

Plans Panel (City Centre)

Thursday, 16th September, 2010

PRESENT: Councillor B Selby in the Chair

Councillors D Blackburn, C Campbell,
A Carter, G Driver, M Hamilton, S Hamilton,
G Latty, J Monaghan, E Nash and
N Taggart

Councillor

28 Chair's opening remarks

The Chair welcomed Councillor Taggart, who had recently been appointed to the Panel and then welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked Members and Officers to introduce themselves

29 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 10/01601/FU – Victoria Gardens LS1 – Councillor Driver declared a personal interest through being a member of Leeds Groundwork Trust Board who were the applicants (minute 32 refers)

Application 10/01601/FU – Victoria Gardens LS1 – Councillor Monaghan declared a personal interest through being a member of Leeds Civic Trust which had objected to the proposals (minute 32 refers)

Councillors Campbell, Nash and Selby declared personal interests through being members of English Heritage

30 Minutes

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the Plans Panel City Centre meeting held on 19th August 2010 be approved

31 Matters arising

Further to minute 26 of the Plans Panel City Centre meeting held on 19th August 2010 where Members were informed of structural damage to the property adjacent to the First White Cloth Hall on Kirkgate and the fear that the Listed Building might need to be demolished for public safety reasons, Members made the following comments:

- that the First White Cloth Hall was as important to the city as the Town Hall and the Corn Exchange
- the recent comments by Leeds Civic Trust that the Council should purchase the site; that a design statement had previously been drawn up and that the Council should consider purchasing the building and the whole row

- that a letter be sent from the Panel to the Executive Member for Development and Regeneration informing him of the Panel's views and that it supported the stance taken by Leeds Civic Trust
- that the Panel be informed of the status of the discussions which had been previously carried out on proposals for the refurbishment and regeneration of that area and whether the scheme had been progressed

The Head of Planning Services advised that the First White Cloth Hall had been saved for the immediate future and that a meeting had been arranged with the Chief Planning Officer, the Council's Conservation Officer, Councillor Nash, in her capacity as Heritage Champion and representatives of the site owner early next week to discuss the present situation and future proposals for the building

The Panel requested that the Chief Planning Officer write to the Executive Member for Development and Regeneration as set out above, with a copy to all Plans Panel City Centre Members and that a report on the current situation in respect of the First White Cloth Hall and the outcome of the meeting/how things will be progressed be submitted to the next meeting

32 Application 10/01601/FU - Alterations to public open space at Victoria Gardens The Headrow Leeds LS1

Further to minute 24 of the Plans Panel City Centre meeting held on 19th August 2010, where Panel deferred consideration of proposals for alterations to Victoria Gardens at the Headrow for further information on aspects of the scheme, Members considered a further report

Plans, photographs and graphics were displayed at the meeting

Officers presented the report which provided responses to comments raised by Members at the previous meeting

The Panel was informed that the proposals were for two large chess boards as the third chess board was not in use due to there not being a third set of chess pieces. Furthermore, the library did not have the storage space for an extra chess set. The proposals did however provide for smaller boards to be carved into the existing stone planters, so increasing the availability for chess games and other games which used this board layout. Whilst Members had raised the possibility of games such as hopscotch being laid out, it was felt more 'active' games were not appropriate in this setting

Regarding the underplanting of the trees with plants to provide more colour in the scheme, the provision of pot plants had been considered. However, it was felt that these could be damaged when events were taking place in Victoria Gardens and could therefore detract from the appearance of the scheme

In terms of the seating, the design of previous, large, Art Deco, wooden benches in the gardens had been considered and it was proposed to use this as a model for a smaller bench which would comprise a stainless steel sub-frame which would be timber clad. A design for a matching litter bin would also be drawn up

Bare-stemmed, clipped London Plane trees were still proposed for the scheme, although the trees positioned on the corner of the site and at the ends of the planters would have further pruning to provide a chamfered edged to continue the Art Deco motif

Members discussed the following matters:

- the siting of the benches and that these should be positioned around the site

- the size of the benches with concerns about the scaled down version of the existing large bench
- whether a slightly reduced amount of bulb planting could be considered, with the money saved being used to provide a third set of chess pieces
- that the Art Gallery could be approached with a view to storing a set of chess pieces
- the London Plane trees, with diverse views being expressed on this aspect of the proposals
- that the uplighters to the trees should be turned off through the night to avoid light pollution
- that measures were needed to prevent the planters being damaged by skateboarders
- the need for a signed maintenance agreement for the pruning of the trees and concerns based on previous experiences that the trees might not be maintained as regularly as required

Officers provided the following responses:

- that the benches would be sited around the gardens
- that smaller scale benches had been proposed in order to allow them to be manually lifted when the space was required for event purposes
- that the Chess Society had been consulted on the proposal and was satisfied with two large chess boards and the seven smaller boards around the site
- that a landscaping maintenance plan had been submitted and agreed

Members referred to the discussions which took place on the application at the meeting on 19th August 2010, with clarity being sought on what had been agreed in respect of the application

The Panel's legal adviser stated that the minute indicated that no decision had been reached on the application on 19th August 2010 which had been deferred to enable further information to be provided

RESOLVED - That the application be granted subject to the conditions set out in the submitted report and an additional condition to control the hours of operation of the uplighters

(During consideration of this matter, Councillor Driver left the meeting)

33 Application 10/02973/RM - 5 storey office building at Wellington Place (building 10) adjacent Grade II Listed Lifting Tower

Plans, photographs, sample materials, architects drawings and an image of the whole scheme depicted by cheese wedges were displayed at the meeting. A Members site visit had taken place earlier in the day

As there were two applications at the Wellington Place development to be determined by Panel, the Chair asked Officers to present the proposals together

Officers presented the reports which sought permission for Reserved Matters at building 10 and building 3 of the mixed-use development at Wellington Place which was granted outline approval by Panel in 2007

Members were informed that since the outline permission was granted, the applicant had reappraised the scale of the whole site and now wished to erect buildings which were lower than originally proposed

10 Wellington Place was angular in shape with splayed sides. Materials would comprise stone, metal, a green roof and expansive curtain wall glazing on one elevation which would reflect the Listed Lifting Tower. The slope of the roof would also enable glimpses of the green roof

3 Wellington Place was also angular in form, with two, complementary shades of stone forming the main material for the building

A central atrium space would be provided and on the 5th floor, a set back of the building allowed for a roof terrace

Some basement car parking would be provided underneath this building, with 40 car parking spaces, 84 cycle spaces and 11 motorbike spaces being provided

The landscaping treatment which had been agreed in the application for Tower Square would be continued for buildings 3 and 10, with this being high quality granite, lighting, seating, trees, plants and corten steel features. The soft planting would be naturally irrigated from the surface-water run off

The scheme would provide the opportunity to light the trees, structures and the linear routes which would provide a reference back to the railway tracks of the former goods yard

Officers reported that following further consultation, Leeds Civic Trust was supportive of both applications

Members were informed of a request from Environmental Health Officers for a condition requiring full details of the proposed sound insulation measures. Planning Officers were of the view that there were sufficient controls in place to protect amenity through conditions attached to the outline consent. A further condition on the Reserved Matters applications was therefore unnecessary

Members commented on the following matters:

- the inclusion of a comment from the Police Counter Terrorism Unit
- how the stone cladding would weather
- the reduced scale of the overall scheme and the impact of this on the roof line
- that the reduced scale of the proposals was more respectful of the Listed Lifting Tower
- concerns whether the mainly glazed elevation adjacent to the lifting tower would cause an unacceptable internal environment, particularly as the elevation was south facing
- that the temporary landscaping put in place by the applicant had been impressive and that this augured well for the scheme
- the quality of the proposals and that if approved, the city would benefit from a prestigious development
- whether the historic images shown on the site visit could be made available

Officers provided the following responses:

- that new national guidance had been brought out regarding security issues and that the police wished to consider sites where there would be significant public activity to ensure the design/materials would minimise potential damage in the event of an attack
- that in terms of weathering of the stone, much depended upon the type of stone to be used although good quality stone samples had been provided by the applicant. The distance from the back of the kerb to

the building was generous and it was felt that winter salt, which could be problematic, would not reach that far

- regarding the impact of reduced heights on the roof line, the site section presented included central low rise buildings which would be flat roofed as originally agreed. The surrounding buildings would continue to provide a distinctive sloping roof profile towards the centre of the site, although their overall building heights were to be reduced
- that the type of glass to be used would be treated to protect internal comfort conditions
- that the 1962 photograph of the site could be made available

RESOLVED - That the application be granted subject to compliance with the conditions attached to the outline consent

34 Application 10/02974/RM - 6/7 storey office building with basement car park and landscaping at Wellington Place (building 3)- corner of Wellington Street and Northern Street - Leeds LS1

With reference to the above discussions

RESOLVED - That the application be granted subject to the following additional condition:

Prior to the commencement of development, details to include plans and cross-sections of the new basement vehicular access and its method of linking to the underground road system, approved as part of outline permission 06/06824/OT, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

These details shall include:

- i the line of the carriageway
- ii the security barrier mechanism
- iii all signing and lighting
- iv the lighting of the access route
- v a plan indicating all visibility splays
- vi a plan indicating all forward visibility dimensions
- vii details of any kerbs and protective barriers if required

The access point and linking road shall then be constructed in accordance with the approval details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority

Reason: in the interests of the provision of a safe vehicular environment which as the capacity to accommodate the necessary volume of vehicle movements

The site shall also be subject to compliance with the conditions attached to the outline consent

35 Date and time of next meetings

Thursday 14th October at 1.30pm in the Civic Hall

Friday 12th November at 1.30pm in the Civic Hall