

Appendix 2 – minutes of the meeting of City Plans Panel 13th February 2014

Application 13/04862/FU - Proposed student accommodation, key worker and apartment buildings on land at St Michael's College and former Police Depot - Belle Vue Road and St John's Road Little Woodhouse LS3

Further to minute 24 of the City Plans Panel meeting held on 4th July 2013, where Panel received a presentation on proposals for the demolition of all existing buildings on the site, other than the original St Michael's College (the 1908 building); refurbishment and extensions to the 1908 building and the development of two new buildings to provide key worker housing; student accommodation; private market apartments and two commercial units, to consider a further report of the Chief Planning Officer setting out the current position on the application

Plans, photographs and graphics were displayed at the meeting Officers presented the report and outlined the proposals which would provide a mix of student housing – in studios and cluster flats in a new development – key worker accommodation in the 1908 building and extensions and finally a new development of open market apartments on the former playground area. Details of the proposed materials and the building heights of the different blocks were provided. Layouts of the different types of units were also shown together with an indication of how these could be converted to larger units, if required in the future

The comments of Re'new which had been received after the report had been published were read out to the Panel, with the organisation being satisfied the proposals met the criteria of Policy H6B Members were informed that comments from Highways were awaited.

Members considered the proposals and commented on the following matters:

- the number of key worker apartments and whether this had changed since the scheme was last presented. Members were informed that the level of key worker accommodation had been reduced from 302 units to 262
- the concerns of local Councillors about the amount of student accommodation in the scheme
- the new emerging strategy on student accommodation; the concerns about empty units and the need to provide, when considering applications for student housing, information which set the application in context with the level of demand and the amount of student accommodation already granted planning permission
- the need for further information on policy H6B and how this application related to that
- that the retention of the 1908 building was welcomed but concerns that the extensions and new build elements dwarfed the historic former College
- that more public open space should be provided on the site
- the possibility of the student accommodation remaining empty and that larger apartments should be provided instead which could be used by young professionals or key workers
- the impact of the proposals on the house nearest the new build element on Belle Vue Road
- concern that Re'new had not addressed the strategic questions about the level of student accommodation in the City

- the size of the key worker accommodation which was considered to be small and that people required flats, not studio apartments. Concerns were also raised about the size of some of the student accommodation
- that the scheme was over-intensive and led to cramped living conditions, particularly in the key worker and some of the student accommodation
- the possibility of the student accommodation being converted at a later date although the infrastructure would have been created for a different scheme
- that the location was highly sustainable for student accommodation and there was a need for key worker accommodation in Leeds, however there were concerns about the design of some of the buildings and the size of the accommodation being created. On the issue of design and materials, the Chief Planning Officer suggested that further work be undertaken on the student accommodation to ensure the quality being required was achieved. It was also important to ensure the future of the 1908 building which was currently suffering from neglect and vandalism and that the development of this should not be left to the end of the scheme

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

- that subject to the figures being acceptable for the level of student accommodation in the City, that further student development could be considered to be appropriate on the site
- that the area required retail facilities but to guard against a letting unit or bar, with the A2 and A4 uses requiring deletion
- that concerns existed about the size of some of the units and that flats for key workers would be more attractive. Members requested further work to be carried out on this
- on whether low cost housing exclusively for key workers was suitable in lieu of provision of affordable housing managed by a registered provider, as long as it was genuine low cost housing and would be so in perpetuity, then this could be considered. Again, Members requested further details on this
- regarding massing and design, that there were mixed views and that further detailing was required on some elements, including detailed treatment of the elevations and the relationship to existing properties on Belle Vue Road
- that having regard to the scheme's effect on residents' living conditions in houses in Kelso Gardens and Consort View, that the scheme was acceptable
- that in the absence of on-site greenspace that a contribution should be paid towards the provision of off-site greenspace having regard to UDPR policies N2 and N4
- that the existing trees should be protected from construction work and that new trees of appropriate species, numbers, locations and ground conditions were required to provide a suitable setting to the development
- concerning provision for disabled people, Members were informed that 5% of rooms in the student accommodation would be expected to meet the needs of people with disabilities. However the developer was proposing 1%. Similarly a lower level of disabled parking provision was being proposed. Members were of the view that this level of provision was not acceptable

- in respect of the costs of achieving higher levels of sustainability performances possibly undermining the overall viability of the scheme, Members requested further information on this
- on the proposed Section 106 Agreement, whilst this had not been discussed in detail, it was acknowledged that some of the comments made could impact on this. Two non-standard obligations were proposed, one relating to a contribution towards a pedestrian crossing over the Inner Ring Road, which was being discussed with the developer. The other condition related to the key worker accommodation which would be offered at a sub-market rent and the need for this to be in perpetuity as it would replace the requirement to provide affordable housing on the site. Regarding community use of the building, it was felt that the wording of the draft S106 should be amended to allow some flexibility as to the name of the community association which could use the building and in respect of the length of their meetings

RESOLVED - To note the report and the comments now made

During consideration of this matter, Councillor Lewis left the meeting