



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

PLANS PANEL CITY CENTRE

Date: 18 JUNE 2009

Subject: PRE-APPLICATION PREAPP/09/00036 – Proposed 7 level Multi Storey Car Park and landscaping - University Of Leeds, Woodhouse Lane, Woodhouse, Leeds.

Electoral Wards Affected:

Hyde Park and Woodhouse



Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

RECOMMENDATION: This report is brought to Panel for information. The Developer will be asked to present the scheme to allow Members to consider and comment on the proposals.

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

The Developers of the above site have requested to present this scheme to Members for their consideration and comments. The proposal is for a 7 level block to house a multi storey car park to serve the university campus visitors, staff and students. The building is to be set in an area of hard and soft landscaping.

The building is to be positioned on one of the 27 development proposals sites put forward by the University as part of their overall Strategic Development Framework (May 2008 Revision C) for the campus, which was presented to Members on 28 February 2008.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

The site is currently used as a surface car park, and has a number of relatively mature trees and bushes planted in landscaped edges around the car parking bays.

The Leeds Unitary Development Plan Review 2006 (UDP) defines this location as being within the Education Quarter, and as Proposal Area 19 – University Campus (South East). In this area the UDP states that a science park/innovation centre

would be supported. The UDP also defines an opportunity for an enhanced public routes crossing the site as well as a proposed public space.

3.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS

The proposal has been the subject of pre-application discussions between the Developers, their Architects and Local Authority Officers since March 2009. These discussions have focused on the proposed use of the site as a multi storey car park, the numbers of car parking spaces, the position of the block in relation to other existing and proposed buildings, the height, form and scale of the block, details of the elevational design and materials, key views, pedestrian routes and connectivity through the site and wider campus, the sustainability credentials of the proposal, and the proposed hard and soft landscaping scheme.

Members will recall being presented an indicative block plan of the proposed multi storey car park as part of the presentations on the Innovation building given to them by the Developers at Plans Panel of 26 March 2009 and 23 April 2009.

4.0 PROPOSAL

The proposal is for a 7 level rectangular block set in a landscaped area. The proposed block would house between 500 and 550 car parking spaces. This should equate to, or be less than, the overall loss of car parking on campus that will result from the development of the 27 schemes detailed in the Strategic Development Framework.

The elevations of the building will be in the form of 'shields' positioned to conceal the interior of the car park whilst allowing the penetration of natural light and natural ventilation. These shields will be a lightweight material fixed to a lattice frame, attaching to the floor slabs within the car park. These shields would have a curved surface to allow some visual activation of the elevations. A glass fronted gallery is proposed to the ground floor of the north facing elevation to ensure a more active frontage to this face of the building.

The landscaping scheme would link into the proposed landscaping for the Innovation building proposed to the east of the multi storey car park. This will result in a combined landscaping scheme creating new green public open spaces, as well as defined connections to and extension of existing routes. In addition, there is proposed a continuity between the soft landscaping and the multi storey car park building, such that the landscaping would, to the east, west and south be integrated into the elevations of the building at the lower level of the building.

In terms of sustainability the possibilities of siting photovoltaic panels on the roof are being explored by the Developer. In addition the materials of the building would have 60% recycled content, and the aim is to achieve a Summary 'A' rating in the Green Guide to Specification (which is a BRE [British Research Establishment] method of rating the elements of a building such as walls, roofs, floors, windows, insulation, etc)

There is also the potential of a proposed new Physics building on the existing car park area to the north of the site of the proposed Innovation building and multi storey car park, which may also come forward in the near future. Details of this 3rd building are yet to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority, and as such the Developers have shown this as an indicative building only at this stage. It is also the case that public realm improvements works to the University campus entrance adjacent to the Parkinson Building, off Woodhouse Lane, are to be addressed alongside the proposal for a multi storey car park.

5.0 ISSUES

Members are asked to consider the following matters:

1. Is the design, height, form and scale of the building acceptable?
2. Are the landscaping scheme proposals appropriate and acceptable?

Background Papers:

University of Leeds Strategic Development Framework (May 2008 Revision C)

Minutes from Plans Panel City Centre 28 February 2008

Members considered a report by the Chief Planning Officer outlining the University of Leeds' long term strategy for development of their campus over the next ten years. A copy of the University's Strategic Development Framework was tabled at the meeting, and the Panel received a presentation on the proposals by the University's Director of Estates, Mr Robert Sladdin, which was supplemented by a range of photographs and artist's impressions. The Panel was informed that it was the vision of Leeds University to be recognised as one of the top 50 universities by 2015, and that a range of development opportunities, including expansion in some areas was needed to help achieve this.

The main elements of the strategic development framework were set out, including:

- the existing architecture as designed by Waterhouse, Lanchester and Lodge and Chamberlin, Powell and Bon
- the student housing strategy
- pedestrian routes, both existing and proposed improvements to
- development opportunities, with pressure to expand in certain areas, and the need to demolish and rebuild properties which were no longer fit for purpose
- transport proposals, including car parking levels, and the proposals for a multi-storey car park on site
- public realm and proposals to open up St George's Field, (the former Leeds General Cemetery) – and create greater accessibility
- creation of a new paved area to the main entrance by the Parkinson building and various other new and enhanced spaces

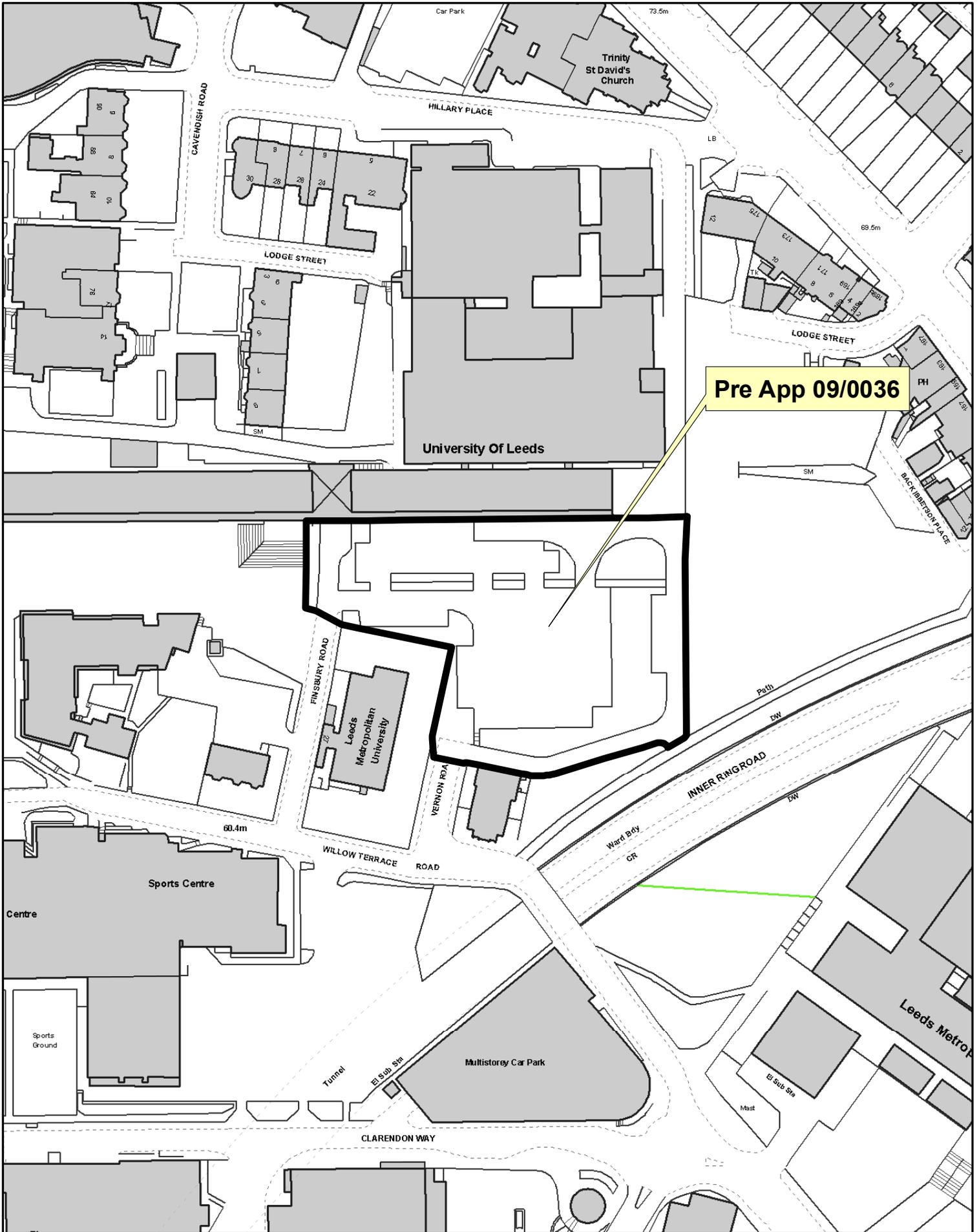
Members commented on the following matters:

- whether the proposals would lead to an expansion in student numbers
- the need to see figures and a plan of the campus showing the building area and the amount of POS likely to be lost through development
- that an area of the western campus was a protected playing pitch, that local debate was still ongoing in respect of how the S106 money arising from development in this area was being spent
- that the improvements to pedestrian access and connectivity were welcomed
- concerns that the proposals for the central area might not greatly benefit pedestrians
- landscaping proposals and the need for greater information on the species of trees being considered
- consultation on the development framework document and the need for university staff and the citizens of Leeds to have some awareness of and input into the debate on this, and that one possible forum for debate would be at the North West Inner Area Committee
- that the accommodation at Blenheim Terrace had not been included in the proposals
- the proposals for the Parkinson entrance, that it was currently heavily congested with vehicles and where the traffic would be displaced to
- linkages between the two universities

The Head of Estates Management provided the following responses:

- there was no intention to see a rise in student numbers, except from overseas students. Furthermore there was greater research work now being undertaken by the university which would not impact on student numbers
- regarding public consultation, whilst a presentation had been made to the Leeds Civic Trust, with a further one planned, the possibility of arranging a series of public meetings would be considered
- that the university did not own all the buildings on Blenheim Terrace
- in respect of the proposed new entrance, that further work on this would be needed, including consultations with the Council and its Highways Engineers, and regard being taken of the Council's plans for a Rapid Transport System, and how this would impact on the scheme

RESOLVED - To note the report, the tabled information, the presentation and the comments now made



CITY CENTRE PANEL



Scale 1/1500

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