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**Report of the Director of City Development**

**Executive Board**

**Date: 11 September 2007**

**Subject: Development Proposals for Elland Road**

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**Electoral Wards Affected:**

Citywide

**Specific Implications For:**

Ethnic minorities

Women

Disabled people

Eligible for Call In

Not Eligible for Call In

(Details contained in the report)

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The area around Elland Road stadium is a key and sensitive site in the city which is currently dominated by low-grade surface car parking. This situation presents a low quality physical environment for local residents and does little to help regenerate the area.

Whilst there has been a long-standing need to resolve this position, there are a number of current development factors that make this an appropriate time to consider the nature of development that can take place on the site. To this end the City Council in association with other stakeholders has developed draft framework proposals which have been subject to public consultation and further revised to produce an informal planning statement for Executive Board's consideration and approval. The informal planning statement seeks to promote a high quality leisure development supported by ancillary uses, together with a maximum of 2,750 car parking spaces.

In addition, the City Council has been in liaison with the West Yorkshire Police Authority concerning their requirements to find a suitable site for a replacement Police Headquarters should they decide to vacate their existing facilities at Millgarth and Holbeck. In view of the benefits that will accrue to development in the city centre from the release of the Millgarth site, it is proposed that the City Council agrees to enter into one-to-one negotiations with the West Yorkshire Police Authority to consider the sale of the former Greyhound Stadium site at Elland Road, at open market value, subject to the detailed terms being agreed to the satisfaction of the Director of City Development.

## **1.0 Purpose of the Report**

1.1 The purpose of the report is to;

- Note the outcome of the public consultation process on the development proposals for the Elland Road site.
- Approve the informal planning statement as a guide to future development proposals for the Elland Road site.
- Approve the exploration of the potential and the implications for the provision of a park and ride facility on the site.
- Approve in principle the sale of the former Greyhound Stadium site at open market value to the West Yorkshire Police Authority as a site for their new Divisional Head Quarters, subject to the final terms being agreed by the Director of City Development.
- Note that a proportion of the receipt of the Greyhound site and others arising from Council disposals in the area covered by the informal planning statement may be required to facilitate the reconfiguration of car parking provision and the implementation of any infrastructure proposals required to facilitate the comprehensive redevelopment of the Elland Road site

## **2.0 Background Information**

2.1 Executive Board will recall that at a meeting held on 14 March 2007, Members considered a draft Masterplan proposal for land in the vicinity of Elland Road and resolved that:

- the Director of Development be authorised to procure consultants to undertake a preliminary public consultation exercise on the draft masterplan proposals contained in Appendix 1 of the March 2007 report.
- the Director of Development be authorised to develop an informal planning statement for the site, taking account of the outcome of the public consultation exercise.
- a report be brought back to this Board with a revised masterplan/planning statement, prior to inviting bids from developers for their arena proposals.

2.2 The rationale for developing a masterplan at this time is in response to a number of drivers, which from the City Council's perspective recognised that the site:

- Is unattractive and contributes to a poor physical environment in the local area;
- Makes little or no contribution to the regeneration of a ward with relatively high levels of social and economic deprivation;
- Is high profile, not just because of its proximity to the City's Football Club, but also due to its location next to the M621 and the Leeds to London mainline railway, which necessitates the need for high quality design solutions
- Is identified for prospective arena developers wanting to participate in the competitive dialogue process for the selection of a developer to bring forward a 12,500 seat arena for the city, who either do not have land interests of their own, or believe that the public land available offers the best arena solution.

- 2.3 In addition, any development proposals for the site need to take into account the aspirations of the other interested parties in the greater site. In this context, Leeds United have ambitions to improve the ancillary commercial offer at the Elland Road Stadium including the development of a hotel as part of the stadium complex. Also, prior to confirmation that Leeds will be able to grant a license for a large casino, Stanley Leisure lodged an outline planning application for a casino on the site, which if successful, would operate under the 1968 Act licensing procedures. This would not prejudice Stanley Leisure from seeking to secure a large casino licence in the future through a transparent and competitive process, which would take place across the city should Leeds be permitted to licence a large casino.
- 2.4 It is, therefore, clear that there is development pressure on the site and without a coherent planning statement to inform individual development proposals there is the potential for incremental and piecemeal development. This would not result in a positive development outcome and the site would not contribute to the wider regeneration aspirations for the Beeston Hill area.
- 2.5 In view of the issues identified above, and in recognition of the importance of the site within the City, the objectives of the process to date have been to:
- Provide guidance on the development of some eighteen and a half hectares of brownfield land which currently contributes to a low grade environment in a key regeneration area of the City (see Plan 1)
  - Formulate a vision which will transform the area immediately surrounding the Leeds United Football Club Stadium, which could result in the development of a vibrant leisure quarter hosting a mix of activities accessible to all.
  - Ensure the site's development contributes to the local economy.
  - Ensure that any development proposal results in high quality buildings, welcoming, comfortable, safe and well-used spaces which create a sense of place, and which people will wish to visit repeatedly.
  - Facilitate development which has a physical, economic and social regenerative impact within the local area of the Elland Road Stadium.
  - Have regard to all stakeholder interests in the area of the Elland Road Stadium.

### **3.0 Main Issues**

- 3.1 The main issues to consider in this report are:
- The outcome of the consultation process
  - The development of the informal planning statement in light of the outcome of the consultation feedback received.
  - Proposals to progress in principle the sale of the former Greyhound Stadium site to the West Yorkshire Police Authority for the development of a new Police Headquarters and
  - The implications and capacity for a park and ride facility to be developed to compliment the replacement car parking to be provided as part of the Elland Road planning statement.
- 3.2 Each of these issues is considered in turn below.
- 3.3 **Consultation Process** - Following the Executive Board resolutions identified in 2.1 above, a preliminary consultation exercise on the draft masterplan has been completed and work undertaken to update the initial proposals into an informal planning statement in the context of the consultation feedback received.

3.4 The consultation exercise was managed by Frances Wells Associates on behalf of the Council. The scope and methodology for the consultation exercise was developed following a stakeholder workshop to identify the key groups that the consultation exercise needed to include. Accordingly a broad range of consultation events and meetings have been held including stakeholder workshops, one-to-one in depth interviews, public drop in sessions and telephone interviews as part of a qualitative exercise. A full schedule of the consultation process undertaken is identified in the consultation report and the main outcomes are covered in the Executive Summary which is attached at Appendix 1.

3.5 Following the conclusion of the consultation exercise the key themes to bring to Executive Board's attention are as follows:

**Theme 1** – Sense of place, identity and quality of place. The consultation process identified a strong theme of dissatisfaction with the look and feel of the site and a need to improve the perception of safety, attractiveness of the site and to also encourage investment. In addition, it was also noted by many that the site is a gateway to the South and West approaches to Leeds and in need of improvement.

**Theme 2** – Traffic management, parking and connectivity. This theme was very important to local people living in the vicinity of the Elland Road site. Key issues that emerged included the significant amount of on-street car parking in residential areas on match days and some of the anti-social behaviour that is linked to this activity. Also, the perceived high cost of match day public transport was commented on as was a perceived lack of reliability and information about services. It is clear that the local community wants to see solutions that protect them from the impact of the Elland Road Football Ground and that the situation should not get any worse as a consequence of development. Achieving a successful modal shift from the car to public transport was high on the agenda of a number of consultation responses.

**Theme 3** – Environmental quality and management. Local people, especially young consultees wanted to see improvements to the problem of litter on the site and improvements to greenspace and other open spaces. Also linked to theme 2, a recurring comment was a desire to improve air quality by reducing standing traffic on match days.

**Theme 4** – Economic considerations including employment. The potential for new employment for local people was a major area of feedback. In addition, capturing the value of the purchasing power of any incoming new businesses for the benefit of the local area was highly important. In summary, many consultees saw the potential benefits of area regeneration, new jobs and new businesses.

**Theme 5** – Safety and comfort of users. The consultation process highlighted the need to maintain segregation between pedestrians and vehicles as well as home and away supporters of football matches. The key suggestion for maintaining safety was to ensure that the site is well used on a regular basis, thus giving the site a sense of location. There was also some concern amongst local residents about the potential for a casino to attract undesirable behaviour.

**Theme 6** – Provision of new housing and its quality. Proposals to include new housing created a mixed response. On balance, more thought that investment in new housing was a positive for the area in terms of demonstrating new investment and widening the choice of housing types available. However, some felt that it would result in more people living close to an area already experiencing problems.

Those in favour of housing gave a strong message that the housing mix needed careful consideration, as did the design layout, provision of parking and buffer treatments between new residential areas and the Elland Road football ground itself.

**Theme 7** – Site synergy to maximize positive benefits. The consultation process identified the need to carefully consider the design layout of any development proposals and to ensure appropriate levels of segregation and integration where necessary. The final development proposal should improve the sustainability of the site.

**Theme 8** – Sense of community and community cohesion. Overall it was thought that development would raise both the profile and image of the local area, which would have benefits for local communities. Achieving a sense of vibrancy was one of the positives highlighted. However, any development proposals would have to address the negative aspects felt by some residents including on-street parking and litter. Accordingly, the need to keep local people engaged in the development throughout is a key issue as is the need to ensure that any development results in an attractive site which is accessible to a wide range of local people.

**Theme 9** – Visitor experience. At present, people appear to be either neutral or negative about the visitor experience in and around Elland Road. The area affords a low quality environment for local people and football supporters note that there is little to attract them to arrive early, or stay behind after matches. There was clear enthusiasm for the redevelopment of the site for leisure uses. This enthusiasm included the potential for an arena, particularly from people across Leeds and football fans. However, this is tempered by local concerns that both an arena and a casino could have negative consequences for residents living in close proximity to the site. Some also queried whether an arena at Elland Road would draw potential trade away from the city-centre.

**Summary of consultation** – The consultation process has identified that, on balance, there is a desire both local and city-wide for a development at Elland Road which improves the quality of the local environment and brings economic and regenerative benefits to the local area. However, any development proposals brought forward must address a number of issues currently faced by local residents in the area. Critically, the impact of car travel on football match days needs to be reduced, which may require measures to achieve a modal shift which improves the attractiveness of public transport. In addition, the need for environmental improvements and better environmental management would also have to be key components of any development proposals that resulted in the site being integrated into every day use by local people as well as visitors.

- 3.6 **Informal Planning Statement** - In recognition of the issues identified through the consultation process, officers have reviewed the draft Masterplan proposals and developed it into an informal planning statement for Executive Board's consideration. This is attached as Appendix 2.
- 3.7 The planning statement has been drawn up with the key aim of providing a coherent approach to facilitating the development of this site in accordance with the aspirations set out in the adopted Unitary Development Plan under Policy LT5A. From a planning perspective, it is vital that the development does not take place in an incremental and piecemeal manner and that the opportunity to integrate future development into the local community, contributing to wider regeneration objectives is not overlooked.

- 3.8 The planning statement is guided by the adopted UDP policy for the Elland Road site (LT5A) which describes the types of 'leisure & tourism' uses which were anticipated when the policy was prepared. However, it avoids being overly prescriptive, and deliberately incorporates the necessary flexibility to allow the site to come forward for a range of development proposals. This is because any scheme must be deliverable and there are a number of development options, depending upon whether the site is eventually selected as a preferred site for an arena and/or a casino.
- 3.9 As stated, the existing UDP planning policy for the site allows for large scale leisure or tourism proposals which would enhance the regional and national role of the city, together with a range of uses which are ancillary to such primary uses and which could, in addition, enhance the facilities available to the local community. This limits the opportunities for development of the site to a select number of development options and uses. As an example, the proposed police headquarters on the former greyhound stadium would require advertising as a departure from adopted policy should the council be minded to approve a planning application. The same would apply to any residential use within the LT5A boundary. However, the planning statement clearly indicates the council's willingness to consider uses and proposals beyond the scope of existing planning policy to encourage redevelopment of this site for the wider well being of the locality and city.
- 3.10 The planning statement has regard to Planning Policy Guidance and the need for a sustainable transport solution for the site. The site provides a potentially valuable opportunity to create a park and ride facility combined with potential improved bus links to the city centre. This in turn could provide improved access both to the football stadium and other potential uses on the site.
- 3.11 Given the complexities of land ownership and the council's determination to bring about a comprehensive scheme for this important site in a reasonable timescale, the planning statement states that the use of compulsory purchase to assemble land will be considered.
- 3.12 **Police Headquarters** – The City Council is currently in discussion with the West Yorkshire Police Authority (WYPA) for the sale of the former Greyhound Stadium site for the development of a new Divisional Police Headquarters. The police are reorganising nationally and are reducing the number of Divisional HQs. The new facility for south Leeds is to replace the police stations at Millgarth, in the city centre, and Holbeck off Dewsbury Road.
- 3.13 This 8.5 acre site (shown on the attached plan) is within the overall Elland Road site and is being considered as part of the planning statement for the area to ensure comprehensive redevelopment of a significant gateway location.
- 3.14 The site was included in 15 sites considered by the Police Authority.
- 3.15 Elland Road was identified as the favourite as it meets the WYPA criteria in operational terms, access to the city centre and proximity in relation to community catchment.
- 3.16 Proposals include a 110,000 sq ft Police Station Headquarters with custody suite and car parking in a high quality building which will do much for the wider regeneration of the deprived area of Beeston through new job opportunities, environmental improvement and social inclusion.

- 3.17 The new proposal will also ensure benefits to the city centre in enabling the Eastgate and Harewood Quarter development and wider regeneration benefits in the Dewsbury Road District Centre area as part of the Beeston Hill and Holbeck Regeneration area through the redevelopment of the Holbeck HQ site.
- 3.18 Development of the Greyhound Stadium site can be independent to the wider Elland Road proposals, but needs to be compatible with the wider development especially with regard to traffic and transportation issues.
- 3.19 To this end the Informal Planning Statement that has been produced (attached at Appendix 2) which sets out the principles for the comprehensive development of the wider Elland Road site and allows for the Police Headquarters, subject to satisfying a sequential test and securing planning approval.
- 3.20 Executive Board is requested to support the Council entering into one-to-one negotiations on the potential sale of the site of the former Greyhound Stadium marked on Plan 1 to the West Yorkshire Police at an agreed open market value with the approval of final terms of any sale being delegated to the Director of City Development. Members of Executive Board should note that any capital receipt generated from the proposed disposal of the site to the West Yorkshire Police will potentially need to be made available to contribute to the reconfiguration of car parking provision across the site and the wider infrastructure provision that will need to be implemented in the area covered by the Elland Road informal planning statement.

#### **4.0 Ward Member Consultation**

- 4.1 Ward Members comments will be reported at the meeting.

#### **5.0 Implications for Council Policy and Governance**

- 5.1 The development of the Elland Road site, and addressing the current issues faced by local residents in the area links to a number of the Council's strategic outcomes including:
- All communities are thriving and harmonious places where people are happy to live.
  - Leeds is a highly competitive international city.
  - All neighbourhoods are safe, clean, green and well maintained

#### **6.0 Legal and Resource Implications**

- 6.1 Should members of Executive Board agree to approve the informal planning statement, this document will be included as part of the descriptive documents bundle to be provided to the long-list of developers short-listed for the arena project.
- 6.2 If Elland Road is not selected as the site for the Leeds Arena, it is proposed that the site is still brought forward for development as part of the capital receipts process and on this basis the informal planning statement presented would be used to inform other development propositions that might be forthcoming. Members should, however, note that the informal planning statement is based on a package of uses centred on the development of major leisure facilities consistent with the sites planning status. In the event that proposals do not meet these aspirations, it may be necessary to revisit the planning guidance,

6.3 The sale of the former Greyhound Stadium site to the West Yorkshire Police Authority would be progressed independently from the remainder of the site and it is envisaged that this will provide a capital receipt to the Council, which may be achieved in 2009/10. Members should note that a proportion of this receipt and others arising from Council disposals in the area covered by the informal planning statement may be required to facilitate the reconfiguration of car parking on the site and, the implementation of any other infrastructure proposals required to facilitate the comprehensive redevelopment of the area covered by the informal planning statement. However, the extent to which this might be the case would only be known once bids are received for arena development and any detailed consequences will be reported further as part of that process.

## **7.0 Recommendations**

7.1 Members of Executive Board are asked to:

- Note the outcome of the public consultation process on the development proposals for the Elland Road site.
- Approve the informal planning statement presented as a guide to future development proposals for the Elland Road site and, to note that it may be necessary to review the content of the informal planning statement dependent upon the outcome of the major leisure interest shown in the site.
- Approve the exploration of the potential and the implications for the provision of a park and ride facility on the site.
- Approve in principle the sale of the former Greyhound Stadium site at open market value to the West Yorkshire Police Authority as a site for their new Divisional HQ, subject to the final terms being agreed by the Director of City Development.
- Note that a proportion of the receipt from the Greyhound Stadium site and others arising from Council disposals in the area covered by the informal planning statement may be required to facilitate the reconfiguration of car parking and the implementation of any infrastructure proposals required to facilitate the comprehensive redevelopment of the Elland Road site.

**Supporting Documentation;**  
Elland Road Informal Planning Statement