

Plans Panel (City Centre)

Thursday, 22nd July, 2010

PRESENT: Councillor B Selby in the Chair

Councillors D Blackburn, C Campbell,
G Driver, M Hamilton, S Hamilton, G Latty,
J Matthews, E Nash and R Wood

10 Chair's opening remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked Members and Officers to introduce themselves

11 Declarations of Interest

The following Members declared personal/prejudicial interests for the purposes of Section 81(3) of the Local Government Act 2000 and paragraphs 8 to 12 of the Members Code of Conduct

Application 08/05440/FU – Globe Road/Water Lane LS11 - Councillors Campbell, Nash and Selby declared personal interests through being members of English Heritage which had commented on the proposals and Councillor Matthews declared a personal interest as a member of West Yorkshire Integrated Transport Authority as Metro had commented on the proposals (minute 14 refers)

12 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A Carter, who was substituted for by Councillor Wood; from Councillor Monaghan, who was substituted for by Councillor Matthews and from Councillor G Harper

13 Minutes

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the Plans Panel City Centre meeting held on 1st July 2010 be approved

14 Application 08/05440/FU - 5 storey 78 bedroom hotel at Globe Road/Water Lane Holbeck LS11

Plans, photographs, drawings and sample materials were displayed at the meeting. A site visit had taken place earlier in the day which Members had attended

Officers presented the report which sought permission for a 78 bedroom hotel situated at Globe Road/Water Lane LS11 which lay within Holbeck Urban Village (HUV) and adjacent to Hol Beck and the three Italianate towers

Details of planning permissions which had been granted to adjacent sites were outlined to enable the site to be viewed in context

At the ground floor level there would be a restaurant, gym and changing rooms, with a unit on the corner which would be independent of the hotel but to be controlled to provide an active use such as a café, so providing a high level of activity at this level

The accommodation would comprise double bedrooms, with some large rooms designed for use by people with disabilities

Details of the roof were provided with Members being informed that this would be an 'eco roof' and would encourage plants, birds and insects, with nesting boxes also being provided. The plant room would be sited in the centre of the roof, and would be constructed from punched aluminium to resemble patinated copper, - this material also being used elsewhere within the scheme. The plant room would not be visible from street level. Also on the roof would be eight solar panels to provide energy for use by the hotel. There would also be a roof terrace which would enable guests to experience views, north, south and west of the city

The main entrance to the hotel, restaurant and bar would be on the west elevation and would be defined by two wavy ribbons in the same material as the plant room

The proposal would provide £300,000 towards the planned public realm improvements in the HUV area. In the vicinity of the site these would comprise provision of lay-bys and crossing points on the north side, making Water Lane one-way and providing footpath improvements to the south side and general surfacing improvements. In the interim, the development would provide highway works to ensure the scheme could be serviced properly in the form of a lay-by on Globe Road

The scheme did not contain any parking. On balance this was considered acceptable for a hotel in this location since visitors would be able to arrive by train or bus and there were strong on-street parking controls in the vicinity of the site which would help to prevent the potential for adverse highway conditions

Members discussed the following matters:

- the hotel and the market this would be aimed at. Members were informed that the concept of the scheme was to provide longer-term hotel accommodation for up to 3 months at a time
- whether guests would arrive predominantly by public transport
- that some doors appeared to open inwards and whether that was contrary to fire regulations
- the possibility of a café/bar use at the corner of the development; whether this would be in addition to the hotel bar and whether such a use could be sustained in view of the number of café/bars in the surrounding area, none of which seemed to be full
- policy BC7 relating to use of local materials in Conservation Areas; that there did not appear to be much copper in the area around the site and how this policy requirement could be seen to have been met
- policy N19 relating to the need for new development within or adjoining a Conservation Area to preserve/enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and concerns that the use of copper in the scheme did not do this
- the metal ribbons at the entrance, with mixed views as to the overall success of this feature
- the siting of the entrance on the west elevation; that this was not the most prominent position for it; that this could account for the need to highlight its position by using the metal ribbon feature and that moving

the entrance to the front of the building in the area designated for the active unit would be more acceptable

- concerns at the lack of access to public transport in view of there being no bus routes in the area and the proposals for the southern railway station access having been halted
- the proposed drop-off point on the north side; whether this catered for people with disabilities and that the drop off point was too far from the entrance both for people with mobility problems and guests with heavy luggage
- the travel plan; that no parking was being made available in the scheme either for staff or guests; the need to understand how this would be enforced; the specific detail on this issue in the travel plan; that it needed to be robust and that Members needed to understand this aspect of the scheme
- that it was unreasonable and unrealistic to think that people using the hotel in the way that was envisaged, ie up to 3 months at a time, would not use a car and require parking
- that the site was not near local transport, nor located centrally so there was a likelihood of guests parking their cars in nearby communities and what measures would be put in place to prevent this from occurring
- the possibility of the accommodation being sold off individually as flats and how this could be prevented
- the need for an explanation of 'reasonable endeavours' in terms of the S106 requirement
- that the building was fairly innocuous but that it did not make a statement and that at the Water Lane/Globe Road junction, it would probably be the Giotto Tower which was noticed more than the corner of the hotel building
- that the relationship between the stone wall around Hol Beck and the brick of the building was uneasy and that some stone detailing should be introduced at ground level to help with the transition
- the copper effect trim, mixed views as to its success in the scheme and concerns that if this was to be used, it should be real copper as the proposed material was not of a high enough quality
- that from the images shown, Members were unable to fully see the detailing of the building which gave the impression that the elevations were flat, leading to concerns at the overall effect of the building
- the siting of the photovoltaic cells, and that it would be more effective to put them on the plant room
- concerns at the siting of the plant room and that a straight-line roof was needed

Before Officers responded to points raised by the Panel, the Head of Planning Services who was in attendance, stated that following concerns raised by Panel about the use of public transport contributions, as agreed, a letter had been sent by the then Chair of the Panel, Councillor Martin Hamilton, to Metro on this matter and that whilst a response had not been received, this would be chased up. In respect of the use of public transport contributions from the City One site, a meeting was to be arranged with Metro to discuss this

Officers provided the following responses to points raised by Members:

- that fire doors were required to open outwards but that non-fire doors could open inwards
- that the corner unit would provide an active use and whilst a café/bar had been mentioned in the presentation, this was not the defined use and that when interest in a use for the unit had been shown, this would be considered and if approved, would be controlled by condition
- that the use of copper-effect cladding in the scheme was as an accent material and that it was the use of brick as the main construction material which related to policies BC7 and N19
- that the drop-off point would be provided on the north side which would provide a widened footpath and a lay-by with a restriction on times to ensure taxis could gain access and that level surfaces would be provided for wheelchair users
- in terms of the lack of parking in the scheme, that this would be dealt with by the parking restrictions in the area as the development was envisaged as part of the whole HUV masterplan. Whilst the site and surrounding area might appear to be isolated that there were a number of consents which had been granted, including a multi-storey car park on Sweet Street which would provide the parking for uses in HUV where no parking had been included
- the concerns raised about increased on-street parking resulting from the development; that there were existing on-street parking controls which resulted in very little unauthorised parking which suggested that the controls which were in place were effective
- that hotels dealt with car parking in different ways, depending upon the type of operator, with some budget hotels indicating in their promotional information the location of nearby car parks; others had arrangements with car parks to provide parking for guests and some high class hotels provided a valet service. At this stage it was not known who the operator of the proposed hotel would be
- regarding a lack of parking for staff, that the hotel would be no different to shops, hotels etc located in the heart of the city centre without parking. That hundreds of people worked in the city centre and they had the choice to either walk, use public transport or pay to park in order to arrive at their workplace
- that a Travel Plan had been agreed with the developer and this would consider the situation after the initial 3 month period and would assess how people were arriving at the hotel and consider how any car use could be reduced. The Plan would promote the use of public transport possibly through the distribution of leaflets, briefings to staff and incentives, with the Travel Plan being monitored for effectiveness
- that the nature of the ownership of the development would be controlled by condition to prevent rooms being sold off as flats and that a maximum occupancy period of 3 months per person would be set out in the proposed conditions to be attached to any approval
- in relation to the detailing of the building and the images shown, Officers did pay attention to details ie shadow lines and how facade levels were expressed and required the submission of 1:20 details including cross sections and eaves details

The Civic Architect, Mr Thorp, commented on the following specific design issues:

- the detailed articulation of the building and whether its intention was to be simple and elegant or simple and bland. That from the views expressed by Panel that the building was considered to be bland and that consideration would be needed on how the appearance of the building could be improved
- that if the proposed entrance was moved to the corner of the building, the challenges of the ribbon feature would be removed
- that the proportions of the building were in keeping with a warehouse-style building but that the design of the elevations, being expressed in columns, did result in a scheme which looked flat and that further detailing, eg shadow bands all the way along, could be considered
- Members' concerns at the patinated copper-effect material being proposed and if that was the effect being sought, then patinated copper should be used. However, a calm, zinc sheeting might be more suitable than a copper material

The Panel considered how to proceed. The Chair congratulated the developer on having been able to achieve some development on what was a tight site, however there remained a number of issues which Members had expressed concerns about

In terms of the scale, massing, siting and shape of the building, the Panel was largely satisfied with the proposals, but that there were a range of concerns including detailing of the elevations, materials and the relocation of the entrance and drop-off point

RESOLVED - That determination of the application be deferred and that the Chief Planning Officer be asked to submit a further report in due course on the following issues only:

- a revised entrance to the hotel to be sited on the corner of the building and how that would be expressed
- proposed materials
- additional elevations to provide greater detail and depth to the building

The Head of Planning Services stated that the scheme was now being put forward on behalf of a Receiver and whilst it was useful to resolve some of these detailed issues, a hotel operator could have different ideas

In response to the request for a copy of the Travel Plan, Members were informed that the detail of this would be circulated to the Panel as quickly as possible

15 Date and time of next meeting

Thursday 19th August 2010 at 1.30pm in the Civic Hall, Leeds