



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

CITY PLANS PANEL

Date: 21st November 2013

Subject:

- 1. Application 13/01640/OT – Outline application for part demolition and alteration of existing buildings and erect extensions to form new and enlarged retail units, Class A1, A3, A5, D2 (Cinema); alterations to existing and creation of new public realm and landscaping; alterations to existing vehicular access and creation of new vehicular, pedestrian and service accesses; alterations to car park configuration; infrastructure and associated works – White Rose Shopping Centre, Dewsbury Road, Morley, Leeds, LS11 8LU.**
- 2. Application 13/02684/FU – Demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment of site for use as car parking, with improvements to access, landscaping works and enhancements, new culvert to Cotton Mill beck and upgrading of existing pedestrian crossing and associated works – Land south of White Rose Shopping Centre, Dewsbury Road, Morley, Leeds, LS11 8LL.**

APPLICANT

Ravenseft Properties Ltd

DATE VALID

10th April 2013 &
20th June 2013

TARGET DATE

20th December 2013

Electoral Wards Affected:

Morley North
Morley South
Beeston and Holbeck

Yes

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

RECOMMENDATION:

13/01640/OT

APPROVE the application in principle and **REFER** the application to the Secretary of State as the application needs to be considered jointly with 13/02684/FU which, if approved, would represent a departure from the adopted Development Plan. In the event of the Secretary of State not wishing to intervene, Members are further recommended to **DELEGATE** final approval to the CPO subject to the conditions

specified (and any others which he might consider appropriate) and the completion of a legal agreement covering the following obligations:

- Public transport infrastructure contribution (PTIC) of £672,510 – Please note that it is proposed for this contribution to be paid over three instalments and the cost of the Bus Station Enhancements and the Step Free Access Scheme identified below are included within the contribution.
- Travel Plan Monitoring Fee - £5,000;
- Bus Station Enhancement Scheme - the cost of which shall not exceed £40,000 (cost included within PTIC);
- Landscaping contribution – £25,000;
- Step Free Access Scheme between WRSC and WROP - the cost of which shall not exceed £130,000 (cost included within PTIC);
- Cycle Path Contribution - the sum of £47,500 for the purpose of providing a cycle path along Dewsbury Road;
- Travel Plan Contingency Fund - the sum of £400,000; and
- Employment and Training Scheme – As identified in the Updated Employment Strategy submitted in support of the outline planning permission.

In the circumstances where the Sec.106 has not been completed within 3 months of the resolution to grant planning permission the final determination of the application shall be delegated to the Chief Planning Officer.

13/02684/FU

APPROVE the application in principle and REFER the application to the Secretary of State as the development represents inappropriate development in the Green Belt, and as such approval is a departure from the approved Development Plan. In the event of the Secretary of State not wishing to intervene, Members are further recommended to DELEGATE final approval to the CPO subject to the conditions specified (and any others which he might consider appropriate) and the completion of a legal agreement to include:

- Undertaking from the developer that no further applications are to be submitted for the development of the land to which this application relates for a period of 5 years from the date of the decision.

In the circumstances where the Sec.106 has not been completed within 3 months of the resolution to grant planning permission the final determination of the application shall be delegated to the Chief Planning Officer.

It is intended that the obligations listed above would be covered by a single legal agreement covering the two sites, rather than in separate agreements for each application.

CONDITIONS: 13/01640/OT

1. Reserved matters covering scale, access, appearance, layout and landscaping to be submitted.

2. Reserved matters to be submitted within specified timescale, implementation within timescale.
3. Development to accord with approved plans.
4. Development to be carried out in accordance with parameter plans.
5. The uses hereby permitted shall be limited to the following Gross Internal Areas:
 - a. Retail (Class A1) – 11,048m²
 - b. Cinema (Class D2) – 4136m²
 - c. Restaurants/catering units (Class A3/A5) – 2322m²
6. Of the 11,048m² A1 floorspace hereby permitted, 5864m² gross internal area shall be provided as an extension to the existing unit identified as 'Primark' on drawing (20) AP300, forming a unit of not more than 9291m² gross internal area.
7. Of the 5864m² additional gross internal area referred to in condition 2, not more than 3994m² shall be used as net sales area [definition of 'net sales area' to be included as an informative note].
8. Of the 11,048m² A1 floorspace hereby permitted, 3326m² gross internal area shall be provided as an extension to the existing unit identified as 'Debenhams' on drawing (20) AP300, forming a unit of not more than 15,148m² gross internal area.
9. Neither of the larger units formed as a result of the extensions to the units identified as 'Primark' and 'Debenhams' on drawing (20) AP300 and referred to in conditions 2 and 4 shall be subdivided either vertically or horizontally at any point.
10. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) (or any Order revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification) the approved retail floorspace referred to in conditions 2 and 4 shall not be used for the sale of convenience goods, except where such sales are ancillary to the use of the units for the sale of comparison goods.
11. Of the 11,048m² A1 floorspace hereby permitted, the 1858m² which does not fall within the extensions to the units identified as 'Primark' and 'Debenhams' on drawing (20) AP300 (as defined in conditions 2 and 4) shall be provided as an extension to the existing north eastern mall entrance as shown on this drawing. This extended mall entrance shall be formed of no more than five units, of which none shall exceed 700m² gross.
12. The 2322m² gross A3/A5 floorspace hereby permitted, as referred to in condition 5, shall be formed of units of which all shall be a minimum of 520m² gross internal area.
13. Phasing of development in relation to the provision of the off-site car park, and linking the off-site car park to the WRSC, preventing its severance from the Centre or its separate sale, lease or occupation [timescales/phasing to be agreed].
14. Surface water drainage details
15. Details of any measures to divert sewers affected by the development.
16. Development to be carried out in accordance with submitted flood risk assessment
17. Surface water to be passed through oil interceptor.
18. Former coal mining site investigation and any necessary mitigation.
19. The reserved matters application for the development shall include the provision of no fewer than 4,697 parking spaces across the site, including the parking spaces within the off-site car parking area approved under application 13/02684/FU.
20. Off-site highway works pre-occupation

21. Provision for contractors during construction
22. Four electric vehicle charging points to be provided.
23. Improvements to Cotton Mill Beck to be submitted to and approved by LPA and then implemented in accordance with agreed timescale.
24. Contaminated land studies and remediation statements if found to be necessary.
25. Amended remediation statement if necessary/unexpected contamination
26. Remediation verification report.
27. Sustainability measures
28. Retention of existing trees
29. Protection of retained trees during works

CONDITIONS 13/02684/FU

1. Time limit for implementation
2. Approved plans
3. Phasing of the provision of the car parking relating to the loss of spaces at the White Rose Centre and the first occupation of the new developments permitted under application 13/01640/OT, and preventing the severance of the car park from the Centre in the future.
4. Scheme for security measures to car park and to pedestrian route linking it to the centre, including a plan of the route, details of lighting, CCTV and other measures.
5. Coal – site investigation and any necessary remediation
6. No development, demolition or site clearance until bat licence submitted and approved.
7. Biodiversity protection and enhancement plan, including details of culvert design.
8. Samples of materials for culvert.
9. Oil interceptors
10. Surface water drainage scheme
11. Development to be carried out in accordance with FRA.
12. Access onto Dewsbury Road only to be used in the event of an emergency, as an evacuation route in the event of flooding, and shall not be used as an entrance or exit route for staff using the car park.
13. Closing redundant accesses onto Dewsbury Road.
14. Use of off-site car park shall not commence until two controlled pedestrian crossings have been provided on the route between the car park and the shopping centre: one on the perimeter road between the car park and the Sainsbury's petrol station, and one on the internal circulation road (as shown on plans). Details of both to be submitted and approved prior to their implementation.
15. Contaminated land studies and remediation statements as necessary.
16. Amended remediation statement if necessary/unexpected contamination
17. Remediation verification report.
18. Retention of existing trees
19. Protection of retained trees during development

20. Retention of tree screens along western and southern boundaries for the lifetime of the development
21. Landscaping scheme and implementation, including surfacing materials, boundary treatments and tree pit details.
22. Landscape management and maintenance plan
23. Replacement of any tree that dies etc. within 5 years.

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

- 1.1 These applications are brought to Plans Panel as they propose a significant major development and a departure from the Development Plan in relation to the provision of additional out-of-centre floorspace at the White Rose Shopping Centre (WRSC) and the provision of car parking on an adjacent site which is in the Green Belt. The proposals consist of two applications: an outline application for the additional floorspace, and a full application for the change of use and redevelopment of the former office building and scrap yard site to the south to provide staff car parking for the extended centre.
- 1.2 A pre-application presentation was made to City Plans Panel on 25th October 2012, and a position statement was subsequently presented to Members on 1st August 2013, following the submission of the two applications. The minutes of these two Plans Panel meetings are attached below at Appendices 3 and 4 respectively.

2.0 PROPOSAL:

- 2.1 The proposals for the centre itself and for the off-site car parking have been submitted as separate applications, however the car park scheme forms an integral component of the proposals for the extended shopping centre, and the two applications are therefore being considered together. The key aspects of each are summarised below.

A) Application 13/01640/OT – Extensions to WRSC and associated works

- 2.2 The proposals for the WRSC can be divided into the following four main elements:
 - a) Debenhams extension and additional retail units
 - b) Primark extension
 - c) Cinema
 - d) Additional catering units

All floor areas quoted below relate to the gross internal floor area rather than net retail floor areas.

- 2.3 Debenhams extension and additional retail units (all figures gross floorspace)
The first of the four key development zones relates to the area to the east of the existing Debenhams store at the northernmost end of the centre, where it is proposed to provide an additional 3,326m² of floorspace for the Debenhams store over two levels.
- 2.4 It is proposed to provide 3 new, smaller, single storey A1 retail units (with a combined floor area of 1,858m²) to the south of the proposed extension to Debenhams, extending the existing mall entrance at this point further to the east.

Primark extension

- 2.5 This element of the proposals consists of a three storey extension to the east of the existing Primark store in the middle portion of the centre. The two lower floors of the proposed extension would provide an additional 3,994m² of A1 floorspace for the Primark store, whilst the top floor would provide additional storage and 'back of house' provision for the unit, amounting to around 1,870m².

Cinema

- 2.6 An extension of 4,136m² is proposed to the west of the centre, to the north of the existing entrance to the food court area, this will introduce a new cinema (D2 use) with up to 12 screens and around 1,920 seats.

Additional catering units

- 2.7 To the south of the proposed cinema, on either side of the existing food court entrance, it is proposed to provide a further 2,322m² of additional catering units (A3/A5 use). These would connect to existing catering units which have already been granted permission in this area as discussed below, and which are currently under construction.
- 2.8 The application is in outline, with all matters reserved, but is accompanied by a series of parameter plans identifying the main components of the scheme. These are intended to provide sufficient certainty over what is proposed to allow the implications of the development to be fully assessed and the key design principles to be established whilst retaining the flexibility to allow more detailed design and layout matters to be finalised once the final operational requirements of each tenant are known. The plans include:

- Identification of development 'zones' for each extension. These show the maximum extent of the area within each zone which would be constructed, based on plans indicating the minimum and maximum extent of elevations and the degree of variation in each of these.
- Plans showing the minimum and maximum height of each of the proposed extensions/buildings in relation to the existing building.
- Areas where demolition and remodelling are proposed and areas where parking spaces and trees would be lost and access routes would need to be reconfigured.
- Key vehicle, pedestrian and cycle routes, positions of cycle parking and taxi drop-off locations.
- Customer entrances, canopies and areas of public realm around these, defining minimum and maximum dimensions for each of these areas, and new tree planting.
- Indicative elevations have also been provided, showing areas of fenestration and main frontages.

- 2.9 The proposed extensions would be constructed on areas of existing parking, leading to the loss of around 670 of the centre's existing 4,697 spaces. Prior to the submission of the application, discussions were held with the developer regarding the re-provision of some parking on site in the form of decked car parking, however, the submitted details advise that for viability reasons, this proposal this has not been brought forward as part of the application. It is now proposed instead to re-provide the lost spaces through a combination of reconfiguring some areas of existing parking on site, and the provision of 574 staff car parking spaces on the area of land to the south as part of the accompanying application, the details of which are below.

- 2.10 As the application is in outline only at this stage, the reconfigured parking layouts have not been finalised, as these will depend on the final position of each of the extensions (within the development 'zones' identified on the parameter plans). However, the applicants have confirmed that while it is not proposed to provide additional parking in association with the additional floorspace proposed, they will, as a minimum, re-provide all of the existing spaces lost. There would therefore be no net reduction in the number of parking spaces across the wider site (including the off-site staff car park) as a result of the development.
- 2.11 A travel plan has been submitted, which includes measures to promote the use of public transport and other means of travel by staff and customers. This aims to achieve a significant shift from car-based travel to alternative modes of transport and to thereby minimise the impact of the development in terms of traffic generation, parking demand and environmental impacts. The scheme also includes a number of supplementary measures in conjunction with the travel plan, including improvements to the on-site bus station and to pedestrian links between the bus station and the adjacent White Rose Office Park, and the provision of a contribution towards a new stretch of cycle route along the site frontage, together with a car park management plan for the site.
- 2.12 A public transport contribution has also been requested as part of the scheme. At this stage, it is likely that this would be used to provide improvements to bus services between the centre and surrounding areas, including Beeston, Hunslet, Middleton, Belle Isle and Morley.
- 2.13 The applications are accompanied by a range of other supporting documents, including:
- Transport Assessment
 - Draft Employment Strategy
 - Flood Risk Assessment
 - Retail/Economic Impact Assessment (supplemented by additional information in response to representations received during the application)
 - Sustainability Statement
 - Contamination and Coal Mining Risk Assessment Studies
 - Statement of Community Involvement.
- 2.14 A screening opinion was carried out prior to the submission of the application, and concluded that an Environmental Statement was not necessary for the development.
- 2.15 The application also specifies Heads of Terms for a Section 106 Agreement to cover the following issues:
- Public Transport contribution
 - Travel plan and monitoring fee
 - Improvements to on-site bus station
 - Local employment and training scheme
 - Contribution of £25,000 towards landscaping enhancement to the area outside the houses on the opposite side of Dewsbury Road to the east of the site.
 - Improvements to the pedestrian link between the bus station and the adjacent White Rose Office Park site.
 - Contribution of £47,500 towards the provision of a new cycle route along part of the Dewsbury Road frontage to the east of the site.

- 'Contingency fund' of £150,000 for the carrying out of improvement works to the Arlington Roundabout in the event that Travel Plan targets are not met and the traffic impact of the development is therefore greater than anticipated.

B) Application 13/02684/FU – Off-site staff car park

- 2.16 In connection with the main application, it is proposed to provide 574 staff car parking spaces on the site of the former breaker's yard and office building to the south, including the demolition of all buildings on these sites. Access is proposed from the WRSC's southern perimeter road via an existing entrance, which would be widened and extended by providing a culvert across Cotton Mill Beck. The existing vehicular entrance from Dewsbury Road into the north eastern part of the site is to be closed off. The access from Dewsbury Road in the south eastern part of the site is proposed to be retained, although the submitted details confirm that this would only be used for emergency access/egress, for example in the event of flooding, and would be barrier-controlled to prevent its use by staff.
- 2.17 Pedestrian access from the car park to the Centre would lead across the perimeter road, where a new pedestrian crossing is to be created, through the car park to the east of the Sainsbury's petrol station, across the car park access road, where the existing zebra crossing is proposed to be upgraded to a pelican crossing, and towards the mall entrance in the south eastern part of the Centre. The submitted details advise that the pedestrian route through the car park would be covered by CCTV and other security measures.
- 2.18 Some trees and areas of vegetation are proposed to be removed to facilitate the provision of the culvert across the beck, and a pedestrian access through the centre of the site, however the majority of the existing trees and vegetation are proposed to be retained and supplemented with additional planting within the car parking areas. It is proposed to remove areas of hardstanding in the eastern part of the site, adjacent to Dewsbury Road, and to carry out earthworks to provide a grassed embankment along this frontage, which would include tree planting to provide screening of the car park from Dewsbury Road.
- 2.19 Details submitted with the application confirm that the off-site car park is intended for use by staff only, as part of the car park management strategy for the Centre which seeks to direct staff parking to more remote car parks, retaining the more convenient car parks for customer use, and to reduce car-based travel among staff in conjunction with the aims of the Travel Plan.

3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

- 3.1 The WRSC is a substantial retail centre in south Leeds with over 100 retail and restaurant units, including a Sainsbury's supermarket and large anchor stores at Debenhams and Primark, and around 4700 car parking spaces. The centre was built in the 1990's after being refused planning permission by Leeds City Council but subsequently allowed on appeal in 1989.
- 3.2 The centre is located in south Leeds, to the north east of Morley, north west of Middleton and south west of Beeston. The site is bordered to the east by Dewsbury Road, which runs north-south from Junction 1 of the M621 to Junction 28 of the M62, and to the west by the Leeds-Huddersfield-Manchester railway line. The surrounding area is mixed in character, with offices at the White Rose Office Park to the north, residential properties on the opposite side of Dewsbury Road to the east, and open land to the west and south.

- 3.3 Permission has recently been granted for extensions to various units in the centre, and to the food court area. These were considered initially as part of an outline application, approved in March 2011, and a number of reserved matters applications for various aspects of the development have subsequently been granted and implemented.
- 3.4 The staff car park proposals relate to an area of land to the south of the Centre, all of which is within the Green Belt. The northern part of the site contains a three storey brick building, formerly an office but now vacant, with a single storey warehouse to the rear, and hard standing to the front and rear. The area immediately to the south is also hard-surfaced, and was a petrol filling station in the past, although this was demolished over 10 years ago. The south western part of the site, was formerly used as a car breaker's yard, a use which benefits from a lawful use certificate granted in 1994. Whilst vacant at present, the site contains areas of hardstanding and a small office building associated with this former use.
- 3.5 The site slopes uphill from Dewsbury Road towards open land to the west, with steeper gradients in the eastern part of the site. An existing access from the WRSC southern perimeter road into the northern part of the site, which at present serves a substation and gas control station, is proposed to be widened and extended to provide access to the car park. There are relatively wide belts of trees and vegetation around the site's southern and western boundaries, and along Cotton Mill Beck in the northern part of the site, as well as a belt of trees running through the middle of the site. At present, the site is also enclosed by metal palisade fencing.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

White Rose Centre

- 4.1 Outline permission was granted in March 2011, following a resolution by Plans Panel, for extensions to provide up to 2,048m² retail floorspace (A1 use) and up to 1,850m² restaurants and cafe floorspace (A3 use) (application 10/04190/OT). The permission was granted subject to a legal agreement including the following obligations:
- Revocation of permitted development rights for the implementation of mezzanine floors of up to 200m² within the remaining A1 retail units in the centre
 - Local employment and training initiatives
 - £40,000 contribution to pay for the provision of real-time bus information within the centre
 - The dedication of an area of land to the east of the centre for use as a cycle route
 - Travel Plan and monitoring fee.
- 4.2 A number of related reserved matters applications have subsequently been approved and implemented. This leaves a total of 2,285m² approved floorspace still to be brought forward for development (1,443m² of A1 and 842m² of A3).
- 11/01070/RM – Extension to mezzanine floor to retail unit (44m²). Approved May 2011.

- 11/01092/RM – Extension and alterations to units 52 and 53 to provide ground floor extension and mezzanine extension providing 177 square metres additional A1 floor space. Approved May 2011.
- 11/03953/RM – Extension to upper level food court providing 998m² additional A3 floor space. Approved November 2011. Two minor material amendment applications relating to this proposal have subsequently been approved as follows:
 - 12/00833/FU – Changes to approved layout, as a result of which a further 10m² of floorspace would be created, resulting in 1,008m² rather than 998m² as originally approved. Approved May 2012.
 - 13/00435/FU – Changes to main elevation. Approved March 2013.
- 11/04243/RM – Amalgamation of 2 retail units and extension to mezzanine floor (101m² floorspace). Approved November 2011.
- 12/01360/RM – Reserved matters application for extensions, for the provision of 283m² retail floorspace. Approved May 2012.

4.3 All other history relates to previous extensions, minor alterations and changes of use of existing units within the centre, signage and the original permission for the centre, the original outline permission for which was granted on appeal in 1989 (application H23/59/87/) and renewed in 1991 (H23/59/87/1).

4.4 Permission has recently been granted in May 2013 for the demolition of the Woodman service station and public house to the south east of the WRSC, and the redevelopment of the site with a replacement petrol station and coffee shop (application 13/01022/FU).

Proposed staff car park site

4.5 There have been a number of applications relating to extensions and redevelopments on the office building and former petrol station in the northern and eastern parts of the site. A number of these were refused in the late 1970s on Green Belt grounds (although one was then allowed on appeal). Two more recent applications were subsequently approved: one for an extension in 1982 and one for a prefabricated office building in 1992 (applications H23/228/82/ and H23/9/92/).

4.6 A certificate of lawful use for vehicle dismantlers and retail sales was granted in relation to the southern part of site in December 1994 (23/82/93/CLU). An application for a detached industrial unit and offices on this part of the site was refused in February 1995 on Green Belt grounds (application 23/174/94/FU).

White Rose Office Park

4.7 Permission was granted for a new office building (5,500m² office floorspace), at the neighbouring White Rose Office Park site in September 2013 (application 13/02207/FU). This decision is subject to a unilateral undertaking covering several planning obligations, including a travel plan monitoring fee, employment and training scheme, and a public transport contribution of £106,975. It also includes improvements to the pedestrian route in the southern part of the site, which links to the footpath through the WRSC site to the bus station which is proposed to be improved as part of the implementation of the current application.

Victoria Gate, City Centre

4.8 Outline permission for the redevelopment of the Eastgate/Harewood quarter in the city centre (now called Victoria Gate) was granted in September 2011 (application

11/01000/OT). The permitted uses included retail, offices, a crèche, medical centre and a D2 leisure use (restricted to use as a gym in the original decision). An application to vary the approved uses to allow for an unrestricted D2 leisure use and a casino (*sui generis*) use was approved in October 2012 (application 12/03002/OT).

- 4.9 Applications for the first phase of this development were submitted in June 2013, and include the new John Lewis store together with other retail, restaurants and bars, a multi storey car park and a casino (applications 13/02967/FU, 13/02968/FU and 13/02969/RM), but not the D2 use which was permitted under the outline application. These applications were reported to City Plans Panel on 26th September 2013, where Members resolved to grant permission for the developments, subject to the completion of Section 106 agreements.

Thorpe Park

- 4.10 An application for an out-of-centre mixed use development at Thorpe Park in the east of the city (application 12/03886/OT) was submitted in September 2012. This seeks outline permission for a range of uses including offices, retail and bars/restaurants, a hotel, leisure facilities and car parking. The applications were considered by City Plans Panel at meetings in September 2013, and Members resolved to approve the applications, subject to the completion of a section 106 agreement and referral to the National Planning Casework Unit as a departure. The National Planning Casework Unit have subsequently confirmed that they do not wish to call in the application for determination.

5.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS:

- 5.1 Prior to the submission of the application extensive pre-application discussions took place with the developer, involving planning, highways and design officers, which culminated in a pre-application presentation by the developers to City Plans Panel in October 2012. The following matters were discussed by Members at that stage:

- Traffic impacts, particularly on Dewsbury Road and at peak times around Elland Road.
- Cinema likely to generate trips at evenings and weekends when public transport was usually less frequent
- Staff car parking
- Whether Centre had ever competed with the city centre and other centres, and whether Primark and Debenhams would close in city centre.
- Further details of scale and design, particularly cinema.
- Strong commitment to creation of jobs and job guarantees for local people. To be monitored by Employment Leeds, and agreements rigorously enforced.
- Some support for proposal for more retail floorspace and new cinema use, but concerns about levels of car parking and design of decked parking.
- Proposals being against planning policy.
- Views of neighbouring centres and adjoining local authorities.
- Assurances on behalf of Debenhams and Primark regarding commitment to retaining presence in Leeds and centres in neighbouring authorities.
- Improvements to an area of greenspace on the Ring Road should be considered.
- Improvements to the bus stops at the centre were welcomed.
- Linkages with Middleton, Beeston and Morley to be specifically addressed.
- Further consultation to take place and to a wider area

A copy of the full minutes for this presentation is included at Appendix 1 below.

- 5.2 The developers also carried out a programme of pre-application engagement and consultation. This included letters to MPs, south Leeds Ward Members, Morley Town Council, Leeds Civic Trust, and local community groups and organisations, meetings with officers at Wakefield, Kirklees and Bradford, public exhibitions at the Centre and at Morley Town Hall, and presentations to Morley Town Council and Beeston Village Community Forum.
- 5.3 A further public display at the WRSC was held by the developers in May 2013, to inform people about the applications as submitted. The developers have advised that positive feedback was received regarding the employment benefits of the proposals, the cinema and improved retail and leisure choices.
- 5.4 A position statement was presented to City Plans Panel on 1st August 2013, when the following points were discussed:
- Case for additional retail space and a cinema not yet proved. Some Members felt this might be acceptable but it would be subject to further retail assessments to understand the impacts and benefits.
 - Assurances should be sought that the main retail components will be delivered as extensions to existing large anchor stores and not subdivided in the future.
 - Further evidence sought that no significant additional impact on the local highway network. Particular concerns regarding cinema and likelihood of longer stays, and that no additional car parking was proposed.
 - Support for integrated approach to the development of the bus station to serve the WRSC and the neighbouring office park, and improvements to footpath links.
 - Support for improved bus services to local areas of high unemployment, as identified in the South Leeds Investment Strategy, such as Middleton Park, Beeston and Holbeck and Morley and Churwell.
 - Need for a high quality design.
 - The suggested planning obligations were noted, and it was suggested that a car sharing plan could be considered as part of the S106 Agreement.
 - Developers should provide a financial viability statement in support of their case for providing car parking in the green belt instead of on site.
 - Phasing of delivery of new car park to ensure sufficient staff parking during construction, balancing this against the need to ensure that the new car park was not brought forward too early without the accompanying development.
 - The use of the land to the south for car parking should be restricted to prevent its further development in the future.
 - Need for a management plan for the car park and measures to encourage its use by staff and ensure their safety and security in using these areas.
 - Consideration should be given to allowing staff to walk through the WRSC after it is closed to the public, rather than requiring them to walk outside late at night
 - Members welcomed the retention of hedgerows and trees in the off-site car park.
 - Members welcomed the employment and training impacts of the development in terms of the number of jobs to be created, but stressed the importance of ensuring local employment.

A copy of the full minutes relating to this presentation is provided at Appendix 2 and the issues raised by Members are considered in the Appraisal section below.

5.5 Since the position statement report in August, further discussions have been ongoing with the developer and their representatives in the light of the comments made by Members, and covering issues including highways, public transport, employment and economic impacts.

6.0 PUBLIC/LOCAL RESPONSE:

Ward Members

6.1 A Member briefing meeting was held on 18th June, attended by representatives from Morley North, Beeston and Holbeck and Middleton Park Wards. Members were briefed on the proposals, and the following matters were discussed:

- WRSC's current work in terms of local employment and training and community involvement noted, but new proposals need to be specific in terms of the initiatives, and target Wards, and appropriately monitored.
- Objections received from neighbouring authorities.
- Public transport proposals need to focus on existing deficiencies in links between different parts of South Leeds.
- Traffic concerns relating to Dewsbury Road and Elland Road at peak times.
- Off-site car park – Need to consider Green Belt implications.

6.2 A further Member briefing was held on 3rd September 2013 with Members from Morley North, Beeston and Holbeck and Middleton Park Wards, where the following matters were discussed:

- Consideration of highways impact needs to take account of takes account of recently approved/commenced/submitted developments around Elland Road (ice rink, police HQ, Park and Ride scheme).
- Public transport deficiencies on Sundays.
- Longevity/sustainability of funding for new/extended bus services.
- Scheme relies heavily on public transport and travel plan with no additional parking. Concern that parking is insufficient and won't be mitigated by public transport contribution.
- Employment – need to ensure training scheme identifies agencies where engagement work will be carried out in Wards where there are no job centres such as Beeston and Holbeck.

6.3 Councillor Gettings, Morley North Ward, has written in support of the applications on the basis that the proposals would enhance quality of life for local residents, and that additional off-site staff parking would allow customers to park nearer the Centre.

6.4 Councillor Varley and Councillor Elliott, Morley South Ward, have written in support of the proposals on the grounds that they would bring a much needed leisure facility and greater retail capacity, and provide employment opportunities for local people.

6.5 Councillor Gabriel and Councillor Ogilvie, Beeston and Holbeck Ward, have written in support of the applications on the basis that additional retail provision and new cinema would be positive for the area. They also welcome the creation of up to 1,000 jobs and are keen to ensure that as many of these as possible benefit local residents.

Morley Town Council

6.6 The Town Council Planning Committee have objected to the application for extensions to the centre on the following grounds:

- Out of centre development contrary to policy – potential impact on Leeds, Wakefield and Bradford city centres.
- Parking and highway safety:
 - Increased floorspace and reduced parking on site.
 - Decker car parking not brought forward.
 - Cinema will increase visitor numbers and cause longer-stay parking.
 - Although electronic car park signage now implemented, previous experience of tail-backs as customers drive round looking for spaces.
 - Increased traffic – northern roundabout appears to be at capacity. Problems for buses leaving the Centre.
- Safety concerns if mall is closed on an evening and customers have to walk around the Centre to bus station in the dark.
- Note that application is outline; some of buildings appear ‘boxy’. However, inclusion of large full height windows in Primark extension is more positive than blank curtain walling which makes up much of this elevation at present.
- Replacement of coach parking with car parking is welcomed, as is better segregation of delivery vehicles and pedestrians around Primark area.

6.7 The Town Council Planning Committee have advised that they support the provision of additional staff parking in isolation, to alleviate existing problems at peak times, but that the number of spaces proposed would not be sufficient to provide for or justify the increased floorspace now proposed. The following comments are made:

- Additional retail floorspace and new cinema would bring more visitors and long-stay parking, therefore need to increase, not just re-provide, spaces.
- Possibility of former mine shafts on site.
- Although in Green Belt, site is previously developed with a long industrial/commercial history. Removal of former industrial site and buildings, and increase in planting would be beneficial to Green Belt overall.
- Public footpaths around car park site should be safeguarded.
- Proposed pelican crossing is welcomed, but a second pelican should be provided across the main perimeter road.

6.8 In addition to the comments received from the Town Council Planning Committee, 3 individual Town Councillors have written in support of the proposals making the following comments:

- Cinema is a much-needed facility and this and additional restaurants are welcomed, as others in Leeds are difficult to access from this area.
- Additional retail capacity will allow Centre to remain competitive and vibrant – allowing Morley town centre to ‘piggyback’ on this success.
- Proposals will generate additional local employment opportunities.
- Staff car parking will improve an area which is an eyesore and detracts from landscaped setting of the Centre at present.
- Do not believe that the proposals will have a detrimental impact on Morley Town Centre – may attract shoppers to Morley.

Other public response

6.9 The application for the extensions to the centre and associated works has been advertised as a major application and as a departure by site notice, posted 26th April 2013, and by press notice, published 17th April 2013.

- 6.10 The application for the off-site car park has been advertised as a major development, a departure and as affecting a public right of way, by site notice posted 5th July 2013, and by press notice published 10th July 2013.
- 6.11 A letter of objection has been received from Hammerson (UK) Properties Plc, the Victoria Gate developer, raising the following concerns:
- Justification is misleading. It refers to the scheme being 'operator-led', providing extensions to existing Debenhams and Primark stores, but makes no reference to these operators in plans/supporting documents, and acknowledges no operators have been secured for remaining A1, restaurant and cinema floorspace. Without certainty on these matters, floorspace could be provided as standalone retail units and attract new retailers.
 - Application fails sequential test and does not consider the sequentially preferable Victoria Gate site.
 - Assessment does not consider impact on Phase 1 of the Victoria Gate scheme, which has now been approved, and the intended delivery of a cinema as part of Phase 2. Further development at White Rose will prejudice ability to attract new retailers/operators to Victoria Gate site.
 - Not in accordance with NPPF, UDP or emerging Core Strategy, this directs development to city centre.
- 6.12 A letter of objection has been received on behalf of John Lewis, raising the following concerns:
- Assumptions in sequential test rely on majority of A1 floorspace being provided as extensions to Primark and Debenhams, rather than as standalone floorspace.
 - At present, submitted documents make no reference to any commitment to restrict this floorspace or its occupiers. In the absence of any such agreement, additional space should be considered as separate floorspace and therefore fails the sequential test and would have a significant adverse impact on the city centre.
 - If the developer's assumptions are accepted by the Council, any permission must be subject to conditions restricting the size, occupiers and range of goods sold within these extensions, to ensure they're provided as extensions to existing stores and not as new retail units which would compete directly with the city centre.
- 6.13 A letter of objection has been received on behalf of several developers and investors in Bradford City Centre, including Westfield Bradford Ltd (Bradford Council's development partner for the Broadway scheme), The Leisure Fund Limited Partnership (the owner of the Leisure Exchange), Augur Investments Ltd and LaSalle Investment Management. The following concerns are raised:
- Development is out-of-centre, contrary to local and national planning policy.
 - The scheme fails the sequential test and will have a significant adverse impact on existing centres and on planned investment, including the Broadway scheme.
 - WRSC already draws trade from surrounding areas. Extensions and new cinema will increase its attraction and further impact on established centres.
 - No justification or identified need for further growth of WRSC
 - Concerns regarding aspects of methodology in applicants sequential and impact assessments.

- 6.14 Following the receipt of additional supplementary information from the applicant in response to the concerns raised, a further letter of objection has been received on behalf of these developers/investors, raising the following concerns:
- Development should be subject to correctly-applied sequential test and policy, including draft policy in Leeds' Core Strategy, which recognises that White Rose is not a centre and that developments there need to be subject to sequential test.
 - Sequentially preferable sites exist that could accommodate further retail floorspace and have a positive impact on existing centres. The effect of an extended WRSC would be negative.
 - Delivery of Broadway scheme is at a critical stage and there is serious risk to its timely implementation. Developer and Leeds' retail consultant both assume that Broadway scheme is fully committed and will go ahead, but this is incorrect.
 - No identified need for expanded WRSC.
 - Flaws in methodology of reports.
- 6.15 In the light of the concerns raised by neighbouring authorities and other developers, assurances have been sought from the applicants regarding the intentions of Primark and Debenhams to retain a presence in existing centres, and a response is currently awaited. They have also been consulted on the draft retail conditions but have yet to respond. Any further submission will be provided for Panel Members at the meeting.
- 6.16 Leeds Civic Trust have raised concerns regarding the potential impact of further out-of-centre retail and leisure development on existing centres, including nearby cities and smaller centres such as Morley. They raise the following points:
- Although proposed occupiers of large retail extensions intend to maintain city centre presences at the moment, this may not always be the case.
 - Large retail extensions could be subdivided without permission in future – need conditions to prevent this.
 - Only support expansion if retail and leisure sequential and impact assessments demonstrate no other sites and no detriment to existing centres.
 - Staff car park to be linked to extensions scheme as they rely on each other.
 - Clearing of scrap yard welcomed but car park is still Green Belt development and should be carefully assessed; taking into account need for measures to ensure it is used by staff.
 - High quality design and landscaping needed.
 - Improvements to public transport needed in the evening to serve cinema, and to pedestrian and cycle links to neighbouring employment sites and residential areas.
 - Need for safe route between cinema and bus station on an evening.
 - Further support to be given to businesses in Morley.
- 6.17 The MP for the area, Ed Balls MP, has written in support of the application, subject to adequate transport provision, and provided that a substantial portion of the new jobs created would go to young people and adults in the area, and that any expansion of the Centre is accompanied by an expansion of the support that the Centre gives to Morley town centre and the local economy.
- 6.18 Letters of support have been received from the following local organisations:

- 'Leeds2Success'
- The Hunslet Club
- Middleton St Mary's Primary School
- Beeston Action for Families
- Middleton Elderly Aid
- Cardinal Youth Club, Beeston
- Whiterose Residents Association
- Hamara Centre, Beeston
- Morley Chamber of Trade and Commerce
- Ahead Partnership
- Leeds, York and North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce

6.19 These groups have made the following comments in support of the applications:

- Will strengthen links with Morley town centre, and complement existing businesses in Morley which are not available at WRSC.
- Valuable contribution to regeneration of the locality.
- South Leeds lacks a cinema. Proposals will provide a more accessible and affordable option than travelling into city centre or other cinemas, and safe environment for families, young people and elderly residents.
- Employment opportunities for local residents in an area of high unemployment and skills levels below the national average.
- Will not impact on city centre, and will enhance Leeds city as a whole.

6.20 One letter of objection has been received from a local resident, which raises concerns that the proposals to increase car parking on adjacent land, in addition to the new buildings, would be contrary to UDP policies which "encourage development in locations that will reduce the need for travel".

7.0 CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES:

A) Application 13/01640/OT – Extensions to WRSC building and associated works

Statutory

Environment Agency

7.1 No objections, subject to conditions.

Yorkshire Water

7.2 No objections, subject to conditions.

Highways Agency

7.3 No objections, subject to the agreement of an acceptable Travel Plan and the securing of this by s106 agreement.

Highways

7.4 The applicants are not proposing any net change in car parking provision on the site, i.e. 4,697 parking spaces will be maintained. The applicants propose that through the implementation of a revised and strengthened travel plan that mode shift of 9% for staff travel (from 51% to 42% car driver) and 4% for customer travel (40% – 36% car driver) can be made over 5 years which would maintain parking demand slightly below/around above current levels and which the applicant believes can be accommodated within the existing parking numbers on the site.

- 7.5 In reviewing the figures, Highways Officers have considered the likelihood of increased average dwell times (because of the additional facilities on site) of customers from 99 to 111 minutes (12%) and assumed that the operational capacity of a car park to be between 90 and 95% of the total number of car parking spaces available. Taking these aspects into account, highways' analysis suggests that there is a risk that the operational capacity will be exceeded, especially at the weekends and on the run up to Christmas. With the Travel Plan successfully implemented the corresponding % capacity figures would appear to be in the range 92-97%.
- 7.6 Highways officers are supportive of the travel plan proposals to implement a car parking management plan which will include:
- Limiting the number of parking spaces available to staff to 950
 - Providing incentives to staff who car share
 - Providing public transport ticketing incentives
 - Introducing monitoring of car parks with enforcement provisions

In addition other travel plan measures include the provision of sustainable travel information packs

- 7.7 It is proposed that the Public Transport Developer contribution will be spent improving bus services to the site with the existing number 12 service which operates between Middleton, Belle Isle, Hunslet, Leeds and Harehills, terminating at Roundhay Park on a 10 minute headway being extended to the White Rose Centre. In addition some on site RTI and bus station improvements are proposed to improve facilities for users.
- 7.8 An improved footpath link between the Centre and the White Rose Office Park is also proposed which has the potential to reduce unnecessary car trips between the 2 sites.
- 7.9 Although these measures are welcomed and will assist in bringing the car parking demand (and consequential traffic movements) down as far as possible it is still considered that the applicants assessment is very optimistic and further interventions should be provided if the travel plan targets are not met and car traffic / car parking is greater than predicted. The applicant has now offered a pot of £400k towards further public transport interventions should the travel plan targets not be met.

Coal Authority

- 7.10 No objections, subject to conditions.

Non-statutory:

Public Transport

- 7.11 A contribution of £672,510 is sought, in accordance with the *Public Transport and Developer Contributions* SPD. Envisage that the contribution agreed would be spent on works to improve on-site facilities at the White Rose for public transport, improvements to bus services serving the centre, with particular emphases on improving connectivity to local labour markets and improving services on an evening in the light of the aspirations in the South Leeds Investment Strategy, and to off-site infrastructure which would be of benefit to those services and passengers going to the WRSC.

Travelwise

7.12 Comments have been made on the measures within the travel plan and the mode split targets, which have fed into the discussions relating to the highway impacts of the development which have taken place with highways.

Metro

7.13 No objections in principle. Proposed improvements to the bus station and pedestrian link to Office Park are welcomed. The installation of Real Time information displays within the centre has been secured through the previous permission in 2011, and is currently undergoing testing, after which it is proposed to install this in the Centre.

7.14 Discussions have been held between the developer, Metro and the bus operators in relation to potential improvements to services.

LCC Retail Consultant

7.15 The applicant has confirmed that the two main retail extensions are for the existing Debenhams and Primark stores, and their agreement to conditions restricting this floorspace to these two existing units and preventing its future subdivision. In the light of this, it is agreed that the Primark and Debenhams extensions cannot be assessed in isolation of their existing stores, and that for sequential test purposes any alternative sites should be capable of accommodating all of the floorspace in these stores (existing and proposed). A thorough sequential assessment has been carried out, and no sequentially preferable alternative sites are available, suitable and viable to meet the needs of the proposed development. The sequential test is therefore considered to be satisfied.

7.16 The impact assessment has been reviewed and it is agreed that there would be no significant impacts on the vitality and viability of existing centres from the retail or leisure components of the scheme. It is also agreed to be very unlikely that the proposed extensions would have any adverse effect on the Victoria Gate development or harm planned investments in any other centres. The impact test is considered to be satisfied.

7.17 In addition to their assessment of the details submitted by the applicant, the Council's retail consultant has also reviewed the representations received from neighbouring authorities and other investors/developers in Leeds and Bradford city centres, and has had regard to the findings of the recent Bradford and Wakefield retail studies. The specific details and conclusions in relation to the sequential and impact assessments and the implications for these existing centres are discussed in more detail below.

7.18 An assessment has also been carried out of the cumulative impact of the current proposals and the scheme at Thorpe Park which City Plans Panel Members recently resolved to approve. This concludes that the highest predicted cumulative impacts are in town centres in east Leeds, all of which arise from the Thorpe Park proposals rather than the WRSC scheme. The cumulative impact on Leeds city centre would be around 3% of its total turnover, 35% of which would arise from the WRSC scheme, however the study concludes that the level of trade diversion expected would have only a minimal effect on the vitality and viability of the city centre, and would largely relate to Primark, Debenhams and other clothes retailers, a sector which is considered sufficiently strong to compete. The study also concludes that any impact on Wakefield or Bradford city centres arises solely from the WRSC scheme, rather than the Thorpe Park development, the implications of which are discussed below, with the conclusion that the development would not have an adverse impact on the vitality or viability of either centre.

Employment Leeds

- 7.19 Discussions have been ongoing regarding the local employment and training proposals for the development, which would form part of the section 106.

Flood Risk Management

- 7.20 No objections, subject to conditions.

Environmental Health

- 7.21 No objection.

Contaminated Land

- 7.22 No objections, subject to conditions.

Licensing

- 7.23 No objections.

Public Rights of Way

- 7.24 A number of rights of way close to the site should remain open and available for use at all times. Opportunities for improvements to nearby rights of way, through S106 contributions/obligations, are identified.

West Yorkshire Police Architectural Liaison Officer

- 7.25 It is noted that the application is in outline rather than detailed form. Guidance is provided on various aspects of design and security which are intended to inform the detailed design of the scheme.

Air Quality Management

- 7.26 No objections. Electric vehicle charging points should be provided.

Environment Policy

- 7.27 No comments received.

Responses received from adjoining authorities

Kirklees Council

- 7.28 Together with Wakefield and Bradford Councils, Kirklees jointly commissioned an appraisal of the applicant's Economic Development Assessment (EDA), which raised a number of queries regarding the methodology and findings of the EDA. Kirklees raised concerns regarding the potential for the proposals to harm the vitality of their existing centres, and advised that they were unable to fully comment on the implications until the concerns raised in their appraisal had been addressed, and that therefore could not support the proposals as originally submitted.

- 7.29 Additional supplementary information has been received from the applicant in response to the concerns raised by Kirklees and other neighbouring authorities. A further appraisal has been commissioned by the authorities in the light of this, and on the basis of this, Kirklees have provided a further letter of representation, reiterating concerns that the information submitted is insufficient to determine the potential impact on centres within Kirklees. The following specific concerns are raised:

- If the impact figures are as low as suggested by the applicants and Leeds' retail consultant, it is not expected that there would be a notable impact on Huddersfield, Batley or Dewsbury. However, as the true impact cannot be ascertained from the information provided by the applicant to date, it is not

possible to conclude with certainty that there would be no significant adverse impact on these centres.

- Concerns regarding methodology of applicant's studies, including that it is not based on most up-to-date Kirklees retail study (but with acknowledgement that this study is not currently a publicly-available document)
- Particular concerns relating to Batley and Dewsbury, which are currently underperforming, and regarding potential impacts on planned investment in Huddersfield town centre.

7.30 Kirklees' most recent representation requests that, if the decision is taken to grant permission for the development, a condition is included restricting the amounts of additional retail floorspace in the Primark and Debenhams units.

Wakefield Council

7.31 Wakefield originally responded along the same lines as Kirklees and requested additional/revised details in the light of the queries raised in their jointly-commissioned appraisal of the EDA.

7.32 In response to additional supplementary information provided by the applicant in relation to the concerns raised by Wakefield and other neighbouring authorities, a further report has been commissioned by Wakefield and a further letter of representation has been received from them, reiterating concerns that the information provided is insufficient to determine the potential impact on the vitality of the centres within Wakefield. The following specific concerns are raised in their letter and report:

- Further clarification is sought regarding the use of existing storage areas to ensure these are not used for sales in the future as a result of the proposed changes.
- Potential impact on the attractiveness of refurbished and extended Ridings development in Wakefield city centre, and that this may end up trading below its optimum level.
- Concerns regarding aspects of the methodology of the applicant's studies.

7.33 As with the most recent representation from Kirklees, Wakefield have requested that, if the decision is taken to grant permission for the development, a condition is included restricting the amounts of additional retail floorspace in the Primark and Debenhams units.

Bradford Council

7.34 Objected to the application on the basis of the originally-submitted EDA on the grounds of the proposals' impact on Bradford city centre, other town centres in the Bradford District, and planned in-centre investments, including the Broadway scheme in Bradford city centre and a forthcoming shopping centre in Keighley. Various concerns raised regarding assumptions and conclusions in the applicant's EDA regarding the impacts of the proposals. In particular, they consider that the applicants underestimated the level of trade likely to be diverted from Bradford, Kirklees and Wakefield, and had not adequately addressed the implications of the proposals on planned investments and regeneration projects in existing centres.

7.35 Additional supplementary information was subsequently received from the agent in response to the objections raised by Bradford and other neighbouring authorities. In response to this additional information, Bradford has reiterated their strong objection to the application. Their specific concerns relate to the methodology of the

applicant's assessments, that these do not provide a sound base for the assessment of the potential impact on Bradford city centre and that there would be a significantly larger amount of trade diversion to the WRSC than stated, with potential impacts on the viability of the Broadway scheme in Bradford city centre as a result. These additional comments have been forwarded to the Council's retail consultant, and are addressed in the appraisal section below.

B) Application 13/02684/FU – Off-site staff car park

Statutory

Highways

7.36 The application should not be considered or determined in isolation from the outline application for extensions to the centre, and should be linked by condition or legal agreement in the event that both are to be approved. Concerns raised regarding retention of an emergency exit directly onto Dewsbury Road. Staff access from/onto Dewsbury Road is not acceptable and this should preferably be deleted from the proposals.

Environment Agency

7.37 No objections, subject to conditions.

Yorkshire Water

7.38 No objections, subject to conditions.

Highways Agency

7.39 No objection, subject to the provision of the off-site parking spaces being linked by condition or legal agreement to the development of the Centre.

Coal Authority

7.40 No objection, subject to conditions.

Non-Statutory

Travelwise

7.41 The development of the car park must be linked to the application for the shopping centre, and the travel plan should refer to this.

Public Rights of Way

7.42 Public footpaths adjacent to the site should be open and available for use at all times. Resurfacing of a footpath adjacent to the beck is requested as this is likely to have increased use.

Flood Risk Management

7.43 No objection, subject to conditions.

Contaminated Land

7.44 No objection, subject to conditions.

Air Quality Management

7.45 No objections. Electric vehicle charging points are suggested.

West Yorkshire Police Architectural Liaison Officer

7.46 Concerns raised that the site is remote and has little natural surveillance. Additional information requested regarding how access to the car park would be controlled, boundary treatments, CCTV coverage and lighting during hours of darkness, to

ensure that the security of the site is fully considered to ensure that staff using the car park feel safe doing so.

8.0 PLANNING POLICIES:

Development Plan

8.1 The development plan for Leeds consist of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan Review 2006 (UDP) and the Natural Resources and Waste Development Plan Document (DPD), adopted in January 2013.

8.2 The WRSC site is unallocated in the UDP Review. The following UDP policies are relevant to the consideration of the proposals for extensions to the centre (application 13/01640/OT):

S5 – Criteria for major out-of-centre retailing proposals

GP5 – General planning considerations

GP7 – Planning obligations

GP11 – Development must meet sustainable design principles

N12 – Urban design principles

N13 – Design of new buildings

N23 – Open space around built development

T2 – New development and highway safety

T2B – Submission of Transport Assessments

T2C – Requirement for Travel Plan

T2D – Public transport contributions

T5 – Access for pedestrians and cyclists

T6 – Provision for disabled people

T9 – Public transport

T24 – Parking

BD5 – New buildings, design and amenity

BD6 – Extensions and alterations to existing buildings

SP7 – Priority to be given to enhancement of the City Centre and town centres

8.3 With regard to proposals for major retail development outside defined centres, UDP policy S5 states that such development will not normally be permitted unless:

- i) The type of development cannot satisfactorily be accommodated within an existing S1 or S2 centre (or in the absence of an in-centre site, on a site adjacent and well related to an S2 centre);*
- ii) It can be demonstrated that by reason of the scale and type of retailing that the proposal does not undermine the vitality and viability of the city centre or any S2 centre or prejudice the local provision of essential needs daily shopping. It will normally be necessary for the applicant to carry out a formal study of impact on nearby centres and an assessment of the changes in travel patterns. Normally conditions will be imposed or a legal agreement will be required to ensure that the scale and type of retail development does not change its composition without the prior consent of the City Council;*
- iii) It addresses qualitative and/or quantitative deficiencies in shopping facilities;*
- iv) It is readily accessible to those without private transport, as well as those with cars, and results in a net reduction in the number and length of car journeys;*

v) *It does not entail the use of land designated for housing or key employment sites, or land located in the Green Belt or generally in the open countryside.*

8.4 The area of land to the south of the centre, where the off-site staff car park is proposed, is designated as Green Belt in the UDP. The northern part of the site, around Cotton Mill Beck, is within Flood Zone 3. The following UDP policies therefore relate to this aspect of the proposals (application 13/02684/FU):

GP5 – General planning considerations

N33 – Green Belt

N24 – Provision of landscaped buffer between development and open land

N49 – Nature conservation

T2 – Highways

LD1 – Landscaping

8.5 The Natural Resources and Waste Development Plan Document (DPD) was adopted in January 2013, and now forms part of the Development Plan. This document includes a number of policies relevant to the consideration of the applications, as follows:

MINERALS3 – Surface Coal resources

AIR1 – Management of Air Quality and inclusion of low emission measures

WATER1 – Water efficiency, including incorporation of sustainable drainage

WATER6 – Flood Risk Assessments

WATER7 – Surface water run-off

LAND1 – Contaminated land

LAND2 – Replacement tree planting

Draft Core Strategy

8.6 The draft Core Strategy sets out strategic level policies and vision to guide the delivery of development investment decisions and the overall future of the district. On 26th April 2013 the Council submitted the Publication Draft Core Strategy to the Secretary of State for examination and the examination has now taken place. Some weight can now be attached to the document and its contents recognising that the weight to be attached may be limited by outstanding representations made as part of the examination.

8.7 There are a number of key principles identified in the draft Core Strategy that are of relevance to the White Rose Centre's current proposals, including:

- The adoption of the centre-first approach to all uses considered to be main town centre uses and the requirement for sequential assessments and consideration to be given to the impact of any out-of centre retailing on the City Centre, other district centres and centres beyond Leeds' boundaries;
- The requirement for developers to enter into local labour and training agreements through planning obligations; and
- The requirement for new development to be accessible and adequately served by the existing highway network, by public transport, and with safe and secure access for pedestrians, cyclists and people with impaired mobility.

8.8 With regard to the development of out-of-centre retail schemes, the draft Core Strategy states that:

“Out of centre shopping retail parks do not perform the role of a city, town or local centre, as they lack the broad range of facilities and services which should be

available within such centres. Nevertheless major out-of-centre retailing is a feature of most regional economies, usually associated with the regional city. Such retail parks provide a valuable part of the wider retail offer and make a significant contribution to the local economy and as a source of employment. It is not in the interest of the local economy that such centres should be allowed to decline. In recognition of the important role of such retail parks it is considered that some element of the retail capacity identified in the Core Strategy could be acceptable in established retail park locations where this is clearly demonstrated not to compromise the centre-first approach, including consideration of the impact on centres beyond the Leeds boundary. Such proposals should be considered within the context of the delivery of major retail proposals in the City Centre (Trinity and East Gate (now Victoria Gate))."

- 8.9 The draft Core Strategy, at paragraphs 4.2.4 and 4.2.5, also makes reference to the development of a number of new city centre retail schemes within the city and the wider region/sub-region, including Trinity and Eastgate in Leeds, Trinity Walk in Wakefield and Westfield in Bradford, and to the need to have regard to the completion of these developments and their implications for retail trends within the region.

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 8.10 The following SPDs are relevant to the consideration of the application:

- Street Design Guide
- Public Transport and Developer Contributions
- Travel Plans
- Building for Tomorrow Today: Sustainable Design and Construction

Investment Strategy for South Leeds

- 8.11 Drawn up by Leeds City Council in partnership with key business interests in the south Leeds area and in consultation with local community groups, Ward Members, service providers and other stakeholders, the Investment Strategy for South Leeds aims to summarise the issues, opportunities and challenges facing South Leeds and the aspirations of these groups for the future. It is intended as a document identifying opportunities for actions to benefit the area and local residents, and to inform and influence future planning strategy and investment decisions and support the preparation of the Core Strategy and the subsequent site allocations document.
- 8.12 The Investment Strategy identifies high unemployment and poor access to services, facilities and job opportunities as being some of the main issues facing local people, who placed a high priority on the provision of better connections, particularly by public transport to areas such as Middleton, Belle Isle and Morley to provide better access to amenities and employment opportunities for these communities. This was supported by the private sector, which included enhanced and efficient public transport and skilled local labour amongst their key priorities.
- 8.13 Opportunities for improvements and actions in the south Leeds area identified within the strategy include:
- Exploiting the potential of White Rose/Millshaw as a public transport hub (including the possibility of a new rail halt) and shopping and leisure attraction with better facilities for young people and those working in the area.

- Concentrating services and facilities in accessible places (i.e. existing centres) and making them transport nodes.
- Improved public transport, including improvements to bus service frequency and routing to better connect residential areas, local centres and employment areas across south Leeds.
- Better connections east to west across the Dewsbury Road valley, especially for buses, walkers and cyclists, including an improved network of cycle/pedestrian routes.
- Major investments in skills, training and education, including local employment initiatives and programmes.

8.14 The strategy identifies a number of medium and long term investment opportunities for the area, which include the potential intensification of uses around the White Rose Centre and Office Park, including additional retail, office, leisure and evening economy uses. Whilst generally supported by the Council's Executive Board, it was noted by Executive Board Members in a report on the Strategy in July 2011 that this would be contrary to national planning policy, and any additional development at White Rose would therefore need to be considered in the context of securing further investment in the City Centre and in adjoining district centres such as Morley, Middleton and Beeston, and the impact on these centres, as well as others in the Leeds City Region, would need to be carefully assessed.

National Planning Policy Framework

8.15 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27th March 2012 and replaces previous Planning Policy Guidance/Statements in setting out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. One of the key principles at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of Sustainable Development.

8.16 The NPPF supports the centres first approach, and states that local planning authorities should 'recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and pursue policies to support their viability and vitality' (paragraph 23) and apply a sequential approach to the consideration of applications for town centre uses that are not in existing centres. It also advises that 'plans and decisions should ensure developments that generate significant movement are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised (paragraph 34) and that developments should be designed to 'give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, and have access to high quality public transport facilities' (paragraph 35). The Framework places great emphasis on the importance of good design as a key aspect of sustainable development.

9.0 MAIN ISSUES

A) Application 13/01640/OT – Extensions to WRSC and associated works

1. Principle of development
2. Transport
3. Local Employment and Training
4. Design and landscaping
5. Section 106
6. Residential amenity
7. Flood risk
8. Letters of representation

B) Application 13/02684/FU – Off-site car parking

1. Principle of development – Green Belt and viability

2. Transport
3. Visual amenity and landscaping
4. Crime and security
5. Nature conservation
6. Flood risk
7. Letters of representation

10.0 APPRAISAL

A) Application 13/01640/OT – Extensions to WRSC and associated works

10.1 Principle of development

10.1.1 The application seeks permission for the following (gross floor areas), all of which are defined as ‘town centre uses’ in the NPPF:

- 11,048m² A1 retail, distributed as follows:
 - Debenhams extension – 3,326m² retail floorspace
 - Primark – 3,994m² retail floorspace and 1,870m² ‘back of house’
 - 1,858m² small retail units adjacent to Debenhams
- 4,136m² D2 cinema use
- 2,322m² A3/A5 restaurant floorspace

10.1.2 UDP policy S5 sets the criteria for the consideration of applications for major retail development outside designated centres, including a requirement for applicants to demonstrate that the development cannot be accommodated within existing centres (sequential test) that it would not undermine the vitality or viability of these centres and that it would address deficiencies in facilities in the area. This is supported by policies in the NPPF, which requires applications for ‘town centre uses’ (including leisure developments as well as retail) in out-of-centre locations to be assessed against their impact on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in the centres within a defined catchment area and their impact on vitality and viability of centres for a number of years after the application is submitted.

10.1.3 The core strategy, which has recently undergone examination in public, also recognises the role of out-of-centre retailing within regional economies and regional cities, and that such developments can provide a valuable part of the wider retail offer and make a significant contribution to the local economy and as a source of employment. In the light of this, the core strategy states that ‘some element of the retail capacity identified in the Core Strategy could be acceptable in established retail park locations’, however it is clearly stated such additional out-of-centre development should only be supported where this is clearly demonstrated not to compromise the centres first approach. This includes consideration of the impact on centres beyond the Leeds boundary, as well as on the delivery of major retail proposals in Leeds City Centre.

10.1.4 Retail consultants have been employed by the applicant and Council to assess the potential impact of the proposed retail and leisure development on other centres in a defined catchment area as well as the City Centre. A catchment area was agreed that covers the central, southern and western parts of Leeds district, plus Bradford and Wakefield city centres and some parts of north east Kirklees, including Dewsbury and Batley. Sequential and impact tests have been carried out. The Council’s retail consultant has also taken into account and commented on the representations received from neighbouring authorities and Hammerson, and on behalf of John Lewis and investors in Bradford.

10.1.5 The submitted sequential and impact assessments were carried out on the basis that the majority of the A1 retail floorspace is proposed to be provided as extensions to existing large stores, namely Debenhams and Primark. Although not specifically named on the plans, the developers have confirmed that the floorspace is intended for these existing operators, and their agreement to a condition, in the event that permission is granted, restricting the provision of this floorspace to these two existing units and preventing its subdivision in the future. The application has therefore been assessed on this basis, and in the event that permission is granted for the scheme, it is recommended that this is subject to such a condition.

10.1.6 Retail

Sequential Assessment

10.1.7 The centres included in the sequential assessment are: Leeds, Wakefield and Bradford city centres and Crossgates, Halton, Morley, Dewsbury and Batley town centres.

10.1.8 As the majority of the retail floorspace is intended as extensions to existing large stores, it was agreed that the Primark and Debenhams extensions could not be assessed in isolation of their existing stores, and therefore for the purposes of the sequential test, any alternative sites should be capable of accommodating the floorspace of the entire unit as extended (including the existing floorspace as well as the proposed extension).

10.1.9 As the 3 smaller A1 units adjacent to the Debenhams extension are proposed in order to align this northern mall entrance with the extension and thus maintain its prominence, it was agreed that for the purposes of the sequential assessment, the floorspace of these units should be considered cumulatively rather than as individual units, as it is only in this way that they would achieve the critical mass necessary to maintain an attractive entrance to the centre.

10.1.10 Having assessed the proposals on this basis, the sequential test concludes that no sequentially preferable sites are available, suitable and viable to meet the needs of the proposed development: a conclusion agreed by the Council's retail consultant, and it is considered that the proposals are in accordance with part i) of UDP policy S5 and with NPPF guidance in this respect.

Impact Assessment

10.1.11 The impact assessment is based on comparison goods retailing across all of the retail floorspace within the scheme, and considers the cumulative impact of the development with recent and committed retail developments in city and town centres within the agreed catchment area, taking into account turnover, trade draw and trade diversion. This has been independently reviewed by the Council's retail consultant, who has applied slightly different assumptions to the applicants in terms of trade draw and clawback, in order to test the sensitivity of the assessment's conclusions. The impact on existing centres is summarised in the table below, which predicts the percentage of trade at existing centres/sites that would be lost to the proposed White Rose Centre retail provision.

10.1.12 Table 1: Trade diversion from existing centres/sites

	Trade diversion
Designated centres	
Leeds city centre	1.1%
Wakefield city centre	1.1%
Bradford city centre	0.6%
Morley town centre	0.9%
Crossgates town centre	0.3%
Halton town centre	0.0%
Batley town centre	0.3%
Dewsbury town centre	0.2%
Other non-designated centres	
Leeds retail warehouses	1.9%
Other retail parks (including Birstall retail park and Woodhall Centre, Bradford)	3.2%

Source: LCC Retail Consultant (England and Lyle), October 2013

- 10.1.13 In both the applicant's and the retail consultant's assessments the largest predicted trade diversions in percentage terms (excluding those from other out-of-centre developments) are from Leeds city centre and Wakefield city centre, with lower impacts on Morley town centre and Bradford city centre.
- 10.1.14 Leeds city centre is the largest centre in the catchment area with a strong regional role and attraction, and high levels of vitality and viability. The main competition would be with the Debenhams and Primark stores in the city centre and other clothes retailers, which are considered sufficiently strong to compete with the new floorspace at the WRSC. It is therefore considered that the amount of trade diversion likely to take place (1.1%) would have a minimal effect on the overall vitality and viability of the city centre.
- 10.1.15 The recently-opened Trinity scheme in Leeds city centre is operated by the same developers as the WRSC, and Primark have confirmed that they will continue to trade in both Trinity and the WRSC. It is considered very unlikely that the proposed extensions at the WRSC would have an adverse effect on the Trinity development or other recent investments in the city centre.
- 10.1.16 The Eastgate/Victoria Gate scheme is the major planned investment in Leeds city centre. Representations have been received from Hammerson, the developers of the scheme, and on behalf of John Lewis, the main anchor store, raising concerns that the proposed WRSC extensions would prejudice their scheme and their ability to secure occupiers, particularly without any certainty that the two large retail extensions would be restricted to the existing Debenhams and Primark stores. The applicants have confirmed that the majority of the floorspace would be constructed as extensions to these units, and their agreement to conditions to this effect, and having considered the application on this basis, the Council's retail consultant has advised that they do not consider that retailers would be deterred from going into the Victoria Gate scheme by extensions to these existing large stores at the WRSC, or that the planned investment at Victoria Gate would be prejudiced by the current proposals as a result. Subject to the recommended condition restricting the two main retail extensions to the existing large store units and preventing its future severance or subdivision, it is not therefore considered that the proposals would

have material implications for the delivery or attractiveness of the Victoria Gate development. CBRE (on behalf of John Lewis) have accepted the proposed retail conditions, and subject to their imposition, have withdrawn their objections.

Impact on centres in neighbouring authorities

- 10.1.17 Wakefield is a sub-regional city centre with a large catchment, which has been improved by recent major developments, including the Trinity Walk scheme and an extension to The Ridings. The city centre has existing Debenhams and Primark stores, and it is considered that these would be able to compete successfully with the extended units at the WRSC, and it is not considered that the anticipated level of trade diversion of around 1% would have an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of Wakefield city centre or these recent developments within it. Specific concerns have been raised regarding the potential impact of the development on the ability to secure operators for The Ridings refurbishment and extension in Wakefield. These further representations have been considered by the Council's retail consultant, who has confirmed that he is satisfied that the proposals would not have a significant adverse impact on existing or planned investment in Wakefield city centre, subject to the recommended conditions regarding floorspace.
- 10.1.18 Objections have been received on behalf of Bradford City Council and investors in the city regarding the impact of the proposed extensions on the city centre and on planned investments, including the planned Broadway scheme. Specific concerns have been raised regarding some aspects of the methodology in the applicant's assessments. In reviewing the submitted assessment, the Council's retail consultant has applied higher levels of trade draw from Bradford than those assumed by the applicants, in order to test the sensitivity of the assessment, and concludes that the trading impact of the proposals on Bradford city centre would still only be 0.6%. They have also agreed that the methodology used provides a robust analysis of the likely impacts of the development.
- 10.1.19 At present, Bradford has a Primark store but lacks some of the other more prominent national retailers, although it is considered that it will be strengthened by the forthcoming Broadway Centre development. Concerns that this scheme is not yet fully committed are noted, however, Debenhams are understood to have confirmed their intention to locate within the development. Although there is overlap between the catchment areas of Bradford city centre and the WRSC, the Council's retail consultant has advised that they consider there to be sufficient retail demand across the area as a whole to support the extensions to Debenhams and Primark at the WRSC as well as the existing Primark store and proposed new Debenhams store in Bradford. Furthermore, it is not considered that Debenhams would be prepared to open a new store in the Broadway scheme if the trade in that store would be harmed by an extension to the WRSC. In the light of this, and the very small trading impact of 0.6% on the city centre, it is considered that the proposed extensions at the WRSC would not have a harmful effect on the vitality or viability of Bradford city centre, and would not prejudice the planned investment in the Broadway scheme.
- 10.1.20 The impacts on all other centres, including designated centres within the Leeds district as well as Dewsbury and Batley in the north eastern part of Kirklees, would be very low, and it is not considered that the vitality and viability of these smaller centres would be adversely affected. The representations received from Kirklees have been considered by the Council's retail consultant, who has confirmed that he is satisfied that there would not be a significant adverse impact on these centres, or on future investment in Huddersfield town centre.

10.1.21 The areas at the bottom of the table, including retail warehouses within Leeds district and other retail parks within the catchment area, are not designated town centres and therefore do not benefit from protection under planning policy relating to town centre designations. The impact of the development on these retail parks is not a material planning consideration.

10.1.22 As well as a condition restricting the majority of the A1 floorspace to extensions to the existing Debenhams and Primark units as suggested above, it is also recommended that any permission is subject to a condition restricting the total floorspace areas for each use to those applied for, as the assessment of the proposals and their impact, and their acceptability, is based on these proposed floor areas. The provision of appropriate safeguards in relation to existing centres through the imposition of these conditions has been discussed with the three neighbouring authorities. Any further comments received will be reported verbally to Members at Plans Panel.

Cumulative Impact with Thorpe Park

10.1.23 In addition to his advice on the two individual schemes, the Council have commissioned their retail consultant to carry out an assessment of the cumulative impact of the WRSC development and the recently-approved Thorpe Park scheme. The highest predicted cumulative impacts are in town centres in east Leeds, all of which are confirmed as arising from the Thorpe Park proposals rather than the WRSC scheme. The cumulative impact on Leeds city centre would be around 3% of its total turnover, 35% of which would arise from the WRSC scheme, however it is still considered that the level of trade diversion expected would have only a minimal effect on the vitality and viability of the city centre. As discussed above, the main competition from the WRSC would be with Primark, Debenhams and other clothes retailers, a sector which is considered sufficiently strong to compete, and on this basis it is not considered that the proposals would have an adverse impact on the city centre or that retailers would be deterred from going into the Victoria Gate scheme by the extensions to these stores at the WRSC.

10.1.24 The Thorpe Park scheme is not predicted to have any significant impact on Wakefield or Bradford city centres, or on centres in Kirklees, therefore all of the predicted trade diversion from these centres would arise from the WRSC scheme. This impact has been assessed as part of the appraisal for the WRSC development as discussed above, with the conclusion that the development would not have an adverse impact on the vitality or viability of either centre.

10.1.25 Leisure

Sequential assessment

10.1.26 Sequential assessments relating to the proposed cinema floorspace and to the A3/A5 restaurant units (considered as ancillary to the main retail/leisure function rather than as a draw in themselves) have been carried out. These conclude that no sequentially preferable alternative sites are available, suitable and viable to meet the needs of the proposed development, which is agreed by the Council's retail consultant.

Impact assessment

10.1.27 The main cinema in Leeds city centre is the Vue complex in The Light. A second city centre cinema, the Everyman, has recently opened in the Trinity development, however this is of a smaller 'luxury' format with only 3 screens, rather than being directly comparable to the large multiplex development proposed at the WRSC. Out-of-centre within Leeds district there is a second Vue cinema on Kirkstall Road and

an Odeon close to the boundary with Bradford, and the smaller independent Cottage Road Cinema in Headingley and the Hyde Park Picture House. Outside Leeds are the Showcase at Junction 27 in Birstall, Cineworld at Xscape in Castleford, and an Odeon cinema at Gallacher Leisure Park in Bradford.

- 10.1.28 The impact assessment concludes that an out-of-centre cinema at the WRSC would compete mainly with other out-of-centre multiplexes, and serve latent demand for a cinema within the catchment area. As the Trinity development and the WRSC are both developments by Land Securities, it is considered very unlikely that a new multi-screen cinema would be proposed at the WRSC if it would prejudice investment in the Everyman in the city centre, and it is not considered that the scheme would impact on this recent development.
- 10.1.29 Hammerson, the developers of the Victoria Gate scheme, have raised concerns that the provision of a cinema at the WRSC would impact on Phase 2 of their scheme, which has permission for up to 11,000m² of D2 floorspace that Hammerson have advised is likely to include a cinema. However, at this stage no detailed planning application has been submitted for Phase 2 of the scheme or for specific uses within it (the outline approval permits D2 use but this is not restricted to any particular use within this class), and as Phase 1 is anticipated to commence trading from 2016, it is unlikely that Phase 2 would be operational until sometime after this, and after the WRSC scheme would be built, if approved. On the basis of the current situation and these timescales therefore, the Council's retail consultant considers that a possible cinema or other leisure scheme in the city centre would not be affected by the cinema and restaurant proposals at the WRSC.
- 10.1.30 In the light of the impact assessment's findings, it is accepted that the leisure component of the proposed development would not harm the vitality and viability of any centres or any planned investment in these centres.
- 10.1.31 Conditions
- 10.1.32 The consideration of the proposals and their impact on existing centres, including planned investment in these centres, has been based on the particular characteristics of the submitted scheme, specifically:
- The amount of floorspace proposed. This is in terms of both gross floorspace in relation to the size of the extensions, and net floorspace (for example a significant part of the Primark extension is proposed as storage/back-of-house facilities rather than retail floorspace).
 - The fact that the majority of this is proposed as extensions to existing large stores, Debenhams and Primark
 - That the floorspace proposed is for the sale of comparison, not convenience, goods.
 - The three smaller A1 units being proposed as a means of extending the north eastern mall entrance in line with the proposed Debenhams extension, maintaining the prominence of this entrance.
- 10.1.33 For the reasons discussed above, it is not considered that the proposed development would not harm the vitality and viability of existing centres in Leeds or neighbouring authorities, or have a detrimental impact on planned investment in these centres. However, these conclusions rest on the particular circumstances of the proposals, and the impact could be greater if, for example, the large retail extensions were to be provided separately to the existing stores which they are to extend, or if these areas were to be separated or subdivided into smaller units in the

future. In the light of this, it is recommended that conditions are attached to restrict the development to that which has been applied for. Any proposals for future changes would therefore require planning permission, allowing their impact on existing centres to be fully assessed. It is considered that such conditions are reasonable and necessary, and would achieve the protection of existing designated centres and planned investments in Leeds as well as in neighbouring districts. The suggested conditions are listed in Appendix 1 below, but it is proposed that these cover:

- Restricting the two large retail extensions to the Debenhams and Primark units
- Restricting the net retail floorspace in these units
- Preventing the subdivision of these units in future
- Restricting this floorspace to the sale of comparison goods only, with only ancillary sales of convenience items.
- Restricting size and number of units for the remaining retail floorspace and the range of goods sold from these units
- Restricting the size and number of units for the restaurant floorspace.

10.2 **Transport**

10.2.1 **Travel Plan**

10.2.2 The travel plan (TP) submitted with the application updates the WRSC's existing travel plan to reflect the development proposals. It aims to increase the number of staff and customers travelling to and from the site by public transport and, to a lesser extent walking and cycling, with a resultant reduction in the number of staff and customers travelling by car, thereby reducing the impact of the development in terms of parking demand and traffic generation. The updated travel plan sets ambitious targets for achieving this 'modal shift' from car-based travel to other means of transport, as summarised in the table below (2012 figures are taken from 2012 staff and consumer surveys):

10.2.3 Table 2: Travel Plan targets

		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Staff	Car	58%	56%	54%	52%	50%	48%	46%
	Bus	32%	33%	35%	36%	37%	39%	40%
	Walk/cycle	5%	6%	6%	7%	8%	8%	9%
	Other	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Customers	Car	80%	79%	77%	76%	75%	73%	72%
	Bus	16%	16%	17%	18%	19%	20%	21%
	Walk/cycle	3%	4%	5%	5%	6%	7%	7%
	Other	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Source: SKM Buchanan (developer's transport consultant) – Travel Plan April 2013

10.2.4 The TP identifies a series of measures and initiatives aimed at promoting alternative transport options and achieving the modal shift targets. These include:

- Improving information and awareness among staff and customers, including the development of a WRSC public transport timetable and route map, promoting the various alternative modes of travel on the website, providing

staff with travel information packs and the development of a 'travel office' within the Centre.

- Installation of real-time bus information (a contribution of £40,000 towards this was secured as part of the previous outline application in 2011, and this is likely to be implemented in the near future).
- Promotion of and involvement in national and local sustainable travel campaigns such as National Cycle Week.
- Developing a WRSC walking and cycle guide and ensuring routes are well signed and promoted.
- Encouraging retailers to set up 'cycle to work' schemes and promoting these where they are already in place.
- Investigating the feasibility and delivery of discounted 'WR Travel Cards' for employees, valid with all bus operators serving the Centre, and discount season ticket purchases such as the First Bus and MetroCard schemes.
- Further promotion of car sharing.
- Provision of four electric vehicle charging points as part of the development.

- 10.2.5 It is also proposed to provide a £400,000 'contingency fund' as part of the s106 which would be held by the Council and spent to fund mitigation measures in the event that the TP targets are not met.
- 10.2.6 To accompany the TP measures, a Car Park Management Plan (CPMP) for the Centre has recently been implemented, and is proposed to be extended and developed further in association with the proposed development, with a final version, once agreed, to be included in the Section 106. The aim of the Plan is to direct staff parking away from the most popular car parks (including to the proposed off-site car park), as well as gradually reducing the amount of staff car parking in conjunction with measures in the TP to reduce staff car use.
- 10.2.7 Since May 2013 staff have been asked to park in the three least popular car parks to ensure that the more popular areas remain available for customer use. The applicants have advised that 40% of staff have already complied with this request. From November 2013 a dedicated car park management team will be introduced, who will be responsible for implementing a system of recording of vehicle registration numbers, distributing of traceable leaflet-based warnings to staff who are repeatedly found to be parking in customer car parks, and the issuing of a parking charge notice after the 3rd warning, the proceeds of which are to be donated to charity.
- 10.2.8 The longer term plan for the Centre is to gradually reduce the number of staff parking spaces, with all dedicated staff parking eventually to be provided in the proposed car park, and 100 car sharing bays in the south western car park. In the meantime, car parks 7 and 8 (adjacent to the Sainsbury's petrol station in the south and the Office Park boundary in the north) would remain available for both staff and customers. These would be managed by the car park management team in the same way as discussed above.
- 10.2.9 The CPMP and TP are proposed to be supplemented by a series of other measures, including:
- Enhancements to the pedestrian route between the bus station and the White Rose Office Park, including improvements to surfacing and signage, and the installation of a lift to provide level access. This is proposed to link in with the existing pedestrian route within the Office Park, which is also to be

upgraded as part of a recently-approved development for a new office building at the site.

- Public transport contribution – The details of how this is currently intended to be used are discussed further below.
- The provision of junction capacity improvements at the Arlington Roundabout adjacent to the Centre, discussed below.
- Contribution towards the provision of a cycle route along part of the Dewsbury Road site frontage and the dedication of an area of land to allow for its provision.

10.2.10 The measures proposed in the TP and the CPMP have been reviewed by highways and Travelwise officers, and in general the approaches proposed are supported. However, concerns have been raised that the targets in the TP, particularly for customers, are very ambitious, and that if these were not achieved, the development could have significant implications in terms of traffic generation on surrounding roads and junctions, and on parking capacity within the site. Although mitigation measures have been suggested by the applicant if the targets are not met, concerns still remain regarding the feasibility and practicality of these and whether these would satisfactorily address any issues which may arise. These are discussed further below.

10.2.11 Public transport

10.2.12 In accordance with the *Public Transport and Developer Contributions* SPD, a contribution of £672,510 towards public transport improvements has been requested as part of the application. However, in the light of the improvements to the bus station and the pedestrian link to the office park which are proposed as part of the development, and the contribution of £47,500 which has been agreed towards the provision of a cycle route along the site frontage, a deduction to this sum may be agreed. Details are awaited in relation to the costings of the physical works on site before finalising this sum.

10.2.13 The developer has been in discussion with bus operators First and Arriva regarding how this might be spent on public transport improvement, with the possibility of combining this sum with the £106,975 contribution from the new office building at the Office Park. These discussions have focused on two main aims:

- Improving connectivity between the WRSC and areas of high unemployment in south Leeds, many of which have identified deficiencies in public transport provision, to allow residents to access the amenities and employment opportunities at the Centre.
- Improving public transport to the Centre in the evening, in connection with the proposed cinema.

10.2.14 The following improvements have been suggested by Metro, following discussions with the bus operators:

- To extend the 12 service which currently operates between Middleton, Belle Isle, Hunslet, Leeds, Harehills, terminating at Roundhay Park at a 10 minute headway. The extension would see the service continue from Middleton to the WRC. First estimate that this would need 2 additional buses to maintain the 10 minute headway or 1 bus to achieve a 20 minute headway. Their recommended cost for a bus is £150k per annum (gross).

- 223 service, originating in Heckmondwike and serving north Kirklees and Morley – it has been suggested that the hours of this service be extended into the evening to serve the proposed cinema.

These services would open up areas to the White Rose area for residents living in the Beeston/Belle Isle and Middleton areas.

10.2.15 The developer has also suggested that the SPD contribution could be spent on the proposed capacity improvements to the eastern arm of the Arlington roundabout, as discussed above. However as such works would primarily provide a traffic impact benefit rather than specifically relating to public transport infrastructure, it is not considered appropriate for these to be funded from the SPD contribution, and a separate Section 278 agreement would be required to cover these works.

10.2.16 Discussions regarding the practicalities and funding implications of these proposals are ongoing with Metro, however it is noted that if a 5 year funding period is assumed, it is unlikely to be possible to fund all of the proposed service improvements from this contribution. The final decision on how the monies are spend will lie with local planning authority, but it is likely that this would relate in full or in part to these proposals.

10.2.17 Traffic impact and parking

10.2.18 A traffic assessment (TA) has been submitted as part of the application which assesses the implications of the development in terms of parking requirements and traffic impact. The likely impacts in these respects have been considered against two scenarios:

- With travel plan – assumes that the staff and customer mode share targets in the table above are achieved.
- Without travel plan – assumes that the proposed mode share targets are not achieved and is based on existing modal splits.

Traffic Impact

10.2.19 The traffic generation for each of the proposed uses has been calculated separately, based on anticipated increases in visitor numbers and data from the TRICS database and taking into account the likelihood of linked trips and customer dwell times. The approaches and assumptions used in each case have been agreed with highways.

10.2.20 The traffic impact assessment for the development considers the traffic impact on the three major junctions closest to the Centre:

1. A653 Dewsbury Road/WRSC Access roundabout
2. A6110 Ring Road Beeston/WRSC Access/Millshaw Road/White Rose Office Park roundabout
3. A6110 Ring Road Beeston/Elland Road/Manor Mill Lane roundabout.

10.2.21 The submitted details confirm that, if the mode share targets for staff and customers in the travel plan are achieved, with the resultant reduction in car-based travel to and from the centre, there would be no material impact on any of these three junctions as a result of the development.

10.2.22 In the event that the travel plan targets are not achieved, the submitted details confirm that there still would be no material impact on junctions 1 and 3, which has

been accepted and confirmed by highways. However, the impact of the development on junction 2 – the Arlington roundabout – could be significant if these targets are not achieved or only partially achieved. The assessment shows that in the ‘without Travel Plan’ scenario, this roundabout would approach and, in some respect, exceed capacity at certain times, and would experience significant delay and queuing as a result of the development proposals during both the weekday afternoon peak and the Saturday peak.

- 10.2.23 Works to the Arlington roundabout are proposed as part of the scheme, comprising the widening of the A6110 (eastern arm) to a two lane approach, rather than a single lane as it is presently. Although this would considerably improve capacity and reduce congestion on approach to the roundabout from the east, it would not provide any mitigation for the potentially significant increases in congestion which could arise in the event that the anticipated reductions in car-based travel set out in the TP were not achieved. In the light of this and the concerns that that the targets in the travel plan are very ambitious, there are concerns that the mitigation measures proposed are sufficient at present to adequately mitigate against any adverse impacts which may arise in terms of traffic generation in the event that these targets are not met. The applicant has now offered a pot of £400k towards further public transport interventions should the travel plan targets not be met.
- 10.2.24 On the basis of the information submitted, the Highways Agency have advised that they are satisfied that the development would not have significant implications for the two motorway junctions closest to the Centre (M62 Junction 28 and M621 Junction 1), and that they have no objections, subject to the agreement of an acceptable travel plan by Council.

Parking

- 10.2.25 The applicants are not proposing any net change in car parking provision on the site, ie 4697 parking spaces will be maintained. The applicants propose that through the implementation of a revised and strengthened travel plan that mode shift of 9% for staff travel (from 51 to 42% car driver) and 4% for customer travel (40 – 36% car driver) can be made over 5 years which would maintain parking demand slightly below / around current levels and which the applicant believes can be accommodated within the existing parking numbers on the site. Based on data provided by the applicant, the car park is currently operating at 91% capacity (average of July and November data). Their figures suggest 86% capacity will be reached in July periods and 90% in November periods with a robust Travel Plan.
- 10.2.26 In reviewing the figures, Highways Officers have considered the likelihood of increased average dwell times (because of the additional facilities on site) of customers from 99 to 111 minutes (12%) and assumed that the operational capacity of a car park to be between 90 and 95% of the total number of car parking spaces available.
- 10.2.27 Taking these aspects into account, the highways officer’s analysis suggests that there is a risk that the operational capacity will be exceeded, especially at the weekends and on the run up to Christmas. With the Travel Plan successfully implemented the corresponding percentage capacity figures would appear to be in the range 92-97%.
- 10.2.28 Highways officers are therefore supportive of robust travel plan proposals to implement a car parking management plan which will include:
- Limiting the number of parking spaces available to staff to 950
 - Providing incentives to staff who car share

- Providing public transport ticketing incentives
- Introducing monitoring of car parks with enforcement provisions

In addition other travel plan measures include the provision of sustainable travel information packs.

- 10.2.29 It is proposed that the Public Transport Developer contribution will be spent improving bus services to the site with the existing 12 service which operates between Middleton, Belle Isle, Hunslet, Leeds and Harehills, terminating at Roundhay Park on a 10 minute headway being extended to the White Rose Centre. In addition some on site RTI and bus station improvements are proposed to improve facilities for users.
- 10.2.30 An improved footpath link between the Centre and the White Rose Office Park is also proposed which has the potential to reduce unnecessary car trips between the 2 sites.
- 10.2.31 Although these measures are welcomed and will assist in bringing the car parking demand (and consequential traffic movements) down as far as possible it is still considered that the applicants assessment is very optimistic and further interventions should be provided if the travel plan targets are not met and car traffic / car parking is greater than predicted. The applicant has now offered a pot of £400k towards further public transport interventions should the travel plan targets not be met.

Parking

- 10.2.31 As with the traffic generation impacts, it is accepted that, if the targets in the TP are achieved and the CPMP is successfully implemented, the level of parking proposed – i.e. the re-provision of any lost spaces but no additional parking provision – would be sufficient to accommodate the proposed development. However, in the ‘without travel plan’ scenario, the submitted details demonstrate that the car park would exceed both actual and operational capacity at certain times as a result of the additional development proposed.
- 10.2.32 In the light of the highway safety implications in the event that car parks were to regularly exceed capacity at peak times, it is important that a robust package of measures are secured as part of the TP which would provide appropriate mitigation in the event that the targets therein are not achieved. At present, highways have advised that the measures put forward are not sufficient to adequately address these concerns. Discussions with the developer’s highways consultant are ongoing in this respect.

Cycle and pedestrian infrastructure

- 10.2.33 In conjunction with the TP and other measures to improve accessibility and promote alternatives to car-based travel as part of the development, additional cycle parking is proposed at the Centre, and a contribution to a cycle route alongside Dewsbury Road to the front of the site is to be provided as part of the scheme, as has been requested by the Council’s cycling officers.
- 10.2.34 Public rights of way officers have drawn attention to a number of initiatives which are currently in progress in relation to the public footpaths around the railway line and on land to the south and west of the centre, some of which the applicants are already understood to be involved in. Officers have requested a contribution towards the improvement and resurfacing of parts of these routes as part of the development. Whilst this aspiration is noted, it is also noted that the developers

propose significant enhancements to the pedestrian footpath link between the Centre's bus station and the Office Park, including the installation of a lift to provide level access. In the light of this considerable investment, and as this links into other initiatives relating to improving public transport accessibility to and from the Centre and surrounding employment areas, including improvements to the bus station itself and a contribution to improving bus services, a further contribution to public footpaths elsewhere has not been sought in this instance, although the comments received have been referred to the developer for information.

10.3 Employment and Training

- 10.3.1 The South Leeds Investment Strategy identifies high unemployment and poor access to services, facilities and job opportunities as key issues facing South Leeds residents. The submitted details advise that the development would create around 1000 jobs (600 full time equivalent (FTE)), plus around 195 FTE construction jobs.
- 10.3.2 The WRSC has an existing record of working with local communities and involvement in initiatives aimed at developing skills and employment prospects in the south Leeds area. These include:
- Work with local schools including mentoring and awareness raising in relation to employment in the retail industry, and guidance on interview skills.
 - Developing relationships with organisations such as Employment Leeds, Leeds City College and Jobcentre Plus, and other employment, training and advice providers in south Leeds such as The Hunslet Club, South Leeds Youth Hub and the Hamara Centre in Beeston.
 - The centre's on-site learning and development centre, The Point, which provides employment and training support to local jobseekers, including training on skills to prepare candidates for the move into employment or career progression, such as application writing and interview coaching.
- 10.3.3 According to a recent survey of the centre, 68% of their employees live in the five nearest postcode areas. A detailed Employment Strategy has been submitted, providing details of how they propose to build on their existing work and partnerships to continue to promote and provide local employment and training in the south Leeds area.
- 10.3.4 The main target area for the initiatives in the Employment Strategy covers the following Wards: Ardsley and Robin Hood, Beeston and Holbeck, City and Hunslet, Middleton Park, Morley North and Morley South.
- 10.3.5 The development is expected to create in the region of 195 construction jobs, and the stated aim in the Employment Strategy is for at least 60% of the total construction workforce to be from within Leeds, with a particular focus on the 6 Wards identified above. Measures proposed include meet the buyer events, work experience opportunities, school/college site visits and apprenticeships. A series of targets for local employment and apprenticeships, formulated in discussion with Construction and Housing Yorkshire, are incorporated into the strategy.
- 10.3.6 Once completed and operational, the development will provide up to 1000 new jobs. The Employment Strategy sets a target for the Centre and its tenants (new and existing) to employ at least 40% of new employees from the 6 Wards identified above, and 70% from within Leeds.
- 10.3.7 Specific activities to promote local employment and training opportunities include:

- Providing information on new tenants to Employment Leeds to allow opportunities for local engagement and employment to be identified and promoted in partnership with other agencies.
- Voluntary charter for new and existing tenants including commitments to deliver local employment targets, monitor local employment data, develop apprenticeship schemes and support work experience, participate in recruitment open days and advertise new jobs to local people (including through Employment Leeds and their network of local organisations) before advertising elsewhere.
- Facilitating community outreach and recruitment events for each of the occupiers of the proposed extensions, including existing tenants.
- Continued use of The Point as a link between local people and training and employment opportunities at the Centre.
- Advertising new opportunities within the WRSC, on the Centre's website and through JobCentre Plus and The Point.
- Continued work with local schools including visits, work experience and mentoring.
- Ongoing work with community organisations including South Leeds Youth Hub, Hamara, Beeston Community Forum, Health for All and The Hunslet Club, including job events and promotions.
- Monitoring and evaluation of local employment statistics and initiatives.

10.3.8 The developer has committed to continuing work with Employment Leeds to identify and promote opportunities for pre-recruitment engagement with local communities, drawing on Employment Leeds' existing networks of local agencies in areas of employment need. The aim of such engagement is to identify training needs associated with forthcoming employment and to tailor local training delivery accordingly, providing local people with the confidence and skills to improve their chances of taking advantage of these opportunities.

10.3.9 Employment Leeds have reviewed the Employment Strategy and confirmed that this is acceptable. The final version of this document will therefore form part of the section 106 for the development.

10.3.10 In identifying priorities for improvements to public transport as part of the section 106 for the development, the main aspiration was to improve connectivity between the centre and those parts of south Leeds where unemployment levels are high and links with the Centre are identified to be poor at present. As discussed above, the intention at this stage is to provide improvements to the routing and frequency of the number 74 bus service, serving Middleton, Belle Isle, Beeston, Holbeck and Hunslet, including the diversion of the service into the WRSC's on-site bus station improving its efficiency in serving these areas and their connectivity to the WRSC.

10.4 Design and landscaping

10.4.1 The application has been submitted in outline and the detailed design of the scheme has not yet been finalised, however a series of parameter plans have been submitted, identifying the key principles which will inform the detailed design of the scheme. The submitted details confirm the actual floorspace for each extension, which would be restricted by condition, and the 'zone' within which each would be sited, but allow flexibility in how this floorspace is laid out within each of these areas, within minimum and maximum extents. The plans also identify building frontages and entrances, pedestrian routes around the site, and areas of public realm and

landscaping, including the creation of an enlarged pedestrianised public space to the west of the proposed cinema/restaurant extensions.

- 10.4.2 Detailed pre-application discussions took place with the applicant's architects and the Council's design team to identify the main design themes for the development which, in turn informed the submitted parameter plans.
- 10.4.3 The indicative scale and siting of the extensions are considered to be acceptable, and it is considered that proposals to incorporate of glazed shop fronts and clearly articulated entrances to the Debenhams and Primark extensions would be of significant benefit in enhancing active frontages to this side of the building. The general design approach is considered acceptable, and specific details regarding fenestration, materials etc can be considered in detail at reserved matters stage.
- 10.4.4 The development would involve the removal of a number of trees from the site. As well as creating a larger public space to the west of the centre and providing new landscaping associated with this, the indicative design drawings also include new planting and landscaping around the other extensions. The principles of this approach are considered to be acceptable, and a detailed landscaping scheme, including additional tree planting within the site to compensate for the removal of trees to facilitate the development, would form part of a subsequent reserved matters application.
- 10.4.5 Many trees in other parts of the Centre's car parks are in poor condition as a result of waterlogging, salting of the car parks in the winter, and trees outgrowing tree pits, and have been removed or identified for removal. The submitted details advise that trees which have had to be removed are to be replaced either with native planting in verges around the parking areas, or *in situ* with more suitable species as part of a long-term replanting strategy of pit replacement for all trees within the parking areas.
- 10.4.6 As suggested by Panel Members at pre-application stage, the applicants have agreed to provide a contribution of £25,000 towards landscaping enhancements on Dewsbury Road to the east of the site, outside the houses opposite the Centre. As well as providing a visual enhancement along this approach to the Centre, this would also provide some new planting in partial compensation for the removal of trees on site to facilitate the development, although additional planting would still be required on site as part of a detailed reserved matters application. The agreement to provide a contribution in this respect is considered to be reasonably related to the development and an appropriate means of addressing some of its impact and providing enhancements within its immediate vicinity, and to comply with the tests set out in the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations.

10.5 Section 106

- 10.5.1 Heads of terms for a Section 106 agreement have been submitted. This is proposed to cover the following obligations:
- Public transport contribution – As discussed above, in the light of the developer's agreement to provide physical improvements to public transport and related infrastructure on-site (through improvements to the on-site bus station and the pedestrian route from there to the Office Park), together with a separate contribution to the provision of cycle route along Dewsbury Road adjacent to the site, a reduced public transport contribution of how much has been agreed (together with the extension of the Nos 12 and 223 services described in paragraph 10.2.13 above).

- Contribution to provision of a cycle route along Dewsbury Road
- Travel plan and monitoring fee (£3000)
- Local employment and training scheme
- Contribution to landscape enhancements on Dewsbury Road opposite the site - £25,000
- Travel plan contingency fund - £400,000 to be paid to and held by Leeds City Council, and spent on improvements to Beeston Ring Road and the Arlington Roundabout adjacent to the site in the event that Travel Plan targets are not met. Details of how this would be spent
- Car park/staff parking management strategy
- Undertaking from the developer not to submit any further applications for development on the Green Belt land (off-site car park) to the south of the site for a minimum 5 year period.

10.5.2 The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 require that all matters to be resolved by a Section 106 planning obligation have to pass 3 statutory tests. The relevant tests are set out in regulation 122 of the Regulations, which state that a planning obligation may only constitute a reason for granting planning permission if it is:

- Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- Directly related to the development; and
- Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

10.5.3 The matters listed above have been considered against these tests and, for the reasons set out in more detail above and below, are considered to be necessary, directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

10.6 Residential amenity

10.6.1 Due to the nature of the uses proposed and the distance to existing residential properties there are no direct amenity concerns relating to the proposed development. Environmental health have raised no objections and the development is therefore considered acceptable in this respect.

10.7 Flood risk

10.7.1 Although eastern and southern parts of the wider site are within flood zones 2 and 3, these do not cover the areas where the extensions are proposed. A flood risk assessment (FRA) has been submitted as part of the application, and the Environment Agency and the Council's flood risk management section have raised no objections to the proposals, subject to conditions covering drainage and the implementation of measures in the FRA.

10.8 Letters of representation

10.8.1 All matters raised in the letters of representation which have been received in response to the outline application have been addressed in the foregoing appraisal.

B) Application 13/02684/FU – Off-site car parking

10.9 Principle of development – Green Belt and viability

10.9.1 Although the former car breaker's yard area benefits from a Lawful Use Certificate and other parts of the site have previously been developed, the site is in the Green Belt, and the policy tests in the UDP and the NPPF in relation to development in the Green Belt apply to the consideration of the scheme.

10.9.2 Car parking is not one of the categories of development which UDP policy N33 identifies as acceptable in the Green Belt, and it therefore constitutes 'inappropriate development'. The NPPF states that 'inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.' It goes on to advise that

when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt and that 'very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

10.9.3 The developer's supporting statement advises that, as the proposals relate to a previously developed site and no buildings are proposed – in fact buildings are proposed to be removed – the proposals would have no significant impact on the openness or purposes of the Green Belt and therefore are not inappropriate. Whilst this is noted, the application seeks to redevelop the land into a car park, a use which is not within the categories set out in policy N33, and which is therefore inappropriate, and has been held to be so in other cases.

10.9.4 In anticipation of this, the applicant advises that even if the proposals are deemed to be 'inappropriate', the following very special circumstances exist which would outweigh the harm to the Green Belt arising from the development:

- The proposals would be less intensive than the current lawful use, and would remove or derelict buildings, thus reducing the impact on openness.
- The proposals would improve the appearance of the site by removing temporary fencing, advert hoardings and areas of scrubland and damaged hardstanding, and providing additional landscaping and improved surfacing.
- The proposals will remove existing access points onto Dewsbury Road and limit all public access to the northern entrance, improving highway safety.
- The car parking will support the expansion of the WRSC, providing a large number of entry-level and part-time jobs that are accessible to local people most at risk of unemployment.
- The creation of on-site car parking decks as discussed pre-application would not be financially viable. If the proposals are to be delivered and the local employment benefits realised, this therefore relies on the provision of additional car parking on this site.

10.9.5 As inappropriate development, the creation of car parking can have an impact on openness arising from hardstanding, vehicles parked on the land and ancillary features such as lighting columns, signage etc. This is in addition to the visual implications of providing large car parks within areas of open land. In considering the implications of the development, it is necessary to have regard to the lawful and former uses of the site.

10.9.6 The fact that a development would 'tidy up' a site is not in itself considered to constitute very special circumstances. There are many sites in the Green Belt which have fallen into dereliction or disrepair, and where this argument, if accepted here,

could be repeated. However, in considering the particular circumstances of the application site, there are a number of matters to be weighed in the balance in considering the implications of the development for the Green Belt. The southern area benefits from a certificate of lawful use as a breakers yard, and there are existing areas of hardstanding and a building on site related to this use. If intensively used for this purpose, this could result in large numbers of scrap vehicles being stored/stacked on the site, with associated implications for both the visual character and the openness of the Green Belt. In this respect, the creation of car parking on this part of the site is unlikely to have a significantly greater impact in terms of openness and amenity than the existing lawful use.

- 10.9.7 The development would result in the removal of the building from the scrap yard site, as well as the larger office/warehouse building from the northern part of the site, providing some benefit in terms of openness in this respect. It is noted that much of the northern part of the site, around the former office building, is surfaced with hardstanding, and that whilst the eastern part of the site – formerly a petrol filling station – has been disused for a considerable period and has become overgrown, concealing the impacts of this former use to some extent, there is still some evidence of its use.
- 10.9.8 Whilst removing existing buildings from the site and providing some additional planting and landscaping, the proposed development would result in an increase in hardstanding overall across the site, removing trees from around the beck area to create the access, and would still have an impact on openness, which needs to be taken into consideration.
- 10.9.9 The developer has also put forward as ‘very special circumstances’ the fact that the proposed car park is required as an integral part of the proposed extensions to the WRSC itself, without which the proposed development, with its associated investment and employment, would not be brought forward, as it would be unviable for the developer to provide decked car parking on site as proposed pre-application. A viability statement has been provided by the applicant in support of this assertion, and has been independently assessed by consultants Sanderson Weatherall. Further details on the viability assessment are provided in an exempt appendix to this report, which will be provided to Members in advance of the Plans Panel meeting on 12th December. The information contained in this exempt appendix is confidential as it relates to the financial or business affairs of the applicant. It is considered that it is not in the public interest to disclose this information as it would be likely to prejudice the affairs of the applicant. It is therefore considered that the supplementary report should be treated as exempt under Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4 (3).
- 10.9.10 The viability statement concludes that a requirement to provide decked car parking within the existing WRSC site would render the scheme unviable, and that the ability to re-provide adequate parking whilst achieving a viable scheme relies on the creation of a surface car park for staff on this adjacent Green Belt site.
- 10.9.11 The proposed extensions to the WRSC would provide a significant investment in the south Leeds area, providing local employment opportunities, improved leisure facilities for the area and improvements to public transport infrastructure and connectivity. Furthermore, as discussed above, it is not considered that the development would have a harmful impact on the vitality and viability of existing centres, or on highway safety. The visual benefits which would arise from the removal of vacant and derelict buildings and enhancements to surfacing and landscaping on the proposed car park site are also noted. It is accepted that the

viability and delivery of the scheme relies on the provision of this proposed surface car parking, and in the light of the significant benefits that would arise from the proposals, and taking into account the lawful use and appearance of the site at present, and the visual enhancements proposed, it is considered on balance that these benefits are sufficient to outweigh any harm to the Green Belt which may arise from the inappropriate development and to constitute very special circumstances to justify its approval in this instance.

- 10.9.12 Concerns were raised pre-application that, even if it were to be accepted that very special circumstances did exist to justify the proposed development, the establishment of a WRSC car park on this land could lead to pressures for the further extension/encroachment of the shopping centre further to the south in the future, which would be contrary to GB policy and objectives, the applicants have advised that they would include a clause in s106 agreeing no further applications for development on this land for 5 years.

10.10 Transport

- 10.10.1 Highways have confirmed that the proposed layout and access arrangements for the off-site car park are acceptable. Concerns had been raised regarding the retention of an exit from the site onto Dewsbury Road, and highways had advised that all access to and from the site should be from proposed new entrance in the northern part of the site. However, it is understood that, whilst other accesses onto Dewsbury Road are proposed to be closed as part of the scheme, it is necessary to retain the exit in the south eastern corner of the site as an emergency exit in the event of flooding in the northern part of the site. In the light of this, the retention of this exit is considered acceptable, subject to conditions restricting its use to emergencies only and preventing its use as a general entrance/exit by staff, and requiring all other redundant accesses onto Dewsbury Road to be closed and reinstated. A condition is also recommended tying the implementation of the car park to that of the associated extensions to the shopping centre, and preventing its severance or separate use in the future. Subject to these conditions, highways and the Highways Agency have confirmed that this aspect of the proposals is acceptable.

10.11 Visual amenity and landscaping

- 10.11.1 The site is in the Green Belt and is surrounded by open land to the south and west. Whilst it is noted that parts of the site are previously developed and/or benefit from a lawful use certificate, the creation of car parking on this land would increase the amount of hardstanding in parts of the site, particularly where the access is proposed which, together with the associated structures such as lighting columns etc, and the parking of vehicles on this site, would have an impact on its character and appearance. However, this has to be weighed against the site's existing layout and character, which includes disused buildings, metal palisade fencing, overgrown vegetation and damaged hardstanding. A number of measures have been proposed which seek to mitigate and minimise the impact of the proposed development, and a detailed landscape impact assessment has been submitted in support of the application.
- 10.11.2 The measures proposed include the removal of hardstanding and vehicular access points along the Dewsbury Road site frontage and the creation of a landscaped embankment around 1.5m high, and the planting of trees along this raised area, which aims to screen views into the car park from vehicles travelling Dewsbury Road. The retention of a belt of trees immediately behind this initial section of

parking along the site frontage would serve to screen views of the remaining car parking areas in the rear part of the site, as the land rises away from Dewsbury Road. The removal of hardstanding and its replacement with soft landscaping along this frontage would be of benefit to its visual amenity, as would the demolition of the prominent disused office building and other buildings from the site.

10.11.3 A number of trees are proposed to be removed from the site to facilitate the creation of the access, the culvert across the beck, and the provision of a pedestrian route through the site. However, additional tree planting is proposed within the car parking areas. The details of this, together with the landscape impact assessment, have been considered by the landscape officer, who, following a number of minor revisions and clarifications on certain aspects of the scheme, has confirmed that the proposals are acceptable, subject to conditions relating to the provision of a detailed landscaping scheme, tree protection and retention which are recommended as part of any permission.

10.11.4 In accordance with UDP policy N24, it is proposed to retain the belts of planting which currently run along the western and southern boundaries of the scrap yard site, in order to retain a landscaped 'buffer' between the development and the adjacent open land and minimise its appearance within the landscape. A condition requiring this to be retained for the lifetime of the development is recommended.

10.12 Crime and security

10.12.1 As discussed above, a staff car park management strategy has recently commenced at the site, incorporating measures aimed at reducing staff car use and relocating staff parking to those car parks furthest from the Centre, leaving the more popular and accessible car parks available for customer use. As part of the current applications, this strategy has been updated and extended into a car park management strategy covering the whole of the extended site, including the proposed off-site staff car park. It is intended that, once finalised, the car park management strategy will form part of the Section 106 for the development.

10.12.2 Concerns were raised during pre-application discussions that staff might be discouraged from using the off-site car park because of its remoteness from the Centre and potential security and safety concerns for staff walking back to the car park late at night. In response to these concerns, further details of the management and security features to be employed in respect of this off-site car park, as an extension of those already in place in the Centre's existing car parks, and to encourage staff use of the off-site car park and therefore the effective operation of the car parks across the site.

10.12.3 Measures which are currently operational at the site, which are to be extended to the off-site car park, include:

- 24 hour on-site security provision
- External CTV – monitored 24 hours
- An on-site and dedicated police team

10.12.4 In addition, the following security features are proposed in relation to the off-site car park:

- Malls will remain open to allow staff working on an evening to walk through the Centre rather than having to walk around it from the cinema for example.

- Car park lighting across the wider site to be timed to remain on to cover all staff working times.
- Enhancements to the pedestrian route between the centre and the off-site car park, and the provision of lighting along this route, including low level lighting.
- The issuing of free panic attack alarms to staff.
- The installation of panic call points.
- Intercoms linked to the Centre's 24 hour manned Security Control Room.
- Increased security and police patrols of the area.
- CCTV

10.12.5 The measures in the updated car park management strategy for the wider site, including enforcement measures to manage staff parking, have been reviewed by highways and are considered to be acceptable. In the light of this, it is considered that the additional and extended security measures proposed in relation to the staff car park and the extended opening hours are reasonable. A condition is recommended requiring details of security measures, including lighting and CCTV locations within the car park and along the route to the centre, to be approved and implemented before it is brought into use.

10.13 Nature conservation

10.13.1 The off-site car park proposals involve the removal of an area of trees and vegetation within the site and works to culvert a section of Cotton Mill Beck in the northern part of the site to facilitate the provision of the vehicular access. Because of the implications of these works for protected species and biodiversity along this stretch of the beck, a habitat survey and a number of species-specific surveys have been provided as part of the application, covering bats, water voles and reptiles. These have been considered by the Environment Agency and the Council's nature conservation officer who, on the basis of the findings and recommendations therein, have advised that they have no objections, and that the proposals would not have significant implications for protected species.

10.13.2 Conditions are recommended restricting the times at which vegetation clearance can be carried out, and requiring the submission, approval and implementation of a biodiversity protection and enhancement plan, including enhancements to Cotton Mill Beck and improve bat foraging habitats across the site. Subject to these conditions, the application is considered acceptable in this respect.

10.14 Flood risk

10.14.1 The northern part of the site, alongside Cotton Mill Beck, is within Flood Zones 2 and 3. As part of the development it is proposed to culvert a section of the beck. A flood risk assessment (FRA) has been submitted as part of the application, which assesses the implications of the development and recommends appropriate mitigation measures. This has been reviewed by the Environment Agency and the Council's flood risk management section, who have confirmed that they have no objections to the proposals, subject to conditions requiring the measures within the FRA to be implemented and details of the drainage of the site to be approved before development commences. Subject to these conditions, the proposals are considered acceptable in this respect.

10.15 Letters of representation

10.15.1 All matters raised in the letters of representation which have been received in response to the application have been addressed in the foregoing appraisal.

11.0 CONCLUSION

- 11.1 The proposed expansion of the White Rose shopping centre to include extensions to the existing Primark and Debenhams stores, together with a new 12 screen cinema, has largely been welcomed by local Councillors and community groups. An extension of this type is supported by the Draft Core Strategy and the South Leeds Investment Study, subject to there being no adverse impacts on planned investment in either Leeds City Centre and Bradford City Centre. The retail assessments submitted with the applications, together with the City Council's own independent scrutiny of likely retail impacts, indicate that the proposed development will not have an adverse effect on either of these proposals, nor have significant adverse effects on centres in adjoining districts such as Wakefield, Calderdale and Kirklees.
- 11.2 A number of significant benefits will also result. These include the creation of approximately 1,000 new jobs (600 full time equivalent), together with 195 construction jobs. Past experience has indicated that the majority of these jobs will be taken by local residents. However, this application is accompanied by a comprehensive training and employment plan which focusses on recruiting staff from nearby areas of high unemployment such as Middleton, Belle Isle, Beeston and Holbeck. This employment offer is reinforced by proposals to extend bus services to these areas providing, for the first time, a direct link to the White Rose area (including the office park) through the week with early morning and late evening services. These bus services relate to the labour market catchment area and will also improve the likelihood of local people in these areas of high unemployment gaining much needed jobs.
- 11.3 The impact of the new development, together with the additional parking deemed and loss of spaces give rise to a need for replacement parking. Initial proposals for deck parking had been superseded by proposals to develop in the Green Belt. This has led to an exceptional circumstances case based on financial viability. A private and confidential report will be circulated separately containing an independent assessment of the case. Should Members be mindful to support this application, conditions are recommended to link the provision of the new car park to increase in development and the loss of existing spaces, as well as to prevent any other form of development on the land for 5 years following completion.
- 11.4 These significant benefits are to some extent offset by the transportation implications of the proposed development. These include improved bus services, provision of on-site footpath routes and off-site cycle ways which will also help to reduce the dependency to travel to the centre by car by employees and visitors. However, the car park is already operating close to its maximum capacity and it will only be if the Travel Plan is fully effective or any subsequent problems that may arise are ameliorated by the £400,000 contingency sum that any adverse effects on the highway networks will be averted. It is important therefore that Members consider this application in the round and balance levels of support, retail impact and the creation of jobs, together with increased employment opportunities for residents in areas of high unemployment against the potential adverse transportation impacts. It is in this context that the application is, on balance, recommended for approval.

12.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1 Application files: 13/01640/OT and 13/02684/FU.
Investment Strategy for South Leeds and Executive Board report 27th July 2011.

12.2 For application 13/1640/OT notice has been served on:

- White Rose (Leeds) Ltd
- Evans Property Group
- Debenhams Retail Plc
- Greggs Plc
- The Entertainer (Amersham) Ltd
- Primark Stores Ltd
- Marks and Spencer
- HMV(UK) Ltd (in administration)
- Bank Fashion Ltd
- TFS Stores Ltd
- Northern Powergrid (Yorkshire) Plc
- Millies Cookies Ltd
- Thorntons Plc
- Yorkshire Electricity Group Plc
- Costa Ltd
- Northern Gas Networks Ltd

12.3 For application 13/02684/FU notice has been served on:

- White Rose (Leeds) Ltd
- Land Securities Plc
- Evans Property Group

Appendix 1 – Minutes of Pre-application Plans Panel presentation – 25th October 2012

Plans, graphics and photographs were displayed at the meeting. A Members site visit had taken place earlier in the day.

The Panel considered a report of the Chief Planning Officer on pre-application proposals for extensions to the White Rose Centre (WRC) and received a presentation on behalf of the applicants.

Members were informed this would be a significant scheme and because of the location of the site, there could also be implications for neighbouring authorities.

There would be 3 main elements to the scheme, these being an extension to the Primark unit, an extension to the Debenhams unit and the creation of a multiplex cinema, with up to 12 screens, with additional retail and catering outlets, with all of the development taking place on existing car parking on site.

To mitigate against the loss of 670 car parking spaces, raised areas of decked car parking would be provided, with a total loss of car parking spaces being 170. Members were informed that discussions were ongoing in respect of the design of the decked car parking. Members were informed that there was an extant permission for 2,000 sqm of additional retail space at the centre.

In terms of the main issues the following were highlighted:

- that the site was not within a designated centre and that the developer was in the process of drawing up a sequential test and assessment which would be considered as part of the formal application
- the proposed three additional A1 units could have an impact on smaller centres, including Morley
- that the two main extensions were to retail units which also had a presence in the city centre and that assurances that the proposals would not have an adverse effect on vitality and viability of existing centres
- the introduction of the cinema use and whether this would generate new trips to the centre in its own right
- public transport issues, with a public transport hub being proposed
- the possibility of the creation of a pedestrian link from the adjacent White Rose Office Park to the bus station
- design issues, particularly in respect of the Primark extension and the decked parking
- S106 issues relating to public transport contributions; greenspace and local employment

The Panel then received a presentation on behalf of the developers and received the following information:

- that the application would give the opportunity to invest further in an existing asset; that the WRC was seen as a community asset with much support being given to local events and community projects, as well as providing a source for local employment, with over 40% of those employed at the WRC living locally
- the proposals would help address some of the problems of deprivation which existed around the site and that the leisure and retail jobs which would be created through the scheme would be of benefit to local residents. Aligned to this, the WRC had established good links with a range of organisations involved in providing education and employment and that the proposals could create up to 1,000 new jobs

- enhanced public space; additional planting and the inclusion of a public square to create a new, active space at the WRC
- improved public transport facilities would also be provided
- in terms of the proposed extension to the Debenhams store, the aim was to extend the architectural language of the existing unit and create active frontages and double height glazing
- public consultation had commenced, with currently 100 hours of this having taken place to date, which also included meeting with Morley Town Council's planning committee. Of the 643 responses received so far, 90% of these were favourable towards the proposals. If permission was granted, the aim was to start on site in Spring 2014, with completion being in Autumn 2015

The Panel raised the following matters:

- the extent of the consultation exercise in view of one Panel Member residing in the area but being previously unaware of the proposals
- the impact of the proposals on traffic, particularly on Dewsbury Road and whether a residents' parking scheme could be considered by the developer to alleviate the problems on streets close to the site and that the cinema use would lead to trips at different times, especially evenings and weekends when public transport was usually less frequent and this would need to be addressed
- staff car parking and that additional spaces were likely to be required
- the information to be provided as part of the formal planning application and whether historical analysis would be included to show how the WRC in its 15 years of trading had competed with the city centre;
- whether by extending in the WRC, Primark and Debenhams would close in Leeds city centre; whether existing centres were trading to capacity;
- the need for Members to be informed about the sustainability of the proposals and some context for the scale of the proposed extensions
- the creation of jobs and for this commitment to be a strong one and for local people in the area to have a job guarantee.

In response to the points raised, a representative of the developer provided the following details:

- that further letter drops about the proposals were to be undertaken
- that it was not felt that on-street parking from visitors to the WRC occurred but that management would work with residents to ensure no such problems occurred
- that discussions were ongoing with Metro about the public transport proposals
- that a car sharing scheme for staff had been tried with limited success but that an agreement had been reached with the White Rose Office Park to join their scheme to encourage more car sharing. In terms of visitors to the centre, the new vehicle messaging system was proving successful and that it was felt that the proposals would result in people coming to the centre and staying longer
- that Land Securities as well as being a joint developer of the WRC were also developing the Trinity Scheme in the city centre and this would not be the case if it was felt that both schemes were not viable. In addition, two major retailers had signed up for Trinity and the WRC and that Primark and Debenhams had indicated that the proposed extensions would not impact on their stores in Leeds, Wakefield and Bradford
- that a detailed base of evidence on shopping habits would support the planning application
- that the comments made about the provision of a job guarantee would be considered

In line with the agreed protocol for speaking at pre-application presentations, the Panel then heard from Councillor Finnigan who stated that he had also discussed the scheme with

Councillor Congreve, whose ward bordered that of the site and would be providing comments on behalf of the Beeston and Holbeck Ward Members also.

Members were informed that there were concerns about the proposals in respect of highways, with Dewsbury Road already experiencing significant congestion from traffic going to the WRC and that reassurances were needed that there would be no worsening of the current situation if the scheme was granted planning permission. There was also concern about parking provision and that sufficient parking would be needed to satisfy the development for visitors and staff. Public transport also had to be improved with a better drop off/pick up point being provided and a link established to the office park.

In terms of the S106 agreement, there should be a continuation of the work which had been done by the WRC with local primary and high schools and that the monitoring of the S106 should be undertaken by Learning and Skills. In respect of greenspace, there was the opportunity to improve an area on the Ring Road, opposite the WRC which would help enhance the immediate setting of the centre.

Regarding possible competition, Members were informed that the WRC had not competed but in fact had complemented Morley Town Centre and that it was not felt that the proposals would have a detrimental impact on other surrounding centres. Furthermore there would be the creation of much needed employment and in terms of working closely with the local community, the WRC had a track record of doing this.

It was noted that several Members had left the meeting and in relation to the issues raised in the report for specific comment by Panel, the following brief comments were provided:

- that in respect of the proposal to increase the level of retail floorspace and introduce a new cinema use at the WRC, there was some support, although there were issues about the levels of car parking to be provided and the design of the decked parking. It was noted however that no reference in the presentation had been made to the fundamental point that the proposals were against planning policy. Furthermore, it was likely that neighbouring centres and adjoining local authorities were likely to have views on the proposals.
- to note the assurances given by the developer on behalf of Debenhams and Primark about their commitment to retaining a presence in Leeds and the centres of neighbouring authorities
- that the provision of an additional cinema would provide more choice
- that there was some support for the three smaller A1 units which were proposed
- regarding highways issues, to note the concerns which had been raised and that there was a need for detailed information on this, particularly the impact of traffic to the cinema and that an analysis of this should include when Leeds United had an evening home game
- to note Members comments about the information which should be provided when the application was to be determined
- to note the concerns about the design of the decked parking; that insufficient detail had been provided about the design of the cinema to enable a provisional view to be formed; that the issue of improvements to an area of greenspace on the Ring Road should be considered.

Members noted the comment given by the developer's representative that this could be done as part of the proposed quality landscaping scheme

- the proposals for improvements to the bus stops at the centre were welcomed
- regarding the content of the S106 agreement, this should also address linkages and that there should be specific work done around Middleton, Beeston and Morley; to note that Jobs and Skills would monitor the local employment matters but the need for the agreement to be

enforced rigorously, if that became necessary

- to note that further consultation would be taking place and to a wider area

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

Appendix 2 – Minutes of Position Statement to Plans Panel – 1st August 2013

Further to minute 24 of the City Plans Panel meeting held on 25th October 2012, where Panel received a pre-application presentation on proposals for the expansion of the White Rose Shopping Centre, Members considered a further report of the Chief Planning Officer on the proposals together with details of the current position on a related application for the demolition of existing buildings and re-development of an area of land sited in the Green Belt, for use as a staff car park for the White Rose Centre (WRC)

Plans, photographs and graphics were displayed at the meeting. Members had visited the site prior to the meeting.

Officers outlined the proposals for the WRC which were to extend two existing stores, create three new retail units, a multi-screen cinema – up to 12 screens, restaurant units and remove an existing coach park and provide an area of public open space.

Whilst the proposals would result in the loss of 670 car parking spaces, the related application was to provide a staff car park and would involve the demolition of the existing buildings and improvements to the appearance of the site, whilst providing improvements to highway safety through the access arrangements proposed.

Members were informed of the main issues which were still being considered in respect of the proposals, these being:

- retail and out of centre issues; that a Sequential Test and Impact Analysis had been submitted and were being considered by the Council's independent retail consult
- that objections from the three neighbouring Local Authorities had been received regarding the impact of the proposals on their centres
- that the cumulative impact of the proposals had to be considered in relation to the proposals for introducing retail uses at Thorpe Park and the impact both of these could have – if approved – on planned development in the City Centre, particularly the Victoria Gate development and the proposals for the second phase of that scheme. The Chief Planning Officer stated that the retail impact assessment would be at the core when it came to assess these proposals in view of the other retail schemes coming forward
- whether extensions to existing stores had a different impact as opposed to the creation of new, separate stores and the introduction of a new offer into the WRC
- highways issues; the proposals for some improvements to the bus station but the need to consider public transport links to the WRC from further afield and for longer hours; the loss of a high level of parking, with no re-provision for shoppers, with the approach being to create an off-site staff car park; the need to make this attractive for staff to use and to understand what further measures would be proposed in the event that the parking proposals were not as successful as envisaged. There would also be a need to link the two proposals by condition to ensure neither element could be brought forward in isolation
- pedestrian access and the need for improved links, particularly from the adjacent office park
- job creation, with around 1,000 new jobs being created through the construction and post-construction phases; that discussions were ongoing with Employment Leeds and the need to ensure local employment was achieved
- that as a Green Belt site the proposal for the staff car park was inappropriate development and therefore the applicant had to demonstrate that 'very special circumstances' existed to outweigh the intrinsic harm to the Green Belt caused by the proposals
- the design of the car park and the need to ensure safety of staff using it, especially late at night

A small number of representations had been received at this stage and whilst there was support for the local jobs and investment the expansion would create, concerns at its impact and the need for the proper tests and analysis to be carried out had been raised.

Members discussed the proposals and commented on the following matters:

- the anticipated increase in customers if the scheme was approved and where the expected additional shoppers would be coming from
- the use of public transport and whether people would be likely to use this to travel to the centre, particularly to undertake major shopping
- how it could be ensured that staff were not using the more remote parts of the WRC car park, rather than a dedicated staff car park further away
- whether the proposals would lead to car park charges being implemented at the WRC. Members were informed that there were no proposals to introduce a charge for parking at the WRC
- the need to ensure that, if approved, there was sufficient and safe staff parking during the construction of the WRC extensions, with the possibility of the car park being ready in place before this. On this matter, the Chief Planning Officer stated that whilst it was right for this to be considered, there was currently surplus car parking spaces at the WRC; that the staff car park was proposed on a Green Belt site, which required careful consideration and that it was important to ensure there was no overspill, whilst at the same time ensuring that not too much car parking was being provided too early
- the need for adequate lighting of the staff car park, with Officers advising that there would be a condition requiring the submission of a car park management plan to enable these concerns to be addressed
- that the proposals were for a massive expansion of the floorspace and that the onus was on the developers to show that this would not have an impact, with the view being that this had not been done
- that the concerns of Morley Town Council Planning Committee had not been addressed and that the developer's approach had been to mount a publicity exercise and garner support for the scheme
- the likelihood that the application could be called in by the Secretary of State
- that the proposed leisure uses would bring in more people who would then stay for longer, thereby having a greater impact on the car parks in the WRC
- that at certain times, i.e. weekends, Bank Holidays and close to Christmas, the existing car parks at the centre were full, with queuing traffic then building up on to Dewsbury Road and that even taking into account the creation of a staff car park, the overall level of customer parking at the centre would be less
- the number of buses which ran past the site per hour and that a system could be introduced to enable staff to travel by bus from the more remote car park and access the WRC via the bus station
- that improved evening bus services to the WRC were needed as there were gaps in provision from areas of the city in relative close proximity to the site
- that the siting of a staff car park on a Green Belt site was not too great a concern in this case as the area was particularly degraded, although there were mixed views on the loss of an area of Green Belt
- that the creation of a car park in isolation might help increase trade at the WRC as during peak times, many shoppers drove away from the centre when it was clear that the car parks were full
- that the development of the WRC had led to the creation of traffic problems in the local area, particularly on the Ring Road to the site and on the A653 and at what point Highways Officers would feel that capacity had been reached
- that the previous proposals for decked car parking should be reintroduced

- that there was a need for the developers to do more to encourage public transport use to the WRC
- the importance of ensuring local employment and to welcome the training initiatives the proposals would bring.

The Chief Planning Officer stated that the traffic impact of the proposals would be very carefully assessed and that the jobs; investment; expansion of bus services and training would go hand in hand and was the kernel of the whole judgement of the application.

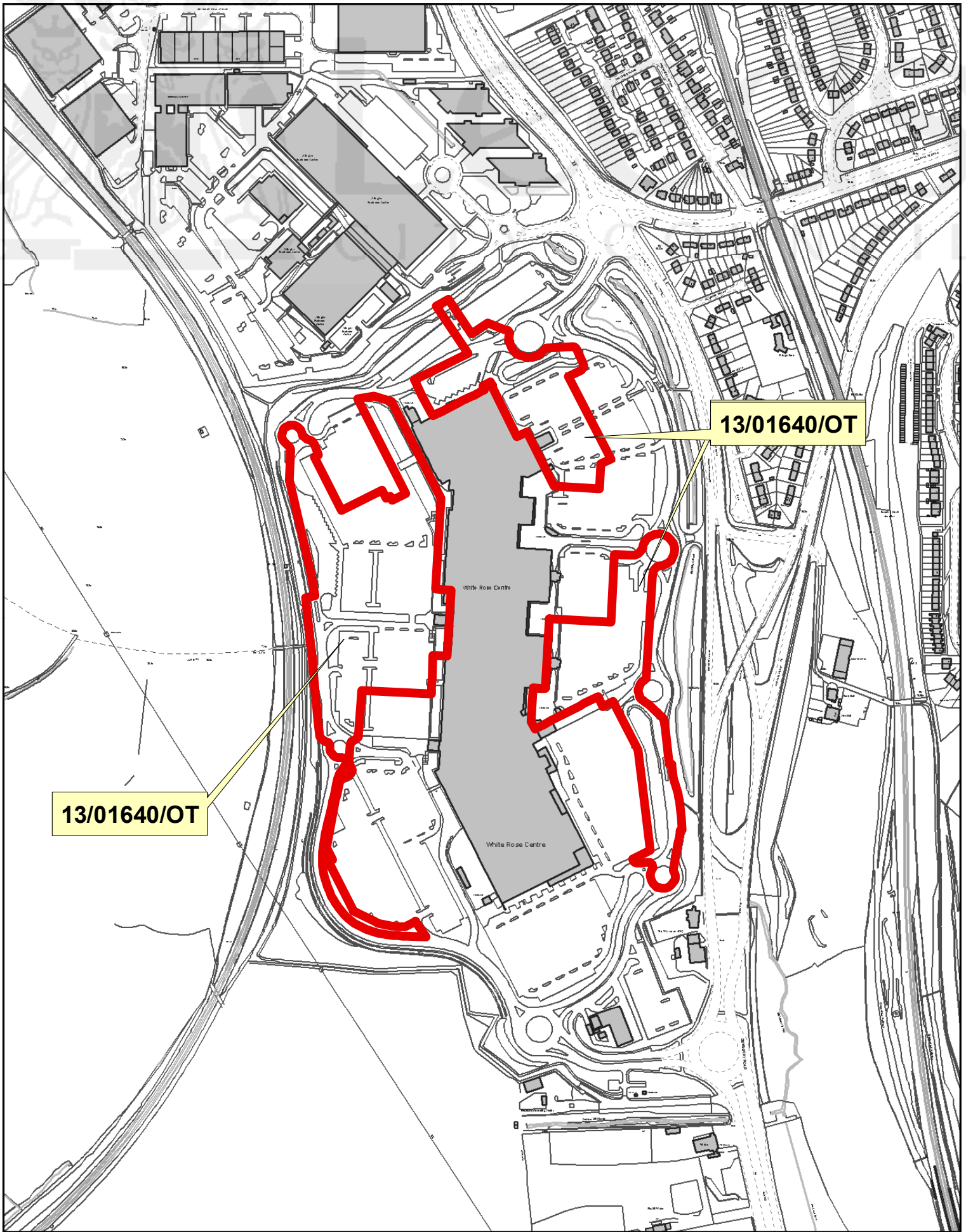
In response to the specific points raised in the report, the Panel provided the following comments:

- regarding the proposal to increase the level of floorspace and introduce a new cinema use at the WRC, the view was expressed that currently the case for this had not been proved, whereas some Members felt this might be acceptable but it would be subject to further retail assessments to understand the impacts and the benefits
- regarding assurances to be sought from the developers in terms of ensuring that the principal elements of the retail proposals were delivered as extensions to the existing large anchor stores and preventing their subdivision in the future in order to protect planned investment in Leeds City Centre and adjoining local authorities, Members required a legal agreement for this
- that more research was needed to satisfy Members there would be no further significant impact on the local highway network as a result of the development, particularly at peak periods, e.g. Christmas and on match days
- that an integrated approach to the development of the bus station to serve the WRC and the neighbouring office park, together with associated improvements to infrastructure and footpath links was supported, however the difficulties this posed when dealing with a de-regulated bus industry had to be realised and there was a need to fully understand the interventions proposed to drive modal changes. Members also supported the provision of improved bus services to local labour market areas with high levels of unemployment, as identified in the South Leeds Investment Strategy, such as Middleton Park, Beeston and Holbeck and Morley and that Churwell also needed to be included
- that the request for further detailed and specific information as set out above was supported and the need for an overall review of all bus services which ran past and through the WRC was called for
- the information and proposals for cyclists should be incorporated
- that it was too early to comment on the parameter plans
- that high quality design was required
- to note the planning obligations set out in the report and that a car sharing plan could be considered as part of the S106 Agreement
- that the developers should provide a financial viability statement in support of their case as to why a decked car park solution was not possible and why Green Belt land needed to be used
- that in terms of restricting the use of the land for car parking to prevent its further development in the future, that this must be tied down tightly to ensure there were no loopholes
- that the provision of a management plan for the car park and pedestrian routes to the centre, setting out measures to encourage its use by staff and ensure their safety and security in using these areas must be provided
- regarding the impact of the proposed car park on the character of the area, Members welcomed the retention of the hedgerows and trees
- in terms of security of the car park and for staff using this area late at night, that more assurances were needed of the measures to be put in place and that consideration should

be given to allowing staff to walk through the WRC after it closed to the public, rather than requiring them to walk outside late at night

- to bear in mind that it would be the cinema and restaurants which would be the most important in terms of generating additional traffic and leading to extra pressure on car parking

RESOLVED - To note the report and the comments now made

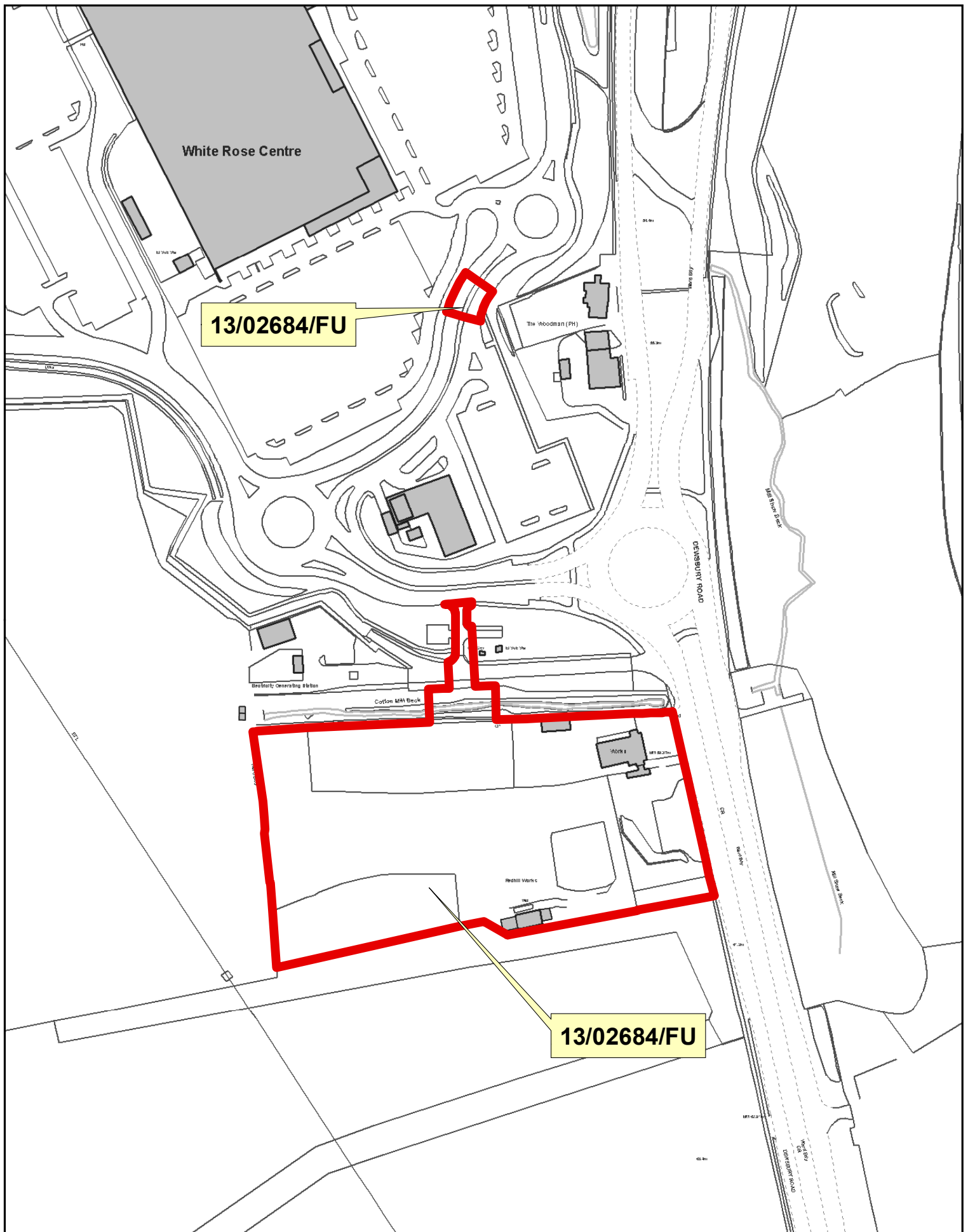


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