

Planning Applications Committee

13 November 2008

Section B

<b>Agenda Number:</b>	<b>B7</b>
<b>Section/Area: I</b>	Inner
<b>Ward:</b>	Thorpe Hamlet
<b>Officer:</b>	Gary Howe
<b>Valid Date:</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> August 2008
<b>Application Number:</b>	08/00833/F
<b>Site Address :</b>	Land Between St Helens Wharf and Barrack Street, Barrack Street, Norwich
<b>Proposal:</b>	Pedestrian/cycle fixed bridge over the River Wensum with associated landing points/access and ground works.
<b>Applicant:</b>	Jarrolds St James Ltd
<b>Agent:</b>	Bidwells (Mr Glyn Davies)

**THE SITE**

This application relates to the pedestrian/cycle bridge that formed a part of the Outline (hybrid) planning permission granted to the applicants in 2007 (06/00724/F) for a mixed use scheme. The bridge would link the Jarrold's site on the northern bank of the River Wensum with the southern bank at St Helens Wharf adjacent to the Riverside Walk to the north of the Council's public car park beside the Adam and Eve Public House.

The exact location of the bridge has been determined by the masterplan document that formed a part of the Outline planning permission and in particular it relies heavily on maintaining the sight lines of the Cathedral Spire when seen along the proposed Boulevard from Barrack Street. The site is characterised on both sides of the river by a largely unmade bank with, on the north side, a

number of mature trees which are protected by Tree Preservation Order 238. This side of the river is not within the City Centre Conservation Area. On the south side the land is within the conservation area but there are fewer river bank trees although these are also protected by virtue of being within the conservation area.

The river Wensum is some 27m wide at this point and it is near to the sharp bend which takes it to the west past the Law Courts and St James Mill and on to Whitefriars Bridge.

## **PLANNING HISTORY**

In 1999 planning permission was granted for the redevelopment of the adjacent site to the east for a Health and Fitness Centre (Greens). An associated Section 106 Agreement required the construction of a pedestrian bridge over the river immediately behind the fitness centre. It was subsequently found that there was no consensus that the bridge could 'land' on the private property on the south side of the river. This obligation was subsequently removed from the Section 106 Agreement.

On 20<sup>th</sup> March 2003 Planning Applications Committee resolved to grant Outline planning permission (App. No. 4/2002/0682/O) for mixed use development on a smaller site (2.7hectares). It did not include the bindery building nor the Barrack Street Council housing site. The application proposed, 'Redevelopment of site for offices (class B1), multi-storey car park (386 spaces), housing, shop, printing museum, footbridge over river, new vehicular access and associated highway works'. Due to the changing nature of the Jarrold's printing business, the Section 106 Agreement was not signed and so no planning permission was issued.

In 2007 Outline planning permission (06/00724/F) was granted for mixed use development on a larger site (4.8 hectares). It included all of the Jarrolds works to the east of the City Wall together with a new bridge which would land on the Council's land at St Helens Wharf. The application proposed 'Redevelopment of site comprising of 20,500sq.m. offices (Class B1) gross floor area of which up to 1,500sq.m. for shop units (Class A1 and A3) ; 200 residential units; 60 bed hotel; 637 car parking spaces, riverside walk and footbridge, associated accesses and ground works'. This permission included the need for the details of the bridge to be approved as a 'Reserved Matters' application and a Section 106 Agreement to promote the delivery of the bridge. The Section 106 Agreement requires:-

- details of the bridge to be submitted within 1 year of commencement of the office and residential development (commencement was summer 2007);
- construction of the bridge be commenced within 2 years of obtaining the final of the various consents.

Also in 2007 Outline planning permission was granted by the Broads Authority for the erection of a pedestrian and cycle fixed bridge (06/00908/BA). This

essentially accepted the principle of the bridge in an indicative location the details of the scheme were reserved for a future application.

In May of this year the applicants submitted their pre-application scheme for the bridge to both this Council and the Broads Authority. As part of their community consultation as recommended in the City Council's Statement of Community Involvement the applicants informed local residents of the proposals via a leaflet drop. This included inviting them to an exhibition (16<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> June) of the presentation material in City Hall. Subsequently there was a 'for information' presentation of the scheme to members of both Council's on 17<sup>th</sup> June.

## THE PROPOSAL

Taken altogether the proposal involves the following:-

- Single span, 2.9m wide, 'J' shaped bridge formed by two mutually stabilized propped cantilevers, one on each bank (no supports in river);
- Constructed of box sectioned steel, for stability and tensile strength with steel balustrades and meshwork to the sides and a hardwood deck;
- Maximum soffit height of 3.8m AOD (higher than highest arch on Bishops Bridge).

However because the bridge falls within both the Broads Authority and Norwich City Council's jurisdiction the applicants have submitted applications to both authorities.

1. Norwich City Council are responsible for dealing with works associated with the bridge where it 'lands' on either side of the banks of the river (and this is what members are being asked to consider and determine);
2. Broads Authority are responsible for dealing with the works covering the extent of the bridge spanning over the river (BA/2008/0260/FUL).

## CONSULTATIONS

**Advertised** in press, on site and adjacent occupiers notified: No response.

**Quality Panel:** (16/06/2008):

The Panel generally considered it to be a welcome and exciting proposal. The transition between the bridge and the car park could be made easier to avoid conflict between cyclists and pedestrians. There was no clear separation at the southern end of the bridge, so perhaps the bridge could be altered / designed in such a way to provide an easier transition, perhaps by shortening the ramp. It was important to get the right sort of balustrade detailing. More thought should be

given to how pedestrians/cyclists leave and enter the bridge on the north bank and how this route connects into the wider pedestrian and cycle networks. The Broads Authority was strongly urged to waive its normal policy of requiring “dolphins” to avoid marring the appearance of the river.

**Norwich Society:** The Society appreciates the overall design and slenderness of the bridge, but is concerned and perplexed by the proposed off-white colouring of the steel. Instead of losing itself in the context of the river, the bridge would stand out awkwardly. For general maintenance it is much better to have a darker colour – e.g. bronze. We are also concerned that the mesh infill on the long side of the bridge might be used as a climbing frame.

**Norfolk Landscape Archaeology:** The land on the north side of the river is controlled by a separate scheme of works. The works to the south bank may impact on medieval deposits similar to those uncovered by excavations at St Martin at Palace Plain and therefore a condition is required for a programme of archaeological works.

**Environment Agency:** Development falls within Flood Zone 3 (1:200 probability of flooding) A Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted and the Agency are content that the design of the bridge (height above possible floodlevel; clear span and minimal displacement) will not adversely affect flow in times of flood. They would wish however for conditions relating to the following:-

- Preventing the spread of Japanese Knotweed
- Tree felling using reasonable avoidance measures
- Timing of vegetation clearance
- A bat box scheme on Riverside Trees.

**Broads Authority:** Have worked with City Council and developers to achieve this scheme. Raise no objections.

**Central Norwich Citizens Forum:** Admire iconic and sophisticated design.

**Norfolk Wildlife Trust:** Support the conclusions of the protected species survey in relation to the impacts of lighting the bridge on foraging bats. Recommend conditions to control lighting on and under the bridge.

## **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Relevant Government Guidance:**

PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development (Jan 2005)

PPS9 – Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (Aug 2005)

PPG13 – Transport (April 2001)

PPG16 – Archaeology and Planning (Nov 1990)  
PPS25 – Development and Flood Risk (Dec 2006)

### **Relevant East of England Plan Policies:**

ENG1 – carbon dioxide emissions and energy performance  
ENV7 – Quality in the Built Environment

### **Relevant Saved City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan Policies:**

CC8	Seeks a new pedestrian and cycle route from Barrack Street via a new bridge
HBE3	Area of Main Archaeological Interest
HBE8	Development in Conservation Areas
HBE12	High quality of design, with special attention to height, scale, massing and form of development
HBE 19	Designs for Safety and Security including minimising crime
EP 12	Developments in Flood risk Areas
TRA 14	Enhancement of the pedestrian environment
TRA 15	Cycle network and facilities
NE 7	Protection of sites of nature conservation
NE 9	Landscaping of new developments

### **Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents:**

Flood risk and development  
Trees and development  
Green links and riverside walks

### **Land Use/Policy**

There has been a long held aspiration set out in the Replacement Local Plan policy CC8 for there to be an additional pedestrian and cycle bridge across the River Wensum to link the area north of Barrack Street with the St Helens Wharf area on the south bank and on to the City Centre. The bridge is seen as a key means of improving connectivity and permeability between the north and south of the eastern part of the city as well as providing a catalyst for regeneration in this area. The Outline (hybrid) planning permission (06/00724/F) granted in March 2007 for mixed use on the former Jarrold's site further established this aspiration for the bridge and embodied it in the conditions and the associated Section 106 Agreement.

### **Layout/Design/ Archaeology**

The position and orientation of the bridge has been determined by the wish to take advantage of the north-south view of the Cathedral when seen from Barrack

Street. The masterplan for the Jarrold's development on Barrack Street takes account of this view and proposes a central pedestrian and cycling Boulevard which leads from Barrack Street in the north down to the river in the south of the site. The bridge would be seen as a continuation of the view towards the Cathedral and a desire line for that destination.

Whilst the initial intension was to provide a conventional linear bridge, the lower land levels on the southern bank and the wish to minimise the penetration of the bridge into the Council owned St Helens Wharf car park site, dictated an elegant J shaped structure which takes advantage of the higher ground to the west as a dropping-off point.

The design of the bridge seeks to provide a lightweight and elegant structure to minimise the visual and functional impact across the river. The bridge is fixed on the north and south banks by concrete abutments. The bridge acts as two mutually stabilising propped cantilevers. One side the bridge is made up of a closed steel box section which acts as a strengthening spine off which the deck and balustrade are fixed. The deck is to be made of an untreated hardwood, chosen for its strength, durability and stability. It is from a sustainable source (Forest Stewardship Council) and should weather to a silver-gray patina. Inset strips of treated fibreglass with grit on one edge are set into a rebate within the timber deck strips to achieve the required slip-resistance.

## **Transportation**

From a transportation point of view the bridge is an essential infrastructure project which will allow pedestrian and cycle routes to and from the Jarrold's site for future employees and residents but will also enhance linkages for local people between the north of the City (Mousehold and Silver Road area) to the City Centre via the area around the Cathedral. In this way it is hoped that it will reduce the need for the car. It will be a direct route from Barrack Street via the Boulevard or Riverside Walk to the City Centre without using busy streets. The bridge is being provided by the applicants (in part) to mitigate the wider transportation impacts of their main development, and is in lieu of a transportation contribution for the mixed use scheme being implemented. By virtue of the Section 106 Agreement attached to original planning permission, the bridge will be owned by the applicants and maintained by them but available for use by the public at all times. There is no requirement for the bridge to be adopted.

## **Riverside Walk/Trees**

In terms of wider linkages and to maximise permeability the bridge will link to the existing riverside walk on the south bank. Here the riverside walk runs from Whitefriars Bridge to the west towards the Bishop Bridge in the east. This will

offer a 'green' pedestrian route from the north via the new bridge towards the railway station.

The applicants have submitted an Arboricultural Methods Statement and Tree Protection Plan as part of their submissions. In order to facilitate the bridge on the alignment best suited to take advantage of the view of the Cathedral a number of riverside trees have already been removed on the north bank in accordance with the terms of the Outline (hybrid) planning permission (06/00724/F). A small number of trees will also need to be removed on the south bank although these are not considered to be significant and especially as there are opportunities to compensate with additional tree planting in this area. There will need to be conditions requiring the Arboricultural Methods Statement to be adhered too and the provision of compensatory tree planting.

## **Conclusion**

The construction of a new pedestrian and cycle bridge over the River Wensum to link the north and south banks is a long held aspiration and this application is welcomed as a means of increasing and improving links locally as well as a means to support the regeneration of the area. The design is innovative and the bridge will be an asset to the City.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

GRANT Planning Permission subject to the following conditions:

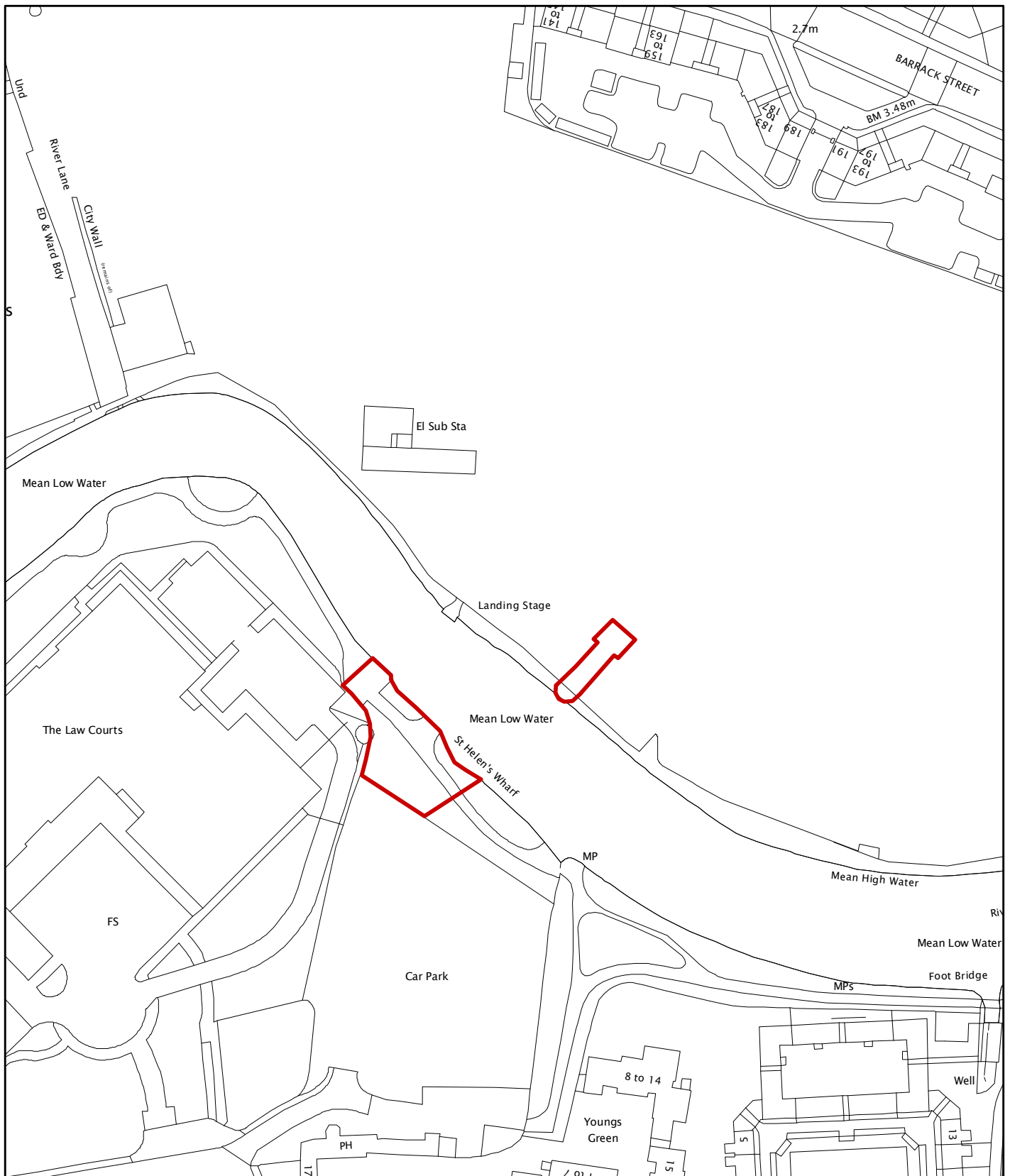
1. Commencement within 3 years;
2. Details of materials and finishes to be approved (timber, steel mesh and colour of structural steelwork;
3. Prior approval of details( bollards);
4. Archaeological Condition;
5. Method of dealing with Japanese Knotweed;
6. Timing of vegetation clearance (for birds);
7. Felling using reasonable avoidance measures (for bats):
8. Bat box scheme on riverside trees:
9. Details of lighting:
10. Position and specification of the proposed CCTV cameras;
11. Adherence to Arb. Impact Assessment;
12. Compensatory Tree Planting on south bank;

## **Reason for approval**

The decision to grant planning permission has been taken having regard to saved policies CC8, HBE3, HBE8, HBE12, HBE 19, EP 12, TRA 14, TRA 15, NE

7 and NE 9 of the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan (Adopted November 2004) and all material considerations.





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Planning Application No - 08/00833/F

Site Address - Land between St Helens Wharf and Barrack Street, Barrack Street

Scale - 1:1250



**NORWICH**  
City Council

DIRECTORATE OF REGENERATION  
AND DEVELOPMENT

