



## Report of the Chief Planning Officer

### CITY PLANS PANEL

Date: 16<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2014

**PROPOSAL FOR TWO NEW STUDENT ACCOMMODATION BUILDINGS, RETAIL UNIT AND PUBLIC SPACE, CITY CAMPUS, CALVERLEY STREET, LEEDS (13/04584/FU)**

**APPLICANT**

Downing Property Services

**DATE VALID**

30<sup>th</sup> September 2013

**TARGET DATE**

16<sup>th</sup> January 2014

**Electoral Wards Affected:**

City and Hunslet

Yes

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

**RECOMMENDATION : DEFER and DELEGATE to the Chief Planning Officer for approval subject to the specified conditions (and any others which he might consider appropriate) and also the completion of a Section 106 agreement to include the following obligations; restriction to student occupation; public transport contribution (£24,380); travel plan and monitoring fee (£500); accessibility to public areas; employment and training initiatives; and Section 106 management fee (£750). In the circumstances where the Section 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.**

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This application seeks planning permission for the construction of two new student accommodation buildings on vacant land at Leeds Metropolitan University's City Campus. The buildings would contain a total of 465 bedspaces and a small retail unit. The buildings would sit in new hard and soft landscaped spaces. The current proposal represents the third and final phase of the developer's masterplan for the site. The University of Leeds has already leased the first and second phases of the student accommodation development.

- 1.2 A pre-application presentation of the scheme was presented to City Plans Panel on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2013. The minutes of that meeting are attached as Appendix 1. On 4<sup>th</sup> September 2013 Executive Board approved an amendment to the draft Core Strategy Policy H6B intended to manage the delivery of new student housing. One of the criteria of the policy is that applicants demonstrate a need for additional student accommodation or that there is a formal agreement with a university/higher education institution for the supply of the bedspaces. The planning application was accompanied by a detailed report with regard to the need for student accommodation, in addition to a letter from the University of Leeds confirming that it has agreed draft heads of terms to lease the third phase of student accommodation.
- 1.3 The planning application was subsequently considered by City Plans Panel on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2013. The minutes of that meeting are attached as Appendix 2. The application was deferred to allow officers to provide a further report in respect of the need for the student accommodation; the character of the space between the two proposed buildings; the design of the buildings, in particular the gable ends; and regarding the impact of wind on the development. This report addresses those issues.
- 1.4 Following City Plans Panel the applicant's student accommodation report has been independently reviewed by Re'new, the authors of the August 2013 Student Housing Demand and Supply report. The review concludes that the applicant's report presents an evidenced case for the proposed development offering a constructive and needed addition to the stock of purpose-built student accommodation in the city. Re'new state that the location of the development will mean that demand problems are unlikely to materialise and that it could certainly attract international and post-graduate students, as well as new and returning students. Re'new state that this appears to be a good scheme which positively satisfies revised policy H6 and should be supported.
- 1.5 Revised proposals have been submitted for the area between the two new buildings which create an acceptable balance between hard and soft landscaping in this space. Additional information has been prepared relating to the proposed external materials intended to be used which help to demonstrate the approach is an appropriate response to the context of the development. Finally, the Council's wind advisor has reviewed the findings of the submitted wind report. It is confirmed that the development will redistribute winds around the site leading to some windier areas and some more comfortable areas. Mitigation, potentially including some structural screens to supplement suitably designed landscaping, is recommended to ensure that the wind environment is comfortable for the intended use.
- 1.6 Suggested conditions are attached at Appendix 3.

## **2.0 APPRAISAL**

### **2.1 Principle of the proposed student accommodation**

- 2.1.1 Members will recall that the site is located in the Education Quarter in the Unitary Development Plan Review where one of the objectives is to encourage extra student housing. The proposal also accords with criteria in Policy H15A which seeks to promote student housing developments in areas outside the Area of Housing Mix.

2.1.2 The applicant provided a Student Accommodation Demand Analysis Report (Jones Lang Lasalle - JLL) in response to revised Policy H6B of the draft Core Strategy which was adopted in September 2013 for Development Control purposes. The JLL report has been independently reviewed by Re'new, the authors of the August 2013 Student Housing Demand and Supply report.

2.1.3 Re'new considered the evidence in the JLL report in relation to the criteria set out in revised Policy H6B. The criteria, Re'new's response (R) and, where appropriate, officer's supplementary comments are set out below:

1. To demonstrate that there is a need for additional student accommodation or that it has a formal accommodation agreement with a university/higher education institution for the supply of bed-spaces.

R The applicant notes the 3.1% growth in applications seen for students looking to study from September 2013 and reasonably predicts an increase in student numbers of a similar extent for future years. It also refers to series of measures the Government has introduced including increasing the number of government funded places available; allowing universities to recruit unlimited numbers of students with AAB grades; relaxing penalties for over recruitment of students. Recently the Governments Autumn Statement included the intention to remove the 'cap' on students from 2015

The applicant has demonstrated that there is strong demand for purpose built student accommodation (PBSA) in the vicinity of the proposed scheme, with schemes in the area achieving strong levels of occupancy. The applicant also notes the changing preferences of students, whom are increasingly seeking purpose built student accommodation as opposed to shared housing as identified in the research conducted by Unipol/re'new in 2012.

The applicant notes that the first two phases of the development are subject to occupational agreements with the University of Leeds and discussions have been held in respect of the proposed development and on the additional requirement for student accommodation bed spaces for the 2013/14 academic year identified by the University.

The applicant also refers to the research undertaken by Renew for Unipol which found "*a clear preference from students for housing options closer to the universities and the city centre, and accordingly this may translate into increasing demand from returning students for purpose built accommodation.*"

2.1.3.1 The criteria recognises that new provision will be accepted where need is demonstrated or if there is a formal agreement with a university for the supply of bedspaces. Reports from UCAS, Unipol and the universities recognise that historic trends in demand for places from students had resumed in 2013-2014 following the blip in 2012-2013. According to Unipol, the larger, purpose built student accommodation developments were full from late August 2013 leading to students returning to the off-street market.

Whilst there has been a growth in purpose-built student accommodation in the city in recent years the addition of the proposed development to this stock would see Leeds remaining in a median position in the UK in terms of the proportion of purpose-built student accommodation. Although there is already planning permission in place for an additional 2,384 bedspaces, not all of these are likely to be constructed and many are not as well located to the two university campuses.

The University of Leeds has confirmed that they expect rooms at the development to be popular with students who have requested that the University allocate greater numbers of high quality rooms at the site which is conveniently located both to the campus and the city centre.

In terms of the second element of the criteria the University of Leeds has confirmed that they already have formal lease agreement on the first two phases of the development and that they have agreed draft heads of terms with the developer for the proposed accommodation which they will seek to formalise in the event that planning permission is granted.

2. To avoid the loss of existing housing suitable for family occupation

R The applicant makes the case that the proposed development would aim to target postgraduate and international students and is a purpose built scheme.

2.1.3.2 The development may help to release pressure on the conventional family housing stock in the Headingley/Hyde Park areas.

3. To avoid excessive concentrations of student accommodation (in a single development or in combination with existing accommodation) which would undermine the balance and wellbeing of communities.

R The scheme is based close to the University campuses well away from residential communities.

2.1.3.3 The development, when combined with existing and approved accommodation, would result in 1677 student bedspaces in the area. As noted by Re'new the location in the Education Quarter, close to the city centre is such that the concentration would not directly affect established residential communities. It forms a logical extension to the existing student accommodation schemes already constructed by Downing. It is possible that the additional managed student accommodation would help to release Houses in Multiple Occupation in the Area of Housing Mix back to the open market, thereby providing the opportunity to help to rebalance those communities.

4. To avoid locations which are not easily accessible to the Universities by foot or public transport or which would generate excessive footfall through residential areas which may lead to detrimental impacts on residential amenity.

R The proposed scheme is located on the Leeds Metropolitan University City Campus and would avoid any excessive footfall through residential areas.

2.1.3.4 The development is also well located with regard to public transport routes if students were travelling beyond the adjacent university campus areas.

5. To ensure new accommodation is of an appropriate quality and size in terms of environmental health standards

R The scheme will provide 77 studio flats and 388 en-suite rooms within cluster flats. The applicant has identified that the market for studio flats in the city is relatively limited by comparison to the provision of en-suite rooms within cluster flats.

As the target market for the proposed scheme is both the postgraduate and international student markets, it is likely that both postgraduates student and international students will be attracted to PBSA and in particular studio flats.

The developer already has two schemes connected to the scheme in question and has also developed the Broadcasting Tower scheme which achieves consistently high levels of occupancy. The scheme appears to offer accommodation of a good standard and size, in line with the known needs and requirements of students today.

2.1.3.5 The nature of the accommodation involving a mix of cluster flats and studios evolved following discussions with the University of Leeds. The University has confirmed that the discussions have been based on rooms being larger than standard rooms and offering a level of quality at a premium to those in earlier phases.

6. *To ensure new accommodation can be physically adapted for occupation by average sized households*

R Given the proposed scheme's location adjacent to the main campuses of the University of Leeds and Leeds Metropolitan University, it is highly unlikely that there would not be sufficient demand from students for the scheme.

Although the proposed scheme would be designed for a student end user, the applicant correctly states that there is no particular reason as to why the scheme could not be retrofitted and converted to residential apartments.

2.1.4 In summary, Re'new consider that the applicant has presented a well-structured and evidenced case for the proposed development offering a constructive and needed addition to the stock of purpose built student accommodation in the city. Its location next to the Universities will mean that demand problems are unlikely to materialise and it could certainly attract international and post graduate students, as well as new and returning students. Its location also means that there will be no impact at all on the balance within neighbouring communities and would avoid creating any excessive foot journeys through residential areas. It appears to be of a good design in keeping with other developments progressed by the developer and also offers studio accommodation which could be attractive to international and post graduate students. The scheme could also with some limited alteration be let to young working households should demand from students not materialise or diminish. Finally, Re'new conclude that the development appears to be a good scheme which positively satisfies the criteria set out in Policy H6 and should be supported.

2.1.5 Whilst student numbers are subject to future change the proposed development performs well with regard to criteria both within the Unitary Development Plan and also the revised Core Strategy Policy H6B. The development is ideally located on a brownfield site in a sustainable location close to both the universities and also facilities within the city centre. The purpose built facilities would provide good quality accommodation in a well-managed environment. The principle of the development is therefore considered to be acceptable.

## 2.2 Character of the space

- 2.2.1 The proposed development provides two new buildings positioned perpendicular to the Calverley and Portland Buildings. Extensive spaces are proposed between the proposed buildings (18.8 metres), to the existing building to the north-west (19.5 metres) and to the approved hotel to the south (28 metres). The central space was identified as being primarily a hard-surfaced area whereas the two areas on the flanks of the development were shown to be primarily areas of soft landscaping. The buildings would be set back from the Calverley Street frontage beyond hard landscaped areas principally designed to provide access to the development and areas of soft landscaping enabling retention of existing roadside trees.
- 2.2.2 Following Members' comments regarding the space between the two buildings additional and extended areas of planting, along with seating, has been introduced. Initially, the area contained 103 square metres of soft landscaping and 3 trees. The revised proposal provides 318 square metres of soft landscaping and 8 trees. This provides a significantly greener appearance, especially when viewed from Calverley Street, whilst respecting the need for hard landscaping to provide pedestrian routes and amenity in and around the building entrances and seating areas. The arrangement represents a suitable balance between hard and soft landscaping across the site.
- 2.2.3 12 trees of varying size and condition need to be removed to enable the development. At the same time the scheme seeks to retain groups of trees along the Calverley Street frontage. The landscape scheme identifies 41 new trees, to include but not limited to *Betula Jacquemontii* (Himalyan birch), *Carpinus betulus* (Hornbeam), *Pyrus calleryana* (Ornamental pear), *Acer freemanii* (Freeman's maple) and *Amelanchier lamarckii* (Juneberry). Two new hedge lines are proposed to the east and west of the new buildings. The species would include *Fagus sylvatica* (beech). Extensive areas of ornamental planting are also identified throughout open areas of the site in linear arrangements helping to soften hard areas and to punctuate soft areas to create a striking landscape throughout the year.

## 2.3 Form and appearance of the buildings

- 2.3.1 The proposed scheme follows the theme of previous developments on the City Campus established in the original masterplan. The first stage recognised the quality of the original 1960's modernist buildings and refurbished these to enable a contemporary use for student accommodation. The second tower phase followed on with an up to date interpretation of the original 'modernist' buildings.
- 2.3.2 The proposed third phase continues to have regard to the existing Modernist context by providing a clear but contemporary interpretation of the Modernist style. Each of the buildings provides a slightly different solution to avoid visual uniformity and provides the clean and sharp aesthetic associated with the technological aesthetic of Modernism. This latest proposal to finish the campus development solidly respects the existing Modernist context and will complete a harmonious ensemble of modern designs for the new buildings on the campus. The architect and developer both have a reputation for delivering high quality development.
- 2.3.3 Whilst it is considered that the Modernist approach is appropriate in the context of the campus buildings the relationship with its wider setting, including views from the City Centre conservation area past the Civic Hall, remain important. Officers concur with the views of Leeds Civic Trust and English Heritage that the modelling,

proportions and materiality of the development would sit well as a backdrop to the Civic Hall and would create a calm backdrop in views along Calverley Street.

- 2.3.4 The external façade is clad in pre-cast panels articulated by an expressed frame. The exposed faces of the reconstituted stone panels would be finished to differing degrees of aggregate exposure. The frame and gable end panels would have a light acid etched finish providing a lightly textured stone appearance. The infill panels, set back from the frame, would have a lightly exposed aggregate finish which would have a slightly more textured finish and assist in expressing the frame. Similar materials have been used elsewhere in the city, including 1 City Square, Leeds.
- 2.3.5 The solid ends of the gables would finish flush with the building's grid. Joint positions between the panels would follow the logical expression of the building's grid, emphasised at floor levels with joints subdividing the equal width panels. The panels are then to be supplemented with a series of vertical slots cast into the face of the panels providing a further decorative layer in a similar way to the coloured fins on the Phase I development subtly add to the façade.
- 2.3.6 In summary, it is considered that the form and appearance of the buildings have a rigorous contextual reference provided by nearby buildings. Their construction, alongside the new public realm, will enhance the appearance of both the campus and in the wider locality.

## 2.4 Wind issues

- 2.4.1 The application was supported by a quantitative assessment of the impact of the proposed development upon local wind patterns. The emphasis of the analysis is on the comfort and safety of pedestrians using public areas, including an assessment of gust effects for the prevailing wind direction. Although the buildings are set back from Calverley Street the report also considers the impact on adjacent road traffic.
- 2.4.2 The Council sought an independent review and verification of the submitted wind report. The review confirms that the development will redistribute winds around the site leading to some windier areas and some more comfortable areas. Within the site the overall day-to-day experience of the space between the two new buildings could be unsuitable for sitting / standing without appropriate mitigation. Mitigation, potentially including some structural screens to supplement the soft landscaping, is recommended to ensure that these areas of the site are more comfortable for the intended users. Similarly, the space to the west of the site is also unlikely to be suitable for sitting / standing on a day-to-day basis. However, this sloping soft-landscaped space is primarily designed for its visual benefits rather than as an active public space. The landscape design incorporates hedging and areas of ornamental planting to help control its use. At the same time, the space could also be used by people on calmer days. Mitigation is also recommended along the route north of the existing square to the north-west to assist with the effect of wind redistributed by the development. Full details of the necessary wind mitigation measures will be secured by condition and will need to be agreed with the Council prior to the development commencing on site.
- 2.4.3 As noted, the redistribution of winds also generates improvements to existing conditions creating some more comfortable areas. In particular, wind speeds on Portland Way between the Portland Building and the Civic Hall will reduce due to the proposed buildings providing significant shelter from prevailing winds.

## 2.5 Conclusion

- 2.5.1 The proposed development represents the final element of the masterplan for the site. The proposed uses perform well with regard to criteria within both the Unitary Development Plan and also revised Core Strategy Policy H6B. The proposed building design and materials provide an appropriate response to the site's context. The scale, form and appearance of spaces between buildings will provide visually interesting areas with a suitable balance of hard and soft landscaping across the site. The wind conditions around the site can be mitigated through hard and soft landscaping such that they are suitable for the intended use.
- 2.5.2 The development would deliver redevelopment and major investment in a significant brownfield site in a highly sustainable location. The proposals accord with the Development Plan and other material planning guidance. Accordingly, the application is recommended for approval subject to appropriate conditions and the completion of a section 106 agreement.





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## Report of the Chief Planning Officer

### CITY PLANS PANEL

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> NOVEMBER 2013

**PROPOSAL FOR TWO NEW STUDENT ACCOMMODATION BUILDINGS, RETAIL UNIT AND PUBLIC SPACE, CITY CAMPUS, CALVERLEY STREET, LEEDS (13/04584/FU)**

**APPLICANT**

Downing Property Services

**DATE VALID**

30<sup>th</sup> September 2013

**TARGET DATE**

30<sup>th</sup> December 2013

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**Electoral Wards Affected:**

City and Hunslet

Yes

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

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**RECOMMENDATION : DEFER and DELEGATE to the Chief Planning Officer for approval subject to the satisfactory resolution of the issues identified in the report and subject to the specified conditions (and any others which he might consider appropriate) and also the completion of a Section 106 agreement to include the following obligations; restriction to student occupation; public transport contribution (£24,380); travel plan and monitoring fee (£500); accessibility to public areas; employment and training initiatives; and Section 106 management fee (£750). In the circumstances where the Section 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.**

### Summary Conditions

- 1 3 Year Time Limit
- 2 Development to be in accordance with approved plans.
- 3 Notification of Commencement.
- 4 Notification of unexpected significant land contamination and remedial work if found necessary.

- 5 Soil brought to site to be suitable for use.
- 6 Tree protection before commencement.
- 7 Schedule of tree works to retained trees.
- 8 Hard and soft landscape details.
- 9 Implementation of hard and soft landscaping.
- 10 Landscape management and maintenance.
- 11 Replacement of soft landscaping if it is removed, destroyed or dies.
- 12 Details of contractor's storage and parking.
- 13 Details of methods to control dirt, dust and noise during construction.
- 14 Construction hours.
- 15 1:20 drawings and sections.
- 16 Details and sample panel of all external facing and surfacing materials.
- 17 Implementation and retention of wind mitigation measures.
- 18 Short and long stay cycle facilities to be provided before occupation.
- 19 Details of method, storage and disposal of litter and refuse.
- 20 BREEM Excellent to be achieved and post construction review of sustainability measures.
- 21 Drainage to be provided before occupation.
- 22 Sound insulation scheme to protect residents from noise to a good standard at night.
- 23 Post completion sound test.
- 24 Provision of pedestrian route between Campus Square and Portland Way before occupation.
- 25 Provision and retention of an active frontage to the commercial unit.
- 26 Consent required for signage to commercial unit.
- 27 Management of fumes/odours if the commercial unit is A3/A5.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This presentation is intended to inform Members of the current planning application for the construction of two new student accommodation buildings on vacant land at Leeds Metropolitan University's City Campus. The buildings would contain a total of 465 studios and a small retail unit. The buildings would sit in new hard and soft landscaped spaces arranged perpendicular to Calverley Street.
- 1.2 Downing acquired the north and western half of the Leeds Metropolitan University campus in 2010. The area comprised large, redundant university buildings, underused open space, cleared land and had poor permeability. The first phase of regeneration was completed in Summer 2012 and the second phase of student accommodation, comprising a new tower adjacent to the Inner Ring Road, commenced earlier this year and is due to be ready for occupation in September 2014. The current proposal represents the third and final phase of the developer's masterplan. It is intended to commence construction early in 2014 to enable completion in time for student occupation in 2015. The University of Leeds has leased the first and second phases of the development and has agreed draft heads of terms to lease the third phase from the developer.
- 1.3 A pre-application presentation of the scheme was presented to City Plans Panel on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2013. The minutes of that meeting are attached as Appendix 1. On 4<sup>th</sup> September 2013, following survey work and recommendations made by the Student Housing Working Group, Executive Board approved an amendment to the draft Core Strategy Policy H6B intended to manage the delivery of new student housing.

- 1.4 This report is brought to City Plans Panel as the development involves major investment and development of a significant, previously developed site within the Education Quarter.

## **2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

- 2.1 Leeds Metropolitan University (LMU) city campus is bounded by Calverley Street, Willow Terrace Road, Portland Way, Woodhouse Lane and the Inner Ring Road to the north of the city centre. It is characterised by denser built forms towards the eastern side and a more open setting containing protected trees on the northern and western edges. The southern portion of the site was cleared of redundant LMU buildings during 2007/8. The earliest buildings on the campus were constructed in the late 1960's to the designs of Yorke, Rosenberg and Mardall Architects. Two of these buildings were refurbished as part of the first phase of the development.
- 2.2 The site encompasses land on the western side of the campus between Calverley Street and the University's Portland and Calverley Buildings. The land comprises a grassed area, hardsurfaced parking space and steps, and previously developed land currently being used as a site compound. The site contains several trees, primarily adjacent to Calverley Street. Levels fall by 6 metres from the Calverley Building down to Calverley Street. Levels also fall down Calverley Street towards the south.
- 2.3 The surrounding area is mainly characterised by institutional and civic uses. Leeds General Infirmary is situated across Calverley Street to the west and the Civic Hall and the LMU Rosebowl building are located beyond Portland Way to the south. The University of Leeds campus is located directly to the north of the Inner Ring Road. A seven storey hotel was approved at the junction of Portland Way and Calverley Street in June 2012 but has yet to be commenced.
- 2.4 The campus is located between the University Conservation Area, the City Centre Conservation Area and Queen Square Conservation Area. The Civic Hall is grade II\* listed. Trees around the site are protected by Tree Preservation Order (No.22) 2007.

## **3.0 PROPOSALS**

- 3.1 The current proposals seek to continue the development of the architect's 2010 masterplan for the site responding to the surrounding urban grain whilst delivering improved access, permeability and reinforcing key spaces.
- 3.2 The development involves two buildings accommodating 465 students in a combination of studios (77) and cluster bedrooms (388). Both forms of accommodation would be accessed from a corridor running along the spine of the buildings. Each of the studios would have kitchen/dining space and en-suite shower or bathroom facilities. Standard bedrooms would be grouped in clusters of no more than 6 bedrooms served by a shared kitchen and living area. 13 per cent (62) of the bedrooms will be larger adaptable rooms to meet current accessibility requirements.
- 3.3 The two new buildings would be partly linked at lower ground floor level albeit the link containing plant rooms would be located discreetly beneath the rising ground levels. The lowest level of the northern building would contain a double height retail

unit (144sqm) which could potentially be a shop (A1), café (A3) or hot-food take-away (A5). There would also be support space for the student accommodation above, including a bike store. The front, slightly cantilevered, element of the building would have 5 storeys of student rooms above the retail unit. The rear of the building would have 15 storeys of accommodation above the upper ground floor entrance level which primarily comprises a lobby area, management suite and a common room (191sqm).

- 3.4 The proposed southern building contains a large common room (307sqm) and study area at lower ground floor level. In common with the northern building, the front element of this building would contain 5 storeys of student rooms above the common room. The upper ground floor would also be used as the entrance level including lobby and social areas, in addition to student bedrooms. The rear of the southern building would have 11 storeys of accommodation above the entrance floor.
- 3.5 The buildings would have a linear footprint arranged perpendicular to the University's Portland and Calverley buildings and parallel to the proposed hotel building. The gable ends of the buildings would be 7.5 metres from the Portland and Calverley buildings beyond a new landscaped footway. The footway, which is intended to provide the north-south pedestrian route through the campus, will include a slope down towards Portland Way so as to provide level access. The new buildings would be 18.8m apart. The northern building would be 19m from the existing Block B / Tescos and the southern building would be 28m from the proposed hotel creating an ordered pattern of development along Calverley Street.
- 3.6 At lower ground floor level a 7m floor to floor height establishes a clear podium on both buildings with light, glazed elevations fronting onto Calverley Street. The double height deep structural grids are expressed on each flank of the buildings. The current proposal involves a white, pre-cast concrete frame with light grey, exposed aggregate pre-cast concrete infill panels adjacent to the windows. Each room is provided with at least one full height glazed element with the resultant asymmetric window positioning creating a strong rhythm to the facades. The gable ends utilise large pre-cast concrete panels with occasional vertical grooves intended to add a subtle layer of texture to the building.
- 3.7 The new space between the two new buildings would be primarily hardsurfaced including a striking cascade of steps leading up towards the Calverley Building in a similar location to those existing but double their width. The new public space would be formed in high quality concrete pavements with strong geometric forms and street furniture complimenting the building design. The front of the buildings would be set back 6 to 14 metres from Calverley Street. The new level frontage would provide access into the new retail unit and the southern building's common and study areas as an extension to the existing pedestrian footpath. Areas of soft landscaping would be created to the front of buildings to enable retention of as many of the existing roadside trees as possible. A total of 11 trees would be removed as part of the development whereas 25 new trees are currently proposed
- 3.8 Space to the north of the northern building and to the south of the southern building would be laid out as greenspace although changing levels limit its usability. Undulating mounded lawns are proposed in response to the changing levels. New tree and ornamental planting would be arranged in a geometric fashion relating to the wider site layout and architectural treatment. The landscaped mounds would be bordered by feature edges creating distinctive ribbons running down the undulating landscape. Robust materials would be used with copings designed to

deter damage. The spaces, landscape and routes would be enhanced by lighting based on the existing in addition to feature lighting.

- 3.9 Gas fired combined heat and power plant would provide low carbon electricity generation as the preferred Low or Zero Carbon technology. Air source heat pumps are also proposed to generate a small quantity of heating and cooling. High frequency compact fluorescent lighting will be provided to minimise energy consumption. The development will have a Low Water usage strategy. A Site Waste Management Plan will also be adopted to reduce waste through the construction process as well as designing systems to reduce waste once the development is in use. It is likely that the development will achieve a “Very Good” BREEAM rating.
- 3.10 A Travel Plan submitted in support of the application sets out measures to encourage sustainable travel. A total of 58 long stay cycle spaces will be provided within the building, in addition to 13 short stay Sheffield stands. The development would not provide any additional parking spaces. The existing 25 parking spaces accessed from Woodhouse Lane would be available for use at the start and end of terms. One of the parking spaces is dedicated for use by the car club. Waste collection and deliveries would take place from the existing service lay-by on Calverley Street provided as part of the earlier phase of development.

#### **4.0 PLANNING HISTORY AND CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 Since construction in the late 1960’s the campus remained largely unchanged until the late 1990’s when the Leslie Silver building was constructed adjacent to Woodhouse Lane. Following demolition of buildings to the north of the junction of Portland Way and Calverley Street pre-application proposals for the wider site were considered by Plans Panel in March 2008. The site was acquired by Downing in 2010.
- 4.2 Plans Panel considered the application for the first phase of Downing’s proposed development across the northern half of the campus site in February 2011. At that time an illustrative masterplan was presented identifying principles of building layout; future pedestrian connections and showing how the development could be integrated with the landscape. The second phase, a 21 storey tower on the northern edge, was approved in April 2012 and is currently under construction. A hotel was approved on the southern fringe of the site at the junction of Portland Way and Calverley Street in June 2012 but has yet to be commenced.
- 4.3 Detailed pre-application discussions regarding the current scheme commenced in June 2013. Plans Panel received a pre-application presentation of the proposals on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2013.

#### **5.0 PUBLIC/LOCAL RESPONSE**

- 5.1 Site notices advertising the application were displayed around the site on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2013 and the application was advertised in the YEP on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2013. Letters were also sent to the University of Leeds, Leeds Metropolitan University (LMU) and Unipol notifying those organisations of the application.

5.2 Leeds Civic Trust (LCT) supports the scheme. LCT welcomes the provision of student accommodation in this location and states that it will help to continue the gradual restoration of accommodation for families in the Headingley area. LCT also comments that:

- the scheme will help to enliven Calverley Street, with active frontages and green spaces;
- the modelling and proportions will sit well as a backdrop to the Civic Hall in views from Millennium Square;
- careful consideration will need to be given to design and materials to ensure they weather acceptably.

5.3 LMU has provided a response to the application. They consider that the proposed buildings are far too close to the Portland and Calverley Building. They also raise questions about the following issues:

- access and parking proposals upon completion;
- measures to control noise and dust generation during the construction process;
- how pedestrian and emergency access will be maintained during and after the construction process and what Health and Safety precautions will be established;
- what precautions will be put in place to protect neighbouring buildings from being undermined;
- whether the impact of wind has been considered;
- whether the space will become public open space.

5.4 The University of Leeds has commented that they have a lease on phase I and phase II of the site and are pleased with both the quality of accommodation and its management of phase I which is now in its second year of operation. They have been in discussion with the developer regarding the third phase of development on the basis that the rooms will be larger than standard rooms and be a higher quality. The University state that draft heads of terms have been agreed with the developer which both parties would seek to formalise in the event that planning permission is granted.

## **6.0 CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES**

### **Statutory:**

#### **Transport Development Services:**

A Transport Assessment has been submitted in support of the proposals. The site is in a sustainable location. The limited and managed on-site parking will ensure that traffic generated by the development will remain low. No objections to the proposals subject to conditions relating to construction, provision of cycling facilities, and closing of redundant accesses.

#### **English Heritage**

The stepped articulation of the two blocks should mean that the proposed buildings will not harm the setting of the Civic Hall whilst the highest sections should not intrude substantially, if at all, in views from Millennium Square. The new buildings should form a successful terminus of views north along Calverley Street but will not be overly dominant upon their historic neighbours.

## **Non-statutory**

### **Flood Risk Management:**

Infiltration drainage would be unsuitable. The proposed on-site attenuation with restricted discharge to the public sewer is acceptable in principle. No objection subject to a standard drainage condition regarding surface water drainage works.

### **NGT Project Team:**

Under the terms of the Public Transport Improvements and Developer Contributions SPD a contribution of £24,380 should be sought towards the cost of providing the strategic enhancements which are needed to accommodate additional trips on the network.

### **Transport Development Services (Travelwise):**

The submitted travel plan needs to be updated to refer to the operation of phase I of the development and the use of the existing car park. A Travel Plan review fee of £500 is required.

### **Contaminated Land Team:**

The site investigation proposals are satisfactory. No objections are raised subject to standard conditions being applied.

### **Entertainment Licensing:**

No issues regarding the residential element. Further details of the retail use will be required if the end use is A3 or A5.

### **Police Architectural Liaison Officer:**

It is recommended that bollards are installed to protect the entrance from vehicle attack. The new square should be lit by good quality lighting. The implementation of Secured By Design guidelines and use of CCTV to all external elevations is welcomed. Questions are raised regarding the management of access control into the buildings.

## **7.0 PLANNING POLICY**

7.1 The introduction of the NPPF has not changed the legal requirement that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The policy guidance in Annex 1 to the NPPF is that due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF. The closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given.

### **7.2 Unitary Development Plan Review**

7.2.1 The area forms part of the designated Education Quarter in the adopted Unitary Development Plan Review (UDPR). The main objective of the designation is to facilitate the University's main functional requirements on site, enhance its character and reinforce its distinct sense of place, improve linkages with the rest of the city centre, encourage the provision of extra student housing, and resolve vehicular access and circulation. Proposals for other uses in the Quarter will be encouraged

which service the Quarter; add variety in land use and contribute to the vitality of the city centre; and support the attractiveness of the area for the principal use (CC27).

7.2.2 Policy H15A promotes student housing in areas beyond the Area of Housing Mix such as this. Paragraph 7.5.35 states that “significant potential exists for further student housing in the City Centre and in locations elsewhere. To be successful, such provision will need to be well served by public transport connections to the Universities, have the potential to appeal to students and be capable of being assimilated into the existing neighbourhood without nuisance. The City Council will encourage and support pioneer developments in such locations to help establish a critical mass of student presence and, ultimately, generate alternative popular locations for students to live, other than the wider Headingley area”.

7.2.3 The existing parking area and footway into the site is allocated as public space. The Calverley Street edge identifies an aspiration for an enhanced pedestrian route. Other relevant UDPR policies include GP5 (detailed planning considerations to be resolved and should seek to avoid loss of amenity); GP11 (development must meet sustainable development principles); N12 (priorities for urban design); N13 (All new buildings should be designed to a high quality and have regard to the surroundings); Policy N19 states that new buildings within or adjacent to conservation areas should preserve or enhance the character of the area; N23 (space around new development should provide a visually attractive setting and existing features which make a positive contribution should be retained); T2 (development should not create or materially add to problems of safety or efficiency on the highway network); and A4 (design of safe and secure environments, including access arrangements, public space, servicing and maintenance, materials and lighting). In the city centre character will be maintained by encouraging good design of buildings and spaces and upgrading the environment (CC3); and development in conservation areas or its immediate setting must preserve or enhance the character of the area (CC5). Policy CC21 states that ancillary shopping development will be acceptable outside the Prime Shopping Quarter provided it contributes to overall planning objectives for the quarter.

### 7.3 Natural Resources and Waste Local Plan 2013 (NRWLP)

7.3.1 The Natural Resources and Waste Local Plan was adopted by Leeds City Council on 16th January 2013. The NRWLP is part of the Local Development Framework.

7.3.2 One of the strategic objectives of the NRWLP is the efficient use of previously developed land. General Policy 1 is that when considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

7.3.3 Policy Energy 3 states that proposals for low carbon energy recovery methods, including Combined Heat and Power applications, and supporting infrastructure will be supported in principle.

7.3.4 Policy Land 1 states that trees should be conserved wherever possible and new planting should be introduced to create high quality environments for development. Where removal of existing trees is agreed in order to facilitate development tree replacement should be provided on a minimum three for one replacement to loss. Such planting will normally be expected to be on site as part of an overall landscape scheme. Where on-site planting cannot be achieved off-site planting will be sought or an agreed financial contribution will be required for tree planting elsewhere.



## 7.4 National Planning Policy Framework

- 7.4.1 Planning should proactively drive and support sustainable economic development; and seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. Planning should also encourage the use of renewable resources (para. 17). Local Planning Authorities (LPA's) should recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and support their vitality and viability; and recognise that residential development can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres (para. 23). Local Planning Authorities should look for opportunities for new development within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance (para. 137).

## 7.5 Draft Core Strategy (DCS)

- 7.5.1 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. The Inspector examined the Strategy during October 2013. The weight to be attached is limited where representations have been made.
- 7.5.2 DCS Policy H6B considers proposals for purpose built student accommodation. Developments should extend the supply to take pressure off the use of private housing; avoid excessive concentrations of student accommodation; and avoid locations which are not easily accessible to the Universities by foot or public transport.
- 7.5.3 Following approval from Executive Board the Council put forward late changes to Policy H6B in response to new evidence concerning future demand / supply of student accommodation and concern about an increasing surplus of bedspaces forecast in Leeds. The changes were subject to 3 weeks public consultation prior to being considered as late changes at the Core Strategy examination in October. The changes would alter Policy H6B as follows:

### **B) Development proposals for purpose built student accommodation will be controlled:**

- ~~i) To help extend the supply of student accommodation taking pressure off the need for private housing to be used,~~ accept new provision where a provider demonstrates that there is a need for additional student accommodation or that it has a formal accommodation agreement with a university/higher education institution for the supply of bed-spaces
- ii) To avoid the loss of existing housing suitable for family occupation,
- iii) To avoid excessive concentrations of student accommodation (in a single development or in combination with existing accommodation) which would undermine the balance and wellbeing of communities,
- iv) To avoid locations which are not easily accessible to the Universities by foot or public transport or which would generate excessive footfall through residential areas which may lead to detrimental impacts on residential amenity.
- v) To ensure new accommodation is of an appropriate quality and size in terms of environmental health standards
- vi) To ensure new accommodation can be physically adapted for occupation by average sized households

7.5.4 DCS Policy P10 requires new development to be based on a thorough contextual analysis to provide good design appropriate to its scale and function, delivering high quality innovative design and enhancing existing landscapes and spaces. P12 states that landscapes will be conserved and enhanced. Policy G6 states that open space in the city centre will be protected unless (ii) the space is replaced by an area of at least equal size and quality or (iii) redevelopment proposals demonstrate a clear relationship to improvements to existing greenspace quality in the same locality. Policy CC1e(i) supports small scale retail/catering in such a location. Policy CC3 states that development in appropriate locations is required to help and improve routes connecting the City Centre with adjoining neighbourhoods, and improve connections within the City Centre. Policies EN1 and EN2 identify sustainable development criteria including achieving a BREEAM standard of Excellent from 2013 onwards. DCS Policies T1 and T2 identify transport management and accessibility requirements for new development. Specific accessibility standards are included in DCS Appendix 2.

## 7.6 Supplementary guidance

7.6.1 Public Transport Improvements and Developer Contributions SPD identifies where development will need to make a contribution towards public transport improvements or enhancements.

7.6.2 Building for Tomorrow Today – Sustainable Design and Construction SPD identifies sustainable development requirements.

7.6.3 Travel Plans SPD (September 2012) identifies the need for sustainable approaches to travel.

7.6.4 SPG 14 Leeds City Centre Urban Design Strategy (September 2000). The guide refers to the need to retain and enhance space in the area; encourages appropriate ancillary uses at all times of the day and to provide active uses in holiday periods; to develop a mixture of land uses; to realise opportunities for increased soft landscape; to promote active frontages; to promote sustainable development; to enhance pedestrian movement; and to enhance the existing variety of buildings.

## 7.7 Other material considerations

### 7.7.1 Best Council Plan

The Plan identifies 6 objectives in order to achieve the best council outcomes identified between 2013-2017. Two of these have relevance for the development: (2) Dealing effectively with the city's waste; and (5) Promoting sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

### 7.7.2 Vision for Leeds 2011-2030

One of the aims is that by 2030 Leeds' economy will be prosperous and sustainable. This includes having a skilled workforce to meet the needs of the local economy. Leeds will be the best city to live in including the provision of high quality buildings, places and green spaces.

### 7.7.3 City Priority Plan 2011-2015

The Plan states that Leeds will be the best city for business. One of the priorities to achieve this is supporting the sustainable growth of the Leeds' economy. To help make Leeds the best city, growth will be enabled whilst protecting the city's distinctive green character.

## **8.0 MAIN ISSUES**

1. Principle of development
2. Layout, scale and design
3. Wind
4. Sustainability
5. Highways and access
6. Landscape
7. Other issues
8. Section 106

## **9.0 APPRAISAL OF MAIN ISSUES**

Members are asked to comment on the scheme and to consider the following matters:

### **9.1 Principle of the development**

9.1.1 The site is situated within the city centre immediately adjacent to two universities and would involve efficient redevelopment of previously developed university land. The use for student accommodation would be in accordance with the objectives identified for the Education Quarter in the UDPR (policies CC27 and H15A).

9.1.2 More recent policy on purpose built student accommodation is being advanced through Policy H6B of the Core Strategy. In September, following on from the recommendations of the Student Housing Working Group, the Council brought forward changes to Policy H6B in response to evidence concerning the future demand / supply of student accommodation and concern about the potential surplus of bedspaces in the city. The policy (see para 7.5.3 above) was approved for Development Control purposes in September and as such is the Council's policy on student housing. However, the policy was vigorously contested at the Core Strategy Examination and, at this stage in the Core Strategy preparation, can only be given very little weight.

9.1.3 The applicant has provided a Student Accommodation Demand Analysis Report (Jones Lang Lasalle - JLL) as part of the supporting documentation for the application. It identifies that there are 53,405 full time students in higher education in the city. 12,307 (23%) of these are accommodated in university managed accommodation. 36,056 (67.5%) students live at home or in Houses in Multiple Occupation. There are an additional 5,042 (9.4%) bedspaces in purpose built accommodation managed by the private sector. A comparison with other UK cities with large student populations shows that Leeds occupies a median position in terms of the level of purpose built student accommodation. There is also planning permission in place for an additional 2,384 bedspaces. If all of these schemes were built the purpose built private sector would account for 13.9% of the stock, assuming other factors such as student numbers, remained constant. In these circumstances Leeds would still remain in a generally median position in the UK.

9.1.4 The JLL report concurs with the findings of Working Group that there was a significant reduction in the number of applications to study in Higher Education

during 2012. The University of Leeds had 540 unfilled spaces, Leeds Metropolitan University 123 unfilled spaces whilst Leeds Trinity University filled all of its spaces.

- 9.1.5 Whilst there was an overall reduction in students during 2012 applications from international students increased. In the experience of JLL the availability of high quality accommodation is an important factor for international students in determining where they will seek to study such that the provision of purpose built accommodation is essential to the success of international student recruitment for universities.
- 9.1.6 The 2013 Renew report comments that “with the number of applications increasing for 2013/14, this would appear to suggest an increase in demand from new students for accommodation in 2013/14 and a potential continuing increase over future years”. This is backed up by reports from UCAS and Unipol. In July 2013 UCAS reported that demand for higher education is at or near record levels for each country of the UK and historical trends had been resumed. At the end of September 2013 UCAS stated that there had been a 9% increase in UK university’s acceptances compared to the previous year. Recent information suggests that student numbers at LMU increased by 20% this year relative to 2012/13. The increase in numbers in 2013 is also reflected in press releases from Unipol. In October 2013 Unipol reported that Leeds was following the national pattern in 2013/14, with the universities accepting around 1,200 additional students from the 2012/13 low point. Unipol also reported that the University of Leeds was doing particularly well in recruiting postgraduate international students. According to Unipol the larger, purpose built student accommodation were full from late August 2013 leading to students returning to the “off-street” market.
- 9.1.7 The JLL report also refers to the Renew report finding that there is a “clear preference from students for housing options closer to the universities and the city centre, and accordingly this may translate into increasing demand from returning students for purpose built accommodation”. At the same time the JLL report notes that the university managed accommodation will continue to age and deteriorate such that the private sector will have an important role to play in terms of delivering and maintaining the quality of purpose built housing stock in the city. Consequently, JLL consider that it is important that a pipeline of potential schemes is maintained so as to assist in any future requirements for accommodation from the universities. JLL also comment that the proposed development would assist in rebalancing the over-reliance of students on the HMO market in areas such as Headingley.
- 9.1.8 Whereas Policy H6B can only be given limited weight the JLL report shows that the proposal accords well with the additional criteria. The JLL report concludes that Leeds still has a need for higher quality student accommodation well located to university teaching facilities. In addition, the University of Leeds has confirmed that they are in a process of agreeing terms for the proposed accommodation, to add to the first two phases of the development which it has already leased.
- 9.1.9 The proposed student accommodation is ideally located both with regard to the universities and also facilities within the city centre. Consequently, it would not have any direct impact upon either the balance of residential communities or their amenities. The proposed accommodation is of an appropriate size and quality. Further, the applicant has demonstrated a need for the development and draft terms have been agreed with the University of Leeds. Consequently, the proposals accord with the overall aims of the Development Plan and national planning guidance. The principle of development is therefore acceptable.

## 9.2 Layout, scale and design

- 9.2.1 The position of the buildings continues the orthogonal order set up by the original development under the original 1960's masterplan. The Leslie Silver Building and the university Union building have subsequently been constructed on the east side of the campus creating extensive floorplates on the eastern edge. Buildings, albeit much lower in height, previously abutted the Calverley and Portland Buildings at right angles until their demolition in 2007/08. Since demolition and the sale of the land the occupiers of the Calverley and Portland Buildings have enjoyed an open outlook towards the southwest.
- 9.2.2 Leeds Metropolitan University (LMU) has commented that the proposed buildings are far too close to existing buildings. In disposing of the land LMU expected that some form of development would take place at some point in the future. In general terms the proposed buildings are similar in height to original buildings retained on the campus. The identified layout reflects the ordered arrangement originally advocated when the 2010 masterplan for the site was developed, itself a logical response to the 1960's masterplan. The proposed buildings will have an impact upon the outlook and daylighting within the Calverley and Portland Buildings although no overlooking will arise given the blank gable ends proposed. It is considered that the juxtaposition is acceptable in this situation by virtue of the city centre context and arrangement of buildings on the campus; the accordance with the masterplan; the extensive spaces retained between the proposed buildings enabling light and visibility between them; and due to the complementary uses involved.
- 9.2.3 The development involves two new buildings which step up in height from Calverley Street towards the Calverley and Portland Buildings. At the same time the buildings would step down in scale along Calverley Street to the scale of the approved hotel to the south. The front section of the two buildings are cantilevered over double height glazed areas which respond to the height of the existing Tesco retail block to the north. A retail unit in the northern building and a common room in the southern building would help to activate the Calverley Street frontage.
- 9.2.4 As with the existing buildings it is currently intended to utilise concrete and glass as the primary external building materials to deliver simple but elegant structures that respond positively to their context. An expressed grid draws inspiration from neighbouring buildings. The white concrete frame and gable ends bring together the architectural language of the site to produce unashamedly modernist buildings. At the same time the materiality, form, scale and rhythm of the buildings create a calm and appropriate backdrop to views of the Civic Hall from the south.
- 9.2.5 The proposed development would have an impact when viewed from within the Portland and Calverley Buildings. However, the proposed relationship is acceptable and the layout represents an appropriate response to the site. Similarly, the massing, design and use combine to enhance the appearance of Calverley Street whilst protecting the setting of nearby listed buildings and conservation areas. Consequently, the proposal accords with policies GP5, N12, N13 and N19 of the UDPR and DCS policy P10.

## 9.3 Wind

- 9.3.1 People require safe and comfortable access to buildings around the development. Additionally, recreational and amenity areas where people can walk, stand or sit, need to be sheltered from high wind speeds. The application is supported by a

quantitative assessment of the impact of the proposed development upon local wind patterns. The emphasis of the analysis is on the comfort and safety of pedestrians using public areas, including an assessment of gust effects for the prevailing wind direction. Although the buildings are set back from Calverley Street the report also considers the impact on adjacent road traffic.

- 9.3.2 The submitted report identifies that the construction process will cause temporary localised wind acceleration around the base of the buildings. Temporary wind mitigation measures, such as site hoardings, are advised during this period. The completed development would have a range of effects on pedestrian wind speeds and comfort conditions ranging from major beneficial to moderate adverse, although the general impact is identified as minor beneficial to a negligible effect.
- 9.3.3 Without mitigation wind speeds in the area of public realm between the new buildings are predicted to be unacceptable for sitting and standing. Canopies above the building entrances and landscaping provides adequate mitigation in these areas. Wind speeds in other public realm areas are acceptable, and in some cases improve the existing baseline condition. The impact of the development on wind speeds on the two roads close to the site, Calverley Street and Portland Way, is moderate/major beneficial due to the buildings providing significant shelter from prevailing winds.
- 9.3.4 Whilst the proposed window recesses in the buildings will help reduce the downwash effect the report identifies the use of soft and hard landscaping to further reduce the impact of wind. The report concludes that by implementing these measures the wind microclimate in all areas will be appropriate for their proposed use. LMU has questioned whether the changes in wind profile will affect use of their buildings through additional noise from wind.
- 9.3.5 The Council has sought independent analysis and verification of the submitted report. At the time of drafting this report a response had not been received. In the event that the report is agreed, or if additional modifications are subsequently identified as being necessary by the Council's expert to make the scheme acceptable, the requirements would be subject of a planning condition.

#### 9.4 Sustainability

- 9.4.1 The site is located in a highly sustainable city centre location and the development would have a sustainable approach to travel. The buildings' position minimises shading of the new public space whilst all bedrooms and dining spaces will be naturally ventilated. A Low and Zero Carbon Technology report submitted in support of the application considers the effectiveness and economics of a range of technologies. It concludes that a gas-fired combined heat and power plant is most suitable to provide the majority of low carbon electrical generation for the development. Energy consumption and water use will be limited, and heat loss would be reduced through the improvement of insulation throughout the building.
- 9.4.2 Initial analysis shows that at least 10 per cent of energy will be derived from renewable sources and CO2 emissions will be reduced by 21 per cent. The scheme currently achieves a BREEAM score of Very Good whereas current local policy seeks an Excellent standard where feasible. The developer states that whereas they strive for BREEAM Excellent they have never been able to deliver it on a student accommodation scheme as the tenants fail to follow recycling procedures. At the time of drafting this report officers were due to meet the developer to explore

whether there were any realistic opportunities for raising the sustainability criteria of the development further.

## 9.5 Highways and access

9.5.1 The sloping topography currently presents challenges for pedestrian movement around the site. The scheme delivers improvements to pedestrian permeability and connectivity, reinforcing previously created routes and adding new ones. The network of routes provided will be enhanced by the provision of a sloping path from Portland Way along the north-south axis of the campus. This would deliver a new accessible route supplementing the accessible east-west route provided by the first phase of the development. In addition to the new public areas, the Calverley Street footway to the site frontage will be upgraded as part of the development to tie in with proposed improvements that should be realised by the completion of earlier phases of the campus development and the proposed hotel.

9.5.2 A Travel Plan submitted in support of the application sets out measures to encourage sustainable travel including new long stay and short stay cycle spaces. There would also be a public transport contribution of £24,380. The development would not provide any additional parking spaces. The existing spaces accessed from Woodhouse Lane would be available for use at the start and end of terms for dropping off and collecting students. One of the parking spaces is dedicated for use by the car club. Day to day servicing would be from a loading space provided on Calverley Street provided as part of the earlier phase of development.

9.5.3 The development provides an acceptable and appropriate response to issues of connectivity, accessibility and transportation in accordance with UDPR policies T2 and A4, and DCS policy CC3.

## 9.6 Landscape

9.6.1 The existing site comprises three distinct parcels of land. At the northern end there is a sloping lawned area; the area towards the middle is hardsurfaced whilst the southern portion is cleared land. The proposed landscape design is a rectilinear 'architectural' response to the dominant built forms and their layout.

9.6.2 Mature trees, primarily along the site frontage, enhance the appearance of the site and the streetscene. An intent is expressed to retain some of the existing boundary trees to Calverley Street. However the growing areas being retained for this purpose are constrained. The applicants will need to demonstrate how they will be able to retain the current ground levels around the trees within the new scheme, without causing disturbance or damage. Given the number of existing trees removed to facilitate earlier phases of development, retention of trees in this highly visible frontage location is all the more important. It may be that long-term management proposals could include for replacement of trees as they reach their full lifespan, and once new tree provision has been allowed to establish as strong features in their own right in the wider landscape.

9.6.3 The wave pattern in the soft landscape ground forms is an interesting and positive response to addressing the fall in levels across the site. However its success will depend upon carefully considered design detailing, the use of high quality materials, effective implementation and consistent long-term aftercare.

9.6.4 There is considerable use of hard surfacing in the central access route up from Calverley Street. Additional soft landscape elements should be considered for this

area although it is recognised that the existence of a below ground level of building development limits what can be achieved. Trees in planters need to have sufficient volumes of soil for effective long-term growth to maturity. Without adequate growing conditions the trees will at best struggle and more likely fail. The additional use of trees for wind mitigation adds to the importance of securing the best growing conditions possible.

9.6.5 Services should be located within hard landscape areas to avoid conflict or potential disturbance of established planting. Service easements will impact on tree planting proposals, so both need to be considered in conjunction from the outset. Lighting proposals should work well within the landscape scheme both for safety and for extended use of external spaces. Well integrated lighting will enhance the overall quality of the external environment, creating somewhere to be appreciated and used rather than just spaces to be 'got through' on the way to other destinations.

9.6.6 The relationship between this scheme and the potential hotel development to the south-east needs to be considered. In the absence of the hotel development coming forward in the near future a positive boundary treatment needs to be identified as part of the current proposals.

9.6.7 As proposed, the landscaping and public realm proposals will enhance the streetscene and accord with UDPR Policies CC3, CC9, CC11, CC13 and CC31. However, detailed design and implementation of proposals are crucial to its initial success, and it needs to be demonstrated that 3 replacement trees for every removed tree (NRWLP policy Land 1) is achieved. Thereafter, there needs to be a positive and proactive management approach to the landscape.

9.7 Other issues

9.7.1 Officers have had a meeting with LMU to discuss other issues raised in their objection letter. Measures to control impacts of the construction process, such as noise and dust, would form the subject of planning conditions whilst other requirements, such as those relating to Health and Safety and Party Walls, would fall under the control of other relevant legislation. Following completion of the development the new pedestrian routes and public realm would be maintained by obligations contained in the section 106 agreement such that access around the site, and alongside the Portland and Calverley Buildings, would not be restricted.

9.8 Section 106

9.8.1 The Section 106 agreement will include the following:

- Public transport contribution £24,380.
- Implementation of Travel Plan and evaluation fee £500.
- Restriction to students in higher education.
- Accessibility to public areas.
- Employment and training initiatives.
- Section 106 management fee.

9.8.2 The Section 106 obligations are compliant with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 Statutory Tests.



## 9.9 Conclusion

- 9.9.1 The proposed development represents the final element of the architect's masterplan when the site was acquired in 2010. The building form and design responds well to its context whilst new public spaces and pedestrian routes would integrate with, and reinforce, those provided by earlier phases of the development. Issues relating to wind, landscaping and the sustainable performance of the development remain to be agreed with officers. However, elsewhere, the proposals accord with the Development Plan and other material planning guidance. Accordingly, officers recommend that the application is delegated for approval subject to resolution of outstanding issues, appropriate conditions and the completion of a Section 106 agreement.

### Background papers

Application file 13/04584/FU

Certificate of ownership : signed on behalf of Downing Property Services

## Appendix 1

### Minutes of the meeting of 29<sup>th</sup> August 2013

#### **48 Preapp/13/00656 - Pre-application presentation of proposal for new student accommodation buildings - City Campus, Woodhouse Lane and Calverley Street LS1**

Plans, including a revised location plan circulated prior to the meeting, together with graphics and a model 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 preapplication proposals for two new student accommodation buildings at the former Leeds Metropolitan University's City Campus site; the proposals representing the third and final phase of the developer's masterplan.

Members received a presentation on the scheme on behalf of the developer. Members were informed that the proposals were for blocks, partly linked at ground floor level and providing student accommodation in a mix of studios and cluster flats, study and common room area and a small ancillary retail unit. A total of 410 bedspaces were proposed with 20 of these being DDA accessible. Areas of hard and soft landscaping would be provided which would include undulating lawns to address the changing levels on the site and new tree and shrub planting would enhance this publicly accessible space. The proposed materials were high quality pre-cast concrete and glazing with the use of some lighter colour materials to reflect the Portland Stone of the Civic Hall.

After hearing the presentation and viewing the model, Members commented on the following matters:

- the need for connectivity between the two buildings and the Rose Bowl and for improved access across Portland Way. Members were informed there was a new crossing approximately halfway along Portland Way, although it was accepted that this did not exactly align with the proposed pedestrian route through the development.
- the design of the proposals, with mixed views on this;
- that the design was sympathetic to the surrounding campus environment and the view that what was proposed was a continuation of the established grid pattern, whereas some slight move away from the existing buildings might be an improvement
- concern about how the public space would work and whether it would receive any sun
- whether there was a need for further student accommodation and that a cross-party Working Group had been established to look into this matter, had taken advice from a range of sources including Unipol and Renew; and was soon to report its recommendations to Executive Board and that the applicant would need to demonstrate to Panel there was a need for this development
- that there was unlikely to be another site more suitable for student accommodation and if approved, this could return some large houses in Headingley currently used for student housing, back into family homes
- the difficulties in assessing need as it could be that if this scheme was approved and developed, then other student schemes either in the pipeline or approved but not yet implemented, might not proceed
- whether some of the student accommodation schemes built 10–12 years ago and which were not full could be converted to residential accommodation and if so, the

implications in terms of the loss of S106 contributions which would have been part of a residential scheme but not a student accommodation scheme.

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

- concerning the appropriateness of additional student accommodation in this area, having regard to local and national policies, the supply of other consented schemes and the proximity to the universities, Members questioned the need for further student accommodation and was of the view that the applicant would need to outline the argument for this development and produce evidence in support of it
- regarding the proposed layout and overall massing of the development, the majority view was that this was acceptable
- in respect of the proposed use of materials and the overall architectural approach, this was considered to be acceptable as it fitted in with the design of other buildings on site, but that if approved, a high quality appearance must be delivered
- on landscaping, the general approach to this was considered to be acceptable and that new trees should be planted in suitable ground conditions to ensure that the trees would thrive and be positive additions to the landscape
- that in general terms the Panel considered that the development produced an acceptable and appropriate response to issues of connectivity and accessibility, although concerns remained about access over Portland Way and that there would be a need
- for contributions for public transport

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

## Appendix 2

### Minutes of the meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> November 2013

Prior to consideration of this matter, Councillor M Hamilton withdrew from the meeting

Further to minute 48 of the City Plans Panel meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> August, where Panel considered a pre-application presentation on proposals for new student accommodation buildings at Calverley Street, Members considered the formal application for a 465 student bedroom development in two blocks together with retail use (A1/A3 or A5) of 144 sqm.

Plans, photographs and graphics were displayed at the meeting. A Members site visit had taken place earlier in the day. Officers presented the report; outlined the application and explained the layout of the accommodation which comprised 77 studio flats and 388 clusters, which provided for up to 6 beds per cluster with a shared living space. Members were informed of numbers of students in Leeds; the type of accommodation they lived in and stated that research had indicated students preferred modern, purpose-built accommodation which was close to where they studied. In terms of materials, primarily glass and concrete were proposed. Double height expressed structural grids would be used on the side elevations and pre-cast concrete panels on the gable ends with some additional detailing to the concrete cladding to add a further layer of texture. The landscaping would be a mix of hard and soft and the grassed areas would fully work with the changing levels on the site to provide undulating lawns.

Members commented on the following matters:

- the suitability of cluster flats
- the lack of analysis in the report on the study produced by the applicant in response to the policy introduced in September to manage the delivery of student housing, and that the comments of Unipol and Renew would have been welcomed on the application. The Chief Planning Officer accepted that further information should have been provided in the report but stated there had recently been a significant increase in the number of students attending the universities this year
- the outcome of the cross-party working group which had examined student accommodation in the City and that no reference had been made to this in the report
- the total number of students living within this area if these proposals went ahead. Members were informed that taking into account the first phase of the scheme, the accommodation currently being constructed, the bedspaces in the former BBC development and the application being considered, there would be approximately 1500 – 1600 students residing in this area
- the number of bedspaces in schemes which had not yet been implemented, with Officers advising that not counting accommodation proposals at Trinity and All Saints, there were 2384 student bedspaces with extant planning permission
- the space between the two blocks; that this created an unattractive and bleak area and concerns about the wind levels on the site, particularly in this area. Members were informed that Officers were awaiting a response from the Council's wind expert regarding the acceptability of the submitted wind report
- disappointment that the character and prominence of the Civic Hall were being eroded through the new developments which were surrounding it
- tree loss and the need for Councillor Nash to be consulted on the species of the 33 replacement trees being provided
- the suitability of the location for student accommodation and the highly sustainable nature of the site

- the landscaping and whether what was being proposed was appropriate for how it would be used
- the design of the proposals, in particular whether the gable ends, was the best which could be achieved in such an important location

The Panel considered how to proceed, with a proposal made to defer determination for one cycle to enable further information to be provided on the issues raised by Members. Following an equality of votes to agree the recommendation or to defer the application for further information, the Chair, whilst originally minded to support the Officer's recommendation agreed to defer final determination of the application to the 12<sup>th</sup> December meeting.

**RESOLVED-** That determination of the application be deferred for one cycle and that the Chief Planning Officer be asked to submit a further report which included information on the issues raised by Members.

Following consideration of this matter, Councillor M Hamilton resumed his seat in the meeting.

### Appendix 3 – Proposed conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans listed in the Plans Schedule.
- 3) The Local Planning Authority shall be notified in writing of the date of the commencement of development at least one week prior to such commencement.
- 4) The Local Planning Authority shall be notified in writing immediately where unexpected significant contamination is encountered during any development works and operations in the affected part of the site shall cease.

Where remediation of unexpected significant contamination is considered by the Local Planning Authority to be necessary, a Remediation Statement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the recommencement of development on the affected part of the site. The Remediation Statement shall include a programme for all remediation works and for the provision of verification information.

Remediation works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Remediation Statement. On completion of those works, the Verification Report(s) shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority in accordance with the approved programme. The development shall not be brought into use until such time as all necessary verification information has been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

- 5) Any soil or soil forming materials brought to site for use in soft landscaping, public open space or for filling and level raising shall be tested for contamination and suitability for use. A methodology for testing these soils shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority prior to these materials being imported onto site. The methodology shall include information on the source of the materials, sampling frequency, testing schedules and criteria against which the analytical results will be assessed (as determined by risk assessment). Testing shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved methodology. Relevant evidence and verification information (for example, laboratory certificates) shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority prior to these materials being imported onto the site.
- 6)
  - a) All existing trees and shrubs shown on the approved plans to be retained shall be fully safeguarded during the course of the site works and building operations in accordance with the guidance of British Standard 5837 (Guide for Trees in relation to Construction), or with the particulars specified in details which shall first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
  - b) No development shall be commenced, or materials or equipment brought onto site (except in connection with compliance with this condition), until all trees, shrubs or features to be protected have been protected in accordance with the approved details, or in the absence of such details, in accordance with BS 5837, with either:-
    - i) 1.5m height chestnut paling to BS 1722 Part 4 securely mounted on post and two rails framework and clad with orange fluorescent mesh,

ii) 2.4m height heavy duty plywood hoarding securely mounted on scaffolding.

c) Pre-printed laminated waterproof signs at least A4 in size shall be securely fixed to the fencing posts to each enclosure at 10 metre minimum intervals bearing the words

PROTECTED TREE ZONE NO STORAGE OR OPERATIONS WITHIN FENCED AREA

d) The protective enclosure shall be maintained during the course of the site works and no equipment, machinery or materials shall be stored within any area enclosed in accordance with this condition and the ground levels within those areas shall not be altered, nor shall any excavation be made, including any underground services. No fires shall be burnt within 10m distance of the outer edge of the canopy of any tree protected.

e) The protective enclosure shall be retained in position until all equipment, machinery or materials have been removed from the site and the development has been occupied.

- 7) Prior to the commencement of building operations a schedule of tree works to retained trees shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works thereby agreed shall be completed prior to the occupation of the development.
- 8) The following hard and soft landscape works shall not take place until full details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include (a) proposed finished levels and/or contours; (b) walls and retaining walls or other means of enclosure;(c) other pedestrian access and circulation areas; (d) hard surfacing areas; (e) minor artefacts and structures (e.g., street furniture including seating and bicycle anchor points, balustrades, bollards, directional signs, external lighting etc.), (f) samples of surfacing, walling and materials for steps (g) proposed and existing functional services above and below ground (e.g. drainage, power cables, communication cables, pipelines etc., indicating lines, manholes etc.). Soft landscape works shall include (h) planting plans, (i) written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment), (j) schedules of plants noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities, (k) implementation programme.
- 9) Hard and soft landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The hard landscape works shall be completed prior to the occupation of any part of the development. The soft landscape works shall be completed by no later than the end of the planting season following the substantial completion of the development. The landscape works shall be implemented to a reasonable standard in accordance with the relevant provisions of appropriate British Standards or other recognised codes of good practice.
- 10) The development shall not be occupied until a plan, schedule and specification for landscape management has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. This shall include reference to planting and hard landscaped areas, including paving, seating and other features. The schedule shall identify the frequency of operations for each type of landscape asset and reflect the enhanced maintenance requirement of planted areas during the establishment period. It shall provide for an annual inspection during late summer for any areas of failed tree or shrub planting, and the identification of the replacements required in the autumn planting season. Prior to planting, all landscaped areas shall be

cultivated and maintained in a weed free condition by mechanical cultivation or chemical control. Maintenance shall be carried out thereafter in accordance with the approved management plan.

- 11) If, within a period of five years from the planting of any trees or plants, those trees or plants or any trees or plants planted in replacement for them is removed, uprooted, destroyed or dies or becomes, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, seriously damaged or defective another tree or plant of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place in the first available planting season, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to a variation. If such replacements die within twelve months from planting these too shall be replaced, until such time as the Local Planning Authority agrees in writing that the survival rates are satisfactory.
- 12) No development shall take place until a plan showing satisfactory details of provision to be made for the storage, parking, loading and unloading of contractors' plant, equipment and materials, and the parking of vehicles of the workforce, within the site, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such facilities shall be provided for the duration of site works.
- 13) Prior to operations commencing on site details shall be submitted for the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority of the proposed means of minimising dirt, dust and noise, including details of methods to be employed for the prevention of mud, grit and dirt being carried onto the highway and to limit impact upon the users of the Calverley and Portland Buildings during the construction process. The approved scheme shall be implemented upon commencement of works on site, and thereafter maintained throughout the construction process.
- 14) No building operation shall take place before 0730 hours on weekdays and 0800 hours on Saturdays nor after 1900 hours on weekdays and 1300 hours on Saturdays, with no operation on Sundays or Bank Holidays unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 15) The following external façade works shall not be commenced until full details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority-
  - (i) Drawings at a scale of not less than 1 to 20 of the typical details of the new building including ground floor facade treatments; soffit details; external grid details; details of gable ends including any vertical slots; details of each type of window unit; eaves treatments; and roof details.

The works shall be carried out in accordance with the details thereby approved.
- 16) Details and samples of all external facing and finishing materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to their installation. The samples shall include full-size mock-ups of the expressed grid and windows, and the panels on the gables. The external surfaces shall be constructed in accordance with the details thereby agreed.
- 17) Prior to the occupation of the development the redundant vehicular access into the site shall be removed and made good in accordance with details which shall first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 18) The short and long stay cycle parking hereby approved shall be provided prior to first occupation of the development and shall thereafter be retained and maintained.



- 19) Prior to the first occupation of the development a scheme detailing the method of storage and disposal of litter and waste materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include a description of the facilities to be provided including, where appropriate, details for how the recyclable materials will be collected from the site, with timescales for collection. The approved scheme shall be implemented before the development hereby permitted is brought into use and no waste or litter shall be stored or disposed of other than in accordance with the approved scheme.
- 20) Prior to the commencement of development
- (i) a pre-assessment using the BREEAM assessment method showing how the development will seek to achieve a credit score commensurate with an Excellent standard; and
  - (ii) an energy analysis showing the percentage of on-site energy that will be produced by Low and Zero Carbon (LZC) technologies and a carbon reduction target for the development
- shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the detailed scheme.
- A post-construction review assessment shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority prior to occupation of the development and a BRE certificate confirming the rating which has been achieved and final confirmation of the percentage of on-site energy that will be produced by Low and Zero Carbon (LZC) technologies shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority within 10 weeks of occupation of the development.
- The development shall be maintained and retained in accordance with the approved detailed scheme and post-completion review statement or statements.
- 21) Prior to the commencement of development details of the proposed surface water drainage scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme, supported by relevant calculations, should accord with the drainage principles identified in the Flood Risk Assessment as updated by the drainage outfall strategy drawing ref 213-198 D0S01 P1. The drainage works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved scheme prior to the first occupation of the development.
- 22) Internal noise levels for habitable rooms in the development shall be to a good standard at night (not greater than 30dB LAeq,8h) with maximum noise levels not exceeding 45dB LAmax. During the daytime, internal noise levels in student rooms shall be to a reasonable standard (not greater than 35dB LAeq,16h). The rooms should be fitted with trickle vents to enable cooling without the need for opening windows.
- 23) Within 3 months of completion of the development a noise survey shall be undertaken to show compliance with condition 22. The survey locations and methodology shall be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority in advance of the survey being undertaken and shall be representative of the noise sensitive receptors within the development. The results of the survey shall be provided to the Local Planning Authority within 4 weeks of the survey being carried out. In the event of failure to demonstrate compliance with any imposed noise conditions, measures necessary to comply with condition 22 shall be agreed and implemented within a

timetable agreed by the Local Planning Authority. A further noise survey shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority following completion of the works to demonstrate that acceptable noise levels have been achieved.

- 24) The pedestrian route between Campus Square and Portland Way shall be laid out in accordance with details which shall first be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority before first student occupation of the accommodation hereby approved. The route shall thereafter be retained as a pedestrian route unless temporarily required for the purposes of construction or maintenance.
- 25) Further to conditions 9 and 17 the existing pedestrian footway fronting the site shown on Gillespies drawing M5036-100 01 shall be improved prior to first occupation of the development in accordance with details which shall first be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 26) Prior to the first student occupation of the accommodation hereby approved, measures to mitigate the effects of wind identified within the submitted Buro Happold Wind Microclimate Assessment Report dated October 2013 shall be implemented in accordance with details which shall first be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The measures shall thereafter be retained and maintained.
- 27) An active frontage shall be retained and maintained in the retail unit facing Calverley Street hereby approved at all times.
- 28) Prior to first occupation of the development a car parking strategy for the management of vehicles at the start and end of the academic year shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be operated in accordance with the strategy thereby approved.
- 29) Details of any proposed external extract ventilation system/air conditioning plant/or measures to control odours shall be submitted to and approved in writing prior to their installation. The facilities shall only be installed in accordance with the approved details.
- 30) Noise levels generated by the mechanical plant shall be at least 5dBA below the existing background noise level (L90) when measured at the nearest noise sensitive premises with the measurements and assessment made in accordance with BS4142:1997.
- 31) The hours for deliveries to and from the commercial premises shall be restricted to 07.00 to 21.00 hours Monday to Saturday and not on Sundays and Bank Holidays.