

CITY PLANS PANEL

THURSDAY, 5TH JUNE, 2014

PRESENT: Councillor J McKenna in the Chair

Councillors P Gruen, R Procter,
D Blackburn, S Hamilton, G Latty,
T Leadley, E Nash, N Walshaw, M Ingham,
C Campbell, M Harland and C Macniven

192 Election of Chair

In the absence of the designated Chair, nominations to chair the meeting were sought, with Councillor J McKenna being nominated to the chair the meeting

Councillor McKenna in the Chair

193 Chair's opening remarks

Councillor McKenna welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked Members and Officers to introduce themselves

194 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests

195 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Lewis and Councillor Cummins, with Councillors Harland and Macniven substituting for their respective colleagues

196 Minutes

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the City Plans Panel meeting held on 8th May 2014 be approved

197 Applications 14/01511/FU and 14/01713/LI - Full and Listed Building applications for the variation of the approved plans for replacement weirs at Leeds Weir and Knostrop Weir

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

With reference to minute 59 of the City Plans Panel meeting held on 17th January 2013 and minute 91 of the City Plans Panel meeting held on 24th October 2013, where applications for two replacement weirs and flood defences and cut were approved as part of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme (FAS), Officers presented the report which related to revisions to the design and location of the movable weirs

The revisions and design changes were outlined, with Members being informed that these were necessary to improve efficiency and assist in the delivery of other elements of the Leeds FAS

Regarding the use of reclaimed stone for the cladding material for the in channel piers, these would now be finished in concrete as engineers had indicated there were concerns about the strength of the reclaimed stone to undergo the demolition and rebuilding process. It was also stated that the use of concrete would provide better construction and would result in reduced maintenance requirements to remove vegetation growth

The Council's Conservation Officer had raised concerns about the use of concrete, although English Heritage had not commented. If minded to approve the applications, suitable conditions to control the external appearance of the weirs would be included

Members discussed the applications, with the main issues relating to:

- the design of the control cabinets
- the case for not reusing the stone due to concerns about its strength and whether this could be justified
- the visual appearance of concrete cladding which would not be in keeping with its surroundings
- that concrete could be considered to be acceptable at Knostrop Weir but not at Leeds Weir in view of its prominent location
- the need for regular maintenance of the weirs to ensure that damaging vegetation was removed
- concerns about the dominance of the weirs
- the absence of a water turbine at Leeds Weir

The Chief Planning Officer highlighted the different elements of the scheme and suggested that for Leeds Weir, stone could be used on the side elements, with concrete being used in the middle, which would better reflect the location. Members considered this, with the suggestion being made that stone should also be used in the middle at Leeds Weir, so long as the engineering works were not compromised by this

The Panel considered how to proceed

RESOLVED:

Application 14/01511/FU

To defer and delegate approval of the application to the Chief Planning Officer, subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 1 of the submitted report and subject to the use of stone at Leeds Weir, subject to details being agreed with English Heritage and the Council's Conservation Officer and in the event this matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved, to bring a further report to Panel for final approval of the application

Application 14/01713/LI

To agree in principle and defer and delegate to allow the application to be referred to the Secretary of State for the Department of Communities and Local Government

198 Preapp/14/00337 - Proposal for residential development at Sweet Street, Holbeck, Leeds

Plans, graphics, photographs and precedent images were displayed at the meeting

The Panel considered a report of the Chief Planning Officer on pre-application proposals for a residential development at Sweet Street and received a presentation on proposals from the developer's architects and agents

The key elements of the proposals were outlined to Members, which included:

- that the site has planning permission for a mixed use scheme comprising residential with A1/A2/A3/A4/A5 and B1 uses
- that the scheme being drawn up was a less dense residential scheme which provided courtyards and meaningful public realm with good pedestrian permeability
- the massing of the buildings related to their immediate context and allowed for good levels of sunlight in to the courtyards
- that the ground floor apartments would each have their own front door and balcony, which would help activate the streets
- that 750 apartments were proposed, with the larger apartments facing into the courtyards and benefitting from their own private amenity space
- that vehicular access would be from Ingram Street
- that 696sqm of commercial accommodation would be provided, with this being set back from Sweet Street
- that a range of studios, 1, 2, and 3 bedroom apartments would be provided, in a private rented development, managed by a single investor
- a generous landscaping scheme would form an important element of the development
- that public seating areas would be provided at key locations
- that the use of colour will be considered in the materials for the scheme, with the aim of creating a sense of identity through this

Members discussed the proposals and commented on the following matters:

- the amount of natural light residents would receive for much of the year
- the maintenance of the landscaped areas, particularly the raised beds
- the need for problems of litter and vermin around the landscaped areas to be fully addressed
- the use of tree pits and whether sufficient space would be available for trees to grow adequately

- a suitably sized play area for children would be required
- issues of security for residents
- the high number of studios and one bed room flats in the scheme and the need to understand the market the development would be aimed at
- community identity and how this would be forged
- S106 contributions which would be required
- Issues of sustainability and whether photovoltaics and grey water could be included in the proposals
- the size of the units with concerns these were not as generous as hoped
- the location of public seating areas and the need to address potential issues of noise nuisance and anti-social behaviour for tenants of units in close proximity to these areas
- whether a public seating area was necessary
- concerns about the proliferation of studios and that these did not help create a permanent community
- appropriate tree species and that Councillor Nash should be consulted on this, in the event the pre-application proposals progressed to a formal application
- the need for the different sized units to be mixed across the scheme to prevent segregation
- the changes to the heights of blocks; that the shortfall would need to be made up elsewhere in the scheme; the siting of the 13 storey block and whether this was appropriate
- the need for any development on this site to be of a high quality and distinct character, rather than just standard residential apartment blocks
- the need for detailed sunlight surveys to be provided as well as a proposed colour palette
- that more family accommodation was needed, particularly in view of proposals for a large school to open in the area within a few years
- the buoyancy of the private rented market and that city centre apartments were welcomed as were some elements of the design principles, i.e. the proposals to activate the streets and provide front doors and private courtyards space. However it was felt the scheme lacked a sense of place; that buildings of greater architectural merit were required for this key location; that the mix of units was not suitable and that more family accommodation should be provided

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

- that the proposed use of the site for a predominantly residential scheme was appropriate
- that whilst in general Members agreed with the siting of the buildings, provision of landscaping; public realm and provision of active street frontages, to note Members detailed comments on

these matters. That the arrangement of the taller block should be explored further and a clear rationale for it should be provided. Consideration of orientating the tall building towards The Mint building should be considered

- to note that more work was required regarding the height of the buildings, together with requirements for rooftop plant and the distribution of building heights around the scheme
- to note Members' detailed comments about the proposed landscaping
- that issues of sustainability needed to be addressed
- regarding the mix of units; their size; proportions and quality of the proposed flats, to note Members' comments and the Chief Planning Officer's comments about the work in progress on trying to achieve a Leeds Standard for units and for this work to be shared with Panel Members
- to note the requests for further detailed sun path surveys, information on proposed materials and the size of units in relation to average furniture sizes

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

199 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday 26th June 2014 at 1.30pm in the Civic Hall, Leeds