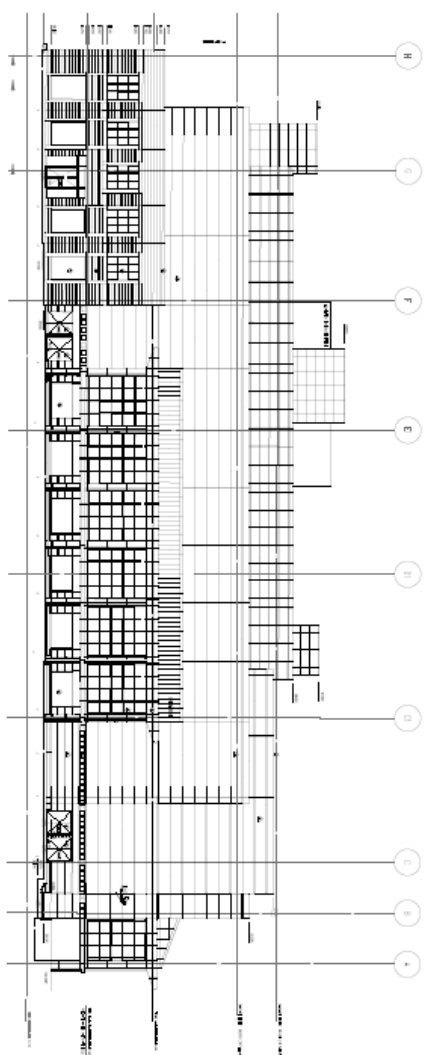
[illegible]

10m 20m



ELEVATION A House of Fraser Riverside South West End

ELEVATION C House of Fraser



ELEVATION B House of Fraser South East, Bridge St

NOTES

EXISTING SAFETY WIRE SYSTEMS
ARE LOCATED OUT OF PUBLIC VIEW
BEHIND THE LEVEL OF THE ADJACENT
PARKING

Rev A Revised to include PC's comments 16.03.20 D1

Client The Grange Shopping Centre Investment	Design The Grange Shopping Centre Investment	Drawn The Grange Shopping Centre Investment	Check The Grange Shopping Centre Investment
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Project
The Grange Shopping Centre
Investment

Date
23.01.20

Scale
1:200 @ A1 scale

Drawn
The Grange Shopping Centre
Investment

Check
The Grange Shopping Centre
Investment

Project
The Grange Shopping Centre
Investment

Date
23.01.20

Scale
1:200 @ A1 scale

Drawn
The Grange Shopping Centre
Investment

Check
The Grange Shopping Centre
Investment

L



House of Fraser Riverside South West end



ELEVATION C House of Fraser display



ELEVATION B House of Fraser South End, Bridge St.

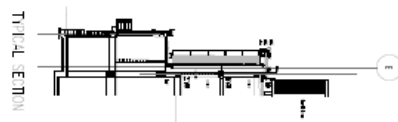
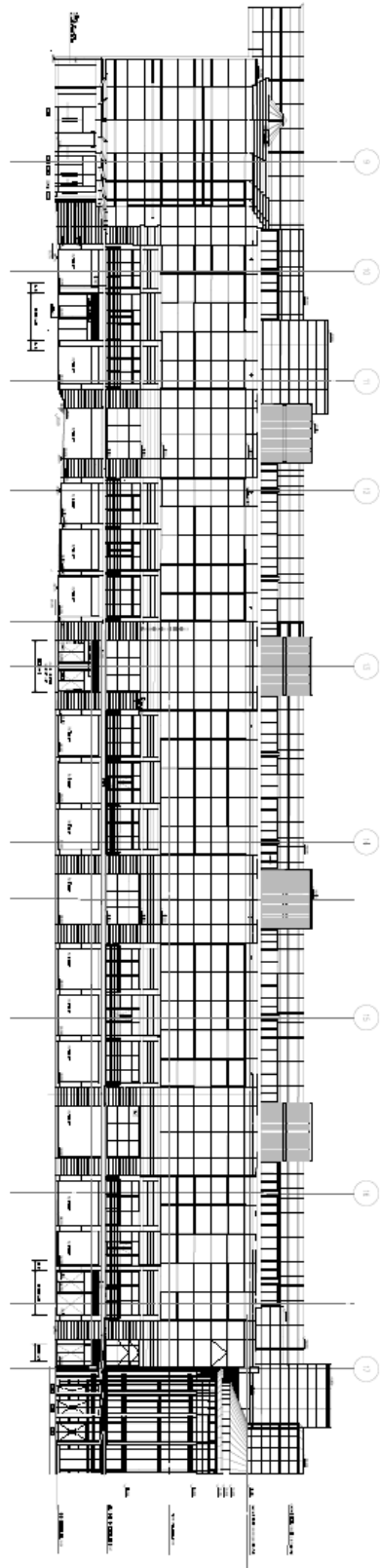
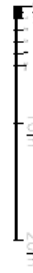


NOTES

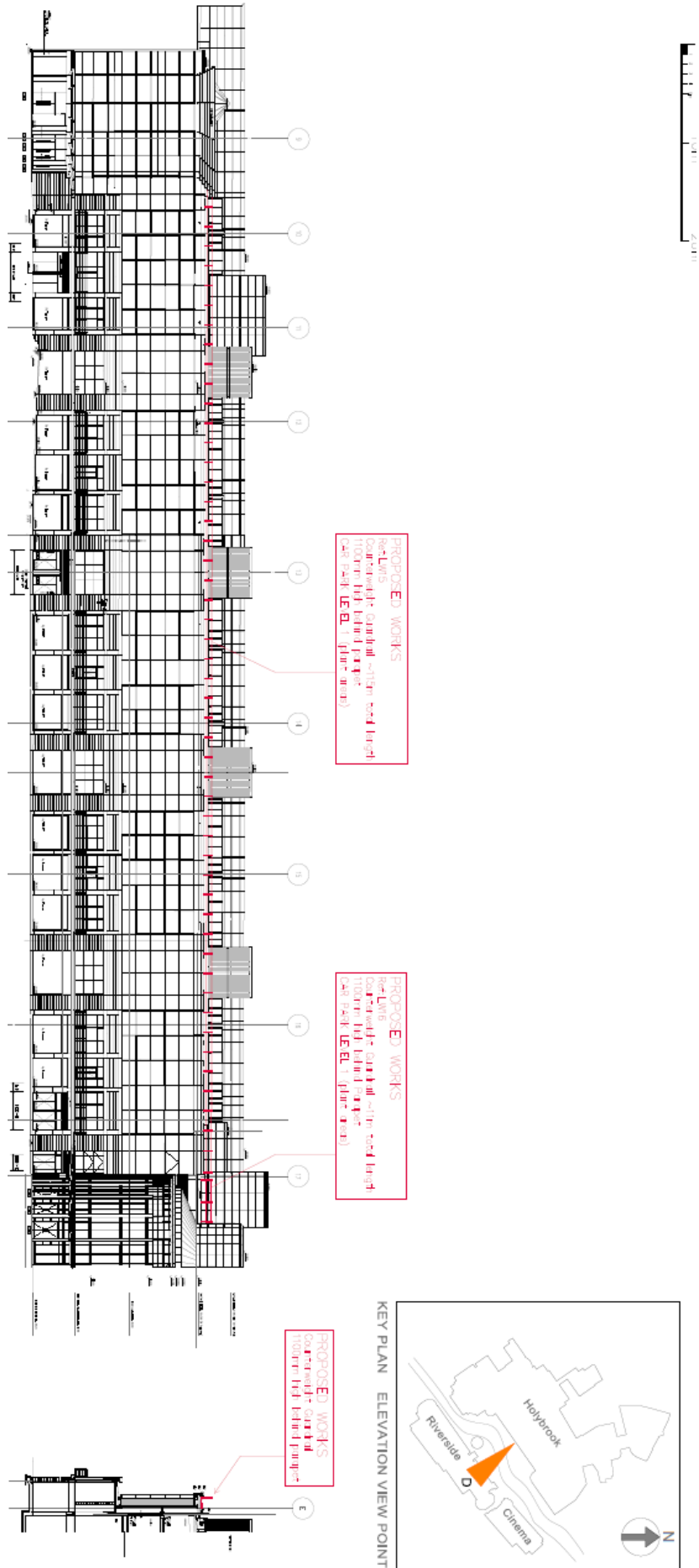
PARAPET

TO ALL REDUNDANT FIXTURES

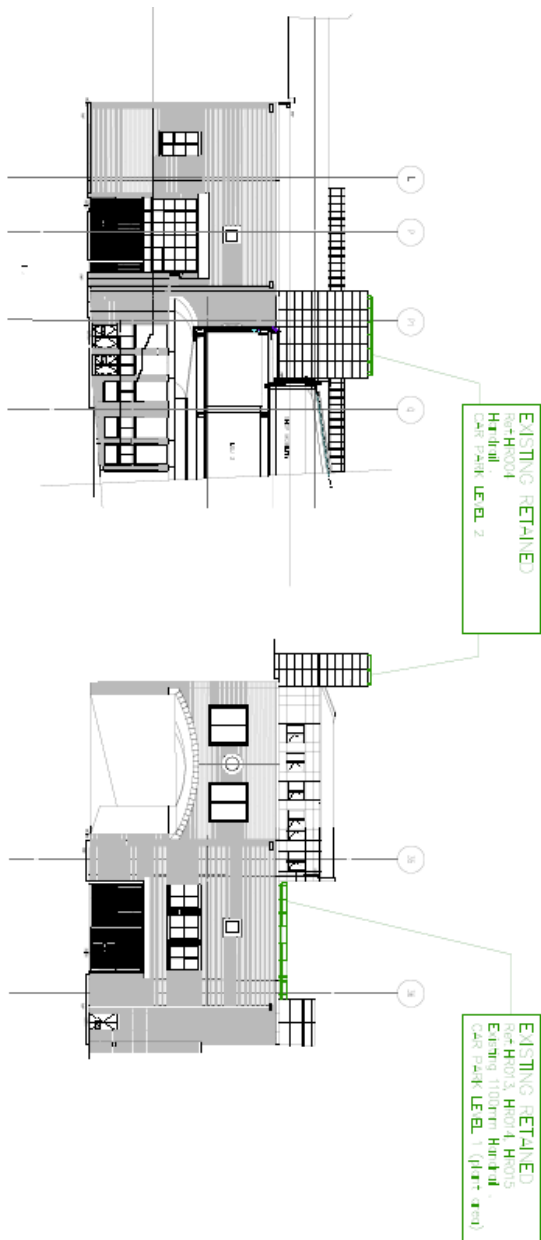
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Existing Elevations – Riverside North

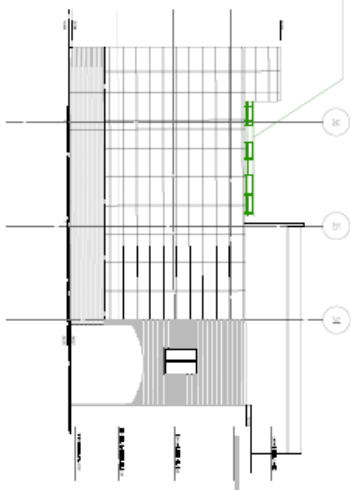


Proposed Elevations – Riverside North

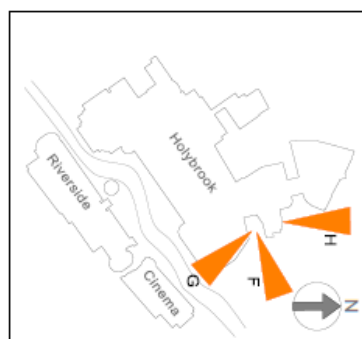


ELEVATION F **Yield Hall Place, EAST ELEVATION**

ELEVATION G **Yield Hall Place, SOUTH ELEVATION**



ELEVATION H Deviation to side of George Hotel, North



NOTES

EXISTING SAFETY WIRE SYSTEMS
ARE LOCATED OUT OF PUBLIC VIEW
BEHIND THE LEVEL OF THE ADJACENT
PARAPET

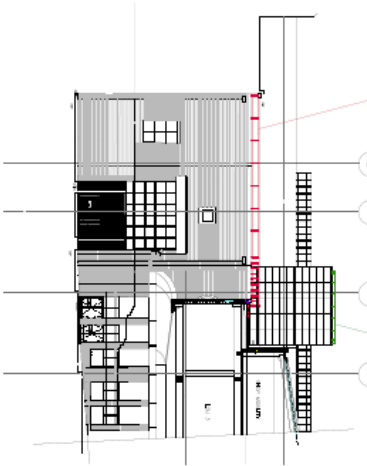


PROPOSED WORKS
Ref: LWH
Carriageway - Ground - ~20m total length
Tidewater tidal bed parking
Car Park: LE.B.1 (first area)

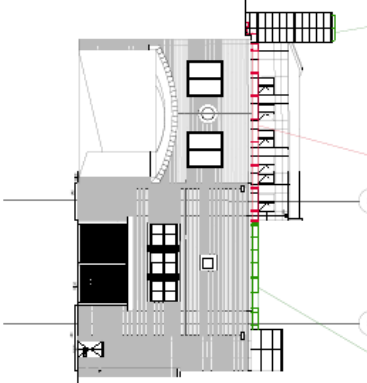
EXISTING RETAINED
Ref: H004
Carriageway - Ground - ~20m total length
Tidewater tidal bed parking
Car Park: LE.B.2

PROPOSED WORKS
Ref: LWH
Carriageway - Ground - ~20m total length
Tidewater tidal bed parking
Car Park: LE.B.1 (first area)

EXISTING RETAINED
Ref: H004
Carriageway - Ground - ~20m total length
Tidewater tidal bed parking
Car Park: LE.B.1 (first area)



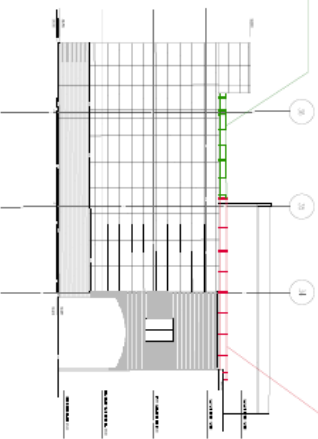
ELEVATION F Mill Hill Three, East Elevation



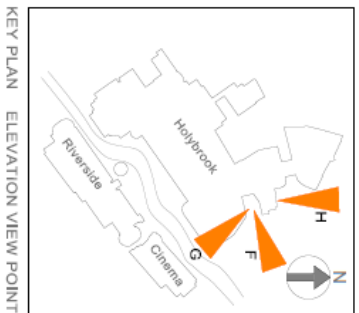
ELEVATION G Mill Hill Three, South Elevation

EXISTING RETAINED
Ref: H003, H004, H005
Carriageway - Ground - ~20m total length
Tidewater tidal bed parking
Car Park: LE.B.1 (first area)

PROPOSED WORKS
Ref: LWH
Carriageway - Ground - ~20m total length
Tidewater tidal bed parking
Car Park: LE.B.1 (first area)

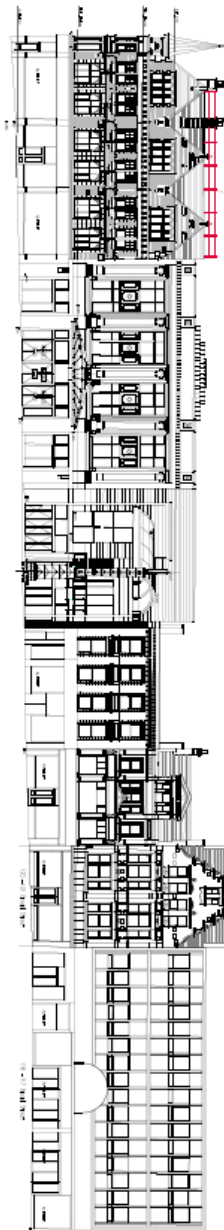
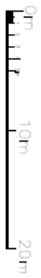


ELEVATION H Riverfront to site of George Hotel North



NOTES

EXISTING SAFETY / FIRE SYSTEMS
ARE LOCATED OUT OF PUBLIC VIEW
BEHIND THE LEVEL OF THE ADJACENT
PRIVATE
DE-COMMISSIONED DO NOT USE
REID PLASTIC SIGNS TO BE FITTED
TO ALL REDUNDANT FIXTURES



PROPOSED WORKS
 Ref: LWB
 Cantilevered - Cantilevered ~50m total length
 1100mm high at 4th floor
 800mm ST BET

PROPOSED WORKS
 Ref: LWB
 Cantilevered - Cantilevered ~20m
 total length. Edge at 4th floor.
 The new steel access will be
 1100mm high at 4th floor
 800mm ST BET

ELEVATION K Broad Street, South East



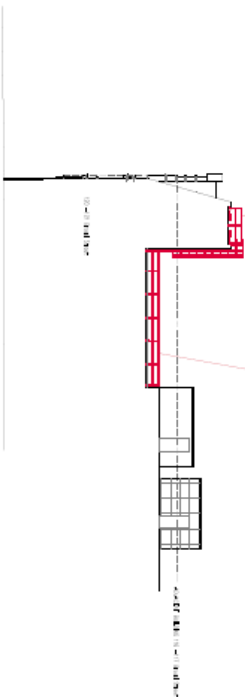
EXISTING - EXISTING
 Ref: H02, H1, H11
 Ref: F

PROPOSED WORKS
 Ref: LWB
 Cantilevered - Cantilevered ~50m total length
 1100mm high at 4th floor
 800mm ST BET

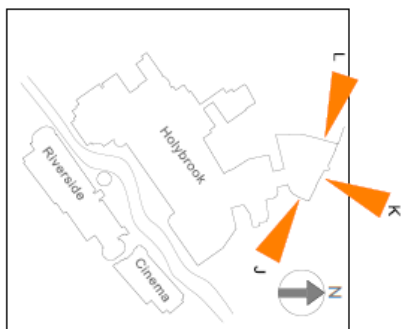
PROPOSED WORKS
 Ref: LWB
 Cantilevered - Cantilevered ~20m
 total length. Edge at 4th floor.
 The new steel access will be
 1100mm high at 4th floor
 800mm ST BET

PROPOSED WORKS
 Ref: LWB
 Cantilevered - Cantilevered ~17m total length
 Edge at 4th floor
 800mm ST BET

ELEVATION J Western Street, South West



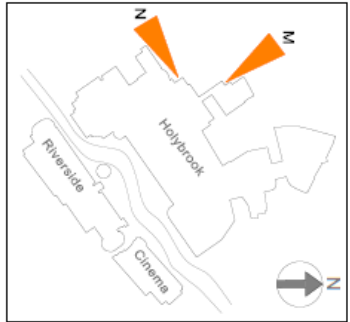
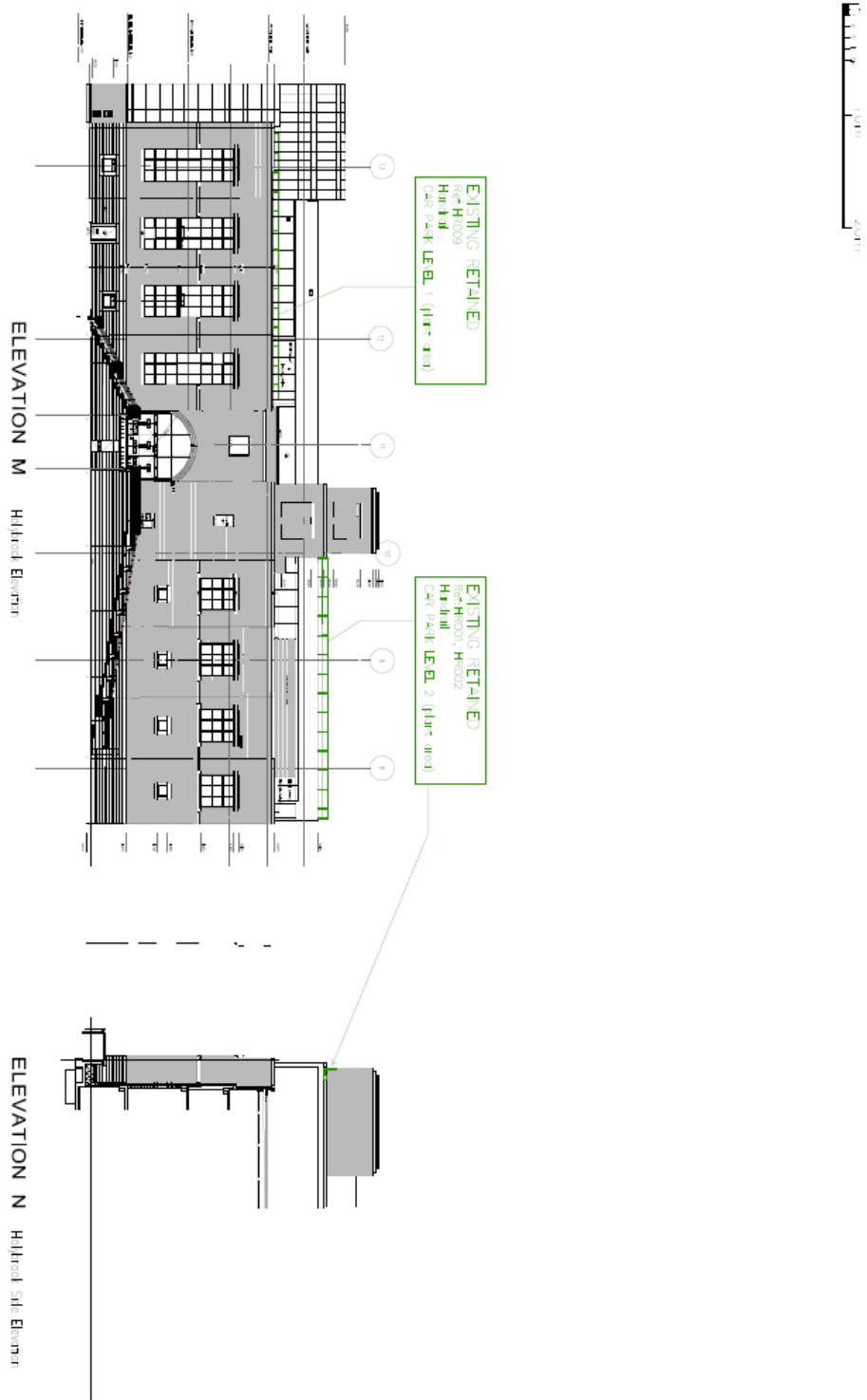
ELEVATION L Broad Street, North West



KEY PLAN ELEVATION VIEW POINT

NOTES

EXISTING SAFETY LANE SYSTEMS
 ARE LOCATED OUT OF PUBLIC VIEW
 BEHIND THE LEVEL OF THE ADJACENT
 PARAPET.
 THE COMMISSIONED DO NOT USE
 RIGID PLASTIC SIGNS TO BE FITTED
 TO ALL REDUNDANT FIGURES



KEY PLAN ELEVATION VIEW POINT

NOTES

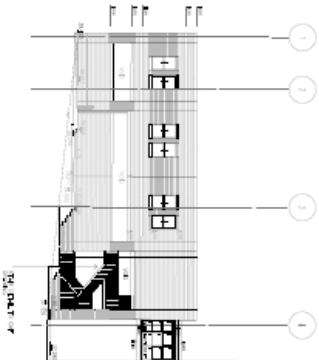
EXISTING SAFETY/JUNE SYSTEMS
ELEVATION N OF HILLBROOK
SHOWN THE LEVEL OF THE ADJACENT
PLANT ET

Existing Elevations – West

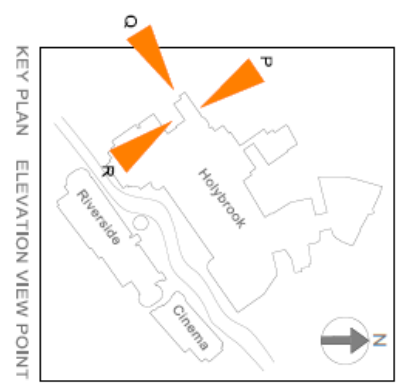


ELEVATION P

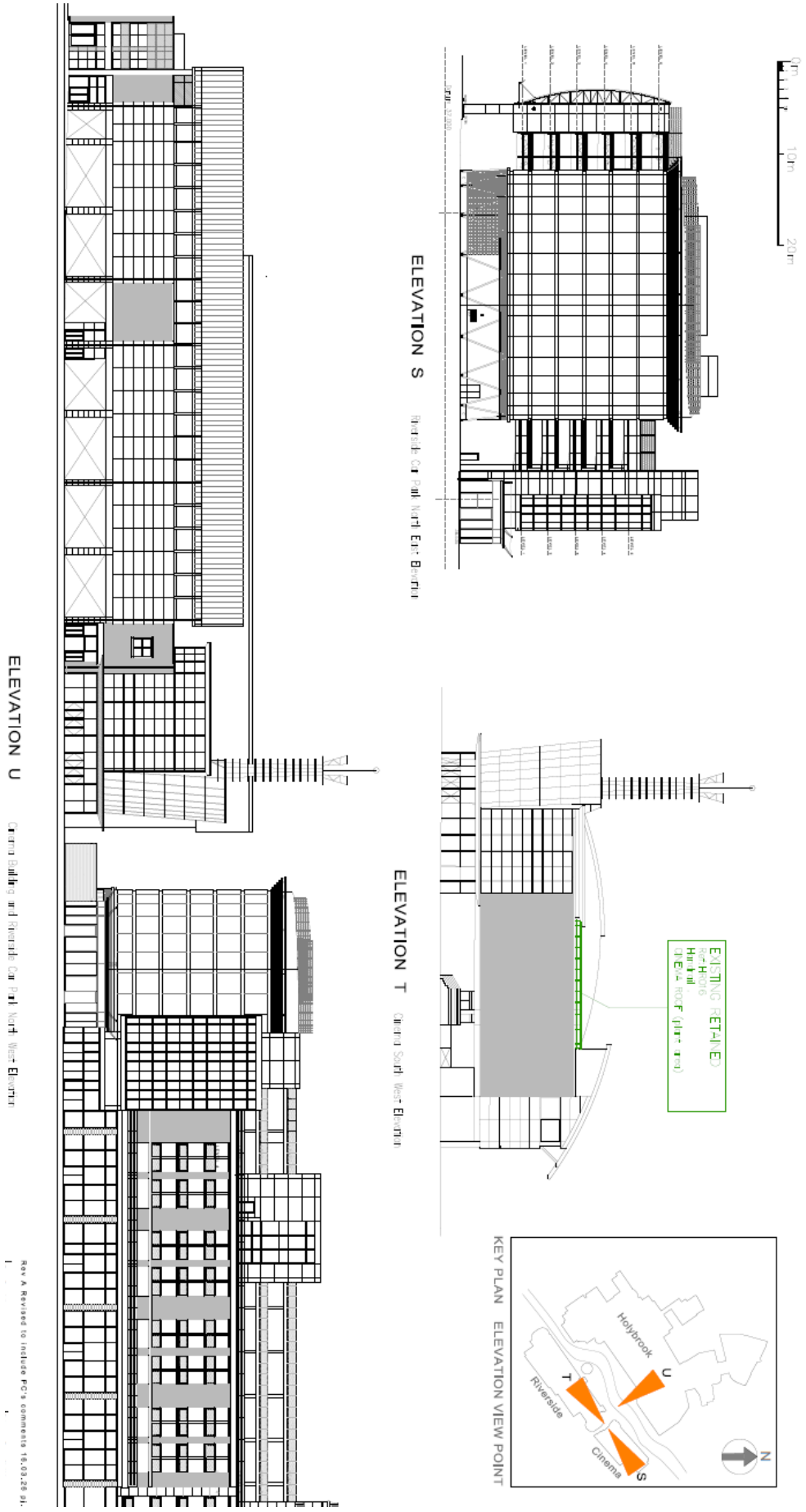
North West Elevation of Car Park Ramp



ELEVATION R *Greiforse South*



NOTES



Existing Elevations – Riverside South

