



**NORTHAMPTON**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
Planning Committee

**PLANNING COMMITTEE:** 26<sup>th</sup> September 2017  
**DIRECTORATE:** Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning  
**HEAD OF PLANNING:** Peter Baguley

**APPLICATION REF:** N/2017/1027

**LOCATION:** Westbridge Motors , St James Road

**DESCRIPTION:** Removal of Condition 2 of Planning Permission N/2014/1209 (The erection of a pedestrian footbridge to cross the brook) to allow for the permanent retention of the footbridge

**WARD:** St James Ward

**APPLICANT:** Westbridge Motors Ltd  
**AGENT:** DRH Architectural Design

**REFERRED BY:** Head of Planning  
**REASON:** Council owed land

**DEPARTURE:** No

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**APPLICATION FOR DETERMINATION:**

**1. RECOMMENDATION**

1.1 **APPROVAL** subject to the conditions as set out below and for the following reason:

The proposal would assist in improving the parking facilities available for an established business and would not adversely impact on existing flood conditions in accordance with Policy BN7 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

**2. THE PROPOSAL**

2.1 Permission was granted in 2015 under planning application N/2014/1209 for the erection of a pedestrian footbridge across the brook to the rear of The Maltings building to allow access to an area of Council owned land, leased to the applicant on a temporary basis to provide additional car parking for employees. Condition 2 of this planning consent required that the footbridge be removed on or before 30 April 2017 and the land restored to its former condition.

2.2 The current application seeks to vary Condition 2 to allow for the permanent retention of the footbridge.

**3. SITE DESCRIPTION**

3.1 Westbridge Motors is located on the edge of the town centre and occupies part of The Maltings, a commercial building occupied by various business uses. To the rear of the site is a brook, beyond which is an area of disused land owned by the Council. The surrounding area is predominantly commercial in character with St James Mill Road industrial park located to the south.

3.2 The site lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3.

#### **4. PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 N/2014/1209 – The erection of a pedestrian footbridge to cross the brook. Approved 18.02.15.

#### **5. PLANNING POLICY**

##### **5.1 Statutory Duty**

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires a planning application to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the purposes of this application comprises the adopted West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2014) and the Northampton Local Plan (1997) saved policies.

##### **5.2 National Policies**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the current aims and objectives for the planning system and how these should be applied. In delivering sustainable development, decisions should have regard to the mutually dependent social, economic and environmental roles of the planning system. The NPPF should be read as one complete document. However, the following sections are of particular relevance to this application:

The NPPF supports economic growth and seeks to ensure that investment in business is not over-burdened by planning policy expectations.

Paragraph 103 advises that in determining planning applications Local Planning Authorities should ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere.

##### **5.3 West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2014)**

The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) provides an up to date evidence base and considers the current Government requirements for plan making as it has been prepared in full conformity with the NPPF. Policy of particular relevance is:

Policy BN7 – all new development will need to demonstrate that there is no increased risk of flooding.

##### **5.4 Northampton Local Plan 1997 (Saved Policies)**

Due to the age of the plan, the amount of weight that can be attributed to the aims and objectives of this document are diminished, however, the following policy is material to this application:

E20 – New development should be in keeping with the character of the surrounding area.

#### **6. CONSULTATIONS/ REPRESENTATIONS**

6.1 **Environment Agency** – no comment.

6.2 **Crime Prevention Design Adviser** – no objection. The site is kept secure by lockable gates which are carefully managed. The retention of the footbridge does not pose any security threats to either site.

## 7. APPRAISAL

7.1 The only issues to consider are whether the permanent retention of the footbridge would lead to any adverse impacts on visual amenity or flood risk.

7.2 The bridge is located in an enclosed area to the rear of The Maltings building. The structure is not visually prominent in the wider surrounding area and the appearance is considered acceptable.

7.3 The application site lies within Flood zones 2 and 3 and within a few metres of a controlled sluice gate leading to the main river.

7.4 The bridge was designed with an open appearance to allow any surge of water during a flood to pass through the bridge in accordance with the recommendations of the Environment Agency during the course of the original planning application.

7.5 The bridge will be retained as previously permitted and the Environment Agency has no objection.

7.6 The Council's Asset Management Team has no objection (verbal) and, subject to planning, would continue discussions regarding the terms of a new lease for the adjacent land with the applicant. Access to this adjacent land would therefore be controlled under the terms of the lease with no requirement for any additional controls through planning.

## 8. CONCLUSION

8.1 The proposal would assist in improving facilities for the existing business and would not increase the risk of flooding within the area in accordance with policy requirements and is therefore recommended for approval.

## 9. CONDITIONS

1) The development hereby permitted shall remain in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan, Block Plan and DRH.91814.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to accord with the terms of the planning application.

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

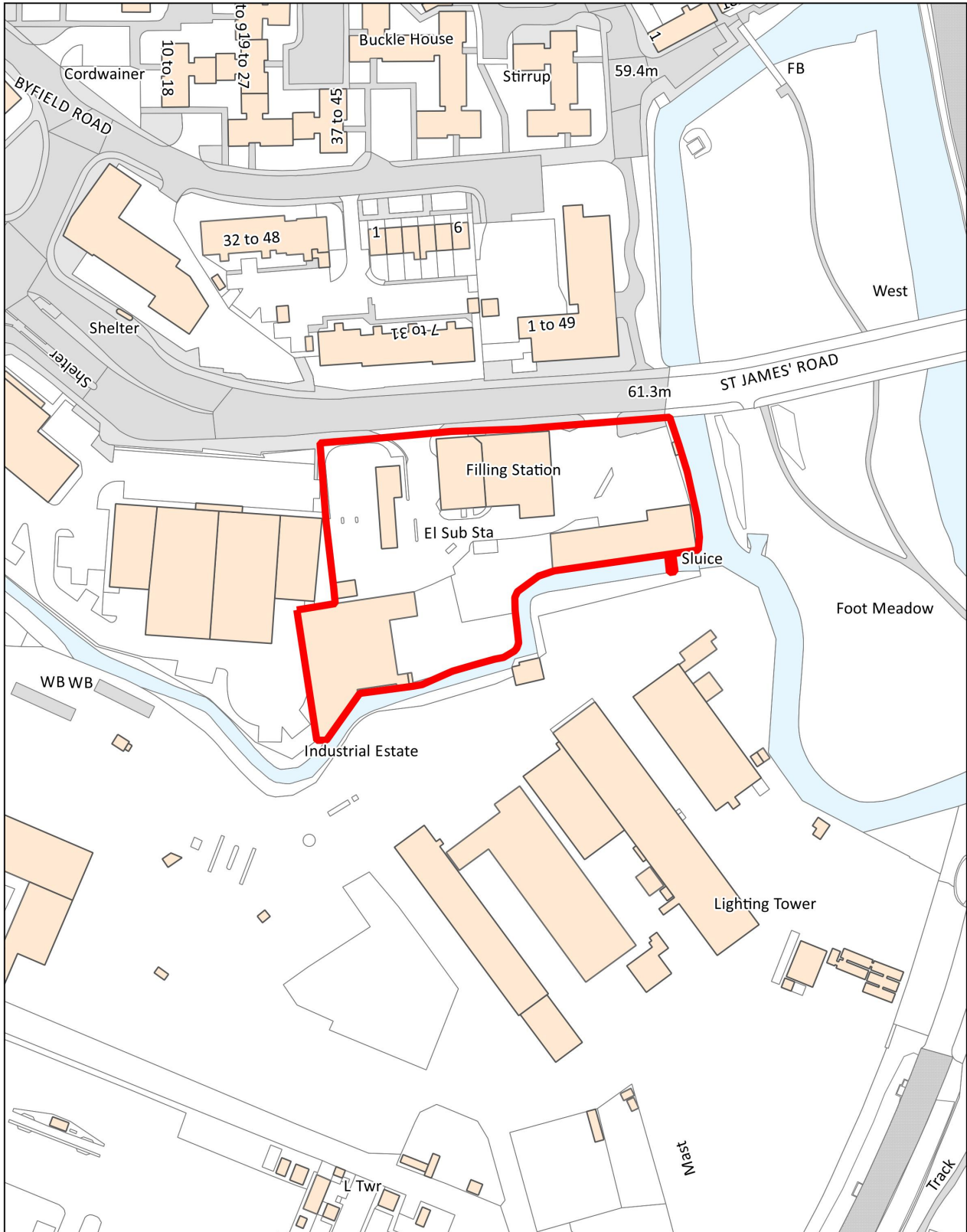
10.1 N/2017/1027.

## 11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None.

## 12. SUMMARY AND LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN

12.1 In reaching the attached recommendations regard has been given to securing the objectives, visions and priorities outlined in the Corporate Plan together with those of associated Frameworks and Strategies.



 <p><b>NORTHAMPTON</b> BOROUGH COUNCIL</p>	<p>Title: <b>Westbridge Motors, St James Road</b></p>	<p>Date: 18-09-2017</p>
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