



## Report of the Chief Planning Officer

### NORTH AND EAST PLANS PANEL

Date: 08<sup>th</sup> January 2015

Subject: PREAPP/14/00795 - Pre-Application Presentation – Alwoodley Medical Centre, Land off King Lane, Moortown.

#### Electoral Wards Affected:

Alwoodley

Yes

Ward Members consulted  
(referred to in report)

#### Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

**RECOMMENDATION: This report is brought to Panel for information. The developer's representative will be asked to present the emerging scheme to allow Members to consider and comment on the proposals.**

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this report is to appraise Members of forthcoming proposals for the development of land within the designated Green Space/Urban Green Corridor at King Lane Moortown, for the provision of a primary care medical centre, and to inform Members of a short presentation that forms part of the on-going pre-submission consultation regarding this proposal.

## 2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1 The site relates to part of the undeveloped Green Space and Urban Green Corridor which flanks either side of King Lane, north of the outer ring road, beyond Moor Allerton retail centre and library. The site is east of and adjacent to St Stephen's Church. To the south are red-brick three storey flatted dwellings on Saxon Mount, to the south west is Saxon Vicarage. Across King Lane to the east are the Lingfields, which are lined by further three storey blocks of flats and two storey semi-detached red-brick dwellings. To the north across King Lane is the King Lane Park and Ride facility beyond which is Allerton High School.

2.7 In terms of policy designation, the site is located within the strategic network of green spaces which link the main urban area with the countryside, as designated under saved Policy N8 'Urban Green Corridors' and Policy N1 'Greenpace' of the UDPR. Some trees are protected trees within the corridor.

### **3.0 PROPOSALS**

- 3.1 Access into the site is proposed to be taken from King Lane. The site is owned by the Council and negotiations are ongoing to acquire the land required. The most recent submitted layout indicates a delivery bay for transit sized delivery vehicles adjacent to the building entrance and a bin store is shown to the northwest corner of the proposed car park. The parking layout shows 59 spaces including 4 for spaces for disabled people.
- 3.2 The scheme involves the merger of 2 GPs practices (Moorcroft Surgery and Nursery Lane Surgery) to form a joint primary care centre, and has the backing of the NHS and GPs. It is clearly an important facility, and it is important in terms of NHS funding that views are sought at an early stage to inform the formal submission and to avoid unnecessary delay. The proposal would lead to more modern less cramped facilities and would facilitate improved patient care.
- 3.3 Whilst no details have yet been submitted on the latest design of the new centre at the time of writing this report, and so no informal assessment of acceptability can be made within this report, pre-application advice has been offered on earlier proposals, in terms of the need to consider the context and green corridor designation, as set out under relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance, saved Unitary Development Plan and adopted Core Strategy policy.

### **4.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS AND PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 In June 2014 the applicants submitted a preliminary feasibility document outlining 3 options for a site closer to the roundabout on the outer ring road, lower down King Lane. Following detailed consultation with GPs and a technical review one option was progressed in greater detail, this was presented to the Council in September 2014, and pre-application advice was given on the need to reflect the green corridor designation and wider context. Advice was also given on UDP green corridor policy requirements to seek to offset the impact of any development within it, and to provide details of a sequential approach to site selection in terms and in terms of the pharmacy.
- 4.2 Though anticipation of formal submission was expected to be in September 2014, mains utilities were identified underneath the original site identified, necessitating relocation further up King Lane to the present site the subject of this report and the pre-application presentation. In November 2014 amended plans relocating the proposed centre further up King Lane were submitted, highways were re-consulted on the amended location and site layout plans, and pre-application advice given shortly after. Detailed design drawings of the current building proposed have to date not yet been made available to the Council. Ward Councillors have been consulted and have been advised of this pre-application presentation.

### **5.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES**

#### **5.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

- 5.2 The NPPF advocates a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It sets out 12 core land-use planning principles. Development should “...take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community facilities to meet local needs’, and “...always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings”. One of the broad principles of sustainable

development is achieving a healthy and just society, and the protection of the environment and promotion of healthy communities are part of the social and environmental roles the planning system serves, as set out in the NPPF.

5.3 Section 4 promotes sustainable transport, Section 7 provides guidance relating to the design of new development, Section 8 provides guidance on promoting healthy communities, and section 11 sets out guidance on conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

5.4 With regard to the Urban Green Corridor location, under Section 8 promoting healthy communities, significantly paragraph 73 states that:

*“Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. The assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the local area. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sports and recreational provision is required.”*

5.5 Under Section 8 Paragraph 74 states:

*“Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:*

- an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or*
- the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or*
- the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.”*

5.6 With regard to plan making and health and wellbeing, Paragraph 171 states:

*“Local planning authorities should work with public health leads and health organisations to understand and take account of the health status and needs of the local population (such as for sports, recreation and places of worship), including expected future changes, and any information about relevant barriers to improving health and well-being.”*

5.7 With regard to the proposed pharmacy, Section 2 sets out the approach towards ensuring the vitality of town centres. It stipulates that local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for town centre uses that are not in an existing centre and are not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan. They should require applications for main town centre uses to be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations and only if suitable sites are not available should out of centre sites be considered. When considering out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centre. Applicants and local planning authorities should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale.

5.8 Again with regard to the proposed pharmacy, paragraph 26 requires that “*when assessing applications for retail development outside of town centres, which are not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan, LPA’s should require an impact assessment if the development is over a proportionate, locally set floorspace threshold (if there is no locally set threshold, the default threshold is 2,500 sq m). This should include assessment of:*

- *The impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal; and*
- *The impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local customer choice and trade in the town centre and wider area....”*

5.9 At paragraph 27 the NPPF advises “*Where an application fails to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have significant adverse impact on one or more of the above factors, it should be refused.*”

## **5.10 Development Plan**

5.11 The development plan consists of the Core Strategy and the Saved Policies within the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review 2006) (UDP) and the adopted Natural Resources and Waste DPD (2013). Objective 10 of the Core Strategy, in reflecting the Spatial Vision, is to “*Support the provision of community infrastructure that is tailored to meet the needs of the community including high quality health, education and training, cultural and recreation, and community facilities and spaces.*”, whereas Objective 21 is to “*Protect and enhance Green Infrastructure, strategic green corridors, green space, and areas of important landscape character, taking the opportunity to improve their quality, connectivity and accessibility through the development process.*” [My emphasis].

5.12 Local Development Framework Core Strategy policies:

SP1	Location of Development
SP13	Strategic green infrastructure
G8	Protection of important species and habitats
G9	Biodiversity improvements
EN1	Climate change
EN2	Sustainable design and construction
EN5	Managing flood risk
T1	Transport management
T2	Accessibility requirements and new development
P9	Community facilities and other services
P10	Design
P11	Conservation
P12	Landscape

5.13 Saved Policies of Leeds Unitary Development Plan Review (UDPR):

GP1	Land use and the proposals map
GP5	General planning considerations
N1	Greenspace
N8	Urban Green Corridor
N9	Urban Green Corridors and development
N25	Landscape design and boundary treatment
T7A	Cycle parking guidelines

## 5.14 Relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance

Supplementary Planning Document: "Street Design Guide".  
Supplementary Planning Document: Travel Plans.  
Supplementary Planning Guidance "Neighbourhoods for Living".  
Supplementary Planning Document – Sustainable Design and Construction  
"Building for Tomorrow, Today"  
Supplementary Planning Document – Travel Plans  
Supplementary Planning Guidance 25 – Greening the Built Edge

## 6.0 MAIN ISSUES

- 6.1 Officers have held discussions with the applicant's architects over the proposed development and have focussed on a number matters. Members are asked to consider the following matters in particular:
- 6.2 Principle of Development in the Green Corridor
- 6.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 state that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.4 Paragraph 12 of the National Planning Policy framework indicates that development that accords with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved, and proposed development that conflicts should be refused, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. The starting point for any consideration of the development must therefore be the provisions of the saved policies of the UDPR and adopted Core Strategy, in order to assess whether the development is in accordance with the development plan.
- 6.5 In considering the site against the provisions of the development plan, the key issues are that the proposal is for a community health facility involving the amalgamation of two existing GP practices to provide one new primary care facility, and this is clearly an important proposal in terms of local access to high quality health facilities. This is naturally an important aspect of the proposal to which significant weight should be given.
- 6.6 Core Strategy policy P9 Community facilities and other services states: "*Access to local community facilities and services, such as education, training, places of worship, health, sport and recreation and community centres, is important to the health and wellbeing of a neighbourhood. New community facilities and services should be accessible by foot, cycling, or by public transport in the interests of sustainability and health and wellbeing. Facilities and services should not adversely impact on residential amenity and should where possible, and appropriate, be located in centres with other community uses. The scale of the facility or service should be considered in conjunction with the level of need within the community and its proposed location within the Settlement Hierarchy.*"
- 6.7 In terms of principle, given that the site is located within an Urban Green Corridor, as designated in the UDPR, the terms of saved policies N1, N8 and N9 are relevant. The Spatial Vision states objective (v) Managing Environmental Resources, (point 21) - "*Protect and enhance Green Infrastructure, strategic green corridors, green*

space, and areas of important landscape character, taking the opportunity to improve their quality, connectivity and accessibility through the development process.”. Balanced alongside this, the Core Strategy also talks of improving health and addressing deprivation and health inequality, and it recognises this is a part of the key challenges the city faces in achieving its growth targets.

6.8 Saved UDPR Policy N1 states that development of land identified on the proposals map as protected greenspace will not be permitted for purposes other than outdoor recreation, unless the need in the locality for greenspace is already met and a suitable alternative site can be identified and laid out as greenspace in an area of identified shortfall. Saved UDPR Policy N8 sets out that the strategic network of Urban Green Corridors links the main urban area with the countryside, and that these corridors have the potential to provide for informal recreation and also contribute to visual amenity and nature conservation. Under criterion i) of Policy N8, within these corridors, development proposals should ensure that any existing corridor function of the land is retained, enhanced or replaced. Saved UDPR Policy N9 states that all development should respect and where possible enhance the intrinsic value of land fulfilling a corridor function, in terms of access, recreation, nature conservation and visual amenity.

6.9 The associated text to policy N8 states:

*“The strategic network of Urban Green Corridors identified on the Proposals Map focuses upon the main urban area of Leeds. This technique has been adopted in order to secure a strategic approach towards Urban Green Corridors in areas where considerable pressures tend to erode existing linkages, and in contrast where opportunities exist to enhance and extend the network. It should also be recognised that many other places serve to provide a corridor function, on a less ‘strategic’ basis. A fine grained network exists in many areas, providing important local visual breaks, wildlife habitats, and informal recreational routes and facilities. This can include linear features such as streams, railway routes, major roads, hedgerows, footpaths and bridleways, along with concentrations of urban green space, allotments, playing fields and cemeteries. Within these areas, features such as trees, flora and water make important contributions to their visual character and value to wildlife and local residents. Outside the strategic Urban Green Corridors, this local corridor function must also be protected and supported”.*

6.10 Having broached the above policy considerations with the architects it is understood that they are proposing to ‘grub’ up the tarmac roads of the former bus terminus to the south of the site (the site formerly selected for the proposed building before prohibitive underground mains were identified beneath it), and to return it to grass by way of compensation for the impact of the proposed new building. Significant landscaping works are also anticipated, though details are awaited. It is also understood that a number of alternative sites for the centre have been explored, but which have been discounted for various reasons. It is hoped that more detail on these points will be also made available as part of the pre-application presentation to Members.

6.11 In light of the above, and following the presentation, Members views are sought on the following issues:

- **Do Members support the principle of the development in this Green Space and Urban Green Corridor location?**

- **Are the proposed mitigation and compensatory measures for the loss of Green Space and Urban Green Corridor considered sufficient to meet the ‘enhance and replace’ terms of UDPR saved policy and Core Strategy objectives?**

6.12 Design and Layout Issues

6.13 Core Strategy Policy P10 relates to design and requires that new development should be based on a thorough contextual analysis and good design that is appropriate to its location, scale and function. Policy P10 states that proposals will be supported where they accord with the following [summarised] key principles:

- i) Size, scale, design and layout are appropriate to context and respect the character and quality of surrounding buildings, the streets and spaces that make up the public realm, and the wider locality.
- ii) Development protects and enhances the district’s existing historic and natural assets, locally important buildings, spaces, skylines and views.
- iii) Development protects the visual, residential and general amenity of the area, through high quality design.
- iv) Car parking, cycle, waste and recycling storage is designed in a positive manner and is integral to the development.
- v) Development creates a safe and secure environment.
- vi) Development is accessible to all users.

6.14 Saved UDPR policy GP5 sets out general planning criteria for new development, with reference to access, drainage, contamination, stability, landscaping and design. Policy GP5 requires that proposals seek to avoid problems of environmental intrusion, loss of amenity, pollution, danger to health or life, highway congestion, highway safety and promote energy conservation and the prevention of crime. Under policy GP5 proposals should also have regard to any framework or planning brief prepared for the site or area.

6.15 Officers have given pre-application advice that the proposals need to follow SPG planning guidance and saved UDPR and Core Strategy policy, and be sympathetic to both their context and the Urban Green Corridor location. Detailed plans were not available at the time of writing this report, but Members will have the benefit of a pre-application presentation by the applicant’s architects.

6.16 Members are asked to consider the presentation given and to have regard to the comments above. In particular:

- **Do Members consider the design concepts (including landscaping) and layout to be appropriate in principle?**

6.17 Highways Issues

6.18 The proposed scheme involves access from King Lane. The site is within easy walking distance of bus stops served by the 7 and 7A services, providing a combined service of around 9 buses per hour, and in principle no specific highway safety objections have been identified. Subject to satisfactory parking and pedestrian access and servicing, the proposals are in principle acceptable.

6.19 The layout received shows 59 parking spaces including 4 for disabled people. Parking provision should be provided in accordance with Appendix A9A of the UDP, which for Doctors’ surgeries is 3 spaces for patients per doctor/nurse in surgery, and

1 space per doctor and staff attending surgery. Though these are maximum levels of provision, given the site's location close to the ring road, it is essential that the development provides adequate on-site parking to prevent overspill onto King Lane. It may be that travel surveys of staff and patients attending the existing surgeries could be helpful in establishing current travel modes and predicted parking demand, and a Travel Plan (with monitoring fee) and Transport Statement will be required with any formal submission. Pedestrian accessibility via footways should also be provided from both north and south bound bus stops. Highways suggest that the footway should abut King Lane, linking between the signalized pedestrian crossing to the north and the bus lay-by to the south, and that public transport improvement contributions may be required. Of course after 06 April 2014 CIL would apply and the development should be exempt.

6.20 The layout indicates a delivery bay for small (Transit sized) service vehicles adjacent to the building entrance. The bin store is positioned to the northwest corner of the car park, the inference being that waste collection will take place from Saxon Mount. If this is to be the case, it is suggested that to reduce carry distance to Saxon Mount and to avoid the need for service vehicles to stop on a bend, the bin store is repositioned to the southwest corner of the car park. A dedicated access route from Saxon Mount to the bin store will be required, of an alignment and construction suitable for the manual handling of bins. Notwithstanding this it is considered that the internal layout should be designed to accommodate service vehicle access and turning.

6.21 Taking into account the above and the presentation before Members, the following questions are asked:

- **Do Members consider the site access and parking arrangements to be acceptable ?**

## **7.0 CONCLUSION**

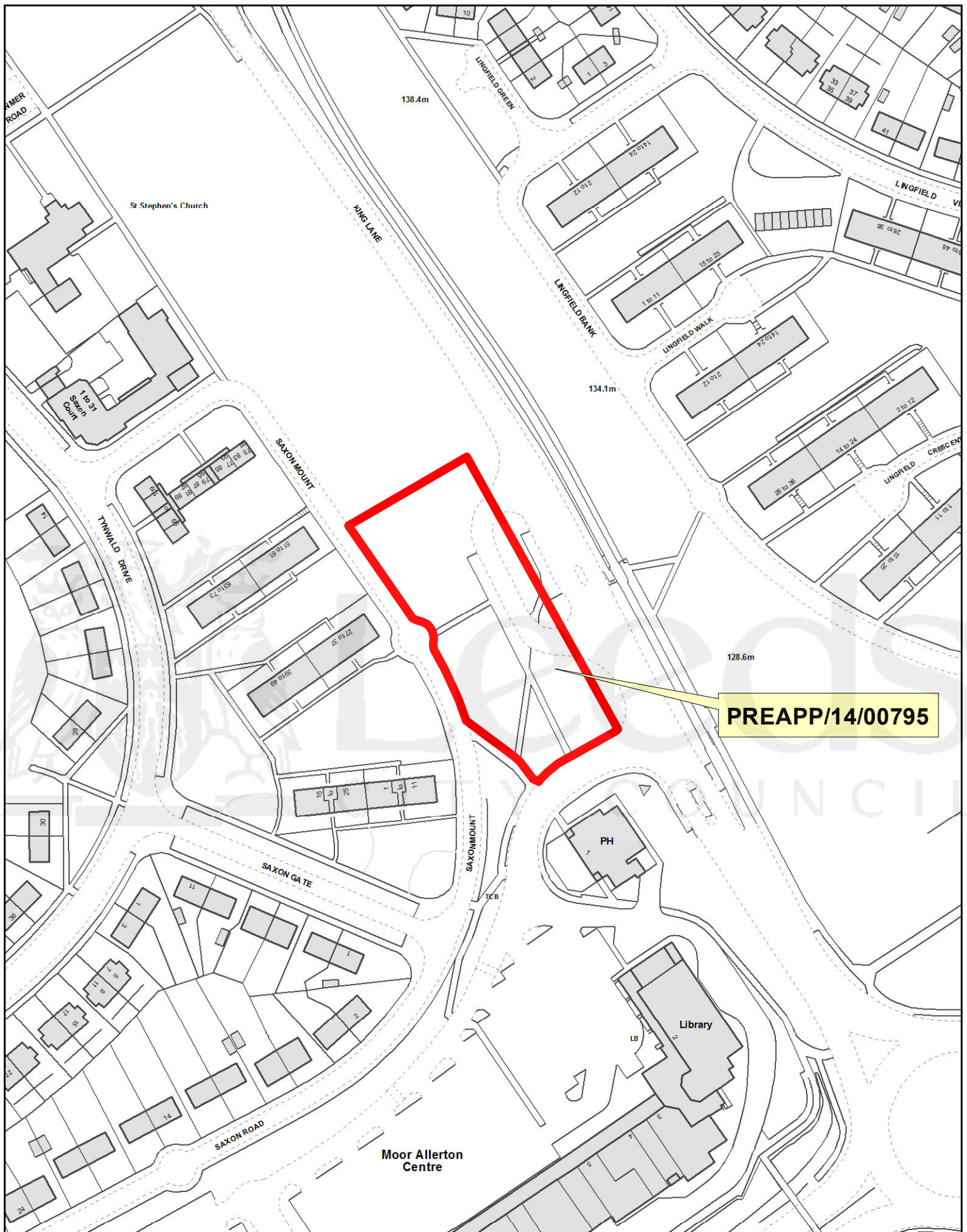
7.1 The site represents an opportunity to amalgamate two medical practices in one single, modern and accessible, primary health care centre for which NHS Trust support and funding has been given. Clearly, there are a number of important benefits to this in terms of promoting healthy communities which are supported in local and national planning policy. There are equally also important considerations in terms of layout, the impact of the development and mitigation measures with regard to the Green Space and Urban Green Corridor location of the site, and in terms of the appropriateness and the quality of the design. Members are therefore asked to note the contents of the report, and the presentation, and are invited to provide feedback on the questions and issues outlined in the report and repeated below:

- **Do Members support the principle of the development in this Green Space and Urban Green Corridor location?**
- **Are the proposed mitigation and compensatory measures for the loss of Green Space and Urban Green Corridor considered sufficient to meet the 'enhance and replace' terms of UDPR saved policy and Core Strategy objectives?**
- **Do Members consider the design concepts (including landscaping) and layout to be appropriate in principle?**
- **Do Members consider the site access and parking arrangements to be acceptable?**
- **Are there any other issues that Members want to raise at this time?**









# NORTH AND EAST PLANS PANEL

© Crown copyright and database rights 2014 Ordnance Survey 100019567

PRODUCED BY CITY DEVELOPMENT, GIS MAPPING & DATA TEAM, LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

SCALE : 1/1500

