
2024/0687

Miss Chloe Source

Installation of an external air cooling system chamber, and roof top air handling units and associated gantry

Computer Centre, Maple Road, Tankersley, Barnsley, S75 3DJ

Site Location and Description

The application site is the main building and two ponds and some of the landscaped area at the long standing HSBC computer centre at Wentworth Industrial Park, Tankersley. The main building is a two storey building (although it is significantly taller than a conventional two storey building) constructed of precast cement panels and with a flat roof. As viewed from Maple Road, it is set back behind a substantial car park which includes some tree planting. The building can be glimpsed from A61, which is screened by a substantial tree belt. The building is screened from views from the south-west by Sowell Wood. The ponds are situated well within the site and are not visible from any public aspect; the adjacent landscaped area within the application site can be glimpsed in front of some of the green ventilation shafts.

The wider area of Wentworth Industrial Park is wholly commercial.

Site History

Range of applications relating to the data centre use dating back to 2006; the data centre was completed in 1981. Most recently

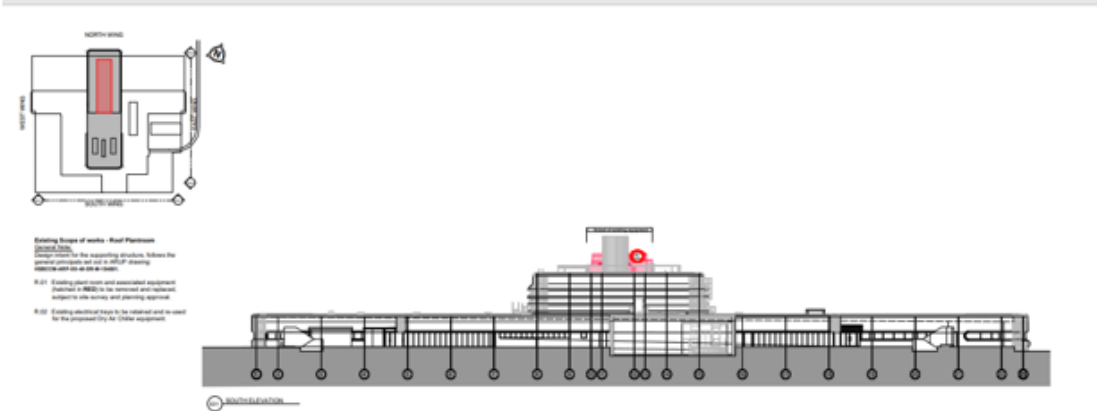
2024 0464 - Removal and replacement of the existing roof top air handling units with 2no new units and the removal and replacement of the associated purpose-built cover structure. Granted July 2024

Proposed Development

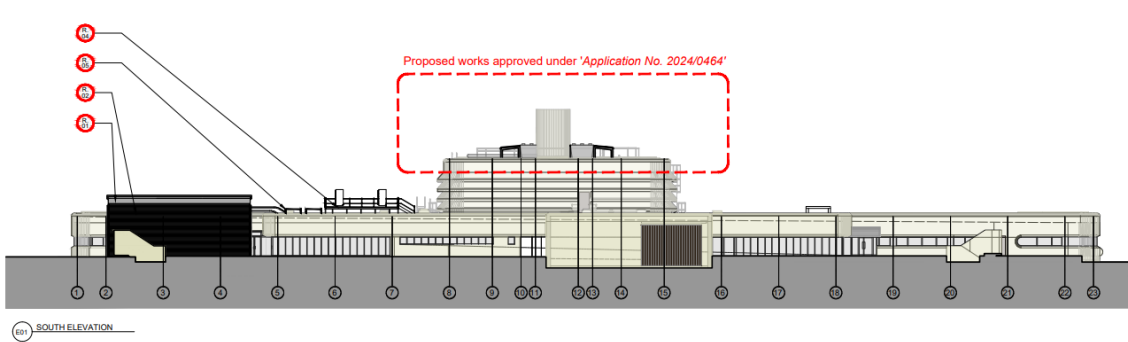
The applicant seeks permission to make a number of changes to the recent permission to remove and replace the existing roof top air handling units with 2 new units and to remove and replace the associated cover structure. The proposed replacements as amended are significantly smaller than the existing plant and structures and are located away from the roof edge nearest to Maple Road, which will minimise their visual impact.

In addition, the proposed external air cooling system chamber will require removal of part of one of the ponds on the site.

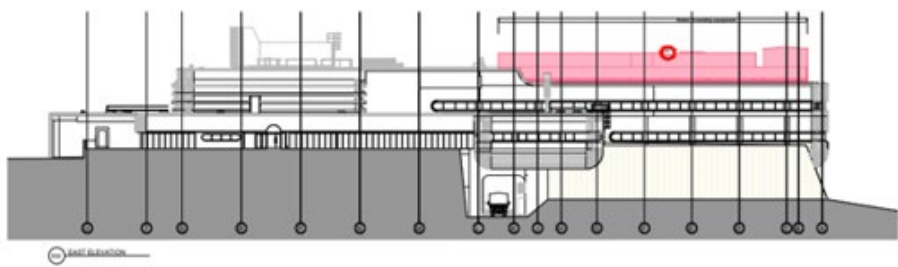
Existing south elevation



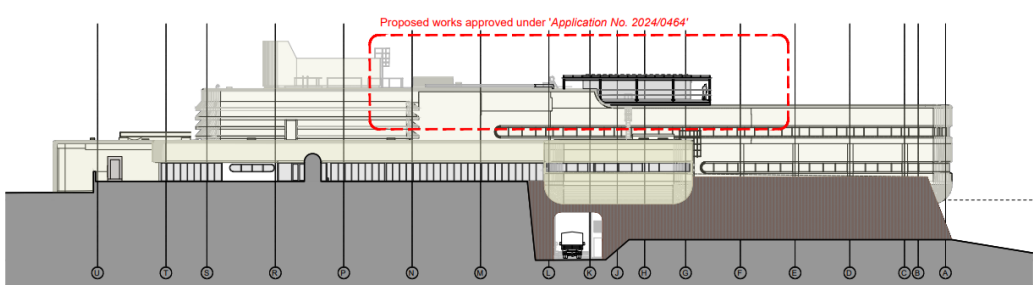
Proposed south elevation



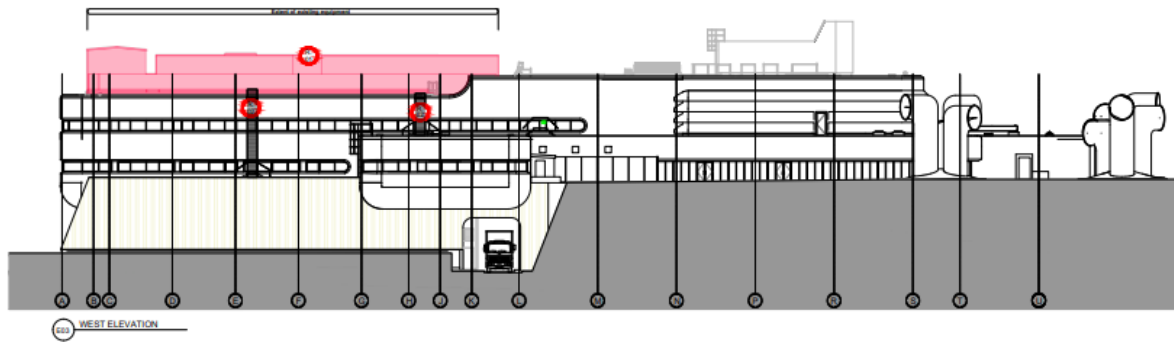
Existing east elevation



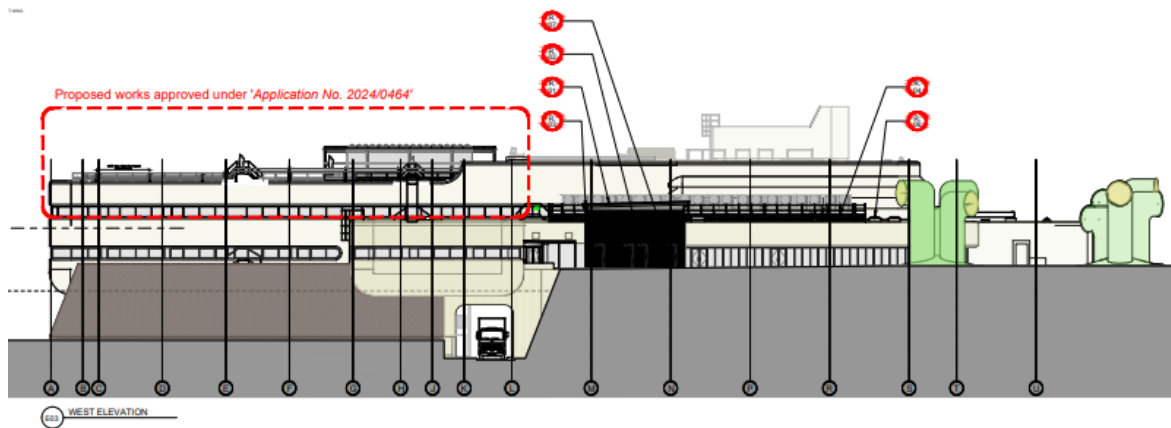
Proposed east elevation



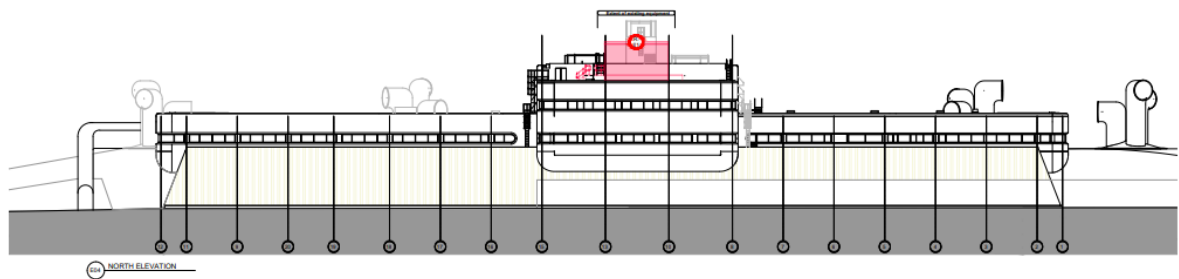
Existing west elevation



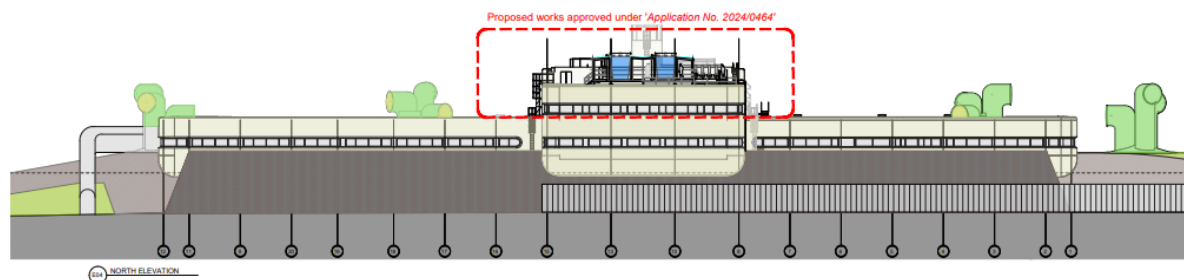
Proposed west elevation



Existing north elevation

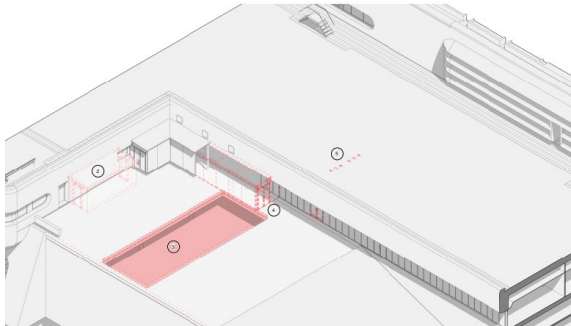


Proposed north elevation

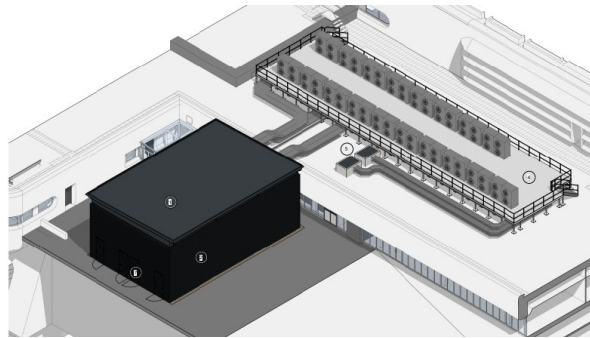


External air cooling system chamber 3D visuals

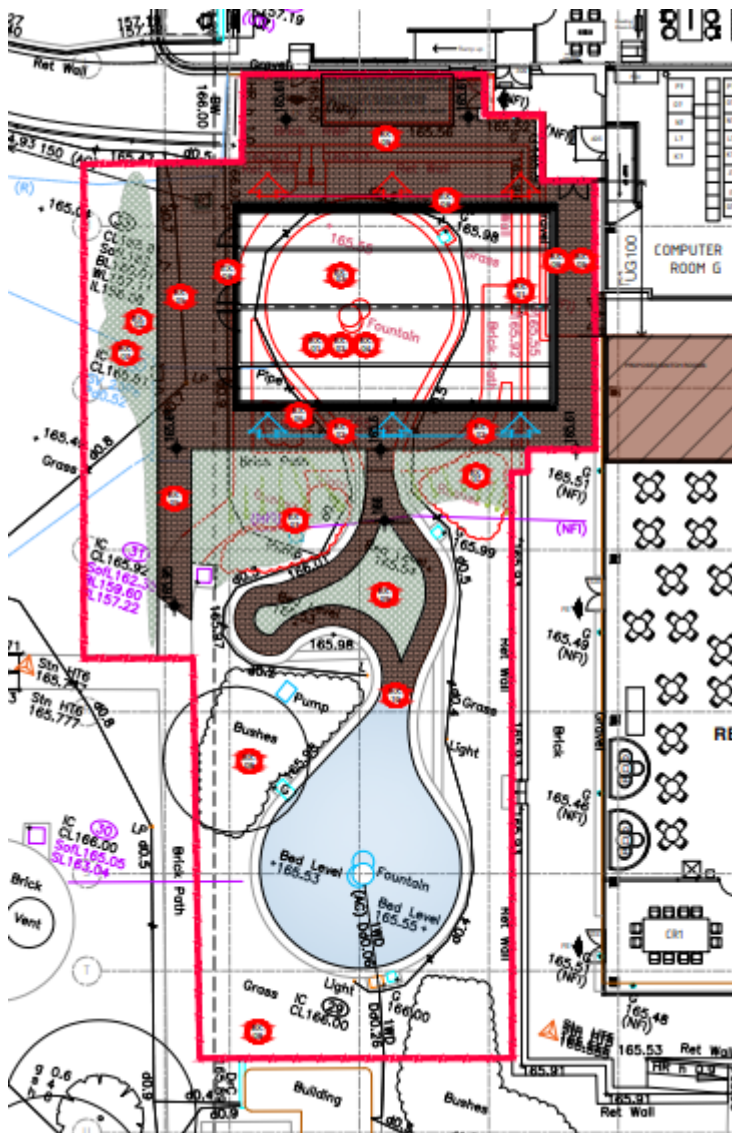
Existing



Proposed



Extract from proposed landscaping plan



Policy Context

Planning decision should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making.

Local Plan

The Local Plan was adopted by the Council in January 2019. Council has also adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents which are other material considerations.

The Local Plan review was approved at the full Council meeting held on 24th November 2022. The review determined that the Local Plan remains fit for purpose and is adequately delivering its objectives. This means no updates to the Local Plan, in whole or in part, are to be carried out ahead of a further review. The next review is due to take place in 2027 or earlier if circumstances require it.

The site is in an area designated as Urban Fabric on the Local Plan Proposals Maps reflecting the existing built-up character. The following policies are relevant:

Policy SD1 Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development – indicates that we will take a positive approach reflecting the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the National Planning Policy Framework and that we will work proactively with applicants to find solutions to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area

Policy GD1 General Development – sets a range of criteria to be applied to all proposals for development.

Policy E3 Uses on employment land – indicates we will allow research and development, light and general industry and storage or distribution on allocated Employment Sites or land currently/last used for employment uses; also appropriate scale ancillary uses and other employment generating uses will be considered on their merits.

Policy D1 High Quality Design and Place Making – indicates that development is expected to be of high quality design and to reflect the distinctive, local character and features of Barnsley

Policy BIO1 Biodiversity and Geodiversity - Indicates that development will be expected to conserve and enhance the biodiversity and geodiversity features of the borough and that harmful development will not be permitted unless effective mitigation and/or compensatory measures can be ensured.

Policy CL1 Contaminated and Unstable Land – requires the submission of a report where future users or occupiers of development would be affected by contamination or stability issues, to establish the extent of the issues and set out measures to remove, treat or protect from contamination; or address land stability issues.

Policy Poll1 Pollution Control and Protection – sets criteria to ensure that new development does not unacceptably affect or cause nuisance to the natural and built environment or to people; or suffer from unacceptable levels of pollution.

SPD

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

NPPF

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole; or where specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted or unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Consultations

Biodiversity – no objections subject to conditions

Drainage – the details are sufficient and can be checked by building control

Mining Regulatory Authority (responded as The Coal Authority) – the nature of the development is exempt from and there are therefore no objections

South Yorkshire Mining Advisory Service – The submitted coal mining risk assessment recommends further intrusive works which can be addressed at the building control stage. The proposal is exempt from The Coal Authority's risk assessment procedure and only the standing advice is recommended as an informative.

Pollution control – the development is unlikely to have an adverse impact on health and the quality of life of those working in the location and therefore no objection or recommended conditions

Ward Councillors – No response

Representations

The application has been advertised by means of letters to nearby properties and a site notice displayed 4 to 25 October; no representations have been received.

For the purposes of considering the balance in this application the following planning weight is referred to in this report using the following scale:

- Substantial
- Considerable
- Significant
- Moderate
- Modest
- Limited
- Little or no

Assessment

The main issues for consideration are:

- The principle of development
- Design
- Residential and commercial amenity

- Biodiversity
- Stability

Principle of development

The application site has a designation of urban fabric in the Local Plan where Policy GD1 sets a range of criteria against which planning applications must be judged.

As the proposal is for plant at an existing commercial building in an existing Industrial Estate, the principle is acceptable subject to consideration of details.

Design

The appearance of the existing commercial building will not be negatively affected. As amended, the replacement rooftop equipment is smaller in footprint than the existing equipment and set back from the roof edge nearest to Maple Road. The external air cooling system will be sited in a location where it will be viewed in the context of the existing building on the site and will not have an adverse effect on the appearance of the site. It is concluded that the proposal is in compliance with Local Plan policy D1 and this weighs to a modest degree in favour of the proposal.

Residential and commercial amenity

The proposed rooftop equipment is intended to replace existing cooling equipment. Together with the new external air cooling system it is not anticipated to cause any more noise than the existing equipment. The nearest dwellings are over 180 metres away near Tankersley Manor, with the A61 and the road side tree belt in-between.

Reflecting the advice of pollution control, it is concluded that the proposal is acceptable from a residential and commercial amenity perspective and is in compliance with Local Plan policies GD1 and Poll1 and this weighs to a modest degree in favour of the proposal.

Biodiversity

The Ecologist has confirmed that the submitted countersigned IACPD will ensure impacts to great crested newts are mitigated. Precautionary measures should still be undertaken during site clearance and construction, and this can be conditioned. The submitted SSM indicates that the development will result in a 10.23% net gain. Conditions are recommended to secure that the development is completed in line with the submitted details. It is concluded that the proposal is capable of being in accordance with national BNG requirements and is in compliance with Local Plan policy BIO1 and these considerations weigh to a significant degree in favour of the proposal.

Stability

The application site is in a location with high risks from past coal mining activity, but both the MRA and SYMAS have confirmed that the proposal is exempt from the MRA risk assessment procedure. Any stability issues can be dealt with at building control stage and only the MRA standing advice is recommended as an informative. It is considered that the proposal is in compliance with Local Plan policy CL1 and this weighs to a little degree in favour of the proposal.

Conclusion

The proposal allows the replacement of existing rooftop cooling equipment with more modern equipment of smaller scale and the addition of a new external air colling system. It supports an existing business and the economy of the borough and it is concluded that the proposal complies with the development plan as a whole.

Recommendation

Grant subject to conditions